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The Baftas News page 7

Terror returns to streets of London

● Knifeman shot dead by police was under surveillance ● Extremist freed from jail just days ago

John Simpson, David Brown,
Ben Ellery, Chris Smyth

Police have shot dead a terrorist recently released from prison and under surveillance by MI5 after he stabbed two people on a busy shopping street.

Sudesh Amman, 20, was wearing a fake suicide vest when he stole a 10in kitchen knife and set upon a man and woman in Streatham, south London.

Amman, an extremist from Harrow, north London, was jailed 14 months ago for possessing Islamic State recruitment material and manuals containing instructions on inflicting damage to the body with various types of knives.

He had kept a notebook in which he wrote that his goals in life were to "die as a shuhada [martyr]" and he had discussed slaughtering apostates and non-Muslims with a sharp knife. Amman was released from prison late last month after serving half of his sentence of three years and four months for possession of extremist materials. He was still on licence and under the supervision of the Probation Service.

Boris Johnson is today expected to announce plans to review the automatic early release of prisoners convicted of terrorist offences, expanding his manifesto pledge that focused on those convicted of violent offences.

Witnesses described Amman as a young bearded man in western clothes with "silver canisters on his chest". Scotland Yard later confirmed that this was a "hoax device".

The man who was stabbed, in his forties, had suffered a large gash in his side. Last night he was no longer considered to be in a life-threatening condition. The woman, who was said to have been in her fifties and with two boys aged about nine or ten, was said to have been kneeling on the ground screaming "Help me". She was discharged from hospital last night.

Undercover counterterrorism officers arrived at the scene of the attack within seconds, with witnesses describing hearing between three and five gun-



Armed police in Streatham, south London, yesterday where Sudesh Amman, 20, was shot dead after stabbing two people

shots. Amman is the second convicted terrorist to carry out an attack while still on licence in the past three months.

Usman Khan, 28, was shot dead by police in November after stabbing two former Cambridge University criminology students at London Bridge while wearing a fake suicide vest. Khan, who was jailed for links to a terrorist cell

that plotted to blow up the London Stock Exchange, was released the previous December by the Parole Board.

Mr Johnson last night offered his sympathies to the victims and the families, praised the quick response of officers and promised that the government would address how the release of convicted terrorists was managed. A

Whitehall source said that the prime minister was concerned that prisons and the probation system were powerless to ensure that terror suspects assessed as a high risk remained behind bars. The source said: "He [the suspect] had reached the halfway release point and there was nothing that could be

Continued on page 2, col 5

Johnson: I'd rather accept tariffs than obey EU rules

Chris Smyth Whitehall Editor

Boris Johnson will enter the next phase of Brexit by warning the European Union that he is not afraid to walk away from talks as tensions escalate between London and Brussels.

The prime minister will say today that he would rather accept tariffs than European law and that Britain has "made our choice" in refusing to follow EU regulations.

Setting out his objectives on trade, Mr Johnson will accept that he has traded full access to the single market in order for Britain to reclaim full control of its laws. He will urge European leaders to honour what he regards as their side of the bargain.

Downing Street is prepared to fall back on an "Australian" version of no deal, and the prime minister will say "there is no need for a free trade agreement to involve accepting EU rules".

The scene is set for a bitter dispute with Brussels about the concessions Britain must make in pursuit of a "Canada-style" deal — an arrangement in which 98 per cent of tariffs between Ottawa and the EU were removed.

London and Brussels are already in dispute over the interpretation of commitments to a "level playing field" in a future deal. Downing Street has let it be known that it is "privately infuriated" that the EU is not willing to offer the same terms to Britain as Canada, accusing Brussels of going back on its word.

European leaders responded by claiming that they had always been clear that "robust" guarantees on regulations and subsidies to business were a precondition of such deal.

"There is no need for a free trade agreement to involve accepting EU rules on competition policy, subsidies, social protection, the environment or anything similar any more than the EU should be obliged to accept UK rules," Mr Johnson will say in a speech to business leaders in London.

"The UK will maintain the highest standards in these areas — better, in many respects, than those of the EU — without the compulsion of a treaty and it is vital to stress this now."

Downing Street is frustrated that Brussels wants Britain to agree to follow specific EU laws — while

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An ex-military chief warned ministers against launching a "debilitating" exercise in overhauling how the Ministry of Defence spends billions of pounds on equipment. **Page 2**

Costly acquittals

More than 120,000 people acquitted of serious crimes over the past four years have been left out of pocket after the government made cuts to legal aid. **Page 6**

Crew sets old record

Four men with a combined age of 257 have broken the record for the oldest crew to row across the Atlantic. They arrived in Antigua after 49 days at sea. **Page 11**

Britons' virus warning

The Foreign Office has warned tens of thousands of Britons in China that it cannot guarantee to get them home as the coronavirus epidemic worsens. **Pages 12-13**

Sanders lashes out

Bernie Sanders said that the Democratic establishment was trying to thwart his attempt to win the party's presidential nomination on the eve of the first state vote. **Pages 28-29**

England defeated

Eddie Jones, the England coach, said his team felt "sorry for ourselves" as they were beaten 24-17 by France in Paris in their opening Six Nations match. **Pages 60-64**

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FIT CLUB

A-listers are flocking to the woman credited with helping Adele to lose 100lb

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Labour will not win back its 'red wall' by patronising the voters with class warfare

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Abusers turning to technology

Social media harassment and the use of technology such as hidden cameras and fitness trackers is recorded in up to three quarters of domestic abuse cases, according to police and charities. **Page 18**

EU fears new migrant surge

The European Union fears that the Libyan civil war could propel a surge of refugees into Europe, according to a leaked report. It said that Libya's coastguard could be "rapidly overwhelmed" by migrants. **Page 33**

Beijing tries to calm investors

China is injecting £130 billion into its financial system as the authorities battle the impact of the coronavirus outbreak. A big sell-off in Chinese markets was expected today after they reopened. **Page 35**

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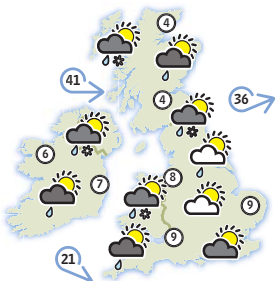
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THE WEATHER



Blustery with showers in the north and west. Drier and brighter elsewhere. **Full forecast, page 51**

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Ex-forces chief warns against overhaul of defence spending

Lucy Fisher Defence Editor

A former military chief has warned ministers against launching an “excruciating and debilitating” exercise in overhauling the way the Ministry of Defence spends billions of pounds on equipment.

General Lord Houghton of Richmond suggested that enhancing international alliances was a better strategy to boost Britain’s hard power, as the government prepares to launch a Whitehall review of foreign policy, defence and security this month. The transformation of military procurement is expected to form part of the review and is thought to be a personal priority for Dominic Cummings, Boris Johnson’s most senior aide.

Lord Houghton, 65, declared that the military budget was overstretched but expressed caution over plans for yet another restructuring of purchase and acquisition processes as a solution. In a stark message last week he said that the UK was “struggling to afford the sustenance of the nuclear deterrent and

retain the totemic capabilities of a tier one power, without seriously hollowing out the resilience of its conventional force structure”.

Savings could be achieved by deepening co-operation with partner nations, he said, advising against “national military nostalgia” over maintaining sovereign assets clouding “rational judgment” about pooling resources. Nato was “unequalled anywhere in the world” in its aggregate conventional military capability, but its structures could be improved.

He advocated bolstering regional initiatives such as the Anglo-French Combined Joint Expeditionary Force, and the UK Joint Expeditionary Force, to which Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Sweden, Norway and the Baltic states contribute personnel and assets.

His view has been coloured by his close involvement in the past two strategic defence and security reviews, the last of which took place in 2015, when he was chief of defence staff. That, he said, was “a remarkable indulgence in political hubris”. The earlier review, in

2010, was an “unpretty attempt to fit an inflated defence programme to a much diminished budget”. The two were “failed exercises in achieving a sustainably affordable defence programme”.

He acknowledged that “we do not live in the most dangerous of times” but spoke of the rise of hybrid warfare; malevolent state activity below the conventional threshold of war.

This hybrid activity, which includes terrorism, sabotage, assassination, cyberattack and misinformation, “is a poorly considered national risk”, he said. Britain was well adapted for crisis response, but there was now a continuous fight for competitive advantage around the world that called for the creation of a “permanent national operational architecture” in the UK.

The remarks were made in a speech last week to the Global Strategy Forum, an independent foreign policy group founded by Michael Ancram, the Marquess of Lothian.

Lord Houghton said he hoped the imminent integrated review would be “truly profound” and strategic.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Terror knifeman shot dead

done to keep him behind bars. The PM has seen the detail and is clear that something needs to change. The public will see this and ask why this individual was not behind bars. The PM shares that view. He was under surveillance. The police acted incredibly quickly. They did everything they could have done. The issue is why was he released from prison in the first place.”

There is growing concern that the prison service is already over-burdened and that extending sentences for jihad-ists could have an adverse effect.

Paul Stott, research fellow at the Henry Jackson Society, said: “The challenge of dealing with so many radicalised Islamists has been critically undermined by automatic release dates. We need an immediate moratorium on the release of terrorist prisoners whilst the government reviews each individual case.”

The relatively low-profile choice of location for yesterday’s attack has raised concerns that Amman had realised he was being watched.

Deputy Assistant Commissioner Lucy D’Orsi said: “The situation has been contained and officers from the Met’s Counter Terrorism Command are now leading an investigation into the incident. The incident was quickly declared as a terrorist incident and we believe it to be Islamist-related.”

Terror attack, pages 4-5

There is a place for private sector, Nandy tells Labour

Chris Smyth Whitehall Editor

Lisa Nandy has warned her rivals for the Labour leadership against “simplistic” attacks on the private sector as candidates seek to out-do each other in their backing for public ownership.

Emily Thornberry, the shadow foreign secretary, also risked praise for Tony Blair’s 1997 pledge cards as she told party members that Labour’s recent manifesto “bombarded” voters with so many policies that even she struggled to keep up with them.

Sir Keir Starmer, the shadow Brexit secretary and consistent favourite to succeed Jeremy Corbyn, is seeking to present himself as a radical who can unite the party. He used a leadership hustings in Cardiff yesterday to promise to retain the party’s plan for big tax rises on those earning more than £80,000. It is “right to ask those with the broadest shoulders . . . to pay more”, he said.

He, Ms Thornberry and Rebecca Long Bailey, the shadow business secretary, all gave a straight “no” when asked if they had thought privatisation had brought any benefits.

However, Ms Nandy warned: “I think no, but I think this binary debate where

we don’t recognise that there is a role to bringing the private sector in order to enlist their help in raising standards is a real problem. . . I think our members and the public deserve better.”

She clashed with Ms Long Bailey, the favoured candidate of those around Mr Corbyn, over “stitch-ups” where friends of the leadership were selected as Labour candidates “over and above the choice of local party members”. Ms Long Bailey insisted: “We shouldn’t have top-down selections of our MPs”.

Ms Thornberry, who is yet to secure enough backing from local parties to make it on to the ballot, attacked the party’s last general election manifesto.

“We were completely overwhelmed,” she said. “It was a 15-year programme not a five-year one and kept making announcements, four or five a day. I was having difficulty keeping up with it.”

In a potentially controversial reference to Mr Blair’s focused messaging in 1997, she added: “I don’t want to go back to the 1990s — apart from maybe winning elections. And one of the ways we won elections is by having a pledge card and having five priorities. We need to be able to prioritise what it is we stand for so that people don’t feel overwhelmed.”

Clare Foges, page 23

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Brexit trade row

Canada made only a broad commitment not to cut workers’ rights in an effort to attract investment. “We have often been told that we must choose between full access to the EU market, along with accepting its rules and courts on the Norway model, or an ambitious free trade agreement, which opens up markets and avoids the full panoply of EU regulation, on the example of Canada,” Mr Johnson will say.

“We have made our choice: we want a free trade agreement, similar to Canada’s, but in the very unlikely event that we do not succeed then our trade will have to be based on our existing withdrawal agreement with the EU.”

Brussels says that, given Britain’s size and location, more specific commitments than those made by Canada will

be demanded. Mr Johnson will say that this is not on the table and, if Brussels insists on it, Britain will fall back on a much looser arrangement.

“The question is whether we agree a trading relationship with the EU comparable to Canada’s or more like Australia’s,” he will say. “In either case, I have no doubt that Britain will prosper.”

Although Mr Johnson will say that “the choice is emphatically not ‘deal or no-deal’”, Australia does not have a free trade agreement and its partnership arrangement with the EU involves widespread tariffs on goods and agricultural products.

Britain will seek deals with New Zealand, Australia and Japan alongside EU negotiations, Mr Johnson will say as he demands that Brussels treats Britain as “equals”. UK representatives to international institutions will sit separately and no longer follow European direc-

tion, he will say. Dominic Raab, the foreign secretary, set the confrontational tone yesterday when he said that agreeing to align with EU rules would “defeat the point of Brexit”.

He said that Britain was “entering these negotiations with a spirit of goodwill”, but stated bluntly: “Legislative alignment just ain’t happening and we’d better be clear about that from the outset because we don’t want to waste anyone’s time.”

Mr Raab accused the EU of trying to “shift the goalposts” as he expressed frustration about EU conditions for a Canada-style deal. “We obviously would expect commitments on both sides to be lived up to,” he told the BBC. “We just need to be very clear that the Canada-style agreement doesn’t involve regulatory alignment.”

Taoiseach warns Johnson, pages 8-9
Leading article, page 27

And now for something completely different...

In one of his last acts, the Monty Python star Terry Jones helped to bring Chaucer to a new digital audience, writes **David Sanderson**

It takes a serious humorist to know one: that's the verdict of the historians who have unveiled the last project involving Terry Jones.

The late Monty Python star, also an author and medievalist, has been revealed as a pivotal figure in a groundbreaking app that brings to life the works of Geoffrey Chaucer, whose 14th-century stories can be surprisingly bawdy and subversive.

Richard North, a medievalist at University College London, said that Jones had been an early enthusiast for the project, with a "memorable" dinner at the Red Inn pub near his home in north London sealing his involvement.

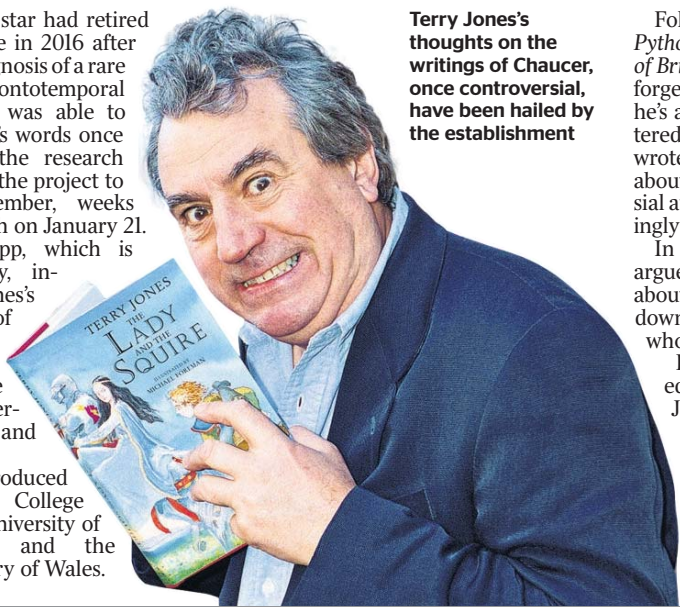
"He was a serious historian," Professor North said. "There was a lot of energy there, a lot of comedy and good humour, and intelligence."

Jones provided academic research and gave what turned out to be one of his last interviews to the team behind a treasure trove of new material on Chaucer's *General Prologue*, regarded as the key element of *The Canterbury Tales*.

The Python star had retired from public life in 2016 after receiving a diagnosis of a rare form of frontotemporal dementia, but was able to "hear Chaucer's words once more" when the research team unveiled the project to him in December, weeks before his death on January 21.

The free app, which is released today, includes Jones's translation of the prologue from Chaucer's Middle English, performances and new research.

It has been produced by University College London, the University of Saskatchewan and the National Library of Wales.



Terry Jones's thoughts on the writings of Chaucer, once controversial, have been hailed by the establishment

Following the 1970s success of Monty Python's *Flying Circus* and the film *Life of Brian* — in which he delivers the unforgettable line: "He's not the Messiah, he's a very naughty boy" — Jones entered the field of Chaucerology. He wrote two books and advanced theories about the writer that were controversial at the time but which have increasingly gained traction.

In a 2003 co-publication Jones argued that Chaucer was murdered in about 1400 during a religious clamp-down by the Archbishop of Arundel, who objected to *The Canterbury Tales*.

In an interview on the app, recorded as he was retiring from public life, Jones explains his admiration for Chaucer's literary innovations. "It is very different," he says of *The Canterbury Tales*. "The Book of the Duchess, Parlement of Foules, Troilus and Criseyde, The Legend of Good Women were built for a courtly audience, I think." He

adds that unlike other early narratives, such as the *The Arabian Nights* and Giovanni Boccaccio's *Decameron*, Chaucer's "characters interrupt each other, are more lively".

Professor North said that Jones's 1980 book on Chaucer had been hated by elder scholars but galvanised study of the key character of the Knight, with the Python star "pointing out things that no one else had seen". Peter Robinson, from the University of Saskatchewan, said that Jones's work and his passion for Chaucer had been inspiring.

The Canterbury Tales retain many mysteries, given that they were unfinished at the time of Chaucer's death and that scholars have had to reconstruct the text from more than 80 distinct manuscripts.

Mr North said that the purpose of the app was to "bring Chaucer forward and make him lively and interesting again".

Something, perhaps, that was never needed for Jones himself.



Record coin hoard found after 30-year hunt in field

Nadeem Badshah

A hoard of Iron Age coins worth an estimated £10 million has been officially recognised as the largest of its kind to be recovered in the British Isles.

Reg Mead and Richard Miles, both metal detectorists, discovered the Celtic coins in Jersey in 2012 after a 30-year search.

The final number of coins found in the collection has now been confirmed as 69,347, setting a Guinness World Record. The find surpasses the previous record for the largest collection of Iron Age coins of 54,951 found more than 40 years ago in Wiltshire.

Some of the treasure is now on display at La Hougue Bie Museum, in the Jersey parish of Grouville.

Olga Finch, curator of archaeology for Jersey Heritage, said: "We are not surprised at this achievement and are delighted that such an impressive archaeological item was discovered, examined and displayed in Jersey."



The 69,347 Iron Age Celtic coins were found by two detectorists in Jersey

Mr Mead and Mr Miles found the coins after spending decades searching in a field. They had received a tip-off in the 1980s from a woman who said she had spotted something that looked like silver buttons.

The hoard is thought to date from about 500BC and was discovered at a depth of only 3ft. The Roman and Celtic silver and gold coins were entombed under a hedge in a large mound of clay weighing three quarters of a tonne.

It has been declared treasure as defined by the Treasure Act 1996, which means it officially belongs to the Queen, although the finders are entitled to a reward.

Mr Mead and Mr Miles hope their hoard will stay in Jersey and ministers have discussed finding the funds to purchase it for the island.

The world's largest hoard of coins yet found was in Brussels in 1908 when 150,000 silver medieval pennies dating from the 13th century were uncovered.

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News Terror attack

He grabbed a knife near the till

Ben Ellery, David Brown

The pavements of Streatham High Road in south London were packed with lunchtime shoppers yesterday when the bearded man entered the Low Price Store just before 2pm.

Suddenly he grabbed a £3.99 knife from a display and rushed out to begin a bloody rampage. It was swiftly ended by a police bullet.

Kiranjeet Singh, 38, the store's owner, said that his brother was working at the shop when he noticed the customer, who "looked suspicious". "He recognised him because he had come in the week before and didn't buy anything," Mr Singh said. "My brother said he grabbed a ceramic 10 inch kitchen knife that was hanging by the till and ran outside."

The shoplifter turned left and ran towards the White Lion pub, where he attacked his first victim.

"My brother chased him but he tore off the wrapper and stabbed a woman in the back," Mr Singh said. "He stabbed another man in the side and he was more severely injured than the woman."

Gjon Kathegjolli, 33, an engineer from Crystal Palace, was walking to the barbers when he heard a woman screaming "Help me". "She had two young boys with her, around nine and ten," he said. "The knifeman looked extremely angry, like he was on the warpath. He was a big guy and had a metal tube strapped to him, it looked like a bomb."

Rafe Askem, 21, was smoking outside Maeme's takeaway when he heard a man screaming further along the road.

"I heard a shout, like an 'Ahhl!'," he said. "The next thing I saw was a guy on the floor with blood round him."

Gulled Bulhan, 19, a student from Streatham, was crossing the busy high street along the A23, one of the main roads south out of central London, when he saw a commotion. "I saw a

man with a machete and silver canisters on his chest being chased by what I assume was an undercover police officer," he said. "After that I ran into the library to get to safety."

One onlooker described seeing the knifeman running towards him as he was shot. The 45-year-old IT worker from Streatham, who asked not to be named, was on a bus when he saw a man carrying a large knife. "I saw this man running towards me, then collapse literally dead in front of the bus," he said. "He went into convulsions."

Witnesses said two men armed with handguns fired at the knifeman. Two other men with handguns jumped out of a black BMW and pulled ski masks over their faces. A series of shots left the knifeman convulsing on the pavement outside the Boots store as another plain-clothes police officer arrived on a motorcycle.

The number of shots was unclear. Some witnesses could not recall any gunfire. Others said it was two shots, some clearly recalled five in quick succession.

Police cars containing armed uniformed officers were on the scene within seconds. The plain-clothes officers who had moved away from the body followed their uniformed colleagues wearing body armour towards the lifeless body before kicking his knife away.

A second woman lay injured on the pavement after being hit by glass splintered by the police shots.

In the chaos a police car responding to 999 calls about the stabbing crashed in Streatham Common. Cinemagoers at Streatham Odeon were told "there's a bomb" before being evacuated.

Nardos Mulugeta, 52, a retired mechanical engineer from Streatham, was smoking when he heard a commotion further up the road.

"I saw the two people who had been stabbed. The man had a big gash in his side and looked badly injured," he said. "I went over and I saw a male victim on the ground, near the White Lion pub, and people were helping him."

"The woman who was stabbed was a white lady, in her early forties. She was kneeling on the ground and said, 'He stabbed me as well.'"

David Chawner, 31, a stand-up comedian who appears on TalkRadio, was on his way to the cinema when he saw someone "bump into" a person, who fell to the ground.

"I saw someone on the floor. I thought they had been Tasered. They were lying on their side and they were reaching out. Two police armed officers were keeping their guns on the victim. I dumped my bag. I was going to the cinema so I had a blanket with me. I got the blanket out to compress the bleeding."

"The police were calm-headed and resourceful; however it took well over 30 minutes [for an ambulance to arrive] while an innocent victim bled out on the street."

Pam Jenkins, 52, was on her way to a nail salon and hid in a bakery after hearing gunshots. "Five minutes later I saw armed police, at least two or three near Sainsbury's across the road, some of the shops started to shut their shutters and go into lockdown. I saw the armed police carrying big rifles."

"When I was in the bakery everyone outside was watching and filming on the street corner, everyone inside was leaning up against the inside watching. Then about five minutes after the incident armed police shouted, 'Everyone get back.'"

Some of those who helped the injured complained about the time it took for ambulance crew to arrive but the London Ambulance Service said the first staff had arrived at the scene four minutes after being called at 1.58pm.



Plain-clothes police point guns at the knifeman, while later uniformed police were on guard. Blood-covered items were left in

Profile

Sudesh Amman kept a notebook in which he wrote that his goals in life were: "Die as a shuhada" [martyr] and "go to jannah" [paradise].

Amman was aged 18 when he admitted 13 terror offences at the Old Bailey in December 2018, including talk of slaughtering apostates with a sharp knife. He was jailed for three years and four months and released only days before yesterday's attack.

The teenager was studying science and maths at North West London College when he sent Isis recruitment material to a family WhatsApp group that included younger brothers aged between 11 and 15. He had also told his online girlfriend that she should kill her "kuffar [infidel] parents" and that he was ready to launch an attack.

He was arrested after posting an image to an encrypted forum of a knife along with two firearms on an Isis flag and the Arabic words: "Armed and ready." When police searched the home where he lived with his mother and younger brothers, they found a notebook in which he had noted down bomb-making instructions. He had also downloaded manuals showing how to kill people, including one called *Blood Brazilian Knife-Fighting Techniques*.

then ran out and began stabbing

Security services must balance public safety and gathering proof

Behind the story

Counterterrorism officers and security services keeping terror suspects under surveillance are constantly forced to choose between taking the target off the street and observing them for long enough to build a case (John Simpson and Duncan Gardham write).

The choice between “letting them run” and bringing them in can be the difference between securing enough evidence to jail a suspect and a failed prosecution. It can also mean life or death.

In recent years, “low-tech” attacks with knives and vehicles, as well as trying to build bombs or acquire guns, have reduced the security services’ appetite for risk. Putting officers out on the ground to monitor suspects is costly and labour-intensive, and follows a thorough assessment that often has to be urgently completed.

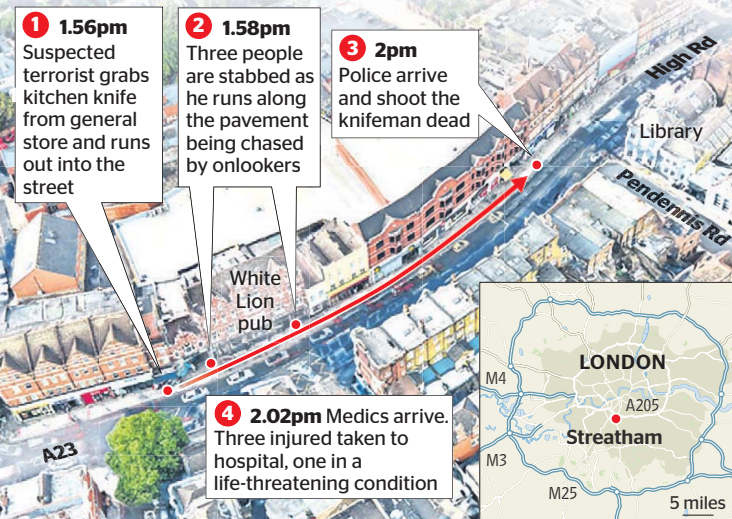
MI5 and the police form joint teams when they are concerned that terrorist suspects may be planning attacks. These “executive liaison committees” always put public safety first, sometimes to the extent that they are left short of the evidence they need to secure a conviction. In many cases they raid houses when suspects are talking about plans, before they have bought weapons, and suspects then deny intending to act on such talk.

Whenever they spot an individual buying a weapon, or suspect they may already have done so, they will move to “executive action” and make an arrest. The fear is that they may have already armed themselves, either from their kitchen supplies or having bought an item before they were under surveillance.

MI5 is also aware that individuals can improvise as the Streatham suspect did — going into a shop or jumping into a vehicle.

There have been a handful of

How the attack unfolded



recent cases in which MI5 was following individuals, unaware that they had already armed themselves.

One such case was Khalid Ali, who was under surveillance by MI5 as he walked from Victoria to Westminster to launch an attack on Downing Street but the team lost him in the crowd. They caught him as he crossed Whitehall, just yards from the gates of Downing Street, where he was arrested in front of startled sightseers on April 27 2017. Ali's mother had called police the night before his planned attack after finding knives in his bedroom.

A surveillance team watched him re-arm at a shop in Ealing, west London, the next morning. They followed him on to a Tube train into central London and called in a firearms team to intercept him.

Ali, a gas fitter from north London who spent years building bombs for the Taliban, was given three life sentences.

Brusthom Ziamani, a Muslim convert, was arrested as he roamed the streets with a hammer, a knife

and an Islamic flag, searching for a victim in August 2014. Ziamani, then 19, was said to be within hours of carrying out his plan to murder a soldier or police officer and wanted to hold up the severed head for a friend to photograph.

Police had searched the house where he was staying amid concerns that he had fallen under the influence of one of the followers of the radical cleric Anjem Choudary.

After discovering a letter he had written to his parents in which he pledged that “British soldiers’ heads will be removed and burned” they put Ziamani under 24-hour surveillance, but were unaware he had already armed himself.

Judge Timothy Pontius said it was an “unavoidable and entirely justifiable conclusion” that Ziamani was looking for another Lee Rigby, the soldier who was murdered in 2013, but “if he couldn’t find a soldier, I have little doubt that a police officer or another figure of authority would have suited his purpose just as well.”

Copcats try to commit ‘suicide by cop’

Duncan Gardham, John Simpson

The Streatham incident followed an increasingly common pattern in Islamist terrorism whereby attackers seek “martyrdom” by wearing a fake suicide vest, prompting officers to shoot them.

The killers responsible for the London Bridge terror attack in June 2017 all wore the vests and their tactics seem to have influenced later incidents.

Suicide is forbidden under Islam but attackers are often intent on reaching paradise by the fastest means possible and “suicide by cop” has become an increasingly attractive option.

Scotland Yard confirmed last night that a “hoax device” was found on the dead suspect. Witnesses described seeing the knifeman wearing a vest with several silver canisters strapped across it.

Khuram Butt, Rachid Redouane and Youseff Zagbba all wore fake suicide belts, made out of plastic bottles wrapped in silver tape, during their attack on London Bridge. The bottles



One of the fake suicide belts worn by the London Bridge terrorists in 2017

had been made by Redouane in his flat in east London and served no obvious purpose, other than to make police and the public fear for their lives and to give firearms officers no choice but to shoot to kill. A City of London Police officer told the London Bridge inquests that

one of the killers had “what I believed was an [improvised explosive device] on his chest”. He shouted a challenge but it had no effect. “I thought that I was going to get stabbed and that if it was a viable IED, it was going to explode. I kept firing until that male hit the floor and was neutralised.”

In Redouane's rented bedsit above a betting shop police found silver tape used for the fake belts, along with packets of superglue and craft knives.

When Usman Khan stabbed two Cambridge University criminologists to death last November near London Bridge he was also wearing a fake suicide belt. Police have never specified how Khan made his belt, but images showed two straps of silver tape around his torso and a number of silver items taped to him.

A terrorism prisoner called Brusthom Ziamani and another inmate launched an attack inside HMP White-moor in Cambridgeshire last month, using improvised bladed weapons and wearing fake suicide belts.



the street, and while some people were traumatised others helped the wounded



West Highland spring This terrier was given a lift through the snowdrops at Welford Park in Newbury. Today will be blustery and cold for most. Forecast, page 51

Innocent are left with enormous bills after cutbacks in legal aid

Rosa Ellis, Jonathan Ames

Tens of thousands of people have been left out of pocket after being acquitted of serious crimes over the past four years because the government ended the reimbursement of legal fees.

More than 120,000 acquitted defendants have had to pay significant legal bills after Whitehall cut legal aid, official figures obtained by *The Times* reveal.

Since 2014, when a means test for criminal legal aid was introduced, more than 126,000 defendants have paid for lawyers in crown court trials and been acquitted. They accounted for a third of crown court trials over that period.

A cap limiting how much of their costs acquitted defendants can claim back means that those found not guilty can pay thousands of pounds in legal fees.

Justice campaigners have called the charge “the innocence tax” and claim that it can “wipe out life savings”.

Defence lawyers fear that the likelihood of being unable to recoup legal costs on acquittal will encourage defendants to act for themselves in the crown courts, which one specialist said was as “ill-advisable as performing your own heart surgery”.

Ian Kelcey, a senior criminal defence solicitor, called on the government to “think about the reintroduction of reimbursing legal costs for acquitted defendants from central funds”.

Mr Kelcey and other campaigners claim that while acquitted defendants are able to claim back their costs at legal aid rates, doing so leaves them out of pocket because the government has set those rates so low.

“Defendants paying privately often pay as much as three times as much as they would be reimbursed at legal rates,” the lawyer said.

In 2014, Nigel Evans, the Conservative MP and former deputy speaker of the Commons, was cleared of rape and sexual assault charges but had to pay

£130,000 in legal costs, which he said were all his savings.

At the time, he told *The Mail on Sunday* that people “dragged through the courts through no fault of their own” and then found not guilty should “get their legal fees back from the Crown Prosecution Service budget”.

Mr Evans backed the move to means test legal aid, admitting two years later, after his acquittal, that he regretted having done so.

Under the present means test, defendants facing crown court trials are not eligible for legal aid if their joint household disposable income exceeds £37,500 after tax. Acquitted defendants can claim back some costs, but only those who initially apply for legal aid and were rejected are able to do so.

Caroline Goodwin, QC, chairwoman of the Criminal Bar Association, described the situation as “outrageous”. She said that the earnings threshold for legal aid eligibility needed urgent review. “For seven years now we have

in effect left whole swathes of often hard-working innocent people at the mercy of an inequitable tax from the state,” she said.

Ms Goodwin said that the relative scale of legal bills to people who have disposable income just above the threshold “can be the equivalent of one, two or even three times a person’s annual earnings after tax”.

“Savings can be wiped out or huge debts built up just to prove your innocence through a fair trial. This cannot be right if we truly believe in equal access to justice”.

Judges and lawyers claim that cuts to legal aid eligibility have triggered a dangerous rise of litigants in person — people appearing in court without a lawyer — in civil law disputes.

Criminal defence lawyers now fear a similar rise of unrepresented people in the crown courts. This would leave defendants “more vulnerable to conviction for crimes they didn’t commit”, Ms Goodwin said.

Solicitors flee dinner as fire hits Law Society HQ

Jonathan Ames Legal Editor
Catherine Baksi

Scores of firefighters battled a blaze that broke out on Saturday night at the headquarters of the Law Society in Chancery Lane, central London.

Twenty-five fire engines and about 150 firefighters were called to the grade II listed headquarters of the solicitors’ profession as the fire burnt through the night and into the morning.

Officials said that 28 people left the building before the London Fire Bri-



About 150 firefighters were called to the blaze at the society’s headquarters

gade arrived and another 11 were evacuated from nearby flats as a precaution. No injuries were reported and an investigation into the cause has begun.

Dom Ellis, the brigade’s assistant commissioner, described the fire as “very complex... due to the age and layout of the building”.

The junior lawyers’ division of the society was having its annual dinner at the building, which opened in 1832. Charlotte Parkinson, chairwoman of the junior lawyers, said: “We’d had dinner and were having coffee when the

fire alarm sounded. The staff handled it so well. We weren’t sure if it was a test or a real fire until we got outside. The main thing is that no one was hurt.”

Paul Tennant, the society’s chief executive, said: “Clearly we are extremely upset that this has happened to this wonderful and historic building.”

About 40 people were attending the dinner, including David Greene, the Law Society’s vice-president who played a pivotal role in one of the legal challenges over Brexit that was heard by the Supreme Court.

Quintagram® No 602

Solve all five clues using each letter underneath once only

1 Obsolete recording medium (4)

2 Puzzle compiler (6)

3 Leafy vegetable (7)

4 Marine food fish (7)

5 Songbird with a flickering tail (8)

A	A	A	A	B	B	C	D
E	E	E	E	E	E	G	G
H	I	N	P	R	R	R	R
R	S	S	T	T	T	T	T

Solutions MindGames in Times2
Cryptic clues every day online

Coroner lottery claim

Bereaved families and taxpayers are being poorly served by a “postcode lottery” in coroner investigations, campaigners say. The Medical Protection Society said investigations were often “unnecessarily prolonged and expensive”. In some parts of the country a coroner’s investigation into a patient’s death would take place, but a comparable incident elsewhere might be resolved at hospital level. It called for the creation of a national coroner service in England and Wales.

Brexit signs inquiry

Signs wishing residents of a block of flats a Happy Brexit Day and ordering them to “evolve or go home” are being investigated as racially aggravating. The signs were attached to fire doors in Winchester Tower, Norwich, on Friday. One said the “Queens [sic] English” was the spoken tongue. Norfolk police said there was no place for hatred or intolerance.

Slaves ran drug farm

Three Vietnamese men accused of running a cannabis farm in Scunthorpe have had the case against them dropped after Grimsby crown court was told that they were slaves who had been trafficked there and given only rice and water to live on. The farm contained about 15,000 cannabis plants with an estimated value of up to £4 million.

Six rescued from mud

Emergency workers put in a “back-breaking” effort to free six people who became trapped on mudflats. One person was stuck waist-deep in mud near the Hoburne Naish Holiday Park at Barton on Sea, Hampshire, on Saturday evening and the others became stuck trying to help. Three people needed to be dug out, which took three hours.

Strike at Foreign Office

Cleaners and maintenance staff working at the Foreign Office will go on a month-long strike over terms and conditions. The Public and Commercial Services union said: “We call upon the foreign secretary Dominic Raab to put an end to contracting out of services.” Interserve, the workers’ employer, said the union had refused to engage in talks.

Prince takes aim at the Baftas on night of glory for 1917 and Mendes

David Sanderson Arts Correspondent

The film is *1917* and it is taking 2020 by storm — but the entire film industry was put on notice by the Duke of Cambridge last night that it needed to wake up to the future.

Sir Sam Mendes's war epic was the overwhelming winner at last night's Baftas ceremony, which was overshadowed by a royal warning about the industry's failure to ensure that female directors and non-white actors and actresses were getting recognition.

The duke, who has been president of the British academy for a decade, said it "simply cannot be right in this day and age" to be "talking again about the need to do more to ensure diversity in the sector and in the awards process".

This year's nominations, voted on by more than 6,000 members of Bafta, had no non-white people in the main acting categories. The best film and director categories were dominated by men.

The duke said that while Britain's film industry had "incredible film-makers, actors, producers, directors and technicians, men and women from all backgrounds and ethnicities enriching our lives through film", many were being excluded.

Micheal Ward, the black British actor who won the rising star award partly in recognition of his performances in the television drama *Top Boy* and the film *Blue Story*, said he thought that the industry was "going in the right direction".

"That's what I want to show, especially with something like this, to show there's a lot more opportunities for people like me," he said after winning his award. "It's not like before."

Last night's ceremony at the Royal Albert Hall was peppered with references to the diversity row. For example Margot Robbie and Scarlett Johansson received four out of the ten main female acting nominations but there were no non-white actresses.

There was home-grown pride, however, in the success of *1917*, Mendes's "one shot" film set in the trenches of the First World War. Its cinematographer, the Devon-born Roger Deakins, 70, said on receiving his award that it was "George Orwell that said some films are more special than others". "This one was really special," he added.

The film won seven awards, including best film and best director for Mendes, adding to his success at the Golden Globes last month. It is now the clear frontrunner for the Oscars on Sunday. He was the first British winner of best director since Danny Boyle's 2009 success with *Slumdog Millionaire*. Krysty Wilson-Cairns, who co-wrote



Renée Zellweger, Sam Mendes, Florence Pugh, Scarlett Johansson and Charlize Theron graced the red carpet at the 73rd Baftas. The Duchess of Cambridge, arriving with Prince William, wore an Alexander McQueen dress first seen in 2012

The award goes to ...

Best film 1917
Outstanding British film 1917
Best director Sam Mendes for *1917*
Leading actor Joaquin Phoenix, *Joker*
Leading actress Renée Zellweger for *Judy*
Best supporting actor Brad Pitt for *Once Upon a Time in Hollywood*
Original screenplay *Parasite*
Best documentary *For Sama*
Rising star Micheal Ward
Casting Shayna Markowitz for *Joker*
Outstanding British contribution to cinema Andy Serkis
Cinematography Roger Deakins for *1917*
Outstanding debut *Bait*
Special visual effects 1917
Best film not in English *Parasite*
Best supporting actress Laura Dern for *Marriage Story*
Best editing Le Mans '66
Production design 1917
Costume design Jacqueline Durran for *Little Women*
Best original score Hildur Guonadottir for *Joker*
Sound 1917
British short animation *Grandad Was A Romantic*
British short film *Learning To Skateboard In A Warzone*
Best animated film *Klaus*
Make-up and hair Bombshell
Adapted screenplay Taika Waititi for *Jojo Rabbit*

the script with Mendes, said last night that it was a "quintessentially British" film.

There were flashes of humour throughout the night, with Robbie, who failed to turn her shortlisting into victories, collecting the best supporting actor award on behalf of the absent Brad Pitt.

Pitt, who has a number of failed romantic relationships behind him, was apparently unavailable because of a "family obligation". Through Robbie, he brought a grimace to British faces. "Hey Britain," Pitt's message read. "Heard you just became single, welcome to the club, wishing you the best with the divorce settlement."

He then revealed that his Bafta award would be named Harry and, with the Duke of Cambridge in the crowd, said he was "really excited about bringing it back to the States".

One winner present to receive her award was Laura Dern who, 45 years after her mother, Diana Ladd, won the same award with her performance in *Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore*, won best supporting actress for her role in *Marriage Story*.

We must do more to overcome racism in film, says Phoenix

David Sanderson

Joaquin Phoenix denounced the film industry last night as he called on it to "do the hard work to truly understand systemic racism".

Phoenix, named best actor for his role in *Joker*, said that he felt "conflicted [winning the award] because so many of my fellow actors who are deserving don't have that privilege".

Referring to the all-white acting shortlists and reiterating the Duke of Cambridge's call that the industry

needed more diversity, Phoenix said: "We send a very clear message to people of colour that you are not welcome here, people who have contributed so much to our medium and industry which we benefit from."

"I am part of the problem," he added. "I have not done everything in my power to ensure that all the sets I work on are inclusive."

"I think it is the obligation of the people who have created and perpetuate and benefit from a system of oppression to be the ones to dismantle it. So

that is on us." He made his comments after the chairwoman of Britain's Time's Up campaign said that Bafta was in the last chance saloon.

Dame Heather Rabbatts said that the organisation needed to ensure that its members watched all the films nominated for awards, not only those with big marketing budgets.

She said that unless there were a root and branch reform of the voting system there was a "real danger — that would be a tragedy — that all this talent will feel that these ceremonies are not for

them". Bafta has promised to review its voting processes after this year's shortlists failed to include any female directors for the main awards and the main acting categories were dominated by white people.

Last night Dame Pippa Harris, the academy's chairwoman, said the lack of female directors and non-white actors getting nominated was an "industry-wide issue". "It takes everyone to look at what they're doing," she said. "Awards are right at the end of a whole process and so we need to look at the types of

films being made, the opportunities people are getting, how the films are promoted. All these things play a part."

Dame Heather said that Bafta should be more open about the diversity of its membership and find a way to ensure "that those films that don't have a great marketing pitch behind them are raised up the order of viewing".

There were 269 films in consideration for this year's Baftas, meaning that the 6,500 members would, if an average of two hours were given per film, take 13.5 working days to watch them all.

News Brexit

Tone down EU rhetoric, Varadkar warns Britain

Chris Smyth Whitehall Editor

The Irish prime minister has attacked Britain's "nationalist rhetoric" as EU leaders reacted badly to Boris Johnson's hardline opening salvo in the next stage of Brexit talks.

Leo Varadkar urged Mr Johnson not

to "repeat the errors of the past two and a half years" by talking so tough it made compromise harder.

After Mr Johnson insisted that he had no intention of eroding workers' rights, ditching environmental standards or subsidising business, Mr Varadkar demanded to know why

Britain was refusing to sign a deal confirming this.

Mr Varadkar accused the British government of being immature as he reacted to "petty" instructions from Downing Street for British ambassadors to sit separately from EU ones in order to emphasise the UK's independ-

ence in international institutions. With London and Brussels talking tough as both set out their negotiating aims today for next month's talks, Mr Varadkar made a plea for things to "start off on a better footing".

The taoiseach, who is behind in the polls with the general election on Saturday, urged: "Let's not repeat some of the errors that we've made in the past two and a half years. Let's not set such rigid red lines that it makes it hard to come to an agreement, and let's tone down the kind of nationalistic rhetoric."

Dominic Raab, the foreign secretary, had earlier told Sky News: "We're taking back control of our laws so we're not going to have high alignment with the EU, legislative alignment with their rules, but we'll want to co-operate and we expect the EU to follow through on their commitment to a Canada-style free trade agreement."

However, Mr Varadkar was adamant that the EU deal with Britain would have to differ from the one made with Canada. "Canada isn't the UK. You know, you're geographically part of the European continent, we share seas, we share airspace, and our economies are very integrated," he said. "One thing that we feel very strongly in the European Union is that if we're going to have tariff-free, quota-free trade with the UK, which is essentially what we have with Canada on almost everything, then that needs to come with a level playing field."

Mr Varadkar said such rules would ensure that Britain did not give its companies "huge amounts of grants and state aid" to compete unfairly with EU firms. "We have to make sure that we have common rules around issues like that — and also of course labour standards, environmental standards, product standards," he said.

He insisted that he believed Mr Johnson when he said Britain did not want to undercut the EU on workers' rights, environmental protection and food standards, but argued: "If that is the case, and we all accept that, why is there a problem writing that into law, into an international treaty so that we all have that assurance?"

Michel Barnier, the EU's chief negotiator, has warned that Brussels will adopt a different tone now that Britain is no longer a member state, saying European interests must come first.

Stefaan de Rynck, an adviser to Mr Barnier, expressed the EU's frustration on regulatory alignment. He said yesterday that when the European Council said in March 2018 that it was ready to work towards a free-trade deal "insofar as there are sufficient guarantees for a level playing field" it was not exactly being ambiguous about it, was it?

The declaration that accompanied Mr Johnson's withdrawal deal also stipulated that, given Britain's location and deep links to the EU, any deal must include "robust commitments to ensure a level playing field".

Mr Varadkar, however, hinted at compromise over an EU demand that the European Court of Justice adjudicate trade disputes. "It may not necessarily be the European Court of Justice but there will have to be some sort of mechanism," he said.

He suggested that Brussels was open to a panel of judges from both sides as an arbitration mechanism.

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Leading article, page 27

Business anger, page 35



You are the loonies now, Farage tells Remainers

Nigel Farage has said that Remainers are now the "fruitcakes and loonies" as he told them to stop ranting and accept Britain has left the EU (Chris Smyth writes).

The Brexit party leader warned Boris Johnson that he would "ring the alarm bell" if the government gave too much ground in trade talks, promising that he would scrutinise the process even though he no longer holds office.

His party would continue to exist as an "insurance policy" even though it had achieved its primary goal, he told *The Andrew Marr Show* on BBC One.

During the election campaign Mr Farage stood down in Tory-held seats after Mr Johnson

Tusk: Brussels

Chris Smyth

Dominic Raab has rebuked a senior European leader for suggesting that the EU would welcome an application for membership from an independent Scotland.

The foreign secretary said that the comment by Donald Tusk, former head of the European Council, could worsen secessionist tendencies across Europe.

Nicola Sturgeon, the Scottish first minister, has urged the EU to "leave a light on for Scotland", which voted heavily to remain in the bloc, and is seeking to use Brexit to build support for independence.

Boris Johnson has rebuffed her

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HOLLIE ADAMS/GETTY IMAGES

MPs join forces to call for friendship pact with Germany

Oliver Moody Berlin

A British MP and his German counterpart have called for a post-Brexit “treaty of friendship” between the two nations as concerns grow in Berlin that cross-Channel relations could turn increasingly hostile.

The Anglo-German pact could enshrine joint security and foreign policy goals as well as common science projects and exchanges between schools and universities.

The idea is an early instance of an expected “bilateralisation” of the UK’s ties with the Continent, as European governments seek to forge customised relationships with London in keeping with their individual interests.

It also reflects an anxiety that this year’s trade negotiations may further toxify the atmosphere between Britain and the EU.

The proposal is set out in *The Times* below by Norbert Röttgen, head of the Bundestag’s foreign affairs committee, and Tom Tugendhat, a Conservative MP who is standing for re-election as his counterpart in the Commons.

The two MPs believe that it is time to “rethink the bilateral relations between EU member states and the UK”.

Although the proposal sets out a substantially shallower deal than the Aachen treaty between Germany and France, which includes cross-border economic zones and military procurement, it would nevertheless mark a significant shift in British diplomacy.

Since 2016 the UK has tried in vain to peel away individual EU members and recruit them as allies in the wrangling

over the withdrawal agreement. Brexiters repeatedly prophesied that Germany’s carmakers would ultimately persuade Angela Merkel to offer Britain generous terms of exit.

That did not happen. Yet now that Britain has left the EU and the future relationship is being shaped, European powers including France, Germany and Italy may have more freedom to speak directly to London without being seen to compromise the bloc’s unity.

Mr Tugendhat and Dr Röttgen stress that the German-British treaty would “complement whatever the UK agreed with the 27 member states”. But they point out that as Britain’s diplomatic presence in Brussels is downgraded, its embassies in other European capitals will assume greater importance.

They also note that the two states have for decades largely pursued the same objectives on the international stage. Together with France, Britain and Germany have operated as an informal axis of European powers known as the E3, sometimes with a markedly different agenda from the US.

Neither of the MPs speaks for their governments. Mr Tugendhat, 46, a former Territorial Army officer, has been broadly loyal to Theresa May and Boris Johnson but lobbied for greater powers to be handed to the Foreign Office. Dr Röttgen, 54, is a member of Mrs Merkel’s Christian Democratic Union and served in the chancellor’s cabinet as environment minister. He has, however, opposed some aspects of her foreign policy, including her decision to allow Huawei to bid for work on building Germany’s 5G network.



promised to pursue a Canada-style free trade deal with the EU rather than accept following European rules.

Mr Farage said yesterday that Mr Johnson was “saying all the right things” but pledged that he would not quit frontline politics as he did briefly after success in the 2016 referendum. “I’m not going to walk away this time. The Brexit party will still be here it will be more an insurance policy in case things go wrong,” he said.

Mr Farage promised he would

“praise the government to the high heavens if they’re getting it right and ring the alarm bell if they’re getting it wrong”.

David Cameron once called supporters of Ukip under Mr Farage’s leadership “fruitcakes, loonies and closet racists”. Yesterday Mr Farage pointed to a newspaper column suggesting the roles had been reversed after remainers such as Alastair Campbell said they would refuse to use a 50p coin marking Brexit. “What I’d say to all of those

Nigel Farage holds up a commemorative 50p piece to mark Brexit day, left

people is come on, get with it, it’s happening,” he said. “Who are the fruitcakes and loonies now? Which having had that jibe directed at me many times, I’m now rather enjoying it.”

Last week Mr Farage ended two decades as an MEP and after the Brexit party failed to win any Westminster seats in December’s election he has no elected representatives at national level. However, he said with social media “we have the ability to reach very large numbers of people without letters after our name”.

Fear in the EU of what Britain may do after Brexit meant that “for the first time, they’re a little bit more frightened of us than we are of them,” he said.

Mr Johnson should threaten to undercut Brussels on regulation if Britain did not get its way in trade talks, he said. “What they fear more than anything is a competitor on their doorstep, that terrifies them. What we should be doing is ensuring we are a competitor.”

would welcome Scotland with open arms

demands for another referendum but as Britain left the EU, she promised that “Scotland will return to the heart of Europe as an independent country”.

Mr Tusk, who stepped down from his role in speaking for EU member states in December, said he felt “like I’m Scottish, especially after Brexit”.

Asked on *The Andrew Marr Show* on BBC One about the prospect of an independent Scotland applying to join the EU, Mr Tusk said: “Emotionally I have no doubt that everyone will be enthusiastic here in Brussels, and more generally in Europe. If you ask me about our emotions, you will witness I think always empathy.”

He said there would be “formalities”

if Scotland applied to join and approval would not be automatic, however warmly EU leaders felt.

Mr Raab criticised Mr Tusk’s comments when asked about them on the same programme. “I think it was frankly rather un-European and rather irresponsible, given the secessionist tendencies in Spain, in France, in Italy. I’m not sure that European leaders, let alone here in the UK, would actually welcome that kind of language,” he said.

However, Alyn Smith, an SNP MP, said: “Donald Tusk’s comments underline the reality that Scotland would be welcomed back into the EU with open arms as an independent country.”

A YouGov poll published on the eve of Britain’s departure from the European Union found a slim majority favouring Scottish independence for the first time in five years. Yes was ahead by 51 to 49 per cent as Remainers swung towards independence and overturned a 56-44 lead in favour of the union in the same poll in December.

The poll found that 21 per cent of those who voted against independence in 2014 but backed Remain two years later had changed their minds on Scotland remaining in the union. However, 56 per cent of Scots are still opposed to holding another independence referendum this year.

We must take this chance to strengthen ties that bind us

Tom Tugendhat and Norbert Röttgen
Comment

After 47 years of integration, Brexit not only changes the relationship between Britain and the EU, it also requires us to rethink bilateral relations between member states and the UK. While we have different perspectives on Brexit, we agree that it is now time to move on.

Many aspects of our future relationship will be organised at the European level but some issues are bilateral and require stronger direct ties. We think it’s time for a German-British Friendship Treaty, which would regulate enhanced co-operation and strengthen our shared values, cultural and educational policy and, yes, our foreign affairs. A treaty would complement whatever the UK agreed with the 27 member states and deepen our bonds.

One of the first consequences of Brexit will be that officials, ministers and parliamentarians from our two countries will no longer meet regularly in Brussels. We need to ensure understanding remains strong, ramping up our embassy staff and cultural and educational programmes.

Irrespective of the UK’s decision

on remaining a full member of the Erasmus exchange programme after 2020, we should strengthen direct ties between German and British students and teachers. New bilateral grants to fund joint projects no longer eligible for EU funding would promote collaboration and could culminate in shared clusters of excellence at universities.

Shared enterprise will boost much more than science and the economy, it will further entwine our values. Germany and the United Kingdom are home to some of the most tolerant and open societies in the world. And yet racism generally, and antisemitism in particular, is on the rise. To counter this we should launch a joint project that fights intolerance and promotes solidarity.

Finally, Germany and the United Kingdom have shared interests overseas. Our two countries stood together on every important international issue, from global trade to the Iran nuclear deal. Geography and geopolitics is not changed by Brexit and our security is indivisible. Security in the Middle East has direct implications for the stability of our own societies, and those of our neighbours.

It is time to look ahead and create a strong foundation for our future bilateral relations. A German-British Friendship Treaty would provide a framework. It will be the first draft of the next chapter which we will write together.



Not so small change The Royal Mint has produced a ceremonial gold £5,000 coin, weighing 5kg and actually worth about £300,000. It is tested for quality by Goldsmiths' Company in a tradition called the Trial of the Pyx that dates back to 1284

THE GOLDSMITHS COMPANY/SWNS

Roadside camera fears over green numberplates

Graeme Paton Transport Correspondent

The introduction of green numberplates for electric cars is likely to lead to far more surveillance cameras on roads, ministers have been warned.

A government watchdog said that the proposal from the Department for Transport would have serious privacy implications and may even be illegal.

The Surveillance Camera Commissioner, which regulates the use of CCTV and similar technology, said there was "limited evidence" that the new plates were wanted or would provide benefits to society.

It raises questions over the plans that were unveiled by the DfT last year in a move to encourage the purchase of zero-emission vehicles — pure electric and hydrogen cars.

A consultation published last autumn said that green plates would "enable people to spot and differentiate vehicles based on their environmental impact", helping to "normalise the idea of clean vehicles on our roads".

Councils would be encouraged to give green plate holders "local incentives" including the ability to drive in bus lanes, access electric charging parking bays and free use of car parks.

The document said that enforcement of the scheme "would likely be by the local authority reading vehicle plates" through automatic numberplate recognition (ANPR). The technology is already used by councils to monitor bus lanes, yellow box junctions and car parks. There are also an estimated 9,000 cameras used by police forces.

Under the proposals, numberplates for the cleanest vehicles would keep the traditional black-on-yellow design but a green stripe would appear on the left-hand side to mark them out. It said that a full green numberplate with black lettering would be difficult to read by ANPR camera.

In its formal response to the DfT

consultation, the Surveillance Camera Commissioner said it was concerned that green numberplates would trigger "an unqualified extension to the role of ANPR" on the road network, which may be illegal.

"Where is the evidence to prove that the extension to the ANPR function is justified?" the response said. "Limited evidence was presented that car drivers want green numberplates or that it is for the benefit of society. Therefore, the legality was questioned."

The response also warned of a possible increase in criminals attempting to clone plates to secure access to benefits such as driving in bus lanes.

"This leads to a greater risk to the national ANPR system regarding the potential of more cloned plates on the road," it said. "The process of getting green numberplates should therefore be tightly controlled."

It said that views had been taken from the ANPR "independent advisory group" — a panel chaired by the commissioner which includes representatives from the Home Office, police forces and the Information Commissioner's Office — to draft the response.

The DfT consultation closed last month. Plans are expected to be announced late this year, with the likelihood that legislation will be needed to bring in the green plate scheme.

A DfT spokeswoman said: "Green numberplates are a positive and exciting way to raise awareness and support the uptake of electric vehicles on our roads. The public consultation has now closed and we are analysing responses."

Last year 37,850 pure electric cars were sold, well over double the number 12 months earlier. However, they made up less than 2 per cent of new cars and there are fears that Britain will fall short of its target to eradicate the sale of new petrol and diesel models within 20 years. The government is considering bringing forward the 2040 cut-off point to 2035.

Stop worst rail operators raising fares, urges mayor

Graeme Paton

Failing rail companies should be banned from imposing annual fare rises to encourage better performance, ministers have been told.

Rules should be introduced that require private operators to hit punctuality targets before being allowed to increase the cost of travel, Andy Street, the Conservative mayor for the West Midlands, said. Fare rises should be performance-related to "focus minds" on cutting delays and cancellations, he added.

