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Your brilliant 12-page guide

Sunak turns fire on Farage in battle for the undecided voters

Chris Smyth Whitehall Editor
Geraldine Scott

Rishi Sunak will mock Nigel Farage's goal of becoming the opposition to Sir Keir Starmer as he urges undecided voters to vote Tory to stop Labour winning a "supermajority".

The prime minister will turn his fire on the Reform UK leader today after

Farage used the biggest rally yet of the campaign to attack "slippery Sunak" and say that Starmer offered only "a change of middle management".

In a speech acknowledging that Starmer is heading for victory in the general election, Sunak will warn disaffected Conservative voters that "unchecked Labour government would be a disaster from which it would take

decades to recover". The shift came as:

- Labour vowed to scrap a rule allowing those stealing goods worth under £200 to escape punishment.
- Lord Harris of Peckham, the multi-millionaire Tory donor and academy backer, said he was switching his support to Labour because he believed they were better for education.
- Farage sought to defend Reform

after facing accusations from across the political divide that he had failed to show leadership over allegations of racism within the party.

With the Conservatives and Reform locked in a fight for millions of disillusioned voters undecided about whether to stick with the Tories, Farage insisted "they could come to us over the course of the next four days" as he looked to set

himself up as "the real voice of opposition" to a Labour government. Sunak will ridicule that claim and plead with voters on the right to stick with him.

Reform "just won't win enough seats to oppose Labour", Sunak will say as he points out that the party has previously
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Rise of Starmer, the radical lawyer,
page 10-11



BERNADETT SZABO/REUTERS

England were seconds from being knocked out before an injury-time Jude Bellingham bicycle kick and Harry Kane's extra-time header secured a 2-1 victory over Slovakia

Three Lions through after last-gasp leap

Charlie Parker Gelsenkirchen

The Three Lions clawed their way to victory against Slovakia at Euro 2024 after Jude Bellingham scored with a bicycle kick late in injury time.

The equaliser, after the squad spent most of a nervous 90 minutes a goal down, was quickly followed by Harry Kane scoring the winner a minute into the first half of extra time.

The 2-1 victory means England will play a quarter final game against Switzerland in Dusseldorf on Saturday.

Bellingham said he was "happy to help" after the game. "We showed the character that England has missed in times before," he added.

Rishi Sunak used England's win to claim "It's not over until it's over", with a picture of him punching the air behind an England flag. His general election rival Sir Keir Starmer tweeted after the final whistle: "Never in doubt."

The Prince of Wales, president of the Football Association, summed up England fans' feelings by posting on Twitter/X: "Emotional rollercoaster! Let's go @England! Quarter finals here we come! W."

You thought it was all over, page 5
The Euros, pullout

French right humiliates Macron

Marine Le Pen's populists within touching distance of power after reducing president's party to third place

Adam Sage, David Chazan Paris

Marine Le Pen hailed an unprecedented triumph for her populist right National Rally in the first round of French parliamentary elections last night.

With the second round next week, the Rally is now within touching distance of power for the first time. It hopes to be running the country during the Paris Olympics this summer.

Speaking before cheering supporters in her northern French constituency,

Le Pen, 55, said that voters had turned their backs on President Macron, whose camp had been "virtually wiped out".

Her party secured about 34 per cent of the vote, ahead of the left-wing New Popular Front (NPF) on about 29 per cent and Ensemble, Macron's coalition, on about 22 per cent.

Le Pen said voters wanted to "turn the page" on Macron's "scornful and corrosive" presidency. But she added: "Nothing has been won yet." The comment was a tacit admission that her party is unsure of winning the absolute

majority it needs in next Sunday's second round to be able to form the first hard-right government in France since the Second World War.

Last night thousands of people took to the streets in Paris and cities including Rennes and Strasbourg to protest against the Rally.

Le Pen's triumph, which comes with the populist right surging across Europe, set off alarm bells in Brussels, where there are fears that it could put Paris on a collision course with the EU. Jordan Bardella, 28, the Rally's

chairman and its candidate for prime minister, made an immediate appeal to the middle-of-the-road voters whose choice is likely to be decisive. "I intend to be the prime minister of all French people, to respect the opposition and always to be mindful of the unity of the nation," he said. He cast the second round as a choice between the Rally and the NPF, saying that Macron's camp could not win. Bardella suggested that the Rally would "establish security and defend work" in contrast to the parties of the left, which he said would

lead the country to ruin. His aim was to depict himself as a moderate by comparison with the left, whose figurehead is Jean-Luc Mélenchon, 72, a radical often compared to Jeremy Corbyn.

If Bardella does become prime minister, he has pledged to work with Macron, 45, who has vowed to stay on as president come what may. However, their cohabitation would probably lead to tensions, according to political commentators.

Macron made a last-ditch plea for
Continued on page 2

News

Today's highlights

- 8.05am** Nigel Farage, leader of Reform UK
- 12.30pm** The historian and author Kate Williams, right, on what she would do if she ruled the world
- 1.05pm** Rory Stewart, the former Conservative cabinet minister
- 1.30pm** Rain Newton-Smith, director-general of the CBI
- 1.45pm** The Tory grandee Michael Gove and Harriet Harman, former Mother of the House

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TODAY'S EDITION

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 days since Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich was detained in Russia
[#FreeEvan](#)

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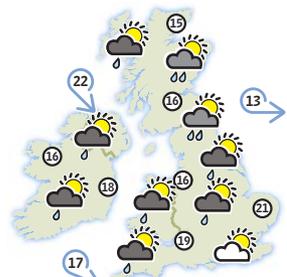
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THE WEATHER



Outbreaks of rain to spread eastwards throughout the day across the British Isles. Full forecast, page 49

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Green issues polarise public, though many don't care at all

Adam Vaughan Environment Editor

Paul would like the sale of new petrol cars to be banned early. Graciella wants the London congestion charge to be scrapped and supports the Tories' "back drivers bill". Voters in this election, like Labour and the Conservatives, are polarised on the environment.

Polling suggests that the subject is on a par with crime and housing in public perceptions of the most important issues facing the country, behind only the economy, health and immigration.

Yet the subject has barely featured in television debates and campaigning. "I've only heard about it from the Greens," said Russell, to nods among 24 voters at a focus group.

For several, the environment has been squeezed out by urgent needs, primarily housing and the cost of living. "It's bottom of my list," Aaron said. But it remains electorally important for others, even those feeling financial pressure. "At the end of the day, this is our planet; we don't have anywhere else to live," said Keri, although inflation was her biggest concern.

The Tory strategy of using language such as a "sensible" and "pragmatic"

approach to net zero appears to have registered, with the cost of meeting the 2050 target raised by some in the group.

Voters have noticed that Labour watered down its £28 billion annual green spending pledge. But dividing lines on details, such as Labour wanting a zero-carbon power grid by 2030 and the Tories by 2035, were not well known.

The pollution of waterways was one subject relating to nature that had an impact. "I live in the Lakes," said Sarah. "Our dog gets sick all the time when she goes in the rivers."

Several Labour voters raised the water issue, suggesting that the party had been right to prioritise it. However, one was unimpressed by how its policies compared with those of the Liberal Democrats, who have promised a "sewage tax" on water firms' profits.

Several had already made green lifestyle changes, with some having solar panels or a household battery, and some choosing to cycle. Ben in London was switching to an electric car because of the expanded ultra-low emission zone.

Two people worried about how quickly charging points were able to top up electric cars but Ben was relaxed. "Range anxiety is not a thing," he said.

Opinion was split between the Tories postponing the 2030 ban on new petrol and diesel car sales to 2035, and Labour's plan to reinstate the 2030 target.

Parties at the extremes fared better on climate change. "When looking at the headlines on climate without revealing the party, there tended to be more support for the outliers, both Reform and Green.

"The main parties were seen to be too bland," said Lucy Farrow, of Think's, the insight consultancy that organised the focus group, where people took part on the condition that The Times used only their first name.

"We have got a climate crisis and we do need to do something about it," Paul said. "This election, neither of the two main parties are taking it seriously."

Whoever is elected, it is clear that they will have to get better at bringing people on board with green policies.

Rain Newton-Smith, of the CBI, will tell a conference in London today that the next government cannot be pro-growth without being pro-green. As the election campaigns enter their final days, she will highlight the "deafening silence" from parties on green matters. **Politics, pages 6-11**

Postal voters 'can ask for replacements'

Geraldine Scott

Those who have not received their postal votes just days before the election should ask for a replacement from their council, it has been advised.

The suggestion comes after concerns that thousands of people who applied for postal votes may not receive them after councils across the UK struggled to deal with the requests.

At least 13 constituencies are thought

to be affected, eight of them marginal, meaning the postal votes could be pivotal in deciding the result.

Councils can issue replacement packs which can be collected in person up to 5pm on polling day, and the Electoral Commission advised voters to contact their local town halls.

A spokesman said: "As is the case at all elections, given the electoral timetable, there is a short window of time for administrators to prepare and dispatch

postal votes. If a voter's postal ballot pack does not arrive in time, there may still be options available to voters, such as requesting a replacement from their local authority.

"If voters are concerned their postal vote won't be sent back in time, they also have the option of handing their postal pack to their polling station on polling day." The commission said it would investigate how the postal voting system had worked after the election.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Sunak targets Farage

suggested it would be a good result to get "one, two, three, four, five elected MPs" after Thursday's vote.

"Just imagine that: hundreds and hundreds of Labour MPs opposed by just one, two, three, four, five elected MPs," Sunak will say.

He will tell voters tempted by Reform: "We Conservatives will stand up for you and make sure your voice is heard, your values represented."

The Conservatives insist they have not conceded defeat and Sunak claimed yesterday that he expected to be in No 10 on Friday, saying he was "fighting very hard" to stay in office. But in the final days of campaigning he will attempt to use Labour's big poll lead to warn voters who have deserted the Conservatives of the consequences if they do not return.

"If they get the kind of majority, the supermajority that the polls suggest, they will set about entrenching themselves in power," Sunak will say in a warning about Labour's plan to give the vote to 16 and 17-year-olds.

"I tell you this: once you have handed Keir Starmer and Labour a blank cheque, you won't be able to get it back," he will say. "A Labour government would be bad for our country and an unchecked Labour government would be a disaster from which it would take decades to recover."

Labour will urge people not to take the result for granted as it spends the final days of the campaign insisting voters must back the party if they want to oust the Tories. "If people don't want to wake up on July 5 to five more years

of economic chaos, to wake up knowing that all the future offers is the same as the recent Tory past, then they have to vote Labour," Pat McFadden, the party's campaign co-ordinator, said.

Tory strategists believe warnings of a supermajority are persuading some voters to return to the Conservatives. Only 12 per cent of voters say they want a Tory majority, significantly behind the 20 per cent currently planning to vote for the party, and only 70 per cent of those who say they intend to vote Conservative say they want a Tory majority. Some 11 per cent of those planning to vote Conservative want a Starmer-led administration, either as a majority or minority government.

Overall, 41 per cent of voters say they want a Labour majority, slightly ahead of the 37 per cent planning to vote Labour, suggesting an element of tactical voting for other parties to remove the Conservatives. Ninety per cent of those intending to vote Labour want a Starmer majority while the rest want a hung parliament or "some other result".

Farage said support for his party was "not a protest vote, even though there is much to protest against". He told supporters in Birmingham the UK was a "country that is in cultural decline" and has "forgotten where we came from".

On *Sunday with Laura Kuenssberg* on BBC1, Sunak said: "It's entirely wrong, this kind of declinist narrative that people have."

Sunak also said Russia did not want the Tories re-elected as the party had "stood shoulder to shoulder with Ukraine". Speaking to the Telegraph, he said: "Putin would like nothing more than for Britain to step back to appease his aggression."

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

French hard right wins first round

voters to prevent the Rally taking power, calling for a "broad, clearly democratic" coalition against the populist right. In practice, according to polling institutes, the best that Macron can now hope for is a hung parliament with no party able to form a government and France facing months of legislative deadlock and political chaos.

The Elabe institute said the Rally may win the 289 seats it needs for an absolute majority, although other pollsters suggested that it was likely to fall short. Elabe predicted that the NPF would win about 130 seats and Ensemble about 100 seats.



Marine Le Pen was celebrating the National Rally's triumph in last night's first round

The NPF said it would pull out of constituencies where it had finished third and urged its supporters to back Macron's camp in the hope of defeating the Rally. Macron's coalition, however, seemed reluctant to withdraw in favour of the left.

The president upset ministers when he announced the snap parliamentary elections after his centrists were defeated by the Rally in European elections three weeks ago. Gabriel Attal, 35, his prime minister, was furious, making it clear he thought Macron had scored an own goal by dissolving parliament. **Reports and analysis, pages 26-27**



TV Brit pack making a big splash across the Atlantic

A new wave of actresses from the UK is leading the charge in top dramas, writes Alex Farber

A new pack of British actresses is emerging in American television, spearheaded by Ella Purnell, the star of Amazon's hit drama *Fallout*.

Purnell, 27, has become a breakout star following the launch of the show in April, alongside a crop of other talent including *House of the Dragon's* Olivia Cooke and Aimee Lou Wood, who will appear in *White Lotus*, both 30, and the 20-year-old star of *The Last of Us*, Bella Ramsey.

Producers have attributed their success to the unparalleled training they have received in Britain as they cut their acting teeth on the stage on the way to emulating forerunners such as Emily Blunt, Keira Knightley, Carey Mulligan and Kate Winslet.

In *Fallout*, which is based on the video game franchise, Purnell stars as Lucy MacLean, a heroic "vault dweller" searching for her father in the wasteland of a dystopian retro-futuristic Los Angeles. Her performance, along with

a big-budget marketing campaign, has helped propel *Fallout* to become the most-streamed original show to air this year so far.

The post-apocalyptic show, which will return with Purnell for a second run following its launch in April, reached more than 34 million subscriber accounts in the United States, UK and other major European countries according to Digital i, a media analysis company.

It attracted more viewing time than any other show available on Netflix or Disney+ this year, ahead of *Fool Me Once*, *Avatar* and *3 Body Problem* and increased average daily viewing on Amazon's Prime Video service by 8 per cent. Viewers tended to binge the eight episodes, with 80 per cent of those who completed the series doing so within five days.

"Binge-viewing drives buzz, a key factor when it comes to creating a global hit," a Digital i spokesman said.

That buzz has extended to Purnell, whose career has forged ahead after her character was killed off at the conclusion of the Showtime survival thriller *Yellowjackets*, her previous project.

Meanwhile, the Sunday Times critic Camilla Long described Cooke's "monstrously randy kind of scheming, post-menopausal dowager slut/cougar" as the reason she is watching the *Game of Thrones* spin-off. And earlier this year, the producers of the acclaimed *White Lotus* revealed that they had snapped up Wood after her turn in four series of the Netflix teenage juggernaut *Sex Education*. Ramsey is considered too old to reprise her role in the zombie thriller *The Last of Us*, turning instead to playing the White Widow in *Girl Next Door*, a film about the 7/7 London bombings.

Mark Linsey, managing director of scripted for BBC Studios, said the group was following in the footsteps of British stars to have cracked Hollywood including Dame Judi Dench, Harriet Walter, Julie Walters, Dame Imelda Staunton and Fiona Shaw by capitalising on the growth in high-end TV drama.

"They are building on that tradition, as there has been an explosion of demand for TV across the world," Linsey said. He added that the UK boasts world-class drama schools and a strong theatre tradition that cannot be matched by the US. "That strong tradition of theatre gives them the experi-

ence and depth of role that they're able to take with them into TV or movies," he said. "Whereas their counterparts in the US tend to go straight to television or movies without that training and learning the craft of acting."

Purnell began her career as a child actor in the West End in *Oliver!* where she played the part of young Ruth. *Game of Thrones*' Cooke graduated from the Oldham Theatre School to appear in a local version of a Cinderella remake, and Wood made her debut in a performance of the play *Mary Stuart*.

Ramsey, a patron of the disabled children's theatre group Bamboozle who spent many years performing in

amateur productions before moving to screen roles, has said that the stage "opens hearts, evokes emotions and offers different perspectives".

Ben Stephenson, a former BBC drama chief who now runs an ITV production label, said Americans had admired British talent since the time of Cary Grant, who was born in Bristol, but the way shows now travel globally has supercharged opportunities.

"We all watch shows from across the world rather than the US dominating world viewing," he said. "So it's both the case that Americans watch more British shows and see more talent and that having British actors can help with the international appeal of shows."

Cécile Frot-Coutaz, chief executive of the production arm of Sky, which broadcasts *House of the Dragon* and *The Last of Us*, said audiences around the world were flocking to global series led by British female talent. "Over the past year it's been great to see a new wave of young British actresses leading the charge in Hollywood," she said.

An edge acquired at British drama schools, leading article, page 25



From top left, Ella Purnell in *Fallout*; Bella Ramsey with Pedro Pascal in *The Last of Us*; Aimee Lou Wood, Purnell and Olivia Cooke are a new generation taking the US by storm

Swift will follow in Naomi Campbell's footsteps at V&A catwalk

Alex Farber Media Correspondent

Not many people have the power to follow Naomi Campbell down a catwalk but the Victoria & Albert Museum has found one global star who fits the bill.

Taylor Swift, 34, will follow the supermodel with an exhibition of some of her outfits and memorabilia following her sell-out Eras tour around the UK and Ireland. They will sit alongside Naomi In Fashion, the South Kensington museum's tribute to Campbell, which opened last month and will run until April.

Taylor Swift: Songbook Trail, which is free and runs from July 27 to September 8, will give visitors the chance to see 16 costumes and archive material up close, with many of the items on display for the first time.

Among the items to be seen will be customised cowboy boots Swift wore during her opening slot on the country stars Faith Hill and Tim McGraw's 2006-07 Soul2Soul II Tour, as well as the black ruffled dress worn in her recent music video for *Fortnight*, the first single from her latest album, *The Tortured Poets Department*.

The costumes will be shown along-

side music awards, storyboards and previously unseen items from Swift's archive that will explore her childhood and recording legacy.

The Songbook Trail will take visitors on a journey through permanent galleries at the V&A, interspersing Swift's looks with objects from the museum's own collection.

Each of the stops will showcase a chapter in her

Taylor Swift's exhibition will run until September



music career, which began when Swift moved from Pennsylvania to Tennessee and began pursuing her music career in Nashville, the home of country music, when she was 14.

The installations have been designed by Tom Piper, whose other projects include the V&A's 2021 exhibition *Alice: Curiouser And Curiouser*.

The exhibition follows the launch of a hunt in February for a "Taylor Swift superfan adviser" with expertise in the

"culture and artisanry" to help curate exhibitions surrounding the world's most popular singer.

Kate Bailey, the museum's senior curator and producer, theatre and performance, said: "Taylor Swift's songs — like objects — tell stories, often drawing from art, history and literature."

The Eras tour completed its three nights in Dublin's Aviva Stadium yesterday to head for a series of performances in European cities including Amsterdam, Milan and Munich. It returns to the UK for five nights in Wembley Stadium from August 15.



DAVE JOHNSTON/ALBA PICTURES

Knight riders Jousting, hand-to-hand combat and falconry were among the medieval pursuits on show at Linlithgow Palace, West Lothian, which dates from 1424

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Solve all five concise clues using each letter underneath once only

1 Trophies (4)

— — — —

2 Item of cutlery (5)

— — — — —

3 Put an end to (rumours, eg) (6)

— — — — — —

4 Digits (7)

— — — — — — —

5 Flattered (someone) (8,2)

— — — — — — — —

B	C	C	C	D	E	E	E
E	F	F	G	H	I	I	K
N	O	P	P	R	R	S	S
S	S	T	T	T	U	U	U

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Hospital patients dying alone due to shortages

Charlotte Wace

Patients are being left to die alone and others are suffering in pain because of staffing shortages, according to a report.

Analysis from the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) has suggested that only a third of shifts had enough registered nurses. These shortages have led to nurses caring for dozens of patients at a time, it said.

Nurses have reported being unable to spend time with dying patients, or ensure that those in their care are properly cleaned, fed and given medication.

A survey of more than 11,000 nursing staff about experiences on their most recent shift found many were demoralised from feeling unable to keep patients safe. One in three hospital shifts was missing at least a quarter of the registered nurses needed, it found. In the community, almost four in ten shifts were missing up to half the planned number of registered nurses.

Across all settings, eight in ten surveyed said there was not a sufficient number of nurses to meet the needs of patients safely. In A&E and community settings, a significant number of nurses reported having more than 51 patients to care for.

The RCN has warned that nurses are “fighting a losing battle” and suffering “morale injury” in having to deliver compromised care, sometimes in corridors and other inappropriate places. It has now called for safety-critical limits on the maximum number of patients for whom a single nurse can be responsible.

In a hospital in the West Midlands,

one nurse said: “I have not been able to sit with patients who are dying, meaning they have been left to die alone. I have not had the time to make sure patients are fed properly and have adequate drinks.”

A nurse working in the community in the southwest claimed there were days where 60 visits were left unallocated because there were not enough staff.

“Every day we are asked to do more. We are always rushing,” the nurse said.

Another community nurse in the south of England said they “leave over 50 patients requiring nursing care unseen on a daily basis due to poor staffing levels”.

The nurse added: “This leads to increases in hospital admissions and death. It is left to us to decide who gets seen and who gets missed, which is heartbreaking.”

A student nurse working in an NHS hospital in the West Midlands claimed that medications for patients had been administered “hours late”, leaving them in “severe pain”. They raised additional concerns that patients were not receiving personal care as often as necessary to keep them clean after episodes of incontinence.

There are more than 31,000 unfilled posts for registered nurses across NHS services in England. Last month an undercover investigation by the Channel 4 programme *Dispatches* at the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital, in Shropshire, showed “harrowing” video footage of patients waiting in A&E for up to 46 hours and being treated in corridors.

A spokesman for Shrewsbury and Telford Trust apologised that their patients had “experienced anything

less than the quality care we strive for”. He added: “We are determined, working with partners, to improve the care and experience for everyone. Whilst we dispute some of the claims made in the *Dispatches* programme, we will fully investigate.”

The RCN has claimed its survey shows that the scenes in Shrewsbury are commonplace across health and care services, including the community. Nicola Ranger, acting general secretary for the RCN, said: “In every health and care setting, nursing staff are fighting a losing battle to keep patients safe.

“Without safety-critical limits on the maximum number of patients they can care for, nurses are being made responsible for dozens [of patients] at a time, often with complex needs. It is dangerous to patients and demoralising for nursing staff.”

“We desperately need urgent investment in the nursing workforce but also to see safety-critical nurse-patient ratios enshrined in law. That is how we improve care and stop patients coming to harm.”

There are also concerns that a growing number of nurses are leaving the country to work overseas. More than 10,000 nurses in England applied for certificates last year that would allow them to work abroad, up fourfold since 2019.

The three most popular destinations were New Zealand, the United States and Australia, according to the RCN, which said staff were “fleeing England for better pay”.

Meanwhile applications for nursing degrees in England have fallen by 26 per cent over the past two years.

Identical twins raised apart match IQ scores

Tom Whipple Science Editor

The twins were first taken from each other, then taken from their country. Abandoned during China’s one-child policy, they found themselves scattered around the world.

As they grew up they unwittingly found themselves a unique test for a key question: where does intelligence come from? How much is nature? How much is nurture?

The answer, according to a study published on this rare group of separated identical twins, is that the genetic component of intelligence predominates. Even when raised in different households, in some cases different countries, identical twins converge on the same IQ scores — and seem to do so the more the older they get.

“As genetic factors kick in, the environment drops out,” said Nancy Segal of California State University. “So they become more alike with time.”

Segal, who researches twins, came across the separated pairs from China after being approached by a mother. “She told me she’s looking for literature on how to raise one twin. I told her that doesn’t exist. Then she told me her story,” she said.

A consequence of China’s one-child policy was the abandonment of thousands of girls because boys were more highly prized. “Some families wanted to get rid of them. So parents would give [them] up. And among these thousands of baby girls who were abandoned there were twins.”

These twins were, in turn, separated. Parents from other countries looking to adopt them would often be assigned only one. Segal has worked to track down both halves in 15 instances where identical twins were separated in this way, then used them to understand

aspects of intelligence. “The mum who initially contacted me knew a couple of other families. And then sometimes I’d read about them in the newspaper. Then families would contact me once they heard what I was doing.”

Of the 15 pairs, 14 are boys. It is not many but, she said, given how unusual it is, enough. “Even though it’s a small sample, it’s a much more powerful sample than twins raised together.”

Twins are useful in behavioural research because they share DNA and usually share an upbringing. With identical twins, nature and nurture are the same; with non-identical twins, who share only half their DNA, nature is different. By comparing the two, researchers can tease out the genetic component of traits.

In this case, though, the paradigm was reversed. Nurture was completely different but nature the same. This was what was so exciting for Segal, whose work is published in the journal *Personality and Individual Differences*. From their similarities, in all sorts of ways, you can see genetics emerging.

“The twins just are themselves and they tell you a whole story about human behaviour. They’re so well-aligned in so many ways that they don’t even think about it,” Segal said.

The IQ scores of the children were highly correlated and appeared to become more so as they got older, though the small sample size meant they could not be sure about the latter finding.

Either way, said Segal, it fits with a growing body of research into the importance of the genetic component in intelligence — yet that does not make parenting pointless. “Should parents and educators throw their hands up in despair? Absolutely not. Everybody can become smarter. But we’re not going to all be the same.”

You thought it was all over, didn't you?

Fans feared the worst before Jude Bellingham rescued England, writes **Charlie Parker** in Gelsenkirchen

Groans became jubilant roars inside Gelsenkirchen's stadium as England beat Slovakia to secure a spot in the Euro 2024 quarter-finals.

Supporters, and the manager Gareth Southgate, breathed a collective sigh of relief last night as the final whistle blew on a nail-biting match that nearly ended with the pre-tournament favourites being knocked out early.

Fans had complained that the Three Lions were too timid and playing "side-ways", until the team's two attempts on target went in. The first was from Jude Bellingham, whose injury-time bicycle kick turned the game around for Southgate's men.

A header by Harry Kane, the captain, early in extra time, meant England had somehow scraped through to the next round while Slovakia went out.

Fans in the stands said they were "stunned" by the sudden success of the England team, with one saying: "Thank God we woke up and started playing." Others revealed they had already booked tickets for the final, and hoped for "war" with Germany — on the pitch.

Richard Roberts and Richard Brookes, from Stratford-upon-Avon, had seats in Gelsenkirchen's stadium last night, as well as tickets for France v Belgium match in Düsseldorf today. The pair also have tickets for the Austria v Turkey match in Leipzig tomorrow, before flying back to the UK. The two friends said they would return to Germany after securing tickets for the final in Berlin on July 14, and were praying for England to go all the way. Roberts, 42, an engineer, said: "We are hoping for a Germany and England final in Berlin. To come over for that would be something special."

Four friends from Castle Donington, in Leicestershire, Gaz Mosey, 63, Craig Barber, 52, Matt Grammer, 64, and Sam Wright, 21, were also dreaming of the Three Lions reaching the final after booking flights to Berlin. Mosey cautioned: "We have got the best players but the performances have been poor", as Grammer chipped in: "They never play positively. It is always sideways."

However, Tom Thurson, 18, a



Despondency turned to joy for fans watching in London when Jude Bellingham scored, but Slovaks' hopes were dashed, and Gareth Southgate won a reprieve



student from Shropshire, held on to hope. "The group games were awful but that's ancient history. We're on our way and can get to Berlin for the final," he said.

Fans also admit-

ted they fear Switzerland, who knocked out the defending champions Italy on Saturday. "The Swiss look strong but we have the stars to go all the way," said Paul Atkins, a 40-year-old IT consultant from Birmingham.

Earlier in the day thousands of supporters were out drinking cold pints of German beer in the city centre. Among them were two men dressed as medieval knights, including Tony Walker,

60, a driving instructor from Bristol. As a troop of supporters in clown outfits marched in formation through the old town square, Walker said his costume was "not very comfortable" as he pointed at the mock armour on his chest. "England haven't been very good so far... [but] we will win the tournament now. We had to win today."

The skies above the city were overcast following thunderstorms in the region, which forced Germany's game against Denmark to be halted on Saturday night. The cloudy conditions failed to dampen the spirits of the roughly 20,000 fans partying in the city's main square before kick-off.

Vindaloo, Hey Jude and *Don't Take Me Home*, were among the anthems chanted by groups of dancing men draped in St George's flags.

Two Englishmen were spotted enjoying Euro 2024 in the company of a German man they first met the last time the tournament was held in the country — 36 years ago.

Rob Leslie, 58, and Nigel Degnan, 61,

both from Oldham, Greater Manchester, were passing through Cologne after watching England play Ireland in Stuttgart in 1988, when they met Carsten Giessmann at a train station. Leslie said: "We've got together at each tournament ever since, and even went to the Uefa European Under-21 Championship together in Georgia last year."

Degnan, who now lives in Lincolnshire, said: "We used to ring Carsten at his family home and I remember his mum answering and then shouting up to him: 'Carsten, ein Engländer!'"

Thousands more "Englanders" are expected to descend on Deutschland for the next fixture following last night's re-energised play.

Ashley Bird, 37, a gas engineer from Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, said: "England can definitely play with more belief now we're safely through to the quarters. It will be tough but this squad is hugely talented and can easily go up another gear."

Saved by the Bell: Sport, page 60
The Euros, pullout

Downpours bring death and destruction to Alpine villages

James Imam Milan

At least seven people were killed and hundreds forced to flee their homes after ferocious storms tore through France, Switzerland and parts of Italy, triggering lethal landslides and causing rivers to flood.

Three people in their seventies and eighties died in France's northeastern Aube region on Saturday when a tree crushed the car they were travelling in during fierce winds. A fourth passenger was in a critical condition, the Agence France-Presse news agency said.

In neighbouring Switzerland, four people have died, according to local police. Three died in a landslide in the remote Vallemaggia, north of Lake Maggiore in the Italian-speaking Ticino canton, yesterday morning.

Their bodies were later recovered and were awaiting identification. A further two people were reported missing.

Bursting riverbanks caused the Visletto bridge, near Cevio, to buckle, making side valleys inaccessible by road. "We saw the destruction," said Gabriele Dazio, mayor of Lavizzara, another village in the valley. "If you haven't experienced it you can't imagine it."

Further north, the Rhône burst its banks in several parts, flooding a highway and a railway line in the Valais canton. South of the Rhône, the body of a man was found at a hotel in the Alpine resort of Saas-Grund, in the canton of Valais. Police said they believed flood waters had caught him by surprise.

Another man has been missing since Saturday in the Binn area of the upper Rhône valley, near Italy. Among those



rescued were two adults and a three-month-old girl after rising waters left them stranded in a car, firefighters said.

The civil security services said "several hundred" people were evacu-

ated in Valais, including some from campsites, and roads closed after the Rhône and its tributaries overflowed in different locations. Adverse weather was complicating rescue efforts. "The

The Visletto bridge near Cevio buckled after torrential rain caused rivers in Switzerland to burst their banks. Elsewhere, landslides led to the deaths of at least three people in the Italian-speaking Ticino canton

situation remains tense," said the Swiss president, Viola Amherd, on Twitter/X. "Please take care and follow the instructions of the authorities."

Italy's northeastern Valle d'Aosta and Piedmont regions were also battered by violent storms. In Valle d'Aosta, 300 people were evacuated from Cogne, where homes and hotels were left without drinking water and rivers swept away cars and bridges. Another 120 people were being evacuated from Alpine villages in Piedmont after torrential rain, Italian news agencies reported, citing local firefighters.

Landslides in Cervinia forced roads to close and cut off communities in Valle Orco near Turin. In the village of Noasca, heavy rain turned the waterfall of Noaschetta into a huge jet of water that covered the bridge and road below.

News Politics

Sites spin a web of intrigue

Max Kendix Red Box Reporter
Geraldine Scott
Senior Political Correspondent

Websites have been registered backing potential Conservative leadership contenders as Tories turn their eyes to life after the election.

Several sites that match the names of likely candidates have been created or updated in recent months, with some redirecting to Conservative Party campaign material.

The site kemi4leader.com, which redirects to the Conservative Party homepage, was registered in West Yorkshire on April 18. A separate site, backingbadenoch.co.uk, was last updated on June 27 and is thought to be a grassroots effort with an accompanying active social media presence.

The website used for Kemi Badenoch's leadership attempt in 2022, kemiforprimeminister.com, no longer exists.

Suella Braverman set up the suella4leader.co.uk website to promote her campaign in the summer of 2022. The website was last updated on June 10 and sends users directly to Braverman's personal website.

It is common for website domain names, which may be in demand later, to be bought by domain name registrars, who hope to make a profit by resale later on. In these cases, the domain is "parked", and when the website is visited an offer to buy it is advertised.

The websites appearing to back Braverman and Badenoch, however, are unusual in redirecting to Conservative websites.

Braverman and Badenoch are understood to deny that the websites in their current form had anything to do with them or their team. Braverman is understood to have not used the website since the 2022 leadership campaign.

Several senior Conservatives have refused to rule out harbouring leadership ambitions. Badenoch, the business secretary, told GB News: "I said to everyone that I don't want to talk about leadership debates because my constituents ... say they don't like us talking about ourselves."

But she said the future of the party "needs to be one that occupies the whole of the centre right, not just the centre, because that's where we're losing to Reform". Badenoch added: "At the moment, we're a very broad church, we're a very broad coalition, which is why sometimes we disagree."

The Sunday Telegraph reported that allies of the minister had developed a plan to delay a Conservative leadership

election to give her the best shot at victory. The newspaper reported secret meetings were being held on Zoom to figure out how to ensure they can give Badenoch the best chance at success.

Grant Shapps, the defence secretary, also refused to rule out running in an interview with The Sun on Sunday. He said: "Let's see what happens."

Last week it was revealed that Steve Baker, the Northern Ireland minister, wanted to throw his hat into the ring should he keep his seat.

Tom Tugendhat, the security minister, also did not rule out putting his name forward. He previously told Times Radio: "We'll deal with hypotheticals in a different way."

"The reality is Rishi Sunak is the candidate. There's only two candidates for prime minister, there's Rishi Sunak and there's Sir Keir Starmer."

However, Oliver Dowden, the deputy prime minister, said any suggestion of his running was "total and utter nonsense".

Dame Priti Patel, the former home secretary, has also been mooted as a future leader. However, the Mail on Sunday reported that party members thought she was "too short" to lead.

It said that Patel, who is about 5ft tall, had been found to be the least popular potential successor in a poll of Tory members and that her allies claimed it was because she had a "presence" problem. One friend told the newspaper: "I just wish she was taller."

Another source said: "I've been at events with her where you can't see her over the crowd, and her voice doesn't carry enough."

Many Tory sources believe Penny Mordaunt is the favourite to take over at the helm in the event of a Conservative election defeat.

Her website, pm4pm.com, used during her last leadership campaign, was last updated on the day of the local elections in May and redirects to Mordaunt's personal website. The website was renewed so the domain could be kept live rather than as an active leadership challenge, it is understood.

A social media account, Penny Mordaunt for PM, describes itself as a "grassroots campaign" and has been kept reasonably active.

Ellie Reeves, Labour's deputy national campaign co-ordinator, said: "While the Tories put their self-interest and leadership ambitions first, it's clearer than ever ... if the Conservatives are given another five years, the chaos will just continue."

Tory donor switches to Labour over education, letters, page 24



Nigel Farage drew the crowds at a rally in Birmingham, while Rishi Sunak continued his campaign at a synagogue in



Apprentice has a lot to learn from the master of simply blaming other people

Tom Peck
Political Sketch



Are there, possibly, clues to be found, signals to be picked up on, with regard to what the major parties are up to on the final weekend of the election campaign?

Keir Starmer has held a mass rally. Nigel Farage has held a mass rally. Rishi Sunak has been getting increasingly tetchy and saying the word "right" over and over again while defending the transparently indefensible to Laura Kuenssberg. Ed Davey has waved a pool noodle

around above his hair during an aqua aerobics class in a swimming pool in Cheltenham.

Mass rail engineering works and a sudden tree on the line were not sufficient to keep an estimated 4,000 people away from the NEC in Birmingham.

The Reform Party open-top bus, on which I personally have avoided decapitation-by-overhanging-tree-branch three times in the past three months, had been driven in and parked up at the side, its top deck deployed as a kind of VIP seating area for distinguished Reform guests. But once Ann Widdecombe went up there, nobody else quite seemed to dare.

There were fireworks, there was a very long speech from a "tech entrepreneur" called Zia Yusuf who has given Reform north of six figures over the past few months and whom Farage reckons is the next big thing.

Yusuf has already been whispered about as Farage's successor but the apprentice has much to learn. He did what Farage and co have always done, which is to shout out simple solutions to complex problems and claim they're the only people left with common sense.

"All we need are political leaders who actually want to solve the problems and possess the courage to do so!" he shouted. "All we need to

fix the NHS is fewer overpaid, incompetent administrators and more doctors and nurses!"

This is not the first time it has been suggested that the NHS needs more doctors and fewer administrators. The people who make these suggestions tend not to have asked the doctors whether or not they fancy doing more admin. But they probably will, won't they? Who doesn't?

It was a promising start for young Yusuf but if he wants to make it, he'll need to come up with some only very slightly less simple answers, ones that not everyone can immediately see through.

One of Farage's newest

simple answers — to pay 18 years' worth of child benefit up-front to parents who want to stay off work until their children are school age — is a classic of the genre. What a great idea.

What happens if, during the very long school years, said parents find themselves out of work and suddenly rather in need of the child benefit they've spent?

I've got no idea, and nor does Farage, but Mr Yusuf, this is the sort of level of simplicity you need to reach for. You're not quite there yet.

When he eventually made it on stage, in the now-standard eruption of indoor fireworks, Farage seemed angrier than usual. Was it only four weeks ago that he strode out on to Clacton Pier like Hulk Hogan

Zia Yusuf has been touted as Nigel Farage's possible successor as leader of Reform UK



about future Tory leaders



Golders Green, north London, yesterday. Ann Widdecombe, left, is an ex-Tory minister now part of Farage's Reform Party

emerging from the locker-room area at WrestleMania?

He spoke for 40 minutes and about 20 of them were dedicated to taking the fight to the various people that have wronged him in the past few days. Channel 4 News is a disgrace for having had the temerity to film one of his supporters calling Sunak a “f**ing P**i”. He’s also, apparently, “boycotting” the BBC over the “biased audience” that didn’t applaud him as much as he would have liked on Friday night.

The most memorable bits of Starmer’s speech, on Saturday, were his admonition to his audience with two words: “Don’t forget.” “Don’t forget the lies. Don’t forget the cronyism. Don’t forget partygate. Don’t forget they crashed the economy.” It went on for almost two full minutes. Party aides have since republished it with a soft, stirring string soundtrack inserted underneath.

It is the sort of music you usually

deploy when you’re selling some kind of hopeful vision of the future. Soft strings traditionally accompany visions of the sunlit uplands, of children’s laughter. As a backing track for a two-minute hate against Tory Britain, it doesn’t quite work.

These are the menu options from which the people will shortly be asked to pick. Five more years of Sunak getting ever more tetchy, five years of Farage getting very angry with everyone, or five more years of never forgetting that all these frankly unsolvable problems were someone else’s fault.

Farage shouting about everything that’s broken and doesn’t work feels rather odd when it’s directed at a Conservative Party that has for a very long time now been trying to save itself by copying him.

By Friday morning he’ll probably have some different people to shout at. The brave new world might feel like it makes a bit more sense, even if it doesn’t really.

HOLLIE ADAMS/REUTERS; IDANNIS ALEKPOULOS/LNP; JAMES MANNING/PA



Farage’s insults sound familiar as he tries to trash talk like Trump

Constance Kampfner

Nigel Farage’s language is increasingly mirroring that of his American counterpart, experts have said.

Almost every place visited by the Reform UK leader turns out to be “the most patriotic” in England.

When he launched his eighth attempt to become an MP, Farage told the masses on Clacton pier they had the honour of residing in the country’s “most patriotic town”.

A few weeks later, addressing a 1,000-strong audience in Houghton le Spring, near Sunderland, it turned out that the northeast had wrenched the crown away from Essex and that it was the flag-waving heart of the nation.

The populist politician’s penchant for superlatives is not the only similarity between him and Donald Trump.

While the Republican presidential candidate has long denigrated his opponent as “Sleepy Joe”, Farage has taken to yawning at the mention of the Labour leader’s name and said the final TV leadership debate was “one of the few times Keir Starmer seemed to be awake”. The prime minister has earned the epithet of “slippery Sunak”.

Farage’s attack on “woke policing” concluded in Sunderland with a cry of: “Stop and search! Stop and search! Stop and search!” echoing when Trump supporters would roar for him to “Build the wall! Build the wall! Build the wall!”

A rally in Birmingham yesterday contained his most eviscerating attack on the media yet, in what Lone Sorensen, associate professor of political communication at the University of Leeds, said was “very similar to Trump’s focus on ‘fake news’”.

Farage has said he would boycott the BBC over what he called a “rigged” *Question Time* audience, accusing it of behaving like a “political actor”. The room erupted when he said his party would abolish the licence fee were it to come to power.

“The word ‘rigged’ explicitly links to Trump and his claims of a ‘rigged elec-

tion,” Sorensen said. “He is using that Trumpian language to turn it into proof of his truth-telling, a way of signalling there’s a distinction between members of the elite and real people like him.”

Reform has complained to the Electoral Commission and Essex police about a Channel 4 undercover investigation that revealed racist and homophobic comments by campaigners in Clacton. The party is alleging that Andrew Parker was an actor used by the broadcaster to discredit the Reform campaign in what Farage called “the greatest stitch-up of my life”. Channel 4 and Parker have denied the allegations.

Farage, 60, has denied “fanning the flames of prejudice” as his party faces accusations from across the political divide that he has failed to show leadership over allegations of racism within the party.

One Reform candidate, Liam Booth-Isherwood, who is standing in Erewash, in Derbyshire, disowned the party over what he called “widespread racism and sexism”, urging voters to back the Tory candidate Maggie Throup.

Farage insisted — in language again mirroring that of the former US president, who blamed police violence on a few “bad apples” — that rotten fruit in his party was gone.

Francesco Rigoli, a cognitive and social psychologist at City, University of London, said: “Trump’s and Farage’s narratives share many similarities. Their rhetoric alludes to the past, when, they claim, the country was more united, ordered and respectful of traditions. Their diagnosis is that ... the country has been declining fast because of the actions of groups extraneous to the people, first and foremost the liberal elites and their allies, the immigrants. Trump and Farage style themselves as those who can save the country.”

Farage denied tearing pages out of the Trump playbook, telling *The Times*: “Maybe his language has gotten more Faragian.”

Farage is the standout success of the campaign, Trevor Phillips, page 21

Posting far-right song was ‘mistake’

Geraldine Scott Senior Political Correspondent Constance Kampfner

Nigel Farage has been accused of using a song hijacked by the far right on a video attacking the Tories’ record on immigration.

A video, which has now been removed, posted on Farage’s Twitter/X account on June 5 featured a slowed-down version of *L’Amour Toujours*, a 1999 Italian disco hit, as background to an interview with Richard Holden, the Conservative chairman, and then a speech by the Reform UK leader.

However, the song has been banned across Europe for its far-right connotations after multiple viral videos showed Germans signing “Germany for the Germans, foreigners out” over the song’s refrain.

Farage said yesterday he “didn’t know” the connotations of the song

and “once we realised what we’d done, we took it down”. The Reform leader told *The Times* the person who had posted the video had admitted he had made a “mistake”. Farage said: “Occasionally — occasionally — we make mistakes. When we realised what it was, it was gone.”

He said: “If it wasn’t a mistake, it would still be there. What’s the point of putting something up for a few minutes? You either want to put something up or you don’t.”

“A mistake was made and it was removed. And by the way, we put up tons of social media content. I think I’ve deleted two tweets in 12 years. Even we make the odd mistake.”

The adoption of the song by groups dubbed racist has led to it being banned at events across Europe. In Munich, the Oktoberfest boss pledged to ban the song from the festival. Clemens

Baumgartner said: “We want to ban it and I will ban it.”

He added: “There is no place for all that right-wing bullshit at the Wiesn [the colloquial name for the event].”

The use of the song by the far right is thought to have begun in late 2023, when a video was circulated of a group replacing the song’s lyrics with “Ausländer raus”, which translates to “foreigners out”, in a Dortmund nightclub.

In May this year another group was filmed singing the song with one partygoer mimicking a Nazi salute. A black woman was allegedly racially insulted and punched in the face at the gathering in Kampen on the North Sea island of Sylt.

Gigi D’Agostino, the DJ who released the song, has distanced himself from the right’s use of it, telling *Der Spiegel* it was “about a wonderful, big and intense feeling that connects people, it is love”.

News Politics

'People feel police aren't there ... that no one is coming'

The woman who could be home secretary on Friday wants respect for law and order restored, she tells **Matt Dathan**

One of Sir Keir Starmer's first laws will be a Crime and Policing Bill that will overhaul police standards, create a range of new criminal offences and scrap rules that allow shoplifters to escape punishment if stolen goods are worth less than £200.

Yvette Cooper, who is expected to be appointed home secretary on Friday if Labour wins the election, said she would force the Home Office to take a more "active" approach to crime and policing.

The new legislation, to be introduced in Labour's first King's Speech on July 17, will set up a new police performance and standards unit in the Home Office.

It will oversee new nationwide mandatory vetting standards that must be enforced by all police forces to root out rogue police officers following years of scandals and inconsistencies in disciplinary procedures across forces.

At present the standards are in guidance form but Labour will put them on a statutory footing, meaning police forces must abide by the same vetting procedures by law.

Cooper accused successive Conservative home secretaries of "doing nothing" about police standards despite repeatedly promising measures following the kidnap, rape and murder of Sarah Everard by Wayne Couzens, a serving Metropolitan Police officer. She said the new measures would ensure that police forces by law have to automatically suspend any officer investigated for domestic abuse and that they are "properly punished".

In an interview with *The Times*, Cooper said she would take a more "hands-on" approach to fixing

problems in policing, adding: "What I want to do is have an active Home Office rather than what too often to me has felt like a laissez-faire Home Office approach."

"And I think you'll see that particularly around the crime and policing side, where it's just been hollowed out in terms of the approach to a very passive approach to crime and policing and a lack of any proper focus on standards and lack of any active partnership with police forces under the Conservatives — and that was a conscious decision, a deliberate decision that Theresa May took early on but then has been replicated ever since."

Cooper said the new police unit would require the 43 chief constables of England and Wales to be more accountable to the home secretary on their force's performance but the minister would also support them to "troubleshoot the problems they face".

She said setting up the unit would "hugely strengthen the work that the Home Office does around policing". It will mirror the police standards unit that was introduced by Tony Blair's New Labour government in 2001, which appointed a former police commissioner of the Boston police service who had overseen a 34 per cent drop in violent crime in the American city.

One of the measures in the Crime and Policing Bill will amend the Data Protection Act to scrap rules that prevent police forces sharing unredacted case files with the Crown Prosecution Service, which is estimated to waste about 210,000 hours of police time each year.

This has been blamed for causing major delays and obstacles to prosecuting suspects, with more than 90 per cent of crimes going unsolved last year. Redaction rules was the biggest issue cited by police chiefs in a vote in 2022.

The bill will also introduce a statutory duty on chief constables and chief crown prosecutors to devise joint charging action plans to ensure that a larger volume of crimes are prosecuted and there is a higher success rate. It will give powers to the

police to charge domestic abuse suspects so they can be kept in custody and prevented from returning home to assault their partners.

She said the low charging rate had led to a "declining respect for law and order" and a "feeling that the police are no longer on the streets ... a sense that no one comes and nothing is done". Cooper added: "I think that the impact of that on the really important British tradition of policing by consent and respect for the rule of law is really damaging for policing. It's also really damaging for democracy. So for me, this is a shared task between the Home Office and the police."

She admitted she could not guarantee that the public would be safe from criminals because of the prisons overcrowding crisis, which has led to emergency measures being introduced to release prisoners up to 70 days early and police forces being temporarily told to stop making non-priority arrests.

The shadow home secretary said: "Ministers haven't shared their plans with me and I am concerned that they have allowed this. So I am really worried about what we're going to inherit if we are elected because there's so much chaos in the system and so much lack of proper action."

The Crime and Policing Bill will set up a 13,000-strong neighbourhood policing guarantee scheme that will appoint a named officer for each community tasked with tackling antisocial behaviour. The bill will create new "resault orders", a form of Asbo, to punish adults guilty of persistent antisocial behaviour.

The legislation will formally scrap rules introduced in 2014 that led to shoplifters escaping with a slap on the wrist if they stole goods under the value of £200. The aim is to ensure police investigate and prosecute more shoplifting offences, amid growing evidence of shoplifters deliberately stealing less than £200 worth of goods to avoid punishment.

However, Cooper was lukewarm when asked whether a Labour government would embrace the use of facial recognition technology



A new Crime and Policing Bill will lead to a named police officer tackling antisocial behaviour in each community, said Yvette Cooper, who enjoyed a visit to the Dee Space community centre in Reading

despite an increasing use of it among police forces. She said: "It's one of those things [where] you need to look at the detail. We haven't looked at the detail of it."

The bill will also introduce a "comprehensive ban" on the possession of dangerous knives — known as Ronan's Law after Ronan Kanda, who was murdered with a

ninja sword in Wolverhampton in 2022. It will ensure the possession of a wider range of weapons will result in a prison sentence. Those weapons include machetes, zombie knives and samurai swords that are not covered by existing laws.

Measures will also be adopted from the government's Criminal Justice Bill that was dropped due to the general

I'm switching to Labour for the children, says donor

Nicola Woolcock Education Editor

A multimillionaire Tory donor and backer of dozens of academies is switching his support to Labour because he believes they will be better for education.

Lord Harris of Peckham, the founder of Carpetright and sponsor of the Harris Federation, which runs 55 schools mostly in London, is a long-time supporter of the Conservatives and admirer of Michael Gove, who was education secretary until a decade ago.

He has donated £1,120,409 in the past 20 years and has been giving money to the party since the 1980s. Harris said he now believes the Tories are out of ideas.

He called Bridget Phillipson, the

shadow education secretary, "impressive". He writes in a letter to *The Times* that Gove brought "new ways of teaching and running schools" to the education system. "Academies — including



Lord Harris of Peckham was a supporter of Michael Gove

those in the Harris Federation — have been a central part of bringing a renewed focus on high standards," he says. "The results speak for themselves. At this election it is no longer the

Conservatives who are the party of high and rising standards, no longer the Conservatives putting our children and their schools front and centre. Despite a merry-go-round of ministers in recent years, they are out of ideas."

Harris is chairman of the Harris Federation, which he founded because he wanted children to have a better education than his. He left school in his early teens after the death of his father and has said he did not realise the importance of education when he was young.

Gove, who is standing down after the election on Thursday, oversaw an expansion of the academies programme and allowed groups to set up free schools, outside local authority control. One of the most expensive free schools

established was Harris Westminster, a sixth form that cost £45 million and was supported by the fee-charging Westminster School.

Harris, however, adds: "I have watched with admiration as Sir Keir Starmer and Bridget Phillipson, Labour's impressive education spokeswoman, have set out Labour's stall. She gets teaching, knows that expanding and improving the teacher workforce and tackling the epidemic of mental ill health among our young people are both vital, and will focus on making schools better. At this election the party for people who care about education is, as it was a quarter of a century back, Labour. The torch of change has passed." **Letters, page 24**

Reviews planned 'to pin blame on Tories'

Chris Smyth Whitehall Editor

Labour is planning expert-led reviews of public service failures which will be designed to pin blame on the Tories.

Audits of the state of the NHS, councils, universities, prisons and other pressing problems would begin shortly after a Labour victory in the general election on Thursday with the



ADRIAN SHERRATT FOR THE TIMES

Everything to play for in the fading resort where expectations aren't great

All three parties believe they can sway gloomy voters in the marginal seat of Great Yarmouth, writes **Geraldine Scott**

If it hadn't been Clacton, it would have been Great Yarmouth. The seaside town on the east coast, let down by governments over decades, would have been prime hunting ground for Nigel Farage.

The leader of Reform had the Tory-held constituency in his sights for his entrance to Westminster. His absence, however, has not dampened support for Reform in the town where Ukup once held the balance of power on the council.

A disclaimer: I was born in Great Yarmouth and grew up in one of the town's poorer areas. I am so local that a voter I asked about the election turned out to have been married to my aunt's sister. Another — whom I did not know — recognised me as "Joy's girl", despite my not having lived in the area since 2011.

What it means is that, unlike those who roll into town not knowing its history and issues, I can say with legitimacy that Great Yarmouth is in a mess.

All the candidates admit it has been let down. The riches from tourism drained away with cheap package holidays, 1980s gas and oil booms have come and gone and promises of opportunities in renewables have not been widely felt. It is little wonder that one woman at a market stall asked me: "Why have you come back to this shit-hole?"

Great Yarmouth voters are not only sceptical but they are also part of a three-way marginal battle between Labour, the Conservatives and Reform.

The first thing I see when I park in the sunshine on the Golden Mile is Reform's open-top bus. Rupert Lowe, 66, its candidate, is on the top deck with supporters waving Union Jacks.

In front of Britannia Pier James Clark, the Conservative candidate, is giving an interview for television.

Mark Quinn, a voter listening to the interview, has just returned from Torremolinos in Spain. He describes himself as a "GB News junkie" and a Reform supporter, mostly because of Farage. He says Rishi Sunak is "useless" and out of touch. But he adds that he has a "lot of faith" in Sir Keir Starmer. "He's got a sharp focus, he speaks directly," he says. "He reminds me of my dad and he's the same age as me."

The idea that potential Reform voters could stomach Starmer will not bring solace to Clark, an army reservist major. He tells Quinn: "I fully appreciate Nigel Farage, he's very popular. My mum had a birthday message from Nigel a few years ago, she was very excited. I think he's a good guy."

In any other election Clark, who twice stood against Jeremy Corbyn in Islington North, could expect to win comfortably in Great Yarmouth. Sir Brandon Lewis, the former housing minister, was the town's MP for 14 years. But Labour's national poll lead combined with Reform's entry into the fray has made the seat difficult.

Clark is positive though. "I was at the point where I thought to myself, which

seats do I think we're going to win, which do I think my profile will fit?"

Clark says the Yarmouth campaign is the strangest he has been in. He has helped one person who collapsed in a pub and carried a woman's shopping home, naively believing her assurances that it was "only down there".

Lewis came in for flak for the number of jobs he held in addition to being at Westminster but Clark says he wants to be the stereotypical local MP.

Labour has accused him of being too close to Lewis after the former MP spent thousands of pounds of taxpayers' money on trying to improve his image, using Millbank Creative, a consultancy co-founded by Clark. But Clark says Lewis started using Millbank only after he left the company.

Clark knows the seat is a challenge — where he is staying is surrounded by Reform posters — but he believes that only a Tory can fix the immigration problems.

"The Conservatives have a good record in Great Yarmouth — the council certainly — in stopping the government putting illegal migrants here," he says. "The people I've met ... are extremely politically aware."

Like the candidates for Reform and Labour, Clark is not local. He says that if he wins he plans to get the words Great Yarmouth, or the constituency map, tattooed on his chest.

Yarmouth voters are arguably more politically aware. Politics is something



Great Yarmouth has been the biggest target for Reform's digital adverts. Its candidate is Rupert Lowe, below

that happens to them rather than for them and this means many Tory voters are turning to Reform.

Jonathan Ling, the owner of This is Effective, a graphics and marketing company, says: "If we had a Tory government that done everything they promised to do I wouldn't consider voting for anyone else. But I really think that they've forgotten the people."

Ling says he won't vote Labour because "I'm not a socialist". Reform has his vote because "they say they're going to tackle immigration". He adds: "I'm not a right-wing extremist but we're slowly losing our identity as a country."

Demonstrating Reform's hopes for the seat, until two weeks ago Great Yarmouth was the leading target for its digital adverts.

Who Targets Me, which tracks political advertising, said Lowe, a former chairman of Southampton FC, was the only "substantial spender".

Ray Turner, an army

veteran who owns a vacuum-cleaner repair business, has also lost faith in the Tories. "They're in it for themselves," he says. "I'm a member of the Conservative Club but now obviously it's Reform."

Turner says Sunak's failure to say he will take the country out of the European Convention on Human Rights put him off the party. He adds, however: "People here will vote locally. People can't get to see a doctor, they can't get a flat, there are parts of the town where no one speaks English."

Against this backdrop, Keir Cozens, the Labour candidate, is trying to run a positive campaign. "The constituency has so much to be proud of," he says. "It's got so much that needs doing. But then it's also been forgotten, particularly over the last 14 years."

Cozens says the town has lacked a "strategy or vision". That means secure work, getting the economy going and tackling the cost of living crisis.

"One of the biggest challenges has been that for so long people have been promised so much and then delivered so little," he says. "People are fed up of part-time politicians around here. That comes up on the door everywhere."

Cozens has teams all over the constituency campaigning but we meet in Martham, a village ten miles north that is a more affluent part of the seat. He clearly believes he can take votes from wavering Tory supporters.

He says Great Yarmouth epitomises the national issues Labour has highlighted. "You're going to think I'm making this up," he says. "But I was speaking to a lady on a new-build estate and she was waiting for an Amazon delivery for dental filler — she was going to fill the hole herself."

The area also has its local gripes, such as the village of Hemsby falling into the sea due to coastal erosion, an issue brought up by all candidates thanks to high-profile campaigning by residents. "I intend to be incredibly irritating about that," Cozens says.

It is difficult to know whether he will have the opportunity to do so.

A YouGov MRP poll puts Great Yarmouth as a toss-up between Reform and Labour, with the former slightly ahead on 36 per cent, Labour on 31 per cent and the Tories on 24 per cent.

Lowe, who says he was part of the group that convinced Farage to return to lead his party, puts his lead down to Yarmouth being "very badly served by past governments of all colours".

Like Lewis, Lowe has also faced criticism over his other work, with anonymous posters stuck up around town claiming that he has 13 jobs. Labour has accused him of having a record of "failed business ventures".

But Lowe has insisted he would be Great Yarmouth's full-time MP and that his other roles are non-executive positions in which he has shares.

Does he think he'll be victorious? "You've got Spartacus fighting the Romans," he says. "That doesn't mean Spartacus won't win."

election, which will include greater powers for police to seize knives and tightening sexual offence laws to criminalise intimate images taken without consent.

Cooper disclosed that she has not spoken to the Rwandan government about Labour's pledge to scrap the Rwanda deportation scheme on "day one" of government.

"I think those are the conversations that are for governments but we haven't had the election."

She said she would take "swift action" to set up the new border security command centre tasked with delivering on Starmer's pledge to "smash the gangs". Cooper said the priority for the Home Office on small boats would be appointing a new commander with a military, intelligence or policing background to lead it and hundreds of new specialist immigration and smuggling investigators, cross-border police officers and prosecutors. However, she refused to say when the public

could expect to see small boat arrivals come down under a Labour government.

She said: "I am concerned about the situation that we will inherit if we are elected because we've obviously seen record crossings this spring and that means you need that comprehensive work, both around boosting border security, the additional cross-border police and partnerships across Europe, but also working with some of the countries where we've seen the increases — Vietnam, for example, Kurdistan, for example, where there are particular key relationships. So we want to again start that straight away this summer."

Cooper confirmed Labour has dropped proposals that had been included in the party's national policy forum to allow asylum seekers to work after six months rather than the present rule of 12 months. She said: "That's not our approach."

It's like 1997, without the optimism, Libby Purves, page 23

campaign co-ordinator, said that although there was a "real possibility" of a Labour government, "I'm assuming nothing about the result."

However the party is privately considering what it would need to do in the early days in government to capitalise on the big win that is predicted by the polls.

Starmer has sought to lower expectations of rapid improvements, arguing that the Tories had "broken" public services and public finances.

McFadden told Sky News: "There's lots of challenges ... What they all add up to is a legacy that we will inherit of 14 years of the Conservatives."

Under the plan, a senior doctor would diagnose the problems of the NHS, a council leader would study local authority finances and other experts would look at university funding and prison overcrowding.

intention being to highlight the dire state of Sir Keir Starmer's inheritance.

Senior party sources said that as well as diagnosing problems to be fixed, a public show of the depth of the crises in some services would help Labour to blame the previous government for the painful decisions needed to fix them.

Some likened the strategy to the Tory use of the note left by Liam Byrne to his successor as chief secretary to the Treasury saying "Sorry there is no money", a message wielded to argue that the Conservatives were solving problems caused by Labour overspending.

"You need to know what the problems are and make sure voters understand why they are there," one party source said. Others dismissed the comparison with the Byrne note, saying that the reviews would be a "substantive piece of work".

Pat McFadden, the Labour Party's

News Politics

Rise of Starmer the charmer,

Labour's leader called for property rights to be dismantled before making his name with human rights cases, write **Billy Kenber** and **Dominic Kennedy** in the first of a three-part series

The ancient cobbles and archways of the Temple, home of English law since Chaucer's time, welcomed in the mid 1980s a youth filled with dreams and ideals, a passion for football and a fanatical love of The Smiths.

Armed with his first-class law degree from Leeds and a Bachelor of Civil Law from St Edmund Hall, Oxford, Keir Starmer started a pupillage at 1 Dr Johnson's Buildings. John Mortimer, creator of *Rumpole of the Bailey* and a noted liberal barrister, once practised there.

Starmer was a rebel against the conservative mood of the times. At Oxford he had been a member of the "editorial collective" for a Marxist journal, *Socialist Alternatives*, affiliated with an obscure Greek Trotskyist, Michalis Raptis. It had a focus on green issues, women's rights and gay equality.

"He was radical as a barrister, certainly, which in the Eighties was still a very conservative profession," Gavin Millar, KC, a colleague alongside Starmer throughout his legal career, said.

"We were doing what was called civil liberties work at the Bar during the Thatcher years when it was very difficult. It wasn't terribly well paid, it was all legal aid or at best a trade union would fund you, or an NGO.

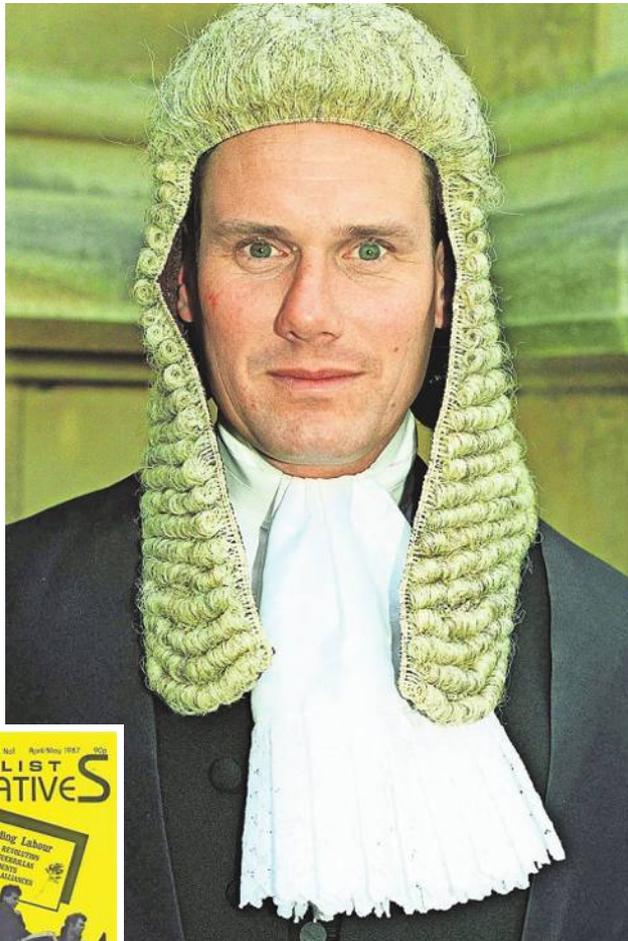
"He developed a strong academic interest in criminology and penology: why do people offend, how do we deal with them, how do we prosecute them and punish them, how to rehabilitate them — which is a very difficult and interesting area of the law and it's really a sharp area of the law as far as human rights are concerned. That was his first love. He was very interested in the rights of criminal suspects and prisoners."

Starmer joined and later became secretary of the Haldane Society of Socialist Lawyers, named after Labour's first lord chancellor, Viscount Haldane, who served in the 1920s.

He proclaimed his idealistic views on the society's magazine, *Socialist Lawyer*. Starmer and a co-author argued for trade unions to aspire to "socialist self-management" and declared that collective bargaining was insufficient because it failed to involve ownership of the means of production.

"We could do worse than to begin by dismantling those common law rules governing the property entitlements of private parties which for almost a thousand years judges have been happy to regard as pre-political norms," he wrote in 1995.

He called in 1987, while still writing for *Socialist Alternatives*, for a 35-hour week as a step towards "a different society in which people will have time and scope to develop away from the



oppression of the workplace."

A Labour spokesman said: "These articles are three decades old and it is clearly nonsense to suggest they offer any insight into his thinking now. As leader, Keir Starmer has transformed the Labour Party and put it back in touch with the country. We're proud of [his] record as the country's chief prosecutor."

Starmer was a legal observer at Wapping in east London when mounted police charged demonstrators during protests against Rupert Murdoch moving his print works, which produced *The Times*, from Fleet Street amid the dismissal of thousands of printworkers. The future Labour leader also helped to monitor demonstrations against Margaret Thatcher's poll tax.

Despite this, Professor Bill Bowring, who met Starmer in the 1980s, doubts whether the future Labour leader ever truly held radical views.

"He never uttered the words Marx, Engels, Lenin or Trotsky," Bowring said. "Socialist Alternatives was a Trotskyist magazine [but] Keir to my knowledge never subscribed to Trotskyism or even knew what it was particularly."

Starmer joined a trip to Moscow and St Petersburg shortly before the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, organised by Bowring for students he taught at the University of East London.

"Keir and Haldane colleagues came along and I



thought it would be good for the students to meet some left activist lawyers," Bowring said. "The students were slightly shocked at the amount they drank." They met lawyers and judges as high up as the chief justice of Russia, Vyacheslav Lebedev.

A short while later Starmer led a delegation of Haldane Society lawyers to Northern Ireland during the Troubles. "What we observed were grave miscarriages of justice and things which had not been happening in the rest of the UK," Bowring said.

The lawyers stayed in a hotel close to Queen's University, Belfast, and one evening asked in the bar for directions for a drink.

"We all trooped off for the pub and sat down," Bowring recalled. "We were then in terror because we didn't know whether it was a green or orange pub. Only when somebody came around collecting money for [IRA] prisoners did we breathe a sigh of relief."

Although they were English, the left-

leaning barristers and solicitors were considered friends of the nationalist cause.

"I wrote the introduction to the report but he helped to write it," Bowring said. "The report calls for a united Ireland and he didn't disagree at the time. Keir was secretary and he wouldn't have had his name put to something he radically disagreed with."

A few years later Starmer organised a 45-strong delegation to the International Association of Democratic Lawyers Congress in Cape Town, South Africa, where they met President Mandela.

Starmer had been called to the Bar in 1987 and until 1990 the human rights organisation Liberty employed him as a legal officer. He spoke out against infringements of civil liberties such as laws targeting acid house parties.

The young barrister developed an interest in bringing cases against Britain in Strasbourg. In June 1989 Starmer told PR Week that Liberty would consider taking a test case to the European Court of Human Rights if a local government and housing bill were passed prohibiting council officers from being politically active.

For Liberty he attended an appeal by the Winchester Three: Irish citizens who were found guilty of plotting to murder Tom King, then the Northern Ireland secretary, but who later had their convictions quashed. Starmer was there because of Liberty's opposition to government proposals to re-

move the "right to silence" for criminal defendants and instead allow guilt to be inferred.

Starmer and a pack of libertarian barristers moved outside the Temple to found a new style of chambers. "We went off and formed Doughty Street in 1990 and we ended up with him working as head of chambers and me as deputy head of chambers," Millar said. "To do those sort of roles in a big set of chambers with 100 barristers you have to be pretty sociable and relate to people and hang out with people and go to the pub."

The young Starmer's activism crossed over with his legal practice. Protest rights were a theme. He successfully defended an unemployed man accused of trying to attack the police during a poll tax riot in Trafalgar Square.

Under the cab-rank rule that forbids barristers from rejecting clients, Starmer represented defendants challenging the Tory government's offence of "trespassory assembly", such as a lecturer and a student arrested after taking part in a commemoration of a clash between Wiltshire police and new age travellers heading to Stonehenge. The case became an important test. Starmer won in the House of Lords when a three-to-two majority held there was a legal right to assemble for peaceful demonstrations on public roads.

He also successfully defended in the High Court a protester charged with aggravated trespass after occupying land at a Derby open cast mining site.

A Labour spokesman said: "Prior to entering politics, Keir's legal career saw him appointed as the country's most senior prosecutor, working under both

Starmer with his parents, Rodney and Josephine

'radical' lawyer of the Left



DUNCAN PHILLIPS/REX/SHUTTERSTOCK; ALAMY; PHOTOSHOT/AVALON



Starmor defended a man (not pictured) involved in the poll tax riots and acted for Dave Morris and Helen Steel, above, in their fight against McDonald's. As a young barrister, he wrote for the Socialist Alternatives magazine, at one point calling for a 35-hour working week

Labour and Conservative governments.

"In this country, everyone is entitled to a defence. A lawyer can no sooner choose who they represent than a doctor can choose their patients or a firefighter choose which fires they attend. That's how our justice system works and why it is the envy of the world.

"Keir has fought for people's rights across the world, prosecuted terrorists as our country's chief prosecutor and put victims at the heart of our criminal justice system."

Starmor often found himself junior to one of the Bar's living legends, Edward Fitzgerald, KC, who has defended despised criminals such as the boys who killed two-year-old James Bulger.

Starmor and Fitzgerald represented the former MI5 officer David Shayler, who was charged with breaching the Official Secrets Act for disclosing information to The Mail on Sunday.

Starmor's interest in prisoners' rights is reflected in him being chosen in 2005 to represent Thomas Tangney, who had shot dead a woman during a burglary. The murderer objected to being disciplined by his prison governor instead of an independent adjudicator. Tangney lost his appeal. Again, Starmor acted under the cab-rank rule.

Fitzgerald was also Starmor's "inspiration in particular for all the work he did on prisoners and the death penalty", Millar said. The idealistic Starmor worked pro-bono for the Death Penalty Project, an NGO run out of the law firm Simons Muirhead Burton, which receives funding from the Foreign Office, European Union and charitable foundations. Parvaz Jabbar, who co-founded the project and became Starmor's friend, said: "He never, ever said no to

us. Whatever work he had, he always committed to doing this."

Starmor travelled to see clients in difficult circumstances. "Death rows are not very nice places," Jabbar said. "In Belize, where we used to go, death row was just a row of cells and the bars were open to the outside, they weren't enclosed. They're in these very hot cells. It's noisy. It's not a kind of interview room with a glass of water."

One of Starmor's earliest death-penalty cases involved two men convicted of murder, Earl Pratt and Ivan Morgan, who had spent 14 years on death row in Jamaica. They were set to

“ Keir never subscribed to Trotskyism or even knew what it was particularly ”

be executed but given three last-minute reprieves. Starmor argued that the mental torment during the prisoners' long time awaiting execution was inhumane and therefore violated Jamaica's constitution. In 1993 the Privy Council agreed, ruling that a delay of more than five years in carrying out a death sentence was cruel and inhuman and therefore unconstitutional.

Jabbar said Starmor, one of the lead juniors, "really made his name in that case". It established a legal precedent that would save condemned prisoners.

In December 2000 Starmor was named the Liberty/Justice Human Rights Lawyer of the year. The judges singled out his work representing murderers facing execution as well as train-

ing their lawyers in the Caribbean. Starmor and Fitzgerald were instrumental in looking at "how we might try to change the law or get countries to develop their systems," Jabbar said. "In some jurisdictions you couldn't just challenge the death penalty per se. So what we tried to do was look at systemic issues."

They hit upon the idea of challenging the mandatory nature of the death penalty, arguing that it was arbitrary and unfair because mitigation could not be taken into account.

The strategy proved successful. In 2001 the Eastern Caribbean court of appeal ruled that an automatic death sentence was cruel and inhuman unless judges could consider extenuating circumstances. The sentence was declared unconstitutional. The Privy Council took the same view in 2002, sending death-penalty cases back to courts in Belize, St Lucia and St Kitts for resentencing. Jamaica and the Bahamas followed suit. By 2006 Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados were the only ones among English-speaking Caribbean nations still holding out.

Hundreds of people were previously on death row in the West Indies. Now the punishment was all but gone. The idea was used by lawyers in Africa and "fundamentally changed the system in those jurisdictions too".

Although Starmor earned a reputation as a diligent young barrister, he was more comfortable making dry technical arguments in appeal cases heard by judges rather than having the showman-style skills needed for jury trials.

He was "incredibly hard working. Would never take a shortcut, would always take the long route in order to get things right. He was quite bookish

and academically inclined," Millar said. "Helena Kennedy was in our chambers and was a great friend of ours and there was a probably apocryphal story about Helena's cases at the Old Bailey in the Eighties and Nineties where the ushers would say when Helena walked into court to defend somebody that they needed to leave tissues in the jury box for tearful jurors.

"Keir would not be that type of advocate. He's much more clinical and careful. What you would choose to employ him for would be to argue points of law and appeal, which he did a lot. He wasn't in the trial. He came in later on to argue as a matter of law."

Among lawyers at the Bar, his agreeable manner earned him the fond nickname "Starmor the charmer".

While still a young lawyer, Starmor co-edited the definitive textbook on miscarriages of justice with his former university tutor, the eminent law professor Clive Walker from the University of Leeds. Justice in Error is still used by students and academic researchers. "It really has stood the test of time," Hannah Quirk, reader in criminal law at King's College London, said.

When Doughty Street chambers organised a conference on miscarriages of justice, one guest was Simon McKay, a solicitor who was struck by Starmor as an "idealistic but pragmatic lawyer". McKay mentioned a case he was working on, defending a British soldier in Northern Ireland who had been accused of murder after firing at teenage joyriders at a security checkpoint.

The case of Lee Clegg provoked outrage in Britain, with supporters arguing that the soldier was being scapegoated for political gain and had just been following army orders in difficult circumstances.

Starmor said "he would be interested in considering the brief if it was ever on offer," McKay recalled. By the late 1990s, it was.

The case was a big challenge for him to take on, McKay recalled, "because a lot of the left wing of the profession were of the view that he shouldn't be acting for a British soldier who was accused of murder while serving in Northern Ireland". But Starmor, like McKay, took the view that human rights "extend to everybody".

In March 1999 the soldier was acquitted of murder as a result of Starmor's pleadings.

"In terms of his skills as an advocate, they were exceptional. And anyone who suggested otherwise is

Lee Clegg said Starmor was a professional who knew the law inside out

really guilty of professional jealousy in my opinion," McKay said. Clegg, now in his fifties, said Starmor was "extremely professional, really comforting, really reassuring and from my perspective as a young man [he] knew the law inside and out and knew the flaws in my case".

Starmor was becoming a high-profile figure. Two years earlier, he had scored a historic victory for freedom of expression when he provided legal advice, without charge, to the environmental campaigners Helen Steel and Dave Morris, who were sued for defamation after distributing leaflets attacking McDonald's. The defendants were a part-time barmaid and an unemployed postman. The verdict, in favour of McDonald's, was delivered in June 1997 at the High Court.

Starmor represented Steel and Morris at the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, where judges accepted that the pair's lack of access to legal aid breached their right to a fair trial. Starmor argued that it was contrary to freedom of expression for the law to presume damage without McDonald's showing any loss.

The Tory-Liberal Democrat coalition government's Defamation Act 2013 is credited as being the antidote to the problem Starmor raised in Strasbourg. It prevents companies from suing for libel unless serious financial harm is caused or is likely.

Starmor's expertise in human rights law and increasing public profile meant he was well placed to take advantage of growing interest in the field in the 1990s. Labour pledged to bring in a British bill of rights in its 1997 general election manifesto and Tony Blair's Human Rights Act was passed in 1998.

In an article for The Independent in early 1999, Starmor wrote of hopes that the act would "create a human rights culture in the UK". The start date had been delayed until 2000 so judges and tribunal members could be trained in human rights law — training he was involved in delivering.

"The idea of Doughty Street training magistrates and police is bizarre," Starmor would later remark. "But we are writing the manuals."

That year he wrote a guide to the act, analysing the law in 1,500 Strasbourg cases. The textbook "kind of took the legal world by storm," McKay recalled. "This was a book with academic and forensic rigour but inherently pragmatic for this new wave of lawyers that would be working with the Human Rights Act."

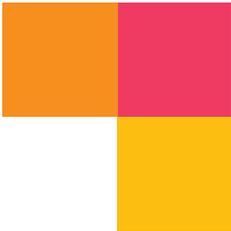
The act was controversial from the start because of fears that laws would be made by judges instead of parliament. The Conservatives now suggest that they would defy the European Court of Human Rights if necessary to send migrants to Rwanda. Reform UK wants to leave the European Convention on Human Rights.

Starmor took silk after only 15 years, in 2002. He was hailed by The Observer as one of the "new legal crusaders" — a group "united by a commitment to civil liberties and a willingness to represent the sort of clients that high-flying barristers once wouldn't have dirtied their hands with". At last, a Labour government was in power. Human rights were encased into British justice like the letters in a stick of rock. What could possibly go wrong?

TOMORROW

How victorious Starmor left Labour's terror policy in chaos





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Shyamili Dhivakar
Craig Fitzpatrick
Shamil Ganatra
Saf Geldart
Emma Grainger
Mark Gregory
Robbie Hawkins
Alan Hendry
Laura Hill
Jim Houghton
Louise Lazarus
James Lewin

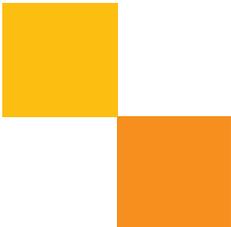
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Andy Lison
Richard Madden
Nabil Manzoor
Natalie Martin
Kieran McGing
Daniel McNulty
Fiona McVeigh
Laura Morroll
Priyen Naidoo
Sudheer Parwana
David Pedler
Will Phillips

Portia Pierrel
Amanda Pybus
Naomi Rigby
Heather Smith
Dev Solanki
Emma Sowerby
Sam Taylor
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Can Yentur
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Jay Slater's family 'left in the dark' as Tenerife search called off

Charlotte Wace, Gerard Couzens

The search for a British teenager who went missing in Tenerife has been called off after almost a fortnight.

Jay Slater, 19, was last seen in the mountain village of Masca just after 8am on June 17. He had flown to the island for the three-day New Rave Generation festival with two friends.

A Civil Guard spokeswoman said yesterday: "The search operation has finished although the case remains

open." Officers will continue to act on tip-offs or other information they receive.

The statement came less than 24 hours after an operation involving about 30 police, firefighters and volunteers failed to find Slater, an apprentice bricklayer from Oswaldtwistle, Lancashire. They searched near Slater's last known location, in a rocky area made up of ravines, trails and paths.

A source said: "The daily operation which has been going on in and around



Jay Slater was last seen in Tenerife on June 17

Masca close to where Jay was last seen has been brought to an end.

"My understanding is Jay's parents have been informed of what obviously is a major development. Nothing of any

relevance was found during [the] large-scale search."

The Civil Guard said that despite the suspension of the "visible" mountain search in and around Masca, a "parallel" investigation, which they would not discuss, continues.

A family friend said that Slater's relatives were still "in the dark" over what would happen next and declined to comment further. Rachel Hargreaves, another close family friend who joined them on the island, told The Telegraph:

"Nothing has changed. We will continue to search for him."

Slater became separated from his friends at the Papagayo beach club a fortnight ago and went back to the villa of two men he had met at the club. According to the owner of the property, he was seen leaving the villa on foot the next morning.

Debbie Duncan, Slater's mother, who flew to Tenerife to help the search, said the family had been forced to read "conspiracy theories" online for days.

Raducanu gets ready for Wimbledon

Lara Wildenberg and Stuart Fraser tell fans all they need to know, from getting tickets to Andy Murray's farewell

The lead-up to Wimbledon has been somewhat overshadowed this year by another title contest concluding on Thursday and a certain football event.

Yet with the highest number of Britons playing across both singles draws since 1999, an anticipated farewell from Andy Murray and a possible appearance from the Princess of Wales to present the trophies, the championships have arrived in the spotlight.

Spectators started queuing for tickets from 2pm yesterday. The first day of action, when Emma Raducanu is due on Centre Court in the afternoon, is predicted to "feel pleasant" and be "mostly dry".

CAN I STILL GET TICKETS?

The public ballot, which is intended to be the fairest way of obtaining tickets, closed in October and hospitality tickets sold out in March. Each day, however, tickets are available for those who queue outside.

HOW DOES THE QUEUE WORK?

The queue often starts the evening before with hopeful spectators camping in Wimbledon Park before the 10am daily opening.

There are 500 tickets for Centre Court (excluding the final four days), No 1 Court, and No 2 Court sold for each day, which will increase in price from £70 to £255 as the tournament progresses. Alternatively, ground passes, which include access to all other courts, cost £30 and reduce in price later in the competition.

WHAT ARE ANDY MURRAY AND EMMA RADUCANU'S PROSPECTS?

Murray, 37, who has won the competition twice, will make the decision whether or not to play this evening as he recovers from surgery on a spinal cyst less than two weeks ago. The Scot, who plans to retire after the Olympics, said that he no longer has back pain. However, he added that he still does not have feeling back in his right leg where his nerves were compressed by the cyst, a condition that usually takes months to recover from.

He has also been handed a wildcard entry for the doubles tournament alongside his brother Jamie, which he hopes might be possible because it starts later in the week.

Raducanu, who won the US Open at the age of 18 as a qualifier, will play on Centre Court on Monday. The 21-year-old from Bromley, ranked fifth in Britain but 168 in the world, was awarded a wildcard, having missed the grass-court season last year due to injury.



Emma Raducanu showed her support for the England football team as she prepared for her first-round tie this afternoon

WILL THE PRINCESS OF WALES PRESENT THE TROPHIES?

The Princess of Wales, who is patron of the All England Lawn Tennis Club, would usually present trophies to the singles winners. There is uncertainty whether she will do so as she continues to undergo cancer treatment but Kensington Palace has not ruled it out.

Wimbledon's organisers remain optimistic the princess will return after she featured at the Trooping the Colour ceremony, her first public appearance since she released a video statement disclosing her condition.

WHAT IS THE ROW ABOUT THE ALL ENGLAND CLUB EXPANSION?

The club has proposed the largest expansion in its history, from 42 to 115 acres, to maintain its position among the four grand-slam tournaments.

