

12 PAGES OF PUZZLES INCLUDING 8-PAGE PULLOUT FREE INSIDE



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Sunday Mail

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July 14, 2024



Natasha's Green party

PAGE 3



EURO 2024



It'll be Juan to savour

PAGE 9



INSIDE 8-PAGE EURO PULLOUT

FRNSMT
Travis star Fran Healy, Right, Natasha Bedingfield

EXCLUSIVE

FARAGE'S ELECTION GHOST ARMY

BY HANNAH RODGER

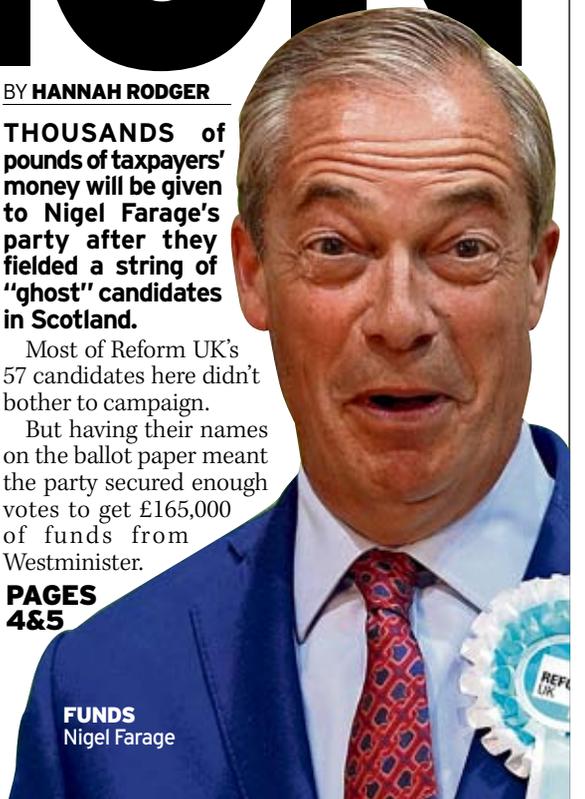
THOUSANDS of pounds of taxpayers' money will be given to Nigel Farage's party after they fielded a string of "ghost" candidates in Scotland.

Most of Reform UK's 57 candidates here didn't bother to campaign.

But having their names on the ballot paper meant the party secured enough votes to get £165,000 of funds from Westminster.

PAGES 4&5

FUNDS
Nigel Farage



Reform handed £165k for candidates who didn't even bother to campaign

INFO

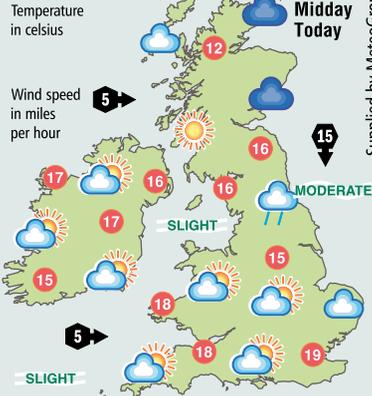
WEATHER

Today

Sunday: Mainly dry but dull and grey with cloudy skies and just a few showers. Rest of Britain: Cloudy with patchy rain but sunny spells will develop.

Outlook

Brighter spells tomorrow but there is a chance of showers too.



Supplied by MeteoGroup

MONDAY

WORLD WEATHER

AM	PM	(C)	Max	Min	Outlook
		Aberdeen	18	12	cloudy
		Dumfries	19	13	cloudy
		Dundee	19	12	rain
		Edinburgh	20	13	rain
		Glasgow	20	12	drizzle
		Hawick	19	12	showers
		Inverness	18	12	drizzle
		Lerwick	14	11	cloudy
		Oban	18	12	cloudy
		Perth	19	12	rain
		St Andrews	19	12	rain
		Stirling	19	12	rain
		Stornoway	15	11	cloudy

	(C)	(F)	
Amsterdam	15	59	thndr
Athens	37	99	sunny
Barbados	29	84	thndr
Barcelona	25	77	sunny
Belfast	17	63	rain
Canaries	27	81	sunny
Costa Del Sol	28	82	fair
Dublin	17	63	fair
Lisbon	24	75	sunny
London	18	64	cloudy
Los Angeles	21	70	fair
Majorca	30	86	sunny
New York	27	81	thndr
Nicosia	36	97	sunny
Paris	21	70	fair
Rhodes	31	88	sunny
Rome	31	88	sunny
Sydney	16	61	fair

7-DAY FORECAST

UK: 0906 367 8367
World: 0906 367 8368
Calls cost 60p per minute

EXCHANGE RATE

US Dollar 1.2326
Euro 1.1343

LOTTERY

Last night's estimated jackpot is £3.9million

22 27 37 38 49 51 59

Thunderball

1 22 27 28 36 8

EMERGENCY HELPLINES

NHS 24	111
National Rail Enquiries	0345 748 4950
Scottish Hydro Electric	0800 300 999
SP Networks	0800 092 9290
Scottish Water	0800 077 8778
Gas emergencies	0800 111 999
Childline	0800 1111
Crimestoppers	0800 555111
Samaritans	116 123
Victim Support	0345 603 9213
Scottish Domestic Abuse Helpline	0800 027 1234
Scottish SPCA	03000 999 999

LOVE SUNDAY

FREE INSIDE SCOTLAND'S TOP MAG



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GOT A STORY?

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DISABLED DRIVERS' PARKING BATTLE

FURY AT BLUE BADGE BLOCK

BY NORMAN SILVESTER

THOUSANDS of vulnerable disabled drivers are being refused vital Blue Badge parking permits by councils, according to figures.

Last year almost 10,000 had applications for the parking permits rejected – an increase of more than 25 per cent on 2022.

Complex online applications systems have been blamed for the massive rise and people refused badges reported growing difficulty in speaking to someone directly about their submissions.

Most councils require online applications, creating problems for older applicants who may not have access to the internet or the skills to fill them out correctly.

“This is a staggering increase in rejected applications

ADAM STACHURA OF CHARITY AGE SCOTLAND

Delays in processing UK Government Adult Disability Payments is also contributing to the rise in rejected applications as people are not then able to provide supporting documents.

Edinburgh-based charity Disability Information Scotland said a growing number of applicants are coming to them for help.

A spokesperson said: “People come up against a lot of issues when applying for Blue Badges.

“Those who seem to have most difficulty are those who cannot access the internet due to disability, lack of a connection, or lack of digital skills. Many councils are also hard to get on the phone.”

Charity Age Scotland's policy director Adam Stachura said: “This is a staggering increase in rejected applications. A Blue Badge is such an important lifeline which keeps many disabled

LIFELINE Blue Badge helps disabled drivers park safely and easily



Rejections soar in all but one council area



people mobile, connected with their community and supports their independence.

“It's vital councils keep a very close eye on how they support people to access what they are entitled to and ensure there is enough resource to do so for those who are digitally excluded.

“We have also asked the Scottish Government to make the process much simpler when

they start delivering the Pension Age Disability Payment from the end of the year.”

There are around 90,000 Blue Badge applications annually in Scotland. In Glasgow, 2148 applications were unsuccessful last year, compared to 1757 in 2022.

Edinburgh reported 584 refusals in 2023, up from 543. One of the biggest rises in rejections was Perth and Kinross – up from

477 to 828. In Dumfries and Galloway, failed applications more than doubled from 24 to 56. Increases were also recorded in Aberdeen, Dundee, the Borders, North Ayrshire, Fife, and West Lothian.

Only one local authority – Inverclyde – saw a drop in the number of rejections.

Glasgow City Council said they are aware of problems people may have with online applications and have raised the issue nationally.

A spokesperson added: “Every application is dealt with on a case-by-case basis.”

GIVE TEACHERS 'A FAIR DEAL'

EDUCATION Secretary Jenny Gilruth has been urged to “rebuild relations” with councils and trade unions as figures showed strikes by council workers and teachers cost 210,000 staff days in just 18 months. The Liberal Democrats said youngsters had missed

BY KATRINE BUSSEY

“weeks of education” as a result of industrial action.

The party raised the issue as the trade union Unison prepares to ballot 38,000 staff working at schools and early years centres on further strikes.

The union warned its

members could walk out in September if the pay row with employers at council body Cosla is not resolved.

Lib Dem education spokesperson Willie Rennie said ministers must provide a “fair settlement for local government”. He made the plea as figures

from FoI showed in 2022-23, at least 170,049 school and council staff days were lost to strikes, with a further 46,197 days from April-October 2023.

A Scottish Government spokesperson said: “No one's interests are served by industrial action.”



DEMAND Willie Rennie

STARS AND FANS LET THEIR HAIR DOWN AT FESTIVAL



STAGE IS SET
For Rick Astley, left, the Vaccines and, far right, NewDad

SCENE STYLER
Natasha Bedingfield went down a storm with the fans

It's cut and blow dried for Natasha



THE gusts blew at TRNSMT but this superstar was never going to let the storms turn her into Natasha Bedingfield.

The 42-year-old These Words singer dashed straight to the pop-up salon, hosted by Rainbow Room, for a blow dry before taking to the main stage at Glasgow Green.

The festivalgoers shook off the unseasonal blowy weather to party to the acts with main draw, local hero

Gerry Cinnamon, headlining last night.

For one fan, Rob Appleby, from Newcastle, it was a 70th birthday to remember.

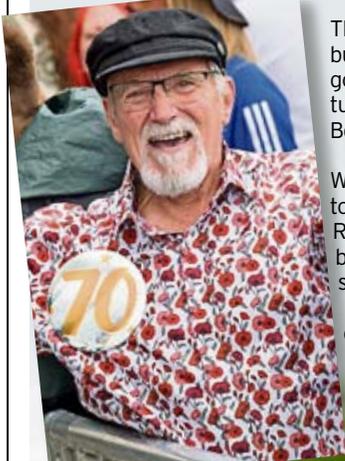
He said: "My daughter treated me for my birthday because she knows I love Gerry Cinnamon.

"I'm not moving all day, I

haven't drank for two days. I'll be here to see him."

Following Liam Gallagher's stellar set the previous night, the crowd got up for more partying with Rick Astley.

Now there's a quiff that not even the strongest Glasgow wind can shift.



PARTY ON DAD
Birthday boy Rob Appleby and festivalgoers get into spirit of it



FRAN'S BUSK STOP

Travis conduct crowds on city double-decker tour

TRAVIS went back to their roots yesterday with a busking bus tour around Glasgow.

BY BEVERLEY LYONS

LA-based Fran Healy was clearly glad to be on home soil. He said: "I miss us. We all talk to one another. When you're away, I didn't miss home as much as when I was in Berlin, and they speak German there, another language, but in LA, it's like no one talks to anybody. "And here, you are standing for two

minutes anywhere and you'll strike up a chat with someone."

The bus tour came after their appearance at the TRNSMT festival on Friday where they secretly played under original name Glass Onion.

Fran said: "We thought we'd gatecrash it. We climbed over the droopy by the side of the thing with the neds and got in and got chased by a guy with a visibility thing.

"We managed to get on stage before he got to us. We played a set and we loved it."



FARE PLAY
Fran on the buses in Glasgow



THE BUSMAN WHO Fran Healy is just the ticket

"We gatecrashed TRNSMT and got chased by security"

FRAN HEALY ON SECRET TRNSMT GIG AS GLASS ONION

EXCLUSIVE CANDIDATES SET

GHOST



REALITY CHECK Stewart McDonald

Swinney must be ruthless, says axed MP

BY HANNAH RODGER

THE FIRST Minister will have to be "ruthless" if he wants to turn the SNP's fortunes around before the next election according to a former MP.

Stewart McDonald, the SNP MP for Glasgow South until the last election, said John Swinney might have to be a "bit of a b*****d" to reform his party into a "serious" operation after their rout at the Westminster election.

McDonald said he felt the SNP may suffer at the Holyrood election in 2026.

The former defence spokesman said the party had become one where people were afraid to voice their views for fear of being "seen as a troublemaker" or causing an argument.

He pointed to his own public opposition to using the next election as a de facto referendum and said: "I received messages from folk telling me they privately agreed."

"That was also happening alongside tweets and messages telling me I wasn't a true believer or I was an MI5 plant - all this sort of rubbish."

"I was getting messages from MPs, MSPs and Scottish Government ministers at the time telling me they also thought the policy was a bad idea."

He pointed to debates about whether economic growth was a good thing and a motion at their next conference discussing what the national anthem would be in an independent Scotland.

McDonald said: "I mean, get real. This is just not serious. I couldn't give a monkeys [what it should be]."

The former parliamentarian said the Labour Party was "getting their act together in a way that's connecting people" and criticised the Green coalition as being damaging for the SNP.

“Messages saying I was an MI5 plant. All rubbish”

STEWART MCDONALD ON SNP IN-FIGHTING

BY HANNAH RODGER
Chief Reporter

NIGEL Farage took advantage of Westminster finance rules to scoop more than £160,000 for party funds by fielding "ghost" election candidates in Scotland.

Reform UK put up 57 names – one in every seat in Scotland – but the majority did no campaigning and eight didn't even live in the country.

But the Sunday Mail can reveal how it allows the right-wing party to claim "short money" from parliamentary finances for every area where they party secured at least five per cent of the total votes.

And last night, one of its members who stood in the Falkirk seat admitted he'd never campaigned here and described himself as a "paper candidate".

Farage's party, which won just five seats in the general election – none in Scotland – has now been accused of exploiting the system and Scottish voters to swell their coffers.

George Havenhand, senior legal researcher at campaign group Spotlight on Corruption, said: "Short money was introduced to level the playing field for opposition parties, not to fill their coffers through paper candidates running hopeless and potentially disingenuous campaigns."

"The fact candidates don't need to prove their identity to stand in an election and that the Electoral Commission can't investigate makes this all the more troubling."

"These findings must prompt a review of whether our political finance laws need a major update – and demonstrate the need for increased powers for the Electoral Commission."

Short money is given to opposition parties who get at least one MP elected with more than 150,000 votes.

To qualify for short money, a party's candidate – regardless of whether they win the seat – has to get at least five per cent of the total votes cast.

Once this threshold is met, they get the £500 deposit for standing refunded and their party also gets £44.53 for every 200 votes that candidate received.

In Scotland, 48 Reform candidates met the threshold and together secured 147,947 votes meaning Farage's party will get £32,940 from their Scottish efforts every year of the parliament.

If it lasts for its five-year term, Reform will end up with £165,000 in total from the taxpayer.

Of the 57 candidates in Scotland, only 10 had their photograph on Reform's website or any description of why they were seeking election.

The remaining 47 have little to no online presence, didn't hold any campaign events and, in Glasgow, four of the party's six candidates didn't live in Scotland.

Glasgow North East candidate Jonathan Walmsley is from North Shropshire, close to the Welsh border, as is Falkirk candidate Keith Barrow.

Neither men attended, travelled the 300 or more miles to their counts or



SWELLING COFFERS Nigel Farage



SILENCE Nigel Farage

Farage party claims 'short money' after

handed in their own paperwork and have no details or photos on Reform's website.

After being tracked down by the Sunday Mail, Barrow admitted he was a "paper candidate" and hadn't been to Scotland at all during the campaign but said he had "strong connections" to the country, particularly Glasgow.

He said he had worked as a swimming coach and achieved success during the Commonwealth Games at the Tollcross swimming pool in the city and he had "fond memories".

He said: "I was more of a paper candidate, to be honest with you. With

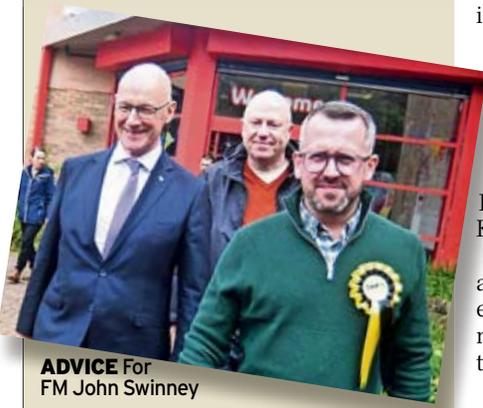
the general election being called at the last minute, it meant a lot of people were selected last minute.

"I'm Welsh, by the way – we're all Celts together. Had I won, I'd have moved to Falkirk, I promise you."

Asked if he thought voters might be annoyed to discover he had no intention of becoming their MP despite standing for election, he said: "You could have said that for the gentleman in Essex who got elected."

"He signed up basically thinking he had no chance of winning and ended up in

“I gave thousands



ADVICE For FM John Swinney

TO RAKE IN £160K FOR REFORM

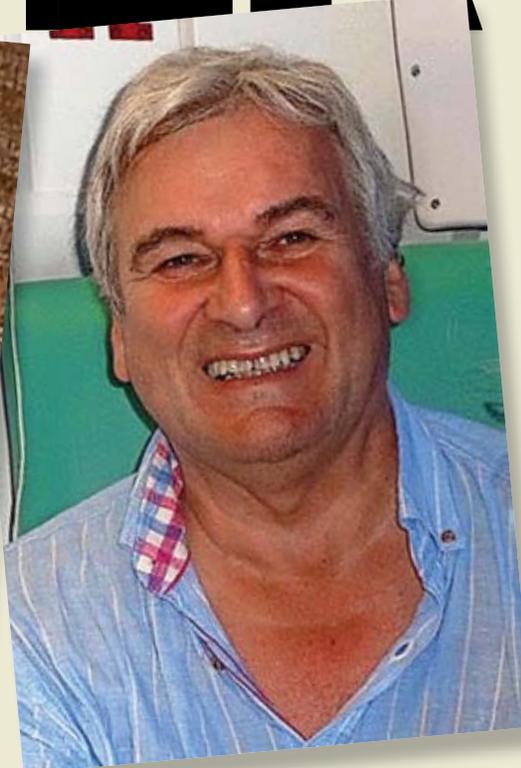
BLUSTER



YOU'VE SCOT A CHEEK
Matthew Wren



POSTED MISSING
Helen Burns and, right, Keith Barrow



Comic targeted with vile abuse after social media hunt for paper candidate takes off

COMEDIAN Kim Blythe first raised the scandal of missing Reform candidates on social media but said she's been bombarded with abuse ever since.

The 32-year-old posted on social media asking if anyone knew who the Glasgow North candidate Helen Burns was as there was no information about her online.

Her funny clip was shared thousands of times but she soon started to receive personal attacks.

Kim told the Sunday Mail: "I've been called

fat more times than I could count. It's been mostly on social media and from anonymous accounts but other people are trying to suggest I'm campaigning against Reform.

"I never actually said much about Reform, I just wanted to know who the candidate was when she was basically non-existent.

"I was asking a legitimate question because I couldn't find any trace of Helen Burns, so I just posted a funny video about it and it took off. I wasn't expecting it to be so popular."

Kim said that while she took a light-hearted approach to the hunt for Burns, she thought it was important voters knew who they

were voting for. Now she thinks so-called paper candidates - who do no campaigning and have no presence in their constituency - should be banned.

She said: "I've had a lot of people saying 'welcome to politics' and 'it's called a paper candidate', as if it's something everybody knows about.

"I think if you actually have no intention campaigning or want to win at all, then you shouldn't be allowed to stand. It shouldn't be a thing.

"Obviously the chances of Helen Burns winning were very slim but she lives down south and didn't come here or really make any effort. It seems wrong."



QUESTIONS Comedian Kim Blythe

putting forward hopefuls who didn't even live in Scotland

Parliament. I think it just works like that. And also giving people the opportunity to vote for the party they want to vote for. Let's be frank, I was never going to win the seat, was I?

"I gave thousands of people the opportunity to cast their vote for Reform UK, which I think is a good thing."

The search for the Glasgow North candidate Helen Burns went viral after a comedian, who lives in the constituency, posted a video asking where she was.

Some voters speculated Burns didn't exist due to her lack of online presence

or campaigning efforts. The Sunday Mail found one personal social media image of Burns online but nothing official.

She lives in a village in north-west Leicestershire - 311 miles away - and is not believed to have come to Scotland at all during the campaign.

Coatbridge and Bellshill candidate Fionna McRae is listed as living near Nottingham, along with Glasgow South West candidate Morag McRae.

Neither of them attended the election count, completed their own paperwork or displayed any public information about

themselves on Reform's site before the vote. Hamilton and Clyde Valley hopeful Lisa Judge also lives in north-west Leicestershire and had a similar lack of input or detail provided about her.

Matthew Wren lives in Horsham in West Sussex - 500 miles from the constituency of North East Fife where he was running as a candidate.

He did have a photograph and a biography on Reform's website and is one of the few candidates who attended a hustings event during the campaign.

Inverclyde and Renfrewshire West

nominee Simon Moorehead, who hoped to become an MP for Inverclyde, is listed as living in the Tatton constituency which is between Liverpool and Manchester.

He was criticised during the campaign after social media posts emerged where he had described murdered MP Jo Cox as a "dreadful woman, with bad ideas", adding: "No one wanted her dead though."

The Sunday Mail repeatedly contacted Reform UK - and Farage - to seek comment but they did not respond.

Earlier this month, the party had to publicly deny they had fielded non-existent candidates after one admitted to using an AI-generated image of himself as his campaign photograph.

Matt Matlock, who stood, said he used AI to edit his photograph as he wasn't wearing a tie in the Reform party colours.



RUBBLE Damaged building

Four killed as Ukraine hit by shells from Russia

BY SAMYA KULLAB

FOUR people died in Russian shelling of Ukraine yesterday.

The deaths came as the countries exchanged drone attacks, one of which set a Russian oil depot ablaze.

Two people died in Ukraine's partly occupied Kherson region and two were wounded in the attack close to the regional capital.

Two other people died yesterday afternoon and 22 were wounded in Ukraine's north-eastern Kharkiv.

An oil depot in the Tsimlyansky district, deep inside Russia's south-western Rostov region, was set ablaze in the early hours after a drone attack.

Ukraine has recently stepped up aerial assaults on Russian soil, targeting refineries and oil terminals in an effort to slow down the Kremlin's war machine.

Moscow's army is pressing hard along the frontline in eastern Ukraine, where a shortage of troops and ammunition in the third year of war has made defenders vulnerable.

Meanwhile, the Kremlin warned Europe over the deployment of US missiles in Germany.

The US and Germany announced on Wednesday they would begin "episodic deployments" of the long-range missiles to Germany in 2026.

A Kremlin spokesman said: "We have enough capacity to contain these missiles but the potential victims are the capitals of these countries."

Missing man's body is found

A BODY has been found in woods during searches for a missing man.

The discovery was made at the rear of Broompark Crescent in Airdrie at 1pm on Saturday.

He has been formally identified as 20-year-old Nico McCann, who was reported missing on Friday.

Police say there are not thought to be any suspicious circumstances surrounding his death.



NO TIME TO WASTE PM and deputy Angela Rayner at first Cabinet

Our plans put service back into UK politics

BY **LUCY POWELL**
Leader of the Commons

WEDNESDAY'S State Opening of Parliament is a moment of profound change after 14 years of Conservative government.

Labour will set out the laws it wants to pass to bring promised change.

As the Leader of the House of Commons, my job is to ensure those first laws meet Labour's missions.

We've been working so we hit the ground running with an ambitious and bold agenda.

Over 14 years, our economy has stalled, with the cost-of-living crisis and rising bills hitting families hard. Public services aren't working, with NHS waiting times at record highs.

Our streets feel unsafe. Young people don't have the opportunities their parents did to get on in life.

There's no time to lose to start making a difference. Rather than stick our heads in the sand, or pull the wool over people's eyes as the Tories did, Labour will be straight with people about the problems we inherit.

Our first King's Speech will be a downpayment, just the start of the legislative plans we set out over the next five years. Transforming our country will take patient, focused work over a long period of time.

As the Prime Minister has made clear, this will be a government of service. We will do things differently, and do things properly. Rather than useless gimmicks and bills, we will focus on real change for working people.

Rather than sleaze, scandal and division in Parliament, ministers and MPs alike will be held to the highest standards of behaviour and respect.

Rather than trashing our democratic institutions and the rule of law, we will respect them.

We will focus every day on delivering our missions – basic asks that have been ignored for years.

Change won't be easy. National renewal won't come quickly. But Labour will put politics back to public service and put Parliament to work delivering for working people. Change starts now.

BY **MIKEY SMITH**

A LAW to protect workers from unscrupulous bosses is set to be included in Keir Starmer's first King's Speech.

The Employment Rights Bill, which Labour plans to pass within 100 days, will ban zero-hour contracts and outlaw "fire and rehire" tactics.

It is one of 35 new laws to be revealed as the Prime Minister puts growth at the heart of his plan to rebuild Britain.

"Our work is urgent – there is no time to waste," Starmer said last night.

"We are hitting the ground running by bringing forward the laws we will need to rebuild our country for the long-term – and our ambitious, fully costed agenda is the downpayment on that change."

King Charles will deliver a speech in the House of Lords on Wednesday at the State Opening of Parliament, setting out Labour's plans for the coming session.

New laws announced in the speech will all be aimed at kickstarting Britain's "stalled economy".

And every measure will be focused on the six missions the Prime Minister announced during the campaign – Economic stability, cutting NHS waiting times, border security, launching Great British Energy, cracking down on antisocial behaviour, and recruiting more teachers.

Bosses at ferry firm P&O were branded "modern-day pirates" after sacking 786 workers before replacing them with agency staff – who could be paid as little as £4.87 an hour – in 2022.

Such tactics would be banned under new workers' rights protections.

The bill is also expected to introduce basic statutory rights from day one on sick pay and parental leave – and beefed-up protections against unfair dismissal.

And it will allow the Government to scrap some anti-union rules pushed through by the Tories.

A Labour source said: "Labour is the party of working people and this Labour government is delivering on our promise to make work pay with a New Deal for Working People."

"We will hit the ground running, introducing legislation within the first 100 days of entering office."

The source added: "The Tories let wages stagnate and have left millions of workers in insecure jobs."

"Labour will turn the page, improving people's lives and boosting economic growth for everyone's benefit."

Writing for this paper, Commons Leader Lucy Powell said: "We will prioritise the things that will make the most impact first."

"Over 14 years, our economy has stalled, with the cost-of-living crisis and rising bills hitting families hard."

"Public services aren't working, with NHS waiting times at record highs. Our streets feel unsafe."

"Young people don't have the opportunities their parents did to get on in life. There's no time to lose to start making a difference to people's lives."

Meanwhile, Starmer will bid to "change" Britain's relationship with the European Union as ministers host European leaders at a major summit at Blenheim Palace, near Oxford, next weekend.

“
Tories let pay stagnate... we will hit the ground running with our new deal for workers

First up... end fire & rehire

Labour to pass law within 100 days

The King's Speech: What's in...

GROWTH AND ENERGY

Wednesday's agenda-setting speech is due to include laws to set up Labour's national wealth fund and a new "mission control" tasked with turbo-charging the UK to clean power by 2030.

REGION AND ECONOMY The role of regional politicians and the Office for Budget Responsibility are set to be bolstered.

EDUCATION Measures are expected on strengthening school standards and introducing free breakfast clubs for primary school children. It's thought elements of

the reform of school regulator Ofsted will be flagged up.

HOUSE OF LORDS REFORM

Also expected is removing the right of hereditary peers to sit and vote in the Lords and putting a mandatory retirement age of 80 on the upper chamber.

HOMES & JOBS Measures to boost housebuilding and infrastructure, improve transport and create more jobs will be included, No10 said.

CRIME A crackdown on anti-social behaviour and county-lines drug smuggling are highly likely.

and what's out

Labour says this first speech should be seen as a "downpayment" – the first wave of changes. That means a number of measures Labour has announced, or has been urged to introduce, will not be there yet:

TWO-CHILD BENEFIT Moves to scrap the two-child benefit cap are unlikely to be included.

DIGITAL ID CARDS As called for by Tony Blair, are not on the cards.

VOTING AGE While Labour still plans to reduce the voting age to 16, it's not expected to make it to this year's King's Speech.

EXCLUSIVE CASH-STRAPPED CLUB'S TAKEOVER TALKS

BY NORMAN SILVESTER

ADMINISTRATION-threatened Inverness Caley Thistle are involved in advanced takeover talks with American investors, the Sunday Mail can reveal.

The club has said it needs to raise at least £300,000 to pay creditors in the coming weeks or it could go under.

Little is known about the Americans, who are believed to have first approached Caley Thistle last month.

They are said to have an exclusivity agreement with the club over any takeover and are thought to have made an initial offer of about £2million.

It is also understood the club directors have given them until July 25 to confirm their intentions following a meeting last week.

There are believed to be at least two other potential overseas bidders interested should the US deal fail.

A club insider: "The club is keen to conclude the current negotiations as quickly as possible to bring some financial stability. The board is aware of interest from other investors but have been open about the prompt need to pay off monies due to creditors and ensure the survival of the club.

"That is why it has set a deadline for later this month.

"The current negotiations are fairly well advanced with further discussions planned."

The board has previously warned the risk of going into administration is real if it can't attract new investment or owners. Inverness's financial status was laid bare this month when its accounts, up to May 2023, showed a £588,053 loss. They showed the amount due to creditors over the next year had risen to £3.25million from £1.96million the previous year.

The figure included £2.1million owed to directors, including former chairman Ross Morrison who says he has ploughed £1.5million into the club in recent years.

Its assets, including pitch, stands and floodlights, were valued at £2million but the club had just £20,210 in cash. After taking account of money owed, the club had overall liabilities of £1,255,816 compared with net assets of £462,000 the previous year.

Noting the club's financial state, the auditors A9 Accountancy said there continued to be a "material uncertainty" over its ability to continue as a going concern.

The accounts confirmed directors were in discussion with interested parties looking to invest in the club and planning a "significant cost restructuring project" to improve its financial position. Last month, Caley Thistle said they planned to approach an insolvency practitioner about how to proceed if efforts to find investment

SKINT CALEY'S £2 MILLION U.S. LIFELINE HOPE



ASSETS Pitch, stands and floodlights are valued at £2m



QUIT Morrison, top. Manager Ferguson hopeful for Caley's future



Directors set deadline for investors to ensure team survival

SUPPORT Ewing backs club

fail. RBS's lending to the firm is secured by a charge over its assets.

Local MSP Fergus Ewing said: "I am sure that Invernessians will welcome this investment to enable the club to overcome its financial difficulties and continue to operate and to continue to play and keep the club on the football map. Nobody wants to see the club go, it has become part of the fabric of the city."

Morrison, who resigned in June, also has a charge over the club's shares in a proposed battery energy storage venture which Highland Council has refused planning permission for at a site in Inverness. The project was expected to bring

in an estimated £3.4million. Caley Thistle have appealed against the decision. The Scottish Government will now consider their appeal.

The collapse of a separate deal to use the stadium as a park-and-ride for a major hydro project at Loch Ness is also thought to have lost the club up

under US ownership and Motherwell are considering an offer from US TV executive Erik Barmack.

Administration would result in 15-point deduction and make it hard for the club to achieve promotion next season after being relegated in May. It's understood the US investors were due in Inverness this weekend for discussions with the board.

George Moodie, Director of the Inverness Caley Thistle Supporters Trust, said: "It is great to hear about potential new investors in the club - which is long overdue."

Last week, manager Duncan Ferguson said he was optimistic the club's situation will be resolved soon. Inverness Caledonian Thistle did not respond to our request for comment.

"I'm sure Invernessians will welcome the investment"

FERGUS EWING ON THE CALEY THISTLE POSSIBLE DEAL



TRAGEDY Scene of blaze Child dies and five are hurt in house fire

BY SERENA RICHARDS

A YOUNGSTER has died and five adults have been injured following a house blaze yesterday.

The inferno occurred at a terraced property at around 8.30am.

The child died at the scene and those who were hurt were taken to hospital. No further details have been provided on their condition.

Last night the cause of the blaze, in East Ham, east London, remained under investigation. Police were trying to contact the child's next of kin.

London Fire Brigade's assistant commissioner Patrick Goulbourne said: "This is a terribly sad incident and the thoughts of all of us are with the family, friends and all those affected."



CARNAGE Israel hit Gaza Over 70 killed in 'terrorism plotter' strike

BY SIMON MURPHY

AN Israeli strike targeting the suspected October 7 attack mastermind has killed at least 71 people in southern Gaza.

Israel claimed Mohammed Deif - the Hamas commander believed to be behind last year's deadly attack - and a second senior figure in the group were the targets.

It is not known whether Deif, who is thought to have escaped multiple Israeli assassination attempts, was killed.

At least 289 others were injured with many of the wounded taken to Nasser Hospital, the Gaza health ministry said.

Video footage showed charred tents, burnt out cars and belongings scattered on blackened earth as emergency workers searched for survivors.



ON CREST OF A WAVE Tom Cruise



PALS Hugh Jackman and Kate Beckinsale



WINNER Barbora Krejcikova celebrates



CHECKING IN Jenna Coleman

It's love all for Maya and P!nk

POP singer P!nk helped Get the Party Started at the Wimbledon ladies final yesterday.

She joined Love Island host Maya Jama to watch Czech ace Barbora Krejcikova beat Italian

Jasmine Paolini. Tom Cruise, Anya Taylor-Joy, Jenna Coleman and Zendaya also enjoyed the action, while Hugh Jackman, Kate Beckinsale and Ellie Goulding had VIP seats.



STRIKING A POSE P!nk and Maya Jama



SUITS YOU Zendaya



MADE UP Ellie Goulding



DRESSED DOWN Anya Taylor-Joy

Kate centre court

BY PATRICK HILL

THE Princess of Wales is due on Centre Court later today to watch the men's singles final and present the winner's trophy at Wimbledon.

Having Kate at the showpiece match - between Novak Djokovic and Carlos Alcaraz - will delight royal fans as it will be only her second public appearance since she revealed her cancer diagnosis in March.

It had been hoped the princess, who has been patron of the All England Club since 2016, would also

Princess of Wales WILL go to Wimbledon for men's final

be at yesterday's ladies final, where Barbora Krejcikova triumphed over Jasmine Paolini. But in a statement, Kensington Palace yesterday announced she would miss the event for the first time since 2017.

Kate, right, also missed a charity polo match on Friday, when husband Prince William was on the field. She

was last seen in public in June, when she watched Trooping the Colour with children George, 10, Charlotte, nine, and Louis, six.

Kate, 42, said last month that



she hoped to attend the occasional royal engagement over the summer, but urged the public to bear with her.

She admitted she has "good and bad days" and stressed she is "not out of the woods yet".

Kate's cancer was discovered after abdominal surgery in January. The princess later confirmed her diagnosis in an emotional televised statement. She is not expected to return

to full-time royal duties until fully recovered.



EURO2024 SPAIN V ENGLAND THE FINAL

BY JENNIFER HYLAND

A SPANISH restaurant boss based in Glasgow will be clocking off early to watch his national team take on England tonight in the Euro 2024 cup final.

Jamie Gonzalez-Bradley, who co-owns Malaga Tapas with his brother Antonio, hopes to see three-time European champions Spain prevent England from lifting the prestigious trophy.

The 37-year-old, who is dad to two-year-old Santiago, said: "We've been brought up in both Spain and Scotland and we describe ourselves as 50/50."

"I support Spain's national football team and I'm very nervous. Spain have by far been the better team in the tournament while England have been more than lucky."

"I think Spain have had a tough tournament while England have had an easier time. I hope we see Spain beat England 2-0."

Glasgow-born Jamie's Spanish dad Christobal and Scottish mum Susan took the family to live in Malaga when he was just six weeks old.

The family then spent years living across both countries before settling in Scotland and opening their first restaurant, Malaga Tapas, in Pollokshields in October 2011.

Brothers Jamie and Antonio, 27, who went on to open Malaga Tapas restaurants in Clarkston and Bearsden, have been donning their Spanish strips at work during the tournament, which saw the Spanish beat France 2-1 to book their spot in the final.

Now, despite a busy night ahead with customers booked in to enjoy some traditional Spanish cuisine, Jamie has vowed to clock off with a pint to take in the showpiece match.

He added: "My wife Julie is from Glasgow and she's very supportive of our son Santiago wearing his Spain strip."

"We were on holiday during some of Spain's games and Santiago had taken his Spanish and Scotland strips but got more use of the Spanish one."

"During the tournament, my brother and I have also been wearing our Spanish football tops in the restaurant along with all the staff who've been wearing their tops in the kitchen and on the floor. The manager Luke has been wearing his Scotland one, too."

"We've had some friendly banter with the punters. Some have been

It's going to be an El of a match

Restaurant boss is taking night off to cheer on Spanish



JUAN OF THE BOYS
Jamie with his son Santiago

“I’ll be clocking off at 7.45pm to watch

JAMIE IS HOPING FOR A SPANISH VICTORY

saying Spain better win or they're not coming back to the restaurant.

"Who is going to win has been the topic of conversation in the restaurants ever since England got into the final."

"The customers have been brilliant and we're looking really busy on Sunday."

"I think there are lots of Scots who have decided to book in to have some

Spanish food while watching the game. But no matter what, I'll be clocking off shift at 7.45pm and sitting down with my first pint to hopefully watch Spain win."

Meanwhile, fans hoping to see England crowned Euro 2024 winners will be heading out to watch the nerve-racking final today.

Manager Donna Dorrall, from Glasgow's Union Bar, said fans looking

to watch the England v Spain match would be welcome.

Regulars are also looking forward to getting the celebrations off to a good start with the pub's Union Bar Holiday party which will be in full swing ahead of the 8pm match kick-off.

Donna said: "The England v Spain game will be on and we're hoping

England will win.

"It's been some tournament and both are good teams."

"There will be a great atmosphere and we're looking forward to a great game."



FRIENDLY RIVALRY
Spanish and English fan have a chat

ENGLAND PLAYING IT COOL ALL IN OUR EUROS PULLOUT

COLOGNE HAS SCOT THAT TWINNING FEELING



PRAISE Mayor Reker

COLOGNE has officially started the process of twinning itself with a Scottish city... because they were so impressed with the Tartan Army at the Euros.

An estimated 200,000 Scotland fans descended on the German city for the second game of the tournament - which ends

BY MARK WALKER

today - as Steve Clarke's side collected their only point after a 1-1 draw with Switzerland.

Cologne mayor Henriette Reker already praised the Tartan Army for their behaviour and insisted they would be welcome back any time.

Now the city's council

have officially put forward a motion to twin the city with one of three in Scotland - Glasgow, Edinburgh or Aberdeen.

Cologne council deputy leader Oliver Seeck said: "There is the shared love of football between the Scots and the people of Cologne, which unites both fan groups in a

unique way and which was impressively demonstrated this summer.

"And the bagpipes are now used in Cologne music by many bands and carnival societies."

"Another connecting element is the special art of brewing, which has a long tradition in both

Cologne and Scotland. Both regions are known for their unique beer creations.

"We have put forward three Scottish cities as suggestions, but we would be more than happy to twin our city with the whole of Scotland."



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HUG Zelensky and Harris

Zelensky 'can forget' Biden Putin blunder

BY SIMON MURPHY

UKRAINE'S Volodymyr Zelensky yesterday said he is able to forget Joe Biden's gaffe in which he called him "President Putin".

His forgiving words followed the US president's embarrassing blunder at the Nato summit.

Asked about the under-pressure 81-year-old's slip, Zelensky said: "It's a mistake. I think the United States gave a lot of support for Ukrainians."

"We can forget some mistakes. I think so."

The war-torn country's leader was speaking during a visit to Ireland where Taoiseach Simon Harris hugged him at Shannon Airport.

Asked for his message to Ireland, Zelensky said: "Thank you so much for your support, thanks to Ireland for hosting a lot of Ukrainian refugees."

Biden has faced pressure to stand down from the presidential race.

Hollywood star George Clooney, 63, a Democratic fundraiser, has written an article saying the President had won many battles, "but the one he cannot win is the fight against time".

Lawrence probe cop race storm

ONE of the detectives who bungled the investigation into Stephen Lawrence's murder described young Jamaican men as "ignorant and uneducated".

Mick Tomlin said a description of the Windrush generation being involved in prostitution, stealing and drug dealing "reflected exactly" his experience.

The racist ex-detective constable also accused Stephen's mum Baroness Doreen Lawrence of lying.

Tomlin was involved in the initial failed probe after Stephen, 18, was stabbed by a racist gang in Eltham, south-east London, in 1993.

Six years later an inquiry branded the ex-cop "incompetent" and guilty of "serious neglect".

David Norris, 47, and Gary Dobson, 48, were jailed for the murder in 2012.

Baldwin gun trial: The reality show



DEATH Halyna Hutchins

BY SASKIA ROWLANDS and SARAH ROBERTSON

HOLLYWOOD star Alec Baldwin is set to use his manslaughter trial ordeal in a reality TV show.

It comes after a judge threw out the case against the 66-year-old actor accused of fatally shooting cinematographer Halyna Hutchins on the set of movie Rust in 2021.

As he headed into court in Santa Fe, New Mexico, on Thursday he and wife Hilaria were being filmed by documentary videographer

Jenna Roshier - who owns California-based Althea Films. She is said to have had special access to film the pair.

Last month, the actor announced plans for new reality show The Baldwins.

Set to be screened next year, it is being billed as a fly-on-the-wall peek into family life with their seven children.

But it is not yet known if courtroom scenes will be included.

Baldwin - who faced up to



ACCUSED Baldwin on set of Rust

18 months' jail if convicted - was on trial accused of shooting Halyna and wounding director Joel Souza.

The prosecution claimed he

behaved recklessly during a scene rehearsal. But Judge Mary Marlowe Sommer dismissed the case after it emerged police and prosecutors hid evidence about ammunition used.

Baldwin always maintained he did not pull the trigger, claiming others on the set were responsible for safety checks.

Roshier's website says she has produced, directed and filmed social, political and music documentaries for TV and film.



COURTROOM TEARS With hug from his wife Hilaria

We're devastated ... beyond words

BY DAN WARBURTON and SASKIA ROWLANDS

HEARTBROKEN BBC commentator John Hunt, whose family was killed in a crossbow attack, spoke out for the first time yesterday.

The horse racing radio pundit and surviving daughter Amy, 23, told of their despair in a moving message.

The pair said: "The devastation we are experiencing cannot be put into words. We would like to thank people for their kind messages and for the support we have received in recent days. These have provided great comfort to us for which we are very grateful."

"As you can imagine, this is an extremely difficult time for us, and we need time and space to come to terms with what has happened and start the grieving process." Their words came four

Anguished dad & daughter's moving message after triple crossbow killing

days after John's wife Carol, 61, and daughters Louise, 25, and Hannah, 28, were tied up and shot in their home in Bushey, Hertfordshire.

It is understood one of

the dying victims managed to ring the police during the horror attack and another sent a desperate last text to her partner urging them to dial 999. Police launched a

manhunt for Louise's ex-boyfriend Kyle Clifford, 26, who served in the Queen's Dragoon Guards.

They raided his home in Enfield, north London, and some local schools were locked down.

On Wednesday, he was found in a nearby cemetery and taken to a trauma centre with suspected self-inflicted chest injuries. He was arrested on suspicion of the triple murder on Thursday.

More than 50 mourners attended a church service on Thursday.

Afterwards, friend Lea Holloway tearfully said: "I'll miss Carol like crazy. I can't believe this has happened. It's the thing nightmares are made of."

Det Supt Rob Hall said: "Our thoughts remain with the victims' family at this tragic time. The investigation is moving at pace. Inquiries are continuing."



VICTIM Hannah, 28



DEAD Wife Carol with husband John



SHOT Louise, 25



Another last minute winner!

Save up to £400 on large screen TVs, and **bring it home today** in time for the big game.



Order & Collect

Order online and collect in-store today.

Teen knifed in 'targeted' park attack

A TEENAGER was rushed to hospital after being stabbed in "targeted attack" by two thugs on motorbikes on Friday.

The 19-year-old was with two friends in Victoria Park in Edinburgh when they were approached by two men on motorbikes.

One stabbed the victim in the arm before they made off towards Craighall Road.

The victim was taken to the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh where staff said his condition was stable.

Detective Inspector Gavin Howat said: "This appears to have been a targeted attack on the victim and extensive inquiries are ongoing."



REHOMED Yampil

Rescued bear dies

A "BELOVED" bear rescued from the war in Ukraine and rehomed in a Scottish zoo has died.

Staff at Five Sisters Zoo in West Calder, West Lothian, said the death of Asiatic black bear Yampil meant it was a "truly sad day".