It comes amid concerns that fares are rising year on year with little sign of improvement on some networks. Figures show that 65 per cent of trains reached stations within a minute of their scheduled arrival in the year to the end of September, with the proportion dropping to just 40 per cent on some lines.

In January fares increased by an average of 2.7 per cent across the country and annual season tickets for commuters jumped by 2.8 per cent.

However, Mr Street, former managing director of John Lewis, and a

respected figure within the Tory party, said there should not be "an assumption that every year a fare rise is automatic".

West Midlands Trains announced late last year that it was scrapping the 2020 fare increase, instead opting to cut the price of weekly, monthly and annual season tickets by 3 per cent. The decision was made to compensate passengers for poor performance. This year's performance by the operator, run by Dutch state-owned company Abellio, has significantly improved.

Hull Trains, which runs 92 direct services a week between Hull and London, also froze fares in January.

The government has previously rejected calls to ban fare rises on performance grounds. In 2018, Chris Grayling, then transport secretary, said that a fare freeze would only result in "cuts in investment".

However, Mr Street insisted that the threat of hitting train operators' bottom line would drive improvements, saying: "John Lewis never put its prices up if it was having a lousy trading time and it shouldn't be different for trains."

South Western woes, page 35

dfs

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Ancient mariners row the Atlantic

Tom Ball

Samuel Coleridge's ancient mariner had to contend with ghostly ships and evil spirits. But for a team of senior sailors inspired by his travels, it was dodgy knees and failing hearing that were of more concern.

With a combined age of 257 years and 10 days, the crew of four — who named themselves after the titular hero of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* — broke the Guinness World Record for the oldest crew to row across the Atlantic Ocean by 33 years.

Guy Munnoch, 67, Mike Winn, 64, Steve Hughes, 61, and John Moorhouse, 63 — respectively a businessman, a retired accountant, a former soldier and a dentist, set off in their rowing boat *The Grey Escape* from La Gomera



The sixtysomethings (from left, below) John Moorhouse, Steve Hughes, Mike Winn and Guy Munnoch celebrate arriving in English Harbour after two months at sea

in the Canary Islands on December 12.

They were at sea for 49 days, 8 hours and 40 minutes before reaching English Harbour in Antigua last Thursday. They coped with 30ft waves, sleep deprivation and their own waning faculties during the two-month crossing.

Mr Munnoch, a non-executive chairman from Lovedean in Hampshire, had never set foot in a rowing boat before starting his training for the charitable fundraising challenge. Although he and his team had the wisdom of age on their side, maturity brought with it certain difficulties.

"For me, I found hearing a bit of a challenge, which is one of the things that comes with age I suppose," he told *The Times*. "Often I'd miss what someone said and just nod and say 'yes'."

"Mobility was a bit tricky too. You need to be agile, especially when the boat is rolling, which is not so easy when you get older. But psychologically, we were all the better for being older.



Your muscles might not quite be the same as when you were in your twenties, but mentally you are much tougher."

Mr Munnoch and his colleagues were taking part in the Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge, an ocean race started in 1997, with 35 other crews from 14 countries.

The four had been brought together by Mr Munnoch, who first roped in his friend Mr Moorhouse, with whom he has shared other adventures, including treks to the North and South Pole. Mr Winn and Mr Hughes then came on board.

The men rowed two-hour shifts, with two hours of rest in between, for 24 hours a day, pulling about 1.5 million combined oar strokes on a diet of dehydrated food and desalinated sea water.

The record-breaking adventure has raised over £20,000 for two charities — Blind Veterans in the UK and Open Arms Orphanage in Malawi, with

£5,000 donated by Hitachi Capital, of which Mr Munnoch is chairman.

"Others see your age but it isn't something you necessarily see in yourself," he said. "I'd hope that our record would be a message to other older people that age doesn't always need to be a barrier."

Mr Hughes, a programme manager from Helensburgh in Scotland, said: "All of us think of ourselves as being 21-year-olds but you realise when you take a knock that you're not as young as you think — the recovery time is so much greater. But then the flip side of being old is that you're better at just getting on with things. When you're in your sixties it's easier to get your head down and carry on."

Asked if he would do something similar again, Mr Hughes responded with an emphatic "no". "I'm glad I did it," he said. "But enough is enough. I can look back and be proud of that achievement knowing I'll never have to do it again."

Leading article, page 27

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News Coronavirus

There's no guarantee of escape,

Chris Smyth, David Brown

The Foreign Office has warned tens of thousands of Britons in China that it cannot guarantee to get them home as it begins withdrawing diplomats during the worsening coronavirus epidemic.

Eleven Britons and their families arrived in the UK from China yesterday on a flight organised by the French government, joining 83 already in 14-day quarantine at Arrowe Park Hospital,

Merseyside. Their arrival followed the news a 44-year-old man in the Philippines had become the first person outside China to die from the virus. A Chinese student at the University of York and his mother last week became the first confirmed cases in the UK.

Health officials in Britain are still attempting to trace 438 travellers from Wuhan who are within the incubation period for the virus. More than a third of the 1,561 passengers and aircrew who

arrived before the city was quarantined by the Chinese authorities last month remain unaccounted for.

Some British boarding schools are telling pupils with parents in China that they cannot return home during half term this month.

The British consulate general in Wuhan, the city at the centre of the outbreak, has been closed and the Foreign Office began withdrawing staff and their families from China last Friday.

Essential staff remain but the Foreign Office has warned the estimated 30,000 Britons in the country "in the event that the situation deteriorates further, the ability of the British embassy and consulates to provide assistance to British nationals from within China may be limited".

Dominic Raab, the foreign secretary, said British officials were "working tirelessly on the ground in China to make sure we can get the information to

those that need it". The Foreign Office said that Dame Barbara Woodward, the ambassador, and "staff needed to continue critical work" would remain.

The withdrawal of diplomats would not mean ending help to Britons stuck in China and they "will continue to have access to 24/7 consular assistance", said a spokesman.

Steffan Atherton, 47, a former British soldier working as a teacher in China, said he was not told of the evacuation

WELCOME TO THE UNIVERSITY OF YORK



A woman takes no chances at York University where a student has been confirmed as one of two in the UK with the virus. In Indonesia medical staff in masks and protective suits prepare for students



Don't go home at half-term, pupils told

David Brown

School pupils who have parents in China are being told not to return home for the half-term holidays this month or risk being placed in quarantine when they return.

Boarders from mainland China and Hong Kong account for 44 per cent of the 28,910 overseas pupils at independent schools.

Hereford Cathedral School said it was preventing students from travelling to the region to limit the risk of the virus spreading.

Laura Yates, the admissions manager, told the *Hereford Times*: "Obviously for Chinese pupils they are concerned about family and friends back home. None of the pupils are travelling back home and the boarding house will remain open over half-term."

"None of the students from China have been there since the outbreak and any planned visits from family and friends have been cancelled."

Wellington School in Somerset has asked parents of all Chinese and Hong Kong boarders not to allow them to

return home during half-term. King's College, Taunton, is also advising parents to not let their children travel to affected areas.

The Boarding Schools Association has told headteachers that if pupils do travel to China there should be protective measures in place before they return, which could include quarantine. It said: "This should not be seen as an overreaction or 'scaremongering' but is based on experience gained from the progress of previous such diseases." Some schools have already cancelled visits from prospective parents and pupils from China.

Claire Coker, director of The Independent Education Consultants company, which helps parents find places at schools, said many boarding schools were advising pupils to stay in the UK.

She said: "Those who choose to return home may find their boarding schools are not able to accommodate their return to school after half-term. A half-term stay with a UK family member or guardian would be a much safer approach."

A boarding school close to the Uni-

versity of York, where a Chinese student and his mother became the first confirmed coronavirus cases in the UK, has denied that it will close temporarily.

St Peter's School said in a statement: "Parents, staff and pupils have been contacted to ensure that all recommended precautions are in place and to reassure them that the health and well-being of our pupils is of paramount importance to us."

A Department for Education spokesman said it had advised schools to follow advice issued by Public Health England.

Chinese pupils at Alexandra College, a boarding school in Milltown, south Dublin, have been told that if they return to their home country they will have to spend two weeks in quarantine upon their return.

The Santa Cecilia music school in Rome has asked "Oriental" students not to attend classes while the government of New South Wales, in Australia, has advised parents with children who have recently returned from China to refrain from returning to school for two weeks.

Beijing's spies in the sky order people to use masks

Didi Tang Beijing

Video shot in Inner Mongolia shows the hi-tech measures the Chinese government is using to ensure its citizens stay inside. In one sequence an elderly woman is taken aback when a drone appears above her and starts to speak. "Granny, there is no need to stare but this is a drone," the object booms. "You shouldn't be wandering around without a face mask. Hurry home, and once you get home, wash your hands."

The technology is being used from the northern region of Inner Mongolia to the southern province of Fujian.

"Drones can be used in the campaign against the outbreak, as they can communicate with local residents but without the risk of cross infection," said a neighbourhood committee in the eastern city of Yangzhou.

In Wuhan, the epicentre of the outbreak, video posted online of government officials seemingly taking donated face masks intended for medical



You shouldn't walk around without wearing a mask

Video from the drone shows "Granny", who was urged to return to her home

workers has caused outrage. That anger grew when another image was posted on the Chinese social media site Weibo showing officials wearing specialised respirator masks designed to keep out 95 per cent of small particles in

fleeing diplomats warn Britons

flight that arrived yesterday. He said embassy officials initially told him to leave his wife, Diana Buelot, 27, who was born in Peru, and bring their two-month-old son Danny home to the UK from Fuzhou.

Mr Atherton, from Wirral, Merseyside, said: "I had the horrible decision to make to leave my wife in China to protect my baby or do we stick together. We all stick together and if Danny gets infected would it be something I regret-

ted for the rest of my life? Expecting expats to leave their families at risk to catch the virus is downright shameful."

A London-based teacher who has contracted coronavirus while visiting her parents in Wuhan said she does not know when she will be allowed to return to the UK. Muying Shi, 37, told the *Sunday Mirror*: "I am really scared. I fear for my life but I can't think about it because I would just break down. I feel like I'm hanging on by a thread." Ms

Shi, a private language tutor in Colindale, north London, said hospital staff know little about the virus "so there's no proper treatment". "My dad are I are being given painkillers and antibiotics, but there is no cure," she said.

Human trials of a vaccine for the new infection could start soon, the head of global scientific research said yesterday. As Britain pledged £20 million towards research, the international body that co-ordinates research into new ep-

idemics said it was hopeful of progress at "unprecedented" speed.

British funding will go in part towards three new programmes to find a coronavirus vaccine, with US companies hoping to begin testing soon.

Richard Hatchett, head of the Coalition for Epidemic Disease Preparedness, set up in response to the ebola epidemic in west Africa, said the British cash came at a "crucial moment". "Our hope is that, with our partners, we can

get an investigational vaccine from gene sequencing of the pathogen through to clinical testing in 16 weeks. The earliest stage of clinical trials... would take around two to four months," he said.

Matt Hancock, the health secretary, said a vaccine was the best defence against the virus and it was "vital that we lead the way in developing new vaccines to target global threats" in Britain.

INDONESIAN EMBASSY/AFP VIA GETTY; CREDIT: XINHUA/ALAMY LIVE NEWS; AP; BEN LACK



evacuated from Wuhan to arrive at Hang Nadim airport in Batam. China showed off the 1,000-bed hospital built in just ten days in Wuhan, the centre of the outbreak

a meeting with doctors who wore surgical masks, which are far less effective. One user wrote: "Shameless... Have some dignity. The whole country is watching," *The Guardian* reported.

In Wuhan, construction of a 1,000-bed hospital to treat those infected with the coronavirus was completed in 10 days and it is expected to take in patients from today. More than 4,100 people in the city have fallen ill with the virus and at least 175 have died.

The number of confirmed infections reached more than 14,000 yesterday, and the death toll rose to 350, making it the biggest public health crisis since the 2002-2003 Sars outbreak.

A study by University of Hong Kong scientists, published in *The Lancet*, claims that the number infected in Wuhan is far higher, at 75,815. It said the epidemic was doubling every 6.4 days. In Hong Kong, where the city confirmed its 15th case of coronavirus infection, the recently formed Hospital Authority Employees Alliance of 18,000 medical professionals is set to go on strike today in a bid to force the government to close its borders with the mainland. Carrie Lam, the territory's chief executive, has refused to meet representatives of the union.

China's £130bn injection, page 35

Backlash grows against Chinese citizens

Tom Ball, Oliver Moody, Tom Parfitt

Chinese citizens in Britain and around the world have been targeted with harassment and physical attacks amid the worsening coronavirus outbreak.

Community leaders in Britain have reported their concern at repercussions as Chinese students, workers and tourists in Europe, Asia and America have become the focus for confusion and fear about the virus.

Joan Concannon, director of external relations at York University, where the first two known carriers of the virus in Britain were taken ill, said that they were aware of several complaints, including one incident when a Chinese student was told to "go home" by a group of children.

Another student, who gave his name as James, said that he and a group of friends were asked by staff at a café in the centre of York to remove their masks as it was making other customers nervous.

In Sheffield a female postgraduate student at the university reported that

she had been physically and verbally harassed in the street for wearing a protective mask.

More than 240 calls have been made to a coronavirus helpline that was set up by the university on Saturday.

The student, whose name has not been released, was asked by her attackers why she was wearing a protective mask before being assaulted, according to Sheffield Chinese Community Centre, who reported the incident.

In York some Chinese businesses have reported a drop in sales. Jay Tang, the chef at the Happy Valley restaurant, said that panic over the virus had had "a big impact" on trade.

Will Zhuang, president of the Chinese Association in York, said that many members of the community in the city had chosen to stay indoors.

He said: "I've seen very few Chinese people in the city over the last few days and I believe lots of people are not leaving their homes."

Although incidents of aggression in Britain have been relatively minor, more aggressive incidents have been

reported abroad. A young woman in Germany was treated in hospital after being spat at and punched in an apparently racially motivated attack.

Some restaurants in Japan, Hong Kong and Vietnam have refused to admit Chinese customers. In South Korea more than half a million people have signed a petition to President Moon demanding that Chinese people be stopped from entering the country.

In Germany a young Chinese woman was dragged to the ground by her hair and kicked in the head. Investigators said they believed that the attack had been motivated by xenophobia.

The unidentified victim, 23, needed treatment in hospital after she was set upon by two women as she walked to a railway station in the Moabit district of Berlin during daylight hours.

The assailants are said to have racially abused her, spat on her, pulled her down to the ground and punched and kicked her in the legs, torso and head, breaking her glasses.

They stopped only when two female

passers-by stepped in to protect the woman, who was taken to hospital. Her attackers fled.

In an attempt to avoid harassment, some Asian people have been holding signs to signal that they are not Chinese.

In Hungary, Vietnamese shop owners put up signs saying that they were not Chinese, and in Georgia a photograph circulated of a young Asian woman smiling and holding up a placard in Georgian that said she was Japanese, had been in Tbilisi for a long time and did not have the virus.

The outbreak has been used to political ends by opponents of free movement.

Matteo Salvini, leader of the far-right League party in Italy, tweeted after the first cases of coronavirus were announced in the country, saying: "And they said we were speculators and alarmists. Open borders, useless people in government."

"We pray to God that there are no disasters, but whoever has done wrong must pay."

First person

The news on January 23 that Wuhan was sealing itself from the outside world made Beijing residents panic and ask if we, too, should quarantine ourselves (Didi Tang writes).

I phoned my parents, who were coming to visit for Chinese New Year, and we agreed that they should still make the 800-mile train journey but wear masks.

By January 27, after four days at home, my two young sons were racing each other in the living room, climbing on to the sofa and jumping off it. I began to wonder if it was worth keeping them out of harm's way for how much they were exhausting me.

All the shops had run out of masks and disinfectants. I found half a bottle of 75 per cent alcohol in the medicine cabinet, poured it into a spray bottle and disinfected the most commonly touched parts of the house.

By January 30, the air became tolerably clean. I sent the children out in adult masks with the ear loops shortened as we were out of ones in their size.

On February 1 we went to a nearby shopping centre. It was nearly noon but most shops were closed. Starbucks was open but a worker standing by a rope across the entrance took our temperatures.

Yesterday a neighbour told me a pharmacy near by had just taken delivery of a box of masks. I rushed there but it was already too late. They had already been snapped up.

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Your lunch is off: Mayfair restaurant is closed mid-meal

Ashley Armstrong

A Mayfair mogul who once said that the restaurant trade was a “survival of the fittest” is having to eat his words after administrators interrupted lunch-time service to shut down one of his establishments.

The Michelin-starred restaurant The Square, which is owned by the Lebanese tycoon Marlon Abela, has been closed down after repeated rumours of financial difficulty. Mr Abela also owns the private members’ club Mortons, which has also been forced to shut its doors, and the Michelin starred restaurants The Greenhouse and the Kyoto-inspired Umu.

Mr Abela, who is regularly pictured at society events with his Russian-born wife, Nadya, a former Burberry model, inherited £320 million from his father, Albert, who had built a catering business that supplied airlines, hospitals and schools and owned a string of hotels in the Middle East.

Mr Abela said that his father’s foodie lifestyle meant that he became accustomed to having three-hour fine dining meals at eight years old, and his first sip of wine, aged 12, was a vintage Chateau Margaux. He says he eats out 12 or 13 times a week on average.

Sue Houghton, a customer, posted on

Instagram that she had been enjoying an anniversary meal at The Square on Friday afternoon when “four suited men arrived mid-meal and disappeared into a side room. Cheese is then mysteriously ‘off’ and then over coffee a very tearful Maitre D comes round all the tables and says we must please leave now as the restaurant has gone bankrupt. Really sad way to get a free meal. It’s been the most amazing top ten restaurant for over 20 years,” she wrote.

A spokesman for the Marlon Abela Restaurant Corporation (Marc) said: “It has been a challenging time for the hospitality sector as a whole over the last few years, with rents and rates rising dramatically. Mr Abela cares deeply about the businesses and staff but, despite investing tens of millions of pounds of his own money into the businesses, was unable to save them from going into administration.”

In the last available



The Square, above, was closed by administrators during lunch service. It is owned by Marlon Abela, left, with his wife, Nadya

accounts for Mr Abela’s main business Marc Ltd, auditors said that they were unable to reconcile the bank statements in a number of subsidiaries “nor could we verify any of the transactions throughout the year”.

The auditors at Haysmacintyre said that as a result it was

unable to “obtain significant appropriate audit evidence” to perform an audit.

In response to the findings a spokesman for Marc said at the time that the “relevant financial institutions” had failed to provide “the necessary information”.

Clement Leroy, head chef at The Square, said that he was “really sad about the situation, even if we could guess it. I hope all the staff get paid this month.”

ITV wanted Stewart out, say friends

Ben Ellery

Alastair Stewart offered to apologise privately to a man he offended on Twitter but his friends have said that ITV told him this would not be enough to save his job.

A friend of the newsreader, 67, told *The Sunday Times* that ITV “definitely wanted him out” and that he had not previously received an official warning. The broadcaster said Stewart stepped down because of “errors of judgment” after quoting a line from Shakespeare’s *Measure for Measure* about an “angry ape” during an argument with Martin Shapland, a black former Liberal Democrat candidate.

Mr Shapland, 34, has said he would have been satisfied with an apology and a pledge by the newsreader to be more careful with his language. About 74,000 people have signed a petition urging Stewart’s reinstatement.

ITN staff are said to be “furious” after being gagged from tweeting any opinion about the departure. Department heads were warned last week that only tributes could be paid to the broadcaster, who had worked there for 44 years.

An ITN source has insisted that the departure was not just about one tweet, and that there were other incidents. One senior staff member told *The Mail on Sunday*: “For an organisation that vows to uphold freedom of speech, gagging your staff is outrageous.”

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Romanian embassy owes £75,000 rent, says landlord

Tom Ball

British diplomats are embroiled in a row between a Hyde Park landlord and the Romanian government over £75,000 in outstanding rent for a former ambassadorial residence.

Romania has refused to pay the sum despite a High Court order in December, with officials insisting they are not liable for the last six months of the lease on the £12,000-a-month tenancy due to a "gentleman's agreement".

The landlord, Christopher Christos, 67, of Kensington, believes Bucharest's diplomats consider themselves "untouchable" because of their diplomatic immunity. The

Romanian embassy rented the property at 18 Hyde Park Street in London between April 2008 and April 2019. Late last year it was ordered by a court to pay £73,270 in arrears after the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) intervened on behalf of the property owner.

Barry Nicholas, head of diplomatic missions at the FCO, met Teodor Ciobanu, administrative attaché at the Romanian embassy, several times to petition his government to pay the money owed.

When Romania refused to pay, Mr Christos took the embassy to court. On December 11 last year it was ordered to pay the rent owed along with £3,660 in legal fees. The embassy says that a "gentleman's



The Romanian embassy in London was taken to court in a rental dispute

agreement" had been set up by the property owner and the new Romanian ambassador, Dan Mihalache, who had recently moved into the property. Officials say they were told that they could terminate the tenancy agreement six months early.

Mr Christos, who bought the five-bedroomed property in 2007 for £2.8 million, says that agreement was made on the basis that he could find another tenant, which he was unable to do. In any case, he says, the Romanian ambassador remained until the formal end of the tenancy in April 2019.

"They are giving me the runaround and think that because of diplomatic immunity they are untouchable," he said. "But I've got a mortgage to pay off."

A notice to quit was issued to the ambassador two months after rent had ceased to be paid in December 2018. When that was ignored, Mr Christos contacted his local MP, Mark Field, who forwarded the complaint to the FCO and asked it to intervene.

Several letters were exchanged between Mr Nicholas and senior diplomats at the Romanian embassy, in which they denied any wrongdoing.

After three months of discussions between the FCO and Romanian government, Mr Christos was told by Mr Nicholas that as this was a private financial dispute

there was little they could do to help. A spokesman for the embassy said: "The ambassador of Romania in London and the owner of the property on Hyde Park Street had a gentlemen's agreement during a meeting in June 2018 regarding the termination of the rental contract."

"Following this agreement, the owner was also notified in writing by the embassy of Romania about the termination of the contract with a grace period of three months."

"During this agreed period of three months the Romanian embassy continued to pay the rent for the respective property, as agreed with the owner. The landlord didn't inform us about any changes in his position, so his decision to ignore the termination agreement and to claim breach of the contract came surprisingly."

"At the end of the three-month notification period, the Romanian Embassy vacated the space, the residence of the head of the mission being relocated."

A spokeswoman for the FCO said: "This is a private financial dispute between the Romanian Embassy and the owner of the property."

In January 2018, it was reported that the government of the Democratic Republic of Congo was facing legal action over alleged non-payment of rent on its embassy building in London.

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Species at risk as mild winters fool them into starting spring early

Rhys Blakely Science Correspondent

Butterflies and nesting blackbirds have already been spotted this year, far earlier than usual, stoking concern that milder winters are depriving species of their seasonal cues.

The sightings were reported by the Woodland Trust, which said that dozens of species were at risk of falling out of sync with their food sources. The trust's analysis of last year's spring

shows that dozens of species became active weeks earlier than usual.

Lorienne Whittle, citizen science officer with the trust's Nature's Calendar project, said: "It seems that last year we almost lost winter as a season — it was much milder and our data shows wildlife is responding, potentially putting many at risk." She cited the earlier arrival of frogspawn, which could be wiped out in a late cold snap.

The Nature's Calendar project com-

piles records of seasonal activity, assisted by thousands of volunteers who log features such as the first flowering snowdrop of the year and the first ripe berries in autumn.

All but one of more than 50 spring events tracked last year came earlier than in 2001, which has been chosen as a benchmark year because it closely reflected the 30-year average from 1961 to 1990. The events included lawn mowing: the average date for gardeners

to cut their lawn for the first time was March 10 in 2019, three weeks earlier than the benchmark.

Elder budburst was almost a month earlier, while the first leaves on pedunculate oak came three weeks early.

Peacock butterflies were spotted in Kent and Cornwall last month, and a blackbird was seen building a nest in Wiltshire this weekend.

Ms Whittle said: "Some species are able to adapt to the advancing spring

better than others. Oak trees respond by producing their first leaves earlier and caterpillars seem to be keeping pace. But blue tits, great tits and pied flycatchers are struggling to react in time for their chicks to take advantage of the peak amount of caterpillars, the food source on which they depend."

The Met Office has said that the past decade was the warmest on record, with 2019 being the second warmest year since 1850 when records began.

Flipping heck! Seals clap to see off rivals

The gunshot-like sounds that male grey seals use to scare away rivals had mystified scientists for decades (Rhys Blakely writes).

Now a GP from Northumberland has solved the riddle — by revealing that the animals slap their flippers together under water to ward off competitors and win over females.

Ben Burville, a researcher at Newcastle University who also works as a GP, spent 17 years trying to film a bull seal producing the percussive sounds, which are made during the breeding season.

It was previously believed to be a vocal noise, similar to the calls and whistles produced by many marine mammals.

However, Dr Burville's underwater footage, taken while diving near the Farne Islands, shows a male grey seal repeatedly

clapping its flippers to produce the noise.

"How could a seal make such a loud clap underwater with no air to compress between its flippers?" Dr Burville said. "I've heard the distinctive shotgun-like 'cracks' many times and I felt sure this clapping behaviour was the source, but filming the seals in action has eluded me for 17 years. Then one day I had heard a couple of claps in the distance, I hit the record button and eureka — I got it."

The findings are published in the journal *Marine Mammal Science*.

David Hocking, of Monash University in Australia, said: "The discovery of 'clapping seals' might not seem that surprising; after all, they're famous for clapping in zoos and aquaria. But where zoo animals are often trained to clap for our entertainment, these grey seals are doing it in the wild of their own accord."



This grey seal was caught on film using his flippers to make the distinctive cracking sound

Attenborough's next series will be positive not preachy, vows BBC

Matthew Moore Media Correspondent

Sir David Attenborough's next BBC natural history series will shun the "pious, self-righteous" tone of some environmental programming and focus on offering positive solutions.

Green Planet, due to be screened next year, explores the world of plants. Sir David, 93, has been more involved in production than for any series in a decade, flying the world to film wildlife on location despite his advancing years.

The veteran naturalist's recent blockbusters, including *Planet Earth II* and *Blue Planet II*, have been praised for raising awareness of climate change and plastic pollution but faced criticism from some viewers who felt that the messages were too heavy-handed.

Our *Planet*, which Sir David narrated for Netflix last year, was rejected by the BBC because it was made in partnership with the World Wide Fund for

Nature (WWF), a campaigning environmental charity.

Mike Gunton, creative director of the BBC's Natural History Unit, revealed that *Green Planet* will take a more positive tone, giving audiences practical tips on ways they can help save the



Sir David Attenborough continues to travel the world aged 93

world, such as planting a tree. Speaking to the Media Masters podcast, Gunton admitted that he would get into trouble for saying it, but believes that the job of natural history programmes is not to proselytise or preach about threats to the planet. "The danger is that you can become pious, and self-righteous, and

kind of holier-than-thou," he said. "Audiences... quite rightly say, 'I want to know, but I don't want to be told off'. So I think we're trying to avoid this 'we must, we should, you mustn't' type approach."

He added that the BBC often says: "Stop doing this. Don't use plastic. Don't do that". All very important. But the joy of... *Green World* is we're going to... say, 'Do something. Plant things in your garden. Conserve. Plant a tree.'"

Gunton is one of the country's most experienced natural history producers, responsible for BBC series such as *Dynasties* (2018) and *Planet Earth II* (2016) and *Hidden Kingdoms* (2014).

Green Planet has been described as the first immersive portrayal of the unseen, interconnected world of plants, revealing them to be the arch-manipulators of the natural world.

For *Green Planet*, Sir David has been much more hands-on than in recent

series, travelling to the US, Costa Rica, Croatia and northern Europe to help shoot the raw footage himself.

"He's got so many things on his plate, but this definitely appealed to him," Gunton said. "This project, he's back to the old days where he's actually out in the field saying, 'Look at this. Watch this. Let me show you that'. And I think he's loving that."

The BBC has a global reputation for natural history excellence but faces competition from streaming services such as Netflix and Apple TV.

The streaming wars look set to be lucrative for the Natural History Unit, which is part of BBC Studios, the corporation's independent commercial arm, and generates extra revenue by making shows for non-BBC platforms. It is partnering with Jon Favreau, director of *The Lion King*, on *Prehistoric Planet*, a CGI series about dinosaurs, to be shown on Apple TV.

Charities tell of Brexit threat to hedgehogs

Rhys Blakely

Hedgehogs, pond wildlife and nesting birds are among the species at risk if protections provided by European Union regulations are not replaced with new legislation, leading wildlife charities have said.

The Agriculture Bill making its way through parliament will leave significant gaps in environmental protections as the country sheds EU law after Brexit. The Wildlife Trusts, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and World Wide Fund for Nature say in a report published today.

Without additional legislation, Britain will lose regulations which ensure that hedgerows are not cut during the bird nesting season, protecting birds like yellowhammers and small mammals such as hedgehogs, they say.

Rules that guard against bare soils blowing away or being eroded will also be lost, the charities say, endangering the productivity of agricultural land and reducing the amount of carbon locked away.

Two flagship bills — for the environment and for agriculture — are making their passage through parliament. The report coincides with the second reading of the Agriculture Bill in the Commons today.

"Both bills cover areas which have huge implications for our ability to tackle the twin emergencies of the nature and climate crises," the charities said in a statement.

Ellie Brodie, senior policy manager of The Wildlife Trusts, said: "We're really concerned that the Agriculture Bill does not contain the regulation that's so desperately needed and nature will continue to take the rap."

Tom Lancaster, the RSPB's head of agriculture policy, said: "Hedgerows may just be dividers between crops to us, but they are often hidden worlds, teeming with the amazing wildlife that calls our farmland home. The government must not let this once-in-a-generation opportunity to reform farming policy be undermined by these gaps in the protections for wildlife."



Campaigners say the Agriculture Bill puts hedgehogs, birds and bees at risk

Tech plays part in 72% of domestic abuse cases

John Simpson Crime Correspondent

Social media harassment and the use of technology such as hidden cameras and GPS tracking is recorded in up to three quarters of domestic abuse cases, police and charities have said.

Abusers are increasingly using new technologies such as fitness trackers and “smart” home devices attached to heating, lights and video doorbells to stalk, isolate and control present and former partners.

Data from the charity Refuge showed that “tech abuse” formed part of 72 per cent of cases it handled last year, compared with just over half in

2018. Last year, domestic abuse led to a murder every two days in the UK, a five-year high.

Charities warned that tech companies needed to be held accountable for the publishing of abuse and revenge porn on their platforms and the sale of tracking devices and spyware. In an interview with *The Times*, the national policing lead for domestic abuse joined the call for tech companies to help to stem the rise of tech abuse.

Three of the country's largest domestic abuse charities, Women's Aid, Safe Lives and Refuge, called yesterday for more action from tech companies. They also called for tougher legislation

on revenge porn, including anonymity for victims and an offence of threatening to share intimate images.

One victim described the abuse as “domestic terrorism” as she spoke of being stalked using a GPS tracker and recorded with dictaphones and video cameras hidden in her bedroom.

Alongside a growing range of household items that can be controlled remotely by one or more people using smartphones, there are concerns over abusers accessing smart speakers such as Amazon Echo, Google Home and Apple's HomePod.

One victim warned that a “stalker's toolkit” could be bought online, includ-

ing GPS trackers that cost as little as £50. Charity case workers also warned that many smartphones also allow “pairing” of devices, meaning that an iPad can be set up to access messages and call logs from an iPhone.

Louisa Rolfe, the National Police Chiefs' Council lead for domestic abuse, said: “A lot like the use of technology in other crime, it's something that seems to feature in domestic violence cases to facilitate abuse.” She added that the most prevalent tech abuse remained “putting nasty comments on social media”.

Ms Rolfe said that there were four main types of tech-enabled abuse:

monitoring, harassment, impersonation and tracking.

Monitoring involves less intrusive methods, while harassment includes bombarding victims with messages across platforms or revenge porn, impersonation often entails creating any number of accounts posing as the victim and tracking can involve GPS devices, giving users access to almost everything a victim does.

Sandra Horley, the chief executive of Refuge, called for greater collaboration between tech companies and the government and said the charity wanted to see “much more transparency from tech companies”.



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Rugby player broke rival's jaw after 'fatty' jibe on pitch

Jonathan Ames Legal Editor

A teenage rugby player ran on to the pitch and broke a rival's jaw after being called “fatty”, before being dragged away by his mother, a court was told.

Cameron Pinks, 19, stormed off the touchline and lashed out after an opponent, Toby Cripps, blew him a kiss.

He punched the A-level student before being pulled away by his mother, a hearing at Portsmouth crown court was told as a judge sentenced Pinks to a community order.

The court was told that Pinks, who plays for Gosport & Fareham in Hampshire, became incensed while on the touchline at his side's away clash with Portsmouth last April. He accused Mr Cripps of “playing dirty” and a row broke out between the pair.

Matthew Lawson, for the prosecution, said that Pinks “came on the pitch and punched him in the face”. “Mr Pinks said he was being provoked by Mr Cripps after having a kiss blown at him and being told: ‘What you going to do about it, fatty?’”

The barrister added: “Mr Pinks is sensitive about his weight.”

Police arrived and initially decided to caution Pinks. They later reconsidered and said that the offence was so serious

they would charge the player. The victim needed an operation on his jaw.

Pinks, of Lee-on-the-Solent, admitted grievous bodily harm.

Mr Cripps said in a statement that his exam results were worse than expected as a result of the pain. He added: “I couldn't eat hard food and had to sleep sitting up for a month.”

John Naylor, for the defence, said: “There was a lot of jibing at [Pinks], who



Cameron Pinks broke his opponent's jaw

thought the victim was playing particularly dirty by putting someone in a headlock after a try.”

He added that Pinks was called “a ‘fatty’ and then overreacted”.

Judge Karim Ezzat said: “The punch could have had far worse consequences. There are cases where one punch kills a person.”

Pinks was given a 12-month community order, including 220 hours' unpaid work. He was also ordered to pay £340 costs and £700 compensation.

IN THE TIMES TOMORROW

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Charles flies in to lecture students on emissions

Rhys Blakely Science Correspondent

The Prince of Wales's office has again defended his use of private helicopters after he flew to Cambridge to speak about lowering aircraft emissions.

He is understood to have flown 125 miles by helicopter from his family residence in Highgrove, Gloucestershire, to the University of Cambridge last week. After making the final stretch of the journey by Bentley, he told students: "We have run out of time now to rescue this poor old planet from man-made emissions."

Whittle Laboratory, which hosted the event, is partnering with the University of Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership (CISL), of which the prince is patron, in an effort to make the aviation sector net zero on emissions by 2050. CISL did not respond to a request for comment yesterday.

During his visit the prince urged Cambridge researchers to redouble their efforts to combat climate change. According to the *Sunday Mirror* he then flew 53 miles to Sandringham to see the Queen. Experts said that the helicopter's full journey emitted about 2.5 tonnes of carbon and cost at least £12,000. The prince could have cut his carbon footprint down to 0.2 tonnes had he gone by car, they estimated.

A Clarence House spokesman said: "The prince is not personally involved in decisions around his transportation arrangements, although he ensures all carbon emissions are offset every year."

"They are made based on what is possible within the constraints of time, distance and security. In order for him to undertake as many engagements as he does across the UK and around the world he sometimes has to fly. As he has often said, as soon as there is a more sustainable way of making these journeys, he'll be the first to use it."

Graham Smith, of the campaign group Republic, said: "He wants to play the role but not walk the walk. His view seems to be that it's one rule for him and one rule for the rest of us. Driving or using the train would have been pretty easy."

Prince Charles was criticised last week for flying more than 16,000 miles in less than a fortnight. Clarence House suggested that the prince's desire to cut emissions was sometimes in conflict with his duty to represent the UK but that the latter needed to take priority.



Petworth's beauties get their legs back at last

When the Earl of Egremont wanted more wall space at Petworth House for paintings celebrating the Battle of Waterloo, six fine ladies were harshly given the chop (Mark Bridge writes).

Portraits by Michael Dahl of Lady Rachel Russell, Duchess of Devonshire, and Lady Mary Somerset, Duchess of Ormonde, important ladies of Queen

Anne's bedchamber, were among those in Petworth's "beauty room" that he ordered to be cut to three-quarter length, declaring: "I will cut off their legs, I do not want their petticoats."

More than 200 years later, both women have been restored to full glory. Fortunately for the National Trust, which owns the house in West Sussex, the workers who cut the canvases down on the earl's orders folded up the pieces and tacked them behind the

paintings. An inscription in chalk by one of Egremont's workers on the back of one frame, said: "After the paintings are lined, all paintings should be painted at the backs." This move, intended to protect against damp, was not carried out, which made it easier to restore the paintings.

The Duchess of Devonshire's father, Lord Russell, was executed for treason by Charles II.

The Duchess of Ormonde, a daughter of the Duke of Beaufort, was the most famous beauty of the day. She and her husband, a Jacobite, later went into exile. John Dryden dedicated a poem to her,



The baroque portraits of ladies at Petworth Park were severed but have now been restored to full length for an exhibition at Tate Britain

saying her "face is Paradise". It was rumoured that she accepted a bribe of £1,200 to install one of Queen Anne's maids of honour, a certain Miss Christian Temple.

Both ladies were part of a group of "beauties" close to the Duke and Duchess of Somerset, Petworth's owners, and prominent at court. The foremost was Sarah Churchill, the Duchess of Marlborough, played by Rachel Weisz in the film *The Favourite*. Their looks were not universally admired, however. One 18th-century diarist, Thomas Creevey, described them as "a quantity of ugly women".

Tina Sitwell, the National Trust's paintings conservation adviser, said: "It is quite unusual for paintings to be cut and the pieces folded in this way. Once the layers of varnish ... were removed, what appeared to be cream fabric in the dresses were shown as pure white and the skin tones of the ladies revealed as Dahl intended."

"To flatten, realign and seamlessly re-join the cut pieces was a ... difficult structural treatment, Ms Sitwell said, adding that the painting was retouched to match the original surface."

The paintings will appear in Tate Britain's exhibition *British Baroque: Power and Illusion* from tomorrow. Curators say it will be the first show to focus on baroque culture in Britain.

Museum refuses to return tribal relics

Nadeem Badshah

A British museum is being urged to end a decade-long dispute over the return of relics of a 19th-century Blackfoot Nation chief after it told descendants that it did not accept their plan of where they would be kept.

The Royal Albert Memorial Museum in Exeter has said that it did not recognise as adequate a \$100,000 cultural centre built by the descendants of Crowfoot of the Blackfoot Nation, whose relics have been in the UK since they were bought by the museum for £10 in 1904.

The Blackfoot-run cultural and educational centre in Alberta, near where the chief is buried, first lodged a formal repatriation request in 2015.

Stephen Yellow Old Woman, general manager of Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park, told *The Guardian*: "We are in our second decade of repatriation efforts, with no end in sight. Much of this whole experience has been shocking to us."

The relics include Crowfoot's buckskin shirt, leggings and a deer-hide necklace strung with grizzly bear claws.

Efforts to repatriate the artefacts are supported by Jason Kenney, Alberta's provincial premier, who wrote to five British officials last year to say that the repatriation "would be regarded as a great act of reconciliation with Canada's indigenous people", it was reported.

However, museum officials told the Blackfoot historical party that the letter from the premier "has no effect what-

Ancient treasures

- The Elgin Marbles, taken from Athens by The 7th Earl of Elgin, were bought by the British government in 1816. Greece has sought their return from the British Museum.
- Tippoo's Tiger, an automaton, was looted during the Seringapatam Siege of 1799 in India. It is in the V&A Museum in London.
- India has reclaimed the Koh-i-Noor diamond, which came into British hands in the 19th century and is at the Tower of London.
- Nigeria wants the Benin bronzes, looted in the 19th century, returned from London's Horniman Museum.

soever on how we operate in the UK".

According to *The Guardian* the museum said that the Blackfoot historical centre was not accredited with the Canadian Museums Association and details were needed about the long-term preservation of returned materials.

Details about governance had also been requested "to minimise the risk of competing or conflicting claims for the same material" but negotiations had stalled because the Blackfoot Centre had not sent all the information.

The Exeter museum has now written to the Siksika tribal council, elected representatives of the Siksika nation and part of the Blackfoot confederacy, proposing that the repatriation request be considered by Exeter city council's executive committee in June.

The letter also asked for information on the governance relationship between the Blackfoot historical centre and the tribal council, and clarification about future ownership of the regalia.

It added: "In recent months, debates on decolonising Britain's museums have intensified. The response of UK museums has been disparate, ranging from examples of unconditional repatriations to a lack of engagement with indigenous communities."

In 2013 Blackfoot representatives flew to Britain to see the relics, and in 2014 museum staff visited the historical park and Blackfoot nations in Alberta.

Last month the Arts Council tendered for help to update the guidance for UK museums on "the restitution and repatriation of cultural objects".

News

Fast tunes help you breathe more easily during exercise

Rhys Blakely Science Correspondent

The pulse-quicken power of a thumping tune has long been vital for exercise enthusiasts. But a study has now suggested that high-tempo music really could help you get into better shape.

Scientists found that physical activity was less arduous for those who listened to songs with faster beats. High-tempo music was also linked to a 33 per cent increase in heart rate compared with gentler music. "This means that the exercise seemed like less effort but it was more beneficial in terms of enhancing physical fitness," Luca Ardigo of the University of Verona, who led the research, said.

Nineteen participants walked for ten minutes on a treadmill followed by a higher-intensity exercise using a leg-press weight machine. These activities were carried out in four conditions: with no music, with music of between 90 and 110 beats per minute (bpm), 130-150 bpm and 170-190 bpm.

Heart rates were measured during each session and participants were

asked how much physical exertion they had put in. They reported having to use less effort when they were listening to the faster music. It also quickened their heart rates. The slowest music produced a heart beat of 83 bpm while the subjects walked on the treadmill and increased by about a third, to 110 bpm, when faster music was played.

"I would recommend that people listen to high-tempo music while walking," Dr Ardigo said.

The findings will come as little surprise to gym lovers, or perhaps to anyone whose pulse has been stirred by a rousing tune. However, researchers believe that the study, published in the journal *Frontiers in Psychology*, is the first to demonstrate that higher tempo music reduces the effort people believe they expend while exercising, while potentially increasing its benefits.

The best tracks for lifting the pulse included Taylor Swift's *Cruel Summer* (172 bpm); Green Day's *Basket Case* (176 bpm); Pat Benatar's *Love Is a Battlefield* (181 bpm); Scissor Sisters's *Laura* (182 bpm) and Caro Emerald's *You Don't Love Me* (189 bpm).

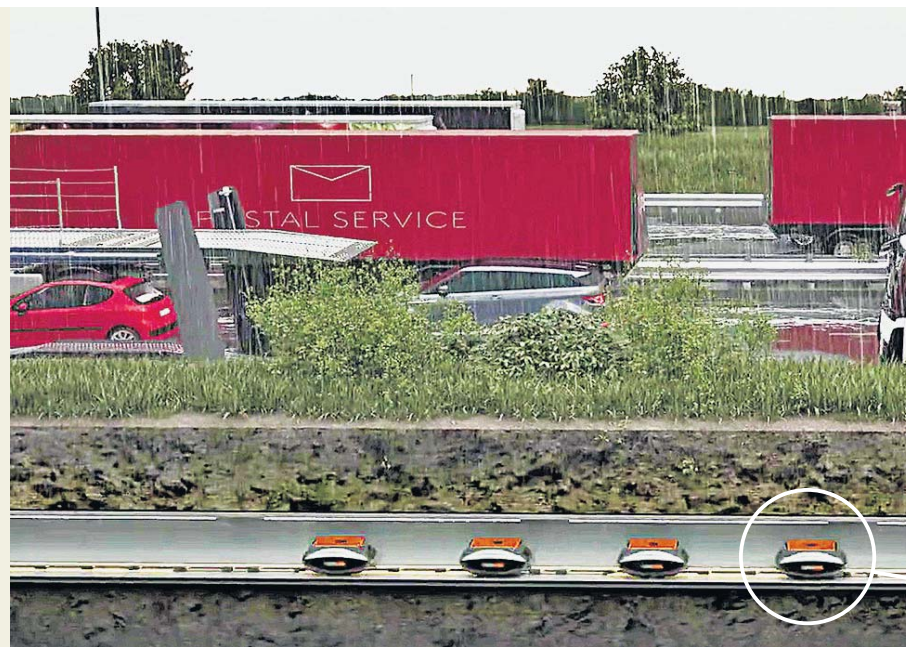
Shopping delivered by magnet in pipeline

Shopping will be propelled by magnetism through a network of pipes under plans to cut the number of trucks on the road (Graeme Paton writes).

A British company is planning to build hundreds of miles of pipes to transport goods without worsening traffic and vehicle emissions.

Magway, the engineering start-up, says it has raised more than £1.55 million from investors to fund a trial. A 1.2-mile test track will be built this year.

The company hopes to construct a network of pipes with a diameter of



90cm that would carry goods beneath or above ground.

An electric current will run through a track in the pipe, creating a magnetic

wave that propels pods at speeds of 50mph less than half a second apart.

It is claimed that the system, which is backed by a number of

organisations including Ocado, the online grocer, will be able to carry the equivalent of two articulated lorry-loads of goods per minute. The



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Billy Graham's son defiant as tour dates axed

Kaya Burgess
Religious Affairs Correspondent

The son of Billy Graham, the fiery American preacher who befriended the Queen, has said that Britain is "fertile ground" for his brand of evangelical Christianity despite much of his planned tour of the country having been cancelled because of his views on homosexuality.

Franklin Graham, who has strong links to President Trump, was due to embark on a four-month tour of the UK in May. However, six of the seven venues at which he was to have appeared have pulled out, facing pressure over Mr Graham's views that gay people are sinful and should "repent" their sexuality.

His father, Billy, visited the UK for mass rallies, which he called "crusades", in the 1960s. He preached in the Queen's chapel at Windsor, as dramatised in the Netflix series *The Crown*.

Mr Graham Jr, 67, told *The Times* that



Mr Graham's father, Billy, befriended the Queen during tours in the 1960s

he would "love to meet the Queen" while in Britain, citing his father's "very close and warm relationship" with her, but said that he had not approached Buckingham Palace for a meeting.

Despite the tour cancellations, he

said: "Membership is declining among many of the [Christian] denominations and there's a young generation that has not had church influence in their life."

"I think it's a wonderful opportunity and so many churches have asked us to come. We hope we will be able to share with a new generation how much God loves them. It is very fertile ground."

"Just because the venues have cancelled, we have not cancelled our tour. We will continue in other venues."

In a "letter to the LGBTQ community in the UK" that was published on his Facebook page last Thursday, Mr Graham said: "The rub comes in whether God defines homosexuality as sin. The answer is yes."

The SSE Hydro arena in Glasgow, the FlyDSA Arena in Sheffield, the Marshall Arena in Milton Keynes, ACC Liverpool, Arena Birmingham and ICC Wales in Newport have cancelled Mr Graham's bookings.

The Marshall Arena said on Friday that Mr Graham's appearance could

lead to a breach of the peace, and ICC Wales said that his views were "incompatible with our own values of equality, diversity and inclusivity", adding that "opposition to this event has come from numerous sources".

The Utilita Arena in Newcastle is the only venue not to have cancelled, but it is under pressure to do so from the city council. Mr Graham is also planning to speak in London, but has not confirmed a venue.

Jayne Ozanne, a gay rights campaigner on the Church of England's General Synod, said: "Franklin Graham holds and promotes strongly held views on a number of sensitive issues, which many find offensive and consider hate speech."

She said that he showed "little understanding of the harm that he causes [to] vulnerable members of the LGBTI community" and said she was "grateful and glad" that the six venues had pulled out of his appearances.

Asked if he understood such opposi-

tion, Mr Graham said that he was "not coming to preach against the gay and lesbian community" and that they were welcome at his events.

However, he added: "If a person commits adultery and asks for God's forgiveness ... then God is going to forgive him."

"But if he wants to continue to live in that adulterous relationship and continues to sin, the Bible requires repentance, that we have to leave our sin, regardless of what our sins are."

He added: "Her Majesty always welcomed my father when he came to the country and they had a number of visits that were private. We don't discuss those conversations, but they were very close. They talked quite often."

Asked if he wanted to meet the Queen during his tour, he said: "I think everybody would love to meet the Queen as such a historical figure and she's a wonderful person," but added that he would "hate to be a burden in asking for a few minutes with her".

Tinnitus harms mental health

Rhys Blakely

As many as a million people in Britain have been driven to suicidal thoughts because of tinnitus, where sufferers hear noises that have no external cause, a new survey suggests.

Research published today by the British Tinnitus Association suggests that about seven million adults suffer from the condition, which can involve hearing sounds that seem to be as loud as a jet engine or a whistling kettle.

The association is calling for more to be spent on tinnitus research, a field it says receives less than 3 per cent of the funding devoted to conditions such as depression and hearing loss, despite the comparable impact.

A survey of 1,620 people with tinnitus showed that nearly six in ten had experienced low moods and sadness. More than four in ten said that it had caused them to avoid contact with friends or take part in fewer social activities.

One in seven — equivalent, potentially, to about one million adults across the country — said that the condition had driven them to suicidal thoughts. A spokesman for the association said that other surveys had painted a similar pic-

ture of the psychological burden put on people with tinnitus.

One in three said that their condition was often trivialised by their partner, family, friends, work colleagues and health professionals, while more than eight out of 10 are dissatisfied with the current treatment options.

Claire Eveleigh, 34, a mother of two from New Milton, Hampshire, described the toll tinnitus had taken on her after being diagnosed in July last year. "It came on suddenly after a rare night out where I'd listened to loud music. It was a low droning noise which I could also feel," she said. "I started having suicidal thoughts. I was very scared and thought my two young children would be better off without me. I couldn't focus on them; I was too preoccupied with listening to these horrible sounds. I was prescribed antidepressants."

She is now part of a support group and has found that yoga and mindful meditation have helped to overcome her anxiety.

"I still have my bad days. I live for my children and spend a lot of time outside with them. They are my main distraction and my family is really supportive,"

she said. David Stockdale, chief executive of the British Tinnitus Association, said: "It is a travesty that tinnitus, with its huge mental health impact, receives 40 times less funding than comparable conditions. It's time for the government to listen up and invest in tinnitus to help improve mental health and quality of life for millions of people."

Sir John Hayes, Conservative MP for South Holland & The Deepings, urged the secretary of state for health to commit more funding to tinnitus research. "I've had tinnitus since suffering a serious head injury in my 20s," he said. "It can have a huge impact on people's lives and yet the underfunding of research has left big gaps in scientific knowledge. I am urging the health and social care secretary to commit more funding."

Tinnitus is sometimes linked to other conditions such as diabetes, thyroid disorders or multiple sclerosis. It can also be a side-effect of certain medicines or caused by exposure to loud noise. In many cases, however, the trigger is unknown.

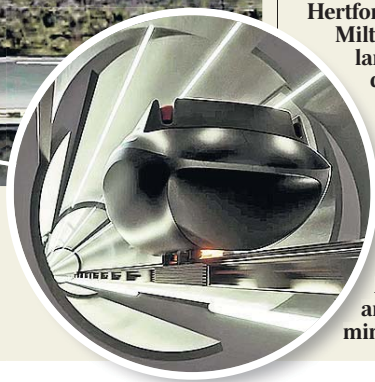
The NHS offers treatments including specialist counselling and cognitive behavioural therapy, which are designed to help people cope.



Britain's first shopping pipeline could run for 52 miles alongside the M1

mile path stretching from northwest London to Hertfordshire and on to Milton Keynes, where large numbers of distribution centres have been built next to the M1. The company anticipates that pipes would be laid by the side of motorways, A-roads, canals and rail lines to minimise disruption.

ultimate plan is to develop a UK-wide Magway pipe network. The first route to be earmarked is a 52-



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Freeze frame Protesters brave the waters of Grasmere in their battle against the commercialisation of the Lake District

LORNE CAMPBELL/GUZELIAN

'Toxic culture at ambulance service trust is risking lives'

Graeme Paton

A whistleblower has gone public over the suspected suicide of three workers at a "toxic" ambulance trust, with warnings that other staff are at risk.

Paul Fitzgerald, formerly responsible for equalities at East of England Ambulance Service Trust, alleged last year that staff had been pushed to the brink because of bullying. A month after the allegations were reported in October, three members of staff died. After the deaths the trust said that it was doing everything it could to support staff.

Mr Fitzgerald has now gone public to say that six staff members have told him they have suicidal thoughts.

The three deaths happened after cuts were made to the trust's in-house well-being team and as it moved the service to a private provider.

Mr Fitzgerald, who left the trust last October, told *Health Service Journal*: "I

have never witnessed anything like the completely toxic culture at the trust. There is a very real risk of more staff committing suicide."

In a statement to the *HSJ*, the trust said: "We take staff welfare very seriously. This is why we have reviewed the service and now have an enhanced service in place provided by Kays Medical."

The trust said it had appointed "a single independent external investigator, who has undertaken a formidable number and range of serious incident investigations" to review its practices.

Dorothy Hosein, the chief executive, said: "We were deeply saddened by the deaths of our colleagues in autumn 2019. The board has commissioned an independent investigation into the underlying factors associated with those deaths. We have significantly improved the way in which we listen and ensure that when [staff] raise concerns with leaders these are acted upon."



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La meccanica delle emozioni



Why willpower is the secret to a happier life

Edward Lucas

Page 24



Comment

Labour should ditch its obsession with class

The party has to realise that voters are sick of nostalgic narratives of working-class heroes and Thatcher-esque villains

Clare Foges



@CLAREFOGES

Labour leadership candidates: never mind your policies or plans — how working class are you? Do you use the toilet or the loo? Do you drop your Ts, Hs, or both? Can you confirm your childhood horizon was more mill town than Mayfair?

Since the starting gun went off, candidates to become leader and deputy leader have been busily showing off their working-class credentials. Keir Starmer tells us his dad was a toolmaker, while his Wikipedia page has been edited to remove the slur “millionaire”. Emily Thornberry’s father might have become assistant secretary-general of the United Nations but she grew up in a council estate, OK? Rebecca Long Bailey clarifies: “I’m not a millionaire or a landlord, and I didn’t go to a posh school.” Echoes of Monty Python’s Four Yorkshiremen sketch: “There were a hundred and sixty of us living in a small shoebox in the middle of the road” ... “You were lucky! We lived for three months in a brown paper bag in a septic tank.”

I like a grit-to-green benches tale as much as the next person. But the fact that in 2020 those hoping to lead the Labour Party still feel they must prove their working-class credentials underlines an obsession with class that the party urgently needs to ditch if it is to have a hope of winning again. Some of my fellow Conservatives may wonder why this

should matter; why not rejoice as the Labour wilderness stretches on into decades? But having a credible, challenging opposition matters deeply. Without the competition of a Labour Party that could conceivably win power, the Conservatives will soon be complacently coasting along to Campaign 2024.

So God help us if an article published last week gives a sense of the party’s future. The high-profile Corbynite Grace Blakeley, who has now transferred her loyalties to Long Bailey, declared in the socialist *Tribune* that Labour needs to work on “a sense of oppositionality” because “any convincing political narrative requires a hero and a villain” and “it is up to the left to construct an oppositionality based on class”. Here’s a winning strategy: Tory Scum here we come (again). Blakeley wants Labour to talk about “the rigged economy” ruled by a “tiny elite” and presided over by the “Westminster-based establishment”.

This is not a country where 99% are under the boot of the elite

At the heart of said “Westminster-based establishment”, another comrade has been fighting the good fight in the class war. Zarah Sultana, the new MP for Coventry South, railed against a prime minister “who went from the playing fields of Eton to a free education at Oxford University”, raged that “the gap between the ruling class and the working class has widened”, declared that as a “working-class Muslim woman ... I know the Bullingdon boys will never be on my side” and claimed that we have just experienced “40 years of Thatcherism” — a swipe

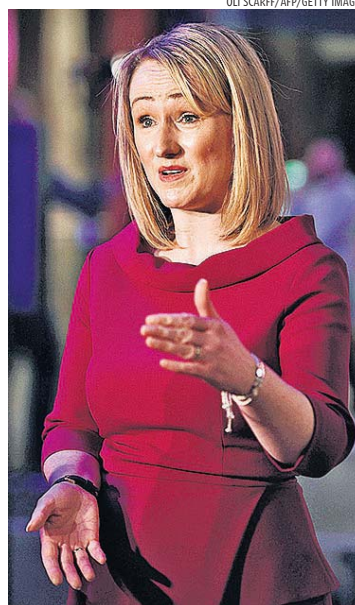
at Blair and Brown, those nasty neoliberal architects of Sure Start and the national minimum wage.

Sultana’s speech was applauded by John McDonnell, Diane Abbott and the deputy leadership hopeful Angela Rayner, herself not averse to a bit of us-and-themmy; in parliament recently this “proud, northern working-class member representing a proud, northern working-class constituency” declared that “the prime minister has never cared about the people in the north”, getting in a jab or two at Lady Thatcher while she was at it.

With wearying predictability, Long Bailey’s opening pitch for the leadership began: “In 1979, the year I was born, Thatcher’s election victory precipitated an attack on our working-class communities ...” Meanwhile, the organiser of the Durham Miners’ Gala declares that newly elected Conservative MPs might want to speak to the police before they dare to turn up to this celebration of working-class culture.