However, a well-organised large group of residents called Save Wimbledon

Park opposes this by claiming that the plans are excessive and risk creating an "industrial tennis complex".

Until 2022 the area proposed for development was a golf course that was considered Metropolitan Open Land, which has the same protected status as green belt and can only be built on when planning authorities agree that there are "very special circumstances".

WHAT ELSE MIGHT HAPPEN?

Both Palestine Solidarity Campaign (PSC) and Just Stop Oil are planning protests, leading the organisers to hire more than 1,000 security guards and specialist police spotters in the crowds.

PSC is planning to protest outside the grounds today against the tournament sponsor, Barclays, which it claims is "bankrolling arms companies supplying Israel with weapons". Just Stop Oil has also planned further action after disrupting two matches last year.

Activists stopped play by throwing orange paper petals and jigsaw pieces on the court, which has prompted the All England Club to withdraw jigsaw puzzles of Centre Court and the score board from its shops this year.

Russian and Belarusian flags remain prohibited this year due to the war in Ukraine. No other flags have been added to the ban despite expected disruption from the PSC.

The dress code states that clothing must be free of emblems, national flags, offensive or inciting images, or slogans. Political campaigning is also banned.

Spectators will see another increase in branding as the club embraces the sponsorships it resisted for so long. A large American Express lounge for cardholders is now at the top of Henman Hill, and those coming in from the queue will be welcomed into an "activation zone" with sponsor-led activities.

Navratilova: women's sport must be sex-based

Lara Wildenberg, Stuart Fraser

Martina Navratilova, the record nine-time Wimbledon champion, has reiterated that she will keep fighting for sex-based sports.

The Czech-American, 67, speaking yesterday on the eve of the tournament, has repeated her views that including transgender women in women's sports excludes women.

Navratilova, who came out as gay in 1981, said she had been "jettisoned" by some in the LGBT community for her views but would speak her mind. "It's been pretty rough but I know I'm on the right side of history. I'm right on most people's opinion about women's sex-based spaces, and especially sports. They need to stay female," she said.

"The politics have been kind of crazy about that. It's become very political when it shouldn't be when it comes to women's rights. We seem to put trans rights ahead of women's rights, particularly for males that identify as women.

"Women are asked to be kind and be inclusive, yet by including transgender-identified males in women's sports, you're excluding women," she said.

Despite the "rough" response from some quarters, Navratilova said she had felt "very loved by the [LGBT] community" when she attended a drag queen show in Miami a couple of months ago.

The International Tennis Federation, the sport's governing body, states in its policy that "a male-to-female transgender player" must satisfy two requirements to be eligible to participate in female categories.

A transgender woman must provide a signed declaration that her gender identity is female. She must also demonstrate that "the concentration of testosterone in her serum has been less than 5 nmol/l continuously for a period of at least 12 months" and will stay at that level while she competes.

Navratilova was speaking alongside Chris Evert, her old rival, on the 40th anniversary of their Wimbledon final in 1984, which Navratilova won. Evert, 69, a three-time Wimbledon singles champion, lost to Navratilova in five Wimbledon finals. Evert praised Billie Jean King for starting "the revolution of women athletes".

INSIDE

Your 12-page guide to the feast of tennis being served up at SW19 [thetimes.com](https://www.thetimes.com)



First-time flyers Young kestrels ready to leave the nest in Rochdale, Greater Manchester. They can live for 16 years or more

GEMMA DECEY/ANIMAL NEWS AGENCY

Teachers battle to cope with complaints from hostile parents

Nicola Woolcock Education Editor

Complaints from parents are overwhelming schools by taking up vast amounts of time and resources as heads tackle hostile or trivial grievances, teachers have said.

Schools are bringing in consultants to build bridges with difficult parents because teachers say they are now expected to deal with problems such as domestic violence and evictions.

Other complaints are because exasperated parents struggle to get support for children with special educational needs. Families in crisis also see schools as the first port of call for help that used to be provided by social services.

However, many complaints deemed trivial by heads are fired off by angry parents to agencies such as Ofsted, local authorities and the Department for Education. They also escalate on social media before schools have a chance to respond.

Schools said recent complaints included a primary school football team losing a match, sports day being held on a Wednesday and badgers digging up a field.

Another school said Ofsted had received dozens of complaints, including about children getting detention or too much homework.

One head teacher from the south of England said: "It has never been as bad as it is now. Complaints include a child flicking dirt at another child in the playground, parents being horrible to other parents, a teacher being off unwell, sports day being cancelled because rain was predicted and a family's term-time holiday being recorded as an unauthorised absence."

"Many teacher decisions that would previously have been questioned by parents are now formal complaints," he said.

One teacher left this year because of weekly criticism from a parent. He added: "They feel personal and you have to find a lot of time seeking evidence to disprove. Some complaints have included information shared about staff on social media."

The situation had worsened since the pandemic, he said, but the government's

criticism of teachers had contributed to the problem. "Families are angry with the system, particularly for special educational needs where parents have to fight for everything. It plays schools and families against each other."

Abrial, a coaching service, was co-founded by Miranda Perry and her husband, Michael Whitworth, both former teachers, to work with schools and parents. Whitworth said: "There was an unwritten contract between schools and parents — we think that's frayed. It's more overt and confrontational, more time-consuming."

He added: "School staff are perceiving complaints and unhappiness in a more personal and accusatory way. Staff are leaving schools or the profession because they didn't sign up for this."

He said some complaints related to the greater number of children with special educational needs and a lack of funding to provide support. "Parents are more informed and generally have less acceptance of authority," he said. "Social media is also an issue for schools, but parents have a right to communicate with each other."

Societal changes since the pandemic had made schools more exposed, Whitworth said. Schools provided more during the pandemic, such as food banks and helping families who were being evicted, but this was now expected.

Some schools, however, had been slow to return to face-to-face contact with parents, including keeping parents' evenings online, he said.

Jane Waters, head teacher of Seven Kings, in Ilford, east London, is using Abrial's services. She described an "overwhelming" volume of "complex" complaints, adding: "We have 56 families in temporary accommodation and they reach out to us. Domestic violence has been an issue and poverty is putting a strain on families — [previously] they would have gone to social services, the doctor or a local authority, ... but they don't feel listened to because of dwindling resources."

Pepe Di'lasio, of the Association of School and College Leaders, said: "There appears to be a post-pandemic culture of people being angry and taking to the keyboard."

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Gen-Z's eye for subtitles give foreign films a new audience

Alex Farber Media Correspondent

Foreign-language films have become the unlikely beneficiary of the growth of youngsters "dual-screening" when watching television, a study has found.

Researchers have discovered a generational divide in foreign programming as youngsters embrace subtitles to allow them to follow what is happening on the big screen while keeping one eye on their phones.

More than a third (36 per cent) of 16 to 24-year-olds in the US and UK said they were watching more foreign titles than five years ago, compared with only 10 per cent of those aged over 55, according to the survey by Allwyn,

which operates the National Lottery.

While more than half of older people said they were put off foreign films by the need to rely on subtitles, this fell to 29 per cent for Gen-Z viewers.

Last year, a YouGov survey found that more than 60 per cent of 18 to 24-year-olds preferred to watch TV with subtitles, compared with 13 per cent of 50 to 64-year-olds.

Netflix, which has a younger audience than terrestrial TV, found that 80 per cent of its subscribers regularly watched with subtitles. It named the German-language First World War film *All Quiet on the Western Front* and Poland's *Forgotten Love* among its most-viewed offerings last year.

Visa change leaves Ukrainian families divided

Matt Dathan Home Affairs Editor

Mariia, seven, speaks to her mother on the phone every day and asks when she will collect her from school.

She fled Ukraine with her father days before Russia invaded in February 2022. They live in the Czech Republic, far from her mother, Elena Sergievskaya, who moved to Britain late in 2021 for seasonal work.

Sergievskaya intended to earn enough to rent a house and bring her daughter to live with her in Lancaster. She worked six days a week while Mariia started school and learnt English. The 39-year-old mother found an apartment last February and set about gathering the necessary documents for her daughter to join her under the Ukraine Family Scheme, one of the two schemes set up to enable Ukrainians living in the UK to bring their immediate family to the country.

But days after she had scraped together enough money for her and her daughter, the Home Office announced it was closing the scheme without notice on February 19. Mariia and her mother are among hundreds of refugee families left separated by the decision.

Their hopes of being united in the UK were dampened further by new restrictions to the second scheme, Homes for Ukraine. The Home Office changed the eligibility criteria for being a sponsor so only British and Irish citizens, or foreign citizens with settled status, could act as sponsors.

Previously, any Ukrainian refugee qualified as a sponsor. A survey by the

Work Rights Centre, a charity that offers free advice to migrants, has found hundreds of Ukrainians affected by the rule changes.

The Home Office said it was right to adapt and develop visa routes to ensure they kept pace with the shifting situation in Ukraine. Labour, which opposed the changes in February, has not confirmed whether it will relax the rules if it wins the general election.

The tighter rules cut off the prospect of Sergievskaya being her daughter's sponsor. To bring her to the UK, she must find a household willing to sponsor her, a process made harder by the extra safeguarding precautions required to sponsor a seven-year-old girl.

Sergievskaya, one of many Ukrainians who have spoken to The Times about the changes, said: "I think about my daughter all the time. I didn't see my daughter go to first grade. I wasn't with her when she experienced new emotions. I can't do it any more. Every day she asks me when I'll pick her up."

She said she knew she was not alone in being separated and her gratitude to Britain was "boundless". But she added that she felt let down by the sudden closure of the visa schemes. "My daughter and I are now on different shores," she said. "It's difficult and unbearable."

Her desperation is shared by many other families. The visa changes coincided with a worsening situation for Ukrainians hoping to return to their homeland as Russia



ANDREW MCCAREN AND ROBERT PERRY FOR THE TIMES



Elena Sergievskaya remains hopeful but Julia Hryshchenko, who has three children, says she is "heartbroken"

hospital with pneumonia in both lungs. The couple decided he should continue with his move to the UK and they would follow when their sons were better. He moved to Edinburgh and found work in the construction industry.

By the time the boys left hospital, both schemes were closed to the family.

Shakun, 44, must now decide whether to stay and hope to find a way to bring his family or return to Ukraine, where work is scarce and the threat of war is constant. "Living in a country with daily sirens, explosions, lack of work and electricity and now also facing issues with crime ... is not life, it's survival," he said. "But the main issue is the children. They are growing up in abnormal conditions."

The sudden change in rules left Julia Hryshchenko, 37, who has three children, "crying for days" because it meant she could no longer bring her brother Bogdan, 13, to the UK after the deaths of both their parents. Their mother died of Covid in 2020 and their father died a month before Russia invaded. Bogdan is living with a grandmother near Kyiv.

Hryshchenko said her "heart was broken" when the rules were changed.

Despite their despair, the refugees who spoke to The Times remained hopeful and grateful to Britain.

For Sergievskaya, the resilience and optimism that runs through so many of her compatriots is still driving them on. "Has my opinion and view of Britain changed? No," she said. "I will always be grateful. I hope my problem will be solved and in the near future all children will be with their parents."

made advances north and east of Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-biggest city. Serhii Shakun used one word to sum up his feelings after the visa schemes were closed: "desperation".

He applied to move his wife Natalia and two sons, Platon and Andrew, to the UK temporarily under the Homes for Ukraine scheme and to find a job as work became more scarce. Before they could move, their sons were taken to

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Victoria's sketches of knights and fair ladies

Drawings of knights and veiled women on horseback could be doodled by a romantic teenager today but there is a different feeling to them when they were drawn by a 19th-century girl who knew she was about to become queen (Jack Blackburn writes).

Four such drawings by Queen Victoria, made in

the run-up to and soon after her taking the throne, will make a rare appearance on the open market, going on sale at Roseberys next week.

The pieces show the young Victoria's artistic talent, something she maintained deep into adult life. They depict a knight, a veiled woman on horseback, another woman riding and, in one image from after



*Rejoice in Peace by Her Royal Highness
The Princess Victoria. 1833. 207.
The Victoria and Albert Museum*



Victoria, a keen artist throughout her life, drew this knight when she was 14

her accession, a young woman wearing a sash and a crown with a figure not dissimilar to Victoria's.

"She was a very keen artist, experimenting with lots of styles," said

Charlotte Russell, a specialist at Roseberys. "Touchingly, she would often do domestic scenes with her children. When her works do surface, which is not very often, it is a glimpse into an unseen domestic side of her."

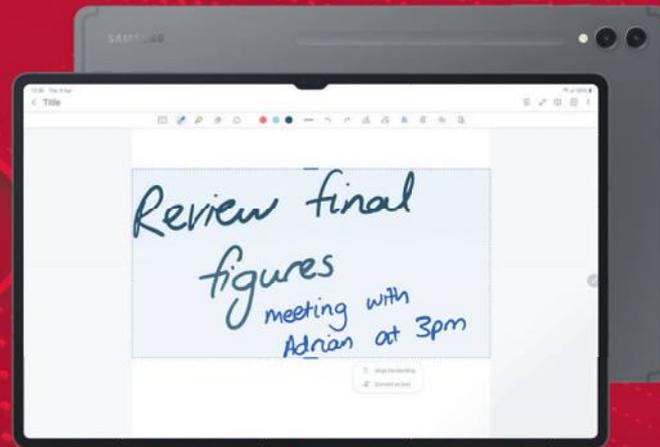
Victoria had a great love of art and the Royal Collections have more than 4,000 of her drawings, etchings, lithographs and watercolours. She was tutored from the age of eight, getting lessons from Richard Westall, and she indulged her hobby every day. The drawings of figures on horseback are dated to July 1833, when the then-princess was 14.

The drawings form one lot along with royal ephemera including an invitation to the coronation of George IV. They will go under the hammer on July 9, valued at up to £2,500.

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Young, female recruits answer call to help Met in fight against terrorism

James Sweetland
Ben Ellery Crime Editor

A new intake of young, female counterterrorism (CT) recruits is boosting the Metropolitan Police's response to extremist threats, according to the head of SO15.

Sixty per cent of detectives recruited through a new graduate scheme are female, compared with 31 per cent across the force.

Commander Dominic Murphy, head of the Met's counterterrorism command, said diversifying the workforce was "critical" to tackling threats.

The scheme, started by Police Now, a charity that recruits graduates into policing, has also increased the number of ethnic minority recruits. In an exclusive interview, Murphy told The Times:

"Police Now has provided an opportunity to reach a different demographic. Rather than our usual approach of recruiting those with ten to 15 years of frontline experience as a police officer, we're drawing on another generation with a new set of skills.

"The [terrorism] threat has completely transformed. We're seeing much younger people involved now, with a perception of society and the on-line world that's entirely different to my own. The only way to meet that threat is by thinking differently."

Baroness Casey of Blackstock, in her review of the Met last year in response to the murder of Sarah Everard by the firearms officer Wayne Couzens, warned that the Met's workforce "continued to fall far short" of representing London's black, Asian and minority

ethnic men and women and that it would take "at least another 40 years" to reflect London's diversity.

One black female CT trainee described the challenges some ethnic minorities face when joining policing. "Not everybody will understand why you picked this job. Your family may not understand, they might not be on board, though I'm lucky that mine are supportive," she said.

"In CT, you can have impact locally, nationally and internationally. The course is literally a one-way ticket to my dream, so I thought, 'Why not apply?'"

The recruitment scheme offered trainees a chance to join the Met and work in CT within two years. Formally announced in 2023, trainees first started on the programme in March. It attracted 2,081 applicants for 75

places. Those on the CT scheme secured a 70.2 per cent pass rate on the national investigators' exam against a national average of 56.2 per cent.

One white male recruit said: "CT are really excited by our youth. We're mostly [aged] 20 to 30, we grew up on technology and used it for everything. We come into CT with so much to learn but we can also teach them about social media and things like that."

At the end of the two-year scheme, recruits will enter the Met's CT command (SO15) full-time. Kurtis Christofides, Police Now's chief executive, said creating a more diverse workforce was "the closest thing we have to a silver bullet" to solve policing's trust and confidence problem. "We know the public think policing needs to change from top to bottom," he added.

Church seeks diverse priests

Kaya Burgess
Religious Affairs Correspondent

A plan to boost the number of "neurodivergent" priests has been launched by the Church of England as part of a £1.3 million package to improve the diversity of its clergy.

The term neurodivergent may include those with autism, ADHD or dyslexia. The church has announced grants of up to £277,000 to fund "innovation in theological education", with the aim of "widening the pool of people training for ministry", including by attracting more priests and lay leaders who may fit this description.

The Rev Ed Olsworth-Peter, a director at St Mellitus, the theological college, was diagnosed with dyslexia and dyspraxia in his twenties. He said that when training he "would have valued support in the challenges this can bring in ministry, as well as the recognition of the gift this can be to the church".

Feelgood festival leaves us on a high

Pop Will Hodgkinson

Glastonbury
Worthy Farm, Somerset
★★★★☆

Say what you like about Coldplay — and God knows, I have — but they do know how to put on a Glastonbury headline set. They have, of course, had the practice, but having an aerial shot of the vast crowd before launching into *Yellow*, their best song, was a stroke of populist genius. From there it was a fireworks, flashing wristbands, balloons bouncing over the audience and the Christian youth group positivity of *Higher Power*.

Before you knew it, we were into *Paradise*, with the one-armed pianist Victoria Canal, a mass singalong of the weepy ballad *The Scientist* and Michael J Fox doing a guitar solo from a wheelchair. Coldplay are people pleasers and their cheerfully ruthless commitment to mass popularity stretches the limits of credibility, but this was inarguably effective.

In truth this wasn't a banner year for headliners. With Madonna rumoured to have pulled out because of relatively low fees — the Eavis take no sponsorship and give a lot to charity — we were left with the professional pop of Dua Lipa and the mid-tempo R&B of SZA, who may have huge streaming numbers, but hardly has the chant-along-to classics.

Throw in a couple of important things going on — football, the general election — and this was never going to be one for the history books. But the weather was good, the atmosphere was great, and there were countless acts to dig into in this pop-city on a farm.

There was a sparse crowd for Janelle Monáe at the Pyramid after Shania Twain (huge turnout, terrible set), during the England game, which was a real shame because this Atlanta artist is a female Prince: ultra-musical, totally original. Coming out in a voluminous outfit made of flowers, backed by a brassy band that could have matched James Brown's exacting standards, she began with *Float*, a tribute to her own fabulosity, which she performed as if she had the biggest audience of the weekend.

Monáe impressed because she gave it her



Paloma Faith rocks the Pyramid yesterday, and Coldplay, below, know how to please a crowd. Shania Twain, below left, was disappointing, and then it was home time



all, despite the unfortunate timing, turning *The Electric Lady* into a funky rock epic, having a Bob Marley moment on the reggae-tinged *Lipstick Lover*, doing a Michael Jackson dance routine, and even flashing her breasts. She also gave an informed speech on human

rights that put the usual nonsense spouted from the Pyramid to shame. This was the set of the weekend, however few people witnessed it.

Bar Italia are one of the biggest buzz bands of recent years, in part by doing the opposite of what most performers at Glastonbury do: not pandering to the crowd, not talking, offering nothing but an icy sheen of Velvet Underground-like guitar rock.

They softened a bit for their set at The Park: their singer Nina Cristante even said "thank you" and danced about a lot. They were also very good: dynamic, intense, confident and with

something clearly personal going on in songs shrouded by poetic mystery.

Elsewhere, who knew Irish language Republican hip-hop from three men with an avowed love of drugs would be such a hit? Kneecaps' morning was a febrile thrill, and not just because they had a rudely titled track about love across the sectarian divide. *Get Your Brits Out* was a great moment: an audience chant, tricolour clad DJ Próvaí jiggling about, a general air of pushing the audience to their limit. Not since the Sex Pistols have a band courted controversy with such style and humour.

"It's crazy to be doing an album all about the night at four in the afternoon," said Arooj Aftab, a Pakistani singer who made an album called *Night Reign*. The blazing sun did make an ill fit for songs about lovers being like the moon, but Aftab's low, sonorous tones and skittering jazz backing brought a crepuscular mood nonetheless. Incredibly, she had fallen and smashed her face shortly before going on stage and went from her last song to Bath hospital; that she sang perfectly throughout showed true professionalism.

A Saturday highlight came from The Streets, songwriter Mike Skinner's hip-hop and reggae-tinged band offering everyday surrealism. He wandered on stage with a beer, looking like he was trying to find something he dropped on the floor, with all the ease of the darts sensation Luke Littler scoring a 180 before bedtime.

Before you knew it, he was in the crowd for the fan favourite *Who's Got The Bag*, jumping along with the rest of them. "We're going to feel like shit on Tuesday," he said, somewhere in the middle of *Don't Mug Yourself*. Yes, we would, but for a brief, once-a-year window, Glastonbury really does have the ability to make 200,000 people feel pretty good.

Brexit and bad weather wipe out Britain's small potato farms

Adam Vaughan Environment Editor

The UK no longer has any small or medium-sized farms producing new potatoes, the founder of an organic vegetable company has warned.

Guy Singh-Watson, 64, said that for the first year he had been unable to supply British early potatoes for Riverford, his box delivery company. He said that it was part of a wider "tragedy" of smaller fruit and vegetable growers quitting in the face of low returns, post-Brexit labour shortages and extreme weather.

A Riverford survey found 49 per cent of horticulture firms feared going out of

business imminently. "Indeed, they are going out of business," he added.

"Around the south and southwest, there were lots of small family farms, who grew 10 to 100 acres of potatoes. They all got fed up with the returns and the work and they have given up. The last one who grew down on the 'Golden Mile' near Penzance gave up last year."

A Downing Street summit in May promised support for fruit and vegetable growers, who were disappointed by the government abandoning a horticulture strategy last year.

Many of the farmers who drove tractors to a protest in London in March were in the horticulture sector.

Shortages in supermarkets last year were linked to declines in the sector.

Smaller new potato farmers have tended to be on the coast because they are frost-free. Singh-Watson said the potatoes were grown "traditionally" on family farms using seaweed as fertiliser. "Those are the ones that are particularly suffering," he added.

Jersey Royal potatoes continue to be produced from the self-governing crown dependency.

But Singh-Watson said production on the mainland now appeared to be left to larger growers with thousands of acres in east and central England.

Gerard Croft, a former president of

the British Potato Trade Association, said that even the big producers were struggling after the wet winter and spring left fields waterlogged.

Mark Taylor, chairman of the industry group GB Potatoes, said the south-west had suffered a "torrid time". He added: A lot of the crop went in very late. Supply is tight. We are seeing more extreme weather and that is putting a lot of growers under pressure.

National statistics on potato production are no longer collected, making it difficult to assess the situation.

But the area of land used for horticulture has shrunk by 6.3 per cent since 2022, to 2 per cent of all agricultural

land in England. Rebecca Laughton, a co-ordinator at The Landworkers' Alliance, said that shoppers could help smaller fruit and vegetable growers by avoiding supermarkets and buying direct from farmers and box schemes.

Labour has promised to help growers with rules for hospitals, schools and the public sector to get 50 per cent of their food from local or sustainable sources.

Will White, of the charity Sustain, told the Groundswell Agriculture Festival in Hitchin, Hertfordshire, last week the pledge had to be made law. "Otherwise who is going to enforce it?" he said. "There needs to be budget for it too."

Hostages sue BA and government over Iraq ordeal

David Brown

Passengers and crew taken hostage at the start of the first Gulf War have begun legal action against the government and British Airways.

They claim that Flight 149 landed to insert a covert special operations military team into Kuwait in August 1990.

Government files released in 2021 showed that Sir Michael Weston, the British ambassador to Kuwait at the time, had called the Foreign Office to warn that Iraqi forces had crossed the border an hour before it touched down.

BA flight crew, staff in Kuwait and 94 passengers are preparing for a High Court civil action against the Foreign Office, the Cabinet Office, the Ministry of Defence and British Airways.

Their lawyers have sent letters before action for negligence and joint misfeasance in public office claiming the government and the airline were responsible for “deliberately endangering” the passengers and crew.

They say the 367 passengers and crew were taken hostage by Saddam Hussein's forces and suffered torture, rape, starvation and mock executions while being used as human shields.

Flight 149 left Heathrow for Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, with a scheduled refuelling stop in Kuwait. Some passengers and crew claim that nine “military-looking” men boarded the flight shortly before the departure.

Files released by the National Archives show Weston called the Foreign Office in August 1990 to warn that Iraqi forces had crossed the border before the flight landed.

Liz Truss, foreign secretary when the files were released, apologised for the failure to disclose the ambassador's warning but insisted there was no



Barry Manners was among those taken in August 1990

evidence that the flight was carrying British special forces.

The pilot in command of the leg, Captain Richard Brunyate, is alleged to have been an “MI6 asset”. Anthony Paice, who was working at the embassy, has said that he was responsible for



The aircraft was destroyed by Iraqi forces who had crossed the border into Kuwait

“political intelligence” — often a cover for MI6. He told the BBC in 2021 that he believed there was a “hastily prepared attempt to put intelligence boots on the ground”.

Paice said he and the ambassador were unaware of the mission, run by the military and special forces.

The lawyers claim that when the hostages were freed after five months in captivity many of those who worked for BA were forced to take medical pensions. It is alleged the airline failed to adjust their work requirements in recognition of the trauma they endured.

Barry Manners, a passenger from Botany Bay in Broadstairs, Kent, was 24 when he was taken by Iraqi soldiers. He said he was a victim of mock executions and physical abuse by his captors.

He claims the hostages were treated

as “expendable pawns for commercial and political gain”.

Manners said: “A victory over years of cover-up and bare-faced denial will help restore trust in our political and judicial process.”

Matthew Jury of McCue Jury & Partners, which is making the claim, said: “The lives and safety of innocent civilians were put at risk by the British government and British Airways for the sake of an off-the-books military operation. Both have, we believe, concealed and denied the truth for more than 30 years. There must be closure and accountability to erase this shameful stain on the UK's conscience.”

A Cabinet Office spokeswoman said the government would not comment about continuing legal matters. BA did not respond to a request for comment.

‘Al Capone’ tax evader goes on run

George Sandeman

A prisoner whom a judge compared to Al Capone after being convicted for tax evasion left court last week before he could be sentenced.

Nigel Harker, who has 256 previous convictions, made £30,000 trading goods while behind bars but admitted to not declaring his earnings to HMRC, Newcastle crown court was told.

The Newcastle Evening Chronicle reported that Harker, 47, was trading in 2020 while serving a sentence for tax fraud at HMP Northumberland. The size of the bill he evaded was estimated to be £3,080.

Harker, who was on bail, attended the sentencing hearing on Friday. Judge Stephen Earl compared the case to the FBI prosecution of Capone in 1931, saying they “couldn't get him” on drugs charges but did prosecute him for tax evasion. “So you are in good company,” he told Harker.

The judge rose to consider the appropriate sentence in his chambers but by the time he returned to the courtroom Harker had left the building.

Michael Cahill, for the defence, said: “He has voluntarily absented himself. He knows what's going to happen.”

As well as the tax offence, Harker had pleaded guilty to dangerous driving on December 7, 2022. He was sentenced in his absence to 19 months in prison. An arrest warrant has been issued.



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GET OFFER



Scientists explore energy bubbling under Montserrat

Tom Whipple Science Editor

Thirty years ago on the small Caribbean island of Montserrat a volcano started erupting — and kept doing so for 15 years. The capital city, Plymouth, was buried, half the island became uninhabitable, and much of the population was evacuated.

More than a decade later the eruption largely stopped, and scientists from Oxford University think the destructive volcano, and the metals dissolved in superheated brine beneath it, could prove to be the island's salvation.

If they are right, their work could also help the rest of us, as the world seeks the

materials and energy to power a clean economy.

Montserrat runs its electricity grid on imported diesel. As an island sitting above a volcano, this seems odd, said Jonathan Blundy, of the Oxford Martin School's Programme on Rethinking Natural Resources, because of the energy that is there for the taking.

"The interesting aspect is that although they only need two megawatts, that big old hot volcano has about 900 megawatts of potential," Blundy said.

The question is how to justify the capital outlay to tap into it? There were, Blundy said, plenty of options. "You

could do electrolysis of water. You could smelt aluminium. Or you could use the superheated water to extract resources, such as copper, lithium and gold, which are crucial for green technology.

"Pretty much all deposits from which we get many metals come from ancient volcanoes," Blundy said. In a live volcano, much of that metal is dissolved in solution in the same brine and hot water used for geothermal power. Normally, that's where it stays.

"In conventional mining, you wait until the volcano is dead, until everything that was in solution has precipitated, until all the heat has disappeared,

then you dig a hole, take out all the rock, crush it up using lots of energy, and throw away 99.5 per cent. Then you spend a lot more energy trying to get the metal that was once in solution back into solution."

Why not, he said, go straight for the metals when in solution? Several companies are working to extract lithium in this way. Although significant technical hurdles remain, he and his colleagues have been assessing the potential of doing so for metals on Montserrat.

In an exploratory visit they are using seismic devices to track the flow of brine beneath the volcano and near to existing wells. Given the need for metals in,

for instance, batteries, as well as the environmental cost of mining, Blundy said the time has come for this technology: "My feeling is that aqua mining, or geofluid mining, as I call it, is probably going to be very important in the next five to ten years."

His colleague, David Pyle, a professor of earth sciences, said it would be good news for the island. "Depending on what industries you co-locate or power with your geothermal, you could have a setting where the Montserrat diaspora wants to return," he said, adding: "If we can make it work on Montserrat, it'll be clear how it can work elsewhere."

BUCKINGHAM PALACE/PA

Lyla O'Donovan and Tony Hudgell missed a party at the Palace in May



Latecomers treated to tea with Queen

When the King and Queen hosted the year's first garden party at Buckingham Palace in May, two special guests were missing (Kate Mansey writes).

Lyla O'Donovan, 11, from Catterick, North Yorkshire, had been invited in recognition of her charity work, which she does while living with a rare brain tumour. On the day, however, she felt too ill to attend and was "gutted".

Tony Hudgell, 9, a double amputee from West Malling in Kent, was stuck in traffic after a lorry fire on the M20. His parents turned back three and

a half hours into a journey meant to take 90 minutes.

Tony was awarded a British Empire Medal in the new year's honours list, its youngest recipient yet. His legs were amputated as a baby after suffering horrific abuse at the hands of his birth parents.

In 2020 he was inspired by Captain Tom Moore to walk 10km on his prosthetic legs and crutches. He has raised more than £1.8 million for the Evelina London Children's Hospital which saved his life.

Lyla and Tony finally had their day at the palace on Wednesday when they were invited, with

their parents and siblings, to watch the Changing the Guard. They joined the Queen for a private tea party in the palace summerhouse, where they were served sandwiches, scones and special King's Guard biscuits, before enjoying a tour of the Royal Mews.

Lyla said: "Everyone made us feel so comfortable and made me feel super-special." Her father Paul called the day "an amazing moment for us". He serves with 6 Rifles, the regiment of which the Queen is colonel-in-chief.

Tony's adoptive mother Paula Hudgell, who was given an OBE after a successful four-year campaign to get tougher sentences for child abusers, said her son and Camilla had chatted "like old friends".

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It's a bit like 1997, but without the optimism

Libby Purves

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Comment

Farage will still dominate after the election

The Reform leader has been the standout success of the campaign and a union with the Conservatives is inevitable

Trevor Phillips



@TREVORPTWEETS

It is not necessarily a mark of approval to point out that, whether or not he wins Clacton on Thursday, Nigel Farage must be regarded as the most consequential political figure in the Britain of this century.

Having bamboozled the UK into a referendum on EU membership, he won the vote. His influence brought down two Tory leaders (we shall see if he can bag a hat-trick on Thursday). And he personally delivered a stunning victory to Boris Johnson in 2019 by withdrawing his candidates in Tory held constituencies.

New Labour types will protest that Tony Blair pacified the Labour Party, instigated the minimum wage and negotiated a ceasefire in Northern Ireland. But all that took place before the turn of the century.

No wonder Farage was by far the breeziest Sunday-morning interviewee I've faced in this campaign. Asked the Mrs Merton question ("What do you think first attracted racists, antisemites and homophobes to your party?") he brushed away the bigoted remarks of his activists as a minor hazard of political life. Whatever happens, his project to reshape British politics remains on track.

One aspect of the Reform leader's success is the consistency with which he is underestimated by his opponents, for whom he is a baffling contradiction. Posh Conservatives deride him as a pub bore and are

nonplussed when more drinkers want to buy him a round than his Tory rival. Earnest lefties denounce him as a racist only to discover that his largest donor is a person of colour.

It is true that the policy proposals advanced by his latest vehicle, the Reform Party, are wafer-thin; you wouldn't want to blow your nose on them. Reform's plans to squeeze £50 billion out of Whitehall spending would not survive a vigorous workout by any sixth-form economics class. But Farage's prospectus does not pretend to be a programme for government. It is merely a signpost to the kind of Britain he favours. As has been said of Donald Trump, we should take Farage seriously, though not literally.

For an avowed nationalist, Farage's vision owes much to what he has seen on foreign shores. Economically, it looks like the United States — free-wheeling, ultra-competitive,

He brushes aside the fact that Brexit sent net migration soaring

buccaneering. Socially, he hankers after the classlessness and matey lack of deference of Australia.

Most powerful is his cultural landscape, which also evokes a foreign country: the past, where they do things differently. To be precise, somewhere before 1948, pre-Windrush, when men were men and ethnic minorities were where they belonged. His account of Britain's decline — stifling bureaucracies, government overreach, moral failure and Marxist infiltration of beloved institutions — carries enough resonance with the public to drown out inconvenient reality. For example, Farage brushes aside the

fact that Brexit has turbocharged net migration, now running at roughly three times its pre-2016 rate. Not only would his plan for "net zero" migration decimate social care and health services; it would accelerate change in the composition of the UK's population, and not in the direction that many who voted for Brexit wanted. Since 2019, migration flows from the EU have been reversed. Five years ago 80,000 people arrived; last year, 75,000 left. By contrast numbers from India were up from 72,000 to 250,000; from Nigeria up from 14,000 to 141,000; Zimbabwe, 2,000 to 36,000; and Ghana, 5,000 to 35,000.

When Farage claims to have done more to tackle the far right's influence in the UK than anyone else, he may be right, though not in the way he believes. He has, in fact, become the patron saint of multicultural Britain. I don't think that is what his followers who complain about the "f***ing P****s" had in mind when they signed up.

All the same, his success in splitting the right is undeniable. And just as in 1983, when the SDP-Liberal alliance divided the left and gave Margaret Thatcher a huge victory, the result is a certain Labour ascendancy for as long as that division endures. The strategic tasks for the Conservatives and Labour are now clear. For the former, to heal the schism between true conservatives and national populists. For the latter, to keep punching the bruise. The Tories' task is the more straightforward.

Whoever succeeds Rishi Sunak may think they have a choice — either to merge with Reform or to fight the takeover by Farage's forces. In fact, they have no choice. The union will take place sooner or later.

In France, Emmanuel Macron's rash decision to call a snap election



Nigel Farage will present a vexing dilemma for a Labour government

almost guaranteed that Marine Le Pen's National Rally would gobble up the traditional Gaullist conservatives within days; a choice between a share of power with populists and dwindling into irrelevance is no choice at all. Our first past the post system may delay the inevitable; but the point about the inevitable is that it does eventually come to pass.

But Farage presents a far more vexing dilemma for Labour. Sir Keir Starmer will enter Downing Street with no credit in the bank, financial or political. With a net approval rating of minus-19, he will be the most unpopular opposition leader elected to office on record. As challenger, Starmer benefited from an electorate that is grumpy and volatile. As premier, with no money to give away, he can expect no honeymoon and no mercy from the voters in 2029.

Labour's best bet for more than five years in power lies in keeping its opponents divided — no easy task. The temptation simply to demonise Farage will be almost irresistible; there will always be party members who once belonged to unsavoury groups to expose, but the attempt to establish guilt by association has failed everywhere. So has quibbling over language. And the habit of left-wing lawyers to try to silence opponents by use of the courts has galvanised populists — in Trump's case materially and spectacularly.

As is often the case, the Thatcher years are instructive. After winning an unlikely victory in 1983, helped by the split on the left, she used a massive majority of 144 to embark on a programme of radical change: sale of council houses, financial deregulation, privatisation of utilities and trades union reform. She made an example of the miners and more or less eliminated opposition within her own party. Each and every step wrongfooted the opposition.

Starmer looks about to confound all of us who urged him to be less cautious on the road to power. But Labour may have only one term to prove it can deliver, and baby steps won't be enough.

With Farage lurking wolfishly in the wings, ready to gobble up disillusioned voters, the Labour leader should think about adopting what might be called the reverse-Cuomo doctrine: if you really want change, then, sure, campaign in prose — but get ready to govern in poetry.

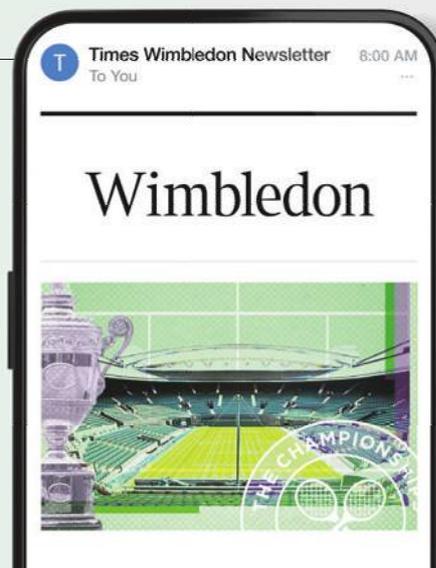
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Comment

Betting on politics is dangerous for all of us

Gambling might seem harmless fun, but knowing the odds is far better than playing them

Edward Lucas



I owe a lot to an oddball called Ron Pollard, a spiritualist who claimed to be guided by a 15th-century bearded Chinese man in a white skull-cap. In the 1960s Pollard, who died in 2015, transformed the British gambling industry by pioneering the idea that you could bet on events, not just sporting contests. He made lots of money for his employer, the bookmaker Ladbrokes, including from never-going-to-happen wagers on the discovery of the Loch Ness Monster, UFOs and the like.

This expertise did not stretch, however, to third-party fortunes in British by-elections in the early 1980s. This benefited me greatly as I criss-crossed the country helping the then SDP/Liberal Alliance at by-elections. In the hard-fought Bermondsey contest of 1983, for example, I knew the initial 16-1 odds offered by Ladbrokes on the Liberal contender, Simon Hughes, were far too generous. A dirty campaign tainted our victory. But my joy in beating the bookies' judgment was unalloyed.

Now, as a parliamentary candidate myself, I'm a fervent foe of political betting in particular, and the ruthless and greedy gambling industry in general. True, working out odds is a useful mental discipline: it's at the heart of insurance and risk

management. Some games — poker and blackjack — reward this skill, and political betting on inside information can turn a hefty profit.

But gambling fouls everything it touches. Bets on man-made events stoke corruption. From exploiting your expertise to insider trading to abusing your influence are short and treacherous steps. Well-run sports ban their participants from betting. But the tentacles of gambling syndicates still seek to nobble players, a problem outlined in 2010 by Declan Hill in his jaw-dropping book on football, *The Fix*. Betting trivialises and corrodes politics too.

This monster was nourished by the Blair government's 2005 Gambling

My joy at beating the bookies was unalloyed, but victory was tainted

Act. The regulator (usually toothless) and well-lobbied politicians have been struggling to get a grip ever since. The industry tars its critics as killjoys. It downplays and dodges the costs it imposes on its victims and on the rest of society. These include: bad parenting, family breakdown, mental health problems, crime, unemployment and domestic abuse, as well as suicide. Preliminary findings published last year by the Gambling Commission show that 1.3 million people (2.5 per cent of the adult population) are dangerously affected by gambling with a further 11.5 per cent showing signs of harm.

Chris Sweeney drove this home to me. Now 38, he has lost, he

estimates, between £200,000 and £300,000 to his gambling addiction. He lives in the central London constituency I'm contesting and contacted me recently. "I'd lose all my money at lunch on payday and walk to work for the rest of the month. I've been kicked out of the house, not able to pay the bills — you can't have an honest relationship with someone when you are an addict," he told me. On the school run, he would even leave his young children waiting outside the betting shop, he recalls with shame.

Sweeney has spent years in clinics and support groups. But our current set-up puts the onus only on "problem" gamblers to sort themselves out. It soft-pedals the role of an industry that hooks us on dopamine highs, just as tobacco hooks us on nicotine.

Temptation is burgeoning unchecked. Game Nation, a self-described market leader in "slots clubs", says it has many venues that are open round the clock. "Who's gambling responsibly at 4am, who are they staying open for?" asks Sweeney. (I asked the company: no reply). As our high streets wither, such outlets survive and thrive, offering warmth, the semblance of companionship and even free refreshments.

My biggest beef is with the industry's toxic advertising. It spends £1.5 billion annually on, in effect, trying to hook new customers. Three quarters of the 18-24 age group (the most vulnerable because their brains have not developed fully) see gambling ads on social media at least once a week. One in four addicts

report that they started gambling with a "free bet".

Niche products such as betting on politics are designed to drag punters into this devastatingly addictive mainstream. Once you register for an online account and place even a small bet on some geeky contest, you will be bombarded with email and text advertisements offering "free bets" on the most addictive forms of gambling, such as the online slot machines and roulette wheels you can play on your phone. "They want you on the much more dangerous stuff," says Will Prochaska, a campaigner.

My Lib Dem colleague in the House of Lords, Don Foster, has published a supplementary election manifesto outlining much-needed reforms. It includes phasing out sports sponsorship, banning free bets, a compulsory levy to fund independent research and harm reduction, and a gambling ombudsman. Another idea is mandatory affordability checks on online gamblers who lose over £100 monthly. Limiting the stakes in the most harmful games and slowing them down would help too, as would giving local councils more licensing powers.

I would go further, changing the ineffective and sneaky wording at the bottom of gambling advertisements. This urges users to play "affordably, responsibly and enjoyably", with slogans such as, "When the fun stops, stop." But this tacitly pushes the line that betting is just another pleasurable hobby. I would like tobacco-type warnings, such as: "We always win in the end. You won't."



Show must go on by bringing back tax-free shopping

Sonia Friedman

Come Friday, whoever is in No 11, there's one thing to agree on: Britain needs growth and greater foreign investment. One piece of the puzzle lies in the entertainment business. If our new chancellor is kind to theatre and tourism, those joint national power houses can bring us more than a little of both.

In 2022 we enjoyed 16.4 million theatre visits, about a third by tourists. In simple terms, people come here and want to spend money. It's good for theatre, for restaurants and our retail industry, and it makes sense to do everything we can to help them do that.

Think about how we behave on holiday: last year, we spent €1 billion on EU tax-free shopping. So it was welcome news when, this year, the Office for Budget Responsibility announced it was reviewing the decision to scrap the VAT Retail Export Scheme, which allowed visitors from outside the EU to claim back VAT paid on certain goods.

The government's decision to abolish it in 2020 was hugely

Chancellor can offer a huge boost to theatre — and the economy

detrimental to our ability to attract visitors to the UK. We're now the only major country in Europe where international visitors cannot shop tax-free. Research from the Association for International Retail found shops had lost an estimated £1.5 billion of spending in 2022 alone as tourists chose to travel elsewhere.

It's estimated that reintroducing tax-free shopping and extending it to EU visitors would create a new tourism market worth £10 billion annually, with half that spent outside London.

It's straightforward: a boost for tourism means more jobs in the retail, hospitality and travel sectors, enabling them to contribute more to our country's growth. Annually, theatre generates £2.4 billion to the UK economy and for every £1 spent on a theatre ticket, £1.40 is spent in local communities. This means a boost not only to our economy, but for Britain's reputation as the ultimate destination for world-class theatre.

You can't be a producer without understanding whether something is a good, bad or risky investment. Scrapping the scheme has been a terribly short-sighted decision — a flop as we say in theatre. But, with the stroke of the pen in No 11, we can reverse that. Let's boost our world-leading theatre and entertainment, hospitality and retail sectors, which were hit so badly during the pandemic, and quite simply make a great investment in our country by bringing back tax-free shopping.

Sonia Friedman is a theatre producer

Helen Rumbelow Notebook

The one thing I am grateful to Tories for

If you think of being governed by the party of power as a relationship, this one has gone on well past the seven-year itch into something unpleasantly yeasty. So it's hard to look back at the faded political wedding pictures and remember how it all began, what we saw in each other; when the Conservatives, to misquote a young David Cameron, "were the future once". But I'd like to, because I am grateful for something in particular.

We went to the altar with the Tories back in 2010, with Michael Gove as Cameron's shiny-eyed best man in revolutionary mode as education secretary. Gove changed one little thing about the way children learn to read. They would each do a five-minute "phonics check" at the age of six. It sounds tiny, but it finally got schools to abandon their "muddle along" approach and help children learn to read by teaching letter sounds. And it

caught those kids slipping through the reading net.

It's what governments can be brilliant at: evidence-based intervention that helps everyone, but perhaps the most disadvantaged, and impacts a generation. If we search for positives of the past 14 years — hard to be rosy-eyed but still — the fact that English primary school children are now the best in the western world for reading has to be near the top. The phonics thing played no small part, and this, as a legacy, is no small thing. My son, aged six, had a spectacular car crash of a phonics check, which finally got him more help. As every relationship ends in sloppy drunk mangling an Abba song, "so I say, thank you for the reading, for giving it to me".

Picking holes

Moth infestations are shameful, like the household version of a sexually transmitted disease. I was mortified when, donating a bag of kid clothes to a friend, we both watched at a little fluttering emerging from the top. I hope she put the whole lot in the incinerator after I

left. After years of traps, dry cleaning and sprays, I wondered if I could style out moths as the mark of aristocratic distinction, wool rugs, cashmere jumpers and all that.

Until a friend told me about invisible parasitic wasps. They lay their eggs in the eggs of clothes moths, killing them. In the spirit of "my enemy's enemy is my friend", I bought three sachets. On arrival, I laughed. The wasps, so the company claimed, were 0.3mm. Who could say? The sachets had a tiny pinprick from which they would allegedly emerge. I'd fallen for a comedic con, like those celebrities who pay thousands of pounds for a "dress" when actually they parade down the catwalk nearly naked.

And yet: our moths are gone for the first time in a decade. Do I think it was the thousands of parasitic micro-wasps that flooded our airspace? Yes. Do I lie awake at night, fretting about the consequences of inviting in thousands of parasites that I have inhaled and may be laying eggs in my brain? Also yes. At least with the moths, I had them where I could see them.

They were only an inconvenience, eating holes

in my cardigan. Now I've created a terrifying invisible nightmare eating holes in my psyche.

Kids at heart

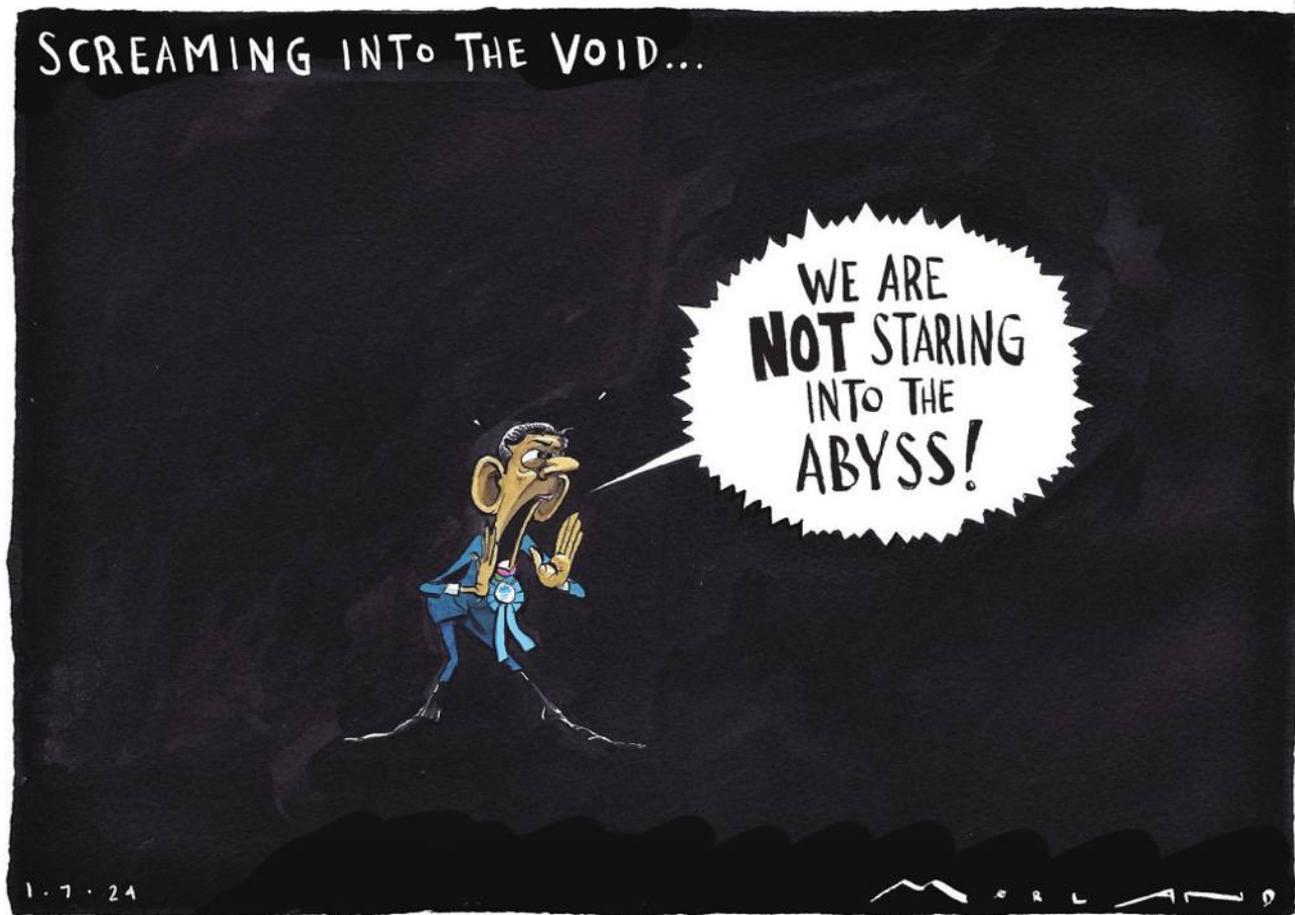
The fake gearboxes being introduced by electric car makers are intriguing: a toy you might give a child playing at being Mr Toad. Just as the crowd at Glastonbury apparently "lit up" after the eco-conscious drone show was over and the fireworks began. There is something deep in our souls that claps toddler hands at a smelly bang or vroom vroom, but why? It can't be a genetic evolution, there's no mammal that enjoys a thunderstorm.

Blasts from the past

Our household has just emerged from a double GCSE and A-level lockdown, with kids being fired at their proms like corks from a bottle. The style of dress — gowns and ties — is antiquated. It struck me that they're not aping America, they are cosplaying the past. Schools were once the place for "first experiences", now they are the museum repository of "lasts". Last time you'll use handwriting, last time you'll knot a tie, last time you'll be asked to memorise by rote, last time you'll live like it's 2010.

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It's a bit like 1997, but without the optimism

Reviewing how Britain felt on the brink of the previous Labour landslide is instructive — and embarrassing for some

Libby Purves



@LIB_THINKS

We have stood here before, poised at the crumbling edge of a long Conservative government, expecting a landslide. For some of us, Thursday night may feel uncannily familiar: in 1997 we had seen 18 invincible Tory years, Mrs Thatcher twice increasing her majority and John Major winning five more years. But on that May morning Labour's painful self-reform in opposition was rewarded by a majority bigger than any of Thatcher's. A tide had turned. Polls suggest history will repeat itself this week.

Nothing is exactly the same, of course. Major had beaten an internal challenge and his party's defeat was not accompanied by as intense a level of political, financial and sexual disgrace as we have today. Illegal roistering at No 10 followed by irresponsible budgeting was not that quiet man's style. But there are echoes all the same: a sense of shaking off grubby old clothes.

I have been wandering through the

Times archive remembering the mood music, the emotional response of us non-partisan floatable voters on both sides of that landslide 27 years ago. It's been an odd experience to read what I and others said: a journey of memory and cringe. Forgive some purple prose: they were emotional times.

Uncertain ones too. In the last days of April I wrote: "It isn't in the bag, don't be fooled... in this trade we like to pretend we know, but we don't." I was remembering 1992, when all the polls (and the man himself) wrongly predicted a Kinnock win for Labour. I suspected there were many humble Hamlets, picking up the pencil in the polling-booth still only half-certain. I noticed

Blair seemed young and shiny but Major appeared maudlin

how Tony Blair avoided using the unconditional future tense. I related a friend's worried opinion that though Tories were "bastards to the poor" they were also "great business people, they'll make the country rich — then we can afford social democracy later".

Everyone knew then, as they do today, that the leader and his shadows were untried in office.

During the "pendulum" years of 1964 to 1979, we had at least been able to choose between two sets of experienced ministers we'd watched at work. Stepping into the mist creates fear of monsters: like Sunak now, Major said "wake up to the danger!"

I reflected that floating voters might "hold on to Nurse, for fear of something worse" — who was this bloke Blair, anyway? But then they might shudder at Nurse's grim, scolding, too-familiar face (I notice I took a special dislike to the late Brian Mawhinney, for reasons I can't recall: that's politics for you). I sensed a murmur of "Dear God, not again... the Tories are the depressing party, a scribbled-over, dog-eared tear-stained exercise book of a party. Must we really go back over those crabbled pages?"

Blair seemed young, shiny, smiley, "with children, a bright kitchen and a keen-eyed sincere Christian urge to put the nation in a hot bath and give it a good scrub". Set against that Bambi innocence was only "John Major's maudlin watercolour hymns to his Brixton roots and his father's honest business failure, his dank aura of evening classes, Tizer, country cricket and old maids on bicycles". The year before, remember, an expanding Ikea cried "Chuck out the chintz!" in favour of the clean bland lines of Nordic socialist light. So

chuck out Granny Thatcher's nasty cracked old dinner set and doilies, redecorate with bright colours and blond wood, junk the Howards and Hoggs and Widdecombs like stained old brown furniture.

Many now in middle age remember boasting, on that May morning, that they were "still up for Portillo!" and saw Stephen Twigg looking like a schoolboy aghast, hardly believing he'd slain a dragon.

Giants fell, but there was often a

Parkinson said there might not be enough Tories for a squabble

kind of cleansing decency in their responses — more graceful, I suspect, than any we will get this Friday. Portillo was gracious and Cecil Parkinson, nagged by Paxman about the next lot of Tory party squabbles, gently replied: "There may not be enough of us by tomorrow to have a good squabble." And just as I headed at last for bed I saw John Major, that decent cricketer, at his constituency count laugh: "Oh all right, so we lost."

In the morning the young leader, whose flaws we did not yet know, walked through crowds in the sunshine, and my old-Labour neighbour observed dreamily: "There

is a new spirit of warmth and unity in the air today. I can tell this because I am feeling sorry for Michael Portillo." Next day we won the Eurovision Song contest with Katrina and the Waves singing, "Love, shine a light in every corner of the world". A foal born overnight was named Landslide.

The mood music did get a bit dotty: a Londoner said she was oddly shocked to see homeless people still on the streets that May morning, because "everything should have changed!" More soberly, an octogenarian friend, a D-Day veteran, emailed me: "*Nunc dimittis*. I could go happily now. My country feels younger and safer."

I doubt it will feel quite like that on Friday. Britain is even wearier now, more divided. What will be the same though is the sense I found in later writings under the headline, "Now for the bill". People who had prospered since Thatcher but quixotically voted for change did so not only for the sake of the poorest, but because it is frankly no fun to live on the middle-class island if all around you the waters are rising. No point in gated estates and paying private if the streets are not safe, ambulances late, hospitals crumbling, prisons toxic. We all knew we'd have to pay for it. Just hoped the new lot would reward our trust.

Letters to the Editor



Letters to the Editor should be sent to letters@thetimes.co.uk or by post to 1 London Bridge Street, London SE1 9GF



Vote for education

Sir, Fourteen years ago radical change spearheaded by an ambitious and determined Michael Gove brought new ways of teaching and running schools to our education system. Academies — including those in the Harris Federation — have been a central part of bringing a renewed focus on high standards, an evidence-led practice in teaching, and on the outcomes a school delivers rather than who runs it or how they like to teach it. The results speak for themselves.

Today the excellent start a good education provides is needed more than ever. But at this election it is no longer the Conservatives who are the party of high and rising standards, putting our children and their schools front and centre. Despite a merry-go-round of ministers in recent years, they are out of ideas.

I have watched with admiration as Sir Keir Starmer and Bridget Phillipson, Labour's impressive education spokeswoman, have set out Labour's stall. She gets teaching, knows that expanding and improving the teacher workforce and tackling the epidemic of mental ill health among our young people are both vital, and will focus on making schools better, not fiddling with how well-run schools are operating.

At this election the party for people who care about education is, as it was a quarter of a century back, Labour. The torch of change has passed.

Lord Harris of Peckham
Chairman and sponsor, Harris Federation; founder, Carpetright; House of Lords

Diet supplements

Sir, Poor nutrition and obesity in the UK are inextricably linked to deprivation. Consequently, while the commercial offerings of Professor Tim Spector — the expensive Zoe subscription, the M&S "gut shot" and this latest multi-supplement — undoubtedly appeal to the relatively affluent worried well, who can afford them, they are unlikely to have a beneficial impact on the nation's public health ("Can you really get your 30-a-week plant intake in one daily supplement?". Weekend, Jun 29).

To read that trial participants consuming this product reported an "improvement in energy", an endpoint that is difficult to quantify objectively, is perhaps unsurprising given that such trials cannot easily be blinded.

Seif Shaheen
Professor of respiratory epidemiology, Queen Mary, University of London

Corrections and clarifications

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Decision time for Democrats as Biden falters

Sir, In the wake of the TV debate between Joe Biden and Donald Trump, it is clear to all objective observers that the president needs to step down to make way for a younger candidate who will have a chance of winning in November (news, leading article, letter, Jun 29). This may not happen for a variety of reasons: Biden's "determination", the wheels of party procedure, a reticence among Democrats to "break ranks" or a state of denial. None of these or other reasons are weighty enough to justify not acting decisively before the Democratic convention in August. The alternative is a predictable election night with all the recriminations and post-factum regrets customary on such occasions.

Russell Phillips
Bury, Lancs

Sir, The excuses given by Democrats for not immediately replacing Biden — "his party has no process" (Janice Turner, comment, Jun 29) — sound weak and hollow. In 1990 Tony

ministers boldly told Margaret Thatcher her time was up. There seems to be no need for a process for senior Democrats to group together to tell Biden: "Joe, it is time to go now."

Richard Wellesley
London SW14

Sir, If Donald Trump is elected president again, he will be the same age as Joe Biden is now in his third year in office. Attention must be paid to the qualities of the proposed vice-presidents, and to what arrangements may be made in the event the winning candidate is found to be mentally incapable.

Simon Cockshutt
London W5

Sir, I couldn't disagree more with the general view of the debate. Elderly people often enunciate more slowly, but that does not mean that the brain is not keeping up, as it clearly was here. President Biden did not look particularly well, but was on top of his brief, quietly and comprehensively

dismantling the unstructured, often ridiculous, Walter Mitty claims of the other candidate, with fact after fact, and more telling blows on morality.

Peter Orwin
Mayfield, E Sussex

Sir, In his sketch (Jun 29) Will Pavia muses how the 1858 debates between Stephen Douglas and Abraham Lincoln would have sounded today. While Douglas looked unprepossessing, he had an eloquent and persuasive speaking style. Lincoln looked impressive but had an absurdly squeaky voice. If Lincoln had been obliged to take part in a TV debate it is doubtful he would ever have been elected to the presidency.

Russell Vallance
Helensburgh, Argyll and Bute

Sir, As Antony Blinken has won great respect for his mediating travels to the Middle East, perhaps he should be considered to replace President Biden.

Yvonne Craig
London WC1

Party or candidate?

Sir, Your correspondent (letter, Jun 28) states that he will vote for Sir Keir Starmer as "a new fresh contingent of Tories is needed". There are many hardworking Tory members of parliament who do not deserve to be thrown out with the bathwater. That is why, having considered the other local candidates, I will continue to support the Tory who has served my constituency, and the government, efficiently for more than 14 years.

Guy Fearon
Gasper, Wilts

Sir, Matthew Parris's injunction to vote Tory in order to keep "socialist" interference at bay may be all very well if his Conservative candidate is a serious-minded, thinking Conservative (comment, Jun 29). But they have been thin on the ground in recent years. Surely the best advice is to re-elect the incumbent (of whichever party) as long as they are pragmatic, honest and of sceptical mind. Otherwise boot them out in favour of someone who might just do better.

David Boorer
Y Fron, Carmarthenshire

Sir, Until the 1960s the ballot paper in a general election showed only the candidates' names, not their party affiliation. This was because you were

supposed to vote for whoever you thought would best represent you in parliament, rather than a political party. Candidates' flyers and leaflets told you about the individual and what they stood for. If you wished to vote for a specific party, then you at least had to know which party the candidate supported.

Now, most of the flyers that drop through the post box tell you about the party, and possibly give you the name of its nominated candidate in your constituency, but give you absolutely no details at all about the candidate, their experience of life or why they are suitable to represent you in parliament.

Robin Garside
Weston Turville, Bucks

Sir, It is timely to note the speech given by Edmund Burke to the citizens of Bristol in 1774. It emphasises the need for an MP to exercise their judgment based on what they believe is best for their constituents rather than surrendering their opinion to the party line. They represent the people of their locality rather than being an electoral delegate of their party in that place. Dated perhaps but with relevance now. Many of us face the dilemma of having a good local MP belonging to a party we don't support.

David Andrew Rees
Cheltenham, Glos

Political honesty

Sir, Matthew Parris gives a useful reminder to political leaders that they cannot avoid the inevitabilities that await them (comment, Jun 29). Any leadership is about taking decisions, and decisions are about trade-offs. You raise someone's pay, you lose money that could have gone to others. Even postponing a decision means you gain peace of mind but lose time and progress. I wish that leaders were more honest with us. We would respect them more.

Deep Sagar
Berkhamsted, Herts

Sunak and racism

Sir, My heart goes out to Rishi Sunak and anyone who suffers racist abuse ("My children hear the abuse, PM tells Farage", Jun 29). However, it is one thing to call out racism when you and your family are subjected to it, and another to take action when someone else is the target. He would be on considerably firmer and higher ground had he returned substantial donations to his party from Frank Hester, who said that Diane Abbott should be shot and that she made him want to hate all black women.

Will Holdaway
London SE15

REGRETTABLE FENCING INCIDENT

FROM THE TIMES JULY 1, 1924

A regrettable incident marked the opening stage of the final pool in the Olympic Games foils team matches at the Velodrome d'Hiver this morning. France was drawn against Italy and Belgium against Hungary. The French team was captained by M Lucien Gaudin, the great French amateur, about whom there is little to be said except that he is incomparable. He has gone through the whole series of foils team matches so far without losing an assault and with very few hits scored against him. There is always great rivalry between the French

and Italian schools of fence, and the meeting attracted a large number of spectators. The first round ended in favour of France by three victories to one. M Gaudin then faced Signor A Boni, and a desperate encounter followed. Attacking with all the impetuosity which distinguishes the Italian method of fence, S Boni held his own with the great French amateur. When he was still level with M Gaudin at four all and only one more hit to go, the Italian supporters in the audience were delirious with delight. The fight for the last hit was watched breathlessly. After some fine, but ineffective phases, M Gaudin attacked on the full lunge, but S Boni was too quick for him, and, parrying the attack, sent in a quick riposte. Instead of parrying the riposte as he should have done, M Gaudin hit his adversary on the chest with a remise. The Italians yelled with delight that victory was won. The judges, however, decided that S Boni's riposte

did not reach the target and that M Gaudin's remise was good. He was declared the victor by 5-4. When the judges' decision was announced it was received with howls of protest, and the Italian fencers joined in the tumult. They declined to continue the match and left the hall surrounded by their friends, singing Fascist hymns. This withdrawal from the match is a serious contravention of the Olympic Games rule that any competitor who feels aggrieved must continue to the end and lodge his complaint with the committee afterwards. The penalty is exclusion from the Games. It has been decided to exclude the Italian team from further participation unless a letter of apology and regret is received from the captain of the Italian team tonight.

THETIMES.COM/ARCHIVE

Designing homes

Sir, Richard Morrison can expect support for criticising our built environment (Times2, Jun 28; letter, Jun 29). But his targets are not the cause. Today's new homes are a function of land price and local affordability. He references sketches of Edwardian façades used in recent electioneering. Such buildings cost more to develop than their value outside Kensington, which he notes they mimic. When built, their land cost was a fraction of construction cost and developers competed on the quality of their product for residents who put prestige before price. Today land and construction cost are approaching parity and a developer accesses land through minimising construction cost and design fees. There are still good housing schemes built, often where the land deal is more nuanced than "highest price wins", and these are recorded in the 76-year-old national Housing Design Awards. Sadly the scarcity value of land makes charmless design the economic model for many new homes.

David Birkbeck
Chief executive, Design for Homes; director, Housing Design Awards; honorary fellow, RIBA

Seaside donkeys

Sir, I totally support John Nuttall in ensuring overweight children are excluded from riding his donkeys ("Scaled at seaside for donkey riders", news, Jun 29). He has the welfare of his animals to consider. If parents do not wish their children to be weighed, there are plenty of other interesting things to do in Cleethorpes. As for Katharine Jenner, of Obesity Health Alliance, may I suggest she gives obese children piggy-backs along the seafront and see how far she gets.

Christopher Westlake
Bridgwater, Somerset

English in Paris

Sir, Ann Treneman is surprised to find the French friendly (Notebook, Jun 29). I am more surprised every time I read about "unfriendly" Parisians, or indeed the French in general, because during 28 years of living either in Paris or only eight miles from the Arc de Triomphe, and working in Paris for 15 of those years, I encountered true unfriendliness only twice, despite my English accent identifying me every time I opened my mouth.

George Hart
Rickmansworth, Herts

Heckler tackled

Sir, Surely the prix d'honneur for deft heckler-crushing (letters, Jun 26, 27 & 29) must go to the late Jacques Chirac who, faced with an arm-waving objector loudly abusing him as a "connard", stuck out his own arm and said with magisterial simplicity: "Enchanté, moi, c'est Jacques Chirac."

Simon May
Kingston-upon-Thames, Surrey

Motor memories

Sir, Your report (news, Jun 29) that some manufacturers are fitting electric cars with fake gear shifts reminds me of my first Mini 1970. Showing my father its transverse engine, he remarked that I was mad buying a car with no starting handle.

Ralph King
Loughirst, Northumberland

Daily Universal Register

UK: Wimbledon tennis tournament begins; Nationwide releases latest house price index. Belgium: Hungary assumes presidency of the Council of the European Union.

Nature notes



It is the end of the flowering season for man orchids, which bloom later in the UK, at the northern edge of their range, than in the

Mediterranean. This curious species is extremely rare in the UK but is spotted occasionally, usually on short, chalky grasslands. When one turns up it often causes a stir on social media because of the extraordinary shape of the lower lips of the greenish-yellow flowers, which resemble tiny human torsos, heads hidden, limbs dangling down. Like all orchids, they have a complex symbiotic relationship with mycorrhizal fungi that is not yet fully understood. It is likely to be why they need undisturbed and unimproved soil, and why they are rarely spotted. MELISSA HARRISON

Birthdays today



Carl Lewis, pictured, athlete, nine-time Olympic gold medalist, 63; Pamela Anderson, actress, *Baywatch* (1992-97, 2017), 57; Leslie Caron, actress, *Gigi* (1958), 93; Sir Wayne

David, Labour MP for Caerphilly (2001-May 2024), 67; Rosie Duffield, Labour MP for Canterbury (2017-May 2024), 53; Malcolm Elliott, sprint cyclist, two-time Commonwealth Games gold medalist (1982), 63; John Ellis, theoretical physicist, Clerk Maxwell professor of theoretical physics, King's College London, 78; Sir Vernon Ellis, chairman, British Council (2010-16), 77; Trevor Eve, actor, *Waking the Dead* (2000-11), 73; Iain Ferguson, chairman, Crest Nicholson (housebuilder), 69; Lord (David) Filkin, former Labour minister, 80; Carl Fogarty, motorcyclist, four-time superbike world championship winner, 59; Prof Dame Julia Goodfellow, molecular biologist, 73; Jasset Ormsby-Gore, Lord Harlech, government whip (lord in waiting, HM Household), 38; Debbie Harry, singer, *Heart of Glass* (1979), 79; Dame Julia Higgins, polymer scientist, emeritus professor and senior research investigator, Imperial College London, 82; Mark Hunter, rower, Olympic gold medalist (2008), 46; Prof Sir David Lane, scientist involved in discovering the cancer gene, 72; Richard Lloyd, deputy chairman, Financial Conduct Authority, chairman, Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority, 59; Jean Marsh, actress and co-creator, *Upstairs, Downstairs* (1971-75, 2010-12), 90; Toshihiro Mibe, president and chief executive, Honda Motor Company, 63; Victoria Miro, director, Victoria Miro galleries, London, 79; Stephen Neidle, emeritus professor of chemical biology and Cancer Research UK professorial fellow, UCL School of Pharmacy, University College London, 78; Daniel Ricciardo, racing driver, 35; Alan Ruck, actor, *Succession* (2018-23), 68; Garry Schofield, rugby league player, England (1984-95), 59; Léa Seydoux, actress, *No Time to Die* (2021), 39; Twyla Tharp, dancer and choreographer, 83.

On this day

In 1867 the British North America Act created the dominion of Canada.

The last word

"I would rather dance as a ballerina, though faultily, than as a flawless clown." Margaret Atwood, novelist, *Lady Oracle* (1976)



Muddled Middle

The Liberal Democrats present a confused programme on economic, fiscal and foreign policy. Such a lack of realism ought to cost the party electoral support

It is not impossible the Liberal Democrats will this week emerge as the official opposition owing to an implosion of Conservative support. It is therefore germane to examine what the Lib Dems espouse. Whereas the party's campaigning under Sir Ed Davey has rested heavily on stunts, its programme neither bears scrutiny nor evinces seriousness.

Liberalism, in the broad philosophical sense, holds that perfect social arrangements are unattainable and tough choices inevitable. You would not know this from the Liberal Democrats' manifesto, which insinuates that all good things are readily compatible. Hence the section on the economy says: "Liberal Democrats would invest in renewable power and home insulation to drive a strong economic recovery, bring down energy bills and create clean, secure, well-paid new jobs."

Combating climate change is urgent but the notion this is also the route to Britain's economic renaissance is less clear. Effective and timely action would require importing equipment such as domestic heat pumps, notably from China. There is no reason this would create new UK jobs in clean energy, or that a shift in Britain's energy mix to renewables must automatically bring bills down.

Wishful thinking pervades the party's pledge to "fix the UK's broken relationship with Europe and

tear down the Conservatives' damaging barriers to trade". By definition, Brexit involves barriers to trade, with a countervailing benefit of greater regulatory sovereignty. The notion that the costs can be removed just by being nice to EU governments is risible. Not even the Lib Dems' policy of seeking to rejoin the single market would overcome these. Norway belongs to the single market yet accepts much EU regulation and has had anti-dumping duties imposed on exports of farmed salmon.

The Lib Dems say they would "manage the public finances with the utmost care and responsibility". It turns out they will rely on "fair" taxes, enabling them to raise additional revenues of £27 billion by the end of the next parliament, levied on banks, tech companies and energy companies, in addition to cracking down on tax evasion.

This is fantasy. Taxes on companies are always ultimately paid by individuals, in the form of higher prices or curtailed investment programmes. The Lib Dems also propose a tax on corporate share buybacks, a breathtakingly naive idea given that quoted companies would avoid it by paying higher dividends to shareholders, and thereafter finance themselves by debt rather than equity issuance. The party also commits itself to maintaining the "triple lock" on the state pension

and that "women born in the 1950s are ... properly compensated" — a genuflection to the preposterous idea that raising and equalising the state retirement age for men and women is an injustice.

On foreign policy, the picture is also confused. Cross-party support for Nato and Ukraine is a good thing. The Lib Dems rightly state that Russian aggression underlines the need for Britain to have an independent nuclear force with "four submarines providing continuous-at-sea deterrence".

Yet this is a new position and Richard Foord, the Lib Dem defence spokesman, has written that the party's "previous plan to move down from continuous deployment should remain a credible option for UK leadership on nuclear disarmament". This makes a nonsense of the party's commitment to an independent deterrent. If Britain lacked a continuous capability, it might have to launch a submarine from dry dock in a crisis to guarantee it could still strike back. This would exacerbate tension rather than reinforce deterrence.

The quality of the Lib Dems' thinking on security policy is of a piece with the rest of their programme. Across domestic and foreign affairs, the party is a force for insularity and unreality. There are scant positive reasons why it should gain support in this election from its existing low base.

Iranian Apathy

Despite voter disillusionment, Iran's presidential election is a consequential moment

Turnout on Friday for the first round of voting in Iran's snap presidential election was dismal. Just 40 per cent of those eligible participated: the worst showing since the revolution of 1979. Such palpable disillusionment will register as a rebuke to Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who intervened on polling day to insist a high turnout was an "absolute necessity" if the nation was to retain its "honour and dignity in the world".

Such hectoring rhetoric reflects a growing sense of internal crisis in the regime. After three years of ruthlessly hardline government, Friday's snap poll was triggered by the sudden death, under somewhat murky circumstances in a helicopter crash, of former president Ebrahim Raisi. His legacy was a damaging one. Iran's middle classes have been hit hard by a cost of living crisis amplified by the cumulative effect of sanctions. Inflation sits at 40 per cent, as Iranian authorities print money to attempt to escape the effects of a shrinking oil trade. Political repression has come to be epitomised by 2022's brutal crackdown on the protests that followed the death of a 22-year-old woman detained by the morality police for violating Iran's

strict dress code. Swathes of the electorate, especially the young, are alienated by the apparent impossibility of reform from within; many express their resignation by declining to vote at all.

In spite of this, this week's run-off appears to offer a stark choice. Though the political selection process remains tightly controlled, in an apparent attempt to boost participation the Guardian Council approved the candidacy of Masoud Pezeshkian, a reformist. On Friday he topped the poll, though with 42 per cent of the vote he fell short of the 50 per cent threshold required for outright victory. Mr Pezeshkian's strong performance has introduced an element of unpredictability to the race and will have unsettled regime hardliners. An outlier among a slate of more reactionary candidates, he has sharply criticised the violence of the morality police, signalled his desire to negotiate an end to the western sanctions that are presently crippling Iran's economy, and indicated that should he be elected social reforms such as the easing of strict online censorship might follow.

Mr Pezeshkian's ability and inclination to bring reform to the Iranian regime should not be over-

stated. The power of the presidency is notably circumscribed by that of the supreme leader, to whom Mr Pezeshkian, like all presidential candidates, has pledged loyalty. Mr Pezeshkian has performed impressively in marshalling his supporters: in advance of his two-week campaign he was not widely known. But there is every chance that the run-off will see support coalesce around his hardline opponent, Saeed Jalili, a regime stalwart who won 38 per cent of Friday's vote.

Should Mr Jalili prevail, the opportunity for managed domestic reform and a restoration of some measure of wider international stability could quickly expire. Stoking regional tensions is a favoured displacement activity of the Iranian regime. The ailing health of Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, now 85, and the challenges of managing his political succession, might provide another future catalyst for turmoil. A second Trump presidency could foreclose any chance for international compromise, and Iran's growing isolation spur it on in developing a nuclear arsenal. Last Friday's vote was inconclusive; this week's could prove crucial in shaping an increasingly hazardous future.

Brit Pack

The next generation of young British thespians is set to take centre stage in America

The British accent has always been a familiar sound in Tinseltown. Though the stereotype may be that the UK's thespians are chiefly booked for character roles and camp villains, the truth is that British acting talent remains some of the most versatile and commercially bankable in Hollywood.

Though the term "Brit Pack" may have been coined to refer to a loose group of actors who came of age in the 1980s — among them Colin Firth, Gary Oldman and Rupert Everett — there has never since then been a shortage of young stars waiting in the wings to join the scene. Over the last two decades Emily Blunt, Carey Mulligan, Keira

Knightley and Kate Winslet have all made their mark in America; likewise, Tom Hiddleston, Tom Holland, Henry Cavill and Benedict Cumberbatch have become the linchpins of Hollywood's multibillion-dollar superhero movie franchises.

The streaming boom, and the accompanying explosion in demand for high-production-value TV series, has aided and abetted the British invasion. The global reach of platforms like Amazon Prime and Netflix means that the arrival of an unexpectedly binge-worthy hit can make reputations on both sides of the Atlantic. Among those poised to crack the American market are Ella

Purnell, star of Amazon's *Fallout*, and Olivia Cooke, star of HBO's *House of the Dragon*.

While British actors enjoy the advantage of a shared native language, their edge over the American competition seems to be acquired at drama school. The strong theatrical tradition, and emphasis on stage technique and vocal training, mean the UK's acting schools remain some of the most demanding in the world. No comparable tradition exists in America, whose elite stage schools can also be ruinously expensive. So long as high standards prevail, it seems likely British theatrical talent will continue to upstage the competition.

World

Democracy has spoken with

France

Adam Sage Paris

President Macron was humiliated yesterday as the hard-right National Rally recorded a historic victory in the first round of snap parliamentary elections in France.

Marine Le Pen's movement was predicted to have polled about 34 per cent of the vote, ahead of the leftist New Popular Front (NPF) on about 29 per cent. Macron's centrists were on 22 per cent, according to the first results.

The Elabe institute predicted that the Rally would win between 260 and 310 seats after the second round next Sunday. It needs 289 MPs for an absolute majority, which would enable Jordan Bardella, 28, its chairman and candidate for prime minister, to form the first hard-right government in France since the Second World War.

The institute forecast between 115 and 145 seats for the NPF and between 90 and 120 for Macron's Ensemble camp which had 245 MPs in the outgoing parliament.

However, pollsters said predictions should be taken with caution given that

Exit poll results

Vote share

Hard-right National Rally

34.2%

Left-wing New Popular Front

29.1%

Emmanuel Macron's allies Together

21.5%

Source: IFOP first estimates

at least three candidates have made it through to the second round in more than half of France's 577 constituencies.

Macron, who once vowed to eliminate the populist right, issued a desperate plea for voters to stop it taking power. "In the face of the National Rally, the time has come for a broad, clearly democratic and republican [coalition] for the second round," he said.

However, Le Pen, 55, who was elected as MP in the first round of the election in her Henin-Beaumont constituency in northern France, said Macron's camp had been "virtually wiped out".

"Democracy has spoken," she said, adding that voters had shown "without ambiguity their desire to turn the page after seven years of a scornful and corrosive [presidency]".

She said the second round would be "decisive to give Jordan Bardella an absolute majority in the National Assembly to... put the country back on the rails and re-establish national concord". She added: "We need an absolute majority to ensure that Bardella is named as Macron's prime minister in eight days' time."

Bardella sought to portray the second round as a head-to-head confrontation between his Rally and the NPF, which he claimed would bring "disorder, insurrection and the ruin of our country". In a pitch for mainstream voters, he said the Rally alone could protect France against the leftist extremists of the NPF, which is running on a programme that includes pledges to cut the state pension age from 64 to

Brussels may suffer fallout

Analysis

When he was elected in 2017 President Macron promised to turn France into a reliable partner for its fellow members of the EU (Adam Sage and Bruno Waterfield write). "We will restore the confidence of Europe and of the rest of the world in our country," he said.

It has not worked out that way. Macron, 46, threatens to go down in history as a head of state who has sapped trust in France after his decision to call snap parliamentary elections underlined widespread disaffection with Brussels.

He dissolved the National Assembly after the victory of the populist right National Rally in last month's European elections. Macron believed that the outcome would be very different when voters were asked to pick their MPs.

He was wrong.

Radicals on the right and left were triumphant in the parliamentary elections, to push France towards what many commentators are calling its "Brexit moment".

Diplomats in Brussels can now envisage only two outcomes, neither of them reassuring for the bloc. The first is a populist-led cabinet, the second a deadlocked parliament that makes France ungovernable.

Yesterday more than 33 per cent of voters backed the National Rally, a movement which, despite having dropped pledges to pull France out of the EU and the eurozone, remains on a collision course with Brussels. The party has outlined demands for a €2 billion rebate from the EU, plus exemptions on European VAT and electricity price policies.

On the other side of the spectrum, 29 per cent of French voters chose the New Popular Front (NPF), a left-wing coalition that includes the radical France Unbowed party, which wants to "revise" EU treaties so they respect the

"sovereignty of peoples".

The coalition's programme, involving €150 billion of spending commitments over three years, could place the euro under unprecedented strain. Given that France has been censured by the European Commission for its budget deficit of 5.1 per cent of gross domestic product, it is hard to see how such plans could be implemented without provoking historic tensions between Paris and Brussels.

The next week will witness horse trading before the second round on Sunday. Will leftwingers side with Macron's camp to block the populist right? Will Macron's supporters throw their weight behind the left? Will centrist voters swing towards the populist right on the grounds that France Unbowed is more unpalatable than the Rally?

For the EU, the elections boost parties that challenge its status quo. France and Germany are the foundation stones of the EU's functioning. If France becomes ungovernable and hostile to the EU, Brussels could grind to a halt.



Marine Le Pen in Henin-Beaumont where she was elected MP in the first round;

Q&A

How do the two-round elections work?

Voting for the 577 seats in the National Assembly takes place over two rounds unless a candidate wins a seat outright in the first round with more than 50 per cent of the vote. This rarely happens and the two leading candidates in each seat usually face off in the second round, next Sunday. But any candidate who wins more than 12.5 per cent of the vote qualifies and there are sometimes three-way run-offs. This may offer President Macron's candidates hope of avoiding the humiliation of being knocked out in the first round, which is often seen as a chance to make protest votes. Traditionally, moderate voters of different political persuasions join forces in the second round to block a hard-right or far-left party, which could now occur, even if French politics is increasingly polarised.

What if the National Rally wins a majority? It would form a government and Macron would have to share power. It would be the fourth "cohabitation"

between a president from one party and a government from another since the Fifth Republic was founded in 1958. Domestic policymaking would be in the hands of a hard-right government but Macron would retain control over foreign policy and defence. However, the new government could block his policies, for instance on Ukraine, by refusing to provide funding.

What happens if no party wins a majority? If Marine Le Pen's party wins the most seats but falls short of an absolute majority, as most polls predict, Macron could find himself presiding over a hung parliament. The Rally has said it would refuse to form a minority government. The EU's top military power and second-largest economy could then suffer extreme political instability that could weaken the bloc and diminish France's support for Ukraine. The president could seek a broad-based coalition government but this appears unfeasible given France's sharp political differences. Another option would be a government of technocrats unaffiliated with political parties, but it would still need to be approved by a majority at the National Assembly.