The animal had been discovered by Ukrainian troops in an abandoned zoo in July 2022.

Crumbling parly needs repair now

MINISTERS face fresh pressure to speed up plans to refurbish the crumbling Houses of Parliament – after eight incidents of falling masonry in a year.

Four were reported since April 2023, said data revealed under Freedom of Information laws.

In the Lords, there were two incidents in March 2024.

Options available include both houses moving out – MPs for nine years, Lords for 11 – support staff moving out for a decade and House of Lords for 17 years or a rolling "enhanced maintenance" programme.

MPs will vote on the plans next year.

CALL TO SPEND CASH ON FAMILIES



SUFFERING Money saved could help alleviate child poverty

AXE THE TAX

New Labour Government urged to ditch hated Tory policy to tackle poverty

BY HANNAH RODGER
Chief Reporter

THE new Labour Government has been urged to scrap the bedroom tax to save Scotland £70million a year.

Since the so-called spare room subsidy was brought in by David Cameron's Tory government in 2013, SNP ministers in Holyrood have spent more than half a billion pounds of taxpayers' cash to mitigate its effects.

Now, politicians, charities and the leader of the country's biggest local authority are calling on Keir Starmer to rip up the policy to free up money for aiding child poverty.

Glasgow City Council spends £14million a year – the most of any local authority – offsetting the levy.

Leader Susan Aitken said: "Austerity is a choice. Every penny the city spends trying to mitigate the worst effects of the austerity imposed on our communities by the UK Government could be put to work on other priorities and strengthening public services if the new Government took a different direction.

"In truth, we would almost certainly still choose to direct much of that money towards tackling poverty. The

“The bedroom tax was wrong when it was introduced and it's wrong now”

ALISON WATSON SHELTER SCOTLAND



INVEST Susan Aitken, above, housing minister Paul McLennan and, right, Shelter Scotland's Alison Watson



difference would be that the city's efforts would have much greater impact – and could deliver more effective and sustainable outcomes for Glasgow families – if they weren't constantly undermined by UK Government policies." The call comes as the new PM is under pressure to scrap the Tories' two-child benefit cap – which affects 26,000 Scots families.

Under the bedroom tax policy, people who have one spare bedroom in their home have a 14 per cent reduction in benefits while those with two spare rooms get 25 per cent less. At the same time, a cap on how

benefit could be received was brought in. In 2017, Holyrood was given powers to mitigate the tax as ministers feared not doing so would cause evictions.

Scottish housing minister Paul McLennan said: "Since 2017, we have invested over £613million in Discretionary Housing Payments to mitigate the bedroom tax and benefit cap. We want to work with the UK Government to drive forward the action needed to end child poverty once and for all.

"However, decades of Tory austerity and welfare cuts mean the Scottish Government has been working with one hand tied behind our back.

"We continue to call on the UK Government to lift the benefit cap and bedroom tax, to benefit those on low incomes

POLICYMAKER David Cameron



in Scotland." Shelter Scotland called for the bedroom tax to be axed in 2013 and still believes it should be scrapped.

Director Alison Watson said: "The bedroom tax was wrong when it was introduced and it's wrong now.

"The resources spent mitigating the bedroom tax would be much better spent on the only long-term solution to our housing emergency – building more social homes."

Scottish Labour was asked if it supported scrapping the bedroom tax but said it wasn't able to comment.

The UK Government said: "We are committed to reviewing Universal Credit to make work pay and tackle poverty, recognising the very challenging state of the economy and public finances. This new government will deliver the change needed to grow the economy and make everyone better off."

BBC DANCE CONTEST IN CRISIS AS

Joy over return of cancer-hit Amy

PRO dancer Amy Dowden's return to Strictly can't come quick enough for head judge Shirley Ballas.

Amy, 33, was diagnosed with breast cancer last year and, after gruelling treatment, was told in February that doctors could find "no evidence" of the disease.

Shirley said: "Amy is an ex-student of mine - I've known her all her

dancing life. She's incredible and does a lot for women's health.

"Of course, she is

Amy Dowden MBE now, might I say, for the work she's done. I've been there through Amy's darkest times and I've been there through her brightest times. And I know her brightest light

is now, that she's back on the show, because she was mortified when she couldn't go on last year.

"I hope she gets an amazing partner and I know that she's going to be doing some great work, and carrying on the wonderful messages that she's putting out there."



HEALTHY Amy Dowden

Shirley: My stalker hell ..I don't go out alone

BY LAURA ARMSTRONG and JANINE YAQOUB

SHIRLEY Ballas fears being stalked after having to call police over a fan's disturbing behaviour.

The Strictly judge, who has faced vile death threats in the past, said the man - who believes he knows her - "lunged" at her in one alarming encounter.

He also took photographs of her car and home.

Shirley, who has since beefed up her security, spoke exclusively to our sister paper the Mirror's Invite Only podcast just days before Gavin Plumb was sentenced to life for plotting to kidnap, rape and kill TV presenter Holly Willoughby.

Shirley said police had confiscated her suspected stalker's phone and computer.

She also told how her driver will always get out of the car first and scan the area to make sure it's safe.

The 63-year-old, who has been rocked by Holly's ordeal, said: "I like to be a free bird but we're coming into times where you have to be more vigilant.

"I'm careful not to go out alone. If it's at night, I'm always a little bit nervous.

"Thankfully, the BBC's duty of care towards me has been 1000 per cent. They've been fantastic." This year,

Strictly celebrates its 20th anniversary. Shirley promises it will be a series to remember with shows that will be "the most magnificent on Earth".

The dance contest has also been given the royal seal of approval after the Princess of Wales, 42, Princess Charlotte, nine, and Prince Louis, six, visited the set at Elstree Studios.

Months later, it was revealed that Kate was battling cancer.

Shirley, who has had her own cancer scare, said: "I think it was remarkably brave of Kate to talk about her issues.

"I think the whole country wishes her the very best and she has a speedy recovery."

Shirley, who revealed that the young royals sat in the judges' chairs, added:

"They were so well behaved and beautifully poised.

"Charlotte, she's a little dancer... she's got things going with a little bit of jazz."

Shirley had another brush with royalty last year when she sent a copy of her debut novel, Murder on the Dance Floor, to the Queen - who replied with a handwritten thank you letter.

"I don't know how she got on with that steamy book," Shirley laughed.

"I was hoping she'd pass it to the King and he could also enjoy it."

●Murder on the Dance Floor: The Sequin Mysteries is out in paperback. The sequel Dance to the Death will be

released on October 10. Listen to Shirley's full interview at podfollow.com/inviteonly



ICON Strictly judge Shirley



CHATTY With our Janine and Laura

We've designed a new logo especially for our customers



2ND PRO LEAVES UNDER A CLOUD



STRICTLY REELING

» Graziano gets the boot amid claims of gross misconduct

» Another shock for fans after Giovanni's exit from family show

BY SARAH ROBERTSON

STRICTLY Come Dancing fans were left shocked yesterday after Graziano Di Prima was sensationally booted off the BBC show.

The professional dancer, 30, was fired following a complaint about his behaviour towards TV star Zara McDermott that amounted to gross misconduct.

Zara, 26, was partnered with the Italian dancer in last year's series.

Graziano's shock sacking comes as Strictly reels from allegations against fellow Italian pro Giovanni Pernice, 33.

Neither man will be part of the Strictly 2024 line-up.

Within minutes of his sacking yesterday, Graziano said in a statement: "My intense passion and determination to win might have affected my training regime.

"I deeply regret the events that led to my departure from

AT ODDS
Sherlock actress Amanda and Giovanni on last year's Strictly

Strictly... I understand it's best for the show that I step away."

Graziano, who is married to Italian dancer Giada Lini, added: "I remain committed to being strong for my family and friends."

But he hinted there were "aspects of this story involving external influences".

He added: "When the time is right, I will share my story."

Last night, former Love Island star and documentary maker Zara had not commented on the matter.

But one source reportedly said: "It is incredibly brave of Zara to have come forward.

"It is never easy for a woman - or indeed anyone who has been mistreated - to do that."

According to reports, Zara did not raise the complaint about Graziano but she was contacted by BBC chiefs after a number of Strictly staff expressed concerns about his behaviour.

A BBC spokesman said yesterday: "We can confirm Graziano Di Prima is no longer a part of the line-up of professional dancers for the upcoming series.

"The BBC has established and robust duty of care procedures and if issues are raised, we will always take them

seriously and act swiftly". It comes as Giovanni has been mired in "serious complaints" about alleged "threatening and abusive behaviour" since his last celebrity partner, Sherlock star Amanda Abbington, 50, quit the show after just five weeks.

The BBC announced in May he would not be returning for this year's special 20th anniversary series. But show sources reportedly said that Graziano's "awful" behaviour makes Amanda's claims - that Giovanni bruised her toe during rehearsals - seem "miniscule".

Graziano joined Strictly in 2018 and has previously danced with presenter Vick Hope, Loose Women star Judi Love and actor Kym Marsh. His pairing with Zara lasted six weeks.

In the wake of his sacking, some fans have threatened to boycott Strictly, which attracts more than 10million viewers when it airs on Saturday nights in the run-up to Christmas.

One said online: "What in the world is in the drinking water [at] Strictly? I can't deal with this BS any more."

PR expert Mark Borkowski said the latest rows could eclipse stories about the "Strictly curse" - where celebs taking part in the show dump their partners after getting close to dancers.

He said: "This is more structural - about the way people go about their training. I feel for the BBC and for people caught up in the maelstrom of this because it's careers [at stake]."

"I deeply regret the events that led to my departure ... it's best I step away"

PUTTING ON A SHOW Graziano dances with Zara



Sunday Mail

OPINION

No political Reform with Nigel at helm

THE ousting of the corrupt Tory government and the breath of fresh air into Number 10 from a Labour Prime Minister was meant to usher in a new confidence in politics.

But it looks like Reform UK's leader Nigel Farage forgot to read the memo.

They're threatening to undermine efforts to restore faith in the system through their questionable election tactics.

In Scotland, they fielded 57 candidates but barely any of them campaigned or even turned up to find out how many votes they got at the election count on July 4.

Across the country, 167,000 people voted for Reform hoping their local candidate would be the best person to represent them.

But most were simply "paper candidates" who'd given their name to a constituency just to help swell party coffers.

Many Reform voters in Scotland will be furious to learn that eight of their Scottish candidates didn't even live here and some of them have freely admitted to having no intention of running a campaign here, let alone wanting to become an MP.

But the votes mean Farage's party will benefit from taxpayer cash thanks to the numbers his candidates picked up in Scotland.

It's simply manipulation of the electoral system which is supposed to be about serving the public.

It's also taking advantage of the short money parties get from Westminster which is designed to help them hold the governing party to account.

At a time when trust in politics is at one of its lowest levels, we only need representatives who will fight for their constituents and try to make their lives better.

Democracy can't take much more of the manipulation, rule-bending and abuse it has suffered in the last decade or so.

The politics of self-interest was supposed to die with the Tory government but Farage is making sure it's still alive and well.

Everyone will be a winner

THE Tartan Army showed Europe how football is a force for good during the three games we played at the Euros.

Everywhere they went, our fans were welcomed and brought others together for the love of the game.

Young and old and different cultures and communities have come together to watch the beautiful game.

When it comes to rivals, Scotland has none greater than England and most of us like a wee joke about them getting beat.

But tonight, some of the best players in the world will be on display as Spain take on the English in the final in Berlin.

And regardless of who you are supporting, it promises to be a celebration of sporting talent, teamwork and a display of passion and positivity.

In that spirit, we offer an old footballing cliché... may the best team win.

THE SUNDAY LIST STARS ON THE RISE

LEON JACKSON

The 35-year-old Scot from Whitburn, West Lothian, won the fourth series of The X Factor in 2007 with his unique jazz-style pop after an audition in Glasgow. He had a UK No1 with his winner's single When You Believe and his album Right Now was in the top five. Leon is currently living in LA and is said to be working on a long-awaited second album.



OLLY MURS

The 40-year-old was runner-up on The X Factor in 2009 but later released a string of hugely successful solo albums. He also launched a media career which has seen him become a judge on talent shows such as The Voice UK.

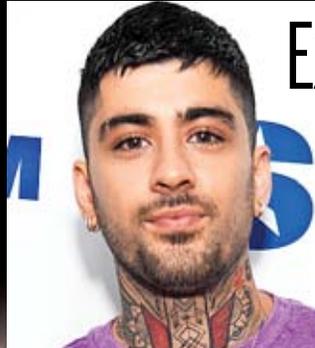


LITTLE MIX

Leigh-Anne Pinnoch, Jade Thirlwall, Perrie Edwards and Jesy Nelson auditioned as solo artists on The X Factor in 2011 but later formed Little Mix on the show. They won the talent contest and went on to achieve huge success before going on their final tour in 2022.

WON DIRECTION

Ex-talent show acts who have found fame



ZAYN AGAIN PLEASE

The ex-boyband singer

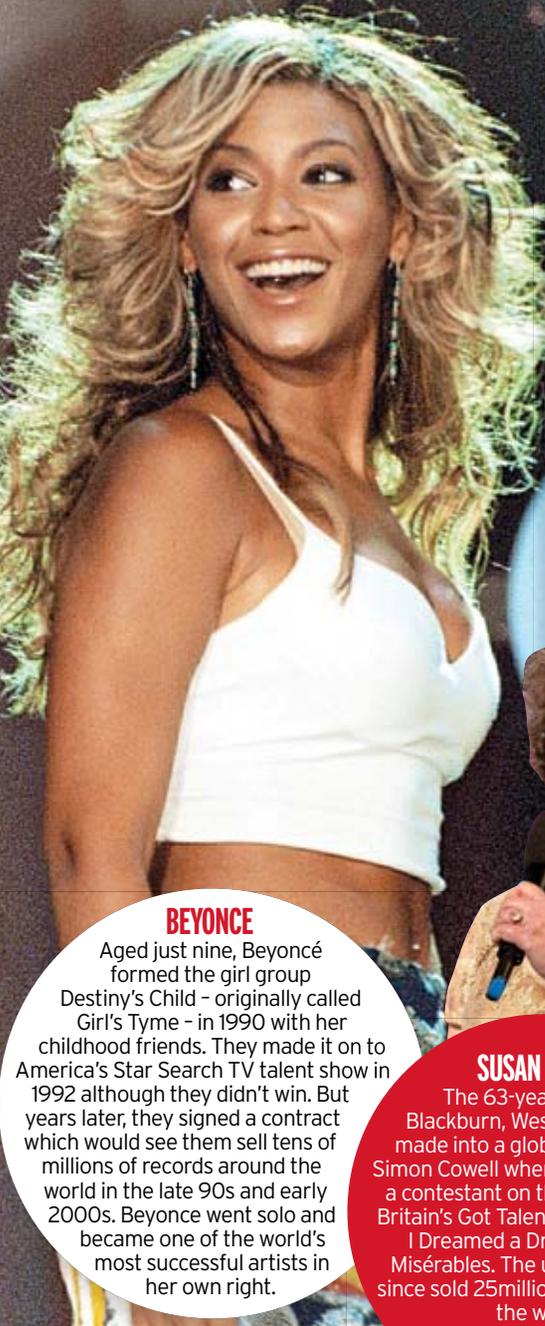
POP music supremo Simon Cowell has launched a hunt for the UK's next big boy band. The Britain's Got Talent boss reckons "the amount of UK artists breaking globally has

fallen" and wants a new star like Zayn Malik from One Direction who has since gone on to have a successful solo career. The group was formed on Cowell's X Factor in

2010 and talent shows have given us hundreds of hopefuls over the years - some of them went on to be superstars, others... well, didn't. Here are 10 acts who started their careers on the box.



SEARCH Cowell



BEYONCÉ

Aged just nine, Beyoncé formed the girl group Destiny's Child - originally called Girl's Tyme - in 1990 with her childhood friends. They made it on to America's Star Search TV talent show in 1992 although they didn't win. But years later, they signed a contract which would see them sell tens of millions of records around the world in the late 90s and early 2000s. Beyoncé went solo and became one of the world's most successful artists in her own right.

SUSAN BOYLE

The 63-year-old from Blackburn, West Lothian, was made into a global sensation by Simon Cowell when she appeared as a contestant on the third series of Britain's Got Talent in 2009, singing I Dreamed a Dream from Les Misérables. The unlikely star has since sold 25million records around the world.



ONE DIRECTION

Niall Horan, Liam Payne, Harry Styles, Louis Tomlinson and Zayn Malik formed the band and finished third on The X Factor in 2010 but were a fans' favourite and soared in popularity on social media. Cowell signed them to his Syco label and they sold millions of records as a result. All five members have had solo careers with differing levels of success.

GIRLS ALOUD

Nadine Coyle, Sarah Harding, Nicola Roberts and Kimberley Walsh formed Girls Aloud on Popstars: The Rivals in 2002 and went on to become one of the UK's biggest selling girl groups. None of the members achieved solo careers which could match the band's success and, this year, after the death of Sarah from cancer in 2021 at the age of 39, reformed for a new tour.



JAMES ARTHUR

The singer-songwriter won The X Factor in 2012 and has since released five solo albums, including this year's Bitter Sweet Love.



MICHELLE McMANUS

The Glaswegian won UK talent show Pop Idol in 2003 and made history when her debut single All This Time made her the first Scottish female artist to hit No1 with her first single, in January 2004. Michelle, 44, has since gone on to have a successful media career and is a host on BBC Radio Scotland's The Afternoon Show.



LEONA LEWIS

The 39-year-old landed a £1million recording contract with Cowell when she won The X Factor in 2006. Her debut single A Moment Like This spent four weeks at No1 and broke digital download records. She's since sold 35million records worldwide.

Jean Johansson



Brits I help are not the enemy. They're just looking for a dream in the sun

AS a host on A Place In The Sun, it's my job to help Brits find their perfect home abroad, whether it's permanent or a holiday bolthole.

Week after week, I guide people into making a move to sunnier climes.

The show has been going for over 20 years which is almost unprecedented in terms of TV recommissioning and I think the secret is that everybody can relate to the universal dream of having a place in the sun.

As well as showing the house hunters the properties, the presenters will take them to points of interests, beauty spots, the best beaches and bars and restaurants.

I often feel like a tour guide and it's a role I absolutely love so I'm finding all the recent anti-tourist protests hard not to take personally.

I spend a lot of time in Europe and most of our shows are filmed in Spain so I'm hoping I can avoid having water sprayed at me or canned drinks thrown my way as happened to tourists last week.

Some Spanish destinations feel there's too much tourism, and in a city like Barcelona that may be valid, but demonstrating in the streets and demanding "tourist go home" seems very extreme and could become a case of be careful what you wish for.

The recent protest in Barcelona was staged by angry locals who are mad about the city's perceived problems with too many visitors.

They blocked hotel entrances, soaked travellers with water and held banners saying "decrease tourists now". Call me crazy but isn't having



SIGN OF TIMES Protesters

millions of people from all over the world coming to visit the stunning Gaudi buildings, stroll Las Ramblas and do a tour of The Nou Camp a GOOD thing?

Don't get me wrong I can imagine that living there can get annoying in the summer months when the city swells, prices rise and there's people everywhere.

But attacking them isn't the way to get the point across.

When I think of Edinburgh during the festival, it's hellish busy, over-priced and I tend to avoid it.

But it's great for the city and great for Scotland that so many people come and have an amazing time.

It's something we can be proud of and I can't imagine anyone protesting against it.

The complaints are not just on mainland Spain either. Earlier this year, thousands of demonstrators in the Canary Islands gathered to call for

a more sustainable model for tourism.

The locals feel the natural environment is being affected and that life has become unaffordable for residents but I wonder how an island like Tenerife or Lanzarote could thrive without tourism.

Nature and sustainability on any island must come first but it's down to local governments to have sensible conversations and come up with concrete plans on how to balance

visitors to the islands with bringing a much needed boost to the economy.

I've spoken to my colleagues about this and they assure me it's a small minority.

Smart people know they need us and particularly after covid.

I'd be devastated to come across people telling us to "go home" while filming A Place in The Sun this summer.

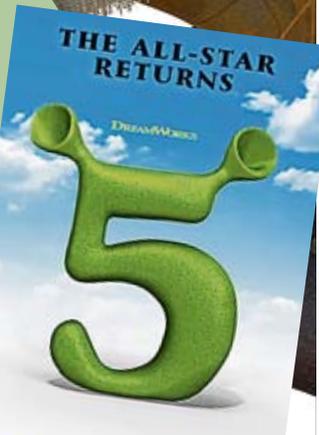
I get emotional when I think of my six years on the show and how many couples I've seen achieving their dream of moving to, or buying, a property in Spain, France, Italy or Cyprus.

They're not the enemy, they're people who love those countries and their cultures, so much so that they're willing to leave the UK behind to live there or just visit for a few months every year.

“ They love the countries so much they're willing to leave the UK behind to live

Ogre the moon about new Shrek

I MAKE no apologies about being a bit too excited over the announcement of Shrek 5. I've such fond memories of watching the films with Junior and I'm delighted everyone's favourite Scottish Ogre is making a comeback. I always found them to be adult-friendly and hilariously anti-Disney, with positive messages sprinkled through for kids. DreamWorks officially announced the fifth instalment is in development with Mike Myers, Cameron Diaz and Eddie Murphy returning and I'm all set to return to a land far far away with my favourite animated characters of all time.



FAULT IS ALL YOURS DJOKOVIC

Novak Djokovic I couldn't believe what I was seeing as I watched tennis player Novak Djokovic throw his toys out of the pram on national TV.

The Serbian made a real a**e of himself as he ranted at the crowd for "disrespecting him" while they cheered on underdog Holger Rune.

The 37-year-old seemed angry and unhinged as he went off on one during his

post-match interview in which he moaned "I played in much more hostile environments, trust me - you guys can't touch me".

Maybe he thought he was at a fight in Vegas rather than the quaint green lawns of Wimbledon,



perhaps he expects the crowd to sit in silence as they sip their champagne and enjoy their strawberries and cream.

A champion of his stature should have more grace about them... instead he came off churlish and childish.

ENGLAND EXPECTS & SO DO I

England The national football team are on the verge of winning The European Championships and I sincerely hope they go all the way tonight. I use the term "auld enemy" with affection when talking about the Three Lions and, of course, I wish it was Scotland in the final but I have no problems getting firmly behind Gareth Southgate's men as

I believe they deserve to be there.

We're also big English Premiership fans in the Johansson household so it's been a joy to watch Arsenal's Bukayo Saka, right, Kobbie Mainoo of Manchester United and Manchester City's Phil Foden have

such a brilliant tournament.

It'll be a feisty final as Spain look unstoppable after winning every game so far. They are my team of the tournament so England will have to raise their game to be in with a chance. Good Luck!





BREAKOUT Edgar-Jones

Daisy keen for a Normal People return

BY NAOMI CLARKE

DAISY Edgar-Jones has said it would be "wonderful" to return in the hit TV series *Normal People*.

The actress, 26, shot to fame as Marianne Sheridan alongside Paul Mescal, 28, who played love interest Connell Waldron, in the mini-series based on the novel of the same name by Irish author Sally Rooney.

The BBC Three drama, aired in April 2020, focused on the on-off relationship between the Irish teens, beginning in their school days through to university.

Discussing the potential for a second series, Edgar-Jones said: "That's a question for Sally Rooney. If she is up for writing a new story, who knows."

Asked if she was open to returning as Marianne, she added: "I love those characters."

"It would be wonderful to explore them again."

Banking on cash abroad

CHASE, First Direct and Virgin Money are among the banks to allow holiday-makers to use debit cards and ATMs abroad without charging extra.

Tesco and Nationwide won't charge for using credit cards, financial ratings firm Defaqto found.

SURVEY STUDIES ATTRACTIVE TONES

THAT'S AMORE

Italian tops list of accents that get hearts of men and women beating much faster

BY DAVID JARVIS

MAMMA Mia! If being chatted up in Italian sends your heart aflutter, you're not alone.

Hearing the dulcet tones of someone from Italy makes the average heart rate of men and women go 23 per cent faster, research found.

A study found the heart races by an average of 15 beats per minute more upon hearing Italian accents like those of actress Monica Bellucci or TV chef Gino D'Acampo.

Both men and women responded passionately to the accent.

But the English and Dutch accents are the least sexy, with heart rates jumping by just six beats or 10 per cent for English and by only 12 per cent or by seven beats per minute for Dutch.

The sexy French accent,



TV CHEF
Gino D'Acampo

“The Italian accent is by far the most alluring.”

ALEKSANDRA STEVANOVIC
LANGUAGE EXPERT ON
GLOBAL ACCENTS

which made heartbeats jump by 18 per cent – 11 beats more – was beaten into third place by the sultry Portuguese accent, which came second and causes heart rates to jump by 20 per cent or 13 beats.

Experts at online language tutor Preply attached heart rate monitors to 1050 UK

adults and played them pre-recorded chat-up lines to come up with the findings.

Language expert Aleksandra Stevanovic said: "The higher the heart rate jumped, the more attractive the accent was to the listener according to our findings."

"The Italian accent is by far the most alluring for both men and women but sadly the English and Dutch accents are among the least attractive."

"Italian sounds musical to human ears which can be perceived as being attractive."

Greek came fourth causing a 17 per cent increase – 10 beats more – and Chinese came fifth on nine beats more.

Japanese and German came sixth on a 15 per cent jump or eight beats per minutes.

Dutch came seventh and English was eighth with six beats more.

LANGUAGE OF LOVE

Increase in heart rate of men and women after being chatted up in foreign accents.

Italian	23% or 15bpm more	Japanese	15% - 8bpm more
Portuguese	20% or 13BPM more	German	15% - 8BPM more
French	18% or 11bpm more	Dutch	12% - 7bpm more
Greek	17% or 10BPM more	English	10% - 6BPM more
Chinese	16% - 9bpm more		

BPM - Beats per minute



FLUTTER
Actress
Monica
Bellucci



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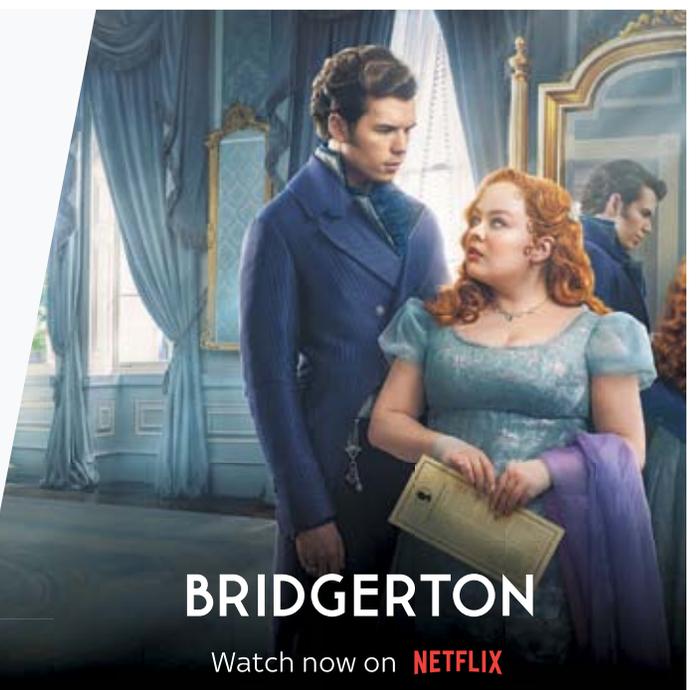
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WOMAN SPEAKS OUT ON ORDEAL AS TEENAGER



DISAPPEARED Jay Slater

Jay pal raps 'armchair detectives'

BY PATRICK HILL

JAY Slater's distraught loved ones have hit out at so-called armchair detectives speculating about the teenager's disappearance.

The family, from Oswaldtwistle, Lancashire, are devastated by rumours about the 19-year-old, who vanished four weeks ago.

Rachel Hargreaves, a pal of the bricklayer's mum Debbie Duncan, 55, said: "People going on to TikTok saying they have new information using Jay as a way of getting themselves some likes and attention!!"

"Any information will always come from the family not some random person who doesn't even know Jay or his family.

"Armchair detectives what is wrong with people?"

Her son Brad, 19, was on holiday in Tenerife with Jay and pal Lucy Law, 18.

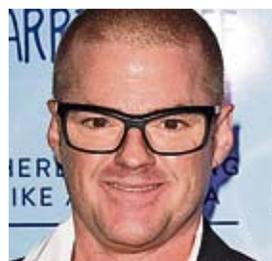


BRAVE One of Craig's victims. Inset, his work and his profile



About Me

Visual artist based near Glasgow. I believe that films are made up from four pillars; script, performance, music, visuals. Each pillar has to be as strong as the other or the film will lose balance. I enjoy experimenting in various genres, from comedy to drama, thriller to dance. My experience in photography helps to shape the films that I create, giving them a visual style that distinguishes them, meaning that while I am versatile in production genre, it is easy to tell one of my projects from the look of it. Presently I am creating documentary content for BBC The Social.



CALL Chef Heston Blumenthal

Bipolar chef hits out at employers

BY SASKIA ROLANDS

HESTON Blumenthal has criticised businesses for failing to support people with Bipolar.

The celeb chef, who was recently diagnosed with the mental health condition, hit out as shock figures revealed nearly a third of sufferers have experienced discrimination at work.

Some 32 per cent told a Bipolar UK survey they struggled to find a job due to stigma and 24 per cent did not tell their bosses for fear of being sacked.

Heston, 58, said: "Businesses are missing out on skilled and passionate employees simply because they don't understand the condition or have proper support in place.

"Although there are tough days, I'd attribute some of my most creative moments to Bipolar."

AN AWARD-WINNING BBC Scotland film director has been banned from using social media after being convicted of sending explicit sexual images of himself to three teenage girls.

Simon Craig, who worked as a writer and director for BBC's The Social under the name Simon Fox, targeted his victims when he was a DJ at under-18s club nights in Edinburgh.

He added the girls, then aged 14 and 15, on social media platforms before going on to send them explicit images of himself and pornographic videos.

A victim, now in her 30s, said: "He thought he was untouchable. I doubt we're the only victims, I'm sure there will be more."

Craig, 41, from Airdrie, was convicted, at Edinburgh Sheriff Court, of lewd, explicit and libidinous practices and behaviour towards three victims between February 2005 and July 2007.

Despite his conviction, Craig remained as someone commissioned by the public broadcaster until last week.

His work was listed on their site until we asked them about his criminal past. His profile has since been removed. In June,

Award-winning film director lured girls as DJ at under-18s club nights and sent images of himself and porn videos

BY JENNIFER HYALND

Craig was handed a community payback order, placed under supervision for 18 months and banned from social media platforms.

He was snared after a victim came across his photography website. She was so concerned about the images featuring kids she reported his crimes against her.

She said: "The sentence he has been handed is not nearly enough after what he has done.

"I met him through Studio 24 when he was in his mid-20s and I was 14.

"He then added me on the Vampire Freaks website and it wasn't long before he

started sending me images. It was really disturbing and unsettling. I was a child. I didn't ask for any of it.

"He went on to become an award-winning actor, writer and director. He then began working as a freelance photographer and started to work on one with young girls doing photo sessions.

"It was when I came across his website I knew I

had to come forward. It was full of photographs of young girls in compromising positions and very little clothing.

"The positions and poses are uncomfortably suggestive. He is well known in film circles but, in truth, he is a predator."

BBC The Social is a digital platform based in Glasgow that develops creative new talent. On the BBC Scotland site, his profile, listed under Simon Fox, explained that he began writing at the age of 17 before progressing on to filmmaking.

He has created web content and short films and internet series Metalhedz was nominated for Best International Comedy at the 2016 Miami Web Fest. The BBC website

stated: "Simon continues to write and direct for film and TV, and enjoys photography on the side."

Craig was convicted of sending one of the victims, then 14 years old, explicit images of himself between February 2005 and 2006.

He was also convicted of repeatedly sending another victim, then aged 15, sexual images of himself and messages of a sexual nature between July 2006 and July 2007.

Craig was also convicted of sending another 15-year-old victim sexualised messages and a pornographic video.

The offences took place at his Musselburgh home.

ABBC Scotland spokeswoman said: "This individual was a former freelance contributor to The Social and we have not worked with him since October 2022. He was contracted under the name Simon Fox, not Craig, and has never been employed as BBC staff."



MANIPULATIVE Simon Craig

“The sentence isn't nearly enough. I was a child. I didn't ask for any of it”
A VICTIM ON CRAIG'S CRIMES

ARMED COPS IN SUITCASE QUIZ SWOOP

Man held after bodies found in luggage

BY SASKIA ROWLANDS

A MAN has been held on suspicion of murder over bodies dumped in two suitcases.

The remains of two men were in the luggage found on Bristol's Clifton Suspension Bridge on Wednesday.

Scotland Yard said a man, 34, was arrested at nearby Temple Mead station yesterday morning.

It came only hours before forensic teams were seen leaving a house in Shepherd's Bush, west London, where more remains were found – thought to belong to the same victims.

Two officers could be seen also searching the bushes of a neighbouring building while another took photographs of the



HUNT
Cops at home in west London

area, including bins. Police believe the suspect travelled from the capital to Bristol on Wednesday, hours before the suitcases were found.

Police are not looking for anyone else in connection with the crime.

Last night, Scotland Yard's deputy assistant commissioner Andy Valentine said: "This is a significant development

and I would like to thank the public for their support.

"We understand the concerns of communities in Bristol and London and officers will remain in the Clifton and Shepherd's Bush areas over the coming days to reassure those affected by this tragic incident.

"Anyone with any concerns is encouraged to speak to them."

SCOTLAND'S CHAMPION

Daily Record

IN TOMORROW'S

Beach wear for all body shapes and sizes this summer

4
PLUS
PAGES OF PUZZLES

Clipper race first as it sails into Scotland

BY KATRINE BUSSEY

A SCOT taking part in a gruelling round the world yacht race told how arriving in her home country was "really special".

Vicki Leslie, from Shetland, spoke after boats in the Clipper Round the World Yacht Race arrived in Oban on Friday night – the first time the race has come to Scotland.

The event sees people with no experience of sailing take part in the 40,000-nautical-mile race around the world, after first completing a course to gain the skills for life on board.

Leslie, who is part of the crew on board the Ha Long Viet Nam boat, said: "It's amazing to be back here, and thankfully it's not raining."

Teenager on airport rap

A MAN was charged over a "disturbance" at Glasgow Airport on Friday.

The 18-year-old was arrested at about 4.15pm. A report will be submitted to the procurator fiscal.

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GOVERNMENT REFUSES TO WRITE OFF ARREARS

BY NORMAN SILVESTER

PLEAS to cancel a £33million debt owed by homeless people for emergency accommodation have been rejected by the Scottish Government.

The sum is due to councils for the cost of providing hostels, hotels and bed and breakfasts as a temporary place to stay.

A petition was lodged at Holyrood by campaigners calling on ministers to use taxpayers' money to pay the arrears.

But the Sunday Mail can reveal it has been refused by the Scottish Government.

Anyone made homeless in Scotland must pay for their temporary accommodation if they are not on housing benefit.

Maeve McGoldrick, head of policy and communications for homeless charity Crisis in Scotland, said: "It's

Anger at £33million homeless debt snub

Campaigners say accommodation bills punish the vulnerable



not right that anyone should be driven into debt because they have become homeless.

"A one-off payment to local authorities to allow them to alleviate debt could provide much needed resource to help move people out of homelessness and into settled accommodation."

Sean Clerkin, of the Scottish Tenants Organisation,

RESOURCE Maeve McGoldrick

lodge the petition at Holyrood and does not care about what happens to vulnerable homeless people."

In its subsequent response the Scottish Government said it has no plans to "waive the outstanding debt owed by homeless households".

Clerkin said: "This shows a Scottish Government which is wholly incompetent

and does not care about what happens to vulnerable homeless people."

The £33.3million debt, which dates back more than five years, involves an estimated 29,000 households with many owing several thousand pounds. Two years ago we revealed councils

were using debt collection agencies to pursue the arrears.

The highest homeless debt was £12.7million in Edinburgh, followed by £5million in Glasgow, £4.8million in North Lanarkshire and £4.4million in Highland.

A report by Homeless Action Scotland found 75 per cent of people in temporary accommodation were unable to afford the charges. A record 30,000 Scots are classed as homeless.

"This shows a government that does not care"

SEAN CLERKIN ON THE REFUSAL TO WAIVE DEBT



RAISING BAR Expedition was sponsored by Tunnocks



Everest trip takes biscuit

BY MARY WRIGHT

SCOTLAND'S favourite biscuits have fuelled a climb to the top of the world.

A group of school child abuse survivors conquered Mount Everest with sponsorship from Tunnocks. The Lanarkshire bakery got behind Team Uprising and their expedition has raised cash for charity NSPCC.

Speaking about the Tunnocks treats they received, expedition leader Giles Moffatt, 51, said: "I estimate that the majority of our supply was commandeered by our team of Sherpas, who had never tried them before."

SUMMIT SPECIAL
Team Uprising member Andrew Leslie on Everest with Tunnocks

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CRUISES FROM GLASGOW SCIENCE CENTRE

<p>VISIT DUNOON OR KYLES OF BUTE & TIGHNABRUACH</p> <p>VISIT KILCREGGAN, ROTHESAY OR KYLES OF BUTE & TIGHNABRUACH</p> <p>VISIT LARGS, MILLPORT, LOCHRANZA, CAMPBELL TOWN OR CRUISE KINTYRE COAST</p> <p>VISIT AYR OR STEAM ROUND AILSA CRAIG & Ayrshire Coast VIEWING CULZEAN CASTLE</p> <p>VISIT LARGS, MILLPORT, BRODICK OR CRUISE ROUND ISLE OF ARRAN</p> <p>VISIT AYR, BRODICK OR CRUISE TO PLADDA & ROUND HOLY ISLE</p> <p>VISIT LARGS, LOCHRANZA, ARDRISHAIG OR CRUISE LOCH FYNE & OTTER NARROWS</p> <p>VISIT DUNOON OR ROTHESAY</p> <p>VISIT DUNOON, ROTHESAY OR CRUISE LOCH STRIVEN</p> <p>VISIT DUNOON, ROTHESAY OR CRUISE TO KILCHATTAN BAY</p>	<p>SATURDAYS July 20, August 3 & 17 - Leave 10:30am, back 7:40pm Cruise to the Cowal resort of Dunoon for time ashore £49, or cruise through the stunning Kyles of Bute to the remote village of Tighnabruach for time ashore £57.</p> <p>SATURDAYS July 27 & August 10 - Leave 9:30am, back 7:30pm Visit the village of Kilcreggan for time ashore £40, visit the Isle of Bute with time ashore in Rothesay £53, or cruise through the stunning Kyles of Bute for time ashore in the remote village of Tighnabruach £57.</p> <p>SUNDAY July 21 - Leave 8:45am, back 9:30pm by coach from Largs One way trip to Greenock £29, one way trip to Largs £35, visit Millport (Keppel) £49, visit Lochranza £53, visit Campbeltown £56, or cruise the Kintyre Coast £59.</p> <p>SUNDAY July 28 - Leave 9:30am, back 8:15pm by coach from Ayr Visit Ayr for time ashore £49, or cruise round the famous Ailsa Craig £59. On the return journey to Ayr Waverley will cruise up the Ayrshire Coast with views of Culzean Castle.</p> <p>SPECIAL CRUISE ROUND ISLE OF ARRAN</p> <p>SUNDAY August 4 - Leave 9:45am, back 9:15pm by coach from Largs Visit Millport (Keppel) £49, sail to the Isle of Arran with time ashore in Brodick £55, or stay aboard for a special cruise round the beautiful Isle of Arran £59.</p> <p>SUNDAY August 11 - Leave 9am, back 8:15pm by coach from Ayr Sail across to the Isle of Arran with time ashore in Brodick £55, or cruise along the Isle of Arran coastline to Pladda and round Holy Isle £59.</p> <p>MONDAY July 15 - Leave 9:15am, back 9:45pm by coach from Largs Sail across to the spectacular Isle of Arran for time ashore in the small village of Lochranza £53, visit Ardrishaig £57, or stay aboard to cruise Loch Fyne & the Otter Narrows £59.</p> <p>FRIDAYS July 19 & August 16 - Leave 10am, back 6pm Sail down the Clyde to the Cowal resort of Dunoon for time ashore £46, or visit Isle of Bute, with time ashore in Rothesay £49, Senior £46.</p> <p>FRIDAYS July 26 & August 23 - Leave 10am, back 6pm Sail down the Clyde to the Cowal resort of Dunoon for time ashore £46, visit Isle of Bute, with time ashore in Rothesay £49, Senior £46, or cruise into the rarely visited fjord-like Loch Striven £53, Senior £49.</p> <p>FRIDAY August 9 - Leave 10am, back 6pm Sail down the Clyde to the Cowal resort of Dunoon for time ashore £46, visit Isle of Bute, with time ashore in Rothesay £49, Senior £46, or cruise the Bute Coast to Kilchattan Bay £53, Senior £49.</p>
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FUN TIMES
There's plenty to enjoy across Scotland



Since 1931, the National Trust for Scotland has been protecting our country's natural, cultural, and historic places – so we can all share in them.

The charity maintains hundreds of properties, each one with an exciting story to tell.

At Brodie Castle & Estate in Moray, discover the magic of the Playful Garden, where young adventurers can find musical instruments, unicorns and a giant bunny waiting to be climbed!

Newhailes in East Lothian is a must visit; younger visitors will be thrilled by the vibrant

colours and unique design of the Weehailes playpark.

Culzean Castle & Country Park is a glorious 260-hectare estate in Ayrshire with plenty to do come rain or shine. Explore the castle, woods, beaches and parkland before refuelling at the Home Farm Kitchen. Let the kids run wild in the Adventure Cove and Wild Woodland play areas too.

Make your way around the activity map to find more places to visit.

NATIONAL TRUST for SCOTLAND

FOR MORE INSPIRATION VISIT [NTS.ORG.UK/SCOTTISH-SUMMER](https://nts.org.uk/scottish-summer)

Pensioner critical after hit and run

AN ELDERLY man was left fighting for his life in hospital after being struck by a motorbike in a hit-and-run incident.

The 81-year-old, who was using a walking frame, was struck crossing Bathgate Road in Blackburn, West Lothian, at 7.15pm on Friday.

He was taken to the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh, where his condition was described as critical.

Police are trying to trace the rider, who left the motorbike and made off after the incident.

Inspector Colin Morrison, from the road policing unit, said: "We are appealing for anyone who may have witnessed what happened to get in touch."



WHO STAR Mandip Gill

Gill's uni return

ONE of Doctor Who's companions has returned to her old university for an honorary fellowship.

Mandip Gill, 36, who studied at Central Lancashire University from 2006 to 2009, has been recognised for her acting.

She played Yasmin Khan for three series alongside Jodie Whittaker.

£24k record sale for rare Pistols single

A RARE Sex Pistols single has sold for a record £24,320 at auction.

God Save the Queen came out in 1977 to coincide with the Queen's Silver Jubilee.

About 25,000 records were withdrawn and destroyed after a backlash to controversial lyrics describing the monarchy as a "fascist regime".

But between 13 and 20 copies remained. The seller was the A&M label receptionist said to be first to meet the Sex Pistols in 1977 when they visited.

The last one to sell at Wessex Auction Rooms in 2019 sold for a then world record of £16,400.

VICTIMS TELL



FAKING IT But AI porn creeps are facing prison

BY CALLY BROOKS

VICTIMS of deepfake porn have told of their hell as ministers prepare tougher laws to jail offenders.

The vile online images – created by superimposing innocent faces on existing footage of sex acts – are already illegal to share.

Now the new government is also threatening those who create deepfakes with jail or unlimited fines.

Celebrities are the best known victims of the bullies, blackmailers and other perverts.

But women and girls all over the UK are having their images manipulated and shared online.

Last month police reprimanded two private schoolboys for using AI to make deepfakes of female pupils.

Campaign group End Violence Against Women says non-consensual

porn accounts for 96 per cent of all deepfakes, with 99 per cent featuring women.

One high-profile mum who is also a victim says it is young girls she fears for the most.

Channel 4 News presenter Cathy Newman, 49, said: "I worry, having two teenage girls, that this is the world we live in."

"I did ask them before I shared my story and they were really supportive."