We’ve had Old Labour and New Labour; this is Retro Labour. Retro Labour is intensely nostalgic. It longs for Thatcher-esque villains to give drama to its narrative and lend the glow of heroism to its fighters. It is hopelessly sentimental about Britain’s industrial past; misty-eyed over colliery bands and pit-town solidarity, boiler suits and steel capped boots, trade unionism and self-education, workers, as Philip Larkin put it, “who leave at dawn low-terraced houses/Timed for factory, yard and site”. Above all, Retro Labour is obsessed with class war, seeing 90 per cent of the British experience as a Ken Loach film made real, and the rest as *Brideshead Revisited* peopled by red-cheeked toffs.

The trouble with Retro Labour is



Rebecca Long Bailey has made clear that she did not go to a “posh school”

that it speaks of an imaginary country. In its appeal to “the working class” as one monolithic entity, Retro Labourites are appealing to a bloc that no longer exists. Though around half the population will, if asked, define themselves as working class rather than middle class, this description is not central to the identity of millions, as it was in the heyday of friendly societies, working men’s clubs and trade unionism.

This is not to deny the existence of a class system, and the howling unfairness that comes with it; or the fact that the gig economy can be cruel and capricious. But Retro Labour’s simplistic idea that there is a huge swathe of oppressed workers just does not fit with how most in this country see themselves. It is as if they haven’t noticed that the

minimum wage has been hiked way above the rate of inflation, or that the personal allowance has risen significantly, or that there are generous provisions for maternity leave and free childcare for those who need it. This is not a country where 99 per cent are under the boot of a “ruling elite”.

Labour may be desperate to win back its “red wall”, but it won’t do so by patronising the voters with class warfare, as though all the C2DE parts of the electorate would feel that their problems will be solved with a bit of bash-the-rich. The truck driver or care worker might not be able to draw the Laffer curve but most know instinctively that it is nuts to demonise those who create a large chunk of the nation’s wealth.

Labour is in a bewildering situation: the tribal vote has imploded, the red wall has crumbled, a lot of the old talents have fled. In the midst of this bewilderment it will be tempting to cling to the comfort blanket of class war, an “oven-ready” narrative that makes the hearts of Labour members beat faster, that has baddies and drama, boldness and clarity. But to embrace the politics of “oppositionality” once again will kill Labour’s credibility once and for all.

The British public are sick of this shallow rancour and wise to the emptiness it covers. If it fails to expunge this tendency, if it continues to cling on to class division then Labour will be not looking at a few years in the political wilderness but for ever.

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Comment

Why willpower is the secret to a happier life

Our mental muscles are precious — so we should exercise them on things that really matter



@EDWARDLUCAS

My 14 years as a foreign correspondent were stressful, physically and mentally. So I created routines to compensate. In Moscow, I always ate lunch at the same restaurant: the Scandinavia (now sadly closed) was central, clean, quiet and unpretentious. Not only that, I always ate the same dish. Spending the middle of the day in the calm, friendly Swedish-run oasis helped me to concentrate on the chaotic and menacing swamps elsewhere.

What the staff (and probably the spooks assigned to shadow me) regarded as quintessential English eccentricity now turns out to have science behind it. I have been reading the work of the American social psychologist Roy Baumeister, who has made his name with the study of willpower. Self-control, he argues, is what prevents us from responding to impulses that create self-defeating behaviour, such as drug-taking, over-eating, promiscuity and wasting time on trivia. His main insight is that willpower is like a muscle. Your brain gets tired: if you waste your mental energy on one thing, you will have less for another. He calls this “ego depletion”, a reference to Freud’s idea that the ego

is what controls our passions. That analysis leads to immediate practical fixes. Do the most difficult things first. Do not, for example, start your working day by replying to emails regardless of importance.

Exercise does tire muscles — but done the right way, it also strengthens them. Simple self-control exercises might include delaying a cup of coffee or a rest, or forcing yourself to speak, at least sometimes, in complete grammatical sentences without swear words. Baumeister also suggests tricks such as using your left hand (if you are right-handed) for routine tasks such as teeth-cleaning or your computer mouse. Unaccustomed efforts jolt your brain into a new routine. This may sound tiresome and eccentric, but it works. The evidence also suggests that greater self-control makes you happier at home and

Obama said he tired of having to decide what to eat or what to wear

more successful at work, thus hugely increasing your chance of a long, healthy and satisfying life.

Our Victorian forebears would have understood this at once. As a child, I found on a dusty bookshelf an ancient copy of *Self-Help*, by the much-neglected radical campaigner Samuel Smiles. He reckoned that thrift and personal responsibility were the foundation of individual goodness and social progress, arguing his case with lines such as “even the humblest person, who sets

before his fellows an example of industry, sobriety, and upright honesty of purpose in life, has a present as well as a future influence upon the well-being of his country; for his life and character pass unconsciously into the lives of others, and propagate good example for all time to come.”

His book, first published in 1859, was a best-seller, but then went out of fashion. It seemed wrong to blame poverty on fecklessness when crushing social and economic unfairness was the root cause. Social reformers such as Robert Tressell, author of the inspirational socialist novel *The Ragged-Trousered Philanthropists*, regarded Smiles’s individualist gospel as callous and pernicious. The pendulum has swung back a bit since then, not least thanks to Gertrude Himmelfarb, an American historian of 19th-century thought who died late last year. She noted that Victorian virtues seemed to produce better results than modern values.

Leaving aside wider questions of social policy, the “power of self-help, of patient purpose, resolute working, and steadfast integrity”, as Smiles put it, certainly looks increasingly attractive on an individual level. In my youth, I survived on adrenalin, quick wits and an excellent memory. It was too much trouble to be calm, tidy or well organised because I would manage everything anyway. As I get older, I tire more easily and forget things more often. I protect my willpower by building routines, not just about lunch (though I have found a quiet, modestly priced eatery in London too). I keep a travel bag by

the front door packed with clothes, toiletries, medicines, passport, pens, notebooks and mains adapters. When I go on a trip, I simply put my laptop inside and walk out of the house; when I arrive home, I spend a few minutes immediately restocking it. I almost never answer the phone at home: if it is important, the caller will leave a message. The mobile phone is set to “silent” and sits in another room. I answer texts first, emails only when I have time.

I actively shun unnecessary and exhausting decisions, such as anything involving choosing or buying clothes. My role model here is Barack Obama, a Baumeister fan. Despite mockery from Michelle, the former US president wore only grey or blue suits. He told *Vanity Fair* in 2012: “I don’t want to make decisions about what I’m eating or wearing. Because I have too many other decisions to make.”

My world is far humbler. But saving my mental energies helps me achieve the day’s greatest pleasure: periods of intense, unbroken concentration. The Hungarian-American psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (pronounced ME-high CHEEK-sent-me-high) has coined the term “flow” for the joy of complete absorption. It matters far more to happiness than material wealth. The newly popular “mindfulness” is a more limited version of the same thing. Trance-like concentration is easiest to achieve when doing something interesting. Some lucky people may find it easier than others. But even a little goes a long way — and practice makes perfect.



The world needs secularism to survive in India

Andrew Copson

The secularism of India has always been different from that of France or America, born not of anticlericalism or a concern for religious liberty as such, but of a desire to hold together a plural society of many creeds in peace, democracy and freedom. The republic that succeeded the British Empire was secular because it could scarcely be anything else. People of all communities had fought together for independence and the state for whose existence they laboured together was going to reward them with equal citizenship.

Indian secularism in its seven decades has been far from perfect but it has held together, in relative peace, a nation of more than a billion diverse believers. It has been an inspiration for secularists in the region and a rebuke to local theocracies. As societies in the West that were more uniform become more heterogeneous, many here have even looked to India for an example of how law and policy in newly diverse societies might be re-gear. It matters that this example is being eroded so visibly.

The fruits of the Hindu nationalism of prime minister Narendra Modi’s BJP have been long known. It was the BJP’s intellectual forebears who plotted and carried out the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi. Their path to power in the decades since has been littered with countless more corpses of non-Hindus. BJP politicians have spoken of the need to “cleanse” Indian culture of “foreign” religions such as Islam and Christianity.

But the rolling back of secularism in India is also part of a global trend. Its advocates are the allies of all ethnic nationalists, whether Islamic states or crusaders for a white Christian America and Europe. It complements the agendas of regimes that share Modi’s belief in national characters and destinies trumping international standards, whether Putin’s “traditional values”, China’s idea of “national culture”, or Islamic states’ formulation of “Islamic human rights”.

The Indian government ideology lends weight to the (false) claim that secularism is a western phenomenon unsuited to Asia. Already the supporters of secularism at the international level are few. If the example of India falls away, does it have a future anywhere? India’s first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru thought secularism essential for a democracy of equal citizens to flourish. Its failure in the republic he helped to found may turn the clock back not just for India but for the world. That’s why it must be defended.

Andrew Copson is president of Humanists International and the author of *Secularism: a Very Short Introduction*

Sathnam Sanghera Notebook

Copycat’s marketing ploy is good, clean pun

We Sikhs have, I suppose, become known in Britain for certain things over the years, from charity fundraising, to spending wild amounts of money on private number plates, to (thanks to the historical ignorance of Laurence Fox) fighting for Britain in two world wars in large numbers.

But now it seems we have another string to our bow: alleged copyright infringement. Mandeep Singh Chatha went viral the other day after opening a convenience store in Wolverhampton called Singhsbury Local, using an orange font that just happened to resemble Sainsbury’s. “My name is Singh and it is on Bushbury Road,” he told a newspaper when asked about the brazen copycatting. “It’s just a coincidence.”

As it happens, the Black Country has a proud heritage on this front: Kent’s Tuck Inn Fried Chicken on

Kent Street in Dudley surely being the best example of brand imitation.

But it’s Sikhs who seem to have embraced it most enthusiastically. One tried to establish a Singhfellow in Wolverhampton (it never opened, but I liked it so much that I used the name for a pub setting in my novel) and in 2017 the businessman Jel Singh Nagra also renamed his North Tyneside shop Singhsbury’s. After Sainsbury’s threatened legal action, he renamed it Morrisings, with the approval of ... Morrisons. Which is exactly how companies should respond. After all, cheeky copyright infringement is the greatest form of flattery. I look forward to seeing branches of Abercrombie & Singh, Marks & Singhs & Spencers, and Turban Outfitters.

Breakneck bus

Lots gets said about the drawbacks of electric vehicles, such as their short ranges, the relative expense and their cat-crawling quietness that makes them potentially lethal to pedestrians. But with my local bus route having

recently been electrified, I find myself worrying about something new: their instantaneous acceleration.

Transport for London tells me that its electric buses are fitted with something called intelligent speed adaptation, ensuring drivers don’t exceed the speed limit, and that the acceleration is limited, but what the system doesn’t seem to confront is that electric motors deliver instant torque, which makes the new buses a trial to stay upright on. It is now a daily challenge to find a seat before the blistering take-off throws me on to the floor, and I stay seated until I absolutely have to get up, having witnessed countless others fall down during extreme braking.

Zero emissions are fantastic, but you’d find it easier to stay standing in a bouncy castle.

Friends reunited

Is there anything, this side of a big birthday, that inspires melancholy like a school reunion? I’ve been invited to my very first at

Wolverhampton Grammar School, 25 years after I left, and the accompanying Facebook group has already been intense. The guy whose sense of

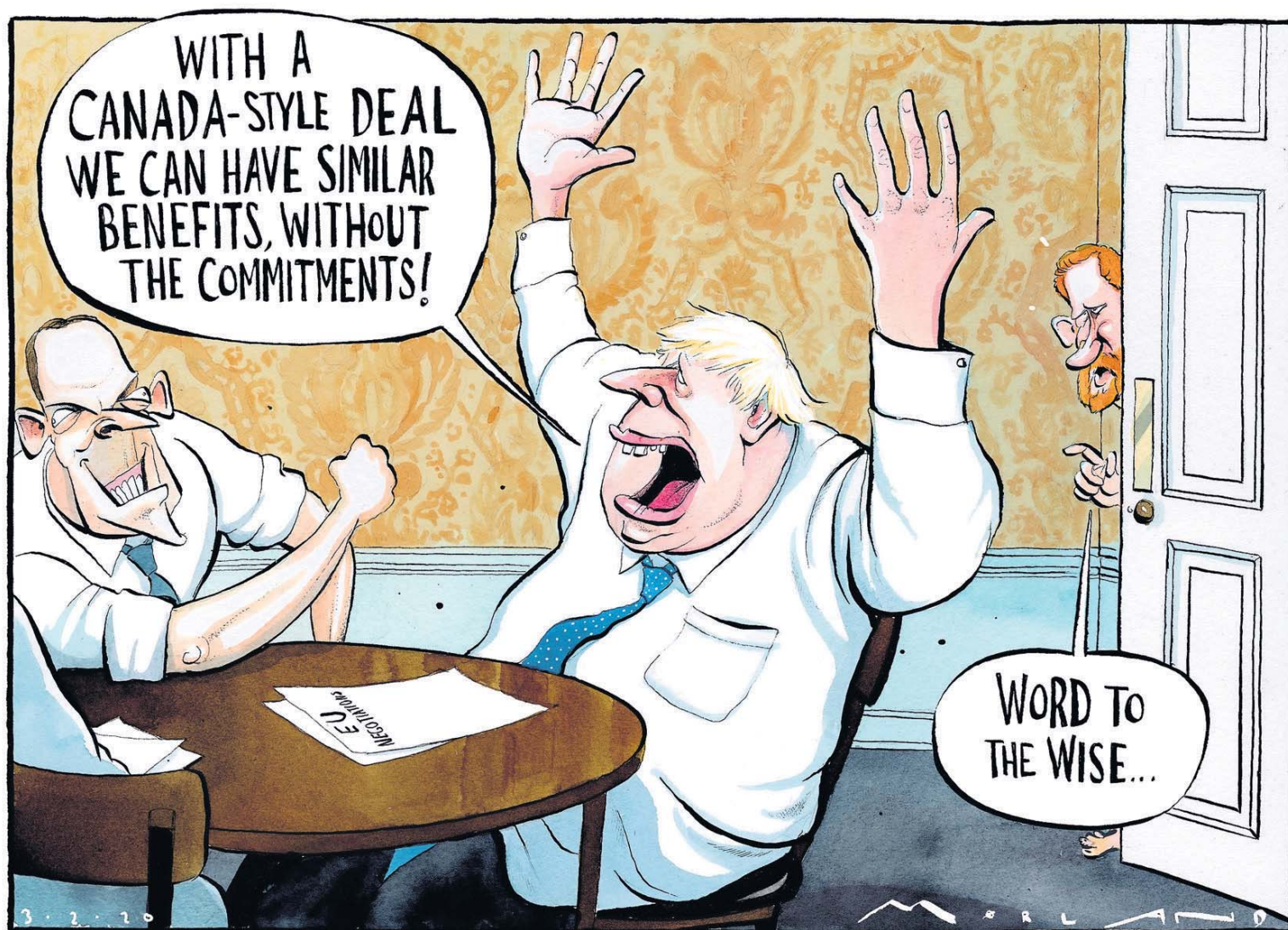
humour doesn’t seem to have changed since 1995. The quiet classmate who seems to have become gregarious and rich. The ten fellow pupils you somehow can’t even remember though you spent seven years sitting alongside them, and then, the individuals who have ended up in jail or died. God, the cruelty, tragedy and utter randomness of life! But at least the Facebook photos allow you to prepare for the biggest challenge: pretending you’re not shocked at how fat and bald we’ve all become.

Whatever suds you like

I made what initially felt like a disastrous error with my laundry the other day: I put dishwasher tablets into the machine instead of Persil capsules. But guess what? The towels and jeans and smalls turned out totally fine. I might have smelt faintly of lemon for a week, and the buttons of my jeans might still squeak when fastened, but so what?

It just proves that all detergent is actually the same. Billion-pound marketing campaigns try to convince us otherwise, but I got away with washing my hair with antibacterial handwash in a hotel not long ago. I’ve heard of people using washing powder to get rid of stains on dishes, and washing up liquid as soap. Though personally I draw the line at brushing my teeth with Bold.





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Let's cheer the end of MPs' breastfeeding ban

Young women braving motherhood and the brutalities of Westminster can make an important contribution to politics

Libby Purves



@LIB_THINKS

Time for some happy political news. The arrival of the mild-mannered new Speaker of the House of Commons, Sir Lindsay Hoyle, is a definite relief: whatever your politics, the departure of John "Bollocks to Brexit" Bercow feels as if the builders outside have finally switched off an angle grinder. But as a grace note, gentle Sir Lindsay told journalists that he sees no reason to keep the ban on women MPs breastfeeding in the chamber. "I'm of the view there isn't a policy. It is up to the woman. I think it would be wrong for me as a man to dictate ... I wouldn't be upset by it."

Tactful words, since in fact there has been a policy. Helene Hayman fed her baby there in the late 1970s, and I believe Harriet Harman sneaked an infant into the division lobby in 1983. In 2018 Jo Swinson's baby Gabriel slept while she spoke on maternity rights, but she had to leave the chamber to feed him.

When Julia Drown, with long committees to attend, made a civil request in 2000, the Speaker Betty Boothroyd said no. Neither in the chamber nor committee rooms was it "appropriate", being classified as "bringing refreshment into the room". Harsh, when the said refreshment is firmly attached to a human chest. It was not "conducive to the efficient conduct of public business, nor do I think that the necessary calm environment in which to feed babies can be provided in such circumstances".

Twenty years passed. Speaker Michael Martin did nothing to change that ruling; John Bercow made crowd-pleasing liberal noises

I did it while chairing a meeting of senior Met police. They didn't care

when the administration committee recommended change, but he did nothing. Perhaps fearing uproar from dinosaur members such as the DUP MP for East Antrim, Sammy Wilson, who with moustache a-bristling proclaimed that women breastfeeding would be "exhibitionists" and attract voyeurs: "The woman has to expose her breasts!"

Well, phooey. There are shawls,

and easy tops that pull up, revealing nothing the baby doesn't cover. It is perfectly possible to feed a small baby without anyone seeing more than some enthusiastically kicking feet. Plenty of us have done it in public — on trains, in shops, in my case while chairing a short meeting of senior Met officers at the BBC. The baby woke, and to mince off to a side room would waste police time. They were cops, anyway; they see corpses, the odd bit of flesh didn't faze them. Most people do take it in their stride unless you make a mumsy fuss. As my brother Patrick observed, "you wouldn't upset anyone you would LIKE". The only time I was trapped opposite a censorious man on a delayed train, who muttered "Must you!", I gave him the choice: "Ninety minutes to Newcastle. Screaming or feeding? You choose."

Admittedly, after a few months some high-spirited babies do tend to take a break, turn and bestow a dribbling grin on the whole room. So there might, just possibly, be a risk that a sensitive DUP member could glimpse a nipple and require counselling. But by and large breastfeeding is a quiet guerrilla activity that need not distract anyone, any more than when some MP of maturer years falls asleep with a snort. And, respect to Speaker

Boothroyd, while "a calm environment" is nice, hungry babies rarely give a damn. If you can feed on a football train you can feed in PMQs. And if the baby is tricky or the mother unconfident, she won't anyway. She will either (sadly) give up breastfeeding or take leave from her elected, democratic duty.

A third of MPs are women. Many of them are young. Stella Creasy, Ellie Reeves and Kemi Badenoch

Stupid remarks about 'preg-head' or mental fuzziness are wrong

were sworn in in December holding newborns. It is important to have such voices in the most important of public areas, to listen and debate. Before Sir Lindsay stepped up, resistance may have owed something to a dark idea that lactating mothers are not really rational and don't belong in the serious world. This gets backed up by stupidly flippant remarks from public women about "preg-head" or the mental fuzziness of new motherhood. It's rubbish.

If an individual mother and baby need confined separation and milky silence, fine. But the truth is that there is another strand in some new mothers: something Amazonian,

matriarchal, powerful. The dependent infant focuses us: it is tiny but wholly human, learning constantly, staring up with unmatched concentration. It represents the urgent basis of society: those vulnerable to every change from polluted air to street violence. It hardens a drive to protect, protest and improve the world for all.

Any woman who has fought through to a parliamentary seat while young enough to give birth has some of that steel. Her voice is important. There is a place on the green benches for the old, the established, the politically astute, the chancer, the intellectual visionary and the proud male; but also for young women brave enough to face the brutalities of political life in that exhausting, revelatory time of life. Many will never feed in the chamber, but if they do it can only sweeten and sober it.

Time we caught up, anyway. It happens in New Zealand, Australia and Spain where Carolina Bescansa fed her baby while actually running for Speaker. In Iceland Unnur Bra Konradsdottir breastfed while giving a speech on immigration law. Her baby woke up, and she pointed out that mothering too is a job. "You've got to do what you've got to do." Quite.

Letters to the Editor



Motorway safety

Sir, Your leading article (“Dumb Motorways”, Feb 1) reinforces the need for the Department for Transport to take urgent action on a tragedy it could have avoided. In June 2016 the cross-party transport select committee issued dire warnings that lives would be lost if the department proceeded with its plan for all-lane running smart motorways. We urged the government to halt its programme. The police, motoring associations and motorway recovery teams all expressed serious concerns but the government ploughed on with its ill-advised plans. It is appalling that 38 people have now died. The department says it will halt the work on new smart motorways pending a reassessment. This must be transparent and be driven by safety considerations.
Dame Louise Ellman
Chairwoman, transport select committee 2008-17

Sir, Your leading article is only half right. What is clever is the use of overhead gantry signage, which contributes to safety (by warning of problems ahead) and to traffic flow (by the use of variable speed limits, managed with cameras). What was bad was to combine a really good idea with a really stupid one — getting rid of the hard shoulder, whether in all-lane running or in “dynamic” mode. I hope that no more hard shoulders will be removed and that those already removed will be reinstated, but it is important not to throw the baby out with the bath water.
John Haines
Corfe, Somerset

Sir, The debate on smart motorways needs to be informed by statistics. In 2018 there were about ten deaths per 200 miles of traditional motorway and nine deaths on the 200 miles of smart motorway. In terms of fatalities, smart motorways are no less safe than traditional ones.
Roger Davies
Worthing, W Sussex

The best medicine

Sir, Professor Alderson’s letter (Feb 1) makes one wonder if humility is included in surgical training. Last year I participated in a medicines review by our practice pharmacist. In ten minutes she had taught some pharmacology that this physician of 50 years should have known and we reduced the NHS medicines bill. Not bad for an “amateur pharmacist”.
Timothy Chambers, MRCS
Bristol

Corrections and clarifications

Regulated

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Where next for Britain after leaving the EU?

Sir, Michael Gove’s comment piece (“True prize is chance to make politics work again”, Feb 1) was interesting; but it failed to distinguish between the disempowerment felt by British politicians while the UK was part of the EU and the popular feeling of disempowerment that was largely responsible for our leaving the EU. Brexit has certainly resolved the former but it has aggravated the real problem, the disempowerment of the electorate due to two factors: a voting system that distorts the will of the people; and a political system that makes the party with control in the House of Commons an absolute sovereign answerable to no one until the next election. Accordingly, Mr Gove’s views about political accountability do not reflect reality and will not do so unless and until there is serious constitutional reform.
Paul Lasok, QC
London N7

Sir, I would question Richard Ritchie’s conclusion (letter, Jan 31) that Enoch Powell would feel vindicated and happy at our departure from the EU. From his contact with US officers

during the Second World War, he identified the destruction of the British Empire as one of the war aims of the United States. Lend Lease, a debt not cleared until 2006, and the Marshall Plan provide some support for this view, with both projects essentially based on an “America First” philosophy. The British Empire is no more. In severing our strong ties with the EU we now place ourselves at the mercy of an unscrupulous US president and without any bargaining chips to play with. Powell would doubtless have been unhappy to see this prediction of his fulfilled.
Donald MacFaul
Knodishall, Suffolk

Sir, To prevent lorry congestion after increased formalities are imposed, why not establish container depots at all exit ports? The driver and cab would drop off one container, pick up another container already passed by customs and head back, staying in the UK. A similar arrangement could be made for imports in the European ports and the loading on and off of ferries and trains could be done by

port drivers who do not cross any borders. This would make the most efficient use of driver time and also reduce the dangers from drivers not accustomed to foreign countries’ rules and regulations. There remains a delay to the containers, but the checks could be made without the pressure to keep traffic moving and our roads would be less congested.
Andrew Irvine
Walsall

Sir, We are one of the few countries in the world to not have a national or independence day. Let January 31 be our national day from next year onwards, and may it become a bank holiday to help celebrations.
Hugh Wingrove
Brighton

Sir, Given the emotional outpouring of loyal Brexiters you would expect them to understand that the Union flag should be flown with the broad white strips uppermost on the pole side. Your front page photo (Feb 1) showed two flags, one upside down.
Keith Virgo
Newmarket, Suffolk

Classical influences

Sir, One of the most versatile modern rock bands, Muse, make extensive use of classical music for their inspiration (letter, Feb 1). In reflecting not only Rachmaninov (Second Piano Concerto and Preludes) but also Chopin (Nocturne in E-flat Major) and in particular *Mon cœur s’ouvre à ta voix* from Saint-Saëns’s *Samson and Delilah*, Muse demonstrate how sensitively and powerfully such themes can be interpreted.
Robert Cassels
Whittlesford, Cambs

Sir, Rachmaninov is not the only classical composer to have his music turned into a pop song. Little Mix borrowed Faure’s *Pavane*, as did S Club 7. *Can’t Help Falling in Love*, recorded by Elvis Presley and UB40 among others, borrowed phrases from Martini’s *Plaisir d’amour*; Procul Harum’s *A Whiter Shade of Pale* relied heavily on Bach’s *Air on the G String* and the Pet Shop Boys used Pachelbel’s Canon in D. Tchaikovsky, Prokofiev, Mussorgsky, Debussy, Rossini and Chopin have all found their way into pop music. Indeed there is a history of such borrowings stretching as far back as

the 1890s. Long may it continue.
Terence Crolley
Maghull, Merseyside

Fair inheritance tax

Sir, The suggestion that the existing inheritance tax of 40 per cent should be replaced with a 10 per cent rate on all lifetime gifts and assets bequeathed at death (“Cut tax on inheritance to 10%, MPs say”, Jan 30) does not go far enough. My attempts to understand the complexity of inheritance tax have encountered — in addition to the basic 40 per cent tax and £325,000 nil-rate band — a fantastical range of exceptions and reliefs. These include the residential nil-rate band, entrepreneurial relief, agricultural property relief and, for the truly masochistic, the downsizing relief. All this without entering the solicitors’ world of bare trusts, discretionary trusts, flexible reversionary trusts etc. The whole lot should be scrapped. There should be no reliefs and exceptions but, crucially, the tax should be set sufficiently low, say 5 per cent, so that it is not worthwhile trying to avoid it and it should generally be regarded as being fair.
Robert Bibby
Beaminster, Dorset

Out in the cold

Sir, I read Sonia Dowse’s letter (Feb 1) about a lack of heating at St John’s College, Oxford, with interest. When I, as an undergraduate, applied to read in the Bodleian Library in 1965, I had to repeat and sign an undertaking “not to bring into the library or kindle therein any fire or flame”. I imagine that too many scholars had been bringing portable braziers to warm them as they studied the manuscripts.
Mike Hattersley
Milnthorpe, Cumbria

Sir, Students at St John’s College fear that the loss of central heating at this time of year would be “borderline dangerous” (“Professor turns oil row into a heated debate”, Jan 31). How times have changed. When I was at St John’s College, Cambridge, at the start of 1963, water froze in the pipes to our gas fires and we lived for several weeks without heating. It was the cause of much conviviality, with the added delight of skating on the river beside the Wren Library.
Gareth Keene
Hound Tor, Dartmoor

Letters to The Times must be exclusive

THE INDIAN FRONTIER PROBLEM

FROM THE TIMES FEBRUARY 3, 1920

Fighting on the North-West Frontier of India continues, especially in Waziristan. It was announced that the Mahsud Waziris had accepted the British terms, but it is now clear that their submission was delusive. Three factors are said to have contributed to their opposition. The first is that they object to the construction of a strategic road through their territory. There is nothing new in this, for tribesmen always object to roads. The second is that they are unwilling to surrender their rifles. The third is that they are still hoping for aid from Afghanistan,

in vain. A fourth is that occasional successes against our troops have encouraged the tribes to continue fighting. Even if peace had been made with the Mahsuds, the Wana Waziris have still to be tackled. The outlook on the frontier is not promising. Sir Hamilton Grant, the warden of the marches, says that the Afridi tribe, which remained stanch during the Afghan War, “has for months past committed serious acts of lawlessness”. The tribe is “full of hot-headed young men, chiefly deserters from the Army,” who are turning to raiding for a livelihood. The same is true of Waziristan, where the leaders are either men who deserted from the Indian Army when their battalions were ordered overseas, or members of the frontier militias. These are all men we have trained ourselves and their efficiency is now extremely disconcerting. The Indian Army is suffering from its heavy losses in the Great War.

Large numbers of admirable officers were killed or disabled. Many others have left because of ungenerous treatment by the Government of India and the War Office. For the first time we are fighting a frontier campaign almost exclusively with Indian troops. The splendid old British Army in India, consisting of troops “salted” to the climate, was destroyed in the Great War. Too much reliance was placed upon aeroplanes and “intensive bombing,” an expedient of limited value with people who can retire to caves and holes in the rocks. The elusive Pathan cannot be subdued by big guns or troops in masses offering an easy target. A long spell of frontier warfare lies before the Indian authorities, and behind the hostility of the tribesmen lies the shadow of the Bolshevik menace.

THETIMES.CO.UK/ARCHIVE

Separating the art from the artist

Sir, Companies that have pulled the productions of Liam Scarlett (“Ballet star’s shows dropped over sex claims”, Feb 1) are missing the point of art. Scarlett has not been convicted of any offence and even if the claims are proven to be true it renders his talent for choreography no less real. If we were to ban the work of any artist on the basis of their actions being considered odious there would be little in the way of literature, music or painting left for us to admire. Richard Wagner, the idol of Adolf Hitler, was a virulent antisemite. Does the woke generation say that we should deny ourselves the delights of *Das Rheingold* among other works of genius? Let us keep some perspective.
Carl Hughes
Norwich

Joy of crosswords

Sir, Jane Asher’s affectionate account of working on the *Times* crossword with her late mother (“‘I can’t imagine starting the day without it’: what the solvers say”, Saturday Review, Feb 1) reminds me of the cruciverbal relationship I enjoyed with my mother for more than 40 years, sometimes via email or video call from half a world away. In the final weeks of her life my mother had stopped eating but nothing would stop her doing the crossword. The day after she died, I found in the depths of her ever-present basket, along with her mobile phone, two handkerchiefs, a novel, and an assortment of pens and pencils, a clipboard bearing a couple of partially completed *Times* crosswords from earlier that week.
Michael Shmith
Richmond, Australia

Sir, Your article on the anniversary of the *Times* crossword made me reflect on my own experience of trying to complete it. My first attempts coincided with my taking up golf and I remember fondly the weekend when I completed the crossword and achieved par on a par 4. That happened some years ago. I live in hope of a repetition of either feat.
Barry S Peters
Bramcote, Notts

Bags on seats

Sir, I think Ann Treneman (“A human magnet”, Notebook, Jan 31) misread the intent of the lady who wished to sit in the seat occupied by her bag. Many train travellers feel rightly aggrieved that any passenger should assume that purchasing one ticket gives them the right to the use of the seat beside them. Many passengers searching for a seat will accommodate the double-occupancy ticket holder by sitting elsewhere. However, there are those of us who will deliberately seek out what I shall in future think of the “Treneman seat”, not out of spite but to emphasise that we will not stand for such selfishness.
Warren Page
Purley on Thames, Berks

Pain in the neck

Sir, Now that Hays Travel has allowed women to wear trousers to work (“Travel firm ends ‘archaic’ dress code for female staff”, Jan 31) maybe other firms will end the tyranny of the tie and let men work in more comfort too.
Steven Chambers
Weymouth, Dorset

Daily Universal Register

UK: Boris Johnson gives a speech on Britain's future relationship with the EU.
US: Iowa caucuses kick off the presidential race with Democrats and Republicans voting for their preferred candidate.

Nature notes



Blackbirds are singing again. This is a significant moment for lovers of birdsong, since the blackbird can fairly be regarded

as the great bird of summer song. It is very common, it sings in towns — on roofs and television aerials — as much as in the countryside and by May the whole country is flooded with blackbird song, especially in the evenings. It is a beautiful song, too. It is a kind of languorous, mellow fluting with harsh notes occasionally interspersed that do not spoil it, but give it an extra touch of character. The male is the singer and often sits not far from the female sitting on the nest. These first February songs open up a world of expectation for the summer.

DERWENT MAY

Birthdays today



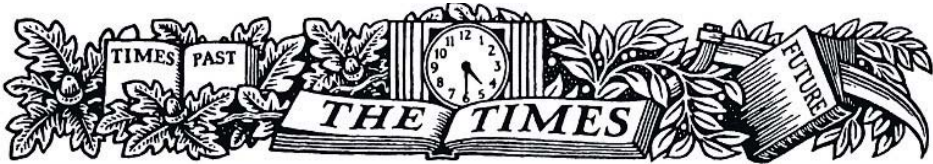
Warwick Davis, pictured, actor, the *Harry Potter* and *Star Wars* films, 50; Stephen Anderton, garden writer for *The Times* since 1993, 65; Paul Auster, writer, 4321 (2017), 73; Dr David Balmforth, president, Institution of Civil Engineers (2014-15), 73; Amal Clooney, human rights lawyer, 42; John Cridland, chairman, Transport for the North, director-general, CBI (2011-15), 59; Blythe Danner, actress, *Will & Grace* (2001-06), 77; Dave Davies, guitarist and singer, the Kinks, *You Really Got Me* (1964), 73; Michael Dickinson, racehorse trainer, 70; Isla Fisher, actress, *The Great Gatsby* (2013), 44; Paul Heiden, director, London Stock Exchange Group, 63; Prof Gavin Henderson, principal, Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, 72; Dame Sue Ion, nuclear engineer, vice-president, Royal Academy of Engineering (2002-08), 65; Nathan Lane, actor and singer, *The Producers* (2005), 64; Stephen Martin, director-general, Institute of Directors (2017-19), 54; Malcolm Martineau, pianist, professor, Royal Academy of Music, 60; Alexander McDonnell, Earl of Antrim, keeper of conservation, Tate Gallery (1975-95), 85; Paula Nickolds, managing director, John Lewis (2017-Jan 2020), 47; Baroness (Detta) O’Cathain, managing director, Barbican Centre (1990-95), 82; Elaine Padmore, director, Royal Opera House, Covent Garden (2000-11), 73; Salil Shetty, secretary-general (2010-18), Amnesty International, chief executive, ActionAid (1998-2003), 59; Bob Simpson, cricketer, Australia (1957-78), 84; Will Tuckett, choreographer and dancer, Royal Ballet, 51; Kirsty Wark, journalist, *Newsnight*, 65; Lord (Alan) Watson of Richmond, director, Corporate Television Networks, president, Liberal Party (1984-85), 79.

On this day

In 1877 the *Celebrated Chop Waltz* (Chopsticks) for piano, by Arthur de Lulli (pseudonym of Euphemia Allen), 16, was registered at the British Museum; in 1995 Lt-Col Eileen Collins became the first female pilot of a space shuttle (*Discovery*).

The last word

“We first crush people to the earth, and then claim the right of trampling on them forever, because they are prostrate.” Lydia Maria Child, abolitionist, *An Appeal in Favor of that Class of Americans Called Africans* (1833)



Friends and Rivals

Boris Johnson’s success in leaving the European Union gives him momentum for the difficult negotiations ahead. Both sides must make them work

After the party, the hangover. As Britain begins its first week outside the European Union, both sides are already sounding irritable. Dominic Raab, the foreign secretary, was yesterday to be found voicing frustration at reports that the EU intended to push for British alignment with European rules in exchange for a trade deal. That “just ain’t happening” he said, accusing the EU of “shifting the goalposts” with demands that the European Court of Justice (ECJ) adjudicate on future trade disputes. Simultaneously, *The Sunday Times* reported that Mr Raab had instructed British diplomats to make a show of their separation from Brussels, calling upon them to keep their distance from EU officials at summits and to “adopt a stance as a confident independent country” which was unafraid to “disapply EU foreign policy positions”. The combativeness was not one-sided, with the Irish taoiseach Leo Varadkar seeming happy to respond in kind. Attacking “nationalistic rhetoric” and “rigid red lines”, he said that Mr Raab’s instructions to diplomats were “petty” and reminiscent of children in primary school wondering whom to sit next to in class. All this, barely 48 hours after Brussels swathed itself in Union flags, the EU parliament sang *Auld Lang Syne* and Boris Johnson promised “a new era of friendly co-operation”.

This will probably get worse rather than better. “The interests of Europe, of each and every member state and of all our citizens come first,” was how the EU’s chief negotiator Michel Barnier put it on Saturday, with the thinly veiled message being that British citizens are no longer his problem. None of this is quite as silly as it sounds. For the EU, the goal is to prevent what it regards as unfair competition. For the British government, it is to show that Brexit has a point. Speaking in London today, Boris Johnson is expected to set out British demands for a Canada-style trade deal, tilting against the expectation that the EU plans to nudge things in a direction that is closer to Norway’s relationship. Adding a new nation into the lexicon of propounded trade deals, he is also expected to raise the idea of an “Australia-style” deal; a euphemistic way of threatening to end the year-long transition period with no trade deal at all. He is also, as per Mr Raab, expected to rule out deference to the ECJ, alignment with EU standards and any extension of the transition agreement. Nor, he will say, will Britain be prepared to relax rules on food hygiene, environmental standards and workers’ rights. Again like Mr Raab, he may have words to say about where the British chair ought to be in inter-

national meetings. Some bits of this will matter more than others. The refusal to relax rules on food, workers’ rights and environmental standards, for example, will be intended to reassure domestic audiences who fear the impact of a deal with the United States. Given that most of our standards in these areas are EU ones, however, it also indicates that Mr Johnson’s objections to following EU rules have less to do with what these rules are and more to do with whose rules they are. In the six months he has been in Downing Street, Mr Johnson has transformed the parameters of Britain’s debate on Brexit. Yet however dramatic his domestic successes, it remains fearfully difficult to conceive of, let alone achieve, a new UK-EU trade deal in which there are no losers as compared with the status quo. It may be that the shift from partnership to rivalry only makes this harder. Even so, Brussels should understand that Mr Johnson has the wind behind him. There will be further frustrations in the months to come, and perhaps many of them, but the end goal for both sides must be a close and functional relationship between Britain and its closest neighbours. “No achievement lies beyond our reach,” Mr Johnson will say tomorrow. Least of all, that one.

Failed Impeachment

The blunders of Donald Trump’s opponents have strengthened his hand

The impeachment of Donald Trump has been an ugly partisan battle which has reflected poorly on almost everybody. From the outset, given the Republican majority in the Senate, President Trump’s opponents will have understood that they were likely to fail to eject him from office. A more modest hope, however, was to damage Mr Trump’s standing and chances of re-election by forcing a spotlight on to his un-presidential behaviour. In this, they seem to have failed, too. Mr Trump is only the third American president to face such proceedings, and for all of his shouting about witch-hunts the allegations against him appeared strong. In conversation with the Ukrainian president, Volodymyr Zelensky, Mr Trump stands accused of seeking to tie military aid to a demand that Ukraine provide compromising material on Joe Biden, the former Democrat US vice-president, and on Hunter Biden, his son. Thereafter, when Congress investigated, the White House refused to co-operate. Technically this could well have qualified as the sort of action that could justify impeachment, but the finer details of the story were murky and the

White House’s own transcript of the call was rough and inconclusive. In the words of Mr Trump’s lawyer, Patrick Philbin, “there’s been no proof of a quid pro quo here”. To remove Mr Trump from office his accusers needed to show him guilty of “high crime and misdemeanor”, which is a lofty bar. In order to make their case, to the American people as much as to the Senate itself, Mr Trump’s accusers sought to subpoena further documents and witnesses, perhaps subjecting the latter to televised hearings. “We must hear from those who were ‘in the room where it happened’,” was how the House impeachment manager Sylvia Garcia put it on Friday, with the last phrase referencing the title of a new book by Mr Trump’s former national security adviser, John Bolton. Leaked extracts from Mr Bolton’s book appear to support allegations against the president, but the Republican-dominated Senate voted against calling new witnesses. As a result they are almost certain to vote for Mr Trump’s acquittal this week. Democrats will regard this as a partisan stitch-up even if their own victory would have been one

too. Yet while their defeat may have been anticipated, their failure to even land much of a blow on the president leaves them looking like incompetent wreckers. Mr Trump, triumphant in his escape, has been gifted a victory over the political establishment that he can crow about on the campaign trail. While nothing technically prevents him from being impeached again, it is deeply unlikely with his majority support in the Senate now so solid. In the absence of dramatic testimony the process will have served to solidify minds rather than change them, reinforcing America’s political polarisation. Today the next presidential race kicks off in earnest with the Iowa caucuses. Mr Biden, almost certainly the candidate whom Mr Trump most fears, lags in Iowa polls behind the senator from Vermont, Bernie Sanders, whom the president understandably fears less. It is time for the Democrats to grasp that the best way to dislodge Mr Trump from the White House is via the old-fashioned route of beating him in an election. A failed and farcical impeachment may have made that a harder task.

The Old Men And The Sea

With a combined age of 257, the crew of one boat are an inspiration to all of us

If you’re as old as you feel, then there must have been points during the past few weeks when the crew of *The Grey Escape* felt absolutely ancient. Whereas today, they probably feel like schoolboys. With a combined age of slightly over 257 years, the four crewmates took 49 days, 8 hours and 40 minutes to row from the Canary Islands to Antigua. They are the oldest crew ever to have done so, beating the previous record by 33 years. Guy Munnoch, a businessman from Hampshire, had also never been in a rowing boat before, having spent his mere 67 years on this Earth doing other things. He and his crewmates had to deal with 30ft

waves and sleep deprivation, but also the fact that Mr Munnoch’s hearing wasn’t great. “But psychologically,” he tells *The Times*, “we were all the better for being older.” Their feat stands, or perhaps sits, as a bold redefinition of how the slightly older ought to behave. Classicists will recall the writings on old age by the Roman statesman Cicero, in which he ponders the contributions of the senior and concludes that one still has a role on a ship even if one must leave it to others “to climb the masts and rush through the gangways”. Rowing boats have neither, but these shipmates rowed two hours in every four for two

months, and did all the work themselves. Inevitably the crew chose the nickname “the ancient mariners” but sexagenarians, these days, are not really that old. Life expectancy today for a British man is around 80 years (closer to 83 for women) and male babies born today can expect to live to 90. Britain is also, on average, an ageing nation. If we are lucky we will all have time to live our dreams, and our dreams need not be as grey as our hair. Cicero also observed that “rashness belongs to youth; prudence to old age”. Who says? Indeed, how would he know, anyway? He was dead at 63.

World

Democratic establishment is the

United States

Henry Zeffman, David Charter
Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Bernie Sanders has lashed out at the Democratic establishment, fracturing the party's fragile unity on the eve of the first state vote for a presidential candidate.

The 78-year-old Vermont senator, addressing a 3,000-strong crowd in Cedar Rapids on Saturday night — the biggest assembled by any Democratic candidate in Iowa before tonight's caucuses — said that the party's upper echelons were trying to thwart his democratic socialist agenda. To cheers from the mostly young people who had turned out for the rally he said: "This is the political reality of the moment... we are taking on the entire political establishment, both the Republican and the Democratic establishment."

Even as he spoke, his rivals at colleges and town halls across the snowbound state were attacking his revolutionary policy agenda or making pleas for unity against him. After a campaign that kicked off more than a year ago, and which still has 11 candidates, tensions erupted as the clock ticked down to a decision.

Pete Buttigieg, 38, the former city mayor who is claiming the middle ground between moderates and left-wing "progressives", told his supporters: "Senator Sanders is offering an approach that suggests that it's either revolution or it's the status quo and there's nothing in between. In our party and in our country, the less 2020 resembles 2016 the better" — a reference to the acrimonious battle that Mr Sanders narrowly lost to Hillary Clinton in the run-up to the previous election.

Amy Klobuchar, 59, a moderate senator from Minnesota aiming for a breakthrough in Iowa, contrasted herself to Mr Sanders by emphasising her appeal to middle-ground voters: "We win with the candidate that brings people with them," she said.

An Iowa poll last night showed Mr Sanders on 28 per cent, a seven-point lead and two points down on the same Emerson College poll last week, with Joe Biden, the former vice-president, unchanged on 21 per cent. Mr Buttigieg was third on 15 per cent, up five points; Elizabeth Warren on 14 per cent, up two points; and Mrs Klobuchar on 11 per cent, down two.

The sizeable crowd present for Mr Sanders's three-hour event in Cedar Rapids would have been a welcome sight for a candidate who recovered

Analysis

In a ritual as old as Iowa's role in being first to pick a candidate for president, the snowy Midwestern state has witnessed relations between the Democratic candidates turn chilly with increasingly personal attacks on each other and their supporters (David Charter writes).

The warnings not to repeat the recriminations between Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton in the 2016 contest have been forgotten with so much at stake in tonight's caucuses.

Despite the state's relatively small size, candidates know that victory in Iowa will bring the biggest prizes in US primary politics: momentum and funding.

It was Barack Obama in Des Moines, the capital of Iowa, who chided Hillary Clinton before their 2008 showdown by saying: "Not answering questions because we're afraid our answers won't be popular just won't do it." He later endorsed

a radio advert that declared: "Hillary Clinton will say anything to get elected."

All the Republicans have to do, with their candidate a certainty, is sit back, watch the Democrats take lumps out of each other and make notes. Mr Obama's attacks on Mrs Clinton came in very useful for the opposition eight years later. "I rarely agree with President Obama; however, he is 100 per cent correct about Crooked Hillary Clinton. Great ad!" the candidate Donald Trump tweeted in the 2016 race.

Bernie Sanders, as the apparent frontrunner, is taking the biggest hits from his rivals. Although it is a cast-iron rule of primary politics that the favourite becomes a target, he and his supporters take it as extra evidence that everyone is against them. As usual, the party establishment is in Mr Sanders's crosshairs and, as is also customary in this quadrennial soap opera, the governing

Democratic national committee is playing along.

It has announced a rule change that removes the number of small donors as a qualification barrier for presidential debates, clearing the way for Michael Bloomberg, the self-funded media billionaire, to join the stage.

This has led some Democrats to begin another seasonal practice: questioning whether the primary system is the best way of choosing a candidate. While it allows every state a vote, it also takes a long time — most contestants began their Iowa campaigns a year ago and the final states hold their votes in June. This will help the Republicans to build up a war chest of attack material, made even more valuable in the social media age by the usefulness of even the shortest clip ripped out of context in a speech where candidates talk about unity but cannot resist the occasional barbed comment.

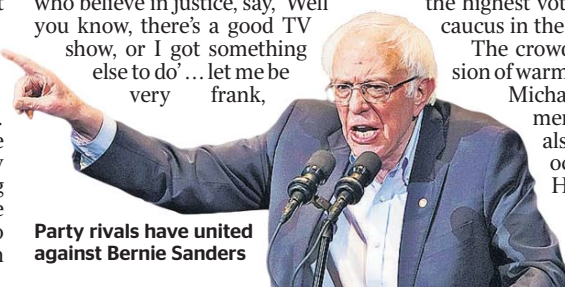


Bernie Sanders drew a raucous, 3,000-strong crowd in Cedar Rapids, though

from a heart attack in October to become the frontrunner in the agricultural Midwestern state. Many admitted, however, that they had also seized the opportunity to attend a free concert by the band Vampire Weekend: Ezra Koenig, the lead singer, asked the masses if they were from Iowa or from out of state, and by far the biggest cheers came in response to the latter. Nevertheless, the rally reflected the infectious enthusiasm engendered by Mr Sanders, especially among young voters. He urged them to turn out at one of the 1,678 local venues tonight to caucus; a convoluted process in which

Iowans stand in a section of a room to show who they support.

"If there is a low voter turnout, if working people, young people, people who believe in justice, say, 'Well you know, there's a good TV show, or I got something else to do'... let me be very frank,



Party rivals have united against Bernie Sanders

we're going to lose," he said. "But if there is a high voter turnout we're going to win. So I am here to ask you to make certain that on Monday night we have the highest voter turnout for an Iowa caucus in the history of this state."

The crowd heard from a succession of warm-up speakers, including Michael Moore, the documentary film-maker, who also lambasted the Democratic establishment. He was furious that the ruling Democratic national committee scrapped a provision

on donors, with the effect of letting Michael Bloomberg — to whom he referred as "the billionaire Republican mayor of New York City" — take part in television debates.

"They did this because they're so nervous and worried," Mr Moore said to a jeering crowd. "This is everything we have fought against our entire lives, right folks? Yes, our main opponent is Donald Trump and the Republicans and all this, but we have a 1 per cent in our party too. They think that they can buy their way with their billionaire on to the stage."

Lucas Malhotra, 22, drove for four

Winemakers gripe over threat to strip them of Burgundy name

France

Adam Sage Paris

"In vino veritas," as the saying goes, but for some French vineyards the truth that their wines are no longer to be called Burgundy is proving hard to swallow.

A French government agency plans to redefine the areas of central and eastern France that are allowed to call their wines Burgundy.

The move would prevent swathes of the region, including Chablis, from labelling their bottles as Burgundy. Instead, they would have to call their

wines Coteaux-Bourguignons (Burgundian Hills), which they say would halve the price they could ask.

The project has caused uproar, with one leading winemaker claiming that it would lead to devastation on a scale to match that inflicted by Caesar after his conquest of Gaul in 51BC.

More than 4,000 people have signed a petition against the reform, and winemakers say they will protest in Paris on Thursday when a decision on the proposal is due to be taken by the National Institute of Origin and Quality.

The institute is responsible for ensuring that cheese, fruit, vegetables, wines

and other products come from the region stated on their labels.

The task is often straightforward. In Burgundy, however, it is proving complicated. This is largely because no one ever decided whether the Burgundy's winemaking area should correspond to the boundaries of the old Duchy of Burgundy, which stretched up the Belgian border in the Middle Ages, or to those of the more recent Burgundy Regional Council, which was abolished in a local government shake-up in 2016.

Officials debated the issue in 1937 but never came to a conclusion — unlike their counterparts in Bordeaux.

In 2015, the institute had another go, largely at the behest of Beaujolais winemakers wanting to be incorporated into the much more prestigious Burgundy region and thus able to sell their bottles for higher prices.

The redrawn map would see 5,500 hectares of vineyards around the towns of Dijon and Châtillon-sur-Seine and in the Chablis area fall outside Burgundy, while 24 districts of Beaujolais would be included in the area.

The institute says it has assessed which areas best respect Burgundy's winemaking traditions and image. Chablis has been excluded because its

vineyards have tried to differentiate from the rest of Burgundy in recent years. On their labels, the word Chablis is often more prominent than Burgundy. Officials say this means Chablis' wine-makers have in effect removed themselves from Burgundy.

Louis Poitout, a Chablis winemaker, was appalled. "The Burgundy appellation is the foundation. If that breaks, the rest will follow."

Even Burgundy winemakers unaffected by the change are worried. They fear that the inclusion of lower-class Beaujolais wines in the region will harm their reputation and their prices.



The World at Five Does Iowa deserve first pick of a president?

In depth and online today at 5pm
thetimes.co.uk

real enemy, says Sanders

MIKE SEGAR/REUTERS



some admitted they were attracted by the promise of a free concert given by Vampire Weekend. Mr Sanders is ahead in the latest fortnightly average of Iowa polls

hours north from Washington University in St Louis, Missouri, with a group of fellow students. "I'm definitely a Bernie supporter," he said. "If you have someone like Joe Biden as the nominee, people like us will go vote for Joe Biden. But we're not going to donate to him, we're not going to caucus for him, we're not going to do anything like that."

His friend Jacob Noel, 22, was undecided between Mr Sanders and Elizabeth Warren, also on the left of the party, but he too opposed the former vice-president. "I think Biden's just the safe choice," he said. "I feel like there needs to be really significant changes

and I think Biden represents maybe more of the status quo. I think every election is an opportunity to move forward and I don't want to go back to how things were before. There's a lot to change."

Others in the group were less keen to talk politics. "I'm here for Vampire Weekend. This was a strategic trip," one said.

By contrast Boyd Walker, 51, a property investor, drove for 14 hours from Alexandria, Virginia. He was in Iowa for a week to knock on doors and drive people to caucuses, he said. "I have a son. I want a future for him. People

aren't having kids because they're worried whether we'll have a planet to live on in the future. So we need a radical change of direction, not just an incremental change. People want a president who will not lie, who will always tell the truth. And that is Bernie."

Mrs Warren, 70, like Mr Sanders, had chosen to visit Cedar Rapids, cramming in campaign events after a week locked up in the Senate for the impeachment trial of Mr Trump. She urged those wanting radical change to choose her. "I've been building a campaign that's not a campaign that's narrow. That's not a campaign that says 'It's us and no-

body else'," she told an audience at Coe College, in a veiled jab at Mr Sanders. "A campaign that says come on in because we are all in this fight together."

Mr Sanders supporters' suspicions about an establishment stitch-up were fuelled by an NBC report that John Kerry, the former secretary of state campaigning for Mr Biden, was overheard on the phone discussing joining the race amid "the possibility of Bernie Sanders taking down the Democratic Party".

Mr Kerry tweeted a vehement denial that he was considering a late entry. **Leading article, page 27**

Republican challengers to Trump find it hard going

Henry Zeffman Mount Vernon

Of the many differences between a Donald Trump rally and a Bill Weld event, the most obvious is size.

Whereas the president pulled in a crowd of 7,000 to Des Moines on Thursday, Mr Weld, a former governor of Massachusetts waging a quixotic campaign against Mr Trump for the Republican presidential nomination, drew about 25 to Cornell College on Saturday afternoon.

Then there is his language. Mr Weld, a cerebral lawyer, accused one questioner of being "dirigiste" and compared Steve Bannon, Mr Trump's former strategist, to Robespierre and Rasputin.

Yet Mr Weld, 74, who studied at Oxford University, appears genuinely convinced that the political sands could shift rapidly. "It can happen," he told *The Times*. "My political plan is to exceed expectations principally in New Hampshire, get a following wind there, and win a few states on Super Tuesday when Massachusetts, Vermont, Colorado and California all come out to vote. If I come in with three, four, five states then I'd be seen as a legitimate counter-party to Mr Trump."

Even at his own event, though, it is hard to find people who see Mr Weld that way. Blake Thornton, 19, an archaeology student who organised it, is caucusing for Mr Trump today.

"There's still work to do clearing the swamp," he said.

Joe Walsh, Mr Trump's other challenger, is more like the president in demeanour. A former congressman from Illinois, Mr Walsh is a conservative talk radio host who once accused Barack Obama of being a secret Muslim but has undergone a radical reawakening during the Trump presidency.

"What woke me up was the election of Donald Trump," Mr Walsh, 58, said. "Having him in the White House was like a cold slap to me. It forced me day after day to look back at things I'd said, it forced me day after day to think about it and soul search. How did I help put him in the White House? And I'll tell you what, it's been eye-opening. My party, the Republican party, is not a party. It is a cult. It is no longer a party that advances ideas, it is a party that worships one man."

With this drug ring ... El Chapo's daughter marries narco rival

Mexico
Stephen Gibbs Caracas

In scenes reminiscent of *The Godfather*, a daughter of the notorious drug lord Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán has married the nephew of another alleged narco trafficker at a lavish ceremony in the city of Culiacán, Mexico.

Much of the centre of the city was sealed off and under apparent control of a drug cartel's security team as the dynastic union was sealed.

The bride, who wore a traditional "princess" wedding gown, arrived at the cathedral service in a white bulletproof

car. The Catholic wedding Mass was conducted by a priest described by Mexican media as a "family friend" of the Guzmáns.

Local reports claim that the bride was Alejandrina Gisselle Guzmán Salazar, one of more than a dozen children of El Chapo, long seen as the world's most powerful drug lord, whose criminal operations led to thousands of deaths. The groom, Edgar Cázares, is the nephew of Blanca Margarita Cázares, otherwise known as "The Empress".

The US Treasury sanctioned Blanca Cázares in 2007 for her "sophisticated money laundering apparatus" and links

to known drug traffickers. Residents in Culiacán had reported that the city's cathedral was closed to the public on January 25 for an "important wedding", though no further information was released. Images of the marriage reception, which was held in a nearby estate known as the "Big Alamo" have since emerged on social media.

Alejandrina Guzmán and her husband, Edgar Cázares,



Culiacán is the de facto headquarters of Mexico's most successful drug gang, the Sinaloa cartel. The group was led for several decades by El Chapo [Shorty], who became a billionaire largely by eliminating rivals and monopolising the business of exporting cocaine and other drugs to the US. He twice managed to escape from Mexican jails but was arrested in 2016 and extradited to

the US, where he is serving a life prison sentence.

Last November in Culiacán, police attempted to arrest Ovidio Guzmán, Alejandrina's brother, who is alleged to now control the cartel. Within minutes, dozens of heavily armed gunmen arrived and began to threaten the officers, who quickly backed down.