60, to increase the minimum wage by 14 per cent and to raise state spending by €150 billion in the next three years.

Bardella said: "I plan to be the prime minister of all French people."

A victory for the Rally would plunge France into an uneasy cohabitation between the pro-European Macron, who has pledged to stay on as president whatever the outcome of the parliamentary election, and the right-wing Eurosceptic Bardella.

The hard-right party has never done so well in elections since it was founded in 1972 by Le Pen's father, Jean-Marie.

The Rally, which had 89 seats in the outgoing parliament, is certain to see the number increase in the next one. Yet it is by no means certain of obtaining the absolute majority it needs.

Jean-Luc Mélenchon, 72, the leader of the France Unbowed party, the most radical component of the NPF, signalled that its candidates would drop out of the race in constituencies where they had finished third.

The move will increase Ensemble's chances of winning seats, and make it harder for the Rally. Macron's camp said it would pull out in favour of moderate leftist candidates, although not for those with the France Unbowed

label. The horse trading means there is a distinct possibility that no party will be able to form a government.

That would leave Macron facing parliamentary chaos for the remaining three years of his term of office, with the legislative process grinding to a halt. If that is the outcome, it seems certain he would face pressure to resign. Whatever happens in the second round, Macron's camp admitted that it had no hope of forming a new government.

The president, 46, called the parliamentary election after his camp was trounced in last month's European elections. Macron thought voters would make different choices in the parliamentary election, swinging behind his coalition.

He has repeated the same message since coming to power, when he promised his policies would leave voters "with no reason" to pick the Rally. This time, however, his words fell on deaf ears. The highest turnout for a parliamentary election for more than four decades did not result in Macron's party benefiting in a significant way. Instead left-wing voters threw their weight behind the NPF to stop the Rally, while right-wingers backed the Rally to block the NPF. Macron's centrists were squeezed.

Biden consults family as pressure grows to quit election race
Page 29

All aboard the night train as Swedes opt for guilt-free travel
Page 30

Macron 'wipeout', says Le Pen

Rally jubilant but shops close shutters amid protest fears

David Chazan Paris

Waving French flags and cheering, hundreds of jubilant National Rally activists welcomed the first results at Marine Le Pen's northern constituency headquarters as a decisive turning point on the party's path to power.

Defending her seat in Hémin-Beaumont, a former mining town in the Pas de Calais, Le Pen achieved an outright victory with more than 50 per cent of the vote in the first round. Because of this, she will be one of the few candidates who will not have to contest a run-off next Sunday.

Le Pen proclaimed the high turnout as making the result more conclusive, claiming the vote had "practically wiped out" the centrist Ensemble alliance of President Macron.

Despite the celebrations in Hémin-Beaumont, party activists had hoped for an even better result that would have set the Rally securely on course for an absolute majority rather than leaving open the possibility of a hung parliament.

Jordan Bardella, Le Pen's young lieutenant, has said he would refuse to form a minority government that could too easily be toppled by a motion of no-confidence if other parties were to band together.

Le Pen herself will stand aside to prepare a presidential run in 2027. She said those warning that the National Rally was a threat to hard-won democratic rights were trying "to perpetuate a system that has failed. No French citizen will lose any rights. On the contrary, rights will be guaranteed."

Bardella, speaking in Paris a few minutes after Le Pen, sought to allay fears of political instability if he becomes prime minister while President Macron stays in office in a power-sharing arrangement known as "cohabitation".

He told some 300 journalists assembled at a reception hall near the Champs-Élysées: "I intend to be a prime minister in cohabitation, respectful of the constitution and the function of the president of the republic, but intransigent on the policy we will implement in the service of France."

Bardella attacked the New Popular Front, the left-wing alliance that came second, according to projections, as an "existential threat" to France that would bankrupt the country and "throw open the gates to

immigration". Since Le Pen took control in 2011 of what was then the National Front from her father Jean-Marie, a Holocaust denier, she has detoxified and rebranded the party. She has transformed it from a fringe group tainted by antisemitism, racism and its roots in the wartime Vichy regime that collaborated with the Nazis, into a possible leader of the next government.

Critics, however, say the party's makeover is only cosmetic. As Bardella arrived in the Paris suburb of Garches to cast his ballot, a woman screamed at him: "It's shameful!" He shrugged off the incident, saying: "They even invited the leftists."

As rumours spread on social media that ultra-leftwingers were planning violent protests against the election results, some shops and banks in Paris, Lyons, Rennes and other cities boarded up their windows.

An Apple store in central Paris and numerous clothing outlets erected barriers to protect their shopfronts from being vandalised. Many were badly damaged by the anti-government *gilets jaunes* (yellow vests) protests during Macron's first term in office, and pension protests after his re-election in 2022.

Yesterday's election result showed that Le Pen and Bardella have succeeded in making the party palatable to voters who would have shunned it under her father's leadership.

Over the past week left-wing and centrist candidates repeatedly pointed out that the National Rally's ranks once included former members of a Waffen-SS military unit under Nazi command during the Second World War. The attacks appear to have made little difference to voters, however.

Le Pen has skillfully channelled discontent over the high cost of living and a lack of public services in rural communities and small towns, and Bardella has succeeded in attracting women and younger voters with a slickly orchestrated social media operation.

One thing Le Pen has not moderated, however, is its core message of hostility to immigration and the "Islamisation" of French society.

The National Rally has a history of ideological and financial links with President Putin. Bardella said he would use his powers as prime minister to block the supply to Ukraine of long-range missiles and other weapons capable of striking Russian cities.



President Macron casts his vote in Le Touquet-Paris-Plage; and a selfie with Jean-Luc Mélenchon, leader of France Unbowed

Profile

Jordan Bardella, the National Rally candidate to become prime minister, may be running on an anti-immigration platform but he grew up in a family of largely immigrant origin (Adam Sage writes).

Only one of his grandparents was born in France and she was half-Algerian. The others arrived from Italy in the 20th century. One has converted to Islam, it has been reported.

Bardella, 28, spent his childhood in a council estate in the troubled Paris suburb of Drancy, where he was brought up by Luisa, his mother, after she separated from Olivier, his father, when he was young. The populist says his modest

background helps him understand the difficulties of ordinary families. He often highlights his Italian roots, which are seen as acceptable in the Rally. The movement tends to portray the Italians who crossed the Alps to work in France in the first half of the 20th century as "good immigrants" who have assimilated French culture and customs — a narrative that ignores the antagonism and sometimes the violence that greeted them at the time.

The party contrasts these immigrants with the Muslims who arrived from north Africa before and after decolonisation, whom it portrays as having failed to integrate. This may explain why

Bardella is less loquacious about his great-grandfather on his father's side, Mohand Séghir Mada, who arrived from the Kabylie region of Algeria, then a French colony, to work in the textile industry in the 1930s. Today, his journey would be more complicated if the Rally gets its way. The party wants to cut net legal immigration from about 180,000 a year to 10,000, including by scrapping a deal giving preferential treatment to Algerian visa applicants.

Mada married a French woman, with whom he had a daughter, Réjane, the only one of Bardella's grandparents who was born in France. Réjane Mada then married Guerrino Bardella, an

Italian immigrant, but they divorced. Following the break-up, Guerrino Bardella, the populist leader's grandfather, went to Casablanca, where he married a Moroccan woman, according to *Jeune Afrique*. The magazine said that because the wedding took place in Morocco, Guerrino Bardella converted to Islam beforehand, Moroccan law stipulating that one of the country's citizens cannot marry a non-Muslim.

The revelation has provoked intense discussion on social media, notably because the Rally's programme includes policies denounced as anti-Muslim, such as a ban on wearing hijabs in public.

Jordan Bardella has won over female voters



World

Kim on a pin is new fashion must-have

Officials in North Korea are wearing badges bearing the face of Kim Jong-un for the first time in an sign of the increasingly intense cult of personality developing around the supreme leader (Richard Lloyd Parry writes).

Photographs on state media taken at the plenary session of the Workers' Party of Korea, which reviews the party's achievements in the first half of the year, show cadres wearing the badges on their left lapels.

All North Koreans are obliged to wear a badge portraying the Kims but these were always images of Kim's late father and grandfather: Kim Jong-il, whom he succeeded in 2011, and Kim Il-sung.

The badge comes after a new song in praise of Kim Jong-un was broadcast in the spring, accompanied by a video of citizens singing his name and praising the "bright future" he promises.



A North Korean official wearing the badge featuring the portrait of Kim Jong-un during a key meeting of the Workers' Party of Korea

Bomber with baby on back hits wedding

Nigeria
Kate Bartlett

A female suicide bomber with a baby strapped to her back detonated explosives at a wedding party in Nigeria's Borno state before a funeral for the victims and a hospital in the same town were also attacked.

At least 18 people were killed and dozens injured in the series of attacks suspected to have been carried out by the terrorist group Boko Haram, although the Islamist group did not immediately claim responsibility.

The funeral for 15 people killed in the wedding blast in Gwoza on Saturday was attacked on the same day, claiming three more lives. Another attack, also by female suicide bombers, occurred at a hospital in the town, which is near the border with Cameroon. The dead are understood to include children and pregnant women.

Experts say jihadist groups are increasingly using girls and women to carry out detonations and smuggle weapons. Oluwole Ojewale, a Nigeria analyst with the Institute of Security Studies in South Africa, said: "It speaks to two things; one the vulnerability of those women in the first place to be recruited, and secondly ... the prevailing culture and religious sentiment in the region does not make room for searching of women so ... that makes it easier for women to perpetrate these crimes."

Kyiv generals 'send troops on suicide missions to tick boxes'

Ukraine
Marc Bennetts, Kateryna Malofieieva
Kyiv

Ukraine will struggle to drive out Russia's invading army without sweeping changes to rid its military of Soviet-style generals who are coldly indifferent to the lives of ordinary soldiers, a prominent MP has said.

"I'm fighting for changes in this culture to help us achieve victory," Mariana Bezuhla, the outspoken deputy head of the Ukrainian parliament's defence and security committee, told *The Times* in Kyiv.

Bezuhla has been mired in controversy since last year when she accused General Valery Zaluzhny, the gruff military leader who was widely seen as a national hero, of lacking a plan to defeat Russia. Zaluzhny was later dismissed as commander-in-chief by President Zelensky. Bezuhla is now among the fiercest critics of General Oleksandr Syrskyi, Zaluzhny's replacement.

Both generals, she said, differed little from their Russian counterparts in their attitudes, which she described as "sovok," a slang word that means a Soviet-style mindset. "In this case, it's even worse," she said. "It's a degraded, hybrid version of Sovietism, with corruption and nepotism. They are very rigid in their thinking. One of the main problems of this culture is a disrespect for truth. When something bad happens, they always try to cover it up. If you talk about genuine problems, you come under pressure."

Ukraine's top generals were feted for holding back Russia's invasion in 2022,

but complaints about their tactics and attitudes to troops have become more frequent since Kyiv's failed counter-offensive last year and Moscow's recent advances in the east of the country.

Bezuhla also accused some generals of sending soldiers on suicide missions just so that they could file reports stating that attempts had been made to recover areas that were seized by Russian forces. "Generals can order military administrative officials, military cooks or others without the proper training to try to regain positions. But they know they cannot do this and that they will die. They do this simply so that they can tick the right boxes," she said.

As Russia achieved a recent breakthrough close to the town of Toretsk, General Yuriy Sodal, who oversees ground forces in eastern Ukraine, was socialising with friends at a restaurant in Odesa, 450 miles to the south, Bezuhla wrote in a social media post. Some reports say he was celebrating his son's graduation from military academy. "He was drinking in another city while his soldiers were dying," Bezuhla said. She had previously called Sodal a criminal and a butcher. She and other critics have also accused Sodal of failing to organise the defence of Mariupol in 2022, as well as tactical errors that allowed Russia to advance in the Kharkiv region this year.

Sodal was dismissed last Monday shortly after stinging criticism by a well-known officer from the Azov brigade, one of Ukraine's most respected fighting forces. Although he did not mention Sodal by name, Major Bohdan Krotevych said on Telegram that he

had filed a complaint to Ukraine's state bureau of investigation concerning "a military general who in my opinion has killed more Ukrainian soldiers than any Russian general".

Zelensky removed Sodal hours after the online post and replaced him with General Andrii Hnатов. Bezuhla welcomed Sodal's dismissal, but said that his removal should be followed by a deeper shake-up of the military, including the replacement of Syrskyi. "Sodal is just a part of the system, a part of the wider problem," she said.

Her comments were echoed by Olek-



Mariana Bezuhla is scathing about Ukraine's General Oleksandr Syrskyi

sy Herman, a Ukrainian army officer, who said Sodal was not the only general to have thoughtlessly sacrificed Ukrainian troops. "[This] is an unprincipled Soviet format of warfare where the life of a soldier or officer is worth nothing," he wrote on social media.

In place of old-school generals, Bezuhla said, Ukraine needed quickly to promote brigade commanders whose experience of the conflict with Russia since 2014 has given them the vital skills to adapt swiftly to battlefield realities.

Zelensky, a former

actor with no military experience, initially had no choice but to trust the judgment of established generals, she said. "But now his vision is also more and more in favour of how to organise innovation in warfare and decision-making, rather than relying on reports from old-style generals."

Bezuhla, who served as a military doctor in eastern Ukraine during battles with Russian forces in 2015, was elected to parliament after standing as a candidate with Zelensky's Servant of the People party. She quit her membership this year after a row over her criticism of Zaluzhny, but remains a member of its parliamentary faction. She continues to support Zelensky.

Shortly after Russia's invasion, she travelled to Poland in a delegation to persuade Warsaw to donate old Soviet T-72 tanks, artillery and other equipment. The talks were tough and Bezuhla went on hunger strike for 76 hours until Poland agreed to provide the arms.

Her fearlessness has prompted suspicions that she is a mouthpiece for the presidential office, which she denies. "She acts independently, but at the same time she reflects the mood within the presidential office, as well as in some groups within the military sphere," Volodymyr Fursenko, a political analyst, said.

"She is ready to tear chunks out of Zaluzhny and Syrskyi and anyone else for Zelensky; it's possible that they appreciate her for this in the presidential office."

Top Russians fall for Nazi poetry hoax

Russia
Tom Parfitt

When a poet from Moscow began posting flowery online tributes to President Putin and patriotic "Z poetry" in support of the war in Ukraine, Russian politicians were quick to show their approval.

Soon the accounts of at least 100 members of Russia's lower house of parliament and 30 senators had friend-ed Gennady Rakitin on social media, where the 49-year-old linguist had a moody black-and-white portrait.

One of Rakitin's works, *The Leader*, was dedicated to Putin and began: "You are like a gardener who harvests the fruits of his heavy labours ..." Another popular poem was about an unnamed serviceman dying heroically at the front. The title of *The Faceless PMC Soldier* referred to private military companies such as the Wagner group that fought for the Kremlin in Ukraine.

However, Rakitin does not exist and his oeuvre consists of work by Nazi poets from the 1930s and 1940s translated into Russian and slightly adapted.

Andrei Zakharov, a journalist, revealed that a group of people he knew who opposed the war in Ukraine had created the phoney poet, apparently to expose the hypocrisy of Russia's ruling class. Rakitin's image, Zakharov said, was generated by AI. *The Faceless PMC Soldier* is the Nazi songwriter Heinrich Anacker's *The Faceless Stormtrooper*.

The phoney poet signed off with a final ditty on Vkontakte, the Russian social media site, contradicting previous gung-ho posts: "Gennady long derided/The Z-verse on his wall/In the end, he decided:/'F*** the war."



Biden meets family as pressure mounts to quit election race

United States

Will Pavia New York

President Biden was cloistered at Camp David with his family yesterday amid the continuing fallout from his debate performance and signs that a growing number of Americans think he is unfit to hold office.

Nearly three quarters of voters now think that Biden lacks the "mental and cognitive health" to serve as president, according to a YouGov poll for CBS News published yesterday.

The poll was conducted in the 48 hours after Biden's tottering performance on a debate stage in Atlanta as his campaign fought to reassure donors and the president himself offered more energetic speeches at a rally in North Carolina and at fundraising events in New Jersey and New York.

"I didn't have a great night," Biden told supporters mustered at a home in the Hamptons on Saturday, who appeared prepared to overlook the fact that he confused Italy for France in the same speech.

His campaign team circulated polling data suggesting that other potential candidates in his party, including Kamala Harris, his vice-president, or Gavin Newsom, the governor of California, would not perform better against Trump.

"The bedwetting brigade is calling for Joe Biden to 'drop out,'" Rob Flaherty, Biden's deputy campaign manager, wrote in an email to supporters, warning that "if he were to drop out, it would lead to weeks of chaos, internal foodfighting, and a bunch of candidates who limp into a brutal floor fight at the convention."

The polling guru Nate Silver tweeted that figures he cited actually showed other candidates performing similarly to Biden "despite being much less well-known, which generally tends to depress your polling ... That this is the best talking point they can come up with indicates how poor their argument is."

Biden's motorcade pulled into the presidential retreat at Camp David in Maryland yesterday morning amid mounting pressure from erstwhile allies for him to step aside. The New



The Bidens head for Camp David. The first lady is said to be the only person with "ultimate influence" on his choice

Fit for office

Has mental and cognitive health to serve as president?

(Change in opinion since June 6, 2024)

Biden

Does 27% (-8%)

Does not 72% (+7%)

Trump

Does 50% (0%)

Does not 49% (-1%)

CBS poll June 28-29, 2024. Source: CBS

York Times columnist Thomas Friedman, who described himself as a longstanding friend of the president, said he had been "ready to give Biden the benefit of the doubt up to now, because during the times I engaged with him one on one, I found him up to the job. He clearly is not any longer."

The editorial board of The Washington Post urged him to spend the weekend doing "what many Americans are doing ... wondering whether he is up to the job", while The New York Times and the Atlanta Journal Constitution called on him to make way for another candidate. NBC News reported that Biden would be considering the future of his re-election campaign with his family at Camp David. It cited a source who said that this was not "a formal or determinative discussion" and another who said that "the only person who has ultimate influence with him is the first lady."

The White House said the report was inaccurate. The gathering at Camp David was to take a family photo, an official said. "It's been on the schedule

for weeks. There is nothing more to it"

Donald Trump, for his part, continued to revel in the fallout from the debate while suggesting that the Democrats should not seek to replace Biden. Other potential candidates "wouldn't have done any better", he told supporters in Virginia.

Several of Biden's allies on Capitol Hill also insisted that the president would stay the course. Jim Clyburn, a congressman from South Carolina credited with helping Biden win his party's nomination in 2020 by marshalling support among black voters, told CNN that Biden may have suffered in the debate from "preparation overload".

Biden also received help from Barack Obama, who said on social media that "Bad debate nights happen. Trust me, I know" — a reference to his own lacklustre, though not disastrous performance in a first television debate against Mitt Romney in 2012.

Obama joined Biden at a fundraiser in New York on Friday evening, one of a series of events where his campaign attempted to portray him bouncing back from a bad night.

But several of those present were said to have told Democratic members of Congress attending the event to pressure Biden to step aside, according to The New York Times. The paper also reported that some present were blaming the campaign for agreeing to the format for the debate, or to a start time that was so late in the evening.

In the Hamptons on Saturday, Biden acknowledged the "editorial" in The New York Times urging him to stand down. But he added that the same editorial had noted that Trump "lied 28 times in a matter of 90 minutes". He said that "voters had a different reaction than the pundits. Since the debate, polls showed a little movement, and we've moved us up, actually."

At an event in New Jersey, Biden recalled undergoing a procedure after an aneurism, in 1988. A doctor gave him a 30 per cent chance, he said. "Well that's good," Biden told the doctor. Afterwards, the doctor "said: 'You know your problem, senator?' He said: 'You're a congenital optimist.'" Decision time, letters, page 24



Feeling Lo A tense-looking Jennifer Lopez was seen in Los Angeles on Saturday amid reports that her husband, Ben Affleck, had moved out of their Bel Air home

Eagle checks in for legal battle over Hotel California lyrics

Will Pavia

The lyrics for the Eagles' album *Hotel California* were written by Don Henley and Glenn Frey on five pads of notepaper in the mid-Seventies.

The notes have since been passed on to a writer, a bookseller, two dealers in rock'n'roll memorabilia and finally to Manhattan prosecutors, who treated them as stolen property and lodged a criminal case that collapsed.

Now Henley, 76, has filed a lawsuit for the notes' return. His claim, filed against the collectors Edward Kosinski and Craig Inciardi, maintains that the lyric sheets were stolen. He has asked a court to declare him the lawful owner of the notepaper. Frey died in 2016.

Inciardi, a curator of the Rock & Roll

Hall of Fame, and Kosinski, the founder of a music memorabilia auction site, deny the claims. Stacey Richman, counsel for Inciardi, said the lawsuit "perpetuates a false narrative", and he described Henley as a "bully".

The musician has been seeking the return of the notes since 2012 when four pages were offered for sale on Kosinski's auction site.

He says in court papers that he rented a house in Los Angeles with Frey from 1975 to 1976 to work on *Hotel California*. He writes that he put down their ideas on five yellow legal notepads.

The album, released in December 1976, is third on the list of bestselling American records. Henley says he kept the notepads in a converted barn at his farm in Los Angeles County, where he

had an office and a storage area full of boxes of his papers.

He says that in 1979 Ed Sanders, the poet and author, was hired to write a book about the Eagles. Henley says he allowed him to visit his barn to push him "to focus on the band's songwriting". A housekeeper put some papers into boxes, which were sent to Sanders' home in Woodstock, New York state. Henley says a contract with the

Hotel California is third on the list of American bestsellers

writer specified that the manuscript and any materials provided would remain the property of the band.

In 2005 Sanders sold the papers to Ed Horowitz, a book collector, who traded them on to Kosinski and Inciardi.

To the surprise of many observers, prosecutors in New York brought a criminal case against Horowitz, Kosinski and Inciardi, alleging that they sought to obscure how the papers came into their possession.

The case collapsed in March, midway through a criminal trial, when Henley waived attorney client

privilege and released 6,000 pages of communications with his lawyers.

Prosecutors dropped the case because the defence had received the new evidence midway through the trial, after key witnesses had testified.

Judge Curtis Farber said attorney-client privilege had been used to "obfuscate and hide information" from prosecutors and the defence. Henley maintains in his suit, which repeats many of the claims from the criminal case, that prosecutors believed the documents "strengthened" the case.

Shawn Crowley, counsel for Kosinski, accused Henley of being "desperate to rewrite history". He said his client would bring a lawsuit against the musician "to hold him accountable for his repeated lies".



World

New cover-up at the Vatican (of tattoos)

Vatican City

James Imam Milan

The Pope has ordered Vatican workers to cover up body piercings and tattoos in an attempt to keep up appearances before an estimated 35 million pilgrims turn up next year.

The new rules state that staff at St Peter's Basilica should hide visible piercings and tattoos "in respect of decorum and work environments".

They were published on Saturday as the Vatican gears up for next year's Jubilee, when worshippers from around the world will descend on the Italian capital to ask for remission from sins.

The rules apply to staff of the Fabbrica di San Pietro — or St Peter's Workshop, which oversaw the construction of the basilica from the 16th century onwards — including the *sampietrini*, whose carpenters, blacksmiths, plumbers and bricklayers maintain the iconic place of worship today. The rules contrast with some of the Pope's past pronouncements. In 2018 he told young believers: "Don't be afraid of tattoos ... tattoos indicate belonging."



Riverdance A dancer at the Boi Bumba festival in Parintins, Brazil, which celebrates Amazonian culture with songs, costumes, parties and musical performances

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Swedes wake up to joys of midsummer night trains

From our correspondent
Alex Maxia

Taking the sleeper train north through Sweden at this time of year can be a peculiar experience: the closer you get to the Arctic Circle, the brighter are the summer nights, to the point where you can seldom see the stars out of the window.

The country's night routes, which had for many years fallen out of favour in the age of budget airlines, are now struggling to cope with a surge in summertime demand thanks to a mixture of nostalgia, relatively affordable prices, a trend for more leisurely travel and *flygskam* or "flight-shame" at the environmental effects of aviation.

On the 12-and-a-half-hour journey from Umea, a city in the northwest, to Gothenburg on the southwest coast, Sandra and her three children are taking their first night train together, alighting in Stockholm to get another connection to the island of Gotland. "It's like an adventure," she said.

Sverke, who is buying chocolate for his own kids on the way home to Gothenburg, said they had been "euphoric to see they had their own [sleeping] compartment where they can play games".

Yet not everyone is happy. The services are now so popular that they are frequently overcrowded and often booked out months in advance, particularly the route between Stockholm and Berlin via Copenhagen, which was revived in 2018. A ticket for a seat between the two capitals costs £37, while a single bedroom with shower costs about £340. On the way up to

Umea, the train was so full that I was only able to secure a seat.

The return journey, in a communal compartment of six bunk beds, was a little more comfortable, although there are more luxurious options with three beds and a shower, unfortunately sold out.

"I couldn't sleep," said Gunilla, a pensioner polishing off her breakfast in the bistro carriage. "But my fellow passengers in the compartment are nice, so I would recommend it."

However, Isabelle, a nurse from Umea returning to Gothenburg, where she grew up, said the trains were so congested that she would fly instead if she could afford to, despite her concerns about emissions. "This time I chose [the night train] because it was cheaper," Isabelle said. "It's hot and overcrowded, and not super-cheap either."

SJ, the Swedish state-owned rail company, says its night trains used to carry an average of 500,000 passengers a year but now have to accommodate 900,000.

"A couple of years ago, few wanted to take night trains. The market was extremely slow," said Christer Litzell, business manager at SJ. "The trend changed after 2014 and increased until the pandemic, when it decreased again. We are soon catching up to these levels." Asked why the trains

Compartments with bunk beds are often sold out as demand surges

are so popular, Litzell said: "It is perceived as a very pleasant and environmentally friendly way to travel. Night trains are efficient, as you travel while sleeping and save on a hotel night in some cases."

These days the sleeper services between Sweden and Germany, which are run by SJ and a smaller private start-up called Snalltaget, are especially overwhelmed.

Litzell said SJ would like to add more carriages but had run up against finicky Danish regulations and strict financial rules in Germany. Unlike Sweden, which subsidises the night trains during the winter months when they are less profitable, Berlin makes

passengers pay their own way. "It's tricky to have a very long route [via Germany] operated on a commercial basis, especially during wintertime," said Litzell.

A German official said night trains were already charged much lower track-usage fees than other kinds of rail traffic and it was a long-standing principle that private railway operators had to support themselves without public subsidies. They acknowledged that these fees were being driven up by the strain on Germany's "heavily overloaded" railway network after years of underinvestment.

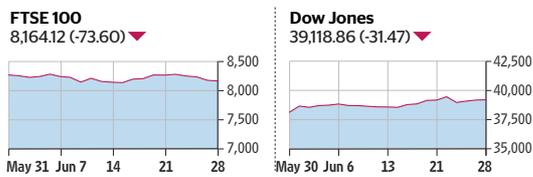
"In 25 years' time we could build another couple of lines and then see whether [the fees] are cheaper," the official said. "But I don't think that's going to help the Swedes now."

Additional reporting by Sabine Schu in Berlin

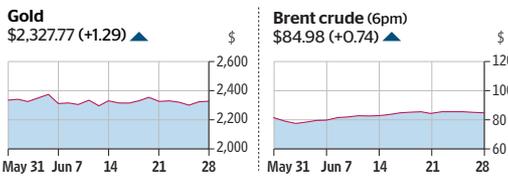


Business

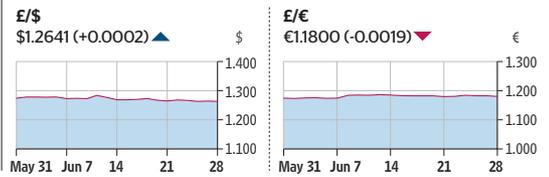
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COMMODITIES



CURRENCIES



City law firm launches anonymous 'microaggressions' hotline

Jonathan Ames Legal Editor

A City law firm claims to be the first legal practice in the country to have launched a "microaggressions" hotline for anonymous staff reports of "interactional bias". Hogan Lovells said it had created an "anonymous channel to log incidents", including perceptions of bias related to gender, race, sexual orientation and disability.

The move has triggered criticism of

"woke tokenism" and suggestions that bosses are aiming at "re-education" or are seeking to cover the firm's own liability in the face of potential constructive dismissal claims from junior lawyers.

Senior partners at the firm said it had teamed up with InChorus, a technology platform that is promoted as allowing staff to report "bullying, harassment and non-inclusive behaviours [through a] multi-channel

platform" that can be embedded into workplace systems such as Microsoft Teams and Slack.

Microaggressions — such as referring to a mixed-gender group as "guys" or asking a colleague with an ethnic minority background where they are "really" from — were said to be "subtle, often unintentional, behaviours or comments that convey negative assumptions about a person's identity or background". Other examples cited

relate to sexual orientation, age and disability.

The anonymity of the process will worry some critics that it could be used unfairly to settle scores. Commentators on Legal Cheek, a website aimed at junior lawyers in the City, lambasted the move as "Orwellian" and "woke tokenism". One said: "Can't wait to tour the Hogan Lovells special re-education centre." Others speculated that the anonymous hotline was little more

than a measure to cover partnership liability. "What's the initial acknowledgement when you submit your complaint?" one commentator asked before speculating that the response would be: "Thank you for assisting us in safeguarding the partners from a constructive dismissal claim."

Hogan Lovells is ranked as one of the 15 highest-earning law firms in the world, with revenues in 2023 of about £2.1 billion.

Pension fund opens door to private equity

L&G to invest workplace schemes in illiquid assets

Patrick Hosking Financial Editor

Millions of employees saving in workplace pension schemes are set to have their money put into illiquid, unlisted assets for the first time with the announcement by Legal & General of a new fund capable of handling billions of pounds.

L&G, which operates workplace pension schemes for employers including Tesco and NatWest, said that its new fund would feed savers' cash into private equity, private debt and infrastructure — asset classes largely denied to pension savers.

It said the fund would "unlock private market access" for 5.2 million members of modern defined-contribution schemes and would help to meet its Mansion House Compact pledge to put up to 5 per cent of assets in private equity.

The fund will have a substantial bias towards the UK, with an aim of placing 30 per cent to 35 per cent of employees' savings in British assets, a much higher level of UK exposure than the weighting of as low as 4 per cent in conventional listed share portfolios.

Both the Conservative and Labour parties have announced plans to try to divert more pension fund money into productive British assets, with some experts calling for mandatory UK allocations.

L&G said that the ambition of the fund, to be called the L&G Private Markets Access Fund, was to attract £500 million of savers' money by the end of this year, £1 billion to £2 billion by the end of 2025 and then to "grow exponentially from then on". Pension schemes run by London Stock Ex-

change Group and EDF, the French energy company, have already expressed an interest, while dozens more are potential customers, including L&G's own staff pension scheme.

L&G is one of the biggest so-called master trusts, used by employers auto-enrolling staff into pension saving. It also operates single company schemes. Other employers using L&G for staff pensions include Marks & Spencer, Kingfisher and Greggs.

Rita Butler-Jones, head of defined-contribution pensions at L&G, said: "We've seen a very strong appetite across employers we've spoken with." She added that the move was "a significant milestone for UK pensions" and "a game-changer for DC pensions".

Until now, high fees and the illiquidity of unlisted shares and other private assets have deterred many defined-contribution pension schemes from shifting members' money into such hard-to-value assets. Investment consultants say savers could be missing out because these assets generally have produced higher returns in the long run than listed securities and so in theory could deliver larger pension incomes.

Nest, the government-backed pension scheme for auto-enrolled employees, has put the pensions of most of its 13 million members into some private assets by embedding the asset class into its default investment mix. The L&G approach is understood to be the first to use a separate fund capable of being dramatically increased.

The Treasury has said that a 5 per cent allocation to private equity could boost the nation's pension incomes by up to 12 percentage points, a claim met with scepticism by many experts.



Bank bets on debutant being ripe for shorting

Shares in Raspberry Pi, the maker of microcomputers, are being shorted by the asset management division of JP Morgan barely three weeks after it was listed on the stock market. The stock has risen by 43 per cent since going public. Page 33

Boots chief sees his future with Veonet

Tom Saunders

The outgoing boss of Boots is set to run Veonet, one of Europe's largest chains of ophthalmology clinics and the owner of SpaMedica in Britain.

Sebastian James will leave Boots in November and will join Veonet soon afterwards, according to Sky News, which first reported the story. Markus Hamm, the present Veonet chief executive, is retiring but will remain on its board.

Veonet owns more than 275 clinics in five countries, carrying out about 2.7 million ophthalmological procedures and more than 500,000 eye surgeries every year. It is owned by PAI Partners, the private equity group, and the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan, of

Canada, which acquired the business in early 2022 from Nordic Capital, another buyout firm.

James, 58, is leaving Boots after Walgreens Boots Alliance, its parent, decided for the second time in two years against selling or floating the pharmacy chain. Walgreens, the American retail powerhouse, has owned Boots since 2014.

According to The Sunday Times, James would have been willing to run Boots as a listed business, but, with the prospect of a float off the table, he decided to accept an offer elsewhere.

Before his appointment at Boots, James had worked with Dixons from 2008, seeing through what ultimately turned out to be a disastrous merger with Carphone Warehouse. His plans

for Boots were derailed by the pandemic, which had a significant impact on the high street-orientated business. At the time, the pharmacy chain faced heavy criticism for withholding rent from its landlords.

Under his leadership, the company has leaned into its more profitable beauty business, opening its first "beauty only" store in Battersea Power Station, south London, last year. At the same time, the company has shut 300 outlets. Last week it reported like-for-like sales growth of 6 per cent in the third quarter thanks to strong online sales. Last year its pre-tax profits jumped by 42 per cent to £237.6 million.

Veonet and PAI did not respond to requests for comment. Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan declined to comment.

Business

Need to know

1 Millions of employees saving in workplace pension schemes are set to have their money put into illiquid, unlisted assets for the first time with the announcement by Legal & General of a new fund capable of handling billions of pounds. **Page 31**

2 Sebastian James, the outgoing boss of Boots, is set to run Veonet, one of Europe's largest chains of ophthalmology clinics and the owner of SpaMedica in Britain. **Page 31**

3 Hogan Lovells, the City law firm, claims to be the first legal practice in the country to have launched a "microaggressions" hotline for anonymous staff reports of "interactional bias". **Page 31**

4 The economy is poised to grow more rapidly than initial forecasts, indicating that Sir Keir Starmer will inherit more stable conditions should Labour win the general election. GDP growth is set to rise to 0.5 per cent this year from 0.1 per cent last year, according to new forecasts from KPMG.

5 Up to 23 million people in Britain are said to have low levels of financial literacy after respondents to a survey struggled to answer basic questions about savings and investment. In a report for Abdrn, the investment group, there was found to be a level of ignorance or confusion that would make it difficult for people to take even the most simple decisions about managing their money. **Page 34**

6 The boss of Ineos Energy has said it will prioritise expansion in the United States and Denmark rather than in Britain, contrasting the UK's uncertain fiscal regime with greater stability offered by policymakers overseas. **Page 34**

7 The Falkland Islands has asked its residents whether it should back a scheme to extract up to 500 million barrels of oil from the Sea Lion field, 150 miles to the north of the isolated Atlantic territory. **Page 34**

8 After at least 23 demonstrators died in Kenya during nationwide protests against government plans to increase taxes, President Ruto was forced to withdraw his finance bill. But the focus has not been solely on the government in Nairobi: the International Monetary Fund has been thrown into a reputational crisis, with Kenyans honed in on the fund's role in demanding measures to stabilise public finances. **Page 36**

9 A leading shareholder of Britvic has called on Carlsberg to improve the terms of its takeover bid for the soft drinks group. Aviva said that although there would be benefits from a combination of the two companies, the most recent price on offer was too low. **Page 37**

10 Des Gunewardena, who spent three decades at Conran Restaurants and D&D London, will announce plans today for a £10 million restaurant, bar and events space at Olympia in west London. **Page 37**

Can the next government really tap into £40bn tax gap?

Jack Barnett
Economics Correspondent

Possibly more so than in any general election in recent history, there's little that divides Labour and the Conservatives on fiscal policy. Both parties have ruled out increases to the taxes that generate the bulk of the government's revenues, namely income tax, national insurance and VAT.

There is speculation that Labour will look to boost the public finances through tweaking the capital gains regime, but there is a consensus between Labour and the Tories in thinking that there is about £6 billion to be had, mostly through clamping down on tax avoidance.

Essentially, both parties have put at the heart of their fiscal plans efforts to narrow the so-called tax gap, the difference between what the government raises via taxes in reality and what it should raise in theory. According to HM Revenue & Customs, that difference stands at a chunky £39.8 billion, about £10 billion greater than the entire transport budget. Labour has promised to inject £855 million into the HMRC budget to cut tax avoidance, while the Conservatives have suggested that they, too, will increase resources for the tax office.

Although it does play a part, tax avoidance — not to be confused with tax evasion, which is illegal — represents only a small share of the wedge of missing revenue, responsible for only £2 billion. According to Dan Neidle, the founder of Tax Policy Associates, the think tank: "We can say with some confidence that neither Labour nor the Conservatives can raise £6 billion from clamping down on tax avoidance, because there probably isn't £6 billion of tax avoidance."

Stuart Adam, senior economist at the Institute for Fiscal Studies, argued that

"it is plausible that the next government could raise some revenue by further reducing the tax gap. But it is easier said than done. And it is not victimless."

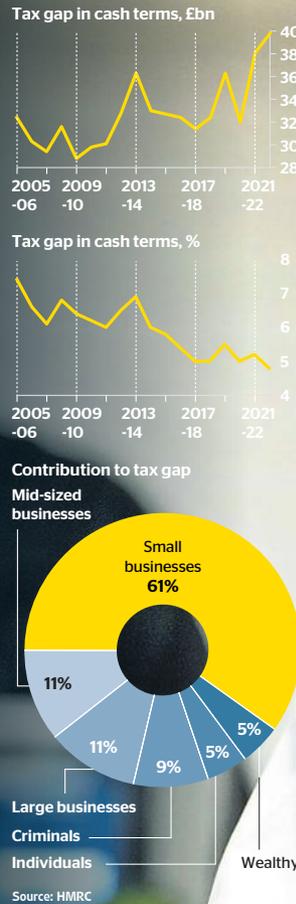
"There can be downsides and risks. For example, of placing more administrative burdens on taxpayers who are doing the right thing in order to stop those who aren't. And none of the parties highlights the fact that, on HMRC's figures, most of the tax gap comes not from big businesses and the wealthy but from small businesses and the self-employed."

One area where the Conservatives can point to making progress since 2010 is in driving down the tax gap. According to the Office for Budget Responsibility, the fiscal watchdog, £6.7 billion per year of additional revenue has been yielded from more than 200 measures launched by the Conservatives over the past 14 years to tackle tax non-compliance. As a share of all theoretical revenue that the government should take in, the tax gap has fallen to 4.8 per cent in 2022-23 from 6.4 per cent in 2009-10. In cash terms, it is at the highest level since at least 2005-06, but that is mainly owing to high inflation over recent years.

That the tax gap as a share of all theoretical revenue has fallen as the overall tax burden has increased markedly demonstrates that the tax office has become more effective at collecting revenues. Efforts have been made to improve its digital filing system to make it less burdensome for individuals and businesses to declare tax.

For a long time, VAT led the way as the tax where the government could be more efficient at collecting revenues, but this trend has reversed, at least in part. Underpaid VAT receipts now represent 4.9 per cent of potential income from the tax, compared with 13.7 per cent about two decades ago. As a share

Out of reach



of the tax gap as a whole, income tax and national insurance lead the way, not least because pretty much every working person is liable to pay them. However, corporation tax has risen up the rankings, helped by Rishi Sunak increasing the headline rate to 25 per cent from 19 per cent in his March 2021 budget. Corporation tax now represents 34 per cent of the entire tax gap, the same share as income tax, national insurance contributions and capital gains tax combined.

The key culprit for that missing corporation tax revenue is small business. In fact, HMRC estimates that the corporation tax gap for the sector stands at 32.2 per cent, compared with 6.7 per

cent for mid-sized firms and 2.9 per cent for large companies.

"Small business is a hard nut to crack," Neidle said. "It's a difficult political sell. It's also not entirely clear why the small business tax gap is so large."

Stephen Relf, technical manager in taxes at the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, said that the incoming government would need to simplify the tax system "as it is far too complicated and HMRC figures suggest that smaller businesses struggle to cope with it, consequently making unnecessary errors and mistakes".

The most common behaviour exhibited by businesses and individuals that lead to the tax take being lower than an-

Central banks warned over inflation

Meheen Khan Economics Editor

Record global debt and growing government deficits pose a new inflationary risk for a fragile world economy, the Bank for International Settlements has warned.

The annual report from the "central bank of central banks" calls on governments to "avoid adding stimulus" that would worsen inflationary dynamics and it urges authorities urgently to "prioritise budgetary consolidation".

"The priority... is to consolidate with clear-eyed and firm resolve. This would relieve pressure on inflation, even if in the near term any removal of lingering energy and food subsidies would raise prices. More importantly, it would pave the way for the arduous long-term task of ensuring the sustainability of public finances," the BIS said. "Laying a more solid foundation for the future is as difficult as ever. It is an arduous task that requires a long-term view, courage and perseverance."

The warning comes in the run-up to

elections in Britain, France and the United States. Investors have begun raising borrowing premiums in some countries over fears of unfunded spending plans and an increase in borrowing. These concerns are most pronounced in France, where parties on the hard right and left are campaigning for tax cuts and fiscal loosening in a two-round parliamentary election that concludes on July 7.

After the pandemic, much of the global economy had emerged with "historically high levels of private and public debt and drastically reduced monetary and fiscal policy headroom", the BIS said.

The stock of global debt has hit a record high of \$313 trillion, driven by increases in America, France and Germany, according to figures from the Institute of International Finance.

The US has one of the largest budget deficits in the world at just under 7 per cent of GDP, after it embarked on bold industrial policies designed to weaken China's grip in green technology supply

chains and to achieve its climate targets.

Fiscal expansions helped to cushion households from the worst effect of the energy crisis in 2022-23 and helped to limit consumer prices inflation. However, continuing expenditure now risked worsening inflationary pressures, the BIS said.

"Fiscal trajectories represent one of the biggest threats to macroeconomic and financial stability in the medium to longer term. In some cases, fiscal policy is still adding stimulus to the economy, acting at cross-purposes with monetary policy. Absent consolidation measures, debt ratios are set to climb over time, even in a scenario in which interest rates remain below the growth rate of the economy."

The BIS said fiscal policy threats and "financial vulnerabilities have not gone away". It also pointed to the possibility of another jump in energy and commodity prices, which could "encourage and entrench inflation psychology" among businesses and households.

Debt interest bills pile up for companies

Ben Martin Banking Editor

The surge in interest rates has sent the debt servicing costs shouldered by companies worldwide to a record high of \$458 billion.

The amount spent by businesses on the interest on their bond and bank debt climbed by 24.4 per cent on a constant currency basis in the year to the end of June, according to Janus Henderson Investors, the fund management group.

Debt servicing costs are at record levels in all countries tracked by Janus Henderson, including in Britain, where they jumped by 29.6 per cent year-on-year. Net debts at British companies also had edged up by 3.2 per cent to \$484 billion, the fund manager said. It singled out Anglo American and



Jeremy Hunt has helped the Conservatives to cut the tax gap since 2010

anticipated is a "failure to take reasonable care", which essentially means that those liable for a certain tax have failed to follow the rules, often unintentionally. Experts claim that businesses and households accidentally underpay their tax owing to the severe complexity of Britain's tax system. The larger the web of taxes that people have to navigate, the greater the likelihood that they will fall foul of their liabilities.

Amanda Tickel, head of tax and trade policy at Deloitte, said: "The most obvious actions seem to be twofold: to significantly simplify the tax system, while also introducing more measures targeted at helping small businesses to work out and disclose their taxes to HMRC.

Glencore, the listed miners, as having made "the largest impact, as both borrowed significantly to fund dividends and share buybacks as operating cashflow fell due to less favourable market conditions". It said Vodafone was Britain's most indebted business.

The research lays bare the burden that higher borrowing costs are exerting on companies' finances. The Bank of England's base rate has gone from a record low of 0.1 per cent in late 2021 to a 16-year high of 5.25 per cent, while the US Federal Reserve, the world's most powerful central bank, has increased its borrowing costs to a range of 5.25 per cent to 5.5 per cent. While it had taken time for these higher rates to feed through to companies, the impact of sharply elevated borrowing costs "has now really begun to bite", Janus Henderson said.

In its fifth annual corporate debt index report, the fund manager found that higher debt servicing costs had eaten up 12.4 per cent of companies operating profits in 2023-24, an increase from 9.2 per cent a year earlier.

Volkswagen, the German carmaker, was the world's most indebted company with net borrowings of \$196 billion.

For example, making it easier to contact HMRC for advice."

Improving the service that HMRC provides is also essential. A recent report by the National Audit Office found that the tax office answered only two thirds of calls in the first 11 months of last year. The average wait to speak to an officer was 23 minutes. More officers could change this dismal record.

Ultimately, Labour and the Conservatives have pledged to strengthen public services or to lower taxes with theoretical money raised by cracking down on tax avoidance. It is a shaky strategy. Both parties essentially are spending funds before they have even been earned.

UK growth 'will be faster than forecast'

Jack Barnett

The economy is poised to grow more rapidly than initial forecasts, indicating that Sir Keir Starmer will inherit more stable economic conditions should Labour win the general election on Thursday, as expected.

GDP growth is set to rise to 0.5 per cent this year from 0.1 per cent last year, according to new forecasts from KPMG, the consultancy. The 2024 growth rate was revised up from 0.3 per cent in the firm's previous projection.

The economy is predicted to expand by 0.9 per cent in 2025, helped by a series of cuts to interest rates by the Bank of England as inflation eases. KPMG said the Bank's base rate could fall towards 3 per cent next year from its present 5.25 per cent, a 16-year high.

KPMG said that the economy was "turning a corner" after sputtering since the pandemic began in 2020. Severe inflation, rising interest rates and a leap in the cost of living caused by higher global energy prices after Russia's invasion of Ukraine have constrained economic growth.

Yael Selfin, chief economist at KPMG UK, said: "Political uncertainty will now resolve sooner with a summer election and a potential fiscal event in the autumn, setting out the new government's economic agenda. This could be aided by gradual cuts in interest rates, which look likely despite a small rise in inflation above its target expected later this year."

Inflation has fallen to the Bank's 2 per cent target for the first time since July 2021 and last week the Office for National Statistics upwardly revised its estimate for first-quarter GDP growth to 0.7 per cent, from 0.6 per cent previously. The Bank is expected to start cutting interest rates at its next meeting on August 1. KPMG predicted that a slowdown in prices growth could convince the central bank to lower the base rate several times over the next 18 months.

The consultancy warned that the next government would still face a challenging fiscal environment. "The fiscal reality is similar for whichever party wins the general election on July 4," it said. "Interest rates are set to remain higher, debt more difficult to bring down and spending pressures on health and defence continue to mount."

Raspberry Pi shorted by asset firm weeks after IPO

Ben Martin Banking Editor

A fund management company is betting against shares of Raspberry Pi weeks after the maker of microcomputers was listed on the stock market in a flotation hailed as a boost for London.

The asset management division of JP Morgan, America's biggest bank, has amassed a so-called short position in Raspberry Pi stock equivalent to 0.51 per cent of the company's issued share capital, disclosures to the Financial Conduct Authority show.

It is the first fund to reveal a bet against Raspberry Pi. Under City rules, short positions must be publicly disclosed once they reach 0.5 per cent.

Shorting is a technique used by investors to profit from falling share prices. The move by JP Morgan Asset Management suggests it expects Raspberry Pi's stock to come under pressure.

The technology company's share

price has risen by 43 per cent since it went public at 280p on June 11. It closed at 400½p on Friday, having risen to 440p after the initial public offering.

London suffered a dearth of floats last year and in 2022 that fuelled concerns in the City and in Westminster that the UK stock market was no longer an attractive venue for companies to go public. The decision by the Cambridge-based Raspberry Pi to pursue a listing was considered a much-needed vote of confidence. The deal valued the business, which makes cheap, credit card-sized computers, at £542 million; that has since swelled to £775 million.

The New York-based JP Morgan manages \$3.6 trillion in its asset and wealth management division and the bet against Raspberry Pi is by the British subsidiary of the investment business.

Raspberry Pi and JP Morgan declined to comment.

The week ahead

Attention on Friday will be focused firmly on the state of the American jobs market, with the release of monthly figures on employment growth in the world's largest economy. June's non-farm payrolls number, an important indicator of market sentiment, is expected to have fallen to about 180,000 after a robust 272,000 expansion in May.

Jobs data in the United States has consistently beaten expectations this year as a strong private sector, government spending and record immigration have fuelled the labour market before November's presidential election. The unemployment rate will remain unchanged at 4 per cent, close to historic lows despite interest rates remaining above 5 per cent.

The US Federal Reserve is looking for signs of cooling in the labour market and a decline in the pace of earnings growth before it cuts its benchmark interest rates for the first time since 2020. Analysts expect the Fed to be the last of the big central banks to reduce borrowing costs this year. The Bank



The United States has beaten recent forecasts on employment numbers

of England is expected to start its rate cuts in August.

Weaker jobs growth in June should be the start of "slowing employment growth, which will weigh on real income growth and will spur households to spend more cautiously", Ian Shepherdson, at Pantheon Macroeconomics, said.

TOMORROW

Sainsbury's is expected to report another strong quarter of sales growth when it updates the market. Recent market data from NielsonIQ for the 12 weeks to June 27 showed that the supermarket's grocery sales had risen by 4.7 per cent year-on-

year and its market share had increased from 14.6 per cent to 14.9 per cent. HSBC Global Research views the NielsonIQ data as the most up-to-date point of reference for Sainsbury's first-quarter grocery sales and it estimates a 5.5 per cent increase

on a like-for-like basis. HSBC has forecast a mid-single-digit percentage decline in sales for Argos.

Finals CML Microsystems, Mercia Asset Management, Supreme
Interims Kitwave
Trading update J Sainsbury

WEDNESDAY

Britain's biggest seller of tiles has struggled amid what Rob Parker, its chief executive, recently called "challenging" trading conditions in the tile market. Topps Tiles reported a statutory loss before tax of £1.5 million in the first half of the year, compared with a profit of £1.7 million in the first half of 2023. Its revenue declined by 5.8 per cent to £122.8 million in the same period.

Investors are not expecting trading to have improved. Group

sales over the first seven weeks of the second half of the year were 7.3 per cent lower year-on-year. The tile merchant

noted that indicators such as GDP, mortgage approvals and customer confidence were all starting to improve, but said trading was yet to benefit from those trends.

Finals Baltic Classifieds
Trading updates SIG, Topps Tiles
Economy S&P Global UK services PMI, Federal Reserve federal open market committee meeting minutes



THURSDAY

Victrex, the polymer manufacturer, will release a trading update for its third quarter after a dismal set of half-year results in May. They showed revenues had dropped by 14 per cent to £139.3 million compared with the same period last year, with pre-tax profits sliding by 92 per cent to £3.3 million, which the company blamed on high levels of inventory and industry-wide destocking among its medical devices customers. The shares are at about their lowest level in a decade. Analysts at Berenberg expect Victrex to end the year with adjusted pre-tax profits of £67.4 million, a 15.7 per cent fall on 2023's figure.

Monthly new car sales figures have become a touchstone for the impact of inflation and high interest rates on consumer spending and on the pace of the transition to electric

vehicles. For the year to date, the data has been underwhelming. Figures from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders for June and the half-year will provoke further debate on the state of the private buyer retail market, which was down by 11 per cent in the first five months and now accounts for only 38 per cent of all sales, with the rest going to corporates and fleets. So, too, on registrations of all-electric cars, up nearly 10 per cent on 2023 but still accounting for a mere 16 per cent of all sales.

Finals Trifast
Trading update Victrex
Economy SMMT UK monthly car registrations figures

FRIDAY

Economy US employment report

Business

Britons struggle to find answers in global test of financial literacy

Patrick Hosking Financial Editor

Up to 23 million people in Britain are said to have low levels of financial literacy after respondents to a survey struggled to answer basic questions about savings and investment.

In a report of 3,000 adults undertaken by Opinium for Abrdn, the investment group, there was found to be a level of ignorance or confusion that would make it difficult for people to take even the most simple decisions about managing their money.

For the first time, people in Britain were asked three key questions developed by the United States-based Global Financial Literacy Excellence Center that have become an internationally recognised benchmark for measuring financial literacy.

Only 20 per cent of the sample could answer all three questions correctly, while 20 per cent got none of them right and another 24 per cent could answer one correctly. That compared with just under 30 per cent of Americans who, in a study from 2021, got all of the same

three questions correct, according to that country's national financial capability study.

The questions were designed to explore people's basic understanding of interest rates, the impact of inflation on savings and the merits of investment diversification.

Abrdn said that the findings suggested that 23 million people, or two fifths of all adults in the UK, had poor levels of financial literacy, based on getting two or three of the questions wrong. "This is concerning, especially in a world where people are going to have to take more responsibility for their finances," Sarah Moody, the corporate affairs chief at Abrdn, said.

The investment company said that policymakers had only limited data on how Britain compared with other countries for financial literacy because the UK had stopped participating in figures compiled by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

The Financial Conduct Authority has cited a study that found Britain ranked ninth of 17 countries studied for financial literacy, coming just above Turkey and below Indonesia. Its financial lives study found that 24 per cent of adults had low confidence in managing their money. The young, the unemployed and ethnic communities were most affected, it found.

Basic arithmetic skills and financial knowledge are seen as being crucial in helping people to budget correctly, to save for emergencies and their old age and to avoid falling into a spiral of unmanageable debt. The FCA regards better public understanding of finance as an important step in protecting consumers from predatory lenders, investment scams and other financial dangers. "We've been asking for financial education to be baked into the system from primary school age," Moody said.

Bridget Phillipson, the shadow education secretary, has promised to change the maths curriculum to help students to apply lessons to their everyday lives, including budgeting, buying holiday money and cookery recipes, if Labour wins the election on Thursday. She has said that Britain has a "chronic cultural problem with maths".

Can you pass the test?

Q 1. Imagine you have £100 in a savings account with an annual interest rate of 2%. After five years without touching the account, how much money do you think you would have?

- a) More than £102 c) Less than £102
b) Exactly £102 d) Don't know

Q 2. Imagine that the interest rate on your savings account was 1% per year and inflation was 2% per year. After 1 year, how much could you buy with the money in this account?

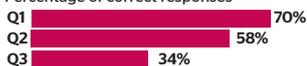
- a) More than today c) Less than today
b) Exactly the same d) Don't know

Q 3. Is this statement true or false?

"The purchase of shares of a single company generally provides a safer return than a fund that invests in the stock market on your behalf."

- a. True b. False c. Don't know

Correct answers are: 1-a; 2-c; 3-b
Percentage of correct responses



The Falkland Islands are deep in the South Atlantic and are not bound by Labour's plans to halt new drilling for oil

Falkland Islanders discuss oil proposal

Tom Saunders

The Falkland Islands has asked its residents whether it should back a scheme to extract up to 500 million barrels of oil from the Sea Lion field, located 150 miles to the north of the territory.

The drilling proposal has been submitted by Navitas Petroleum, an Israeli company that controls 65 per cent of the working interest in the Sea Lion field. Rockhopper Energy, which discovered the field in 2010, holds the rest of the interest.

As a whole, the field in the southern Atlantic is understood to contain 1.7 billion barrels of oil, several times larger than the largest development planned for the UK's North Sea, which is believed to hold about 300 million barrels of oil.

In a notice published in the Falkland Islands Gazette last Monday, the

island's administration said that a period of consultation would run until August 5. Navitas is planning to hold several sessions across the island during the period, according to The Telegraph, which first reported the news.

In an environmental impact statement published by Navitas, the oil drilling company said it planned to construct 23 wells initially, working in water 1,500ft deep to access 500 million barrels of oil.

The islands would expect to benefit from a significant windfall in royalties and taxes levied on the profits of the oil drilling, resulting in a significant boost to an economy that historically has depended on sheep farming and fishing.

Labour has committed to a ban on all new oil and gas exploration in British waters if it wins the general election this week, but this would not affect the

Navitas plans, given that jurisdiction over drilling is devolved to the Falkland Islands' local administration. As a British overseas territory, it governs itself, but the UK takes responsibility for its defence and foreign affairs. Although oil was discovered in the area's waters in 1998, the next step of bringing the oil on stream has yet to be taken.

In a statement to The Telegraph, the Falklands Islands government said: "We have the right to utilise our own natural resources. The Falkland Islands operates its own national system of petroleum licensing, including exploration, appraisal and production activities related to its offshore hydrocarbon resources. Should approval be given leading to development, the Falkland Islands has a royalty-based petroleum licensing system and would receive royalties for the production of oil, direct tax receipts from the project and increase economic activity."

Ineos Energy looks elsewhere as Britain 'puts pain' on sector

Emma Powell

The boss of Ineos Energy has said it will prioritise expansion in the United States and Denmark rather than in Britain, while contrasting the UK's uncertain fiscal regime with greater stability offered by policymakers overseas.

David Bucknall's comments come days before a general election in which energy policy has been a key battleground.

"If we're looking to expand the footprint of our business, the other two regions we operate, Denmark and the US, are much easier to invest in at the moment. And that's where our focus is," the Ineos Energy chief executive said.

Ineos Energy, established in 2020, oversees the energy-related operations of Ineos, the petrochemicals group founded by Sir Jim Ratcliffe. Its activities are focused on onshore and offshore oil and gas assets in Britain and Denmark. Last year it entered the US oil and gas production market for the first time with the acquisition of a portion of Chesapeake Energy's oil and gas assets in the Eagle Ford Shale area in south Texas for \$1.4 billion.

"If you look at the US, you have different rhetoric at the top level from different sides of the political spectrum, but the reality is that the people in the Department of Energy are professionals. They know what they're doing. We

haven't seen very much change at all at the operational level, the practical level, in terms of oil and gas, despite who is the president of the US. So it makes it a very investable thing."

In contrast, the policy backdrop in Britain had become more about parties "outdoing each other in how much pain you can put into the industry".

The Conservative Party, which introduced the windfall tax in 2022 after the outbreak of the Ukraine war, has said it would keep the levy in place until 2029 unless prices fall back to normal sooner. Labour has pledged to raise the energy profits levy from 75 per cent to 78 per cent and to remove "the unjustifiably generous investment allowances" that

companies can use to reduce their tax bills. "If you take away investment allowances and you pile on windfall taxes, then it's very easy to make things uneconomic," Bucknall, 56, said.

Some smaller producers have sought to expand by consolidating with other producers in the North Sea in an effort to reduce their unit costs. In April, Ithaca Energy agreed an all-share deal to acquire the North Sea assets of Eni, creating a company capable of producing between 100,000 and 110,000 barrels of oil equivalent per day. Others, such as Harbour Energy, the largest independent oil and gas producer in the UK, have diversified away from the North Sea. Fiscal uncertainty in Britain

had made it more difficult to forecast the potential long-term returns to be made from any acquisitions, Bucknall said. Investment in the UK would be more focused on developing existing licences, he said.

As well as operating oil and gas assets, Ineos Energy has made investments in low-carbon technologies, including carbon capture and storage, and hydrogen. Last month it was awarded an exploration licence from the Danish government for onshore carbon storage in the Gassum formation in Jutland, Denmark.

Representatives for the Conservative and Labour parties were contacted for comment.

Simon French

Companies cannot afford to ignore society's demand for ESG

“Sustainable and ethical investing is back in the headlines. After a period during which a European energy crisis and two globally significant wars shifted the dial on investing towards carbon-producing energy capacity and defence companies, activist groups are fighting back. Investors are having to be fleet-footed to keep abreast of shifting societal priorities.

This change in mood has had an impact on some of the most well-known companies in British finance. Barclays has faced protests centred on its retail branch network, justified by its supposed links to defence companies that work with Israel. Meanwhile, pressure by Fossil Free Books has forced Baillie Gifford, the Edinburgh-based institutional investor, to end its sponsorship deals with several literary festivals. Complete divestment from the fossil fuel industry is central to protesters' demands.

These two flashpoints are part of a long-running tug-of-war between absolutism and nuance in investing driven by environmental, social and governance factors. As we noted in these pages in 2021, before the Ukraine and Gaza wars and high inflation forced perspectives to shift, embedding ESG principles into the approach of how companies operate is a more sensible aim than blunt divestment. Orwellian absolutism has a poor track record of translating into good policymaking. But this view is far from universal.

On one hand, pressure groups argue that only disruptive protest will focus minds and channel money. Active divestment of investments in oil, gas, coal and defence companies, regardless of the operations of the underlying company, has been a central demand from these groups. On the other hand, such wide-ranging definitions can quickly trip over

Octopus Energy is showing that innovative pricing can change behaviour



themselves. Not least on social media platforms. As Coimbatore Sundararajan Venkatakrishnan, also known as Venkat, the chief executive of Barclays, noted at the recent Times CEO Summit: "There is very little respect for facts in social media. It is as if what is asserted and repeated is the truth. There is an assertion that we [Barclays] are investors in defence companies. We don't invest in defence companies."

How do investors navigate this tumult and the range of conflicting views? And are there areas of the economy where sustainability and ethics are less politically charged but no less important?

The first thing to note is that not all sustainable and ethical investing issues are as contentious as fossil fuels and defence capability. Sustainable and ethical delineations can and should be applied with dexterity across the economy. Progress in delivering a sustainable economy and healthy allocation of investment will require change outside the obviously controversial areas. Often these more consumer-driven operators are where the biggest impacts can be achieved. Which consumer brands are bought by people determine where trillions of pounds are allocated.

While the recent focus on economic growth, particularly in stock markets, has been in the technology sector and artificial intelligence, it is the deployment of commodities and raw materials that sits at the heart of a durable economy. In a world of stretched resources, we need to be finding solutions that grow our economy, but not at the expense of future generations. At present, markets are failing to do this.

Earth Overshoot Day marks the date each year when demand for ecological resources exceeds what the planet can sustainably regenerate. This year that date is in only a month's time, August 1. This means that over the course of 2024 we will consume 70 per cent more resources than is needed to leave the world in the same

condition for future generations. This is clearly not sustainable.

So what sort of British companies offer another path? Octopus Energy is one of the big recent success stories addressing energy efficiency and the switch to a less carbon-intensive world and it is now valued at more than £7 billion. It is showing that innovative pricing and understanding consumer incentives, rather than banning stuff, can change behaviour. Its commercial success has been underscored by returning £3 billion of public money that guaranteed the bailout of Bulb Energy.

Octopus remains in private hands and the reality is that public markets have few pure-play green companies. Yet the UK is a world leader in having private companies with the potential to disrupt legacy operators with more sustainable solutions. Examples include Cheeky Panda, in using bamboo for hygiene products, Faith in Nature, which is developing sustainable beauty and care products, and Clipper, the maker of Fairtrade tea.

After the general election this week, ESG investing is an area that will appear in ministerial in-trays sooner rather than later. Last month the Legatum Institute, the think tank, sought to influence the debate with its report *Woke Capitalism in Britain*. It concluded that "ESG regulations and practices have made the British businesses less competitive. This is not good for business, nor is it good for the economy." While nobody would pretend that the Legatum Institute is politically impartial, this is symptomatic of how recent low economic growth can weaponise these issues in Westminster, with echoes in the City.

Conservative ministers recently have shown themselves amenable to the changing economic and political backdrops. It would be naive for the Labour leadership to think that it won't be forced to make similarly tricky judgments, all in the face of activist pressure, should the party win power this week. The best advert for financial markets is to offer a helping hand.

Simon French is managing director, chief economist and head of research at Panmure Liberum



David Aikman and Richard Barwell

Outside economists are a resource the Bank should not ignore

Clare Lombardelli takes up her role today as the new deputy governor for monetary policy at the Bank of England and there are plenty of important issues waiting in her in-tray.

Priority No 1 is responding to the Bernanke review of the Bank's process. She will need to reflect on how the Bank can improve its communication strategy and whether it should publish a view on the likely path of interest rates.

She also will need to decide how to repair the internal process through which Bank staff produce the forecasts that should drive interest rate decisions. Presumably, she will want a clear understanding of how that process fell into disrepair to avoid a repeat performance on her watch. The new

'Lombardelli will want to reflect on how to restore public trust in the Bank as a guardian of monetary stability'

deputy governor will need, too, to come up with her own answers to the questions that her colleagues have been grappling with. She needs a view on the present state of the economy and the appropriate policy response, the right level of interest rates and the right pace of reduction in the Bank's portfolio of bonds. In time, she will have to reach a view on the effectiveness of buying bonds or taking rates into negative territory the next time there is a recession. Last but not least, she surely will want to reflect on how to restore public trust in the Bank as a guardian of monetary stability.

The conduct of monetary policy never stands still for long. The economy will be hit by new shocks. New puzzles will emerge in how the economy behaves. The profession will develop new techniques and perspectives in response. Other central banks will innovate new monetary policy instruments. Lombardelli will be at the forefront of keeping on top of these developments. While much thinking will have to be done in-house, there

are plenty of people outside the Bank who have valuable insights and perspectives that they can share. We are not talking merely about the handful of people who work for influential financial institutions within the Square Mile; we are talking about the broad church of economists working across the UK in academia, business, think tanks and the media, as well as in the financial sector. This is a resource that Lombardelli can tap.

The Bank has much to learn here from other leading central banks. The US Federal Reserve and the European Central Bank each have cultivated a diverse ecosystem of "central bank watchers" with which they interact. These central banks see the benefits in terms of the exchange of ideas and the constructive challenge of views, as well as satisfying concerns around transparency. We hope that Lombardelli can see the merit in building a similar relationship here in Britain. Fortunately, we are not starting from square one. A Bank of England Watchers' Conference was established recently. Last year it attracted several hundred people for an all-day event devoted to discussing Bank policy. We hope that Lombardelli will view this conference in the same way that her colleagues at the ECB treat their own watchers' conference, as a key forum in the calendar at which senior policymakers can engage with this community.

The Bank of England watchers have something interesting to say about the Bernanke review, too. Almost 30 of them have published their personal take on the review and how the Bank should respond. There is a deep well of experience and insight here that the Bank can use to its advantage. The arrival of a new deputy governor for monetary policy presents an opportunity to build a closer relationship between the Bank and the community of Bank watchers. We hope Clare Lombardelli seizes it.

David Aikman is Professor (in Practice) of Finance at King's Business School and Director of the Qatar Centre for Global Banking and Finance. Richard Barwell is Head of Macroeconomic Research at BNP Paribas Asset Management



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Business



Young Kenyans have led protests against plans from President Ruto, below, to increase taxes on some key commodities

GERALD ANDERSON/ANADOLU

IMF reputation under threat as Kenya protests against austerity

Mehreen Khan Economics Editor

The demonstrations have been as deadly as they have been dramatic. At least 23 people have died in the past week amid nationwide protests in Kenya against government plans to increase taxes. Faced with such fury, the government of President Ruto has been forced to withdraw a finance bill that proposed a series of tax rises on necessities including cooking oil, napkins and energy worth \$2.3 billion. But the focus has not been solely on the government in Nairobi.

As it celebrates 80 years since its founding, the International Monetary Fund has been thrown into a reputational crisis. Kenyan protestors have honed in on the fund's role in demanding measures to stabilise the country's public finances. Public unrest didn't merely arrive on its doorstep; demonstrators staged a sit-in at the IMF's offices in the capital.

Kenya has been one of the fund's biggest debtor countries in recent years. It has suffered from a combination of spiralling debt costs, declining tax revenues and a weakening currency, but, according to Jason Tuvey, deputy chief emerging markets economist at Capital Economics, Ruto "lacks the political capital to push through austerity measures, particularly steps to raise the tax take that the IMF has been pushing for". Something shown all too clearly by the events of recent days.

The IMF has been here before. The social unrest, led by younger Kenyans, has echoes of a backlash in the 1990s and 2000s, when the Washington-based institution was seen by critics as a conveyor of neoliberal orthodoxy, administering painful structural reforms and austerity on debt-stricken nations. It became a lightning rod for protestors during the Asian financial crisis in 1998, when it demanded sweeping budget cuts and an overturning of local economic models in return for emergency aid. In the 2010s, the IMF was part of the "troika" of lenders to eurozone countries such as Greece, Ireland and Spain that led President Macron of France to claim there was "no place" for the lender in European affairs.

Now Kenya's plight has refocused attention on the IMF at a time when scores of low and middle-income countries in Africa are suffering from a "brutal financing squeeze", according to Abebe Aemro Selassie, the fund's director for the continent.

The fund responded to Kenya's protests by saying that it was "deeply concerned" about the unrest. "Our main goal in supporting Kenya is to help it to overcome the difficult economic challenges it faces and to improve its economic prospects and the wellbeing of its people," it said. Meanwhile, the fund's impending sign-off of another €300 million

tranche of aid is likely to be delayed as it works with Kenya's government to review the terms of its programme. Kenya has been receiving IMF loans since 2021 as part of an emergency credit facility that is due to expire next year.

Kenya's budget deficit is now on course to grow to 5 per cent of GDP next year without the finance bill, compared with a projected 3.2 per cent if the austerity measures had been passed, according to S&P Global. The credit rating agency said Kenya had the fifth largest debt interest servicing bill in the world, eating up about 30 per cent of all government revenues. "We anticipate the IMF may work with the authorities to recalibrate select programme targets, allowing for a more gradual path to fiscal consolidation," it said.

In recent years, the IMF has tried to detoxify its image with debtor nations, offering a more collaborative loan programme rather than dictating terms to governments. Mark Sobel, a former US Treasury official and US government representative at the fund, said it was being unfairly blamed for Kenya's "deep-seated and longstanding fiscal woes that are the country's own doing. The IMF's financing provides breathing space for a less disruptive adjustment path, but it doesn't obviate the need for the country to adjust. When one sees a house on fire, one often sees fire trucks. That doesn't mean the fire truck caused the house fire."

Like other countries in debtor distress, Kenya's mounting financial problems have been complicated by the more than \$6 billion in loans that are owed to Chinese creditors, which have largely resisted debt restructuring through prolonging payment deadlines or assuming losses.

Brad Setser, a senior fellow at the Council of Foreign Relations, an American think tank, said the tax-heavy austerity bill had been the result of Kenyan authorities and the IMF "deciding to not seek a restructuring that would stretch out payments on Kenya's bonds and Chinese policy banks loans, to instead rely only fiscal adjustment to restore [market] confidence".

Fund officials point to the painfully slow progress in debt restructuring talks for a number of countries negotiating with official creditors and the private sector as evidence that it would have provided no silver bullet for Kenya.

"China and private creditors have a strong desire to avoid losses," Sobel said. "Both would rather refinance payments and avoid haircuts. China sees a little need to play by the Paris Club's [debt restructuring] practices, especially when it's not a member of the group and is a dominant creditor."



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Olympia offers new peak for Gunewardena's latest venture

Dominic Walsh

During his three decades at Conran Restaurants and D&D London, Des Gunewardena ran some of London's best-known eateries, from Coq d'Argent to Quaglino's to German Gymnasium. His abrupt departure in 2022 was far from the end of the story, however, and today he will announce plans for a £10million restaurant, bar and events space at Olympia, the west London exhibition venue.

The new site, which is due to open next year, will become the third restaurant for D3 Collective, the former

D&D boss's new hospitality company. The first, set to open on Thursday, is a 5,000 sq ft Japanese-Korean venue with a "1920s Berlin vibe" at the Royal Exchange in the City of London; the second will be a 10,000 sq ft site in Canary Wharf, east London, due to open in November.

The Olympia restaurant is part of a £1.3billion redevelopment of the 14-acre site spearheaded by Yoo Capital and Deutsche Finance International and co-designed by Heatherwick Studio and SPPARC. Their aim is to turn the 138-year-old site into a state-of-the-art culture and entertainment



Des Gunewardena has run some of the capital's finest restaurants

hub. Gunewardena's project will be incrementally bigger than his first two sites, at 30,000 sq ft, as it encompasses the grade II listed Pillar Hall, built in 1885 by Henry Edward Coe, the architect. The new-look Pillar Hall will be designed by Robert Angell Design,

which worked with Gunewardena on the award-winning 14 Hills restaurant in the City.

There will be a main restaurant, a café-grill, a central bar, outdoor dining and a basement "speakeasy". It also will feature a 370-capacity music and events space.

The restaurateur said that, despite its location in an exhibition centre, the new hospitality venue would produce "a menu that is purely destination, not appealing to crowds of people. We're aiming to be a world-class restaurant."

Gunewardena, 56, left D&D London after what he admitted had been

a "fundamental disagreement" with LDC, the group's private equity backer, over the way forward. Last year, when D&D was put up for sale, the Sri Lankan-born businessman launched an abortive attempt to buy it back; however, two new investors — Calveton and Breal Capital — bought it in a deal valuing D&D at about £60 million, including debt.

Although his wife declared three restaurants to be "quite enough", the entrepreneur said: "I don't think that is going to be the case. There are lots of opportunities and sites being offered to my company."

British wine has world wanting to top up its glass

Dominic Walsh

English wine is an industry in ferment. Investment in new and existing vineyards is accelerating, businesses have started changing hands, high-net-worth individuals are sitting on big stakes and its sparkling wines are being exported worldwide.

According to WineGB, the industry association, the number of hectares under vine has more than doubled over the past decade to about 4,000, while the number of wineries has increased by more than 50 per cent to just over 200. The number of vineyards has doubled to about 950.

The industry is also garnering an array of awards to reflect the quality of its products. Chapel Down Group alone collected 28 successes in 2023, being awarded gold medals in the International Wine Challenge, Decanter World Wine and WineGB awards.

According to Andrew Carter, 55, chief executive of Chapel Down: "The English wine industry is enjoying the fruits of its extraordinary terroir, favourable climate and sustained investment to create a new, internationally acclaimed wine region." And it is not sitting on its laurels. Last week Chapel Down, already the biggest producer, announced a review amid plans to raise money for significant expansion.

The company also has two of the City's best-known investors on its board: Nigel Wray, a non-executive director since 2004, has a stake of almost 14 per cent; and Lord Spencer of Alresford, the chairman of IPGL and the founder of Icap and Nex, has 26.4 per cent. Another investor to target English fizz is Lord Ashcroft, the former deputy chairman of the Conservative Party and the world's biggest

collector of Victoria Crosses. He has a 66 per cent stake in Gusbourne, which, like many of its rivals, has been stepping up the pace on exports. They now account for 21 per cent of its total net revenue, with sales in 35 markets including Scandinavia, Japan and the United States. New markets are being opened. "Opportunities in China continue to be interesting," Jonathan White, 42, Gusbourne's chief executive, said, "but we proceed with a degree of caution, given the complexity of the market and the importance of getting things right."

Gusbourne, which was established in 2004, is one of the few British producers of red wine, offering a pinot noir that retails at £40. Its sparkling wines range from £45 to £195 for its exclusive Fifty One Degrees North label. The company has 93 hectares of mature vineyards in Kent and West Sussex, plus a visitor centre at its Appledore winery in Ashford. It has acquired a further 55 hectares in Kent for planting in the next few years.

Although the majority of vineyards are located in Kent, West and East Sussex and Surrey, as the industry continues to expand so its geographical spread has been broadening to encompass Hampshire, Essex, Cornwall and even Scotland (although that's not English wine, obviously). According to *Vineyard Magazine*, it is only about 80 years since the first vines of the modern era were planted at Hambledon, Hampshire, and only 50 years since people seriously started planting



Chapel Down's expansion plans are typical of an English winery industry that is gaining a stronger reputation overseas

chardonnay, meunier and pinot noir.

So far, so good, but every industry has its challenges.

For English wine, that

may be the issue of

land. Many new

vineyards have

been established

on south-facing

chalk land in Kent

over the past

decade or so at

prices of more

than £10,000 per

acre, with Nyetimber

said to have

shelled out £16,000

per acre on one deal. Between

2018 and 2022, almost 500 million

was invested in land, according to

Strutt & Parker, the property agency,

with the best vineyards securing three

times the average price of arable land.

Jackson Family Wines, the Californian

group that is the latest to join a nascent

invasion from overseas, bought 64

acres of land in the Crouch Valley, in Essex, but a *Vineyard Magazine* writer was coy about revealing the price paid: "Jackson are rumoured to have paid a sum per acre that I dare not print for fear of looking a fool."

Until last week, Chapel Down's expansion plans, costing between £25 million and £30 million, were expected to involve using its recent listing on Aim, the junior stock market, to conduct a fundraising exercise. The cash, an eye-watering amount for a wine producer, is due to be invested in a new purpose-built winery near Canterbury, new vineyard planting and the development of its base in Tenterden, Kent. That may be the route it takes, but the announcement of the review suggested the board "will consider all alternatives, including a sale of the company".

The suggestion that the biggest English winemaker could be sold was a bombshell for the industry and there was speculation that it could draw bid interest from across the Channel and

beyond. Carter thinks wider corporate activity is likely. "The English wine industry as a whole has grown to 4,000 hectares, of which only 3 per cent in total is in the hands of foreign owners," he said. "I think you'll see more industry consolidation in the coming years."

Half an hour away from Chapel Down is the Balfour Winery, on the Hush Heath Estate, which is run by Richard and Leslie Balfour-Lynn. After last year's bumper harvest, they expect to produce 900,000 bottles this year, of which a third will be still wines. Ten per cent will be exported to countries including Australia.

Although his winery (strictly, his wife Leslie's business) is prospering, Balfour-Lynn, 70, expressed some concern over the rate of growth of English wine: "I still worry about the number of people planting and the number of new people coming into the industry. The question one should ask them is: 'Who are you going to sell to, and what product are you going to sell?'"

Britvic investor calls on Carlsberg to refresh its takeover bid

Dominic Walsh

A leading shareholder of Britvic has called on Carlsberg to improve the terms of its takeover bid for the soft drinks group.

Aviva said that although there would be benefits from a combination of the two companies, the most recent price on offer was too low.

Britvic revealed on June 21 that it had rejected two bids from the Danish brewer, with the highest offer valuing

the FTSE 250 business at £3.1 billion. After offers of £12 a share and £12.50, it said it had "carefully considered" the second proposal but had decided that it was too low to accept.

Kunal Kothari, UK equities fund manager at Aviva, said Carlsberg had the "scope to be more generous" with another bid. He said the brewer could generate synergies from a takeover as both companies distributed drinks to the same types of customer, providing scope for cost savings. He told the

Financial Mail: "Whether we support the deal or not depends on whether the offer price values the business appropriately." He said the present offer was not high enough because it did not take into account how Britvic's finances were expected to improve over the next few years as a standalone company.

Carlsberg has until July 19 to announce a firm intention to make an offer or walk away. Its £3.1 billion bid, worth £12.50 per share, was 29 per cent higher than Britvic's share price before

speculation about a deal emerged. Last week PepsiCo, which has a bottling contract with Britvic, said it would not stand in the way, removing a potential barrier to a deal.

Britvic is Britain's second biggest maker of fizzy and still soft drinks, with brands including Pepsi, 7UP, Tango, Fruit Shoot and J2O.

Carlsberg's pursuit of Britvic is one of a raft of deals in the City, many of which have been from foreign bidders. Sidara, the Dubai-based engineer, has until

Wednesday to make a final offer for Wood Group, the oil services supplier. Carlsberg is trying to expand its business "beyond beer" as the younger generation shifts away from alcohol.

Shares of Britvic closed at £11.81 on Friday, still well below the Danish brewer's offer price. City analysts have said the company is likely to need to put at least £13.50 per share on the table to stand a chance of success.

Neither Carlsberg nor Britvic would comment.



HOW BUPA CAN HELP YOUR COMPANY GROW

Bupa's business health insurance offers employers various ways to support staff health and wellbeing.

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Bupa's nurses – including a menopause specialist – are available by phone to offer advice. And when it comes to proactively supporting health and wellbeing, employers can access free online nutrition and lifestyle information, as well as HR health and wellbeing templates, on the Bupa website.

Bupa can also provide health assessments and flu vaccines, at an additional cost, to help employers look out for their teams' health.

Wellness starts at work

An ailing workforce is bad news for the economy and hits small businesses hard. The good news is that a proactive approach to staff wellbeing can reap big rewards

Britain is getting sicker. More than one in five people describe their physical health as poor or very poor, according to Bupa's recent Wellbeing Index, which is a yearly survey of more than 8,000 adults across the UK.

There are multiple drivers of this problem – from the enduring effects of Covid-19 to changing lifestyle habits – and multiple impacts. Poor health reduces quality of life for individuals and, in aggregate, it has a disastrous economic effect. It can seriously affect productivity – in 2022, the last full year for which official statistics are available, 185.6 million working days were lost due to sickness or injury, an all-time high.

Small businesses are particularly vulnerable. They are less likely to have the resources to cover staff off sick, and the loss of key individuals often has a disproportionate impact. It is therefore worrying that small and medium-sized enterprises appear to have been particularly hit by rising sickness rates. A recent survey by PeopleHR of 1,775 SMEs charted a 55 per cent increase in sickness absence rates since 2019.

Tackling a problem of this scale will require action from many different parties, including government, healthcare providers and individuals. But employers also have a role to play. Those prepared to actively engage have a golden opportunity to help their staff become healthier, which is key to business growth.

"Companies can make a significant difference to their



RICHARD NORRIS
BUPA UK

employees by demonstrating that they care and are invested in prioritising their people's physical and mental health," argues Richard Norris, general manager for business specialist products at Bupa UK.

What does that mean in practice? One important element of support is clearly workplace health insurance, which enables staff to secure diagnoses and treatments quickly and conveniently, helping them get back to work sooner.

Employers can also help by taking a proactive approach to staff wellbeing. For example, those whose



There has been a 55 per cent rise in sickness absence rates since 2019

employees predominantly sit at desks for most of the day can encourage people to move around more by nudging them to take short but regular breaks, both directly and through well-designed office spaces that promote movement. Support for walk-to-work and cycle-to-work schemes also increases physical activity; providing changing rooms and storage facilities can help here.



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Subsidised gym memberships are also a valuable employee benefit.

Regarding nutrition, where employers have staff canteens and vending machines, it is important to ensure these serve healthy foods. Participating in promotions such as Healthy Eating Week and National Fitness Day should also pay off.

While more people now work remotely, this doesn't absolve employers of responsibility. Home office set-ups may be more likely to give rise to musculoskeletal problems such as back and neck ache.