"They were keen for me to talk about the issue because they want action. Their generation doesn't want to live in this way."

During a Channel 4 investigation, Cathy discovered her image was being used in a clip of a woman having sex.

She said: "You get used to online abuse so my first instinct was to laugh. It wasn't until I sat down to watch it that I realised how invasive and dehumanising it was. I found it very disturbing how realistic the facial expressions and movements were."

"It disturbed me that someone might stumble across this and believe it's me. The conclusion you reach is that it's

done to degrade women." But, like other victims, when she approached search engines to have the footage removed, she was shocked to learn they would not be taken down.

She added: "They said they would derank it, which means they will move it further down the search results, but they can't remove it. So, they can make sure people can't find it as easily."

"Part of the problem is these sites are hosted outside of the UK so, even if the UK bans the creation of deepfakes, you need international action for anything to take effect."

"I do feel things are changing but it shouldn't be okay for women to be targeted online in a way that would be illegal offline. It's abuse."

Cathy is one of 255 female celebrity victims of deepfake, according to Channel 4's probe. It found 143,733 new

deepfake porn videos were uploaded online in the first three-quarters of 2023 – more than all previous years combined. In 2016, researchers identified just one.

Other victims include former Love Island contestant Cally Jane Beech, 32, from Hull, who has a daughter, aged seven.

Cally said: "I had floods of messages from my followers who had also been deepfaked."

"This is happening to everyone, school-children as well."

"You can drag any picture into these sites and it will generate fake breasts and genitals."

"I felt sick when I saw my deepfake image. I've never shared an intimate image of myself with anyone, even ex-boyfriends."

"There's still more work to be done and the current law change is only the start. These apps that allow people to create these images should not be allowed to exist."

Author and journalist Becca Caddy was threatened by a blackmailer who created deepfake topless pics of her. Instead of agreeing to his cash demands



'DEGRADING'

Channel 4 anchor Cathy Newman

OF AGONY AS NEW LAWS ON WAY

'I FELT SICK'

Love Island star Cally Jane Beech



'BETRAYED'

Florist and mum of two Sophie, 32



BLACKMAIL

Author and journalist Becca Caddy

TERRORISED BY DEEPPFAKE PORN

she posted the images on social media and explained they were fake.

And Sophie Parrish, 32, a florist, from Merseyside, discovered a family friend had created deepfake pictures of her – even using items of clothing stolen from her house.

The creep was arrested in January last year but there was no law in place at that time.

"I felt hatred and anger," said Sophie. "We felt betrayed but he was released."

"I have two young children. My biggest fear is that they'll find these images online one day."

"I want to know they are protected from these monsters. These websites need to be

shut down." This January, the Online Safety Act made the sharing of dodgy deepfakes punishable by up to two years in prison.

Tougher laws to criminalise the creators were welcomed by Clare McGlynn, a Durham University law professor who specialises in legal regulation of online abuse.

She added: "We also need to be taking action

“My biggest fear is my two children will find these images online one day. I want to know they are protected. These sites need to be shut down”

against platforms and internet providers. Search engines like Google have an awful lot to be accountable for because they provide access to websites allowing this content."

We approached a number of websites and search engines for responses to the criticism.

Google said: "We've been actively developing new protections in Search to help people affected by this content. We're continuing to decrease the visibility of involuntary synthetic pornography in Search and develop more safeguards."

Reddit said it had partnered with SWGFL, a charity devoted to the safe use of technology, to find and remove vile images. It

said internal safety teams used tools to detect and remove such content before anyone saw it.

A spokesperson added: "Reddit's policies prohibit any non-consensual sharing of sexually explicit media, including depictions that may be AI-generated or faked."

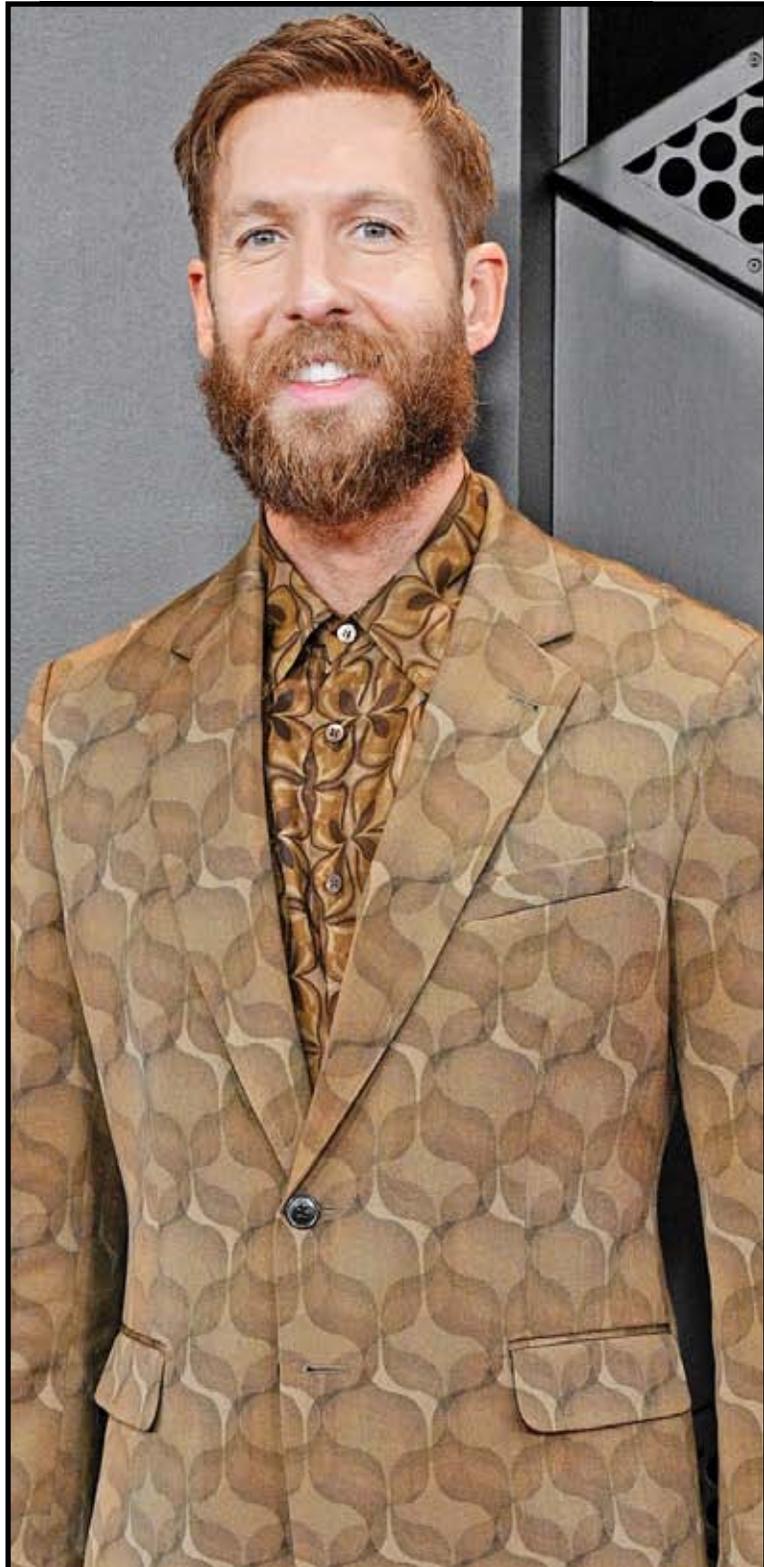
Despite difficulties in getting images removed and catching perpetrators, police urge victims to come forward. The National Police Chiefs' Council said: "It's important to report it either in person or online. Police are committed to supporting victims and survivors with respect."

The Ministry of Justice said: "We're looking at all options to ban the creation of sexually explicit deepfakes as quickly as possible."

Garry Spence



Catch Garry live across Scotland every weeknight 4-7pm on Clyde 1, Northsound 1, Forth 1, MFR, Tay FM and West FM.



TRNSMT is what you came for.. Calvin, Garbage and Gerry too

THERE'S something that feels very "all is well in the world" when Calvin Harris is back to headline a major Scottish music festival... and it doesn't get any bigger than TRNSMT, where he'll play tonight.

He was on my radio show a few months back when I told him about his major clash with the Euros final - one which now looks like it could have significant impact on the mood of thousands in front of him.

Either way, he will bring the party and I just can't believe it was a decade ago on this weekend when Will Smith appeared on stage

to introduce Calvin at T In The Park.

It's been a weekend of home-grown superstars including Garbage and Gerry Cinnamon as Geoff Ellis and his team continue to pull it out of the bag with great festival line-ups, year after year.

While I'm here - the guy must be due some sort of honour for the contribution he's made to Scottish culture over the decades?

TITP was a rite of passage for every young Scot and there could be no guessing the economic boost his events bring to our country.

The election dust has settled but a real danger still lurks on the horizon

WELL, now that the dust has settled on a general election that passed in a bit of a blur for me given my own personal events of late, I'm going to go all out with my first major political prediction in this column.

Unfortunately, I believe there's a real danger Nigel Farage could be the next prime minister.

While Ed Davey is celebrating a return to form for his Brexit-enabling Lib Dems, it remains a devastating fact that Reform UK are, in real terms, the third biggest party in the country.

Four million people backed Reform, which saw candidates withdraw amid claims of racism, misogyny and all the other endearing qualities they equate to being "anti-woke".

Farage is switched on and he knows that this could be his time.

I've said as much in family settings before and I'm sure they all think I'm off my rocker.

But here is a guy who only decided to run a few weeks ago for a party that didn't exist long before the pandemic.

And already they've harnessed more than half the number of people who voted for the Tories this time round.

This is a party engulfed in racism rows led by a man who stated that



SWITCHED ON Although I am no supporter of Farage

“**There's a real danger Farage could be the next PM. He knows this could be his time**”

women being paid less than men wasn't discrimination but simply a fact that they "are worth less" due to making life choices which don't allow for the sacrificing of family life.

I mean, you thought Boris and Co were bad?

You haven't seen anything yet.

And UK Labour are getting one shot at this because the leader of the former Brexit party - a movement which came about to ensure an event which would go on to decimate industries and devastated so many sectors - will harness all the divisiveness and disaffection he can.

As for Scotland, well I'm afraid that

it came as absolutely no surprise to me when the Highlands and Islands swapped yellow for orange and red.

I've long pointed out to my fellow independence supporters the similarity between Westminster's apparent lack of care for Scotland and that of the SNP for anything outside the central belt.

Their necessary embracing of Green policies was absolutely awful for the oil sector in the north-east while they also presided over a fiasco with the ferries.

It remains a fact that many of the trains serving the Highlands are not fit for purpose.

And I honestly don't know what else there is left to say about the A9 remaining a single carriageway after years of false promises and so many unnecessary deaths.

Transport is a devolved matter of course.

But this election was, I fear, a sign of what's to come in a couple of years when we decide who'll take the seats in Holyrood.

I will always celebrate democracy, it's just that I regret that so many couldn't see that a vote for the SNP needn't have been more than a means to an end.

It's done for now. Nigel Farage though?

Watch this space and please, feel free to join me in hoping that future elections don't have us pining for the fun old days of Jacob Rees-Mogg and the like ...

BEST WISHES A REAL CONSOLATION

THANKS to everybody who's reached out to me over the last week as I come to terms with the death of my best friend Ryan in a road accident and my brother Laurence.

I was back on air on Monday and talked a bit more about Laurence's death after years of alcohol addiction.

One of the main reasons for doing this was because of the stigma which still surrounds addiction and there are

many people who picture a certain person, from a certain background, when they think of an addict.

Alcohol and drug addicts though come from every background or family.

Addiction doesn't discriminate, although it's true some people are born with what seems like no chance, due to factors such as poverty and deprivation which blight many areas of Scotland.

This is one for the SNP to continue

working on as they fight to show their worth.

Meanwhile, I send love and strength to all fighting this battle and watching somebody close to them trying to get sober, get clean.

The biggest thing I've learned from my double-bereavement is people, on the whole, are just thoroughly decent.

I can't put it any more simply than that - people are good.

Rees-Mogg family show snubbed by UK TV firms

JACOB Rees-Mogg's fly-on-the-wall series about his family was snubbed by all major UK broadcasters before ending up on a US subscription channel.

Meet The Rees-Moggs, starring the eccentric ex-MP, his wife and six kids, has been optimistically billed as a Brit version of the Kardashians.

But one ITV source said the decision not to

BY NICOLA METHVEN

commission it had been easy. The insider said: "Jacob Rees-Mogg is a GB News presenter who has set his sights on furthering his media career now that he is no longer a serving member of parliament.

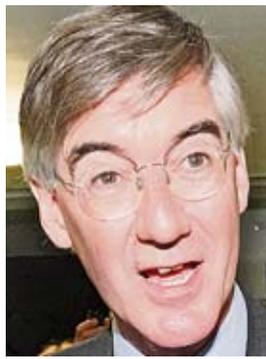
"Did we want to help with that? I don't think so.

"The Rees-Mogg doc was turned down by all broadcasters before ending

up on Discovery+." The five-part series claims to "lift the lid on the man behind the public image".

Rees-Mogg, 55, who is said to be worth about £100million has described it as "a bit more Fawlty Towers than Downton Abbey".

Filming captured the ex-business secretary's reaction to losing his seat after 14 years.



ECENTRIC Rees-Mogg

Laura Boyd



Slimming drugs can be the thin edge of wedge

I RECENTLY googled "Where do you get Ozempic".

Curiosity combined with a constant stream of skinny, largely American, celeb pictures flooding my social media feed and the sight of my own body on TV recently led me to wonder: "What if I could get my hands on this miracle drug?"

I'm not proud of it but the thought of something to stop me wanting to reach for every sweet treat within my eyelid is tempting.

That sweetie table in the STV office that sits behind my desk is both a blessing and a curse!

Thankfully, I quickly came to my senses and decided that spending my money on a personal trainer, getting up and out for more runs and walks and generally being more disciplined in what I eat is a better option. For now!

But if I've been thinking about it, I know many others have too.

Weight loss drugs seem to be becoming far more mainstream.

And while that's great for people who could really benefit from them, I worry about the controls around them and the effect on teens who are, understandably, more body-conscious than ever.

We've all seen the pics of stars who have taken things too far, who look skeletal and like they could snap.

It reminds me of the early 90s when supermodels looked like they hadn't eaten or washed in days and that was meant to be cool.

Constant images of skinny celebs do play with your mind and make you think, "Should I be like that too?"

And if it's not a miracle drug then



PACKET IN The seductive slimming drugs

how do you achieve that? One so-called nutritionist on TikTok will be explaining the virtues of intermittent fasting while the next, punting supplementary shakes and the next telling you eat three high protein meals a day.

It's an absolute minefield and I really worry how it's going to play out in the coming years among youngsters in particular.

As the mother of a little girl, it's alarming. For now, I guess all I can do is try to maintain a healthy, balanced lifestyle, while still enjoying the odd treat along the way, to show her that everything should be taken in moderation.

And that so-called miracle drugs are not necessarily the wonder they're made out to be.

Certainly not until we know all the facts.

Just give me a wee nudge if you ever spot me eyeing up an éclair in the window of Greggs though, would you please? Thank you!

It's a minefield and I worry how it's going to play out in the coming years among youngsters

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Carole Smith, Aberdeen



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CLUTHA BEST BAR NONE

I'VE driven past the Clutha Bar thousands of times. Its murals are like a

comforting beacon of joy as I often crawl along the busy Broomielaw on my drive home from work.

The welcome is warm, the drinks well priced and the banter brilliant. From old music lovers to people just enjoying a drink, to a table of war veterans who were there when I was. The

other week when my band played there. Now I very much regret leaving it so long. It's a true gem in Glasgow's well served pub map.

It's a building that makes me smile, while never forgetting the tragic helicopter crash of 2013. But the pub has rebuilt since, strengthening its reputation as a hub of live music and conversation. Yet I had never been through its doors until the

pizzas are delicious too and the staff brilliant.

There are hopes to develop the location into flats, a new bar and arts space, as well as a tribute to those who lost their lives in 2013.

Times move on but the Clutha still has that old-school magic and I'd urge you to get along and enjoy a great day or night out.

There are hopes to develop the location into flats, a new bar and arts space, as well as a tribute to those who lost their lives in 2013.

Times move on but the Clutha still has that old-school magic and I'd urge you to get along and enjoy a great day or night out.



Quiz of the week

1. Which actor delayed the start of his play to watch an England penalty shoot out at Euros 2024?
2. Who did Keir Starmer meet on his first visit to Scotland as Prime Minister?
3. What new ITV cop comedy has angered police officers?
4. Who was reportedly paid \$10million to sing for an Indian billionaire's son?
5. Which former Scottish political party leader was described as "Stalin's wee sister"?
6. Who did the Scotland rugby team beat 73-12 on their summer tour?
7. Which rival party did Alex Salmond admit voting for at the General Election?
8. Who won the British Grand Prix for a record ninth time?
9. Which type of monkey died at Edinburgh Zoo after a fight with his troop?
10. In which Spanish city have locals been demonstrating against mass tourism?
11. What is the name of the hurricane that killed 10 people in the Caribbean?
12. Which tennis star complained of being booed by the crowd at Wimbledon?
13. Which vacuum cleaner manufacturer is cutting 1000 jobs in Britain?
14. What was the cause of death of DJ Steve Wright?
15. Which Hollywood star's trial for a film-set fatal shooting was axed by a judge?
16. Which football club is relocating to Hampden due to stadium renovation delays?
17. The Prime Minister of which country visited Vladimir Putin in Russia last week?
18. Which Fleetwood Mac star cancelled a Glasgow concert after injuring her leg?
19. What Meryl Streep movie is to get a sequel after 18 years?
20. Who is the new Secretary of State for Scotland?

ANSWERS
 1. James Corden 2. First Minister John Swinney 3. Pgltes 4. Justin Bleber 5. Nicola Sturgeon 6. Canada 7. SNP 8. Sir Lewis Hamilton 9. Chimpanzee 10. Barcelona 11. Beryl 12. Novak Djokovic 13. Dyson 14. Burst stomach ulcer 15. Alec Baldwin 16. Rangers 17. India 18. Steve Nicks 19. Devil Wears Prada 20. Ian Murray

CAMPAIGNER HITS OUT AT FM'S COURT ROUTE



FORCED RETIREMENT
 Pat Kelly, who had a herniated disc operation but experts say the disc had not been touched

DEADLY SERIOUS Protesters keep up pressure over Sam Eljamel

Former broadcaster opens up on 'biggest mistake of my life'

VICTIMS of butcher surgeon Sam Eljamel have been refused compensation by the Scottish Government.

BY HANNAH RODGER
 Chief Reporter

Campaigner Pat Kelly, who was left in constant pain as a result of the rogue NHS Tayside employee, has branded John Swinney a "coward" for failing to help those harmed by him.

The former broadcaster, of Dundee, has been calling for ministers to compensate victims for months but has now been told by the government they will have to face a court battle with the health board instead.

After writing to the First Minister a response by an adviser said "legal action is the appropriate route for anyone harmed by negligent treatment to seek compensation from an NHS Board".

Pat said: "John Swinney is a coward. I asked for a meeting to be arranged with him so that he can tell patients to their faces why they have to go through the court to get justice. My request for a meeting was simply ignored and not even mentioned. Patients have been treated with utter contempt by John Swinney."

Pat, 64, said he had to fight NHS Tayside for four years to receive any compensation for his ordeal at the hands of Eljamel and he doesn't want any other victims to have to suffer through the same thing.

He went for surgery for a herniated disc in his back in 2007 but experts later said they didn't believe the disc had been touched.

He was left with so much scar tissue from Eljamel's botched opera-

tion that he is unable to undergo any more surgery to fix the problem and had to retire at the age of 53.

He is among 200 patients who fear they've been harmed by the Libyan neurosurgeon and are seeking answers.

Pat said there could be issues with a court route due to there being a time limit on when people can lodge a claim – currently it has to be done within three years of the incident taking place.

Eljamel worked for NHS Tayside from 1995 until his suspension in 2013.

Pat said: "In my case, it took four years of torture and misery within the court system. By the end I'd have signed my own death warrant."

"Going to court was the biggest mistake of my life. I now wish that I'd

never done it. That's how bad it was and Swinney wants patients to go through this.

"The courts should be the very last resort and a Victim Support Fund would allow patients to go through a solicitor to argue their case.

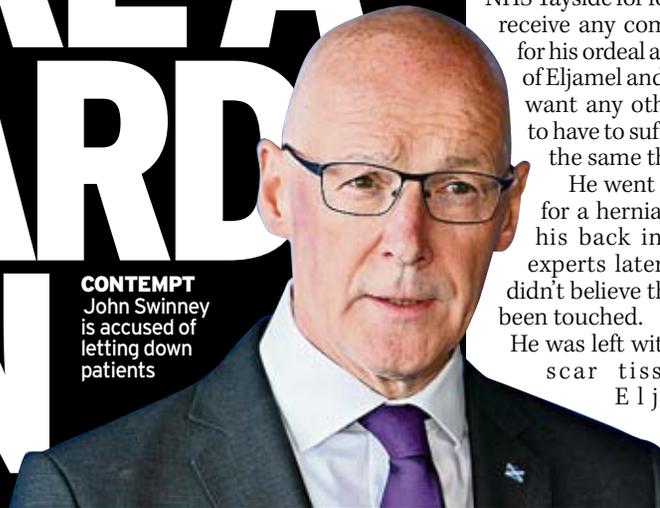
"I'm not advocating that every patient who was operated on by Eljamel is compensated but only those who can prove they have been harmed. "If a local butcher poisoned his customers, they would have more legal rights and accountability than you have with a butcher who has seriously harmed patients."

A Scottish Government spokeswoman said: "We recognise the pain and distress experienced by patients impacted by Mr Eljamel's practice.

"There are already established avenues for patients who have suffered as a result of the national health service to claim compensation."

BUTCHER OP VICTIM YOU'RE A COWARD JOHN

CONTEMPT
 John Swinney is accused of letting down patients





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- IMPERIAL
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Mon 22 Jul	5 DAYS	ELGIN	£429	£319	£110
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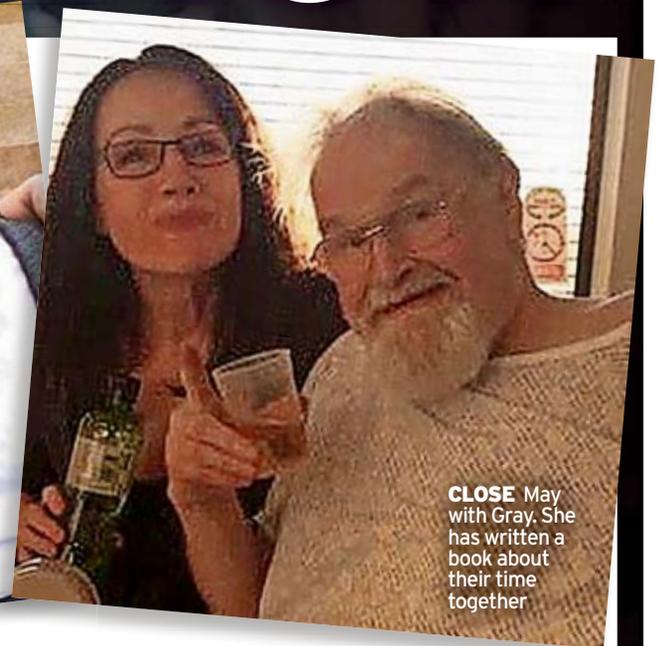
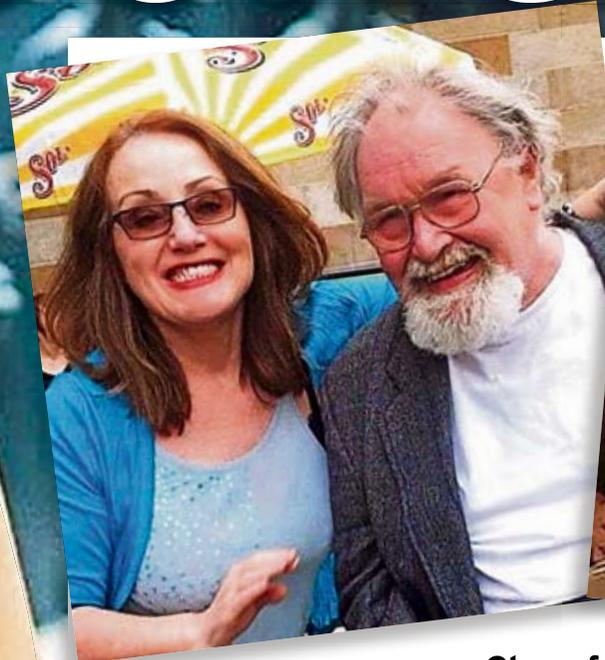
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COMPANION'S BOOK ON LIFE WITH ACCLAIMED ARTIST



BIG SCREEN
Emma Stone as Bella in the film version of *Poor Things*

POOR SHOW



CLOSE May with Gray, She has written a book about their time together

BY MARY WRIGHT

AUTHOR Alasdair Gray would have been furious an award-winning film adaptation of one of his books made no mention of his beloved Glasgow, according to his closest friend.

Poor Things, starring Emma Stone, Mark Ruffalo and Willem Dafoe, won four Oscars and was regarded as one of the best Hollywood films of the last year.

But it uses London as the backdrop for character Bella Baxter instead of Glasgow which features heavily in Gray's 1992 novel.

May Hooper, who has released a memoir which tells the story of her 40-year friendship with Gray, said: "Because I knew Alasdair so very well, I have no doubts that he would have been incandescent about the film failing to use Glasgow as the central backdrop.

"He was intensely proud to be Scottish and was a life-long supporter of independence, so I believe it would have been a bitter pill for Alasdair that London was substituted for the city he loved so deeply.

"The book was, after all, very Glasgow-centric and it featured a great many of the real places that played such an important role in Alasdair's life."

The novel featured

Close friend says author Alasdair Gray would have been 'incandescent' that the movie version of his acclaimed novel *Poor Things* was set in London instead of the writer's beloved home city, Glasgow

maps and prints of Glasgow, many drawn by Gray.

The black comedy sees Bella, played by Stone in the film, implanted with the brain of her unborn daughter in an experiment by warped surgeon Dr Godwin Baxter, played by Dafoe.

May, 73, was the subject of more than 50 works of art by Gray, as well as being a fiercely loyal friend who nursed him through the final days of his life.

Her memoir, *Loving Alasdair: the 39 years of my life with Alasdair Gray*, tells the story of their unshakeable bond for the first time.

May, a nurse, health campaigner and former medical social worker, as well as a skilled writer and artist in her own right, met Gray at a party in the early 80s in the west end of Glasgow, where the author immediately asked if he could draw and paint her.

Gray produced over 30 books, including *Lanark*, and also created more than a thousand paintings, portraits, illustrations and murals.

The book reveals that May spurned two marriage proposals from Gray and they were "never lovers" – her choice not his.

His second wife, librarian Morag, died in 1994. May said: "I adored

him but wasn't attracted to him in that sense. If you look at all the portraits he did of me, I think it comes across that there was an attraction.

"What I thought was that our deepening friendship, which was to grow and develop over the years, would last much longer if we weren't married.

He ultimately agreed but it took him a while."

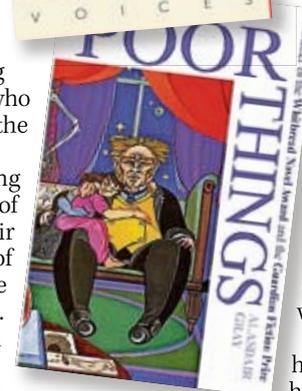
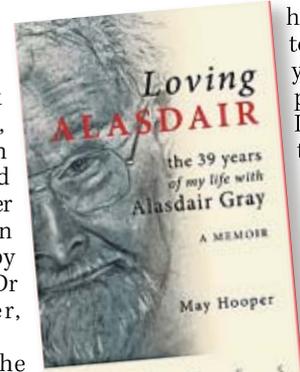
Gray died in 2019, five years after suffering a catastrophic fall outside his home, which left him confined to a wheelchair.

According to May, he had given both his blessing and consent to their story being told.

The book was put on hold after Gray broke his back and suffered severe head and leg injuries in the fall. May then took on the mantle of carer and guardian.

She organised a memorial for the writer because there was no funeral as he donated his body to medical science.

She said: "I started to write the book when he was alive and he encouraged me to get on with it – he was always very supportive and encouraging of me."



“
It would have been a bitter pill for Alasdair that London was substituted for the city he loved

GONG SHOW
Stone with her Critics' Choice Best Actress award for role in *Poor Things*

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HACKER'S 7-MONTH WAIT FOR AMERICAN COURT BID

Extradition hearing set for February

BY MICHAEL McQUAID

A BABY-FACED scammer wanted in America over a £7million online fraud won't know his fate until next year.

Robert Barr is facing up to 20 years in prison if he is sent to the US for trial and convicted.

The 27-year-old has been fighting extradition since 2022 after the FBI named him as a suspect in a huge fraud.

It is alleged that he and associates stole digital cash from New York financier Reggie Middleton after accessing his email and locating cryptocurrency addresses.

A second, unnamed victim is said to have lost £485,000 from her accounts in a similar scam.

The alleged frauds date back to 2017.

Barr, of Biggar, Lanarkshire, saw his case called at Edinburgh Sheriff Court last week where it was said he maintains his opposition to the extradition bid.

Four days have now been set aside for a full extradition hearing in February.

Georgia prosecutors say Barr worked with two others in an elaborate con known as "SIM swapping".

This is where fraudsters dupe mobile phone firms into handing over details of customers' SIM cards so they can hack into cryptocurrency accounts or wallets.

Middleton, who described himself as an investor and philanthropist, claimed he prevented even more being taken.

He told the Sunday Mail previously: "I caught whoever it was as they were doing it, 30 minutes after it started. I did not lose all my money but a large amount."

"It's been a very big loss financially and



CRYPTO CLAIMS Robert Barr

professionally. My company was essentially put out of business after years of hard work."

Barr was also jailed for 21 months at Airdrie Sheriff Court in May this year for hacking into the email accounts of a cryptocurrency trader in England.

He and an accomplice stole around £3000 and were only stopped from getting another £33,000 when the victim employed security experts to prevent funds being transferred.

Sheriff Derek Livingston told him: "You have a degree of insight into what you did and accept your culpability. Otherwise the sentence I'm imposing would be a good deal higher."

Defence advocate Fred Mackintosh said Barr suffers from attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, but added: "He accepts full responsibility. He was well aware of what he was doing."

“ He was well aware of what he was doing ”

FRED MACKINTOSH
BARR'S DEFENCE LAWYER

The rail cost of leaves on track

RAIL travellers endured 4000 hours of hold-ups in the last five years - because of leaves on the track.

Almost 47,000 journeys were delayed and 3123 services cancelled.

Network Rail wipes tracks with 61 "leaf-busting" trains and fells hundreds of

BY RECORD REPORTER

trees. It takes longer for trains to accelerate and brake for leaves.

The worst cases cause communications problems, with HQ unable to locate trains.

Natasha Grice, of

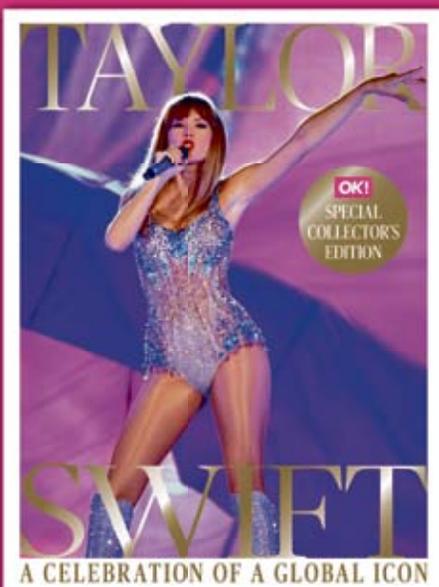
Transport Focus, said: "It is vital Network Rail and train companies explain what work they are doing to reduce the impact of leaves."

Network Rail said: "We deploy cutting-edge tech to improve train punctuality and keep passengers safe."

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HIGH ALERT IN HMP GLENOCHIL

Strip search fear for wardens at transgender jail



RAPIST
Isla Bryson, previously Adam Graham, is at HMP Glenochil

BY JENNIFER HYLAND

FEMALE prison officers are being put at risk carrying out strip searches on transgender male prisoners who have been convicted of violent sex crimes.

Five trans prisoners including rapist Isla Bryson and paedophile Joseph White have been placed in HMP Glenochil. Bryson was recently kept away from other prisoners for protection.

Sources said female prison officers are now being put in danger when asked to carry out searches on trans prisoners convicted of rape and sex offences.

A source said: "Trans prisoners can request a search by a woman. Officers are being put at risk because whilst trans prisoners may say they are women, these are biologically male offenders.

"These are dangerous males who have been convicted of violent sex crimes."

Figures from December showed 19 trans women in Scots jails.

Bryson, from Clydebank, was jailed for eight years last year for raping two women while living as Adam Graham.

The rapist, 32, was moved from Cornton Vale to HMP Edinburgh after a political row over safety, then switched to Glenochil but has had run-ins with staff Bryson accused of transphobia. Bryson said in a letter to the Sunday Mail: "I didn't do anything."

PAEDO
Jo' White

In May, we also told how White, who transitioned after arrest, complained of having no hairdryer in HMP Barlinnie.

White, jailed for five years for the sexual abuse of girls aged two and 11, also moved to Glenochil and is now Jo.

A transfer request also came from violent trans prisoner Tiffany Scott, 32, who died at HMP Grampian in March.

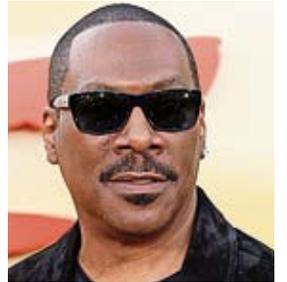
Former Cornton Vale governor Rhona Hotchkiss said: "If SPS management really believe the fantasies of male sex offenders matter more than the safety and dignity of female officers they are out of touch with reality."

Scots Tory Russell Findlay MSP said: "Those with concerns about searching male-bodied prisoners should not have to plead a case and hope for the best."

The SPS said: "Governors have the discretion to determine if a transgender person should be searched by an officer of their birth sex, if it is necessary to protect the health, welfare, and safety of those involved, and the security or good order of the establishment."



Source says dangerous sex criminals are putting the staff at serious risk



GROOM Eddie Murphy

Murphy and Paige wed in Caribbean

HOLLYWOOD star Eddie Murphy has married long-term partner Paige Butcher.

The US actor and Australian model – who got engaged in 2018 – tied the knot in a private ceremony on the island of Anguilla in the Caribbean on July 9, US magazine People said.

The couple, who began dating in 2012, share two children together – a daughter, Izzy, born in May 2016, and a son, Max, who arrived in November 2018.

Murphy will return as the voice of Donkey for Shrek 5 in 2026.



PRISON HMP Glenochil



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IMPRESSIONIST MATT ON HOW HI

Pain or political laughter is the best medicine



ROSE MATAFEO

ROSE will perform her show *On and On and On* during a one-week stint at the Pleasance Courtyard. In 2018, the Starstruck writer won the Edinburgh Comedy award.

This year's best jokers



EMMA SIDI

FRESH from the hit show *Ghosts*, Emma's show runs from July 31 to August 25. Emma Sidi is Sue Gray will see her performing as the pandemic civil servant.



BOBBY DAVRO

THE TV legend will perform his stand-up show *Everything is Funny... If You Can Laugh At It* from August 2. One of this year's must-see gigs.



HANNAH GADSBY

THE Aussie star will perform *Woof!* for one week, August 18 to 25. It's Hannah's first appearance at the Fringe since 2017.

MHARI BLACK

RATHER than a return to Westminster, the SNP's former deputy leader will be heading for the stage at the Fringe with her "brutally honest" look at British politics in the 21st century in her show *Politics Isn't For Me*. It runs from July 31 to August 25.

BY **HANNAH RODGER**
Chief Reporter

A YEAR is a long time in politics but for comedian Matt Forde the last 12 months have been life-changing after being diagnosed with a rare form of spinal cancer.

The 41-year-old funnyman, who has made a career out of mocking politicians, was overcome with crippling back and leg pain just days before taking the stage for his Edinburgh Fringe show last year.

He feared it may have been his last time performing at the legendary festival.

But now he's set to return to the capital for his *End of An Era* tour this year after having major surgery to remove part of his spine and having to learn to walk again.

Ahead of his 26-night run at the Pleasance Beyond starting at the end of this month, Matt said: "I never miss a festival, I've been doing it every year since 2010 and it's just such a big part of my year.

"Edinburgh is a phenomenal place and I love the atmosphere around the festival, and the audiences that come from across Scotland and the UK, and the world.

"The thought of not being there really just was quite hard to stomach so I've pushed myself to be able to do it."

He added: "This time last year I was getting this



FOLLOW THE LEADER Matt as Donald Trump and, right, with Boris Johnson's Spitting Image puppet



The comedian was in searing pain at the Edinburgh Fringe last year. As he returns following treatment for cancer in his spine, he says he can't wait to get stuck into politicians of all parties

pain like I'd pulled my hamstring but when I got to Edinburgh it went through the roof. It was this explosive relentless pain in my left buttock and back of the left thigh that was red hot nerve pain and I couldn't lie down or even sit down.

"They found out it was cancer at the base of my spine and it had touched the nerve.

"That feels like it was a long way behind me now, thank God, and it's quite special to imagine that I'll be back on stage within a year."

The impressionist and Spitting Image writer is continuing to recover after his latest MRI scan showed his cancer hadn't returned.

Walking, which was not possible for months after

the surgery, has improved and he's able to "wobble about at home" without help now but expects to have to use walking sticks when he comes to Edinburgh.

He believes British politics looks as though it has finally turned a corner in its recovery too with the election of Keir Starmer as the new Prime Minister and the SNP getting a "dose of reality" in last week's general election.

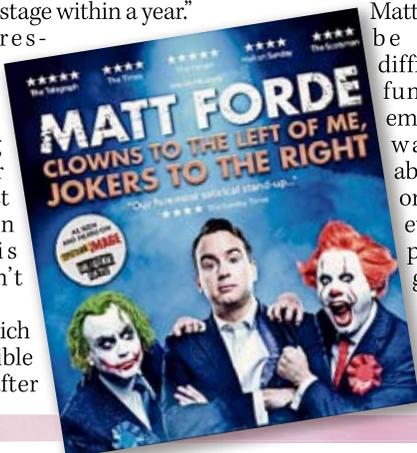
As a former Labour adviser, Matt said it won't be any more difficult to poke fun at his old employer than it was to joke about the Tories or the SNP and every political party is fair game for him. He said: "I've always taken the p*** out of

the Labour Party. I think every political party is ripe for satire and for lampooning. Every political party contains idiots and makes mistakes. There's a lot of ambition and all the stuff of human drama contained within it.

"My shows have always bashed all the parties - Tory, Labour, SNP, the Lib Dems, the Greens, Ukip, Reform. I've always gone for all of them so that won't change, it'll just be the order I do it in, I suppose."

Sometimes audience members get offended, Matt said, admitting that supporters of Jeremy Corbyn and the SNP were often the ones who stormed out of his gigs.

He said: "One show there was this guy who had been laughing the whole time I was doing stuff about Boris and Starmer but when I got to the SNP and did some material about



E HAS FOUND FUNNY SIDE OF ILLNESS

S...

e



TAKE-OFF
Matt's favourite impression is of Scottish Labour leader Anas Sarwar



BIG TARGETS
Matt has chatted to former first minister Nicola Sturgeon and, above, former prime minister Tony Blair in his shows



replicated in 2026 at Holyrood. While he's been working on his impression of First Minister John Swinney, because "I always like to

the ferries he stood up and said "I'm Scottish and you're an a*****e" and walked out.

"I couldn't disagree but I'd been on for an hour and he'd been happy with me taking the mickey out of everyone else yet one little joke about a major political scandal that has cost the country hundreds of millions of pounds and he couldn't handle it."

The turmoil of the SNP in recent years has given him plenty of material but the legacy of Nicola Sturgeon,

and the "basically non-existent" one of Humza Yousaf, is no laughing matter.

Matt said: "It was amazing the parallels between the Tories and the SNP, but I don't think the SNP ever saw that. They saw themselves as the primary opponents of the Tories, instead of their greatest tribute act."

"The corruption at the top of the SNP is unlike anything we have seen in the Tory party, never mind their terrible record in government."

"The key difference is that Boris Johnson was never pretending to be a good person. "He never tried to sell himself as morally superior to his opponents - Nicola Sturgeon did. But what can she point to as an achievement for all those elections she won?"

"Both of these parties last Thursday got absolutely battered by a party that has come to its senses and it's a pragmatic turnaround of British politics."

Matt said his upcoming show is based around the general election and the rise of a government which could see Labour's success

be able to do whoever's in charge", if Labour wins control in two years time he won't have to learn a new character.

He said: "Anas Sarwar, Scottish Labour leader, is my favourite Scottish politician to impersonate. I love doing him."

"He's basically got that great mix of two accents and when I do him it's definitely a caricature - very squeaky."

Matt said he told Sarwar before he started impersonating him, for fear of offending him or anyone else.

He said: "When I first started doing it I did message him and just say, 'Just so you're aware, I'm doing an impersonation of you, hope that's OK'."

"I got myself in a bit of a pickle about it because I'm a white guy doing a politician of a different race so I just thought I better let him know. Now I realise that of course there's no problem doing it. He's a very robust individual and I think he likes the fact that he's being impersonated, really."

Matt is also hosting two special The Political Party podcasts at the Gilded Balloon venue on August 13 and 19 with Sarwar appearing on stage with him at the first event.



GAGS Jeremy Corbyn has been the butt of many jokes



NEW TARGET
Labour Prime Minister Keir Starmer

Hang with Heather

Lots of twists and turns in creepy chapel

IF you love easy-to-read, domestic suspense and aren't reading Alice Feeney yet, you're missing out.

Known for her twisty and dark thrillers, Feeney's *Rock Paper Scissors* is a good holiday read blending chilling atmosphere, cinematic setting and unpredictable characters.

And true to form, Feeney delivers a masterful twist (or two, or more) and vividly drawn characters.

Alice Feeney is a New York Times million-copy bestselling author and her books have been translated into over 35 languages.

A number have been optioned for major screen adaptations, including *His & Hers*, which is being made into a Netflix series.

Her debut novel, *Sometimes I Lie*, is currently being made into a TV series by Ellen DeGeneres and Warner Bros starring Sarah Michelle Gellar.

And this one is also slated for TV after *The Crown* executive producer Suzanne Mackie scored the option.

In *Rock Paper Scissors*, things have been off between Mr and Mrs Wright for a long time. Each year, the couple exchanges traditional anniversary gifts - paper, cotton, pottery, tin - and Amelia writes Adam a letter that she never lets him read.

They win a weekend away in Scotland and this weekend will make or break their marriage. But their trip wasn't won randomly. One of them is lying,

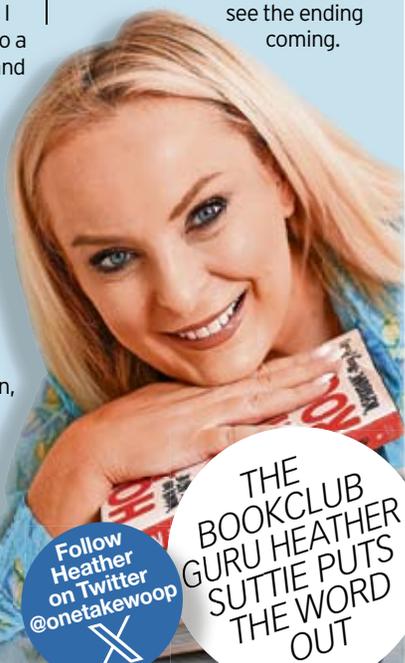
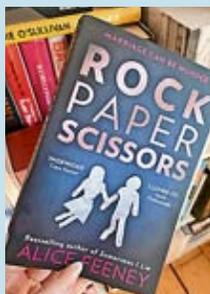
and someone doesn't want them to live happily ever after.

Adam, obsessed with his work as a screenwriter, struggles with face blindness, unable to recognise even his wife.