Alejandrina Guzmán has been capitalising on her father's legacy with the launch of the "El Chapo 701" fashion brand last year. In January, she diversified with the launch of an "El Chapo" beer, featuring the drug lord's familiar moustached image on the label.

World

Trouble flares over choice of Iraqi leader

Iraq

Foreign staff

Hundreds of anti-government demonstrators in Iraq yesterday rejected the new prime minister-designate, who was recently nominated by rival government factions. Demonstrators have long sworn that they would not accept a candidate chosen by Iraq's establishment.

The choice of Mohammed Allawi, 66, the former communications minister, to replace Adel Abdul-Mahdi, was made after months of back-room talks between rival parties, ending a political stalemate.

Hundreds of students voiced their rejection of Mr Allawi at rallies in Baghdad's central plazas and in southern Iraq.

Muqtada al-Sadr, the influential cleric, supports the nomination and asked his followers camped out in Tahrir Square and its surrounding plazas to resume "day-to-day life" yesterday by opening cut roads and ensuring schools and government offices remained open.



Great white hope Brothers Mustafa and Baran Erbay with their prize fighter after a snow-training session for the annual camel-wrestling season in Van, eastern Turkey. The sport was formalised by Turkic tribes more than 2,000 years ago

OZKAN BILGIN/ANADOLU AGENCY/GETTY IMAGES

Emergency declared as locusts ravage Somalia

Somalia An infestation of locusts sweeping the Horn of Africa was declared a national emergency in Somalia, which cited the threat to its "fragile food security". Experts said the swarms were caused by extreme swings in weather with the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation terming the situation the worst for 25 years. The declaration, the first in the region, was made to focus efforts and raise funds. The Somali agriculture ministry said: "Food sources for people and their livestock are at risk. The desert locust swarms are uncommonly large and consume huge amounts of crops and forage." (AFP)

Wartime bomb causes evacuation in Venice

Italy About 3,500 residents were evacuated from Venice as a Second World War bomb discovered during excavation work in the port of Marghera last month was defused. Planes were banned from taking off or landing at Marco Polo airport from 8.30am until midday yesterday. The 225kg (500lb) bomb was stripped of fuses and taken out to sea to be detonated. (AFP)

20 churchgoers die in prayer meeting crush

Tanzania Twenty people died and a dozen others were injured in a "stampede" during a church meeting in the northern city of Moshi, as hundreds of worshippers were directed through a single exit so they could walk on "anointed" oil. Boniface Mwamposa, a preacher who heads the Arise and Shine Ministry Tanzania and led the meeting, has been arrested. (AP)

Milanese drivers fined for flouting ban on cars

Italy Police in Milan handed out 162 fines in less than three hours yesterday to motorists flouting a temporary ban on cars as the city tries to deal with smog. Milan is regularly ranked among Europe's most polluted cities and smog remains an issue there and in several others in Italy. Last month, a number imposed a temporary ban on diesel vehicles after pollution levels soared.

Government critic held before two elections

Tajikistan The government says it is holding a journalist and government critic on extremism charges, fuelling concern that it is cracking down on dissent before two sets of elections. Daler Sharipov has been detained for publishing "over 200 articles containing extremist content". Tajikistan will hold parliamentary and presidential votes in March and November respectively. (AFP)

Tortoise George wasn't lonesome after all

Ecuador Conservationists in the Galapagos Islands have found 30 giant tortoises partially descended from two species thought extinct, including that of Lonesome George, who died in 2012. A female had a direct line of descent from the Chelonoidis abingdonii species of Pinta Island. Another 11 males and 18 females were from the Chelonoidis niger line of Floreana Island. (AP)

We'll use guns on you, BJP minister warns protesters

India

Hugh Tomlinson Delhi

Two shootings in three days by suspected Hindu extremists targeting anti-government protesters in Delhi have left the Indian capital on edge as it prepares for crucial elections this week.

The city votes on Saturday in local polls that Narendra Modi and his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) are determined to win at any cost. An already-toxic campaign for control of the capital has spilled into open violence, with BJP ministers urging loyalists to "shoot the traitors". Many fear there is worse to come in the days ahead.

A gunman fired several shots into the air on Saturday near a demonstration in the south Delhi district of Shaheen Bagh, where hundreds of women have staged a sit-in against a controversial new citizenship law for almost two months. As he was led away the shooter yelled: "Nobody else can rule, only Hindus will rule."

Two days earlier a 17-year-old boy took a day off school to travel 50 miles to a Delhi university, where he opened fire on student protesters, wounding one. Delhi police were accused of standing by and watching without intervening.

The Citizenship Amendment Act, seen as discriminating against Muslims, has ignited the biggest anti-government protests for a generation. To the government's fury the women at Shaheen Bagh have become symbols of the backlash against Mr Modi's agenda. Trailing in the Delhi polls, the BJP has sought to foster a backlash against the protests.

BJP language towards the protesters at Shaheen Bagh has grown more menacing as polling day nears. Amit Shah, the home minister and

the party's chief strategist, told a rally last week that voters must choose between "Modi, who conducted airstrikes on Pakistan to kill terrorists or those who support Shaheen Bagh."

Yogi Adityanath, a firebrand Hindu cleric and the BJP chief minister of neighbouring Uttar Pradesh state, went further at a rally on Saturday. "If you don't agree to what we say, then we will use guns to make you agree," he said.

Delhi handed Mr Modi his first significant defeat as prime minister when it elected the anti-corruption activist Arvind Kejriwal as chief minister in 2015. However, power and funding in Delhi are split awk-



Yogi Adityanath is also a head priest of a Hindu temple

wardly between the federal and local governments, enabling the BJP to undermine Mr Kejriwal's management of the city while blaming him for failing to address its ills.

Mr Kejriwal accuses Mr Modi of holding the capital to ransom, refusing to commit resources to reform unless he gets the credit, or to co-operate on tackling Delhi's appalling air pollution and soaring rates of rape and sexual violence.

Still ahead in the latest polls, Mr Kejriwal has tried to keep the focus on infrastructure, job creation and offers such as free electricity to poorer families. The frenzy of the BJP campaign has obliterated other campaign issues in recent days, however, including Delhi's status as the world's most polluted capital.

Thunderer, page 24

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Israeli spy is fired for sending agent to buy Palestinian tahini

Israel

Anshel Pfeffer Jerusalem

An order for luxury tahini from a Palestinian village has led to a scandal and a shake-up of one of the most secret Israeli intelligence units.

The sesame paste is available across Israel, but the most prized tahini is made in small batches in Palestinian villages in the occupied West Bank.

A report broadcast by an Israeli tele-

vision news programme revealed that senior personnel in Unit 504, the department of Israeli military intelligence that controls the country's spies, had tasked one of its agents with buying jars of Palestinian home-made tahini as a gift for the Israeli army's chief intelligence officer.

The scandal enraged the chief of staff of the Israel Defence Forces and led to a military police investigation. An official was interviewed and admitted that

his commanders had told him to send an agent to the West Bank for the tahini.

He insisted that he had waited for a time when the agent needed to be in the village anyway. Following the success of "Operation Tahini", the agent was sent for a second batch. In each case, explosives experts inspected the jars to ensure they were not booby-trapped.

After the investigation, the lieutenant-colonel who had made the order was discharged from the service and

three other officers were reprimanded. They included the Unit 504 commander, a colonel, and the chief intelligence officer, Brigadier-General Yuval Shimoni, although the investigation found that he had been unaware of the covert sesame mission.

Bringing various delicacies back from spying operations is a tradition in Israeli intelligence. Senior officers routinely serve their guests trays of sweets and pastries, alluding cryptically to

their origin. In one case in 2007, a secret emissary who had been sent to conduct negotiations with the Assad regime in Syria returned to headquarters with a package of quality hummus from Damascus. The food was eagerly consumed by the then prime minister, Ehud Olmert, and his aides.

The crackdown was partly sparked by concerns among the military about increasingly lax standards in secret intelligence units.



Egypt to build world's biggest apartment block

Egypt

David Rose Cairo

For 3,800 years the Great Pyramid of Cheops in Giza was the largest man-made structure in the world, built as a monument to just one man.

Modern Egyptian builders are now hoping to set another construction record as they clear a massive plot of land to house up to 30,000 people on the outskirts of Cairo.

The Skyline building, which is under construction in the southeastern suburbs of Kattameya, has been officially recognised as a contender for the title of the world's largest residential building.

Scheduled for completion in 2025, it will contain 13,500 apartments under one giant roof, with a 40-acre garden, the world's largest infinity swimming pool and a network of cycle paths. Conceived as an antidote to overcrowding

for upper-middle-class residents in the Egyptian capital, it will house shops, restaurants, Imax cinemas, an ice-skating rink, a climbing wall and other attractions built around a central courtyard.

Greater Cairo is the largest city in the Middle East and is estimated to be the fastest-growing urban area in the world, with a population that is approaching 21 million and rising by more than half a mil-



Skyline, due for completion by 2025, will have 13,500 apartments. Below: Mohamed Hadid with his daughter Gigi

lion a year. Separately, since 2015 the Egyptian government has been building a new administrative capital 28 miles east of the city centre. Skyline's developers have spurned the new capital, saying that most Egyptians will still aspire to live near the banks of the Nile, but must learn to accept smaller living spaces than they have been used to.

One possible fly in the ointment is Cairo's notorious traffic congestion,



which will make it difficult for residents in the new flats to commute to the old city.

Among the designers is the Palestinian-born property tycoon and architect Mohamed Hadid, father of the models Gigi and Bella Hadid. He is working with the Spanish company Van der Pas and the Egyptian engineer Raef Fahmy.

Guinness World Records have confirmed the £420 million project as an official attempt on the record but notes that there is no record as yet for the

largest residential building, as opposed to the tallest, which is the 426m-high 432 Park Avenue building in New York.

The Skyline building will be only 11 storeys high, but each of its four sides will measure 450 metres. Its base will be 202,500sq m, creating a floor area bigger than the Pentagon.

Hassan Morshedy, chief executive of the Morshedy Group, which is behind the project, said that Skyline was intended to be "iconic, beautiful, but also affordable", with prices from about £35,000 for a studio apartment to £90,000 for a three-bed flat.

"Skyline is solving a housing problem, it's not only about setting a record," he said. "It will have 13,500 apartments yet everyone will have privacy, and all the facilities and amenities they can dream of." More than 3,000 buyers have put down deposits for an apartment, with the first expecting to move in by the summer of 2022.

Sisi honour puts opera ball in doubt

Germany

Oliver Moody Berlin

The spectacular annual ball at the Dresden Opera House is in crisis after its figurehead flew to Cairo to bestow a ceremonial honour on President Sisi, Egypt's authoritarian military ruler.

Hans-Joachim Frey, the ball's artistic director, hailed Mr Sisi, whose regime has been accused of torturing and "disappearing" its critics, as a peacemaker and the "voice of Africa" as he handed the president the Order of St George of Dresden.

An apology from the mortified organisers has done little to calm the furore, and a prominent TV journalist pulled out of compering the event yesterday after threats against her children.

The opera house in Dresden, a symbol of the power of the old Saxon mon-

archy, held its first ball in 1925, offering new jazz dances alongside the stuffer classical waltzes familiar from the ballrooms of Vienna.

The experiment was repeated nearly every year until the outbreak of the Second World War in 1939. It did not return in its original pomp until 2006, when Dresden celebrated the 800th anniversary of its foundation.

Mr Frey, an impresario and the moving force behind the ball's resurrection, may now be the unintentional cause of its second downfall.

Each year the ball's organisers confer the Order of St George on a handful of people judged to have made an impression upon Germany. Past recipients have included the footballer Franz Beckenbauer, Michael Jackson, Bob Geldof and Gerard Depardieu.

The political category, however, has

been more problematic. Although critics eventually gave up haranguing the committee over its decision to honour President Putin of Russia in 2009, the awarding of the Order to Mr Sisi, 60, appears to have been a step too far.

Last week Judith Rakers, 44, one of the country's best-known television news presenters, resigned as the ball's master of ceremonies, saying that she was "unsettled" at the way the event had become politicised. Yesterday her replacement, Mareile Höppner, 42, followed suit, citing the "intolerable level of hatred" to which she had been exposed in a matter of days.

Mr Frey, 54, initially defended his actions but later conceded that they had been a mistake.

The opera house has insisted that this year's event would still go ahead as planned on Friday.

Syrian rebel on student visa is arrested for war crimes

France

Hannah Lucinda Smith Istanbul

A senior figure from a Syrian rebel group has been arrested in Marseilles and charged with war crimes.

Islam Alloush, who is in his thirties, was the spokesman for the Army of Islam, a rebel group that controlled the Damascus suburb of Eastern Ghouta for seven years. He is thought to have travelled to France on an Erasmus student visa.

The International Federation for Human Rights, an advocacy organisation that has been working with 20 of the group's alleged victims and their families, filed a complaint against Mr Alloush with the French authorities in

June last year, accusing him of complicity in war crimes, torture and enforced disappearances. The organisation accused the group of carrying out a "reign of terror".

The Army of Islam was led by Mr Alloush's brother, Zahran. Their father was a hardline preacher who had trained in Saudi Arabia, which helped to fund their militia. For a time, it was one of the biggest and best organised groups within Syria's chaotic armed opposition. It was also accused of promoting an extreme Islamist ideology, and of crimes against civilians.

Zahran Alloush was killed in a regime airstrike in December 2015 and Islam Alloush fled to Istanbul after Eastern Ghouta fell to the regime.

Boris, HS2 will cost nature too much

The Rt Hon Boris Johnson MP
Prime Minister

Dear Prime Minister,

HS2 should not get a green light in its present form because of the huge impact on the natural environment. It shouldn't only be the financial cost that is under scrutiny.

A recent report from The Wildlife Trusts shows that if HS2 is allowed to continue unchanged, it could damage or destroy irreplaceable internationally recognised wetlands, ancient woods and Sites of Special Scientific Interest that are supposed to be protected under UK law.

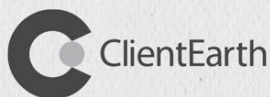
Scientists say that nature is in deep trouble in the UK; the HS2 project threatens to be a severe setback to the great efforts being made to restore it. It is not just wildlife that will lose out: many of the wild places at risk are treasured by local people.

Green transport is vital but the Climate and Ecological Emergency will not be solved by making the nature crisis worse. We urge the government to stop and rethink HS2's approach because of potential environmental damage.

Yours sincerely,

Craig Bennett, CEO, Friends of the Earth
Dr Gail Bradbrook, Co-Founder, Extinction Rebellion
Hilary McGrady, Director General, The National Trust
Darren Moorcroft, CEO, Woodland Trust
Chris Packham CBE, StandForTheTrees.org
John Sauven, Executive Director, Greenpeace
Matt Shardlow, Chief Executive, Buglife
Beccy Speight, CEO, RSPB
Tanya Steele, Chief Executive, WWF
Patience Thody, Acting CEO, The Wildlife Trusts
James Thornton, CEO, Client Earth
Julie Williams, Chief Executive, Butterfly Conservation

#ReThinkHS2



GREENPEACE



ReThinkHS2.org

EU fears new migrant surge from Libya

European Union

Oliver Moody Berlin

The European Union fears that the Libyan civil war could propel a second surge of refugees into Europe, according to a leaked report from the bloc's diplomatic service.

Brussels is worried that the deepening humanitarian crisis could leave Libya's ill-equipped and fractious coastguard "rapidly overwhelmed" with migrants attempting to cross the Mediterranean. The north African state has been torn between two warring factions — the UN-backed government and the rebel GNA, led from Tobruk by General Haftar — since 2014.

European states have looked on with growing concern over recent months as

General Haftar's forces advanced deep into Tripoli, the capital, and seized Sirte, a strategically important port city.

The conflict is threatening to devolve into an international proxy war as the two sides suck in support from overseas. The rebels have several hundred mercenaries from Russia and have received weapons and funding from a number of Arab states, while the government's defence of Tripoli is being propped up by Turkish military units.

Peace talks in Berlin have stalled and a ceasefire brokered by President Putin of Russia and President Erdogan of Turkey fell apart last week.

The EU's External Action Service (EAS), its de facto foreign ministry, has warned that the number of refugees seeking to make their way out by sea



will increase significantly if the situation continues to deteriorate.

The diplomats believe that the Libyan authorities would be all but powerless to stop a resurgence in the mass people-smuggling that made the Mediterranean the world's deadliest border, according to a report obtained by *Der Spiegel*, the German newspaper. While

the local coastguard has received funding and training from Europe, its 42 boats can only patrol a fraction of the country's 1,100-mile coastline, much of which is in the hands of the rebels.

Libya is effectively the gateway to Europe for many migrants from Africa and the Middle East, on account of its proximity to Italian waters and the relative ease with which people-traffickers can operate amid the chaos of the civil war. At least 1,262 people died trying to make the crossing last year.

The country is now so precarious that EU civil servants were unable to go ashore and inspect the Libyan coastguard. Last week the UN withdrew workers from a refugee centre in Tripoli as the fighting drew closer.

The EAS is said to favour bringing

back European naval patrols and arms embargo inspections in the Mediterranean under Operation Sophia, which picked up more than 50,000 refugees from the sea over three years but was effectively abolished last spring.

Yet this option is strongly resisted by some member states, which regard the project as a boon to people smugglers. Yesterday Sebastian Kurz, the centre-right Austrian chancellor, dismissed the idea as a "ticket to Europe" for African migrants.

"I say clearly: it's not going to happen," Mr Kurz, 33, told *Die Welt am Sonntag*, the German newspaper. "The EU and its partner countries should concentrate instead on controlling arms smuggling on the ground and from the air."



Smooth ride A classic Porsche 356 tows a skier in the skijoring event of the GP Ice Race weekend in Zell am See in Austria, a revival of an event first held there in 1937

Salvini tries to orchestrate boycott of TV song contest

Tom Kingston

Reeling from his setback last month in a key Italian regional election, Matteo Salvini, the former deputy prime minister, has picked on Italy's television song festival as his new enemy while he plots a path back to power.

The annual Sanremo contest, a Eurovision-style show, hardly seems a vote-winning nemesis for the anti-migrant rabble-rouser, who has been leader of the League party since 2013.

However, for the second year running Mr Salvini has attacked the programme, which runs for four nights this week, and encouraged his four million Facebook fans to boycott it.

"At Sanremo they have already decided that all the politically correct and leftwingers will win," Mr Salvini

Matteo Salvini has criticised Junior Cally's rap lyrics



said in a Facebook video, adding: "This is not my Sanremo."

Last year, he objected to the victory of Alessandro Mahmoud, the son of an Egyptian migrant, complaining that he won thanks to the backing of the television jury of journalists and celebrities who overruled votes from viewers who had backed another singer.

This year, Mr Salvini has criticised the rapper Junior Cally, a contestant who has been accused in the past of glorifying the mistreatment of women in his lyrics. "As an Italian I say that is disgusting," said Mr Salvini, who has previously said the rapper should go to jail for his provocative lyrics, which have included attacks on the police.

Mr Salvini's party leads the polls and he has shown no sign of slowing down in his attempt to oust the Five Star Democratic Party coalition government led by Giuseppe Conte, despite losing last month's regional election in Emilia-Romagna.

As well as criticising Junior Cally and Sanremo to bolster his family man image and police-supporting credentials, Mr Salvini, 46, also rounded on Sanremo and the state television network RAI, which shows it, for paying large amounts of money to guest stars.

Rome metro diggers plot a route through history

Italy

Tom Kingston Rome

On a traffic island in the middle of the busy Piazza Venezia, engineers and archaeologists have been drilling to bring up core samples of earth from 20 metres below Rome.

They are the advance guard for the city's new subway C Line which is snaking through the world's densest concentration of buried Roman ruins.

The drilling is the crucial moment when it becomes clear if the line is about to hit an ancient villa or imperial palace.

The cylindrical samples, a mix of black volcanic material, sand and silt with their depth indicated, were laid out in cases as they emerged from the ground. Amid the crumbling earth a chunk of ancient-looking stone caught the eye. At eight metres the drill had also cut through a slab of travertine.

"Probably Roman," said one of the archaeologists.

The C Line is arriving thanks to two massive boring machines toiling 25 metres under ground which drilled past the Colosseum last year in the direction of Piazza Venezia, the heart of Rome's historic centre, where a train station is urgently needed to alleviate the traffic choking the city.

Digging the tunnel has been the easy part since it travels below any ancient remains. The trouble is building stations, with one along the line already requiring an additional museum to house 40,000 artefacts unearthed at the site, while another was built around an ancient Roman barracks.

A further obstacle came when cash ran out last year, leaving the drills marooned under the Roman Forum, 200 metres short of Piazza Venezia, until cheques were hurriedly signed by the town hall. The drills should now arrive



Virginia Raggi, left, mayor of Rome, visits the metro C Line extension site

in May. Engineers know they could stumble on to priceless artefacts at any moment. During preliminary excavations in Piazza Venezia a decade ago, a massive auditorium built by the emperor Hadrian for poetry readings came to light, albeit conveniently situated to one side of the Piazza, meaning the new station could be fitted around it.

"In 2014 heritage authorities gave final approval for the station, otherwise we would not be here," said Andrea Sciotti, the head of the project.

The spot where the travertine and cement was found can be carefully excavated, he said, with any Roman remains discovered — probably including a stretch of the ancient Flaminian Way — removed for inclusion in the museum display cases planned for the station. This week, drilling for core samples was also taking place at opposite ends of the piazza where new plans call for the addition of extra station exits leading directly into two museums.

Engineers who had removed cobblestones from the street to insert their drill next to Palazzo Venezia were bringing up clay and silt.

Scouring the samples, Mr Sciotti saw no sign of Roman marble or masonry. Smiling, he said: "That's one up for the engineers."

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT

In a post-colonial era there are corners of foreign fields around the world that are forever France — and happily so

Adam Sage

PARIS



There were cod fritters from the Caribbean, shrimp balls from South America, duck in a vanilla sauce from the Indian Ocean and fish marinated in coconut milk from the Pacific. One delegation performed the Haka, others danced to songs performed by the West Indian pop band La Compagnie Créole. The Overseas Gastronomy Fair, in Paris at the weekend, featured chefs and artists from across the world in what may have looked to the uninitiated like a dazzling display of diversity and exoticism. In fact, it was nothing of the sort.

This was an event that brought together people living in the bits of France that are dotted around the globe thousands of miles from the capital. It was a celebration of French unity, of the nation's grandeur, of its universal aspirations and of its empire, upon which the sun has never quite set.

Of course, no one calls it an empire, at least not officially. The 12 islands and regions that chose to remain French when other colonies and protectorates opted for independence between the 1950s and 1970s — Guadeloupe, Martinique, Saint Martin and Saint Barthélemy in the Caribbean, Mayotte and La Réunion in the Indian Ocean, Polynésie Française, the Wallis-et-Futuna islands and New Caledonia in the Pacific, French Guiana in South America, Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon in the Atlantic and the Terres Australes et Antarctiques Françaises in the Antarctic — are overseas territories. Their 2.6 million inhabitants are known as *outremarins*, which translates roughly as overseaers

and they have a special place in France's vision of itself.



The outremarins in Paris brought a global dimension to French cuisine

“They show that France is not just a hexagon in Europe, but a country that has a border with Brazil in South America, and which has as its neighbours across the seas Canada, Madagascar, South Africa, Australia and Mexico,” said François Garde, a former senior civil servant who spent much of his career in the overseas territories.

“They are part of the power of France, along with nuclear weapons and a seat on the UN security council. They show that we are not just a bigger version of Belgium.”

Thanks to its overseas territories, France is the world's second-biggest maritime nation, at least in terms of the waters it controls. Only the US has a bigger exclusive economic

zone. But Mr Garde said the overseaers brought ideological and cultural as well as economic benefits to Paris. “They demonstrate that France is more than just a white nation with some immigrants.”

France's overseas territories seem attached to the status quo. There are few calls for independence and little sign of a desire to break their links with the mainland.

Consider Mikaele Tui, 63, who had travelled 9,941 miles from his native Wallis Island in the Pacific to the three-day fair. A retired anthropologist, he said France had brought free schooling and healthcare, welfare benefits and public sector jobs. He pointed out that 99.99 per cent of islanders had rejected independence in a referendum in 1959, and a vast majority of the 12,197 inhabitants would probably do so again if a second vote were held today.

Mr Tui was among the Wallis-et-Futuna delegation which performed a Haka on stage at the exhibition centre, and he had also taken part in a demonstration of umu cuisine, a Pacific speciality that involves cooking dishes wrapped in banana leaves in a hole in the ground covered by stones.

In between all this he found time to profess an undying faith in the European Union, which provided France's overseas territories with €5.5 billion in funds between 2014 and 2020. “We are part of France, and France is a pro-European country and therefore we are pro-European,” he said with a conviction that brooked no argument.

Maurice, the wild boar, set for the chop

France

Adam Sage Paris

More than 20,000 people have signed a petition to save a wild boar that lives with a couple in rural France who have been told the animal could be put down.

Sylvia Bachellerie and William Vayne have kept Maurice, as they call him, in an enclosure in their garden for five years after finding him injured.

A year ago officials from the National Office of Hunting and Wild Fauna arrived at their home in Le Jardin, a village in central France with just 84 people, after an anonymous tip. They said that Maurice, who now weighs more than 15 stone, would have to be sent to a zoo or a refuge, or failing that be put down. It is forbidden to keep a wild animal without specific authorisation to do so.

“We haven't found him a place anywhere,” Ms Bachellerie said. “It's mission impossible.” She and Mr Vayne have launched a petition and a Facebook page, and even written to President Macron seeking authorisation to keep the boar, but to no avail.

A hearing is to be held in the nearby town of Tulle next month to decide Maurice's fate. Ms Bachellerie is appealing for help in meeting the legal costs of about €2,500, more than half of which has been raised already.

Officials argue that there are too many wild boars in France and that they cause extensive damage to crops.

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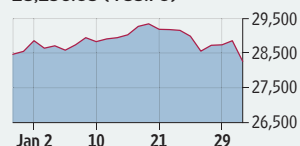
Business

WORLD MARKETS (Friday's close, change on the week)

FTSE 100
7,286.01 (-299.97) ▼

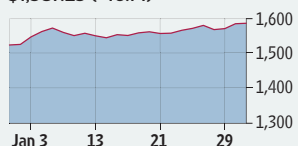


Dow Jones
28,256.03 (-733.70) ▼



COMMODITIES

Gold
\$1,587.23 (+16.14) ▲

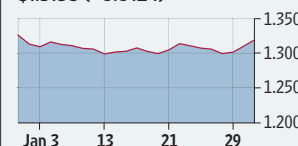


Brent crude (6ppm)
\$58.13 (-2.41) ▼



CURRENCIES

£/\$
\$1.3195 (+0.0124) ▲



£/€
€1.1900 (+0.0046) ▲



South Western Railway faces losing franchise if new bid falls short

Robert Lea Industrial Editor

South Western Railway will be formally asked this week to explain to Grant Shapps, the transport secretary, why he should not sack it from the commuter network based at London Waterloo.

Just days after Mr Shapps renationalised Northern rail, stripping Arriva of its franchise, the owners of South Western Railway (SWR) have been told to submit a bid to the Department for Transport to stay in the job. If the plans

of SWR's operators — First Group and MTR of Hong Kong — fall short, Mr Shapps will nationalise the business and hand the keys over to the operator of last resort, a sub-division of the transport department which is taking over at Northern next month.

If SWR keeps the contract it will be under substantially revised terms with the department likely to put the operator on a highly specified, low-profit-margin management contract.

This would anger passenger groups

fed up with two years of disruption. MPs are also angry at having been misled over the government's intentions. Last month in an answer to a parliamentary question the transport minister Chris Heaton-Harris said SWR remained "fully compliant" with its financial commitments. Days later Mr Shapps declared SWR was "not sustainable" as it emerged that the business was losing £137 million a year.

SWR has been in disarray since it took over the franchise two and a half

years ago from Stagecoach's South West Trains operation. Within a year SWR, in the grip of a chronic industrial dispute with its guards and unable with Network Rail to make its timetable work, had returned to the transport department asking to have its contract rewritten. It is supposed to run to 2024.

The crisis at SWR has been mirrored by disarray at its main owner, First Group, which has lost £532 million in two and half years, been under attack by hedge funds, suffered boardroom

coups and has been forced by investors to break itself up. It is understood SWR will argue that it should be given the chance to reset its relationships with Network Rail and passengers under its new management. Mark Hopwood, credited with turning round First's GWR operation, was installed as managing director at the turn of the year.

First Group, SWR and the transport department declined to comment.

Off the rails, pages 36-37
Andrew Sentence, page 39

China pumps in £130bn to calm markets

Liquidity injection to offset virus-linked sell-off

Ben Martin Senior City Correspondent

The Chinese authorities are injecting more than £130 billion into the financial system to bolster the world's second largest economy as it battles the impact of the coronavirus outbreak.

China's financial markets are expecting a big sell-off when they reopen today after a long break, as investors take fright over the spread of the virus.

It is thought that the liquidity measures announced by Beijing yesterday are aimed at containing the fallout from the outbreak on the equity, currency and bond markets in mainland China, which have been closed since January 23 for the lunar new year.

The market shutdown was extended by three days after the holiday was lengthened as the authorities tried to contain the crisis.

The People's Bank of China said that it would pump 1.2 trillion yuan (£131 billion) of liquidity into the country's markets today. This will take place through "reverse repos" in which the central bank will buy securities from investors in what it is estimated will be the biggest one-day operation that Beijing has undertaken since 2004, according to Bloomberg. A reverse repurchase agreement, or reverse repo, is the purchase of securities with the agreement to sell them at a higher price at a specific future date.

The net cash injection is expected to be 150 billion yuan, however, because about 1.05 trillion yuan of reverse repos are due to mature today. The coronavirus outbreak started in the city of Wuhan, where it is believed to have

been passed to human beings at a seafood market. It has since spread rapidly, with at least 14,380 infections reported in China, where there have been more than 300 deaths.

Stock markets around the world have already fallen amid fears about the impact of the outbreak.

The Hang Seng index in Hong Kong fell by about 6 per cent last week and the FTSE 100 lost about 300 points, or 4 per cent, over the same period. The Dow Jones industrial average fell by more than 600 points, or 2.1 per cent, on Friday in what was its biggest one-day fall since August. There is expected to be similar tumult today as the spread of the virus continued over the weekend.

Analysts said Beijing's cash injection would help to soften the blow on Chinese markets but that prices were still expected to slide.

Stephen Innes, of AxiCorp in Bangkok, told Bloomberg: "This is well beyond the Band-Aid fix. If this deluge doesn't hold risk-off at bay, we are in for a colossal beatdown."

China's economy is second only to that of the US but growth had stalled before the outbreak, knocked by the trade war with America and a crack-down by Beijing on risky debt. It had already been stimulating its economy using tools including reverse repos.

Goldman Sachs believes the virus crisis will hit Chinese growth by 0.4 percentage points this year. It is also expected to drag on the US economy.

Many international companies have been restricting staff travel to China and carriers including British Airways have suspended flights to the mainland.



Taxing times Netflix, makers of *The Crown*, above, will face close scrutiny of its tax practices in parliament today **Page 36**

Anger at mixed messages over Brexit

Callum Jones Trade Correspondent

Boris Johnson must urgently provide details on what Brexit means for business if Britain is to reverse the "tragedy" of ailing investment, according to a top FTSE 100 manufacturer.

Miles Roberts, chief executive of DS Smith, one of the world's largest packaging companies, told *The Times* that years of "contradictory" statements by ministers about Britain's departure from the European Union had left businesses "in a vacuum".

"They talk about being bold," Mr Roberts said. "Dribbling out bits and pieces seems at odds with what we've been told. That's the danger: the drip, drip of future regulation will lead to the drip, drip out of investment."

The UK's departure from the EU on

Friday evening triggered an 11-month transition period, giving Whitehall and Brussels until the end of the year to agree future arrangements.

In a speech today, the prime minister will set out his vision before the negotiations. He is expected to confirm that Britain is seeking a "Canada-style" deal with the EU but would settle for a looser "Australian-style" approach.

Such broad-brush guidance is unlikely to reassure corporate leaders seeking clarity. Mr Roberts said that it was the "responsibility" of ministers who campaigned to leave to explain the tangible economic consequences.

Last month Sajid Javid told the *Financial Times* there would not be "alignment" between UK and EU rules, but he later said that there would not be divergence "just for the sake of it". His

remarks that executives had "known about Brexit since 2016" had annoyed some business leaders.

Mr Roberts, 55, said: "They want to be bold, so let's hear it. They're the ones who control the levers. We're a servant to the country, bound by the laws, and we need to know what they're going to be. Even some clear statements of intent. With the chancellor, I don't think what he said really fit that criteria."

Business investment growth was flat in the six months to September, according to the Office for National Statistics.

DS Smith, which completed a £1.7 billion deal for Spain's Europac last year, has about 31,000 staff in 37 countries. It has capitalised in recent years on the online delivery boom and the flight from plastic packaging.

Business

Need to know

1 Boris Johnson will say in a speech today that he would rather accept tariffs than EU law, as the next phase of Brexit begins in acrimony. Britain has made its choice in refusing to follow EU regulations and is not afraid to walk away from talks, the prime minister will tell business leaders in London. **Page 1**

2 The introduction of green number plates for electric cars is likely to lead to far more surveillance cameras on roads, which would have privacy implications and could even be illegal, a watchdog has warned. The proposals aim to reward green plate holders by, for example, allowing them to drive in bus lanes. **Page 10**

3 A Mayfair mogul who once said the restaurant trade was a "survival of the fittest" is having to eat his words after administrators interrupted lunch to shut one of his establishments. The Michelin-starred The Square, owned by Marlon Abela, was closed after rumours of financial difficulty. **Page 15**

4 Shopping will be propelled by magnetism through a network of pipes under plans to cut the number of lorries on the roads. Magway, a British start-up whose backers include Ocado, says it has raised more than £155 million to fund a trial. **Page 20**

5 The Chinese authorities are injecting more than £130 billion into the country's financial system in an attempt to bolster the world's second largest economy as it battles the impact of the coronavirus outbreak. China's financial markets are expected to be hit by a severe sell-off when they reopen today. **Page 35**

6 Boris Johnson must urgently provide details on what Brexit means for business if Britain is to reverse the "tragedy" of ailing investment, according to a top FTSE 100 manufacturer. Miles Roberts, chief executive of DS Smith, one of the world's largest packaging companies, attacked years of "contradictory" statements from ministers. **Page 35**

7 The operators of South Western Railway will be formally asked this week to explain to the transport secretary, why he should not sack it from the commuter network based at London Waterloo. If the plans of First Group and MTR of Hong Kong fall short, Grant Shapps will nationalise the business. **Page 35**

8 Netflix faces growing scrutiny of its tax affairs in Britain as analysis by Tax Watch, a think tank, suggested the US streaming company generated more than £1 billion in revenues from its UK subscribers last year.

9 People may be able to get cashback from thousands of corner shops across the country without making a purchase as part of a drive to ensure access to cash. **Page 38**

10 Amazon has launched a search for new office space in London in a show of confidence in the city's ability to retain creative talent after Brexit. **Page 41**

A mile of track shows how

If those running each part of the railway were better connected we might all have an easier ride, **Robert Lea** writes

The Castlefield Corridor is, in microcosm, the story of why the nation's railways are in crisis.

It has played a big role in why Arriva has been sacked from the soon-to-be renationalised Northern franchise. It has played a significant role in why Network Rail was recently given an "official warning" by the rail regulator over its poor service in the northwest.

The Castlefield Corridor is a one-mile strip of railway through the centre of Manchester, between Piccadilly, the city's main station, and Deansgate to the west, a line from which all points are served, south to London, north to Scotland, west to Liverpool and east across the Pennines to Leeds and Newcastle.

It is officially "congested infrastructure", which means that too many trains are clogging up the line and it is time-tabled to carry more services than it can physically manage.

That the Castlefield Corridor has been a priority infrastructure issue since at least 2014, but has been allowed to fester ever since, goes to the heart of who is in charge of the railways.

Chris Grayling, who was transport secretary, once said it wasn't him who was in charge. What the corridor has demonstrated — and which has been repeated nationally — is a failure of the transport department, the Network Rail track and signalling engineer and train operators to agree what services can be timetabled to run on the available infrastructure.

That those failings continue has led Network Rail to think again about what it should be doing ahead of the delayed publication of the Williams Rail Review, promising reform of what is regarded as a broken privatised model.

In what in hindsight was a revolutionary move, 18 months ago Network Rail appointed a chief executive who had experience of being a train operator and dealing with the public, the sort of executive with whom Network Rail has historically been at loggerheads.

Andrew Haines, a former managing director of South West Trains and

former head of First Group's rail division, immediately set out a manifesto encapsulated in the words "putting passengers first".

Putting those words into practice, Mr Haines has created a petri dish in the company's northwest and central England sub-division — from London Euston to Gretna Green and the Birmingham and Manchester hubs in between — by appointing three men, all of whom have come directly from running train companies, to its leadership.

Tim Shoveller was hired by Mr Haines to become managing director as his 30-year career in train operating came to an end. His job as head of Stagecoach disappeared with Stagecoach's barring from the railways over legal action about pension liabilities. One of his Stagecoach deputies, Jake Kelly, who was running East Midlands Trains, was hired to become his "passenger experience director". Dave Penney was persuaded to turn in his job running Chiltern Railways to take over Network Rail's central region.

This has not been an immediate success. Last month the division run by Mr Shoveller for the past eight months was criticised by the Office of Rail and Road for its failures in infrastructure delivery, something that played a part in the meltdown at Northern Trains.

Mr Shoveller says he believes that the report on the railways by Keith Williams, chairman of Royal Mail, must deliver "structural change" in the relationship between track and train, the historical point of confrontation between Network Rail and the train companies. That, he says, does not necessarily mean that track and train should be merged under single ownership, public or private.

"The railways are only going to work well if we work together," he says. "We have to have a whole industry perspective which will allow us all to make better decisions. It shouldn't be a question of who employs the drivers or the signallers. It is more a case of how well they work together. The simpler [the structure] the better. But there isn't one model."

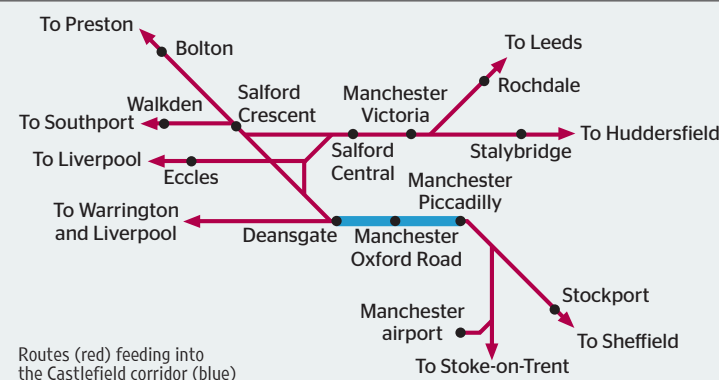
The issues in the Castlefield Corridor are a sibling to the great timetable meltdown of May 2018, when large parts of the railway were thrown into chaos.

Of the 2018 fiasco Mr Shoveller says: "We were over-optimistic as an indus-



Infrastructure problems clogging up the lines in Manchester — and many of

The Castlefield corridor



Netflix tax on British profits 'should be £13m'

Ben Martin Senior City Correspondent

Netflix faces growing scrutiny of its tax affairs in Britain amid claims it generated more than £1 billion in revenues from its UK subscribers last year.

The American streaming company may have made annual pre-tax profits of £68.5 million on revenues of £1.08 billion from its British customers in 2019, according to analysis by Tax Watch. This would result in a tax liability of £13 million if the profits were declared here, the think tank estimated.

Netflix's tax practices will be criticised at a debate in parliament today called by Dame Margaret Hodge, the Labour MP.

Netflix began 23 years ago as a business that rented out DVDs through the

post but shifted its focus to streaming ten years later. It is now the world's leading video streaming service, with a market value of more than \$151 billion and 167 million paying subscribers as of the end of 2019. It generated annual revenues of \$20.2 billion last year.

The company launched in the UK in 2012 and makes a number of television shows here, including *The Crown*.

However, subscriptions paid by its British users are booked through a business based in the Netherlands, a lower tax jurisdiction, and are therefore not reflected in the accounts for its main British subsidiary, Netflix Services UK Limited.

The last set of figures available for the UK-incorporated business are for 2018 and show that it generated pre-tax

profits of €2.3 million on revenues of €48 million and received a €57,656 income tax credit. Production credits for shows including *Sex Education* helped it to erase its tax bill in the UK.

It emerged over a year ago that Netflix's tax practices were being studied by Revenue & Customs and the company said in its latest US regulatory filings that it was "currently under examination in the UK for 2018".

A spokesman for Netflix said it support-

ed proposals to reform taxation on an international level and added: "We comply with the rules in every country where we operate." He said there were "a number of inaccuracies" in the Tax Watch report.

"Netflix continues to invest heavily in the UK, spending more than £400 million on local productions in 2019, which helped to create over 25,000 jobs and training placements," the spokesman added.

Dame Margaret Hodge has called a debate by MPs today



we came off the rails



Northern's trains — were highlighted in 2014 but solutions have been hard to find

try on our aspiration for delivering growth. But overlaying that, there was an industrial relations problem. If you want massive, once-in-a-lifetime change at the same time that you are going to have a row with your staff, then don't be surprised that it doesn't work very well."

In the Castlefield Corridor he admits infrastructure upgrades are late but there was a disconnect between what the Department for Transport and Arriva thought could be delivered. "It is just an illustration of how the industry was not working in a joined-up way," he says.

What Mr Shoveller would like to see in the Williams review is the installation of a "strong guiding, co-ordinating

mind" at the centre of the industry. That sounds like a resurrection of the old Strategic Rail Authority, which ran the railways from the turn of the century and was scrapped when ministers thought it too over-mighty.

"The point is that the industry must plan together and that is something the Strategic Rail Authority did very well," he says. "To my mind that model worked well. Some things didn't, like the SRA's relationships with parts of government, with Network Rail and with the regulator. But we don't have the level of co-ordination at the moment that we had during the SRA period. I can see the attraction of that co-ordination and the evidence is there that it added value."

Surge in older women unable to pay bills

Ashley Armstrong

The number of women over 65 entering insolvency has almost doubled in the past decade.

In 2008 there were 1,109 women over 65 in insolvency and by 2018 there were 2,082, according to Rest Less, a job site for the over-50s.

The data, based on official figures and a freedom of information request, also shows that in 2008 the insolvency rate for men aged over 55 was twice that of women but by 2018 this gap had narrowed.

Mark Sands, of R3, the insolvency industry trade body, said: "For the over-65s, unique challenges include living on fixed pension incomes with barely any returns on savings. When you're in this

situation it's no surprise that you might be more vulnerable to financial shocks. More people are reaching retirement with unpaid debts and if their retirement income and savings are insufficient to service or repay those debts, they are then faced with stark choices

2,082

Women over 65 insolvent in 2018

and many people then find that a formal insolvency process is the best solution for them."

The number of women over 55 entering insolvency has jumped by 69 per cent over the past decade with 7,817

HS2 landed with £500m VAT demand

Louisa Clarence-Smith

The government-funded company responsible for delivering HS2 has been forced to repay more than £500 million to Revenue & Customs after an investigation found that it had been wrongly reclaiming VAT.

The tax authority ruled that HS2 Limited should not have reclaimed £569.1 million incurred on design and construction between 2014 and 2019.

A spokeswoman for HS2 Ltd confirmed that the money had been returned after the three-year investigation by HMRC concluded in June.

HS2 Ltd had made a provision of £21.1 million to pay the default interest cost on VAT that was over-claimed, accounts filed to Companies House show.

The findings raise new concerns ahead of a decision on whether to continue building the network. The cost of the high-speed line is thought likely to exceed £100 billion.

Lord Berkeley, deputy chairman of a review on HS2, said: "It is extraordinary that a company of this size that is government-owned should be having questions raised about VAT."

HS2's budget was set at £56 billion in 2015 but rose to £88 billion. The review led by Doug Oakervee, former HS2 Ltd chairman, is believed to acknowledge that it could cost £106 billion.

Boris Johnson appeared to signal last week that the project would go ahead. "The only thing to do is keep digging," he said on Sky News. However, he criticised the management of the project.

A spokeswoman for HS2 Ltd said: "In 2016 HMRC commenced a review of HS2's right to reclaim VAT, but continued to refund VAT to HS2 on a monthly basis. This review concluded in June 2019 ... and at this point HS2 no longer submitted claims to HMRC for the repayment of the related VAT."

"As the National Audit Office made clear in their 2013 report, in respect of construction costs affecting the company, any VAT 'represents an internal transfer within government'. This review of HS2 Ltd's VAT status will not change the net cost to the UK taxpayer of delivering HS2."

A spokeswoman for HMRC said: "We cannot comment on identifiable businesses."

Andrew Sentance, page 39

The week ahead

Emma Walmsley is in her third year as Glaxosmithkline's chief executive, so most of the questions at the drug group's annual results on Wednesday will feel familiar. Except perhaps: "Have you found a cure for the coronavirus yet?" Mind you, as one of Europe's big vaccine developers, it's got as good a chance as any to get one over the line.

Analysts reckon that Ms Walmsley will be able to unveil a pretty strong set of results, with turnover expected to rise by just under 10 per cent to nearly £33.9 billion and pre-tax profits to be up about 5 per cent to almost £4.5 billion. The Glaxo boss upgraded guidance twice during the course of the year, in large part thanks to the success of Shingrix, a new vaccine for shingles. On course to be a serious blockbuster for the group, Shingrix recorded sales of £743 million during the first half, plus a further £535 million over the third quarter, streets ahead of the previous year and analysts' forecasts.

It's been enough to more than offset one of Glaxo's big worries, a



Analysts reckon that GSK's Emma Walmsley will unveil good results

sharp fall in sales of Advair, its bestselling respiratory drug, which has been hit hard by the rise of copycat generics. It looks as if the performance is vindicating Ms Walmsley's strategy of producing fewer but bigger blowout big-sellers.

miles.costello@thetimes.co.uk

TOMORROW

Shareholders in Electrocomponents were taken by surprise in November when Lindsley Ruth, the 49-year-old chief executive, took a leave of absence to receive treatment for an undisclosed medical condition. While obviously wishing Mr Ruth well — his illness is known not to be life-threatening — the FTSE 250 electronics distributor's investors are going to be keen for an update when it reports on recent trading. Mr Ruth, who took charge at the group almost five years ago, was said by Electrocomponents to be preparing to return to work after treatment and a period of recovery in the new year. In the meantime, David Egan, 52, the company's finance director, has been covering the role for him. **Finals** BP, Micro Focus, St Modwen Properties

Lindsley Ruth, the 49-year-old chief executive of Electrocomponents, took a leave of absence

THURSDAY

The delivery of Royal Mail's trading statement covering the final three months of the year would have been very different had Jeremy Corbyn picked up the keys to No10. Now, rather than the threat of being rationalised, the letters and parcel group's shareholders will be more interested in how much the general election boosted Royal Mail's delivery of campaign marketing materials. Still, despite clocking up a return to operating profit in the first half, life is tough for the former FTSE 100 star as its steadily growing parcels business battles to offset a structural fall in letters. At the last count in November, the former state-owned postal service said its turnaround plan was behind schedule.

Finals Beazley **Interims** Ashmore **Trading statements** Compass, Tate & Lyle **AGMs** Compass, Easyjet

WEDNESDAY

Vodafone updates the City on trading over the three months to the end of December amid signs that the FTSE 100 telecoms group is finally back in growth mode. It lifted its turnover by 0.4 per cent to €21.9 billion over the six months to the end of September thanks to a growth in top-line revenues in the later three months of that period. Nick Read, 55, the newish boss, felt sufficiently confident in the future that he upgraded Vodafone's annual profit forecasts by about €1 billion.

They probably won't complain about not being able to smoke at Imperial Brands' annual shareholder meeting in Bristol, but investors may be minded to hack a bit about the tobacco group's performance last year. There was nothing as disastrous as a dividend cut (indeed, the payout was up 10 per cent), but a looming regulatory crackdown in the US meant that growth of revenues from next-generation products (think vaping) fell short of expectations. **Finals** Glaxosmithkline **Interims** Barratt Developments, Redrow **Trading statement** Domino's Pizza

FRIDAY

It shouldn't happen to a veterinary practice, but it's happened in shovelfuls to CVS. One of Britain's biggest vet operators, which updates the market on recent trading, spent much of last year recovering after a belter of a January profit warning. A shortage of vets, a Dutch acquisition and a move into farming and treating horses set the cats among the pigeons at the company, whose shares also got a bad dose of foot and mouth. Still, that's now behind the group, which has a new chief executive and a beefed-up board. CVS most recently provided some cheer to its investors — and the share price — at its November annual general meeting, when it reported an 8 per cent increase in like-for-like sales over the four months to the end of October. That was after some healthy full-year numbers and it is hoped there is more where that came from. **Trading statement** Bellway

Business



The versatility of corner shops of the type run by David Jason in the BBC series *Open all Hours* could be extended further by plans for them to offer cash services

Corner shop tills could become replacement for cash machines

Katherine Griffiths Banking Editor

People may be able to take out money from the tills of thousands of corner shops across the country as part of a drive by the government to ensure nationwide access to cash.

The plan, which could be announced in the budget, would be an early divergence from European regulations, laying down a marker that the government intends to make changes to EU rules to suit Britain.

At present, people can get cashback in shops only when they buy something. Removing the link to a purchase means they could simply use their bank card to receive cash in shops.

Shopkeepers may see it as a way to boost footfall and encourage consumers to support their local area. It may also be worth their while financially. Under the current cashback system

shops pay a fee to Visa, which owns the scheme, when a customer asks for cash. Visa has run an initiative in rural areas in which the shop was paid to offer the service and this could be extended across the country.

The government hopes this would help to compensate for closures of bank branches and cash machines.

Another significant initiative is also expected in the budget, requiring banks to continue to make cash available through a universal service obligation, similar to the one imposed on telecoms companies to provide broadband connectivity across the country, which goes live next month.

A review last year led by Natalie Ceeney, former head of the Financial Ombudsman Service, found that while there has been a dramatic fall in the number of people who prefer to use cash, about eight million adults, or

17 per cent of the population, rely on it. That creates problems of social exclusion, the report found.

Ms Ceeney said yesterday: "It's increasingly clear that the current legislative framework isn't fit for purpose, as it doesn't give regulators what they need to support consumers, and it stops banks offering services such as cashback without a purchase, which would really help smaller communities."

The government has pushed the Post Office as one solution to this problem. In October, 28 banks signed a three-year agreement to collectively pay the Post Office £200 million annually to allow individuals and businesses to withdraw cash and make deposits over its counters in a move aimed particularly at rural areas. Barclays tried to pull out but was pressurised into rejoining by John Glen, the City minister.

Some shops already have cash ma-

chines, but many do not want them as it can attract ram-raiders. In many cases there is not enough footfall to cover the costs of a cash machine. Being able to give customers cash occasionally would be another service small shops could offer with the hope it would drive revenues, industry figures believe. It would, however, carry the security risk of having more cash in the till.

Link, the cash machine network owned by banks and ATM operators, last year promised to pay for a cash machine on every high street if there was no other one and no post office.

John Howells, Link's chief executive, said: "Most parts of the country are just not ready to go cashless and Link is committed to ensuring that every high street has free cash access via ATMs and post offices. We are also keen on initiatives that will incentivise retailers to provide free cashback for consumers."

Development bank makes its pitch to help regions

Gurpreet Narwan
Economics Correspondent

The government should invest more in small and medium-sized businesses if it wants to deliver on its promise of "levelling up" all parts of the country, the chief executive of the British Business Bank says.

Keith Morgan said that funding for the state-owned economic development bank needed to rise by billions of pounds so that it could increase regional investment.

"In order to expand our regional activities, and in order to expand our investment in innovative companies, you have to have greater funding," he said. "So yes, our focus for this year is making the case very clearly that we are able to support government in these areas."

The bank was set up in 2012 by Sir Vince Cable, as business secretary, with £1 billion of government money. This has grown to £6 billion, which is staggered over several years. Mr Morgan said that the bank would be bidding for more money in the budget on March 11.

The bank does not lend directly to businesses but aims to increase the supply of finance to small companies by channelling funds through finance partners. That includes investing in venture-capital funds, taking shares in peer-to-peer lenders and guaranteeing loans. It supports 90,000 businesses.

"Our ability to do all these things depends upon funding from government," Mr Morgan said. "There's no special pleading in that. It's stating fact, we are up and running. We've got models that are working in delivering in the regions, we've got models which are operating and working in terms of scaling up innovative companies for the future, both of which I think intersect the government's priorities."

The new Conservative government has made "levelling up" opportunity and economic performance across the country a key priority.

According to UK Finance, the trade body, lending from big banks to small and medium-sized companies shrank between 2014 and last year and it did so most rapidly outside London.

"The government's clearly got some big objectives and the way to deliver on those strategic objectives is to utilise institutions like the British Business Bank, which have already got the capability to deliver," Mr Morgan said.

Apprentice levy 'failing small firms'

James Hurley Enterprise Editor

Reforms to vocational training are failing young people and small and medium companies, according to a poll by the Federation of Small Businesses.

The apprenticeship levy has made it harder to access entry-level training and is not providing enough support for smaller companies, its critics say.

More than one in four small companies that employ apprentices say that changes introduced three years ago have been counterproductive.

The apprenticeship levy was supposed to increase vocational training. It requires businesses with an annual wage bill of £3 million or more to pay 0.5 per cent of their payroll costs into a training fund. They can use the cash for qualifying training schemes.

Money that they do not spend is used

to help to cover the cost of apprenticeship training at small businesses.

In 2017 when the levy was introduced there was a 24 per cent drop in apprenticeship starts, with a further drop last year. Big employers are using more of their levy funds than expected because

24%

Fall in apprenticeship starts in 2017

of a sharp rise in more advanced "higher" and degree-level apprenticeships, which are more expensive.

Many employers are finding it hard to transfer levy money to smaller businesses, which have traditionally been big recruiters of young people. New starts for 16 to 18-year-olds have fallen

by nearly a quarter since 2016, according to London First and the North West Business Leadership Team.

As the government promotes the value of vocational training during National Apprenticeship Week, which starts today, Mike Cherry, chairman of the FSB, said: "Urgent action is needed to ensure sufficient funding for small businesses in order to be able to continue offering apprenticeships."

The government has promised a £3 billion skills fund for the next five years, which may be used to top up apprenticeship funding for small companies.

Baroness Wolf of Dulwich, the government's skills adviser, has said smaller companies should also contribute to the levy, but the FSB is demanding a reduction in the "co-investment" costs, the obligatory contribution to the bill for training an apprentice.

Green promises must be kept, energy suppliers told

Emily Gosden Energy Editor

The energy regulator has vowed to crack down on "greenwashing" by suppliers overstating their environmental credentials, as part of a strategic focus on climate change.

Ofgem said it was critical that consumers choosing renewable electricity tariffs could trust they really would make "the expected positive impact for the planet", such as by driving investment in new wind and solar farms.

The consumer group Which? warned last year that consumers risked being misled because many companies marketing green tariffs were only buying cheap certificates that allowed them to claim they were "100 per cent

renewable", rather than actually buying power directly from renewable sources.

In a decarbonisation action plan, the regulator said: "We are aware of growing concerns about 'greenwashing', where the environmental impact of a particular tariff or supplier is overstated. We expect suppliers to be transparent about what constitutes a 'green tariff' and we will undertake work to ensure that consumers are not misled."

Jonathan Brearley, who has just taken over as Ofgem chief executive, said it was "taking an approach that recognises that our role protecting consumers includes achieving net zero".

The plan includes an electric vehicle strategy to address "how the grid needs to evolve to meet increased demand".

Paul Johnson

Inheritance tax isn't fit for purpose if the super-rich find ways round it

I see nothing objectionable in fixing a limit to what anyone may acquire by mere

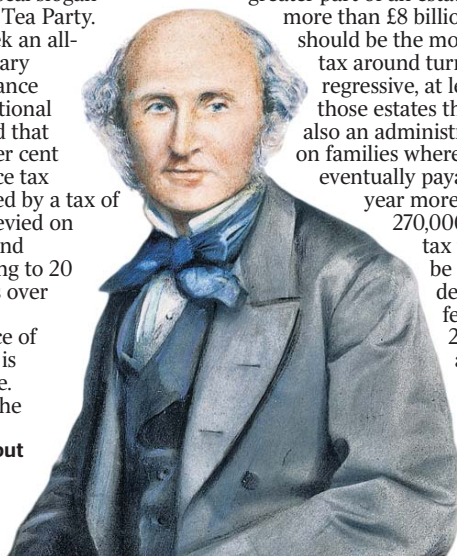
favour of others, without any exercise of his faculties, and in requiring that if he desires any further accession of fortune, he shall work for it." That, from John Stuart Mill, alongside his conviction that great economic and social advantages would result from a reduction in the number of "enormous fortunes which no one needs for any personal purpose but ostentation or improper power", has for more than a century been the central liberal case for a substantial and effective inheritance tax.

The logic appears compelling. Gifts and inheritances come not as a result of effort or desert, but rather of blind luck. They reduce the incentive of the lucky recipient to work hard. They concentrate both economic and political power in an undeserving elite.