"It's really important for employers to address any pain or discomfort their people may experience when working from home," warns Damian McClelland, clinical director for musculoskeletal services at Bupa UK Insurance. "Simple changes, such as not working from beds or beanbags, sitting up with feet planted on the floor, adopting hands-free sets for long phone calls and making time to stretch, can go a long way to preventing strain that could develop into more serious conditions."

Providing all this proactive support represents an opportunity

to build stronger relationships – to foster an engaged workforce who feel valued and are less likely to defect to another business.

Research published last year by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development revealed the extent to which employers are responding to strong demand for a range of support at work. It found half of employers now offer advice on healthy eating and lifestyle, a third offer health screening programmes, and one in six offer assistance such as exercise and relaxation classes at work.

Another survey of 1,000 employees by a recruitment firm found one in two look to their employer to provide private healthcare; more than a third want access to employee assistance programmes that can provide advice on health and wellbeing. Indeed, research by SME services platform Bionic suggests healthcare is now one of the most desired employee benefits among jobseekers – well above perks such as a company car, high-street vouchers or productivity bonuses. With many SMEs struggling to attract the right candidates for vacancies, private medical insurance can be a powerful ally to growth.

In other words, there is every reason for employers to step up. Action to improve staff health will drive greater productivity and reduce sickness days. It is also a critical tool for recruitment and retention – vital in today's fiercely competitive labour market.

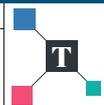
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Wishlist for the next government from fastest-growing companies

THE TIMES
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Entrepreneurs spell out what they want to help them further expand their businesses, writes Richard Tyler

The behaviour of the taxman and banks, the lack of support for exporters and manufacturers, and the ongoing shortage of skilled recruits are all issues that the leaders of some of Britain's fastest-growing companies want the next government to address. Ten of the founders and chief executives from six companies featuring high-up in the annual Sunday Times 100 ranking shared their concerns before this week's general election.

They all faced specific challenges in business but the one common to them all were the growing pains of managing such a rapid increase in sales and workforces. The average sales growth rate for the Sunday Times 100 was 118 per cent, sustained for three years in a row — and these six companies all logged higher rates of growth than that. Between them the 100 featured companies hired 10,000 people in the last three years, taking their total to 13,670.

"We were tiny 18 months ago so we have faced considerable growth and it has been a big challenge for us and continues to be so," said Kate Prince, 51, a former media lawyer and founder and chief executive of Ancient + Brave, the Sussex-based wellness brand, which hit sales of £10.2 million last year. It now employs 50 people.

Purdy & Figg makes sustainable cleaning products and the London firm ratched up sales of £18.3 million in the year to March. Set up by Purdy Rubin, 67, an NHS nurse, and Charlotte Figg, 63, a horticulturist, Rubin's sons Charlie and Jack are co-chief executives. Charlie, 33, said: "We tripled one year, then quintupled the next. Protecting our culture and the quality of our people and work when you go from two people to 50 people is incredibly difficult."

Like Purdy & Figg, Simmer, a healthy ready-meal provider, makes all its own products on site — in its case, in Hertfordshire. This brings its own headaches, admits founder



Simmy Dhillon, 27, founder of Simmer, a healthy ready-meal provider, finds hiring "very difficult" as his business expands

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Simmy Dhillon, 27, who runs the business with his brother Jhai, 29. "We manufacture everything in-house, unfortunately. It is a case of 'can we continue to scale and operations not burst?' Hiring is very difficult," said Simmy.

Rob Levene, 52, is chief executive of Constellia, a £67 million-turnover company which buys professional services, technology and construction for 200 public sector bodies and manages about £300 million of spend.

"Three years ago we were at zero, so it's been a real hockey-stick curve of growth," Levene said of the Nottingham-based business. "But how do we continue to grow and maintain the quality you have been successful with?"

"When you have a small business, it is fun, everyone is getting involved and rolling up their sleeves. That requires a particular kind of person. As the business grows you become a bit more corporate, there is a new culture, and there are new processes and systems."

All the companies agreed that despite such growing pains, there were opportunities to expand further

this year, particularly at the expense of larger, slower-moving rivals.

Andy Proud, 55, a founder of the IT consultancy Liqueo, said: "Whatever industry you are in it used to be that [customers] would go to the big companies, but now the smaller companies are much more accessible and that is a fantastic opportunity that we have benefited from."

Government statisticians said on Friday that Britain's economy grew slightly faster than expected in the first quarter of the year, as the country exited a shallow recession.

Sam Stageman, 39, co-owner of Kent-based Pentalec, a £9.3 million-turnover electrical engineering business, said he was looking to the next government to keep the momentum going, especially in a construction sector exposed to public spending, planning rules and building targets. "We are having one of our best months ever for order intake. We are on-plan to hit anywhere between £12 million and £15 million turnover this year. But the second half of the year needs to be firmed up."

Entrepreneurs are most at ease when their commitment and clever

thinking can influence the situation they face in their favour. As such, interactions with public bodies like HM Revenue and Customs, and the business services of the main banks leave much to be desired.

John Hatt, 45, co-owner of Pentalec, thinks HMRC is "broken". Efforts to tackle fraud have left a mess, he argued. Some firms within supply chains are asked to hand over cash, for instance for VAT, and then claim it back, while their own suppliers further down the chain can charge them VAT.

"It really cripples small businesses," he said. "We are waiting for money from HMRC, and HMRC is probably one of the most poorly run organisations I have ever had to deal with. You can be on the phone for 45 minutes on hold; the calls drop and they don't call you back. Their email correspondence is shocking. I feel it needs real attention from the new government, especially for the construction industry."

He also believes the main banks need to up their game, potentially with the support of industry regulators. Rules designed to protect consumers and prevent fraud appear to have resulted in a system of checks that impedes business rather than supports it, he said.

Looking ahead to a likely Labour government, if the general election polls are accurate, the entrepreneurs said one priority was to fix Britain's apprenticeship system and inspire a new generation of young people to build businesses.

"The biggest thing that will affect us directly is investment in apprenticeships," said Stageman at Pentalec, who was an apprentice himself. "There is definitely not enough young, skilled talent coming into the industry." His co-director Hatt was also an apprentice and said his two sons were too. "I believe in it," said Hatt. "Apprenticeships are the best education you'll ever get ... learning on the job."

Jhai Dhillon, at Simmer, and Charlie Purdy, at Purdy & Figg, also said they wanted to set up schemes, but found the process too difficult. "You have to hook up with four or five different organisations — it is a hassle," said Charlie. A single website where employers see pre-vetted CVs and can book young people for interviews would be welcome.

Also on the wishlist is more tailored support for small manufacturers, specifically reductions in business rates, to encourage more production to stay in the UK. "If people are serious about UK manufacturing then we need to see some action," said Charlie Rubin.

Business clinic

Question One of my employees has been splashed across social media as part of a crowd singing inappropriate songs at the Euros. He has taken annual leave to attend the tournament, but I don't want my company being linked to this kind of behaviour. Can I dismiss him?

Answer The simple answer is yes. You can dismiss an employee for

their behaviour outside work. However, as with all dismissals, you would still have to follow fair and proper procedures to avoid an unfair dismissal claim at a tribunal.

It is not an employer's job to police what employees do in their own time, and employees have a right to a private life. But when that private life becomes public, if it can be linked to your

business then you may need to act.

Dismissing an employee for behaviour outside work can be a fair reason. Even though the employee's conduct was not "carried out in the course of employment", the effect on the public view of the organisation can be sufficient to deem it impossible for the employee to continue his or her employment.

Behaviour outside work will not always be sufficient grounds to secure a fair dismissal, and the following will need to be looked at:

- Press coverage.
- Size of the business.
- Role of the employee.
- Time between disrepute

and disciplinary proceedings.

- Concerns expressed about the continued employment.
- Record of employment.

- If there is a link between conduct and employee's role.

The best course of action is to fix a meeting



with your employee to find out what happened. It's always important to conduct a thorough investigation before making any decisions.

Consider all the points above in relation to your disciplinary policy and document everything. *Peter Done is co-founder and managing director of Peninsula, an employment law, HR and health and safety advice specialist*



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Good leaders share a vision for future

Lynda Gratton



What do we want from our leaders? At times like this, it's a question we are all pondering.

When it comes to business, we measure a leader's capability in part through their capacity to engage their workers. In the simplest form, it's the employees' answer to the survey question: "I intend to stay at this company over the next three years." If you use employee engagement survey data in your organisation, this will be one of the pivotal questions. It's a simple measure of an employee's

“ We all look to our leaders to create a sense of the possibilities of growth ”

commitment to the company and a sense of whether their future is tied with the company's future.

This sense of engagement changes over time. During the dark years of the pandemic, it was the relationship with the manager that became key to engagement. People looked to their immediate manager to be empathic, thoughtful and to guide them through the overwhelming complexity of dealing with illness and the move to hybrid and flexible work. It was a time when long-term perspective-taking shrank down to day-to-day activities.

As the heavy weight of the pandemic lifted, employees began to look not simply at the next week, but also to think about the next couple of years. And in doing so, it was leaders who became crucial. I can see this in the survey data collected by Culture Amp, an employee engagement, development, and survey company that draws from data on more than three million workers.

Where is the balance between

managers and leaders now? Here is a question: what would you prefer, a great manager or a great leader? No surprise, for those lucky workers who have both a great manager and great leader, engagement is high with 89 per cent of them saying they are committed to staying at their organisation. Just as unsurprisingly, those unfortunate to have both a poor manager and a poor leader are looking to leave, with only 22 per cent committed to stay.

What is more interesting is when the leader and the manager have different levels of performance. Here is the choice — good leader or a good manager? Both combinations occur. Some employees have great managers, but poor leaders: and with this combination, only 38 per cent are committed to stay. Some have a poor manager, but report they have a good leader. With the combination, 60 per cent are prepared to stay with the company.

Right now leadership really makes a difference and can even compensate for some of the damage poor managers create. But what is it that good corporate leaders are actually doing that sets them apart from the role of managers? What is emerging from the data is that at a time of economic uncertainty and job instability, we sense our long-term opportunities are determined by wider factors than a good or bad manager. When we think about our long-term opportunities, it's a broad group of factors that we consider. These include the structure of the business, its overall growth rate, and — importantly — its economic viability. Employees are clear that if the company fails to grow, their own opportunities for growth and promotion are also restricted.

The data show that employees are increasingly looking to the future. Here is some evidence: in the 2021 survey, questions about "career opportunities" were ranked the seventh as a driver of an employee's engagement; by 2023, it was ranked second.

But here is the challenge. A closer look at the Culture Amp survey data shows that from 2020 to 2024, there has been a global decline in employees' belief that there are good career opportunities in their companies. Why is this? Certainly, when it comes to managers,

confidence has remained stable. Managers are appreciated when they genuinely care about employees' wellbeing, give their team members useful feedback on their performance, and act as great role models. But since 2022, confidence in higher-level leaders has declined globally in three vital capabilities that support employees' career progression. Employees report that leaders are less likely to demonstrate how important people are to the company's success; they are less able or willing to keep

people informed; and they are less capable of communicating a motivating vision.

In these times of economic and political turbulence, the role of leadership is amplified. From my research I can see that the best leaders understand this. They are engaging and motivating their employees by proactively aligning workers' most crucial question ("Will I grow in this company?") to the company vision and growth plans. For companies looking to both grow and maintain their best

talent, this is a win-win for all. We all want to look to the future and imagine we have a chance to grow and develop. And we all look to our leaders to create a sense of the possibilities of growth — whether they are leaders who lead corporations or leaders who lead our country.

Lynda Gratton is professor of management practice at London Business School. Her latest book is *Redesigning Work: How to Transform your Organisation and Make Hybrid Work for Everyone*



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THE TIMES

Business briefing

Business and the economy are key battlegrounds in the looming general election with both the Conservatives and Labour battling to win the trust and support of the City. Meanwhile, voters continue to feel the pain with borrowing costs at historic highs. Cut through the spin and stay on top of the latest corporate news and market

Business Equity prices

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price	Wkly (%)	Forecast (%)	Yield (%)	P/E
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Automobiles & parts

1,185.03	Aston Martin Lag	143%	-	7½	-	-3.0
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Banking & finance

2,641.51	Abrdn	148%	-	3½	9.8	...
5.48	Acuity RM	3%	-	½	-0.4	...
7,751.06	Admiral	2615	+ 51	2.7	23.6	...
6.02	ADVFm	13	...	...	-0.2	...
1,564.78	AJ Bell	379%	-	10	3.0	22.9
50,428.48	Aon Corp	23192%	-	338%	...	22.9
160.75	Arbutnot Bldg	985	-	2½	4.7	4.4
1.56	Argo Group	4	...	...	-0.1	...
1,128.76	Ashmore	170	-	6	9.8	11.7
44,871.64	Aus New Z	1491%	-	50%	...	12.8
12,765.64	Aviva	476%	-	3½	7.0	12.8
56,215.89	Banco Santander	363	-	11½	4.1	6.3
1,813.13	Bank of Georgia	4035	+ 130	6.7	4.5	...
30,983.94	Bardays	208%	+ 4	3.8	8.0	...
1.53	Blue Star Capital	...	...	...	-0.2	...
192.60	BP Marsh&Ptnrs	517%	+ 2½	2.3	14.2	...
2.87	Braveheart Inv	4½	-	½	1.8	...
1,564.20	Brewin Dolphin	515	+ 1	...	28.1	...
1,748.38	Bridgepoint	220%	-	7½	4.0	24.4
16.44	Genius Secs	29	+ 2	...	5.9	...
372.61	Cesnara	247	-	2½	9.6	20.1
11.94	City of Lon GP	10	-	14	...	-0.4
187.51	City Lon Inv Gp	370	-	5	8.9	12.8
637.47	Close Bros	423%	-	14½	10.7	4.4
915.00	CMC Markets	327	+ 9½	1.4	88.3	...
14,247.60	Commerz&B	1202%	+ 12%	...	7.8	...
25,212.31	Deutsche Bk	1263%	+ 37%	...	5.1	...
2,605.78	Direct Line Ins	200%	+ ½	1.9	12.7	...

Investment companies

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price	Wkly (%)	Forecast (%)	Yield (%)	P/E
29,842.42	3i Group	3066	+ 237	2.8	40.6	...
2,956.13	3i Infrastructure	320%	-	6½	3.3	-7.9
1,272.64	Aberforth Smir	1512	+ 146	3.2	-32.8	...
3,441.65	Alliance	1212	-	12	1.9	-3.4
643.75	Asia Dragon Tr	404	+ 47	1.5	-16.1	0.57
3.99	Attheytrust	185	+ 2	5.0	-4.5	1,823.05
1,063.65	AWI Global Trust	237	+ 7	1.4	-10.2	313.56
121.65	Baillie Gifford Ch Gr	198	+ 5	0.8	-10.8	181.20
408.58	BaillieGifford Eu Gr	95%	-	1	2.3	-14.6
648.34	Baillie Gifford Jpn Tr	726	-	6	1.1	-32.7
346.93	Baillie Gifford SN	114%	-	2½	...	-16.3
251.42	Baillie Gifford UK Gr	771	+ 8	1.9	-15.1	664.95
555.63	Bal Comm Prop	79%	+ ½	4.6	-27.7	398.84
1,350.94	Bankers Inv Trst	113%	+ 1½	2.0	-10.8	2,720.85
1,335.39	BH Macro	371	+ 35	...	-13.5	723.41
329.85	Biotech Growth	985	-	6	...	-5.2
147.23	Block&Rk Com Inc	117	-	3	3.4	-10.8
272.16	Block&Rk Fnt Inv	143%	-	11½	3.8	-8.1
615.24	Block&Rk Grt Euro	614	-	11	1.0	-5.6
39.71	Block&Rk Inc & Gwth	197	+ 15	3.5	-12.2	445.97
683.89	Block&Rk Smir	1452	+ 94	2.7	-11.7	136.25
152.84	Block&Rk Sustain Amer	197	+ 4	3.5	-10.1	1,107.74
556.06	Block&Rk Thrgmontn	601	+ 16	2.2	-10.3	335.03
1,087.83	Block&Rk Wld Min	569	+ 1	5.9	-4.3	126.14
152.13	Brown Adv US Sm	1282%	-	32%	...	-11.9
559.27	Brunner	1310	+ 10	1.6	-4.9	52.72
1,894.50	Caledonia Inv	3475	+ 45	1.2	-35.4	1,808.33
2,096.01	City of Lon IT	420	+ 13	4.9	-2.2	827.65
65.84	Crystal Amber Fd	86	+ 9	22.6	-11.2	416.72
311.05	CT Priv Eq Ord	433%	-	9½	3.9	-25.9
3.58	CT Property	73%	+ 73%	6.1	-16.5	262.26
332.39	CT UK Cap&Inc	326	+ 6	3.6	-5.5	907.97
26.33	CT UK HFT B	85%	+ 1½	...	-8.7	1,551.38
69.99	CT UK HFT	84	...	...	5.9	-4.9
27.66	Dunelm Entp	502%	+ 12%	5.7	-22.3	458.43
1,097.43	Edinburgh IT	726	+ 25	3.6	-9.5	1,435.26
564.13	Edin Wivide	147%	+ 2%	...	-11.7	7,694.98
86.50	EF Global Opp	296	+ 12	1.3	-21.6	1,674.94
312.54	European Assets	88%	+ 1½	5.6	-11.7	3,966.18
579.84	European Opp Trust	880	+ 16	0.3	-10.6	1,156.15
5,092.43	F&B Invest Tr	1012	+ 20	1.3	-10.8	2,360.63
360.47	Fidelity Asian Val	506	-	10	2.6	-9.9
1,069.11	Fidelity China Sp	204	-	2	2.7	-10.9
538.35	FidelityEmergMkt	703	+ 27	2.0	-11.9	442.29
1,606.31	Fidelity European Trust393	3	+ 6	2.0	-4.9	808.25
211.65	Fidelity Jap Tru	173%	-	4%	...	-10.5
980.40	Fidelity Spec Val	302%	+ 13%	2.8	-9.5	309.16
1,555.62	Fins Gwth & Inc	840	+ 13	2.0	-7.4	211.98
695.99	GF Infrastructure	80%	+ 8%	6.3	-35.8	99.55
28.00	Gdn Prop Prc Mkt	22%	-	3%	...	-18.7
3,028.58	Greencoat UK Wind	132	-	7	6.3	-16.9
85.20	Hansa Investment	213	+ 1	0.8	-32.2	295.91
163.20	Hansa Inv Co 'A'	204	+ 5	0.8	-35.9	1,292.63
1,901.14	Hbvest Gbl Pt Eq	2470	+ 180	...	-42.8	742.08
392.56	Hend Euro Foc	184%	+ 4%	2.1	-11.7	1,806.45
269.40	Hend High Inc	15%	-	½	6.0	-8.2
638.95	Hend Smir	856	+ 76	2.9	-14.4	0.88
1,192.17	Herald	2185	+ 85	...	-12.4	900.61
2,219.98	HFCapital Trust	485	-	2	1.3	-4.6
2,527.17	HK Infra	12%	-	1½	5.2	-22.6
...	Highbridge Tactical	...	...	...	61.1	...
814.40	IGC Ent Tr	1222	-	24	1.6	-38.7
1,037.22	Impax Evn Mkts	388	-	10	1.0	-11.0
216.88	Invesco Asia Tr	328	+ 17	4.2	-12.3	1,965.78

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price	Wkly (%)	Forecast (%)	Yield (%)	P/E
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404.14	EFG-Hermes Hldg	55%	+ 5½	...	6.3	...
53.03	EPE Special Opps	127%	+ 1½
453.21	FBD:	1117%	+ 17	6.7
8.87	Fisicw	75	...	...	0.3	15.0
57.86	Frenkel Topping	45%	-	½	2.2	34.7
410.74	Georgia Capital	980	+ 90	...	2.2	...
451.54	Gresham House	1100	+ 5	...	...	30.5
162.20	H&T Group	374	-	1	4.5	7.7
62.73	Hansard Global	46	-	1½	9.6	9.5
5,364.28	Hargreaves Lansdown	1132	-	1½	3.7	20.1
128.19	Helios Underw	171%	+ 5	3.5	35.5	...
127,325.14	HSBC	683%	+ ½	7.0	7.4	...
3,047.31	IG Group	819	+ 11	5.5	11.1	...
484.98	Imapax	379	+ 23	7.2	12.7	...
6,341.59	Intermed Capital	2182	-	58	3.5	28.2
287.94	IPF	127	+ 1½	8.2	6.2	...
2,425.28	International Publ P'ship	127%	+ 1½	...	87.4	...
3,700.01	Investec	573%	+ 3	5.8	7.8	...
16.85	Investment Co	353	-	2	43.8	...
426.75	IP Group	41%	-	2½	3.0	-2.5
26.61	Jarvis Securities	59%	...	...	15.1	6.6
393.02	Justit Fund Mgmt	76%	-	2½	8.9	...
1,094.79	Juniper Group	105%	-	½	1.9	5.4
1,467.69	Langshare Holdings	614	-	2	2.6	9.9
13,556.72	Legal & Gen	227	-	4	8.9	31.1
1,438.66	Liberty Group	502%	-	704%	...	-16.2
436.76	Liontrust	685	-	70	9.9	8.5
63.66	Livemore Invest	38%	...	...	...	...
34,194.83	Lloyds Banking Group	54%	-	½	4.9	7.8
14.17	LMS Capital	17%	-	1½	...	-3.8

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price	Wkly (%)	Forecast (%)	Yield (%)	P/E
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49,939.26	Lond Sth Ex Gp	9400	- 254	1.2	68.0	...
4,855.72	M&G	204	- 3	9.6	16.4	...
2,809.60	Man	242%	- 4%	5.3	15.9	...
22.34	Manx Fin	19	...	2.4	5.4	...
1.59	Marechale Cap	1½	...	...	-3.6	...
372.31	Mattoli Woods	788	- 1	3.4	41.0	...
15.35	Metal Tiger	9	+ 1	...	-2.0	...
248.57	Metro Bank	36%	- ½	...	2.7	...
59,279.15	Nat Aust Bk	1914	+ 2	...	16.8	...
25,962.35	NatWest	311%	- 3	5.4	6.7	...
372.31	Numis	343	+ 1	...	...	...
1,658.36	Onesavings Bank	428%	- 13%	7.3	6.5	...
462.36	PayPoint	636	...	2.0	14.9	...
3.17	PCF Group	½	+ ½	...	-0.4	...
5,223.15	Phoenix	521%	+ 5%	10.1	1.1	...
19,744.16	Prudential	710%	+ 11%	2.2	14.7	...
11.30	Quantum Blockchain	½	...	...	-2.7	...
1,667.36	Quilter	120	- 2%	4.2	38.7	...
0.28	Randall & Quilter	...	...	...	1½	...
1,818.72	Rathbone Grp	1680	- 54	5.0	33.0	...
1.71	RiverFort Global Opps	½	...	1.6	-1.8	...
85.64	Rockwood Strategic	266	- 2	...	6.8	...
226.00	S & U	1860	- 30	9.6	8.9	...
1.321	Sancus Lending Grp	½	...	...	...	...
218.14	Schroder REITs	44%	- ½	...	-4.0	...
5,864.72	Schroders	363%	- 12%	5.8	15.0	...
2,998.13	St James Place	546%	- 1½	4.3	8.0	...
18,069.65	Stand Chart	716	- 7	2.9	8.0	...
6.82	Starinvest	11%	- ½	...	-1.9	...
31.48	STM Group	54%	- 3	1.0	56.1	...

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price	Wkly (%)	Forecast (%)	Yield (%)	P/E
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65.30	Billington Hldgs	529	+ 9	3.8	6.6	...
280.61	Boat (Henry)	210	...	3.5	10.8	...
1,329.48	BREEDON	387	- 2½	3.4	12.4	...
3,817.64	Br Land:	411%	- 1%	5.5	-3.5	...
15.32	Caledonia Tst	130	+ 5	...	...	...
145.62	Cap & Regnl	62%	+ 1½	9.5	...	...
23.87	Cardiff Prop	2300	...			

Equity prices Business

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly %	Ytd %	P/E
1.68	N4 Pharma	1/2	...	-0.8	
290,90	NIOX Group	68 1/2	- 1/2	1.4 32.5	
CHF196.23bn	Novartis	CHF96.17	+ 2.18	...	24.3
5.23	Omega Diags	2 1/2	...	-1.6	
0.73	Ovoca Bio	7 1/2	...	-0.3	
312.12	Oxford Biomedica	296 1/2	- 15 1/2	-1.8	
1.63	Phyomics	1 1/2	...	-3.0	
10.33	Proteome Sciences	3 1/2	- 1/2	-4.2	
29,924.38	Reckitt Benckiser	4282	- 146	4.4 18.8	
6.83	RUA Life Sciences	11	+ 1/2	-1.3	
48.04	Sareum Hldgs	44 1/2	+ 6 1/2	-7.1	
8,573.26	Smith & Neph	980 1/2	- 24 1/2	3.1 41.5	
948.98	Spire Hcare	235	- 5	1.1 35.6	
8.46	Symraen	4 1/2	- 1 1/2	-0.8	
46.76	Tissue Regenix	65 1/2	+ 1/2	...	
14.25	Totalx	7 1/2	- 1/2	1.7	
217.48	Tristel	457 1/2	+ 20	2.8 36.5	
4.17	ValiRx	3 1/2	+ 1/2	-1.2	

Industrials

131.63	Accsys Tech	55	- 5	-2.4	
34,192.34	BASF	3830 1/2	+ 2 1/2	...	
21,973.00	Bayer MDSO	2236 1/2	+ 32 1/2	-8.2	
2.65	Biome Tech	70	- 2 1/2	-1.7	
0.45	Byotrol	...	...	-0.2	
4.98	Camb Gal Timber	6 1/2	...	-4.0	
1,260.62	Coats Grp	79 1/2	- 2 1/2	2.7 19.6	
5,512.21	Croda	3948	- 101	2.7 32.2	
31.53	Cropper (James)	330	- 15	2.1 9.7	
858.94	Elementis	145 1/2	+ 1 1/2	1.1 39.5	
6.08	Hardidex	7 1/2	...	-4.0	
2,874.32	Johnson Matthi	1567	- 2	4.8 16.2	
6,694.28	Mondi	1518 1/2	+ 20	4.0 15.3	
18.43	Robinson	110	...	5.0	
5,808.11	DS Smith	421	+ 59 1/2	4.2 12.5	
5,801.65	Swire Pacific	699 1/2	+ 1 1/2	3.4 3.4	
6.19	Symph Environ	2 1/2	...	-2.0	
421.19	Synthomer	257 1/2	+ 2	-2.1	
32,466.69	Takeda Pharm	205 1/2	+ 73 1/2	...	32.7
4.51	Velocys	3 1/2	...	-0.2	
997.42	Vivtrex	1146	- 14	5.1 16.2	
87.96	Wynnstar Group	382 1/2	- 7 1/2	4.5 12.6	
215.19	Zotefoams	491	- 19	1.5 24.3	

Leisure

383.53	888 Hldgs	85 1/2	- 2	-6.7	
295.57	Access Tech	728	- 22	49.7	
44.85	Best of the Best	530	...	5.9	
17,204.06	Carnival	1357	+ 231	53.6	
156.29	Cellic	165	+ 22 1/2	22.2	
1,231.63	Domino's Pizza	306 1/2	- 12	3.3 11.0	
4,025.44	Entain	630	- 33	2.8 -4.4	
25,689.93	Flutter Ent	14465	- 600	...	
107.00	Gaming Realms	36 1/2	- 2 1/2	22.9	
12.00	Heavitec	265	...	2.0 8.5	
7.79	Heavitec A	160	...	3.4 5.1	
1.22	Hermes Pacific	52 1/2	...	...
13,455.55	InterContinental Hotels	60	+ 1.4	24.0	
6.12	Mineco Grp	1 1/2	...	-5.1	
1,695.16	Mitch & Butlers	285 1/2	- 15 1/2	...	
229.10	On The Beach	137 1/2	- 9 1/2	0.6 14.5	
318.53	Rank Grp	68	- 3	-3.3	
499.23	Restaurant Grp	64 1/2	...	...
19.54	Rotalis	63	...	...
8.40	Sportech	84	+ 16	...	
1,181.94	SSPI	148	- 4 1/2	2.4	
1.76	Tasty	1 1/2	- 1/2	-0.1	
5.76	Tintex	32 1/2	- 12 1/2	-1.7	
2,859.37	Tui	563 1/2	- 10	3.1	
5.11	Webs Holdings	1 1/2	...	-6.6	
904.91	Wetherspoon JD	732	- 10	22.6	
5,357.41	Whitbread	2975	+ 24	3.2	
608.55	Young & Co - A	980	+ 20	2.1 20.4	
375.06	Young & Co - N/A	604	- 26	3.5 12.6	

Media

5.68	Aeorema Commis	59 1/2	...	5.0 20.6	
13.52	Altitude Group	43 1/2	+ 2	60.4	
31.27	Arcantech Grp	92 1/2	- 3 1/2	3.7 10.7	
690.41	Asential	342	+ 6 1/2	...	
7,180.53	Auto Trader	801 1/2	- 10 1/2	1.0 31.6	
509.80	Bloomsbury Pub	626	+ 16	2.2 24.1	
0.79	Bonhill Group	1 1/2	+ 1/2	...	

17.88	Catalyst Media	85	...	31.7 5.8	
0.31	Catenace	1/2	...	-0.2	
2.54	DCD Media	100	- 50	...	5.0
54.64	Equity	40	- 1	...	
1,198.63	Future	1049	+ 50	1.0 11.1	
1,755.13	GlobalData	218	- 7	2.1 57.3	
351.72	Hyve Group	120 1/2	...	...
213.76	IG Design Grp	217 1/2	- 15 1/2	-9.7	
11,479.53	Informa	855 1/2	- 4 1/2	2.0 28.6	
3,187.99	ITV	80 1/2	+ 1/2	6.1 15.4	
1.35	Jayvint	1 1/2	...	...
0.78	Live Company Grp	1 1/2	- 1/2	...	
644.59	ME Group	171 1/2	+ 1 1/2	4.3 12.8	
1.10	Mediatest	...	...	-1.6	
20.12	Merit Grp	84	- 1	-7.2	
0.14	Miradex	1 1/2	- 1 1/2	...	
18.62	Mission Group	20 1/2	- 1 1/2	8.1 -1.6	
1,194.07	Moneysupermarket	222 1/2	- 4 1/2	5.3 16.4	
8,319.99	News Corp A	2394	+ 70	...	74.9
4,320.23	News Corp B	2265 1/2	+ 34	...	77.3
803.59	Next 15 Group	798	- 104	1.8 31.0	
6,631.21	Pearson	990 1/2	+ 17 1/2	2.3 18.8	
5.03	Primorus Inv	3 1/2	+ 1/2	-4.3	
57.24	Quarto	140	+ 10	...	5.3
312.64	Reach	98 1/2	+ 6 1/2	7.6 14.4	
15.73	REACT Grp	73	- 1/2	...	
67,777.89	Relx	3639	+ 39	1.6 38.6	
4,252.85	Rightmove	537	- 26 1/2	1.7 22.0	
1.66	SpaceandPeople	87 1/2	...	-0.9	
65.98	System1 Group	520	+ 30	53.0	
6,301.30	21st Cent Fox Inc A	2726	...	...	10.8
5,985.99	21st Cent Fox Inc B	2540 1/2	+ 4 1/2	...	10.1
1.49	Vela Tech	...	...	...
5,801.65	Wilmington	390	+ 10	2.5 19.2	
7,809.49	WPP	724 1/2	- 23 1/2	5.3 71.7	
19.01	Zinc Media	83 1/2	- 3	-9.2	

Natural resources

2.67	ADM Energy	1/2	...	-0.7	
2.67	Advance Energy	1/2	...	-0.1	
138.13	AFC Energy	16 1/2	- 2 1/2	-7.1	
118.05	Afentra PLC	52 1/2	- 1/2	...	
4.58	Alba Mineral Res	...	...	...
8.49	Allen Metals	...	...	-3.1	
2,598.48	Alumina	89 1/2	+ 4 1/2	...	
62.87	Aminex	1 1/2	- 1/2	...	
1.25	Amur Mins Corp	...	- 14 1/2	-0.5	
6,915.74	Anglo Amer Plat	2606 1/2	- 63 1/2	...	12.2
30,332.55	Anglo American	2502	+ 29 1/2	...	3.0
86.25	Anglo Asian Mng	75 1/2	+ 3 1/2	3.9	
20,801.58	Antofagasta	2110	+ 52	1.3 31.7	
19.88	Arc Minerals	1 1/2	...	-5.4	
26.94	Ariana Res	2 1/2	- 1/2	15.6	
1.21	Arkle Resources	...	...	-2.2	
3.23	Armadae Cap	1 1/2	...	13.7	
22.44	Asiamet Res	1 1/2	...	-4.8	
610.06	Atlas Iron	434	+ 19	1.5 18.6	
21.68	Baron Oil	...	...	-7.7	
13.98	Beowulf Mining	36	- 3 1/2	...	
2.28	Bezzant Res	...	...	1.0	
114,768.24	BHP Group	2263	+ 30	5.3 19.8	
17.54	Border & Sth Pet	2 1/2	...	...
102.77	Bougainville	25 1/2	- 1 1/2	...	
3.77	BowlEvenco	1 1/2	...	-0.4	
78,962.83	BP	475 1/2	+ 4 1/2	4.8 7.0	
6.62	Caldecott Min	3 1/2	...	-2.4	
5.49	Cadogan Petrol	2 1/2	...	5.7	
149.72	Caledonia Mining	780	- 32 1/2	5.8	
73.29	Caspian Sunrise	3 1/2	...	95.5	
1,402.95	Centamin	120 1/2	+ 5	2.6 19.7	
350.56	Cent Asia Metals	201 1/2	+ 1/2	8.9 13.0	
20.39	Charart Gold	2 1/2	- 1/2	-1.8	
80.50	Charlot Oil & Gas	7 1/2	...	-4.7	
4.97	China Nonfer Gold	1 1/2	...	...
5.04	Clontarf Energy	...	...	1.0	
49.33	Condor Gold	24 1/2	- 1/2	...	
3.56	Corcel	1 1/2	...	-1.0	
588.07	DRD Gold	68	- 2 1/2	...	8.0

4.55	ECR Minerals	1/2	...	-1.6	
3.84	Empyrean Energy	1/2	...	0.8	
4,126.34	Endeavour	1686	- 12	3.8	
259.04	Enquest	13 1/2	+ 1/2	-1.1	
66.03	Eurasia Mining	2 1/2	...	-4.5	
8.15	Europa Oil&Gas	1 1/2	...	...
269.16	Ferrexpo	45	+ 1 1/2	-3.9	
4,131.34	Fresnillo	562	+ 5 1/2	0.8 22.6	
43.86	G3 Exploration	28	...	-2.8	
9.76	Galantas Gold	8 1/2	- 2	-1.6	
15.48	GCM Resources	5 1/2	...	-9.3	
18.23	Gem Diamonds	13	...	...
2.06	Getech	3	- 1/2	-0.4	
54,829.30	Glencore	451	- 3 1/2	5.0 16.9	
1.23	Global Petrol	...	...	-0.7	
10,601.92	Gold Fields	1184 1/2	+ 40 1/2	...	19.1
11.16	Goldplat	6 1/2	- 1/2	5.0	
4.43	Goldstone Res	1 1/2	...	-0.9	
356.33	Greatfild	7	- 1/2	...	
285.09	Griffin Mining	155	- 2	37.5	
322.76	Gulf Keystone	147	- 3 1/2	...	
14.49	Harland & Wolff Grp	8 1/2	- 1 1/2	-0.1	
920.88	Hochschild	179	- 1 1/2	...	
0.88	Horizonte Miners	1 1/2	...	-0.1	
682.03	Hunting PLC	413 1/2	+ 3 1/2	1.9 7.5	
0.56	Independ Res	...	...	...
13.13	Indus Gas	7 1/2	- 4	0.5	
1.50	Ironvelo	...	...	-3.8	
286.28	ITM Power	46 1/2	- 1/2	-4.5	
210.83	Jubilee Metals	7	...	14.6	
2.57	Karel Diam Res	2 1/2	...	...
1.47	KEFI Gold & Copper	1 1/2	...	-3.7	
281.51	Kennecore Res	315 1/2	- 1	13.9 2.9	
37.60	Lamprell	8 1/2	...	-0.7	
8.29	Landore Res	3 1/2	- 1/2	-1.7	

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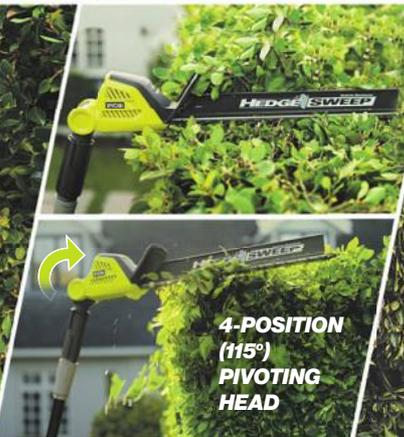
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Rugby prop who lived up to his 'Iron Man' nickname
Courtenay Meredith
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Register

Obituaries

Fred Roos

Oscar-winning *Godfather II* producer, longtime collaborator of Francis Ford Coppola and casting wizard who 'discovered' Harrison Ford

When Fred Roos was hired by Francis Ford Coppola to put together the cast for *The Godfather*, he adopted a mafioso-like attitude to his hunt for the leading men.

First, he and Coppola made a pact to cast either Italians, or if needs be Italian-Americans, for every Italian role — "to keep a certain purity to it", Roos said. For the part of Michael, the mafia boss Vito Corleone's third and youngest son, they then schemed ways to secure Al Pacino, who had just been signed up for the lighter crime drama *The Gang that Couldn't Shoot Straight*. It was a solo mission: studio executives at Paramount wanted a better-known actor, such as Robert Redford, Warren Beatty or James Caan — who would get the part of Michael's ruthless older brother, Sonny.

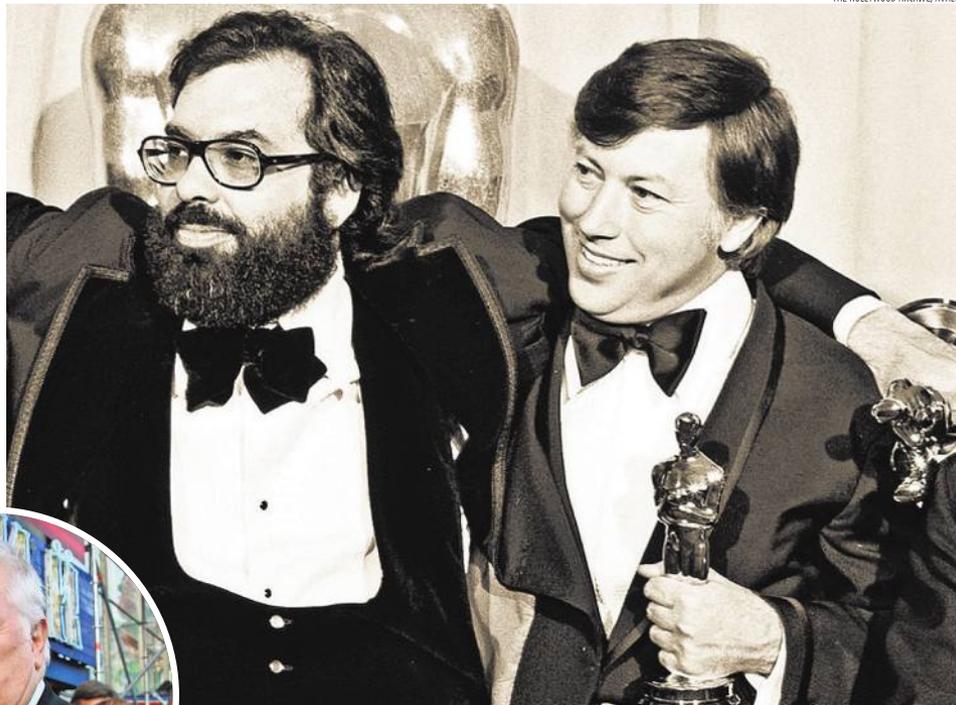
To bag Pacino, Coppola and Roos had to get Robert Evans, head of production at Paramount, to enlist a well-known "mob lawyer" who called the president of MGM, Kirk Kerkorian, and said: "You are building two hotels in Las Vegas. I think you might have some labour problems if you don't release Al Pacino from his contract." They made the actor an offer he couldn't refuse.

A more subtle approach was used to persuade Robert De Niro to play a young Vito in *The Godfather Part II*. "Francis and I knew him, and didn't want to bring him in for a formal interview," recalled Roos, who was hired as co-producer and shared an Oscar for best picture with Coppola. "So we just took him to dinner one night. He did not realise that this was his audition. Through the course of a two-hour dinner, we decided he could pass for the young Vito Corleone."

Casting Lee Strasberg as Hyman Roth, the old Jewish mafioso based on the infamous mobster Meyer Lansky, required a different kind of diplomacy. "You just don't invite someone of his stature, who had run the Actors Studio, in for an audition," said Roos. "So we concocted this whole scam to look him over." They asked a member of his studio, Sally Kirkland, to throw Strasberg a party and invite 100 other guests so that they could observe the ageing director in action. His awkward style worked for the role, Roos said, and he was hired.

In reality, Roos was far from the mafiosi depicted in *The Godfather*. He was genial and quiet, often inscrutable. "It's difficult to make Fred Roos laugh," said Eve Babitz, a journalist whom he dated. "But once you're on his A-list, you're allowed to once, sometimes twice a day."

He had a reputation for getting along with everybody he worked with and he was an unflappable presence on film sets which, given Coppola's ego and temper, often descended into chaos. For *Godfather II* — universally acknowledged as a miserable film to work on — his role was to coolly get things



Roos, right, with Coppola when *The Godfather Part II* won the best picture Oscar, and Robert De Niro, below, won best supporting actor. Left, Roos at the Moscow International Film Festival in 2007



done and he was often compared to the character of Tom Hagen, the discreet consigliere and official lawyer of the Corleone family, played by Robert Duvall. "If someone was ranting or raving one day about something, I would handle it," he said. "Calm them down. They were afraid to approach Francis with these sorts of things, so I smoothed things over."

He took that approach when Coppola hired him as a producer for his Vietnam war epic *Apocalypse Now*, a

'We just took De Niro to dinner. He didn't realise this was his audition'

\$30 million production filmed in the Philippines that was beset by typhoons, Coppola's psychological breakdown, spiralling costs and a civil insurgency. Roos had shot several films in the Philippines in the Sixties, one with Jack Nicholson, and he had contacts there, including the dictator Ferdinand Marcos who gave them permission to shoot on Australian military bases and promised, then flaked on, a swarm of helicopters for the production.

Apocalypse Now featured Harrison Ford in the minor role of Colonel Lucas. Ford had been a struggling actor and part-time carpenter when he first met Roos, who hired him for some wood-working jobs at his house in the early Seventies. They became friends and Roos secured him a role as a drag racer in George Lucas's 1973 film *American*

Graffiti, a bit part in Coppola's thriller *The Conversation* and, crucially, the role of Han Solo in *Star Wars* after arranging for Ford to fit a door at Coppola's offices, where auditions for the space epic were being held.

For *Star Wars*, Lucas took some persuading. He didn't want to reuse actors who had appeared in *American Graffiti*, and he had the actors Kurt Russell, Christopher Walken and Nick Nolte in mind, but Roos persuaded him that Ford was right for the part and it put the actor on the cinematic map. "Fred is a very loyal man," said Ford in 2004. "Once he believes in you, he is unrelenting. He kept putting me up for parts and I kept getting rejected. Finally things worked out." Roos also urged Lucas to cast Carrie Fisher as Princess Leia.

Jack Nicholson was another labouring actor when he was picked up by Roos in the mid-Sixties and cast in a pair of low-budget action films directed by Monte Hellman. Nicholson had been eager and earnest in his younger years but was putting off directors with his new laissez faire approach. "It's that he wasn't humble," said Roos. "He wasn't grovelling to get a job. He was a little bit flip. And he did not look like a leading man was supposed to look in those days." Roos got him work by effec-

tively thrusting him in front of producers. "Sometimes they got mad at me afterwards. Here would be this guy, in the middle of some sitcom, doing 'Jack Nicholson', which was not part of the style."

Roos's first credit as a producer was on the 1964 Nicholson-led *Flight to Fury*, a film about a battle over stolen diamonds in the Philippines in which Nicholson starred. In 1970 he cast Nicholson as an upper-class pianist turned oil rig worker in *Five Easy Pieces* and a year later produced the actor's directorial debut *Drive, He Said*. Nicholson took to calling him "the Rooster".

He was born Frederick Ried Roos in 1934 in Santa Monica, California, and grew up in Riverside and Los Angeles. The son of Victor, a GP, and Florence (née Stout), a teacher, after graduating from Hollywood High in 1952 he served two tours during the Korean War, the first with the director-producer Garry Marshall. During his service he wrote and directed a documentary series called *The Story of Korea*.

Following a degree in theatre arts and motion pictures at the University of California, Los Angeles, he got a job in the mail room of the talent agency MCA. One of his jobs was driving Marilyn Monroe around and he was quickly promoted to junior agent. "I knew how to put things to-

gether," he said. "I knew how to recognise talent."

It was Robert L Lippert, a renowned producer who ran one of the last B movie studios, who took Roos's career to the next level by hiring him as a story editor and eventually casting director. He was less interested in financing films than assembling its parts — actors, location, equipment — and one of his first moves was to secure Nicholson a part in Lippert's western *The Broken Land* in 1962. During the rest of the decade he cast relatively unknown actors for low-budget shows such as *That Girl* and *The Andy Griffith Show*; His watershed came in 1968 with the film *Petulia*, starring Julie Christie as the abused socialite wife of an architect who falls in love with a doctor, played by George C Scott.

An early job for a talent agency was driving Marilyn Monroe around

In the 27-odd films he produced Roos would nurture the careers of Diane Keaton, Jennifer Connelly and Nicolas Cage, and he put the musicians James Taylor and Kris Kristofferson in leading roles in Hellman's *Two-Lane Blacktop* (1971) and *Cisco Pike* (1972) respectively.

His association with Coppola was to be long and fruitful: over more than 50 years he produced nearly every film the veteran director made, including *One From the Heart* (1981) and *The Outsiders* (1983), a coming of age drama that launched the careers of Tom Cruise, Patrick Swayze and Matt Dillon.

He persuaded Coppola to direct *Peggy Sue Got Married* (1986), which became Coppola's highest-grossing film of the decade. "I finally did it because Fred Roos, who has great taste, said it would be successful," said Coppola, who in 2004 called the silver-haired producer "one of the great casting talents in the last 40 years of American movies". Their final collaboration was *Megalopolis*, a critically panned sci-fi released this year.

His association with the Coppola clan was far reaching. Having babysat Sofia when she was a girl, Roos would produce every film she directed including her debut *The Virgin Suicides* (1999), for which he persuaded her to cast Anna Farris in the lead, *Lost in Translation* (2003) and most recently *Priscilla* (2023). He was executive producer on Francis's wife Eleanor Coppola's Emmy-winning documentary on the making of her husband's war epic, *Hearts of Darkness: a Filmmaker's Apocalypse*, and he produced her fiction directorial debut *Paris Can Wait*, which she made when she was 80. He is survived by his wife, Nancy Drew, and son and producing partner, Alexander "Sandy" Roos.

"It's always kind of intangible, just a feeling I have about somebody," Roos said of his knack for unearthing stars. "A lot of people that I've been associated with are like that. Jack Nicholson. Harrison. They don't quite fit any mould."

Fred Roos, film producer, was born on May 22, 1934. He died on May 18, 2024, aged 89

Courtenay Meredith

Rugby prop who won 14 caps for Wales and lived up to his 'Iron Man' name after playing on with a nasty injury in a Lions match

With half-time approaching in the third Test between the British Lions and South Africa in Pretoria on September 3, 1955, blood began seeping from the mouth of the Lions' prop forward Courtenay Meredith. He had bitten through his tongue and asked his colleague, the flanker Clem Thomas, to take a look. "I could see the hole in it," Thomas said. "It looked horrendous, but he was playing so well and doing such a good job on their front row that I told him everything was fine and he should play on." In the second half, Meredith was spitting blood from his mouth and after the game had to have stitches in his tongue.

The Lions won the game 9-6, enabling them to take a 2-1 lead into the fourth and final Test three weeks later. "If he had gone off we wouldn't have won," Thomas added. Although the Lions lost the last Test, they returned home with a draw against a side that hadn't lost a home series for 61 years.

Meredith's determination to remain on the field speaks to the bravery of a player who earned the nickname of "The Iron Man". He was one of the most powerful prop forwards in the international game, renowned for his ferocious scrummaging, and in the four Tests against South Africa lined up in an all-Welsh front row alongside the hooker Bryn Meredith (no relation) and fellow prop Billy Williams.

The series kicked off at Ellis Park in Johannesburg, and in front of over 90,000 spectators, including a 37-year-old Nelson Mandela, the Lions won 23-22. The two Merediths and Williams were titans that afternoon. Shortly after the restart, the English flanker Reg Higgins was carried off with a broken leg and with a depleted pack be-



Courtenay Meredith, second right, playing against the All Blacks in Cardiff in 1953

hind them (this was over a decade before replacements were permitted), they held their ground against the might of the Springboks forwards for more than 30 minutes.

Courtenay Meredith, who was playing his club rugby at the time for Neath, made his debut for Wales in a 12-0 Five Nations victory over Scotland at Murrayfield in February 1953. He was then left out of the team for their remaining games in the championship, before

being recalled for one of the most historic Test matches in Welsh history.

The touring All Blacks arrived at the Arms Park on December 19 having been beaten at the stadium a month earlier by Cardiff. With 15 minutes to play, they held a narrow lead and appeared likely to atone for that defeat, especially since Wales were effectively down to 13 men with their two centres, Gareth Griffiths and skipper Bleddyn Williams, no more than passengers

with shoulder and thigh injuries respectively. But tries from Sid Judd and Ken Jones earned the Welsh a thrilling 13-8 victory. At the time, it was the third victory Wales had enjoyed over the All Blacks. The country has been waiting for a fourth ever since. After the match, Bleddyn Williams said that Meredith and his fellow forwards "weren't up to standard" in the first half, and "were getting a little bit of a hounding". But they upped their game in the second half and it created the platform for their team's revival.

A month later, Meredith had another crack at the All Blacks when the tourists visited Neath's ground, The Gnoll, to take on a combined Neath & Aberavon team. In scoring his side's only try in an 11-5 defeat he showed unusual speed and mobility for a prop by making a break from over 30 yards out to score. He played against another touring side from the southern hemisphere a few days after Christmas in 1957, turning out for Neath & Aberavon against an Australian XV, losing 5-3.

In total, Meredith won 14 caps for Wales, playing in every Five Nations match in 1954 and 1955 when Wales finished joint top of the table. They would have won the championship outright on both occasions had points difference been taken into account back then. He scored his only international try in Wales's 21-3 victory over Ireland in Cardiff in March 1955.

Courtenay Charles Meredith was born in 1926 in Hopkinstown, a small village to the west of Pontypridd. He went to Neath Grammar School and after National Service in the RAF studied at the University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire (now Cardiff University). His rugby career began

at Crynant RFC where he played in the back row, but his arrival at Neath in 1949 coincided with a decision to move forward in the scrum and play as a prop. He could play both tighthead and loosehead, although his preference was the former. His strength was such that he frequently had the beating of his opposite number who would sometimes move to the other side of the front row to get away from him. But Meredith would simply follow him, and in his surprisingly cut-glass accent, yell to his captain Rees Stephens, "This bugger's had it. They'd better fetch another one."

He played a total of 250 times for Neath, combining his rugby with a job as manager of a hot mill at Port Talbot Steelworks. His appearances for Neath would have been greater had he not been called up so regularly to play for Wales or the Barbarians or various invitational XV's. Consequently, his absence from the Neath starting line-up, and that of his fellow internationals Rees Stephens and Roy John, meant he never won the unofficial Welsh Championship during his time at the club. He was made captain for the 1957-58 season, marking his last game with a try in a 25-15 victory over Penarth.

Having quit the game, Meredith chose not to maintain his links with rugby, declining an invitation to return to Neath when the club inducted him into its Hall of Fame. He spent much of his retirement on the fairways of Royal Porthcawl Golf Club, which he joined as a member in 1984, playing to a respectable 16 handicap, and without doing damage to his tongue.

Courtenay Meredith, Wales and Lions prop, was born on September 23, 1926. He died on May 30, 2024, aged 97

Rabbi Moshe Kotlarsky

Leading figure in Chabad, the global movement for Hasidic Jews, and master of ceremonies at New York's 'largest sit-down dinner'

It was at the annual Kinus Hashluchim, a gathering of all the emissaries of the Chabad-Lubavitch Hasidic movement, that Rabbi Moshe Kotlarsky could celebrate the scale of his and his colleagues' achievement. The movement aimed to provide spiritual and material sustenance to Jewish communities across the globe and encourage Hasidic observance. As the gatherings expanded, Kotlarsky could see its success arrayed before him.

He helped to plan the event meticulously, including a gala banquet that kept outgrowing its venues and became, with more than 6,000 participants, what was called "the largest sit-down dinner in New York City".

Kotlarsky, who revelled in the role of master of ceremonies, would take a roll call of each of the shluchim, or emissaries, from different parts of the world. "The shluchim from Belgium, please stand up. The shluchim from Azerbaijan, please stand up. The shluchim from Finland..." There was prolonged cheering and good humour after which he encouraged "spontaneous dancing".

Most of the emissaries and their communities were known personally to Kotlarsky, as he travelled far and wide to investigate and support Jewish life. He would search out those who might have lost most sense of their Jewish identity and needed rabbinical support, or who lacked the means to acquire kosher food, take ritual baths and establish their own schools. And he would negotiate patiently with local authorities to try to ensure the best support for Chabad initiatives and Jewish life generally.

The name "Chabad" came from an acronym for Hebrew words meaning

wisdom, understanding and knowledge. Chabad houses were established that could be used as synagogues and community and cultural centres, aiming to support both observant and non-religious Jews.

"Our mission," Kotlarsky once said, "is to reach every Jew, wherever they may be, and bring them closer to their heritage." He added: "We do not have a 100 per cent success rate. We are human, but we keep on trying and innovating."

Sometimes the communities were especially small and remote. He went to the Caribbean island of Curacao to meet an individual who had spent most of his life unaware of his Jewishness but who now wished to embrace his new identity and had written to the movement's New York headquarters.

"When I arrived on the island," he recalled, "I asked a taxi driver to take me to the Jewish centre, and after meeting a few locals, I stepped into the street. A fellow hurried over to me and asked, 'Why are you here?' I said, 'The Lubavitcher Rebbe [the spiritual head of his organisation] sent me'. The man's eyes widened in astonishment. 'Then you came for me'."

Other challenges were on a far larger scale. A big opportunity emerged after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Russian territory was closely linked with the origins of the Chabad movement in the 18th and 19th centuries. But the Holocaust and Soviet persecution had taken a terrible toll.

Kotlarsky described arriving in Moscow in 1991, a "year of great wonders", as he and his delegation were welcomed over the airport's public address

system not only in Russian and English, but also in Hebrew. He was "freaked out of my mind" when they were then honoured with a meeting in the local Communist Party HQ.

Work in the former USSR and other unstable and hazardous parts of the world did expose the Chabad network to danger, however. In 2008 two emissaries, Rabbi Gavriel Holtzberg and his wife, Rivka, were among those murdered in the Indian city of Mumbai by Islamist terrorists.

Kotlarsky promised to avenge the deaths "not with AK47s, not with grenades and tanks" but by adding "light" and "good deeds", restoring the Mumbai Chabad community and rebuilding its cultural centre.

He derived particular satisfaction from visits to reunified Germany, as it began a new reckoning with the Nazi past. "What are we going to do that ensures we don't forget?" he urged.

"If we are not going to educate, instil and invoke in the children of the next generation, then it will all be forgotten."

Opening Chabad centres in cities such as Munich and Berlin, as their Jewish population revived, felt immensely significant: "For every dedication that I go to, I feel it is the greatest testimony to Hitler's defeat. He did not annihilate the Jewish people. The Jewish people will live for ever."

His work in Germany was especially poignant as visiting the country had been unthinkable for his father, Rabbi Tzvi Yosef Kotlarsky, whose entire family, apart from one brother, had been murdered in the Holocaust. His father had made his escape from Nazi-occupied Poland via Lithuania, Russia, Japan, China and Canada before arriving in New York. There he married Goldie Shimmelman and their son Moshe was born in 1949.

The family became closely involved with the Chabad movement's spiritual leader, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, widely known as the Rebbe and revered by some in the movement as a kind of Messiah. Moshe Kotlarsky began outreach work while a student in Montreal in the late 1960s, once visiting a well-known Yiddish comedian to persuade him to wear tefillin, leather boxes containing Hebrew parchment scrolls. The comedian, a Holocaust survivor, was moved to tears by the gesture.

Following his marriage to

Kotlarsky's work took him to post-Soviet Russia and a reunified Germany

Rivka Kazen, a teacher, Kotlarsky and his new wife asked Schneerson to be sent as emissaries to a Chabad community abroad, but he was persuaded to remain based at the heart of the organisation in New York. The couple had nine children, all of whom became involved in Chabad work.

At first Kotlarsky travelled mostly in the United States, sometimes by bus, and then began his global work which took him everywhere from Bolivia to the Himalayas. Education was a personal mission. A Chabad on Campus international foundation provided facilities and support for students, while the Rohr Jewish Learning Institute, established in the late 1990s, offered adult education in many languages.

The institute was principally funded by the Rohr family, and fundraising was another of Kotlarsky's constant activities. He befriended the wealthy philanthropist Sami Rohr and joked that when he was hungry, he would visit Rohr in Miami for lunch. "He is so busy, but he can't refuse me."

At the meal Rohr would have his favourite fish but Kotlarsky would order the salmon because, he explained to Rohr, "it is two dollars cheaper and you are paying for it". After the meal, when Kotlarsky had explained his latest projects and the funding they would need, Rohr would say: "Rabbi Kotlarsky, you could have purchased the expensive fish, this lunch cost me 800,000 times more than that."

Rabbi Moshe Kotlarsky, leading figure of the Chabad movement, was born on June 8, 1949. He died of cancer on June 4, 2024, aged 74



Law Report

Quantification of damages under standard Gafta default clause for failure to pay for cargo after unloading at port

Supreme Court
Published on July 1, 2024

Sharp Corporation Ltd v Viterra BV
(previously known as Glencore
Agriculture BV)

Before Lord Reed, Lord Hodge, Lord
Briggs, Lord Hamblen and Lord Leggatt
[2024] UKSC 14
Judgment May 8, 2024

Where buyers failed to pay for a cargo after its customs clearance and unloading at the delivery port in India, the damages payable for their non-acceptance of the goods were to be quantified by valuing the actual goods left in the seller's hands on an "as is, where is" basis rather than by seeking to replicate the terms of the original sale contract.

The Supreme Court so held, *inter alia*, in allowing both an appeal by Viterra BV (the sellers) and a cross-appeal by Sharp Corporation Ltd (the buyers) against the order of the Court of Appeal (Lady Justice Asplin, Lord Justice Popplewell and Lord Justice Phillips) ([2023] 2 All ER (Comm) 457) which allowed the appeal of the buyers against the dismissal by Mrs Justice Cockerill ([2023] 1 All ER (Comm) 321) of their appeal against two awards in the sellers' favour made by the Appeal Board of the Grain and Feed Trade Association (Gafta).

The two contracts (between the same parties) had been for the delivery of two cargoes of pulses from Vancouver to Mundra, India on "Cost & Freight free out (C&FFO) Mundra" terms and incorporating the standard Gafta default clause, as set out in clause 25 of Gafta Contract No 24.

Michael Collett KC and **Talia Zybuz** for the sellers; **Chirag Karia KC** and **Ben Gardner** for the buyers.

LORD HAMBLÉN, with whom the other members of the court agreed, said that on the default date the sellers had been

left with goods which had been landed, customs cleared and stored in a warehouse in Mundra.

After the goods had been customs cleared the government of India imposed import tariffs which had the effect of significantly increasing their value in India. The sellers had then resold the goods to an associated company and claimed damages under the Gafta default clause in both contracts.

The Appeal Board accepted the sellers' case that it should base its award on the "Free on Board (FOB) Vancouver" price of the goods on the default date plus the market freight rate on that date for carriage from Vancouver to Mundra. They rejected the buyers' case that the relevant value was that of the domestic market in India.

The judge, on an appeal under section 69 of the Arbitration Act 1996, upheld the awards. The Court of Appeal, however, held that the damages payable under the default clause were to be assessed on the basis of a notional substitute contract for the goods on the same terms as the parties' contract, save as to price, at the date of default.

That, however, was not a C&FFO Mundra contract (it held) because by the date of default the contracts had been varied so as to become contracts for the sale of the goods ex warehouse (subject to some adjustments).

The sellers' appeal to the Supreme Court concerned the jurisdiction of the court on appeals from arbitration awards under the Arbitration Act 1996. Appeals on points of law arising out of an arbitration award were governed by section 69 of that Act.

It was common for applicants for permission to appeal to identify the question of law in

broad or general terms in order to support the contention that the question was one of general public importance. At the hearing of the appeal refinements were often made to the question in order better to reflect the substance of the question of law raised. Such amendments were permissible provided that the substance of the question remained the same.

However, the court's jurisdiction under section 69 was limited to questions of law which had been fairly and squarely before the arbitration tribunal for determination. Further, the jurisdiction was limited to appeals on questions of law. The court had no jurisdiction in relation to errors of fact and no power to make its own findings of fact.

There might be circumstances in which it was possible to infer that the tribunal had made a finding of fact even though it was not expressly set out in the award, but that did not involve the court making a finding of fact. It was the recognition of a finding of fact which the tribunal had made. However, it was necessary to show that the inferred finding was one which inevitably followed from the findings which had been made.

In the present case, the Court of Appeal in deciding that the contracts had been varied had erred: (i) in deciding a question of law which the Appeal Board had not been asked to determine and on which it had not made a decision; and (ii) in making findings of fact on matters on which the board had made no finding. It followed that the sellers' appeal succeeded.

The issue which arose on the buyers' cross-appeal was whether damages should have been awarded on an "as is, where is" basis, being the estimated ex warehouse Mundra value of the

goods. Two fundamental principles of the law of damages were the compensatory principle and the principle of mitigation of damage. The compensatory principle aimed to put the injured party in the same position as if the breach of duty had not occurred. The principle of mitigation required the injured party to take all reasonable steps to avoid the consequences of a wrong. Both of those principles were reflected in the default clause.

The starting point for damages was clause 25(a) which addressed the situation where the injured party went into the market and made a substitute sale or purchase, as the case might be. That was what the injured party would be expected to do in reasonable mitigation of its loss where there was an available market for the goods.

If neither party was dissatisfied with the price under the substitute transaction then that would fix "the default price" and, under sub-clause (c), the damages payable would be the difference between the contract price and the default price.

In the present case, although substitute sales of the goods were made, neither party suggested that they should be taken as the basis for establishing the default price under sub-clause (a). That was because they were sales to a related company and so were not arm's-length transactions.

If no substitute sale or purchase was made, or, as in the present case, none which it was appropriate to rely upon as a substitute transaction, then under sub-clause (c) the damages were to be assessed on the basis of: "the actual or estimated value of the goods, on the date of default". The court had to be guided by the principle of mitigation and to consider the

market in which it would be reasonable for the sellers to sell the goods.

In the present case, on the default date the sellers had been left with goods which had been landed, customs cleared and stored in a warehouse in Mundra. Moreover, the goods so situated had significantly increased in value because of the imposition of customs tariffs.

In such circumstances the obvious market in which to sell the goods, and in which it would clearly be reasonable to do so, was the ex warehouse Mundra market. Indeed, that was the market into which the sellers did sell the goods, albeit to a related company.

Conversely, it was difficult to see how it could be reasonable to sell those goods in the international market involving, as it would, the costs of re-exporting the goods and losing the increase in value resulting from the goods being customs cleared before the significant increase in tariffs.

The approach of the Appeal Board involved ignoring the fact that the sellers were left with the contract goods. Their approach to damages did not involve a substitute sale of goods, still less the contract goods. It involved the notional purchase of a further consignment of goods in a different market in a different continent (FOB Vancouver) resulting in the arrival of the goods at Mundra weeks after the date of default.

Such an approach reflected neither the principle of mitigation nor the commercial realities of a seller left with contract goods after a buyer's default. Hence the Appeal Board erred in law in its assessment of damages, which would have to be reassessed on the correct basis.

Solicitors: **Reed Smith LLP; Zaiwalla & Co Ltd.**

Births, Marriages and Deaths

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WHOEVER dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty. Psalm 91.1 (NIV)

Bible verses are provided by the Bible Society

Births

FAIRE on 17th June 2024 to Anna (née Goodrum) and James, a son, Rafe Jack Easter, brother to Poppy.

Deaths

GANNON Jane (née Edney-Hayter) peacefully at her home in Esher on 14th June 2024, aged 66, with her devoted dog Luna at her side. Beloved wife of Ciarán, adored mother to daughters Jenny, Johanna, Fionnuala, Daisy and Jess, loving grandmother to Annalise, Louis, Layla, Willow, Finn and Mara, and a cherished and loyal friend to many.

GRAHAM Robin Ogilvie died on 20th June 2024, aged 94. Much-loved father, grandfather and great-grandfather. Funeral at 3.15pm on 14th July at Holy Ascension Church, Lower Oddington. No flowers please.

GREATOREX-BELL Sabine died peacefully at The Dower House, Winchester, a month after celebrating her 106th birthday. Loving wife to Ricky and beloved mother to Niall, both of whom predeceased her, and to Coryn who survives her. Much-loved Granny to Ivo and Dominic. A remarkable woman, alert to the end and still speaking some of her four languages, she remained interested in all those she met. She will be greatly missed by her family and friends. Private family service, but if desired, donations may be made in Sabine's name to Winchester Hospice Fundraising Charity via <https://www.sabinegreatorex-bell.muchloved.com>

Thanksgiving Services

PETLEY Roderick Hugh DL. A Service of Thanksgiving will be held at Holy Cross Church, Ramsbury, Wiltshire, SN8 2QH on 4th September 2024 at 2pm. If you plan to attend please email hccburdett@outlook.com

There is no Court Circular for June 29 or 30, 2024

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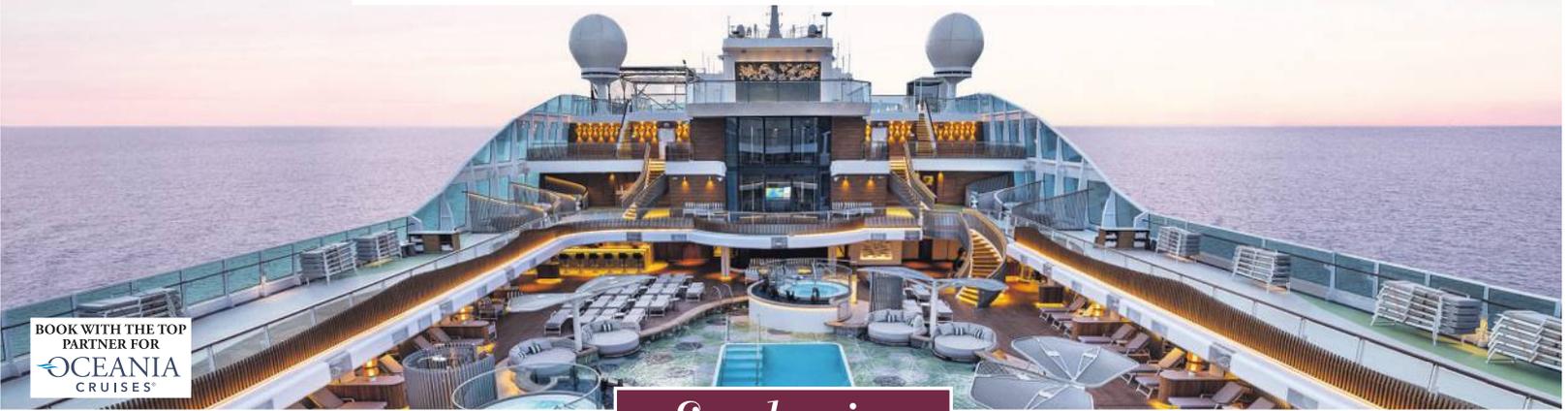
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JUNE 2025

Tue 3 Embark the brand-new 5★ *Vista* and depart Southampton for your all-inclusive voyage
Saint-Malo, France
★Recommended Excursion*: *Mystical Mont St. Michel*
Gaze in awe at breathtaking Mont Saint-Michel, an iconic medieval hamlet clustered on a tiny island. Cherish the village's marvelous Benedictine abbey, perched atop the islet's bluffs

Thu 5 *Relaxing at sea in luxury*

Fri 6 - Sat 7 **Bordeaux, France** (overnight – depart early pm)
★Recommended Excursion*: *Fort Medoc & Lanessan Castle*
Drive through the legendary Médoc wine-growing region during a coach journey. Contemplate Fort Médoc, a 17th-century stronghold named a UNESCO World Heritage site. View several of the fort's intriguing facilities, including its elegant entrance and underground hall. Discover Château Lanessan, an illustrious winery anchored by a marvellous 19th-century manor. Savour a delectable tasting of two distinct vintages at the château

Sun 8 **San Sebastián, Spain**
★Recommended Excursion*: *San Sebastián & Tapas Tasting*
Walk the narrow, pedestrian-only streets of Old Town and admire the architecture. Pause at the lookout at Monte Igueldo for a panoramic view of San Sebastián. Dine on pinxtos, the Basque version of tapas, at an atmospheric bar in Old Town

Mon 9 **Gijón, Spain**
★Recommended Excursion*: *Gijon Highlights and Cider Tasting*
Admire Mirador de la Providencia, an inspired man-made lookout that extends toward the sea. Enjoy unhindered views of Gijón's skyline and the dramatic Asturian coastline from one of the Mirador's balconies. Relish a tasting of traditional Asturian sidra, or cider, at a renowned cellar in Gijón. Tour the streets of Gijón's alluring Old Town, home to splendid medieval plazas and monuments

Tue 10 **La Coruña, Spain**
★Recommended Excursion*: *La Coruña through the Eyes of Picasso*
Visit the home where teenager Pablo Picasso lived for four years with his family. View replicas of paintings and drawings that Picasso created while living in the home. Walk through La Coruña while the guide points out attractions Picasso would have known

Wed 11 **Bilbao, Spain**

Thu 12 **La Rochelle, France**

Fri 13 **Brest, France** (depart early pm)
★Recommended Excursion*: *Panoramic Brest & Mythical Coast*
Appreciate sweeping views of Brest's imposing 15th century castle from the town's handsome harbor

Sat 14 **Paris (from Le Havre), France** (depart late night)

Sun 15 **Arrive in Southampton**

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Today Outbreaks of rain will spread eastwards across the British Isles. Max 22C (72F), min 6C (43F)

Around Britain

Key: b=bright, c=cloud, d=drizzle, pc=partly cloudy, du=dull, f=fair, fg=fog, h=hail, m=mist, r=rain, sh=showers, sl=sleet, sn=snow, ss=sun, t=thunder
*previous day **data not available

	Temp C	Rain mm	Sun hr*
midday yesterday			
Aberdeen	15	C	0.0 4.3
Aberporth	13	PC	4.4 0.0
Anglesey	15	C	3.0 0.3
Aviemore	13	C	0.0 2.0
Barnstaple	16	C	0.8 **
Belfast	16	C	0.0 **
Birmingham	14	D	0.0 3.5
Bournemouth	16	D	0.2 13.1
Bridlington	16	PC	2.0 **
Bristol	15	C	1.0 10.0
Cardome	15	C	1.0 0.7
Cardiff	17	R	0.8 5.5
Edinburgh	16	C	0.0 4.9
Eskdalemuir	14	C	0.0 10.2
Glasgow	15	C	0.0 2.0
Hereford	15	R	2.4 **
Herstmonceux	19	C	0.2 7.4
Ipswich	14	D	0.0 11.3
Isle of Man	13	C	0.0 2.5
Isle of Wight	18	C	0.0 **
Jersey	18	C	0.0 11.6
Keswick	14	C	0.0 0.0
Kinloss	14	C	0.0 1.6
Leeds	13	C	1.4 **
Lerwick	10	D	0.6 0.2
Leuchars	16	C	0.0 9.5
Lincoln	14	C	1.8 3.4
Liverpool	14	D	1.4 **
London	17	D	0.0 11.5
Lynham	15	C	0.0 13.3
Manchester	13	R	2.6 0.1
Margate	18	C	0.4 12.6
Milford Haven	14	C	2.4 **
Newcastle	13	C	0.0 **
Nottingham	14	C	0.6 3.9
Orkney	12	C	2.0 1.0
Oxford	16	C	0.0 **
Plymouth	20	S	0.0 **
Portland	15	D	0.0 **
Scilly, St Mary's	16	PC	0.0 **
Shoreham	15	R	0.0 9.0
Shrewsbury	13	C	1.2 0.5
Snowdonia	13	D	1.0 **
Southend	16	C	0.0 12.1
South Uist	14	C	0.0 **
Stornoway	13	C	1.6 1.1
Tiree	13	C	0.6 **
Whitehaven	13	C	0.2 0.1
Wick	12	D	1.2 **
Yeovilton	16	B	0.8 14.0

Five days ahead

Remaining unsettled with spells of rain and showers, driest in the southeast of England

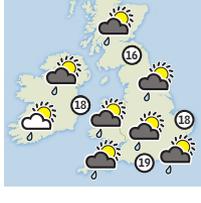
Tomorrow

Showery rain spreading eastwards across Scotland, northwest England, northern Wales and eastern Ireland. Largely dry with sunny intervals elsewhere.
Max 22C, min 7C



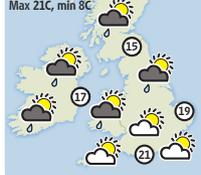
Wednesday

An unsettled day with outbreaks of rain and showers across the British Isles. Driest in southern Ireland.
Max 20C, min 6C



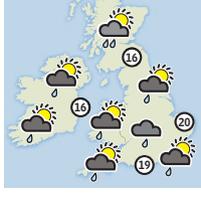
Thursday

Sunny intervals and scattered showers in Scotland. A dry morning in Ireland before spells of rain spread in from the west. Largely dry elsewhere with spells of sunshine.
Max 21C, min 8C



Friday

An unsettled day across the British Isles with outbreaks of rain and showers.
Max 21C, min 5C



Saturday

Largely dry in the southeast of England with sunny spells. Sunny periods and scattered heavy showers elsewhere.
Max 20C, min 6C



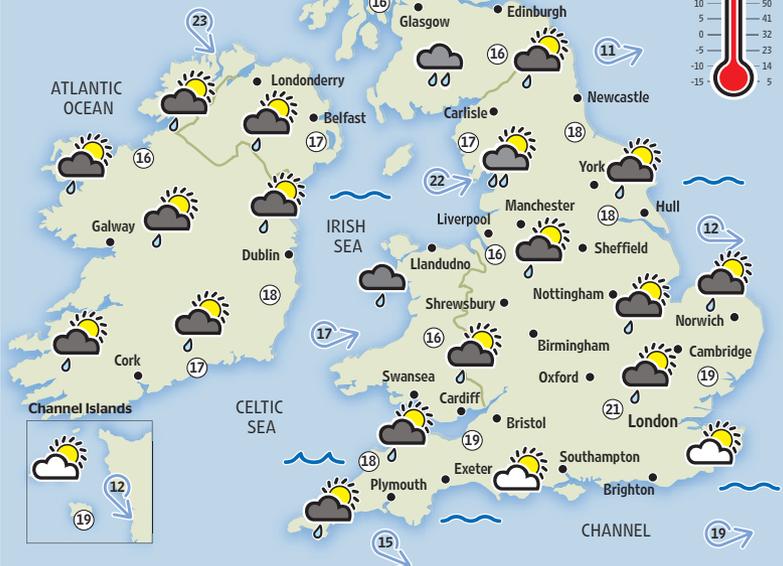
The Times weather page is provided by WeatherQuest

Wind speed
34 (mph)
28 (degrees C)

Sea state
Calm
Slight
Moderate
Rough

Flood alerts and warnings

At 17:00 on Sunday there was one flood alert and no warnings in England and no flood alerts or warnings in Wales or Scotland. For further information and updates in England visit flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk, for Wales naturalresources.wales/flooding and for Scotland SEPA.org.uk



General situation: Unsettled with outbreaks of rain spreading eastwards across the British Isles.

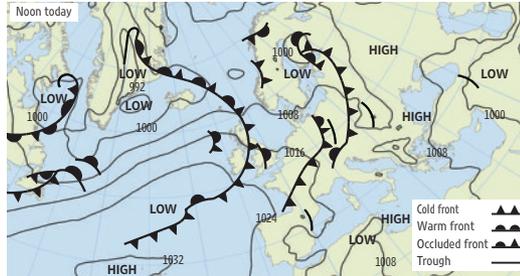
Scotland: Unsettled with spells of rain spreading eastwards through the morning and early afternoon, turning drier and brighter through the second half of the afternoon. Fresh west or northwesterly winds. Maximum 18C (64F), minimum 6C (43F).
NE Eng, E Eng, Cen N Eng, E Anglia, E Mids: A dry start to the morning with sunny spells, but cloud will

build through the morning. A cloudy afternoon with outbreaks of rain. Gentle to moderate west or northwesterly winds. Maximum 21C (70F), minimum 9C (48F).
SW Eng, Cen S Eng, SE Eng, London, Channel Is: Bright or sunny intervals with the chance of a few spots of light rain from any thicker cloud. Moderate northwesterly winds. Maximum 22C (72F), minimum 10C (50F).
W Mids, Wales, NW Eng, Lake District, IoM: A cloudy morning with outbreaks

of rain spreading eastwards, most persistent over the high ground. Mostly cloudy in the afternoon with the chance of drizzle over the high ground. Gentle to fresh west or northwesterly winds. Maximum 19C (66F), minimum 7C (45F).
Republic of Ireland, N Ireland: A largely cloudy morning with outbreaks of rain, turning drier and brighter in the afternoon. Moderate northwesterly winds. Maximum 18C (64F), minimum 8C (46F).

Tides
Tidal predictions.
Heights in metres

	Ht	Ht
Aberdeen	09:50 3.8	22:47 3.6
Avonmouth	03:18 11.1	15:50 10.9
Belfast	07:28 3.2	20:16 3.1
Cardiff	03:07 10.5	15:36 10.2
Devonport	01:45 4.8	14:28 4.6
Dover	07:43 5.7	20:03 5.9
Dublin	08:03 3.8	20:52 3.6
Falmouth	03:21 4.5	14:34 4.3
Greenock	08:39 3.1	21:12 2.9
Harwich	08:11 3.5	20:27 3.5
Holyhead	06:43 5.0	19:33 4.7
Hull	02:44 6.3	14:51 6.6
Leith	11:09 4.9	23:52 4.8
Liverpool	07:29 8.3	20:10 7.9
London Bridge	10:17 6.3	22:39 6.5
Lowestoft	06:29 2.2	17:56 2.4
Milford Haven	02:24 6.0	14:58 5.7
Morecambe	07:43 8.3	20:24 7.9
Newhaven	07:29 5.6	20:02 5.9
Newquay	01:23 6.1	13:56 5.9
Oban	02:25 3.3	14:52 3.0
Penzance	--:--	--:-- 13:29 4.6
Portsmouth	07:54 4.1	20:31 4.4
Shoreham	07:34 5.2	20:10 5.5
Southampton	06:51 3.9	19:27 4.1
Swansea	02:28 8.1	14:59 7.8
Tees	--:--	--:-- 12:10 4.9
Weymouth	02:44 1.5	15:33 1.5



Synoptic situation
A series of fronts associated with a low pressure system close to Iceland will push eastwards across the British Isles bringing a spell of rain. The rain will be light and patchy across southern England and south Wales. A trough will push into Scotland into tomorrow bringing further spells of showery rain to Scotland and northern England.

Highs and lows
24hrs to 5pm yesterday
Warmest: Bournemouth, Dorset, 21.3C
Coldest: Cairngorm, 2.4C
Wettest: Resallach, Sutherland, 13.8mm
Sunniest: Odiham, 14.1hrs*

Sun and moon
For Greenwich
Sun rises: 04:47
Sun sets: 21:20
Moon rises: 01:14
Moon sets: 16:55
New Moon: July 5

The air was sultry, the skies grew scarily dark, and then the thunderstorm broke with lightning flashes, tremendous cracks of thunder, cascades of rain and large hailstones crashing down.

The weather made a dramatic entrance on Saturday in the Euro 24 football match in Dortmund between Germany and Denmark when a thunderstorm erupted and the referee halted the game in the 35th minute with the score goalless.

It was surprising that the match hadn't been stopped earlier when the first lightning bolts flashed across the black sky — these were highly dangerous conditions and there have been many incidents in the past of lightning bolts striking football matches, leaving strikers unconscious and in the worst cases dead on the ground. In the past few days Germany has suffered more thunderstorms, but is not alone.

Over recent weeks, extreme weather has battered much of Europe with severe storms. Last week, thunderstorms and huge rainfalls created havoc in Switzerland with flash floods and landslides that swept away cars, houses, roads and railways before the storms moved into northern Italy causing widespread flooding and more chaos.

In contrast, eastern Europe has been wilting in heatwaves. Temperatures in Serbia and Romania have reached up to 40C and in the southern and western regions of Turkey temperatures have consistently been above 40C since the beginning of June, far above the seasonal norm. It is the headlong clash of intensely hot humid air from the east hitting fresher, cooler air from the west that has set off the recent spate of severe thunderstorms and huge rainfalls.

The UK came off quite lightly in June. Despite the cooler conditions earlier in the month, average temperatures for June were only slightly down from normal and most striking was the largely dry weather, with rainfall widely below average for much of the UK for the first time in months.

Speak directly to one of our forecasters on 09065 777675

8am to 5pm daily (calls are charged at £1.55 plus network extras)

WeatherQuest weatherquest.co.uk

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HIGHLIGHTS OF the Amalfi Coast
Departures | July 2024 to January 2026

The real beginnings of southern Italy start in the Campania region, a sought-after spot since the Romans named it Happy Land. Based in quiet Agerola, amid the green Lattari mountains and away from the crowds, we visit the most famous sites in the Bay of Naples, namely the extraordinarily well-preserved ruins of Herculaneum and the legendary archaeological site of Pompeii. On the other side of the Sorrento Peninsula, we explore the Amalfi Coast, one of the most dramatic stretches of coastline in Europe. Whether travelling to Capri by boat, admiring delightful coastal views from the Path of the Gods or visiting romantic Ravello, you'll be spellbound by the natural beauty and cultural treasures of this land.