Amelia, feeling neglected, sees the trip to a converted chapel in Scotland as a chance to reconnect. However, the isolated chapel quickly becomes the setting for sinister events, making the couple question not only their marriage but also their survival.

Short chapters keep readers hooked, with perspectives from both Adam and Amelia and letters from anniversaries, adding depth and tension to the narrative.

I devoured it in just three sittings and I did not see the ending coming.



Follow Heather on Twitter @onetakewoop

THE BOOKCLUB GURU HEATHER SUTTIE PUTS THE WORD OUT

THE PUCK STOPS HERE

BODY CHECK by Elle Kennedy

How would you best describe this book? The spicy boy-obsessed hockey romance you haven't read from the author of *The Dixon Rule*.

What's it about? Hayden Houston is taking time out to figure out their

love life. A complicated relationship with a badboy hockey player is exactly what she never wanted. But when it comes to Brody, Hayden is realising people are much more than what they seem...

Who is the author? Award-winner Elle loves strong heroines and alpha heroes and just enough heat to keep it interesting.



Julie Scrumptious



Courgette, thyme and walnut cake

INGREDIENTS

- Two medium courgettes, grated roughly
- 150ml sunflower or vegetable oil
- Three eggs
- 150g caster sugar
- Grated zest and juice of two lemons (keep separate)
- 100g walnuts, roughly chopped
- 2 tbsp thyme leaves
- 150g self-raising flour
- Good pinch of salt

For the icing

- One tub of full-fat cream cheese (about 200g)
- 400g icing sugar
- Lemon juice (see above)
- Thyme and walnuts to decorate

METHOD

- 1 Grease and line a 20cm x 30cm x 5cm cake tin and preheat the oven to 160C, gas mark 3
- 2 Place the grated courgettes in a clean tea towel and squeeze out all the excess water.
- 3 Whisk the oil and eggs together in a jug and then add in the sugar and whisk again.
- 4 Add the zest and stir briefly.
- 5 Place the nuts, leaves, flour and salt in a large bowl and then add in the liquid.
- 6 Finally, fold in the courgettes and then scrape into the tin and bake for 45 minutes. Allow to cool completely.
- 7 Beat the cheese with the icing sugar until you have a rich, thick icing.
- 8 Add in lemon juice to taste - I like it very tart.
- 9 Spread over the cake and cut into squares.

Courgette propelled

THERE has been a fair bit of excitement in the Scrumptious house this week as we have the first tiny green fruits on our tomato plant.

It's the first time I've had a go at growing them and I'm currently babysitting five healthy plants.

Regular feeding and watering seem to be key and the rain has helped in that respect.

I don't expect to have a bounty so generous I'll be giving them away but hopefully will have more than it would have cost to buy, even with the price of the plants.

If I had space, I'd like to have a go at growing courgettes as they are one of my favourites, especially in the summer when they are small and sweet.

I love them with lemony pasta or chargrilled Sicilian-style with pine nuts and sultanas.

It's one of the vegetables gardeners moan about having too much of - or that they go on holiday and come home to marrows bursting out of the pots.

I've also always been a fan of the

people who enter giant vegetable competitions - the Wallace-and-Gromit approach to gardening.

There's something peculiarly British about a red-faced gardener beaming with pride as his giant onion weighs in at a local show.

We should maybe start similar in Scotland for the soft fruit growers in Tayside, although strawberries are definitely best when smaller.

This week's recipe is one of the nicest I cooked recently and is great if you do have a glut of courgettes.

We all love carrot cake and for me it has to be spicy and very nubbly with fruit and nuts.

In this case, the courgette cake is light and lemony for the season and uses whatever nuts and herbs you have.

We always have lots of different thyme plants and use it constantly in cooking and baking.

Lemon thyme is one of the nicest varieties and perfect for this cake. But any will do.

✉ jscrumptious@hotmail.com

Mail **motors**



Car sales at all-time high

FRENCH car giant Stellantis is set to pour 30 more hybrid models into the European market this year with six more of them next year.

The company has ramped up production after sales soared.

First figures show a 41 per cent increase on last year's hybrid sales with Stellantis simply insisting it is reacting to customer demand.

They will feature right across the Stellantis brands from Alfa Romeo, Citroen and DS to Fiat Jeep, Maserati and Vauxhall.

Boss Carlos Tavares has been quick to recognise trends and the company has been a leading force in the production of electric cars.



OO AH Cantona with the new Capri

RETURN OF A LEGEND

FORD has gone back to the future with a new all-electric Ford Capri. And it's even brought in 90s French football legend Eric Cantona to help promote the new model

With the return of the much-loved cult classic, Ford has extended its EV offering again. Bosses say it's the classic sports coupe loved across Europe reborn for an electric generation.

It also has a host of up-to date features including intelligent technologies such as automated lane changes and watching out for cyclists when opening doors.

Meanwhile, a massaging driver's seat comes as standard.

Business in driving seat

FLEET and business users kept the Scottish car market buoyant in June as private sales fell by more than nine per cent on last year.

The latest figures from the Scottish Motor Traders Association also show that petrol cars are still the main buy for most motorists with 9450 sold in June this year and a total of just over 54,000 sold in the year to date.

Diesel sales remain similar. And electric sales show the same story, reflecting what is happening in the rest of the country, as the rate of first adopters slows down.

Sales of petrol hybrid cars rose by more than a thousand.

BY **MAGGIE BARRY**

THERE was a task - an mpg challenge.

The day before, one of my colleagues had managed to eke out almost 90mpg driving the Toyota Yaris Cross hybrid on the same route on which I was about to set off.

Could I do it? Could I better it? It was not going to be easy.

Among the tweaks Toyota has made to this, one of its most popular little cars, is to increase the performance to 130bhp.

Added to that, this little crossover is such fun to drive that you just keep wanting to put your foot down - once you've left the built-up zones of course.

Last year, the Japanese carmaker sold 19,000 Yaris Cross cars in the UK to the young and the young-at-heart. And you can understand why - it's a great looking little model, robust, sturdy and strong.

This Premiere trim level comes with 18in dark grey machined alloys, sleek headlights and bi-tone colouring.

Inside, the controls are intuitive and easy to use with



YOUNG AT HEART The Yaris Cross controls are easy to use with the best technology available

Toyota goes that extra mile to give us a cracking car that's handsome and strong

TECH SPEC

Model: Toyota Yaris Cross Premiere FWD
Engine: 1.5-litre hybrid
Power: 129bhp
Top speed: 109mph
0-62: 10.7s
Average mpg: 58.8
CO2: 109g/km
Warranty: Three years/60,000 miles (or Toyota's 10year package)
Price: £32,500

navigation via the cloud and simple connectivity to your smart phone if you prefer to use that. There is now the Hey Toyota voice control which means you can put windows up and down, say, or change the temperature by simply talking to your car. (Sounds daft doesn't it?)

And extra safety systems now make this safe car even safer, like acceleration suppression if it clocks you are coming out of a parking space too fast and there is a

car or pedestrian in the way, and proactive driving assist.

The drive is lovely - smooth and quiet thanks to extra insulation on the windows and you get a swift burst of power if you need it.

This is a non-plug-in hybrid which Toyota is a master at building and that means you regenerate the battery as you drive with no messing with cables and the like.

You can recharge by braking, taking your foot off the accelerator or putting the

car in B mode for a more intensive regeneration.

The car moves seamlessly from electric powertrain to internal combustion as you drive and there is a clever EV button to save your power for city driving.

This particular model, Premiere, is the top of the range. It is front-wheel drive but it also comes as an all-wheel drive.

Entry level is Icon at just £25,530 followed by Design, Excel (also available as AWD) and GR Sport.

If that's not enough, you can personalise your view of the instrument panel to either Casual, Smart, Tough or Sporty. (Toyota does have previous for thinking of everything). And so now we come to the nub of the matter. How did the mpg challenge go?

Well, I'm afraid I was over generous in my driving.

The route, the sunshine and the car all proved too much and I returned a mere 54.9mpg. However, given that the official WLTP figure for this car is 58.8mpg, I don't think I did too badly.

I have simply proved I am just very very average.



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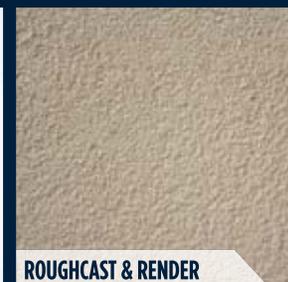
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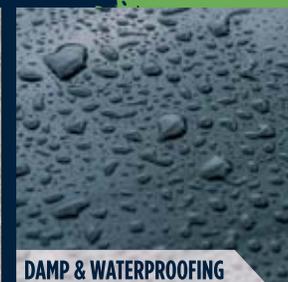
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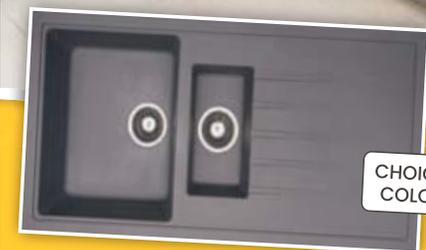
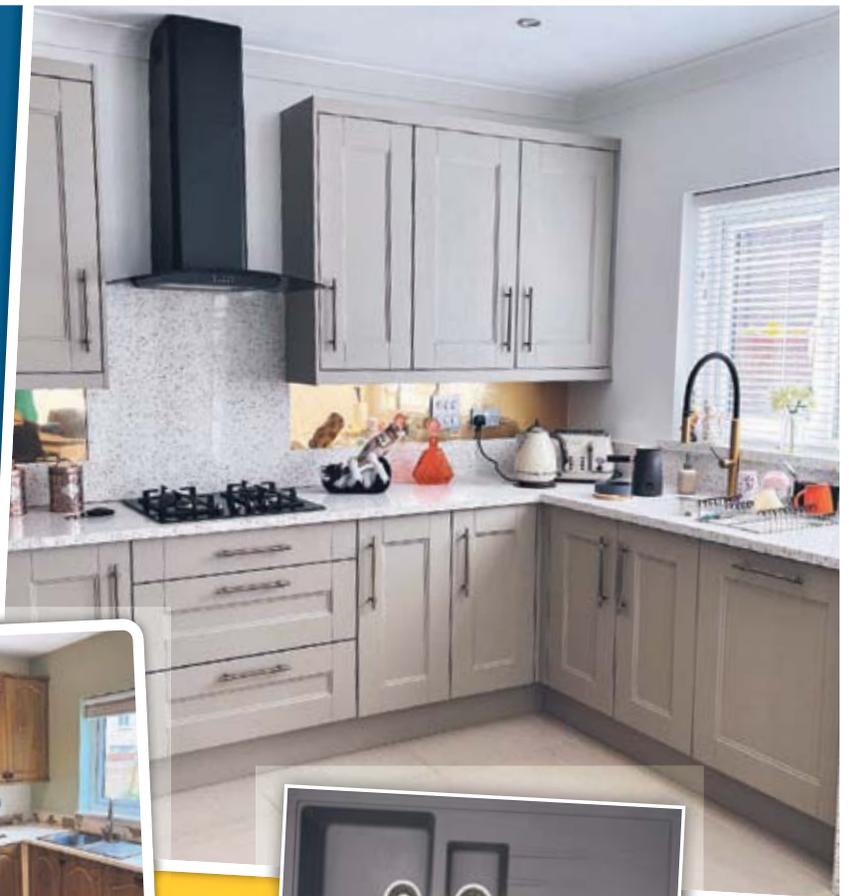
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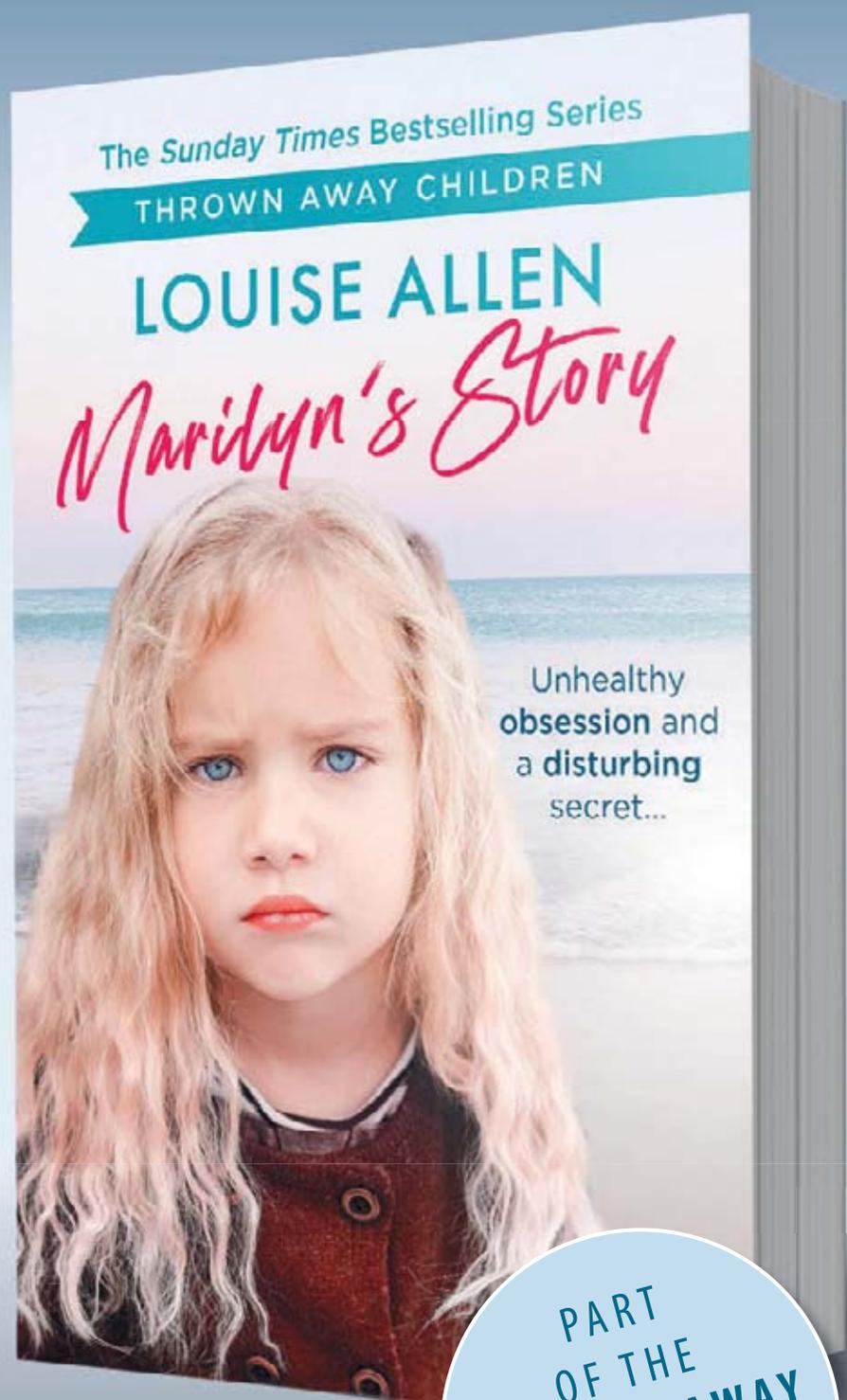
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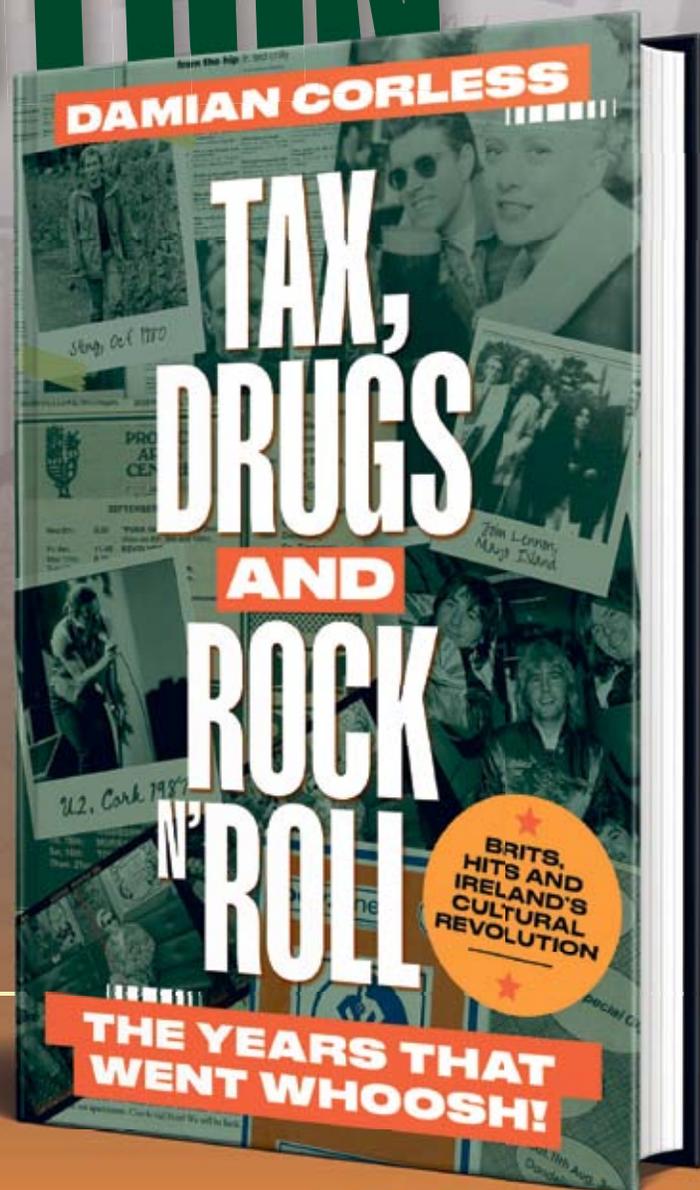


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PANEL BEATERS

WE ANSWER THREE KEY Qs



JOE REILLY, DAVIE MACDONALD, JOE PUNTER

Q1 What's your biggest fancy at Perth?

No Regrets (3.45) can defy a well-deserved 5lb penalty for scoring in good style at Kelso. The five-year-old Tessa Lad gets the vote in the handicap chase at 2.45. Fever Dream (4.15) can build on his emphatic recent win here for Christian Williams.

Q2 Give us your Nap at Stratford.

Songo (4.00) should relish stepping-up in trip for shrewd Richard Hawker. Conceal (1.30) has won off 12lb lower and must have a good shout in this contest. Hammer Dan (4.30) remains on a handy mark for David Pipe in the handicap hurdle.

Q3 Can you pick another one at the two venues?

Buy Some Time (4.15) can stay on the rise over timber for Mike Smith at Perth. Electric Eddy (3.30 Stratford) can get his head in front for the Twiston-Davies team. Global Esteem (4.45) can win the handicap hurdle at Perth for Fergal O'Brien.

RACING

MILL GRINDS IT OUT

Chapple-Hyam's star claims the July Cup



HQ BANKER colt had edge at Newmarket

MILL STREAM swept his rivals away in the Pension Expert July Cup at Newmarket.

Jane Chapple-Hyam's horse was an overlooked 11/1 chance against some fast-rising foes in another hot renewal of the Group 1 sprint. The colt was held-up for most of the six-furlong trip by William Buick as David Allan tried to make all on Art Power. Mill Stream still had plenty to do when Swingalong (22/1) collared the leader two out. However, Buick conjured a power-packed late run from the winner who wore down his rival in the closing stages to score by a neck with VandeeK (4/1) a fine third on his return.

BY JOE REILLY

The well-backed 11/8 favourite Inisherin never posed a real threat in fifth. Buick said: "He's been such a good horse for me this year. He ran well at Ascot but we felt he had a bit more to give. "Jane and the team convinced me he was a much better horse today and he duly was. That bit

of rain we had really suited him and I was always comfortable. "He's so genuine, he really wants it. He puts his head out and it's so well deserved. It's my first July Cup, so I'm thrilled." The top jockey struck again on Ancient Truth (4/6 Fav) in the Superlative Stakes. Charlie Appleby's juvenile was unbeaten in two starts but

he was very keen early on and had to be briefly pushed along two out. However, he soon warmed to the task, storming clear to defeat Seagulls Eleven (5/1) by a length-and-a-half despite drifting left close home. Ancient Truth is a general 16/1 shot for the 2000 Guineas back here in May.



ENFERNO Varian's gelding scorched to impressive win

JAAR SEALS THE DEAL IN YORK CLASH

ENFJAAR maintained his recent revival in the valuable John Smith's Cup at York. Roger Varian's horse was a well-backed 15-2 shot having returned to form when hacking-up at Chelmsford last time. The gelding was never far from the front under Jack Mitchell then made rapid headway to collar Kihavah two out. The four-year-old stayed on strongly to rout Botanical (9/2 Fav) by two lengths with Tony Montana (28/1) third. Mitchell said: "There were battle-hardened horses in there but he really relaxed. "He used to be quite keen but the gelding has been the making of him, I'm just so pleased for the horse, Roger Varian and his owner Sheikhha Hissa.

BY ROCKAVON I think he's better than a handicapper, his work was very pleasing coming into today and he should continue to progress." Quddwah (5/4 Fav) stretched his unbeaten record to four in the Summer Mile at Ascot. Team Crisford's horse missed the Royal Meeting here but showed no ill effects as he cruised through the Group 2. The colt took a while to truly hit top gear but he finished with a flourish to beat Ancient Rome (18/1) by half-a-length under Callum Shepherd. Co-trainer Ed Crisford said: "He never does much in front and is still a bit immature but he's learning to race now and he's got tons of ability. "I think that there's plenty more to come."

RACING RESULTS RACING RESULTS RACING RESULTS RACING RESULTS

NEWMARKET Going: Good 1.40: DESERT FLOWER (W Buick 5-2) 1; Flight (2-1) 2; Bintabuha (5-1) 3 10 ran. 3/4, 2/4, (C Appleby). Tote: £3.50, £1.30, £1.40, £1.50. Tote Exacta: £7.60. Csf: £7.71. Tote Trifecta: £25.20 2.12: ASIAN DAZE (B Loughnane 9-1) 1; Lou Lou's Gift (15-8) 2; Arsaig (4-1) 3 9 ran. nk, 3/4, (Jane Chapple-Hyam). Tote: £10.00, £2.00, £1.30, £1.70. Tote Exacta: £30.20. Csf: £24.94. Tricast: £78.38. NRs: Key To Cotai, Rochelle. Tote Trifecta: £114.70 2.50: FIRST CONQUEST (W Buick 12-1) 1; Treasure Time (6-1) 2; Livemotifive (8-1) 3; Oirat 7-2; H. Volterra 7-2; H. 1/2. Tote: £13.00, £3.20, £2.30, £2.50. Tote Exacta: £106.00. Csf: £78.22. Tricast: £641.26. NRs: Candonmore, Local Hero, The Camden Colt. Tote Trifecta: £924.30 3.25: ANCIENT TRUTH (W Buick 4-6) 1; Seagulls Eleven (5-1) 2; Wimbledon Hawkeye (20-1) 3 6 ran. 1/2, 2, (C Appleby). Tote: £1.67, £1.10, £2.20. Tote Exacta: £4.90. Csf: £4.24. Tricast: £28.28. NRs: Paps Turf, Pentie Bay, The Parthenon. Tote Trifecta: £25.20 4.00: AALTO (R Ryan 15-2) 1; Lethal Levi (18-1) 2; Summerhand (22-1) 3. Carrythone 5-11 20 ran. 2, 1/4, (Ian Williams). Tote: £8.60, £2.30, £4.70, £5.30, £1.90. Tote Exacta: £179.80. Csf: £127.02. Tricast: £2,898.98. Tote Trifecta: £2,694.60 4.35: MILL STREAM (W Buick 11-1) 1; Swingalong (22-1) 2; VandeeK (4-1) 3; Inisherin 11-8; 11 ran. nk, 1/4, (Jane Chapple-Hyam). Tote: £12.00, £2.50, £3.60, £1.90. Tote Exacta: £154.10. Csf: £227.86. Tricast: £1,160.86. NR: Regional. Tote Trifecta: £787.70 5.10: LORD OF LOVE (K Shoemark 5-1) 1; Wonder Kid (3-1) 2; Goodwood Odyssey (5-1) 3; Poniro 3-1; Jiff 11 ran. hd, 1/4, (J & T Gosden). Tote: £6.10, £2.00, £1.90, £1.60. Tote Exacta: £25.70. Csf: £20.83. Tricast: £81.95. NR: Ciro Di Marzio. Tote Trifecta: £137.40 5.45: ALSAKIB (P J McDonald 6-1) 1; Al Garsim (10-3) 2; Wise Eagle (50-1) 3; Klondike 3-1; 8 ran. 1/4, 1/4, (A M Balding). Tote: £7.00, £2.00, £1.60, £5.40. Tote Exacta: £23.70. Csf: £25.88. Tricast: £903.88. Tote Trifecta: £928.50

YORK Going: Good to Soft 2.00: BLUE FLY (J Mitchell 15-2) 1; Northern Express (13-2) 2; Ron O (17-2) 3; Telemark 11-4; 14 ran. 1/4, nk, (D O'Meara). Tote: £5.00, £1.70, £2.50, £2.50. Tote Exacta: £29.10. Csf: £25.71. Tricast: £174.87. NRs: Enajam, Stone Soldier. Tote Trifecta: £177.30 2.35: STARLUST (H Crouch 13-8) 1; Rogue Lightning (7-2) 2; Democracy Dilemma (12-1) 3 7 ran. 1/2, 1/4, (R M Beckett). Tote: £2.63, £1.60, £2.20. Tote Exacta: £7.60. Csf: £6.80. NRs: Emaraaty Ana, We Never Stop. Tote Trifecta: £38.00 3.10: ENFJAAR (J Mitchell 15-2) 1; Botanical (9-2) 2; Tony Montana (28-1) 3 20 ran. 1/4, 1/2, (R Varian). Tote: £9.70, £2.90, £2.10, £7.50, £3.50, Tote Exacta: £40.10. Csf: £41.09. Tricast: £955.68. NRs: Flying Frontier, Marhaba The Champ, Scampi. Tote Trifecta: £2,931.50 3.45: ALSAKIB (P J McDonald 6-1) 1; Al Garsim (10-3) 2; Wise Eagle (50-1) 3; Klondike 3-1; 8 ran. 1/4, 1/4, (A M Balding). Tote: £7.00, £2.00, £1.60, £5.40. Tote Exacta: £23.70. Csf: £25.88. Tricast: £903.88. Tote Trifecta: £928.50

4.15: EAST TYRONE (S A Gray 16-1) 1; Sir Palamedes (11-1) 2; Atomic Mass (4-1) 3; Alashos 10-3; 13 ran. shd, 1/2, (K A Ryan). Tote: £16.00, £5.10, £3.90, £2.00. Tote Exacta: £229.80. Csf: £182.47. Tricast: £851.96. NR: The Flying Squirrel. Tote Trifecta: £916.10 4.50: ZIMMERMAN (S Kirrane 8-1) 1; Valley Of Flowers (11-1) 2; Letsbefrank (6-4) 3 14 ran. 1/2, ns, (T D Easterby). Tote: £10.20, £2.50, £3.20, £1.40. Tote Exacta: £103.80. Csf: £85.25. Tricast: £206.09. NRs: Duke Of Verona, Red Force One, Tallormann. Tote Trifecta: £393.00 5.25: RAY VOHN (H Orouch 11-1) 1; Maxi Boy (20-1) 2; Rebel Path (20-1) 3; Dark Side Thunder 4-1; 18 ran. 1/2 shd, (B Brookhouse). Tote: £14.00, £2.90, £3.70, £5.40, £2.10. Tote Exacta: £416.40. Csf: £226.53. Tricast: £2,404.78. NRs: Kuwait City, Sibyl Charm. Tote Trifecta: £7,547.00 2.20: QUDDWAH (C Shepherd 5-4) 1; Ancient Rome (18-1) 2; Emboso (9-1) 3 7 ran. 1/2, nk, (S & E Crisford). Tote: £2.25, £1.50, £2.20. Tote Exacta: £21.50. Csf: £25.38. Tricast: £141.44. NRs: Epictetus, Sparks Fly. Tote Trifecta: £171.40 2.57: TIGER MASK (P Jamin 11-4) 1; Parole D'oro (28-1) 2; Accentuate (18-1) 3; Big Sip 7-4; 12 ran. 1/2, nk, (K R Burke). Tote: £3.75, £1.40, £6.70, £4.60. Tote Exacta: £103.70. Csf: £86.83. Tote Trifecta: £1,547.70 3.32: DANCING IN PARIS (D Probert 15-2) 1; Tactician (11-8) 2; Manxman (13-2) 3 11 ran. hd, 1/4, (Ian Williams). Tote: £8.50, £1.60, £1.30, £2.00. Tote Exacta: £25.70. Csf: £18.17. Tricast: £75.48. NRs: Iron Lion, Wind Your Neck In. Tote Trifecta: £109.00 4.07: PASSION AND GLORY (R Dawson 7-1) 1; Ziggy (7-2) 2; Tarjeeth (20-1) 3 13 ran. 1, 3/4, (S bin Suron). Tote: £8.00, £2.00, £1.70, £5.80. Tote Exacta: £41.90. Csf: £28.37. Tricast: £472.28. NRs: Euchen Glen, L'astronomie. Tote Trifecta: £561.20 4.42: SURVEYOR (C Shepherd 3-1) 1; Queen Of Atlantis (11-1) 2; Fair Point (9-4) 3 11 ran. shd, nk, (J R Fanshawe). Tote: £6.50, £2.10, £3.20, £1.50. Tote Exacta: £62.20. Csf: £94.64. Tricast: £175.76. NRs: Mercury Day, My Margie. Tote Trifecta: £313.50 5.17: KODI LION (C Shepherd 3-1) 1; Pedro Valentino (7-2) 2; Burdett (9-1) 3 16 ran. 1, 3/4, (C Fellows). Tote: £4.00, £1.50, £1.40, £2.50, £3.20. Tote Exacta: £15.00. Csf: £12.42. Tricast: £90.99. NR: Lord Rapsallion. Tote Trifecta: £128.20 4.40: NAVAL FORCE (G M Ryan 9-2) 1; The Equator (Evens) 2; Vestigia (14-1) 3 6 ran. 2/4, nk, (Donnacha O'Brien). Tote: £5.50, £1.70, £1.20. Tote Exacta: £12.50. Csf: £9.67. Tote Trifecta: £74.30 4.45: IT'S ONLY JUST BEGUN (K G Kennedy 7-4) 1; Explorers Way (13-2) 2; Squire Danagher (4-1) 3 8 ran. 1, hd, (Mrs J Harrington). Tote: £2.75, £1.40, £1.30, £1.60. Tote Exacta: £13.80. Csf: £13.79. Tricast: £39.95. NR: Red Trail. Tote Trifecta: £57.60 5.20: DOCTOR GRACE (R P Whelan 6-1) 1; Nawrag (22-1) 2; Question Of Class (13-2) 3; Mr Mills 4-1; 20 ran. 1/2, 3/4, (M Halford & T Collins). Tote: £8.60, £2.30, £5.00, £1.40, £3.20. Tote Exacta: £202.90. Csf: £145.47. Tricast: £924.96. NRs: Bang Po, Barretstown, Dazzling Spirit, Game Phoenix, Lord Park, Patrick Street. Tote Trifecta: £428.50 4.45: FUJI MOUNTAIN (Z Wheatley 11-4) 1; Zabeel Road (2-1) 2; Up The Claret (9-2) 3 8 ran. 2/4, nk, (D Carroll). Tote: £3.75, £1.30, £1.20, £1.70. Tote Exacta: £10.00. Csf: £8.74. NRs: Ay Gee Ell, Invited, Jagetme. Tote Trifecta: £29.70 5.30: SEA SENTRY (F Norton 8-1) 1; Gibsidi (8-1) 2; Gifted Angel (25-1) 3; Rich Belief 7-2; 10 ran. 1/2, shd, (D McCain Jr). Tote: £3.00, £2.50, £2.30, £5.20. Tote Exacta: £62.10. Csf: £70.10. Tricast: £1,529.46. NR: Chase The Dollar. Tote Trifecta: £2,031.60 6.05: AL SHABAB STORM (J Watson 6-4) 1; Breege (7-1) 2; Vafortino (18-5) 3 6 ran. 1/4, 1/4, (A M Balding). Tote: £12.00, £1.40, £2.80. Tote Exacta: £11.80. Csf: £12.48. NRs: Pogo, Streets Of Gold. Tote Trifecta: £33.60 6.35: STOP THE CAVALRY (E Greatrex 11-1) 1; Balon D'or (8-1) 2; Eye Of Dubai (5-2) 3 10 ran. 2, 1/4, (R M Beckett). Tote: £12.00, £3.30, £2.70, £1.50. Tote Exacta: £99.20. Csf: £95.60. Tricast: £298.46. Tote Trifecta: £338.70

Tote Exacta: £582.00. Csf: £346.35. Tote Trifecta: £4,220.50 2.27: MEHMAR (C T Keane 3-1) 1; Desert Power (4-1) 2; Betsan (8-11) 3 8 ran. 1/4, 1/4, (M O'Callaghan). Tote: £4.00, £1.20, £1.40, £1.10. Tote Exacta: £15.60. Csf: £15.98. NRs: Emerald Banner, Penny Mountain, Speedwood. Tote Trifecta: £21.40 3.02: RAPPELL (W J Lee 4-1) 1; Grand Citadel (8-1) 2; Limoncello Lady (22-1) 3 18 ran. 1/2, 1/2, (P W Flynn). Tote: £5.00, £1.80, £2.30, £4.80, £9.40. Tote Exacta: £43.90. Csf: £33.93. Tricast: £686.80. Tote Trifecta: £461.80 3.37: REINFORCE (R P Whelan 12-1) 1; Only Spoofing (13-2) 2; Run Forrest Run (10-1) 3; Fair Taxes 7-2; 15 ran. 3/4, 1/2, (Miss K Brown). Tote: £17.50, £4.20, £2.90, £3.60. Tote Exacta: £146.80. Csf: £87.46. Tricast: £858.02. NRs: Spirit Of Eagles, Sunday Sovereign. Tote Trifecta: £1,239.60 4.10: NAVAL FORCE (G M Ryan 9-2) 1; The Equator (Evens) 2; Vestigia (14-1) 3 6 ran. 2/4, nk, (Donnacha O'Brien). Tote: £5.50, £1.70, £1.20. Tote Exacta: £12.50. Csf: £9.67. Tote Trifecta: £74.30 4.45: IT'S ONLY JUST BEGUN (K G Kennedy 7-4) 1; Explorers Way (13-2) 2; Squire Danagher (4-1) 3 8 ran. 1, hd, (Mrs J Harrington). Tote: £2.75, £1.40, £1.30, £1.60. Tote Exacta: £13.80. Csf: £13.79. Tricast: £39.95. NR: Red Trail. Tote Trifecta: £57.60 5.20: DOCTOR GRACE (R P Whelan 6-1) 1; Nawrag (22-1) 2; Question Of Class (13-2) 3; Mr Mills 4-1; 20 ran. 1/2, 3/4, (M Halford & T Collins). Tote: £8.60, £2.30, £5.00, £1.40, £3.20. Tote Exacta: £202.90. Csf: £145.47. Tricast: £924.96. NRs: Bang Po, Barretstown, Dazzling Spirit, Game Phoenix, Lord Park, Patrick Street. Tote Trifecta: £428.50 4.45: FUJI MOUNTAIN (Z Wheatley 11-4) 1; Zabeel Road (2-1) 2; Up The Claret (9-2) 3 8 ran. 2/4, nk, (D Carroll). Tote: £3.75, £1.30, £1.20, £1.70. Tote Exacta: £10.00. Csf: £8.74. NRs: Ay Gee Ell, Invited, Jagetme. Tote Trifecta: £29.70 5.30: SEA SENTRY (F Norton 8-1) 1; Gibsidi (8-1) 2; Gifted Angel (25-1) 3; Rich Belief 7-2; 10 ran. 1/2, shd, (D McCain Jr). Tote: £3.00, £2.50, £2.30, £5.20. Tote Exacta: £62.10. Csf: £70.10. Tricast: £1,529.46. NR: Chase The Dollar. Tote Trifecta: £2,031.60 6.05: AL SHABAB STORM (J Watson 6-4) 1; Breege (7-1) 2; Vafortino (18-5) 3 6 ran. 1/4, 1/4, (A M Balding). Tote: £12.00, £1.40, £2.80. Tote Exacta: £11.80. Csf: £12.48. NRs: Pogo, Streets Of Gold. Tote Trifecta: £33.60 6.35: STOP THE CAVALRY (E Greatrex 11-1) 1; Balon D'or (8-1) 2; Eye Of Dubai (5-2) 3 10 ran. 2, 1/4, (R M Beckett). Tote: £12.00, £3.30, £2.70, £1.50. Tote Exacta: £99.20. Csf: £95.60. Tricast: £298.46. Tote Trifecta: £338.70

7.10: KING OF TONGA (Z Wheatley 14-1) 1; Count D'Orsay (11-1) 2; Kitaab (25-1) 3; Dickleburd 10-11; 8 ran. 1/4, 1/4, (D Carroll). Tote: £15.00, £2.90, £2.00, £4.50. Tote Exacta: £35.30. Csf: £148.57. Tricast: £3,747.55. NRs: Grace Angel, Love Wars. Tote Trifecta: £1,778.60 4.40: NAVAL FORCE (G M Ryan 9-2) 1; The Equator (Evens) 2; Vestigia (14-1) 3 6 ran. 2/4, nk, (Donnacha O'Brien). Tote: £5.50, £1.70, £1.20. Tote Exacta: £12.50. Csf: £9.67. Tote Trifecta: £74.30 4.45: IT'S ONLY JUST BEGUN (K G Kennedy 7-4) 1; Explorers Way (13-2) 2; Squire Danagher (4-1) 3 8 ran. 1, hd, (Mrs J Harrington). Tote: £2.75, £1.40, £1.30, £1.60. Tote Exacta: £13.80. Csf: £13.79. Tricast: £39.95. NR: Red Trail. Tote Trifecta: £57.60 5.20: DOCTOR GRACE (R P Whelan 6-1) 1; Nawrag (22-1) 2; Question Of Class (13-2) 3; Mr Mills 4-1; 20 ran. 1/2, 3/4, (M Halford & T Collins). Tote: £8.60, £2.30, £5.00, £1.40, £3.20. Tote Exacta: £202.90. Csf: £145.47. Tricast: £924.96. NRs: Bang Po, Barretstown, Dazzling Spirit, Game Phoenix, Lord Park, Patrick Street. Tote Trifecta: £428.50 4.45: FUJI MOUNTAIN (Z Wheatley 11-4) 1; Zabeel Road (2-1) 2; Up The Claret (9-2) 3 8 ran. 2/4, nk, (D Carroll). Tote: £3.75, £1.30, £1.20, £1.70. Tote Exacta: £10.00. Csf: £8.74. NRs: Ay Gee Ell, Invited, Jagetme. Tote Trifecta: £29.70 5.30: SEA SENTRY (F Norton 8-1) 1; Gibsidi (8-1) 2; Gifted Angel (25-1) 3; Rich Belief 7-2; 10 ran. 1/2, shd, (D McCain Jr). Tote: £3.00, £2.50, £2.30, £5.20. Tote Exacta: £62.10. Csf: £70.10. Tricast: £1,529.46. NR: Chase The Dollar. Tote Trifecta: £2,031.60 6.05: AL SHABAB STORM (J Watson 6-4) 1; Breege (7-1) 2; Vafortino (18-5) 3 6 ran. 1/4, 1/4, (A M Balding). Tote: £12.00, £1.40, £2.80. Tote Exacta: £11.80. Csf: £12.48. NRs: Pogo, Streets Of Gold. Tote Trifecta: £33.60 6.35: STOP THE CAVALRY (E Greatrex 11-1) 1; Balon D'or (8-1) 2; Eye Of Dubai (5-2) 3 10 ran. 2, 1/4, (R M Beckett). Tote: £12.00, £3.30, £2.70, £1.50. Tote Exacta: £99.20. Csf: £95.60. Tricast: £298.46. Tote Trifecta: £338.70

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LUCKY REILLY'S LUCKY 15 Malangen 7/2 (3.15 Prth), No Regrets 6/1 (3.45 Prth), Buy Some Time 9/2 (4.15 Prth), Trailblazer 9/2 (4.45 Prth).

STRATFORD RACING TV.

PERTH RACING TV.

Table with columns ROCKAVON and PA. Lists race numbers and names like GAMBIE TIEP, STAR LEGEND, COCONUT TWIST, etc.

GOING: Good-Good to Firm in places. COURSE: Left-handed triangular shaped track of 1m 2f, with eight fences per circuit and a run-in of 200 yards.

1.30 ESME, ELLIE, MYLA & HARVEY ALLSOPP HANDICAP CHASE (5) Winner £4,040 (12 run) 2m 3f 98yds. 1 P11-0 MYSTIC MAN (40) (P) H Derham 7 12-0 (BF) ... B Bromley (5) 100

2.00 M & M 60TH ANNIVERSARY CONDITIONALS' HANDICAP HURDLE (5) Winner £3,776 (11 run) 2m 2f 148yds. 1 25356 JUST THE MAN (167) J G O'Shea 8 12-0 (CD) ... J Turner (3) 105

2.30 BARBARA SHEPHERD 80TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION HANDICAP CHASE (5) Winner £4,040 (13 run) 2m 6f 125yds. 1 0/54-2 GENTLE CONNECTIONS (36) D Skelton 7 12-0 (BF) ... K Woods 100

3.00 MALCOLM WHEELER 70TH BIRTHDAY JUVENILE HURDLE (4) (3-Y-O) Winner £4,357 (8 run) 2m 70yds. 1 1 PLAY PRETEND (30) Dave Roberts 11-7 (D) ... L Edwards 100

TRAINER TARGETS (won today's race at least twice in last 10 years): None. 1ST TIME BLINKERS: 1.30 Buck Of Maine, 5.00 Deadlock. CHEEKPICES: 1.30 Blaze A Trail*, Conceal, Floating Rock, Go Fox, Mystic Man, 2.00 Pak Army, Star Legend, 2.30 Buto, Chabadatika, Coconut Twist, Dusky Days*, Hobie*, Play By The Rules, Unwanted Attention, 3.30 R S Ambush*, 4.00 Finisk River, 4.30 Jaunty Belle*, My Girl Katie, No More Bolero, Tique*, 5.00 Inspector Lynley, Joker Du Chenet, Mountain Bay*, Swearer.

NO REGRETS FOR NICKY AT PERTH

NO REGRETS has a decent chance of winning the feature chase at Perth according to his trainer Nicky Richards. The ten-year-old has missed a couple of engagements since his narrow win at Kelso in May and the Greystoke handler said: "There was a little issue for taking him out at Southwell and then the ground was a little too quick for him at Perth last month."

BY GORDON BROWN Christian Williams has been doing well with his long-distance raiders at the Scone track so Cap Du Nord may build on his recent course and distance third. But the Glamorgan trainer could go even closer with Tonto Foley and Fever Dream. The former, who lines up in the two-mile handicap chase, has won two of his last four starts while Fever Dream, raised 12lb for a recent course and distance stroll, goes again in the staying handicap hurdle. Four-time course winner Malangen is after more Perth success for Cumbrian trainer Lisa Harrison having bumped into a Nigel Twiston-Davies 'improver' ten days ago.