As we enter a second gilded age of great wealth inequality and the accumulation of great fortunes, Mill's case is surely at least as relevant today as it was in the 19th century. Yet across the western world there are few taxes as unpopular as inheritance tax. Sweden and Norway, often considered beacons of social democracy and equality, have abolished their inheritance taxes entirely. Estate taxation in the United States has produced the rallying cry "no taxation without respiration", surely the best fiscal slogan since the Boston Tea Party. And just last week an all-party parliamentary group on inheritance and inter-generational fairness proposed that the current 40 per cent rate of inheritance tax should be replaced by a tax of just 10 per cent levied on receipts of gifts and inheritances, rising to 20 per cent on sums over £2 million.

Why? The force of Mill's arguments is surely undeniable. Looked at from the

John Stuart Mill put the philosophical case for taxing inherited wealth



perspective of the recipient generation, inheritances appear random, unjust, an obvious basis for taxation. Looked at from the perspective of the bequeathing generation, though, bequests appear simply as an exercise in property rights. I have earned, and paid my taxes, and saved; it is my right to dispose of my assets as I see fit, and in particular to support my children. Few human emotions run deeper.

That is a genuine clash of ethical frameworks. No chance of solving that particular conundrum today.

Vested interests also muddy the political waters. Those with plenty of wealth are not averse to lobbying against its taxation. There is a third issue too — one of practicality. People will go to considerable lengths to avoid inheritance tax. They'll even go as far as not dying. On July 1, 1979, Australia abolished federal inheritance taxes. There was a dip in the number of deaths in the last week of June as thrifty Aussies hung on to life for just a little longer to ensure their heirs could inherit tax-free.

More prosaically, in the UK those with serious wealth find all sorts of ways of paying nothing like 40 per cent tax on their bequests. On average, those leaving estates valued between £1 million and £8 million pay 20 per cent of what they leave in tax; those with estates of around £10 million pay just 10 per cent. It is reported that when the Duke of Westminster passed away in 2016 no inheritance tax was payable on the greater part of an estate worth more than £8 billion. What

should be the most progressive tax around turns out to be regressive, at least among those estates that pay it. It is also an administrative burden on families where no tax is eventually payable. Each

year more than 270,000 inheritance tax forms have to be filed on death, but fewer than 25,000 actually have any tax to pay.

If most of your wealth is tied up in your home, there is

relatively little you can do to avoid inheritance tax. If you have serious money, then avoidance is not hard at all. The simplest expedient is to give away your assets more than seven years before you die. Or you can buy agricultural land, on which no inheritance tax is payable, or various kinds of business assets, or you can make clever use of trusts. Or if you have special "foreign dom" status you will not pay. A good lawyer will save your heirs a lot of money. All of which makes the tax's great unpopularity more comprehensible even to those who take Mill's view of the ethics.

And so we return to that parliamentary report. If you think that an effective system of taxing gifts and inheritances is important, you are left with two options. First, try to make the current system, or something like it, work; close as many loopholes as you can, and stick to the 40 per cent tax. The MPs' conclusion is that this won't work. The incentive to avoid is too great and the game of cat and mouse between tax authority and the wealthy one that the HMRC is bound to lose.

Hence their solution: do away with nearly all the reliefs and allowances and impose a flat tax, at a low rate of perhaps 10 per cent, on receipt of inheritances above the current £325,000 allowance, and on lifetime gifts of over £30,000. The rate would rise to 20 per cent for inheritances over £2 million. Their bet is that at rates like that, the incentive to invest time and effort in avoidance would all but disappear. They would also abolish that egregiously inefficient and inequitable element of the capital gains tax which results in full forgiveness at death.

We need an inheritance or gifts tax system that works far better than the current one, and which is more effective and equitable, and commands public support. Maybe following the all-party group's recommendations would amount to throwing in the towel. But maybe it is the best we can do. For sure, the status quo with all its burdensome inequities should not be allowed to persist.

Paul Johnson is director of the Institute for Fiscal Studies. Follow him on @PJTheEconomist



Andrew Sentance

Why Britain is stuck in the slow lane when it comes to transport

The recent controversy over the HS2 rail project provides a reminder that the UK struggles to develop and deliver big transport infrastructure projects.

HS2 is just the latest example of a project beset by political uncertainty and confused objectives. In 2000, the government launched a consultation on the development of UK airport capacity. After 20 years of discussion and debate, no new tarmac or concrete has yet been laid.

Delays and confusion have affected other major projects. Crossrail is over budget and several years behind its scheduled opening. Road projects are also subject to serious delays. The upgrading of the A14 between Cambridge and Huntingdon has been on the

'Other countries have found ways to develop transport networks much more efficiently'

drawing board since the mid-1980s.

That project was given the formal go-ahead in 2005 and should be completed later this year. But it is a serious impediment to the progress of our economy if it takes 35 years from the proposal of a major transport project to its completion.

Our competitors are not so tardy. Other European countries such as Germany, France, Spain and Italy have found ways of developing their transport networks much more quickly and efficiently. China has built the largest high-speed rail network in the world in just over a decade, as well as putting in place a large comprehensive metro network in Beijing.

There are three main reasons why we are falling behind. The first is the lack of a clear transport strategy and the political will to carry it through. That has not always been the case. From the late 1950s until the 1980s, we developed and built the bulk of the existing motorway and trunk road network. At the same time, parts of the rail network were upgraded so that faster trains could run between the bigger cities (eg Inter City 125). Other projects were launched and delivered,

including the Channel Tunnel. In the 1990s and early 2000s, this drive to upgrade our transport infrastructure lost momentum.

Despite many worthy reports and strategic reviews, such as Sir Rod Eddington's 2006 report, little has been done. Ministers propound ideas such as road pricing to relieve motorway congestion, but nothing of any substance has been implemented with the exception of one or two toll roads.

A second constraint is local environmental and planning objections. The UK planning system is a patchwork of regulations which has grown up over the last hundred years. We do not have a modern and streamlined system for dealing with legitimate environmental and local concerns and compensating those who lose out. Too often, nimbysism dominates.

The third set of problems relates to the financing of projects. In the 1970s and 1980s, successive chancellors and Treasury civil servants used delays and cuts to projects as a means of regulating public spending. Budgets put in place in good economic times are pruned back in periods of austerity. Last financial year, the government spent less than 1 per cent of GDP on road and rail investment. This stop-start approach makes it very difficult to deliver projects that require decades to plan and build.

Attempts to ease these public spending constraints by encouraging private finance have not worked in most cases. The core rail network was taken back into public ownership when Railtrack failed in the early 2000s, and very few road projects have been developed with private finance. The airports are the only part of our transport infrastructure that rely on private finance.

For all these reasons, the UK is likely to continue to struggle to deliver transport infrastructure projects such as HS2. Ministers may talk optimistically from time to time about renewing and upgrading our transport system. But while these more fundamental barriers remain, we will struggle to make progress.

Andrew Sentance is senior adviser, Cambridge Econometrics, and a former monetary policy committee member. Graham Ruddick is away

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Business

Chinese help gets Lotus sales back on the grid

Demand from sportscar lovers in China and the US has pushed sales at Lotus, the niche Norfolk manufacturer, up by 23 per cent (Robert Lea writes).

Lotus, which has spent years hitting operational brick walls or being in danger of running out of financial gas, is now owned by Geely, the anglophile Chinese automotive giant that also owns LEVC, the Coventry manufacturer of hybrid-electric black cabs.

With a reported \$2 billion cheque to return Lotus to the glory days of its founder Colin Chapman, Phil Popham, its chief executive, made



a splash last year with an all-electric Lotus Evija hypercar. At £1.5 million, it is aimed at showcasing the group's ambitions.

In 2018, the year Geely took over, Lotus's sales had dwindled to a barely sustainable 1,232.

Last year, with renewed interest in the £85,000 Evora, the hitherto top-priced sportscar in a four-model stable, total sales jumped to 1,519.

Sales of the Evora were up nearly 60 per cent. Lotus historically has

had little traction in China, the world's largest market, but decided to launch the Evora at the Shanghai motor show. "There has been increased demand from the US and China where customers are

more inclined to buy immediately off the forecourt rather than ordering a personal build specification and waiting a number of months for delivery," a spokesman said.



The Evora, in Shanghai; and Colin Chapman in the Lotus glory days, below

Britain's heritage motor marques have had a mixed year. Latest industry figures showed a 14 per cent fall in production at British car factories. Jaguar Land Rover, the country's largest automotive group and which has accounted for nearly a third of all factory output in the past few years, assembled 14 per cent fewer cars. Mini at Cowley was down 5 per cent. The luxury brands reported a net 16 per cent rise in output.

Strong numbers from Lotus, based in Hethel near Norwich, and Rolls-Royce at Goodwood and Bentley at Crewe, were offset by falls at Aston Martin at Gaydon in Warwickshire and McLaren at Woking in Surrey.

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Toyota recharges batteries as electric car race heats up

Robert Lea Industrial Editor

When Toyota launched its zero-emission hydrogen fuel cell car, the Mirai, at the Los Angeles motor show in 2014, few were left in any doubt about the road the Japanese company was on.

It had transformed the automotive world with the Prius, the first mass-produced hybrid. In Hollywood, Jennifer Aniston, Cameron Diaz, Brad Pitt, Leo DiCaprio and many more celebrities were falling over themselves to be seen getting into the green car that would save the planet.

Today, although the Prius is in decline and seen as little more than the choice of the urban taxi driver, more than half of Toyota's annual 9.5 million production is of hybrid cars.

The man behind this revolution, Takeshi Uchiyamada, 73, chairman for the past seven years and the man known as the father of the Prius, said in 2014 that it had taken 15 years for it to go mainstream. His expectation, he said, was that the Mirai hydrogen car would be on a similar trajectory.

The inference was that hydrogen fuel cells would be mainstream by the late 2020s. "We are so focused on hydrogen because at its most simplistic oxygen and hydrogen makes water and power," he said. "The fuel cell vehicle is a social and economic game changer. Gasoline has been the primary fuel of the first 100 years [of automotive history]. Hydrogen will be the primary fuel game of the next hundred years."

For years the rest of the car industry scrambled to play zero-emission catch-up, investing billions in plug-ins to avoid CO₂ reduction penalties, to the point that 2020 is being called the year of the electric car. For most of that

time Toyota has been silent on battery electric vehicles, leading competitors and consumers to the conclusion that it was sticking to the notion that its hybrids, with just a few miles of electric charge, would remain its "technology bridge" until lithium-ion batteries were the past and hydrogen was the dominant zero-emission technology.

In recent days Toyota has said that it will produce ten zero-emission vehicles for the European market by 2025, most of which will not be hydrogen but battery electrics.

With getting on for 50 zero-emission models expected to be on the roads in the UK by the end of this year, Toyota will have only the £60,000 Mirai, whose sales are numbered in the dozens and whose owners will rely on just 14 public hydrogen filling stations.

Next year Lexus, Toyota's pricier sister brand, will have the £50,000 UX300e on the road in Britain, as Lexus customers, who have grown used to the marque being almost exclusively hybrid, demand the next step into pure electrics.

"Are we late?" Johan van Zyl, 61, the chief executive of Toyota in Europe, said. "I don't think we are late but we are ready. We always said [Toyota would produce pure electrics] when the market is ready. Now we can come. We have said we had to do it affordably and profitably. With any new technology there is a lot of red ink. Our investment in hybrids has

taught us how to make electric vehicles affordable and to do it profitably."

Toyota is in expansionary mode. In Europe last year it sold 1.08 million cars for 5.3 per cent of the market. Mr Van Zyl is promising sales of 1.4 million by 2025 for 6.5 per cent of the European market. That will be fuelled by the launch in Europe of what is known in industry jargon as a B segment SUV – that is, a £16,000 upright small car such as the Nissan Juke – in the fastest-growing segment in the showroom.

Those expansion plans should be good news for Toyota's plants in the UK, which employ more than 3,000 people. Its Derbyshire assembly line makes the Corolla and its engines and hybrid systems plant at Deeside makes 300,000 units a year, of which 70 per cent goes to other Toyota plants, primarily in Turkey.

Toyota's UK car production last year rose nearly 15 per cent to 148,000, albeit up from lows plumbed in 2018.

As for the future of the hydrogen fuel cell vehicle, Toyota is more muted. It is talking much more about hydrogen being the fuel of buses and trucks and concedes that hydrogen refuelling networks remain sparse.

But it is launching a second-generation Mirai, looking a lot more like the sort of executive car that would be driven by a chauffeur – and likely to be priced accordingly – and with enough fuel cells on board to propel it more than 400 miles on a single fill-up of hydrogen.

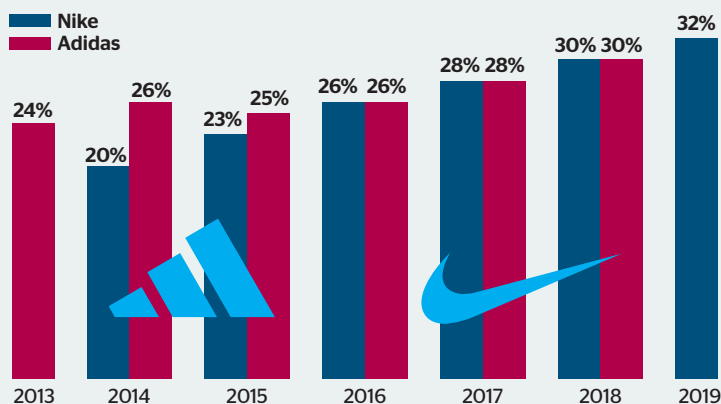
"We are the pioneers," Vincent Dewaersegger, one of the Toyota marketing executives working on next year's launch of the Mirai 2, said. "We did not want to stop as that would send the wrong message."



Britain has only 14 public hydrogen filling stations to serve cars such as the Mirai

Going direct

Share of sales that are now direct to consumer (online and their own stores)



Power play of sports brands puts retailers on back foot

The Adidas deal with Beyoncé highlights a changing relationship in sportswear, writes **Ashley Armstrong**

When Beyoncé launched her Ivy Park collaboration with Adidas last month there was little doubt that the “athleisure” range would be in demand, given her 139 million social media followers.

The question retailers were asking was whether Adidas would allow them access to the singer’s collection of maroon jumpsuits and athletic tops, and how much of her stock they would be allocated.

In the latest sign of the battle between brands and retailers Adidas put its own websites and biggest stores at the top of the priority list, treating its loyal customers to Beyoncé’s collection a day earlier than anywhere else.

The world’s biggest sports brands are turning the screw by going head-to-head with the retailers that have long stocked their products and rely on access to their kit to stay in business.

The boom in demand for athleisure, the fashion trend for wearing tracksuits and trainers outside the gym, coupled with the explosion of online shopping

and social media, has transformed the market.

“The balance of power has shifted dramatically,” a senior industry source said. “The power used to be in the retailers’ hands because the brands didn’t have their own stores or a decent digital platform, but over the last five years the brands have invested in creating a seamless experience with more of their own first-class shops and websites.”

Nike has said that it wants to dramatically shrink the number of global retail partners from 30,000 to just 40 by pulling contracts with shops that don’t offer it scale or present its brand in the best light. At the same time it has been opening more of its own stores in key cities, often just a few doors away from the likes of JD Sports and Sports Direct.

The company used to reassure retail partners that its Nike Town store on Oxford Street in London was just a marketing tool but now industry sources say there’s an all-out offensive to capture more of the market.

“There is a battle royal between the brands and

the retailers, which are having to consolidate extremely fast,” Matt Clark, of the consulting firm Alix Partners, said.

A core part of Nike’s recent strategy has been focused on building its direct to consumer (DTC) sales, which includes digital and own-store sales. In 2014 Nike made \$5.3 billion in direct sales but last year this more than doubled to \$11.8 billion. Adidas has also doubled its DTC sales from \$3.4 billion in 2013 to \$6.4 billion in 2018.

“Having a direct relationship with consumers is more profitable and creates more loyalty,” Sanjay Bailer at Alix Partners said. Nike’s running app, for example, not only tracks joggers’ personal bests and gives training tips, it rewards them with access

to new trainer releases as they clock up their miles. Nike’s SNKRS app, which gives so-called “sneakerheads” a first look at the latest releases, now accounts for 20 per cent of its digital sales.

“The tension between retailers and brands has been building because the brands are now not just dividing the market into specialist and general retailers, they are also considering what they want for their own digital channel, and they want the best to make sure they have an advantage,” a senior industry source said.

Sports Direct’s Mike Ashley, 55, has complained that Adidas still blocks his stores from stocking Originals trainers. Despite Mr Ashley’s complaints, Sports Direct does get access to the brand’s premium lines of football boots and running shoes because it is considered to be a better sportswear stockist than JD Sports. There are also early signs that its heavily hyped “elevation strategy” to shift Sports Direct upmarket with flashy new stores is working.

Nike’s obsession with controlling the supply of its goods to its desired retailers recently landed it in hot water with European authorities. It was fined €12.5 million for restricting sales of Nike football merchandise beyond their allocated territories in Europe, breaching antitrust

rules. In the UK the competition authority is analysing the relationship between brands and retailers as part of its in-depth investigation into JD Sports’ £90 million acquisition of its smaller rival Footasylum. Provisional findings are expected in the next couple of weeks and there is growing concern that the competition authority will block the deal because JD Sports’ recent successes give the impression that it is already in a powerful position.

Critics say that the watchdog is in danger of penalising JD Sports with an overly simplified approach to the market. “JD Sports has to keep innovating and expanding online and internationally to keep their market share but there is no one dominant player in the UK, it’s a highly competitive market,” another senior industry source added.

On Oxford Street, the trainer wars play out: JD Sports, Sports Direct, Footlocker, Footasylum, Schuh, Office and Offspring shops all compete with Nike, Adidas, Asics, New Balance and Vans’ own stores. However, the biggest worry for retailers is online growth.

Asos, Next’s Label business, Very and Germany’s Zalando, which ships to the UK for free, are increasingly key partners for sports brands. As a result industry sources say that consolidation is necessary: “Not everyone is financially strong enough to invest in the service the brands are now demanding.”



Beyoncé features in a marketing image for her deal with Adidas, and below in the retailer’s store in Oxford Street, London



Amazon looks for more London offices

Louisa Clarence-Smith

Amazon has launched a search for new office space in London in a show of confidence in the city’s ability to retain creative talent after Brexit.

Cushman & Wakefield, the property advisory firm, has been instructed to find a building that can accommodate about 200,000 sq ft of office space.

Amazon moved into its 600,000 sq ft UK headquarters on the border of the City of London and Shoreditch in 2017, where it employs about 5,000 people. It also has offices on Holborn Viaduct.

Its latest office search comes despite

uncertainty around the UK’s labour and immigration policies following Brexit. The company employs a large number of people from the European Union in London.

Amazon and other online retail groups also face the prospect of a tax based on 2 per cent of sales this year as part of the government’s plan to help high street shops to compete on equal terms. It paid a total of £220 million in direct taxes in the UK last year, despite total revenues from doing business in the country amounting to £10.9 billion.

Doug Gurr, country manager for Amazon in the UK, has said the com-

pany remains committed to investing in Britain despite the looming introduction of a digital services tax. He told the *Financial Times* last month that Amazon was “very happy to pay all the required taxes” but warned that it could pass on the tax to its sellers by raising the fees it charges them.

Technology giants such as Facebook and Apple have continued to expand their office footprint in London. Amazon has also established research and development centres in Manchester, Edinburgh and Cambridge.

Amazon and Cushman & Wakefield declined to comment.

Glitch delays rates relief

Ashley Armstrong Retail Editor

Hundreds of companies due to receive business rates relief will have their discount delayed because of a problem with local councils’ IT software.

Last year the government announced an initiative to revive the high street by cutting rates for businesses with properties that have a rateable value of less than £51,000.

A total of 75 local authorities have been told by their software provider, Civica, that changes to bills cannot be made until after the new financial year.

The delay is particularly embarrass-

ing after the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government told councils last week to “act promptly to ensure businesses receive the increased support in their rates bills at the start of the financial year”.

A department spokesman said: “The government has been working closely with councils and has published detailed guidance on how to implement the new business rates reliefs.”

Robert Hayton, of the real estate adviser Altus Group, said: “Tax demands can be manually adjusted by councils so it is ridiculous that small firms in England will have to wait.”

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So you say you're the party of small business? Now's the time to prove it

James Hurley looks at the main issues that entrepreneurs hope will be addressed in the chancellor's first budget

There's still more than a month until Sajid Javid delivers the first budget of the new government, but those who want to influence what goes in the chancellor's red box have only until Friday to get their submissions in.

With a tax relief that saves founders more than £2 billion a year at risk and the government under pressure finally to reform business rates and take action to cut costs for small companies, there's plenty at stake. Here is what's on the agenda for small business owners:

ENTREPRENEURS' RELIEF

A generous tax break for people who sell their businesses is in the firing line. Entrepreneurs' relief allows business people to pay a lower 10 per cent rate of capital gains tax when they sell qualifying assets, compared with the normal 20 per cent. It was introduced in 2008 by Alistair Darling in mitigation for changes to capital gains that were unpopular with small business owners. The tax break saved company owners and investors £2.4 billion in 2018. Now, curtailment is on the cards.

Last month Boris Johnson told a group of entrepreneurs that the Treasury was "fulminating against" the relief because it was making "staggeringly rich" people "even more staggeringly rich". The Resolution Foundation has called it "unjustified", the Institute for Fiscal Studies says that it does little to promote investment and a former Revenue & Customs boss says that it should be scrapped.

Nevertheless, abolishing or reducing a relief that is supposed to be a reward for those who take the risk to create wealth and employment is an odd message for any Conservative government.

Amanda Thomson, founder of Thomson & Scott, which sells alcohol-free and sparkling wine, has started a petition to campaign for the relief to be preserved. Ms Thomson, 48, says it has been "misrepresented as a perk for the rich". She sees it as an incentive that recognises the risk and sacrifices involved in growing a company: "Entrepreneurs go all in to grow their businesses, often without a plan B or a pension." Along with other entrepreneurs, she has sent a letter to the government demanding that the relief be preserved.

The Federation of Small Businesses suggests that it could be reformed to help smaller companies only, with a £1 million eligibility cap.

BUSINESS RATES

It's difficult to remember a time when the Treasury wasn't being lobbied to reform business rates, the commercial property tax. The tax brings in about £30 billion a year, making it the sixth biggest contributor to public finances, but the system has long been seen as



Amanda Thomson, founder of Thomson & Scott, is against moves to abolish entrepreneurs' relief, a key tax break for the founders of Britain's ambitious start-ups

Cut the red tape that is tying up companies

Small and medium-sized companies may feel that they have been dealt a bad hand by policymakers in recent years, with pensions reform, the movement of tax compliance online and confusion over Brexit all causing disruption and additional cost in varying degrees (James Hurley writes). Boris Johnson's infamous "f*** business" remark last year hardly improved relations.

Emma Jones, below, founder of Enterprise Nation, a small business network, says that life for small business owners has become more complex in recent years and the red tape burden must not be increased in next month's budget.



"We would like to see in the budget recognition of the role small businesses play in the UK economy and an awareness of the challenges they face, which include late payment and plain bureaucracy [that comes with] running a business in areas such as managing pensions and on-boarding on to procurement systems," she says. "As Boris looks to unleash Britain's potential, a huge part of that is to free up time for small business owners; to let them focus on what they do best, which is making great products, identifying new markets, motivating their teams and generating sales at home and abroad."

With auto-enrolment of workers on to a company pension and "making tax digital", which eventually will mean filling all tax information via digital software, having added to compliance costs, the chancellor could signal the government's backing for entrepreneurs and the self-employed next month by helping them to cut some of their costs.

The Federation of Small Businesses proposes increasing the employment allowance, which gives small employers' £3,000 off their national insurance bills, by a further £1,000.

That would cost about £500 million and would mean that a small company could recruit four staff on the minimum wage without paying any national insurance.

outmoded because it penalises companies that need a presence in town centres, resulting in them paying much higher rates than online and out-of-town rivals.

There have been nearly 150 policy papers and consultations on the issue

over the past decade, but little has changed. Indeed, the only area of significant reform has been to tighten the appeals system for those who feel that their bill is unduly high.

Ryan Bailey, co-founder of Northern Monkey, a brewery start-up,

believes that companies such as his should have more help to revive high streets: "Towns are very deprived. There are boarded-up shops. Even the big retailers are closing everywhere. It can't be viable for the rates [system] to have all of these empty buildings."

Mr Bailey, 33, whose Bolton-based company has two bars, proposes that small companies be given a transition period with lower rates bills, regardless of the size of the premises they take on. "You could open up a lot of these empty premises and get the streets busy again and get them working towards paying [more taxes] in the future."

The government has promised yet another review, but has said that this one will deliver a more equitable system that will reduce the overall burden of the tax. That could be tricky to achieve. Rates are hard to avoid and easy to collect and are increasingly important for propping up strained local authority finances.

IR35

The government is determined to end "disguised employment", the term for people who provide services through limited companies to reduce their tax bills when they should be on the payroll. From April, any medium-sized or large business that hires contractors will have to satisfy themselves that their use does not amount to disguised employment.

The government says that only contractors "working like employees are in scope" and has told companies to take "reasonable care" when deciding on workers' employment status. However, many large companies have responded to the

policy by imposing blanket bans on the use of contractors.

Jason Armitage, 50, who has 12 years' experience contracting in finance and consumer goods industries, says that he is now finding it impossible to find any "outside IR35" work. He says he is likely to quit contracting and look for a permanent job.

The Treasury has said that it will review the implementation of IR35 to ensure that "true" self-employed workers are not harmed, but that has been greeted with scepticism. The review was announced in January, leaving little time for serious reconsideration.

LATE PAYMENT

Small and medium-sized companies were owed a total of £23.4 billion in overdue bills at the end of 2019, an increase of £10.4 billion on 2018, recent research from Bacs, the payments clearing organisation, found. The experience of Ricky Kothari, 40, founder of T-Sticks, which supplies leading grocers with tea products, is fairly typical. He spends management time and borrows money to fill the cashflow gap caused by slow and late payment.

The previous Conservative administration did begin taking action, appointing a small business commissioner to mediate on disputes and promising new measures such as forcing audit committees of listed companies to police payment performance. However, there has been no permanent commissioner since October and, with uncertainty over when new powers might be unveiled, momentum has been lost.

Business Equity prices

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
Automobiles & parts					
1,137.28	Aston Martin Lagonda	498¼	+ 77	...	-7.5
Banking & finance					
25.14	1PM♦	28¼	- 4¼	3.2	4.2
6,634.37	Admiral	2259	- 43	4.0	16.3
4.63	ADVFH♦	18	...	...	...
190.81	Amryt Pharma♦	123½	- 1	...	-2.1
39,168.14	Aon Corp	16879	+ 688½	0.8	35.1
109.48	Appreciate Group♦	58½	- 1¼	5.4	12.0
178.67	Arbuthnot Bkg♦	1200	- 100	2.9	24.7
18.45	Arc Minerals♦	2½	- ½	...	-0.8
4.65	Arden Partners♦	16	- 1	6.2	-2.2
9.55	Argo Group♦	24½	- ½	...	15.6
3,873.75	Ashmore Gp	543½	- 24	3.0	21.7
37,089.29	Aus New Z	1307½	...	6.7	11.1
15,621.62	Aviva	398½	- 13½	7.5	6.8
49,945.74	Banco Santander	300½	+ 1¼	4.8	10.6
719.80	Bank of Georgia	1513	+ 5	4.5	5.7
29,101.06	Barclays	168	- 5½	4.1	15.6
2,868.56	Beazley	541½	...	2.2	23.0
4.09	Blue Star Capital♦	½	...	...	1.8
97.56	BP Marsh&Ptnrs♦	261	- 1	1.8	8.0
2.81	Braveheart Inv♦	10	- ½	5.0	-1.2
1,091.63	Brewin Dolphin‡	360	- ¾	4.5	21.6
14.02	Carador	34½	...	11.1	-5.4
30.05	Cenkos Secs♦	53	- 5½	8.4	17.1
169.51	Charles Stanley	333	+ 2	2.6	14.8
488.45	Chesnara	325½	- 3	6.3	8.6
52.95	City of Lon Gp♦	132½	...	...	...
119.12	City Lon Inv Gp	448½	- 25½	6.0	13.1
1.59	Clear Leisure♦	½	...	...	-0.4
2,142.54	Close Bros	1416	- 74	4.5	10.6
453.34	CMC Markets	156½	- 6½	1.2	18.0
5,474.83	Commerz&k	437½	+ 5	...	7.6
14,393.67	Deutsche Bk	696½	+ 38½	1.4	-3.5
4,644.75	Direct Line Ins	337½	- 1½	6.2	10.8
95.35	Downing ONE VCT	72	...	6.9	...
562.67	EFG-Hermes Hldg	146½	- 6½	4.4	8.4
Investment companies					
8,938.01	3I Group	1120	+ 1½	3.3	27.7
2,130.53	3i Infrastructure	311	+ 2½	2.9	23.2
465.60	Abrdn Div I&G	110	+ ½	4.8	-11.2
1,360.99	Aberforth 374	1450	- 2½	2.2	-0.5
3,141.18	Alliance	833	- 2	1.6	-4.9
608.13	Asia Dragon Tr	400½	- 3½	1.1	-10.1
5.85	Atheletrust	235	...	3.8	-11.9
1,060.63	AVI Global Trust	777	- 1½	2.1	-9.7
377.38	Baillie Gifford Euro Gr	934	- 1½	3.3	-5.7
857.22	Baillie Gifford Jpn Tr	800	- 3	0.4	-0.7
537.13	Baillie Gifford SW	174½	- 2½	...	-1.6
131.67	Baillie Gifford UK Gr	198½	- 1½	2.2	-3.3
1,299.44	Bankers	989	- 1½	2.1	1.7
349.48	BH Global	1542½	- ¾	...	-5.3
418.47	BM Macro	2660	+ 1½	...	0.5
440.86	Biotech Growth	916	- 2½	...	-6.7
88.78	BlackRock Com Inc	65½	- 5½	6.1	-8.6
387.15	BlackRock Fro Inv	120	- 6½	4.8	-8.0
351.34	BlackRock Grt Euro	411½	- ½	1.1	-1.0
51.20	BlackRock Inc & Gwth	202	- 1¼	3.5	-11.1
223.73	BlackRock Latin Am	478	+ 4	5.7	-11.4
149.43	BlackRock Smrl	1726	...	1.8	1.6
614.52	BlackRock Throgmorton	694	...	1.4	3.7
798.75	BlackRock Wild Min	362	- 4½	5.8	-9.4
3.90	Blue Plan G&I Uts#	27½	- 2	...	-51.0
34.16	Blue Plan Int Fn	399	...	6.5	-18.0
364.93	BMO Cap&Inc	350	...	3.2	2.1
1,371.38	BMO Comm Prop	111½	- ¾	5.4	-13.1
1,219.23	BMO Gbl Smaller	141½	- 1½	1.1	-4.1
382.30	BMO Priv Eq Ord	406	+ 4½	3.5	-2.9
358.48	BMO Real Estate	85½	- 3½	5.8	-19.1
134.21	BMO UK HIT	100	- 1½	5.2	-6.0
134.21	BMO UK HIT B	100	- ½	5.2	-6.4
134.21	BMO UK HIT UNIT	399	- ¾	5.0	-8.7
435.92	Brunner	899	- 2	2.2	-14.6
2,019.83	Caledonia Inv	3090	- 5	1.9	-14.7
193.44	City Merch Hl Yld	195	- ½	5.1	3.8
1,846.88	City of Lon Tr	426	- 1¼	4.4	2.6
170.23	Crystal Amber F&D	121	- 7½	4.1	-27.3
88.34	Dunedin Enty	362	- 1½	14.3	-12.1
1,301.02	Edinburgh IT	608	- 1½	4.2	-10.2
655.03	Edin Widvie	203½	- ¾	...	3.9
198.09	Electra Pte Eq	362	- ¾	...	-24.3
126.56	EP Global Opt	308	- ¾	1.7	-0.8
4,532.30	F&C Investment Tr	751	- 1½	1.5	2.1
324.20	Fiditty Asian Val	387½	+ 4	2.2	3.7
1,722.38	Fidelity China Sp	223	- 6	1.7	-6.7
1,215.55	Fidelity Euro Val	259½	- 1¼	2.4	-3.8
283.18	Fiditty Jap Tru	171½	- 4½	...	-6.6
879.61	Fiditty Spec Val	266½	- 1½	2.7	5.0
1,898.63	Fins Gwth & Inc	890	+ ½	1.8	-0.2
1,050.97	GOP Infrastructure	128½	- 3½	5.9	20.2
776.72	GOP Student Living	202½	+ 1¼	3.0	15.9
1,044.27	Gen Emer Mkts	763	- 4½	1.9	-8.6
23.67	Gldn Presc Prc Mtl	31½	+ 1½	...	-22.4
2,305.75	Greencoat UK	139½	- 4½	4.9	25.0
348.11	Hansa Investment	194	- 2	1.1	-34.1
348.11	Hansa Investment Company	194	- 2	1.1	-34.1
1,622.01	Hlrvest Gbl Pt Eq	1836	...	...	-11.4
311.62	Hend Euro Foc	1290	- 2	2.4	-3.2
300.86	Hend High Inc	183	- 1½	5.3	-0.2
870.53	Hend Smrl	1070	+ 1½	2.2	0.3
1,142.46	Herald	1458	- 1	...	-11.2
1,018.56	HgcCapital Trust	267½	+ ½	1.7	3.0
2,902.44	HLCL Infra	176½	- ¾	4.6	9.5
49.66	Highbridge Tactical	193	+ ¾	...	-13.4
782.03	ICG Ent Tr	988	+ 1½	2.2	-12.9
724.04	Impax Enr Mkts	330	- 1¼	0.9	4.5
204.67	Invesco Asia Tr	279½	- 4½	2.4	-8.6
197.91	Invesco InAcGr	300	+ 2½	3.9	-12.4
8.00	IPST Bal	146	...	1.0	-2.6
67.57	IPST Gbl Eq	212	- ¾	3.3	0.8
3.75	IPST Managed	103	...	0.7	-1.8
63.71	IPST UK Eq	184	- 1½	3.5	-2.3
Construction & property					
4.89	EH♦	7½	...	...	-2.5
1.30	Energiser Inv♦	1	...	...	-1.3
65.41	EPE Special Opps♦	199	+ 2	...	3.2
338.79	FBD	705½	...	6.3	4.8
6.90	Fiske♦	59	...	...	...
34.75	Frenkel Topping♦	46	+ 4	2.8	33.0
322.96	Georgia Capital	804	- 8	...	...
16.70	GLI Finance♦	5½	...	...	-0.8
186.12	Gresham House♦	667½	+ 17½	0.4	...
47.01	Gresh Hse Strat♦	1335	- 20	1.4	...
93.29	Gulf Invest	100½	...	2.3	7.0
149.01	H&T Group♦	375	+ 10	2.9	12.3
60.87	Hansard Global	44½	+ 1¼	10.0	13.4
8,182.00	Hargreaves L	1725	- 106½	1.8	33.1
1,190.26	Hastings Gp	180	- 1½	7.5	12.4
24.72	Helios Under♦	137½	+ 2½	...	22.2
1.49	Highway Capital#	15½	...	...	-5.0
3,789.11	Hiscox	1313	- 27	2.5	38.2
112,088.46	HSBC	551½	- 27½	7.4	10.6
2,452.34	IG Group‡	663½	- 37	7.0	15.5
513.84	Impax♦	394	- 6½	1.1	32.5
5,059.41	Intermediate Cap	1742	+ 46	2.5	24.6
353.42	IPF	158	- ½	7.8	5.2
2,693.25	Intl Public Pntshp	167½	- 2½	4.1	15.6
2,917.98	Investec	419½	- 27½	5.8	8.7
15.60	Investment Co‡	327	- 4	5.5	...
731.87	IP Group	69	- 4½	...	...
0.19	IRF Euro Fin Inv	½	...	...	...
52.02	Jarvis Securities♦	476	- 3	5.4	13.9
1,764.89	Jupiter Fund Mgmt	385½	- 3½	4.4	13.3
807.36	Just Group	78	+ 4½	...	...
1,518.01	Lancashire Hdgs	748	- 2½	1.5	...
4.64	Leeds Group♦	17	...	...	-3.6
18,224.14	Legal & Gen	305½	- 6½	5.3	9.7
5,828.55	Liberty Group	534	- 20½	7.2	9.6
745.13	Liontrust	1345	+ 50	1.7	41.3
70.80	Livemore Invs♦	40½	- 4	...	10.3
Miscellaneous					
39,782.85	Lloyds Bkg Gp	56½	- 1¼	5.7	18.9
30.60	LMS Capital	37½	- ¼	...	-4.6
7.06	Location Sciences♦	1½	+ ¼	...	-1.4
27,405.84	Lond Stk Ex Gp	7836	- 114	0.7	57.7
6,244.98	M&G	240½	- 5½	...	4.0
2,330.87	Man	153½	+ 1¼	5.9	10.7
11.63	Manx Fin♦	8½	...	...	3.4
0.48	Marechale Cap♦	¾	...	...	-2.7
43,229.52	Marsh Mcln	8565½	- 72½	1.6	35.9
224.48	Mattioli Woods♦	835	+ 12½	2.1	27.2
19.79	Metal Tiger♦	1¼	...	...	2.6
394.84	Metro Bank	229	+ 25½	...	...
38,707.87	Nat Aust Bk	1313½	+ 8½	7.5	13.7
304.35	Numis♦	285½	- 9½	4.2	21.3
1,900.26	Onesavings Bank	426½	+ 6½	3.4	8.0
0.66	Origo Partners♦	½	...	...	-0.4
1,302.61	Paragon‡	508	- 19	3.8	9.5
682.91	PayPoint	999	- 15	3.9	15.7
82.56	PCF Group♦	33	- 2	0.9	13.7
5,469.08	Phoenix Gp	758	- 7½	6.0	9.9
0.74	Plutus PowerGen♦	...	...	...	-0.3
11.01	Polo Resources♦	3½	- ½	...	-3.3
1,179.48	Provident	4695½	- 1½	2.1	19.8
35,167.68	Prudential	1352	- 65½	3.6	13.2
27.63	Quadrise Fuels Intl♦	2½	...	...	-8.2
3,236.68	Quilter PLC	170½	+ 7½	1.9	22.3
353.93	Randall & Quilter♦	176	- 1	3.1	8.0
1,111.46	Rathbone Brs	1972	- 38	3.3	45.2
300.73	Redde♦	98	- 1¼	11.8	8.8
2,136.72	Robeco N/V	2670½	...	...	...
1,359.65	Rolingo N/V	2489½	...	...	...
26,401.00	Ryl Bk Scot	218½	- 5	2.5	13.1
5,678.18	RSA Ins	550½	- 2	3.8	21.7
264.22	S & U	2180	+ 50	5.4	9.2
273.78	Schroder REIT	52½	- 2½	4.9	26.4
8,668.37	Schroders	3213	- 52	3.5	19.3
8,668.37	Schroders N/V	2490	+ 25	4.5	14.9
Telecommunications					
1,834.02	Balfour Beatty	265½	+ 6½	1.8	16.5
8,174.76	Barratt Devs	802½	- 6½	3.4	11.1
4,909.28	Bellway	3985	- 107	3.6	9.1
6,596.38	Berkeley	5240	- 166	0.5	

Equity prices **Business**

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
40.26	IXICO♦	85½	- ½	...	92.9
11.35	LIDCO♦	4½	...	...	-7.5
2,722.52	Mediclinic Int	369¼	- 22½	2.1	21.6
3.20	N4 Pharma♦	3½	- ¼	...	-2.5
2,696.45	NMC Health	1292	- 55½	1.3	12.7
181,242.67	Novartis	CHF91.17	- 29½	3.2	29.1
22.48	Omega Diags♦	14½	- ¾	...	...
465.00	Oxford Biomedica	605	- 50	...	...
1.94	Physiomics♦	2½	- ¾	...	...
6.14	Premier Veterinary	40	- 15	...	-1.9
10.04	Proteome Scies♦	3½	...	...	...
44,579.19	Reckitt Benck	6281	+ 131	2.7	19.5
12.59	Sareum Hldgs♦	½	...	...	-8.2
310.35	Silence Therap♦	396	+ 22	...	...
15,983.16	Smith & Neph	1826½	- 103½	1.5	29.1
525.42	Spire Hcare	131	- 3	2.9	32.7
72.22	Summit Corp♦	21½	- 1	...	-1.2
11.76	Synairgen♦	10½	+ 3½	...	-3.1
12.31	Tissue Regenix♦	1	- ¾	...	-8.4
54.66	Tiziana Life♦	40	...	...	-1.5
177.69	Tristel♦	397	+ 23½	1.2	44.8
1,877.68	UDG Healthcare†	750½	- 63½	1.7	40.3
1.26	ValiRx♦	...	...	...	-0.1
569.89	Vectura Grp	93½	+ 2½	...	-7.3
55.30	Verona Pharma♦	52½	- 4½	...	-2.0

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
8.59	7digital Gp♦	¼	- ¼	...	-0.1
3.57	Aeorema Commis♦	39½	+ 1½	1.9	12.5
34.82	Altitude Group♦	50½	- 2¼	...	...
27.87	Arcontech Grp♦	211	...	0.6	25.2
1,472.76	Ascential	365½	- 38½	1.5	59.8
5,177.11	Auto Trader	562	- 33½	1.1	25.2
213.93	Bloomsbury Pub	284	- 2	2.8	23.8
13.85	Bonhill Group♦	28½	- 5	...	...
13.99	Catalyst Media♦	66½	...	87.2	...
0.25	Catenae♦	¾	...	...	-0.1
53.44	Centaur Media	37	...	8.1	-3.4
1,708.83	Daily Mail†	812	- 12	2.8	21.4
6.99	DCD Media♦	275	...	...	...
22.79	Dods Gp♦	4	...	...	-2.2
28.09	Ebiquity♦	37	...	1.9	-2.8
3.75	Edenville Energy♦	...	...	...	-0.4
1,337.21	Euromoney In Inv†	1224	- 98	2.7	66.1
1,254.58	Future†	1280	- 252	...	...
1,537.94	GlobalData♦	1300	+ 10	0.8	...
392.19	Gocompare.com	93½	- 8¼	1.7	19.9
801.91	Hyve Group†	98½	- 3½	1.9	...
693.97	IG Design Grp♦	798	+ 42	1.0	43.8
3.64	Immedia Grp♦	25	...	...	...
9,698.94	Informa	774¼	- 45½	2.8	32.2
5,450.40	ITV	135½	- 5½	5.9	12.2
3.97	Jawing♦	4¼	+ ¼	...	-2.1
5,881.67	Just Eat	861	- 4½	...	...
16.32	Live Company Gp♦	20½	- 1	...	-3.2
93.11	M&C Saatchi♦	100	- 17	10.9	6.0
0.60	Mediastest♦	...	...	...	-1.3
12.03	Mirado♦	135	...	...	1.6
74.42	Mission Group♦	87¼	- 2¼	2.1	13.4
1,746.56	Moneysupermarket	325½	- 1	3.3	18.6
4,038.26	News Corp A	1039¼	- 18½	1.5	...
2,127.75	News Corp B	1065½	- 22½	1.5	...
437.96	Next 15 Comms♦	506	- 32	1.4	58.1
4,527.75	Pearson	568½	- 15½	3.2	9.8
339.08	Photo-Me	89½	+ ¼	9.4	10.1
4.06	Primorus Inv♦	2½	+ ¾	...	...
15.49	Quarto	72	+ 2	...	6.6
48.46	Reabold Resources♦	½	...	...	-9.0
398.03	Reach	133	+ 3	4.6	9.3
2.49	REACT Grp♦	½	...	...	-1.0
38,950.02	RELX PLC	2013	- 37	2.0	26.1
5,769.68	Rightmove	657¼	- 18½	0.9	34.9
2.34	SpaceandPeople♦	12	...	4.1	-3.7
163.43	STV Group	417	+ 3	4.8	12.2
35.53	System1 Group♦	282	+ 55	2.6	24.5
25.28	Totally♦♦	13½	- ¾	...	-4.7
9,898.18	Z1st Cent Fox Inc A	2792	+ 14½	1.3	14.3
7,299.48	Z1st Cent Fox Inc B	2742½	+ 8¼	1.3	14.0
1.46	Vela Tech♦	...	...	...	-0.4
0.85	Vintana♦	1	...	...	-0.7
213.64	Wilmington	244	- 2	3.6	19.3
11,783.52	WPP	945	- 58	6.3	16.9
694.56	YouGov PLC♦	646	+ 5	0.4	48.9
2.53	Zinc Media♦	½	...	...	-0.8

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
22.05	Columbus Energy♦	2½	...	...	-8.1
19.88	Condor Gld♦	21	- ½	...	-8.7
416.28	DRDGOGLD	48½	+ 2½	...	75.1
2.82	ECR Minerals♦	¾	...	...	-3.4
34.02	Empyrean Energy♦	7½	- ¼	...	...
405.30	EnQuest	23½	- 2½	...	3.1
92.93	Eurasia Mining♦	3½	- ¼	...	...
8.00	Europa Oil&Gas♦	1¼	- ¼	...	...
5,119.42	Evraz	352½	- 26½	23.6	4.0
66.54	Exillon Energy#	41½	...	...	1.8
818.78	Ferrexpo	139	- 9	5.5	2.3
4.67	Firestone Dmds♦	¾	...	...	-0.4
4,881.18	Fresnillo	662¼	+ 26½	3.2	32.5
17.56	G3 Exploration	11½	- ¾	...	-1.0
4.20	Galantas Gold♦	1¼	...	...	-2.1
13.48	GCM Resources♦	12	...	...	-1.9
85.61	Gem Diamonds	61½	- 3½	...	19.0
8.45	GETECh♦	22½	...	...	17.5
29,646.60	Glencore	222½	- 8	7.0	40.4
3.85	Global Petrol♦	1¼	- ¼	...	-2.8
4,098.25	Gold Fields	494½	+ 32¼	0.4	57.2
8.37	Goldplat♦	5	...	...	-3.7
4.25	Goldstone Res♦	3½	...	...	-7.2
114.47	Greatd Gld♦	1¾	+ ¾	...	...
109.72	Griffin Mining♦	63½	- 7	...	11.3
402.30	Gulf Keystone	185½	- 14½	3.0	7.3
3.32	Hardy Oil & Gas	4½	- ¾	...	...
763.34	Highlnd Gd Mn♦	209½	+ 18	6.4	13.9
870.44	Hochschild	168½	- 1½	1.8	71.4
84.11	Hummingbird Res♦	23½	+ 1	...	-6.1
511.17	Hunting	306½	- 25½	2.3	7.7
2.91	Hydrodec♦	10¼	...	...	-0.3
39.30	Iliska♦	39	- 3	...	...
14.77	Independ Res♦	2	- ½	...	-0.4
530.62	Indus Gas♦	290	...	...	15.5
11.60	Infrastrata♦	¼	...	...	-3.1
4.26	Ironveld♦	¾	...	...	-6.5
492.53	ITM Power♦	104½	- 4½	...	...
43.79	JXK Oil & Gas	25½	- 3	...	4.8
78.18	Jubilee Metals♦	3½	- ½	...	8.2
1.36	Karel Diamd Res♦	3½	- ¼	...	-3.2
2,068.33	Kaz Minerals	437½	- 38½	2.1	5.5
17.94	Kefi Minerals♦	1½	- ¾	...	-0.1
296.08	Kenmare Res	270	- ½	...	8.1
115.16	Lamprell	33½	- ¾	...	-1.4
9.02	Landore Res♦	¾	...	...	-2.2
4.49	Landsdown O&G♦	¾	...	...	...
38.74	ML Mining♦	27½	- 1	...	-1.4
33.14	Metals Explor♦	1½	...	...	-0.2
1.58	Nostra Terra♦	¾	...	...	-1.6
20.67	Nostrum O&G	11½	- ¾	...	-0.2
1.45	Nu-Oil and Gas♦	...	...	...	-0.2
5,606.27	Oil Search	367½	- 27½	2.2	16.8
6.00	Oilco♦	¼	...	...	-2.4
3.09	Oriole Resources♦	¾	...	...	-2.3
3.19	Ormonde Mining♦	¾	...	...	-1.5
4.33	Orosur Mining♦	2½	- ¾	...	-3.5
8.65	Ovaca Bio♦	10½	+ ¼	...	-4.7
250.68	Pan African Res♦	13	+ 1	...	8.4
82.96	Pantheon Res♦	16½	...	...	-6.6
47.61	Parkmead Grp♦	43½	- 3½	...	18.0
82.22	Petra Diamonds	9½	- 1½	...	-0.6
21.87	Petrel Resources♦	10½	- 2¼	...	...
21.78	Petro Mata♦	34½	- 8½	...	-1.6
1,207.93	Petrofac	349½	- 8½	8.4	6.9
10.57	Petronet Res♦	1¼	...	...	-1.3
601.80	Petropavlovsk	18½	+ 1¼	...	9.6
419.15	Phenix Global♦	45	- 3½	...	-9.5
28.62	Plexus Holdings♦	28½	- ½	3.4	-9.1
6,046.62	Polymetal Intl	1286	+ 20	2.8	22.1
361.86	Porvair	786	+ 44	0.5	33.3
834.45	Premier Oil	100½	- 12¼	...	8.9
244.72	Proton Motor Power Systems♦	36½	- 3½	...	-0.6
24.00	Providence Res♦	3½	...	...	-3.0
26.58	Rambler Met&Min♦	2	- ½	...	-0.9
3.04	Red Rock Res♦	¾	...	...	-1.5
2.48	Regency Mines♦	2½	- ¾	...	-0.1
0.89	Richland Res♦	...	...	...	-2.8
18,620.43	Rio Tinto Ltd	5016	- 376¼	4.7	8.1
68,675.86	Rio Tinto	4084	- 354½	5.9	6.5
80.02	Rockhopper Expln♦	17½	- ¾	...	-6.2
3.01	Rose Petroleum♦	1	...	...	-1.9
157,312.87	Ryl Dtch Sh A	1994½	- 192½	7.6	9.7
157,754.58	Ryl Dtch Sh B	2000	- 200	7.6	9.8
117.43	San Leon Energy♦	26	- 1	...	...
35,479.38	Schlumberger	2562½	- 150½	6.3	-5.2
46.24	Serabi Gold♦	78½	+ 5¼	...	...
308.92	Serica Energy♦	115½	- 7½	...	3.3
85.63	Shanta Gold♦	10½	+ ¾	...	...
385.06	Sirius Minerals	5½	...	...	4.5
15.32	Solo Oil♦†	2½	...	...	-6.3
19.07	Sound Energy♦	1¼	- ¼	...	-0.8

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
0.66	Spitfire Oil♦	2½	- ¼	...	-1.2
20.19	Sterling Energy♦	9¼	+ ¾	...	...
3.89	Sunrise Resources♦	¾	...	...	-3.3
1.05	Tertiary Minerals♦	¾	...	...	-0.3
3.39	Thor Mining♦	¼	...	...	-3.1
95,722.59	Total SA	3702½	- 295½	6.3	12.7
5.30	Tower Resources♦	¾	...	...	-1.4
12.61	Tri-Star Res♦	13¼	- 2¼	...	...
715.78	Tullow Oil	50½	- 1	7.5	6.9
1.13	URU Metals♦	145	- 20	...	-0.6
33.39	Vast Res♦	¼	...	...	-1.0
18.96	Victoria Oil&Gas♦	7½	...	...	-1.3
24.25	Volga Gas♦	30	- 8½	32.7	11.9
19.79	W Resources♦	40	...	...	-5.8
18.12	Westmount Engy♦	16½	...	...	11.7
2,577.43	Wood Grp (J)	376¼	- 14¾	7.3	55.6
27.01	Woodbois♦	5¼	...	...	...
4.34	Xtract Resources♦	¾	...	...	-5.5

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E
8,636.38	Rentokil Itl	467	- 14½	0.9	...
624.49	Restore♦	500	+ 7½	1.2	30.4
412.30	Ricardo	772	- 14	2.6	20.9
456.23	Robert Walters	600	+ 20	2.4	12.9
3,417.97	Royal Mail	198½	- 4½	12.6	6.1
395.22	RPS Group	174	+ 2	5.6	16.9
9.88	RTC Group♦	67½	- 2	5.7	7.7
1,578.30	RWS Hldgs♦	574	- 29	1.3	42.8
99.00	Science Group♦	238	- 6	1.9	22.2
1,934.16	Serco Gp	158	- 9½	...	34.8
6,256.46	Smurfit Kappa	2630	- 118	3.3	...
44.12	Staffline Gp♦	64	- 21½	16.4	-0.7
484.56	SThree	365	- ¾	3.9	12.9
26.69	Synectics♦	150	- 5	3.1	16.1
4.04	Tanfield♦	2¼	+ ¾	...	...
39.85	Thrivision Group♦	27½	- 1	...	...
142.70	Tribal♦	71½	- 2½	1.5	31.0
17.24	Universe Grp♦	6½	...	...	18.9
43.74	Vianet♦♦	153½	- 2	3.7	17.4
399.13	Vp	994	- 6	3.0	15.7
19.45	Westminster♦	12½	+ 2	...	...

Mkt cap (million)	Company	Price (p)	Wkly +/-	Yld%	P/E	
414.70	lomart♦	380½	- 7	1.9	30.2	
405.63	IQE♦	50½	...	...	...
63.35	K3 Business Tch♦	147½	1.0	...
3,278.40	LG Electronics†	910¼	2.9	5.3
3,417.97	Micro Focus Intl	1025½	- 90½	8.5	6.1	
33.84	MTI Wireless♦	38½	- 1	3.1	14.6	
48.94	Nanoco Gp	17	+ 3½	...	...
51.71	Netcall♦	36	+ 1	1.4	87.8	
14.49	Northamber♦	53	0.3	...
1.17	Online Blockchain♦	13½	- ½	...	-1.7	
141.34	Online Metrics♦	112½	+ ½	1.3	34.7	
10.26	Parity♦	10
30.70	Pennant Intl♦	85	- 1½
1,048.39	Playtech					

Why have a stairlift when you can have a *real* lift?

Designed to make your life easier when stairs become too much, a Stiltz Homelift easily fits into any home. Often chosen as an alternative to cumbersome and unattractive stairlifts, a Stiltz Homelift will transform your life without the need to move home.

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'extra pair of hands' helping carry bulky laundry or heavy vacuum cleaners up and down stairs.

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The homelift company

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- Fast Installation
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*Based on installing a Duo Homelift (as shown) in pre-prepared aperture

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StiltzTM
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**Breaking the mould
with Gang of Four**
Andy Gill
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Register

Obituaries

Mary Higgins Clark

Bestselling 'queen of suspense' who despite 40 rejection notes went on to sign multimillion-dollar book contracts with her publishers

Mary Higgins Clark had an original way of dealing with anybody who upset her: she simply killed them off. "Someone once wrote an absolutely nasty review of one of my books and I asked for a description of him," she explained in an interview in 2000. "You don't know it, I thought, but you are going to end up dead on the floor." Even the bestselling mystery author's disappointing second husband wound up in a pool of blood — on the pages of one of her popular novels.

Not only was this a slightly macabre, although characteristically humorous, way of processing unpleasant encounters or episodes, it also reflected Higgins Clark's ability to draw on negative experiences from her life and rework them for her novels. She had more than her share of loss and sadness before she began to enjoy success, and coped thanks to her naturally positive, just-get-on-with-it attitude and her Catholic faith.

Having witnessed her widowed mother's indomitable spirit, Higgins Clark adopted the same approach when, aged 36 and with five young children, she found herself in the same predicament. Speaking to *The Times* in 2006, she said: "It was through my mother that I learnt to cope with tragedy. She grieved, but she didn't collapse."

The heroines of the more than 50 novels Higgins Clark wrote after her husband's death were cut from a similar cloth.

In many of her page-turners — of which she sold more than 100 million copies in the US alone — a woman finds herself unexpectedly in a terrifying situation through no fault of her own, but gets out of it through sheer gumption and quick wit. Death is ever present, and life, as Higgins Clark learnt early on, is precarious. As she once told an interviewer: "We all hang by a thread, and there are many things we cannot choose about our lives. It's how we react to the inevitable that counts."

It was not until the late 1990s that America's "queen of suspense" began to be known in the UK, with titles such as *Remember Me* (1994), the tale of a mother whose young son has died in a tragic accident, *Daddy's Little Girl* (2002), about a former child witness's campaign against her teenage sister's convicted killer after he is released from jail, and *The Second Time Around* (2003), the story of the charismatic head of a medical research company involved in the development of a cancer cure, whose private plane crashes, but whose body is not found. All appeared on *The Times*'s bestseller lists.

The reason British recognition did not happen sooner, she believed, was because "you don't know how to classify me. I see my name listed under the 'horror' section, but I'm a suspense writer, not a blood-and-guts spiller. I like the Hitchcockian approach to



Mary Higgins Clark in 1976 and, right, in 2011 as grand marshal of the St Patrick's Day parade in New York City



was a historical novel about George and Martha Washington. Written in 1969, it did not do well, but when it was republished in 2002 as *Mount Vernon Love Story* it joined her other titles on American bestseller lists. To the amusement of librarians her name would appear on book covers in such large print that it

often eclipsed their titles.