*Prices listed are based on two sharing a twin/double room. Single supplement on request. Additional dates may be available, please call for details. Offer subject to availability and prices may fluctuate. Prices are correct at time of publication, and subject to confirmation at time of booking. This offer is not combinable with any other offers, including Loyalty Discounts. Operated by and subject to the booking conditions of Exodus Travels, ABTA 10751, ATOL 25825, a company wholly independent of News UK. *Quote TIMES100 to be eligible for the £100pp discount, included in the price above.

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REVEALED

The Great British Car Finance Rip-off Which Could Reach **'£16 BILLION'** in Refunds.

Millions of British drivers stand on the brink of potentially massive payouts which has been described as 'PPI scale'.

The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) launched an investigation into claims of overpriced car finance.

It means the car finance scandal could reach over £16 billion.

The new enquiry centres on allegations that car dealers, incentivised by higher commissions, manipulated interest rates, potentially fleecing consumers by driving up costs on their vehicle loans for cars, vans, motorbikes, caravans and motorhomes.

The average
claim is
£5,318.25*

This controversial commission model, which was banned by the FCA in 2021, is said to have unjustly enriched dealers at the expense of millions of consumers, costing drivers an estimated £165 million annually.

It's been reported that nine in ten customers pay for new cars on finance in the UK, but people who bought second hand cars on finance agreements, either PCP or HP, can also claim.

One way to check for a car finance claim, and to **see if you're potentially owed £1,000s** is to contact The PCP Experts; find out in as little as 60 seconds.

The **PCP** Experts



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Text
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phone camera
for more
information



*This is our average claim value as of 29/05/2024.

Sport

Windsor Rob Wright

5,45 Persian Blue 7,45 Composite
 6,15 Invincible Crown 8,15 Whakhan (Nap)
 6,45 Ina Mina 8,45 Prince of Bel Lir
 7,15 Shagran

Going: good to firm Sky Sports Racing
 Draw: 5f-6f, low numbers best

5.45 Handicap (3-Y-O; £4,397; 5f) (6)

1 (3) 01-20 CLOUD KING 37 (H,B,F) R Cowell 9-10 O Murphy
 2 (5) -2465 MAKE IT EASY 9 (D) N Tinker 9-8 R Scott
 3 (4) 1-210 LAW OF AVERAGE 30 (C) B Cahnan 9-7 J Haynes
 4 (2) 500-2 BIG TIME RASCAL 28 P & O Candy 9-6 W Buick
 5 (6) 045- POUT HEDLAND 27 (I) H Candy 9-0 T Whelan
 6 (1) 43-35 PERSIAN BLUE 12 (H,1) W Hagas 8-13 T Marquand

11-4 Big Time Rascal, 10-3 Cloud King, 7-2 Law Of Average, 11-2 Make It Easy, 13-2 Pout Hedland, 15-2 Persian Blue.

Rob Wright's choice: Persian Blue drops in distance after racing too keenly over further Danger Make It Easy

6.15 Maiden Stakes (2-Y-O; £5,373; 5f) (15)

1 (1) 04 BALZARINI 20 S C Williams 9-7 S M Levey
 2 (1) 0 EIGHTEENCARATGOLD 7 J Houghton 9-7 C Bishop
 3 (12) I FOLLOW RIVERS 5 Spencer 9-7 R Hornby
 4 (11) J R CLIMPS 5 Evans 9-7 G Downing
 5 (2) 20 MISTER MCGREGOR 24 A Balding 9-7 O Murphy
 6 (13) MONTBELIARDE G Boughey 9-7 W Buick
 7 (15) THE LAST TIME R Spencer 9-7 G Wood
 8 (2) 33 INVINCIBLE CROWN 14 (B,F) R Hughes 9-5 R Kingscote
 9 (9) DUBAI MAGIC 7 Tate 9-2 N Callan
 10 (0) GLAMOROUS JEWEL 23 C Mason 9-2 W Cox
 11(14) 25 WOODHAY WHISPER 9 P Ward 9-2 T Marquand
 12 (6) 00 ANGEL AT MIDNIGHT 14 M Murphy 6 M Keedy 9-1 Sorcha Woods (7)

13 (4) NAINA WESTERN G Nicholls 9-0 C Fallon
 14(10) PURE LIBERTY S Williams 9-0 C Shepherd
 15 (7) 6 RUBY RASCAL 9 Parr 9-0 Alice Bond (7)

7-2 Invincible Crown, 9-2 Woodhay Whisper, 5-1 Montbeliarde, 13-2 Mister McGregor, 8-1 Dubai Magic, 12-1 Eighteencaratgold, 14-2 Ina Mina, 14-1 others.

Wright choice: Invincible Crown can build on a dose their heresite time Dangers Woodhay Whisper, Mister McGregor

6.45 Maiden Stakes (£4,320; 1m 2f) (10)

1 (5) 0 COTSWOLD COTTAGE 21 Miss H Knight 4-9-11 C Bishop
 2 (4) 00 AMIGO YAQUERA 10 R Cook & Bridger 3-9-4 M Gunn (7)

1 (3) 634 BURSTLE 140 (B) W Hagas 3-9-6 T Marquand
 4 (6) TAJER J & T Gosden 3-9-6 T Heard (3)
 5 (10) 6-4 THE KING'S GENERAL 15 (P) & J Gosden 3-9-6 K Sheppard
 6 (2) 04 BESET 7 H Candy 3-9-1 T Whelan
 7 (3) 4 INA MINA 13 W Hagas 3-9-1 C Fallon
 8 (7) 64 LAKE TED 44 H Childs 3-9-1 W Buick
 9 (2) 0-2 SEAK AND DESTROY 31 R Beckett 3-9-1 H Crouch
 10 (8) 0 UPTON 25 A Balding 3-9-1 O Murphy

11-4 Tajer, 7-2 Seak And Destroy, 4-4 Lake Ted, 11-2 The King's General, 15-2 Bursle, 10-1 Ina Mina, 10-1 Bezet, 10-1 Upton.

Wright choice: Ina Mina, fourth at Nottingham, should appreciate this stiffer test Dangers Lake Ted, Upton

7.15 Handicap (£15,462; 6f) (8)

1 (3) 0-545 ROHAAN 38 (D) P Evans 6-10-2 N Callan
 2 (4) 2-202 ARAMIS GREY 23 (D) G Rust 7-9-10 C Shephard
 3 (6) 7-20 WALLOP 38 (D) S M Levey 7-9-10 S M Levey
 4 (1) 1-350 UNDER THE TWILIGHT 18 (D) M Blake 6-9-3 H Davies
 5 (7) 5-211 HAYMAKER 22 (C) H Morrison 5-9-2 R Hornby
 6 (5) 32-1 KA KATIE KONTENT 17 (C) Coo 4-9-2 R Marquand
 7 (2) 5-235 SHAGRAAN 10 (D) M Appleby 3-9-2 T Marquand
 8 (8) -0015 AMAZONIAN DREAM 14 (C) D Millman 5-9-120 Murphy
 10-3 Shagran, 4-1 Haymaker, 9-2 Kately Kontent, 5-1 Rohaan, 6-1 Amazonian Dream, 10-1 Aramis Grey, 11-2 Wallop, Under The Twilight.

Wright choice: Shagran was fifth in a competitive handicap at Royal Ascot Dangers Aramis Grey, Rohaan

7.45 Handicap (£9,631; 1m 2f) (7)

1 (5) 60521 COMPOSITE 4 (B) G Bourke 4-10-4(Sex) W Buick
 2 (3) 11365 AEROSPEE 28 (P,D) A Watson 5-9-13 H Doyle
 4 (7) 13302 ANDREAPET 16 (D,D) D C Koller 9-9-12 T Marquand
 4 (6) 5-240 WISPER 17 (D) M Tinsling 6-9-9 C Costello
 5 (7) 36-30 CRYSTAL MARINER 17 (D) Sir M Stoute 4-9-4 R Kingscote
 6 (2) 000-0 WOODSTOCK CITY 64 (P,D) J R Flint 6-9-4 W Buick
 7 (1) 00555 WOODSTOCK CITY 16 (D) J Williams 4-9-4 O Murphy

6-4 Composite, 7-2 Aerospace, 6-1 Andrepet, Crystal Mariner, 8-1 Wisper, Woodstock City, 50-1 Spirit Of The Bay.

Wright choice: Composite has rediscovered his form since fitted with blinkers on his past two runs Danger Andrepet

8.15 Handicap (£3,768; 1m) (12)

1 (2) 04-61 MUJID 28 (P,D) J Tinkle 9-10 Taylor Fisher (3)
 2 (8) 0290 ADACE 13 (D) R Pava 6-9-13 Jimmy Quinn
 3 (9) 0-436 RIVAL 35 (D) & R Flint 6-9-12 C Shephard
 4 (0) 505-P REVOLUTIONARY MAN 23 A Wille 9-9-12 T Whelan
 5 (12) -1005 GO NO DOLLARS 33 (P,T,D) S C Williams 6-9-10 L Catton (3)
 6 (8) 06-04 KEEPER'S CHOICE 26 (D) A Witle 10-9-9 T Langdon (7)
 7 (11) 35-0 VILLAGER 39 A Irvine 6-9-9 A Healy (3)
 8 (1) 00-10 MONTECRISTO GOLD 18 (B,D) Tom Clover 3-9-4 Jimmy Callan
 9 (7) 00-04 WAHMAN 19 (G) Boughey 3-9-5 W Buick
 10 (3) 5640 KARYD ON AITCH 33 (C) R Ingram 4-9-3 R Ingram (3)
 11 (4) 00-04 KODIAC BRAVE 9 (D) Craig Bennett 3-9-2 C Bennett
 12 (1) 05001 WESTON COURT 7 (P,D) R Gots 3-9-2(Sex) O Murphy

3-1 Weston Court, 4-1 Adace, 5-4 Mujid, 7-1 Go No Dollars, Wahman, 15-2 Rival, 12-1 Keeper's Choice, 16-1 Montecristo Gold.

Wright choice: Whakhan was fourth in a strong handicap at Yarmouth; unexposed Dangers Weston Court, Adace

Yesterday's racing results

Cartmel

Going: good

1.30 (2m If 46yd, hdl) 1, Letterston Lily (S Bowen, 3:2), 2, Not Now Nathaniel (4-5 fav), 3, Hard As Nails (11-4), 6, ran. NR: Jumping Susan, Nellie Bluesky (4), 2 1/2, P M Bowen.

2.00 (2m If 31yd, hdl) 1, City Derby (Sean Quinn, 7:2 fav), 2, Where's Bruno (14-1), 3, Solin Awtwell (6-1), 13, ran. NR: Boomslang, 3/4, 1/2, Lizzie Quinlan.

2.35 (3m If 83yd, hdl) 1, Saint Bibiana (S Bowen, 5:2 fav), 2, Jimm's Cave (66-1), Balkotic (10-1), 9, ran. NR: Startlyte, Nk, nk, G Nicholls.

3.10 (2m If 46yd, hdl) 1, Fiveonfive (1 C

Gainford, 5-1), 2, King Otis (12-1), 3, Book of Secrets (20-1), 12, ran. 2/3, 3/4, C Collins.

3.45 (2m 5f 34yd, ch) 1, Charlie Uheralles (Danny McMenamin, 3:1 fav), 2, Bella Bliss (4-1), 3, Franky Du Berlais (11-1), 10, ran. 2/1, 4/1, M's Dianne Savary.

4.20 (2m If 61yd, ch) 1, Dr Sanderson (R P McLernon, 6:5 fav), 2, Lermoo Legend (9-2), 3, Thank You Blue (10-1), 9, ran. NR: Cuzco Du Mathan, 15/1, 7/1, B Haslam.

4.55 (2m If 107yd, ch) 1, Roll With It (S Bowen, 4:2), 2, Cash Angel (11-1), 3, Calahill (16-1), 10, ran. 3/4, 7/1, P M Bowen.

Placepot: £65.60
 Quadpot: £28.70

Oxtotter

Going: good

1.20 (2m 3f 207yd, hdl) 1, Gale Mahler (Henry Brooke, 11-8 fav), 2, Flying Fortune (2-1), 3, Paddy De Pole (10-3), 8, ran. 2/1, 9/1, A Keatley.

1.50 (2m 4f, ch) 1, Riskinthe Ground (Harry Skelton, 11:5 fav), 2, Drispey Moon (5-1), 3, Will Carver (9-2), 5, ran. NK, 7/1, D Skelton.

2.25 (1m 7f 214yd, ch) 1, Coastguard Station (David Noonan, 8:1), 2, Fringill Dick (7-2), 3, Breizh River (10-3 fav), 13, ran. nk, Henry O'Brien.

3.00 (3m 2f 13yd, ch) 1, Hang In There (Joe

4.45 Handicap (£3,140; 1m) (13)

1 (8) 0-102 TRUE NATION 19 (P,D) R Fahey 4-9-10 Ethan Tindall (7)
 2 (3) 00028 TOMAL 35 (1,2P) J Williams 4-9-3 P Mulholland
 3 (6) -0002 INDICATOR REACTOR 13 (C,D) K Menzies 4-9-7 C Lee
 4 (9) 8006 MOUSH 12 L Bailey 4-9-7 D Tudhope
 5 (12) 04300 MUSICAL MASQUERADE 35 M & D Easterny 3-9-7 J Dennis
 6 (4) -4000 MR HEINE 26 (B,D) S Whitaker 3-9-6 P Meehan
 7 (11) -5056 COLOANE 39 (H,B) R Fell & S Murray 4-9-6 B Loughnane
 8 (7) 6-42 DOOMSDAY 7 (P) L Bailey 3-9-5 B Garrity
 9 (7) -0004 GRAND STYLE 21 P Kirby 4-9-3 C Beasley
 10 (3) 00000 PREMIERSHIP 23 (C,D) M Wigham 3-9-3 F Norton
 11(13) 00-00 MISS RAINSTORM 09 (D) J Waggott 3-9-3 JP Sullivan
 12(10) 04-0 FOOTNOTHEGAS 12 M Hammond 3-8-8 A Brookes (3)
 13 (1) 055- APACE ANGEL 38 (P) S Corbett 3-8-8 Katy Marshall (7)

11-4 True Nation, 7-2 Doomsday, 4-1 Indicator Reactor, 6-1 Grand Style, 10-1 Mr Heine, 12-1 Tomal, Cobane, 20-1 Premiership, Miss Rainstorm.

Wolverhampton Rob Wright

5,25 Caelan 7,30 Due Date
 6,00 Capo Vaticano 8,00 Katie G
 6,30 Tsunami Spirit 8,30 Dubai Imm
 7,00 Buxted Too 9,00 My Mate Mike

Going: standard Sky Sports Racing
 Draw: 5f-7f, low numbers best

5.25 Handicap (3-Y-O; £3,716; 1m If 104yd) (10)

1 (6) 1-05 PRINCE RASAM 37 (H) M Batti 9-1 S Osborne
 2 (1) 5-130 CAELAN 44 (D) M Batti 9-1 B Sayette
 3 (2) -0615 ROSENZOO 12 (D) Johnston 9-1 A Muller
 4 (9) 2-104 CHARCOO TESTING 34 (P) Tom Clover 9-1 J Mitchell
 5 (8) 0-21 LOVEABLE ROGUE 34 (D) James Owen 9-5 D Bowen (5)
 6 (3) 22056 ENDOSSEER 11 (D) M Batti 9-1 D Probert
 7 (10) 6-00 HISTORIC CITY 25 (S) bin Suroor 9-1 Jack Dougherty (5)
 8 (8) -1225 CHEFMAN 21 A Watson 9-1 L Morris
 9 (5) 0-00 ADVERT RULES 18 A King 9-1 D Egan
 10 (7) -0035 THE MEN AND J (T) Alice Haynes 6-12A Farragher

7-2 Loveable Rogue, 6-1 Historic City, Cedar, Character Testing, 8-1 Rosenzoo, Endosser, Between My And J, 10-1 Prince Rasam, Chefman, 25-1 Advert Rules.

6.00 Novice Stakes (£3,942; 5f) (5)

1 (4) 01 ACROBATIC 16 (D) D & C Shaw 3-9-11 S Osborne
 2 (1) 0 R RUESPIERRE 26 K Kubler 3-9-11 C Hardie
 3 (3) 13-00 THOMAS EQUINAS 53 (D) D Ivory 3-9-9 R Havlin
 4 (1) 0034 CAPUCHINERO 19 (P,D) Alice Haynes 3-9-9 Howarth (3)
 5 (9) 10040 NIGHTS OVER EGYPT 11 (P) R Manzi 4-9-9 J Watson
 6 (2) 11000 BOSSY PARKER 10 (B,C) Miss Stella Barclay 4-9-9 Hodgson
 7 (6) 0501 MY MATE MIKE 34 (H,D) D Ivory 4-9-4 L Keniry
 8 (5) 06600 GINGER PASSPORT 28 (B,C) J Osborne 4-9-5 Osborne
 9 (7) 0-0000 SUGAR HILL 39 R Eddy 4-9-7 D Keenan
 10(12) 0-230 KRISTAL KLEAR 34 Mrs Stella Barclay 4-9-7 Doubtful
 11(2) 0000 ONE HART 14 (B,C) D Donovan 7-9-4 Archie Young (7)
 12(10) 404-3 ORIENTAL SPIRIT 27 (B,F) W Kitton 6-9-1 L Morris

7-2 My Mate Mike, 4-1 Oriental Spirit, 7-1 Brunel Charge, Candy Warhol, 8-1 One Hart, 10-1 Capuchinero, Bossy Parker, 12-1 Nights Over Egypt.

6.30 Handicap (£4,972; 5f) (8)

1 (2) -0663 READY FREDDIE 30 (B,C) D Pears 6-10-2 H Russell
 2 (8) 21500 NIGHT ON EARTH 30 (C,D) J Williams 6-10-1 C Todd
 3 (5) 6-205 TUSNAMI SPIRIT 25 P K De Foy 3-9-9 B Sayette
 4 (4) 6-12 BLAZES BOYLAN 34 (D) R Cowell 3-9-8 J Mitchell
 5 (6) 1-405 ROAMIN 37 (B,D) Miss Sanger 3-9-8 David Egan
 6 (3) 1522 INVINCIBLE SPEED 27 (C) Tate 3-9-7 R Whelan
 7 (7) 2236 REIGNING PROFIT 16 (D) R Carr 3-9-6 L Morris
 8 (1) 4-621 POPULAR DREAM 30 9 Shaw 4-1-2 C Hardie
 3-1 Night On Earth, 4-1 Blazes Boylan, 5-1 Invincible Speed, Reigning Profit, 6-1 Ready Freddie Go, Tusnami Spirit, 10-1 Popular Dream, 14-1 Boan.

7.00 Handicap (£3,716; 1m 4f) (11)

1 (3) 11124 OPTIGAN 94 (B,F,C) S Lyckett 4-9-11 L Morris
 2 (2) 634-2 BOLDLY 7 (T) G Boughey 4-9-11 Grace McEntee (3)
 3 (6) 22303 ELEANOR CROSS 21 A Balding 4-9-10 D Probert
 4 (8) 01-00 FEARLESS BAY 50 (C) G Deakin 5-9-10 R Whelan
 5 (10) 0-020 ROCHA DO LEAO 16 (P) Jack James 4-9-10 Dylan Hogan
 6 (7) 4-000 RUBY NIGHTS 31 (C) M Loughnane 5-9-9 D Bowen (5)
 7 (1) 04051 BUXTED TOO 21 (D) Williams 6-9-7 S Osborne
 8 (11) 236- DEADLOCK 20 A Ralph 5-9-4 C Hardie
 9 (5) 121-4 GOBLEY OF FIRE 19 H Henderson 4-9-3 T James (5)
 10 (9) 5-156 STRIKE ALLIANCE 19 (P,C) M Hickin 4-12 David Egan
 11 (4) 52306 THE BAY WARRIOR 19 (P) M Hill 6-8-11 W Rooke

7.30 Handicap (£2,983; 6f) (10)

1 (3) 22400 REVOLUTION 77 (P,C) G Harris 4-9-12 S D Bowen (5)
 2 (8) 0-21 MAGIC GEM 39 (C) M Herrington 6-9-10 Dylan Hogan
 3 (4) 00041 DUE DATE 27 (V,C) D Cox 4-9-9 M Ghiani
 4 (6) 00006 SOLDIER'S CLASS 15 (V) E Dunlop 3-9-8 D Probert
 5 (7) 0-000 POETIC JACK 24 (P) R Cowell 4-9-8 J Mitchell
 6 (5) 06100 GLOBAL EFFORT 14 (C,D) P McEntee 4-9-7 J Gordon
 7 (1) 00516 PORFIN 11 (B,F,D) C P McEntee 6-9-5 L Morris
 8 (2) 5-20 FISTRAL BEACH 39 P McAtee 3-9-2 C Hardie
 9 (9) -0000 UNWINDLE ROYALE 17 G Loughnane 3-9-2 T Greenest
 10(10) 00000 MUSANTYR 14 (D) G Harris 6-9-12 C Hutchinson (3)

5-2 Magic Gem, 11-4 Due Date, 6-1 Porfin, 8-1 Revolution, 10-1 Poetic Jack, 12-1 Fistral Beach, Soldier's Class, Global Effort.

8.00 Handicap (£2,983; 6f) (11)

1 (6) 00551 SAVANNAH SMILES 14 (P,C) G Harris 4-9-11 Hutchinson (3)
 2 (1) 42014 ARLECHIN'S GIFT 9 (C,D) M Usher 5-9-11 G Rooke
 3 (7) 04025 MATHC ANTHEM 20 (P) Charalambos & J Cuttbert 3-9-4 L Morris
 4 (5) 01-04 LIOSA 38 (D) W Kittow 4-8-8 R Whelan
 5 (4) 00651 COOLGAG MAGE 55 (C,D) A Carson 8-8-8 R Keenan
 6 (2) -0413 KATIE G 24 (C,D) E Dunlop 3-9-4 David Egan
 7 (9) 35001 COAST 9 (C) S Dillon 3-9-4 Mikkel Mortenson (7)
 8 (3) 30202 STREET LIFE 70 (V,C) P Morris 3-9-1 Doubtful
 9 (8) -0450 KANGAROO 38 (P) P McEntee 4-8-2 Grace McEntee (3)
 10-4 Gats, 4-1 Savannah Smiles, 11-2 Liosa, 6-1 Katie G, 7-1 Mathc Anthem, 10-1 Arlechin's Gift, Colagh Mage, 16-1 Kangaroo.

Los Angeles lifts Irish Derby

Rob Wright Racing Editor

Los Angeles gave trainer Aidan O'Brien a record-extending 16th success in the Dubai Duty Free Irish Derby at the Curragh yesterday.

The colt had finished third behind City Of Troy and Ambiente Friendly in the Derby at Epsom and the latter was sent off the 6-4 favourite to confirm the form with Los Angeles. However, O'Brien utilised a trio of pacemakers and ensure a thorough test of stamina and

that paid off as Los Angeles, who was a 13-8 chance, struck from home entering the straight and stayed on powerfully to the line. Ambiente Friendly travelled strongly and looked a big threat two furlongs out, but the best proved too much and he faded into third.

Sunway, trained in Sussex by David Menuisier, finished well to take second, but never landed a blow on Los Angeles, who scored by three-quarters of a length. Los Angeles is 3-1 favourite for the St Leger at Doncaster in September.

8.30 Handicap (£2,983; 1m 6f) (11)

1 (1) 53650 SMOKEY MALONE 23 (B,D) J Fellen 6-9-10 D Hogan
 2 (7) 0-000 UNIFICATION 18 P McEntee 4-9-9 Grace McEntee (3)
 3 (3) 01233 BUBBAHIMO 16 (P) W Stone 5-9-8 J Mitchell
 4 (4) 21400 VIRGIL WOLF 24 (C,D) Mrs N Evans 6-9-8 P Bradley
 5 (5) 100-00 SOPHAR SOGOD 37 (P,D) J Manzi 4-9-7 L Morris
 6 (8) 21543 BAILEYS WARRIOR 79 (H,P) D Faulkner 6-9-4 R Whelan
 7 (9) -0466 PRINCE ABU 12 (D) D Shaw 7-9-2 C Hardie
 8 (2) 41630 CASA LUNA 25 (C) P Kirby 5-9-13 D Probert
 9 (1) 00-05 NORTHERN ROSE 30 (W,T) G Hamer 4-8-13 Bowen (5)
 10(10) 06000 PRINCESS NIEVE 92 (P) P Morris 5-9-11 J Dougherty (5)
 11(6) 00666 KITTEN'S DREAM 6 (P,C) S Dixon 7-8-11 Mosen (5)
 13-1 Baileys Warrior, 7-2 Virgil Wolf, 4-1 Dubai Imm, 6-1 Casa Luna, 10-1 Sophar Sogod, SMOKEY MALONE, 12-1 Prince Abu, Unification.

9.00 Handicap (£2,983; 7f) (12)

1 (8) 03220 CANDO WARTHOL 6 (T) S Dixon 5-9-9 M Mortenson (7)
 2 (4) 25006 BRUNEL CHARM 60 (V,B,F,D) C Wallis 7-9-9 C Hardie
 3 (11) 101-0 THOMAS EQUINAS 53 (D) D Ivory 3-9-9 R Havlin
 4 (3) 0034 CAPUCHINERO 19 (P,D) Alice Haynes 3-9-9 Howarth (3)
 5 (9) 10040 NIGHTS OVER EGYPT 11 (P) R Manzi 4-9-9 J Watson
 6 (2) 11000 BOSSY PARKER 10 (B,C) Miss Stella Barclay 4-9-9 Hodgson
 7 (6) 0501 MY MATE MIKE 34 (H,D) D Ivory 4-9-4 L Keniry
 8 (5) 06600 GINGER PASSPORT 28 (B,C) J Osborne 4-9-5 Osborne
 9 (7) 0-0000 SUGAR HILL 39 R Eddy 4-9-7 D Keenan
 10(12) 0-230 KRISTAL KLEAR 34 Mrs Stella Barclay 4-9-7 Doubtful
 11(2) 0000 ONE HART 14 (B,C) D Donovan 7-9-4 Archie Young (7)
 12(10) 404-3 ORIENTAL SPIRIT 27 (B,F) W Kitton 6-9-1 L Morris

7-2 My Mate Mike, 4-1 Oriental Spirit, 7-1 Brunel Charge, Candy Warhol, 8-1 One Hart, 10-1 Capuchinero, Bossy Parker, 12-1 Nights Over Egypt.

Worcester Rob Wright

2,25 Best Mate Dave 4,30 Perfect Arch
 2,55 Bhd 5,00 The Sad Shepherd
 2,30 All In Hand 5,00 Mays Hill
 4,00 Captain Attridge

Going: good, good to firm in places
 Sky Sports Racing

2.25 Handicap (£3,248; 2m 4f) (14)

1 P-62 KAJ JUMPER 18 (T) Deborah Cole 5-12-0 C Ward (3)
 2 P-127 CALVIC 18 (P,C,D) S Edmunds 8-12-0 C Hammond
 3 030-3 SOMEKNIDPFSTAR 29 (D) M Crowley 11-11-8 J Quinn
 4 125-4 BEST MATE DAVE 30 (P) D Jeffreys 7-11-5 S Twiston-Davies
 5 26-61 TRIBESMAN'S GLORY 32 (C) D Down 10-10-12 James Davies
 6 30-53 GONNIE ME SIXTY 30 A Hales 7-10-8 K Woods
 7 00-50 WILLIEKEEPMAN 27 J Coulson 6-10-4 Tabitha Woodley (3)
 8 -0005 ALWAYS FORGET 19 (H,P) H Brown 5-10-3 G Godfrey
 9 -0345 SEVENFOOTS 26 (C) Gray 8-10-2 Elizabeth Gae (7)
 10 P-00 LEGOSTAR 58 (V) J Coulson 9-10-2 William Maggs (5)
 11 055P- SHE HAS NOTIONS 150 (P) M Kehring 7-10-2 S Bowen
 12 4-560 SILVER ATOM 10 A Watson 6-10-2 B Poste
 13 0-292 TYSTERTHIFT 17 Mrs S Gardner 7-10-2 J Best
 14 P-01- DRUMLEES PET 67 (P) G Harris 9-10-2 C Ring
 3-1 Calvic, 4-1 Kaj Jumper, 9-2 Tribesman's Glory, 6-1 Best Mate Dave, 8-1 Gone In Sixty, 10-1 Sevenfoots, Someknidpfstar, Tystertthift.

2.55 Handicap Chase (£4,700; 2m 7f) (7)

1 P-9-2 AJP KINGDOM 18 P O'Brien 7-12-0 G Brace
 2 433-4 GOOSE MAN 29 J Snowden 12-11-13 G Sheehan
 3 2414 HIDDEN DEPTHS 724 (P,T) M Mulholland 9-11-13 J Bowen
 4 3-31 BOLD 13 (B) Dobby Hitchens 10-11-10 H Reed
 5 222-1 ALMAZHAR GARVE 23 (P,T,D) C Longson 9-11-10 Paul O'Brien
 6 440-4 YES INDEED 25 (T,V) Jonjo & A O'Neill 7-10-10 Jonjo O'Neill Jr
 7 11-32 URBAN GRIT 40 (C) M's Hill 7-10-5 H Hobden
 8 4-100 HALL HERMOOSA 47 (P) O'Brien 5-11-2 J J Burke
 9 F6 LIZBETH STAR 31 J Tinkle 5-11-2 Mr C Pritchard (7)
 5 4-5 SHARPS 350 (B,F) O'Brien 5-11-2 J Hogan (3)
 5 3 ALL IN HAND 16 P & M Bowen 4-10-12 S Bowen

3.30 NH Flat Race (£2,451; 2m) (12)

1 P-2 BOLA IN THE BAY 72 (T) D Pipe 5-11-2 J Tudor
 2 0-9 HALL HERMOOSA 47 (P) O'Brien 5-11-2 J J Burke
 3 F6 LIZBETH STAR 31 J Tinkle 5-11-2 Mr C Pritchard (7)
 4 5 SHARPS 350 (B,F) O'Brien 5-11-2 J Hogan (3)
 5 3 ALL IN HAND 16 P & M Bowen 4-10-12 S Bowen

6 COUNTY ROYAL (B Case 4-10-12) H Bannister

7 EMERALD QUEST N Mulholland 4-10-12 J Bowen
 8 46 GRANNY WING D Pipe 4-10-12 D Noonan
 9 6-KALUZE 38 (W,T) A Honeyball 4-10-12 S Twiston-Davies
 10 PUT A LID ON IT P O'Brien 4-10-12 M Kendrick
 11 QUEEN OF THE VALE J Snowden 4-10-12 G Sheehan
 12 TRALEE BAY S Hodgson 4-10-12 N Schofield

4.00 Novices' Hurdle (£4,193; 2m) (12)

1 65-12 CAPTAIN ATTRIDGE 38 (B,F) Henry Oliver 6-11-9L Edwards
 2 25-21 TOVIN 18 (C,D) O Murphy 6-11-8 S Bowen
 3 -0005 SELFTWELSTINGEN 5 T Ellis 5-11-1 F Gillard
 4 F- SIKFIVEVEVEN 225 (W) R G Hawker 4-10-11 H Reed
 5 560-5 SPITFIRE BRIDGE F23 (B,F) Miss S West 4-10-11M Goldstein
 6 P- ZAZIMMA QUEEN 30 D Skelton 5-10-8 H Skelton
 7 VERTICAL F291 (S) S Humphrey 6-10-8 J Best
 8 00-0 BRIEF ENCOUNTER 17 (H) H Hawke 4-10-4 L Murlugh
 9 00 DAWN PARADE 27 D Skelton 4-10-4 T Durrell (3)<

Sport Tour de France

Rivals look primed for 'perfect war'

David Walsh

Bologna



Halfway up the second ascent of San Luca in Bologna, 14km from the finish, Adam Yates moved to the front of the elite group that included his team leader Tadej Pogacar and arch-enemy Jonas Vingegaard. Yates's job was to up the pace on the steep 1.9km climb so that when his team-mate accelerated, the others might already be at their limit. Pogacar waited, his foot on the trigger.

There is something exhilarating about Pogacar attacks. Feats of joy rather than instruments of punishment. In these moments his face lights up and he is smiling, at least on the inside. Yates paved the way, riding smoothly but powerfully at the front of the smallish train. Tiesj Benoot tucked between him and Vingegaard. Pogacar rode in fourth.

He's looking at Vingegaard's rolling shoulders wondering what he's got, thinking now is the time to ask the first question. Pogacar's been thinking for a while about his rival: in April you broke your collarbone, fractured ribs, damaged lungs, spent 12 days in hospital and missed so much training — how are you really feeling?

When the attack came, it wasn't so much a testing of the water but a head-first plunge. Pogacar went hard, flying past Yates, getting a gap, accelerating into a right-hand bend, then swooshing round a left-hander. He knew not many, if any, could live with his explosivity. So he took a quick backwards glance.

And there he was, clear of the others, almost upon him. You, again, Vingegaard. Pogacar might have felt like screaming but with 19 days of racing still to come, he dare not show anything resembling disappointment. He nodded at Vingegaard, his eyes asking the question: how about we share the pace, gain some time?

There was a bit to go to the top and Vingegaard thought no, not the right moment. "He wanted me to pull on the kicker but I waited until the top because otherwise I knew he'd attack me again."

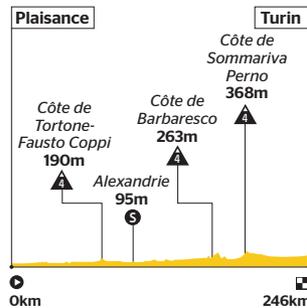
At the top, Pogacar looked again at his nemesis. Ready to dance now? Off they went, down the hill at full pelt, each taking turns at the front, as if trying to impress the other, the boys of



Pogacar ended the day with the Yellow Jersey, inset, but Vingegaard was in hot pursuit on a stage won by Vauquelin, inset

Stage 3 Today

Plaisance-Turin 246km



summer. There are 175 riders in this race but at moments like this, it feels as if there are only two.

They flew into corners, one time Vingegaard at the front, then Pogacar. Occasionally the Slovenian accelerated hard out of a sharp bend, hoping he might stress his rival, but that was a waste of time. They were better than everyone else, but not better than each other. Near the finish in Bologna, Pogacar realised if he kept going hard, he would probably get the Yellow Jersey.

Too soon, too soon, the voice from the team car would have told him, and so he slowed a little, and they were caught by the chasing Richard Carapaz and Remco Evenepoel. Then, uncharacteristically, Pogacar didn't contest their little group sprint. Alas for him, he

still got the Yellow Jersey and, worse still, had to tell everyone how pleased he was to have it.

The stage had already been won by the talented young Frenchman Kevin Vauquelin, who escaped in an 11-rider breakaway soon after the start and through searingly hot conditions, the escapes collaborated and extended their lead to more than eight minutes. That came down towards the end but there would be no coming together. Vauquelin was easily the strongest of the breakaways and won by 36 seconds.

Geraint Thomas lost more than four minutes to Pogacar and all the other general classification contenders, confirming what he suggested at the beginning — he's here to try to win a stage. Even a previous Tour winner some-

times has to cut his cloth to suit his measure. His team-mates Carlos Rodriguez, Egan Bernal and Tom Pidcock were all safely in a group 21 seconds down on Pogacar and Vingegaard. So, too, was Adam Yates.

Mark Cavendish had another tough day in the sweltering heat, finishing in a ten-rider group at the back end of the peloton, 24min 35sec behind Vauquelin. The third leg of this race finishes in Turin and it's one meant for the sprinters. Perhaps we will then get a better sense of how competitive the greatest sprinter of all is going to be.

For the moment though, the two GC giants are lighting up the Tour. Twelve months ago, they gave us something special. Two weeks of intense but never bitter rivalry. Then Pogacar cracked, as Vingegaard had discreetly suggested he would. The backstory to Pogacar's travails in the final week related to his April crash in Liège-Bastogne-Liège; the slow recovery, the weeks of recovery that left him vulnerable.

Now they've switched roles. Vingegaard is the one who has had the disrupted preparation. He came into the Tour saying he really didn't know what to expect. What happened on San Luca cheered him. "This went better than I ever expected, so I'm really satisfied," he said. "That I was able to follow Tadej on the second climb of San Luca... I think this is probably one of the stages we feared the most, or we actually expected me to lose time on."

"Honestly speaking I didn't have a good preparation for this race. I only had one and a half months to prepare, probably, so I can be super happy with how everything is going so far."

Pogacar was also upbeat. "I did a really good attack and I was happy that I could explode the contenders a little bit," he said.

"It feels good to be in yellow again, it's confirmation that I'm strong."

Inside UAE Team Emirates, they were all singing from that hymn sheet. "The Yellow Jersey is always welcome," the director sportif, Matias Fernandez, said. "It's perfect. They're the two big names. We're here to win. It's the perfect war on the bicycle. And, on the bicycle, Jonas is Jonas."

Fernandez might have been exaggerating the joy of having the *Maillot Jaune* so early but everything else he said was true. Especially, the line about Jonas being Jonas on the bicycle.

Newcastle ease fears with £35m sale

Martin Hardy, Tom Allnutt

Elliot Anderson is set to complete a £35million move from Newcastle United to Nottingham Forest.

The 21-year-old underwent a medical at the City Ground yesterday after the two clubs agreed a fee for the Geordie midfielder late on Saturday night.

Newcastle are reluctant sellers, with Eddie Howe, the head coach, a big fan of the player, but the club have been forced to offload Anderson in order to comply with the Premier League's Profitability and Sustainability Rules (PSR) and avoid a points deduction for the new season.

The PSR financial year runs to June 30 and any sales had to be rushed through this weekend to limit losses. The regulations state that a club can accumulate losses of £105million over

three seasons. Newcastle were set to break that and have frantically been attempting to sell players. The England winger Anthony Gordon, 23, was mentioned in negotiations with Liverpool. However, Liverpool decided the deal and price for Gordon — who only moved to Tyneside from Everton 17 months ago — did not suit them.

Newcastle offered two players to Forest before a deal was agreed for Anderson. Newcastle also enquired about the Forest winger Anthony Elanga.

The sale of Anderson, who came through Newcastle's academy, is pure profit under PSR because he is home-grown, and will significantly ease Newcastle's PSR concerns.

Newcastle have spent more than £400million since they were taken over by Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund in 2021. The PSR regulations,

which will change in 2025-26, have been in place since 2013. However, the points deductions given to Everton and Forest last season for breaching PSR in the past two years sent shockwaves through club boardrooms.

Meanwhile, Tottenham Hotspur have made a late move to sign Leeds United's Archie Gray, despite the 18-year-old undergoing a medical with Brentford.

Spurs are in early discussions with Leeds about signing Gray and there is confidence a deal can be agreed.

Gray, who is the great nephew of Eddie, the former Leeds winger and manager, came through the youth teams at Leeds before he was promoted to the first-team squad by Marcelo Bielsa. He played 52 matches for the first team last season, in central midfield and then at right back.

Results

Cycling

Tour de France

Stage 2 (Cesenatico-Bologna, 200km) 1, K Vauquelin (Fr, Arkea-B&B Hotels) 4hr 43min 42sec; 2, J Abrahamson (Nor, Uno-X Mobility) at 36sec; 3, Q Pacher (Fr, Groupama-FDJ) — at 49sec; 4, C Rodriguez (Sp, ARKEA-B&B HOTELS); 5, H Tejada (Col, Astana Qazaqstan Team) same time.

Overall leaders

1, T Pogacar (Slovenia, UAE Team Emirates) 9hr 53min 30sec; 2, R Evenepoel (Bel, Soudal Quick-Step); 3, J Vingegaard (Den, Team Visma | Lease a Bike); 4, R Carapaz (Ecu, EF Education-EasyPost) all same time; 5, R Bardet (Fr, Team dsm-firmenich PostNL) at 65c.

Golf

USPGA Tour Rocket Mortgage Classic

Detroit, Michigan (US unless stated) third round scores: 199 A Bhatia 64 67 68; A Rai (Eng) 66 65 68; 200 C Davis (Aus) 68 66 66; C Young 67 67 67; 201 S Stevens 69 66 66; E van Rooyen (SA) 69 64 68.

202 L Clanton 69 68 65; J Dahmen 70 64 68; Min-Woo Lee (Aus) 69 68 66; 203 N Dunlap 67 69 67; T Merritt 69 64 70; P Rodgers 69 67 67; D Thompson 68 69 66.

LPGA Dow Championship

Midland, Michigan (US unless stated) second round scores: 195 J Kupcho & A Ewing 64 64 67; 196 Hae-Ji Kang & In-Kyung Kim (S Kor) 68 63 65; Ruoning Yin (China) & A Thitikul (Tha) 64 66 66; 197 A Doherty & C Inglis 68 63 66; G Kim (Aus) & A Kim 67 61 69; 198 K Madsen & N Broch Estrup (Den) 68 60 70; Wei Ling Hsu & Su-Chia Cheng (Taiwan) 65 63 70; 199 G Hall & C Hull (Eng) 66 63 70; J Bonchant & C Wannansa (Tha) 64 64 71; 200 P Yooktan & W Meechal (Tha) 68 61 71.

Ladies European Tour VP Bank Swiss Ladies Open

Risch-Rotkreuz, Switzerland: (GB & Ir unless stated) final scores: 202 A Hewson 68 69 65; T Malik (Ind) 68 68 66 (Hewson wins play-off on first extra hole); 203 J Walsh 71 68 64; F Fernandez (Sp) 68 66 68; 205 M Folke (Swe) 69 69 67; M Hernandez (Sp) 67 70 68.

DP World Tour Italian Open

Ravenna, Italy (GB & Ir unless stated) final scores: 274 M Siem (Ger) 69 68 66 71; T McKibbin 71 70 68 65 (Siem wins play-off at first extra hole); 275 S Crocker (US) 66 71 70 68; J De Bruyn (Bel) 67 67 67 69; 276 A Arnan (Sp) 66 71 70 69; A Rozner (Fr) 69 72 62 73; S Sharma (Ind) 68 68 67 73; P Pavan (Ind) 64 73 69 70; J Nicholas (US) 67 70 69 70.

Rugby league

Championship

Halifax 38 Whitehaven 18; Barrow 0 Wakefield 36; Dewsbury 12 Bradford 38; Widnes 16 Batley 24; York 10 Sheffield 18.

League

W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Wakefield	13	0	0	486	142
Sheffield	13	0	0	354	217
Toulouse	13	0	0	4370	190
Bradford	13	0	0	4345	218
Widnes	13	0	0	5245	245
Featherstone	13	0	0	7330	283
Batley	13	0	0	7205	286
Doncaster	13	0	0	7237	325
York	13	0	0	8285	257
Whitehaven	13	0	0	7266	358
Halifax	13	0	0	8270	377
Barrow	13	0	0	8219	377
Swinton	13	0	0	9260	332
Dewsbury	13	0	0	12164	459

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Sport Rugby union

Scott Barrett's father, a rural farmer, tells Will Kelleher his son is getting used to life as the All Blacks captain



It is a beautiful winter's day in Barrett country, just off New Zealand's State Highway 3 that bends around the west of the North Island. Twelve degrees centigrade, a cloudless blue sky and, in the near distance, the dormant volcano that lends the region its name.

Officially, this is Taranaki. But given it is the place where the Barretts grew to become one of the most dominant families in rugby, they may have to rename it someday. The Barrett parents — Kevin and Robyn — still live here on their dairy farm, providing milk from their cows for the Fonterra company, as well as providing All Blacks.

Mount Taranaki is a near-perfect, snow-capped triangle, stretching up to 2,518 metres — it doubled as Mount Fuji in the Tom Cruise film *The Last Samurai* — and those in the New Plymouth area know an eruption is overdue. "If she blows there will be no Taranaki," one says.

Like most of rural New Zealand, this has been farming country since the Victorian Europeans arrived. As of last Monday it is home to the All Blacks captain, Scott Barrett, too.

The father of the Barrett dynasty, Kevin, is not the sort to overdo his pronouncements, but sitting in the small terrace on one side of the glistening green Coastal Rugby Club 1st XV pitch, where all his boys played, he affords himself a moment. "Captaining the All Blacks is on a different level," he says.

He is dressed in ankle-length, slip-on boots, woolly socks, shorts and a microfleece and he has parked his bashed-up truck on the gravel around the corner by the corrugated-iron clubhouse. To arrive here you take the Surf Highway south from New Plymouth, round to Pungarehu, then on to Rahotu, passing roadside signs that celebrate "heifers too big to fit on billboards!"

Diving off right down

an unmarked, single-track lane towards the crashing waves, you find Coastal.

Between Kevin, Robyn and their eight children, the immediate Barrett family form 1/50th of Pungarehu's population; 423 at last count. Three kids are All Blacks; first Beauden, then Scott, then Jordie.

Beauden, 33, has briefly led New Zealand himself, so knows the weight of the role bestowed upon his younger brother. "The All Black captain is right up there with the prime minister in New Zealand," he said this week. His father takes this in and then explains how he found out the news.

Scott had called him for his "five cents-worth" a while ago, after the new All Blacks head coach, Scott "Razor" Robertson, had asked whether he would lead the team. He had called for fatherly advice too in 2020, when he was named Crusaders skipper. This time Scott forgot to tell his parents he was going to accept the offer.

So last Monday Kevin and Robyn sat in their farmhouse with their neighbours Susan and Alan, the latter a former New Zealand sevens player, and flicked on the television to watch Robertson name his first squad not knowing they were in for a double celebration.

"We found out Scott was captain when he was read out," Kevin explains.

"I could have pestered him, but if he wanted to tell me he would've told me. We were talking to Jordie the night before, just on different things, and he wanted to tell us he was vice-captain. He said, 'Have you been talking to Scott?' and we said, 'No, we haven't!' Well, he then couldn't tell us he was vice-captain, if Scotty hadn't told us he was captain!"

"We heard Scotty's name read out by Razor and thought, 'Ah great!' Chink, chink — a toast — and then Alan said, 'Aw, shivers, I heard Jordie's name!' So we had to rewind the TV to see what had been said. When I saw he



Bigger deal than PM: steady rise of Scott Barrett



was vice-captain, I said, 'F*** me guys! Shit yeah, we're hugely proud as parents, as are half the coast and Taranaki.'

The people here try to strike the right balance. They are so keen to burst with pride that their region has created the Barretts and the All Blacks captain, yet are conscious of not making the boys feel as if they cannot come home and be themselves.

Scott and Beauden were here most recently, a couple of weeks ago. Beauden turned out for Coastal, donning the green, white and black kit, and the two brothers attended a fundraiser at their Catholic school in New Plymouth, Francis Douglas Memorial College.

They are building a new auditorium

and gym that will overlook their rugby pitches so the Barretts, who are three of the school's six All Blacks after John Mitchell, Conrad Smith and Liam Coltman, have been helping them to pay for it.

The other night they helped to raise NZ\$100,000 (about £50,000). An All Blacks jersey signed by the three boys went for NZ\$6,000.

Martin Dravitzki is now a history and geography teacher at Francis Douglas and has taken the 1st XV off and on for years. He has been here since 1980, when he and Kevin were pupils, and has watched the Barrett boys grow up. "We're very proud of them, but they're not put on a pedestal," Dravitzki says.

Scott, he reckons, is the most academic of the boys with his

agricultural science degree from Lincoln University. Scott was studying there, near Christchurch, when he was first asked to play for the Crusaders as a teenager by Robertson, now his head coach with the All Blacks. He said no, so he could complete his degree first. There will be plenty of time to play rugby later, he thought.

"Kane went to school to eat his lunch, I think!" Kevin says, chuckling.

Kane is the eldest Barrett boy, who played for Taranaki and the Blues in Auckland before retiring in 2014 having suffered from concussion. Behind him Beauden "came from nowhere" to professional rugby via sevens, and Jordie could have become the school's first New Zealand cricketer. Scott, however, developed

Cricket scoreboards

Investec County Championship

Division One

Table with 2 columns: Match details and scores. Includes Durham v Worcestershire, Durham v Gloucestershire, Durham v Leicestershire, Durham v Lancashire, Durham v Derbyshire, Durham v Warwickshire, Durham v Somerset, Durham v Gloucestershire, Durham v Lancashire, Durham v Derbyshire, Durham v Warwickshire, Durham v Somerset.

Worcestershire: First Innings

Table with 2 columns: Player name and runs. Includes 1G H Roderick lbw b Potts, *J D Libby c Lees b Stokes, K Ali c Stokes b Raine, R P Jones c Lees b Siddie, A J Hose b Siddie, E A Brookes lbw b Raine, M J Waite b Potts, N G Smith c sub b Raine, T A I Taylor c Robinson b Potts, B M J Waite b Potts, A Viridi not out, Extras (lb 2, nb 2), Total (333 overs), Fall of wickets 1-15, 2-50, 3-71, 4-71, 5-99, Bowling Raine 9-2-33-3; Potts 8-0-29-4; Siddie 8-3-20-2; Stokes 8-2-23-1, Umpires: S Shanmugam and S J O'Shaughnessy

Lancashire v Nottinghamshire

Table with 2 columns: Player name and runs. Includes *J M Vince not out, *B C Brown not out, Extras (lb 7, w 1, nb 4), Total (3 wks, 83 overs), Fall of wickets 1-19, 2-24, 3-56, Bowling Stewart 18-7-55-1; Stobo 17-5-50-1; Gilchrist 12-1-60-0; Evison 9-0-48-1; Parkinson 2-1-64-0; Leaning 6-0-17-0, Kent: B G Compton, F I N Khushi, *J Bell-Drummond, J A Leaning, J D M Evison, *H Z Finch, T S Muey, C H Stobo, G Stewart, M W Parkinson, N N Gilchrist, Umpires: P R Pollard and B J Debenham

Surrey v Essex

Table with 2 columns: Player name and runs. Includes The Oval (first day of four, Essex won toss); Surrey have scored 248 runs for eight wickets against Essex, Surrey: First Innings, *R J Burns c Pepper b Walter, D P Sibley c Elgar b Bosch, D W Lawrence c Harmer b Bosch, J L Smith b Critchley, *A L Davies c Abell b Davey, W M H Rhodes c Umeed b Leach, S R Hain b Pretorius, D R Mousley c Aldridge b Pretorius, E G Barnard b Leach, J G Bethell c Rew b Overton, *M G Burgess not out, C R Woakes c Umeed b Pretorius, M G Booth not out, Extras (lb 4, lb 1, nb 8), Total (8 wks, 96 overs), 373, O J Hannon-Dalby to bat, Fall of wickets 1-19, 2-34, 3-36, 4-40, 5-144, 6-145, 7-244, 8-354, Bowling Davey 18-2-71-1; Overton 19-2-61-1;

Somerset A R Umeed, T Kohler-Cadmore, T A Lammonby, T B Abell, T Banton, J E K Row, K L Aldridge, C O Overton, J H Davey, M Pretorius, M J Leach, Umpires: R J Bailey and M Newell

Table with 2 columns: Player name and runs. Includes Pretorius 20-2-72-4; Aldridge 14-0-74-0; Leach 20-2-69-2; Umeed 1-0-11-0; Lammonby 4-11-0-0, Somerset A R Umeed, T Kohler-Cadmore, T A Lammonby, T B Abell, T Banton, J E K Row, K L Aldridge, C O Overton, J H Davey, M Pretorius, M J Leach, Umpires: R J Bailey and M Newell

Derbyshire v Yorkshire

Table with 2 columns: Player name and runs. Includes Queen's Park (first day of four, Derbyshire won toss); Yorkshire, with five first-innings wickets in hand, lead Derbyshire by 207 runs, Derbyshire: First Innings, M D Wagstaff lbw b Coad, L M Rees c Hill b Fernando, W L Madsen lbw b Thompson, *D L Lloyd lbw b Thompson, A H T Donald lbw b Fernando, R A Whiteley c Thompson b Fernando, A T Thompson c Bean b Thompson, J C Chappell c Lyth b Thompson, Z S Connors b Fernando, D M Dupavillon not out, D T E Laves not out, J P A Taylor not out, Extras (lb 5, lb 7, nb 2), Total (8 wks, 79 overs), 248, J J Worral to bat, Fall of wickets 1-41, 2-47, 3-67, 4-100, 5-170, 6-203, 7-224, 8-224, Bowling Porter 15-3-43-0; Snater 19-4-49-1; Bosch 13-2-52-3; Walter 10-3-2-43-2; Harmer 16-5-32-1; Critchley 5-0-17-1, Essex: D Elgar, N L J Browne, *T Westley, J M Cox, M J J Critchley, P I Walter, *M S Pepper, S R Harmer, S Snater, E Bosch, J A Porter, Umpires: P J Hartley and G D Lloyd

Trust in Marcus for chaos ... and control

Stuart Barnes



his share of tries from fly half. Twelve tries in 31 Tests is a reflection of the threat posed by those electric feet of his, together with a fast-fizzing rugby brain. Things happen quickly around him. It leaves the opposition split seconds in which to react. That is what Smith brings to the game. He scores tries, he makes them. The controllers can criticise all they like, but even if Smith was the error-bound No 10 — which he is not — his capacity to create tries and score them is worth a good seven-to-ten points a game. That's the difference between winning and losing.

International rugby needs players like Marcus Smith. So says Scott Robertson, who takes charge of the All Blacks for the first time next Saturday. "He's a creator." New Zealand have enjoyed some pretty creative fly halves over the years. Their new coach was impressed by Smith's man of the match performance against Japan just over a week ago. Outside England, an awful lot of people seem impressed by the 25-year-old.

Why wouldn't they? Robertson again: "He can do things out of hand, or off his feet, beating players, kicking, and he creates a lot." This creativity word. It scares the pants out of some. "Control" is the preferred word when it comes to English fly halves. Owen Farrell struggled to control his own emotions at Test level but, at his best, few would argue he was more controller than creator. George Ford is just about the epitome of English control from the pivot position. Against Ireland at Twickenham, he may not have kicked his goals, but he oozed control. Classy.

It was the same game in which Smith came off the bench at full back and helped ignite England before dropping a goal that won the contest. The drop-goal was more symbolic than anything because England had the benefit of advantage and a penalty in front of the posts. Still, these moments have a habit of falling Smith's way. Creators tend to get more headlines than controllers. Alas, in this black and white world of ours, creators are labelled as uncontrollable talents and controllers seen as devoid of flair.

That is simply not the case with Smith. It is true that his judgment hasn't always been perfect, but let's not forget the 80-minute performance of conservative control he put in to assist in a significant English victory against South Africa in 2021.

This was the Smith who doesn't grab the headlines, the one his detractors would rather ignore. He can't be in control because he creates chaos. It's flawed logic. The opposing defenders might well feel the pressure of controlled offence, but they are left dumbfounded when creativity kicks in. Then defensive systems are left floundering. Smith makes and scores more than

How fortunate that Farrell has decided to head for France. Good luck to him. Good luck to Ford in his rehabilitation from ankle problems. Their absence opens the way for Smith. He scored a try from distance against Australia away in his Test infancy. He has been awarded Six Nations man of the match prizes, back to back, but still there are those who don't believe he possesses the necessary ingredients to dominate the international arena.

Before this tour there was much media debate about which Smith should start against the All Blacks. Fin Smith had a stellar season for Northampton. At just 22 he has a bright future, but the problems he encountered in the Champions Cup semi-final against Leinster and the far-from-convincing Premiership final against Bath rammed home the position of Harlequins' Smith as England's automatic starter.

And yes, he has to settle into the pattern imposed by England's coaching, but the side must also adjust to the speed, wit and sheer invention of the fly half. If he isn't yet quite as good a Test as club player it is not because of the extra pressure so much as the slower reactions of players around him. Harlequins are used to his visionary ways. It is pointless to pick him and then expect him to conserve all that creativity of his.

Saturday in Dunedin is the day when he can seal his position as England's first choice and convince his fellow countrymen that he is the player Robertson, Warren Gatland and countless non-Englishmen regard him as. Borthwick's men are a less-predictable team. Control and chaos need to fuse in order to catalyse a team that has finally decided to pick up the ball and run.

With a back row highly rated at the breakdown (by Robertson), England and Smith have an opportunity to counter the All Blacks at their own game of counterattack. Victory would signal Smith's belated coming of age on the world stage.



Barrett Sr, left, the farmer who breeds All Blacks. Scott, above, will captain the team against England and play with his brothers Beauden and Jordie, below left

needed to kick against England!" These multiskilled Barretts are a product of their upbringing. Kevin played 167 times for Taranaki until 1999, before he took the family to Ireland for a season.

The well-told story goes that, having finished at Taranaki, Kevin proclaimed: "I'm off to breed some All Blacks". Unfortunately that is a slightly apocryphal tale, although he did actually say it, jokingly.

"Years ago we had a weekly magazine called *Touchline*, out on a Thursday, which covered the local clubs," Kevin explains. "It was a player-profile piece for Taranaki, where they asked about your partner, favourite food, ra, ra, and ambitions in life, and I wrote down — tongue in cheek — 'to breed some All Blacks.'"

The quip was a prophecy. Robyn is a runner, and whipped the boys into shape, breeding fitness into them and her girls, who became swimmers and dancers.

"They've got at least as much from her as Kev," Dravitzki notes.

Kevin explains: "Robyn is a bit tougher than me, but she'd kick them out of the car at the top of the road and make them run down barefoot."

The parents would leave a bucket of bats, balls and clubs in their yard for the kids, who spent their lives outside. "No PlayStation controllers in our house," Jordie says.

He remembers being dropped off at his grandfather's house, on the edge of an 18-hole golf course often blocked by sheep, to practise his short game. Scott ditched the golf clubs early, to take up hunting and fishing.

He often heads into Otago's High Country — those hills and forests made famous by *The Lord of the Rings* films — to shoot deer and pigs. Back home he sails out into the Tasman from Opunake to catch snapper, cod, trevally, gurnard, and blue-fin tuna.

Speaking to Scott this past week you sense he is far more at ease out in the wild than in front of cameras and microphones. Three times, unprompted, he mentioned the pressures of being an All Black captain on his first appearance as one in Christchurch last Monday. He has spoken to previous leaders Richie McCaw, Kieran Read and Sam Cane about it, before treading tentatively into their shoes.

Ardie Savea, the No8, was the popular captaincy choice, yet Scott Barrett will not go without support. "We ride the highs and the lows with them," Kevin says. "There are quite a few games where Robyn can't watch so gets up and wanders down the road."

On Saturday the Barretts will be all-in. Beauden and Jordie will be on the field with Scott in Dunedin, and his five other siblings will support from afar. Kevin and Robyn's cows do not start calving until July 20, so they will be at Forsyth Barr Stadium. When he retires, Scott wants to become a farmer like his parents, and is eyeing up a plot near them on the picturesque lava fields of Taranaki, so he can slip back into his normal life. For now, though, the eyes of New Zealand, and the world, are on him — the skinny boy from Pungarehu who is more important than the prime minister.

First Test
New Zealand v England
Forsyth Barr Stadium,
Dunedin
TV: Sky Sports action
Saturday 8.05am

slower. "He was a bit understated and underrated," Jordie, 27, explains. "He was a wee bit smaller as a kid, a skinny young lock into surfing and golf. He bought a squat-rack when he was 16 and turned into the figure he is now."

Beauden adds: "When I left home and played for the Hurricanes I'd only see him occasionally, but when I did he'd multiplied in size."

As Francis Douglas has about 500 senior boys, if players are good aged 15 they leap up three years to play for the 1st XV. To make the side, Scott found a niche as a goal-kicking lock.

"John Eales-style," Dravitzki says, referencing the Australia lock who kicked them to two World Cup wins in the 1990s. "Although things would've gone terribly wrong if he's

*S M Kitan lbw b Dupavillon	18
G C Hill c Guest b Connors	20
M L Revis c Guest b Chappell	5
TJ A Tattersall not out	41
Extras (b 4, lb 8, nb 4)	16
Total (5 wkts, 58 overs)	283
J A Thompson, DT Moriarty, B O Coad and M V T Fernando to bat	

Fall of wickets 1-61, 2-72, 3-109, 4-152, 5-165.	
Bowling Dupavillon 10-2-54-1; Connors 15-0-88-1; Reece 18-1-61-2; Chappell 12-4-44-1; Thomson 2-0-23-0; Whiteley 1-0-1-0.	
Umpires: N Pratt and S Redfern	
Gloucestershire v Glamorgan	
College Ground (first day of four, Glamorgan won toss); Glamorgan, with three first-innings wickets in hand, are 46 runs behind Gloucestershire	
Gloucestershire: First Innings	
C T Bancroft c Cooke b van der Gugten	0
B G Charlesworth c Cooke b Douthwaite	16
O J Price c Cooke b van der Gugten	11
M A H Hammond lbw b van der Gugten	21
FJ R Bracey b Corvin	5
*G L van Buuren c Cooke b Douthwaite	0
B J Webster b van der Gugten	18
Z Akhter c Cooke b Labuschagne	0
M D Taylor b van der Gugten	4
M de Lange not out	46
A S Dale c McIlroy b Crane	32
Extras (b 10, lb 2, w 6, nb 8)	26
Total (44.4 overs)	179

Fall of wickets 1-0, 2-18, 3-36, 4-44, 5-49, 6-85, 7-86, 8-88, 9-104.	
Bowling van der Gugten 15-4-59-5; McIlroy 8-0-39-0; Douthwaite 7-3-23-2; Corvin 5-0-15-1; Labuschagne 7-1-18-1; Crane 2-4-0-13-1.	
Glamorgan: First Innings	
E J Byrom c de Lange b Taylor	12
W T Root c Bracey b de Lange	21
M Labuschagne c Charlesworth b Akhter	19
K S Carlson c Hammond b de Lange	37
*S A Northeast c Bracey b Webster	19
†C B Cooke c Bracey b Webster	0
D A Douthwaite c Bracey b Webster	2
T van der Gugten not out	8
M S Crane not out	3
Extras (b 6, lb 2, nb 4)	12
Total (7 wkts, 45.1 overs)	133
A W Gorvin and JP McIlroy to bat.	

Fall of wickets 1-24, 2-57, 3-59, 4-104, 5-104, 6-108, 7-125.	
Bowling Taylor 11-4-20-1; Dale 8-1-44-0; Akhter 12-3-24-1; Webster 8-3-16-3; de Lange 6-1-0-21-2.	
Umpires: N Ashraf and P K Baldwin	
Leicestershire v Middlesex	
Leicester (first day of four, Leicestershire won toss); Leicestershire, with nine second-innings wickets in hand, lead Middlesex by 133 runs	
Leicestershire: First Innings	
R K Patel lbw b Roland-Jones	4
S G Budinger c du Plooy b Higgins	13

*L J Hill c Robson b Bamber	36
L P Goodsworth c du Plooy b Higgins	5
H J Swindells b Higgins	41
L Kimber c De Caires b Roland-Jones	0
†O B Cox c Davies b Roland-Jones	14
B G F Green c du Plooy b Roland-Jones	2
B W M Mike lbw b Higgins	13
S W Currie not out	34
M E T Salisbury c Higgins b Brookes	10
Extras (lb 8nb 2)	7
Total (49.3 overs)	179

Fall of wickets 1-17, 2-17, 3-82, 4-94, 5-101, 6-101, 7-109, 8-126, 9-144.	
Bowling Higgins 16-4-35-4; Roland-Jones 15-2-63-4; Brookes 9-3-1-34-1; Bamber 9-1-39-1.	
Second Innings	
R K Patel not out	16
S G Budinger c Bamber b Roland-Jones	18
S W Currie not out	0
Extras (b 4, nb 2)	40
Total (1 wkt, 9 overs)	46
Fall of wicket 1-36.	
Bowling Higgins 2-0-14-0; Roland-Jones 4-3-1-1; Bamber 3-0-21-0.	
Middlesex: First Innings	
S D Robson lbw b Mike	10
M D Stoneman c Kimber b Mike	0
M D E Holden c Cox b Green	0
J L du Plooy b Mike	27
R F Higgins b Green	0
J M De Caires c Currie b Green	6
†J L B Davies c Cox b Green	2

L B K Hollman b Mike	9
*T S Roland-Jones lbw b Mike	4
H J H Brookes not out	1
E R Bamber b Salisbury	0
Extras (lb 6nb 10)	16
Total (32.3 overs)	86
Fall of wickets 1-6, 2-21, 3-29, 4-33, 5-45, 6-53, 7-70, 8-82, 9-83.	
Bowling Salisbury 7-3-21-1; Mike 11-3-22-5; Green 9-2-28-4; Currie 5-3-15-0.	
Umpires: I D Blackwell and B J Peverall	
Northamptonshire v Sussex	
Northampton (first day of four, Northamptonshire won toss); Sussex, with eight second-innings wickets in hand, lead Northamptonshire by 129 runs	
Sussex: First Innings	
T J Haines c Breetzke b White	11
D P Hughes c McManus b Procter	35
T P Alesh c McManus b Broad	25
J M Coles c Breetzke b Procter	7
O J Carter c McManus b White	15
*H J A Simpson c Broad b White	8
F J Hudson-Prentice lbw b White	3
N J McAndrew c McManus b Procter	2
J J Carson c Gay b Sanderson	0
E O Robinson c and b Sanderson	0
S F Hunt not out	0
Extras (lb 6nb 2)	8
Total (47.2 overs)	143

Fall of wickets 1-29, 2-60, 3-74, 4-96, 5-106, 6-110, 7-111, 8-125, 9-126.	
Bowling Sanderson 14-21-46-2; White 12-4-23-4; Procter 13-2-37-3; Weatherall 6-1-29-0; Broad 2-1-2-1.	
Second Innings	
D P Hughes lbw b White	13
T J Haines c McManus b Sanderson	45
T P Alesh not out	23
S F Hunt not out	0
Extras (nb 2)	8
Total (22 wkts, 23 overs)	2
Fall of wickets 1-19, 2-82.	
Bowling Sanderson 7-2-32-1; White 4-0-17-1; Procter 6-2-15-0; Broad 3-0-18-0; Weatherall 3-2-1-0.	
Northamptonshire: First Innings	
R S Vasconcelos c Carson b Hunt	33
E N Gay c Haines b McAndrew	7
P P Shaw c Carson b Hudson-Prentice	31
*L A Procter c Haines b McAndrew	0
M P Breetzke lbw b McAndrew	4
R I Keogh c Coles b Robinson	2
†L D McManus c Simpson b Robinson	4
J Broad c Robinson b Hudson-Prentice	2
B W Sanderson b Robinson	0
R A Weatherall c Carson b Robinson	2
C J White not out	1
Extras (b 4, lb 1, nb 6)	11
Total (20.1 overs)	97

Fall of wickets 1-43, 2-53, 3-53, 4-59, 5-82, 6-88, 7-88, 8-89, 9-97.	
Bowling Robinson 9-3-42-4; Hunt 4-1-22-1; McAndrew 4-0-25-3; Hudson-Prentice 3-1-0-3-2.	
Umpires: M H A Syed and A C Harris	

England women v New Zealand women	
New Zealand OD	
New Zealand 141 (A Kerr 43, M Green 30; S Ecclestone 5-25, C Dean 2-35). England 142-2 (T Beaumont 28, M Boucher 100). England beat New Zealand by eight wickets, with 153 balls remaining.	
Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy	
Southern Vipers v Western Storm	
Western Storm 156 (Wilson 34, Wrath 31; Taylor 3-32, Adams 3-17). Southern Vipers 157-3 (McCaughan 49, Elwies 65). Southern Vipers won by seven wickets.	
Sunrisers v Lancashire Thunder	
Sunrisers 253 (Scrivens 51, Gardner 63, Jones 4-50). Lancashire Thunder 224 (Lamb 48; Munro 5-25). Sunrisers won by 30 runs.	
South East Stars v The Blaze	
Blaze 318-8 (Bryce 81, Kelly 52, Claridge 71). South East Stars 185 (Davidson-Richards 44; Graham 6-39). The Blaze won by 133 runs (DLS method).	
Northern Diamonds v Central Sparks	
Central Sparks 239-8 (Perrin 50, George 52, Levick 4-46). Northern Diamonds 242-6 (Winfield-Hill 45, Marlow 55, Heath 58). Northern Diamonds won by four wickets.	

Sport Austrian Grand Prix

Russell wins as Verstappen

Molly Hudson

Motor Racing Reporter, Spielberg



George Russell predicted he would spend the Austrian Grand Prix with his popcorn, watching Lando Norris and Max Verstappen battle for victory and hoping they would inadvertently gift him the win. Little did he know quite how literal that statement would prove to be.

"I saw on the TV [big screen, while driving] that Max and Lando were racing hard and I knew Lando would want to get that race win," Russell said, after claiming his second career victory. "You've got to be there at the end and that is what we were. It was a possibility; you are always dreaming."

It was not only the dreams of a race win for Verstappen and Norris that were left in tatters by the end, so too was their friendship — and their rear wheels. When Norris won his first race at the 110th attempt, in Miami last month, it was Verstappen he chose to party with into the small hours. The fiercest of rivals on track, close friends off it. Their battles in recent races have been close, but fair.

Then Verstappen had a slow, 6.5-second pitstop, and suddenly the seven-second gap he had worked so hard to accumulate had vanished. Three seconds became two, then one as he pushed too hard on his tyres, which were a scrubbed set rather than brand new — struggling for grip and locking up.

A period of ten laps of wheel-to-wheel racing followed. Each time Norris attempted to pass he felt Verstappen was moving under braking, unfairly blocking him. Verstappen's radio messages sounded increasingly irate.

Such was the desire of Norris to get past that he ran off track in his attempts to do so. Such profligacy eventually earned him a five-second penalty for exceeding track limits too many times.

If Verstappen could have stayed on the track, he would almost certainly have won. But, on lap 64, the inevitable happened, as tempers flared. Norris made another move into turn 3, their rear wheels colliding as Verstappen

nudged him. Both suddenly lost control of their cars, and were left with tyres punctured, limping to the pits.

Russell drove past them both, wondering if he could quite believe his luck. Toto Wolff, the Mercedes team principal, came on the radio, probably as much in shock as anyone, to tell his driver: "You can win this thing!" He later said: "This is the single dumbest thing I've done in 20 years at Mercedes. I will be forever ashamed of this."

In his excitement he had broken the cardinal rule of not communicating with a driver while they are in a braking zone and could have caused him to crash. He can be somewhat forgiven for his excitement, given Mercedes had not won a race since the Brazilian Grand Prix in 2022 (36 races ago).

Verstappen reached the pits but dropped to fifth and received a ten-second penalty for causing a collision, while Norris had more significant damage and was forced to retire.

"I expect a tough battle against Max," Norris, 24, said. "I expect aggression and pushing the limits. But, all three times, he's doing stuff which can easily cause an incident and, in a way, just a bit reckless. It seemed like a little bit desperate from his side, which he doesn't need to be. He's got plenty of wins."

Norris fears the damage he picked up from the incident will affect him for his home race at Silverstone next weekend, given the short turnaround and the limited number of components available. He said he will "lose a lot of respect" for Verstappen if he does not accept responsibility for the incident.

The world champion felt that Norris was "dive-bombing" — making late moves on the approach to corners — and denied moving under braking. Verstappen's main concern was the execution from his Red Bull team. "Today has been awful, everything has been wrong. I'm complaining about the tyres, we didn't pit, I was stuck in traffic, bad, bad execution with the pitstops, so everything just went wrong," he said. Norris's retirement meant Verstappen extended his championship lead to 81 points.

Andrea Stella, the McLaren team principal, felt Verstappen's aggressive defence was symptomatic of his driving style from the tussles he had with Lewis Hamilton that often crossed the line in the battle for the 2021 drivers' title.

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'Reckless' Max takes out Lando

After a slow pitstop, Max Verstappen found himself under pressure from Lando Norris. The Red Bull driver pushed too hard on new tyres and struggled for grip, with Norris's McLaren faster.

On lap 64, above, Verstappen tried to shut out another Norris pass. The pair collided, lost control of their cars and punctured tyres, right. Norris was forced to retire because of more extensive damage to the rear of his car. Verstappen was given a ten-second penalty for causing a collision.

That left George Russell to take advantage, celebrating in style, left, and embracing his "ashamed" Mercedes boss Toto Wolff, inset, who got overexcited on the team radio



How they finished

1		G Russell	Mercedes	1hr 24min 22.798sec
2		O Piastri	McLaren	+1.906
3		C Sainz	Ferrari	+4.533
4		L Hamilton	Mercedes	+23.142
5		M Verstappen	Red Bull	+37.253
6		N Hülkenberg	Haas	+54.088
7		S Pérez	Red Bull	+54.672
8		K Magnussen	Haas	+1:00.355
9		D Ricciardo	RB	+1:01.169
10		P Gasly	Alpine	+1:01.766
11		C Leclerc	Ferrari	+1:07.056
12		E Ocon	Alpine	+1:08.325
13		L Stroll	Aston Martin	+1 lap
14		Y Tsunoda	RB	+1 lap
15		A Albon	Williams	+1 lap
16		V Bottas	Kick Sauber	+1 lap
17		Zhou Guanyu	Kick Sauber	+1 lap
18		F Alonso	Aston Martin	+1 lap
19		L Sargeant	Williams	+2 laps
20		L Norris	McLaren	DNF

Overall standings

1	M Verstappen	Red Bull	237pts
2	L Norris	McLaren	156
3	C Leclerc	Ferrari	150
4	C Sainz	Ferrari	135
5	S Pérez	Red Bull	118
6	O Piastri	McLaren	112
7	G Russell	Mercedes	111
8	L Hamilton	Mercedes	85
9	F Alonso	Aston Martin	41
10	Y Tsunoda	RB	19

Fastest lap F Alonso 1:07.694

Constructors

1	Red Bull	355pts
2	Ferrari	291
3	McLaren	268
4	Mercedes	196
5	Aston Martin	58
6	RB	30
7	Haas	19
8	Alpine	9
9	Williams	2
10	Kick Sauber	0

knows who was responsible except for a group of [Red Bull] people," Stella said. "If you don't address these things, honestly, they will come back. They weren't addressed properly in the past when there were fights with Lewis that needed to be punished in a harsher way."

For much of the afternoon it was all going to plan for Verstappen. It is now a familiar sight; the 26-year-old claims pole, and he rarely makes an error with a clear run to turn 1. Those behind had a closer battle, Norris was forced to defend from Russell, and Hamilton passed Carlos Sainz, although later had to give the place back, having left the track and gained an advantage.

Verstappen claimed a superb pole position, 0.404secs clear of Norris despite this circuit having the fastest lap time on the calendar. He was expected to win comfortably.

Cloud cover meant the hard tyre, which Red Bull had saved for the race, was less effective than the medium, which McLaren had more of, and con-

tributed to the late pace offset between the pair.

Choosing when to pit was crucial. Hamilton, who finished fourth, was the first of the leading group to pit, on lap 22, but battled oversteer on the entry into the pitlane and could not avoid crossing the white line, earning himself a five-second penalty. Some encouragement was required from Wolff, who reminded his driver there was still everything to play for despite the error.

Sergio Pérez, Verstappen's teammate, had another difficult race, finishing seventh after damaging his sidepod in an opening-lap collision with Oscar Piastri. That Verstappen could crash, get a puncture and still finish ahead of him shows the width of the chasm between the two Red Bull drivers.

Russell became the only driver in the top ten to opt for a second stint on the medium tyre but, as he had predicted after qualifying, Norris and Verstappen were in a race for the victory while the rest competed for third. Or so he, and we, had thought.

'It's a whirlwind': 17-year-old qualifies for Olympics

Athletics
Rick Broadbent

There is always something special about witnessing the first bloom of a rare talent and on a grey day in Manchester a teenage dream was realised.

Phoebe Gill, a schoolgirl from St Albans who only turned 17 two months ago, won the UK 800metres title and booked her place at the Olympic Games. It was a race flushed with mind-boggling promise.

Gill's run was strong, assured and dominant. She clocked 1min 58.66sec to take the title ahead of Jemma Reekie. Those two and Keely Hodgkinson, the Olympic silver medal winner, will make up the GB trio and could all force their way into the mix.

Gill's parents wore "Run Phoebe" T-shirts at the Manchester Regional Arena and she did that with some panache. "It's a whirlwind," she said. "I still kind of feel like I'm in a dream. I can't think of another way to describe it. It's crazy because these are my idols."

Indeed, this was the first time she had ever met Hodgkinson, who did not try to douse new expectations. "She's amazing," said the self-styled veteran of 22. "I don't want to put any pressure on her, but I think she is definitely up there with a chance of making the final. Paris will be a much faster track than this, and in that competitive environment your adrenaline is pumping. I feel like amazing things are going to happen."

So Gill will go to the Olympics before she gets around to her biology, chemistry and maths A-levels, which is certainly unusual.

Having won the 800m she duly navigated one of her first meetings with journalists with equal aplomb. "I find it very hard to deal with the mental aspect of sport," she admitted. "In my opinion, sport is 70 per cent mental and 30 per cent fitness, but now that I've got that under grasp I've really flourished."

Who is this new star? Well, she first shot to prominence when she ran 1:57.86 in Belfast in May, which demolished the European under-18 record

that had stood for 45 years. That also puts her eighth on the all-time British list and ninth in the world this year.

A few weeks ago she turned down a place in the GB team for the European Championships in Rome to focus on this race, and that proved a shrewd call by her and her coach, Deborah Steer. She is currently without a sponsor, but that will change before Paris. She is also young enough for her first Olympic memories to be from 2012.

"We couldn't get track tickets so I had to watch hock-

Gill ran alongside her idols in Manchester yesterday to qualify for the 800m in Paris

ey, so I don't remember much. No offence to anyone in hockey."

She also appears to have the grounded personality to carry this off. Nobody will expect too much of her in Paris, and Hodgkinson will deflect the bulk of the attention, but if you can run 1.57 you are among the elite. Another sign of just how impressive that time is, is that she is more than five seconds faster than Hodgkinson was at the same age.

By 19, Hodgkinson had won her Olympic silver.

This is that time of the Olympic cycle when athletes are terrified of injuries. Every minor niggle becomes a career-altering disaster and the return of Katarina Johnson-Thompson was a welcome sight. She had cut a deflated figure when she pulled out of the European Champion-

ships after only three events of the heptathlon, but this was more like old times. Her time of 23.20 in the 200m heats was her fastest since her first world title year of 2019. Dina Asher-Smith won the final in a championship record 22.35 to comfortably see off the challenge of Daryll Neita.

Hodgkinson has stated her desire to run in the 4x400m relay in Paris, but that may be a tall order and she was seventh in the 400m final won in another championship record by Amber Anning. Georgia Bell was too strong for Laura Muir to win the 1,500m, although both will be in Paris.

Ben Pattison and Max Burgin finished one-two in the 800m, and the drama continued in their wake where Josh Kerr and Elliot Giles collided and fell. Giles will hope he gets the last discretionary place, although the mayhem may open the door for the absent Jake Wightman when the selectors meet today. Neil Gourley and George Mills took the vacant spots in the 1,500m and will join Kerr in France.



Sport Cricket

England go for risk and renewal with Smith and Bashir

Mike Atherton

Chief Cricket Correspondent



Some Test squads feel more important than others and this is one such. This is partly because of who is in — Surrey's Jamie Smith is picked as a wicket-keeper/batsman for the first time — but also partly because of who is not, with Jonny Bairstow the most significant omission as Brendon McCullum and Ben Stokes

embark on the next stage of their journey.

Bairstow has been an outstanding cricketer for England, across formats and in various roles, but he has often been the focal point for the argument over whether England should pick their best 'keeper or a better batsman for that role. Now, both Ben Foakes and Bairstow have been omitted in favour of Smith, who is not his county's first-choice 'keeper in first-class cricket, but is an outstanding prospect with the bat.

Yesterday's announcement heralds a bad 72 hours for Bairstow, who was part of England's T20 side that went down to India in Guyana last Thursday. That

defeat marked, in all likelihood, the point at which the selectors move on from some of those players — Bairstow, Moeen Ali, Chris Jordan, for example — now in their mid-30s. That much will become clear in September.

So the Test squad announcement was a double blow for him. Bairstow was an ever-present in the team in India this winter and has been at the forefront of the Stokes/McCullum project, following his explosive batting in the summer of 2022, when he scored four blistering hundreds in five innings, helping to reset the team's approach to Test cricket.

At the end of that summer came a horrific leg injury, following a fall playing golf, and although his return in the Ashes in 2023 showed all the fighting qualities that has made him such an exceptional England cricketer, he has not been at his best since the end of that series. He failed to pass 50 in the recent five-Test series in India.

His 100th Test was in Dharamsala, and there were suggestions then that it might be his last. It has been a diet of T20 since then, in the IPL and then the World Cup, but other than in the briefest of patches, he has struggled to find his best form. He has spent so long away of late — there has been no respite since the 50-over World Cup — he must be in need of a break and time away from the game.

Harry Brook missed the entire Test series to be with his dying grandmother and his return was inevitable. In Test and limited-overs cricket, Brook will now move to centre stage, as the player England will build their batting line-ups around. It is Dan Lawrence who is selected as the spare batsman in the squad, not Bairstow.

Change and renewal is an inevitable part of the sporting cycle and the announcement of the squad for the two Tests, but with "first Test only" next to James Anderson's name, is a reminder of that reality. Smith's arrival feels significant and that, along with Shoaib Bashir's retention, is a reminder also of the selection panel's unconventional relationship with the county game and their embracing of risk.

This is because Smith and Bashir are likely to play in roles that neither of their counties select them for. Smith is first-choice pick as a batsman for Surrey across all formats, but not as a 'keeper in first-class cricket, which remains under the ownership of Foakes. Bashir, meanwhile, has had to go on loan from Somerset to get first-team opportunities with the return of Jack Leach after injury.

Both are big calls, especially Smith. Nobody doubts his batting credentials. He is one of the most promising young batsmen in the game, with a wide range of strokes and will fit perfectly into the aggressive batting mentality championed by McCullum

It is likely Bairstow's England career is over



JAMIE SMITH
Surrey, 23
3,264 first-class runs at 40.80 in 58 games, 66 catches, 4 stumpings

Summer details

England Men's Test Squad

Ben Stokes (Durham, captain)
James Anderson (Lancashire, first Test only)
Gus Atkinson (Surrey)
Shoaib Bashir (Somerset)
Harry Brook (Yorkshire)
Zak Crawley (Kent)
Ben Duckett (Nottinghamshire)
Dan Lawrence (Surrey)
Dillon Pennington (Nottinghamshire)
Ollie Pope (Surrey)
Matthew Potts (Durham)
Joe Root (Yorkshire)
Jamie Smith (Surrey)
Chris Woakes (Warwickshire)

England's summer Tests West Indies

First Test: July 10, Lord's
Second Test: July 18, Trent Bridge
Third Test: July 26, Edgbaston

Sri Lanka

First Test: Aug 21, Emirates Oval
Second Test: Aug 29, Lord's
Third Test: Sept 6, Kia Oval

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and Stokes — which Foakes does not. It is the package and the potential they have gone for. Smith's 'keeping is said to be solid. At well over six foot, he will be one of the tallest 'keepers England have picked. In plumping for Smith as the Test 'keeper a little over a month ago, our columnist Steve James noted a positive reference from Andy Flower, who Smith worked with in the ILT20 this winter, and who is a good judge, having done both roles with distinction himself.