RICHARDS Scone raider



WILLIAMS strong squad

3.30 SEPTUAGENARIAN 'NATIONAL HUNT' MAIDEN HURDLE (4) Winner £4,357 (14 run) 2m 70yds. 1 08/97 CONNOLLY (134) S-J Davies 6 11-4 (D) ... J Best 100

4.00 BARRY THE BUTCHER RAISE THE STEAKS HANDICAP HURDLE (3) Winner £7,209 (8 run) 2m 2f 148yds. 1 1187-9 EVERYONESGAME (37) E Lavelle 7 12-0 (D) ... T Bellamy 128

4.30 NOVICES' LIMITED HANDICAP HURDLE (DIV 1) (5) Winner £2,640 (11 run) 2m 6f 7yds. 1 4406-3 PRAIRIE DIAMOND (45) (H) M Keighley 5 11-12 ... S Bowen 93

5.00 NOVICES' LIMITED HANDICAP HURDLE (DIV 2) (5) Winner £2,640 (11 run) 2m 6f 7yds. 1 458-6 BORDERLINE (13) (H,T) J Scott 6 11-12 ... L Williams 92

2.15 PARKLANDS HOTEL PERTH NOVICES' HURDLE (GBB RACE) (4) Winner £4,084 (13 run) 2m 4f 35yds. 1 4/27-3 KANDOR (207) L Russell 5 11-0 (D) ... P W Wadge (3) 100

2.45 MACBET SCOTLAND'S LEADING HORSE RACING BOOK-MAKER HANDICAP CHASE (4) Winner £5,281 (7 run) 2m 7yds. 1 FP-263 GARDE DES CHAMPS (10) (T) L Russell 8 12-0 (CD) ... D R Fox 109

4.15 SCOTTISH RACING ACADEMY HANDICAP HURDLE (4) Winner £4,753 (11 run) 2m 7f 207yds. 1 24-186 LIHYAN (14) (H) R Menzies 6 12-0 (D) ... William Maggs (5) 119

4.45 MACBET BEST ODDS CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS' HANDICAP HURDLE (5) Winner £3,961 (11 run) 2m 4f 7yds. 1 2540-6 VE DAY (38) (B) D McCain 5 12-0 (D) ... William Maggs (3) 103

Table with columns ROCKAVON and PA. Lists race numbers and names like POP THE QUESTION, TESSY LAD, MALANGEN, etc.

GOING: Good. COURSE: Right-handed course of 1m 2f with tight turns, eight fences per circuit, 283yd run-in. TOP TRAINERS: Lucinda Russell 35-315 (11.1%), Donald McCain 20-62 (32.3%), Stuart Crawford 14-104 (13.5%), Iain Jardine 12-84 (14.3%), Fergal O'Brien 12-49 (24.5%).

3.15 MACBET BOOKMAKER ALLOWS YOU TO WIN HANDICAP HURDLE (4) Winner £4,753 (11 run) 2m 4f 35yds. 1 142P9- CONDESA (85) (T) S Crawford (IRE) 8 12-0 (C) ... J J Slevin 119

3.45 MACBET LAYING BETS SINCE 1972 HANDICAP CHASE (3) Winner £7,922 (10 run) 2m 7f 180yds. 1 2335-1 TIGER ORCHID (31) (P) Dr R Newland & J Insole 9 12-0 (D) ... C Hammond 127

4.15 SCOTTISH RACING ACADEMY HANDICAP HURDLE (4) Winner £4,753 (11 run) 2m 7f 207yds. 1 24-186 LIHYAN (14) (H) R Menzies 6 12-0 (D) ... William Maggs (5) 119

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JOE PUNTER



DREAM RUN Williams' raider looks the real deal yet again

Fever can turn up the heat on return to Perth

FEVER DREAM (4.15) can defy the assessor and score once again at Perth.

Christian Williams sent the gelding to the venue last month and there was no doubt about the ease of the success chalked up in a career-best effort.

Naturally, given his shrewd connections, the handicapper didn't miss the performance and has whacked the six-year-old up a stone for that win. But, with Williams in form and Nick Scholfield on board, there's every chance he's still ahead of his new mark.

The trainer has other chances with **TONTO FOLEY (2.15)** of interest in the handicap chase.

The six-year-old has taken well to fences and was a winner earlier in the campaign at Taunton.

Tonto Foley has run with credit in defeat at Hereford, Worcester and Newton Abbot since and remains of interest.

Williams will also be looking for a big run from **Cap Du Nord** but he was beaten by **EVERYDAY CHAMPAGNE (3.45)** when last seen and it may be the same again.

Nick Alexander's charge made a winning start for his yard at Ayr in November and got back on track under a positive ride returned to less testing ground when just held at Kelso.

Everyday Champagne stepped up again on that Borders performance when running superbly into second over course and distance five weeks ago and is worthy of support here as he aims

to go one better under Bruce Lynn.

GLOBAL ESTEEM (4.45) can send the Perth punters home happy by striking in the finale.

The seven-year-old was a fairly useful handicapper on Flat for John Gallagher and has been decent since going over timber.

Trainer Fergal O'Brien is a clever cookie and, given the opening mark of 101, the fact this contest has been selected as the starting point is a major clue.

Down at Stratford, there are also betting opportunities with David Pipe having a strong contender in their penultimate contest.

HAMMER DAN (4.30) left previous efforts well behind when landing a Newton Abbot handicap with something to spare a month ago.

The six-year-old is still on a low mark and has the capacity to go in again in the hands of the excellent Jack Tudor.

BEHOLDEN (2.00) is dropping into a grade which could be feasible.

Jamie Snowden's horse was a dual winner in 2021, but has been lightly raced since and, in truth, does not have a convincing profile.

However, he keeps having his sights lowered and the door might just finally swing open today.

James Owen has an interesting yolk in the solid Flat performer **ROGUE KING (3.00)**.

Lily Pinchin has been booked for the gelding who looks to back up some reasonable runs on the all-weather.



WIMBLEDON

BARB WIRED TO GRAB GLORY

THIS ONE'S FOR JANA
Krejčíková celebrates and with singles trophy, below



BY FELIX KEITH AT SW19

BARBORA KREJČIKOVA broke down in tears as she dedicated her Wimbledon win to her late coach Jana Novotna who, she says, changed her life.

The 28-year-old Czech beat Jasmine Paolini 6-2 2-6 6-4 to claim her second Grand Slam singles title in some style.

But afterwards she told Centre Court that she was ready to quit tennis until fellow Czech Novotna steered her to success.

Novotna won the women's singles title at Wimbledon in 1998 and became Krejčíková's coach.

But Krejčíková's mentor sadly passed away in 2017 from ovarian cancer at the age of just 49 before

PLAYER	SETS		
KREJČIKOVA	6	2	6
PAOLINI	2	6	4

seeing her triumph. A tearful Barbora said: "When I finished uni, I didn't know if I should play pro or stick in with my education.

"Jana was the one who told me I had the potential. Before she passed away she told me to go and win a Slam. I never dreamed that I would one day win the same trophy as Jana did in 1998."

The Centre Court crowd were definitely behind Italian Paolini, who had won the hearts of the Wimbledon public with her huge personality.

But Krejčíková was a worthy

winner, having smashed 28 winners to Paolini's 19 and won 85 points to her 76.

It's the Czech's second singles Grand Slam after her triumph at the 2021 French Open and she has 10 Grand Slam doubles titles to her name.

She flew out of the blocks against Paolini, breaking her serve in the first game, and after the Italian fought back in the second set, she came good with the match on the line.

The winner added: "Nobody believed I'd get to the final. Now I'm a Wimbledon winner. How did it happen? I have no idea."

ALCARAZ WON'T WIN AT DOUBLES

NOVAK DJOKOVIC aims to destroy Carlos Alcaraz's dream of a Spanish sporting double today - but insists he is no heart-breaker.

After his semi-final victory over Daniil Medvedev, Alcaraz admitted he is eyeing up a spectacular Super Sunday.

Firstly, he wants to retain his SW19 title. Then he hopes Spain beat England in the Euros final.

But Djokovic has other ideas as he looks to secure a record-equalling eighth Wimbledon title - and avenge his five-set defeat by Alcaraz last year.

Asked about the opportunity to ruin his rival's party, Djokovic, 37, responded: "I'm not sure if I'm going to break his heart. I'm not intending to do that.

Party-pooper Djokovic chasing his 25th title

BY HARRY PRATT

is going for his fourth. It's so impressive what he's done at 21.

"He's going to win a lot more but I hope he's going to give me this. After that, I'll cheer for him!"

Djokovic could be forgiven if he's a tad jealous of Alcaraz given the super-popular world No.3 seems to get all the love from an adoring tennis public.

That one ingredient is still missing from Djokovic's career - highlighted at Wimbledon amid clashes with heckling, booing fans.

But as Euro fever grips the nation - and with a Spaniard on the other side of the net - there is a chance a partisan Centre

Court crowd may favour the Serb.

History-chasing Djokovic, one short of a record 25th singles title at Grand Slam events, said: "The English crowd will have the best of both worlds because the Euro final is at night.

"They have plenty of time to enjoy both

the tennis and football.

"The Wimbledon final is the most watched tennis match of the entire year but it does add more importance to the match."

Meanwhile, Alcaraz says coping with the stress of being red-hot favourite wherever he goes is a huge battle.

And it makes every one of his matches a sporting "war".

He explained: "I try not to think that I'm the defending champion. I just go into every match thinking I have chances to lose. It's a war."

WRITTEN IN THE STARS
Novak hopes to make history



GOLF

OPEN COUNTDOWN

Jamie's joy as Scots are back in the old routine

BY STUART BATHGATE

JAMIE RITCHIE reckons if it ain't broke, don't fix it.

The former Scotland skipper admitted Gregor Townsend's men stuck to their tried and tested formula as they beat the USA 42-7 in rainy Washington on Friday night.

The Scots ran in six tries as they continued their winning ways on the tour of North and South America.

Edinburgh flanker Ritchie said: "We talked about sticking to things that were working. Obviously our maul was going well, so it was good to get some change out of that.

"It was a little bit scrappy with the nature of the weather. It was really wet out there.

"But I'm proud of how we kept our foot down.

"They put us under pressure at times, but we weathered it quite well."

Duhan van der Merwe equalled Stuart Hogg's Scottish record of 27 tries when he was first to go over the USA's line.

Hooker Ewan Ashman then took centre stage,



RITCHIE won his 50th cap claiming a first-half hat-trick, with all three scores coming from lineout mauls.

Scrum-half George Horne finished off from a Kyle Rowe break early in the second half before No.8 Matt Fagerson scored from a powerful scrum.

Adam Hastings converted five of the tries and substitute Ross Thompson added the extras for the sixth as the Scots followed up the 73-12 victory over Canada.

The win was especially sweet for Ritchie as it was his 50th cap.

He said: "As a kid, all I ever wanted to do was play for Scotland, and to be able to say I've done it 50 times is the thing dreams are made of. So yeah, I'm super proud."

Townsend admitted: "It was a frustrating game - you'd have liked it to have flowed more.

"We built a good score and I can't fault the effort."

ADAM SCOTT can't wait to extend both his special relationship with The Open and staggering Major streak.

When the Australian star pegs it up at Royal Troon on Thursday, it will be the 93rd consecutive time he's played in one of the big four events.

Scott hasn't missed a Major since he first got going in the 2000 Open at St Andrews.

And his astonishing run since the 2001 Open at Royal Lytham is a source of personal pride.

The 43-year-old's run was in danger last month when he came close to missing the US Open after losing a play-off for a spot in qualifying.

But the tragic passing of Grayson Murray let Scott into the Pinehurst field for appearance No.92 and he will add to the astonishing tally in Ayrshire.

Scott will also take the total to 94 at Augusta next April as he is exempt for The Masters as a past champion.

In the modern world where everything is about the here and now, Scott smiles when it is put to him that his sequence is a sign of class.

He grinned: "It's a sign that it is going to come to an end at some point, that's for sure!"

"There was a bit of a focus on it a few weeks ago when I was getting into the US Open.

"But, consistency and longevity, we don't live in that world anymore. Everything is instant.

"It's very different from when I grew up. Consistency was a really highly-rated attribute.

"Nowadays it's almost like it's better missing 10 cuts a year and having two wins in there as well and go for broke."

Scott savours all of the Majors and, of course, has a special relationship with The Masters having secured a Green Jacket with his success there 11 years ago.

But the Adelaide ace is adamant that The Open is the big one.

Scott feels something magical about the week in the UK, with a background of



I'm on a Major run of success & can't wait to extend it at Troon

Aussie ace Adam would love to mark 93rd Slam event in a row with a win

93 IN A ROAR
Adam found rough at Renaissance yesterday but aims to be in with a shout at Troon

BY CRAIG SWAN

experiencing the culture and surroundings as well as the venues.

He said: "The Open is a special week. It's the oldest Major and also the one that is not in the States and there are big differences.

"For years, I have always travelled to The Open the week before. I know I am playing here [at Renaissance], but I was at Troon last weekend and some years I've spent the entire week where it

is being staged. I have stayed in the place and those are some of my favourite memories of The Open.

"As a golf lover, playing The Open course when no one is on it the week before the Championship is fantastic.

"There is no one out there. It was just me one of the days, which is quite incredible.

"You can play in the morning, go out for some lunch, have a late night.

"I have got some great memories with that and also some great memories of

competing as well. I even think back to Troon in 2004 and I played with Tiger [Woods] and Darren Clarke for the first two days. Just great memories."

Scott plays today's final round at the Genesis Scottish Open before heading across country to Troon and said: "It's really the motivating factor for me to keep my game at a high level.

"The odds are starting to get in my favour of winning another one. If I keep racking them up, I'll get another one. I'm excited for The Open."



CLOSE Adam was second to Els in 2012

HENRIK HOPING TO TOAST A HAPPY RETURN



CLARET JIG Henrik Stenson in 2016

HENRIK STENSON admits it'll be special to return to Royal Troon.

And his 2016 victim Phil Mickelson can't believe his heroic final-day 65 wasn't enough to outgun the Swede.

The duo will finish their LIV event in Valderrama today before heading to Ayrshire and the scene of their epic Sunday shootout eight years ago. Stenson came out victorious to lift the

Claret Jug and said: "Great memories. It was a fantastic week for both of us.

"Luckily for me, I was the one to draw the longer straw and come out with a win. I hope to bring some birdies to match those memories.

"There's been a few Opens since, but it's going to be special coming back to that great venue with Phil.

"I was 40 at the time and I never knew how many

chances I was going to get to win a Major.

"So starting that week and ahead of that weekend, I was quite determined.

"Going up against Phil, I knew I was in for a challenge.

"He was never going to back down. At that time he had four Majors in the bag. I brought my absolute best and did it.

"As they say, the rest is history." Mickelson was

unable to peg back his rival and said: "I thought 65 for sure would be enough. I believe I played a great final round, well enough to win, and it just wasn't.

"It's the only time I can remember in my career where I played my absolute best and it wasn't enough.

"I want to play like that again. That's why I'm working hard. I love competing and having a chance to win."

SCOTTISH OPEN

Tommy falls off the top

TOMMY FLEETWOOD was left frustrated after seeing his Scottish Open charge stall.

The Englishman birdied five of his first six holes in a blistering start to moving day.

But Fleetwood lost momentum and a double-bogey at the last shunted him back down the standings.

He said: "If I'd got a par on the last, I'd have felt the same, just not as extreme."

"After the start, I was so close to getting a load of momentum."

"I'm playing great, it's just the last two days I gifted shots."

BOB HOMING IN ON SCOTTISH OPEN WIN

FROM BACK PAGE

himself into a glorious position to better his runner-up finish from 12 months ago when just pipped by Rory McIlroy.

With English football fans dreaming of success at the Euros in Germany, Scotland's golfing galleries could have their own Tartan celebration.

Asked about the prospect of giving Scots a jubilant evening, he said: "That's my end goal."

"I've said it from the start of the week. The Scottish Open on a resume for my whole career is what I want."

"It's not going to change tomorrow, but I've just got to go and play golf and let it happen."

"I can't force it, there are so many good players in the tournament. Golf will be golf, I've just got to go out there and try my best."

"Look, I've not been shy in saying it, the Scottish Open is the one that I want."

MacIntyre can become the first home

winner of the Scottish Open in 25 years since Colin Montgomerie triumphed at Loch Lomond in 1999.

But he added: "I try not to get caught up in the old hype. I just try and play as well as I can."

"I don't worry about the outside noise, I just try and play my game."

"I've been doing a decent job of that so far this week. For me it's just to go out there and play 18 holes and compete as hard as I can."

Aberg leads on 17-under with MacIntyre two behind and Adam Scott a further shot back at 14-under.

The Aussie played alongside the home star on Saturday and said: "It was great. Bob's playing great and he's the hero up here. Playing golf in Scotland is fantastic."

"I've loved it my whole career but playing with Bob was really special."

BOB FEELS BRAVE MacIntyre breezes his way to the brink of ultimate goal



Struggling Hovland admits he is in need of a Troon up before the Open

FRUSTRATED Viktor Hovland is looking for Renaissance at Troon after failing to hit the heights at the Scottish Open.

The Norwegian star is out of title contention going into today's final round and confessed there's no easy solutions.

The Ryder Cup hero and Fed-Ex Cup champion said: "I'm not playing very good. I'm just not hitting it very well and I am trying to figure out my swing a little bit."

"The ball is not going super-far off line but it is not doing what I expect it to."

"It's hard to decide if you want to keep

going down that route or not. So it's trying different things and, yeah, it's frustrating."

"Overall, I know what I need to be doing but it's how exactly to do that which has been the tricky part."

Hovland is fighting to get it right for The Open at Royal Troon having been in Ayrshire last Monday for a knock.

He said: "I really like the course. The front nine kind of eases you into it, then it turns into something completely different. The back nine is going to be tough, especially if we get some weather."

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THIRD-ROUND ACTION

BOB: I'M DRIVING CRUISE CONTROL

BOB MacINTYRE admits it's all about control as he seeks Scottish Open glory.

The Oban ace has moved himself to the brink of achieving a lifetime dream at The Renaissance.

Twelve months ago, it was cruelly snatched away by the magic of Rory McIlroy.

But MacIntyre has again put himself in contention to deliver – and is adamant it's all in his hands.

When the home hero glanced at the leaderboards around the course and saw his name at the top at one stage, it didn't shrink him.

He doesn't feel the weight of pressure on his shoulders. Just the weight of the putter in his hands and, when that happens, all is aligned.

MacIntyre has wanted this all his life. It is not the time to back away and he has no intentions of doing so.

Just two strokes behind leader Ludvig Aberg, he said: "I'm calm, all the work's been done. It's now just about letting it play out."

"I can tell how I'm feeling when I'm holding the putter, when I'm behind the ball."

"I'm doing the two practice strokes and the putter feels heavy – that's a good sign."

"It's all to do with attitude and how you take on the pressure."

"You've got to let it be and I'm a very easy going guy. Just go out there and have fun and see where you end up."

"For the previous eight weeks, I've felt my game has been in good shape."

"To come home and have the home support, I just want to be in with a chance. And I've got that chance."

"This the one I want. But I can only control me and I've controlled myself very well so far. I've got 18 holes to control myself even more."

Just as he did on the Sunday last year, MacIntyre scythed through the field this time on

Oban star's staying cool and in top gear for final day

BY CRAIG SWAN at the Renaissance

the Saturday. Starting the day at eight-under par, a dazzling run through 17 holes charged him to the summit of the standings with seven birdies and an eagle to defy one dropped shot.

The noise grew around the course as home fans roared and MacIntyre added: "Yeah, I look at leaderboards all day to see where I'm at."

"I know how tough it's playing or how easy it's playing. I watch it, but I can't change that without me playing good."

"That's all I try to do, hit good shots and accept the outcomes. It's normally flat out for me anyway." Even a

bogey on the last didn't sour the occasion.

MacIntyre continued: "I'm delighted. Look, the last is a difficult hole, whether it's flat calm, downwind, into wind, it's difficult. And when they put the pin up that top shelf, it makes it even harder."

"I got an awkward lie. I was hoping for it to sit like a real flyer so I could just smash a nine-iron at it. It wasn't."

"It was a soft eight and it came out high in the blade."

"But overall, I played absolutely brilliantly. It was a nice day with good company as well, which is always good."

"I got on well with Adam Scott and I just started. I didn't know what was coming. I started with a nice

tee shot off the first and it just progressed from there, rolled it beautifully all day and got breaks when I needed them."

"I'm in the position I wanted to be at the start of the week."

"I've been rolling it, I think, unbelievable for about a good half of the year now."

"At the start of the year I struggled a bit but since I started working with [putting coach Stephen] Sweeney I've rolled it unbelievable."

"I can see the ball going in, I can see the speed, I can feel the speed."

"I'm confident when I go over the putter, take a couple of practice strokes behind it then I'll let it happen."

"I think I've done a good job

in the last 10 to 15 weeks of getting out of my own way and just letting it happen."

"I'm swinging it nicely as I am just now, it's smooth and I can control the golf ball."

MacIntyre now has a late start on Sunday, but it's exactly what he wanted.

He smiled: "I'm pretty good at wasting time, to be honest with you. It's not really too much of a problem, but it's nice to be in this position."

"How you feel about your game is the biggest thing and I feel like my game is in a great spot. I've worked hard on it over the last little while."

"Normally I'd have taken a week off but last week I was practising because of how much this means to me."

IN WITH A SHOUT
MacIntyre has real chance



SCORES

- (Gbr & Irl unless stated, Par 70):
 193 - L Aberg (Swe) 64 64 65
 195 - R MacIntyre 67 65 63
 196 - A Scott (Aus) 67 65 64
 197 - S-J Im (Kor) 63 67 67,
 C Morikawa (USA) 65 66 66,
 A Rozner (Fra) 65 64 68, S
 Theegala (USA) 66 65 66
 198 - M Manassero (Ita) 67 63 68,
 R McIlroy 65 66 67, E van
 Rooyen (Rsa) 67 67 64
 200 - C Connors (Can) 65 67 68,
 U Coussaud (Fra) 65 67 68,
 C Davis (Aus) 68 66 66,
 T Fleetwood 65 69 66,
 N Hojgaard (Den) 66 66 68,
 M Jordan 67 65 68,
 M Kieffer (Ger) 64 72 64,
 Y Paul (Ger) 65 67 68
 201 - D Brown 65 69 67,
 R Hojgaard (Den) 68 63 70,
 M Hughes (Can) 66 66 69,
 R Langasque (Fra) 66 68 67,
 H Li (Chn) 64 71 66, X Schauffele
 (USA) 69 65 67, C Syme 68 66 67
 202 - T Detry (Bel) 64 69 69,
 M Fitzpatrick 67 69 66,
 M Greyselman (USA) 67 66 69,
 B Griffin (USA) 65 70 67,
 A Hadwin (Can) 69 65 68,
 A Noren (Swe) 65 66 71,
 V Perez (Fra) 68 66 68
 203 - J Campillo (Spa) 68 67 68, S
 Cink (USA) 66 67 70, G Forrest
 67 69 67, B Harman (USA) 67 67
 69, D Hillier (Nzl) 66 71 66,
 L Hodges (USA) 67 68 68,
 B Kohles (USA) 71 64 68,
 N Noergaard Moeller (Den) 66
 67 70, A Rai 68 65 70,
 A Del Rey (Spa) 69 62 72
 204 - E Cole (USA) 71 64 69,
 R Fox (Nzl) 67 67 70, V Hovland
 (Nor) 67 69 68, J-H Kim (Kor) 69
 66 69, J-H Lee (Kor) 67 68 69
 205 - N Bachem (Ger) 67 69 69,
 W Clark (USA) 68 68 69,
 T Olesen (Den) 68 68 69,
 N Taylor (Can) 65 71 69,
 J Thomas (USA) 62 72 71,
 B Todd (USA) 65 69 71
 206 - H English (USA) 68 68 70,
 J Guerrier (Fra) 69 68 69,
 K Kitayama (USA) 67 69 70,
 R Mansell 67 69 70, M Siem (Ger)
 69 68 69, J Svensson (Swe) 69
 67 71, A Wu (Chn) 67 69 70
 207 - J Dantorp (Swe) 67 68 72,
 C Hoffman (USA) 70 67 70,
 M-W Lee (Aus) 67 70 70, J Lower
 (USA) 64 72 71, F Molinari (Ita) 66
 69 72, S Sharma (Ind) 69 68 70
 208 - S-W Kim (Kor) 68 69 71,
 S Stevens (USA) 69 68 71,
 D Thompson (USA) 65 72 71,
 G Woodland (USA) 67 69 72
 209 - T Montgomery (USA) 66
 71 72, A Novak (USA) 66 71 72,
 S Power 69 67 73
 210 - M Homa (USA) 67 70 73
MISSED CUT
 138 - Byeong-Hun An (Kor) 65 73,
 L Donald 68 70, A Eckroat (USA)
 67 71, J Elvira (Spa) 71 67, D
 Frittelli (Rsa) 67 71, D Ghim (USA)
 70 68, J Gumberg (USA) 72 66,
 C Hill 69 69, T Hoge (USA) 70
 68, R Hoshino (Jpn) 67 71, T
 Lawrence (Rsa) 71 67, J Luiten
 (Ned) 68 70, H Matsuyama (Jpn)
 71 67, T McKibbin 69 69, G
 Migliozzi (Ita) 68 70, C Phillips
 (USA) 70 68, S Straka (Aut) 70
 68, S Valimaki (Fin) 70 68; 139 -
 K Aphibarnrat (Tha) 72 67, M
 Armitage 68 71, L Canter 69 70,
 A Cockerill (Can) 71 68, L de
 Jager (Rsa) 69 70, S Forsstrom
 (Swe) 72 67, S Jamieson 69 70,
 P Larrazabal (Spa) 70 69, L List
 (USA) 70 69, H Long (Ger) 70 69,
 K Mitchell (USA) 69 70, C
 Shinkwin 72 67, J Spieth (USA) 71
 68; 140 - A Arnaus (Spa) 71 69,
 A Fitzpatrick 65 75, E Grillo (Arg)
 72 68, Jeong-Woo Ham (Kor) 71
 69, B Horschel (USA) 69 71, D
 Law 72 68, A Putnam (USA) 69
 71, M Schmid (Ger) 68 72, M
 Southgate 70 70, M Wallace 68
 72, O Wilson 68 72; 141 - M
 Baldwin 73 68, N Echavarría
 (Col) 71 70, E Ferguson 73 68, L
 Glover (USA) 71 70, P Harrington
 70 71, Keita Nakajima (Jpn) 73
 68, R Ramsay 68 73, J Rose 69
 72, J Scrivener (Aus) 68 73, O
 Strydom (Rsa) 73 68, S Tarrío
 (Spa) 70 71, D van Driel (Ned) 70
 71, B Wiesberger (Aut) 70 71,
 J Winther (Den) 72 69; 142 -
 A Bjoerk (Swe) 71 71, T Clements
 72 70, M Hubbard (USA) 72 70,
 Sang-Hyun Park (Kor) 69 73,
 D Riley (USA) 70 72, Chun-An Yu
 (Tai) 73 69, W Zalatoris (USA) 71
 71; 143 - C Götterup (USA) 66 77,
 R Hisatsune (Jpn) 71 72, T Moore
 (USA) 75 68, A Otaegui (Spa) 70
 73, J Smith 73 70; 144 - R Fowler
 (USA) 73 71, M Pavin (Fra) 74 70,
 D Whitnell 70 74; 145 - D Bradbury
 73 72, Y Katsuragawa (Jpn) 69
 76; 146 - B Garnett (USA) 75 71;
 147 - D Gavins 73 74, M Kawamura
 (Jpn) 76 71, D McCarthy (USA) 73
 74; 148 - S Crocker (USA) 73 75;
 151 - C Rueck (USA) 74 77.

RORY READY TO START BIG



FIGHTBACK Rory McIlroy

RORY MCILROY believes he can still rip through the pack and retain his Genesis Scottish Open title.

The Northern Irish ace starts Sunday five off leader Ludvig Aberg as he aims to go back-to-back at The Renaissance.

McIlroy faltered on the back nine as he slid back but, having won from behind on 14 previous occasions on the PGA Tour, he is hopeful it can be done again.

He said: "I'm going to need to be at least three-under through five to get myself right up there around the lead and from there just try to keep it going. It's good to have

BY CRAIG SWAN

the opportunity. I wish I was two or three shots better off but it's an opportunity to go out and try to win a very prestigious tournament that has a lot of history."

"If I look back the last two days, especially on the back nine, I've given myself some chances and haven't converted. I have definitely left a few out there all three days, especially Friday and Saturday."

"For the last four holes, I've probably played them the worst that I could, which is unfortunate because I felt like I could

have been right up there at 15-under."

McIlroy needs a huge display and some bad weather to assist his fightback bid.

He added: "It's easy to stay patient knowing that the game is there but I'd love to get myself into the thick of things."

"I'd prefer it to be a little tougher if I'm having to chase. With one or two birdies you can really shoot up the leaderboard."

"But when the conditions are like this, you have to make birdies to sort of keep your position on the leaderboard."

"It's up to me to get off to a fast start and try to put pressure on the guys behind."

FOUR FORTY FIVE

BIG INTERVIEW

Stevie has got great mobility for a wee guy

PREMIER SPORTS CUP

GROUP A

- Dumbarton 1 East Kilbride 1
Orsi (16) Wilson (7 og)
HT 1-1
East Kilbride win 4-2 on pens
- Queen of South 0 Aberdeen 3
HT 0-3
Sokler (6, 37)
Shinnie 23

GROUP B

- Falkirk 2 Dundee United 0
Tait (62) HT 0-0
McIver (71)
- Stenhousemuir 4 Buckie Th 0
Aitken (19) HT 2-0
Taylor (41)
Anderson (59, 69)

GROUP C

- Elgin City 0 Hibs 5
HT 0-2
Vente (8, 44, 58)
Ekipiteka (51)
Boyle (54)
- Peterhead 0 Queen's Park 5
HT 0-1
Rudden (30)
McGregor (60)
Mauchlin (80)
McLeish (85)
Brown (90 og)

GROUP D

- Annan 1 Inverness 0
Goss (21) HT 1-0
- Bonnyrigg 1 Dundee 7
Osador (75) Main (12, 31, 79)
Portales (15)
Cameron (17, 63)
Astley (52)

GROUP E

- Forfar 0 Livingston 2
HT 0-0
Sole (49)
Muirhead (88)
- Spartans 0 Dunfermline 3
HT 0-1
McCann (4)
Ritchie-Hostler (82)
Sutherland (87)

GROUP F

- Brechin 1 St Johnstone 2
Moreland (90) Carey (45 pen)
HT 0-1
Cameron (65)
- East Fife 3 Morton 0
Trouten (17, 22 pen, 54)
HT 2-0

GROUP G

- Motherwell 3 Edinbrough City 0
Balmer (43) HT 1-0
Casey (56)
O'Donnell (61)
- Partick Th 3 Montrose 2
Muirhead (43) Maciver-Redwood (37)
Turner (47) Hermiston (64)
Graham (75)
HT 1-1

GROUP H

- Stirling Albion 0 Raith Rovers 3
HT 0-2
Connolly (17, 25, 66)
- Stranraer 1 Ross County 3
Lang (81) White (6, 32)
HT 0-2
Brophy (83)

PRE-SEASON FRIENDLIES

- Ajax 2 Rangers 1
- Hearts 1 Leyton Orient 2
- St Mirren 2 Fleetwood 2



STEVIE'S WHEELS Lawless on his scooter

Thistle favourite Lawless still a speed merchant despite brutal Achilles injury... only on his runaround scooter

NUMBERING

Due to a lack of results, our usual numbering from 1 to 150 is provided below, chosen at random, for those readers who rely on it for sweepstakes.

01	31	61	91	121
02	32	62	92	122
03	33	63	93	123
04	34	64	94	124
05	35	65	95	125
06	36	66	96	126
07	37	67	97	127
08	38	68	98	128
09	39	69	99	129
10	40	70	100	130
11	41	71	101	131
12	42	72	102	132
13	43	73	103	133
14	44	74	104	134
15	45	75	105	135
16	46	76	106	136
17	47	77	107	137
18	48	78	108	138
19	49	79	109	139
20	50	80	110	140
21	51	81	111	141
22	52	82	112	142
23	53	83	113	143
24	54	84	114	144
25	55	85	115	145
26	56	86	116	146
27	57	87	117	147
28	58	88	118	148
29	59	89	119	149
30	60	90	120	150

CELTIC POOLS

01	11	21	31	41
02	12	22	32	42
03	13	23	33	43
04	14	24	34	44
05	15	25	35	45
06	16	26	36	46
07	17	27	37	47
08	18	28	38	48
09	19	29	39	49
10	20	30	40	50

From May 4 to July 27, scores will be randomly generated by computer. Your team selections are made automatically and if you pay by direct debit any winnings are paid directly into your bank account.

CLUB POOLS

EAST FIFE - 7, 14, 20. No jackpot winner. Next jackpot is £200. CLYDE - 9, 14, 17, 25. No jackpot winner, 10 2nds. Next jackpot is £20,000.

'HE jinks past one, past two ... there's a burst of acceleration ... he weaves in between the two pillars - nothing can stop Stevie Lawless.'

His 10-year-old daughter Rhea was no doubt left wishing something would when the school bell sounded.

This wasn't Lawless charging down the wing.

This was him negotiating the pavement on his mobility scooter.

Three months have passed since the Partick Thistle attacker ruptured his Achilles tendon, prompting surgery and a gruelling rehab process that has ended hopes of playing again in 2024 - albeit not if you ask the man himself.

Hobbling up the stairs at Firhill on crutches in May as the club's promotion bid unravelled in the play-offs, Lawless responded with his trademark humour when asked how he was getting on.

"Bang average," he belted out.

Now back in the gym and able to "see a bit of light at the end of the tunnel", he's assured fans it won't be 2025 before they see him again if he has anything to do with it.

At 33, thoughts of whether his career could be over didn't cross the mind of a Firhill favourite who went from terrorising defenders to terrorising pedestrians. Sitting



ALAN ROBERTSON

down with *MailSport*, the former Motherwell plus Livingston man reflected on his first few weeks post-injury and said: "I had a plan.

"I knew there was going to be a couple of weeks when I couldn't get about.

"I got the operation on the Thursday and the first time I left the house was the Monday, when my wife Lucy - who has been a massive help - took me down to get a mobility scooter.

"I was like, 'I can't do this, I need a bit of freedom'. See relying on people, I hate it.

"At least I could go to the shop, I could go down and pick the kids up from school.

"My 10-year-old was raging. I was turning up on my mobility scooter beeping the horn, embarrassing her - it was brilliant.

"She grew a bit fond of it eventually because I gave her a couple of lifts on it.

"But the first week was brilliant - her face was beetroot.

"It didn't help I would pick up

her younger sister first and would be round sitting outside her class. Neive, who's four, would be beeping the horn and shouting her name.

"She would come out like 'Oh my God'. She called me embarrassing. She shouldn't have as I was then down every day since!

"My youngest one loved it - she was calling it her taxi because I'd pick her up and drive her up the road. She beeped the horn at everybody going past to get out the way.

"I didn't get rid of it for a wee while, I loved it. I got the idea from one of the boys I used to play with years ago.

"I was a s thinking: 'What can I do to get a bit of freedom here? Mobility scooter'."

If that image beggars belief, so too does the fact Lawless was clueless as to what he'd done at East End Park in April.

He'd played 70 minutes against Dunfermline before having to go off, oblivious to the fact his Achilles had gone. So much so, he took up

a seat on the bench to watch the remainder of the 1-1 draw unfold.

"About a month before, my calf was tight at the bottom of my right leg but it went away," he added. "Then a week before the injury, my calf started getting tight in the same area on my left leg.

"I thought it was because I was playing on an artificial surface a lot, sometimes you get a bit tight.

"I had played on plastic for years at Livingston and you get these wee things, you just think they're going to go away.

"During the game it was tight but not affecting me at all.

"When it happened I thought I'd got kicked so when Rob (the physio) has come on, he said: 'What's up?'

"I just felt sick, like I had been kicked on a dead leg. He said: 'Are you wanting to come off?'

"I'm like no. When you get a dead leg, putting weight through it is the best thing.

"As soon as I tried to put weight on it... no chance. But I still thought it was a dead leg so I sat and watched the rest of the game with an ice pack on it.

"When I took the ice pack off at



A lot of people come back around nine months - my target is seven .. I'm a good healer

STEVIE LAWLESS IS GETTING SCOOT ON

JAGS ACE ON PATH TO RECOVERY



CHECK OVER
Stevie gets inspected by physio after his injury against Dunfermline



Wing and a slayer in store for Jags

HIS team-mates were kind enough to get him a seat and retrieve his arrows so he could still join them for their daily darts competitions in the early stages of his comeback.

But Stevie Lawless says he's not coming back to sit on his backside. Partick Thistle boss Kris Doolan has recruited five already.

A title tilt is the aim as the attacker said: "We've gone out and got a couple of good wingers so we have a bit of depth there.

"I am looking forward to getting back and competing with them. Maybe when I am out on the pitch running, I'll start thinking about getting that competitive head on but right now I am basically a cheerleader - I can't even play so probably not a good one!

"I will be before the game but if I see things wrong I'll be calling them out. I'll be there supporting the boys, even the boys in my position - I want that competition. If they are doing well, it will make me do well. Competition is good for you but once I'm back I will be coming for my place again."

at the end of the game and felt it, I'm like: 'Nah that's gone'. It was like water at the bottom of my calf, I could put my finger through it.

"When I went into the changing room, Rob did a wee test with it where you press the bottom of your calf and it makes your foot ping.

"And because that wasn't connected, it wasn't doing it. That's when I knew.

"I played with Steven Saunders and I remember him doing his Achilles when he was at Motherwell.

"It was a pop ... you could hear it from the other side of the pitch and he was rolling about in agony. "I wasn't like that so I didn't think I'd done the same injury until it was confirmed."

Going in to see his surgeon Bob Carter two days later, his mind wasn't racing with thoughts of enforced retirement.

Rather, his questioning revolved around whether he could fly given the family holiday to Spain had been booked three days before and he did not want to leave his two daughters and son Braeden, 8, heartbroken.

As it turned out, the swimming pool at their villa doubled up as a

recovery pool as he worked on putting weight through his leg.

Asked if he'd ever contemplated his career could be over, he said: "No, that has never even entered my mind. I have had a lot of people say that but there is no chance of that happening.

"I'm usually a good healer. I broke my leg with a double fracture when I was younger so I understand that aspect of it.

"Mentally, if this happened to me maybe 10 years ago it would be a lot harder for me to get back because I was less mature.

"Now I know what is ahead of me, I've got my targets.

"They did say between six to nine months but a lot of people come back towards the nine.

"But I am not aiming for nine - my target is November, which would be seven.

"I know there are going to be wee hiccups along the way. When I did it, just thinking about getting back in January, a new year, is depressing.

"So I've set this target and if I am maybe a couple of weeks after that, fair enough. Right now it's feeling good.

"I got a lot of messages through Twitter and Instagram, which I liked.

"I appreciate all the messages of support and they have been noticed.

"I've just tried to keep my head down and work away, try to get back and do my talking on the pitch."

I WAS BORED AT FIRST VIEW

STEVIE LAWLESS quips he was so bored he had to turn off the first Jags game he watched post-injury... and ask wife Lucy if it's that bad when he's playing too.

But the 33-year-old says he won't stop giving his honest take after boss Kris Doolan asked him to help with analysis while out.

Lawless said: "The first game after it... I had to turn the Raith game off at half-time because it was boring the heid off me! Nil-nil, oh my days, it was boring the life out of me.

"I said to my wife, 'Are we this bad when I'm playing?'. She said, 'It is a wee bit better because I'm watching you'. Obviously you have games like that where nothing clicks.

"But that game I was like, 'I can't do this', turned it off.

"Then first game I came to was the play-offs, Airdrie at home - that was brutal as well. I am a terrible viewer.

"Every wee thing I am thinking, 'What are they doing?' so I am going to be brutal. Watching the games is harder for me.

"Even the boys will tell you, when you get taken



HELPING HAND Doolan

off, when you can't affect it, if sitting on the bench, I hate it. So having no impact at all was tough, just from a team aspect as well.

"You can see things they maybe can do better and I can't even say anything. Whereas when on the park the boys will tell you I am a massive pain in the a**e.

"If something is not happening. I am the first to say it. It is going to be tough watching.

"The gaffer actually wants me to do a bit of analysis... I think he's trying to do it to stop me from coming into the changing room and calling people out!

"It'll give me something to focus on. I am looking forward to that part because I enjoy that side of the game as well."

MO ARE LEFT HIGH AND BRI

» PARTICK TH...3
» MONTROSE...2
BY ANDY ROSS

BRIAN GRAHAM picked up where he left off by grabbing the winner as Partick Thistle edged out Montrose in a thrilling Firhill encounter.

Goals from Aaron Muirhead and Kyle Turner put Kris Doolan's side in control after Montrose took a shock lead through Brian Maciver-Redwood.

Ben Hermiston equalised, before Graham, who netted 26 times last term, squeezed home a 75th-minute winner.

Thistle boss Doolan said: "There was a lot of really good stuff from us and bits we can tidy up on.

"On another day we could have scored seven or eight goals."

The home side paid the price for a lack of cutting edge as Montrose opened the scoring eight minutes



GOAL HERO Brian Graham

before the break. Craig Brown's cut-back was met by Maciver-Redwood for a tap-in.

The Championship side replied in 43 minutes with Muirhead turning in Dan O'Reilly's header.

Jags took the lead two minutes after the restart. Kyle Turner collected Graham's cross and blasted beyond Ross Matthews.

Hermiston's cool finish made it 2-2 before Graham's late winner.

Montrose player-coach Sean Dillon said: "There are loads of positives but we lost three poor goals."



PREMIER SPORTS CUP



GOALDEN GRAEME
Shinnie is congratulated
by Gavin Molloy after
classy strike for second

LIONS' PRIDE AS MART MAKES A ROARING START

ROUND-UP

LIVINGSTON warmed-up for life in the Championship with a 2-0 win over Forfar in the League Cup opener.

David Martindale's men crashed out of the top flight in May and face an almighty fight to seal a quick Premiership return.

But they returned to competitive action in style with a solid opening victory in Group E.

The deadlock was broken early in the second half by Liam Sole, who slotted home in the 49th minute, before Robbie Muirhead put the game to bed two minutes from time.

But there was bad news for fellow relegation sufferers Inverness as they went down 1-0 to Annan.

Tommy Goss' 21st-minute strike was enough to nick the points as Caley Thistle boss Duncan Ferguson was left frustrated.

And he didn't spare his own as he slammed a miss by son Cameron Ferguson.

He said: "They had one real chance when we didn't stop the cross and Tommy, who was a real handful, got his head on it to score.

"We dominated the match and had most of the chances and hit the bar. We had enough chances to win and Cameron also had a chance which he should have scored with late on.

"But I was pleased with the players' application. We just never defended that one action and they scored.

"It was a much better performance than we put in against Brora Rangers."

Ferguson also reckons goalscorer Goss should have been off for throwing an elbow in the first half.

He said: "Their centre forward should have been sent off. He gets a yellow card and should have had another yellow, if not a red.

"Had he been sent off, that would have put us in the ascendancy and given us a big advantage."

Queen's Park put on a show with a 5-0 demolition of Peterhead.

Zak Rudden opened the scoring in the 30th minute before Roddy MacGregor, Zach Mauchin, Liam McLeish, and an own goal by Peterhead's Jason



SEALED POINTS Muirhead

Brown capped off a dominant performance.

Stenhousemuir had a field day against Buckie, romping to a 4-0 victory. Matthew Aitken got the ball rolling in the 19th minute, followed by Ross Taylor just before half time. Michael Anderson added a brace.

East Kilbride bagged a bonus point after beating Dumbarton 4-2 on penalties following their 1-1 draw at the Rock.

Kilby went ahead early on when John Robertson's shot was deflected in by David Wilson only for Calvin Orsi to level and force the shootout where Tony Wallace and Orsi were the spot-kick sinners.

Dunfermline started strong and never looked back, securing a 3-0 victory over Spartans.

Lewis McCann opened the scoring in the fourth minute, and late strikes from Kane Ritchie-Hosler and Taylor Sutherland sealed a comfortable win for Pars, who looked in control throughout.

East Fife continued their impressive form with a 3-0 triumph over Morton.

Alan Trouten netted twice in the first half, including a penalty, before wrapping it up in the 54th minute.

Aidan Connolly bagged a hat-trick as Raith Rovers started strongly by blowing Stirling Albion away.

Thrilled Rovers boss Ian Murray said: "I'm delighted for Aidan, fantastic. It was a different pre-season for him this year because last year he had that injury with his ankle from the season before that hampered him.

"He's always got the quality - sometimes it can leave you for a couple of months but it comes back. Aidan had been really sharp in training and he's proved me right today."

IT'S NO SWEAT ON NO MIOVSKI

Dons gaffer plays it cool as Bojan & Duk stay on sidelines

JIMMY THELIN insists he'll take transfer-linked Bojan Miovski's Aberdeen future day by day after leaving the transfer-linked striker out of his winning start to life at Pittodrie.