In 1975 Higgins Clark sold *Where Are the Children?*, inspired by a real case of a woman accused of murdering her children. She received \$3,000 (£1,500, equivalent to about £15,000 today) — a standard fee for a first novel — but it was such a hit that the paperback rights were sold for \$100,000. With the proceeds from her second book she bought a Cadillac and by her third she was a millionaire. Nevertheless, she never forgot her 40 rejection notes, including the one that read: "Mrs Clark, your stories are light, slight and trite."

Speaking to *The Sunday Times* in 2000, she said: "It amuses me that my first application for an American Express card was turned down. They did not think a young widow bringing up five children could afford one. I reapplied when I sold the second book in 1977 and got a \$1 million contract."

Eleven years after reapplying for an Amex card, Higgins Clark set a record with what was believed to be "the first eight-figure agreement involving a single author". The multibook contract with Simon & Schuster guaranteed her at least \$10.1 million. "All I have to do now is write the books," she told *The New York Times*. In 2000 it was surpassed with a \$64 million contract for four novels and a memoir.

The latter, *Kitchen Privileges*, was published in 2002, the title referring to the days when her newly widowed mother took in lodgers. It glossed over Higgins Clark's second marriage, an expensive "mistake" that took place almost as soon as she had achieved financial security for herself and her children. However, "after a long widowhood" she found happiness with her third husband, John Conneeny, a retired Merrill Lynch executive. They married in 1996 and he died in 2018.

With its tales of tragedies and triumphs over adversity, her memoir could almost fit the mould of one of her suspense novels. "I like to tell a story where the theme, really, is it happens to very nice people whose lives are invaded," she once said. "They are not looking for trouble. Something happens." Asked why readers gobbled her books up, she replied: "Because you can ride the gamut and come out on the other side. It's like going on the roller-coaster. You're terrified. You're sure you're going to crash. But in your heart, you know you're going to get back."

Mary Higgins Clark, novelist, was born on December 24, 1927. She died of natural causes on January 31, 2020, aged 92

building tension. In *Psycho* you never saw that knife go into that girl in the shower, and yet it was the scariest scene. It's what's left to the imagination. I get grandmothers coming up to me and saying: 'You write a lovely book, dear. No sex and no violence.' Yet the first one was about a child molester."

She was born Mary Theresa Eleanor Higgins in the Bronx in New York City in 1927, the middle child and only daughter of Luke Higgins, who came to the city from Co Roscommon and owned a popular Irish bar and grill, and Nora (née Durkin). Mary was

especially proud of her Irish heritage and in 2011 was grand marshal of the annual St Patrick's Day parade in Manhattan.

Her father died of a heart attack when Mary was ten years old, leaving Nora with three children and a ledger of uncollectable debts from his pub.

"He died of anxiety, a true disease of the Depression," his daughter said. "Those were awful years. Well-educated people who'd worked hard couldn't find jobs. They'd come to the door so apologetically asking us to spare them something to eat. My mother always used to keep something back."

Further tragedy hit the family in 1944, when her brother Joe, who was

19 months older than her, died of spinal meningitis not long into his training as a radio operator in the navy. Her younger brother, Johnny, also died young, after an accident, at the age of 42.

She aspired to being a writer from an early age and seemed to have a strong presentiment that she would make it, habitually going window-shopping on Fifth Avenue for the expensive clothes she would buy once she was a published author. She was 16 when she began pitching short stories to magazines.

After leaving school she was desperate to earn money, so took a secretarial course rather than going to college. After three years working at an advertis-

'I'm a suspense writer, not a blood-and-guts spiller,' she said

ing agency she switched jobs and, at 21, became a Pan American Airways stewardess. At her ad agency leaving party she was reunited with her childhood sweetheart, Warren Clark, who proposed that evening. They set their 1949 wedding date for Christmas, "because people are more generous then".

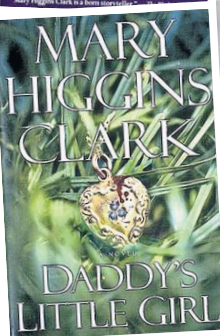
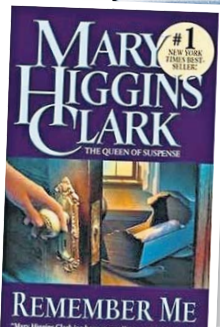
Higgins Clark's career as a flight attendant may have been brief, but it provided her with a taste of the high life, as well as the seeds of the story that became her first published work. After her wedding she took her first writing course at New York University. When the professor told students to pick a situation that they had experienced or read about and begin by asking the

questions: "Suppose ... ?" and "What if ...?", Higgins Clark thought back to being on Pan Am's final flight to Czechoslovakia before the Iron Curtain fell around the country. She wrote the short story *Stowaway*, which was based on the fictional premise that a member of the Czech underground movement was on the last flight out of Prague. *Stowaway* was published in 1956 and became the inspiration for an episode of *Armchair Theatre* on ITV.

Mary and Warren had five children: Marilyn, Warren Jr, David, Carol — who was born in 1956 and named after a character in *Stowaway* — and Patricia. Having started out as her mother's typist, Carol also became a suspense writer. Marilyn and Warren Jr became judges in New Jersey; David became a radio executive; and Patricia joined the New York Mercantile Exchange. In 2000 Higgins Clark spoke of giving them each \$100,000 for Christmas. All survive her, with six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Warren, who had been ill and "uninsurable" for years, died of a heart attack in 1964. Widowed with five children who she was determined to put through private school, Higgins Clark took a job as a radio scriptwriter, which she credited with explaining "why I'm so careful with my readers' imaginations". She continued to write fiction every morning before her family rose. By 7.45am, when a shared car arrived to take her to work, she would have notched up two hours of writing. She joked of finishing dressing in the car. "You do what you have to do," she said.

Her first book, *Aspire to the Heavens*,



Andy Gill

Influential guitarist and a founding member of Gang of Four, whose dissonant, post-punk sound won a cult following

As a guitar hero, Andy Gill was determined to break the mould. With his band Gang of Four he created a slashing, dissonant, bristling sound that fused the aesthetics of punk with avant-garde theories of situationism and structuralism. Punk had “kicked the doors down”, but Gill set out to take its legacy elsewhere. “Every part of it had to be radical,” he said. “It was building musical tension in a precise way.”

Angular yet propulsive, the sound came to be known as post-punk, and the group's 1979 debut, *Entertainment!*, won Gang of Four a cult following. When they had finished recording the album Gill told his bandmates: “We are rewriting the rules. Do you realise this is going to change the musical landscape?” It was not so much a boast as a statement of fact, and the group was subsequently namechecked as a seminal influence by REM, Nirvana, U2 and Red Hot Chili Peppers, among others. The band's song *Natural's Not in It* features in Sofia Coppola's 2006 historical drama *Marie Antoinette*.

Quite how to describe Gill's unique style of playing and the fierce intelligence that informed it often defeated critics. Michael Hutchence, whose recordings Gill produced, said it was music that “took no prisoners”, in which “art meets the devil via James Brown”. Tom Morello of Rage Against the Machine described it as “jagged-plague-disco-raptor-attack-industrial-funk deconstructed guitar anti-hero sonics”.

Gill had a simpler explanation. “I'm a bit of an awkward bastard,” he said. “I think that's why Gang of Four has a specific identity and musical language”.

The group were associated in their early days with the Rock Against Racism movement, and their sociopolitical lyrics were described by U2's Bono as “a smart bomb of text”. Not everyone approved. When they were invited to perform the scathing single *At Home He's a Tourist* on *Top of the Pops*, BBC producers demanded that the group changed the words “the rubbers you hide in your top left pocket”. They refused and the appearance was cancelled. The ironic *I Love a Man in a Uniform* was banned from BBC playlists during the Falklands conflict.

Gill ensured that the band's songs were provocative until the end. *Where the Nightingale Sings*, recorded before the 2016 referendum, was an anti-Brexit song before Brexit. “It's about people imagining a golden age where they are all racially similar and hold the same views,” he explained. Their final album, released last year, contained *Alpha Male*, a song full of digs at Donald Trump who, Gill said, was “providing so much entertainment it would be foolish, it would be rude, not to take note”.

Andrew James Dalrymple Gill was born in 1956 in Manchester, where his parents, Sylvia (née Dalrymple) and Stanley Gill had met as university students. His father's work as a civil engineer resulted in the family moving south in the early 1960s, first to the suburbs of Bexley and then to the leafy environs of Sevenoaks, Kent. His parents separated when he was 11 and he was brought up by his mother.

After winning a direct grant scholarship to Sevenoaks School, he came under the influence of an inspirational



Andy Gill performing in New York in 2011. His music “took no prisoners”

and unconventional art teacher named Bob White, whose department became an extracurricular sanctuary for Gill and Jon King, with whom he would later form Gang of Four. Other contemporaries who found creative inspiration in White's fertile art department included three future members of the band the Mekons; Paul Greengrass, who directed the Bourne films starring Matt Damon, and the Bafta-winning documentary-maker Adam Curtis.

When Gill was 13 a cousin showed him how to play the Rolling Stones's (*I Can't Get No*) *Satisfaction*, and he was hooked, building his own guitar and speaker cabinets from parts he bought by mail order.

At 16 Gill and King formed their first band, the Bourgeois Brothers, causing consternation when they performed a reggae version of the hymn *Jerusalem* in a school assembly. Gill turned down a place at Cambridge to study art at the

University of Leeds, where King was enrolled, and in the summer of 1976 both were awarded grants to study overseas. They spent the windfall on a trip to New York, hanging out at the club CBGBs, where they were entranced by the city's burgeoning punk scene and acts such as the Ramones, Television and Patti Smith.

On their return to Leeds the pair recruited their fellow students Dave Allen on bass and Hugo Burnham on drums, and formed Gang of Four, adopting the name in mockery of the Communist Party leaders who ruled China during the Cultural Revolution. The group broke up in 1983, although Gill reformed the band four years later. King, Allen and Burnham all rejoined at various times, but Gill remained the only constant in the line-up, adding new bandmates as required.

Gill, a noted wine connoisseur, is survived by his wife, Catherine Mayer, an American-born journalist who in 2015 co-founded the Women's Equality Party and who stood as a candidate for London in the 2019 European parliament elections. They married in 1999 and lived in Holborn, central London.

He played his final concerts with Gang of Four on tour in the US three months ago. He was already suffering with a respiratory illness. It was, his bandmates said in a statement, “the only way he was ever really going to bow out, with a Strato-caster around his neck, screaming with feedback and deafening the front row”.

Andy Gill, guitarist, was born on January 1, 1956. He died of pneumonia on February 1, 2020, aged 64

Tom Erhardt

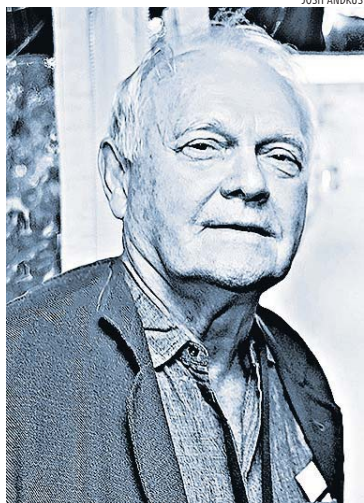
Theatrical agent who managed Tennessee Williams's estate and helped to create the ending for an Alan Ayckbourn play

Alan Ayckbourn's first venture into the West End, in 1964 at the age of 25, was with *Mr Whatnot* at the New Arts Theatre, starring Ronnie Barker and presented by the producer Peter Bridge. Working in Bridge's office was Tom Erhardt, a young American of whom the playwright was only vaguely aware.

Mr Whatnot struggled for three ignominious weeks, collecting some of the worst reviews that Ayckbourn ever received. Despite this, his relationship with Bridge continued, and three years later their second collaboration, *Relatively Speaking*, became Ayckbourn's first big success. As often happens, the script underwent several rewrites while the play was on tour ahead of its West End debut.

A remaining problem was how to bring the play's serpentine narrative to a satisfactory conclusion. “It wasn't until the final week in Leeds, when the posters were proudly proclaiming: ‘Immediately prior to West End opening,’ that Tom came up with the final curtain line, which, delivered impeccably by our leading lady, Celia Johnson, finally gave the play its finishing touch,” Ayckbourn recalled. “Over 50 years and countless productions in innumerable languages later, that ending remains unchanged. I think, possibly born out of sheer gratitude and relief, [that's how] my friendship first began with that young unassuming, slightly reticent American assistant producer.”

Erhardt would feature again in Ayckbourn's life, this time as the director's assistant on the Broadway version of his second big London success, *How the Other Half Loves*. Erhardt's primary duty was to help the star of the production, the former vaudeville comedian Phil Silvers, with his lines. “Night after night after New York



Erhardt had a large worldwide network

rehearsals he sat with the former Sergeant Bilko as the star struggled to master the unfamiliar niceties of colloquial English dialogue,” Ayckbourn said. “Alongside that, Tom also agreed, at the request of my agent, Margaret Ramsay, to act as collector of her percentage of this author's weekly royalties during the play's American run.”

Thomas Joseph Erhardt was born in 1928 in Grand Rapids, Michigan, the eldest of three sons of Joseph and Cecilia (née Panfil). Thomas's brother Peter was an industrial designer who invented the colour toner system for Xerox photocopiers and predeceased him; his brother Larry is a construction engineer and survives him.

Thomas was educated at the Catholic Central High School and Aquinas College in Grand Rapids before enlisting in the US army in 1946, serving as a

stenographer in the Philippines. In 1956 he began transcribing some of the most important plays and musicals of the 20th century for the New Dramatists organisation in New York. He went on to work as an assistant to Lucy Kroll a theatrical and literary agent who represented Carl Sandburg, Norman Mailer and James Earl Jones.

Erhardt recalled how on his first morning with Kroll the phone rang before he had sat down at his desk. It was Bette Davis screaming that she had terrible toothache and would not be making lunch. For the rest of his life he claimed to be wary about answering the first phone call of the day.

On one occasion he was seconded to work with Oscar Hammerstein, who needed a typist for the manuscripts that he and Richard Rodgers were working on. Erhardt worked at his typewriter in one room and on the other side of the door he could hear *The Sound of Music* coming to life.

One morning, when Hammerstein came through to read a typed-up draft, he exclaimed: “Tom, that's not how you spell flibbertigibbet!” Erhardt, a shy young man, was terrified that he had made a career-ending faux pas and it took all of Hammerstein's secretary's powers of persuasion to assure him that such a joke was the composer's way of saying that he liked him.

Erhardt became familiar with Ayckbourn's work while in the US assisting the director Gene Saks, who championed the playwright, and in 1966 he moved to London, where he came under the tutelage of Bridge, who was producing some of the city's most successful plays. Erhardt also worked as an assistant to the scriptwriter Larry Kramer on the 1969 film of DH Lawrence's *Women in Love*, directed by Ken Russell.

In 1967 Erhardt had his first and only meeting with Tennessee Williams, in a London pub. After Williams's death in 1983 the trustees of his estate chose Erhardt as the worldwide agent for his works. That, however, meant dealing with Maria St Just, the keeper of the Williams estate, who kept such a watchful eye on his work that its full range was rarely performed. “Maria did keep a very tight grip on things,” Erhardt told *The Times* in 1997. “If Maria had been alive I'm sure she would not, for instance, have allowed Sam [Mendes] to direct *The Glass Menagerie*.”

By 1971 Erhardt had joined Ramsay, known as Peggy, one of the foremost

Hammerstein exclaimed: ‘Tom, that's not how you spell flibbertigibbet’

British playwrights' agents of the day. One of her clients was Ayckbourn. Within three years Ramsay had made Erhardt a director of her company, where he handled foreign rights as well as acting as the point person for the company's international clients, who included Kramer, Wallace Shawn and Vaclav Havel, the future president of the Czech Republic.

“For Tom it was indeed a job made in heaven — dealing with foreign agents and producers on a daily basis and gaining as a result a unique knowledge of the world play market, developing a series of personal contacts and friendships,” Ayckbourn said.

“Over the years he developed a unique and extensive worldwide network. I became extremely grateful for his success in this field as the number of homegrown productions slowly less-

ened and foreign royalties gradually grew to be an increasing percentage of my income.”

However, it was not all plain sailing. Simon Callow recalled in a *Times* interview in 1999 how, as they were flying back from Lucerne together, Ramsay had asked him what her clients thought of Erhardt. Callow had little to do with him, but she persisted until he said: “Some of them think he might be a little quicker in processing the payments.” Immediately he realised that it was the wrong thing to say, and on their arrival in London he alerted Erhardt, “apologising to the depth of my being”. However, “the moment Ramsay arrived at her office from the airport she hauled Erhardt in to tell him that all the clients hated him”.

The uproar soon passed, and after Ramsay's death in 1991 Erhardt became the keeper of her legacy. He subsequently joined forces with the agent Jenne Casarotto and together they formed a new agency, Casarotto Ramsay, in 1992, where he continued to work into his eighties.

Erhardt, a keen bridge player and a voracious devourer of crime novels, never married. He remained in touch with Ayckbourn and became a frequent visitor to Scarborough, where Ayckbourn's plays usually receive their first run. Erhardt was a great traveller, often building his foreign trips around new theatre productions. In later years, when poor health prevented him from travelling overseas at Christmas, he joined the extended Ayckbourn family for the festive celebrations, “where he was a welcome and generous guest uncle to our grandchildren,” the playwright said.

Tom Erhardt, theatrical agent, was born on March 13, 1928. He died on December 28, 2019, aged 91

Law Report

Pre-action protocol statement leads to contempt proceedings

Court of Appeal
Published: February 3, 2020
Jet 2 Holidays Ltd v Hughes and another
Before Sir Terence Etherton, Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Hamblen and Lord Justice Flaux
[2019] EWCA Civ 1858
Judgment: November 8, 2019

A party could be committed for contempt of court, under the inherent jurisdiction of the court, for making a dishonest witness statement served in purported compliance with a pre-action protocol.

The Court of Appeal so held in allowing an appeal by Jet 2 Holidays Ltd against the decision of Judge Owen, QC, sitting as a judge of the Queen's Bench Division ([2018] EWHC 3716 (QB)), striking out committal proceedings against the respondents, Karl Hughes and Laura Hughes.

Mr Paul Higgins for the appellant. The respondents made written submissions.

The Court said that the appeal concerned proceedings for committal for contempt brought by Jet 2 Holidays Ltd, arising out of claims made by the respondents that they had suffered sickness on a package holiday.

In support of their claim, the respondents had provided witness statements stating, among other things, that: food was left uncovered for long periods; food was reused on several occasions; burgers seemed under-cooked; there were ants and beetles around the food areas and ants were crawling on the bread; children were being sick in the children's pool and their child became ill from swallowing the pool water.

They said that: they had started to feel ill on the second day of their holiday and began being sick on the third day; they were acutely ill for the remainder of the holiday with diarrhoea, stomach pains, vomiting, lack of energy and weakness, and were not 100 per cent fit on returning from the holiday; and they believed that their sickness was a result of the undercooked food and unhygienic conditions at the hotel.

However, the appellant found various images and comments posted by the respondents on social media during their holiday, including Facebook

posts, a YouTube video and two Twitter posts, which indicated that they and their children were physically well during the holiday and that they had an enjoyable time while staying at the hotel. The appellant rejected the respondents' claims and the respondents did not commence proceedings.

Subsequently the appellant commenced proceedings against the respondents under part 8 of the Civil Procedure Rules seeking permission, as required by rule 81.18, to commence committal proceedings on several grounds relating to each allegedly false statement, verified by a statement of truth, made in each of the original witness statements.

The respondents filed an acknowledgement of service stating that they intended to contest the claim. On the same day each of them made a further witness statement stating that the original witness statements were true. They further stated that despite their illnesses arising from the unhygienic conditions, they felt that their only option had been to make the best of the situation and put up a "front" that they were having a great holiday; and that the Facebook pictures did not provide a true reflection of their mood at all times of the holiday.

Judge Godsmark, QC, sitting as a High Court judge, granted by consent permission to the appellant to commence committal proceedings against the respondents. He also ordered a case management conference, which took place before Judge Owen, who raised the question of whether the court had jurisdiction to entertain committal proceedings in respect of the original witness statements in view of the fact that they had been made otherwise than in connection with extant proceedings and no proceedings for damages had, in fact, ever been commenced.

In case it was found that there was no jurisdiction to hold the respondents in contempt on the basis of the original witness statements, the appellant applied to add additional grounds of contempt arising from the various statements made in the further witness statements, which endorsed the truth of what had been said in the original witness statements. Judge

Owen held that there was no jurisdiction to find contempt on the basis of the original witness statements and refused permission to amend the application.

The issue before their Lordships was whether, permission to bring the committal proceedings having been granted by Judge Godsmark, it was open to Judge Owen to strike out the committal proceedings. There was no appeal from Judge Godsmark's permission order, and so, as Judge Owen correctly recognised, the only possible ground for striking out was that the committal proceedings were wholly invalid from the outset because the court lacked jurisdiction.

Their Lordships agreed with Judge Owen that jurisdiction to bring the committal proceedings was not conferred by rule 32.14 of the Civil Procedure Rules because witness statements made before the commencement of proceedings did not fall within that rule. Irrespective of the Civil Procedure Rules, however, the court had an inherent power to commit for contempt.

It was sufficient that the respondents, in purported compliance with a pre-action protocol, set out their claims in a witness statement verified by a statement of truth plainly for the purpose of giving the impression of greater weight and conviction to their claims than might otherwise be the case. They used the witness statements to indicate the oral evidence that they would give in proceedings and the verification of truth gave solemnity to that indication.

A dishonest witness statement served in purported compliance with a pre-action protocol was capable of interfering with the due administration of justice for the purposes of engaging the jurisdiction to commit for contempt because pre-action protocols were now an integral and highly important part of litigation architecture.

Therefore, contrary to the view of Judge Owen, there was a close connection between the original witness statements made by the respondents and the administration of justice, and if those witness statements were false, as appeared strongly to be the case, they interfered with the administration of justice.

Regarding the application to amend, the principal ground on which Judge Owen refused to permit the amendment was that it would be oppressive, and contrary to the overriding objective in part 1 of the Civil Procedure Rules of enabling the court to deal with cases justly and at proportionate cost, to allow a claim to continue that ought not to have been brought.

Since their Lordships had decided, contrary to the conclusion of Judge Owen, that the court had jurisdiction to hear the contempt proceedings based on the original witness statements, he had made an error of principle in refusing to permit the amendment.

It therefore fell to their Lordships to exercise the discretion whether to grant permission to amend, which they considered appropriate, since the new witness statements fell within rule 32.14. Those new statements did not simply repeat what had been said in the original witness statements, but gave further false evidence in seeking to explain the social media posts.

It was plainly convenient, efficient and cost effective for the allegations of contempt in relation to the further witness statements to be heard and determined in the same proceedings and at the same time as the allegations in relation to the original witness statements. That would not give rise to any unfair prejudice to the respondents.

It was not necessary to issue new contempt proceedings every time there was a contempt in or relating to the same set of proceedings. Contempt proceedings were not like litigation between private persons, where the claimant sought a personal remedy against the defendant based on a cause of action that was not barred by limitation of time and which generally speaking had to exist before proceedings could be commenced.

Proceedings for contempt of court were public law proceedings, and when the court gave a private person permission to pursue such proceedings against a witness who was alleged to have told lies in a witness statement, it allowed that person to act in a public rather than a private role, not for the furtherance of that person's private interests, but rather to pursue the public interest.

Solicitors: **Horwich Farrelly.**

Births, Marriages and Deaths newsukadvertising.co.uk

KNOW therefore that the LORD thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations. Deuteronomy 7.9 (AV)
Bible verses are provided by the Bible Society

Deaths

CAIN Valerie, CBE died on 18th January 2020, much loved wife of James, sister of Andrew, Barbara, John and Vivianne, aunt of Emma and Laura and godmother of Joe. Funeral at City of London Crematorium, Manor Park on 4th February. Donations welcome to St Joseph's Hospice, Hackney.

CLARKE Joan Mary on 25th January 2020, aged 91 years died peacefully in Hereford Hospital aged 91 Years. Born in Bilston to Earnest and Vera Clarke on 26th June 1928; much-loved sister of Tony, aunt to Simon, Edward and Elizabeth and great Aunt to Woody, Finlay and Ellis. Educated at Bilston Girls' High School and Birmingham University (B.A./Dip. Ed). Taught French at Lichfield Friary and Southport Girls' High Schools and Gateshead High School. Retired to Pirmill on the Isle of Arran/Edinburgh and moved to Ludlow in 2008. A Memorial Service is to take place at St. Laurence's Church, Ludlow, on Friday 14th February at 12.30pm. Family flowers only please but kind donations received in Joan's memory will be shared between the St. Laurence's Fabric Fund and The Injured Jockey's fund. All enquiries please to: Victoria Allen Funeral Services, 8 Charlton Rise, Ludlow SY8 1ND. 01584 879035

MITCHELL - The Very Reverend Patrick Reynolds Mitchell KCVO died peacefully on the 23rd January 2020, in his 90th year. Former Dean of Wells and of St. George's Chapel, Windsor. Dearly loved by all his family. Funeral at St. Mary's Church, Corscombe DT2 0NU on Friday 7th February at 1.30pm. Thanksgiving Eucharist at Wells Cathedral on Monday 24th February at 2.30pm. A service at St. George's Chapel, Windsor at a later date. Donations for the Friends of Wells Cathedral and the Friends of St. George's c/o A J Wakely and Sons, 7 North Street, Beaminster DT8 3DZ, 01308 423 726.

SCHUTE Patricia May (née Ellacott) died peacefully on 25th January 2020, aged 91 Much loved wife of the late Martin, mother to Alison, Sarah, Jonathan and James, grandmother to Emily, Rupert, Peter, Edmund, William, Alexander, Eleanor, Jessica and Isabelle, and great grandmother to Lily. Funeral service at Test Valley Crematorium, Ridge Lane, Romsey SO51 6AB on Thursday 13th February at 1.45pm

TOWLER Robert died peacefully on 26th January. Funeral at Sacred Heart, Hove, 6th February, 14:00. No flowers.

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Court Circular



St James's Palace
1st February, 2020
The Princess Royal, Patron, Scottish Rugby Union, accompanied by Vice-Admiral Sir Tim Laurence, this afternoon attended the International Rugby Match

between Scotland and Ireland at Aviva Stadium, Lansdowne Road, Dublin, Ireland, and was received by Mrs Sara Tiffin (Deputy Head of Mission, British Embassy in Dublin).

St James's Palace
1st February, 2020
The Duke of Kent, Patron, London Philharmonic Orchestra, this afternoon attended a performance of *Siegfried* at the Royal Festival Hall, Southbank Centre, London SE1.

Sandringham, Norfolk
2nd February, 2020
Divine Service was held in the Church of St Peter and St Paul, West Newton, this morning.

The Queen presented prizes for children's church attendance. Mrs Jane Gardener (head teacher of Sandringham and West Newton Church of England Primary academy) was received by The Queen when Her Majesty presented a Bible to Clara Moreland for proficiency in religious instruction.

Kensington Palace
2nd February, 2020
The Duke of Cambridge, President, British Academy of Film and Television Arts, and The Duchess of Cambridge this evening attended the British Academy of Film and Television Arts Awards at the Royal Albert Hall, Kensington Gore, London SW7, and were received by Her Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Greater London (Sir Kenneth Olisa).

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Sport

‘Walking unaided made me cry for life I never had’

Rick Broadbent talks to swimmer **Grace Harvey** about suit that removed her disability for ten special minutes

They were small steps and giant leaps for Grace Harvey. In a revolutionary Hybrid Assistive Limb robotic cyber-suit the British para-swimmer walked a straight line for the first time. She grinned for those remarkable ten minutes in Japan. And then she cried for 24 hours. “I was grieving for the life I was never meant to have,” she says. Suffice it to say it was one of the most emotional weeks of her life.

Harvey, 21, is a bright and talented athlete. The ten-time British record-holder juggles her paralympic dream with working as a lab technician at Manchester University where she monitors fruit flies as part of research into genetics.

She also has cerebral palsy and spends 90 per cent of her time in a wheelchair, describing her walking pattern as “like a tick-tocking penguin”.

So when the British para-swimming team took a break from a training camp to visit Suzuka University where the pioneering Hybrid Assistive Limb (HAL) is used, she volunteered to try it out. She climbed

into the powered exoskeleton and a team member filmed her as she began to move forwards. “I was in a complete and utter life-changing experience,” she says. “I had struggled growing up with accepting I had a disability. I can’t walk unaided but here I was in a suit that took away my disability and showed me what it was like to have an able-bodied walking pattern.”

“I put the video on the family WhatsApp group. My mum said it was the proudest moment for our family and that set me off again. My sisters were crying as they watched it too. I gave them no context. I just said, ‘Have you ever seen me stand straight or walk a straight line?’ I felt like I grew three inches. It was overwhelming. I watched the clip on repeat for 20 minutes.”

Trying to rationalise what had happened has clearly involved jarring emotions. Harvey has had a taste of what life might have

been like but she has no idea if she will ever get the chance to use a HAL suit again. Initially, she felt thrilled by the experience. Then she went back to the hotel where the team were staying during their training camp. “I went for dinner with everybody and had to go to the bathroom where I just cried,” she says. “I didn’t know why.”

“When I walked, with everybody watching and no lateral sway, it felt crazy. In 2016 they’d said there will be technology one day to help people walk and here it was but I wasn’t just watching a video. I was crying



Suits you: Harvey, who plans to compete in two Paralympic swimming events this year, experiences the groundbreaking walking apparatus in Japan

because I’d experienced something incredible and then had the realisation that it was not my normal. I had gone back to my tick-tocking every day. Later I realised I was in floods of tears because I was grieving for something I had lost.”

The HAL suit detects bio-signals on the surface of the skin and then its power unit amplifies the wearer’s motion. Harvey’s team-mate, Suzanna Hext, who damaged her spinal cord in a horse-riding accident in 2012, also tried the suit. It is largely used to help Japan’s ageing population, but Harvey, an immunology student, believes it

could have a long-term impact on those with cerebral palsy too. “It is relatively new and there are lots of tests going on so we don’t know the long-term prognosis. We don’t know if people will retain the function if they stop, but yes I’d say it’s possible.”

Harvey hails from Hertfordshire and a musical family — her father is a jazz pianist who has played with Aretha Franklin — and she quips that she is the black sheep for going in a different direction.

She did not walk at all until she was six and her condition became more severe at primary school. The ankle

foot orthosis (AFO) that she was given rendered her “an inelegant ballet dancer” forced to wear boys’ shoes. “I hated it but swimming gave me an opportunity to be free,” she says. “I was the same as everyone else and it pulled me away from my mundane everyday.”

She was inspired by Liz Johnson, a cerebral palsy swimmer who won gold for Great Britain at the 2008 Paralympics in Beijing. “She walked exactly like me and, for the first time, I thought it was possible for someone with what I had, to achieve in sport,” Harvey says. The moment she truly began to think big came when she was nine. “It was ten past six on a Tuesday afternoon and I went to Hoddesdon Swimming Club and met my coach Janet Warrington. I said I wanted to go to the Paralympics and she said, ‘OK, I will do what I can to get you there’. It’s been 12 years in the making and I’m getting so close but it still feels so far away.” She is a

“

When I walked, with everybody watching and no lateral sway, it felt crazy. I was in a life-changing experience

versatile swimmer who plans to compete in the 200m individual medley and 400m freestyle. Everything now is geared towards the Tokyo trials in Sheffield at Easter.

A few days on and she has come to terms with her ground-breaking walk but is no longer grieving. “I wouldn’t change myself because the opportunities I have had and the friends I have made through my cerebral palsy are all due to something I couldn’t have prevented,” she says. “I’ve learnt to accept it and take everything with both hands.”

WATCH THE VIDEO

To see footage of Grace in Japan, go to the online version of this article at: thetimes.co.uk/sport

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Delta Work looks up to scratch in Gold Cup trial

Racing
Rob Wright Racing Editor

Faugheen lit up the Dublin Festival at Leopardstown yesterday with a gutsy success in the grade one Flogas Novices’ Chase.

Winner of the 2015 Champion Hurdle, one of nine top-flight victories at the highest level over the smaller obstacles, it had seemed in the past two seasons that Faugheen’s best days were well behind him.

However, Willie Mullins’s 12-year-old has seemingly been revitalised by a switch to fences this term and made it three from three with a half-length defeat of stablemate Easy Game.

Faugheen holds three entries at the Cheltenham Festival but the Marsh Chase on March 12 appears his most likely aim. He is now 6-1 favourite for that prize. There would be no more popular result at the Festival but Faugheen will likely need to raise his game further and does not appeal from a betting point of view.

Delta states Gold Cup claim
Delta Work landed a fifth grade one win over fences in the Paddy Power Irish Gold Cup. With the notable exception of Al Boum Photo, who won the Cheltenham Gold Cup last year, this race featured all of the top staying chasers in Ireland.
Five horses were virtually in line as

they turned for home but Delta Work proved strongest in the closing stages and beat Kemboy by a length and a half, with Presenting Percy back in third.

Delta Work was only third in the RSA Chase last year but is still improving and will be difficult to keep out of the frame in the Gold Cup. He looks fair each-way value at 6-1 with Coral.

Chacun builds up Champion cracker
Chacun Pour Soi was beaten on his reappearance at Leopardstown but put himself in line for a tilt at the Betway Queen Mother Champion Chase when beating Min in good style at the same track on Saturday.

This race was run at a strong pace but Chacun Pour Soi travelled smoothly throughout and impressed with his jumping. With dual winner Altior aiming to get back on track at Newbury on Saturday, the Champion Chase is building up into an absolute cracker.

Honeysuckle needs to blossom
Honeysuckle and jockey Rachael Blackmore maintained their unbeaten partnership in the PCI Irish Champion Hurdle but they had to work hard to hold off outsider Darver Star.
Honeysuckle, who was completing a grade one double for Blackmore on Saturday, is on an upward curve but still has to improve if she is to match favourite Epatante in the Unibet Champion Hurdle on March 10.



Paul Townend steers Faugheen to victory at Leopardstown. The former Champion Hurdler has a choice of three engagements at next month’s Festival

She could well still take her chance in the championship event, rather than go for the less prestigious option of the Festival Mares’ Hurdle, as Benie Des Dieux would arguably be an even more formidable opponent in that contest.

Notebook too short for Arkle
Blackmore’s other top-flight winner, Notebook, retained his position as favourite for the Arkle Trophy when fending off Cashback. He could hardly be described as impressive, though, and

it has to be a concern that he ran poorly at the Festival last year, while his free-going tendencies could also be a hindrance in the Cheltenham cauldron.

Itchy Feet makes Marsh appeal
The best performance in Britain was the victory of Itchy Feet in the Scilly Isles Novices’ Chase at Sandown Park. His prospects for the Marsh Chase at the Festival look to have been underestimated, with Coral and Lad-brokes both offering a generous 10-1.

Carlisle
Rob Wright

1.50 Archi's Affaire

2.20 Ballybreen

2.55 Penny Mallow

3.25 Court Royale

4.00 Holly Flight

4.30 Winds Of Fire (nap)

Going: soft

Racing TV

1.50 Novices' Hurdle
(£4,549: 2m 1f) (12 runners)

1 ARCHI'S AFFAIRE 174 W Colthred 6-11-3 Sam Coltherd (3)

2 5 ELITE ICON 22 Katie Scott 6-11-3 C Bewley

3 630 ELUSIVE RED 59 F Murtagh 6-11-3 L Murtagh (3)

4 44-00 HOLME ABBEY 30 N Richards 7-11-3 R Day

5 0 IBN AL EMARAT 33 Mrs B Butterworth 5-11-3 C McCormack (3)

6 0 MARVELLOUS JOE 335 M Hammond 5-11-3 J Colliver

7 5-245 NEVILLE'S CROSS 38 Tom Lacey 5-11-3 N De Boinvillie

8 46-5 SPECIAL BRUTE 239 Jennie Candlish 5-11-3 S Quinlan

9 3/4-0 TIME FOR ANOTHER 18 Jennie Candlish 7-11-3 T Dowson

10 12 GOOBINATOR 38 (BF) D McCain 4-11-0 B Hughes

11 3 DORA DE JANEIRO 50 S G West 7-10-10 J Kington

12 0 FLOOD DEFENCE 17 I Jardine 6-10-10 C O'Farrell

Evans Gooinator, 5-1 Neville's Cross, 7-1 Archi's Affaire, 8-1 Special Brute, 12-1 Dora De Janeiro, 20-1 Holme Abbey, Flood Defence, Time For Another.
Rob Wright's choice: Archi's Affaire, fair on the Flat, looks interesting here **Dangers:** Gooinator, Neville's Cross

2.20 Novices' Handicap Chase
(£5,198: 3m 110yd) (10)

1 6-012 MYMILAN 22 (BF,C) A M Thomson 7-11-12 R Mania

2 P-133 GATACRE STREET 34 (P) Sam England 8-11-2 J England

3 03P11 BALLYBREEN 13 (B,D) E Williams 7-11-1 C Ring (3)

4 50F52 ASKING FOR ANSWERS 32 (V) M Todhunter 7-11-1 S Quinlan

5 /P105 TRIMMERS LANE 12 M Hammond 10-11-0 A Cawley

6 42132 CUDGEL 25 (BF) J Walton 7-10-12 C O'Farrell

7 0-2032 HARD KNOCKS 39 (P,T,BF) Kenny Johnson 10-10-10 Alison Clarke (7)

8 50663 REAL ARMANI 11 (T) Mrs J Walton 8-10-5 Ross Chapman

9 426-6 SON OF FEYAN 32 Mrs L Normile 9-10-0 S Mulqueen (3)

10 60-PP K O KENNY 12 (P) A Crook 9-10-0 J Kington

11-4 Ballybreen, 4-1 Mymilan, 9-2 Cudgel, 6-1 Hard Knocks, 7-1 Gatacre Street, 8-1 Asking For Answers, 16-1 Trimmers Lane, Real Armani.
Wright choice: Penny Mallow again showed a good attitude at Wetherby and can follow up **Danger:** Lily's Gem

3.25 Novices' Handicap Chase
(£6,498: 2m) (4)

1 22F45 COURT ROYALE 27 E Williams 7-11-12 A Wedge

2 -6441 DORKING COCK 28 (P,D) Tom Lacey 6-11-11 Thomas O'Brien (5)

3 -210F FANZIO 61 (H) Richard Hobson 5-11-6 Paul O'Brien (3)

4 4/3P- RELKADAM 423 T Easterby 6-11-0 W Easterby (5)

4-5 Dorking Cock, 7-2 Court Royale, 4-1 Fanzio, 15-2 Relkadam.
Wright choice: Court Royale usually tackles stronger races and can take advantage of a drop in grade **Danger:** Fanzio

4.00 Mares' Handicap Chase
(£7,473: 2m 5f) (6)

1 42626 HOLLY FLIGHT 36 (T,D) K Dalgleish 8-11-12 B Hughes

2 0/221 HAUL US IN 9 (P) Miss L Russell 8-11-12 S Mulqueen (3)

3 5410F LONGHOUSEISIGNORA 18 (B) Miss V Williams 8-11-5 C Deutsch

4 -1454 SKEWIFF 17 E Williams 8-11-0 A Wedge

5 P-30P HIDDEN DILEMMA 36 (P) S Crawford (Ire) 7-10-12 J J Slevin

6 4P512 TALKOFGOLD 36 (P) M Todhunter 8-10-10 D Cook

7-4 Haul Us In, 11-4 Talkofgold, 9-2 Longhouseisignora, 6-1 Holly Flight, 8-1 Skewiff, 14-1 Hidden Dilemma.

Wright choice: Holly Flight will find this easier than when sixth in listed company at Doncaster **Danger:** Haul Us In

4.30 Handicap Hurdle
(£4,549: 2m 1f) (12)

1 -1034 VENGEUR DE GUYE 16 (T,D) Miss L Russell 11-11-12 T Willmott (5)

2 5-45P ARISTO DU PLESSIS 33 (D) J Ewart 10-11-12 B Hughes

3 04521 XPO UNIVERSEL 8 (P,T,CD) Rebecca Menzies 11-11-11(Tex) K Yeoman (7)

4 20FF5 ROMEO BROWN 25 (CD) P Kirby 6-11-10 T Dowson

5 2-16P CURRAMORE 17 (CD) Mrs L Normile 6-11-9 G Cockburn (3)

6 33 WINDS OF FIRE 70 E Williams 5-11-8 A Wedge

7 42233 SLEEPY HAVEN 18 (P,D) Jennie Candlish 10-11-8 S Quinlan

8 23633 GET HELP 25 W Colthred 7-11-7 Sam Coltherd (3)

9 13-35 MINT GOLD 102 (W,T,CD) Miss L Russell 6-11-6 S Mulqueen (3)

10 50506 NOTWHATIAM 16 A Berry 10-11-5 Emma Smith-Chaston (7)

11 P503F LET'S SWAY 12 (T) S Corbett 6-10-9 J Corbett (5)

12 43F55 CRAIG STAR 33 D McCain 10-10-8 L Murtagh (3)

11-4 Xpo Universel, 4-1 Winds Of Fire, 7-1 Sleepy Haven, 8-1 Vengeur De Guye, 10-1 Romeo Brown, Aristo Du Plessis, 12-1 Let's Sway, Mint Gold, Get Help.
Wright choice: Winds Of Fire, useful on the Flat, looks well treated in this sphere **Dangers:** Let's Sway, Xpo Universel

Course specialists

Carlisle: Trainers S Crawford, 9 winners from 31 runners, 29%; N Richards, 15 from 60, 25%; Miss V Williams, 6 from 27, 22.2%; E Williams, 3 from 14, 21.4%; K Dalgleish, 4 from 25, 16%; A Thomson, 5 from 32, 15.6%. **Jockeys** N De Boinvillie, 3 winners from 6 rides, 50%; C Deutsch, 3 from 12, 25%; A Wedge, 3 from 13, 23.1%; B Hughes, 35 from 194, 18%; D Cook, 16 from 96, 16.7%; R Day, 5 from 41, 12.2%.

Wolverhampton: Trainers J McConnell, 4 from 10, 40%; J Gosden, 43 from 155, 27.7%; H Palmer, 29 from 122, 23.8%; A Watson, 38 from 192, 19.8%; M Meade, 7 from 38, 18.4%; S C Williams, 25 from 142, 17.6%. **Jockeys** J Mitchell, 50 from 227, 22%; S De Sousa, 38 from 184, 20.7%; R Kingscote, 85 from 524, 16.2%; Faye McManoman, 4 from 29, 13.8%; J P Spencer, 10 from 73, 13.7%; S Davis, 6 from 44, 13.6%.

Wolverhampton
Rob Wright

5.00 Lottie Deno

5.30 Rockesbury

6.00 Divine Connection

6.30 Microscopic

7.00 Via Serendipity

7.30 Bond Angel (nb)

8.00 Fair Star

8.30 Cliara

Going: standard

Sky Sports Racing

Draw: 5f-7f, low numbers best

5.00 Handicap (Div: £2,782: 7f) (10)

1 (2) 4-156 BILLYOAKES 17 (P,CD) O Pears 8-9-7 George Rooke

2 (1) 450-4 LYRICAL BALLAD 31 (P) N Mulholland 4-9-7 L Catton

3 (8) 10-04 CALEDONIA LAIRD 20 (P,CD) Miss G Kellaway 9-9-5 Amelia Glass

4 (6) 50-04 BOLD DECISION 14 A Carroll 4-9-5 Elisha Whittington

5 (10) 20-51 ELUSIF 2 (V,D) P McEntee 5-9-7(Sev) Grace McEntee

6 (7) 030-5 MAJOR CRISPIES 10 (D) Ronald Thompson 8-8-12 O Stammers

7 (4) 040-3 LOTTIE DENO 16 (P,T) D J Jeffreys 4-8-12 G Bass (3)

8 (3) 360-0 COOL STRUTTER 16 (D) J Spearing 8-8-12 Selma Grace (3)

9 (9) 0-406 DARWINIA 10 (C) A Whillans 4-8-12 Russell Harris

10 (5) 000-6 BURAUI 10 (V) J Bradley 8-8-12 Kate Leahy

100-30 Elusif, 4-1 Caledonia Laird, Bold Decision, 9-2 Billyoakes, 7-1 Lyrical Ballad, 8-1 Lottie Deno, 20-1 others.

5.30 Handicap (Div II: £2,782: 7f) (10)

1 (3) -5202 ROCKESBURY 7 (B,BF,CD) David Loughnane 5-9-7 Laura Pearson (3)

2 (1) 240-2 PEARL SPECTRE 5 (V,D) P McEntee 9-9-5 Grace McEntee

3 (9) 06-45 AIR OF YORK 5 (P,CD) Grace Harris 8-9-5 Elisha Whittington

4 (5) 040-0 MIRACLE GARDEN 10 (P,C) R Brotherton 8-9-4 L Catton

5 (4) 2000- LITTLE MISS KODI 136 (D) M Loughnane 7-9-0 Mollie Phillips (5)

6 (7) 000-0 HEY PRETTY 24 (B,D) J McConnell (Ire) 5-8-12 Siobhan Rutledge (3)

7 (2) 446-4 COME ON BEAR 35 A Bailey 5-8-12 George Rooke

8 (6) 600-0 JE M'EN FICHE 25 (P) P Chamings 4-8-12 Amelia Glass

9 (8) 5/0-0 WILLIAM ASHFORD 6 (V,D) M Appleby 8-8-12 Erika Parkinson (3)

10(10) 0-000 SUPREME DREAM 10 S A Harris 4-8-12 Levi Williams (3)

7-4 Rockesbury, 3-1 Pearl Spectre, 6-1 Air Of York, 8-1 Come On Bear, 10-1 Hey Pretty, 12-1 William Ashford, 14-1 Miracle Garden, 16-1 Little Miss Kodi.

Yesterday's racing results

Musselburgh

Going: soft (good to soft in places)
1.15 (2m 7f 170yd ch) 1, Dr Hooves (S Mulqueen, 14-1); 2, Im Too Generous (3-1); 3, Stop The World (5-2 fav). 6 ran. NR: Benny's Secret, Buckled, Espoir De Loire. 1½l, 1¼l. Miss Lucinda V Russell.
1.45 (1m 7f 124yd hdl) 1, Thyme White (H Cobden, 2-1 fav); 2, Group Stage (9-2); 3, Anna Bunina (7-1). 7 ran. NR: The Danc-ing Poet. 1½l, nk. P F Nicholls.
2.15 (1m 7f 124yd hdl) 1, Fred (D A Jacob, 5-4 fav); 2, Malystic (11-2); 3, Jabbaar (14-1). 6 ran. NR: Sebastopol. Hd, 14l. N J Henderson.
2.50 (2m 7f 180yd hdl) 1, I K Brunel (Adrian Heskin, 8-5); 2, Saint Xavier (6-4 fav); 3, Some Chaos (9-2). 4 ran. 4¼l, 15l. Olly Murphy.
3.20 (3m 2f 26yd hdl) 1, Highland Hunter (H Cobden, 10-11 fav); 2, Mighty Thunder (22-1); 3, Keeper Hill (11-2). 7 ran. ½l, 8l. P F Nicholls.
3.50 (3m 2f 139yd ch) 1, Gangster (Adrian Heskin, 11-2); 2, Achill Road Boy (16-1); 3, Diggins Deep (9-2). 5 ran. 5l, 21l. W Greatrex.
4.20 (1m 7f 124yd Flat) 1, Kearney Hill (Henry Brooke, 20-1); 2, Hand In My Pocket (8-1); 3, Mortlach (7-4 fav). 7 ran. Hd, 9l. B Ellison.
Placepot: £355.30. Quadpot: £43.80.

6.00 Selling Stakes
(3-Y-O: £2,782: 7f) (9)

1 (8) 640-6 FACT OR FABLE 17 (B) J S Moore 9-0 L Keniry

2 (3) 00-05 KNOCKACURRA 7 M Loughnane 9-0 K Lundie (5)

3 (5) 000-0 LEO'S LUCKYMAN 9 (B,T) D Flood 9-0 R Da Silva

4 (4) 23- BUY ME BACK 47 (P) Archie Watson 8-9 L Morris

5 (2) 4342- DIVINE CONNECTION 49 (BF) J Portman 8-9 R Hornby

6 (9) 0- MRS MUNNELLY 125 D P Quinn 8-9 K O'Neill

7 (6) 000-0 QUEEN MOYA 17 (P) N Timler 8-9 F McManoman (5)

8 (7) 050-0 SOUTH LIGHT 7 A Brittain 8-9 K Schofield (5)

9 (1) WHITE FACE J Holt 8-9 Toby Eley (5)

4-5 Buy Me Back, 11-4 Divine Connection, 8-1 Fact Or Fable, 14-1 White Face, Mrs Munnelly, 25-1 South Light, Knockacurra, 33-1 others.

6.30 Handicap
(3-Y-O: £2,782: 5f) (10)

1 (6) 552-5 BEZZAS LAD 26 (B,BF) A Carroll 9-7 A Rawlinson

2 (1) 4330- FEEL GOOD FACTOR 165 M Appleby 9-6 L Morris

3 (4) 555- LADY MELODY 39 (H) D O'Meara 9-4 S Gray

4 (3) 35-05 MICROSCOPIC 4 (V) P Evans 9-1 C Lee

5 (5) 4054- STREET LIFE 108 (V) R Fahy 9-0 S P Davis (3)

6 (9) -4041 COMEATCHO 9 (D) P McEntee 8-12 B Curtis

7 (7) 435-3 SHE'S EASYONTHEEY 17 J J Quinn 8-10 J Hart

8 (10) 060-4 SECRET IDENTITY 21 (E) M Mullineaux 8-10 P Dennis

9 (8) 00-16 HOT HOT HOT 17 (CD) A Carroll 8-10 F Norton

10 (2) 50-65 LA CHICA LOBO 17 (H) Mrs L Williamson 8-7 C Hardie

3-1 Bezzas Lad, 4-1 Comestchoo, 11-2 Lady Melody, 6-1 She's Easyontheeye, 8-1 Feel Good Factor, Street Life, Hot Hot Hot, 16-1 Secret Identity.

7.00 Conditions Stakes
(£11,828: 1m 1f) (7)

1 (3) 1/4-6 FOX POWER 24 (C) R Hannon 4-9-8 S De Sousa

2 (5) 011-1 ANOTHER TOUCH 26 R Fahy 7-9-5 B McHugh

3 (2) 0430- ARCANADA 112 (P,CD) T Dascombe 7-9-5 R Kingscote

4 (7) 0130- OH THIS IS US 75 R Hannon 7-9-5 J P Spencer

5 (4) 3340- SALATEEN 164 (W,C) K Ryan 8-9-5 T Eaves

6 (6) 015-2 VIA SERENDIPITY 26 (T) S C Williams 6-9-5 H Turner

7 (1) 2030/ WHITE MOCHA 571 H Palmer 5-9-5 B Curtis

7-4 Another Touch, 7-2 Via Serendipity, 4-1 Oh This Is Us, 6-1 Fox Power, 10-1 Arcanada, 12-1 Salateen, 20-1 White Mocha.

Blinked first time: Wolverhampton 6.00 Leo's Luckyman. 7.30 Jack Berry House. 7.30 Dawn Treader.

Team GB thwarted by 'ridiculous' decision

Hockey Great Britain were denied a victory over Australia despite being 1-0 ahead when the match was abandoned at half-time because of a lightning storm in Sydney. Anna Toman had put the 2016 Olympic champions ahead from a penalty corner in the 17th minute.

Under the Hockey Pro League's rules, Australia were awarded the game because they had won the first match between the sides.

Goalkeeper Maddie Hinch took to Twitter to describe the rule as "ridiculous" and "obscene" but Great Britain Hockey said it "fully respects" the decision.

"Given this experience of applying the regulation, we anticipate the FIH and competing nations will review the approach at the appropriate time," it added in a statement.

Hain hundred gives the Lions a win in opener

Cricket Sam Hain's unbeaten century inspired England Lions to a six-wicket win over a Cricket Australia XI in the first of five 50-over matches on tour. The Warwickshire batsman scored 122 off 128 deliveries, hitting 11 fours and two sixes, as the tourists chased down their 282-run target with ten balls to spare in Queensland. The Australians had made 281 for eight in their innings with opener Max Bryant leading the way with 102 off 60 balls. Their innings was held up when batsman Will Pucovski suffered the eighth concussion of his career on his 22nd birthday after his bat got stuck in the turf as he went for a quick single.

Djokovic gives himself two seasons to set record

Stuart Fraser

Tennis
Correspondent,
Melbourne



D Thiem (Austria, 5)	4	6	6	3	4
N Djokovic (Serbia, 2)	6	4	2	6	6

Moments after Novak Djokovic held firm in the face of an almighty challenge from Dominic Thiem to win a record-extending eighth Australian Open title, the 32-year-old Serb revealed that he is planning to scale back the amount of appearances he makes on the tour after the next two years.

With yet another triumph at Melbourne Park yesterday, Djokovic has reclaimed the world No 1 spot from Rafael Nadal. This is particularly significant for him as one of his main goals is to surpass Roger Federer's record total of 310 weeks at the top of the rankings. Djokovic is presently on 276 weeks, meaning that he could potentially move ahead of Federer on October 5 if he were to remain at No 1 until then.

With this in mind, Djokovic is considering giving everything he has for the next season or two to ensure he reaches this particular milestone, before playing a limited selection of tournaments so that he can spend more time with his children, Stefan, 5, and Tara, 2.

"I definitely want to play for many more years," Djokovic said. "But I think in order to have a chance and have a go for the historic No 1 ranking, I am going to try to do everything possible this season and next season maximum. That is what I can devote in terms of time and energy towards that goal.

"I can't really plan ahead for two, three, four years. I guess my children are coming to an age where I really want to spend quality time with them, be the best possible father I can be and not be on the road all the time. I am coming closer to the stage where I have to adjust to that. I have to probably play less and not travel the whole year."

Winning a 17th grand-slam trophy edges Djokovic closer to Nadal (19) and

Highs and lows from the Australian Open in Melbourne

Highlights

Every year I come to Melbourne Park, I am astounded by the ongoing expansion and the improvement of facilities. This is the best grand-slam tournament in terms of spectator experience, with a range of entertainment for people of all ages alongside the tennis. A record attendance of 812,174 was achieved this year.

● While Nick Kyrgios has not improved his demeanour in press conferences, barking at journalists for the most innocuous questions, there was a noticeable improvement in his maturity on the court. If he keeps that up and



Boulter was defeated in the second round

improves his physical conditioning, then he can contend for grand slams this summer.

Lowlights

● The response of the tennis community to the bushfire crisis was admirable, with more

than £3 million raised for relief efforts. Not so impressive was the dismal handling by Tennis Australia of the issues caused by smoke on the first day of qualifying. Their lack of communication to concerned players was a disgrace.

● The collective performance of British singles players was dismal, with all seven knocked out before the third round. It was disappointing to listen to a number of them shrug off their defeats. The claims of Harriet Dart and Katie Boulter that there is strength in depth in the British women's game were absurd.

Federer (20) in the all-time men's singles list, and continues the remarkable dominance of the "big three". Not since Stan Wawrinka's victory in the 2016 US Open has anyone outside this exclusive club won a major title. Thiem, the 26-year-old Austrian, threw in everything he had to try and make what would be a significant breakthrough in the men's game and he came close at two sets to one up. But Djokovic is still one of the sport's great fighters and he clawed his way back for a 6-4, 4-6, 2-6, 6-3, 6-4 victory over the course of four hours.

Although Thiem has now fallen short in three grand-slam finals, this performance has reinforced his status as the best of the rest. One would understand if he were willing retirement upon Djokovic, Federer and Nadal to clear the path to glory, but he is in fact eager that their careers continue so any title he does eventually claim will have extra kudos attached to it.

"These guys have brought tennis to a completely new level," Thiem said. "Of course, it would be easier in a different

era to win big titles. That is 100 per cent. But I'm happy I can compete with these guys. I really hope also that I win my maiden slam when they're still around because it just counts more."

On a cool night in the Rod Laver Arena, Djokovic was backed by a loud contingent of Serbian fans and he gave them much to cheer about with a ferociously intense start for a 3-0 lead. Thiem appeared a little sluggish initially after spending six hours more on court than Djokovic in the tournament.

Thiem had to dig deep to hold serve for 2-4 and his efforts paid off in the next game when he broke back courtesy of some fierce groundstrokes. Djokovic showed some frustration at this point with some over-eager spectators who were calling out during the rallies and mouthed expletives.

But he quickly refocused and ramped up the pressure with Thiem serving to stay in the set at 4-5. Facing a second set point, Thiem hit a first double fault to gift the advantage to Djokovic.

At a set up, the expectation was that

Djokovic, with all his mental strength, would put his foot on the accelerator. But then it was his turn to throw in an inopportune double-fault to drop serve in the third game of the second set.

Although Djokovic managed to claim the break back, he lost his way at 4-4. He received two time violations in the same service game for exceeding the 25 seconds that is permitted between points. This meant the loss of a first serve on break point and it clearly distracted him as he landed a forehand long to give Thiem the chance to serve out the set.

At the change of ends, Djokovic tapped umpire Damien Dumusois's shoe and sarcastically congratulated him. "You made yourself famous," he said. "Well done, mission accomplished." Given that the rulebook clearly states that touching an official is considered "physical abuse" and can be subject to a fine of up to £15,000, Djokovic is fortunate that Dumusois did not take any further action.