Bashir's retention is not surprising. He showed his character and credentials in tough circumstances in India and the selectors feel his height, bounce and accuracy will make him a serious option in Australia down the line, when one spinner will have to carry a load.

Sussex's Ollie Robinson has paid the price for a poor performance in Ranchi in his only Test of the winter, giving way to Matt Potts and the improving Dillon Pennington.

Pennington took the eye some years ago at Worcester when playing for England Under-19. He stagnated after that, as young players sometimes do, and so he sought a move in the close season to Nottinghamshire and a chance to work with their highly regarded bowling coach, Kevin Shine. He has bowled well and accurately this year, at decent pace, and has benefited from the injury to Josh Tongue and Robinson's listless winter.

If it is the end for Bairstow, he can look back at a remarkable all-format career, that includes 287 games for his country. He has played with pride and skill, with gloves and without, up and down the order, and has been one of the most popular players with England supporters. He could come again, but at 34 it feels unlikely.



The three uncapped players hoping to impress in summer Tests



GUS ATKINSON
Surrey, 26
59 wickets at 27.38 in
19 first-class games

DILLON PENNINGTON
Nottinghamshire, 25
169 wickets at 27.26
in 52 first-class games

Five wickets for Ecclestone seals series

Second one-day international
Elizabeth Ammon

Sophie Ecclestone spun England to another destructive victory over New Zealand in Worcester. England won by eight wickets with 25 overs to spare to seal the one-day international series with one match to play.

Opener Maia Bouchier scored 100 not out — her maiden professional century — from 88 balls as England reached the target of 142 with ease.

Ecclestone's five for 25 from nine overs was instrumental in bowling the visitors out for 141 in 41.4 overs. Four of

their batters reached double figures, Amelia Kerr the top scorer with 43.

Kate Cross and Lauren Filer reduced New Zealand to ten for two before a partnership of 46 between Kerr and Sophie Devine. Ecclestone then enticed Devine down the pitch but the ball beat the bat, allowing wicketkeeper Amy Jones to remove the bails.

Off spinner Charlie Dean, who became the fastest women to reach 50 ODI wickets, pinned Maddy Green lbw for 30 before Brooke Halliday became Ecclestone's second victim. Kerr passed 2,000 career ODI runs but after she was dismissed by Dean, New Zealand crumbled, losing seven for 27.

In response, Bouchier and Tammy Beaumont combined to make 73 before Beaumont was run out for 28. Bouchier took charge, smashing five boundaries in eight balls — four from one over off Devine. After Heather Knight was dismissed, Nat Sciver-Brunt batted selflessly to allow Bouchier the chance to make her ton and give England victory.

... while Rohit calls time as India usher in new era

T20 old guard bow out as world champions, finally landing prize for cricket-crazy nation, writes Mike Atherton

When the great prizes land early in life and easily, can they ever be properly appreciated and savoured? Ask an author who writes a bestseller with their first book and then never sells well again. Or an actor who wins a major award in their youth, and strives valiantly but in vain thereafter. Think of those things and then think of Rohit Sharma, India's T20 World Cup-winning captain.

The moment the last ball of the final was hit into the leg side to confirm India's gut-twisting victory over South Africa, Rohit fell to the ground at extra cover and began thumping the turf repeatedly. There he lay, momentarily, as his players gathered on the pitch, before they all came together in celebration. Later, there were tears. Seventeen years earlier it must have seemed much more straightforward.

Rohit was a slip of a lad, just 20 years old, when India won what was then called the World T20 against Pakistan in South Africa in 2007. It was only his fourth T20 international that day and he came in at No 6 and played a cameo, 30 off 16 balls, that enabled India to post what would be a winning score. Rohit must have thought that winning ICC events was the easiest thing ever. Did he really drink it in that day? He was still six years away from a Test debut and had only played a couple of ODIs. He was right at the start of his international career. It is true that nobody thought of the World T20 at that point as a World Cup — it is only latterly that the tournament has grown in stature and importance — but, still, it was a winner's medal in an ICC global event, and he was only 20.

How could he have possibly known it would take another 17 years to win another T20 world title and that there would be a gap of more than a decade after India's win in the 2013 Champions Trophy? Between that win over England in 2013 and Saturday's match, India and Rohit had



Rohit fell to the ground upon India's victory as relief mixed with joy for the skipper

lost five finals: the T20 World Cup in 2014; the Champions Trophy in 2017 and Test championship finals of 2021 and 2023, and last year's 50-over World Cup.

At 37, how many more opportunities would come his way? Not many, given that he announced his retirement from T20 internationals after the match, with Virat Kohli and Ravindra Jadeja also bowing out of the format. So his reaction at the moment of victory at the Kensington Oval was understandable. More than that, of course, he was captain, with all the pressure and responsibility that brings, and he had led with distinction throughout. He had the best team, but the best teams don't always win in T20 and Rohit's calmness and assuredness was a factor.

He carried the hopes of a cricket-crazy nation, as India's captains always do, but during the Test series against England, Jay Shah, the head honcho of the Board of Control for Cricket in India, had added an extra layer of expectation. During a function before the third Test in Rajkot, Shah had announced Rohit would lead India in the forthcoming T20 World Cup and added, for good measure: "We will hoist India's flag." Shah was on hand to dole out the silverware.

It is impossible to find fault with India's team in this tournament. They won on the poor pitches in New York; they won on a slow, low pitch in Guyana and they beat South Africa on a belter of a surface in Barbados. They won every match, becoming the first team to go through a T20 World

Cup unbeaten. They were worthy champions.

Rohit played the best innings of the tournament when he put Australia to the sword in St Lucia, making 92 in 41 balls, with some astonishing strokes. He scored the second highest number of runs behind Rahmanullah Gurbaz, of Afghanistan, and did so in a selfless manner. He showed the way.

He captained with a sure touch and enjoyed having the bowler of the tournament, Jasprit Bumrah, at his command. Bumrah was outstanding once again against South Africa — 4-0-18-2 — completing the competition with a startling economy rate of 4.17, while his average per wicket was 8.26. What a bowler — in all formats — he is.

South Africa had their chances. They ought to have closed out the match when they needed 26 in four overs, with Heinrich Klaasen and David Miller set. Klaasen got out at a crucial time, in an over when, with Bumrah to come, he was aiming to finish the game, while Miller fell to an extraordinary catch in the deep from Suryakumar Yadav.

The result means it is hard to conclude anything other than India and Australia have opened a gap between themselves and the rest. Australia came here looking for a three-peat, attempting to hold ICC trophies in all three formats at the same time.

India, meanwhile, have now contested the finals in each of the three formats, winning one. Cycles come and go but, right now, India and Australia stand out. England have some catching up to do.

Keeper marks Test call with century

Elizabeth Ammon

Jamie Smith marked his call-up to the England Test squad with a dominant century for Surrey, while the man he replaced, Ben Foakes, could only muster seven.

It is not hard to see what has made the 23-year-old so attractive to the England selection panel. He has all the attributes to thrive in Test cricket. It is not just the eye-catching array of attacking shots but he is also solid in defence, playing the ball very late and under his eyes, is quick between the wickets and willing to the leave the ball. He has an unusual stance at the crease and a very low crouch before standing up to play the ball.

Smith moved into the nineties on the opening day of this County Championship game against Essex with a

powerfully struck six over deep mid-wicket and brought up three figures with a whip through the on side for a single off Paul Walter, his century coming from 132 balls and including 14 fours and two sixes. He was bowled in the next over by the spinner Matt Critchley but had taken Surrey into a strong position.

Essex's bowlers stuck to their task admirably on a wicket offering something for both batsmen and bowlers and did not let Surrey get away despite Smith's dominant innings. Former England openers Rory Burns and Dom Sibley put on a 41-run partnership for the first wicket before the latter edged to Dean Elgar in the slips off Eathan Bosch. Dan Lawrence, also named in England's Test squad, lasted 14 balls before becoming Bosch's second victim.

The tall Paul Walter was particularly

effective from the Vauxhall End, getting both swing and extra bounce which troubled the batsmen on a number of occasions. Both sides battled hard in a gripping contest and Surrey finished the day 248 for eight.

For Surrey fans, there is, perhaps, the realisation they might not see much of Smith wearing the Brown Cap for the foreseeable future. He will miss most of the summer on Test duty and come September will be in the mix to be called up to a revamped white-ball side that will take on Australia. If he does well there, IPL franchises may come knocking, meaning he will be absent for April and May of next season before potentially more Test action. It is the job of counties to find and develop England players but with that comes the reluctant acceptance that they may not be seen much on the county circuit again.

Sport

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12 pages of the best reports, analysis and interviews

Inside T2



Glory for Russell

Surprise win for Mercedes as Norris and Verstappen clash

Pages 56-57



JOHN SIBLEY/REUTERS

After a dismal display with no shots on target and 86 seconds from a humiliating exit, Southgate is...

Saved by the Bell

England	2
Slovakia	1

Aet; 1:1 after 90min
Paul Joyce Gelsenkirchen

Jude Bellingham issued a rebuke to England's critics after he and Harry Kane rescued Gareth Southgate's team from an embarrassing Euro 2024 exit at the hands of Slovakia.

With only 86 seconds left of added time and trailing 1-0, Bellingham's stunning bicycle kick — England's first shot on target — forced extra time, in which Kane quickly scored the winning goal.

Bellingham said his heroics were fuelled by the criticism England have faced. "You know what I mean by the rubbish," he said. "But you can always use it and for moments like that, it's nice to throw it back to some people."

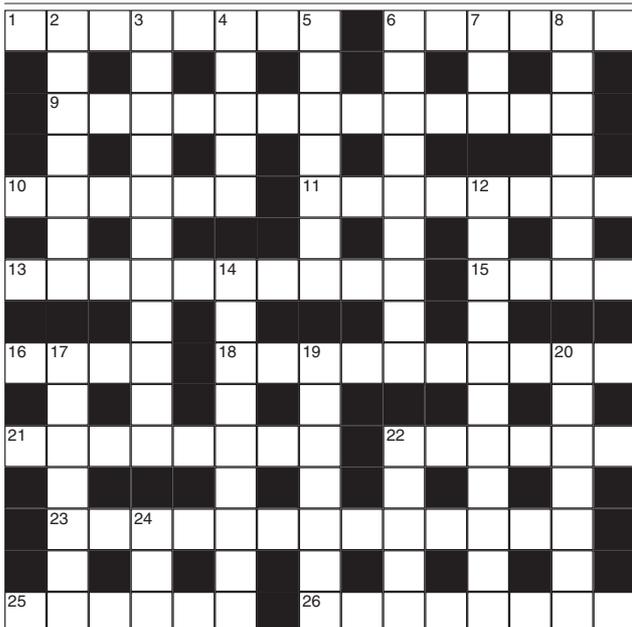
The Euros
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 Inside T2



England v Switzerland
 Euro 2024 quarter-final
 Saturday, 5pm
 BBC 1 & talkSPORT

Bellingham rescues England with an incredible stoppage-time overhead kick in Gelsenkirchen, after they were only seconds away from going out. Kane then scored the winner to seal a quarter-final place

Times Crossword 28,957



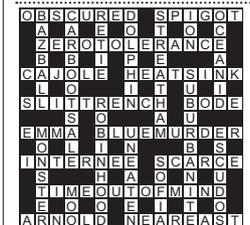
ACROSS

- 1 First of comedians gets a lot of laughs (6,2)
- 6 Judge beginning to swear, surrounded by fools (6)
- 9 Time taken to resolve complaint? (13)
- 10 Arrested by church, father turning red (6)
- 11 Speculator, one believing gold to be within his grasp? (8)
- 13 Case cracked: 500 held by French city authority (10)
- 15 Revolutionary Soviet leader beheaded in square (4)
- 16 One fuming after bet knocked back? (4)
- 18 No swearing about these descendants of the Vikings? (10)
- 21 Joint squad carrying out visit to begin with (8)
- 22 Figure has Sumerian features (6)
- 23 Traders here swapping cattle for sheep? (5,8)
- 25 Drug finishing off naive novelist (6)
- 26 Entertainer dean sues mistakenly (8)

DOWN

- 2 Supporters missing top game (7)
- 3 Donates rice crackers, being kind (11)
- 4 Trap initially set a long time back, capturing knight (5)
- 5 Quickly reaching northern city (7)
- 6 Model in sports car going under bridge (9)
- 7 A setter's offspring, might one say? (3)
- 8 Leave this young fellow's hat (7)
- 12 Investigation extinguishing party's revival (11)
- 14 Criminal not masked? I've no idea (4,3,2)
- 17 Nick right to be upset with old addict (7)
- 19 Laid-back cardinal holding large guitar (7)
- 20 Book of Songs (7)
- 22 A second layer devoid of colour (5)
- 24 Broadcaster's outstanding offering at Eisteddfod? (3)

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said, 'You will
have to lose
your left eye,
and very soon.'
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happened next**

**One woman's story
of facing cancer**



I love my macho hairy chest — and I won't wax it for anyone

Kevin Maher



I have this recurring nightmare. It's an inverted *Planet of the Apes* scenario, set in the near future, where I'm running through a rocky desert landscape in my underpants only, with my hairy body exposed — full hairy chest, thick hairy legs, hairy back and, for good measure, some gently sprouting hair on the shoulders. I am being chased by a hundred shiny, smooth-chested, fully waxed, depilated and lasered Essex boys who eventually catch me in a net, hoist me up in the air and start poking and prodding curiously at my body hair, like the dead-eyed manscaped morons they are. Suddenly aware that I am the last remaining hairy man on planet Earth, I snap and, like Charlton Heston, I roar: "Take your stinking paws off me, you pointless plucked chickens!" This enrages the mob even more, and they charge towards the net, manically wielding branded male grooming products and strips of hot wax.

My nightmare future, of course, appears to be terrifyingly imminent as men everywhere are declaring war on their body hair and fuelling a male grooming industry worth £8 billion a year in the UK alone, and set to snag nearly £90 billion worldwide by 2028. And it used to be the kids, inevitably, at the forefront — impressionable twentysomething tykes with wide eyes and fragile psyches, watching the hairless heroes of Marvel movies and nervously turning to each other and asking, "Is this what a man is?" But now it's us, the middle-aged dorks, driven by our depthless vanity and seeing depilation as the panacea for all interpersonal ills. As a Harley Street dermatologist recently told the Mail on Sunday: "I'm seeing more and more men wanting laser hair removal who are between the ages of 40 and 60. They want to feel more youthful."



What? By looking like a mole rat dipped in olive oil? There is no correlation between the authenticity of youth and the sight of a middle-aged man with the red pimply rash of barber's itch spreading across his flabby pecs and down around the back of his love handles. And who said, anyway, that the primary indicator of male youthfulness was hairlessness? Who? I suspect it's the same people who are trying to flog £90 billion's worth of grooming products by 2028. Or it's the Hollywood crowd, who have effectively banned male body hair from action blockbusters, because it is seemingly a bit gross, and biological, and primal, and thus hints at all those too-real issues that don't sell well in prudish Chinese multiplexes. Better, instead, to sell an arbitrary lie about hairless beauty.

And how do we know it's a lie? Because, once upon a time, especially in the 1960s and 1970s, Hollywood's hairy men were it. Remember Sean Connery? Remember Robert Redford? And remember, especially, Burt Reynolds in that 1972 Cosmopolitan centrefold, lying naked on a bearskin rug? It was almost impossible to tell where the rug ended and Burt began. And Connery? His chest hair was so covetable the James Bond filmmakers built a bathing scene around it in

You Only Live Twice, where our hero notes: "Japanese proverb say, 'Bird never make nest in bare tree.'" Today, however, it's all about bare trees apparently, even for the deluded, youth-obsessed middle aged. I'm sure, though, there's also a Japanese proverb that says, "Old fart who look like bare tree deceiving only himself and will ultimately feel less, rather than more, youthful." And if *Planet of the Apes* has taught us anything worthwhile (other than, mate, eight sequels was enough!) it's that, well, we can fight it all we like but, in the end, we're all hairy monkeys. Resistance is futile.

away from my front door. He has, apparently, great plans for locally sourced menus and the nurturing of an intimate ambience. I can reveal, nonetheless, from personal experience, that there are only three types of pubs in the Cotswolds.

There's the dilapidated, vaguely traditional establishment, frequented by one old guy, several dogs, and a permanently depressed couple. There's the discount bar chain, run from afar by corporate diktat and home to the dispossessed, the

I don't get the racket over padel

Speaking of arbitrary cultural lies. Can everyone please stop trying to make padel happen? Stop trying to promote it as the new funky, flirty, chatty alternative to tennis. Yes, apparently, there's been an explosion in padel court building around the UK (current tally: 502), which suggests that the game's more relaxed and sociable qualities are giving it the edge on tennis.

But I've played padel a handful of times and I simply don't get it — not the rules, but the vibe. The court is tiny, you barely break a sweat, and you can get through an entire match, in between chatting and number swapping, with a couple of arm swipes and a half knee-bend. I speak as someone who ruptured a disc, two years ago, playing wildly competitive tennis with his 20-year-old son. When I play racket sports I don't want to make friends and swap numbers. I am, to quote Roy Keane, "going to war". And it's why, ultimately, I suspect that tennis is safe from padel for now. It's just too, well, dangerous.

disgruntled and the drug dealers (in the loo, every time). And finally, there's the extortionists — the overpriced "destination" pubs, where it's £7 for a Guinness and £80 (yes!) for a T-bone steak. Hmm, I wonder where he'll fit in?

Will Zara Tindall join the King's inner circle?

She's no-nonsense and fun. She won't want the flummery of being a princess, says Hilary Rose

The King has always been full of bright ideas, from the fate of the Patagonian toothfish to the design of the National Gallery. His latest idea, however, is particularly bright. According to the Mail on Sunday, he wants to make Zara Tindall a princess and send her out to work on the royal frontline. The logic is impeccable. She stole the show when she helped Prince William to host a garden party at Buckingham Palace earlier this summer, by brushing up well and looking delighted to be there. Royal ranks are currently not so much depleted as exhausted. Even Zara's indefatigable mother, the Princess Royal, is temporarily hors de combat. But I've met Zara and her husband, Mike. I hate to rain on the King's parade, but I suspect that his chances of getting her to spend her days opening scout huts and cutting ribbons are something close to zero. First of all, she doesn't want a title. Second of all, she has a job. Third, she's built a perfectly normal life for herself and her family. Royalty? What's in it for her? A place on the balcony for the flypast? Unlike some, I doubt she could care less. When I met her in 2011, two days after she got married, she was struggling to get her head round the title "Mrs" never mind Princess Zara. "It's quite weird being called Mrs Tindall and having to wear a ring," she said. If an engagement ring is problematic, I can't help thinking the king has got his work cut out getting her in a tiara at a state banquet.

But his instincts are surely right: the public warm to Zara in a way that they don't warm to, say, the York sisters, who are allegedly keen to undertake more royal duties. The trouble is, the public has little appetite for it. The constant briefings that Beatrice and Eugenie are "ordinary working mums" fall a little flat when they refer to themselves as princesses at every

opportunity and you see them, as I did, getting in to a chauffeur-driven Range Rover in Chelsea, protection officer holding the door open, after lunch in the middle of the week. Ordinary working mums are not wearing Chanel ballet flats to swan around Chelsea on a Tuesday. Like their parents, the York sisters come across as just a little bit too keen on the flummery, and the public sense it. Zara, on the other hand, is allergic to flummery and the public sense that, too.

"I'm lucky that I get to work outside and I love what I do," she told me, lounging on a sofa at a friends' house in Gloucestershire. She was wearing flip-flops and her toenails were painted electric blue — her "something blue" for the wedding. That in itself tells you the line she walks, between royal and not-royal: her "something borrowed" was her mother's priceless diamond tiara and her wedding reception was held in a palace.

"You know obviously, I was very lucky that my grandmother let us have it there," she said referring to Queen Elizabeth and the palace of Holyroodhouse.

She was, perhaps understandably, guarded and spiky. Early attempts to thaw her out fell flat. Why aren't you on honeymoon? I asked with a smile as we were introduced. She didn't smile back. "Because I'm here," she replied. Righto, moving on.

“She has an Olympic medal and an HGV licence

Talking about the royal hoopla that surrounded her wedding, and the need to switch from one life to the other, she said, "Most of the time, I just get on and do what I do."

Which is to ride horses professionally. She has an Olympic medal and an HGV licence, which she uses to transport her horses around the country to the events which pay the bills, thanks to the sponsorship she attracts. She is estimated to earn well



JAMES VEYSEY/SHUTTERSTOCK; CHRIS JACKSON/GETTY IMAGES



Zara Tindall at Ascot this year, above, and, left, with King Charles

home in Gloucestershire. And the Tindall marriage seems genuinely happy. They were introduced by Prince Harry and, when I interviewed Mike over Zoom during lockdown, he described her as his best friend. Asked for his secret to a happy marriage, he grinned broadly and said, “She’s always right.” He has his own lucrative career and sponsorships, along with after-dinner speeches and hosting a podcast. But, he told me, “you always worry about money. Sponsorships won’t last forever.”

At the moment, the Tindalls get all the fun bits of having royal relatives — the royal box at Ascot, Christmas at Sandringham, front row seats wherever they want — and none of the boring bits. Zara can clock in and out as she wishes, go to see Taylor Swift at Wembley without anybody noticing, and spend her days mucking out horses. Talking about being part of the royal family but needing to work, Mike said: “It’s something you just get used to. It has its benefits and it has its negatives. You think about what you do and you have to be aware of it but it doesn’t necessarily dictate. Zara and I,” he added, perhaps ominously for the King, “have always been good at getting on with what’s right for us.”

over £1 million a year from sponsorships with everyone from Land Rover to Rolex but she was clear about that too. When she started out, her parents told her she was not allowed to accept or solicit sponsorship until she’d proved herself. They didn’t want even a hint of accusations that she was cashing in on her royal relatives, something her brother might usefully have borne in mind when he appeared billed as a member of the British royal family in a Chinese advert for milk. “I could have gone out and said to sponsors, ‘Can you help me?’” she told me, “but my parents said you have to work for this.” So on the one hand, she’s the Princess Royal’s daughter, but on the other, she gave birth to her third child on the bathroom floor at

Vote with your feet! Election merch is in overdrive

Why wear your politics on your sleeve when you can state it on flip-flops, asks Jane Mulkerrens

Time was when a demure badge — or, for the flamboyant, a satin rosette — was enough to advertise your allegiance. Blame social media, blame Trump and his Maga caps, but in an era of tribalism, TikTok and ubiquitous tote bags, those subtly signalling days are long gone. Now, if you want to wear your politics on your sleeve — or your midriff, or your head — you need a Lib Dem bum bag or a Reform UK hard hat.

Labour’s “Never Kissed a Tory” T-shirt kicked off the modern merch wars more than a decade ago, although Keir Starmer does not approve of them or own one; the chief centrist dad has confessed to kissing a Tory or two in his time. This election, you can cart your progressive politics around in a £14.99 “Totes Not Tories” or “Totes Labour” bag — made of mostly recycled material, which I’m far too mature to make a cheap gag about.

Attack accessorising went up a gear last autumn when the Tories launched their £16.99 Keir Starmer flip-flops at Conservative Party conference. They sold out almost immediately, unlike, inexplicably, the previous year’s “In Liz We Truss” line of mugs and T-shirts — surely now a collector’s item, destined to be scrutinised on Sunday nights by Fiona Bruce.

And, much like tax claims and leaders’ promises, this election the merch doesn’t even need to be real. The Tories’ collection of dolls — Eco Keir, Corbyn and Remain Keir, all priced at £38.5 billion, lolz (did nobody think of selling a *Star Wars*-style “spending black hole?”) — might not *actually* be for sale, but are going gangbusters on TikTok, as is the big red piggy bank (£2,094.00 — see what they did there?), which is almost as good as winning actual votes, right?

For more practical politicians, there are Lib Dem bum bags (£750), and Reform UK hard hats (£16), perfect for when Nigel Farage’s claims to be the next leader of the opposition come crashing down. The Women’s Equality Party, meanwhile, has a simple, smart slogan cap, suitable for all family lunches: “Vote Labia” (£16.49).

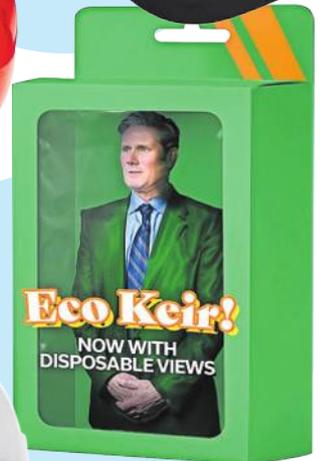
And for anyone hedging their bets (as opposed to placing them) on Thursday night, Sky News has produced a special edition pair of election trainers — left foot red, right foot blue, obv.



The Conservatives’ Keir Starmer flip-flops and the Women’s Equality Party’s cap



The Tories’ big red piggy bank and Starmer doll



Reform’s hard hat and Labour’s T-shirt and tote bag



Sky News’ election-themed Adidas Sambas

times2

'I've had my eyeball extracted. It's the start of a new me'

After a slight issue with her vision while jogging turned out to be eye cancer, **Tessa Parry-Wingfield** found herself on a journey that was by turns terrifying and darkly humorous

I am out jogging when I notice my vision is slightly dodgy. I hastily book an optician appointment. Nothing unusual there, apparently, with my myopic -8 prescription. Oh, hang on. "It appears your astigmatism has dramatically worsened."

Unusual, apparently. There are eerie lights, a prism lens, a second opinion is called for — then bam.

"There's something there. You have a choroidal freckle, or possibly an ocular melanoma within your eye. We are sorry; this is not the news you wanted to hear."

I still have my coat on. I am alone. My smart watch tells me I'm experiencing high levels of stress. I feel jaw-clenching fear despite not grasping what anything means. In the rush hour of life, everything grinds to a halt.

Two days later I'm at a suburban eye unit having scans. It's clear that a dark, sinister shadow has cast its spell across half of my left eye. That image will never leave me. Where has it come from? No doubt the brain, according to a consultant. From eye melanoma to brain tumour in one throwaway sentence. Just a flippant message delivered in the same humdrum way you'd tell someone the milk's run out.

I have never felt true terror before, I realise, as my body shakes uncontrollably in bed that night — and most nights since my life's axis was jolted in such an acute, abrupt manner.

A week later, it's the top dog's turn. An ocular oncologist. It's a relief to be in the professor's safe hands. Cool, calm, corporate and kind; his presence exudes intelligence and excellence. No brain tumour. But, he says, "you have ocular melanoma. Surgery is the only option. We will have to remove your left eye, and very soon."

As I stare into my uncertain future, self-pity creeps in. This wasn't how my life was panning out. I run a communications consultancy, and juggle that with being chief executive officer of our home office. I'm a 45-year-old business owner and married mum of two girls aged 13 and 11, so until now, my everyday worries consisted of piles of laundry, finding time to go to the gym and keeping my clients and family happy. I am fit and healthy. I work out five times a week. But now that the spectre of cancer has been raised, there's no going back to that blissful ignorance.

Cancer is everywhere, and it feels indiscriminate.

Friends, family, our King, the future queen. And now me. According to Cancer Research UK's recent data, cases in people aged 35 to 69 have risen by 57 per cent in men and 48 per cent in women in the past 25 years.

Why are more middle-aged people getting it (as if cancer is a homogeneous thing)? With scrutiny can come shame; it certainly has for me. What's caused this? Too much stress? Too much sugar? Too many toxins? Covid? The vaccine? I

frantically ask my specialist if I've drunk too much coffee. Too much red wine, perhaps. The why lingers, despite being told it's more to do with my Irish heritage, fair skin and blue eyes — with a hideous dollop of biological bad luck.

I'm thankful that swift steps can be taken and the cancer has not spread. But I still have to get through the eye enucleation — removal of the eye that leaves the muscles and remaining orbital contents intact — just two weeks after my first oncology appointment. And the tears of our daughters, who fear Mummy will look different; be different. On sharing the news with them, we decide to be frank and not shy away from the c-word. We all cry. We are all scared. And I wouldn't wish that conversation on my worst enemy. But their unexpected, extraordinary resilience, coupled with humour and hugs, have been a life raft for me during my darkest hours.

A few scans help to pass time before surgery, but they do nothing to abate my anxiety. The first is a PET/CT, a type of nuclear medicine imaging, using small amounts of radioactive material to diagnose, evaluate and treat diseases. Abdul, a kindly, bearded man, delivers the potent liquid after it is wheeled in on a trolley in a Cold War-style box. His deft canular skills make light work of my veins. "Don't go too close to your husband right now," he warns as the cool fluid seeps in. "You are radioactive."

His voice full of concern, he asks about when I'm going to receive treatment for my tumour. "They're taking my left eye out in ten days," I tell him, bluntly. It's probably only the fourth time I've said these words out loud. That grim job has fallen to my



husband, Mark. "Oh," he says, stunned to silence. Even medical professionals aren't used to this rare turn of events. Still, despite warnings of claustrophobia in the scanner, I drift off after ten days of insomnia.

For now, we wait. Am I pulling my hair out? I think I might be. An eye for an eye. I contemplate what metaphorical eye-taking crime I might have committed that means I'm to be robbed of my left eyeball and vision.

I don't get a wink of sleep the night before surgery. Could I barter another part of my body, perhaps? There's something so medieval about gouging out someone's eye. Barbaric and brutal. Although, of course, the prof's job is to save lives, not maim indiscriminately. And he's saving mine. But I confess, I do feel grief for my vision, my looks, and the sweet calm of normality.

Please get the right eye. The left one, that is ... The stage is set for this macabre scene. And the soliloquy is all mine as I sit in my gown, trembling, about to head to the theatre, my feelings mildly offset by a much-needed dose of temazepam.

What if they take my good eye accidentally? A pen-drawn arrow pointing to the bad one helps to allay that worry. I beckon the general anaesthetic. I want my world to go black. Just for a bit. "Possible need for future cosmetic operations, metastasis, spread to the eye socket tissue — these are some of the risks of your melanoma and imminent surgery. Please sign here."

Next, an emotional, bleary goodbye to my husband, who has gone through every grain of emotion with me. My rock, who promises to love and fancy



me when I emerge with my new *Pirates of the Caribbean* look. I am wheeled down a gratingly bright corridor — a scenario I've been playing out in my mind endlessly. I hop onto the trolley in the anaesthetic room. Oxygen mask, heart monitor pads, and the prof, donned in scrubs with a large lens looking deep into my left eye, one last time. Sleep comes not a moment too soon.

When the bandage is removed the next day, I strangely expect light to flood back in, but of course, it doesn't. A foreboding darkness takes its place; the lack of peripheral vision to the left will take some getting used to. It's certainly discombobulating. I stagger into my home, donning very dark glasses and a baseball cap. The pain in my eye socket stops me from freely turning my head. Mummy is home. And she is different.

What do you say to someone who has had their eye removed? What should you say to someone who has a cancer diagnosis? Amid the turmoil of just three weeks, one thing has remained constant. Clichés fill most conversations. Nothing but health matters. One step at a time. You're so brave. Time heals. There are no words. No one can win in this situation. But there are certainly plenty of words I can think of. Perhaps because I work

Tessa Parry-Wingfield. Left: running the Royal Parks Half Marathon six months after her surgery

“The empty socket is like the void I've felt inside since my eye was removed

Tessa Parry-Wingfield is the chief executive officer of the Power of Words and is writing a book about her experience



in the field of communications, I “crisis-commmed” the hell out of my own predicament. Close friends had rigid guidance. They were told (via my husband) the key messages: this is trauma, not a tragedy. Just gotta get through this. Time for big girl pants. Onwards. They were not to stray from this or entertain hyperbole or hysteria for one second. And certainly no pity.

These friends may not have known what to say, but they certainly knew what to do. A few days before my surgery, they whisked me off to buy the darkest, most glamorous sunglasses with thick arms. A gesture that implores me to still be me and urges me not to hide away post-surgery; come on, let’s not forgo our spring rosé catch-ups.

My husband and I feel the love catching us, slowing down the freefall we’re in, not allowing us to crash completely. Close family know when the time is right for a bit of black humour. “You’ll save 50 per cent on contact lenses.” And: “Why not ask people to guess how many eyes you’ve got as an ice-breaker?” I tried out the latter. Not the best tactic in hindsight.

These sophisticated shades mask what I’ve been putting off for 24 hours: the unveiling of what lies beneath. It’s not that I don’t know it will look horrific. I’ve had my entire eyeball

extracted; it’s going to be upsetting and confronting. It’s also the start of a new me, when I quite liked the old me. It looks like I’ve been in the ring with Tyson Fury. Swollen and closed for now, the eerie transparent conformer shield that’s been inserted in lieu of my eyeball to keep the shape is not yet visible.

I google my senior ocularist, who specialises in the making and fitting of prosthetics for people who have lost an eye. Four weeks after surgery, I am about to enter an entirely alien world. He scours his drawer of blue eyes — another surreal moment — and I look at my empty eye socket for the first time, devoid of the conformer lens that had held its shape since surgery. Its pink emptiness is pretty ghastly, if I’m honest, like the void I’ve felt inside since my eye was removed.

I’m then presented with six acrylic eyes, all staring up at me, complete with pinkish red veins to match my other eyeball. “I’m sorry, but I don’t have your exact blue,” he tells me, in an empathetic tone. As I look into the mirror, a large icy iris stares back at me in stark juxtaposition to the puddle grey blue of my right eye.

Sunglasses back on. Finally, my bespoke eye is ready, after three months of healing. It’s a perfect match colour-wise, having been hand-painted. But instead of a sense of liberation, I feel sad. This is it now. Its stunted movement feels glaringly obvious to me, as does the hollow, rounder eye socket. The big reveal is harrowing. Too much honesty stings. While “it’s amazing” doesn’t quite hit the right notes, no comment makes negative thoughts run wild.

My acceptance and confidence do grow over the months, and I quickly learn that how I carry myself will exude a “nothing to see here” vibe. A façade of confidence hiding the fragility behind.

One day, I am wiping away my make-up with a bit too much oomph and the dislodged prosthetic goes flying across the floor. I find it hiding behind the bath. In these moments hilarity is tempered with emotional upset. And panic that this might happen in a meeting or at one of my daughter’s netball matches.

The lingering question “How did you get it?” — as if cancer is something you catch — has cut deep. Someone tells me not to be too stressed because that’s a cause. I’ve just had my eye whipped out — how can I not feel unduly tense? Is society making me feel shame since the rise in middle-aged cancer is now a ubiquitous topic? Or do I just feel ashamed? The lines are blurred, and I don’t know the answers yet.

What I do know is that cancer comes in many shapes and sizes, as does how we deal with it. I also know that humour has carried me through my darkest hours. “Stop moaning already, you’ve got another eye.” And “Of course you’ve got the posh rare cancer” had me crying with laughter. And I can cry with no eye. Who knew?

I don’t pretend to have Herculean positivity and bravery. I feel fear and loss. I’m not sure I’ll ever not touch my fake eye on waking in the hope it might be real. But I’ve discovered on this unwanted adventure that we are more resilient than we know. If we’re forced to call on our inner reserves, we can get through adversity with (one-eyed) panache.

The rise of the dynasty hook-up

By Rebecca Cope

Phoebe Gates and Arthur Donald’s “Instagram official” status might come as a red flag to 25-year-old Donald’s mother, the photographer Mary McCartney, who previously said she advised her children not to be on social media. But Gates, whose father is the Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates, has confirmed their relationship with a photograph of her “boyfriend” giving her a piggyback after her Stanford graduation ceremony. Donald, meanwhile, is no stranger to a high-profile match: he’s been connected to Ava Phillippe, daughter of Hollywood stars Reese Witherspoon and Ryan Phillippe, with the couple pictured on a date in London in 2018. Aw!

Clearly, they are far from the first nepo babies to find love. Natasha Connery (Sean Connery’s granddaughter) and Harper Peck (Gregory Peck’s grandson) had a brief romance in 2022, after hooking up at the Halloween party of a mutual friend. “We clicked straight away,” Peck said. Alas, much like his grandad’s audition for *Indiana Jones* (for Sean Connery’s role, no less), it didn’t work out.

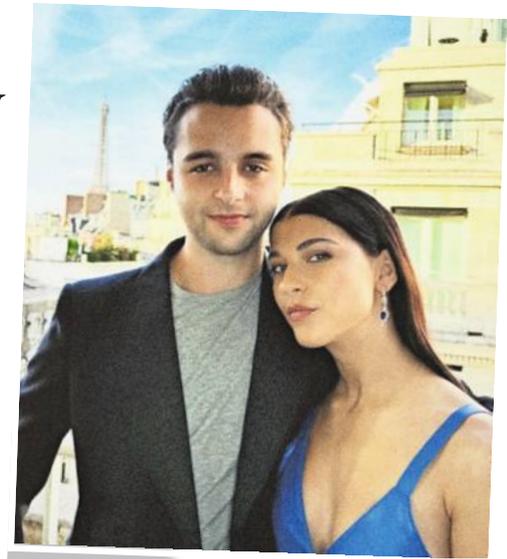
Celebrity offspring can’t help but be drawn to one other. “It’s about trust,” says Mark Borkowski, the celebrity publicist and author. “The difficulty when you are known to be related to somebody famous or wealthy is: how do you build a relationship? How do you run into somebody that you trust? It’s the most difficult thing about existing in the celebrity world. Who do you let into your life? It’s hard to meet people as it is.”

Sasha Spielberg and Harry McNally

Parents can be a liability when it comes to social media. That’s certainly the case for Harry McNally, whose restaurateur father, Keith, is known for his takedowns on Instagram. His most famous target? James Corden, the neighbour of his son’s father-in-law, Steven Spielberg. Luckily, when it came to announcing Harry’s engagement to the director’s daughter Sasha, he only had nice things to say — even if he did reference another director’s classic, *When Harry Met Sally*: “When Harry [McNally] Proposed to Sasha [Spielberg] on New Year’s Eve she said ... Yes.” Fun fact: Sasha previously dated Max Winkler, the son of Henry, aka the Fonz.

Frances Bean Cobain and Riley Hawk

The daughter of Nirvana’s Kurt Cobain and the son of the Nineties skateboarding pro Tony Hawk tied the knot in October 2023, with Michael Stipe from REM officiating. Let’s hope for Hawk’s sake this match doesn’t end in divorce — when Cobain and her first husband, Isaiah Silva, split, it led



Arthur Donald and Phoebe Gates

“It’s all about trust for celebrity offspring

to an explosive lawsuit as he accused his former mother-in-law, Courtney Love, of trying to kill him. His crime? Keeping a guitar that had belonged to the Nirvana musician, which he claims Cobain had once given him.

Hum Fleming and Zac Goldsmith

Their relationship is the talk of Chelsea: Hum Fleming, the 34-year-old great-niece of the James Bond creator Ian Fleming, is dating the 49-year-old banking scion (and Tory peer) Zac Goldsmith, who’d moved on from his friendship with Ellie Goulding. The couple made their relationship official this month, after the model and PR girl posted a snap of the two of them on her Instagram stories, while reports suggest she has already met two of his three children. Fleming will find common ground with Goldsmith’s mum, Annabel, who back in the day used to party with Ian at the members’ club named after her.

Bee Shaffer and Francesco Carrozzini

Few couples can have such a unique shared heritage as Bee Shaffer and Francesco Carrozzini, both being the children of Vogue editors. Bee’s mother, Anna Wintour, and Francesco’s, Franca Sozzani, arrived at Condé Nast in 1988, helming US and Italian Vogue respectively. The two editors enjoyed a 30-year friendship until Sozzani’s death in 2016, two years before her son tied the knot. The couple honoured her by having their second wedding in Portofino, visiting her grave after the ceremony.

Brooklyn Peltz Beckham and Nicola Peltz Beckham

It’s a tale as old as time. He is the son of a footballer and a Spice Girl; she is the daughter of one of America’s wealthiest businessmen. They profess their love for each other on Instagram and have matching tattoos. It’s been a starry path to true love: Brooklyn is something of a serial dater of fellow nepo babies, having previously been linked to Sofia Richie (daughter of Lionel), Holly Ramsay (Gordon Ramsay) and Afton McKeith — er, yes, that’s the Scottish television presenter Gillian McKeith’s daughter.



Francesco Carrozzini and Bee Shaffer

life

Ask Professor Tanya Byron

Our daughter is dropping out of university. What can we do?

Q My daughter is ending her first year of her university course and has announced to us that she is dropping out. We had no idea and are in a state of shock. We probably reacted badly — getting upset (me) and angry (my husband), leading to a couple of huge rows. Now my husband and I are rowing since he is palpably furious and the atmosphere at home is hideous. My husband's view is that we both worked incredibly hard to put our kids through private school and university. They have had every advantage in life and he thinks that our daughter is ungratefully throwing it all away.

After a huge row a few days ago I found my daughter sobbing in her room and we had the most honest conversation we've had. She told me she's made the wrong choice, isn't sure whether she wants a degree anyway, and has felt depressed and overwhelmed by everything. She has told me she has suffered from panic attacks, thinks about harming herself and sometimes sits in her room crying. I think we need to support her mental health; my husband believes that is indulging her, that this younger generation reach for a "mental health" label as a way of avoiding responsibilities and she just needs to "get on with it". What should be done?

Bethany

A Having hopes and dreams for our children is part and parcel of being a parent. You and your husband have worked hard to provide your children with the educational opportunities you believe will enhance their life chances. There is a difference, however, between hopes and dreams and concrete, non-negotiable expectations. The reaction

to your daughter wanting to leave university is counterproductive. Your husband's reaction in particular seems to indicate that what you and he have chosen to provide for your children is conditional, meaning that your dreams for your children are, in reality, clear and concrete expectations and that they should be grateful.

Before we get into the issue of who determines our children's destiny — them or us — your daughter's mental health issues need to be addressed. Mental health and wellbeing underpin our successful engagement with life, and I would suggest that what your daughter is struggling with needs to be treated as a priority.

While it's harsh, I don't entirely disagree with your husband's belief that mental health diagnoses are too quickly reached for. Increased awareness and open dialogue is a very good thing, because mental health must have parity with physical health in terms of understanding and support. However, the ubiquity of the mental health conversation, especially across digital platforms where there are no checks and balances against those informing and advising, means that understanding has become confused, and boundaries between a mental health experience (I'm feeling low, I'm overwhelmed) versus a mental health condition (I'm depressed, I'm having panic attacks) are blurred. It is understandable that the overwhelming nature of life for younger people living in a time of economic crisis, climate issues, political instability, war and, until recently, a pandemic, may be described as a mental health condition even if it's not. The problem is, however, that self-diagnosis can engender a greater sense of helplessness and risks becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy.

The language of mental health — eg trauma, depression

If you would like Professor Tanya Byron's help, email proftanyabyron@thetimes.co.uk



— is often misused, diminishing its meaning. We can no more be "a bit" OCD or ADHD than we can have "a bit" of diabetes or epilepsy. Statistics do show, however, that between the 2016-17 and 2022-23 academic years the percentage of undergraduate students at UK universities who reported mental health difficulties rose from 6 per cent to 16 per cent. Students are 25 percentage points more likely to give mental health as the primary reason for wanting to drop out than any other.

Whether your daughter does or doesn't have a diagnosable mental health condition, she is clearly distressed and overwhelmed. How and why need to be understood, and a "pull your socks up and get on with it" approach is unlikely to be helpful. Your daughter might have found the life transition from home to university difficult, and it has got to a point where she cannot cope. Perhaps she has never felt confident to integrate and make a life at university, so is struggling to develop into a self-sufficient and confident young adult.

Could it be that now that she is living more independently she is trying to work out her wants and needs after a childhood and adolescence defined by parental oversight and expectations? When these anxieties are so overwhelming, they can lead to self-isolation, which intensifies feelings of despair. All this needs to be openly discussed, and she must be listened to compassionately and without judgment.

It seems clear that your daughter would benefit from space and time with a mental health professional to address her mood issues.

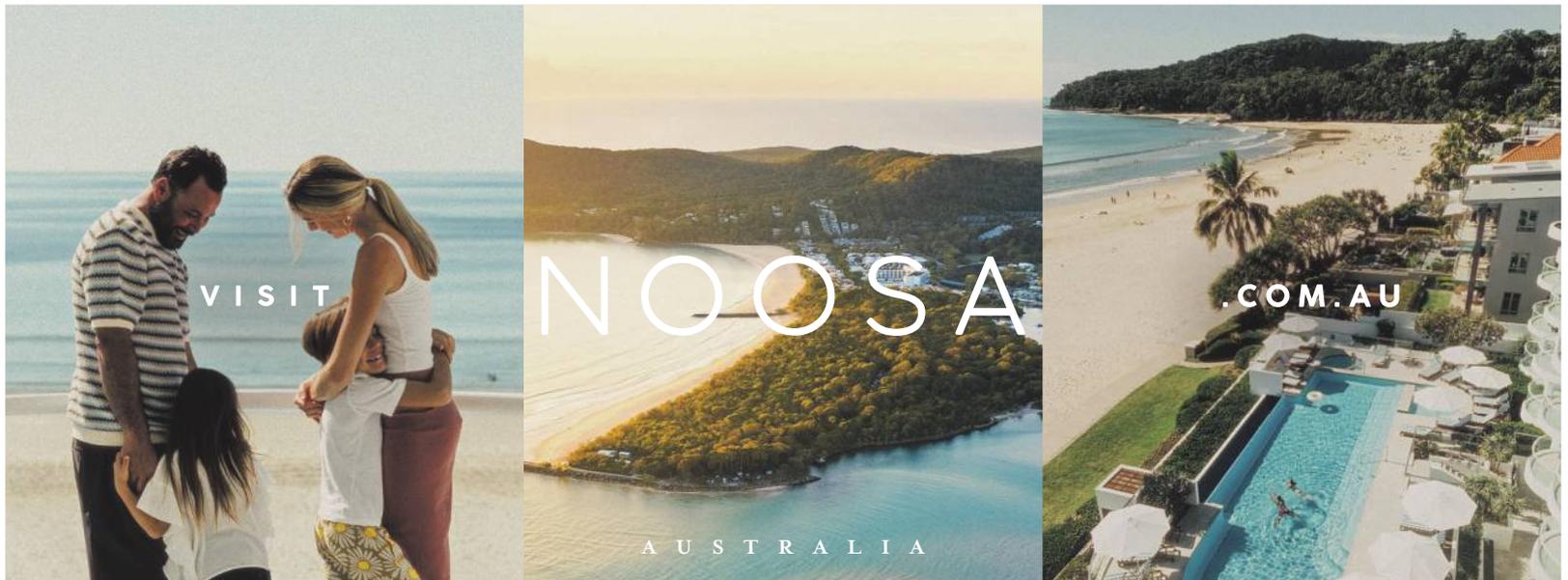
I suggest a GP appointment for assessment and advice regarding treatment options, including referrals as necessary, for example to local talking therapies services — search at nhs.uk, and for a local private

practitioner see bps.org.uk. The evidence-based treatment would be cognitive behavioural therapy. By building a relationship with a mental health practitioner, your daughter can start to untangle the issues that overwhelm her and develop coping skills. I also recommend the self-help guides at NHS Inform: nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/mental-health. See also mind.org.uk and youngminds.org.uk.

It might be that once she has addressed her distress and learnt how to manage feelings of low mood and anxiety, your daughter may reassess her decision to drop out of university. Indeed, it may be prudent for her to defer her course for a year to give herself time to have some treatment and support, perhaps work and just have space to mature, build her resilience and think about her future. There should be no shame in this, in the same way that there wouldn't be if she had a life-limiting physical health problem. To try to keep up with her studies while feeling so overwhelmed will just add to her burden of stress and sense of inadequacy.

All this may result in her deciding not to pursue a degree for now, or ever, but isn't that her right? Do our children owe us a debt of gratitude that extends to them being who we have decided we want them to be? Surely it's better for them to develop into self-aware and resilient adults who are motivated by their own goals. If your daughter comes out of this feeling that she has failed her parents and is a disappointment, how is that going to enhance her life chances?

Believing in our children is more important than having expectations for them. Enabling your daughter to become her own person and owning her life choices starts with listening to what she is feeling and supporting her to work out her next steps — intrinsic motivation is much more powerful and fulfilling. I wish her well.



'I never say my diet cured me, but now I have a pain-free life'

The Great British Menu champion Kirk Haworth tells Tony Turnbull how he overcame Lyme disease

I was going to start this piece by saying that if you wanted to try the dish that Tom Kerridge described as the best pudding he'd tasted, the one that won Kirk Haworth the accolade of champion of champions on this year's *Great British Menu*, there were two ways to go about it. You could make it yourself or visit Plates, the restaurant that the chef is opening in London this week. But it turns out there are a couple of snags.

First, there's finding a table. Haworth is in the happy position of already being fully booked until the middle of February, although there's the promise of extra covers on an outdoor terrace as and when the weather allows.

The DIY route then. You'll find a recipe very similar to his winning creation of cacao gâteau with sour cherries and raw caramel on the website of the Mymuybueno online cookery school. Even if I could gather the 30 ingredients, the list of utensils has me defeated, including, as it does, a maryse (no, me neither), a Silpat mat and espuma gun.

"Yes, it is very technical," Haworth, 36, agrees, when we meet at his sister Keeley's house in east London, which doubles as the informal HQ and test kitchen for the Plates food brand and consultancy they run. He then demonstrates a simplified version of the dessert. It's an extraordinarily complex pudding of contrasting textures and flavours united by a deliciously clean creaminess. He reckons he will be making more than 10,000 of them in the next six months, or 400 a week. "I've had people email to say they'll scream if that dish isn't on the menu," he says.

Also on the £75 seven-course set menu will be a couple of other *GBM* successes, the Feast of Farah, a mung and urad bean lasagne, the herb ice cream with fermented aloe vera pre-dessert and, for a £15 supplement, the barbecued mushroom starter that nearly won him the starter course.

Although the menu (and wine list) will be entirely vegan, he's determined that Plates will be a destination for all-comers. At previous pop-ups and residencies 80 per cent of his guests have been meat-eaters, he estimates. "I don't like the 'vegan' word really. Everyone's different and we all need to find our thing by eating consciously."

Certainly he is not trying to preach or convert anyone to a plant-based diet, not least because his conversion



to veganism came as a result of something he wouldn't wish on anyone. About ten years ago, he fell ill with Lyme disease, the bacterial infection transmitted by ticks that if left untreated can lead to long-term complications such as extreme tiredness and loss of energy, not dissimilar to chronic fatigue syndrome. Conquering the disease has been a constant battle.

"It's hard to explain how debilitating it was," Haworth says. "I was riddled with chronic pain, like having the worst hangover you've ever had multiplied by ten, and it never goes away. It's not like just feeling tired, it's like feeling you've never slept. You can never re-energise and are just constantly knackered." He spent all his savings, the best part of £30,000, trying first to get the diagnosis, then find how best to manage it.

The son of the chef Nigel Haworth, himself a past winner of *Great British Menu*, Kirk was brought up near Blackburn in Lancashire. He didn't think he was destined to be a chef. "My mother told me not to. She said, 'You'll never have a girlfriend, you'll never see your mates, just look at your

dad.'" But he started earning pocket money in the kitchens of Northcote Manor, where his father was head chef, and ended up doing a five-year apprenticeship.

From there he moved on to the Square, under Phil Howard, then spent two years with Shane Osborn at Pied à Terre. "London kitchens were really tough with long days and no time to eat properly, but I absolutely loved it," he says.

Nevertheless, at 23 he went to work in Australia and it was while he was out there that he became ill. He doesn't remember a tick bite, but was bitten by a spider, which made his hand swell up. "I'm pretty sure that was what triggered it because that's when things started to go weird." First came the fatigue, then forgetfulness. "My memory was so bad I'd spend the evenings googling Alzheimer's and going to A&E, spending thousands on tests and scans, but no one could say what was wrong."

All this time he kept clocking in at work. "I was so obsessed with cooking, and I was in that world where you're soft if you quit. So I was trooping on and trying to pretend I was fine."

Kirk Haworth and his dishes of tomato brined in Himalayan salt and coconut sugar, top, and cacao gâteau

“My chronic pain was like having the worst hangover ever — multiplied by ten

Eventually it became too much and he came back to England. He was on opioids for the pain by now, and rather than sit in his room feeling sorry for himself, he went to work at Sat Bains's two-Michelin-star restaurant in Nottingham. "I thought I could handle a four-day week, but it got to the stage where I couldn't even walk straight, I'd bang into doorways, and keep forgetting what I was doing. It was just embarrassing."

So he retreated to his father's house and tried to research what might be wrong with him. Then one day a friend of his stepmother rang to tell him to turn on the TV, and there was John Caudwell, the Phones 4u tycoon, talking about Lyme disease. (Caudwell has set up a charity to fund research into the disease after various members of his family showed symptoms).

For Haworth, it was like listening to his own story being related back to him and he chased for a diagnosis. NHS tests for the *Borrelia* bacteria that cause Lyme disease kept coming back negative, but samples he had sent to the US and Germany came back "sky high".

Doctors suggested an intensive course of antibiotics, but Haworth read that this would destroy his gut — "and besides, it would cost about five grand a week and there's no way we had that sort of money" — so he sought alternative therapies, working with naturopaths, following herbal protocols and monitoring his diet. "I'd never looked after myself, never had three meals a day in my entire adult life, so I thought I'd reverse the energy I put into cooking for others and put that energy into myself."

He kept a journal of what he ate and slowly discovered that cutting out refined sugar, dairy and meat made him feel better. "I tried to look at it as an exciting, positive thing, so rather than missing steak and peppercorn sauce, which I absolutely love, I decided to make the things I could eat as delicious as possible."

Now, seven years later, he is off all medication. "I never say that food cured me. I did so many things — meditation, naturopathic protocols, supplements, lymphatic drainage massages — but with this diet, I've got to a pain-free life."

Is he nervous about a full-time return to the kitchen? "I'm excited. The industry gets a bad rap, but there is so much positivity within hospitality. I feel so free and happy in a kitchen and I want to create an environment where everyone feels the same."

"Plates will be a celebration of plants, but also fun and exciting. It's going to be a lighthouse of happiness and creativity. I don't want to preach health to anyone, I just want people to enjoy it. It's been a long journey to get here, so we believe we've earned it." **Plates, 320 Old Street, London EC1 (plates-london.com)**

artsfirstnight

classical

Héloïse Werner

Purcell Room, Southbank Centre
★★★★★

Héloïse Werner — soprano-composer-cellist-arranger — has risen from contemporary classical's golden child to being crowned, in these pages, "classical's new queen of weird".

It's a magnetic moniker and I'm sure many (myself included) came to this launch of her sophomore album, *close-ups*, wondering how and when she was going to live up to it. I was glad she and the six versatile string players she recorded with made us wait a bit. The first half of the programme, following the track list, skewed less weird than world-weary — a quality to which Werner's unstudied sound and manner are well suited.

Werner brought why-me woe to the baroque Barbara Strozzi's ground bass lament and to the 18th-century Julie Pintel's *Sombres lieux*, rearranged with some effective harmonic and sonic quicksand by bassist Marianne Schofield. And there was why-us reverence to a Hildegard of Bingen chant, co-arranged by cellist Colin Alexander who accompanied with harmonics both raw and ethereal.

One exception to the first half's old-world rule was Werner and her sister Emma's brilliantly conceived *Les Leçons du mardi* which sees a string quartet deliver quotes on female "hysteria" over spiky musical material. String players Max Baillie, Julian Azkoul, Ruth Gibson and Alexander seemed to be enjoying flipping the script, and simply having one.

They only really let loose, though, once Baillie whipped out his (very pretty) hardanger fiddle in the second of three improvisations intended to "echo" and bind together the pieces. Joined by another cellist, Kit Downes, this avant-garde gigue was the gateway to the title piece which, like Werner, defies categorisation. A soprano-violin two-hander, *close-ups* is a sort of carousel of four moods or humours — pompous, disapproving, overexcited, dramatic — involving bells, chimes and book-slamming. It's very funny.

A couple of contemporary curiosities, by Errollyn Wallen and Werner herself, re-entered the first half's introspective sound world but the cat was out of the bag. More character acting in a third echo was followed by a game of catch-me-if-you-can between singer and strings. I desperately wanted to play.

Daniel Lewis

opera

Un giorno di regno

Garsington at Wormsley, Buckinghamshire (230min, including dinner interval)
★★★★★

Verdi's second opera, usually translated as "King for a Day", itself lasted only a day when first staged in 1840 at La Scala. This flop nearly persuaded the young composer to give up altogether. He didn't, but he also didn't attempt to write another comedy for 50 years. *Un giorno di regno* hasn't been revived much since.

But rarity value is not the only reason to see Christopher Alden's new staging. Alden throws pretty well everything at the task of keeping the audience laughing more or less continually throughout. So we get dancing secret-service agents and self-important TV news anchors, a dance routine based on

Polish football scarves and shirts (the king being impersonated in Polish), and a big confrontational duet turned into a spaghetti fight (Henry Waddington and Grant Doyle smearing plates of the stringy stuff over each other). There's also a terrific karaoke skit in which the screen whirls through the lyrics of a dozen cheesy pop songs while the singers deliver verses of an aria. And when the excellent chorus is solemnly exhorting us to trust our leaders'

judgment, Alden flashes a parade of familiar faces, from Thatcher to Trump to Putin, across the big screen.

It's a pretty relentless barrage of perkiness, and not all of it hits the mark. But enough of it does. And Alden is helped by having a cast that is as adept at knockabout comedy as at getting round the notes, of which there are many. Christine Rice is on great form vocally as the raddled, sozzled Marchesa; Madison Leonard seizes her

Joshua Hopkins as Il Cavaliere di Belfiore

classical

DSCH

Queen Elizabeth Hall
★★★★☆

It's not every day that an orchestra must perform for an hour and a half, faces obscured either by masks or burglar's war paint, dressed in what seemed to be items from the fire sale of a bankrupt Norwegian gents' outfitters, with a bit of tartan madness thrown in. Playing from memory, the superb Norwegian Chamber Orchestra also had to weave in and out of video projections and a variant of the illusion trick known as "Pepper's ghost", intermixed with floor-crouching, leaping about, looking like horror-film zombies, or anything else that the performance's very lively Danish director, Mikkel Harder Munck-Hansen, asked them to do.

And the music? Every note was by Shostakovich — the event indeed was called *DSCH*, after the musical cryptogram embedded in so many of his works. We heard excerpts from string quartets, concertos, a symphonic adagio, many of them ingeniously arranged by Oystein Sonstad for the orchestra's strings and the lethally subtle accordion of Bjarke Mogensen. Only one work was heard complete, the Chamber Symphony arranged by Rudolf Barshai from String Quartet No 8, given a passionate performance against video cloudscapes both murky and sulphurous.

In several ways this was a remarkable show. The obvious tactic for a multimedia Shostakovich experience would have been to trot out footage of Stalin, show trials, and Leningrad under siege. Nothing like that appeared: the QEHL stage throbbed instead with foreboding skies, pulsing abstract kaleidoscopes, and many curious grotesqueries.

The production, too, was technically seamless. So much could have gone wrong, but nothing did, while the interaction and finesse of the peripatetic musicians, only partly guided by Pekka Kuusisto's characterful violin, was phenomenal.

The very intensity of the experience, however, created its own drawback. Wasn't 90 minutes of this about a half-hour too much? True, the patchwork of Shostakovich extracts included two waltzes, two romances and one polka, but the black caustic edge was always there, with any glint of light relief swamped in the general nightmare. I left the building delighted with the evening's imagination and skill, but nonetheless relieved that it all was over.

Geoff Brown



Jade Marvin as Momma and the cast of *Starlight Express* in the new version of Andrew Lloyd Webber's hit

A fast train to good fun

Lloyd Webber's rollerskating musical is back and it's still a transporting show, writes Clive Davis

theatre

Starlight Express

Troubadour Wembley Park Theatre (140min)
★★★★★

Make sure to take your inner child with you. Viewed in a cold, rational light, Andrew Lloyd Webber's hugely popular Eighties musical about a pack of rollerskating actors pretending to be trains delivers an extended exercise in daffiness.

But as a way of introducing a young audience to musical theatre, the show has a lot going for it. The melodies are bright and breezy, and you can easily spend the entire evening admiring the ingenuity of Richard Stilgoe's lyrics; like Tim Minchin's much more recent score for the musical version of *Groundhog Day*, they the songs roam across just about every genre of pop. The Tammy Wynette parody on *UN.CO.U.P.L.E.D.*, ending with a fruity swear word, is deliciously droll. *Hydrogen* offers a clever nod at new technology.

In the German city of Bochum, there's a purpose-built theatre that has been hosting versions of this show for more than three decades, enough to earn it a place in the *Guinness World Records*. Lloyd Webber has long made a point of updating and amending revivals. This latest production, touchingly dedicated to his son, Nick, who died of cancer last year, includes new orchestrations by Matthew Brind, who counts Lady Gaga among his inspirations.

Some of the roles have been altered too. The swaggering villain, Greaseball, usually portrayed as an Elvis Presley lookalike, is now a female character, played by the flinty Al Knott. And as Control, the little boy who dreams up the races, Cristian Buttaci (who was playing the role at the preview I attended) is very much in the thick of things, shouting out instructions as he patrols the runway.

The director Luke Sheppard moves things along at a gallop. If the storyline isn't always easy to follow, Jeevan Braich, making his professional debut, brings lots of heart to Rusty, the gallant steam engine who takes on the bigger beasts. Braich possesses a stirring soul voice, too, as does Jade Marvin who, as Momma, leads the intoxicating gospel finale in *Light at the End of the Tunnel*.

Will this staging dazzle all those youngsters who have virtual reality headsets in their bedrooms? To be honest, I'd expected the track design to be a little more audacious. The actors do pass through the middle of the audience, but after the first couple of circuits it begins to look quite sedate. *Mad Max* this ain't. For all the flashing lights, the Troubadour itself, a fair trek from the centre of London, is also a baldly utilitarian venue. But my advice is to ignore the Ikea vibes, and let the songs transport you.

To February 16



lyrical moments as the sopranos Julietta; and Joshua Hopkins, Robert Murray and Oliver Sewell all have fun as assorted lovers and fake monarchs. You don't need to know the plot, just that the young lovers eventually outwit the old lecher.

And Verdi's music? At 26 he was still mimicking Donizetti and Rossini (and, bizarrely, using baroque-style recitative) but the piece is full of lively tunes and, just occasionally, a passage that signals a genius test-driving his own ideas. Played crisply by the Philharmonia under Chris Hopkins's direction, it zips along with irresistible verve.

Richard Morrison
To July 22, garsingtonopera.org

1 We waded through celebrities

Princess Beatrice, a regular Glasto-goer, was spotted at a motorway service station en route. She was in M&S, obviously. Paul Mescal was vibing out to Charli XCX, while Sienna Miller, Anya Taylor-Joy and Cara Delevingne could be heard hollering for LCD Soundsystem. Later, Billie Piper and Alexa Chung graced the Park stage bar. A baffled Dakota Johnson had a pre-festival pint in a local pub with her boyfriend Chris Martin. Elsewhere, we saw a tank-teed Andrew Scott, Benedict Cumberbatch and Bear Grylls. Oh, and among the Coldplay crowd were Gillian Anderson, Simon Pegg and some guy called Tom Cruise.

2 Here come the girls

Last year's headline glut of mature males — Guns N' Roses, Elton, Yusuf/Cat Stevens — arched a few eyebrows. Clearly, festival boss Emily Eavis took note because this year, the future felt female. There was a bona fide pop princess (Dua Lipa), a global R&B star (SZA), a clutch of ascendant stars from Little Simz to Olivia Dean and Noname, nostalgic noughties favourites such as Sugababes and old-school queens Cyndi Lauper and Shania Twain. In the dance tents, too, women ruled the decks: Charli XCX, Romy, Shygirl, Sofia Kourtesis ... ladies, would you let the poor men have a go?

3 Crowd control

Speaking of Sugababes, they proved so popular that security had to shut access to their stage, relegating furious fans to watch from the bins. Crowd size seems to have been a particular challenge on Worthy Farm this year. Obviously it always is — 200,000 people shacking up in a few fields — and total respect for the logistical feats required. But there were a few cases where it felt like an act had ended up on an entirely the wrong stage: latecomers to Jarvis Cocker at the Park faced a similar fate to the Sugababes fans, hundreds of Charli XCX fans were packed into the tiny Levels venue with no bars and no loos, and the late night dance kingdom Block9 is so oversubscribed that the access road is periodically shut from about 10.30 each night. Too many people, too much fun — maybe the Eavises could call in some fluid dynamics experts to sort things out next year?

4 And now, I'm delighted to be joined by ...

Who's the special guest, the secret set, the surprise? When it comes to minor shake-ups to the concrete-clad schedule, Glastonbury-goers love to conjure up mystery and rumour. Unfortunately, the reality doesn't always live up to the hype: Dua Lipa fans, dreaming of last year's headliner Elton John, with whom she shares a song, were a little deflated to be confronted instead with a scruffy T-shirted and spaced-out Kevin Parker of Aussie psychedelic band Tame Impala. And don't get us started on Charli XCX's boyfriend, George Daniel of the 1975, who pumped ten minutes of dirge into an otherwise perfect set. Luckily there were plenty of creative and exciting surprises: Robyn and Romy vibed out with Charli, Norman Cook (aka Fatboy Slim) joined his fellow former Housemartin Paul Heaton for a rendition of *Happy Hour* while Mel C and the Glastonbury



10 things we learnt at Glastonbury

Tom Cruise rubbed shoulders with Bear Grylls, Dua Lipa's duet left us underwhelmed — and Michael J Fox stole the show. By Ed Potton and Susie Goldsbrough

stalwart Tilda Swinton came on (separately) with the electronic duo Orbital. Elsewhere Lianne La Havas cooed with Michael Kiwanuka, and Fred Again, every Gen-Zer's favourite electronic pin-up, popped up for an intimate ambient set high above the farm on the gorgeous Strummerville stage.

5 The Euros? What Euros?

Previously Glastonbury has laid on giant screens to show tournament matches but this time it was assumed people could follow England v Slovakia on their phones. You wonder if the organisers were also worried about the music acts losing punters to the football. Some shows, from Seventeen to PJ Harvey, were quite sparsely attended, even without competing with Harry Kane et al.

6 The wit and wisdom of flags

Coming up with a flag slogan brings out the best in Glastonbury goers. The doozies this year ranged from the ironic ("Annoying flag") to the understated ("Not too bad"), the cryptic ("Gary"), the pragmatic ("Looking for a man in finance") and the purely pictorial (Bob Mortimer holding a small fish). The *Peep Show* and Coldplay universes collided in a flag showing David Mitchell's Mark saying: "Five headline sets Chris? Five? That's insane." And finally there was the enterprising chap who plugged his lawn

Above: Dua Lipa. Above right: Michael J Fox with Chris Martin. Below: Anya Taylor-Joy and Cara Delevingne



maintenance services with the genius "I'm sexy and I mow it". Bravo.

7 Part-timers made a splash

The festival was rife with moonlighters on stage and behind the decks, from the BBC presenter Ros Atkins who played a well-received drum and bass DJ set, to the former Times journalist and current Sky News technology correspondent Arthi Nachiappan, who spun dancehall, reggaeton and more. Fish 56 Octagon, the pseudonym of a middle-aged marketing professional who has reinvented himself on social media as a champion of retro dance music, played a set at the Glade Dome that he described as "the moment of my life so far". Most poignantly, Coldplay brought out the actor Michael J Fox, whose film *Back to the Future*, Chris Martin said, inspired him to make music. Fox has Parkinson's and is in a wheelchair but he strummed along movingly to *Fix You*. Grown men cried (really).

8 Politics and punning

Everywhere you looked the Tories were getting it in the neck, whether it be in badly punning banners ("Fishy Sunak, crime minister") or a mock funeral in which a coffin emblazoned with the words "End of the Conservative project" was accompanied by mourners in Boris Johnson and Liz Truss masks. The Irish Republican hip-hop trio Kneecap led choruses of "Free Palestine" and



"Get your Brits out [of Northern Ireland]" while Jarvis Cocker finished his DJ set with Alexis Taylor of Hot Chip by whipping up an enthusiastic chant of "Get the f***ing Tories out". Amusingly, indie rock band the Last Dinner Party urged us all to have some "f***ing compassion" and go out to vote on "June 4." Whoops. The most powerful political statement came from a Banksy stunt: a blow-up raft packed with life-jacketed dummy refugees which sailed across the crowd. As for Sunak's potential successor? He'll be pleased to hear he earned a very Glastonbury-style salute, in a flag adapting a Coldplay song title: "A Sky Full of Stars". The irony prize was won by the speaker in the Shangri-La field who urged us to smash capitalism — but also to buy some merch.

9 It was one of the most international festivals in years ...

All the world's a stage — and this year, every stage was a world. We can't remember a recent edition that was so gloriously, eclectically international. Among those represented: South Korea (affable if underwhelming K-pop band Seventeen), Peru (glamorous DJ Sofia Kourtesis), Nigeria (Afrobeats star Burna Boy), Cuba/Mexico (Camila Cabello), Australia (Confidence Man), Pakistan (Arooj Aftab), and Jamaica (the Skatalites). Finally, Indonesia were represented by Voice of Baceprot, who one hack claimed were the best heavy metal band he had seen since Metallica.

10 ... so why was everyone pretending to be an American?

"I love the energy that you guys are bringing," drawled Dua Lipa, who was born in north London but apparently with a Californian soul. Even more disconcertingly, Chris Martin sounded like Cliff Richard as he showed his appreciation for the "bewd-iful British crowd".

Sick of the footy on TV? At least there's tennis...

Carol Midgley TV review



Andy Murray: Will to Win

BBC1

★★★★☆

At times like these you discover what kind of TV viewer you are. Or rather, how important a viewer the TV schedulers consider you to be.

Are you a VIP, or are you a second-class pleb? Well, it's simple. If you like watching Euro 2024 then you are top dog, a VIP luminary for whom the schedules are bulldozed by ITV and the BBC. If, however, you don't much care about football and would prefer a nice drama, a documentary or your favourite soap opera, well ... tough titty. You are at the bottom of the pile. Over recent days such shows have

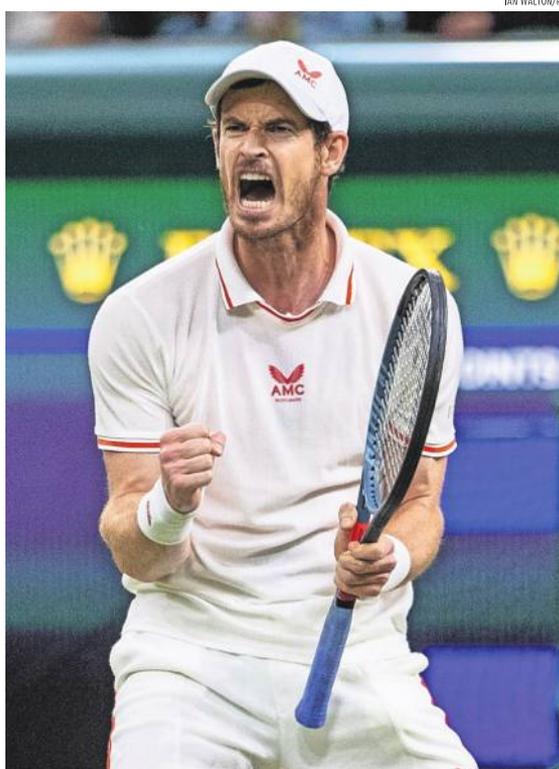
been slashed and sidelined to accommodate a football wipeout.

Take last Wednesday. On BBC1 and BBC2 simultaneously there were separate live Euro 2024 matches. When they had finished, ITV cleared the schedule to accommodate Georgia v Portugal for more than three hours. Then, at 10.40pm on BBC1, there was yet another hour ... of the football "highlights". I don't hate football, and I know it's about money and ratings, but, strewth, whither viewer choice?

Anyway, that rant was a long-winded way of saying that there's nothing much to discuss from last night. With Glastonbury thrown into the mix, all there was on offer was a scrappy jumble of lame repeats. So we must turn to the great Andy Murray.

The BBC's documentary *Andy Murray: Will to Win* (BBC1/iPlayer) was shown on Friday evening, the day we discovered that the two-time Wimbledon men's singles champion and British hero had been drawn against Tomas Machac in the men's singles tomorrow — if he is fit to play. He is also set to play in the men's doubles with his brother, Jamie.

This documentary didn't feature a sit-down interview with Murray or his mother, Judy; it was essentially a cuttings job. But it was a rousing reminder of what an extraordinary player Murray has been. And what a lion-hearted one. It used 20 years of



Exceptionally driven: Andy Murray at Wimbledon in 2021

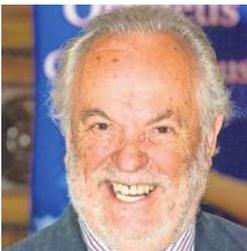
archive footage to take us from the Dunblane boy who was exceptionally competitive and driven about everything to the older champion needing hip surgery after years of punishing his body. It was entertainingly done, with recordings of Murray's voice and those of his parents and his grandmother, Shirley, from previous interviews broadcast over the footage, effectively narrating the story.

After the game-changing moment in 2012 when he won Olympic gold, his grandmother talked of how he came home and placed the medal round her neck. "Is that what you were waiting for, Mini?" he said (he calls her Mini because she's small). The footage of his past glories and losses was thrilling, especially when he defeated Novak Djokovic at Wimbledon in 2013. But it was these little touches that gave it texture — such as Judy revealing that when he was young he revered Andre Agassi so much she bought him a cap with a fake ponytail at the back to look more like him.

When a TV sports interviewer asked Murray what it must be like for his parents watching him at Wimbledon, the title which at that point he yearned for so much, "I've no idea, I'm not that bothered," he replied, deadpan. "It's a lot harder for me, that's for sure." Great answer to what must have been quite an annoying question. A well-spent hour.

Radio choice

Ben Dowell



Cadfael: Monk's Hood
Radio 4 Extra, 11am

Hear mention of Ellis Peters's detective stories where the crimes were solved by Brother Cadfael and you will probably think of the Nineties TV adaptation starring Derek Jacobi. The spiritual sleuth's habit was also filled by the actor Philip Madoc, above, known for playing the U-boat commander in *Dad's Army*. Marking 90 years since Madoc's birth is this five-part radio adaptation from 1991. Set in I138 in Shrewsbury, it follows the death of Gervase Bonel, who has been poisoned by other cast members include Michael Hordern as the narrator, Ian Targett and Geoffrey Whitehead.

OUR TV NEWSLETTER

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Times Radio

Digital, web, smart speaker, app
5.00am Rosie Wright with Early Breakfast
6.00am Aasmah Mir and Stig Abell with Times Radio Breakfast **10.00am** Matt Chorley **1.00pm** Andrew Neil **2.00pm** Jane Garvey **4.00pm** John Pleanar with Times Radio Drive. Analysis of the day's news **7.00pm** The Evening Edition with Kait Borsay. Engaging evening conversation **10.00pm** Carole Walker. Today's headlines and tomorrow's front pages
1.00am The Story. Interviews with news-makers and thinkers **1.30pm** Highlights from Matt Chorley. Political conversation
2.00pm The Best of Times Radio

Radio 2

FM: 88-90.2 MHz
6.30am The Zoe Ball Breakfast Show **9.30am** Vernon Kay. Natasha Bedingfield chooses her top tunes in Tracks of My Years **12.00pm** Jeremy Vine **2.00pm** Scott Mills **4.00pm** OJ Borg **6.30pm** OJ Borg's Half Wower **7.00pm** Jo Whitley's Shiny Happy Playlist **7.30pm** Jo Whitley **9.00pm** The Blues Show with Cerys Matthews. Brixton Blues player Errol Linton talks about his new album, *Break the Seal* **10.00pm** Trevor Nelson's Magnificent 7. Uplifting tunes and essential throwbacks **10.30pm** Trevor Nelson's Rhythm Nation. The DJ introduces a mix of soulful tunes **12.00pm** Phil Williams. Phil Williams sits in for OJ Borg **3.00am** Pick of the Pops. A revisit to the chart from this day in 1978 (r) **4.00pm** Owyn Wyn Evans

Radio 3

FM: 90.2-92.4 MHz
6.30am Breakfast
Petroc Trelawny presents Radio 3's classical breakfast show, featuring listener requests
9.30am Essential Classics
Georgia Mann presents a selection of music and features, including new discoveries, musical surprises and familiar favourites
1.00pm Classical Live
Hannah French presents a live recital from London's Wigmore Hall with Camerata RCO (a select group of members of the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra). Plus, Elizabeth Alker presents the best of BBC string quartet recordings. Bruckner arr. Rolf Verbeek (Symphony No 6); Krasa (Overture for Small Orchestra); Beethoven (Sonata in G, Op 14 No 2); David Lang (*We Were*); Schumann (String Quartet No 2 in F, Op 41 No 2); Arvo Part (*And I Hear a Voice*); Tchaikovsky (Symphony No 5 in E minor, Op 64); and Satie arr. Debussy (*Gymnopédie No 3*)

4.00 Composer of the Week:

Richard Strauss (1864-1949)
Donald Macleod explores key figures in the life of Richard Strauss, beginning with Hugo von Hofmannsthal, his first and most distinguished librettist. These two very different men enjoyed an extraordinarily productive creative partnership that lasted over two decades and was only terminated by Hofmannsthal's untimely death in 1929. R Strauss (*Der Rosenkavalier*, Op 59, Act 1, Introduction; *Le bourgeois gentilhomme*, suite for orchestra, Op 60, 1. Overture; *Elektra*, Op 58, Scene 6, *Was willst du, fremder Mensch?*; *Arabella*, Op 79, Act 2, *love duet Sie seh'n nicht aus wie jemand, den das alles da interessiert*; and *Der Rosenkavalier*, Op 59, Act 3, *Finale*)
5.00 In Tune
A selection of music, arts news and guests. Including **5.00, 6.00 News**
7.00 Classical Mixtape
A selection of classical favourites mixed with jazz, folk and music from around the world
7.30 Radio 3 in Concert
Andrew McGregor presents a concert by the BBC Symphony Orchestra recorded at London's Barbican Hall as part of the BBC Symphony Orchestra's Total Immersion Italian Radicals day on May 5. Plus, during the interval Andrew talks to Harriet Boyd-Bennett and Jonathan Cross about the cultural, political and musical environment that produced these radical composers. Dallapiccola (*Three Questions with Two Answers*); Nono (*Canti de vita e amore*); Maderna (Oboe Concerto No 3); and Berio (Sequenza 9c for bass clarinet solo; *Sinfonia*)
9.45 The Essay: Forever Songs
Karine Polwart considers the power of music to connect, soothe, honour and remember as she recalls a concert given for Al Beck just weeks before his death from cancer in 2020
10.00 Night Tracks
Sara Mohr-Pietsch presents an adventurous, immersive soundtrack for late-night listening
11.30 Round Midnight
Soweto Kinch presents the best in jazz, while the pianist and composer Hiroshi selects Gustavo Dudamel for the first of her Flowers
12.30am Through the Night (r)

9.00 Start the Week
Kirsty Wark and a range of guests explore the art of creation. Last in the series
9.45 Oliver Burkeman's Inconvenient Truth
The seductive nature of a convenient lifestyle. Last in the series (r)
10.00 Woman's Hour
Nuola McGovern presents the magazine
11.00 Behind the Crime
New series. A transgender man whose upbringing has led him to prison (1/3)
11.45 Obsessed with the Quest
Stories of dangerous expeditions (1/5) (r)
12.04pm You and Yours
1.00 The World at One
1.45 Buried: The Last Witness
Dan rushes to a site in the south of Wales, where PCBs are reportedly escaping from an old landfill site (6/10)
2.00 The Archers (r)
2.15 Fags, Mags and Bags
Bishop Briggs must convince Lovely Sue he can perform her marriage (5/6)
2.45 Gambits
Check by Eley Williams. A local chess prodigy thinks he knows who is behind the strange acts of misrule in the village (5/10) (r)
3.00 A Good Read
Tessa Hadley and Sebastian Faulks discuss their favourite books (5/9)
3.30 The Failure of the Future
Johny Pitts reflects on how artists in post-war Japan carved out alternative visions of the future after living through the rise of the bubble era and the economic crash (3/4) (r)
4.00 The Deadly Business of Democracy
Carolyn Quinn asks what can be done to ensure the safety of MPs and politicians as they face more and more risk (r)
4.30 Rewinder
Greg James uses current stories to examine ones from the past (1/3) (r)
5.00 PM
6.00 Six O'Clock News
6.30 Mark Steel's in Town
Mark visits the Malvern Hills in Worcestershire, and creates a stand-up show for a local audience (2/6)
7.00 The Archers
The Carters have to face up to some home truths and Josh makes a point
7.15 Front Row
Arts programme
8.00 The Briefing Room
David Aaronovitch and guests dissect the civil war currently raging in Sudan (r)
8.30 BBC Inside Science
Which protests might help a cause — and which could harm them (r)

Radio 4

FM: 92.4-94.6 MHz LW: 198kHz MW: 720 kHz
5.30am News Briefing
5.43 Prayer for the Day
5.45 Farming Today
6.00 Today
With Amol Rajan and Mishal Husain

9.00 Start the Week
Kirsty Wark and a range of guests explore the art of creation. Last in the series (r)
9.45 Assume Nothing: The Shankill Gold Rush
The fate of the recovered gold (5/5) (r)
10.00 The World Tonight
With James Coomarasamy
10.45 Book at Bedtime: Glorious Exploits
By Ferdia Lennon (1/10)
11.00 The System
Thriller by Ben Lewis (2/5) (r)
11.30 Split Ends
Kitty Perrin speaks to the original female members of Liberty X (2/3) (r)
12.00 News and Weather
12.30am Obsessed with the Quest
Stories of dangerous expeditions (1/5) (r)
12.48 Shipping Forecast
1.00 As BBC World Service

Radio 4 Extra

Digital only
8.00am In and Out of the Kitchen **8.30** The Confession **8.45** Valley of the Dolls **9.00** Mark Steel's in Town **9.30** Parkmasters **9.45** Daily Service **10.00** Radiolab **10.55** Inheritance Tracks. With Jean Marsh
11.00 Monk's Hood. Cadfael murder mystery by Ellis Peters, with Philip Madoc and Michael Hordern. See *Radio Choice*
11.30 Bolt 12.00 Minor Adjustment **12.30pm** Stop Messing About! **1.00** In and Out of the Kitchen **1.30** The Confession **1.45** Valley of the Dolls **2.00** Just a Minute **2.30** Snap **3.00** The Jester of Astapovo **3.45** This Sentence Does Not Consist of Eight Words **4.00** Radiolab **4.55** Inheritance Tracks **5.00** Monk's Hood **5.30** Bolt **6.00** Minor Adjustment **6.30** Stop Messing About! **7.00** In and Out of the Kitchen **7.30** The Confession. By Jessie Burton **7.45** Valley of the Dolls. By Jacqueline Susann **8.00** Just a Minute. With Paul Merton, Chris Neill, Justin Moorhouse and Tony Hawks **8.30** Snap. Comedy by Paul Mendelson **9.00** The Jester of Astapovo. Rose Tremain's drama about the death of Tolstoy **9.45** This Sentence Does Not Consist of Eight Words. By Michael Carson **10.00** Comedy Club: Mark Steel's in Town. The comedian visits Margate **10.30** Rudy's Rare Records. Grandad, father and son collide over a local history exhibition **10.55** The Comedy Club Interview **11.00** The News Quiz. With Geoff Norcott, Stuart Mitchell, Daliso Chaphonda and Katy Balls **11.30** Danny Robins Music Therapy. The DJ writes a new town anthem for Middlesbrough. From 2008

Radio 5 Live

MW: 693, 909
5.00am Wake Up to Money **6.00** 5 Live Breakfast **9.00** Nicky Campbell **11.00** Naga Munchetty **1.00pm** Tennis. Coverage from day one of Wimbledon **4.00** 5 Live News **4.30** 5 Live Sport **5.00** 5 Live Sport: France v Belgium (Kick-off **5.00**) **7.30** 5 Live Sport **8.00** 5 Live Sport: Portugal v Slovenia (Kick-off **8.00**) **10.30** Gordon Smart **1.00am** Dotun Adebayo

talkSPORT

MW: 1053, 1089 kHz
5.00am Early Breakfast **6.00** Breakfast with Jeff Stelling **10.00** Euro GameDay Warm Up **1.00pm** Live Euro GameDay **4.00** Live Euro GameDay: France v Belgium (Kick-off **5.00**) **7.00** Live Euro GameDay: Portugal v Slovenia (Kick-off **8.00**). From Frankfurt Arena **10.00** Euro Sports Bar **1.00am** Extra Time

Talk

Digital only
5.00am James Max. The day's top stories
6.30 Mike Graham **10.00** Julia Hartley Brewer **1.00pm** Ian Collins **4.00** Jeremy Kyle **7.00** Kevin O'Sullivan **10.00** Petrie Hosken **1.00am** Paul Ross

6 Music

Digital only
5.00am The Morning After Mix **7.00** The Morning After Glastonbury **10.00** The Morning After Mix **1.00pm** Chris Hawkins **4.00** Huw Stephens **7.00** New Music Fix **Daily 9.00** Riley & Coe **11.00** Song Explorer. New series **12.00** Oasis at the BBC **1.00am** Oasis at Knebworth **2.00** Oasis: What's the Story? **4.00** The Oasis Playlist

Virgin Radio

Digital only
6.30am The Chris Evans Breakfast Show **10.00** Vogue Williams on The Ryan Tubridy Show **1.00pm** Jaye Middlemiss **4.00** Ricky Wilson **7.00** Bam **10.00** Olivia Jones **1.00am** Sean Goldsmith **4.00** Steve Denyer

Classic FM

FM: 100-102 MHz
6.30am Dan Walker **10.00** Alexander Armstrong **1.00pm** Anne-Marie Minhall **4.00** Margherita Taylor **7.00** Relaxing Evenings **10.00** Calm Classics **1.00am** Bill Overton **4.00** Early Breakfast

television & radio

Viewing Guide

Ben Dowell

Wimbledon

BBC2, from 10.30am/
BBC1, from 12.15pm

Top pick
Thwack, thwack, thwack, loud grunt, applause. The sound as well as the glorious grassy spectacle of the British summer is back

to take our attention away from all the football. Isa Guha is on morning detail today before Clare Balding takes over the mid-afternoon live coverage that promises exciting battles. Among the men is the rivalry between Jannik Sinner and Carlos Alcaraz. In the women's singles Coco Gauff, Iga Swiatek and Aryna

Sabalenka will be the ones to look out for. Emma Raducanu and Katie Boulter present probably the best chance of British singles success. Offering expert summaries are the former players John McEnroe, Martina Navratilova, Billie Jean King, Pat Cash, Tracy Austin, Tim Henman, Nick Kyrgios, Ash

Barty, Johanna Konta and Annabel Croft. For those who have been at work all day the evening highlights package *Today at Wimbledon* (BBC2, 9pm) is the destination, and for the second year running this is fronted by Qasa Alom. Last year there were mutterings that the job might have gone to a sporting rather than a

presenting specialist. Yet Alom, who made his name on documentaries before being appointed a Midlands Today newsreader, acquitted himself well. The self-confessed "tennis geek" said: "I think the men's side is open enough for a player to come out of the pack and make a name for themselves," he said.