The North Macedonian hitman missed the trip to Dumfries as Ester Sokler staked his claim to be a ready-made replacement with a clinical double to help see off Queens. But it was the absence of Miovski - and Duk, who remains subject to disciplinary proceedings after failing to return for pre-season - which was the main talking point as speculation intensifies over his Pittodrie future.

Quizzed on Miovski's Dons situation, Thelin said: "Yeah he is doing really fine.

"There's a lot of things going around about him right now and we spoke about him not playing this game and focusing on training on Monday and

» QOS.....0 ABERDEEN.....3
FRASER WILSON AT PALMERSTON PARK

going from there." Sokler suggested he is ready to step into the breach with a ruthless show leading the line.

The Slovenian's first-half double either side of Shinnie's strike sealed a comfortable win.

Thelin said: "I'm really happy. The players really tried to bring the identity we want to create, the intensity of how we press and work with each other.

"Sokler had that energy but still that quality when the ball arrived into the box which says a lot about him."

Both sides were beckoning in new eras with Peter Murphy taking charge of his first game as Queens boss.

Aberdeen started with the intensity of a side desperate to impress the new boss and took the lead after just six minutes. Shayden Morris turned on

the afterburners on the right to get past Oscar MacIntyre and his clipped cross was perfect for Sokler to head home.

Morris' pace was causing havoc and the winger had a big shout for a penalty waved away by ref Don Robertson after being clattered by Brennan Dickensen before Leighton Clarkson fired just wide.

But the Dons doubled their lead on 23 minutes when Shinnie beat two men in the box before bending a shot low into the corner.

Queens, with ten new faces in the starting line-up, looked like a side still to gel but weren't completely without threat as Kai Kennedy toed an effort over.

Mikey Hewitt was then too high with an attempted hook over his shoulder. But

eight minutes before the break, Jamie McGrath slipped Clarkson in on the left and his cut back found Sokler eight yards out to fire home.

Benji Luissint cracked the outside of Dimitar Mitov's post as Queens tried to get back into the game after the break.

At the other end Stewart saved McGrath's angled drive and Nicky Devlin hit the post as Aberdeen handed Thelin a winning start.



WINNING START boss Thelin hails fans at end

HIBS MARV MAKING UP FOR LOST TIME



DYLAN AND ABLE Vente with the match ball

VENTE AT TREBLE IN CITY ROUT

» **ELGIN..0 HIBS..5**

CRAIG CHRISTIE

DAVID GRAY hailed Dylan Vente as the Dutchman's stunning treble lit up Borough Briggs and bagged a thrilling season-opener for new-look Hibs.

The Dutch striker, alongside goals from Martin Boyle and debutant Marvin Ekpiteta, ensured a perfect start for the new boss.

Gray said: "I'm delighted. It was a real professional performance from everyone.

"When you come up here, there is always the potential for it to be a tricky tie. All the pressure and expectation is on us to win, so I'm delighted with the performance level and the attitude the players showed.

"It was great to see Dylan Vente getting a hat-trick. You always want your striker scoring goals, so for him to score in the first competitive game of the season is great for him, hopefully he can take confidence from that and kick on now."

Vente wasted no time, netting the first just eight minutes in, thanks to a slick assist from youngster Rudi Molotnikov.

Vente quickly doubled the lead, with Ekpiteta heading in a third from a Molotnikov cross. Boyle then showcased his flair, scoring his 80th goal for the club, before setting up Vente's third with a perfect corner.

Gray, overseeing competitive debuts for Josef Bursik, Warren O'Hora, and Ekpiteta, saw his side dominate from start to finish. Despite Elie Youan missing due to illness and absences of Harry McKirdy and Jake Doyle-Hayes, the Hibeers showed no mercy.

The game began with a scare for Hibs as Brian Cameron threatened early, but Bursik saved the day. After that, it was all Hibs. Cadden's early injury saw Nathan Moriah-Welsh step in, leading to a tactical reshuffle that only seemed to strengthen their grip.

Molotnikov and Boyle were a constant menace, with the former orchestrating play beautifully. His pass to Boyle set up Vente's first, and he later delivered the perfect cross for Ekpiteta's debut goal.

Boyle's signature finish made it 4-0 before he assisted Vente's hat-trick goal.

Hibs' relentless attack saw late efforts from substitutes Luke Amos, Dylan Levitt, Kanayo Megwa, and Jair Tavares, with Megwa almost scoring on his debut.

Elgin manager Allan Hale said: "We've ended up on the end of a heavy one which is unfortunate. We just got a bit ragged."

MISTER MARVEL
Ekpiteta's keen to show Hibs fans his winning mentality



I didn't want to be left on the shelf so took a job at Tesco

Ekpiteta racked up 10 jobs on way to getting pro deal

EXCLUSIVE
BY GORDON PARKS

WITH an employment history at Homebase and Tesco, new Hibs defender Marvin Ekpiteta can be forgiven for fearing he'd be left on football's shelf.

The 28-year-old Englishman insists his grounding in the tough school of life has been ideal preparation for the next step of his career in Leith.

It's been a story of triumph over adversity for the former Blackpool stopper, who is convinced his spell making ends meet in high street supermarkets has him fully stocked for the demands that await at Easter Road.

He said: "I feel like I'm different to most players. Most have come through club academies from the age of nine.

"My story is completely different to the average player. I see football and life differently because of my experiences.

"I'm more than just a footballer, that's not all of the real me.

"I was with Oxford United when they were in League Two and enrolled in a college programme.

"After a two-year scholarship I was released and I didn't know what I was going to do.

"I went home and lived back at my mum's. I was down. I didn't know where to start. I had no idea where my life was going to go.

"One of my friends was on trial at Chelmsford City in the National League South. I knew nothing



TALENT POOL Ekpiteta celebrates scoring a goal for Blackpool back in 2021

about that level, about part-time football or how much players were paid or even if they did get paid.

"I knew nothing about the standard but my friend told me to just come along as I had nothing else and I gave it a try.

"I went along and did fine. I was offered a contract but the money wasn't enough to live on so I needed to get other work."

Ekpiteta's needed some retail therapy to help him maintain his dream of a career in football – even then he made his breakthrough just when he was about to call time.

He said: "I played part-time for four years and had 10 different jobs.

"I was determined to find full-time football but needed to make money to get by and help my mum.

"But it was tough. I was training two nights a week as well as playing a game on a Saturday. I knew I

needed to perform well to get out of the level I was at.

"That's almost impossible to balance when you work full-time from 6am to 4pm, going to the gym and playing part-time football – but that's what I needed to do.

"My first job was in Home Bargains. It was hard to get my head around it as I'd thought when I left school my life would be playing football every day as a professional.

"When that reality hit it was tough mentally and I struggled. I didn't want to talk to anyone. I went to work then training and my

performances went downhill. My next job was with Tesco, then in a pub before working as a teaching assistant.

"But I knew I needed to make the most of my situation.

"After my first year I found my feet and tried to adopt a full-time training regime. I told myself that my next season would be my last.

"I was 22 and doing deliveries for Amazon and I'd signed up for a plumbing course – but I ended up signing for Leyton Orient which was amazing."

The England C cap arrives at Hibs on a three-year deal after a successful stint down south with the Seasideers and he's determined to continue making up for lost time.

He said: "I developed late as a player and was getting injuries as I was still growing."

"I think I needed that spell as a part-time player as full-time would have been too much for me.

"It was so tough mentally but I was lucky to have people around me to push me on.

"Now I want to showcase what I can do.

"Defending is my strength and keeping the ball out of the net is a huge part of the mindset this season.

"I have a never-give-up mentality and want to bring that to Hibs."

"I had 10 jobs in four years .. it was tough – I thought my life would be playing football"

MARVIN EKPIKETA GOT TO HIBS THE HARD WAY



PREMIER SPORTS CUP

BALM BEFORE THE STORMER

Stuart says Well debutant Kofi got off to a flier

STUART KETTLEWELL hailed scoring debutant Kofi Balmer as Motherwell cruised to a comfortable Premier Sports Cup win.

And the Well boss reckons the new recruit can help shore up their backline as well as providing a goal threat in the opposition box at set-plays.

Balmer hit the post with a header from an Andy Halliday corner before opening the scoring just before the interval from another corner against Edinburgh City.

Dan Casey doubled the lead after the interval, when he capitalised from another Halliday set-play, before Stephen O'Donnell added a third just after the hour-mark.

And Kettlewell said: "Kofi gives us another option and pitched in with his goal.

"He looked assured, comfortable out of possession and is growing with his communication.

"Something we had to do was get more clean sheets. We were third top scorers last season but we want to improve that record in the backline.

"We probably didn't score enough goals from set plays, so that was a positive.

"The first point is you want to win, the second is you want a cleansheet then you want a few goals and hope everyone comes through unscathed.

"It looks as if we've ticked all of those boxes. We were in complete control.

"Give Edinburgh credit, they were very organised and came with a good game plan.

"This competition can bite you. If you feel you won't be tested you'll be stung."

Balmer went close with a

KOFI TIME Balmer rises highest to bullet his header home and put Motherwell ahead



» MOTHERWELL...3 EDIN CITY...0

MICHAEL BAILLIE AT FIR PARK

25-yard strike that was inches wide then even closer with a header that smacked the bar.

He eventually made the breakthrough two minutes before the interval when he powered his header beyond Mark Weir.

The home side went close five minutes into the second half when Balmer headed another Halliday corner back into the danger area and Casey's header hit the bar.

Well made it 2-0 six minutes later. Halliday's corner found

Casey at the back post and he headed home.

The third came in 61 minutes when Academy graduate Ewan Wilson surged forward, weaving past challenges, then found O'Donnell.

The defender unleashed a shot from the edge of the box that squirmed under keeper Weir and trundled in.

Well went close to adding a fourth when Casey hit the post with a header from sub Lennon Miller's corner.

Edinburgh City boss

Michael McIndoe was pleased with the effort and workrate of his players but disappointed to concede a couple of goals from corners.

McIndoe said: "Overall it was a good workout for the guys but the first goal before half-time came at the wrong time.

"We knew we'd have to give up possession and we were hoping to get them to 0-0 at half-time.

"We conceded through set-plays and it's something we have to work on.

"The workrate was good but Motherwell's quality came through in the end."



ANDY MAN Halliday and scorer Casey

SOFT TANGERINES NOT GOOD ENOUGH

JIM GOODWIN admitted Dundee United were a major let down as they finished a distinct second best to fired-up Falkirk.

It was the clash of the champions in this season opener between United, who lifted the Championship, and the Invincible Bairns who marched to the League One title without defeat.

But second-half goals from Dylan Tait

» FALKIRK.....2
» DUNDEE UTD.....0

and Ross MacIver sealed an impressive victory for Falkirk and left the Premiership new boys with work to do.

Frustrated Tangerines gaffer Goodwin said: "It was extremely disappointing in

every department. We had a good four weeks of pre-season, but it certainly didn't show out there and it was a proper reality check for us. We'll get better, though - we HAVE to get better."

Bairns boss John McGlynn said: "We're delighted to come out on top, delighted to get a cleansheet. It's a great start for us and the boys handled it really well."



SKIPPER SHOUT White

Jordan can be White fit for County captaincy

» STRANRAER...1
» ROSS CO.....3

DON COWIE revealed Jordan White could replace Jack Baldwin as club captain this season as Ross County kicked off their cup campaign with a victory.

It's a straight shootout between White and Connor Randall for the armband at the Staggy's this term.

And White wasted no time in making his claim thanks to a first-half double at Stair Park with fellow striker Eamonn Brophy also netting later in the match.

Cowie said: "I've got a group of good senior players at the club.

"Jordan and Connor Randall are the core of that and very much in my thinking with their affiliation to the club and the service they've given.

"It's not something I've nailed down but they both have a possibility of becoming club captain.

"The core of the squad is still the same from last year, they know what I expect and demand from them.

"You need competition, we're a Premiership football club. We had four good strikers last year competing.

"Simon Murray got most of the goals but it was due to team-mates helping him."

White opened the scoring for County in six minutes as he latched onto a Scott Allardice pass and knocked it beyond Harry Broun.

The former Motherwell man added a second 12 minutes before the break with a glancing header from a James Brown cross.

Deryn Lang pulled one back for Stranraer with eight minutes left but Brophy sealed it for the visitors with a header just moments later.

Stranraer gaffer Scott Agnew said: "We stuck to the task, it's disappointing to concede after we score."

DAVID REID



FRUSTRATED Goodwin

GROUP STAGE KICK-OFF

TONY DOCHERTY reckons relentless Dundee should have hit double figures in their one-sided tie with Bonnyrigg.

Curtis Main bagged a hat-trick and there was a double from Lyall Cameron, with Antonio Portales and Ryan Astley chipping in.

And they didn't even need new star signing Simon Murray, who was an unused sub.

Even losing out on a cleansheet when Rose sub Smart Osadolor grabbed a consolation couldn't wipe the smile from the Dens manager's face.

He said: "I'm absolutely delighted and it's a continuation from last season.

"You could see the progress from last year when we scraped a 1-0 on the first day of the season.

"Our performance from the first minute – when Fin Robertson hit the bar to the 90th minute – was so competitive.

"We were relentless with our intensity and our quality and bravery on the ball was brilliant.

"Yeah, I'm a bit disappointed not to keep a cleansheet.

"But we scored seven and it could have been a lot more. It could have been double-figures.

"The fitness levels are there to be seen. It was a tricky tie but the mentality of the squad and the professionalism were rewarded.

"It was a great start for Curtis to get a hat-trick.

"Some of the movement, our passing ... I see that all the time in training but hoped to see it on a matchday – they did that today.

"Credit to Bonnyrigg because they kept going but we were relentless."

Last season, Dundee only just scrapped a 1-0 win at New Dundas Park almost a year to the day, but they were streets ahead of Rose yesterday.

Of their new faces this summer, only Ethan Ingram started in East Lothian.

Dundee showed intent almost from kick-off when Robertson hit the bar from Main's cross then scudded the rebound high over and into the streets of Bonnyrigg after only 20 seconds.

Ingram angled a shot wide before Main shot over and Dundee should have been three goals up in as many minutes.

Next up Luke McCowan scooped a cross from Ingram over



MY MAIN MAN Curtis breaks through to start the rout to delight of boss Docherty, inset

RUNNING ON MAINS

Doc reckons electric Dundee could've hit 10

**» BONNYRIGG.....1
» DUNDEE.....7**

BY MARK WALKER

as Dundee bombarded the hosts with attacks.

It was no surprise when Dundee finally took the lead in the 12th minute. Main turned in a shot from McCowan for his first goal for Dundee.

Their lead was doubled three minutes later when Mexican defender Portales headed a free-kick into the net.

Dundee netted a third just a minute later when Scott Tiffoney broke free and, after drawing

keeper Michael Andrews wide, selflessly passed to Cameron and stroked the ball into an empty net.

The fourth goal arrived in the 31st minute and it was the pick of the bunch.

Dundee showed pace and skill to slice open the home defence, with Main eventually finishing following an exquisite backheel from Cameron in the build-up.

Dundee carried on where they left off after the interval.

It took them seven minutes after the restart to grab a fifth when Astley poached a goal after Main had nodded Tiffoney's cross into his path.

Dundee's sixth came in the 63rd

minute with a one-two between Robertson and Cameron and the Scotland Under-21 midfielder finished with aplomb.

The hosts did at least grab a 74th-minute consolation when half-time sub Osadolor tapped in from close range.

But Main completed his hat-trick with a looping header

Bonnyrigg boss Calum Elliot said: "It was tough. We are better than we looked but we have to take this on the chin.

"It could have been 3-0 within the first five minutes and we struggled to get to grips with their movement. But we won't play as good a side as that all season."

Crackshot Kyle is real sur-prize for Levein

CRAIG LEVEIN admits he didn't know Kyle Cameron was so lethal from long range.

The newly-appointed skipper capped his Saints debut with a second-half cracker to add to Graham Carey's spot-kick opener on the stroke of half-time.

Centre-back Cameron

» BRECHIN.....1 ST JOHNSTONE.....2

strode on to a Drey Wright pass to hammer high into the net from 25 yards in the 65th minute for what proved to be the winner.

It was his first goal since September and Levein said: "I didn't sign him thinking

he'd be getting goals like that!

"We got the two goals then I felt we took out our foot off the gas a bit, which was annoying. The main thing was winning the game. Getting three points

was crucial because this competition is really important for us."

Highland League Brechin gave the Premiership side a physical test and served up a late fright when Spencer Moreland struck a first-time shot in off the post in the first minute of added time.



LETHAL Kyle Cameron



DREAM TEAM Davidson, left, and MacLean at St Johnstone

OLD PALS' ACT IS BETTER FOR HARD KNOCKS

STEVEN MACLEAN BY FRASER MACKIE

reckons their struggles in the St Johnstone hotseat will make him and Callum Davidson a better management team.

The pair who created history in Perth by winning both domestic cups in 2020/21 have now teamed up at Queen's Park.

But the glory year was followed by tough times as St Johnstone skirted with relegation – and both were binned as bosses by the McDiarmid Park board.

Davidson was dismissed in April 2023 before Macca stepped up to steer clear of bother. But the axe fell on him after only 19 games.

They were reunited last month at Spiders after Liam Craig, who joined Queen's with Davidson in January, left for Hibs.

And Macca is convinced the old pals' act can be a profitable pairing again.

MacLean said: "Callum and I were always close and worked together for just shy of three seasons.

"So it's not taken long to get back into the swing with him again. He knows what I'm all about and that I can get on with whatever he needs done.

"Callum is good to work for. We had great success, then our downs at Saints but I still feel like Callum did a fantastic job.

"We won a double. But I'm working with an even better manager this time.

"Both of us are better for our experiences and we certainly have learned a hell of a lot.

"Having been a manager myself now, I'll know the situations Callum finds himself in at times. We can lean on that if need be."

MacLean was fired after a 4-0 thrashing by St

Mirren last October with Saints winless and bottom of the Premiership.

He'd long been regarded as future manager material by St Johnstone hierarchy.

But the 41-year-old admits that's not how he viewed his future career while assisting Davidson to silverware success.

He said: "When I took over from Callum, I wasn't itching to be a manager.

"Then it all just came about for me. Has it put me off being a manager?"

"I don't know. I'll need to see if it happens again. But I'm comfortable being a coach. I enjoy it."

In fact, MacLean feels he's been recharged by a short spell out of the game.

He said: "Speak to anyone who's been sacked and they'll tell you there's a range of emotions – upset, disappointment, anger. But that's football.

"You take stock and hopefully learn from it to take into your next role.

"I wasn't in any rush. I'd never had a break from football since leaving at 15 to go to Rangers.

"The seven months out were really nice.

"To start thinking about different things, spending time with the family. I enjoyed it.

"I feel better for the time out. Hopefully that helps Callum and Queen's Park have a successful time."

The backroom has also been bolstered by Barry Nicholson and Michael McGovern.

MacLean said: "There are a lot of good things happening at this club.

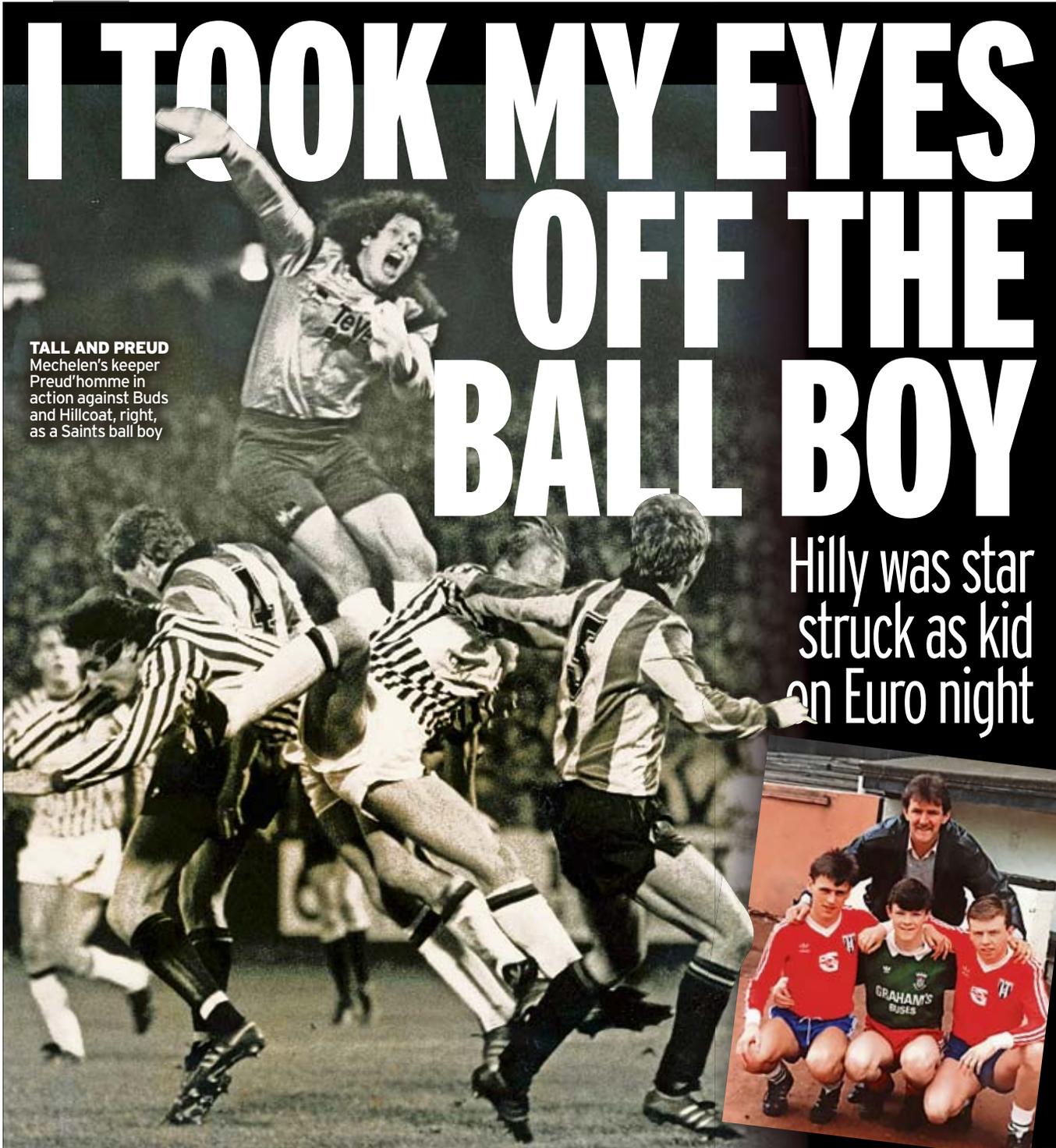
"With a couple more players and a bit of fortune, I don't see why we can't look at the play-offs."



ST MIRRREN EURO COUNTDOWN

I TOOK MY EYES OFF THE BALL BOY

TALL AND PREUD
Mechelen's keeper Preud'homme in action against Buds and Hillcoat, right, as a Saints ball boy



Hilly was star struck as kid on Euro night



JOHN HILLCOAT was a wide-eyed ball boy last time St Mirren played in Europe almost four decades ago.

And the former Buddies keeper has his passport at the ready for the Paisley side's long overdue continental return.

Stephen Robinson's side await the winners of either Valur of Iceland or Vllaznia of Albania for their Conference League second qualifying round and memories of 1987 are being rekindled.

Hillcoat recalls being part of the gameplan for Cup Winners' Cup clashes against Norwegians Tromso KV and Belgian cracks Mechelen all those years ago.

He said: "It's hard to believe it's almost 40 years since we were last in Europe. I was a teenager

EXCLUSIVE
BY GORDON PARKS

on the St Mirren ground staff when we played the games against Tromso and Mechelen.

"Alex Smith was the manager and the ball boys were well drilled on what he wanted.

"An instruction would be given at certain points during the game to either get the ball back into play quickly or to take our time and slow the game down. "It was an amazing experience to be close to the action and to have a job along with the other apprentices as part of Alex's secret strategy.

"We beat Tromso but lost to Mechelen who went on to lift the trophy that season.

"The Belgians were a brilliant side and they had a keeper called Michel Preud'homme who

played for the national side. As a young goalkeeper, I was in awe of him. Star struck.

"My mind was on watching him rather than my ball-boy duties so I don't think I was much use when it came to trying to disrupt the pace of the game."

Hillcoat enjoyed two spells with his hometown club and is a regular at the SMISA Stadium as a fan.

He's hoping to be heading to Albania for the first leg on July 25 rather than Iceland where they may be no room at the inn.

He said: "Valur's Hlíóarendi stadium is only going to be able to accommodate 75 St Mirren fans due to its size so I hope Albania will be our destination.

"I will be going to the away leg regardless of where it is but it will be warmer in Albania and the logistics are better.

"Regardless of where we go, there's a lot of fans in Paisley who are ready to get booked up.

"We wouldn't miss these games for the world."

Saints have been racking up some friendly matches to try to hit the ground running for their

Euro challenge. Hilly is convinced his old side are well equipped to cope with the step up.

He said: "The core of the squad that did so well last season is intact and Robinson has made some shrewd signings with keeper Ellery Balcombe, midfielder Oisín Smyth as well as Shaun Rooney coming in.

"Balcombe looks a quality keeper having arrived on loan from Brentford and impressed in a midweek friendly win over Morton.

"Playing in Europe will be a new experience for most in the squad but it's strong enough to progress past either Valur or Vllaznia.

"Robinson is building something special at the club and this is the next step in what can hopefully become another memorable season."

The Conference League first round, first leg will be played away on July 25 with the return leg one week later.

If Saints progress, they would still face a third qualifying round and a play-off to reach the group stage.



GOOD FOR LEW Jamieson, left, with Dennis Adeniran

KILTIE OP AN EARLY BLOW FOR BUDDIES

ST MIRREN.....2
FLEETWOOD.....2

KYLE GUNN AT THE SMISA

ST MIRREN have been hit by a major injury blow with the news that key attacker Greg Kiltie has been ruled out for the next three months.

The Buddies start the season competitively with their Europa Conference League qualifier first-leg against either Valur of Iceland or Vllaznia of Albania on July 25.

And the Paisley side must now play those Euro ties without the services of Kiltie and Conor McMenamin who has had surgery on a patella tendon injury.

Yesterday Robinson's Saints side battled back twice after being behind to draw with English League Two side Fleetwood as they gear up for their continental matches.

And after the game the Buddies boss confirmed the blow for Kiltie.

Robinson said: "Greg has had an operation. Unfortunately he is going to be out for three months. It's probably a similar timeline for him and Conor.

"That's two big blows for us in terms of the system that we play, both of them having been vital as those two No.10s.

That's something we're going to have to look at.

"I tried something today and it didn't particularly work to be honest. We have to look

at how we replace that and others who are going to step up.

"We wish both boys a speedy recovery because they are players that we miss but it gives others opportunities to come to the fore and stake a claim for a starting place."

Ronan Coughlan opened the scoring for Fleetwood in the first half and that was cancelled out by Buddies home debutant Oisín Smyth's free-kick.

Junior Quitirna put Charlie Adam's side back in front before Lewis Jamieson found the home side a late leveller.

But there is better news on the injury front for Buddies Scott Tanser and goalkeeper Ellery Belcombe as Robbo added: "Tans is a wee bit of a neural and calf issue so it wasn't something we wanted to risk today.

"We are hoping he will be fit for our game against Carlisle next Friday - but that's touch and go.

"But the way Jaden Brown is playing at the minute we have certainly got very good alternatives.

"People can't afford to be injured at the minute because we have got good options.

"Ellery we just rested today. He had a slight niggles that was absolutely nothing so he'll be fine to train on Monday again."

THE VOICE OF EXPERIENCE

Rangers must sort out their rebuild but the roof will blow off if

Matt goes

Celtic fans uneasy after 50 days of lying back doing nothing



STRIFE OF O'RILEY
Matt sale could cause Hoops a heap of woe

FIFTY days have passed since the Scottish Cup Final ended in defeat for Rangers and Joe Hart bid an emotional farewell to the Celtic fans in the midst of their celebrations at Hampden.

Tomorrow or next day, or maybe even the one after that – because this is Celtic we're talking about – Kasper Schmeichel is expected to sign for Brendan Rodgers' side on a free transfer from Anderlecht.

At this laboured rate of player recruitment, the summer transfer window will close and Celtic fans will need to wait until January before welcoming the next new arrival.

One signing every 50-odd days will require the patience of saints.

Supporters can take consolation in the fact that Schmeichel will get here before that shipment of steel for Ibrox that Rangers are expecting.

But, in the meantime, if Celtic decide to accept a monumental offer from Atalanta, or anybody else, for Matt O'Riley before actually buying somebody for themselves, they might need to ask Rangers for the name of their construction contact in Asia.

Because the roof will have been blown off the stand at Celtic Park by disillusioned customers.

Last week, I tried to offer the glowing example of Henrik Larsson's arrival as absolute proof of how good things come to those who wait.

This week, I was recalling to mind how

» HUGH KEEVINS

A WORD FROM THE WISE



Celtic were strung along for ages by Eddie Howe before he turned down the manager's job.

That prompted the arrival of the little-known Ange Postecoglou – and we all know how that turned out.

But I'm now getting the distinct impression I'm preaching to people who are unwilling to be converted.

One radio caller proved to me the usual suspects were being rounded up concerning the growing dismay over Celtic's lack of new faces.

The listener's suspicion was that Celtic chairman Peter Lawwell was a negative influence on the club's transfer dealings.

"His hand is on the tiller," said Peter's accuser.

This is supporter-speak for Lawwell having his hand around Celtic's throat and compressing it in a way likely to cause asphyxiation.

The chairman is, of course, one of those accused of helping cause the loss of 10-in-a-row, partly as a consequence of rancid recruitment.

His popularity rating is such that

the signing of Schmeichel on a free – while Celtic have untold millions in the bank and a share price at record levels – will be condemned as being consistent with Lawwell avoiding spending if he possibly can.

It would be an astonishing state of affairs if Rodgers had to start the new season with a squad that was weaker than the one that won a league and cup Double in the campaign before.

But, if O'Riley moves on, that would be the reality of the situation.

Assuming there are no hitches, Schmeichel will only balance up the existing squad, not strengthen it.

Likewise Paulo Bernardo if he completes the move from Benfica that upgrades him from loanee to permanent signing.

Quality and not quantity is the preference. Accepted.

Patience is a virtue in these matters. Understood.

But try telling that to fans with calendars showing a 50-day gap between the end of last season and the potential arrival of a keeper to

replace one who was the only viable choice in that position to begin with.

All of this is going on at the same time as Rangers manager Philippe Clement is telling his club's fans that a couple of their low-key summer signings are nowhere near ready for first-team football.

It's all about the optics.

Rangers have shed experienced players and gambled on those yet to prove they can handle playing here.

Celtic have reorganised their academy structure and made Darren O'Dea their professional player pathway manager.

Terrific guy, Darren – but there's hard work in front of him to provide a road ahead that's not obscured by a queue of players who aren't doing very much at all, other than getting in the way of the up-and-coming.

Rocco Vata turned down a new contract and went to Watford.

Daniel Kelly has been omitted from the squad heading to America on Tuesday because he refused a lucrative extension to his deal. The young clearly need to be incentivised.

The emphasis on Celtic's squad has to be about reducing numbers as well as filling some highly obvious gaps in terms of what the manager needs going forward.

Only Sead Haksabanovic, has been moved on in the last 50 days. It's not exactly life in the fast lane in the recruitment department, is it?

IT'S TIME FOR IBROX CHIEFS TO BE OPEN

THERE has been a culture of failure at Ibrox. One league title win in 13 years tells you that is not an exaggerated claim.

It is also the reason why some of those too often associated with a lack of success have now been moved on to other clubs.

And why so much emphasis will be placed on those who remain – like captain James Tavernier – to see if they can shake off the tag of being dismissed as serial losers.

An accusation that has come from Rangers supporters as well as a judgemental media.

All of that is for manager Philippe Clement and his backroom staff to sort out in the months ahead.

What the manager can't influence as much is the need for a culture of transparency at Ibrox.

The costly fiasco concerning the hold-up to rebuilding work at the stadium, necessitating the move to Hampden for an undetermined period, has been an embarrassment.

Worse than that is the suggestion the club have not kept displaced fans up to speed. Long gone are the days when clubs took the fans' money then treated them like second-class citizens thereafter.

Rangers were, remember, forced to withdraw from a tournament in which they would have played Celtic in Australia two years ago because the fans would not stand for being a support act at what they perceived to be an Ange Postecoglou tribute.

Throwaway terminology had that down as fan power – but it's more sophisticated than that.

A lot of indiscriminate mud slinging has gone on around the disruption caused to Rangers' league, cup and European commitments caused by the delay of a steel shipment from Asia.

It's right that Rangers should now come clean then tidy up the liaison between club and customer. The season ahead will be tough enough without internal disagreements becoming a distraction.

Chairman who earned respect

I WILL miss Geoff Brown, the outgoing owner of St Johnstone, as the club goes under new management.

Particularly his telephonic dismissal of myself back in the day.

I would call his house, give my name, and he would always say: "Who are you making trouble for now?"

It was all in good part, I think, and offered a reminder of the days when a journalist could phone a club chairman without falling foul of a PR Department, or being accused of harassment.

Happy retirement, mister chairman.

KEEVINS ON EURO FINAL: SEE PULLOUT P7



BY GORDON PARKS

CAMMY DEVLIN insists a first-team jersey scrap can help Hearts deliver his trophy dream and raise the bar on last season.

The Jambos squad returned from a week of warm weather fine-tuning in Tenerife on Friday and the Australian laid out his aims for the campaign ahead.

A positional switch and the battle to claim a starting spot under boss Steven Naismith are immediate concerns for the 26-year-old who has seen Blair Spittal, Yan Dhanda and James Penrice all arrive this summer.

He said: "When you are a club like Hearts, or any of the bigger clubs, you are never comfortable about being selected.

"That's how you raise your standards. Nobody can be complacent and never being comfortable should be the norm as it raises everything.

"If you perform in training then you put yourself forward to get a start – then it's down to you to keep that jersey.

"There are levels for us as a team that we want to hit and for me as an individual.

"Last season the team did well to establish ourselves in third place. This season we want to push as high as we can.

"We set ourselves goals as a team to finish with as many points as we can get.

"I've made no secret that winning a trophy with this club would be a special moment in my career.

"It's something the whole club and the fans are desperate for.

"We have so much to do and it's first about trying to emulate what we achieved last season – then try to better it.

"I want to keep improving as a player, to play more of a different role and a bit higher up the pitch than I've been used to in the past. I'll contribute as much as I can in that final third."

Devlin was handed a Socceros recall for World Cup qualifiers against Bangladesh and Palestine last month.

He came on from the bench in both matches before joining his club in Spain for a camp that he believes allowed the new additions to make an impact. He said: "It was obviously the plan

CAM & HAVE A GO

Devlin's setting out his targets that will make him shine for Jambos

of the coaches to get the recruitment work done as early as possible.

"It's allowed the new boys to integrate into the squad nice and early. They'll get used to a different style of play from what they were used to at their old clubs.

"It's not just about integrating with the boys who are already here but it allowed them to get used to what's a new environment for them and to get used to playing for a club the size and stature of Hearts.

"They have certainly brought a freshness into the group.

"The training camp in Spain was a great environment to be in. It was really hot and allowed the new boys to have an opportunity to gel in with the rest of the squad.

"It was a tough week and we had triple sessions most days but it was beneficial and a lot of fun at the same time.

"We didn't play any games just a practice match against each other as we had a lot of boys out there with us.

"There was a 60-minute game

with very few stoppages to allow us to work on the

tactical side.

"The coaches have been drilling in the ideas they want us to implement when the serious stuff starts and the aim was also to get our fitness levels up as quickly as possible."

Hearts will play a glamour friendly against Tottenham on Wednesday as Ange Postecoglou brings his side to Tynecastle (kick-off 7pm).

Devlin is relishing a reunion with the former Celtic gaffer. He said: "These are the games you want to play in. We'll face world-class players, guys you watch in the English Premier League every weekend.

"It will be super cool under the lights at Tynecastle and it will also be good to see Ange again."



NEW TERM, NEW CHALLENGE Devlin expects a battle for top-team places in the coming season and, below, Hearts' signing Yan Dhanda

I have Webb designs for McDiarmid

BY FRASER MACKIE

ADAM WEBB would love to build St Johnstone a new stadium but admits it's an unrealistic ambition.

The new Saints owner will instead concentrate on a revamp of the area around McDiarmid Park to boost the club and city.

Atlanta-based lawyer Webb has been in Perth for the past week kicking off an exciting era for the club.

Outgoing custodian Geoff Brown said recently that leaving McDiarmid was the next logical step for Saints.

But Webb cautioned: "If the city were to approve a glorious mixed-use development then we could sell all the real estate and build a training ground and stadium elsewhere – as well as potentially have money left over that would benefit the club for decades to come.

"That's one possibility. But it's what I would describe as 'pie in the sky' at this point.

"In the meantime, I think we should make use of the real estate to help the club.

"We are already brainstorming on those ideas."

Webb, who helped Cambridge United buy back their stadium and build a training facility after taking a 10 per cent stake four years ago, added: "If this club didn't have any real estate it would have sold for a lesser price.

"People were kicking the tyres and saying: 'I don't want to pay that much for a Scottish Premiership club'.

"For me, the real estate is a fantastic asset as we go forward. There are a huge range of possibilities.

"It's criminal for some of that real estate not to be utilised. There's prime acreage that should be utilised for the benefit of the community, the local economy and the club."

JAMBOS BRUM UP £1M FOR ACE ALEX

STEVEN NAISMITH has confirmed that Alex Cochrane is close to sealing an exit from Hearts – to join big-spending Birmingham City in a deal worth in excess of £1million.

Cochrane, who joined the Jambos from Brighton for around £400,000 two years ago after an initial loan, sat out their pre-season friendly loss to English League One side Orient in front of a 10,000 plus Tynecastle crowd.

And Hearts boss Naismith insists the deal is good business for his club and he isn't in a rush to replace Cochrane.

» HEARTS.....1
» LEYTON ORIENT.....2
BY STEPHEN HALLIDAY

Naismith said: "We have accepted a bid and that is something that will probably move quite quickly over the next three or four days.

"For us as a club it's an example of finding a talent, who has a drive to go as high as he can and maximise what he can do. Over the last three or four years he has worked really hard at that.

"He has got a year left on his contract

and it's a good deal for the club, one that Alex wants to take and everybody comes out of it well.

"We have progressed a player, we've made a profit and he is moving to a big club and one he wants to be at.

"We're not going to rush in and do anything at left-back. We've players who can play there like James Penrice, Stephen Kingsley and Kye Rowles."

The match was part of Hearts' 150th anniversary celebrations, marking the poignant historical link between two clubs whose players led the way in

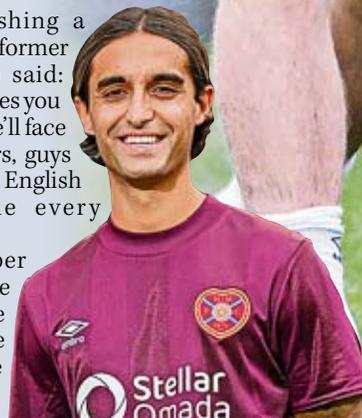
volunteering in the First World War.

An impressive travelling contingent of just over 1000 Orient fans enjoyed their day out but only after seeing their side fall behind in the ninth minute.

Trialist keeper Luca Ashby-Hammond miscued a clearance straight to Liam Boyce who pounced to slot home.

Orient equalised in the 24th minute when Jordan Brown was left unmarked to head home a Jordan Graham corner.

And former St Johnstone loanee Diallang Jaiyesimi fired home the winner just 20 seconds after the restart.



TASTE OF ORIENT Spittal and Dhanda in yesterday's friendly

HOME TRUTHS FOR CELTIC

Reo needs to prove himself at Hoops all over again

But Matt HAS to go if money's right

THE word 'if' is doing a lot of heavy lifting at Celtic right now when it comes to Matt O'Riley.

If Celtic manage to keep hold of the midfielder. If the Hoops can get big money for him.

If O'Riley does go, manager Brendan Rodgers will need to bring in a top-class replacement.

It's the wrong word, though. It should be 'when'.

There are some fans asking if Celtic need to sell their top asset given the club have so much cash in the bank.

But they are missing the point.

When the right money is on the table, O'Riley HAS to be sold.

The entire model of the club is built on selling these guys when the time is right. And few could argue the time is probably right for O'Riley.

In an ideal world, Celtic get these players in, they spend five years here then go for top dollar.

Football doesn't work like that. Players fall in and out of form, their star rises and dips. They can be flavour of the month at one point then on an all inclusive to Siberia the next.

You have to cash in when the chance arises then rely on the recruitment department to rinse and repeat.

It's the Celtic way. It's also how they attract players in the first place.

Celtic are not just a stepping stone to the big time, they're like a trampoline.

They can show players the likes of Virgil van Dijk, Victor Wanyama and right through to Moussa Dembele, Kieran Tierney, Stuart Armstrong, Odsonne Edouard and Kris Ajer.

You can't promise to get these guys to the next level then hold them back when their chance arrives.

Celtic learned it the hard way back during the failed 10-in-row bid.

They kept players on for one extra season and it cost them the league and knocked a few quid off their value.

It also happened during Rodgers' first reign when Celtic knocked back £9million for Dedryck Boyata.

They should have taken Fulham's money and ran laughing straight to the bank before they realised the big man could cause irregular heartbeats.

Instead he left for nothing the

» **MICHAEL GANNON**

following summer. That's not going to happen with O'Riley. But if Atalanta or anyone else in Europe's big five leagues want to stump up a record fee for the midfielder, then it's time to shake hands and wish him all the best.

It's a slightly different story with Reo Hatate. There's a sense he's been keen to step up a level for a while and it wouldn't have been a major shock if he had gone last summer.

But injuries set him back last term and his options are unlikely to be as appealing this time around.

He should run a mile from talk of interest in Russia. Hatate looks made to play in the English Premier League – where he can make himself some major dough.

But he'll need to prove himself all over again in a Celtic jersey this season.

Hatate is a player – but he's not the finished article yet.

There were signs at the end of the season he was hearing the message from Rodgers, who wanted more discipline to his play than the slightly harum-scarum style under Ange Postecoglou.

Rodgers is happy to let Hatate play the Hollywood balls – but not if it leaves half his team stranded with their drawers around their ankles.

EPL bosses certainly won't put up with that kind of stuff either as the level of punishment down there is far more severe than in Scotland. Hatate should tell his agent to back off until January, get his head down and do the business, especially in the Champions League.

The big move will come, even if it's 12 months after O'Riley's.

The prospect of losing both probably sends shivers up a few Celtic spines.

But it shouldn't. This is how the club is run and the trick is keeping the conveyor belt rolling.

And despite a low-key summer so far, that's not another 'if' – it has to be 'when' it gets rolling.

KEEP IT REO
Hatate needs to regain the capital that made him such hot property last summer



BACKING THE BOSS Rice

Boss staying would be a Rice boost for England

FROM BACK PAGE

stages. But the pressure is now on the FA to convince him to stay after Arsenal star Rice confirmed that the whole squad wants him to have another crack at conquering the world in Canada, Mexico and the United States in 2026.

Southgate said: "The way my emotions have gone over the last five weeks, it would be ridiculous for me to think beyond the Spain game.

"We've got time to make decisions – and I won't need weeks – but also I think I've earned the right to give myself a few days to think it through.

"I know where it would have been if we went out in the group stage, that's for sure. I have a pretty good idea in my head. I don't think that would have been my choice."

But Rice has left the manager and his FA bosses in no doubt about where the players' loyalties lie.

Rice said: "This journey he has been on has been so special – and hopefully we can do something special for Gareth on Sunday.

"I know for a fact, the lads would love him to stay on until 2026, there's no doubt.

"The way he looks after us, how calm he is, how he is as a man-manager, how he is on the training pitch. He's top.

"None of us have spoken to him about it. I'm sure he'll make the right decision but he's got the backing of us all."

Southgate has helped young stars like Kobbie Mainoo and Marc Guehi come of age during the campaign in Germany.