The controversy rattled Djokovic so much that he lost six consecutive games, with Thiem closing out the second set and quickly moving 4-0 ahead in the third. Djokovic eventually stopped the rot with a service hold and then called a doctor out onto the court for advice on an issue that was unclear.

Serving at 5-2 for a lead of two sets to one, Thiem saved a break point and held to move to within one set of the best victory of his career. He had more than five minutes to think about that prospect on his court-side chair as Djokovic disappeared down the tunnel for further medical attention.

Djokovic had never successfully fought back from two sets to one down in the seven previous grand-slam finals that he was in this position, but few were counting him out. He used all of his experience to hang on, saving one break point in the fourth set, and then broke the serve of Thiem for 5-4. Djokovic was re-energised and he held to love to force a fifth and deciding set.

Thiem was the first to falter. At 1-1 and 30-15 on his serve, he made three consecutive forehand errors to concede the break. This proved enough in the end for Djokovic to go on and complete his greatest comeback.



Djokovic had to dig deep to win the

Persevering Salisbury going up in the world after doubles

Stuart Fraser

When the last Olympic Games took place in Rio in 2016, Joe Salisbury's career was shrouded in uncertainty.

Then No 643 in the world, he had just arrived back in London from Portugal, after a humiliating 6-1, 6-2 defeat by Tiago Paçõ, ranked No 1,142 at the time, in the first round of a third-tier Futures tournament. It was the moment when he realised that the glandular fever and chronic fatigue he had suffered since childhood were not going to allow him to forge a career in singles.

How his fortunes have changed. Salisbury, 27, is the twelfth Briton to become a grand-slam champion in the open era after winning the Australian Open men's doubles yesterday with his American partner Rajeev Ram. British success in this event is so rare that Salisbury and Jamie Murray (in 2016) are the only two players from this country

to have won it since Fred Perry and Pat Hughes in 1934. Salisbury is now the world No 4 and, barring a disastrous run, will become an Olympian in Tokyo by virtue of a ranking inside the top ten. This gives him the luxury of choosing his own partner: potentially Andy Murray as brother Jamie is likely to team up with his regular cohort Neal Skupski.

It is possible that Salisbury could be the world No 1 by the time of the Games in late July. An opportunity has opened up through the provisional drugs suspension of Robert Farah, the present joint No 1 from Colombia, who maintains that he failed a test because of contaminated meat.

For his success in Melbourne, Salisbury earns £193,000, by far the biggest cheque of his career, and he plans to put it towards a deposit for an apartment in London. This is a just reward for his perseverance. He spent his formative years playing American college tennis for the University of Memphis, where he also



Salisbury, left, and Ram celebrate their win in the final of the men's doubles

studied a degree in economics. But after he turned professional in 2014, it was not long before he considered giving up.

"There were definitely times when I wasn't sure if I wanted to do it," Salisbury said. "I wasn't making any money and wasn't making a living out of it.

Even when I made the switch to doubles, I still spent time playing the Challengers [second-tier tournaments], and was not getting up the rankings as quickly as I wanted up until the Wimbledon semi-finals [last year].

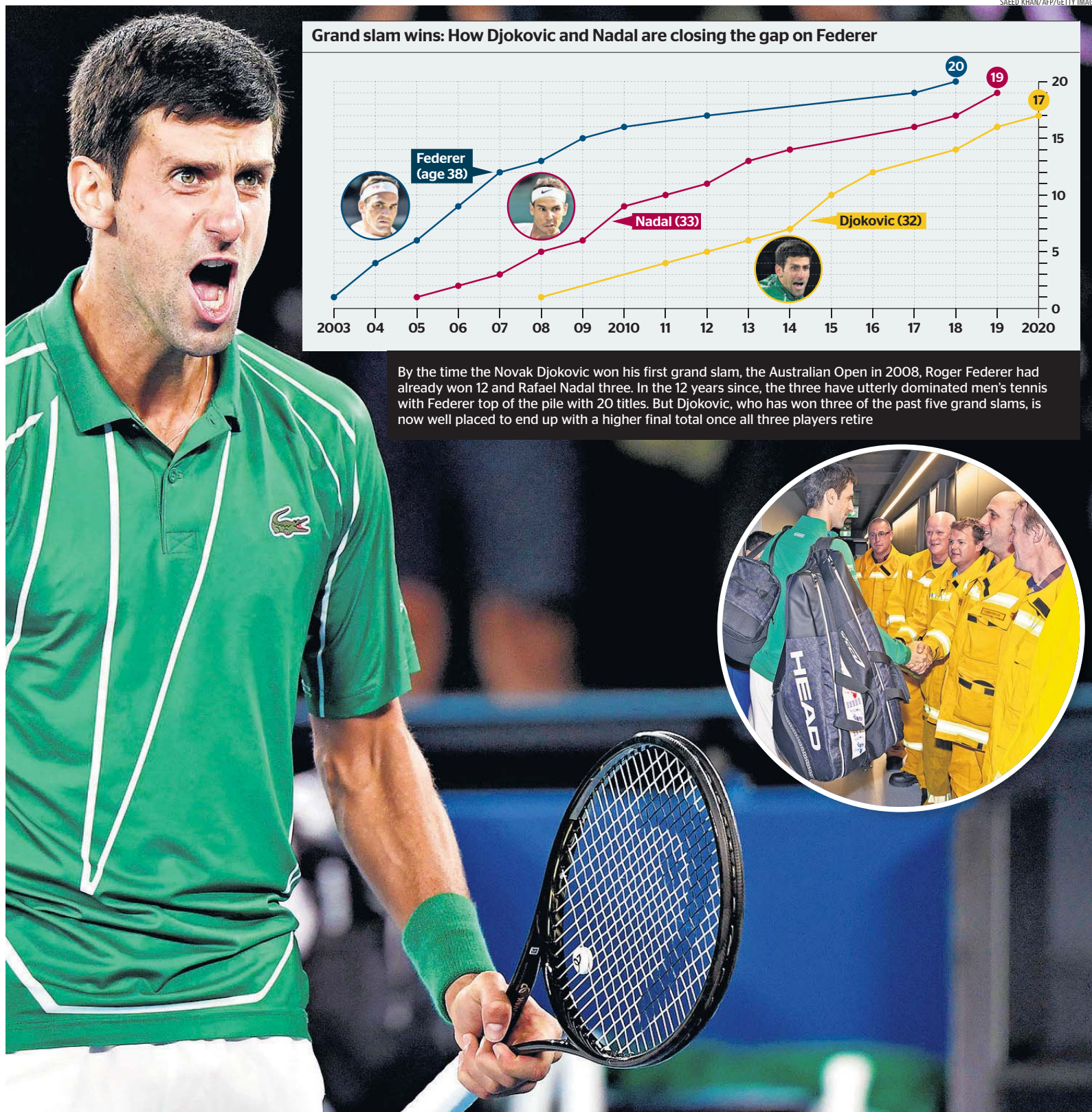
"But I think deep down I've always

British grand slam champions

Jamie Murray.....	7
Virginia Wade.....	7
Ann Jones.....	5
Andy Murray.....	3
John Lloyd.....	3
Jeremy Bates.....	2
Jo Durie.....	2
Roger Taylor.....	2
Sue Barker.....	1
Jonathan Marray.....	1
Heather Watson.....	1
Joe Salisbury.....	1
*in the Open Era	

known that I really did want to. It is what I love doing. I am definitely glad that I kept going."

Salisbury's story could act as inspiration for the many British hopefuls who lose their way when success does not come immediately. "I guess it shows



title for the eighth time, battling on after medical attention and weathering a bad-tempered exchange with the umpire. He met bushfire firemen before the final, inset

triumph

that even if you're not one of the top juniors, winning all the junior grand slams or breaking through when you're 19 or 20, that you can still have a very good career," Salisbury said. The Briton was the best player on court yesterday, partnering Ram to a 6-4, 6-2 victory against the Australian wild-card pair of Max Purcell and Luke Saville.

Salisbury has established a significant lead on Jamie Murray as Britain's No 1 doubles player, which could create a dilemma for British Olympic chiefs this summer. Salisbury and Johanna Konta are presently the best mixed doubles team by ranking, but Murray is a strong performer in this discipline — he and Bethanie Mattek-Sands, of the United States, finished runners-up in the mixed final on Saturday.

"The mixed doubles is really difficult to get into," Murray said. "It's only a 16-team draw. It will depend on the rankings and if they select me. Who knows what ranking I will be at the time?"

Kenin delights in silencing the doubters

Stuart Fraser

As much coverage as Sofia Kenin, the new Australian Open champion, received in her youth, there was a period during her teenage years when the prospect of her becoming a top player in the professional ranks was doubted. Some thought she was too short — even now, she only stands at 5ft 7ins — and others expressed concern over a lack of a potent weapon in her game.

Kenin has few sceptics now. As the 21-year-old American stood on the banks of the Yarra River yesterday, parading her new piece of silverware for photographers, she was more than entitled to think of this as a moment which will force those who doubted her to eat some humble pie.

"I just feel like some people didn't really believe in me," Kenin said. "They turned me down and said some things like I wouldn't make it or that I was too small. We never took that seriously. I had a goal, I had a dream and we

achieved it. No matter what people said, we always believed."

Kenin has provided a feel-good rags-to-riches tale by winning here. Her parents moved to New York from the Soviet Union in the late 1980s with little money and her father Alex, who is also her coach, spent most of his nights working as a taxi driver. More than 30 years on, Kenin has a cheque for £2.1 million and a Manhattan apartment in her sights.

"My dad told me it was a tough time for them," Kenin said. "They wanted to give me the American Dream. I am really thankful."

Kenin's counter-punching style and

Kenin's father Alex has played a huge role in her success



ability to powerfully redirect any groundstrokes that come at her make her a dangerous opponent on all surfaces.

Last summer, within the space of a few weeks, she knocked out Serena Williams on clay in the third round of the French Open and then won her first grass-court title at the Mallorca Open.

Expect her to be a contender at Roland Garros and Wimbledon. "I always dreamt of a grand slam," the new world No 7 said. "It didn't matter where, but we'll see what happens. Wimbledon is such a tradition. You really feel it there. I love the people. Hopefully I can do well this year."

McDowell ends six-year wait to prove he is not YouTube golfer

Golf

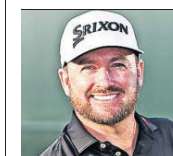
Graeme McDowell celebrated his first European Tour triumph since 2014 yesterday and immediately set his sights on making sure he would be lining up for two significant events later this year.

McDowell, 40, went into the final round of the Saudi International with a one-shot lead and came out on top after a closing level-par 70 in tough conditions at Royal Greens Golf & Country Club saw him finish on 12 under. The defending champion, Dustin Johnson, made his second eagle of the day on the 18th to finish two shots behind McDowell, with Phil Mickelson, Thomas Pieters and Gavin Green a stroke back.

It was McDowell's first European Tour title since winning the French Open six years ago. Almost exactly a year ago, McDowell was No 257 in the world rankings; he was No 104 at the start of the tournament but with this win he is set to shoot back inside the top 50. If he can stay there until the end of March, he will earn a spot at his first Masters tournament since 2016. And if he can maintain this form, a place in the Europe team at the Ryder Cup in September is a definite possibility.

McDowell became the first European winner of the US Open in 40 years when he won at Pebble Beach in 2010, the same year he secured the winning point at Celtic Manor in the biennial clash with the United States.

He won three points from three matches in Europe's victory at Gleneagles in 2014, but missed out in 2016 and was a vice-captain in 2018, a role he



McDowell wants to earn a Masters and Ryder Cup place

would be expected to repeat under captain Pádraig Harrington in September.

"I'd love to be on the team, but there's a lot of things that need to happen between now and then," McDowell said. "I want to play my way on; I don't want to rely on a pick, but we'll see."

As well as the trophy and winner's cheque, yesterday brought a more personal triumph for the Northern Irishman. He proved to his young children that he was not a "YouTube golfer" with his best days all confined to videos.

"My schedule is going to change a little bit, maybe in Mexico [for the WGC event], maybe in the Masters. We were trying to plan an Easter holiday with the kids the week of the Masters but that may have to go on hold now."

McDowell, who crucially bounced back from a three-putt bogey on the 13th to birdie the next two holes, added: "It's tough to win on a course that doesn't fit your eye but this is a sweet one. A big goal this year was to be back in the top 50 — it's come a little faster than I expected. I've been working hard the last year-and-a-half to try and get myself back up there one more time, just to be out there playing against these guys."

"I've got young kids at home and I want to show them that dad's tough and dad can do it. I don't want to have to pull up the YouTube videos."

Mickelson's tie for third was his first top-20 finish since last year's Masters, but Brooks Koepka is set to lose his world No 1 ranking to Jon Rahm, of Spain, or Ulster's Rory McIlroy in the next two weeks after a tie for 17th.

Sport

Sonny 'Spill' Williams suffers on debut

New Zealand star all fingers and thumbs on league return after joining Toronto, writes Christopher Irvine

There will surely be better and warmer days for Toronto Wolfpack and their megabucks recruit. In the chill Yorkshire air, Sonny Bill Williams chipped away at the rust. Little went right for him or his bemused team against Castleford Tigers, whose entire squad cost less than the Canadian club are paying SBW, but who came out on top 28-10.

The same goes for every other club in the Betfred Super League, such is the money being commanded by Williams, 34, roughly £5.2 million over two seasons. Toronto's expensively-acquired sporting polymath — rugby union, boxing and back in his native league code for one final hurrah — was all fingers and thumbs in his first outing. Nervous? Possibly.

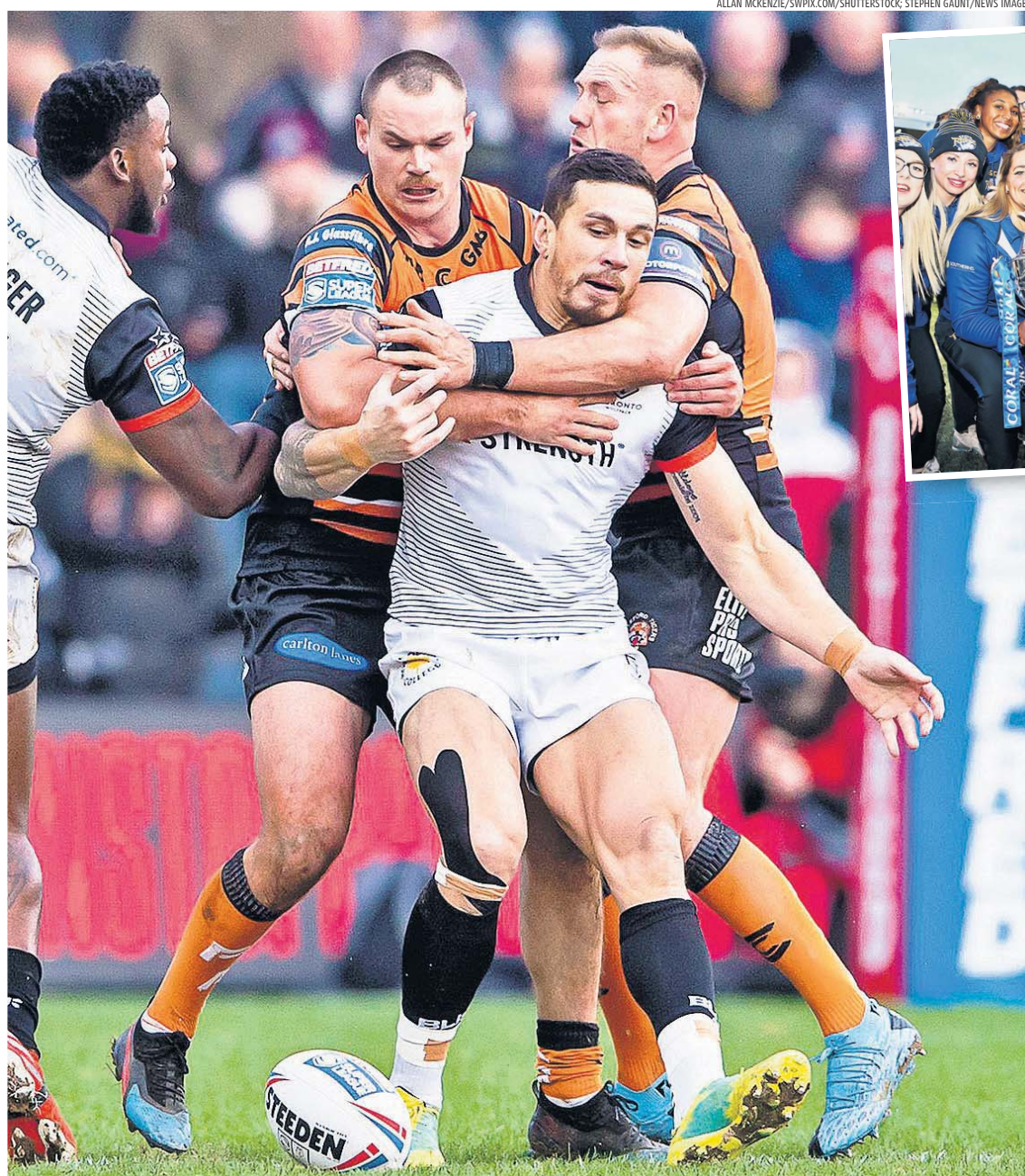
Toronto beat Castleford in pre-season, but looked as if they had one foot still stuck in the second-tier Championship at Headingley. A full house of 20,000 turned up for their Super League debut and Williams's first appearance, which featured the damning statistic of three knock-ons.

"It was, as we were saying from day one, going to take some time," Brian McDermott, the Toronto head coach, said. "When he got his second wind, he got through some tackles and carries. When you sign someone of his calibre, a West Yorkshire crowd can get excited about a certain aspect of life, which is usually on the negative side. It got the biggest cheer of the day when he dropped the ball, but he's got some game-time under his belt."

Williams was disappointed with the result but felt better for the experience. "It was great to be out there again," he said. "The coach only wanted me to play 20-30 minutes max, so I felt like I was getting a feel of it. There was nothing magical but the foundations have been laid and we can work on that in a long season. The magic will come."

Yesterday was a far cry from Japan and the All Blacks' Rugby World Cup semi-final loss to England. McDermott, a four-times Grand Final winner with Leeds, had applied the finishing touches to the deal funded by David Argyle, Toronto's multimillionaire Australian backer, that made Williams the highest paid player in either code.

Williams's pay packet is roughly ten times more than the next highest-paid players in the competition, but his



Williams proves a hit off the field, posing with the Leeds women's Challenge Cup winners, but struggled against Castleford



flight. Williams was like a jack in the box, prowling the touchline and stretching his hamstrings while Castleford struck back with tries by Greg Eden and Grant Millington, before he got on in the 26th minute. It was an inauspicious start, the strapping 6ft 4in second-row forward — no longer a union centre — getting his hands on the ball almost immediately but knocking on as he backed into the innocuous challenge of Cheyse Blair.

An exchange of passes out wide with fellow veteran Jon Wilkin, the 36-year-old who was partly persuaded by Williams's signing to do another year at the Wolfpack coal face, was followed by a straightforward drive, then another knock on, to an inevitable chorus of "what a waste of money".

To put it mildly, Williams did not look up to speed. He looked on as Adam Milner plundered a third try and was in the right-side Toronto defence caught out by Michael Shenton's vision and footwork in the Tigers' threequarter line.

At 22-4 down, the half-time siren came as a relief. Peter Mata'utia added to Castleford's tally, before an interception try by Miloudi halted the rot and the game petered out. "He'll get better," said Daryl Powell, the Castleford head coach. "Once bedded in, he'll be great."

● Shaun Wane, who left Wigan Warriors after a third Grand Final success in 2018 to take up a part-time appointment with Scotland Rugby Union, will today be appointed the England head coach for the autumn series against Australia and the 2021 World Cup at home. Wane succeeds Wayne Bennett, the veteran Australian coach, whose contract was not renewed by the RFL after four straight defeats on last year's Great Britain tour to New Zealand and Papua New Guinea.

"marquee" status means it barely counts against Toronto's £2.1 million salary cap. Still, the club is just about up to the cap with a worryingly thin squad of 23 and has, for now, been refused dispensation to sign more players.

Toronto went into their opening match with only 18 fit personnel and are resigned to Williams going back to New Zealand for the birth of his fourth child after Saturday's game against Salford

Red Devils. He will be returning with his family and has been clear throughout that the best of him is likely to come in the second half of the campaign.

Williams is no stranger to Leeds. Rhinos fans still recall a shuddering tackle the young Sonny Bill put in on Marcus Bai during a bruising display in the 2005 World Club Challenge for Canterbury Bulldogs at Elland Road. And a sparkling hat-trick of tries

illuminated New Zealand's 2013 league World Cup defeat of Papua New Guinea at Headingley.

Six years on from his last league game with Sydney Roosters in the NRL, Williams emerged for the warm-up with strapping to his right leg and took his place on the bench. He was out of his seat after three minutes, when Liam Kay grounded Hakim Miloudi's grubber for Toronto's first try in the top

Britain find middle-distance star...in pair of new Nike spikes

Athletics
Matt Lawton
Chief Sports Correspondent

It was with a look of utter astonishment that Jemma Reekie responded to the time on the clock in Glasgow on Saturday. The 21-year-old British middle-distance runner, until now recognised more as a highly-promising training partner for Laura Muir, had entered the 800m with a personal best, set outdoors last summer, of 2min 01.45sec.

But after starting the last of the invitation event's four laps some five metres down on Muir, she ran a remarkable closing 200m, powering past the European 1500m champion and beating the indoor British record

by more than half a second in the process.

Reekie's time of 1:57.91 was the fastest by any woman indoors in 14 years, and elevated her to a level that makes her a serious medal prospect for the Tokyo Olympic Games this summer.

It has suddenly provided British athletics with a middle-distance rivalry not seen since the days of Sebastian Coe and Steve Ovett, with the added twist that they share a coach in Andy Young.

Reekie's sudden improvement, says Young, owes much to a sinus operation she underwent in December to correct a breathing issue. But there was some debate about the shoes she was wearing when she erased the 1:58.43 mark set by Jenny Meadows en route to winning a

world indoor silver medal in Doha ten years ago.

Even Reekie was stunned by her performance. "I don't even know what happened," she said on Twitter. "I need to process this."

As Young confirmed yesterday, Reekie was indeed wearing a Nike spike, like Muir's, that is not yet available to buy. Young says it will be on the market soon, and as if by magic — because nobody here would dare suggest the new parameters introduced by World Athletics on Friday were influenced by certain Nike products

Reekie's footwear caused some debate afterwards



already being worn by elite runners — it will fall just within the new maximum stack height regulation of 30mm.

But it is still worth noting that, had the new rules already been in existence, Reekie and Muir would not have been allowed to race in a shoe that boasts a single plastic plate (not carbon) and a sole packed with the same super-responsive foam that is used in Nike's record-breaking road shoes.

The new regulations state that from April 30 any shoe must have been available "on the open retail market [online or in store] for four months" before it can be used in competition.

In this state of flux between new and

old rules, Reekie's record will stand. And if the shoes will soon be legal that is probably fair enough, even if there could yet be a period after April 30 when they are under a temporary ban; a situation that sums up the more unsatisfactory aspects of a governing body belatedly trying to keep pace with these advances in shoe technology.

Nevertheless, we should not overlook the fact that Great Britain boasts two of the most exciting middle-distance runners in the world.

Although Young says the pair will take different routes at the Glasgow Grand Prix in February — Muir in the 1000m, Reekie opting for 1500m — the future looks exciting. Coe and Ovett here we come.



Harper is the first to congratulate England's third try-scorer Scarratt during a hard-fought win over France in a tough opening Six Nations encounter held in Pau

Red Roses dig deep for victory

France	13
England	19

Women's Six Nations

Carl Innes

England began their campaign with a hard-fought win over an attritional French side in Pau. Tries from Abigail Dow, Vicky Fleetwood and Emily Scarratt were enough to seal the victory for England, despite a second-half fightback from the French, whose sole try came from their scrum half, Laure Sansus.

It was England's fifth consecutive win over France and the perfect start to the defence of their 2019 Grand Slam. Their captain, Sarah Hunter, was quick to praise her side. "It was always going to be an attritional battle against France and they didn't disappoint," she said. "We knew we could force them into errors with enough pressure; that's down to our mindset and our coaches."

This was a real spectacle in front of more than 14,000 at the Stade du Hameau and undoubtedly featured the two best sides in the competition. Between them they have won 16 of the

18 tournaments since the women's Six Nations began in 2002.

England set the tone, spending most of the opening ten minutes in the French third of the field, and their persistent attack eventually paid off. After heavy carries from the forwards, a nice switch in midfield left an overlap on the outside and England spread the ball wide for Dow to cross in the corner.

With England still camped in the French half, they were two tries to the good shortly after. France conceded several penalties on their five-metre line, and, after a succession of lineouts, Fleetwood dived for the line from the back of a strong driving maul.

After 20 minutes of playing on the back foot, France hit back with a moment of magic. Their captain Gaëlle Hermet picked and ran through the middle of an unguarded ruck, popped the ball off to Sansus on her shoulder and France's No 9 grounded the ball.

As half-time approached, France narrowed the gap to two points with a penalty from Jessy Tremouliere, their star full back and 2018 world player of the year. France desperately searched for another score before the end of the half, but England absorbed the pressure and cleared the ball. If history is anything to go by, this fixture was

destined to be tightly contested, with the last three meetings being decided by a total of only 14 points.

The second half began at a much slower tempo than the first, but the game opened up as both sides began to tire in the searing 27-degree heat. It was England who took advantage: clean lineout ball gave them the momentum, the replacement Amber Reed broke the French line and offloaded to Scarratt, the talismanic vice-captain and 2019 world player of the year, to run in near the posts.

Entering the last ten minutes, and with a dominant scrum bolstered by replacements, France tried to force their way back into the game. Les Bleus looked certain to score after a succession of powerful scrums on the England line, but a wonderful turnover from Katy Daley-McLean allowed the Red Roses to clear their lines.

The French scrum did give Tremouliere an opportunity at three points, a penalty against the head gifting the full back a kick in front of the England posts which brought her side into losing bonus-point territory. England's game management was tested in the final minutes as France pushed for a winning try, but they were able to see out the game.

9
Of the ten Six Nations titles England have won since 2002, nine of them have been grand slams. The only one they failed to secure was in 2009

"We knew that this was going to be the toughest of starts," Scarratt said after a big win on French soil. "We're glad to get that one out of the way, we've got a lot to work on from that game and a lot of recovery to do, it was a tough one."

"The defence of the grand slam is on. It's a tough way to do it this year with three away games, it's definitely the start we wanted."

England: Tries Dow (9min), Fleetwood (18), Scarratt (62) Conversions Scarratt (2)
France: Tries Sansus (23) Conversion Tremouliere
Penalty goals Tremouliere 2 (35, 75)
Scoring sequence (France first) 0-5, 0-12, 7-12, 10-12, (half-time), 10-19, 13-19.
France J Tremouliere; C Boujard, C Boudaud, G Vernier (rep: N Konde 5-15min, 35), C Banet (rep: M Menager 52); P Bourdon, L Sansus (rep: M Peyronnet 65); L Arricastre (rep: D Traore 52), A Sochat (rep: C Thomas 59), A Deshayre (rep: C Joyeux 61), A Forlani, M Fall (rep: S N'Diaye 47), C Ferer (rep: J Annery 47), G Hermet (captain), R Menager.
England S McKenna; A Dow, E Scarratt, Z Harrison (rep: A Reed 55), J Breach; K Daley-McLean, N Hunt (rep: L Riley 55); H Botterman (rep: V Cornborough 49), A Cokayne (rep: L Davies 49), S Brown (rep: S Bern 40), P Cleall (rep: H Millar-Mills 73), Z Aldcroft, S Beckett, V Fleetwood (rep: A Harper 61), S Hunter (captain).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	B	Pts
England	1	1	0	0	19	13	0	4
Ireland	1	1	0	0	18	14	0	4
Italy	1	1	0	0	19	15	0	4
Scotland	1	0	0	1	14	18	1	1
Wales	1	0	0	1	15	19	1	1
France	1	0	0	1	13	19	1	1

Results

Basketball

BBL Championship
Cheshire 83 Sheffield 78. Saturday Bristol 98 Cheshire 94 (2 OT).

Cricket

Fifth T20 international
New Zealand v India

Mount Maunganui, Tauranga (India won toss): India beat New Zealand by seven runs

	(balls)
*K L Rahul c Santner b Bennett	45 (33)
S V Samson c Santner b Kuggeleijn	2 (5)
*R G Sharma retired hurt	60 (41)
S S Iyer not out	33 (31)
S Dube c Bruce b Kuggeleijn	5 (6)
M Pandey not out	11 (4)
Extras (lb 1, w 6)	7
Total (3 wkts, 20 overs)	163

W Sundar, S N Thakur, Y S Chahal, N A Saini and J J Bumrah did not bat.

Fall of wickets 1-8, 2-96, 3-148.

Bowling Southee 4-0-52-0; Kuggeleijn 4-0-25-2; Bennett 4-0-21-1; Sodhi 4-0-28-0; Santner 4-0-36-0.

	(balls)
New Zealand	2 (6)
M J Guptill lbw b Bumrah	

C Munro b Sundar	15 (6)
*T L Seifert c Samson b Saini	50 (30)
T C Bruce run out	0 (3)
L R P Taylor c Rahul b Saini	53 (47)
D J Mitchell b Bumrah	2 (4)
M J Santner c Pandey b Thakur	6 (7)
S C Kuggeleijn c Sundar b Thakur	0 (1)
*T G Southee b Bumrah	6 (5)
I S Sodhi not out	16 (10)
H K Bennett not out	1 (2)
Extras (lb 1, w 3, nb 1)	5
Total (9 wkts, 20 overs)	156

Fall of wickets 1-7, 2-17, 3-17, 4-116, 5-119, 6-131, 7-132, 8-133, 9-141.

Bowling Sundar 3-0-20-1; Bumrah 4-1-12-3; Saini 4-0-23-2; Thakur 4-0-38-2; Chahal 4-0-28-0; Dube 1-0-34-0.

Umpires C M Brown and S B Haig.

Man of the series K L Rahul (India).

India won five-match series 5-0

Tour matches

Paarl, South Africa England XI 346-7 (50 overs: J M Bairstow 100, J E Root 91, J L Denly 85; S Taik 4 for 56); Cricket South Africa Invitation XI 193-7 (30 overs: K W Sekhukhume 54). CSA Inv XI won by four wickets (D/L method). Carrara, Australia Cricket Australia XI 281-8 (50 overs: M Bryant 102); England Lions 285-4 (S R Hain 122 not out, L J Evans 94, D W Lawrence 50 not out). England Lions won by six wickets.

Women's Twenty20 tri-nations international
Canberra England 156-4 (20 overs: H C Knight 78); Australia 156-8 (20 overs: B L Mooney 65). Match tied, England won the Super Over.

Darts

Ladbroke's PDC World Masters
Marshall Arena, Milton Keynes (England unless stated): Quarter-finals M Smith bt A Lewis 10-6 legs; N Aspinall bt J Clayton (Wales) 10-8; G Anderson (Scotland) bt G Price (Wales) 10-2; P Wright (Scotland) bt D Chisnall 10-0. Semi-finals Smith bt Aspinall 11-10; Wright bt Anderson 11-7.

Golf

European Tour Saudi international
Royal Greens, King Abdullah Economic City: Leading final scores (Great Britain and Ireland unless stated): 268 G McDowell 64, 68, 66, 70. 270 D Johnson (US) 67, 68, 68, 67. 271 P Mickelson (US) 66, 70, 68, 67; G Green (Malaysia) 64, 67, 70, 70; T Pieters (Bel) 70, 67, 69, 65. 273 V Dubuisson (Fr) 69, 65, 65, 74; A Ancer (Mex) 69, 70, 67, 67; R Fisher 66, 68, 71, 68; S Garcia (Sp) 69, 68, 70, 66; T Detry (Bel) 73, 66, 65, 69. 274 D Burmester (SA) 71, 68, 68, 67; M Pavon (Fr) 68, 71, 67, 68. 275 S Lowry 69, 67, 70, 69; Wu Ashun (China) 71, 66, 68, 70; M Kaymer (Ger) 73, 64, 73, 65; P Larrazabal (Sp) 69, 68, 74, 64. Others: 276 B Koepka (US) 70, 69, 65, 72; I Poulter 72, 68, 65, 71.

USPGA Waste Management Phoenix Open
Scottsdale, Arizona: Leaders after three rounds (United States unless stated): 197 T Finau 69, 66, 62, 198 W Simpson 71, 63, 64, 199 J B Holmes 64, 65, 70; H Swafford 66, 67, 66, 200 X Schauffele 67, 67, 66; A Long 66, 68, 66; S Piercy 67, 65, 68. 201 An Byeong Hun (S Kor) 65, 66, 70; M Hubbard 69, 68, 64, 202 N Lashley 66, 67, 69. 203 L List 70, 69, 64; M Homa 72, 67, 64; J Rahm (Sp) 67, 68, 68; J Huh 71, 66, 66; T Hoge 65, 71, 67. Others: 205 J Thomas 68, 68, 69; R Knox (GB) 71, 67, 67.

Ice hockey

Elite League
Belfast 0 Cardiff 1; Coventry 4 Manchester 0; Guildford 6 Sheffield 5; Nottingham 2 Fife 0. Saturday Belfast 1 Cardiff 0; Fife 2 Coventry 5; Glasgow 2 Dundee 3 (shoot-out); Manchester 1 Guildford 2 (OT); Sheffield 1 Nottingham 5.

Rugby league

Betfred Super League Leeds Rhinos 4 Hull 30; Toronto Wolfpack 10 Castleford Tigers 28 (at Emerald Headingley). Saturday Catalans Dragons 12 Huddersfield Giants 32.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
St Helens	1	1	0	0	48	8	2
Hull	1	1	0	0	30	4	2
Huddersfield	1	1	0	0	32	12	2
Hull KR	1	1	0	0	30	12	2

Castleford	1	1	0	0	28	10	2
Wigan	1	1	0	0	16	10	2
Warrington	1	0	0	1	10	16	0
Wakefield	1	0	0	1	12	30	0
Toronto Wolfpack	1	0	0	1	10	28	0
Catalans Dragons	1	0	0	1	12	32	0
Leeds	1	0	0	1	4	30	0
Salford	1	0	0	1	8	48	0

Betfred Championship Batley Bulldogs 18 Featherstone Rovers 38; Bradford Bulls 14 London Broncos 18; Halifax 18 Sheffield Eagles 17; Oldham 6 Widnes Vikings 36; Whitehaven 0 Swinton Lions 14. Saturday Toulouse 22 York City Knights 10.

Rugby union

Guinness Six Nations Championship France 24 England 17 (at Stade de France). Saturday Ireland 19 Scotland 12 (at Aviva Stadium); Wales 42 Italy 0 (at Principality Stadium).

Table on page 62

Under-20 Six Nations France 24 England 29 (at Stade des Alpes, Grenoble).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	B	Pts
Ireland	1	1	0	0	38	26	1	5
Italy	1	1	0	0	17	7	0	4
England	1	1	0	0	29	24	0	4
Scotland	1	0	0	1	26	38	1	1
France	1	0	0	1	24	29	0	0
Wales	1	0	0	1	7	17	0	0

Ali: I'm ready to fight for my place back in the Test squad

CONTINUED FROM BACK

tell Silverwood and Root he is ready to return after a period away from the red-ball game. The only complication is his deal to play for Multan Sultans in the Pakistan Super League, the latter half of which overlaps with the tour of Sri Lanka. However, it is understood Andy Flower, the former England coach who is in charge of Multan, is sympathetic to Ali's situation and will not stand in the way of him returning to play for his country. The squad for Sri Lanka is set to be announced soon after England's return from South Africa.

As they did on their last visit to Sri Lanka in late 2018, England will take at least three spinners on the tour, with Ali certain to be included alongside Dom Bess and, fitness permitting, Jack Leach, who returned home early from South Africa after failing to fully recover from the sepsis he contracted on the tour of New Zealand before Christmas.

Ali, who played his first game for England since the Ashes in Saturday's final 50-over tour match against a South Africa Invitation XI, is not expected to play in the first ODI in Cape Town tomorrow.

However, he hinted he is ready to return to Test cricket during an interview with Sky Sports, admitting: "Even in the [one-day] warm-up games here, I was thinking 'I have missed this', which is exactly the feeling I want."

"There were times when I thought I was going to quit playing Test matches, but I spoke to Rooty and he felt I was still a big part of this team. I am going to speak to Spoons [Silverwood] and Rooty [about Sri Lanka] but ultimately it is about if I feel I am ready to play again. I know even if I decide to go to Sri Lanka I might not get in straightaway but I am going to fight for my place. I thought [Dom] Bess bowled really well in South Africa but it was almost like, 'yeah, I could do that, I can still do that'."

"I want to come back a better player. I don't want to ever go through [how I was feeling] again."

Ali last month admitted he felt "burnt out" last summer and has revealed he was hoping to be dropped after a poor performance in the first Test against Australia. "I had to get myself up for the Ashes and I remember bowling thinking, 'I do not want to be here,'" he said. "It is the worst possible place a cricketer can be. I can see when I look back that my body language was horrendous. It was such a big game and the harder I tried the worse I got."

Women's Six Nations France 13 England 19 (at Stade du Hameau, Pau); Ireland 18 Scotland 14 (at Energia Park, Dublin); Wales 15 Italy 19 (at Cardiff Arms Park).

Premiership Cup: Semi-final Exeter Chiefs 22 Harlequins 49.

Greene King IPA Championship Newcastle Falcons 45 Amphilth & District 29. Saturday Bedford Blues 27 Jersey Reds 25; Coventry 28 Cornish Pirates 23; Doncaster 15 London Scottish 13; Ealing Trailfinders 59 Hartpury 5.

Guinness Pro12 Cheetahs 45 Southern Kings 0.

Snooker

BetVictor German Masters
Tempodrom, Berlin: Semi-finals J Trump (Eng) bt G Dott (Scotland) 6-4; N Robertson (Aus) bt S Murphy (Eng) 6-1. Final (best-of-17 frames) Trump leads Robertson 8-5.

Tennis

Australian Open
Melbourne Park: Finals (seeds in brackets): Men: Singles (2) N Djokovic (Serbia) bt (5) D Thiem (Austria) 6-4, 4-6, 2-6, 6-3, 6-4. Doubles (11) R Ram (US) and J Salisbury (GB) bt M Purcell (Aus) and L Saville (Aus) 6-4, 6-2. Women: Singles (14) S Kenin (US) bt G Muguruza (Sp) 4-6, 6-2, 6-2. Mixed doubles (5) B Krejčíková (Cz) and N Mektic (Cro) bt B Mattek-Sands (US) and J Murray (GB) 5-7, 6-4, 10-1.

Sport Six Nations

Tompkins display sets Pivac a poser

Wales	42
Italy	0

Steve James

So does Wayne Pivac now select Nick Tompkins at outside centre against Ireland in Dublin next Saturday?

The new Wales head coach certainly has some interesting decisions to make this week, as Gareth Davies, the scrum half, is also expected to be fit again (full back Liam Williams is only "touch-and-go" according to Pivac) and will put pressure on Tomos Williams, who had a fine match. But the call on Tompkins looks to be the most fascinating.

The 24-year-old Saracens centre made a stunning debut. First he made a cameo first-half appearance while another debutant, the wing Johnny McNicholl, was undergoing a Head Injury Assessment, and he played a big part in the first of Josh Adams's three tries as he took the No13 role, with George North shifted out to the wing. Then Tompkins shone as a permanent second-half replacement for Hadleigh Parkes at inside centre, from where he scored a thrilling try.

"Nick showed that he's got a lot of talent and ability," Pivac said. "He was given an opportunity and he took it with both hands. You love to see that on debut. The try he got... we were seeing that at training with his footwork and acceleration. It was pleasing that 68,500 people got to see it. A lot of people now know who Tompkins is."

They certainly do, but that does not make him a certain starter in Dublin on Saturday. Owen Watkin will be fit by then and in fairness North did decently here, scoring a try of his own, and having another disallowed.

"I thought George went well," Pivac said. "It's been a while since he's started a Test match at centre. He took up the challenge well and you saw he got a lot more touches on the ball. He'll only improve from that performance."

And Wales will need to improve in quite a few areas if they are to win in Dublin for the first time in the Six Nations since 2012. For this was a rather curious game, which Wales won extremely comfortably without really clicking.

Wales's set-piece wobbled at times,

with some mitigation for the scrum-mage coming in the fact that they were unable to get too much quality practice in that area of their game during the week because of sodden fields at their Vale of Glamorgan training base.

"We'd done a lot of scrum work, we just didn't have much success because of the ground we'd been working on," Pivac said. "We'll review that. There are three things you look at with scrum-maging — the opposition and what they're doing illegally or not, what we're doing, and what the referee is interpreting. Jonathan Humphreys [the forwards coach] will go through it with a fine-tooth comb and we'll aim to improve it next time."

But there were some memorable moments, not least fly half Dan Biggar's through-the-legs pass for Adams's second try, further evidence of a change in Biggar's skillset and mindset since coming under Chris Boyd's influence at Northampton Saints.

"The boys have given me a bit of stick; I think I could have just passed it normally," Biggar said. "It was slightly behind me, so I thought I would just flick it and hope for the best. Josh did what he does so well."

Indeed Adams, who rather ironically was released by the Scarlets academy in 2015 when Pivac was head coach of the region, has become quite some finisher. He has now scored ten tries in his last eight Tests.

"I liked his last try," Pivac said. "He could have easily just parked up out on his wing but after more than 80 minutes, he's in close to the ruck looking for the ball and using his strengths to get over the tryline. Very pleased for him."

Adams's team-mates are certainly enjoying his work, even if there is still room for some mickey-taking.

"The boys were giving him a bit of stick for having a couple of walk-ins from a yard out to up his try tally," Biggar said. "He is an out-and-out finisher. The confidence he is playing with — when you are playing that well the ball just seems to find you as well. If he was in a New Zealand shirt, or something like that, he would be getting even more praise probably because his record is fantastic."

And Adams will surely get plenty more try-scoring opportunities given the way Pivac is encouraging his charges to play.

"We are trying to open up the field as



3
Tries Tompkins scored in 12 appearances for the England U20 team, before switching allegiance to Wales as a senior international

Tompkins marked his debut with a try but is by no means certain to be selected for Wales's game in Dublin on Saturday

much as possible by playing off No 10," Biggar said. "With Wayne generally it has been about positivity, playing with speed and width. He made a good point in the hotel before we came down about winning as many physical battles as possible, which makes putting width on the game a lot easier."

Those physical battles will be a lot tougher in Dublin.

Wales: Tries Adams (18min, 30, 81), Tompkins (59), North (77) Conversions Biggar (2), Halfpenny (2) Penalty goals Biggar 3 (4, 11, 16)
Scoring sequence (Wales first) 3-0, 6-0, 9-0, 14-0, 21-0 (half-time) 28-0, 33-0, 35-0, 40-0, 42-0.
Wales L Halfpenny; J McNicholl (rep: N Tompkins 10-21), G North, H Parkes (rep: Tompkins 51), J Adams; D Biggar (rep: J Evans 68), T Williams (rep: R Webb 60); W Jones (rep: R Evans 55), K Owens (rep: Elias 63), D Lewis (rep: L Brown 60), J Ball (rep: C Hill 55), A W Jones, A Wainwright, J Tipuric, T Faletau (rep: R Moriarty 51).
Italy M Minozzi; L Sarto (rep: J Hayward 55), L Morisi, C Canna, M Bellini; T Allan, C Braley (rep: G Palazzani 70); A Lovotti (rep: D Fischetti 46), L Bigi (rep: F Zani 68), G Zilocchi (rep: M Riccioni 46), A Zanni (rep: M Lazzaroni 46), N Cannone (rep: D Budd 70), J Polledri, S Negri (rep: G Licata 55), A Steyn. Referee: L Pearce (Eng). Attendance 68,582.

Biggar's brilliance

Wales's fly half, Dan Biggar, received a rushed pass from his scrum half, Tomos Williams, that was too low. Rather than turning his body as he caught the ball to brace for contact, Biggar instead threw the ball between his legs to Josh Adams, catching the Italian defence off-guard.



Italy are toothless and naive but Georgia would not be any better

Steve James

So that is 23 on the trot now. Twenty-three long games the Italians have gone without a victory in the Six Nations. Their average points difference over those games since 2015 is -26. They are generally not even getting close.

Wales did not play that well for some periods on Saturday and yet still won by 42 unanswered points, the first time an opponent had not scored a point in the Five or Six Nations in Cardiff since Scotland were scoreless in 1974.

This is not a new subject and solutions are not simple or obvious, but how much longer are we going to tolerate

this? The Principality Stadium was not full and the atmosphere was as subdued as at any international there in recent memory. It was because there was not a meaningful contest taking place. The result was not in doubt, even long before Wales took a 21-0 half-time lead.

It was a subject that was put to the new Wales head coach, Wayne Pivac, and he was understandably diplomatic.

"I loved their endeavour," he said. "Obviously there is some change there [with new interim head coach Franco Smith], they're looking to change the way they play and it takes time."

"With their shape and the way they're attacking, they caused us

Declining Six Nations fortunes

Italy beat Scotland 22-19 in 2015 but their form has plummeted since

	Played	Tries scored	Tries conceded	Ave losing margin
2015	2	2	10	35
2016	5	8	29	29
2017	5	6	26	30.2
2018	5	12	27	22.2
2019	5	10	22	17.6
2020	1	0	5	42
Total	23	38	119	29.3

problems at times. I'm sure they will get better as the competition goes on. I'll let other people determine those sorts of things [Italy's future in the tournament]."

But Wales must have been shocked at Italy's toothlessness and naivety. If Scotland's Stuart Hogg admitted to a "schoolboy error" in dropping the ball over the line in Dublin, then goodness knows what the Italian defence were confessing to for the first two tries of Josh Adams's hat-trick.

So what to do? The trouble is that Italy are probably much better than the next best team in Europe, Georgia, who have won the Rugby Europe Champi-

onship in eight of the last nine seasons (Romania won it in 2017). When Italy and Georgia last met in November 2018, Italy won 28-17.

Maybe more patience is required. It did take France more than 40 years to win their first Five Nations title after all and it should be noted that on Friday night at Colwyn Bay the Italian Under-20s beat their Welsh counterparts 17-7.

Perhaps we should, though, skip over the fact that the man of the match was Italy's scrum half, Gloucester's Stephen Varney, son of the former Neath flanker, Adrian, who was born in Pembroke-shire but qualifies for Italy through his mother.

I know exactly how Stuart will be feeling

Hogg's drop in Dublin may haunt him but he will soon bounce back, writes **Stuart Barnes**

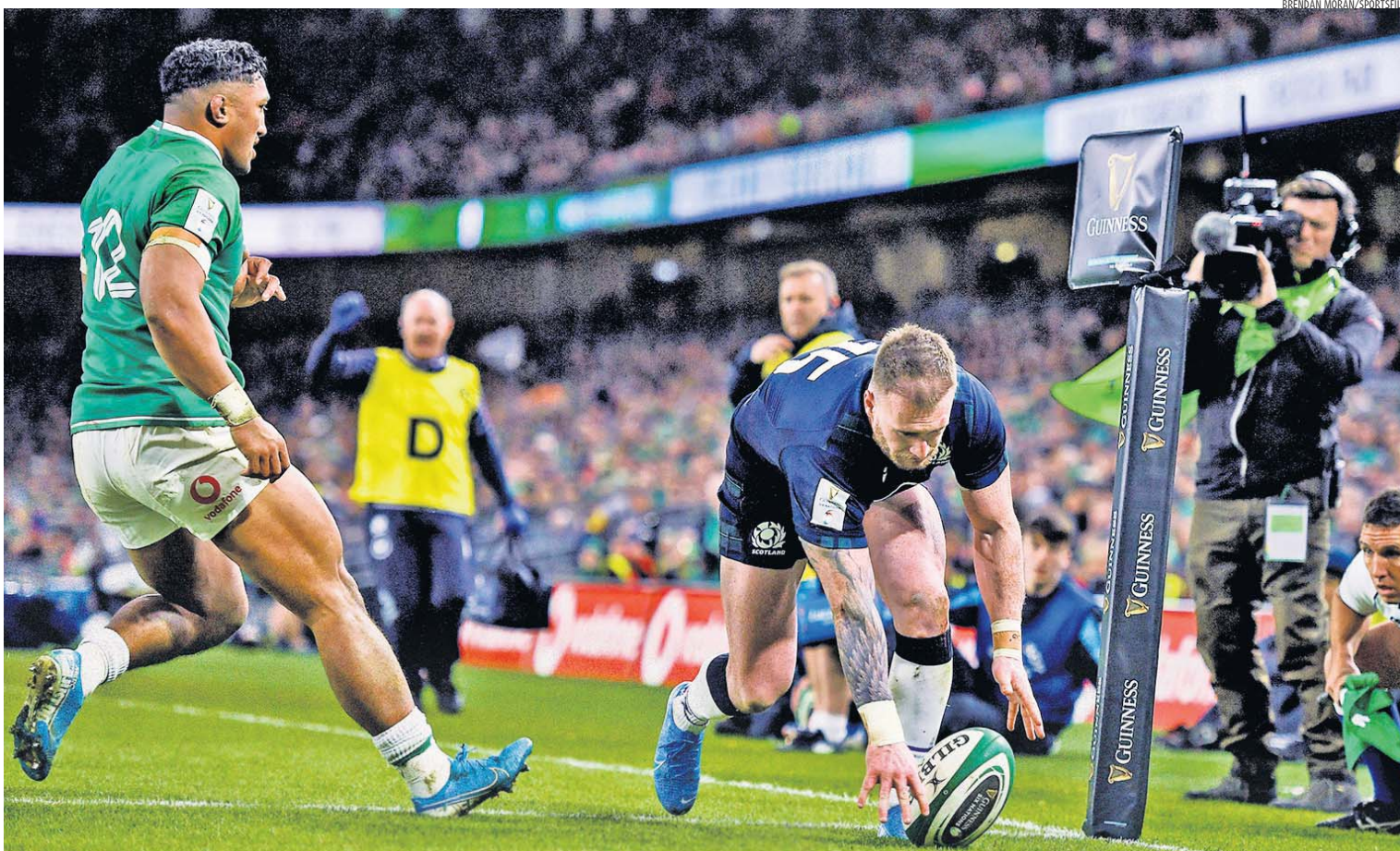
Captain Calamity. It was the cruellest of headlines on the front page of *The Sunday Times* sports section. A cruel moment in what has been an illustrious career for Stuart Hogg. This was no show-boating display of vanity with Scotland 13-6 behind.

Scotland's new skipper apologised to his team, stunned by a split second that will rewind its way through his mind for years to come. The pain is personal but the angst is driven by rugby's collective nature.

There are two types of captain. The cerebral type and the bloke who leads by example. Hogg — a full back on the fringe of the game for large parts — is exemplary. And it was his action that cost Scotland points.

I can empathise. I captained a young and exciting England development team on tour in New Zealand way back when. We played an All Black B-side. No coverage, no headlines but it mattered to us. Like Scotland, we were the better team; like Scotland, the captain bombed it. In my case missing kick after kick.

It hurt because I felt it was *all* my fault. Hogg will feel 100 times worse. Captain Calamity's drop is now part of his legend. The cruel online world takes care of that. When the pain subsides even his mates will tease him. That's how rugby deals with what feels like disaster but is only an error. He's still Stuart Hogg to me.



Four misses to help Hogg over howler

Christophe Dominici
France v Italy, 2004
Christophe Dominici, the flamboyant but erratic French wing broke through the defence and

over the try line. Problem was, Dominici kept hurtling towards the dead-ball line. He panicked and the ball fell from his hands. Bernard Laporte, the France head coach, described Dominici as "an imbecile".

Owen Farrell
Toulouse v Saracens, 2016
There was no pressure whatsoever when Farrell

was put into space in this Champions Cup clash. As he arced behind the posts he somehow dropped the ball and Toulouse won the game.

Juan Manuel Leguizamón
London Irish v Wasps, 2007
The acrobatic swallow-dive move was not Leguizamón's trademark and when the Argentinean flanker flew over the line the ball flew off

in a different direction. When London Irish coach Toby Booth was asked if Leguizamón would have to buy the post-match drinks, he said: "Yes, so long as he's not carrying them."

Will Carling
Middlesex Sevens, 1990
In March of 1990 he led his all-conquering England side to Murrayfield expecting to

finish off a Five Nations Grand Slam, only to be beaten. But the greatest humiliation of the year occurred here, for, after coasting in for what looked a sure try in the final, he was held up in a tackle by two Rosslyn Park players who picked him clean off the ground and deposited him on the wrong side of the dead-ball line.

Positives for Scotland to take into Calcutta Cup clash despite defeat

Injury rules Ringrose out for two games

Peter O'Reilly

Ireland	19
Scotland	12

Alasdair Reid
Scottish Rugby Correspondent, Dublin

Scotland came to Dublin with the aim of restoring a reputation trashed by their flat performances at the World Cup and they left with the job half-done. Yes, they had the bite, the menace and the aggression that had been missing in critical games in Japan, but their penalty count was alarming, their error count hair-raising and their finishing — well, the nicest way to put it is that finishing just wasn't their thing.

Stuart Hogg's 51st minute fumble, when he dropped the ball over the line under no pressure whatsoever, to deny Scotland what could have been an equalising score, will have a special place on rugby bloopers reels for years to come. Hogg called it a "schoolboy error", but Rory Sutherland, the prop who actually played alongside Hogg at their primary school in Hawick, struggled to recall the full back producing anything quite so lurid as that in their younger days.

Gregor Townsend, the Scotland head coach, knows Hogg well enough to understand that the incident is more

likely to motivate the new captain than drive him into his shell.

"He played very well," Townsend said. "We don't judge players on one mistake in the game — there's hundreds of mistakes in any game — and we did get three points [from a subsequent penalty] from that passage. We had other opportunities to score five and seven points and he'll be fine and will bounce back. I think he's a real driving force as captain of this side."

The fact that Hogg had been in his sickbed only 48 hours earlier made his personal display all the more noteworthy. But there were many others in the Scotland side who delivered more than had been expected of them.

Sutherland was a revelation after almost four injury-plagued years out of the side. Nick Haining, the new No 8, put in a hugely impressive shift. Overall, the front-five forwards out-muscled their opponents with a performance as good as any Scottish side has produced in years.

And yet, they still lost. Nor was it any travesty that they were on the wrong end of the scoreline at the final whistle, for no side that butchers and blunders as badly as Scotland did on Saturday can feel hard done by after such a result. Moreover, they clearly caught Ireland cold and out of sorts, for aside from Johnny Sexton's slick and clever tenth-minute try it was hard to recall another

Irish attack that showed any great level of wit or ambition.

That, though, was probably not too surprising. Andy Farrell, the new head coach, has hinted at wanting Ireland to play a different and more ambitious game than the one Joe Schmidt engineered in his years in charge, but he has also made it clear that evolution, not revolution will be the way ahead.

As expected, Ireland had the better of the breakdown, but not to anything like the extent they have enjoyed in most of their clashes with Scotland over the past few years. Wales, certainly, will feel there are areas to exploit in Ireland's forward game. Ireland were lucky to have had a referee as indulgent as Mathieu Raynal was in overlooking some of their work in contact. Townsend was furious about what he saw as a series of offside infringements by the Irish defence, during which they treated the concept of offside as a suggestion rather than a matter of law.

Ireland had their own frustrations to deal with. Caelan Doris, the debutant No 8, had some wretched luck when he sustained a concussion just four minutes into the game and had to be taken off; Dave Kilcoyne suffered a similar fate. Scotland, incredibly, appeared to come through with no injury concerns: a massive boost ahead of next Saturday's Calcutta Cup clash at Murrayfield, when they will also have the

advantage of one more recovery day than their England opponents.

Scotland will also go into that game with a new appreciation of the importance of starting well. In recent games against Ireland, and England for that matter, they have been supine in the opening stages, coughed up soft points and had to chase from then on. Even if they did lose that early try to Sexton, there was a new menace and determination about Scotland in that part of the game.

They will come up against a bruised England at Murrayfield and the possibility of holding on to the Calcutta Cup for a third successive year will be a prospect to relish. Scotland have two parts of a decent game in their locker: if they can pull them out on the same day, then who knows what might happen?

Ireland: Try Sexton (10min). **Conversion** Sexton. **Penalty goals** Sexton 4 (34, 44, 56, 76). **Scotland:** **Penalty goals** Hastings 4 (5, 15, 52, 65). **Scoring sequence** (Ireland first): 0-3, 7-3, 7-6, 10-6 (half-time) 13-6, 13-9, 16-9, 16-12, 19-12. **Ireland:** J Larmour; A Conway, G Ringrose (rep: R Henshaw, 40); B Aki, J Stockdale; J Sexton (rep: R Byrne, 72); C Murray (rep: J Cooney, 60); C Healy (rep: D Kilcoyne, 49); A Porter, 66; R Herring (rep: R Kelleher, 72); T Furlong (rep: C Healy, 78); I Henderson (rep: D Toner, 67); J Ryan, CJ Stander, J Van der Flier, C Doris (rep: P O'Mahony, 4). **Scotland:** S Hogg; S Maitland, H Jones (rep: C Harris, 65); S Johnson (rep: R Hutchinson, 72); B Kinghorn; A Hastings, A Price (rep: G Horne, 65); R Sutherland (rep: A Dell, 65); F Brown (rep: S McNally 46-50, 56); Z Fagerson (rep: WP Nel, 72); S Cummings, J Gray (rep: B Toolis, 65); J Ritchie, H Watson, N Haining (rep: C du Preez, 72). **Referee** M Raynal (France).