A Good Girl's Guide to Murder

BBC iPlayer

Based on Holly Jackson's YA novel series, this sprightly six-part drama feels like a cross between an Agatha Christie mystery and a hot-blooded, hormonal teen story. Set in an English village, our young Miss Marple is Pippa "Pip"

Fitz-Amobi (Emma Myers), who unearths the case of the murdered schoolgirl Andie Bell supposedly at the hands of her boyfriend, Sal Singh. The young cast deliver decent performances, bolstered by an impressive list of more seasoned thespians including Anna Maxwell Martin and Mathew Baynton.

BBC1

Early

6.00am Breakfast **9.30** Morning Live **10.45** Scam Interceptors. The Interceptors go online dating and lure in a scammer **11.15** Homes Under the Hammer. Properties in London, Leicestershire and Kent (r) (AD) **12.15pm** Live Wimbledon 2024. Coverage of play on the outside courts on day one of the Grand Slam tournament from the All England Club, featuring men's and ladies' singles first-round matches. See *Viewing Guide* **1.00** BBC News at One; Weather **1.35** BBC Regional News; Weather **1.45** BBC News at One; Weather **2.00** Live Wimbledon 2024. Isa Guha and Clare Balding present further coverage of day one from the All England Club, as the first round continues in the men's and ladies' singles. Wild card Elina Svitolina impressed on Centre Court at this stage last year, claiming a 6-4, 6-3 victory over five-time champion Venus Williams. Over on the No 1 Court, top seed Iga Swiatek prevailed over Zhu Lin 6-1, 6-3, before three-time Grand Slam finalist Casper Ruud defeated qualifier Laurent Lokoli in four sets. Elsewhere, British hopeful Jodie Burrage was a comfortable victor over America's Gaty McNally. See *Viewing Guide* **6.00** BBC News **6.30** BBC Regional News; Weather

BBC2

6.30am Garden Rescue: Top of the Plots. Charlie Dimmock and the Rich brothers reveal their favourite makeovers (r) **7.15** Bargain Hunt. The contestants search Wetherby Racecourse (r) (AD) **8.00** Sign Zone: The Repair Shop. Experts restore the garden gate of what used to be Roald Dahl's mother's house (r) (AD, SL) **9.00** BBC News **10.30** Live Wimbledon 2024. Isa Guha presents coverage of the opening day of the tournament from the All England Club, featuring men's and ladies' first-round matches on the outside courts. See *Viewing Guide* **12.15pm** Politics Live. The big political issues of the day **1.00** Live Wimbledon 2024. Isa Guha and Clare Balding present further coverage of day one of the Grand Slam tournament from the All England Club, featuring men's and ladies' first-round matches. Carlos Alcaraz will get proceedings under way on Centre Court, as is tradition for the reigning men's champion, having ended Novak Djokovic's streak of winning the title in each of the past four stagings of the tournament by defeating him in the final. Djokovic defeated Pedro Cachin on day one 12 months ago, and there was also a win for Jannik Sinner against Juan Manuel Cerundolo. See *Viewing Guide*

ITV1

6.00am Good Morning Britain. Morning magazine **9.00** Lorraine. Early morning chat show presented by Lorraine Kelly, with showbiz interviews, entertainment news, cooking tips, fashion features and musical guests **10.00** This Morning. A mix of celebrity chat, lifestyle features, advice and competitions. Including Local Weather **12.30pm** Loose Women. Studio discussion from a female perspective **1.30** ITV News; Weather **1.55** Regional News; Weather **2.00** Cooking with the Stars. Emma Willis and Tom Allen host the celebrity cookery show in which famous faces cook up a storm week by week in a bid to outdo their rivals. Each of the contestants is paired with a chef who will mentor and teach them to prepare restaurant quality dishes. In the first episode, Johnny Vegas, Harry Judd, Shirley Ballas and Naughty Boy take part (r) (AD) **3.00** Catchphrase. Stephen Mulhern hosts the game show in which three contestants guess the familiar phrases hidden in animated clues, before one of them plays to win £50,000 (r) **3.45** Live Uefa Euro 2024: France v Belgium. (Kick-off 5.00). Coverage of the last-16 match from Dusseldorf Arena, between two nations who have underperformed so far in the tournament

Channel 4

6.25am Cheers (r) **7.15** Everybody Loves Raymond (r) (AD) **9.05** Frasier (r) (AD) **11.05** Great Canal Journeys. Timothy West and Prunella Scales' waterway adventures in Lancashire and Yorkshire (r) (AD) **12.05pm** Channel 4 News **Summary 12.10** Help! We Bought a Village (r) **1.10** Car SOS. Tim and Fuzz get help from James Nesbitt (r) (AD) **2.10** Countdown. Ranvir Singh is in Dictionary Corner **3.00** A Place in the Sun. A Croydon-based couple enlist the help of Jean Johansson to escape south London's dull weather for the glamour of Marbella (r) **4.00** Renovation Nation. A couple try to restore a derelict chapel in their Scottish castle in time for their wedding (AD) **5.00** A New Life in the Sun: Where Are They Now? Franny and Fenton, who run a hotel in southern Spain, feel the financial pressures, while Zak and Tony face the realities of managing a B&B at their French chateau (r) **6.00** Four in a Bed. The first destination of the week is the Golden Grove Retreat in Carmarthenshire, featuring an afternoon of yoga and a healthy breakfast that leaves guests pining for a fry-up (r) **6.30** The Simpsons. Homer gets trapped in a cave during a nature walk, and Lisa passes the time by telling him a long tale (r) (AD)

Channel 5

6.00am Milkshake! **9.15** Jeremy Vine. Discussing the latest news and get your views and opinions of the day **11.15** Storm Huntley. Debate on the day's talking points continues with Storm, who takes viewers' calls on the biggest stories **12.45pm** Friends. The pals gather for Phoebe's birthday (r) **1.10** Friends. Ross disagrees with Rachel's choice of nanny (r) **1.40** 5 News at Lunchtime **1.45** Home and Away. Harper comes clean to Tane, and Mali has doubts about employing Kirby (r) (AD) **2.15** FILM: Twisted House Sitter (12, TVM, 2021) A destitute woman crosses paths with a beautiful, affluent, entrepreneur, and decides to take over her life. Thriller starring Crystal-Lee Naomi and Jennifer Freeman **4.00** Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun. Cameras follow a woman who runs a rescue horse retreat, taking in abused animals nobody else wants, but the recent death of her husband has made running her own stables more difficult (r) **5.00** 5 News at 5 **6.00** Party Election Broadcast. By the Conservative Party **6.05** Police Interceptors. An ill wind blows through Workop when a Ford Focus seemingly fails to stop for officers, and police dog Quantum follows his nose to an outdoor toilet (r) (AD) **6.55** 5 News Update



A dangerous business: inside the

Our gripping new investigative podcast, *Cocaine Inc.* sheds light on the global cocaine industry, where profits are counted up in millions and losses measured out in murders. Follow the trail with us across four continents.

7PM **7.00** The Bidding Room Items brought in by the public include an unusual piece of Japanese design, a jade mirror and a transforming bookcase **7.30** Live MOTD — Uefa Euro 2024: Portugal v Slovenia (Kick-off 8.00). Coverage of the last-16 match from Frankfurt Arena, where the sides meet for the first time in a competitive fixture. The Portuguese have built another talented squad after being crowned champions at Euro 2016, and secured top spot in Group F with a game to spare following victories over Czech Republic and Turkey. They did slip up in the last fixture against Georgia, but will still start as favourites here, even though they lost to Slovenia as recently as March in a friendly in Ljubljana. Their opponents managed to draw all three of their group matches, including a goalless draw against England, which was just enough to see them reach the knockout stages of a European Championships for the first time in their history

8PM **10.10** BBC News at Ten

10.40 BBC Regional News and Weather **10.50** Peacock Liz has disappeared leaving an empty space at the gym that Andy and Jay compete to fill. Comedy starring Allan Mustafa (1/6) (r)

11PM **11.20** Peacock Andy starts his new job at a different gym but is soon spooked by Kara's talk of high standards (2/6) (r) **11.50** My Week with Marilyn (15, 2011) Fact-based drama with Michelle Williams and Eddie Redmayne (AD)

7.00 Live Wimbledon 2024 Further coverage of day one of the Grand Slam tournament from the All England Club, as the first round continues in the men's and ladies' singles. Coco Gauff has been a popular player at SW19 since her debut as a 15 year old in 2019, but she had a tournament to forget here last year, falling at the first hurdle to compatriot Sofia Kenin. However, she has since won her maiden Grand Slam at the 2023 US Open and also reached the semi-finals of both the Australian and French Opens this year so will be considered a leading contender this time around. See *Viewing Guide*

9.00 Today at Wimbledon Qasa Alom presents highlights of the opening day's play at the All England Club, where the first round got under way in the men's and ladies' singles. Carlos Alcaraz was scheduled on Centre Court to begin the defence of the title he won last year. See *Viewing Guide*

10.00 The Royle Family Denise is a bag of nerves as her wedding day finally arrives (6/6) (r) (AD)

10.30 Newsnight The day's important national and international news stories, with Victoria Derbyshire

11.05 The Peanut Butter Falcon (12, 2019) A young man with Down's syndrome runs away from his care home to pursue his dream of becoming a wrestler. Light-hearted adventure starring Shia LaBeouf (AD). See *Viewing Guide*

7.30 Regional News; Weather **7.45** ITV News; followed by Weather

8.00 Emmerdale Belle panics, and Charity is frustrated. Meanwhile, Cain and Moira reconcile (AD)

8.30 Bradley & Barney Walsh: Breaking Dad The duo embark on the final leg of their European road trip (6/6) (r) (AD)

9.00 Coronation Street Kit goes behind Bernie's back to introduce himself to Paul and Gemma, Cassie helps Steve to take revenge on Tommy, and George gets an update on Glenda's life from Michael. Meanwhile, Toyah disapproves of Leanne encouraging Amy to invest in the Institute (AD)

10.00 ITV News at Ten

10.30 Regional News **10.45** Uefa Euro 2024 Highlights Mark Pougatch presents action from the fifth and sixth last-16 matches in Germany, featuring France v Belgium at Dusseldorf Arena and Portugal v Slovenia at Frankfurt Arena

11.45 Boris Becker: The Rise and Fall The story of how the three-time Wimbledon champion ended up in prison (1/2) (r) (AD)

7.00 Channel 4 News

7.55 Party Election Broadcast By the Social Democratic Party

8.00 Bake Off: The Professionals The best three teams from each set of heats return for a chocolate-fuelled pursuit to reach the final. The chefs create two batches of chocolate bars, after which they must create a hanging showpiece made from chocolate. See *Viewing Guide* (7/10) (AD)

9.00 Skint: The Truth About Britain's Broken Economy with Tim Harford The *Financial Times* writer provides a fresh analysis of Britain's broken economy ahead of the General Election and presents his ideas on how to fix it. Featuring powerful real-life stories and testimony. See *Viewing Guide* (AD)

10.00 24 Hours in A&E A 79-year-old is rushed to A&E with signs of a stroke. She is confused and undergoes tests and a CT scan so doctors can assess how best to treat her. A boy is brought in after injuring himself in the school playground and a part-time wrestler has hurt his knee in the ring

11.05 The Killer Nanny: Did She Do It? Documentary re-examining the trial of Louise Woodward for the murder of eight-month-old Matthew Eappen 25 years on. Featuring contributions from jury members, who openly discuss the factors that influenced their decision for the first time (1/3) (r) (AD, SL)

7.00 Traffic Cops An officer is called to investigate a woman suspected of drink-driving at 10am, and discovers she was arrested two weeks ago, while a PC goes on the trail of a driver who has failed to stop after a collision (r)

7.55 5 News Update

8.00 Motorway Cops: Catching Britain's Speeders In Sunderland, a PC is on the hunt for a van linked to drug dealing and organised crime and has to deploy his Taser when the driver makes a run for it. Meanwhile, an officer spots a van whose driver he is sure is trying not to get noticed (2/10)

9.00 Casualty 24/7: Every Second Counts There has been an influx of patients overnight, creating a huge backlog and there's another emergency on its way. A lorry has tipped over on its side in a country lane and the driver is rushed in. Plus, a man is brought in after they collapsed at home

10.00 Trauma Room One A 63-year-old is losing feeling and function in his hands and fingers, so surgeons at Liverpool's Walton Centre must act fast to remove disc and bone from his neck (8/8) (r)

11.05 Police: Suspect No 1 Detectives investigate when a man is found beaten at the side of the road. Officers start looking through images from that night to see if they can pick up anyone who might have been with the victim, and several clips emerge — but there is an identification problem (3/6) (r)

Late **1.20am** MOTD Top Ten — Defenders Gary Lineker, Alan Shearer and Mich Richards present a countdown of the best defenders to have played in a European Championship **1.50** Euro 2024 Matchday Replay. A chance to see a last-16 match from the tournament in Germany **3.45-6.00** BBC News

12.35am Sign Zone: The Panorama Interviews with Nick Robinson The presenter probes the policies of the Liberal Democrats in an interview with the party leader Ed Davey (r) (SL) **1.05** Countryfile. Joe Crowley reports on the Three Rivers Race inland sailing competition (r) (SL) **2.00-3.00** Springswatch (r) (SL)

12.40am Shop on TV **3.00** Tour de France Highlights. Gary Imlach presents action from stage three, featuring a route of 230.5km from Plaisance to Turin in Italy. With commentary from Ned Boulting and David Millar **3.50** Unwind with ITV **5.00-6.00** Ainsley's World Cup Flavours. With Michael Owen and Alan Fletcher (r) (AD, SL)

12.05am The Killer Nanny: Did She Do It? A double bill of the documentary (2 & 3/3) (r) (AD, SL) **1.55** Ramsay's 24 Hours to Hell and Back (r) (AD, SL) **2.40** The Simpsons (r) **3.05** Car SOS (r) (AD, SL) **3.55** Grand Designs (r) (AD, SL) **4.50** Escape to the Chateau (r) **4.55** Frasier (r) (AD) **5.45-6.25** Countdown (r)

12.05am Traffic Cops Documentary (r) **1.00** Casino **3.00** Call the Balfors: Time to Pay Up (r) **3.50** Incredible Reunions: Pets & Their Owners (r) **4.40** Wildlife SOS (r) (SL) **5.05** House Doctor (r) (SL) **5.30** Entertainment News on 5 **5.35** Milkshake! Monkey's Amazing Adventures (r) (SL) **5.45-6.00** Paw Patrol (r) (SL)

television & radio

Bake Off: The Professionals
Channel 4, 8pm
We're down to the final six of what some may regard as *Bake Off* proper, featuring professional chefs from real, working establishments. For their first challenge the contestants create two batches of chocolate bars: 24 gourmet and

24 fusion. For the second they have to devise a hanging showpiece inspired by mythical beasts and made from chocolate. It will be suspended from the ceiling while chocolate desserts are placed upon it. The patisserie experts Benoit Blin and Cherish Finden will decide who reaches the quarter final.

Skint: The Truth About Britain's Broken Economy
Channel 4, 9pm
Is Britain a failed state, underfunded, falling apart and getting worse for the next generation? Enter the economist Tim Harford, whom you may know as the presenter of *More or Less*, the Radio 4 show

that purports to cut through the half-truths by looking at what the numbers tell us. And why aren't the potholes, overflowing sewage and hospital waiting times much more of an issue in this year's general election campaigns? Includes first-hand testimony from ordinary citizens and experts.

House of the Dragon
Sky Atlantic/Now, 9pm
Last week Alicent (Olivia Cooke) survived an assassination attempt while King Aegon foolishly sent his wise hand Otto packing. In episode three there is more foolish male behaviour and a glimpse of some excellent British acting

talent, with Simon Russell Beale showing up in dank Harrenhal and getting an unwelcome visit from an angry Daemon (Matt Smith). Freddie Fox, meanwhile, struts around as Alicent's cocky brother Gwayne, keen on waging war while keeping a beady eye on his sibling's lover, Ser Criston (Fabien Frankel).

Film The Peanut Butter Falcon
BBC2, 11.05pm
Shia LaBeouf is Tyler, a penniless fisherman haunted by the death of his brother. Tyler undertakes a road trip to Florida with a young wrestling enthusiast, Zak, who has Down's syndrome (played by Zack Gottsagen). (12, 2019)

Sky Max

6.00am NCIS: Los Angeles (r) **7.00** SEAL Team (r) **AD 8.00** The Flash (r) **9.00** Stargate SG-1 (r) **11.00** NCIS: Los Angeles (r) **12.00** The Flash (r) **1.00pm** MacGyver (r) **3.00** Hawaii Five-0 (r) **4.00** S.W.A.T. (r) **AD 5.00** SEAL Team (r) **AD 6.00** Stargate SG-1. The team finds a skull that grants access to areas inhabited by aliens (r) **7.00** Stargate SG-1. Part one of two. A terrifying new creature threatens the Earth (r) **8.00** Rob & Romesh vs Ballet. The comedians try out ballet and perform in *Swan Lake* (r) **AD 9.00** The Walking Dead. A familiar face becomes the unlikely hero of a family of survivors (r) **10.00** Flintoff: Lord of the Fries. Andrew and Rob explore the West Country, where they go surfing on the Severn Bore (3/6) (r) **AD 11.00** The Force: North East. The cells fill up during a busy Saturday night in Newcastle (r) **12.00** The Force: North East (r) **1.00am** Brit Cops: Law & Disorder (r) **AD 2.00** Road Wars (r) **3.00** Hawaii Five-0 (r) **4.00** S.W.A.T. (r) **AD 5.00** Highway Patrol (r)

Sky Atlantic

6.00am Fish Town (r) **7.55** Six Feet Under (r) **AD 10.05** Gomorrah (r) **12.15pm** Game of Thrones (r) **1.20** The Sopranos (r) **3.30** Six Feet Under (r) **5.45** Gomorrah. Italian drama (r) **7.55** Game of Thrones. Ned refuses to trust either Pycelle or Littlefinger as he searches for the truth about Jon Arryn's death, and Jon Snow befriends a recruit at the great Wall (r) **AD 9.00** House of the Dragon. Fantasy drama set 200 years before the events of *Game of Thrones* and telling the story of House Targaryen. Starring Matt Smith. See *Viewing Guide* (AD) **10.20** The Sympathizer. Convinced that the General's plan is doomed to fail, the Captain's mission is to trace the funding for it (AD) **11.25** House of the Dragon. Fantasy drama set 200 years before the events of *Game of Thrones* and telling the story of House Targaryen. Starring Matt Smith and Emma D'Arcy (r) **AD 12.45am** Succession. Kendall plans his next move (r) **AD 1.55** The Deuce (r) **AD 3.05** Game of Thrones (r) **AD 4.05** Fish Town (r)

Sky Documentaries

6.00am The Movies (r) **7.00** Discovering: Ed Harris (r) **AD 8.00** The Directors (r) **9.00** The Nineties (r) **10.00** Juan Carlos: Downfall of the King (r) **10.55** Shaq (r) **AD 12.00** Brazil 2002 (r) **1.45pm** My Icon: Kelly Smith (r) **AD 2.00** Icahn: The Restless Billionaire (r) **4.00** The Directors (r) **5.00** Discovering (r) **AD 6.00** The Nineties. International politics during the 1990s, including the Gulf War (r) **6.55** Shaq. Documentary chronicling Shaquille O'Neal's ascent to superstardom (r) **AD 8.00** Stax: Soulville USA. The success of Isaac Hayes' Shaft soundtrack (3/4) (r) **AD 9.00** Janet Jackson. Janet signs million-dollar sponsorship contracts (3/4) (r) **AD 10.00** FILM: Love to Love You, Donna Summer (12, TVM, 2023) Profile of the iconic artist, following her career from Germany, to the bright lights of clubs in New York **12.00** King in the Wilderness (3) **2.10am** A Crime on the Bayou (r) **AD 4.00** The Directors (r) **AD 5.00** Discovering: Ed Harris (r) **AD**

Sky Arts

6.00am André Rieu: Welcome to My World **7.00** Musical Masterpieces **8.00** The Joy of Painting (AD) **9.00** Tales of the Unexpected (AD) **10.00** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **11.00** Discovering (AD) **12.00** The Joy of Painting **1.00pm** Tales of the Unexpected (AD) **2.00** The Sky Arts Book Club Summer Reads **Special 3.00** Harold Lloyd: Hollywood's Timeless Comedy Genius **4.00** Discovering **5.00** The Joy of Painting **6.00** Tales of the Unexpected (AD) **7.00** Alfred Hitchcock Presents. A faith healer persuades a mechanic to become his chauffeur **7.30** Alfred Hitchcock Presents. A woman is forced to drive a murderer to safety **8.00** André Rieu: Love in Venice. Celebrating 10 years of the Virtuofest concert series (AD) **11.20** Darbar Festival 2023. Performances from the festival held in London that celebrates the diversity of Indian classical music **12.20am** Isle of Wight Festival 2024 **2.20** Nino Simone: The Lost Album (AD) **3.45** National Treasures (AD) **5.00** The Art of Architecture

Sky Main Event

6.00am SSN Euro Report **7.00** Good Morning Europe **8.00** Good Morning Euros **9.00** Good Morning Euros **10.00** SSN Euro Matchday **11.00** SSN Euro Matchday **12.00** SSN Euro Matchday **1.00pm** SSN Euro Matchday **2.00** SSN Euro Matchday **3.00** SSN Euro Matchday **4.00** SSN Euro Matchday **5.00** SSN Euro Matchday. A round-up of news from UEFA Euro 2024 in Germany, featuring reports from the team camps regarding the latest selection issues **6.00** SSN Euro Matchday. Round-up of news from UEFA Euro 2024 in Germany **7.00** SSN Euro Matchday **8.00** SSN Euro Matchday **9.00** SSN Euro Matchday **10.00** SSN Euro Report **10.30** Back Pages Tonight **11.00** SSN Euro Report **12.00** SSN Euro Report **1.00am** SSN Euro Report **2.00** SSN Euro Report. Catch up on all of the latest news **3.00** SSN Euro Report **4.00** SSN Euro Report **5.00** SSN Euro Report

Variations

BBC1 Wales
As BBC1 except: **7.00pm-7.30** Wales' Home of the Year. Owain, Mandy and Glen announce the winner of Wales' Home of the Year (r) **10.50** The Abuser Headteacher. Documentary **11.20** Peacock. Comedy starring Allan Mustafa (r) **11.50** Peacock. Andy starts at a new gym (r) **12.15am-1.50** FILM: My Week with Marilyn (2011) Fact-based drama starring Michelle Williams and Eddie Redmayne (AD)

BBC2 N Ireland
As BBC2 except: **10.00pm-10.30** Peat! Tessa Fleming returns to welcome more pets and their owners to the pop-up clinic, with a cat who may need to shed a few pounds (r)

ITV1 Wales
As ITV1 except: **11.45pm-12.40am** Sharp End. Political discussion

STV
As ITV1 except: **10.30pm-10.45** STV News **12.40am-3.00** Shop on TV **3.50-5.05** Night Vision. News, sport and weather

cocaine industry



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THE TIMES THE SUNDAY TIMES

BBC3

7.00pm Voting for the First Time? Election 2024. Information ahead of polling day **7.30** Eating with My Ex. Chloe Veitch sees the reason she was ditched on national television **8.00** Top Gear. Jeremy Clarkson spares no expense when he tests the BMW X6 **9.00** Paddy & Molly: Show No Mercy. New series. Documentary following friends and mixed martial arts fighters Paddy Pimblett and Molly McCann as they make their mark on the Ultimate Fighting Championship world (1/8) **9.30** Paddy & Molly: Show No Mercy. Paddy is in Liverpool, where Molly is in training for her fight in Vegas on the back of two losses (2/8) **10.00** Eddie Hall: The Beast v the Mountain. Behind-the-scenes access to Hall's preparations for a Dubai bout with Hafthor 'Thor' Bjornsson **11.00** Him & Her. Comedy starring Russell Tovey and Sarah Solemani in an unemployed couple **11.30** Him & Her. Steve informs his friends that he is ill and refuses to celebrate his birthday **12.00** Paddy & Molly: Show No Mercy **1.00am** Eddie Hall: The Beast v the Mountain **2.00** The Plymouth Shootings **2.45** Him & Her (SL) **3.45-3.55** Press X to Continue

BBC4

7.00pm Sicily: The Wonder of the Mediterranean. Part one of two. Michael Scott traces the history of Sicily, from the first arrival of ancient Greek settlers 3,000 years ago to the arrival of the Byzantine Empire (AD) **8.00** Digging for Britain. How a lobster led archaeologists to the discovery of an 8,000-year-old Neolithic underwater settlement and the team who excavated an Iron Age crouched burial in Dorset (3/4) (AD) **9.00** Archaeology: A Secret History. Richard Miles concludes his series charting the history of archaeological breakthroughs by discovering more about the ancient common man (3/3) **10.00** Stonehenge: The Lost Circle Revealed. Professor Alice Roberts follows a decade-long historical quest to reveal a hidden secret of the bluestones of Stonehenge (AD) **11.00** Art on the BBC: Documentary using clips from the BBC archives to explore how television has influenced understanding of the arts **12.00** Treasures of the Indus (AD) **1.00am** Sicily: The Wonder of the Mediterranean (AD) **2.00** Archaeology: A Secret History **2.55-3.55** Digging for Britain (AD, SL)

Talking Pictures

6.00am Stagecoach West (b/w) **7.00** FILM: Wanted for Murder (PG, 1946) Crime drama starring Eric Portman (b/w) **9.00** FILM: Nurse Edith Cavell (PG, 1939) First World War biopic starring Anna Neagle (b/w) **11.00** Time to Remember **11.35** The Outer Limits (b/w) **12.40am** What's On PTV with Noel 12.55 FILM: Cannon for Cordoba (b/w) **12.00** Western starring George Peppard **3.00** The Saint (b/w) **4.05** FILM: An Inspector Calls (PG, 1954) Drama starring Alastair Sim (b/w) **5.45** FILM: Sherlock Holmes: Terror By Night (PG, 1946) Mystery starring Basil Rathbone, Nigel Bruce and Alan Mowbray (b/w) **7.00** The Footage Detectives **8.00** Enemy at the Door. A local woman begins a romance with a German soldier — but her friends soon turn against her **9.05** Hunting Venues. One-off comedy from 1999 starring Martin Clunes and Neil Morrissey **11.10** FILM: Gloria (15, 1980) Neo-noir crime thriller starring Genie Rowlands **1.35am** Look at Life **2.00** Mairget **3.50** 1964 in Church Street Market **4.00** Justice **5.00** The Lloyd Bridges Show **5.30** Honey West (b/w)

Film4

11.00am El Dorado (PG, 1966) Western starring John Wayne and Robert Mitchum **1.35pm** Father Brown (U, 1954) Comedy drama starring Alec Guinness **2.30** Storm Over the Nile (U, 1955) Period adventure starring Alfred Hitchcock **5.30** The Cavalry (U, 1956) Western with Randolph Scott and Jay C Flippen **7.05** Clueless (12, 1995) A teenager tries to boost her new friend's image, but her own popularity suffers as a result. Comedy inspired by Jane Austen's *Emma* with Alicia Silverstone, Stacey Dash and Brittany Murphy (AD) **9.00** Colombian (15, 2011) An orphan grows up to be an assassin while secretly plotting revenge on the gangsters who murdered her parents. Action thriller starring Zoe Saldana, Cliff Curtis, Michael Vartan and Lennie James **11.10** Office Christmas Party (15, 2016) When a CEO threatens drastic action to improve a branch of her company, the affected manager throws a party to impress a client. Comedy starring Jason Bateman, Jennifer Aniston, Olivia Munn and Kate McKinnon (AD) **1.20am-3.40** Another Round (12, 2020) Comedy drama starring Mads Mikkelsen

More4

8.55am A Place in the Sun **10.25** A New Life in the Sun. In France and Spain **11.25** Find It, Fix It, Flop It **12.30pm** Come Dine with Me (AD) **3.10** Four in a Bed **5.50** Château DIY (AD) **6.55** Car SOS. A Jeep Grand Cherokee (AD) **7.55** Grand Designs. Kevin McCloud meets a retired racehorse breeder and his wife who plan on building a new high-tech, accessible pavilion and wildlife garden on a two-acre plot in Dunstable (6/11) (AD) **9.00** PopMaster TV. Ken Bruce presents the last episode before the grand final **10.00** 8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown. Jimmy Carr hosts the popular quiz as Sean Lock and David Mitchell compete against Jon Richardson and Katherine Ryan. The Brett Domino Trio help out in Dictionary Corner **11.05** 24 Hours in A&E. A 40-year-old woman is rushed to St George's with life-threatening injuries, having been knocked over while crossing a road, while a footballer arrives after being elbowed (AD) **12.10am** 999: On the Front Line **1.15** Emergency Helicopter Medics (AD) **2.20** 24 Hours in A&E (AD) **3.25-3.55** A Place in the Sun

ITV2

6.00am CITV **9.00** World's Funniest Videos **9.30** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **10.00** Love Bites (AD, SL) **12.00** Dress to Impress **1.00pm** Deal or No Deal **2.00** Supermarket Sweep **3.00** Charmed **4.00** Dawson's Creek **5.00** Dress to Impress **6.00** Celebrity Catchphrase (AD) **7.00** Deal or No Deal. Game show hosted by Stephen Mulhern **8.00** The Masked Singer US. A recap of the journeys of the three champions and three undercover celebrities including new performances and revealing clues **9.00** Love Island. The pressure rises **10.05** Olivia Attwood: The Price of Perfection. Olivia meets brave women willing to discuss their insecurities about their vaginas **11.05** Family Guy. Brian dates a blind girl (AD) **11.35** Family Guy. Brian and Stewie revisit the pilot episode of the animated comedy (AD) **12.05am** American Dad! Animated comedy (AD) **1.05** Celebrity Karaoke Club. With Jordan Davies **2.05** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **2.40** Unwind with ITV **3.00** Teleshopping

ITV3

6.00am Classic Emmerdale **7.00** Classic Coronation Street (AD) **8.05** Agatha Christie's Poirot (AD) **10.30** The Royal (AD) **11.40** Heartbeat (AD) **1.40pm** Classic Emmerdale **2.40** Classic Coronation Street (AD) **3.50** Inspector Morse. A former police commissioner is murdered. John Thaw stars (AD) **6.00** Heartbeat. Miller's former Army captain offers him a business proposition (AD) **7.00** Heartbeat. Rob's sisters enlist the help of the community to organise a surprise reception as the policeman prepares to marry Helen (AD) **8.00** McDonald & Dodds. The duo are sucked into the fast and furious world of Formula 1 after a promising young driver dies in a suspicious circumstances (2/4) (AD) **10.00** Wire in the Blood. Tony is the last person to see a friend alive at a psychology convention, and immediately becomes prime suspect when she is found murdered (3&4/8) (AD) **11.50** The Royal. Matron is forced to change her plans after a tragic turn of events (12/12) (AD) **12.40am** Upstairs, Downstairs. Period drama **2.25** Unwind with ITV **3.00** Teleshopping

ITV4

6.00am Minder (AD) **6.55** The Sweeney (SL) **7.55** Dempsey and Makepeace (AD) **9.55** Magnum, PI (AD) **10.55** Jokaj **12.00** BattleBots **1.00pm** Tour de France Highlights **2.00** Live Tour de France. The third stage, from Plaisance to Turin **4.45** Hot Shots **4.55** The Sweeney **6.00** BattleBots. The pressure is mounting with just three more fights to impress the committee **7.00** Tour de France Highlights. Gary Lineker presents action from stage three, featuring a route of 230.5km from Plaisance to Turin in Italy **8.00** MotoGP Highlights. The TT Assen. Action from the eighth round of the season, held at TT Circuit Assen in the Netherlands **9.00** River Monsters. Jeremy contemplates whether a spoon catfish could be in Nepal **10.05** FILM: The Expendables 3 (15, 2014) The Soldier of fortune Barney Ross recruits a new team to battle an arms dealer with a score to settle. Action thriller sequel starring Sylvester Stallone, Mel Gibson and Jason Statham **12.30am** Motorsport UK. Brands Hatch Indy **1.30** Auto Mundial **1.55** Motorsport Mundial **2.25** Unwind with ITV **3.00** Teleshopping

Drama

6.00am Teleshopping **7.10** London's Burning **8.00** Doctors **9.20** Classic Holly City **10.40** Classic Casualty **11.40** The Bill **12.00pm** Classic EastEnders **2.00** London's Burning **3.00** Lovejoy **4.40** Tenko **5.15** Birds of a Feather **6.00** Waiting for God. Tom and Diana take on an estate agent who has got her claws on Harvey **6.40** Are You Being Served? The staff enter an inter-store ballroom dancing competition **7.20** Last of the Summer Wine. Comp's funeral day arrives, and emotions run high **8.00** The Brokenwood Mysteries. When four masked men try to rob the Brokenwood Savings Bank, Mike and the team must find out which one of them pulled the trigger that killed the bank manager (3/6) (AD) **10.00** New Tricks. The team investigates the unsolved murder of a pornographer (5/10) (AD) **11.00** Soldier, Soldier. A worrying event stubs home involving his wife forces Michael Stubbs to contemplate his priorities. Stars Robson Green **12.10am** Footballers' Wives. Tanya is arrested on drugs charges **1.15** Call the Midwife (AD) **2.15** Classic Hollywood City **4.00** Teleshopping

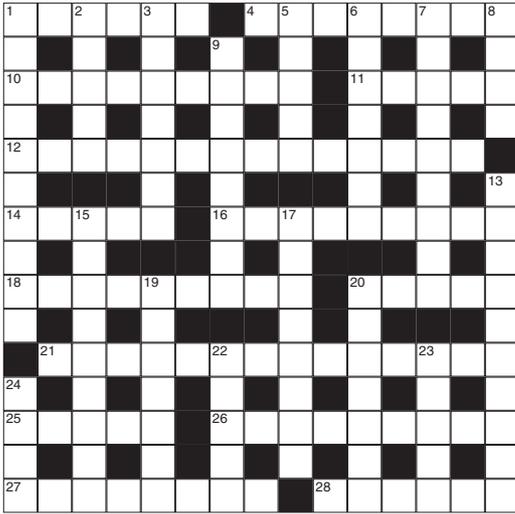
Yesterday

6.10am Train Trucers **8.00** Abandoned Engineering (AD) **10.00** The World at War **11.00** World War Weird **12.00** Great British Railway Journeys **1.00pm** Antiques Roadshow **2.00** Bangers & Cash (AD) **4.00** The World at War **5.00** World War Weird **6.00** Antiques Roadshow. At Helmingham Hall **7.00** Bangers & Cash. Dave's drawn to a Fiat Uno 45 with 36,000 miles on the clock (AD) **8.00** Abandoned Engineering. We explore Fort Amador, the site of an invasion in Panama, and a Polish facility that once caged members of a revolutionary movement (4/8) (AD) **9.00** Antiques Roadshow. Lucy Worsley. Lucy explores how American history has been mythologised and manipulated **10.00** Bangers & Cash. A rare 1968 Honda N600 car emerges in County Durham and Derek collects an original RAC Bedford van (AD) **11.00** Abandoned Engineering. An advanced German battleship that sank in a Norwegian fiord during the Second World War (7/8) (AD) **12.00** Great British Railway Journeys **1.00am** Train Trucers **3.00** Teleshopping

S4C
6.00am Cwyl: Odo (r) **6.05** Dreigiau Cadi (r) **6.15** Guto Gwningen (r) **6.30** Tomos a' Ffrindiau (r) **6.40** Cacamwni (r) **6.55** Timpio (r) **7.05** Ein Byd Bach Ni (r) **7.15** Blero yn Mynd (r) **7.30** Anffoilfaid Bach y Byd (r) **7.40** Dal Dy Ddannedd (r) **8.00** Obolobs (r) **8.05** Ysbytu Cwyl Bach (r) **8.20** Patrol Pawennau (r) **8.35** DigiB Draig (r) **8.45** Ben Dant (r) **9.05** Blochiu Llwi (r) **9.10** Shwshwswyn (r) **9.20** Twt (r) **9.30** Crawc a'i Ffrindiau (r) **9.45** Amser Maith Maith yn Ôl (r) **10.00** Odo (r) **10.05** Dreigiau Cadi (r) **10.15** Guto Gwningen (r) **10.30** Tomos a'i Ffrindiau (r) **10.40** Cacamwni (r) **10.55** Timpio (r) **11.05** Ein Byd Bach Ni (r) **11.15** Blero yn Mynd (r) **11.40** Dal Dy Ddannedd (r) **12.00** News; Weather **12.05pm** Caru Siopa (r) **AD 12.30** Heno (r) **1.00** Prynhawn Da **1.55** News; Weather **2.00** Life Seiclo: Tour de France. Coverage of stage three, featuring a route of 230.5km from Plaisance to Turin in Italy **4.25** Anffoilfaid Bach y Byd (r) **4.35** Dreigiau Cadi (r) **4.45** Dal Dy Ddannedd (r) **5.00** Stwns: Lego Ffrindiau; Amdani Ferched (r) **5.10** Prys a'r Pryfed **5.25** Lloiplor (r) **5.50** News; Weather **6.57** News **7.00** Heno **7.30** News; Weather **8.00** Y Byd yn ei Le. The latest from the Y Byd yn ei Le team on the 2024 election **8.25** Garddio a Myw. The team visit Sioned and Iwan Edwards's garden in Pont y Tŷ **8.55** News; Weather **9.00** Ffermio. Countryside and farming magazine **9.30** Rallio+. Highlights of the seventh round of the World Rally Championship from Poland, which returns to the championship after a five-year break **10.00** Seiclo: Tour de France. Action from stage three, featuring a route of 230.5km from Plaisance to Turin in Italy **10.30** Garddi Cymru (r) **11.00-12.05am** Prosiect Pym (r)

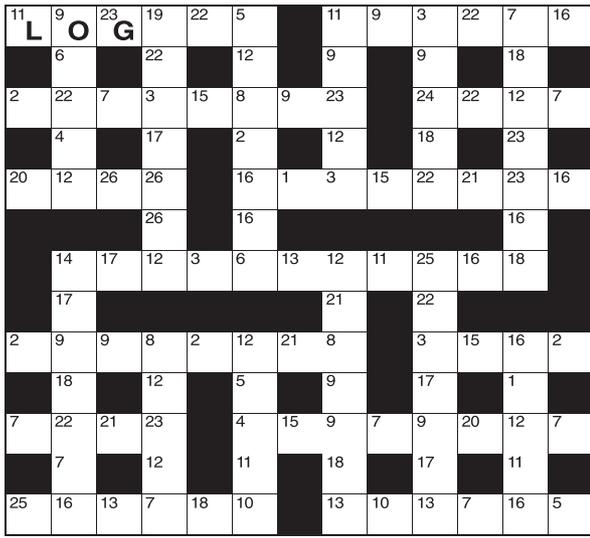
MindGames

General Knowledge Crossword No 240



- Across**
- 1 --- Cash, musician nicknamed the Man in Black (6)
 - 4 The ---, Edinburgh-based newspaper founded in 1817 (8)
 - 10 Dutch pottery often with a blue design on a white ground (9)
 - 11 Michaelmas daisy, eg (5)
 - 12 Trinidad-born broadcaster who finally retired from ITV's *News at Ten* in 2008 (6,8)
 - 14 1970s TV detective whose catchphrase was "Who loves ya, baby?" (5)
 - 16 City home to the sporting venues Aintree and Anfield (9)
 - 18 Celebrity chef associated with Padstow in Cornwall (4,5)
 - 20 US carmaker whose models have included the Viper and Charger (5)
 - 21 Youngest woman to have won an Emmy, Grammy, Oscar and Tony (8,6)
- Down**
- 1 Author of the *Mog* series of children's stories (6,4)
 - 2 Eastern German city where Handel was born in 1685 (5)
 - 3 1976 news satire starring Peter Finch and Faye Dunaway (7)
 - 5 Nicene ---, statement of belief in Christianity (5)
 - 6 Type of shoe known as a sneaker in the USA (7)
 - 7 Arsenic or silicon, eg (9)
 - 8 Claudius's successor as Roman emperor in AD54 (4)
 - 9 Skullcap worn by men in Judaism (8)
 - 13 Part that charges a car battery when the engine runs (10)
 - 15 South African winner of two Booker prizes (1,1,7)
 - 17 Dramatist and architect who designed Blenheim Palace (8)
 - 19 Capital city of Costa Rica (3,4)
 - 20 Streamlined mound formed by glacial action (7)
 - 22 20th-century British painter of stark realist nudes (5)
 - 23 Oil and gas company with a distinctive scallop logo (5)
 - 24 Short satirical piece (4)
- Last week's solution**
- GANDHI UMBRELLA
 O O E A H Y A
 LILYPAD SCOOTER
 D A W O S D T O
 CANTO CHAMELEON
 O R T C S L
 APOSTROPHE STAG
 S N H R U V O Y
 TITO OFFSPINNER
 H E A E C O
 SHELLSUIT TITUS
 A T P S T O W C
 RIOTACT SERPICO
 U W S U I S P
 MONGOOSE RATTLE

Codeword No 5255



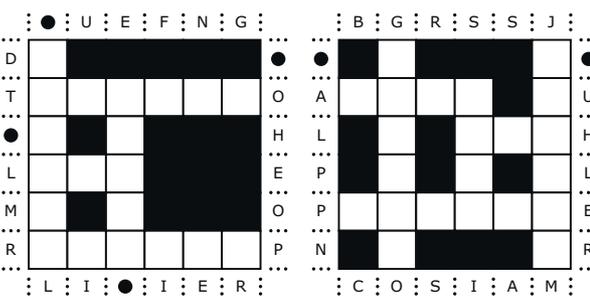
A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

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

Every letter in this crossword-style grid is represented by a number from 1 to 26. Each letter of the alphabet appears in the grid at least once. Use the letters already provided to work out the identity of further letters. Enter letters in the main grid and the smaller reference grid until all 26 letters of the alphabet have been accounted for. Proper nouns are excluded. *Saturday's solution, right*

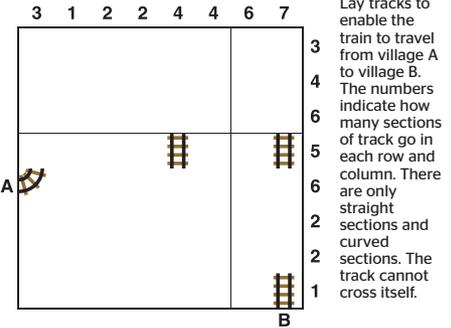
Cluelines Stuck on Codeword? To receive 4 random clues call 0901 293 6262 or text TIMECODE to 64343. Calls cost £1 plus your telephone company's network access charge. Texts cost £1 plus your standard network charge. For the full solution call 0905 757 0142. Calls cost £1 per minute plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5.30pm).

Lexica Easy No 7505 Hard No 7506



Slide the letters either horizontally or vertically back into the grid to produce a completed crossword. Letters are allowed to slide over other letters

Train Tracks No 2283



Quintagram®

Solve all five cryptic clues using each letter underneath once only

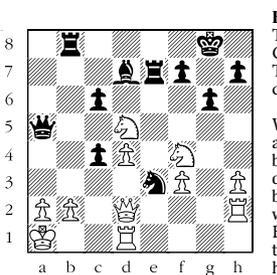
- 1 Returned some blacklisted material (4)
- 2 Open a bottle of corn processed in UK (6)
- 3 Twins get short, short skirt (6)
- 4 Am hiding friend that's Awol, perhaps (7)
- 5 Republican ruse confounded fellow making comeback (9)

A	C	C	E	E	E	G	G
I	I	I	K	K	L	M	M
N	N	N	N	O	O	R	R
R	R	S	S	T	U	U	Y

Challenge your mind with puzzle books from The Times

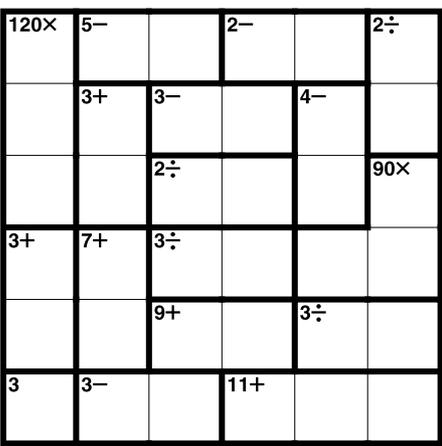


Winning Move



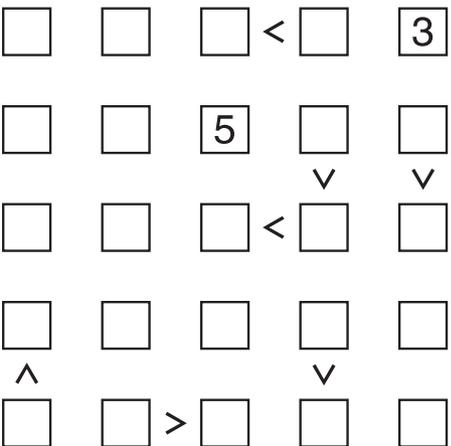
Black to play. This position is from Grigorians-Mindlin, Titled Tuesday, chess.com 2024. White has just played a tricky move by bringing the knight to d5. 1... Qxd2 will now be met by 2 Nxe7+ winning. However, Black has his own very tricky reply. What did he play?

KenKen Easy No 6247



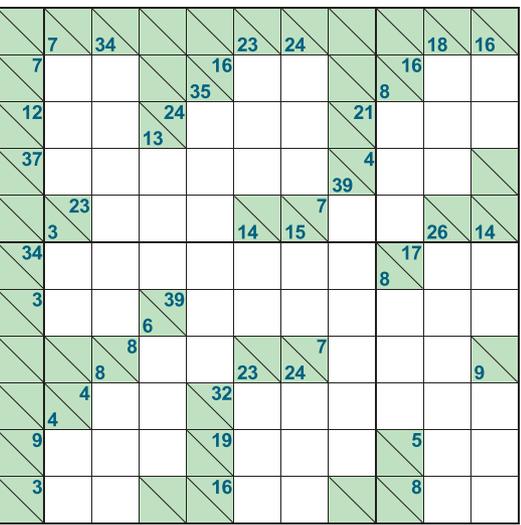
All the digits 1 to 6 must appear in every row and column. In each thick-line "block", the target number in the top left-hand corner is calculated from the digits in all the cells in the block, using the operation indicated by the symbol.

Futoshiki No 4795



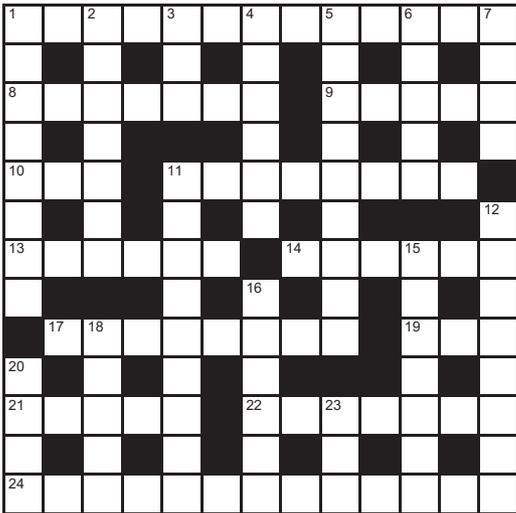
Fill the blank squares so that every row and column contains each of the numbers 1 to 5 once only. The symbols between the squares indicate whether a number is larger (>) or smaller (<) than the number next to it.

Kakuro No 3754



Fill the grid using the numbers 1 to 9 only. The numbers in each horizontal or vertical run of white squares add up to the total in the triangle to its left or above it. The same number may occur more than once in a row or column, but not within the same run of white squares.

times2 Crossword No 9571



- Across**
- 1 Uplifting act or pep talk (6,7)
 - 8 Coastal Irish county (7)
 - 9 Single element of a computerised image (5)
 - 10 July-August star sign (3)
 - 11 Rousing (8)
 - 13 Unit of astronomical distance (6)
 - 14 Hidden, clandestine (6)
- Down**
- 17 Good-looking (8)
 - 19 Greek letter often transliterated as "r" (3)
 - 21 Insect grub (5)
 - 22 Part of a horse's 3D (7)
 - 24 Area of southern Europe (13)

Solution to Crossword 9570



Need help with today's puzzle? Call 0905 757 0143 to check the answers. Calls cost £1 per minute plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390 (Mon-Fri 9am-5.30pm).

Bridge Andrew Robson

For our last look at the 2024 Provost Spring Foursomes in Bristol, a happy tournament for my team, Orca, we feature the brilliance of our semi-final opponents Fredrik Nystrom (Sweden) - Diego Brenner (Brazil).

After N-S bid to the 19-count 4♥, the Swedish declarer won West's trump lead (to East's queen) with the ace and, at trick two, led a spade, creating the threat of establishing the suit.

East beat dummy's queen of spades with the ace and led his second heart. Declarer won the king, ruffed a club then ruffed a second spade. At trick six, he advanced the king of diamonds.

West caught himself a little unawake and paused a tad before ducking his ace. Declarer now followed with the ten of diamonds to dummy's queen (felling East's jack) and ruffed a third spade, the three-three split revealed.

With spades established, declarer cashed the jack of hearts (even though it was his last trump) drawing West's third heart. He then conceded the nine of diamonds to West's ace. West had only clubs left (declarer having exhausted him of his spades). He could only cash the ace then concede the last three tricks. Ten tricks and game made.

My teammate West was (as ever) self-critical for his trance over the king of diamonds. But a quick ace (or a quick duck) may still have been read by the fine (and charming) Swedish opponent.

At the other table, your columnist and partner had bid to 3♥

Dealer: South, Vulnerability: Neither

Teams

♠ QJ7642
♥ 762
♦ Q832
♣

♠ K103
♥ 1098
♦ A75
♣ A1097

N
W
S
E

♠ A95
♥ Q5
♦ J6
♣ QJ8652

♠ 8
♥ AKJ43
♦ K1094
♣ K43

S(Nystrom)	W	N(Brenner)	E
1♥ Pass	2♥(1) Pass		
3♦(2) Pass	4♥(3) End		

- (1) Playing Five-card Majors, 2♥ (the known fit) is preferable to 1♠.
- (2) Natural/help-suit game try.
- (3) With North's wild shape, the volatility (of trick-division) will be very high, therefore, it makes sense to go all-in. Signing off in 3♥ is playing to land on a pinhead (materially gaining only when precisely nine tricks are made).

Contract: 4♥, Opening Lead: ♥10

(yes, pinhead, but we'd stopped in 2♥ and were then pushed to Three over East-West's balancing 3♣). And, no, we didn't make 3♥. Comprehensively outbid and outplayed on the board by our transnational opponents, relief came when they bid this 50-50ish 6♦ that went down.

- ♠ AQ
 - ♥ QJ8654
 - ♦ AKJ9
 - ♣ 6
 - ♠ 863
 - ♥ K7
 - ♦ Q543
 - ♣ AJ83
- Allfrey-Robson had stopped conservatively in 4♥ and we moved to the final — where things went well enough.

andrew.robson@thetimes.co.uk

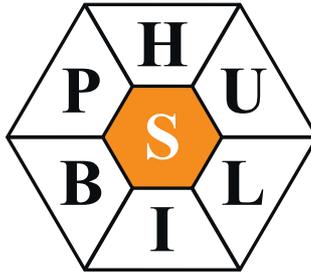
Brain Trainer

EASY 22 x 2 + 6 1/5 OF IT SQUARE IT + 8 ÷ 2 + 12 5/6 OF IT + 12 ANSWER

MEDIUM 113 + 57 + 1/5 OF IT x 4 + 76 50% OF IT - 91 3/5 OF IT + 98 x 3 ANSWER

HARDER 21 SQUARE IT + 437 50% OF IT x 4 + 768 + 1/2 OF IT + 998 + 1/2 OF IT - 654 ANSWER

Polygon

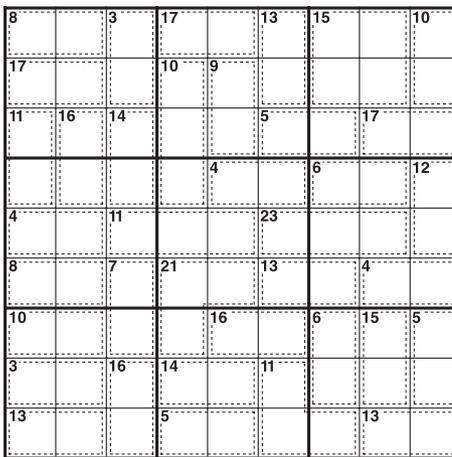


From these letters, make words of three or more letters, always including the central letter. Answers must be in the Concise Oxford Dictionary, excluding capitalised words, plurals, conjugated verbs (past tense etc), adverbs ending in LY, comparatives and superlatives. How you rate 12 words, average: 17, good; 23, very good; 29, excellent

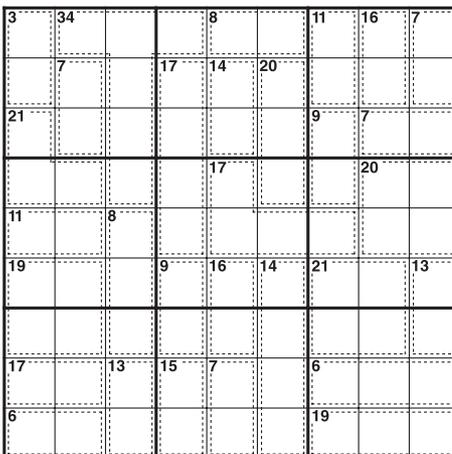
Saturday's answers

ewer, newie, newt, renew, rewind, rewinder, rewire, rewrite, twee, tweed, twin, twine, twiner, underwire, underwrite, unwee, weed, ween, weir, weird, wend, wide, widen, widener, wiener, wind, winder, wine, winter, wintery, wire, wired, wirer, wren, writ, write, writer

Killer Gentle No 9548



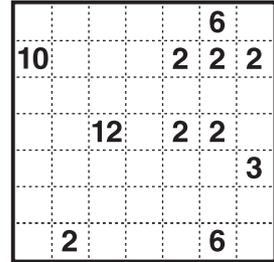
Killer Tricky No 9549



As with standard Sudoku, fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Each set of cells joined by dotted lines must add up to the target number in its top-left corner. Within each set of cells joined by dotted lines, a digit cannot be repeated.

Cluelines Stuck on Sudoku, Killer or KenKen? Call 0901 293 6263 before midnight to receive four clues for any of today's puzzles. Calls cost £1 plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390 (Mon-Fri 9am-5.30pm).

Cell Blocks No 5138



Divide the grid into square or rectangular blocks, each containing one digit only. Every block must contain the number of cells indicated by the digit inside it.

Set Square No 3757

÷ × = 4

× × +

× × + = 69

× + +

- 3 × 4 = 8

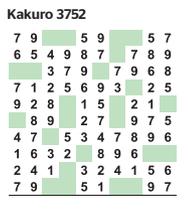
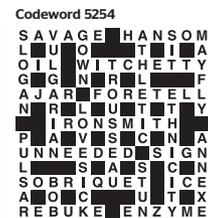
= = =

360 = 17 = 11

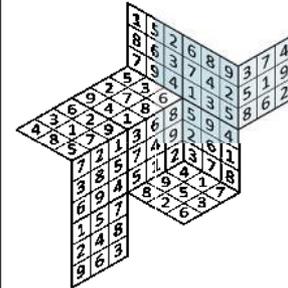
Enter each of the numbers from 1 to 9 in the grid, so that the six sums work. We've placed two numbers to get you started. Each sum should be calculated left to right or top to bottom.

Please note, BODMAS does not apply

Solutions



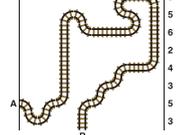
Tredoku 1844



Square Routes 277



Train Tracks 2282



Set Square 3755

9 × 8 + 3

× × +

7 + 4 + 5

- - -

6 ÷ 1 + 2

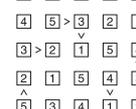
Lexica 7499



Cell Blocks 5137



Futoshiki 4793



KenKen 6246



Lexica 7500



Sudoku 15,032



Today's solutions

- Concise Quintagram
- 1 Cups
 - 2 Knife
 - 3 Scotch
 - 4 Fingers
 - 5 Buttered up

- Cryptic Quintagram
- 1 Silk
 - 2 Unicorn
 - 3 Gemini
 - 4 Acronym
 - 5 Resurgent



- Brain Trainer
- Easy 67
 - Medium 933
 - Harder 6,522

Word watch

- Icteritious (c) Yellow (Collins)
- Rascette (a) A line on the skin of the wrist in palmistry (OED)
- Well smack (a) A type of fishing boat (Chambers)

- Chess - Winning Move
- 1... Qx2+1 2 Kxa2 Ra8+ is overwhelming, eg 3 Kb1 Bf5+ 4 Qd3 Bxd3 5 Rxd3 (5 Nxd3 cxd5 wins) 5... Nxd5 6 Nxd5 Rel+7 Kc2 exd3+ and wins

Quiz

- 1 Ravens 2 Dolly Parton 3 Mary 1 4 Prado 5 Under Milk Wood 6 Huevos rancheros 7 Lancaster 8 Leeds 9 BEA or British European Airways 10 EM Delafield II Teddy Swims, real name Jaten Collin Dimsdale 12 The Chosen One 13 Bettefair 14 Oldham Athletic 15 Jo Johnson

MindGames

For extra puzzles See page 10

Word watch
David Parfitt

- Icteritious**
a Bearing a grin or grimace
b Pertaining to oats
c Yellow
- Rascette**
a A line on the skin of the wrist
b A Swiss dish of cheese and potatoes
c A mischievous girl
- Well smack**
a A type of fishing boat
b Of superlative quality
c A hearty kiss on the lips

Answers on page 15

Sudoku Easy No 15,033

	8	2		3		9		
5	6							8
9			7			6	2	5
		9			2	5		
1				3	7			2
			4	6	7	8		
8		4	2	9	5			
		6						
	5	3		4				

Difficult No 15,034

			9				8	
					8			
		5	4			7		1
1			7		5		3	2
	6			3			5	
2	5		8		4			6
4		7			2	8		
			5					
	2				3			

Fendish No 15,035

				5			1	
	7			3				
		1		7		3	4	
		5			8	9		
9	8			1	7	5		
		3			9	6		
	6		8			5	7	
	3			2				
				6			9	

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

The Times Daily Quiz Olav Bjortom

- Which birds are known as the guardians of the Tower of London?
- The clone Dolly the sheep was named after which country western singer?
- The 13 Stratford Martyrs were burned at the stake during the reign of which Tudor queen?
- Which Madrid museum houses Hieronymus Bosch's triptych *The Garden of Earthly Delights*?
- In which "play for voices" by Dylan Thomas does Mr Pugh dream of how to best poison Mrs Pugh?



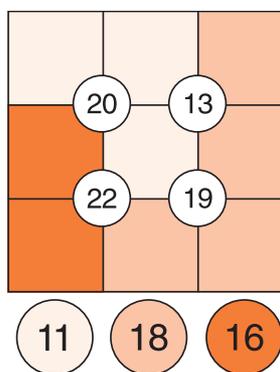
15

- The name of which Mexican breakfast dish means "ranch eggs"?
- The Wars of the Roses were fought between the houses of York and what?
- Seen as a rite of passage for students,

- Lady* (1930), a "classic of domestic literature"?
- Which US singer-songwriter's soul-infused ballad *Lose Control* reached No 2 in 2023?
 - The Mark Millar comic *American Jesus* was adapted into which 2023 Netflix series?
 - Founded in 2000, which online gambling site claims to be "the world's largest betting exchange"?
 - Which Greater Manchester football club was founded as Pine Villa FC in 1895?
 - Who is this former MP for Orpington?

Answers on page 15

Suko No 4156



Place the numbers 1 to 9 in the spaces so that the sum of the four surrounding spaces, and each colour total is correct

For interactive puzzles visit thetimes.com

The Times Quick Cryptic No 2716 by Des

1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
8						9		
10				11				
12	13			14				15
16					17			18
19				20				
21								22

- Across**
- Behold one's girl (4)
 - Football club employing round ball is concentrating (8)
 - Sponsored youngster did clog dancing outside hotel (8)
 - Amphibian that we notice partially retreating (4)
 - What kids never play at school (6)
 - Draws group — to scale, initially (6)
 - Smelt absinthe being distilled in business premises (13)
 - Has to contain brief rash causing bother (6)
 - Is capable, then led astray? That's wicked! (6)
 - Pole to fight, but not seriously (4)
 - Olga Grey is up the spout (8)
 - Game: it follows daily dance (8)
 - Hard to follow some elite military band (4)

- Down**
- Hum nothing gloomy (5)
 - Very disappointed not to be quite qualifying for Python sketch? (4,2,1,6)
 - Impose fine on illegal street trader first of all (5)
 - Cooks in less than boiling water, and spoils (7)
 - Pi to be worked out: so sum in action! (13)
 - Recently arrived in Spain, Rob went climbing (7)
 - Little piggy from the west? (3)
 - Preparation for locks is fake, low-quality, mostly (7)
 - Pasta dish ruined alas and starter of guacamole not available (7)
 - Restrict clothing for male couple (3)
 - Joyous song Lorca composed (5)
 - Lounges with sweets: ie has gone missing! (5)

Friday's solution on page 15

ASK BETTER QUESTIONS

Is conflict in space inevitable?

Every week, the *TLS* publishes book reviews, essays and poems by leading writers from around the world. Surprising, authoritative, often provocative, we inspire our readers to ask better questions.

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WE HAVE LIFT-OFF

ENGLAND FINALLY COME TO THE PARTY WITH TWO GOALS IN 196 SECONDS

PAGES 2-5

Bellingham, right, mimics Kane's celebration after the captain's winning goal

The Euros Germany 2024



Kane heads in the winning goal for England early in extra time after Slovakia heads had dropped seeing Bellingham's late intervention in normal time. The Real Madrid player had delivered just as his team faced their biggest

Bellingham produces class

ENGLAND

Bellingham 90+5
Kane 91



SLOVAKIA

Schranz 25

After extra time; 1-1 after 90min



JONATHAN NORTHCROFT

Gelsenkirchen

It was all in the plan. Bukayo Saka at left back. Only one in midfield. On with big Ivan Toney and long throws launched into Slovakia's box. And the real bit of genius was not to put a shot on target for the first 95 minutes. One-nil Slovakia with only seconds to go? No worries. Keep calm and carry on, England.

It was in this state, after some bits of football so dysfunctional it was mind-blowing, and with their stupefied supporters actually overwhelmed by worries, that England made their way to Slovakia's area again, with just the final one of the six minutes of stoppage time to go. Kyle Walker hurled another throw long, Marc Guéhi flicked on and

Jude Bellingham made a sharp, short, clever movement to peel off Denis Vavro.

Bellingham had once again struggled, and seemed beyond shattered, but he is just one of those players. Those exceptionally rare players. A bottomless pit of self-belief. A champion.

Turning his back to goal, he went up and connected perfectly, leg coming down like a pendulum and right foot striking through the middle of the ball. An astonishing overhead kick — planted into the corner of Martin Dubravka's net. An equaliser. The lifeline to end lifelines. What a moment. And off Bellingham went, yelling "who else?" and making a chatter sign with his hand, a message to his critics and the world.

Suddenly England had extra time, and Slovakia's heads drooped. The most famous victory in their history, a shock perhaps exceeding England's Euro 2016 defeat by Iceland, had been ripped away. They seemed still in shock when the additional 30 minutes began and immediately conceded a free kick, which Cole Palmer spun into their box.

Dubravka punched it out. Eberechi Eze mishit a shot. The ball skewed to Toney and the substitute striker headed it across goal — and there was Harry Kane six yards out. Kane had toiled even more than Bellingham but he is a champion too and powered his header home.

Behind the goal, England supporters,

SOUTHGATE: SUPER SUB TONEY 'HAD THE HUMPH'

Gareth Southgate revealed that Ivan Toney was not best pleased with being asked to come on in the final minutes against Slovakia — before setting up the winning goal.

"I knew Toney had the hump with me for me putting him on," Southgate said. "I could tell from his face what he was thinking and I could understand it. I was putting him on with a minute to go and any player is going to think, 'I have been sat for the tournament and you have not used me.'"

"I said to him this might not be how you like it, but this could be the moment. His presence would have unsettled them and he had a good bit of play for the second goal. I think he has just about forgiven me now."

Southgate added that he had told the players before the tournament about the importance of squad players during England's victorious World Cup campaign in 1966.

"We showed players a presentation about 1966 and how Geoff Hurst hadn't played until the quarter-finals," he added. "We wanted to highlight that tournaments take you in strange places and difficult routes. The team wasn't always flying, they'd have been criticised at the start. We wanted to highlight the value of the squad."

went potty. Of course, the smooth, controlled performance of a team looking likely to win Euro 2024 would have been better but there was a certain, drunken fun in winning like this.

When everyone sobers up, and the analysis starts, the worries will come again in the form of questions. How could England's team of Ballon d'Or contenders, all-time record breakers and footballers of the year, be so disjointed for a fourth consecutive match? How could they come so close to losing to a bunch of veterans and Slovan Bratislava triers?

Will Luke Shaw ever be fit? Saka wants to know because left wingback was one of the four positions he ended up playing during the crazy endgame. And can Southgate seriously go again with the same blend at the top of the pitch? And who comes in for Guéhi, whose early booking means he is suspended for Saturday's quarter-final with Switzerland?

But maybe that's for tomorrow. Maybe, for now, England fans should just laugh and embrace the chaos. The football-bloody-hell of it all. The chance to enjoy the kind of unhinged turnaround that previously seemed to happen only for other national teams.

Maybe they should all be like the lads, on the concourse of the Arena AufSchalke, who were bouncing off towards the bars singing *Hey Jude*. Maybe they should be like Bellingham himself who, with his youthful chutzpah, after ac-

cepting the man of the match award, almost persuaded the press conference room that England had played well.

For who knows where this will end? Under Southgate, England had tried and not quite managed to win tournaments the methodical way so why not try the mad way? One thing that cannot be questioned is this group and their manager's character.

He admits that he has not found the right balance with his team, and it seemed he should have made substitutions earlier. England were neither playing through Slovakia's pressure nor pressing well themselves, and yet it took until the 66th minute for him to introduce Palmer, and a further 18 minutes to bring on Eze, while waiting until the fourth minute of stoppage time to replace Phil Foden with Toney.

But, timings aside, the changes worked and Southgate was correct in two suppositions — that if England kept probing away, an equaliser would come, and that even a minute was enough for the unorthodox Toney to make a difference. And how Bellingham dug deep, Kane too, also Declan Rice — who was relentless. What a shift Saka put in and what character it took for Eze to do a stint at left wingback, even defending crosses at the far post.

We even had an opposition coach — Francesco Calzona — complaining about English shithousery when seeing out the game, so maybe this team have acquired the streetwise streak other

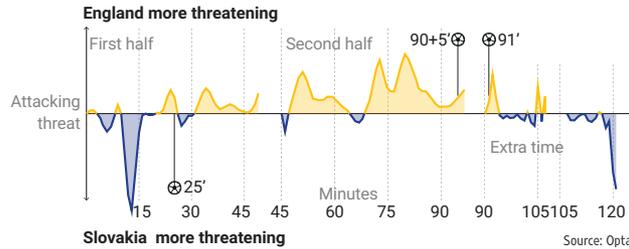


Southgate enjoys the moment of England's victory with Toney, one of his substitutes, who played a part in Kane's goal in extra time. The final whistle was greeted by unedifying pushing and shoving between Rice and Calzona, the Slovakia manager, who had earlier watched his side come within seconds of one of the great upsets



ENGLAND'S SLOW START AND NERVY FINISH

As Opta's match momentum graphic shows, England started timidly, ramped up the pressure before scoring, and dropped off once they had the lead



embarrassment since Iceland in 2016

amid the chaos

England teams lacked. By the end of his press conference, Southgate was talking about 1966 and talking up Shaw's chance of being back for Switzerland so, who knows? Embrace that chaos, believe in the "plan".

But you feel for Slovakia. What a game plan Calzona came up with and what a game they played. In England's faces and under England's feet, they caused havoc with their pressing and brave counterattacks.

From the kick-off they went for it, lining up eight players on the halfway line who charged towards England's box, as Milan Skriniar tried to pump a long ball forward. It smashed off Kane's head and looped back to Dubravka, but Slovakia were unabashed.

Kieran Trippier, who was all over the place, knocked a poor ball towards Guéhi, forcing Guéhi to foul David Strelec, and take a booking. Juraj Kucka almost connected with a cross from the free kick. Soon, David Hancko was overlapping and rolling a shot uncomfortably close to Jordan Pickford's post.

With a superb pass, Bellingham set up Trippier, who skied his shot so badly it almost hit the Arena AufSchalke's roof. Kobbie Mainoo was booked for leaving a foot in on Ondrej Duda, and Bellingham for tripping Lukas Haraslin. All in the first 20 minutes — during

which Walker, England's most experienced footballer, had the discipline of a seven-year-old.

What was going on? Trippier had to clear in front of his posts after Slovakia attacked with Walker out of position. John Stones had about the same composure as Walker and needed Rice to bail out England after a dreadful header straight to Strelec.

Mainoo's smart, first-time passing made a difference in possession but he is not a defensive midfielder, leaving Rice with too much to do in the middle. England would end the first half without a shot on target for the first time in a tournament game since 1986.

And 1-0 down. The inevitable Slovakian goal came in the 25th minute. A horror show. The attack began with a long ball mishit right up in the air by Vavro and Guéhi getting beaten easily contesting a header. He hurt his shoulder, causing him to stop, fatally, and Kucka slid an excellent pass into the space Guéhi had left. Coming in from the right flank was Ivan Schranz, who arrived from the blindside of Rice, who lacked awareness, and in sight of Mainoo who lacked any urgency to get across. Schranz scored with a composed shot past Pickford.

Would there be a change in the second period? Not for a long time. England were playing better but still

without calm, demonstrated when Foden tapped in for what would have been an excellent team goal, only to have run offside in his excitability.

The anarchy continued. Bellingham, didn't check if Stones was ready and rolled a free kick that Strelec intercepted to almost score with a lob from the halfway line. Trippier, retrieving possession after Foden whacked a free kick into the wall, then hammered a long, useless pass out of play.

Southgate ought to have changed things then. As it was, he waited a further few minutes, for Trippier to hurt himself in a challenge with Peter Pekarik, before finally sending on Palmer, to ironic cheers from England supporters.

Palmer went to the right and Saka went to left back and almost immediately Palmer made a difference, meandering infield to tease dangerous cross, which just eluded Foden's head.

Slovakia, experienced and wily, kept breaking up the game and always left enough players up to keep England worrying about counterattacks. They were very like the Iceland side of 2016, right down to the strips they wore.

When Kane miscued a header from Foden's free kick, with an empty net beckoning, and then shanked wide after Rice hit the post, you thought this really was going to be Iceland: The Sequel. But a certain young No10 had a different ending in mind. Wow, Jude. Saved by the Bell.

THE TEAMS RATED

BY TONY CASCARINO

ENGLAND (4-2-3-1)



JORDAN PICKFORD EVERTON He couldn't do much about the Slovakia goal, but he was a bit indecisive with his passing, sometimes taking wrong options	6	BUKAYO SAKA ARSENAL Struggles to replicate what he does for club because England's style is too slow. Still looked sharp and did lots of unselfish work	6
KYLE WALKER MAN CITY One of his worst games for England. Was outwitted a few times in the first half, including when they nearly fell 2-0 down	5	JUDE BELLINGHAM REAL MADRID It's clear he is a big-time player — you need a lot of confidence to attempt a scissor-kick shot when trailing deep into added time	7
JOHN STONES MAN CITY He hasn't really got started in this tournament yet. Lost a lot of headers and didn't handle Slovakia striker Strelec well	5	PHIL FODEN MAN CITY Loads of misplaced passes in the first half and has got frustrated a lot in this tournament but you can never question his heart	6
MARC GUEHI CRYSTAL PALACE Made three errors for Slovakia's goal. Gave the ball away, was beaten by a flick on, and finally allowed Schranz to run clear	6	HARRY KANE (C) BAYERN MUNICH He needs a partner up front. When he scored it was after Toney had come on and teed him up. That's why you can never drop Kane	7
KIERAN TRIPPIER NEWCASTLE Was more offensive than he has been in other games, which helped England a bit, but his passing was not good enough	6	GARETH SOUTHGATE MANAGER He was a minute and a half from exiting the Euros — it wasn't his finest hour. He has to be more pro-active earlier in the game	5
KOBBIE MAINOO MAN UNITED Hard for a teenager to come into a team not playing well, but kept the ball nicely. Was the best midfielder until the later stages	6	SUBSTITUTES Cole Palmer (for Trippier, 66min) 7. He skipped past a couple of players and has great vision all over on the pitch. Eberechi Eze (Mainoo, 84) 6. He was surprised he came on because I thought England would look to be more direct, but he helped make a difference. Ivan Toney (Foden, 90+4) 7. Won the free kick ahead of the second goal, eventually setting it up for Kane. Conor Gallagher (Kane, 106). Ezri Konsa (Bellingham, 106).	
DECLAN RICE ARSENAL Did a lot of donkey work around the pitch, but found it hard to make an impact when helping England's attack	6	Bookings Guéhi, Mainoo, Bellingham. Referee H Meler (Turkey).	
		TOTAL	71

SLOVAKIA (4-3-3)



Martin Dubravka Newcastle United	8	Ondrej Duda Verona	7
Peter Pekarik Hertha Berlin	7	Ivan Schranz Slavia Prague	8
Denis Vavro Copenhagen	8	David Strelec Slovan Bratislava	8
Milan Skriniar (c) Paris Saint-Germain	8	Lukas Haraslin Sparta Prague	7
David Hancko Feyenoord	7	Francesco Calzona Manager	7
Juraj Kucka Slovan Bratislava	7		
Stanislav Lobotka Napoli	6	TOTAL	88

The Euros Germany 2024

This felt like Iceland again until stars dug deep for Southgate

But manager needs team to match the heart they showed with quality if they want to beat Switzerland, writes **Martin Samuel**



Some may think they did it despite him. Some may imagine they did it for him. A precious few may even believe they did it because of him. None of that matters, really. This is tournament football. So all that matters, really, is they did it. Gareth Southgate's England are once again in the European Championship quarter-finals.

Do you think the greatest football nations, the ones with many stars on the shirt, not just a lonely one, sweat the small stuff? Do you think they dwell, after every victory, on whether it was deserved and what it says about the state of the nation. No. It's on to the next week, and the next round, and the tournament starts here. And it has to be that way, because another session of navel-gazing is the last thing contenders need.

For one very simple truth is paramount. Play like this next Saturday in Düsseldorf and England will lose to Switzerland. Slovakia are nowhere near as good as Switzerland; and Slovakia were a minute from eliminating England in Gelsenkirchen.

It took arguably the best goal in England's European Championship history — OK, the second-best because Paul Gascoigne's against Scotland in 1996 still takes some beating — to drag England into extra time, and then a winner that was in some small way a comedy of errors to get them through. Southgate must now have serious questions about the make-up of his team, such as the way they got back into the game and the shortcomings before, but the job got done, again. Not well, not prettily, and if there was a prime emotion on the night it was probably bewilderment.

Yet there is now an opportunity to reset. Switzerland couldn't hold a lead against Germany, just as Slovakia failed to get over the line with England. History can weigh heavily on the smaller nations, no matter their bravery, too. England just have to turn up, as a collection of exceptional players. European champions. Footballers of the Year. This is what they did between minutes 90+5 and 91, the rather bizarre time frame in which the goals were scored.

It makes it appear as if England went back in time, which in many ways they did — to 2016 and Nice, against Iceland. This game had many similarities. The colours, the half-time score, the shock of the blue, and a disjointed, unconvincing England display that risked utter calamity, and the exit of a manager in disgrace. If, during his progress as England manager, Southgate has climbed a

THROWS ARE WAY FORWARD

THOMAS GRONNEMARK
Throw-in coach

You need a bit of luck, sometimes, but you have to make it yourself.

When Kyle Walker threw the ball into the box with only 90 seconds remaining, England were desperate. This was not pre-rehearsed. However the throw itself was extremely high quality, which made the luck England needed.

It had great length — to the edge of the six-yard box — flatness and pace. All Marc Guéhi had to do was hold his opponent off, and flick it behind him.

Once you make the flick-on, it's just like pinball: you never know where it's going to land, but in this instance there were five players behind Guéhi, and four who were in a good position to attack the ball.

Bellingham moved smartly by positioning himself against the defender and then separating himself at the last second, it was very intelligent.

Funnily enough, low-quality throw-ins have been a theme of the Euros. Lots of teams have — when under pressure — panicked and thrown a long, low-quality ball. Loopy balls that don't reach the six-yard-box are easy to defend.

The main thing is to have a good length on the throw, because the longer you can throw, the more creative you can be.

The key thing is to have lots of players in the box and to keep them on their toes so they can react, just like Bellingham did with his overhead kick.

To me, a world-class throw-in is more dangerous than a world-class corner, because you can put it almost anywhere you want, and they are more consistent too. One problem I've noticed is how some national teams have routines which they force.

For example, in England's match with Denmark, they attempted to force a routine where they passed into Harry Kane, so he could switch play. But it was obvious and Denmark were able to pressure him, win the ball and eventually score.

Long throws aren't for everyone, sometimes a fast throw with quick movement is better depending on the style of the team.

But if you can deliver it with quality, they can be a genuine attacking set piece.



succession of ladders, then ending in defeat by third-place qualifiers represented one enormous snake, the type with a head at the top of the board and a tail that ends at square one.