And with stars like Phil Foden, Jude Bellingham, and Bukayo Saka still years away from their peak, he knows the team is likely to get even better.

Southgate said: "When you look at the team's age profile, there are lots of players who will be there for a long time.

"The World Cup, the next Euros. But that doesn't mean that it is just going to happen.

"There is potential, without a doubt. The team is not at the end of a cycle."



“Rodgers is happy to let Hatate play Hollywood balls... but not if it leaves team stranded

CELTIC'S BOSS WANTS MORE DISCIPLINE TO STAR'S PLAY

BUILD UP TO FINAL IS INSIDE
SEE 8-PAGE PULLOUT

Barisic insists he had his pick of clubs after Ibrox exit but joining Trabzonspor was easy decision

BORNA BARISIC revealed he turned down offers from a host of top European clubs to leave Rangers and sign for Trabzonspor.

The former Ibrox full-back joined up with the Turkish side this summer, along with Rangers colleague John Lundstram, after six years in Glasgow.

And, in his first interview since leaving Gers, the Croatian, 31 – who made 236 appearances for Rangers – insisted he had plenty of choices after he decided to quit Ibrox.

He said: "I received other offers from many clubs in Europe but

BY MARK WALKER

Trabzonspor's attempts to convince me to sign were very impressive.

"After hearing about Trabzonspor's interest in me, I spoke to the manager. In the process that followed, the agreement was completed in a couple of days.

"Our meetings progressed very quickly. It was an easy decision. I spoke to my friends and they all said very positive things about Trabzonspor.

"I must say I think I have adapted quickly. My team-mates and

everyone have been very helpful. We are getting better match by match.

"We are on the right track and are enjoying the pre-season preparation.

"My priority is, of course, defence but the expectations of modern football are to contribute to the attack as well.

"The manager has high expectations from his full-backs. I will contribute to the attack and help the players up front.

"But the place for players to do their talking is on the pitch.

"I will try to do my best and am delighted to be here."



CELTIC

DAN-GER ZONE Aidan has warned Daniel Kelly, right, that quitting Celtic may not be best move



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CRABBIT KASPER HATED TO

TAM SCOBIE insists Kasper Schmeichel will bring instant respect to Celtic's backline and a voice of authority to fill the void left by Joe Hart's retirement.

The Berwick Rangers boss was on the receiving end of the Dane's wrath during a spell together at Falkirk in 2007.

Schmeichel is expected to seal a deal with the Hoops in the coming days as the EPL winner with Leicester moves on a free transfer from Anderlecht.

Scobie is adamant the 37-year-old

BY GORDON PARKS

will keep his new team-mates on their toes after sizing him up while he was on loan in Scotland from Manchester City.

He said: "Kasper expected a high standard and made sure the boys in front of him at Falkirk did their jobs.

"If you didn't do that, he'd be first to make you aware of it.

"He wanted to win whether that was in games or training and if he had any goals scored against him in shooting

GROWING PAINS

EXCLUSIVE

BY GORDON PARKS

AIDAN NESBITT went from next big thing at Celtic to lost Bhoys and has a cautionary tale that the grass isn't always greener somewhere else.

The Falkirk midfielder has watched Rocco Vata turn up his nose at a new deal with the Hoops before leaving for Watford.

And this week boss Brendan Rodgers binned Daniel Kelly from his pre-season plans after the youngster rejected a new contract.

After insisting the lure of life-changing money from English and European clubs is a head turner for any teenager, former Parkhead prodigy Nesbitt insists 18-year-old Kelly is at a huge career crossroad which can cut both ways.

He said: "Key decisions which are taken on the future of young players can definitely become crossroads and gambles which can have huge impacts on careers.

"I'm at the stage where I realise the potential I had as a young Celtic player and where I am now.

"I am happy where I am as a 27-year-old and feeling a part of something again. That was something I lost a bit when I left Celtic.

"There are so many factors which can make trying to reach your potential all the more difficult.

"Young players who opt to leave can find themselves in a completely new environment and things may not click for them as it had at Celtic.

"It might be the wrong club at the wrong time, the club may not be in the best place or it may be the wrong move for the individual.

"There will be numerous hurdles and challenges which will arise.

"Daniel Kelly is the player being talked about at Celtic and nobody knows what goes on behind closed doors. But if there is a lot of potential there, then I'm sure Brendan Rodgers is the type of manager who could make him excel and progress."

Nesbitt's post-Celtic career has seen service at the likes of Morton, MK Dons and Partick Thistle before signing for the Bairns and playing a key role in their return to the Championship last season.

And he admits cash can be king when an agent gets into the ear of a young footballer.

He said: "Agents are there to look after the best interests of the player and also to look at the bigger picture,

I did everything right to be a success at Celtic but within two years I walked away from only thing I'd known since I was 8

SAYS EX-CELTIC STARLET AIDAN NESBITT

but let's be honest, it all comes down to money and the finer things such as playing football where you're most comfortable or best placed to learn aren't always the primary concern.

"Where you are best placed to progress in the long term gives way to where you can make a quick buck 90 per cent of the time.

"If huge clubs from down south or abroad come calling then it can be difficult to resist that and I see the pros and cons.

"I know what agents will be saying to players but without being specific, players can get injured, a variety of different things can happen in a footballer's career which can lead to a player looking back and saying

they should have taken the money. There are pros and cons for both staying at a club or leaving as a youngster but the grass isn't always greener.

"Young players want to live in big cities like London and are even willing to move to clubs in Germany and Italy.

"There are so many different factors in any decision for these kids. "Celtic is the best place to progress if you're a technical player."

If Kelly follows Vata out of the Parkhead exit door after making five appearances in the last campaign, then Nesbitt admits it'll be a leap of faith with no guarantees.

He said: "It's certainly not easy to

leave a club like Celtic. When I was 18-years-old I had scored a hat-trick in the Youth Champions League, scored a hat-trick in a Youth Cup Final and felt I was doing everything right in terms of being a young footballer.

"Two years later I was parting ways from the only thing I had known since I was eight so that was especially difficult for me.

"For the first couple of years after I left I admit I felt a bit lost.

"I've played over 250 professional games but I can always say that I did play once for Celtic's first team, so to do that even once was such an achievement for myself."



THE ONE AND ONLY Nesbitt saults fans after sole appearance in Celtic first team

LOSE.. HE'D RAGE IF WE DIDN'T MEET HIS STANDARDS

drills you could see his anger. He raised the bar and made sure you were on it.

"That was the maturity he had at such a young age and it's a huge factor why he went on to have an unbelievable career.

"He was a typically crabby keeper – he liked to give out a wee bit of stick if you didn't do something right.

"Let's just say it would take a lot to get a "congratulations" out of him as he just expected you to do the basics well.

"He was a good kid and was great for

Falkirk. It will be a great business for Celtic if he signs and he'll more than fill the gap of Hart leaving."

Scobbie admits Schmeichel's ability was crystal clear at the Bairns.

He said: "From the minute Kasper arrived at Falkirk it was clear he would go on to play at the highest level.

"His ability to make incredible saves was similar to his dad Peter.

"He was just an all-round professional in everything he did and he had a burning

determination to make it to the top. He had an air of confidence. He knew he was a good keeper and you need that as a footballer, without being arrogant.

"And he's carried that through his career and he's achieved so much.

"He's been an English title winner, captain for his country, so it's won't faze him going into Celtic's dressing room.

"The squad will give him automatic respect given his fantastic career."

Scobbie is also convinced age should

be no barrier for Schmeichel.

He said: "There is no doubt he is capable of coming in to Celtic and doing a job even at 37 years – we all saw that by his performances for Denmark at the Euros.

"He's looked after himself so I don't see any problem.

"He's not had many injuries in his career so he'll be in tip-top shape with three or four years at least left in him."



BAIRN DANCE Kasp while on Falkirk loan



RANGERS

Gers need quality

Defeat underlines the glaring truth that gaffer Clement's talent pool's too shallow for comfort

IT WAS a defeat to Ajax that spelled the beginning of the end for Gio van Bronckhorst at Ibrox.

The loss suffered in yesterday's pre-season bounce game against the Dutch giants is unlikely to set off such a disastrous chain of events for Philippe Clement and his Rangers reign.

But there could be some grim days ahead for the Light Blues if they do not arm their Belgian boss with the quality he's so clearly lacking.

Ajax couldn't quite repeat the four-goal Champions League beating they dished out to Van Bronckhorst's side in Amsterdam back in September 2022.

But that was mostly down to Jack Butland and Liam Kelly pulling off a string of impressive stops either side of half-time.

It wasn't a flawless show from Butland, however as he allowed Branco van der Boomen's free-kick to slide under his body for Ajax to retake the lead before half-time.

He wasn't the only with a red face, though as the local ref's bizarre decision to allow Ajax to take a free-kick before Connor Goldson could resume his position after a telling-off, led to Kian Fitz-Jim opening the scoring.

Tom Lawrence's set-piece special soon after briefly levelled it up, but there's no doubt Clement's side remains well short on fire power.

» **AJAX.....2 RANGERS.....1**

ANDY NEWPORT IN ZWOLLE

Danilo made his return after seven months out with 15 minutes left.

That will come as a major relief to those who saw Cyriel Dessers lumber his way through another hopeless hour-long run-out.

Lawrence and new signing Connor Barron – on for Nico Raskin when the Belgian limped off just before half-time – also offered some scope for enthusiasm with their lively showings.

But Rangers remain well short of the attacking threat they will need if they're to get close to Celtic this season.

Barron, though, is already feeling at home. The former Aberdeen midfielder said after his run out: "It was brilliant.

"It has been a busy week. Pre-season, first and foremost, is about getting the fitness in, and after that it's about implementing the gaffer's ideas.

"We've got more big games coming up and it's about testing ourselves against this kind of opposition.

"The performances will keep coming. We'll make sure we're ready for the start of the season."

Brazilian left-back Jefte was the sole fresh face in from the kick-off, while Dujon Sterling made his first appearance of pre-season at right-

back. That meant there was again no place for skipper James Tavernier, who along with Todd Cantwell was conspicuous by his absence from the team sheet.

The Light Blues could have been three down inside 15 minutes but for Butland and some dodgy Dutch finishing.

Goldson was struggling to keep tabs on Chuba Akpom but wasn't given the chance to help out his side at Ajax's controversial 27th-minute opener.

Butland raced desperately from his line as Ajax took a quick free-kick, wiping out Kenneth Taylor.

But before the hosts could appeal for a penalty, Fitz-Jim slotted the loose ball into the empty net.

Clement was furious with the decision but his mood was soon lifted as Lawrence rifled home a free-kick after Rabbi Matondo was felled outside the box.

Ajax keeper Diant Ramaj hadn't covered himself in glory then, but neither did Butland as he allowed the Amsterdam side to retake the lead seven minutes later.



BLUE BARRON Connor warms up before run out

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DUTCH LESSON FOR LIGHT BLUES

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LAW IN ORDER
Tom Lawrence is hailed by jubilant team-mates after his free-kick strike hauled Rangers level against Ajax



INJURY SCARE
Raskin

Clement's Raskin for a clean bill of health ahead of new season starting

PHILIPPE CLEMENT was last night hit with a fresh fitness sweat after Nico Raskin left Rangers' clash with Ajax on crutches.

The Belgian ace lasted just 43 minutes of the pre-season warm-up clash before being laid low with a twisted ankle.

This injury scare is the last thing Clement needs after last term's never-ending casualty concerns.

And he's been left worrying again just three games into his team's summer schedule.

Asked for an update on the midfielder, Clement said: "We don't know yet. It's too early to say but he twisted his ankle."

"I hope it's not too bad because for him it's important to have this match preparation."

"Like it is for everybody, we want to keep all the squad fit so they can do these six weeks together and have a good base for the rest of the season."

Skipper James Tavernier and Todd Cantwell both missed yesterday's 2-1 defeat to the Dutch giants having also sat out Wednesday's goalless draw against Standard Liege.

That set off rumours about both men edging towards the exit but Clement insists both are nursing knocks. He said: "James

BY **ANDY NEWPORT**

has a small injury. It's nothing big. But it's too much for him to train with the squad at the moment.

"We expect him back next week, depending how it evolves."

"Everyday it's better but he's disappointed that he couldn't train with the team. He's been a little bit down because he loves football."

"He enjoys working with the ball, more than he does doing all these exercises or running laps round the pitch alone."

"It's not a nice time so he wants to be back as soon as possible."

"Todd is also not ready so we will see in the next couple of weeks. It's a small thing with him."

Ajax won the game in Wezep after a controversial opener from a quickly-taken free-kick.

Jack Butland's mistake allowed the Amsterdam outfit to retake their lead through Branco van der Boomen's set-piece after Tom Lawrence had briefly drawn Gers level with his own free-kick strike.

Clement was encouraged by the Welshman's display, saying: "He made a good impression after all the injuries he's had over the last couple of seasons."

"We want to keep him fit. It will be the first time in a long time that he's had a pre-season like this."

I HAVE TO SELL BEFORE I BUY

FROM BACK PAGE

if his Rangers side are to mount a credible Premiership title bid and fulfil their Champions League ambitions.

Further additions, however, are dependent on the club raising funds through sales.

Clement said: "That's the reality. That's the reality that the board told me a few months ago."

"I know this, the recruitment team knows this also. This is the reality of the club."

"I had other expectations when I came in in October, I have to say."

"But I know the reality now. I am very motivated to build the club and help in that."

Clement has so far focused on adding a youthful flavour to his team, bringing in 20-year-olds Jefe and Clinton Nsiala along with Connor Barron and Hamza Igamane, who are both 21.

Liam Kelly at 28 is the only experienced recruit so far but his role will be to provide back-up to Rangers' undisputed first-choice goalkeeper Jack Butland.

The pressure is on to bring in more established figures to fill first-team slots but the Light Blues boss believes having a balanced approach to building his squad will pay dividends in the long run.

Clement said: "It's focusing not only on the short term but also on the long term."

"If I only looked at the short term I would only bring in experienced players who can do the job directly."

"Mistakes like that have been made too much in the past and at the end you don't reach your goals."

"You need a different philosophy and that's what we are all working towards."

"This is a massive rebuilding job, it is true."

"Maybe some people would run away from that but having been seven months in Glasgow, in this city, in the stadium, in the club, I have to say this club already took a big part of my heart in that way."

"I am really confident that we can work in stability the next months, the next years, that we can make a lot of things better in the club."

"We have been busy with that also."

"We have been changing staff in the medical department, in the performance department."

"It is all over the club that everybody is working really hard to make things better."

"At the end it will benefit the cause of growing as a club."

ENGLAND WEAR WHITE



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SUNDAY, JULY 14, 2024

IN FOCUS
MacIntyre
is in the
hunt for
glory

SCOTTISH
OPEN



BOB: IT'S COMING HOME FOR ME

BOB MACINTYRE is adamant he won't shy away from his bid to bring golf home. The Oban ace has a huge chance of glory at the Genesis Scottish Open after a superb

BY CRAIG SWAN

63 on Saturday put him just two off leader Ludvig Aberg in second at The Renaissance. The 27-year-old has put
TURN TO PAGE 48



RANGERS IN THE NETHERLANDS

I'LL NEED TO SELL BEFORE I CAN BUY



BIG DECISIONS Southgate

Take us to next World Cup gaffer

BY SIMON MULLOCK

GARETH SOUTHGATE has revealed he hasn't made a decision about his England future – after Declan Rice urged his boss to lead them to the next World Cup.

Southgate, who is out of contract in December, insists he will announce his plans after the Euro 2024 final against Spain.

The 53-year-old admitted he would have been sacked if England had gone out of the tournament in the group

TURN TO PAGE 59



FREE INSIDE: 8-PAGE EUROS PULLOUT

Clement admits Gers must move on some of their big names to fund a squad rebuild

BY ANDY NEWPORT IN THE NETHERLANDS

PHILIPPE CLEMENT admits he'll have to offload some of his first-team stars before he can press ahead with his Rangers rebuild.

The Belgian boss has so far brought in five new faces this summer.

But he knows a lot more are needed

TURN TO PAGE 63



NEW WOE
Clement consoles injured Nicolas Raskin

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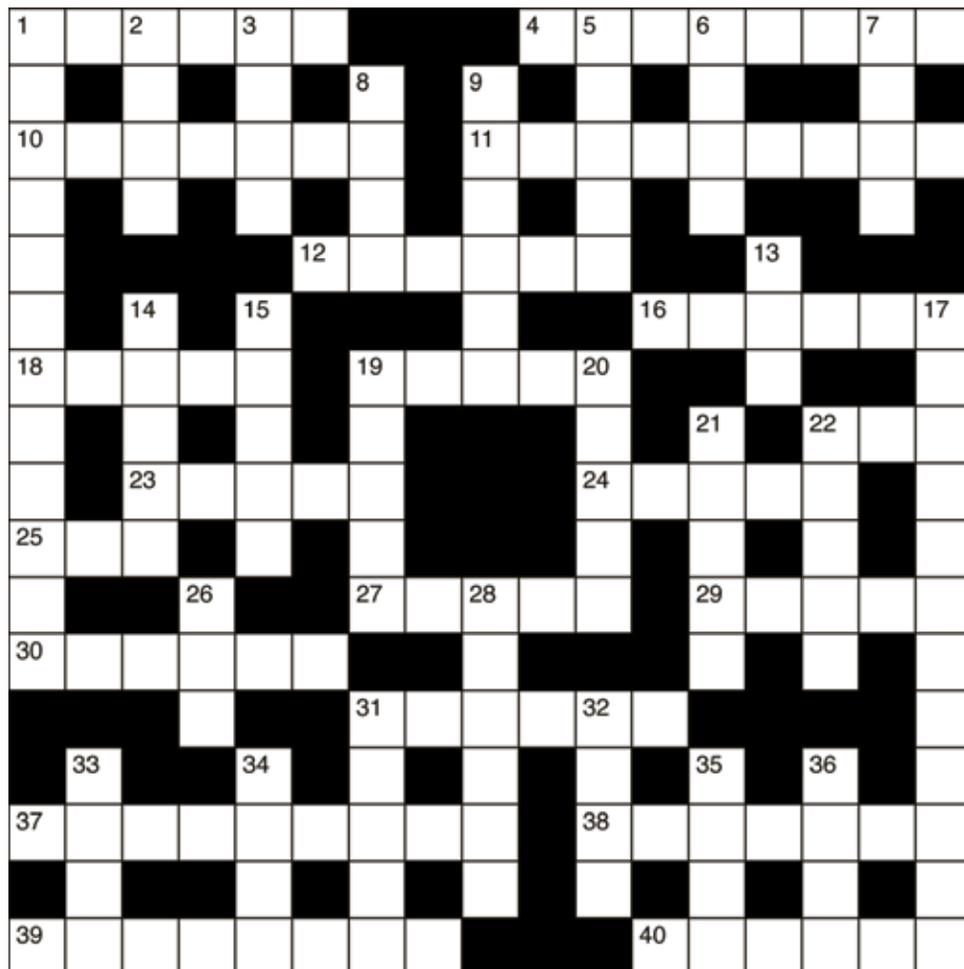
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★★★★

PUZZLES EXTRA

ENTERTAINMENT CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1 & 4 Across Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? host (6,8)
- 4 See 1 Across
- 10 Ally McBeal star who is married to Harrison Ford, _ Flockhart (7)
- 11 Lost actress who appeared in The Fast And The Furious, Michelle _ (9)
- 12 Welsh presenter and who formerly co-hosted Blue Peter, _ Jones (6)
- 16 Meryl _, star of The Devil Wears Prada and Mamma Mia! (6)
- 18 Alexandra _, won the fifth series of The X-Factor (5)
- 19 Jamie _, plays Warren Fox in Hollyoaks (5)
- 22 Muhammad _, boxer who was World Heavyweight Champion three times (3)
- 23 Kim Woodburn's former cleaning partner, _ Mackenzie (5)
- 24 _ DeGeneres, US talk show host (5)
- 25 Veteran rock star, _ Stewart (3)
- 27 Disenchanted actress, Amy _ (5)
- 29 Gladiator actor, Russell _ (5)
- 30 Famously teetotal actor who played a drunk in Withnail & I, Richard _ (1,5)
- 31 British actress who appeared in Atonement and Little Voice, _ Blethyn (6)
- 37 Actress and talk show host, Drew _ (9)
- 38 Businesswoman and former model, _ Mills (7)
- 39 Former UN Goodwill Ambassador and Oscar-winning movie star, _ Jolie (8)
- 40 American actress who starred opposite Nicolas Cage in Willy's Wonderland, _ Cowan (6)

DOWN

- 1 Sharon and Ozzy's self-confessed Adrenaline Junkie son (4,8)
- 2 British actress who has featured in Coronation Street, _ Lenska (4)
- 3 English supermodel, Kate _ (4)
- 5 John _, real name of Johnny Rotten (5)
- 6 Tara _, Sharknado actress (4)
- 7 Jennifer Aniston's Marley & Me co-star, _ Wilson (4)
- 8 _ Hudson, Something Borrowed actress (4)
- 9 Irish chat show host, _ Norton (6)
- 13 Well-spoken TV host, Stephen _ (3)
- 14 Former test cricketer married to Mollie King of The Saturdays, Stuart _ (5)
- 15 Comedian who created Keith Lemon, _ Francis (5)
- 17 Eldest child of the Prince of Wales and Princess of Wales (6,6)
- 19 Futurama character voiced by Katey Sagal, Turanga_ (5)
- 20 Pop band featuring Lisa Scott-Lee (5)
- 21 Gulliver's Travels star, Jack _ (5)
- 22 _ du Beke, Strictly dancer/judge (5)
- 26 Tess Daly's TV-presenting husband, Vernon _ (3)
- 28 Comedian, _ Sayle (6)
- 31 Former Prime Minister, Gordon _ (5)
- 32 Sophie _, model-turned-food writer (4)
- 33 8 Down's Hollywood colleague and mum, Goldie _ (4)
- 34 Meera _, comedian and author (4)
- 35 Ms Palmer-Tomkinson, late socialite and concert pianist (4)
- 36 "In the Air Tonight" hitmaker, _ Collins (4)

CODEWORD

The number in each square corresponds to a letter. Work out the words in the grid using the letters provided. Fill in these known letters first, then use skill and judgement to work out the others.

1

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EASY SUDOKU 2

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FUTOSHIKI 1

Insert the numbers one to five in each row and each column, making sure that no number is repeated. The only symbols to guide you are the "greater than" (>) and "less than" (<) signs.

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FUTOSHIKI 2

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HARD SUDOKU 2

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KILLER SUDOKU 1

Each row and column hold the numbers 1 to 9 and the numbers in the cages must add to the given total. No number can be repeated in a cage.

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KILLER SUDOKU 2

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ALPHADOKU 2

A 9 x 9 sudoku with the letters R to Z.

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KAKURO 1

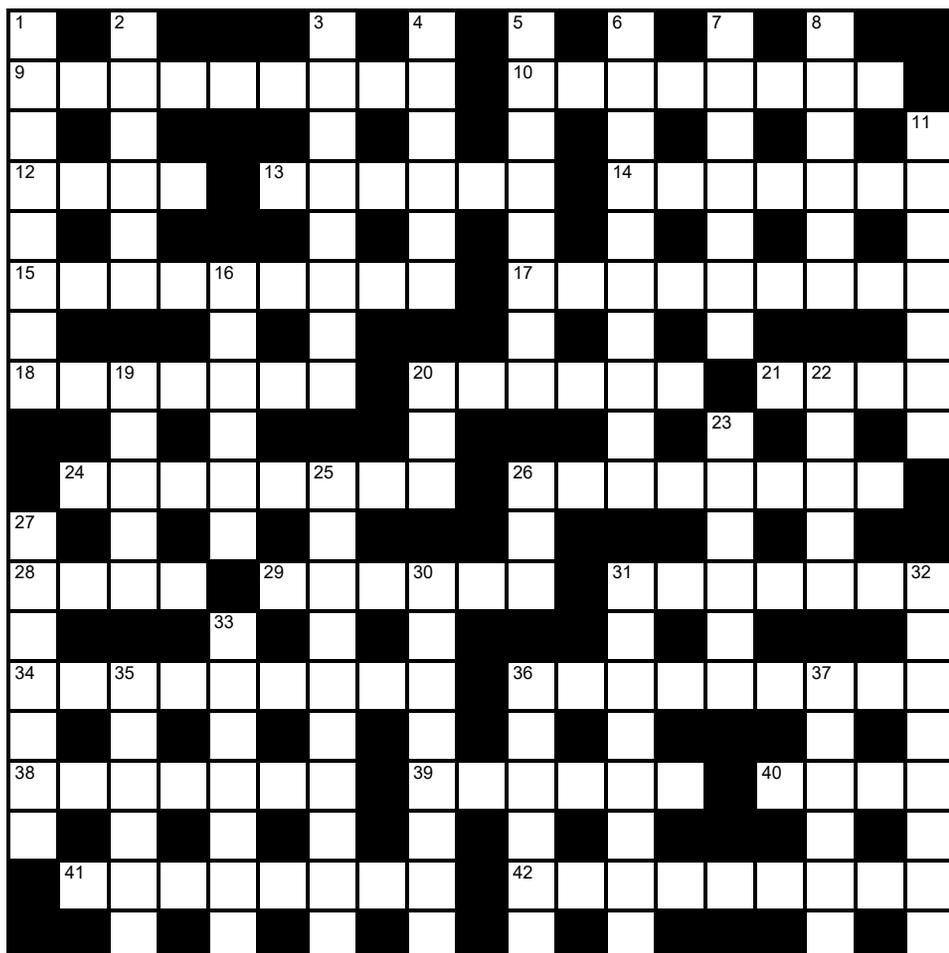
Fill in each series of blank squares using the numbers 1 to 9. Each series – across and down – must add up to the number in the shaded box at the beginning or top of the series. A number may be repeated in each line but not in a series.

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BIG CROSSWORD 1



ACROSS

- 9 Maybe (9)
- 10 Farm vehicles (8)
- 12 Genuine (4)
- 13 Prior to (6)
- 14 Middle East inhabitant (7)
- 15 Abnormal (9)
- 17 Plundered (9)
- 18 Lured (7)
- 20 Last (6)
- 21 Smile (4)
- 24 Potent (8)
- 26 Glade (8)
- 28 Solemn promise (4)
- 29 Brawl (6)
- 31 Regains (7)
- 34 Crude oil (9)
- 36 Deadlock (9)
- 38 Doubter (7)

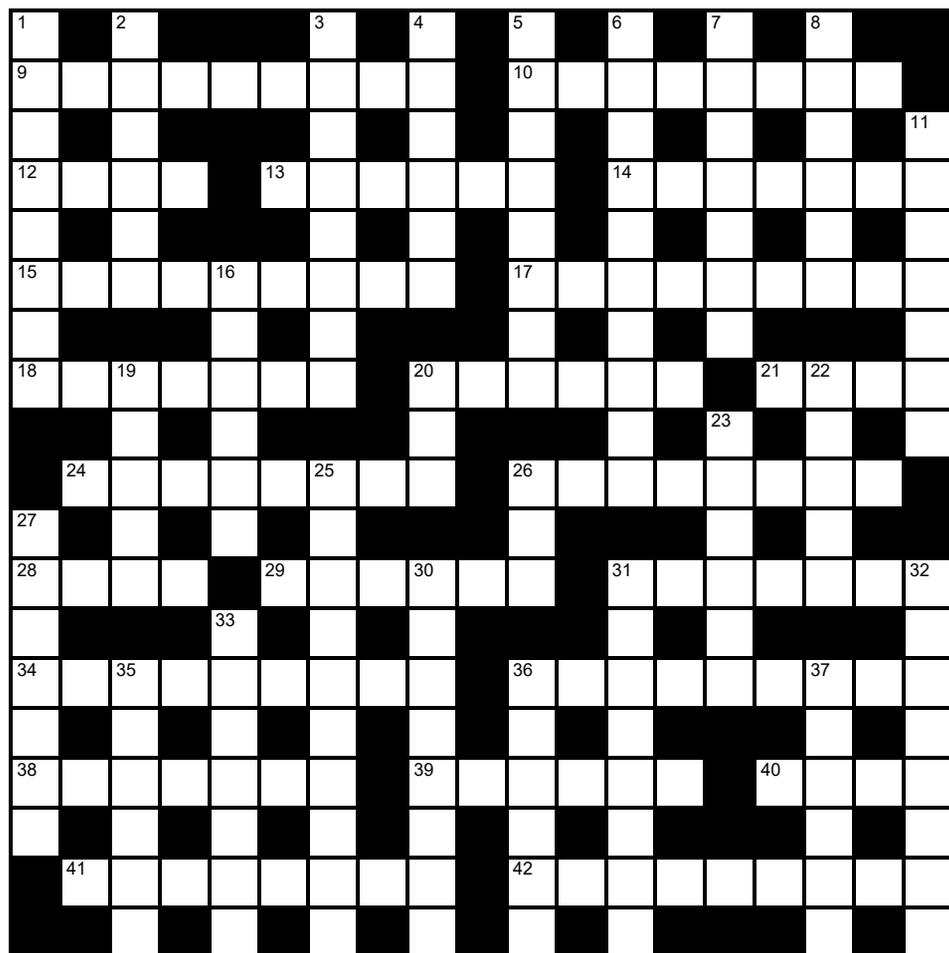
DOWN

- 1 Opening (8)
- 2 Consecrate as a priest (6)
- 3 Deduced (8)
- 4 Draw back (6)
- 5 Was present at (8)
- 6 Pastry shop (10)
- 7 Celebrity (7)
- 8 Trial (6)
- 11 Tying (7)
- 16 Travel voucher (6)
- 19 Game fish (5)
- 20 Slippery fish (3)
- 22 Wash (5)

ACROSS

- 23 Span (6)
- 25 Unlikely (3-7)
- 26 Lettuce (3)
- 27 Write music (7)
- 30 Consist of (8)
- 31 Argued (8)
- 32 Embarrassed (8)
- 33 Happy (7)
- 35 Slight earthquake (6)
- 36 Zone (6)
- 37 For a brief period (6)

BIG CROSSWORD 2



ACROSS

- 9 Dog (2,7)
- 10 Ocean (8)
- 12 Tip (4)
- 13 Hound (6)
- 14 Birds (7)
- 15 Position (9)
- 17 Bleak (9)
- 18 Tell (7)
- 20 Oscillate (6)
- 21 Boast (4)
- 24 Gather (8)
- 26 Valuable (8)
- 28 Tree (4)
- 29 Involve (6)
- 31 Hide (7)
- 34 Repeat (9)
- 36 p.m. (9)
- 38 Quite high (7)

DOWN

- 1 Killer (8)
- 2 Missing (6)
- 3 Heaven (8)
- 4 Inventor (6)
- 5 Fragment (8)
- 6 Nevertheless (3,3,4)
- 7 To come (2,5)
- 8 Split (6)
- 11 Errand (7)
- 16 Arouse (6)
- 19 Got up (5)
- 20 Understand (3)
- 22 Way (5)

DOWN

- 23 Meal (6)
- 25 Infra dig (7,3)
- 26 Chum (3)
- 27 Morale (7)
- 30 Opening (8)
- 31 Waterfall (8)
- 32 Lotion (8)
- 33 Blessing (7)
- 35 Fortunate (2,4)
- 36 Recommend (6)
- 37 Uproar (6)

TWO-SPEED CROSSWORD

This two-speed crossword has two sets of clues, but just one grid

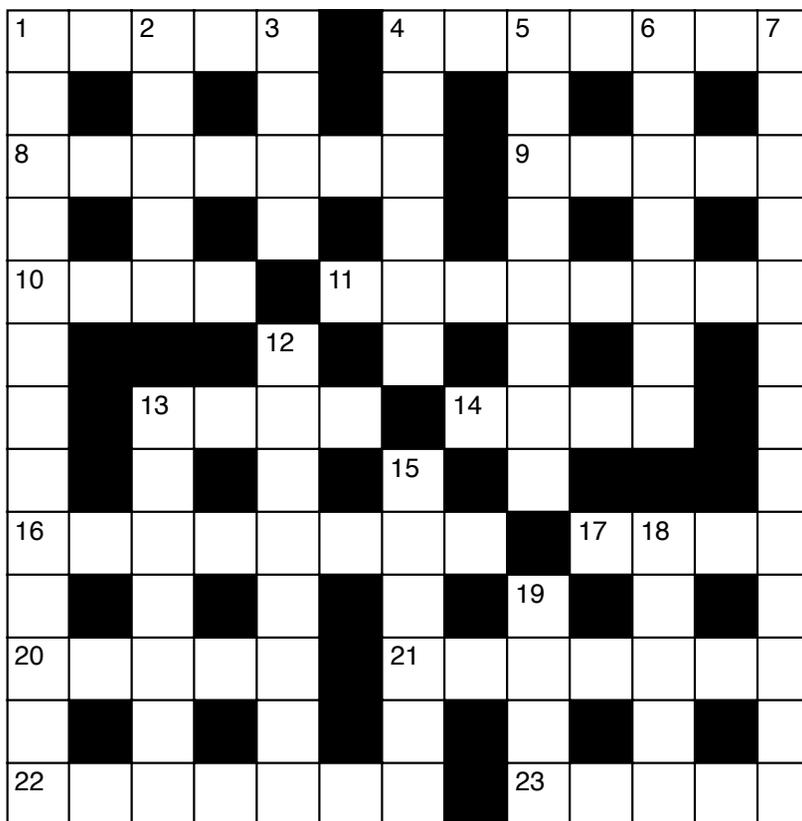
CRYPTIC CLUES

ACROSS

- 1. Neck doctor needs it to write with (5)
- 4. Lodger goes on ship in action? (7)
- 8. Hardy got sunburn after fight (7)
- 9. Just the girl for the excursion (5)
- 10. Cultural activities aren't without guile! (4)
- 11. I dally, so am undutiful (8)
- 13. Such clothing must fit! (4)
- 14. Gardeners dislike it, though it's mostly small (4)
- 16. Domineer because of animal (8)
- 17. Part of leg of animal, perhaps (4)
- 20. Colour of bream unusual (5)
- 21. Note brood of animals really shine (7)
- 22. Immoderate in sex? Tremendously! (7)
- 23. Big enough to have regal possibilities (5)

DOWN

- 1. Cool, but is emotion in date (13)
- 2. Paint is not suitable (5)
- 3. It flies in a flock; it excites young (4)
- 4. Orchestra puts it on for outlaw (6)
- 5. Sailor found the answer and was acquitted (8)
- 6. Held up non-professional indeed! (7)
- 7. Service demonstrates the efficacy of regal bearing (5,3,5)
- 12. Bus rides cause one to pay out (8)
- 13. Lady Redhead has a wager for a dip (7)
- 15. Mutilate many fish (6)
- 18. Later being further to the back? (5)
- 19. It could be owing on a bird (4)



QUICK CLUES

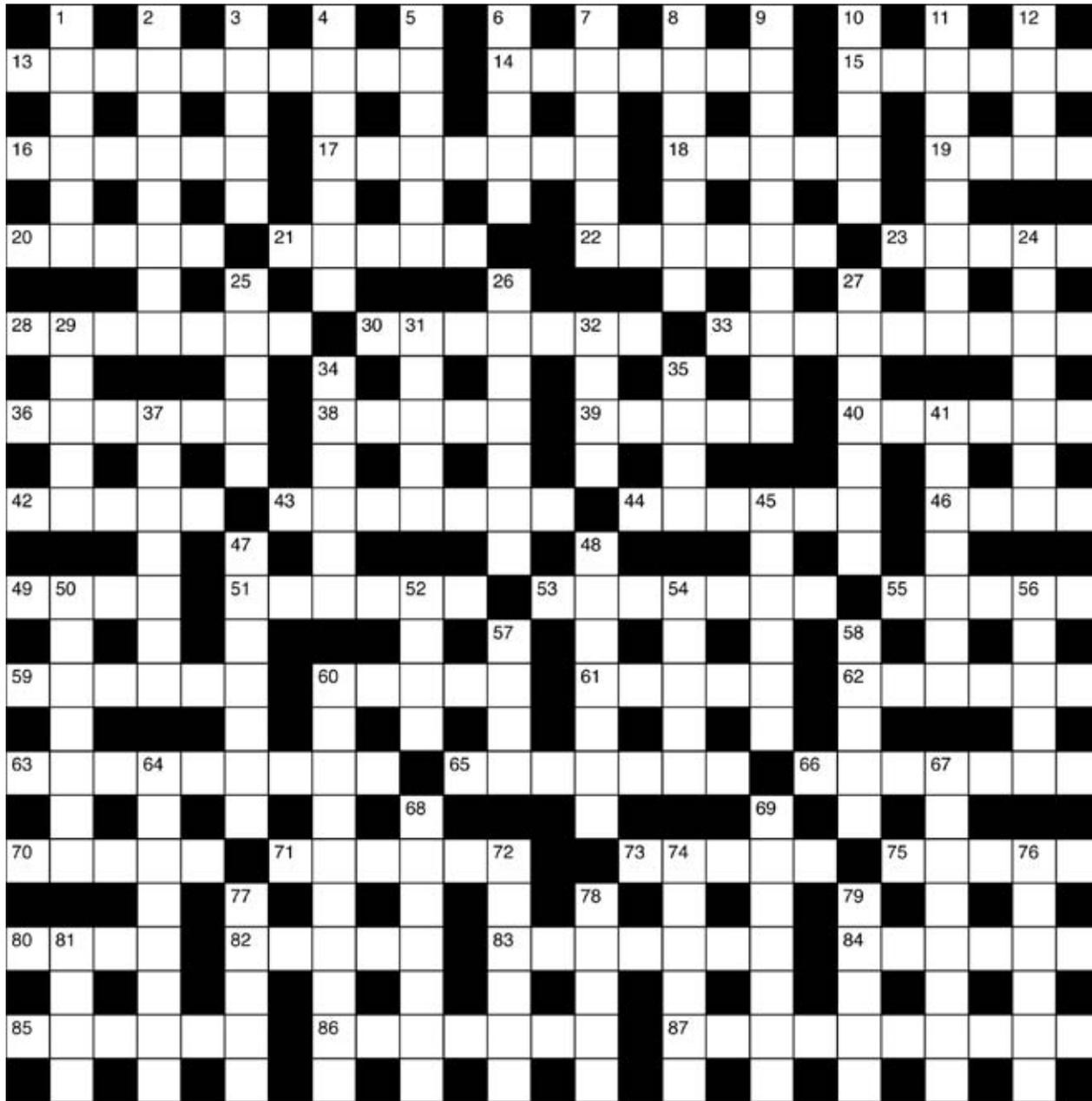
ACROSS

- 1. Beverage (5)
- 4. Lodger (7)
- 8. Austere (7)
- 9. Retort (5)
- 10. Creative activities (4)
- 11. Unfaithful (8)
- 13. Be appropriate (4)
- 14. Wild plant (4)
- 16. Dominate (8)
- 17. Young cow (4)
- 20. Fossil resin (5)
- 21. Sparkle (7)
- 22. Drastic (7)
- 23. Huge (5)

DOWN

- 1. Objective (13)
- 2. Inappropriate (5)
- 3. Bird of prey (4)
- 4. Robber (6)
- 5. Pardoned (8)
- 6. Deferred (7)
- 7. Military organisation (5,3,5)
- 12. Pay out (8)
- 13. Fizzy powder (7)
- 15. Disfigure (6)
- 18. Following (5)
- 19. Beak (4)

JUMBO CROSSWORD



DOWN

- 1. Rush (6)
- 2. Thinks (8)
- 3. Glower (5)
- 4. Continuing (5,2)
- 5. Inviting (6)
- 6. Bright (5)
- 7. Minor (6)
- 8. Caught (7)
- 9. Diaphanous (3-7)
- 10. Inert (5)
- 11. Telltale (8)
- 12. Had been (4)
- 24. Against (7)
- 25. Denoted (5)
- 26. Serious (7)
- 27. Began (7)
- 29. Strand (5)
- 31. Robber (5)
- 32. Gaze (4)
- 34. Gets on (6)
- 35. Passenger (4)
- 37. Includes (5,2)
- 41. Barge (7)
- 45. Dessert (6)
- 47. Suppose (7)
- 48. Fate (7)
- 50. One more (7)
- 52. Miserly (4)
- 54. Find (5)
- 56. Pursue (5)
- 57. Joist (4)
- 58. Kiosk (5)
- 60. Also (2,8)
- 64. Lethargic (8)
- 67. Dagger (8)
- 68. Complaint (7)
- 69. Draw (7)
- 72. Arid area (8)
- 74. Very numerous (6)
- 76. Yarn (6)
- 77. Game (5)
- 78. Intended (5)
- 79. Prevents (5)
- 81. Light (4)

ACROSS

- 13. Discovered (4,6)
- 14. Infamy (3,4)
- 15. Offer (6)
- 16. Notice (6)
- 17. Catching (7)
- 18. Whole (5)
- 19. Finished (4)
- 20. Go by car (5)
- 21. Do without (5)
- 22. Inn (6)
- 23. Boat (5)
- 28. Humiliated (7)
- 30. Odd (7)
- 33. Wild flower (9)
- 36. Bird (6)
- 38. Edible bulb (5)
- 39. Fruit (5)
- 40. Refer to (6)
- 42. Jiffy (5)
- 43. Claim (7)
- 44. Colonise (6)
- 46. Wound (4)
- 49. Overtake (4)
- 51. Feel bitter at (6)
- 53. Particular (7)
- 55. Supply (5)
- 59. Bangs (6)
- 60. Angry (5)
- 61. Track (5)
- 62. Menace (6)
- 63. Type of bread (9)
- 65. Altered (7)
- 66. Blew (7)
- 70. New (5)
- 71. Confused (6)
- 73. Crockery item (5)
- 75. Throw (5)
- 80. Gemstone (4)
- 82. Don (3,2)
- 83. Laugh (7)
- 84. Pact (6)
- 85. Type of salesman (6)
- 86. Mention (7)
- 87. Job (10)

NUMBERCRUNCH

Follow the instructions from left to right, starting with the number given to reach an answer at the end of the row

BEGINNER	21	2/3 of this	-7	x15	+45	40% of this	-42	÷2	+51	7/10 of this	ANSWER
INTERMEDIATE	38	x4	-88	3/4 of this	+55	x2	-78	25% of this	+114	÷2	ANSWER
ADVANCED	78	x3	-199	4/5 of this	+167	x2	-158	3/4 of this	-51	2/3 of this	ANSWER

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

Can you spot the six differences between these two pictures?



GIANT SUDOKU

Every row, every column and every 5 x 5 box must contain every digit from 1 to 9 and every letter from K to Z.

	U	L			1	T		8		Y		4	Z		6	W	3		N	R
R								N	P		6	L	V		M	3	Y	Z		
				Q		U	S				V			P	X		8			T
	V					L				K	U					4				6
	K	2		7		3	W		Q		1			8	N		T		5	M
	P		R			4	M		7		6			K			Z	W		Q
		5				U	K	P		S		T	O					4	Y	1
		6		V	3	2	W	R	O			9		Q		N	X	P		M
	8	X				S		3	Q		5					6	2			
	7				O			2	V	L										K
		P		X	8	9	M	7	T			Z	W		R		U	S		L
	R				1	4	O	U				M	P	3					S	
3			6						5			W	L	2		U			X	7
Y	4				W	S		X	9	2	1	V	6			M	N			Z
				T		L	6	R	P			Q	Y	8	1	O				3
			S	1		N	4			P	U			V	T		6	Y	7	2
U			O		Q	W	7	Z		5	K	N		9						
1	Z			N		P	6			X		S	Y	M	R					3
K					M			3	6		9		7	L		P				U
6			9		R	3		Y		S	Z	P		Q	T	L	W	5		N
4	M			Z	Y		9	1		5				7	V	Q	T	R	U	
Q	L		S				P	9	M		N		T			X			7	5
5					8	V			1	R	7						K	9	W	
	O		3		M			V	4	L	8						S	Z	6	
					2	7	X			K				3	N	4	O			L

MEDIUM SUDOKU 1

		7			4				1
				7		2	9	5	
9	5	4			8				3
2				6	5				
	6						3	2	
		8		9	3				1
8			3				4	9	5
		7	9						
	9			1					8

VERY HARD SUDOKU 1

		1		8		3			
		3		1					5
2		8		5					
		6							9
3	9							7	4
4						3			
				8		9			2
7				4		1			
				3		6			4

CROSS OUT 1

Cross out one of the two letters in each divided square to reveal a completed crossword grid.