Had Southgate's time ended in such bitter humiliation, so much would have come back to haunt England. The antipathy, the animosity, the fear. Instead the most positive takeaway from this night is that heart goes a long way in football, too. And when the chips were down, England had plenty. Class, too, obviously, because Jude Bellingham's equalising goal was an overhead kick, and you won't see many of those completed under such enormous pressure in the final minute of a knockout tie. Yet to bounce into extra time and score again so quickly showed a team that bored deep into reserves of courage.

They knew what was coming had they lost. They knew what would be said, written, screamed, thrown. So, yes, they did it for themselves; but for Southgate and his staff, too. "We would do anything to protect this

manager," Declan Rice said. And it's true. Unlike many who hit the phones and the keyboards, they like Southgate. So they didn't just let him sink out of the tournament into professional oblivion, his reputation for ever stained. They fought. And because they fought, they won. All of them, together.

Not every performance of note got recognition on the scoresheet. Bellingham, and later Harry Kane, saw England through, but a word too for Bukayo Saka. It would have been easy for Southgate to bow to external voices and swap him out to get Cole Palmer in, but he resisted.

Saka repaid that loyalty, not so much with a performance that showed why Palmer is in his shadow, because the Chelsea man still impressed out wide as a substitute, but with a performance that showed why Southgate loves him.

Right forward, left back, right back, Saka played three roles over the two hours. He won't have liked it, but he stuck at it. It's a special relationship and, one imagines, it won't be over



Bellingham scores the equalising goal for England with a stunning overhead kick five

until the last game of Southgate's tenure is complete.

No100 is on Saturday, so we must hope England's displays to this point have been the football equivalent of cricket's nervous nineties and, having steered England to a round in which the word "final" appears, Southgate may at last alight on a starting XI capable of matching one of the most impressive teams in the tournament so far. Switzerland are good. Better than England have been, certainly.

Yet which England will step out in Düsseldorf's Merkur Spiel-Arena? We know Marc Guéhi will be missing, handed a second booking by the over-officious Umut Meler, and the appearance of Ezri Konsa as a late substitute suggests his replacement.

Yet will Southgate find room for Palmer this time? And, if so, for whom? Bellingham's goal and Saka's versatility made pressing cases, and while this was not Phil Foden's best night, he has been England's best forward at the tournament so far. Yet Palmer's urgency continues to advocate for inclusion. In midfield,

Rice and Kobbie Mainoo are not the perfect pairing — they've had a handful of games, for heaven's sake — but are better than what we've so far seen.

Meanwhile, Ivan Toney worked unselfishly with his back to goal once on, and won the header that led to Kane's winner. That it came from an Eberechi Eze shot so mistimed it could have gone anywhere will hand further ammunition to those who view Southgate as a mediocre coach who keeps getting lucky.

Yet England has seen plenty of mediocrity in the past, yet not too many runs like this have been the product. Semi-final, final, quarter-final and quarter-final again. Sven-Göran Eriksson never went further than this stage, do not forget. Sir Bobby Robson did it once.

Doesn't mean England have played well. Doesn't make Southgate a genius. His last game will be on Saturday unless he gets more from his men. But he's here, and so are they. In tournaments, that's the first part of the battle won.



TIMES PHOTOGRAPHER BRADLEY ORMESHER

minutes into added time at the end of the second half, showing a unique ability to execute a difficult skill under immense pressure

Bellingham: I've silenced my critics

PAUL JOYCE

Jude Bellingham said he had thrown some of the “rubbish” aimed at him and his team-mates back in the face of their doubters after his stunning bicycle kick saved England’s Euro 2024 campaign. The midfielder, who turned 21 on Saturday, showcased his happy knack of shining on the grandest of occasions with an equalising goal to peg back Slovakia in the fifth-added minute. Harry Kane’s extra-time winner then set up a quarter-final showdown with Switzerland in Düsseldorf next Saturday, with Bellingham hoping the manner of their victory can inspire the team to new heights.

Bellingham said he had taken some of the criticism aimed at Southgate’s squad “personally” and used them as fuel. “You know what I mean by the rubbish,” he said. “Playing for England should be the most proud moment of your career but often it’s quite difficult. “There’s a really high, intense pressure. The fans expect a lot from us. “People talk a lot. You do have to take it personally a little bit. We work so hard at this game. We work hard to put on a performance for the fans, sometimes it doesn’t go well and sometimes it feels like there’s a bit of a pile on. It’s not nice to hear. But you can always use it and for moments like that, it’s nice to throw it back to some people.” Bellingham, who had scored England’s winner in Gelsenkirchen against Serbia two weeks ago, celebrated his goal by mouthing “who else” as his character and personality changed the course of a high-octane game once again. He admitted it was one of the best feelings he has had in his career. “It’s a feeling that is like no other,” he said. “In international football, in knockout football, you’re 30 seconds

from going home, having to listen to all the rubbish, feeling like you have let a nation of people down. In one kick of the ball, everything can change. “It’s very difficult when you talk in press conferences and interviews to talk as openly as footballers want to because they’re always judged. For me, football, being on the pitch, scoring goals and celebrating is my release. “Maybe it [shouting ‘who else’] was a message to a few people. I was very happy at the end.” England will now regroup, with Southgate having to resolve a growing number of issues before facing the Swiss. Marc Guéhi is suspended after picking up a second yellow card of the tournament, while the fitness of Kieran Trippier will need to be checked. Luke Shaw was once again not involved, but Southgate said the left back, who has not played since February 18, “has a chance” for the weekend. Declan Rice appeared to shout abuse at a member of Slovakia’s backroom staff, Alessandro Bulfoni, after the final whistle although the head coach, Francesco Calzona, played down the row.

THE GAME RECAPPED

PAUL JOYCE ON THE KEY TALKING POINTS FROM GELSENKIRCHEN



Echoes of Platt in Jude’s thrilling late show

For the vast majority of this tournament, England’s set pieces had been predictable or wayward. Then came two in two minutes either side of a break for extra time to transform the fortunes of Gareth Southgate’s side and keep them alive in this competition. They were integral to England’s progress at the World Cup in 2018 when the nation started to believe again and they helped England clamber off the canvas in the most dramatic of circumstances here in Gelsenkirchen yesterday. Kyle Walker’s long throw-in was headed on by Marc Guéhi for Jude Bellingham’s stunning bicycle kick

and then at the start of extra time Cole Palmer’s free kick was met by a punch from the Slovakia goalkeeper Martin Dubravka. Eberechi Eze’s shot was off target, but Ivan Toney’s alertness kept the ball alive, his header teed up Harry Kane to finish with one of his own at the far post. Earlier, Kane had wasted a glaring headed chance from Phil Foden’s delivery. The timing of Bellingham’s goal brought echoes of David Platt against Belgium at Italia ’90, when his now iconic hooked volley from a Paul Gascoigne set piece propelled England into the quarter-finals of a major competition.

Toney the unlikely super sub for Southgate

When Gareth Southgate rolled the dice in the fourth minute of added time with England still trailing and having not yet had a shot on target, Ivan Toney was probably not the substitute many were expecting. Anthony Gordon had spent so much time warming up that you half expected his running stats to be included in Uefa’s post-match analysis. Yet while he remained on the bench, Toney stepped up for his tournament debut, and proved to be an inspired choice.

He blocked the Slovakia defender Norbert Gyomber at the throw-in that led to Bellingham’s goal, teed up Kane for the winner with a header after Eze’s wayward shot, and was then heading away dangerous Slovakian corners in the final moments, before shooting just over at the other end. England talk a lot about “finishers”, not substitutes, and Toney’s mindset in coming on late and influencing the outcome is the perfect example of that.

Guéhi will be sorely missed in quarter-final

Going into the knockout stage, England’s defence had been among the best at this tournament. They boasted the lowest expected goals (xG) faced and the lowest xG per shot faced of all the teams. Yet they began this match in rather shambolic fashion, with Walker repeatedly beaten by Lukas Haraslin and Kieran Trippier’s difficulties as a right-footed player performing at left back evident when he underhit a pass intended for Guéhi.

The Crystal Palace centre back brought down Slovakia’s David Strelec and was booked for the second time in four matches, meaning he will now be suspended for Saturday’s quarter-final against Switzerland. Guéhi produced an excellent block soon after to thwart Haraslin and he will be missed given his form alongside John Stones at the heart of England’s defence. Ezri Konsa will hope to benefit, while England could also turn to Lewis Dunk.

Three-man defence could be the answer

There is an alternative whereby England switch to the three-man defence they finished with here in what would offer another parallel with Italia ’90. By the end, Walker, Stones and Guéhi were the centre halves with Bukayo Saka and Eze as the wingbacks. Overall, England had four different left backs or wingbacks in this game, with Trippier, Saka, Eze and Konsa all deployed there over the course of two hours. Southgate had been asked about the possibility of utilising a back three on the eve of the tournament and said it was not something he had thought about. He said he did not want to “shoehorn” players into positions. Yet it feels that is all that has been happening since England arrived here.

Southgate no closer to a midfield solution

Whatever Southgate has wanted from his midfield at Euro 2024, this still wasn’t it — even though he is now on his third permutation. After the brief experiment of Trent Alexander-Arnold and then the even briefer use of Conor Gallagher, Kobbie Mainoo, left, was given his chance. He was a threat at times, but England did not have control and their build-up was often too ponderous, hence the lack of opportunities. There is still no clear idea about England’s pattern of play. When a player receives the ball, he does not know how to use it, everything becomes slow and passes go backwards or sideways. Maybe Declan Rice tries to break lines. Or Bellingham takes on a man. It has been too individualistic.



The Euros Germany 2024

Spain are perfect blend of talent – and team to beat

SPAIN

Rodri 39
Ruiz 51
Williams 75
Olmo 83



GEORGIA

Le Normand (og) 18



JAMES GHEERBRANT

Cologne

Spain set up a blockbuster quarter-final against Germany with a performance to confirm their status as one of the favourites for this title.

No team at this European Championship has played better football than *La Roja*, and despite the shock of conceding their first goal of the tournament, and the indomitable approach of Georgia, ultimately this was a comfortable, confident and cohesive victory.

The overlapping wingbacks Dani Carvajal and Marc Cucurella were a force, the midfield three looks like a perfect blend of traits, but the stars once again were the two wingers, Nico Williams and Lamine Yamal.

Williams in particular was magnificent, ending with a goal and an assist — on this evidence, he will pose a stiff test for Joshua Kimmich — but it was also simply a joy to see the devil and daring in the wing play of those two and Georgia's audacious Khvicha Kvaratskhelia. He and his team have enriched this tournament.

It was all Spain in the early stages. Carvajal crossed from the right, and Pedri, stretching, drew a save from Giorgi Mamardashvili, who then kept

out Carvajal's header from a corner. After 15 minutes, Spain had had 90 per cent possession, and attempted more crosses than in their entire group game against Croatia. This was dominance of an extraordinary degree. But it was also the exact game that both teams had expected. As Georgia batted down against the red tide, plugging gaps and winning duels, you felt their confidence, their sense of belonging, grow.

Then came an almost unbelievable moment. From their first attack, Georgia's right wingback Otar Kakabadze whipped in a terrific cross which curved around two Spanish defenders, and in the six-yard box, Robin Le Normand could sense Kvaratskhelia behind him. Frozen in indecision, the centre back let the ball hit him and saw it cannon past Unai Simón. The Georgia fans jumped and clutched each other, lost in incredulous jubilation. To that point, their team had had zero shots, no touches in Spain's box, not a single knockout game in their history. Then suddenly, out of nothing: everything.

With Spain rocked, Georgia mounted a dangerous transition. Kvaratskhelia scampered towards the box, leading a three-on-three, and there was a shrill rush of noise around the stadium; Le Normand, at a moment of personal and positional vulnerability, made a well-timed tackle.

Spain's attacks felt a little ponderous, whereas Georgia's periodic raids into open space felt laced with urgency and jeopardy. Another dangerous breakaway ended with Georges Mikautadze running out of road as he tried to go alone. Then Kvaratskhelia attempted an overhead kick, and almost lost his boot in Cucurella's hedge of hair.

With Georgia falling back deeper, there was space on the edge of the box, and when the ball was worked to Rodri, his shot was unerring, picking out the bottom corner of Mamardashvili's net. Georgia weren't done though. Their

intrepid streak, their irrepressible belief that they are the protagonists of every match they play, has been one of the joys of this tournament, and that quality was not about to desert them. After half-time, Kvaratskhelia spotted Simón off his line and took a shot from the centre circle which was a whisker away from curling inside the post.

Spain's quality was a powerful force though, and eventually it told. From a half-cleared free kick, Yamal drifted out wide and curled a delicious cross to the back post, headed down and in by Fabián Ruiz. Yamal then rifled a low shot wide.

Georgia nearly conspired in putting the game out of their own reach: a terrible giveaway by Giorgi Kochorashvili, delivering a blind square pass across his own box teed up Yamal, who shot wide from 15 yards.

Georgia's sense of adventure was thrilling, but it was also, ultimately, their undoing. Spain's counter was swift, simple, brutal. A lofted pass out of defence found Williams on halfway. The winger ran at Giorgi Gvelesiani, spirited the ball past him with a shimmy of his hips, and fired it unstopably into the roof of Mamardashvili's net.

There was time for Dani Olmo to sweep in a fourth from the edge of the box. By the end, Spain were toying with their opponents. They look like the team to beat.

RATINGS

Spain (4-3-3): U Simón 7 — D Carvajal 7 (J Navas 81 min), R Le Normand 6, A Laporte 6, M Cucurella 7 (A Grimaldo 66, 6) — Pedri 7 (D Olmo 52, 8), Rodri 7, Fabián Ruiz 8 (M Merino 81) — L Yamal 8, A Morata 7 (M Oyarzabal 67, 6), N Williams 8.

Booked

Georgia (5-3-2): G Mamardashvili 7 — O Kakabadze 6, G Gvelesiani 6 (N Kvekveskiri 79), G Khashia 6, L Dvali 6, L Lochoshvili 6 (G Tshitashvili 63, 6) — G Chakvetadze 6 (Z Davitashvili 63, 6), O Kiteishvili 6 (S Altunashvili 41, 6), G Kochorashvili 6 — G Mikautadze 7 (B Zivzivadze 79), K Kvaratskhelia 8. **Booked** Davitashvili. **Referee** F. Letexier (Fr).



Williams cuts inside and sends an unstoppable shot into the Georgia net to give Spain

Khaka-Akanji 'axis' and a Bolognese flavour – how the

Confident, adaptable side full of leaders are eyeing England upset, writes

Ian Hawkey



Murat Yakin, the head coach of Switzerland, paused the usual routines of preparation last week to join his players in front of a short video. It had nothing to do with conventional homework. Rather, it had been put together by the squad's support staff, a special thank-you from them for, as Yakin described it, "the wonderful emotions we've been able to share together".

That was before Saturday's

knockout victory over Italy, hitherto the title holders at these Euros, pushed the Swiss into the last eight of Euro 2024. Yakin had been moved by the video. He resolved the players will put their creative minds together to make a short film in return, dedicated to the unsung, backroom members of Camp Switzerland.

The gesture, Yakin thought, reflected a "terrific union between us," a statement with special resonance for a squad where there have been schisms in the recent past, not least between Yakin and his captain, Granit Khaka; where, this being Switzerland, not everybody shares the same first language, and where, last week, a more jittery staff might have been apprehensive about putting onto hard-drive any video at all, lest it find its way into the wrong hands. Laptops belonging to some Swiss technical staff were stolen

before the triumph over Italy, although the national FA reports that no information on them had any value for tactical espionage.

Besides, a significant part of what you need to know about why the Swiss, so comfortable in defeating a lacklustre Italy, so close to beating Germany in their previous fixture, function so well can be gleaned from studying footage of the most sophisticated club sides in England's Premier League, Germany's Bundesliga and, arguably, Italy's Serie A over the past nine months. Yakin's good fortune is that he can build his side around footballers who have been thriving and growing under the watch of some of the most respected and fashionable coaches in Europe; his skill is to channel that in the cause of the national side.

Switzerland draw on a base of reigning club champions, from



Captain Granit Khaka has been a key part of an inspirational Swiss display so far

goalkeeper Yann Sommer, a 2023-24 scudetto winner with Inter Milan, to Manuel Akanji, of Manchester City, to Khaka, totem of Bundesliga and German Cup winners Bayer Leverkusen. It's "an axis," Yakin believes, "that gives other players the confidence to take more risks."

They have the confidence to steer strategic decisions, too. Word is that senior players were influential in recommending to Yakin and his assistant Giorgio Contini that Switzerland, who had some anxious moments in qualifying for the Euros, should switch to a back three, with wing backs, for the tournament. It was an argument made all the stronger while Akanji was, fairly regularly, being encouraged by Pep Guardiola at City to believe he has the range to shift from centre back to full back, or to step into midfield. Khaka, who joined Leverkusen



a two-goal cushion and set up a quarter-final against Germany, the tournament hosts

Swiss mix came together with perfect timing

from Arsenal last summer, was meanwhile making his case, week after week, as a master at acting both as shield for a refined three-at-the-back and as the prompter of slick transitions. It's what Xhaka has been doing for the outstanding club team in Germany. "At Leverkusen, the coach, Xabi Alonso, gave Granit a more important role, as the control centre of the team," Yakin told Bild-Zeitung.

There's been progress, too, in aspects of Xhaka's self-control: the footballer who more often than not would rack up bookings into double figures per Premier League campaign remains combative, but the record shows he is more careful about accumulating cards. The club bookings have reduced and, unlike at the last Euros, when Xhaka was suspended for Switzerland's quarter-final against Spain, the Swiss skipper

will, fitness permitting, be available for Saturday's Düsseldorf quarter-final, ready to extend his personal unbeaten run on German soil to 44 games, taking in his wonder year with Leverkusen's Invincibles and his outings here with Switzerland.

Xhaka was conspicuous in the lead-in to both goals against Italy, quick to make good use of Italian carelessness in possession immediately after the second-half resumption, and from there, as architect of the move that, barely 30 seconds later, finished with Ruben Vargas putting the Swiss 2-0 up. He had set the patient tempo while Switzerland strung together more than 30 uninterrupted passes on the way to the first goal, a sequence that featured three club colleagues fluently breaking lines, their instincts for one another's movements drawing on months of rehearsal on the practice pitch at

Deschamps tries to find real France by packing in all stars

JAMES GHEERBRANT

Düsseldorf

A meeting between Europe's two top-ranked national teams in a European Championship knockout game should feel like a seismic event. But while the round-of-16 match between Belgium and France in Düsseldorf has an undeniable glamour and intrigue to it, it does not quite have the sense of hugeness you might expect. Both these teams seemed to shrink into themselves a little bit in the group stage, and were pitched into each other's path by unexpected and underwhelming draws in their final games, against Ukraine and Poland respectively.

France will be favourites. Didier Deschamps' team have a very formidable record at major tournaments, and are replete with elite talent. The indications are that the France manager is considering a line-up tweak which will accommodate as many of his most stellar individuals as possible: a 4-4-2 diamond with Aurélien Tchouaméni at the base, N'Golo Kanté and Adrien Rabiot either side, Antoine Griezmann at the tip and Kylian Mbappé and Marcus Thuram up front. It would be the first time that Tchouaméni, Kanté, Griezmann and Mbappé have started together for Les Bleus since a Nations League game against Denmark two years ago.

The fourth game in a major tournament is, naturally, a pivotal moment, where teams emerge from the chrysalis of the group stage, play their first knockout game and, if they aspire to go all the way, reach the halfway point of their journey. For Mbappé, match No 4 has always been where his tournament reaches a crescendo. In the 2018 World Cup, he gave that unforgettable performance against Argentina, scoring twice and winning a penalty; at the last European Championship, he missed the crucial penalty in the shoot-out against Switzerland; at the 2022 World Cup, he scored twice and produced an assist against Poland.

After the facial injury he suffered against Holland, Mbappé will be a masked man — and a marked one. The Belgium FA were forced to issue an apo-

logy after they posted a misjudged jockey video on the team's social accounts, in which the comedic Pablo Andres sang, "Who will tackle Mbappé on the shin?", and the defensive midfielder Amadou Onana chanted his own name in response. "It was not the intention to attack anyone, but we misjudged it," the team's press officer said.

Everton's Onana is likely to start in the midfield pivot, but Domenico Tedesco has a decision to make over who partners him. Orel Mangala is the more defensive option and started Belgium's first game against Slovakia; Youri Tielemans offers more going forward and scored in their best performance so far, against Romania, but was disappointing against Ukraine.

That match ended with the extraordinary spectacle of Kevin De Bruyne directing his team-mates to turn their backs on the Belgium fans, who had responded to their tentative approach with a hail of boos and whistles. In the man of the match press conference, De Bruyne demurred when asked about the reaction of the supporters, saying only: "We need our fans." Against such stiff opposition, he is probably right.

Four Belgium players survive from the 2018 World Cup semi-final against France: De Bruyne, Jan Vertonghen, Romelu Lukaku and Yannick Carrasco, the last remnants of a golden generation. Vertonghen and Carrasco are likely playing their final tournament, and De Bruyne, at 33, is unlikely to make the next Euros in 2028.

For France, the number is the same: Kanté, Mbappé, Griezmann and Olivier Giroud. Blaise Matuidi and Paul Pogba will also be in attendance with Pogba making a rare public appearance since his four-year doping ban.

Although both teams have been disappointing so far, each could argue justly that they have played good football in flashes; particularly France, who have somehow mustered only a penalty and an own goal from chances worth 5.7 expected goals in their first three group games. With four games standing between them and a major title which would establish them as the dominant, dynastic national team of the era, the time has come for them to sharpen up.

TODAY AT THE EUROS

France v Belgium

Round of 16, Merkur Spiel-Arena,

Düsseldorf

Kick-off: today, 5pm (6pm local time)

TV: ITV Radio: talkSPORT, BBC 5 Live

Referee: G Nyberg (Sweden)

France (possible); 4-2-3-1



Belgium (possible); 4-2-3-1

Tony Casciarino's view:

I think France's attack can be held back a bit by the likes of Tchouaméni and Rabiot, who are good players but don't provide much cutting edge. For this game I expect Didier Deschamps to bring back the creative talent of Antoine Griezmann, who for me was France's best player at the last World Cup. France and Belgium have both not lived up to their attacking potential in Germany, but whereas Belgium have perhaps one gear to go up, the French have three. The latter's bench is much the stronger of the two, which is another reason I expect France to win. **Tony's prediction:** France 3, Belgium 2

Portugal v Slovenia

Round of 16, Waldstadion, Frankfurt

Kick-off: today, 8pm (9pm local time)

TV: BBC One

Radio: talkSPORT, BBC 5 Live

Referee: D Orsato (Italy)

Portugal (possible); 4-2-3-1



Slovenia (possible); 4-4-2

Tony Casciarino's view:

Slovenia have done very well to get this far and they have a very rigid approach. They play a basic 4-4-2 and sit well back, playing with little attacking purpose and hoping to catch the opposition on the break. Against England they had only 27 per cent possession and failed to win a corner. The fact that they were not caught offside also reflects a team that showed little inclination to run in behind the defence. You can discount Portugal's defeat to Georgia because they had already won the group and changed most of their team — they have too many fine individuals not to go through. **Tony's prediction:** Portugal 3, Slovenia 0

Bologna. The scorer was Remo Freuler, who spent last season on loan from Nottingham Forest at Bologna, where, under the innovative coaching of Thiago Motta — recently headhunted by Juventus — he helped achieve Champions League qualification for a club who last reached European competition in the previous century. Freuler, no great goal-getter, finished superbly, attacking from deep once Italy's defensive marshalls had been gradually stretched this way and that by the darting runs and overlaps of Dan Ndoye and Michel Aebischer.

They, like Freuler, spent last season as students of Motta, who as a former Italy player may regret Saturday's outcome, but who, as an upwardly mobile manager, can hardly help but take some pride in the strong Bolognese flavour to Switzerland's success. Take away the

goals Breel Embolo — against Hungary — and Xherdan Shaqiri — an opportunistic strike against Scotland — have registered for the Swiss in Germany, and all their other goals have had a Bologna man directly involved in the set-up, or the finish, or both.

"We knew Dan [Ndoye], with his pace and ability to run in behind could cause problems for at least two opponents because they had to double up on him and I wanted us to make the most of both flanks," said Yakin, beaming about his boys from Bologna. Freuler's goal, he added, "was the culmination of a superb move, and he read the situation perfectly."

"We have sent out a very strong signal. Anything can happen from now because we're in the knockout phase. But we have the correct shape and we'll have the right gameplan."

The Euros Germany 2024 *Route to the final*

GROUP A

Friday, June 14 Munich	Wednesday, June 19 Cologne
Germany 5 Wirtz 10, Musiala 19, Havertz 45+1 (pen), Füllkrug 68, Can 90+3	Scotland 1 McTominay 13
Scotland 1 Rüdiger (og) 87	Switzerland 1 Shaqiri 26
Saturday, June 15 Cologne	Sunday, June 23 Frankfurt
Hungary 1 Varga 66	Switzerland 1 Ndoye 28
Switzerland 3 Duah 12, Aebischer 45, Embolo 90+3	Germany 1 Füllkrug 90+2
Wednesday, June 19 Stuttgart	Sunday, June 23 Stuttgart
Germany 2 Musiala 22, Gündogan 67	Scotland 0
Hungary 0	Hungary 1 Csoboth 90+10

Team	W	D	L	GD	Pts
A1 Germany (Q)	2	1	0	6	7
A2 Switzerland (Q)	1	2	0	2	5
A3 Hungary (E)	1	0	2	-3	3
A4 Scotland (E)	0	1	2	-5	1

GROUP B

Saturday, June 15 Berlin	Thursday, June 20 Gelsenkirchen
Spain 3 Morata 29, Fabián 32, Carvajal 45+2	Spain 1 Calafiori 55 (og)
Croatia 0	Italy 0
Saturday, June 15 Dortmund	Monday, June 24 Düsseldorf
Italy 2 Bastoni 11, Barella 16	Albania 0
Albania 1 Bajrami 1	Spain 1 Torres 13
Wednesday, June 19 Hamburg	Monday, June 24 Leipzig
Croatia 2 Kramaric 74, Gjasula (og) 76	Croatia 1 Modric 55
Albania 2 Laci 11, Gjasula 90+5	Italy 1 Zaccagni 90+8

Team	W	D	L	GD	Pts
B1 Spain (Q)	3	0	0	5	9
B2 Italy (Q)	1	1	1	0	4
B3 Croatia (E)	0	2	1	-3	2
B4 Albania (E)	0	1	2	-2	1

GROUP C

Sunday, June 16 Stuttgart	Thursday, June 20 Frankfurt
Slovenia 1 Janza 77	Denmark 1 Hjulmand 34
Denmark 1 Eriksen 17	England 1 Kane 18
Sunday, June 16 Gelsenkirchen	Tuesday, June 25 Cologne
Serbia 0	England 0
England 1 Bellingham 13	Slovenia 0
Thursday, June 20 Munich	Tuesday, June 25 Munich
Slovenia 1 Karnicnik 69	Denmark 0
Serbia 1 Jovic 90+5	Serbia 0

Team	W	D	L	GD	Pts
C1 England (Q)	1	2	0	1	5
C2 Denmark (Q)	0	3	0	0	3
C3 Slovenia (Q)	0	3	0	0	3
C4 Serbia (E)	0	2	1	-1	2

GROUP D

Sunday, June 16 Hamburg	Friday, June 21 Leipzig
Poland 1 Buksa 16	Holland 0
Holland 2 Gakpo 29, Weghorst 83	France 0
Monday, June 17 Düsseldorf	Tuesday, June 25 Berlin
Austria 0 Gakpo 47, Depay 75	Holland 2
France 1 Wöber 38 (og)	Austria 3 Malen 6 (og), Schmid 59, Sabitzer 80
Friday, June 21 Berlin	Tuesday, June 25 Dortmund
Poland 1 Piatek 30	France 1 Mbappé 56 (pen)
Austria 3 Trauner 9, Baumgartner 66, Arnautovic 78 (pen)	Poland 1 Lewandowski 79 (pen)

Team	W	D	L	GD	Pts
D1 Austria (Q)	2	0	1	2	6
D2 France (Q)	1	2	0	1	5
D3 Holland (Q)	1	1	1	0	4
D4 Poland (E)	0	1	2	-3	1

GROUP E

Monday, June 17 Munich	Saturday, June 22 Cologne
Romania 3 Stancu 29, R Marin 53, Dragus 57	Belgium 2 Tielemans 2, De Bruyne 80
Ukraine 0	Romania 0
Monday, June 17 Frankfurt	Wednesday, June 26 Frankfurt
Belgium 0 Schranz 7	Slovakia 1 Marin 37 (pen)
Slovakia 1 Schranz 7	Romania 1 Marin 37 (pen)
Friday, June 21 Düsseldorf	Wednesday, June 26 Stuttgart
Slovakia 1 Schranz 17	Ukraine 0
Ukraine 2 Shaparenko 54, Yaremchuk 80	Belgium 0

Team	W	D	L	GD	Pts
E1 Romania (Q)	1	1	1	1	4
E2 Belgium (Q)	1	1	1	1	4
E3 Slovakia (Q)	1	1	1	0	4
E4 Ukraine (E)	1	1	1	-2	4

GROUP F

Tuesday, June 18 Dortmund	Saturday, June 22 Dortmund
Turkey 3 Muldur 25, Güler 65, Akturkoglu 90+7	Turkey 0
Georgia 1 Mikautadze 32	Portugal 3 Silva 21, Akaydin 28 (og), Fernandes 56
Tuesday, June 18 Leipzig	Wednesday, June 26 Gelsenkirchen
Portugal 2 Hranac (og) 69, Conceicao 90+2	Georgia 2 Kvaratskhelia 2, Mikautadze 57 (pen)
Czech Republic 1 Provod 62	Portugal 0
Saturday, June 22 Hamburg	Wednesday, June 26 Hamburg
Georgia 1 Mikautadze 45+4 (pen)	Czech Republic 1 Soucek 66
Czech Republic 1 Schick 59	Turkey 2 Calhanoglu 51, Tosun 90+4

Team	W	D	L	GD	Pts
F1 Portugal (Q)	2	0	1	2	6
F2 Turkey (Q)	2	0	1	0	6
F3 Georgia (Q)	1	1	1	0	4
F4 Czech Republic (E)	0	1	2	-2	1

ROUND OF 16

Sunday, June 30 Cologne	Spain 4 Rodri 39, Ruiz 51, Williams 75, Olmo 83
Georgia 1 Le Normand (og) 18	
Saturday, June 29 Dortmund	Germany 2 Havertz 53 (pen), Musiala 68
Denmark 0	
Monday, July 1 8pm, Frankfurt	Portugal
Slovenia	
Monday, July 1 5pm, Düsseldorf	France
Belgium	

QUARTER-FINALS

Friday, July 5 5pm, Stuttgart	Spain
Germany	
Friday, July 5 8pm, Hamburg	Portugal or Slovenia
France or Belgium	

SEMI-FINALS

Tuesday, July 9 8pm, Munich	winner QF1	winner QF2
Wednesday, July 10 8pm, Dortmund	winner QF4	winner QF3
FINAL		
Sunday, July 14 8pm, Berlin		
winner SF1	winner SF2	

ROUND OF 16

Tuesday, July 2 5pm, Munich	Romania
Holland	
Tuesday, July 2 8pm, Leipzig	Austria
Turkey	
Sunday, June 30 Gelsenkirchen aet; 1-1 after 90mins	England 2 Bellingham 90+5, Kane 91
Slovakia 1 Schranz 25	
Saturday, June 29 Berlin	Switzerland 2 Freuler 37, Vargas 46
Italy 0	

WIMBLEDON

MONDAY JULY 1 2024



Changing of the guard

It's the rivalry that could dominate new era of tennis – with world No1 Sinner and defending champion Alcaraz on collision course for semi-finals
Exclusive Sinner interview, pages 10-11

JUDY MURRAY relives Andy's career through the pages of The Times, pages 4-5
ANNABEL CROFT analyses new-look Emma Raducanu, page 8



Murray takes decision over

STUART FRASER
TENNIS CORRESPONDENT



The prospect of Andy Murray playing one last singles match at Wimbledon will come down to a practice set this afternoon. In keeping with his rollercoaster career, even the end is subject to uncertainty right down to the last minute.

The 37-year-old has never done things the easy way, and the past nine days have been somewhat manic as he attempts to recover from an operation on a spinal cyst in time for his first-round match at the All England Club. At least the draw on Friday was kind, putting him in the half that begins on Tuesday rather than Monday.

Murray quite frankly needed this extra 24 hours of preparation. On Saturday and yesterday he held light training sessions at the Aorangi Park practice courts and did not quite look as if he was fully ready to thrust himself into the challenge of a professional tennis match. His hope now is that the movement will pass a test when he pushes his body a little harder in another practice set today.

"I have just been trying to do everything that I can to try to get ready to start the tournament here," Murray, the two-times champion, said.

"I don't know if that's going to be enough. I've been practising for the last few days. I played a set today. It went pretty well, but I still don't have 100 per cent feeling and sensation in my leg yet.

"It's getting better every single day. I want to give it every single chance that I can to get there. I'm going to play another set again on Monday. I'm doing some physical testing in the morning to see how far off I am from a physical perspective. Then I will probably make a decision tomorrow evening."

Tournament organisers are likely to keep Tuesday's third slot on Centre Court free for Murray, allowing him another few extra hours of recovery. Although he is playing an unseeded opponent, he still faces a tough task against Tomas Machac, the world No38 from the Czech Republic, who has won their previous two meetings this year.

Had Murray not been gearing up for retirement earlier this summer, it is almost certain that he would not be putting himself in this position. Some surgeons had suggested a six-week recovery period during initial consultations last week.

Murray's mind works differently, though. He latched onto the advice of one surgeon that he could potentially be back hitting balls within a few days if everything went to plan in the operating theatre. His painstaking dedication to rehabilitation has also helped, of course. As he put it last week: "I've been f***ing doing rehab 24-7."

The difficulty for Murray is moving to his right on the forehand side. It was the right leg that caused problems at the Queen's Club Championships, when he felt pain shooting down from his lower back. During drills over the weekend, he looked a little hesitant at times when pushed out wide.

"I have no back pain, which is obviously really good," Murray said. "But the nature of the problem was that I had quite a large cyst, which was squashing, compressing my nerves, which then obviously lost not all, but a lot, of control in my right leg.

"That is getting better. But it's like if



you sleep on your arm funny and you wake up and with a dead arm. It's like that feeling. But it goes on for a lot longer because the nerve has been squashed and a little bit damaged for a number of days. How long that takes to regain its full sort of function again is impossible to say. For some people it takes months, for some it's weeks.

"I don't know exactly how long it's going to take. But all of the work that we're doing, the testing we're doing, is improving every single day with the training and the practising. It's not like I'm playing tennis and it's taking a step backwards. It's been getting better every day. I'm hopeful that continues and it's going to be enough to be on the court on Tuesday."

Let's be honest, Murray has no chance of a fairytale ending at Wimbledon by winning the tournament. It would be a miraculous triumph if he was to win one singles match.

His remarkable recovery, though, is the storyline that



has dominated the build-up to these championships. An appearance in the doubles alongside brother Jamie — their first-round match can be scheduled as late as Friday — is now looking extremely likely, but he is still desperate to play one last singles match.

"This is a place that's obviously been really good to me over the years," Murray said. "I guess in the last few years, Serena [Williams] finished playing, Roger [Federer] finished playing, and Rafa [Nadal] obviously has spoken a lot recently about the struggles he's gone through. Everyone has their idea of how they want to finish their career, how they would want it to go.

"I would have seen that happening probably at Wimbledon. Obviously I have the Olympics coming

up. But I would love the opportunity to play here one more time."

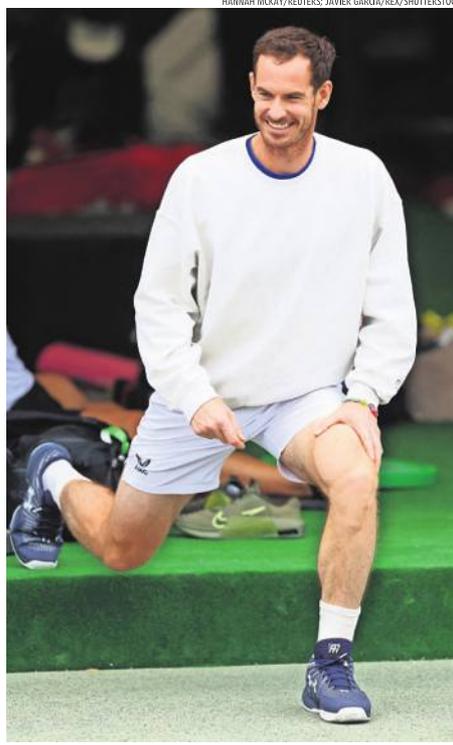
In stark contrast to Murray's rushed build-up, Britain's only other active grand-slam singles champion has enjoyed preparing for Wimbledon without any physical issues. Emma Raducanu opens her campaign today against the No22 seed Ekaterina Alexandrova.

Raducanu returns to Centre Court with less weight on the shoulders than her previous appearance in 2022. The expectation is not as high as it was when she was the reigning US Open champion. "I feel a lot more comfortable this year," Raducanu, 21, said. "There's a lot less going on. There's a lot less stress or chaos. I'm more just coming here, doing my practice and playing the match. This is the most settled I've been in a while."

Overall there are 19 British singles competitors across the singles draws, the most since 1999. Jack Draper and Katie Boulter, both seeded here for the first time, will be targeting a run to the round of 16 at the very least.

final curtain call to the wire

It's not Murray's arms that have been a problem in recent years but he gives them a stretch in his final preparations for the tournament, while he works on his leg muscles too, right. The 37-year-old enjoys a word or two with his great rival Djokovic, below, who will face a tough task in attempting to dethrone present Wimbledon champion Alcaraz, inset, should they meet over the next fortnight



HANNAH MCCAY/REUTERS; JAVIER GARCIA/REX/SHUTTERSTOCK



19 BRITS AT SW19

WOMEN'S SINGLES

Katie Boulter
(Age 27, Rank 32)
Opponent Tatjana Maria (Ger, No61)
H2H 2-0
Wimbledon best 3R (2022, 2023)
Chances of victory 8/10. Boulter is the favourite given her form

Harriet Dart
(Age 27, Rank 105)
Opponent Zhuoxuan Bai (China, No92)
H2H 0-0
Wimbledon best 3R (2019)
Chances 7/10. Dart is ranked lower, but has more prowess on grass

Yuriko Lily Miyazaki (WC)
(Age 28, Rank 148)
Opponent Tamara Korpatsch (Ger, No75)
H2H 0-0
Wimbledon best 1R (2022)
Chances 4/10. Will take some effort to claim a first win in SW19

Heather Watson (WC)
(Age 32, Rank 196)
Opponent Greet Minnen (Bel, No85)
H2H 0-0
Wimbledon best 4R (2022)
Chances 4/10. Watson has lost seven of her past eight matches

Emma Raducanu (WC)
(Age 21, Rank 168)
Opponent Ekaterina Alexandrova (Russ, No22)
H2H 0-0
Wimbledon best 4R (2021)
Chances 6/10. Not an easy opener against a seeded player

Francesca Jones (WC)
(Age 23, Rank 217)
Opponent Petra Martić (Cro, No74)
H2H 0-0
Wimbledon best 1R (2021)
Chances 3/10. A nice chance to test herself

Sonay Kartal (Q)
(Age 22, Rank 295)
Opponent Sorana Cirstea (Rom, No29)
H2H 0-0
Wimbledon best 1R (2022, 2023)
Chances 2/10. Kartal has momentum but this is another level

Men's Singles
Cameron Norrie
(Age 28, Rank 44)
Opponent Facundo Diaz Acosta (Arg, No67)
H2H 1-0
Wimbledon best SF (2022)
Chances 9/10. His opponent has only played twice on grass

Henry Searle (WC)
(Age 18, Rank 568)
Opponent Marcos Giron (US, No46)
H2H 0-0
Wimbledon best First time in main draw
Chances 2/10. British boys' singles champion faces tough step up



Boulter is in good form while new British men's No1 Draper, below, should ease through his first match

Jack Draper (Age 22, Rank 29)
Opponent Elias Ymer (Q, Swe, No206)
H2H 0-0
Wimbledon best 2R (2022)
Chances 9/10. New British No1 should ease through as a seed

Dan Evans
(Age 34, Rank 61)
Opponent Alejandro Tabilo (Chile, No24)
H2H 0-0
Wimbledon best 3R (2016, 2019, 2021)
Chances 5/10. Faces Mallorca winner on return from knee strain

Andy Murray
(Age 37, Rank 115)
Opponent Tomas Machac (Cz, No 38)
H2H 0-2
Wimbledon best W (2013, 2016)
Chances 4/10. A big ask for Murray after recent cyst surgery on a spinal cyst

Liam Broady (WC)
(Age 30, Rank 146)
Opponent Botic van de Zandschulp (Neth, No96)
H2H 1-0
Wimbledon best 3R (2022, 2023)
Chances 4/10. Barely played of late because of an ankle injury

Jan Choinski (WC)
(Age 28, Rank 174)
Opponent Luciano Darderi (It, No37)
H2H 0-0
Wimbledon best 2R (2023)
Chances 3/10. Must hope that his opponent's inexperience on grass is a leveller

Billy Harris (WC)
(Age 29, Rank 139)
Opponent Jaume Munar (Esp, 63)
H2H 0-0
Wimbledon best First time in main draw

Chances. 7/10. Has been the standout Briton on grass this summer

Arthur Fery (WC)
(Age 21, Rank 243)
Opponent Daniel Altmaier (Ger, No77)
H2H 0-0
Wimbledon best 1R (2023)
Chances 3/10. Making progress up rankings but not used to this level

Charles Broom (WC)
(Age 26, Rank 185)
Opponent Stan Wawrinka (Can, No93)
H2H 0-0
Wimbledon best First time in main draw
Chances 4/10. Can take hope from Wawrinka being a faded force

Paul Jubb (WC)
(Age 24, Rank 289)
Opponent Thiago Seyboth Wild (Br, No74)
H2H 0-0
Wimbledon best 1R (2019, 2022)
Chances 6/10. Not short of confidence after reaching his first ATP semi-final last week

Jacob Fearnley (WC)
(Age 22, Rank 271)
Opponent Alejandro Moro Canas (Q, Sp, No189)
H2H 0-0
Wimbledon best First time in main draw
Chances 5/10. A good draw for the debutant

Henry Searle (WC)
(Age 18, Rank 568)
Opponent Marcos Giron (US, No46)
H2H 0-0
Wimbledon best First time in main draw
Chances 2/10. British boys' singles champion faces tough step up

ORDER OF PLAY

11am start unless stated;
Seeds in brackets;
British players in purple

Centre Court (1.30pm): (3) C Alcaraz v M Lajal (Est); (22) E Alexandrova (Russ) v E Raducanu (GB); C Dolehide (US) v (2) C Gauff (US)

No1 Court (1pm): A Kovacevic (US) v (5) D Medvedev (Russ); E Bektas (US) v (3) A Sabalenka (Bela); (1) J Sinner (It) v Y Hanfmann (Ger)

No2 Court (10) G Dimitrov (Bul) v D Lajovic (Serbia); S Wawrinka (Switz) v C Broom (GB); N Osaka (Japan) v D Parry (Fr); (16) V Azarenka (Bela) v S Stephens (US)

No3 Court A Bolt (Aus) v (8) C Ruud (Nor); (7) J Paolini (It) v S Sorribes Tormo (Sp); M Trevisan (It) v (12) M Keys (US); (12) T Paul (US) v P Martinez (Sp)

No4 Court (28) D Yastremska (Ukr) v N Podoroska (Arg); (18) M Kostyuk (Ukr) v R Sramkova (Slovakia); Z Bergs (Bel) v A Cazaux (Fr); S Errani (It) v (26) L Noskova (Cz)

No5 Court L Tsurenko (Ukr) v V Gracheva (Fr); (32) Zhang Zhizhen (China) v M Janvier (Fr); A Schmiedlova (Slovakia) v Wang Yafan (China); (31) M Navone (Arg) v L Sonego (It)

No6 Court C Garin (Chile) v Shang Juncheng (China); A Muller (Fr) v H Gaston (Fr); D Vekic (Cro) v Wang Xiyu (China)

No7 Court B Coric (Cro) v F Meligeni Alves (Br); A Rus (Neth) v Yuan Yue (China); A Vukic (Aus) v S Ofner (Aut)

No8 Court J Struff (Ger) v F Marozsan (Hun); N Hibino (Japan) v E Mertens (Bel); E Lys (Ger) v C Burel (Fr); R Bautista

Agut (Sp) v M Marterer (Ger)

No9 Court I Begu (Rom) v Zhu Lin (China); O Danilovic (Serbia) v A Todoni (Rom); L Harris (SA) v A Michelsen (US); O Virtanen (Fin) v M Purcell (Aus)

No10 Court P Kotov (Russ) v J Thompson (Aus); D Saville (Aus) v P Stearns (US); A Van Uytvanck (Bel) v Y Starodubsteva (Ukr); S Nagal (Ind) v M Kecmanovic (Serbia)

No12 Court M Kessler (US) v (9) M Sakkari (Gr); M Berrettini (It) v M Fucsovics (Hun); B van de Zandschulp (Neth) v L Broady (GB); B Fruhvirtova (Cz) v (24) M Andreeva (Russ)

No14 Court (19) N Jarry (Chile) v D Shapovalov (Can); (14) D Kasatkina (Russ) v Zhang Shuai (China); K Pliskova (Cz) v D Shnaider (Russ); P Carreno Busta (Sp) v (27) T Griekspoor (Neth)

No15 Court M Arnaldi (It) v (29) F Tiafoe (US); A Shevchenko (Kaz) v (16) U Humbert (Fr); (29) S Cirstea (Rom) v S Kartal (GB); B Andreescu (Can) v J Cristian (Rom)

No16 Court L Van Assche (Fr) v F Fogniini (It); D Altmaier (Ger) v A Fery (GB); T Korpatsch (Ger) v Y Miyazaki (GB); Wang Qiang (China) v (19) E Navarro (Sp) (not before 5.30pm)

No17 Court T Townsend (US) v A Pavlyuchenkova (Russ); (18) S Baez (Arg) v B Nakashima (US); J Mensik (Cz) v (23) A Bublik (Kaz); P Badosa (Sp) v K Muchova (Cz) (not before 5.30pm)

No18 Court G Minnen (Bel) v H Watson (GB); G Monfils (Fr) v (22) A Mannarino (Fr); (8) Zheng Qinwen (China) v L Sun (NZ); M Bellucci (It) v (14) B Shelton (US)



Judy Murray takes a look at how the Times has covered the remarkable careers of her sons, with Andy, top, leading the way with his first Wimbledon triumph in 2013 following his success at the US Open the previous year, left, which attracted two notable fans, below. She enjoyed his second title on Centre Court in 2016 more, right top, and in recent times has been there to support him through his hip problems



'You've got James Bond watching my son, it was surreal'

Judy Murray also remembers a tippie with Sir Alex Ferguson as she recalls 20 vintage years.
By Stuart Fraser

Shortly before she is due to take a look back through 20 years' worth of newspaper cuttings from The Times and Sunday Times, Judy Murray receives a phone call in the Queen's Club player lounge. It is the morning after her youngest son, Andy, retired from the second round of the championships at the venue and he has a lot to discuss as he ponders his options before Wimbledon.

Quite truthfully, this does not feel like the best time to take a joyous trip down memory lane. But then Judy is somewhat used to the rollercoaster ride

as a parent of two children who are professional athletes — her eldest son, Jamie, 38, is one of the country's best-ever doubles players.

Andy, 37, in particular, has had a habit of putting his family, friends, staff and many supporters through the wringer in some gruelling battles through the years.

"Life is full of ups and downs," Judy later aptly explains as she recaps the past two decades with remarkable eloquence and insight considering all that is transpiring with Andy that morning.

"Injuries, defeats and disappointments are part and parcel of sport. You learn to take the rough with the smooth."

On the table in front of us are piles of pages covering the career of one of Britain's greatest sportspeople, and the first on top takes Judy right back to the very moment in which the Murray family became subject to intense interest. A report on Andy's triumph as a 17-year-old at the 2004 US Open junior event prompts a recollection of the arrival back in Scotland the following day.

"I remember coming out of Edinburgh airport and there were all these flashes going on through the frosted doors," Judy says. "Andy was saying, 'Oh, mum, look, there must have been an accident.'"

"When the doors opened, we went through and there was this huge posse of photographers. Andy said, 'What are they here for?' I said, 'I think they might be here for you.' And he said, 'Why?'"

"It just really captured the imagination of the Scottish media and public. "If I look back at it, that was the day our lives changed."

The consciousness of the wider British public was then breached the following summer when Andy was given a wild card for Wimbledon as one of the country's most promising prospects.

During his run to the third round, he moved up the pecking order from No 2 Court to No 1 and then onto Centre Court for the first time.

"He had just turned 18, his shorts were too baggy, the hair was huge and he was a bit spotty," Judy says. "I remember

everybody picking him up for having such a boring voice and I was like, wow, it really was a baptism of fire in lots of ways for all of us — suddenly he is in the spotlight.

"I remember walking back from Aorangi Park [the practice courts] the weekend before Wimbledon started, just the two of us. We were walking past Centre Court and he said, 'I want to play in there.' I said, 'Andy, you might have to wait a couple of years before that.' And he said, 'Why?'"

"A week later he was there. I also remember sitting in the players' box that I had seen on the TV for years and years as a tennis fan, never thinking for a minute I'd ever be in there.

"I've got one eye on my son and I've got the other eye on the Royal Box where Sean Connery was. You've got James Bond supporting your boy.

"The whole thing was all just a bit much. Having paparazzi parked outside the little basement flat, there were so many things we had to learn because nobody prepares you for that sudden explosion into the limelight. And he never left it."

People may not recall that it was actually Jamie who was the first to win a Wimbledon title, in 2007. Having agreed to team up after bumping into each other by the entrance to the All England Club at the start of the championships, Jamie and Serbia's Jelena Jankovic captivated those who watched their



Judy gazes up at Andy with great affection but it was her older son, Jamie, left, who first won a grand slam title at Wimbledon, landing the mixed doubles



charge to the mixed doubles title. "Andy came to watch and he consciously didn't want to sit in the player box with everyone else," Judy says.

"He was one of the top players in the world by then and said, 'I don't want to be a distraction from Jamie's moment.' He went and sat in one of the commentary booths and came out at 30-0 in the final game.

"He was so pumped for Jamie, as we all were. It's really the natural order of things for Jamie to do things first as the older brother.

"I really do believe that Andy watching Jamie winning a Wimbledon title gave him that extra impetus to go. 'Well, if he can do it, I can do it too.'"

Five years later, Andy reached a Wimbledon final

“They’re humble, polite and hard working. It is hard to remain grounded but they absolutely have

for the first time but it ended in heartache with a four-set defeat by Roger Federer.

With Andy devastated at home in the days afterwards, it took some effort from Judy and Andy's future wife, Kim, to pick him back up for the London Olympics in a few weeks.

"We could hardly get him to move off the sofa," Judy says. "Me and Kim were trying to find things that he would enjoy doing, like go karting.

"He went to watch *Mock the Week* [recording of a BBC comedy panel show] and we went to Battersea Dogs' Home. They were things that he liked, to try and get him up and out of the house because he was really so down."

The Olympic final pitted Andy against Federer once again on the same court. The difference in 28 days was astonishing as the home favourite cruised to a 6-2, 6-1, 6-4 victory in front of a feverish home crowd.

"What we did after the Wimbledon final was that we analysed that match to death," Judy says. "Of course when he played Roger just a few weeks later, we had all the predictions of the match, the tactics, the responses to certain situations and so forth.

"He went into that match with huge belief and huge support."

Olympic gold turned out to be the catalyst for a long-awaited grand-slam triumph. Having lost his first four major finals, Andy became Britain's first men's singles grand-slam champion in 76 years by overcoming Novak Djokovic in five sets to win the 2012 US Open.

Given the magnitude of the moment, it was the first time that Murray was the subject of a souvenir edition of *The Times* with a wraparound cover.

Just as memorable for Judy as the moment of victory was a meeting with two great Scots two days earlier. She had been sitting watching Andy's semi-final victory over Tomas Berdych when a message from above came through on her phone.

"It was Alex Ferguson," Judy says. "He said, 'I can see you. I'm in a suite and I've got an orange top on.' Around the Arthur Ashe Stadium is absolutely massive. The suite could have been anywhere and there were a zillion orange tops. I said, 'You need to be more specific,' and he said, 'Look up, I'm waving at you. Come up to the suites after the match.'

"I went up to find him and of course he made me have a glass of wine. Then he said, 'I want to see Andy.' I said, 'Right, OK. I'll try to get you down into the player area.'

"The security is tough down there, but I thought, well he is Sir Alex, so we'll try.

"We got to the bottom of the stairs and Sean Connery was there. He says, 'Aw Judy, this is wonderful. Andy's in the final.' The two of them were so excited. They obviously knew each other.

"Alex was like, 'We're just going to see Andy, come with us.' So I'm standing outside the media room with two of them and the security guards are trying to move us on because there's been a hurricane and they are clearing the whole arena.

"They [Ferguson and Connery] went, 'Let's just go in,' and I was saying, 'You can't go in.'

"Andy is up on the podium and the two of them walk in, don't look anywhere near the media, go straight onto the podium and just start this conversation between them.

"Then Andy said, 'Hi mum,' so I went over, gave him a hug and he said, 'You've been drinking.' Andy doesn't drink and

he can smell wine at ten paces. The three of us were there completely ignoring the press conference and it was just these two great white knights of Scotland going crazy about what Andy had done. It was quite a surreal moment for all of us."

Another wraparound cover followed a year later for the biggest moment of Andy's career as he became the first British men's singles champion at Wimbledon since Fred Perry in 1936.

The final against Djokovic may have finished in straight sets — a 6-4, 7-5, 6-4 scoreline — but this does not tell the story of a tortuous final game. It lasted 12 minutes, during which Murray had to fend off three break points before sealing victory on his fourth championship point.

"I would love to say that I enjoyed the match and the occasion but I didn't," Judy says.

"I was so stressed about having potentially to deal with the disappointment of another defeat should he have lost.

"He managed to win the game and I just remember slumping. It was the relief of it rather than the joy of it.

"I would love to have looked back and enjoyed that more because I don't remember anything else about that match other than that last game.

"Normally through his whole career with my part-coach hat on, it has always helped me to not just be totally emotionally engaged. It's always looking for what you work on next, and where the breakdowns are. I don't remember anything about that match at all, so I was clearly in some way in a world of my own because normally I do remember all the break points, the big points, the momentum swings and so forth."

Three years later, Murray was at his peak. An incredible stretch of consistency in the second half of the 2016 season took him to a second Wimbledon title and a second Olympic gold medal in Rio as part of a win-loss record of 50-3.

The icing on the cake was a win over Djokovic in the final of the ATP Finals in London to secure the year-end world No 1 ranking for the first time. It was front-page news.

"He sensed an opportunity to get to No 1 and he knew exactly what he had to do because he is an absolute student of the game," Judy says.

"He's a complete geek for it. He knows everything about everything and a lot about everyone else as well. He really sensed that he could do it and he absolutely put his mind to doing it.

"To see him at the O2 playing Novak for that number one spot was quite incredible. Wonderfully, Jamie had reached world No 1 in doubles earlier that year, so that was great for family harmony and Christmas."

Andy's hip problems started soon after and he was never the same player again, but the family legacy had already been secured. In whatever way the story comes to an end for Andy this summer, the past 20 years has made for a fascinating journey that started in simple surroundings with wee brother trying to get the better of big brother on a tennis court in Dunblane.

"Overall, I have huge, huge pride in what they have both managed to achieve given that we just come from a little town in Scotland that had no track record of success in the sport," Judy says.

"They have absolutely taken advantage of every opportunity that they've had and they've worked their butts off.

"I think the thing for me that makes you incredibly proud, as any parent would say, is that they have remained true to their roots.

"They're humble, they're polite, they're hard working. In the world in which they have operated for the last 20 years it is quite hard to remain completely grounded. But they absolutely have and I think they're great role models."

MEN'S SINGLES DRAW

First round £55,000	Second round £85,000	Third round £131,000	Fourth round £207,000	Quarter-finals £340,000	Semi-finals £600,000	Final Winner: £2.35m. Runner-up: £1.175m
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(1) J Sinner (It) v Y Hanfmann (Ger)						
M Berrettini (It) v M Fucsovics (Hun)						
S Nagal (India) v M Kecmanovic (Serbia)						
P Carreño-Busta (Sp) v (27) T Griekspoor (Neth)						
(19) N Jarry (Chile) v D Shapovalov (Can)						
D Altmaier (Ger) v A Fery (GB)						
L Harris (SA) v A Michelsen (US)						
M Bellucci (It) v (14) B Shelton (US)						
(10) G Dimitrov (Bul) v D Lajovic (Ser)						
C Garin (Chile) v Shang Juncheng (China)						
S Wawrinka (Switz) v C Broom (GB)						
G Montfils (Fr) v (22) A Mannarino (Fr)						
(32) Zhang Zhizhen (China) v M Janvier (Fr)						
J-L Struff (Ger) v F Marozsan (Hun)						
Alexandre Müller (Fr) v H Gaston (Fr)						
A Kovacevic (US) v (5) D Medvedev (Russ)						
(3) C Alcaraz (Sp) v M Lajal (Est)						
A Vukic (Aus) v S Ofner (Austria)						
B Coric (Cro) v F Meligeni (Br)						
M Arnaldi (It) v (29) F Tiafoe (US)						
(18) S Báez (Arg) v B Nakashima (US)						
P Kotov (Russ) v J Thompson (Aus)						
B Van de Zandschulp (Neth) v L Broady (GB)						
A Shevchenko (Kaz) v (16) U Humbert (Fr)						
(12) T Paul (US) v P Martínez (Sp)						
O Virtanen (Fin) v M Purcell (Aus)						
Z Bergs (Bel) v A Cazaux (Fr)						
J Mensik (Cz) v (23) A Bublik (Kaz)						
(31) M Navone (Arg) v L Sonego (It)						
R Bautista Agut (Sp) v M Marterer (Ger)						
D Köpfer (Ger) v F Fognini (It)						
A Bolt (Aus) v (8) C Ruud (Nor)						
(6) A Rublev (Russ) v F Comesana (Arg)						
F Coria (Arg) v A Walton (Aus)						
L Darder (It) v J Cholnski (GB)						
C Lestienne (Fr) v (25) L Musetti (It)						
(20) S Korda (US) v A Davidovich Fokina (Sp)						
Y Nishioka (Japan) v N Borges (Por)						
E Ruusuvaara (Fin) v M McDonald (US)						
T Daniel (Japan) v (11) S Tsitsipas (Gr)						
(13) T Fritz (US) v C O'Connell (Aus)						
K Nishikori (Japan) v A Rinderknech (Fr)						
F Cobolli (It) v R Hijikata (Aus)						
D Evans (GB) v (24) A Tabilo (Chile)						
(28) J Draper (GB) v E Ymer (Swe)						
C Norrie (GB) v F Diaz Acosta (Arg)						
H Searle (GB) v M Giron (US)						
R Carballés Baena (Sp) v (4) A Zverev (Ger)						
(7) H Hurkacz (Pol) v P Albano (Arg)						
A Fils (Fr) v D Stricker (Switz)						
A Murray (GB) v T Machac (Cz)						
R Safiullin (Russ) v (26) F Cerúndolo (Arg)						
(17) F Auger-Aliassime (Can) v T Kokkinakis (Aus)						
L Pouille (Fr) v L Djere (Serbia)						
J Munar (Sp) v B Harris (GB)						
C Moutet (Fr) v (9) A De Minaur (Aus)						
(15) H Rune (Den) v Kwon Soon-woo (S Kor)						
P Jubb (GB) v T Seyboth Wild (Br)						
Q Halys (Fr) v C Eubanks (US)						
A Karatsev (Russ) v (21) K Khachanov (Russ)						
(30) T M Etcheverry (Arg) v L Nardi (It)						
A Popyrin (Aus) v T Moura Monteiro (Br)						
J Fearnley (GB) v A Moro Cañas (Sp)						
V Kopriva (Cz) v (2) N Djokovic (Serbia)						



Women's singles champion 2023
Marketa Vondrousova (Cz Rep)

Men's wheelchair doubles
Alfie Hewitt (GB) and Gordon Reid (GB)

WOMEN'S SINGLES DRAW

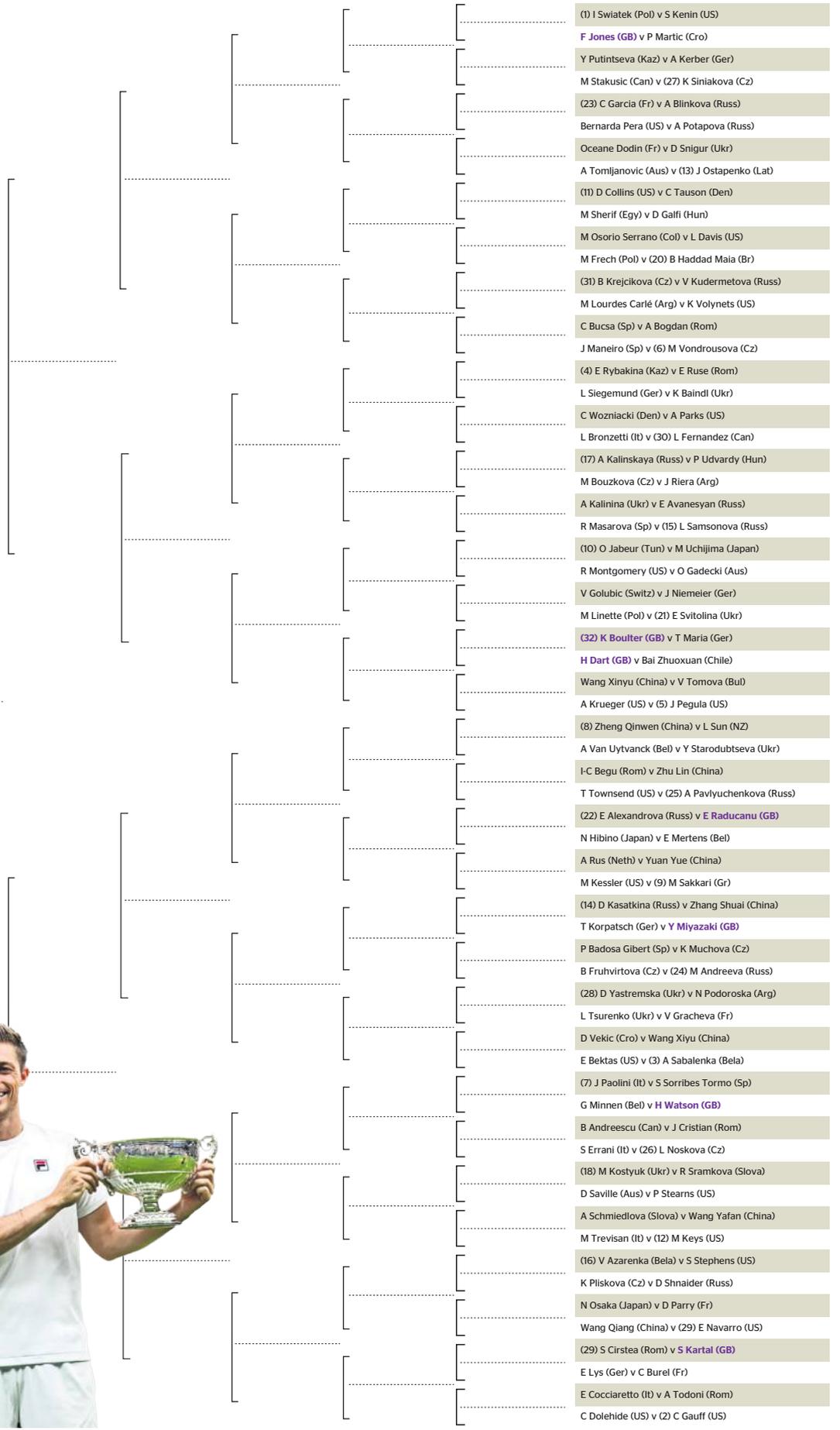
Final	Semi-finals	Quarter-finals	Fourth round	Third round	Second round	First round
Winner: £2.35m. Runner-up: £1.175m	£600,000	£340,000	£207,000	£131,000	£85,000	£55,000



**Men's singles
Champion 2023
Carlos Alcaraz (Sp)**

**Women's doubles
champions 2023
Hsieh Su-wei (Taiwan) and
Barbora Strycova (Cz Rep)**

**Men's doubles
champions 2023
Wesley Koolhof (Neth)
and Neal Skupski (GB)**



TIMES PHOTOGRAPHER MARC ASPLAND; ADAM DAVY/AFP/GETTY IMAGES



Motherhood is no longer an obstacle to success on tour

JOHN WESTERBY

In each of the past two years, the semi-finals at Wimbledon have featured players who have returned to the tour after becoming mothers. Last year, Elina Svitolina, only nine months after giving birth to her daughter, beat Iga Swiatek in the quarter-finals before losing out to Marketa Vondrousova for a place in the final. Twelve months earlier, Tatjana Maria, a mother of two, reached her first grand-slam semi-final, at the age of 34, before losing to Ons Jabeur.

The success enjoyed by these players, along with the contentment expressed by a growing number of mothers on the tour, is encouraging other leading players to start a family during their career, rather than waiting until retirement. Jabeur, for one, was distraught after losing the Wimbledon final last year, as she had hoped to secure a first grand-slam title and then take a break to become a mother.

"It's still in my projects," she said recently at the Nottingham Open. "I don't know when, but seeing a lot of moms come back on tour motivates me even more. I'm hearing Rafa [Nadal] wants his kid to have memories of him playing, I'm the same."

There is a high-profile group of players returning to Wimbledon after becoming mothers this year. Caroline Wozniacki, the former world No.1 and 2018 Australian Open champion, returns to the grass courts of southwest London for the first time in five years, this time with her two children, her daughter Olivia, 3, and son, James, who turns two in October — in tow at the house she has rented in Wimbledon.

Wozniacki, 33, returned to competitive action last year, having surprised herself by how well she found herself hitting the ball on the practice court. She entered the US Open and, remarkably, reached the fourth round. She is picking her tournaments carefully but has been back in regular competition this year, gradually coming to terms with the juggling act of motherhood and the travelling involved in professional tennis.

"You figure it out," she said. "It's a lot more logistics than I'm used to. Having two children, that's already a full-time job, especially when they're so little. Just navigating through, having two full-time jobs and trying to be the best I possibly can at both, it's definitely a fun time of my life. But it puts everything into perspective — once you've been away from the game and you come back, the appreciation for the game is very high."

While the WTA has stepped up its provision for parents in recent years — with athlete care managers available and protected ranking status for up to three years for returning mothers — an extensive support network is naturally useful. "We have a full team," Wozniacki said. "I have both my parents, my husband [David Lee] and a nanny as well. But I think every parent can relate that once you're home and you've been away for half the day working, the kids just want you. There's not so much downtime, that's for sure."

Rather than seeing the travel as a difficulty, Wozniacki believes the opportunities are a vivid life experience for her children, before they start school, at least. "They love to travel, especially my older one," she said. "She really takes everything in, talks about the trips we've taken. What a great way for her to grow up, to explore the world, meet new people and see new places."

There will, inevitably, be players who still see retirement as the best option once they become mothers. Danielle Collins, the No.11 seed, recently announced that she would be retiring at the end of the season, aged 30, due to her desire to have children and two chronic health conditions, rheumatoid arthritis and endometriosis, which can affect fertility.

But, along with Wozniacki, two other former world No.1s will be back in SW19 after returning to action as mothers. Angelique Kerber, 36, the 2018 champion, last played in Wimbledon two years ago before taking a break to have her daughter, Liana. Naomi Osaka, 26, like Wozniacki has not played at the championships for five years, in her case due to a combination of injuries, mental health issues and giving birth to her daughter, Shai, who turns one this week. Osaka was back in action for the Australian Open in January and at the recent French Open she took Swiatek to three sets.

She has yet to make it past the third round in her three previous Wimbledon appearances, but when she discovered she had been granted a wild card, she was clearly delighted. "Feeling very starry-eyed," she posted. "Can't believe I'm here."

Kim Clijsters' victory at the Australian Open in 2011 was the most recent grand-slam success by a mother, while Serena Williams was a runner-up four times. At Wimbledon, Evonne Goolagong Cawley was the last, in 1980, three years after giving birth to her daughter. Forty-four years and counting, but now there are more mothers than ever who are in with a chance.



Wozniacki is embracing the delights — and challenges — of bringing her family on tour

TOP EIGHT WOMEN'S SEEDS

JESSICA PEGULA
 Age: 30
 Nationality: United States
 Height: 5ft 7in
 Win/loss record in 2024
 ●●●●●●●● 14
 ●●●●●●●● 6

5

MARKETA VONDROUSOVA
 Age: 24
 Nationality: Czech Rep
 Height: 5ft 8in
 Win/loss record in 2024
 ●●●●●●●● 15
 ●●●●●●●● 10

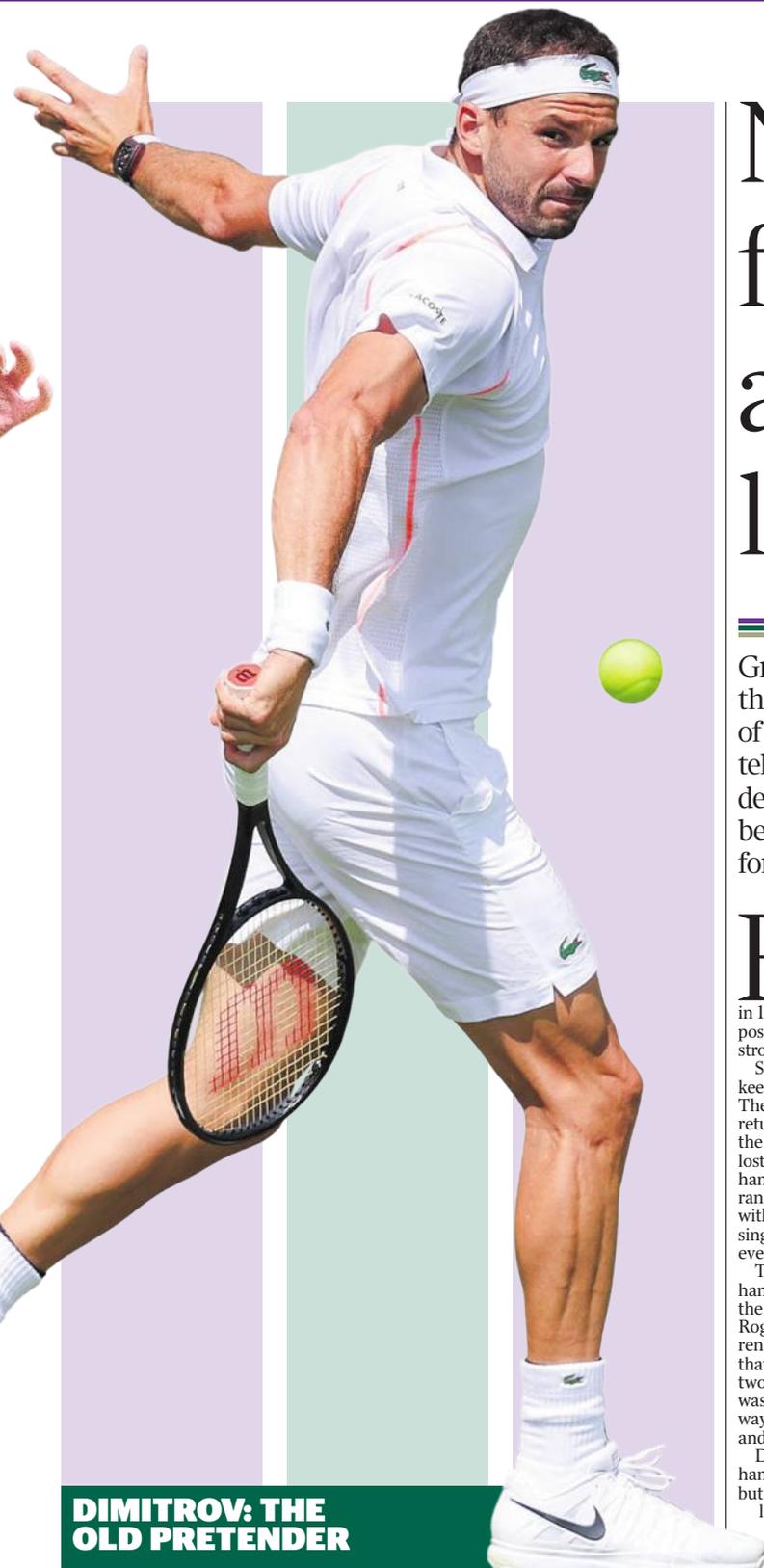
6

JASMINE PAOLINI
 Age: 28
 Nationality: Italy
 Height: 5ft 4in
 Win/loss record in 2024
 ●●●●●●●● 20
 ●●●●●●●● 9

7

ZHENG QINWEN
 Age: 21
 Nationality: China
 Height: 5ft 10in
 Win/loss record in 2024
 ●●●●●●●● 16
 ●●●●●●●● 10

8



DIMITROV: THE OLD PRETENDER

best team I have ever worked with and I'm ready to give 100 per cent."

The story goes that Sinner has never set foot in a nightclub and rarely ever touches alcohol, even if he now resides half an hour further down the coastline in Monte Carlo. On the long flight home from Australia, while the celebrations gathered steam, he couldn't help but begin analysing why he had fallen behind against Medvedev in the first place. There is a slight dichotomy between the Gucci poster boy who dined with Ryan Gosling and Salma Hayek in Mayfair last week and the more reserved character eager to leave the Wimbledon grounds and watch the football in peace. "I always say I have the people I really love with me and I want to share everything for them," he says. "The rest is what it is. I feel very safe when I come

back home." That did not amount to the relaxing evening promised after Italy cratered to a 2-0 defeat, but Sinner's hopes of restoring national pride — there has never been an Italian singles champion at Wimbledon — are pronounced, even if an acrobatic young Spaniard will almost certainly stand in his path again.

"Should I be the favourite? I don't know. If Novak finds the confidence back with his body, he will be very tough to beat. Carlos won here last year. I'm one of them, for sure, but let's see. All these questions will be answered in the next two weeks," he says. And with that, Sinner darts down the stairs away from the packed terrace that overlooks Wimbledon's empty grounds, the match still playing on his phone, eager to field the rest of them on the court.

New Dimitrov fulfilling talent at last after his lost 'wild' years

Grigor Dimitrov, one of the last great exponents of one-handed backhand, tells **Stuart Fraser** of his desire to put heady days behind him as he aims for first grand-slam title

February 19, 2024, was a dark day for those who love to see a one-handed backhand in full flow. For the first time since the ATP rankings were introduced in 1973, not one of the world's top ten possessed this aesthetically pleasing stroke in their arsenal.

Step forward Grigor Dimitrov to help keep this classic shot alive a little longer. The 33-year-old's recent revival has returned the one-handed backhand to the top ten, showing that all is not yet lost for those who prefer not to use two hands on this side. At No10 in the rankings, he leads a group of 11 players with one-handers in the 128-player men's singles draw. In the same-sized women's event there are only three.

There will come a day when one-handed backhands are no longer seen on the grass courts of Wimbledon. Even Roger Federer, whose one-hander was renowned for its beauty, once admitted that he would teach his children to put two hands on the racket. His rationale was that the latter is now a more stable way of dealing with the increasing power and speed in the sport.

Dimitrov reluctantly agrees. His one-handed backhand is glorious to watch but it requires precise timing with its larger swing. When the likes of Carlos Alcaraz and Jannik Sinner are peppering your backhand side with spin-heavy ground strokes, it can be a lost cause if the execution in response is not repeatedly perfect.

"It's probably one of the most difficult shots to hit in tennis," Dimitrov explains. "If you ask me, I still love it. But I would obviously not vouch for it.

"The game has changed and evolved. There are younger players hitting the ball harder and stronger. They've found a good way to put themselves in a position where it's difficult for me, so I need to find a way to put them in an uncomfortable position while still being able to use that shot. With one hand, you also need to use your physicality more."

It is Dimitrov's improved strength and conditioning that has helped him to climb back up the rankings after dropping out of the top 30 last year. Having failed for six years to back up his 2017 ATP Finals triumph in London, the former world No3 finally added another

trophy to his collection in January by winning the Brisbane International.

A winner of the junior title at Wimbledon in 2008, Dimitrov has long moved on from the days in which he was referred to as "Baby Fed" for his stylish game. He has had several high-profile girlfriends, including Maria Sharapova and Nicole Scherzinger, and at times let his personal life get in the way of his professional duties. All indications from those close to him now are that the right balance has finally been struck.

"In my younger years, I was able to lash out a little bit more outside of tennis, but at the same time I was able to play and have fun," Dimitrov said. "I'm a more compact now in the way I do things [off the court] because I don't have time to waste, so whatever I do outside of the sport is at a minimum.

"I don't have much time. I wish I had more to go out with friends or have a little bit of a longer rest, but I don't know how long I have left in me overall. I'm not saying I'm old but at the same time I'm way closer to the end than the beginning. You need to realise that and give everything you've got.

"The early years in my life have probably been the most wild ones overall. I feel like I've passed that stage and now it feels a bit more settled."

It also did not help that Dimitrov's emergence 16 years ago came during arguably the greatest era in men's tennis. He is considered a member of the so-called middle generation, a group of players born in the 1990s who struggled to overcome the dominance of Novak Djokovic, Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer before the likes of Alcaraz and Sinner came along.

"I don't want to say it wasn't playable, but you needed to have something more at the time because it wasn't just one or two players you had to beat," Dimitrov said. "That was the biggest problem.

"I'm not complaining. I loved this time. For some reason I never regretted it and never wished for anything different. Not only did these guys stop me a lot but it taught me a lot for life.

"You have got to accept it. That's just how it is. The gap was very difficult for everybody, especially more so for the players from my generation. I felt like we never had a gap where we could get to those semi-finals and finals to be more consistent at that level."

Now that Federer is retired and the powers of Djokovic and Nadal are waning, Dimitrov cautiously senses an opportunity to claim a grand-slam title in the latter stages of his career. The grass probably gives him his best chance as a former Wimbledon semi-finalist and Queen's Club champion, but he is also a strong performer on hard courts having appeared in the last four of the Australian Open and US Open.

"Of course I believe," Dimitrov said. "But when you think you believe, you need to believe more."

TOP EIGHT MEN'S SEEDS

DANIIL MEDVEDEV
Age: 28
Nationality: xx
Height: 6ft 6in
Win/loss record in 2024
●●●●●●●●●●
●●●●●●●●●●
●●●●●●●●●● 28
●●●●●●●●●● 9

5

ANDREY RUBLEV
Age: 26
Nationality: xx
Height: 6ft 2in
Win/loss record in 2024
●●●●●●●●●●
●●●●●●●●●●
●●●●●●●●●● 24
●●●●●●●●●● 11

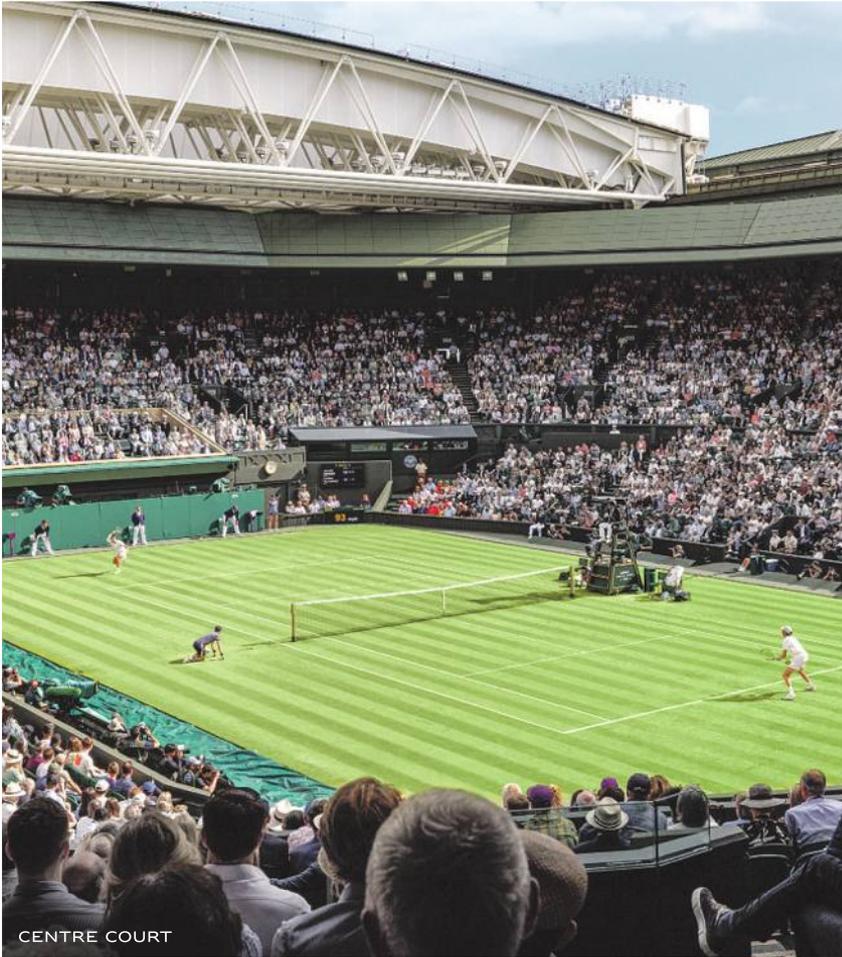
6

HUBERT HURKACZ
Age: 27
Nationality: Poland
Height: 6ft 5in
Win/loss record in 2024
●●●●●●●●●●
●●●●●●●●●●
●●●●●●●●●● 28
●●●●●●●●●● 10

7

CASPER RUUD
Age: 25
Nationality: Norway
Height: 6ft 0in
Win/loss record in 2024
●●●●●●●●●●
●●●●●●●●●●
●●●●●●●●●● 37
●●●●●●●●●● 10

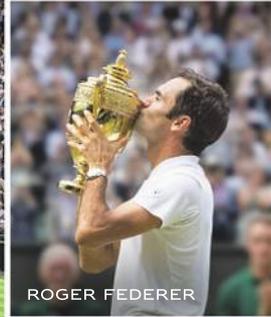
8



CENTRE COURT



CARLOS ALCARAZ



ROGER FEDERER



COCO GAUFF



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