C	Y	G	X	T
R	I	T	A	R
Y		R		E
I		E		R
T	W	N	C	G
P	E	A	N	E
O		L		N
E		T		A
R	W	H	V	C
S	B	E	L	L

CROSS OUT 2

J	A	M	H	Y
R	U	H	P	S
F		A		T
O		O		X
N	E	E	F	S
K	N	I	P	E
W		S		P
E		D		K
M	E	C	E	Y
R	A	T	H	S

IMPOSSUDOKU 1

7			5			4	9
				8			
6	8			3			2
9			6		7		
		5				4	
			9				5
5				1			6
			8			9	
3	2				6		1

MEDIUM SUDOKU 2

		8			7	6	9	
2			9		5			
	9			8			3	
	6	2						4
		9		7		2		3
5	7				3	1	8	
	8			3			5	
			7					1
	3	7	4		1		2	

VERY HARD SUDOKU 2

5							6	4
	4			2				
1		3			4			
	2		8			9		
	5		6		1		7	
		8			7		5	
			4			2		9
				5			3	
9	3							5

IMPOSSUDOKU 2

	9	3		4				
				8			5	
5		1					3	
			1			7		4
4		2			3			
6						9		3
	2			6	5			
						2	1	7
	4		8		2			

PATHFINDER 1

From the top corner, make a path of words linked to the theme. The trail goes through each letter once but never diagonally.

Ology studies

A	H	R	B	I	O	G	G	Y	T	O	L	O	G	Y
N	T	O	Y	O	L	Y	O	L	H	E	O	L	O	C
L	O	P	G	O	A	C	I	O	C	Y	G	O	X	I
O	G	E	O	L	M	P	C	O	H	S	Y	T	H	T
A	Y	A	C	Y	G	A	O	L	O	P	O	L	O	A
R	C	H	L	I	O	N	S	Y	G	Y	G	G	Y	P
L	O	T	A	M	L	O	G	Y	O	P	A	O	L	O
O	G	O	L	O	G	Y	O	L	R	Y	L	A	E	T
C	Y	E	O	L	O	M	E	O	N	G	O	L	O	N
R	Y	G	G	Y	N	U	T	I	I	T	H	O	O	C
I	G	O	L	I	M	M	E	B	O	R	N	Y	L	I
M	I	O	G	O	L	O	R	O	U	E	G	O	S	
O	N	M	E	Y	E	O	C	E	L	O	O	B	M	U
L	Y	D	D	I	P	O	L	Y	Y	G	R	I	Y	G
O	G	E	R	M	A	T	O	G	M	I	C	O	L	O

Horror films

I	H	E	L	S	E	R	L	K	I	A	T	T	N	E
T	T	F	I	A	F	I	A	I	B	L	E	H	O	I
F	O	O	V	I	O	T	L	L	R	U	R	E	T	N
L	L	T	H	N	G	I	E	I	S	T	I	G	H	R
O	W	S	G	E	D	A	R	D	S	Y	R	E	S	O
R	C	N	I	A	D	R	T	R	B	A	A	M	A	N
E	S	E	F	S	W	A	P	O	Y	B	O	R	E	I
A	R	A	I	E	M	R	Y	R	P	C	H	T	A	M
M	R	R	D	O	B	H	E	N	S	Y	R	O	O	N
C	A	I	E	E	E	N	A	H	K	N	F	Y	D	T
D	T	S	T	W	O	L	L	U	E	A	R	T	R	B
R	A	I	H	E	E	R	A	T	N	S	V	I	E	A
U	C	C	R	E	F	S	O	I	E	T	I	A	L	T
L	E	E	O	X	U	I	N	N	R	A	T	C	A	H
A	B	T	L	E	J	C	E	P	A	N	O	R	M	E

WORDSEARCH 1

Find 13 words in the left and 13 words in the right grid.

Scottish clan names

S	I	N	C	L	A	I	R	C	H
D	N	A	L	R	E	H	T	U	S
J	O	H	N	S	T	O	N	H	H
N	R	P	D	O	U	G	L	A	S
M	E	C	U	R	B	J	F	M	E
U	M	P	I	A	D	E	R	I	I
N	A	S	I	X	H	E	A	L	Z
R	C	R	J	X	B	S	S	T	N
O	D	U	N	C	A	N	E	O	E
M	G	O	R	D	O	N	R	N	M

Mythical creatures

N	D	I	A	M	R	E	M	R	T
U	U	G	H	W	Z	E	U	B	M
A	N	N	R	P	L	A	Q	A	M
H	I	O	K	O	T	N	N	S	I
C	C	M	G	N	E	T	E	P	N
E	O	E	E	R	I	R	R	O	O
R	R	C	I	C	O	N	E	L	T
P	N	S	O	X	K	G	I	C	A
E	T	R	E	P	I	X	D	Y	U
L	E	K	L	O	K	P	U	C	R

ARROWWORD 1

Drink South American country	Construct	TV presenter, Humphrey	Boast
		Scottish town	
Water source	Type, sort Hurl	Hen's produce Fencing sword	Lizard
Travelled by horse		Listening organ	1969 film starring David Bradley
Injection		Gregory US actor	
Spider's creation	Tim astronaut		
		Greek god of love	

ARROWWORD 2

Slaughter- house	Living thing Unit of area	Japanese sash	Hen's produce Writing fluid
Metal rod		Large Actress, Thurman	
Quarrell- ing Water vapour			
		Glance	Observant
Asian desert	Short sleep		Corinne Bailey singer
		Epoch	
Edge of a hat	Cut sheep's wool		
		Piano lever	

EURO2024

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



14.07.2024

LAUGH TIME

PEP TALK

England play it cool ahead of final

PAGES 2&3

I'LL NEVER BE GOOD AS MESSI

PAGE 6




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HOW THEY GOT HERE..

GROUP C Game One

Sunday, June 16
Serbia 0 England 1

Gareth Southgate's England got their Euro 2024 bid off on the front foot - for the first 20 minutes, anyway. Jude Bellingham's header from Bukayo Saka's cross after 13 minutes was as good as it got against Serbia, with the Three Lions content to sit back and soak up the pressure when needed.

GROUP C Game Two

Thursday, June 20
Denmark 1 England 1

Harry Kane got his name on the scoresheet as England took a deserved lead against Denmark in Frankfurt. But they reverted to the cautious side from the first game of the tournament after that and were punished by a Morten Hjulmand piledriver before half-time. A disjointed and disorganised performance.

GROUP C Game Three

Tuesday, June 25
England 0 Slovenia 0

The Three Lions were already through courtesy of results in other groups, so this was a chance for a statement of intent ahead of the knockout rounds. But it was another tough watch for England fans as Southgate's charges failed to live up to the pre-tournament hype once again. Another draw, but another point and with it, top spot in Group C and a place in the 'easier' side of the draw.

Last 16

Sunday, June 30
England 2 Slovakia 1 (AET)

Behind for the majority of the game thanks to Ivan Schranz's opener, England looked dead and buried. But cometh the hour, cometh the Bellingham. England's talisman fired home a stunning overhead kick five minutes into injury time to save Southgate & Co, and when Kane nodded in one minute into extra time, it was effectively game over.

Quarter-final

Saturday, July 6
England 1 Switzerland 1 (AET, England win 5-3 on pens)

Another game, another performance which had England fans on the edge of their seats for all the wrong reasons. There were flashes of things starting to piece together in Dusseldorf, but after Breel Embolo gave the Swiss the lead, it took a brilliant left-foot shot from Saka to keep England in the tournament. Would it be penalty heartbreak again? No chance. All five on the Three Lions' spot-kick takers found the net to seal a semi-final spot.

Semi-final

Wednesday, July 10
Holland 1 England 2

England went behind in this tie once more after Declan Rice lost the ball in his own half and Xavi Simons lashed home past a helpless Jordan Pickford. That was the kickstart the Three Lions needed, though, as their best performance in the tournament - by a mile - saw them roar back in fine style. Kane slotted home a dubiously awarded penalty to level and England dominated the game from there. Ollie Watkins was the hero as his turn and shot late on powered Southgate into his second major final as England boss.

This isn't about my redemption & 96 ..



.. it's winning with this group in 2024

Southgate shrugs off redemption talk before Berlin battle

GARETH SOUTHGATE only has eyes on the prize - and not on redemption for the moment that has haunted him for 28 years.

The irony is not lost on the England manager that he has the chance to make history on German soil, given it was his penalty miss in a Euro semi-final shootout against their old enemy that ended hopes of glory in 1996.

But Southgate is refusing to look back in anger as he has the chance to become the first Three Lions boss to win a major trophy on foreign soil.

Spain stand between England and a place alongside Sir Alf Ramsey's World Cup-winning class of 1966 - and Southgate insists that prospect means much more than settling personal scores. He

SPAIN v ENGLAND

TODAY, 8PM, OLYMPIASTADION, BERLIN BY SIMON MULLOCK

said: "I kind of get it but there are so many more things that this game is more important for than that.

"I agree that sounds like a lovely story but I haven't been at home thinking for 18 months: 'Yeah, Berlin... that's redemption'.

"It doesn't help the lads that played with me in '96 but to be able to lead this group, for what they've given and how they have handled this, is brilliant.

"There has been such an incredible commitment from these players. We have lost some of the senior figures so

we were wondering: 'Okay, how is this tournament going to play out?'

"But they've all done brilliantly as a group and to see the way they celebrated in the dressing room together after the semi-final on Wednesday - hit us all as a group.

"Part of that is how they have socialised together - but part of it is the adversity they've been through in the last few weeks.

"You can't replicate that and coming through it is more powerful for bringing people together than anything."

England will be playing in their second successive European final. They are the only nation to have reached the semi-finals in three of the last four major tournaments.

This has been the England chief's proudest achievement to date. The pride of the Three Lions has been hurt by criticism levelled against them for the standard of their performances.

Since topping their group, his team have battled back from behind in three knockout games with Slovakia, Switzerland and Holland to reach the final.

Key moments have helped them get there. Jude Bellingham's dramatic overhead-kick equaliser against Slovakia, Jordan Pickford's shootout save v the Swiss and Ollie Watkins' late

EYES ON THE PRIZE
Southgate is laser-focused on leading England to Euro glory



Gareth could go after Euro decider

ENGLAND boss Gareth Southgate insists he has not made a decision about his future - after Arsenal star Declan Rice urged him to lead the Three Lions into the next World Cup.

Southgate, who is out of contract in December, insists he will announce his intentions after the Euro 2024 Final against Spain.

The 53-year-old has admitted he would have been sacked if England were dumped out of the tournament in the group stages.

But the FA now faces pressure to convince him to stay after England star Rice confirmed the squad wants him to have another go at conquering the world in Canada, Mexico and the United States in two years.

Southgate said: "The way my emotions have gone over the last five weeks, it would be ridiculous for me to think about anything beyond the Spain game.

"We've got time to make decisions - and I won't need weeks - but also I think I've earned the right to give myself a few days just to think things through.

"I know where it would have been if we had gone out in the group stage, that's for sure.

"I have a pretty good idea in my head. I don't think that would necessarily have been my choice."

But Rice has left no doubt about the players' thoughts.

He said: "This journey he has been on with England has been so special.

"Hopefully we can do something amazing for Gareth on Sunday.

"I know for a fact the lads would love him to stay on until 2026 - there is no doubt about that."



GROUP B Game One

Saturday, June 15
Spain 3 Croatia 0

La Roja started their Euro 2024 finals campaign in emphatic style - at the same stadium they will play today's final. Luis de la Fuente's side were 3-0 up at the break thanks to goals from Alvaro Morata, Fabian Ruiz and Dani Carvajal in the game where Lamine Yamal became the youngest player in men's Euros history.

GROUP B Game Two

Thursday, June 20
Spain 1 Italy 0

A statement win against the defending champions secured a spot in the knockout stages as Spain dominated an underwhelming Italian side. Gianluigi Donnarumma in the Italy goal managed to keep it goalless for nearly an hour as the Spaniards created chance after chance. But he was finally undone when Morata's flick hit Riccardo Calafiori's knee and went in.

GROUP B Game Three

Monday, June 24
Albania 0 Spain 1

Ah, the tournament rest game. With a place in the last 16 already secured, boss De La Fuente made 10 changes to his starting line-up which meant every outfield player in the squad played some part in the group stage. Ferran Torres netted early on in this meaningless encounter.

Last 16
Sunday, June 30
Spain 4 Georgia 1

Spain finally conceded a goal - the opener in this tie - but Georgia were still no match for them.

Robin le Normand's own goal after a great breakaway gave the tournament debutants hope a giant-killing, but in the end, it proved fanciful.

Rodri levelled before the break and in the second half it was all Spain, with Fabian Ruiz, Nico Williams and Dani Olmo all getting on the scoresheet.

Quarter-final
Friday, July 5

Spain 2 Germany 1 (AET)

Arguably one of the games of the tournament as Spain knocked out the hosts in a sensational encounter in Stuttgart.

Olmo gave Spain the lead just after the break but nearly paid the price after they sat back and invited Germany forward. Florian Wirtz netted in the 89th minute as the Germans piled on the pressure and Spain looked bereft of ideas. Mikel Merino's header in the last minute of extra time saved his side from the lottery of penalties.

Semi-final
Tuesday, July 9
Spain 2 France 1

Kolo Muani's header gave France the perfect start to the semi-final in Munich. But this game will be remembered for teenage superstar Yamal's curling, long-range strike which levelled the game and turned the tie.

Olmo was on hand to smash home what turned out to be the winner after just 25 minutes as Spain held on in this nervy encounter.

If you are a team that starts to score great goals, that's a great trait to have.

GARETH SOUTHGATE ON WHY ENGLAND'S FIGHTING SPIRIT MAY PROVE CRUCIAL IN THE EURO 2024 FINAL

finish against the Dutch.

Southgate knows his team will have to dig deep again when they face a Spain team who have been outstanding in Germany.

Spain's stylish stroll to Berlin has marked them down as favourites to become the most successful country in European Championship history as they seek a fourth title.

But Southgate is drawing comfort from the way his side have continually battled back in the face of adversity.

He said: "I don't think what we've done can be under-estimated. If you

are a team that starts to score late goals, then that is a great trait to have.

"The players coming off the bench in every game have delivered a high level of performance, so more people than perhaps ever before feel they have contributed significant moments.

"Nobody has been put into a game 3-0 up with 20 minutes to play. Everybody has had to deliver. Everybody has had to be ready.

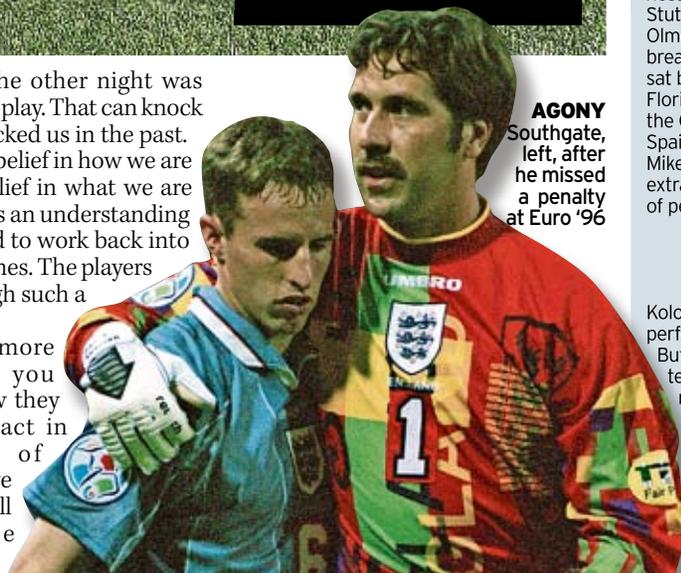
"I love the way we have kept our composure when we've been behind.

Holland's goal the other night was against the run of play. That can knock you and has knocked us in the past.

"But there is a belief in how we are playing and a belief in what we are doing and there is an understanding of what is needed to work back into those sorts of games. The players have been through such a lot already.

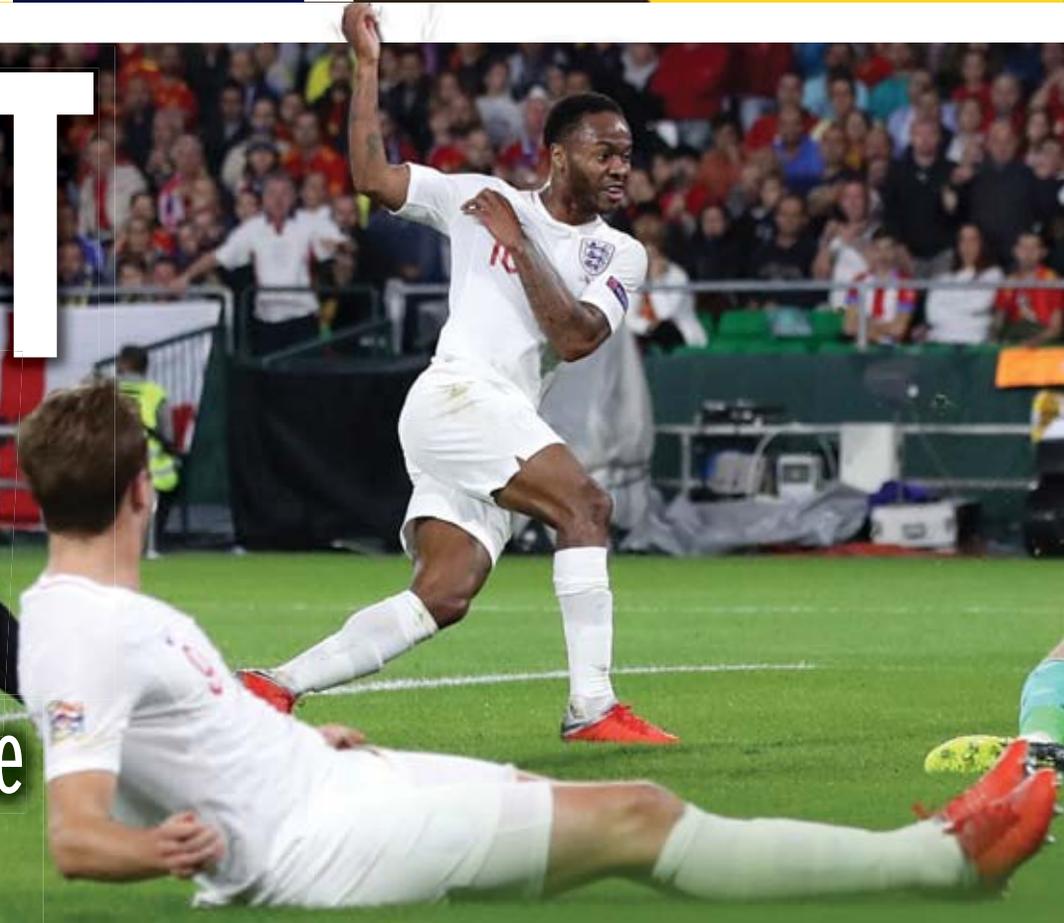
"You can be more anxious when you haven't seen how they are going to react in those types of moments, but we have seen how well they have responded."

AGONY
Southgate, left, after he missed a penalty at Euro '96



HIS FINEST HOURS (SO FAR)

England boss Southgate is chasing the silver after proving his golden touch



GARETH SOUTHGATE is often written off but in his eight years in charge of England he has led them to the semi-finals or beyond in three out of four major tournaments.

England go into their second successive Euros final today, against much-fancied Spain, having also reached the World Cup semi-final in 2018 during Southgate's reign.

And with the Three Lions aiming to end '58 years of hurt' by winning their first major trophy since the 1966 World Cup, we've picked out five career-defining matches from Southgate's 101 games in the England hot seat.

2018 WORLD CUP, ROUND OF 16: ENGLAND 1 COLOMBIA 1 (ENGLAND WIN 4-3 ON PENS)

Eric Dier stepped up to convert the penalty that ended 22 years of relentless shoot-out misery for England at major tournaments.

The 12-yard sudden death curse that has so often struck England down on the big stage was finally ended as Southgate's side reached their first semi-final since Italia '90.

NATIONS LEAGUE GROUP STAGE, 2018: SPAIN 2 ENGLAND 3

Few cared about the competition

BY HARRY PRATT

but a stunning Seville success over Spain showed that England's 2018 World Cup exploits were no flash in the pan.

Spain had won the reverse meeting at Wembley a month earlier but Raheem Sterling's double, either side of a Marcus Rashford strike, made it 3-0 after just 38 minutes.

Not even a late fightback from the hosts could remove the gloss of England's reign in Spain.

EURO 2020, ROUND OF 16: ENGLAND 2 GERMANY 0

Another game that saw another embarrassing record bite the dust.

England had never defeated a renowned superpower in the knockout stages of a tournament.

Germany - under Joachim Low (above with Southgate) - were far from vintage but following a tense opening period, Sterling put the hosts in front.

Then, after Thomas Muller missed a sitter for the Germans, Kane broke clear to wrap up victory at Wembley.

EURO 2020, SEMI-FINAL: ENGLAND 2 DENMARK 1 (AET)

Expectations were high in England as they sealed a last-four showdown with Denmark.

A first major final in 55 years awaited the Three Lions but complacency almost got the better of them as the Danes took the lead.

But Sterling drew England level and Kane netted on the rebound in extra-time after his penalty was saved by Kasper Schmeichel.

EURO 2024, SEMI-FINAL: HOLLAND 1 ENGLAND 2

Southgate's side have set two records before stepping on to the pitch in Berlin.

They are the first England side to reach two straight Euro finals and the first to get to a showpiece event on foreign soil.

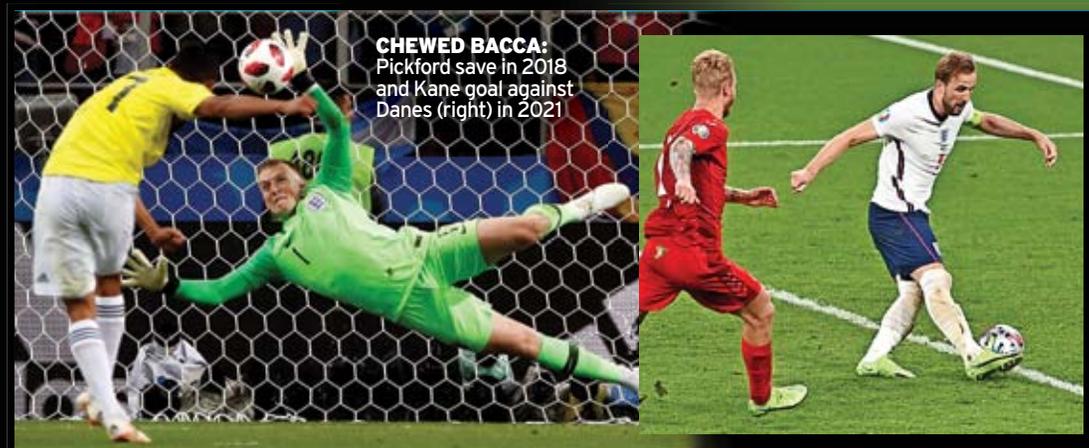
Following a series of dull displays, Southgate switched to a back-three to see off the Swiss in the last eight.

It also worked against the Dutch, but it was a late double change that inspired the win.

At 1-1, in the dying seconds, Cole Palmer fed fellow sub Ollie Watkins who drilled home.



CHEWED BACCA: Pickford save in 2018 and Kane goal against Danes (right) in 2021



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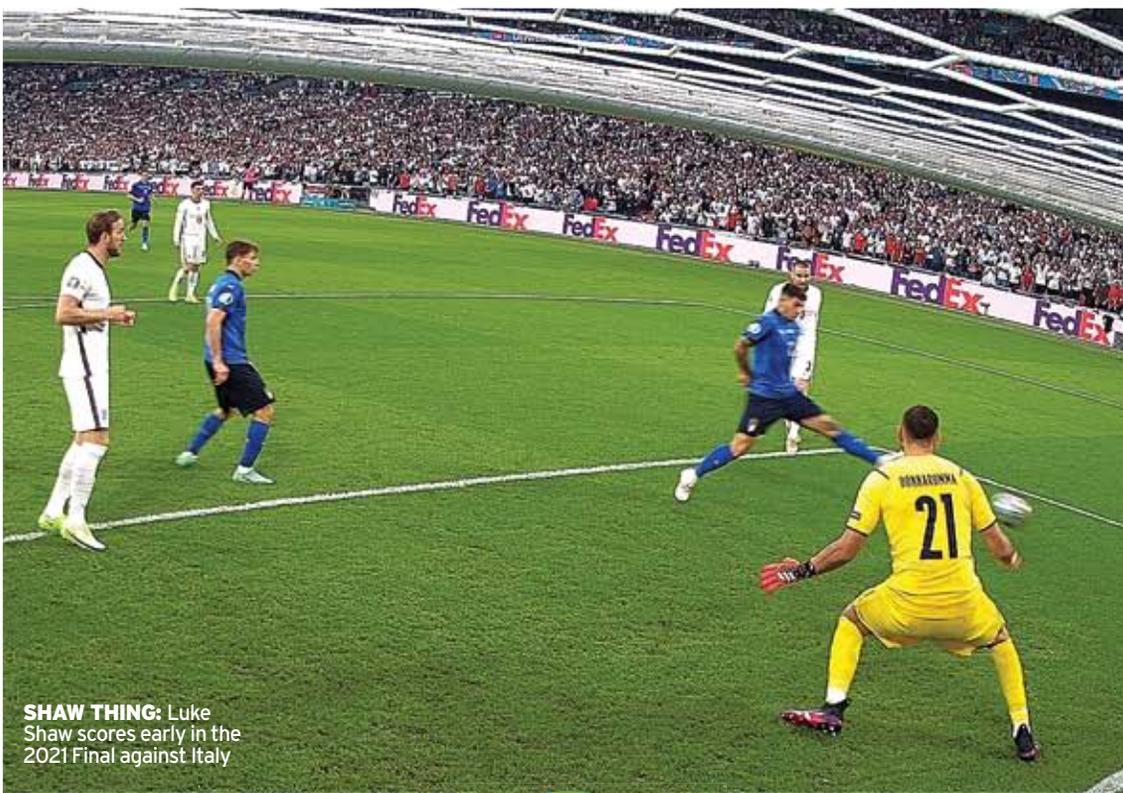
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STERLING WORK:
Raheem scores against
Spain in the 2018
Nations League



SHAW THING: Luke
Shaw scores early in the
2021 Final against Italy



2020 VISION: Pickford saves, Southgate ponders and Chiellini consoles Kane

Five things..

How Lions must learn from 2020 final

ANOTHER FINAL. On the verge of the ultimate prize. So close to glory, yet still so far.

England have been here before. Three years ago – in the Covid-delayed Euro 2020 Final – against Italy at a rammed Wembley.

A night that began with so much promise for England ended in tears as they lost out during yet another crushing penalty shootout defeat.

But, as managers often say, you learn more about yourself in defeat than you do in victory.

And here we look at five lessons from that night that England will hope to learn from in their Berlin battle with Spain.

LUKE SHAW

The Manchester United defender made his mark with a stunning second-minute strike – the fastest goal in a Euro final.

He crashed home a superb cross-field ball from Kieran Trippier to put England ahead.

Shaw has three England goals in total but this strike showed why, when fit, he is the man for the biggest occasion.

BY HARRY PRATT

HUMAN NATURE

There is never a bad time to score but grabbing an early lead – after one minute and 58 seconds of a massive game – has a flip side.

It can spread anxiety throughout the team for what is at stake and England soon started thinking of what they had to lose rather than what victory meant.

They slowly retreated, allowing Italy more and more possession. By half-time, they conceded control and the rest is history.

TOUCHLINE TACTICS

Gareth Southgate was castigated for his substitutions in the final.

They were left too late, made no sense and ultimately were the reason for England's demise, according to the critics.

They had a point. Muddled thinking and seemingly gambling on penalties to land the trophy backfired badly. It's not a problem completely solved, either.

DARK ARTS

Beware the world-class cynic. Italy

were a hard team and their experienced central defensive duo, Giorgio Chiellini and Leonardo Bonucci, made sure Harry Kane knew he was in a game from the first whistle.

Neither were booked until the second half, by which time they had done their job of suppressing England's creativity. It was a case of old heads showing all their experience and England must guard against that tonight.

PENALTY KICKS

Jordan Pickford's sensational heroics saw him save two Italian penalties to underline his status as a shoot-out saviour.

But his efforts proved in vain as Marcus Rashford, Jadon Sancho and Bukayo Saka all missed in a 3-2 sudden-death reverse for the shattered hosts.

The first two had been sent on in the 120th minute – specifically for the task of converting from 12 yards to win it for England.

They had barely touched the ball before their shootout misery struck to end Gareth Southgate's hopes of Euro glory.



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I WILL NEVER BE



LIONEL KING Yamal was pictured with Messi as a baby, left, but doesn't believe he's in the same class as Argentina legend



AS GOOD AS YOU

Spanish sensation Yamal flattered by comparisons to Messi but birthday boy reckons idol is in class of own

LAMINE YAMAL is unfazed by comparisons with Lionel Messi - because he feels he will never be as good as his idol.

Spanish newspaper SPORT recently published images of eight-time Ballon d'Or winner Messi holding Yamal as a baby.

But the attacking sensation, who turned 17 yesterday, has always been keen to keep those childhood snaps under wraps.

Yamal said: "I saw the photo for the first time because my father showed it to me but we wanted to avoid comparisons and we did not spread it."

"Comparisons with the best player in history do not bother anyone. They will always remain but ultimately, you will never be like him."

"I have never spoken to Messi but I hope I can."

The scintillating winger, who is out to prevent England ending their

BY RYAN TAYLOR

58-year wait for a second major trophy tonight, has put his name up in lights at Euro 2024 after scoring a 25-yard stunner to help eliminate France in the semi-finals.

Yamal also has three assists to his name and has persistently taunted opposition full-backs in Germany with body feints, fast feet, slick dribbling and electric speed.

But for all of his brilliance, there is one thing he refuses to do and that is watch video footage of his markers - even if the likes of Kieran Trippier and Luke Shaw will be doing their homework on him ahead of tonight.

He said: "I don't look at opponents I have. If I look at things, it will be their highlights - I prefer to go thinking what I can do, what I want, and catch them off guard."

As Yamal prepares to embark on a date with destiny in Berlin, he has little interest in pre-match mind

games. France midfielder Adrien Rabiot previously took a swipe at him and he was made to look foolish by Yamal's remarkable equaliser.

The Spanish kid said: "There is no need to tease anyone from England."

"I'm really looking forward to the final. After the match against France I went to bed to rest, I've been answering messages little by little but I was able to sleep very well, I was tired."

"My Instagram was flooded but I don't think it's pressure, people are happy, they support me and I try to enjoy it."

Blending Yamal's raw talent with the experience and winning pedigree of Dani Carvajal and Rodri could prove the perfect cocktail for Spain.

Real Madrid right-back Carvajal - yet to taste success on the international stage - is on a mission to ensure Yamal maintains maximum focus. The Spanish star, who returns

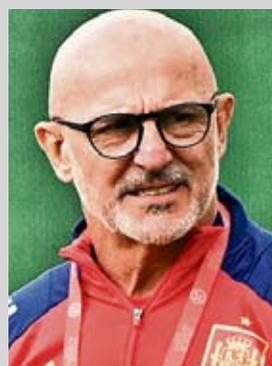
from a one-match ban tonight, said: "I think he's not aware of what he's doing right now. He's focused on playing and he does it as if he were playing with his friends."

"That's the good thing, that in the end that self-confidence is contributing a lot."

"We have to look after him, we have to pamper him a lot and not only in the national team, but also in Barcelona, because it's not easy to manage at this age all the impact he's having."

"There have been many cases in football of young players who at 20-years-old didn't give anything more and we also have to have a certain patience with Lamine Yamal and look after him so that he marks an era."

CARV OUT SPOT IN HISTORY Dani Carvajal believes he can be celebrating with Yamal again tonight



MAIN MAN de la Fuente

Fuente's the future

THE Spanish Football Federation want to keep Luis de la Fuente in charge of Spain until after Euro 2028 - no matter what happens tonight.

De la Fuente, 63, has already signed fresh terms to stay on until the 2026 World Cup but the RFEF now want to extend his deal for two more years.

La Roja have been flying under the former Athletic

Bilbao boss, who replaced Luis Enrique in 2022 and has won 85 per cent of games in charge.

Before Euro 2024, Spain topped their qualification group and were crowned Nations League champions last summer in Rotterdam.

RFEF president Pedro Rocha will outline their desire to keep De la Fuente, having arrived at Spain's training base on Friday.



YOUNG LION CUB Mainoo

Kobbie's eye on cup

ENGLAND midfielder Kobbie Mainoo admits he doesn't want to look back on his "crazy" first tournament experience until the job is finished.

The 19-year-old only made his senior international debut in March following a breakout season at Manchester United.

Now Mainoo has started England's last three matches and become their youngest ever

player to start in a semi-final. He told Lions' Den: "We've come so far at the tournament but this is the biggest hurdle yet."

"It's been good to play my part when called upon."

"To represent my country and then be in the final of the Euros is crazy."

"I can't look back on it too fondly until the job is finished and we have lifted the trophy."

Gareth's telling us fairytale of tapes

DECLAN RICE has revealed Gareth Southgate showed his England team footage of the UK's great sporting heroes in a bid to inspire them to Euro 2024 glory.

The squad will have an open-top bus parade through London if they beat Spain and their gaffer has given them a video taste of how they can lift the nation.

"He put up special moments, like when we won the Ashes and the Rugby World Cup. He wanted us to get that feeling of how we could impact the nation. This is a massive moment – a chance to create history."

Rice, 25, will be playing his 66th game of the season for club and country but he insists he is firing on all cylinders, and added: "In the first games, I felt more tired than now. As the adrenaline kicks in, there is an extra energy, an extra bit of fire."

"We'd all run through brick walls to win this game. I was



EXTRA BIT OF FIRE Rice

poor against Denmark but after that I've looked more like myself. Everyone's gone up a few gears."

And if Rice is celebrating tonight, he has promised to sing to the country, and said: "I would give a rendition of 'Rice, Rice, Baby' to the nation. Hopefully, I can do that."

Coming up against the likes of Pedri, Dani Olmo and Rodri, Rice will need to be at the top of his game alongside teenage midfield partner Kobbie Mainoo.

But the £105million man is not intimidated – and refused to accept the Spanish stars have been better this summer.

He said: "I never feel like we get that love and that credit about how well we actually keep the ball."

"Rodri's a top player. I did an interview at Arsenal just before the end of the season and I spoke really highly of him. The midfield battle will be key, I have a lot of respect for him but it's business and we want to get one over them for sure."

England didn't know when they were beaten but Scotland didn't know how to get themselves up for the fight

You can't grudge Gareth & Co. if they grind their way to Euro title



KNIGHT AND DAY England boss Southgate will deserve his gong if his side beat the Spanish

I CAN tell you from personal experience there are no harmful, or lasting, side effects attached to England winning a major international tournament.

I sat through the World Cup Final over West Germany at Wembley in 1966 and it left no visible scarring.

Coouncil flat. Black and white telly. Some people were on the pitch. They thought it was all over, etc, etc.

So am I now supposed to go into a state of advanced anxiety at the very thought of England beating Spain in Berlin tonight and winning the final of Euro 2024?

For what reason exactly?

We'll never hear the end of it if Gareth Southgate's team triumph?

And what, precisely, would we do in this country if Scotland won a major event?

Would the SFA insist on a news black-out and the maintenance of a dignified silence out of respect for the gallant losers?

England are a tough watch is another criticism I've heard on a regular basis since this competition started.

And what, in all fairness, were Scotland when Steve Clarke had us polluting the Germanic atmosphere with turgid displays that stank the place out during our short stay there?

Where top-class football is concerned, entertainment means winning. Artistic merit is an optional extra. England are



in the final, as the games leading up to tonight's spectacle proved, because there were times when they didn't know when they were beaten.

Scotland's problem was we didn't know how to get up for the fight in the first place.

The Scotland fans invaded Germany and were the hands-down winners of a popularity contest.

I repeat, as a people we went to Munich, Cologne and Dusseldorf and distinguished ourselves.

I don't expect anyone in this country to be willing England over the line tonight – but if they do win the final I couldn't work myself up into a state where I treated

that result as the equivalent of a death in the family.

My teenage reaction to England winning the World Cup was, if memory serves me correctly, turning off the telly and going to the pictures, to use an expression from the dim and distant past.

There will, of course, be knighthoods all round in the event of an England victory. It'll be "Arise Sir Gareth"

before the end of the Glasgow Fair fortnight – just like it was Sir Alf Ramsey in jig time during the Swinging 60s.

Who cares?

Aspiration is the key word for me where today's events are concerned.

As a country, Scotland sucked up



SLIM PICKINGS Jim Baxter after Scots beat world champs in 1967

wee Nobby Stiles dancing around the pitch at Wembley with his false teeth out and the Jules Rimet trophy in his hand at full-time 58 years ago.

What we did the following season was to go down to Wembley and give England a caning, while also having the satisfaction of watching Celtic become the first British club ever to win the European Cup by virtue of overpowering Inter Milan in Lisbon.

We should now aspire to being the best we can at club and international level without obsessing over the noisy neighbours on the other side of the border.

If England don't win tonight there is, based on a long and undistinguished history, a very strong likelihood of there being an unsavoury reaction to defeat because of an undeniably undesirable element within their support.

And it is to our eternal credit that we are not like that in an international context.

But if the football team wins the final on a fair-and-square basis then I see no reason for a period of national mourning in Scotland.

If you're suffering a feeling of anticlimax, then work harder to find an antidote on the pitch that enhances your standing in the game.

If, on the other hand, it is a win for Spain then that is Juan of those things, isn't it?

GROUP A		GERMANY, SCOTLAND, HUNGARY, SWITZERLAND	
GERMANY Wirtz 20, Musiala 19, Havertz 45+1 pen, Fullkrug 68, Can 90+3	5	HUNGARY Varga 66	1
SCOTLAND Rudiger 87 og	1	SWITZERLAND Duah 12, Aebischer 45, Embolo 90+3	3
GERMANY Musiala 22, Gundogan 67	2	SCOTLAND McTominay 13	1
HUNGARY	0	SWITZERLAND Shegiri 26	1
SWITZERLAND Ndoye 28	1	SCOTLAND	0
GERMANY Fullkrug 90+2	1	HUNGARY Csoboth 90+10	1

GROUP B		SPAIN, CROATIA, ITALY, ALBANIA	
SPAIN Morata 29, Ruiz 32, Carvajal 45+2	3	ITALY Bastoni 11, Barella 16	2
CROATIA	0	ALBANIA Bajrami 1	1
CROATIA Kramaric 74, Gjasula 76 og	2	SPAIN Calafiori 55 og	1
ALBANIA Laci 11, Gjasula 90+5	2	ITALY	0
CROATIA Modric 55	1	ALBANIA	0
ITALY Zaccagni 90+8	1	SPAIN Torres 13	1

GROUP C		SLOVENIA, SERBIA, DENMARK, ENGLAND	
SLOVENIA Janza 77	1	SERBIA	0
DENMARK Eriksen 17	1	ENGLAND Bellingham 13	1
SLOVENIA Karnicnik 69	1	DENMARK Hjulmand 34	1
SERBIA Jovic 90+5	1	ENGLAND Kane 18	1
ENGLAND	0	DENMARK	0
SLOVENIA	0	SERBIA	0

GROUP D		POLAND, HOLLAND, AUSTRIA, FRANCE	
POLAND Bukksa 16	1	AUSTRIA	0
HOLLAND Gakpo 29, Weghorst 83	2	FRANCE Wober 38 og	1
POLAND Piatek 30	1	HOLLAND	0
AUSTRIA Trauner 9, Baumgartner 66, Arnautovic 78 (pen)	3	FRANCE	0
HOLLAND Gakpo 47, Depay 75	2	FRANCE Mbappe 56 pen	1
AUSTRIA Malen 6 og, Schmid 59, Sabitzer 80	3	POLAND Lewandowski 79 pen	1

GROUP E		BELGIUM, SLOVAKIA, ROMANIA, UKRAINE	
ROMANIA Stanciu 29, Marin 53, Dragus 57	3	BELGIUM	0
UKRAINE	0	SLOVAKIA Schranz 7	1
SLOVAKIA Schranz 17	1	BELGIUM Tielemans 2, De Bruyne 80	2
UKRAINE Shaparenko 54, Yaremchuk 80	2	ROMANIA	0
SLOVAKIA Duda 24	1	UKRAINE	0
ROMANIA R Marin 37 (pen)	1	BELGIUM	0

GROUP F		TURKEY, GEORGIA, PORTUGAL, CZECH REPUBLIC	
TURKEY Muldur 25, Guler 65, Akturkoglu 90+7	3	PORTUGAL Hranac 69 og, Conceicao 90+2	2
GEORGIA Mikautadze 32	1	CZECH REP Provod 62	1
GEORGIA Mikautadze 45 (pen)	1	TURKEY	0
CZECH REP Schick 59	1	PORTUGAL Bernardo Silva 21, Akaydin 28 (og), Bruno Fernandes 56	3
CZECH REP Soucek 66	1	GEORGIA Kvaratskhelia 2, Mikautadze 57 (Pen)	2
TURKEY Calhanoglu 51 Tosun 90	2	PORTUGAL	0

GROUP A	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Germany	3	2	1	0	8	2	7
Switzerland	3	1	2	0	5	3	5
Hungary	3	1	0	2	2	5	3
Scotland	3	0	1	2	2	7	1

GROUP B	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Spain	3	3	0	0	5	0	9
Italy	3	1	1	1	3	3	4
Croatia	3	0	2	1	3	6	2
Albania	3	0	1	2	3	5	1

GROUP C	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
England	3	1	2	0	2	1	5
Denmark	3	0	3	0	2	2	3
Slovenia	3	0	3	0	2	2	3
Serbia	3	0	2	1	1	2	2

GROUP D	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Austria	3	2	0	1	6	4	6
France	3	1	2	0	2	1	5
Holland	3	1	1	1	4	4	4
Poland	3	0	1	2	3	6	1

GROUP E	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Romania	3	1	1	1	4	3	4
Belgium	3	1	1	1	2	1	4
Slovakia	3	1	1	1	3	3	4
Ukraine	3	1	1	1	2	4	4

GROUP F	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Portugal	3	2	0	1	5	3	6
Turkey	3	2	0	1	5	5	6
Georgia	3	1	1	1	4	4	4
Czech Rep	3	0	1	2	3	5	1

ROUND OF 16

GAME 37	GERMANY Havertz 53 (pen), Musiala 68	2	DENMARK	0
GAME 39	SPAIN Rodri 39, Fabian Ruiz 51, Williams 75, Olmo 83	4	GEORGIA Le Normand 18og	1
GAME 41 (AET)	PORTUGAL	0	SLOVENIA	0
GAME 43	ROMANIA	0	HOLLAND Gakpo 20, Malen 83, 90+3	3

GAME 38	SWITZERLAND Freuler 37, Vargas 46	2	ITALY	0
GAME 40 (AET)	ENGLAND Bellingham 90+5, Kane 91 (ET)	2	SLOVAKIA Schranz 25	1
GAME 42	FRANCE Vertonghen 85og	1	BELGIUM	0
GAME 44	AUSTRIA Gregoritsch 66	1	TURKEY Demiral 1, 59	2

SEMI-FINALS

GAME 49	SPAIN Yamal 21, Olmo 25	2	FRANCE Muani 8	1
GAME 50	HOLLAND Simons 7	1	ENGLAND Kane 18 (pen), Watkins 90	2

QUARTER-FINALS

GAME 45 (AET)	SPAIN Olmo 51, Merino 119 (ET)	2	GERMANY Wirtz 89	1
GAME 46 (AET)	PORTUGAL	0	FRANCE	0
GAME 47	HOLLAND De Vrij 70, Muldur 76og	2	TURKEY Akaydin 35	1
GAME 48 (AET)	ENGLAND Saka 80	1	SWITZERLAND Embolo 75	1

FINAL

GAME 51	SPAIN V ENGLAND
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