Garry Ringrose will miss Ireland's next two Six Nations games after fracturing his left thumb during Saturday's hard-fought victory over Scotland.

The 25-year-old centre will undergo an operation today. His recovery time is estimated at four weeks, meaning he would miss Saturday's game against Wales in Dublin and the trip to Twickenham on February 23.

The most obvious replacement for Andy Farrell, the new head coach, to pick is Robbie Henshaw, the experienced 26-year-old. With 41 caps to his name, Henshaw also has a good understanding with the inside centre, Bunde Aki, having played alongside him during Connacht's successful Guinness Pro12 campaign in 2015-16.

Farrell is due to announce the team to play Wales tomorrow, when he will know more about the availability of two other injured players, the No 8, Caelan Doris, and prop Dave Kilcoyne.

Farrell intimated that he had been considering tweaks in selection from week to week, but he was first interested in watching the tape of Wales's 42-0 demolition of Italy to see how they have changed under Wayne Pivac.

"They're playing a wider, more expansive game and we know how the Scarlets played over the years," Farrell said. "I haven't seen the game [against Italy] but I saw the game against the Barbarians and they are dangerous."

Sport Six Nations

Farrell lacks calm authority

Stuart Barnes

Paris



If not now, when? Once again Owen Farrell failed to find the leadership required by his beleaguered England colleagues. This was the 23rd game in which the hugely competitive Saracen has worn the captain's arm band. England might have played in patches of purple until South Africa left them bruised and battered en route to World Cup glory but his record of 14 wins, eight defeats and a draw is unspectacular — to say the least.

Yesterday offered, yet again, enough compelling evidence to suggest that Jones has appointed the wrong man to spearhead England's attempts to recover from World Cup disappointment. Farrell cut a frustrated and forlorn figure in a first half where next to nothing went right for the visiting team. Rugby union isn't about the solitary general; it is supposedly chock full of leaders. All the more essential when the genie that is the Jones game plan is put back in the bottle by a team that rammed his inspirational words — inspirational for France — down his throat.

But that is not to say that the captain isn't the epicentre of the effort with his decision-making and examples set; he's the man you look to in a crisis. When England have been in a crisis situation, there hasn't been much in the way of guidance from their skipper.

In the 27th minute, Ben Youngs kicked a clearance an incredible 50 metres on the tightest of angles. The Bath lock, Charlie Ewels, stole the French throw and England were in space. George Ford passed to his long-time mate and captain, who duly knocked the ball on under no pressure whatsoever. These things happen. But there's a time and a place for human error and it is not when your team is pointless and taking a pasting.

The television director zeroed in on the gaunt face of the England captain. The look was of a hollowed and haunted man. Farrell in club colours and Farrell as England captain are not one and the same. To make the point, he knocked on two minutes later; England already had an advantage but another opportunity was wasted. The half finished with his petulant push in the face of one of the French forwards.

Nor was his attempt to curry favour with Nigel Owens successful. Men like Martin Johnson and Richie McCaw had that certain knack of leaning into the referee and explaining exactly what had happened. Farrell — so fiery and competitive — is a wound-up bundle of frustration, barely in control of his emotions, let alone playing the on-field diplomat with authority. His ferocity is in many ways part of what makes Farrell the fine player he is, but it is a negative when he skips a side.

He is not a cool, calm captain, rather an out-and-out warrior. There is a role for him, but the evidence of his career as England's leader suggests he would be better without the responsibility.

Jones will not see it this way. Indeed, as the game wore on into its final few minutes it was Ford who was

sacrificed as the England head coach made the decision to move Farrell to fly half and bring Exeter's Ollie Devoto into the midfield equation.

Farrell is a firm favourite and it takes a great deal for Jones to substitute him. In last season's Six Nations he had lost the plot against Scotland, joining in the Finn Russell free-for-all extravaganza, but Jones stuck with him as his mistakes mounted. When Ford belatedly entered the fray he saved the day for England.

And in Paris it was quite obviously Ford who drove England's second half progress until his substitution late in the game. That killer kicking game of his gave England large chunks of territory. He bounded in pursuit of his kicks, pointing, chivvying his teammates as England sought what for so long seemed to be an impossible fightback.

The Leicester Tiger was directing the England team. The high balls were more precise, the drilled kicks squeezed France into the corners where England like to maul teams to their rugby death, to brutalise them. But still, it was the fly half who was substituted to allow an off-form Farrell to conjure the impossible.

Of the two men it is Ford who possesses the greater vision, the greater poise. What England do with their selection ahead of the trip to

Barnes's XV of the weekend

1 R Sutherland Scotland	2 F Brown Scotland	3 G Zilocchi Italy
4 B Le Roux France	5 I Henderson Ireland	
6 C Ollivon France	8 G Alldrit France	7 J Tipuric Wales
9 A Dupont France	10 D Biggar Wales	12 N Tompkins Wales
		13 G North Wales
11 V Rattiez France	15 L Halfpenny Wales	14 J May England

Edinburgh is going to be fascinating. Watching the second half of this England defeat it was hard to believe that Farrell was the captain and Ford, to all extents and purposes, his junior.

The smaller of the two fly halves has shown his aptitude for leadership at Leicester. In a period of crisis he kept them up almost single-handed last season. He was certainly the guiding spirit of a troubled England team in Paris.

Farrell is worth his place in the side. He had a poor game yesterday; that doesn't detract from the fact that he is a fine player. I would continue with him as inside centre. His international record and some of his headstrong performances as captain indicate that until he can master his own emotions he is not best suited to lead his country.

Ford would be a superior skipper but the probability is that he will move back to the bench next week and allow Farrell back into his favoured position. The blinkers are on, the vision narrowing under pressure.

Rattiez plays to the whistle as May stops and allows France to extend lead



I should have played to the whistle,

Owen Slot
Chief Rugby Correspondent, Paris

Jonny May scored both of England's tries in the Stade de France but was left acknowledging afterwards that he was completely at fault for the embarrassing error that led to France scoring in the first half.

The try scored by Charles Ollivon was a howler by England because it was the kind of error that young players are warned against in junior rugby.

Always play to the whistle, they say. May's error was that he stopped in his tracks and, while Ollivon was finishing off the try, May was waving at the referee, calling for him to award a knock-on.

"Certainly, that's one of the first things you learn as a kid isn't it?" May said. "Play to the whistle — and I didn't, so I'll own that one."



May went some way to atoning for his costly error with two second-half tries

May stopped when he thought he saw a clear knock-on by Ollivon, who had contested a high ball with Courtney Lawes. When the ball bounced off Ollivon, it was caught by Vincent Rattiez, right next to May, and May elected not to tackle Rattiez but to gesticulate at Nigel Owens, the referee. "Nigel did go to blow his whistle,"



May said. "You can't necessarily hear it."

After the score, the try was reviewed by Brian MacNeice, the Irish TMO. Together with Owens, it was decided that there was no clear knock-on because the ball appeared to have come off Lawes.

Eddie Jones suggested that he

needed to be leader of men

DAVE WINTER/ICON SPORT/GETTY IMAGES; TIMES PHOTOGRAPHER MARC ASPLAND

Video referee awards try after May stops for 'knock-on'

England were 10-0 down when Courtney Lawes and Charles Ollivon jumped for a high ball. The ball bounced off one of the players into the hands of Vincent Rattez, who passed back to Ollivon to score. Jonny May was so convinced Ollivon



had knocked the ball on he stopped playing. The TMO checked for the

knock-on but could not find any evidence to rule out the try.



Using the angles available from the French broadcaster, the TMO concluded that the ball had gone back off Lawes' arm



A confused May, right, looks back at the assistant referee on the touchline as Rattez and Ollivon run past him to score

admits May It was probably knocked on but footage was inconclusive

thought the decision was wrong. He said: "I used to play cricket and be given out and a lot of times I wasn't out. But in the scorebook it said I was out. It doesn't matter what you think, it matters what the referee's decision is. He made the decision. It's his 98th Test and he gets them right more than often."

Jones did agree that May was at fault. "You always get taught to keep playing to the whistle," he said. "I thought he blew the whistle at one stage. It's a mistake we made."

May made amends for his error with a fine brace of tries in the second half. His first try was a chip and chase, the second was a piece of individual brilliance. He said: "I just went down the edge and slowed up a little bit and then reaccelerated to get outside, and then just cut in, but because I cut in so hard I just had to stick with that line."

Rob Debney

Former International referee



The TMO's decision to award France's second try to Charles Ollivon could have gone either way but based on the evidence provided, the right call was made.

The TMO is only as good as the camera angles they get. They may get several angles but once they have made a decision, may not use the remaining angles available.

I suspect the ball was knocked on by Ollivon as he tried to catch it, but

it was correct not to overturn the decision as there was no clear and obvious evidence in the footage used at the time.

Sometimes after the game there are other unused camera angles that prove the TMO was wrong, but we do not want an American Football-like situation where there is a four minute break to look at every angle for every decision.

England's true problem was that everyone stopped. Vincent Rattez practically walked past Jonny May, who had his arms up to Nigel Owens, the referee. Had England played to the whistle, May would have put in a tackle and probably prevented the try. You have to play to the whistle — we are all taught that from school.

France are back – and the Six Nations is much better for it

The Stade de France came alive at last but emptying the bench almost cost them, writes Stephen Jones in Paris

Replacements. Who needs them? Not France, on this evidence. In the modern game in Britain they call them finishers or game-changers. Both nonsense terms, both a handy excuse for coaches not to have to tell a player he has been kicked out.

But yesterday it seemed for a long time that the blizzard of French replacements were finishers all right. They almost finished France. Game-changers? Yes, they were that too. France were dominating till their own reinforcements arrived. Fabien Galthié, the head coach, sent too many on too quickly; he needed to stagger them for the team to effect the changes.

France anticipated replacements a long time ago — way before they were officially allowed, they used them in droves in their domestic rugby. But they never grasped the possibilities when they went official. French replacements never seem to be tuned up, in body and mind, to make a difference. They seem to simply fill the jerseys.

Replacements need to be as passionate and steely as the starting team in the anthems and to be what they used to call them in football: supersubs.

They almost paid a shocking price for it yesterday. The scrum went to pot, the composure disappeared, the conviction became hair-raising panic.

France were the better team, by a long way. They had a back row, did they ever. Grégory Alldritt, François Cros and Charles Ollivon looked like a unit; they were wonderful.

Romain Ntamack was excellent at fly half. The last time they had a proper one who lasted the seasons was, it seems, when England and Britain were out of Europe politically — because they had not joined yet and General Charles de Gaulle was refusing to let them in.

All sorts of scruffy triers have failed over the years. Ntamack looked like a pedigree. He looked calm and collected. You're in for 50 caps, young man.

And the relief for the country! Paris has fallen so easily for so long. The Six Nations has had a blue hole in it. Yesterday, Paris stood high and proud, it provided a ferocious test and England could not pass it.

In all the key areas of the game until the last quarter, England's promises to be the bullies, to savage France in a physical epic, looked ludicrous, pointless. Eddie Jones came across as a braggart with nothing to back it up.

What did Galthié and Shaun Edwards, the new head coach and the new defence coach, prove? Last year the French Federation gave a vote to every

club in the land. Should they tear up their age-old philosophy of employing only a Frenchman as head coach of the national team?

It was a crazy idea. How is the president of a local village team meant to know who is available amongst the supercoaches on the global stage. It was a landslide — French only, for ever.

But Galthié is at least worldly, speaks excellent English, can broadcast in both languages and at least is not so blatantly identified with any faction as other contenders.

Edwards is from Wigan and spent 12 years with Wales, in which he reinvented the Welsh defence and its style at least four times. He has been with France for a maximum of four sessions.

But this is an incredible man. By all accounts his crash course in French has been so successful that he does not even need an interpreter. He also demonstrates himself what he needs in terms of tackling shape, systems in the back division, the back three, the forwards, and the scrum half. The blue wall.

This was the best display of French defending I can recall, and by some distance. They forced England to resort to scrummaging and kicking, they shut the George Ford attack down completely. The only problem was that the switch exposed the French bench.

France won and deserved it. It is tempting to say that neutrals would have loved this occasion and the result, but in the Six Nations you would have to find one first. To be passionate about your own is the whole point.

This we can say. No Six Nations can be described as vintage, or even excellent, if France have not been themselves. The French have always been a test that any team must pass to prove its physical and mental hardness and long after that, technical excellence.

Ah, the French book of rugby. It is the biggest book in the world. Everyone is on a different page. The national coaches and domestic coaches, the players, the national and regional rugby authorities, the retired maestros revelling in embossed tales of flair and punching, the autocratic club presidents and their allies and enemies and lackeys. They all see it different.

Selection alone has been so abysmally incoherent over the past decade that if you trawl through all the France-qualified players in the Top 14 you find almost all of them seem to have a cap.

Yesterday, it was all trimmed back. It was as if Galthié was a supercoach, Edwards was a Frenchman, and so France had discipline, confidence and intent. Until the replacements arrived they were superb, mixing discipline with deadly attack. It was as if the bad experiences were distilled into one, small, glorious notebook. At last.

The smell of cordite was in the air in Paris last night. France are a true test again. This is so warmly welcome for the rugby nation — and so too the tribe of neutrals, happy in their phone box.

33

Years since the last time England failed to score a point in the first half of a match in this competition — they lost 17-0 to Ireland that day

Sport Six Nations

England suffer at the hands of Edwards again

France

24

England

17

Owen Slot

Chief Rugby Correspondent, Paris

A glorious start for the new French generation. Eddie Jones had not exactly endeared himself to his hosts by declaring their Stade de France to be the least romantic stadium in the world, nevertheless this was a day when the

French public were invited to fall in love with *Les Bleus* again.

It was a curious one-night stand — at least for France it was. Not that the crowd cared or their volume faltered, but they found themselves embracing rarely seen French qualities, like an unrelenting, organised defence and a side that doesn't crumble when the game turns against them.

They talked of “solidarité” afterwards. That clearly fortified them when England finally found their way back into the contest in the last quarter, but England, anyway, were too late and too

limited. And France weren't just having it; they let in two individual tries, but still held firm. This wasn't “jouez jouez”; it was character, courage and belligerence.

It was also a game that England messed up. They finished one converted try short and will recall one humiliating gift of a score that they presented to their hosts in the first half. However, for an hour, they had looked more like the team that had lost the World Cup final three months ago than the outstanding unit that had got them there.

They were guilty of an horrendous accumulation of mistakes. France loved the assistance they were given, Antoine Dupont was outstanding at No 9 and if it were possible to give the man-of-the-match award to someone not even playing, it should have gone to the new France defence coach, Shaun Edwards.

Joe Marler said afterwards that France's line-speed was faster, even, than England had been used to seeing from Wales. “He has clearly done a brilliant job in a short time,” he said. Not for the first time, Edwards has England fans asking why he isn't on their side.

He certainly hurt England here, but England hurt themselves, too, with a litany of mistakes. Some of the errors were a reflection of French pressure, but some were not. Some were made by George Furbank, the debutant England full back, who dropped simple passes, yet others were made by Owen Farrell, the captain, who dropped simple passes too.

Their lineup was picked apart early, they were too often beaten on the ground and they lost the battle in the air too.

For all that, it was not that England lacked for chances. It was actually a game that they might have won. It was not that the

French tryline was out of their reach. They just could not convert chances. The England forwards had six visits to the France tryline, but could not convert a single one of them.

Whatever happened to all of England's infamous “brutal physicality?” It was more a template of France's game.

England's problems were bountiful. One of them was that they missed the go-forward of Billy Vunipola; the experiment with Tom Curry at No 8 didn't work, though Jones, the head coach, insisted afterwards that he was intent on persevering with it.

Another was that their modus operandi was so limited; they bombarded the French line with one-up runners. They didn't

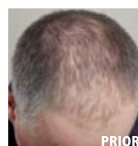
Ollivon, the French open-side flanker, celebrates the first of his two tries with the wing Teddy Thomas, as the home side started their new era with morale boosting and deserved victory over a shell-shocked England



Joseph goes close only to fumble the ball within reach of the tryline



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How they stand

	P	W	D	L	F	A	B	Pts
Wales	1	1	0	0	42	0	1	5
France	1	1	0	0	24	17	0	4
Ireland	1	1	0	0	19	12	0	4
England	1	0	0	1	17	24	1	1
Scotland	1	0	0	1	12	19	1	1
Italy	1	0	0	1	0	42	0	0

Fixtures

Saturday Ireland v Wales (2.15pm, at Aviva Stadium; ITV); Scotland v England (4.45pm, at BT Murrayfield; BBC One).
Sunday France v Italy (3pm, at Stade de France; BBC One). **Feb 22** Italy v Scotland (2.15pm, at Stadio Olimpico; ITV); Wales v France (4.45pm, at Principality Stadium; BBC One). **Feb 23** England v Ireland (3pm, at Twickenham; ITV). **Mar 7** Ireland v Italy (2.15pm, at Aviva Stadium; ITV); England v Wales (4.45pm, at Twickenham; ITV). **Mar 8** Scotland v France (3pm, at BT Murrayfield; BBC One). **Mar 14** Wales v Scotland (2.15pm, Principality Stadium; BBC One); Italy v England (4.45pm, at Stadio Olimpico; ITV); France v Ireland (8pm, at Stade de France; BBC One).

scampered around the defence and when he fed Charles Ollivon, the tryline was all his. With the conversion, France were 24-0 ahead.

That was a lead too great for England to chase. On one point, before the game, Jones had been particularly clear: England needed to assert their authority fast. This was a young, inexperienced French team and they needed to be tested, stressed and pressurised fast in order to have that inexperience exposed.

What actually happened could hardly have been more different. France had a classy try in the sixth

France think, they just made them tackle. And then the ultimate problem was the home defence.

England's attacks were made to look unimaginative, if largely because France held so strong. Their blitz pressured England, this pressure forced the errors and with every England error, French confidence grew.

The finish of the first half was an Edwards masterpiece. England bashed away, hammering at the door and not getting it to budge; they struggled even to nudge France backwards. They then reset, came again, still got nowhere, went through the phases and finally knocked on. Had they finally smashed their way onto the scoreboard on the stroke of half-time, they would have had a mental lift: instead, it was France who went in feeling on top of the world.

At the start of the second half, England had their opportunity again. They stole two French lineouts and worked their way straight back to the French tryline. With a try here, the momentum might have changed. But nothing changed.

Again, the pick-and-go routine was played out with that French tryline begging. Again, France held out brilliantly. Twice they conceded penalties and twice, England bashed away again. The outcome was still no different. Eventually Maro Itoje knocked on and France had snuffed out the danger.

England thus retained an advantage in territory and possession, but it added up to nothing. Having lifted the siege, France worked their way up the other end and Dupont worked more magic from a lineout. He took the ball blind,

MARC ASPLAND/THE TIMES

How defence coach kept England out

Shaun Edwards made an immediate impact as France defence coach. England were repeatedly repelled inside their 22.

08:07min George Ford's flat pass creates a try-scoring opportunity but George Furbank drops the ball
18:04 Maro Itoje wins a turnover in the 22 but 15 phases later England have been driven back almost to half-way
25:56 Kyle Sinckler loses control in the tackle and the ball squirms free
31:52 Tom Curry is penalised for not releasing under pressure
40+2:27 15 phases after Jonny May surges into the 22, Charlie Ewels knocks on after a tackle
47:10 France mount a goal-line stand for over three minutes. Jonathan Joseph blows a chance and then Itoje knocks on
64:10 England are sent into retreat from their own lineout and May is 40m out when he conjures a solo try
71:19 England go through 14 phases but make no ground before Willi Heinz tries to offload from the tackle and spills the ball
76:54 George Kruis is held up under the posts. From the scrum, Heinz spills the ball in the tackle. A France error leads to England kicking a penalty with the last play.

8min 35sec

Time England spent inside France's 22 during the match, while the French had only 1min 25sec inside England's 22

France: Tries Rattiez (5min), Ollivon 2 (19, 54).
 Conversions: Ntamack 3 Penalty goals: Ntamack (15)
 England: Tries May 2 (56, 64). Conversions: Farrell 2
 Penalty goal: Farrell (80)
 Scoring sequence: (France first) 7-0, 10-0, 17-0 (half-time), 24-0, 24-7, 24-14, 24-17.

minute from Vincent Rattiez. Their second try was England's great calamity. Ollivon and Courtney Lawes went up for a box-kick, it looked as though Ollivon had knocked it on, and so Jonny May just stopped. Ollivon's apparent knock-on was collected by Rattiez and rather than tackle Rattiez, May flapped his arms up and down to attract the referee's attention.

Then it was simple for France. A pre-posterous gift. Rattiez fed Ollivon and Ollivon scored. Nigel Owens then went to the TMO and, there, May's humiliation was complete. The TV pictures were not convincing, benefit of the doubt correctly went to Ollivon and the score stood. At least England made a comeback in the second half. They couldn't muscle their way over, so individual skills put them back in the game.

This was when May made amends for his earlier error. His first try was a chip and chase. His second was an outstanding piece of individual brilliance. England eventually got round the French defence and May took off down the right wing, cutting inside and beating four men to go in under the posts.

This, then, finally became a high-pressure test of the new French *solidarité* and England's ability to think their way through. But the French passed with flying tricolore and England failed to get anything bar a consolation bonus point.

CONTINUED FROM BACK

Jones's lesson in brutality

there is a renaissance in French rugby and we didn't match their intensity in the first half."

Jones's use of the word "brutality" had caused a stir in France because on this side of La Manche it suggests cruelty and inhumanity. His comments registered with France.

Grégory Alldritt, the No8 and man of the match, was asked whether the team had drawn motivation from what had been said. "Yes," he replied. "Of course, we read that."

"He was saying that we couldn't manage the brutality of the England team but when you are a winner, a competitor, you just want to show him that you can manage that."

George Furbank, the 23-year-old from Northampton Saints, had a tough debut at full back and the experiment to play Tom Curry, normally a flanker, at No8 did not work because England lacked powerful ball carriers in the absence of the Vunipola brothers, Billy and Mako.

That problem was magnified when Manu Tuilagi went off after 16 minutes with a groin injury. Before yesterday, the Leicester Tigers centre had played only one game since injuring his groin six weeks ago.

Tuilagi's chances of playing against Scotland on Saturday appear slim but Jones said he would stick by Curry as a No8.

"Manu is a big gainline player for us and in those conditions we definitely



Edwards masterminded a brilliant French defensive performance

did miss him but you have to be good enough to cope with that," Jones said.

"That was [Curry's] first Test at No8 so he experienced some issues. I see this as a longer-term project for us. We feel he will turn into a very good No8."

Fabien Galthié, the France head coach, praised his team's defence, which was physical, urgent and drilled by Shaun Edwards, the new defence coach who left the same role with Wales after the World Cup. "We won the match because of our solidarity when England had the ball. We were well organised and won the power struggle"

France



Total
118

Stephen Jones

8 **Anthony Bouthier** Age 27, *Club Montpellier* Delivered a once-in-a-lifetime 95-yard spiral kick into touch: a hoof and a half

8 **Teddy Thomas** 26, *Racing 92* Teddy, this is how you are meant to play. Pin the ears back and use those running talents

6 **Virimi Vakatawa** 27, *Racing 92* His timing was off, but France can get so much more from this richly-talented centre

7 **Gaël Fickou** 25, *Toulouse* His defending has come on a lot. The midfield will be one to savour if they keep improving

9 **Vincent Rattiez** 27, *La Rochelle* Didn't look much at the start. Small and sparrow-like, but what a wondrous game

8 **Romain Ntamack** 20, *Toulouse* Not perfect, but well done to Fabien Galthié for sticking with him. Cool and clever

8 **Antoine Dupont** 23, *Toulouse* Masterly, vying with Tomas Williams as the scrum half of the weekend. Rich Gallic talent

7 **Cyril Baille** 26, *Toulouse* So strong, France missed the big Toulouse beast when he was replaced in the second half

8 **Julien Marchand** 24, *Toulouse* Not first choice but should be proud, a few throws missed the target but he was electric

8 **Mohamed Haouas** 25, *Montpellier* Still much to prove. France is still land of the scrum and he is an heir to the lineage

9 **Bernard Le Roux** 30, *Racing 92* A monster in contact, too small for a lock but no one would have noticed that yesterday

7 **Paul Willemse** 27, *Montpellier* Not the finest athlete, but every team needs a solid grafter and here he was

8 **François Cros** 25, *Toulouse* Out of the blue, here comes François. Cros is in for the ride, with energy to spare

9 **Charles Ollivon** 26, *Toulon* Mistakes from the lineout but brilliant all-round game, great captain and inspiring leader

8 **Grégory Alldritt** 22, *La Rochelle* man of the match, the West Coaster is only in his early-twenties, room to grow as well

Replacements

Almost threw it away. The new men did not bring enough intensity and passion. It looked at one stage as if they were going to undo the great work and lose a match that was done and dusted by the end of the first 40.
Peato Mauvaka, 23, *Toulouse*
Jefferson Poirot, 27, *Bordeaux*
Demba Bamba, 21, *Lyons*
Boris Palu, 21, *Racing 92*
Cameron Woki, 25, *Toulouse*
Baptiste Serin, 21, *Toulon*
Matthieu Jalibert, 23, *Bordeaux*
Arthur Vincent, 20, *Montpellier*

England



Total
75

Alex Lowe

4 **George Furbank** Age 23, *Club Northampton* A baptism of fire for the rookie full back, who was overrun and made errors

4 **Elliot Daly** 27, *Saracens* Switched to left wing but was targeted by France nonetheless and struggled under pressure

5 **Manu Tuilagi** 28, *Leicester* Heavily policed by France on two runs and was forced off with an early groin injury

4 **Owen Farrell** 28, *Saracens* The captain looked lost in the centre, made too many mistakes and lacked influence

6 **Jonny May** 29, *Leicester* Guilty of not playing to the whistle for France try but made up for it with two superb scores

6 **George Ford** 26, *Leicester* Operated behind a team going backwards, but his kicking turned the momentum

4 **Ben Youngs** 30, *Leicester* Missed key tackle for Rattiez try, guilty of slow distribution but not helped by poor set-piece

6 **Joe Marler** 29, *Harlequins* England's best scrummager made his presence felt in the set-piece and in defence

5 **Jamie George** 29, *Saracens* Usually so reliable, England's lineout wobbled and that fed France's first-half momentum

5 **Kyle Sinckler** 26, *Harlequins* Huge ball-carrying duties in the absence of the Vunipolas, guilty of two turnovers in French 22

6 **Maro Itoje** 25, *Saracens* A nuisance around rucks and reliable at the lineout, unable to reverse French dominance

5 **Charlie Ewels** 24, *Bath* First Six Nations start and he stole a lineout but did not impose himself physically

5 **Courtney Lawes** 30, *Northampton* England seem certain Lawes at No6 will work despite all evidence to contrary

5 **Sam Underhill** 23, *Bath* Missed a tackle in the build-up to first French try, was easily handled at the breakdown

5 **Tom Curry** 21, *Sale Sharks* Not a natural No8. Tireless in the loose but lack of carrying made England predictable

Replacements

Had to try and pick up the pieces from a disastrous first-half. Genge hit Ntamack hard as first contribution, then dominated Poirat in the scrum. Not enough to take the win from a deserving French side.
Luke Cowan-Dickie, 26, *Exeter*
Ellis Genge, 24, *Leicester*
Will Stuart, 23, *Bath*
George Kruis, 29, *Saracens*
Lewis Ludlam, 24, *Northampton*
Willi Heinz, 33, *Gloucester*
Ollie Devoto, 26, *Exeter*
Jonathan Joseph, 28, *Bath*

Sport

Closing in on Federer

Djokovic reigns in Melbourne to move to 17 grand slams

Tennis, pages 54-55



The Game

16 pages of the finest analysis of the weekend's football

Inside T2



England were blown away by a new-look France side in the first-half



TIMES PHOTOGRAPHER MARK ASPLAND

José: Sterling's red card let-off

Ian Winrow

José Mourinho saw his Tottenham team beat Manchester City 2-0 but was still aggrieved that video referee Kevin Friend failed to recommend a red card for Raheem Sterling's foul on Dele Alli. Sterling's studs connected with Alli's ankle in the 13th minute of yesterday's game but referee Mike Dean showed only a yellow card and Friend upheld that decision. It was one of a number of bad-tempered episodes during a game that also saw City miss a penalty and have Oleksandr Zinchenko sent off.

"Only Kevin Friend can explain why it was not a red card," Mourinho said. "I thought I was going to love VAR. I like the truth. I thought I was going to love VAR the same way I love goalline technology because there is no mistake. And the VAR is too many mistakes. But I am still happy with the result."

The Game, pages 2-4

Ali: I'm ready for Test return

Chris Stocks Cape Town

Moeen Ali will this week tell England he is available again for Test cricket and wants to be part of the squad for the tour of Sri Lanka in March.

The 32-year-old all-rounder took a break from red-ball cricket last summer after he was dropped following the first Ashes Test at Edgbaston. Despite England's pleas, he made himself unavailable for the recently concluded Test series in South Africa, which Joe Root's team won 3-1.

However, Ali is part of the ODI and Twenty20 squads in South Africa and will hold talks with Chris Silverwood, the coach, and Root, the Test captain, to discuss his availability for the upcoming two-Test series in Sri Lanka. The Times understands that the meeting will happen this week and that Ali will

Jones's lesson in brutality

England coach's pre-match boast backfires in 24-17 loss to France

Alex Lowe
Deputy Rugby Correspondent, Paris

Eddie Jones was forced to eat his words after England failed to match France's power or passion as they crashed to a 24-17 defeat that the head coach admitted could have been even worse.

Jones had goaded France's inexperienced team and claimed

that they would never before have faced the level of "brutality" and "violence" that England would bring to the Stade de France.

France were fired up by Jones's comments, roaring into a 17-0 lead by half-time, and moved 24-0 ahead before two superb solo tries from Jonny May brought England back into the game.

The World Cup finalists

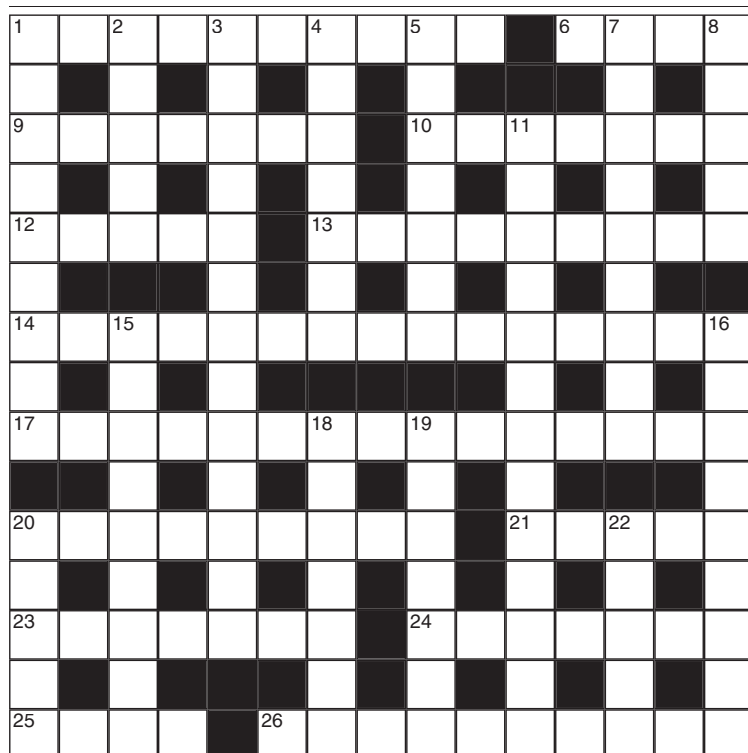
eventually left Paris with a losing bonus point, courtesy of a last-minute penalty from Owen Farrell. Martin Johnson, the former England captain and coach, said the team would be "embarrassed" by their performance.

"It's like we forgot how to play rugby in the first half," Jones said. "We were slow out of the blocks, we were [feeling] sorry for ourselves

and out of kilter, we let the situation get to us.

"We didn't win the gainline, we struggled to get an advantage there. That was a game that could have been ugly for us, the crowd were going nuts and they got a roll on. I was pleased with the response in the second half. We should be giving them credit. They are a young team, Continued on page 63

Times Crossword 27,577



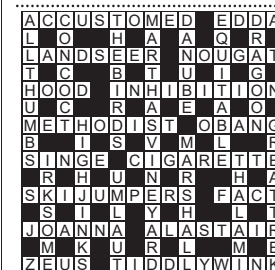
ACROSS

- 1 Russian conspirator's crimes involved with debt (10)
- 6 Peacekeepers infiltrating old army? Something fishy here (4)
- 9 Nothing from speaker left tucking into two molluscs (7)
- 10 Suspicion of fluid ejected by octopuses and marine fish? (7)
- 12 Prelude of note in Italian romantic opera, originally (5)
- 13 Dish encountered in hospital department, on Sundays principally (9)
- 14 Popular fellow playing on lute, say, right away (15)
- 17 Raced after lookalike, such as Fink-Nottle for example (6-9)
- 20 Male, one Conservative on radio introducing a Liberal leader (9)
- 21 Meat Muslims consume, primarily available in communal dining area (5)
- 23 Joint gamble involving danger (7)
- 24 Wave initially to Sophie, a friend in Paris (7)
- 25 Leguminous plant, one originally unknown in South Africa (4)
- 26 Noted creation for sending off new issue? (6,4)

DOWN

- 1 Foppish fellow openly resisted when speaking (9)
- 2 What solicitors do in place of trials? (5)
- 3 Girl Friday reportedly composed old opus about autumn (4,2,3,4)
- 4 First-class workers in extremely robust clothing (7)
- 5 Dairy product in list carried by close relative (7)
- 7 Worldwide student poetry almost entirely unfinished (9)
- 8 Protection say accepted by road workers ultimately (5)
- 11 Be generally hospitable, eager to welcome religious leader home (4,4,5)
- 15 Absurdity of way Charlie gets thrown by greed (9)
- 16 Unexpectedly godly line in vocalisation? (9)
- 18 Footsore person of second celebrity group? (7)
- 19 Joker finally in euphoric state, as the Marx Brothers were (7)
- 20 English doctor on American board (5)
- 22 Some fill a novel — that's plain (5)

Prize solution 27,570



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Frank Williams, Lincoln

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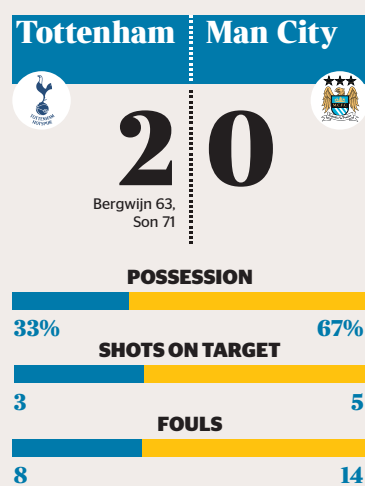
A red card, Sterling's rash challenge and another missed penalty in their 2-0 defeat at Tottenham. Manchester City are ...

Losing it

Zinchenko reacts angrily, despite Alderweireld's efforts to calm him down, after his first yellow card. Sterling's tackle, inset, on Alli received the same sanction

thegame

City in need of reboot as new boy steals the show for Spurs



RATINGS

Tottenham Hotspur (4-2-3-1): H Lloris 8 – S Aurier 6, T Alderweireld 7, D Sánchez 6, J Tanganga 6 – G Lo Celso 6, H Winks 7 – Son Heung-min 7, D Alli 6 (T Ndombélé 70, 6), S Bergwijn 8 (E Lamela 70) – L Moura 6 (E Dier 84). **Subs not used** P Gazzaniga, G Fernandes, J Vertonghen, R Sessegnon. **Booked** Alderweireld, Lo Celso.

Manchester City (4-3-3): Ederson 6 – K Walker 6, N Otamendi 6, Fernandinho 7, O Zinchenko 4 – K De Bruyne 7, Rodri 6, I Gundogan 5 – R Mahrez 6 (G Jesus 72), S Agüero 6 (J Cancelo 64, 6), R Sterling 6 (B Silva 84). **Subs not used** C Bravo, D Silva, P Foden, E García. **Booked** Walker, Sterling, Zinchenko. **Sent off** Zinchenko. **Referee** M Dean.

HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Liverpool	25	24	1	0	60	15	45	73
Man City	25	16	3	6	65	29	36	51
Leicester	25	15	4	6	54	26	28	49
Chelsea	25	12	5	8	43	34	9	41
Tottenham	25	10	7	8	40	32	8	37
Sheff Utd	25	9	9	7	26	23	3	36
Man Utd	25	9	8	8	36	29	7	35
Wolves	25	8	11	6	35	32	3	35
Everton	25	9	6	10	31	37	-6	33
Arsenal	25	6	13	6	32	34	-2	31
Burnley	25	9	4	12	28	38	-10	31
Newcastle	25	8	7	10	24	36	-12	31
Southampton	25	9	4	12	31	46	-15	31
Crystal Palace	25	7	9	9	22	29	-7	30
Brighton	25	6	8	11	30	37	-7	26
Bournemouth	25	7	5	13	25	38	-13	26
Aston Villa	25	7	4	14	32	47	-15	25
West Ham	25	6	6	13	30	43	-13	24
Watford	25	5	8	12	23	39	-16	23
Norwich	25	4	6	15	24	47	-23	18

4

Manchester City have failed to score four of their last six penalties (Gabriel Jesus 2, Sterling and Gundogan both 1)

250

Steven Bergwijn became the 250th Premier League to score on debut and the 13th Dutch player to do so

How VAR mayhem unfolded

13 minutes



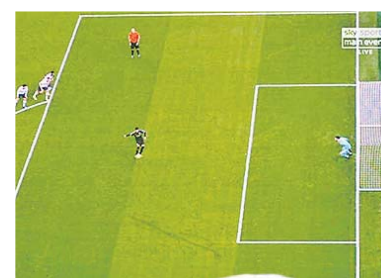
Raheem Sterling's studs-up tackle catches Dele Alli on the ankle. Referee Mike Dean shows Sterling a yellow card and Kevin Friend, the VAR, concurs with the on-field decision – much to José Mourinho's anger

38



Serge Aurier clumsily fells Sergio Agüero but Dean believes the Tottenham defender got the ball. After a VAR check which lasts two minutes, play is brought back and Spurs are awarded a penalty

40



Ilkay Gundogan's penalty is saved by Hugo Lloris low to his left. Replays show the Spurs goalkeeper was off his line when Gundogan struck the ball but these incidents are left to the on-field officials and not VAR

HENRY WINTER

Chief Football Writer at Tottenham Stadium



These are strange times for Manchester City, their crown slipping too easily and passing without any real defiance to imperious, confident Liverpool. City have so many strengths, yet are currently riddled with so much uncertainty. Raheem Sterling embodies their distracted state, his heart willing but body wilting, his radar fractionally off, his timing too.

Sterling caught Dele Alli with a nasty, late lunge above his England team-mate's right ankle after 15 minutes here and could have had his yellow card upgraded to a red by VAR. Given that Arsenal's Pierre Emerick Aubameyang walked for a similar incident with Crystal Palace's Max Meyer, Sterling was fortunate. Alli was also lucky his studs were not fully planted, allowing his ankle to roll slightly under the impact, so escaping any damage.

Sterling and Alli emerged from the tunnel after the break, the England pair deep in conversation, eventually shaking hands in that finger-fluttering way and there was clearly no ill will felt nor harm done. The England manager, Gareth Southgate, was at the Super Bowl, leaving his assistant Steve Holland to scout this collision, and could do without any more injuries tempering the luminosity of his leading lights.

Sterling, particularly, needs this

winter break which, in truth, has arrived a month too late for players, something for the FA and the Premier League to mull over with their respective medical staffs when meeting in the close season. Sterling's mood and failure to score reflects City: Guardiola's players over-elaborated in front of goal, their penalty problems continued with Ilkay Gundogan denied and the failure to replace Vincent Kompany's defensive expertise and galvanising personality remains a live issue. Talk of a reboot in the summer, a clearout of the underachieving parts of the squad, and extensive, expensive strengthening, makes more sense. Catching up Liverpool will not come cheaply.

José Mourinho was convinced Sterling should have been dismissed, and his mood became more concerned when City's pressure required Hugo Lloris to divert Sergio Agüero's shot on to the post. The Spurs head coach then slumped back in his seat, laughing in disbelief, when the VAR Kevin Friend eventually took action over an incident more than two minutes earlier, Serge Aurier's clear foul on Agüero. The referee, Mike Dean, kept flamboyantly gesturing that Aurier had played the ball, to general bemusement on the City bench. Phone a Friend changed Dean's

mind, much to Mourinho's annoyance. "VAR has too many mistakes," he observed. Technology is needed to remedy clear and obvious errors such as this, but it clearly and obviously needs to be quicker, and replays shown in stadiums. At the moment, its inconsistency and delay risk turning football grounds into even more heated crucibles.

Lloris promptly saved Gundogan's penalty, causing more ructions with City believing that the Spurs goalkeeper was off his line, and then raising ire levels higher when Lloris chased the loose ball, sent Sterling tumbling and City screamed for another penalty. The row of dominos clattered down louder. Lloris was outraged by what he perceived as a dive, and confronted Sterling, needing to be held back by Giovanni Lo Celso.

Dean did not administer a booking for simulation as he did not feel there was any attempted deception. He was also busy calming some playground petulance. It seemed only a small detail at the time, a tiny footnote in this one act of an eventful drama, but Oleksandar Zinchenko was booked for running 40 yards, arguing with any opponent he could find.

For all their frustration at the failure from the spot, City still appeared in charge. They had managed 11 efforts on goal, 11 more than Spurs. City fans were singing



Bergwijn soon endeared himself to the Spurs fans with his goal

"park the bus" at Mourinho's tactics. Yet this ignored the influence of Harry Winks and Lo Celso in midfield, and when the Englishman broke through midfield after 61 minutes, Zinchenko ran across, eyes only on the man, and knocked him over. Dean was wise to City's occasional tactical fouls, usually the preserve of Fernandinho, who takes out opponents with far more stealth than Zinchenko. "Cheerio, cheerio," followed the Ukrainian on his long, lonely walk to the tunnel.

As City reorganised, Spurs struck from a corner, the ball moving from Son Heung-min to Steven Bergwijn to Winks. Kyle Walker managed to intercept Winks's dinked ball in, clearing it out but only to Lucas Moura. The Brazilian had spotted Bergwijn's quiet, continued progress into the area, and lofted the ball towards him, at a slightly awkward height, requiring the Dutchman to drop down, trapping the ball on his chest before volleying past Ederson.

Spurs fans will hope to see more of his goal celebration, crossing his middle and ring finger and holding his hand up to his face, peering through fingers, something Bergwijn does when playing Fifa with friends.

Even only a few days into his Spurs career, the 22-year-old is clearly very popular amongst his new team-mates, and clearly a personality, having chosen the No 23, although this reflected his love of basketball (Michael Jordan and LeBron James) rather than any desire to erase the memory of Christian Eriksen, the previous owner of the shirt.

Liverpool fans absorbing the news will have reached for calculators and calendars, working out how soon the 30 years of hurt will finally end, possibly Crystal Palace at home, March 21, even at Goodison Park five days before should City falter.

Mourinho began closing the game out, sending on Tanguy Ndombélé for Alli, and Érik Lamela for Bergwijn after 70 minutes. Within 60 seconds, Spurs had doubled their lead, and Ndombélé had made the assist, taking Lo Celso's pass, and slipping the ball through to Son, who sent his shot in off the stretching Fernandinho. City tried to rally, and Kevin De Bruyne went close, but Spurs celebrated a famous win. "Have you ever seen Tottenham win the league," asked the City fans. Not for a while. But the real story here was all about Liverpool moving closer to ending their wait.



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Lloris appears to catch Sterling while pouncing on the rebound from Gündogan's penalty. Sterling falls to the ground but City's appeal for a penalty fall on deaf ears. The incident goes to Stockley Park but Friend determines that no foul has taken place and City are denied a chance to take the lead

DAVID HEINENREUTERS

Mourinho: Sterling should have gone

IAN WINROW

José Mourinho was fiercely critical of the video assistant referee (VAR) for failing to send off Raheem Sterling for his challenge on Dele Alli.

Sterling, the Manchester City winger, caught Alli's shin with a forceful challenge in the 13th minute of Tottenham Hotspur's 2-0 win and was cautioned by Mike Dean, the referee. The incident was reviewed by Kevin Friend at Stockley Park with the VAR adjudging the decision to have been correct, sparking an angry response from Mourinho.

"Only Kevin Friend can explain why it was not a red card," Mourinho said. "That decision would change the game. It would probably not be such an enjoyable game, one team with one player more for an hour is a big advantage. It's a clear red card."

VAR was the focus of attention for a second time in the first half when play continued for two minutes before the ball went out of play and Dean's decision not to award a penalty for Serge Aurier's challenge on Sergio



Mourinho vents his frustration at the fourth official after Sterling's tackle

Agüero, the City forward, was overturned; Ilkay Gündogan saw the subsequent spot-kick saved by Hugo Lloris. "If the ball doesn't go out, the ball doesn't go out," Mourinho said. "But if the ball doesn't go out for three minutes or ten minutes, you have to play and then when the ball is out, the decisions are to be made. But the right decision, not the wrong decision."

"I thought I was going to love VAR. I like the truth. I thought I was going to love VAR the same way I love goalline technology because there is no mistake. And the VAR is too many

mistakes. But that doesn't take off my pleasure of a fantastic result."

Steven Bergwijn marked his Spurs debut with the 63rd-minute opening goal, three minutes after Oleksandr Zinchenko, the City left back, had been shown a second yellow card. "It was a good goal and a very good performance," said Mourinho, whose side moved fifth, four points behind Chelsea in fourth. "Four points to Chelsea but maybe one point to Sheffield United, or two to Manchester United. So we look up, we also look down. I look to my team, with the problem we have had with injuries, it is going to be hard. If we lose Dele Alli, I cannot imagine."

Pep Guardiola, who kept his players in the dressing room for 45 minutes after the final whistle, confirmed that the title is Liverpool's. "They are far away so they are unstoppable," he said. "The last two seasons they said City winning the title was bad for the Premier League and it could not happen again. Now it's Liverpool you have to be concerned about the Premier League."

TONY CASCARINO



Weekend talking points

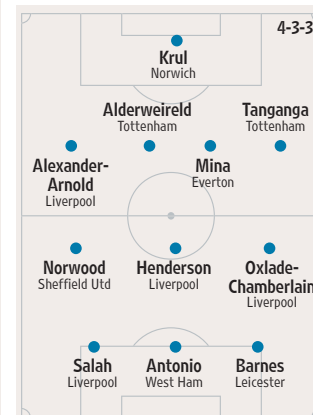
Possession obsession has stalled Guardiola's men

Manchester City have suffered one hell of a drop-off from their past two seasons. From 100 points in 2018 to 98 points last season, this time around they will be lucky if they make it to 80 the way they are going.

In those previous seasons, Pep Guardiola's team blew other sides away. City didn't just win games, they really punished the opposition by scoring and scoring. And not just with the number of goals but with brilliant goals — often almost perfect goals. Something has gone wrong this season. They have failed to punish teams in the Champions League and it is as if they have brought their European form to the Premier League.

The search for the perfect goal has led Guardiola's team to overplay at times instead of just shooting. Even worse, they often overplay in areas that won't hurt teams. Some of their top players have gone completely off the boil — and none more so than Raheem Sterling. He is not getting in great positions at the moment, his touch has gone and he looks like he's going through a bit of a crisis in his game. The England international's last goal for City was against Wolves just after

TEAM OF THE WEEK



Christmas. He has gone 607 minutes without finding the net. If you compare Sterling now with Sterling before Christmas, it is like watching two different players.

It is noticeable that this drop in form coincides with Mikel Arteta leaving City for Arsenal. The Spaniard worked with Sterling a lot as Guardiola's assistant but since he left, the England man's game has gone off the boil dramatically.

Lampard's defensive blues bigger than Kepa

The poor form of Kepa Arrizabalaga is worrying for Frank Lampard but the goalkeeping department is not solely to blame for Chelsea's defensive woes.

They were particularly weak down their right-hand side in their draw away to Leicester City, with neither Reece James nor Callum Hudson-Odoi doubling up effectively enough to stop Harvey Barnes and Ben Chilwell. Indeed, both Leicester players found the net and Barnes even missed a golden chance to win the match.

Lampard suggested before the game that Chelsea's failure to bring in a striker during the January transfer window made his side underdogs to finish in the top four. If they do miss out on a Champions League place it will be Chelsea's defensive frailties, not their lack of goals, that costs them.

Jerma to blame for falling foul of referees

Eddie Howe was quick to defend Jefferson Lerma after his dismissal for two yellow cards against Aston Villa, arguing that referees are now "looking out" for the Bournemouth midfielder.

Lerma has been shown 21 yellows — more than any player since his debut in 2018 — but the reality is that even the most indiscreet of fouls are now getting punished. The likes of Patrick Vieira would pick up far more yellows if they were playing today. Lerma can have no excuses.

Lazy Lacazette needs to put in a shift for Arteta

Alexandre Lacazette needs to up his game. It was not a great game at Turf Moor yesterday and the Arsenal man's poor display stood out. He just does not look as if he is capable of playing the way Mikael Arteta wants. He doesn't seem to fit the system.

Lacazette wants to play purely as a goalscorer. That is not enough. He has to up his work rate and do the closing down and running his new coach demands of him. At the moment, he looks shorn of confidence because he is not fulfilling his role in the team.

Sergio Agüero would be a good example for him to follow. He knew he could no longer get into the Manchester City team just as a goalscorer. He had to work hard too. If Lacazette does not realise that soon, he may find he is not an Arsenal player next season.

Southgate should coax Milner out of retirement

Jordan Henderson and Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain should fill two of England's midfield places at Euro 2020 but what about the third, more defensive player?

Henderson could fill that role but is thriving as a No 8 for Liverpool. Declan Rice is out of form, Eric Dier has not played enough and his Tottenham team-mate Harry Winks has played 90 minutes in just seven league games. If I was Gareth Southgate, I would be phoning James Milner and asking him to consider coming out of retirement.

Gündogan the epitome of fragile City

Pep Guardiola's blind faith in midfielder has begun to pose problems, says **James Gheerbrant**

The crucial moment of this match, the moment that decisively tilted the balance of the game in Tottenham Hotspur's favour, came in the 60th minute when Harry Winks surged up the field on a fast counter and galloped as far as the halfway line, where, with a two-on-two situation looming, Oleksandr Zinchenko was forced to bring him down and take a second yellow card. Winks should never have reached Zinchenko: as he streaked away from Tottenham's penalty area, his first touch was heavy and presented Ilkay Gündogan with the opportunity to dispossess him. But Gündogan was half a second too slow and Winks got to the ball first, leaving the German clutching at his coattails.

To judge by the statistics of the match, Gündogan was impeccable. He created two chances, won five of his eight duels and three of his four tackles. He completed 83 of his 92 passes, 59 of them in the Tottenham half — by far the most attacking-half passes of anyone on the pitch. Gündogan regularly excels by this metric: he is the only player in the Premier League this season to average more than 50 passes in the opposition half, such is his facility for calmly recycling the ball in the rarefied spaces of the pitch.

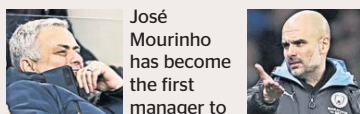
And yet it was in the critical seconds and inches that this match was lost, and at these pivotal points Gündogan was fallible. In the first half, he missed the penalty awarded for Serge Aurier's foul on Sergio Agüero — the first miss of his Manchester City career — when Hugo Lloris kept out a tame spot kick. That can happen to anyone.

But then there was the open goal squandered in the second half, when Lloris had raced out of his net, but Gündogan, stretching, could only poke Raheem Sterling's square ball over the bar. Then, when a brilliant City move unlocked Tottenham's defence and Gündogan looked certain



Tottenham capitalised on Zinchenko's dismissal after the City full back was shown a second yellow card for a foul on Winks

A THORN IN PEP'S SIDE



José Mourinho has become the first manager to beat Pep Guardiola with four separate clubs, winning with Inter Milan, Real Madrid, Manchester United and Spurs. Only Jürgen Klopp has more wins against Guardiola (eight to Mourinho's six).

to receive Riyad Mahrez's pass for a tap-in, he overran the ball.

Perhaps it's unfair to focus on Gündogan. But then again, there is a pattern for the German to be implicated in some of City's worst defeats, which is starting to look like more than a coincidence. Gündogan hasn't been a regular starter in his three and a half seasons at Manchester City, such is the competition in central midfield, but

his name in the XI has been a common factor in the 3-0 Champions League defeat by Liverpool in 2018, the 1-0 Champions League defeat by Spurs last season, and the chastening losses to Norwich City and Wolverhampton Wanderers in the autumn. The statistics make for stark reading: in the 15 league games Gündogan has started this season, City have an average scoreline of 2.0-1.4 and a win ratio of 53 per cent. In the ten games Gündogan hasn't started, their average scoreline is 3.5-0.8 and win percentage is 80 per cent.

In a way, Gündogan epitomises the paradox of Pep Guardiola's curiously fragile City this season: a player who looks brilliant in the numbers, who can set up camp in the opposition half with the ease of a seasoned Sherpa pitching his tent on a mountain ledge, but who lacks the incisiveness to kill teams off in key moments. Gündogan can decorate and dominate, but he rarely devastates. He also embodies

City's fatal flaw: their tendency to get overrun in fast transitions. The Winks incident was a classic example: Guardiola's team commit players into the opposition half with such reckless abandon that they can be picked off. The trait that has made them great is now making them vulnerable.

Clearly, Guardiola feels an immense amount of personal loyalty to Gündogan. He coveted him when he was Bayern Munich coach, made him his first signing as City manager, and stood by him when he was recovering from a soul-destroying cruciate ligament injury. When he was criticised for his performance against Norwich, Guardiola went out of his way to praise his display in the next match

Gündogan has featured in a number of City's worst defeats in recent times

against Shakhtar Donetsk. And you can see why the bond is so strong: if you were to build a prototypical Guardiola player, it would probably look something like Gündogan — slight, silken-footed, comfortable in tight spaces, brilliant at keeping the carousel turning.

But what if Guardiola's weakness for players like Gündogan is just that — a weakness? It is becoming increasingly obvious that City need a sprightlier, more dynamic midfielder to plug the holes that appear when they concede possession high up the pitch. But Gündogan, who will be 30 this year, has started 21 of their 30 Premier League and Champions League games this season, pushing Bernardo Silva out of the XI or into the front three, blocking Phil Foden's path, and muddying the David Silva succession plan. In August, he signed a new contract committing him to City until 2023. Should there really be a place in Guardiola's rebuild for a player who has been the keystone of so many collapses?

The contrast with Tottenham's situation is fascinating. While José Mourinho's arrival, Christian Eriksen's protracted departure and the national psychodrama of Harry Kane's hamstring have colonised column inches, perhaps the most significant development in recent months has been the capture, and emerging influence, of two of world football's elite young central midfielders, Giovanni Lo Celso and Tanguy Ndombéle. Ndombéle started the season strongly; Lo Celso has been to the fore in recent weeks. The

Argentinian excelled again, and when Ndombéle entered the game we got a glimpse of what they could do together.

Lo Celso twisted away from his marker in the City half and passed to Ndombéle, who stepped inside Rodri and slid a beautiful threaded pass into Son Heung-min, who thrashed his shot past Ederson for the second goal. Even Mourinho, that famed mistruster of youth, is embracing Tottenham's future. Is it time for Guardiola to make a tough decision about a player whose best days may belong to City's glorious past?



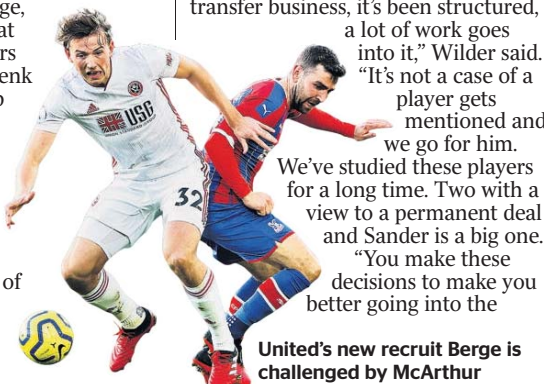
Transfer dealing shows Wilder is not standing still

IAN WINROW

Chris Wilder thinks that the signings he made last month will help to maintain the momentum that lifted his buoyant Sheffield United side up to fifth place on Saturday. Wilder brought in five recruits, including Sander Berge, who made his debut at Selhurst Park 48 hours after arriving from Genk in a deal worth a club record £22 million.

Berge settled in quickly, vindicating the manager's decision to start the Norway midfielder and, in Wilder's view, confirming the value of the work done in identifying targets.

On Friday, Berge was followed into



United's new recruit Berge is challenged by McArthur

Bramall Lane by loan signings Richairo Zivkovic, the Dutch forward, and Panagiotis Retsos, the Greece defender, who arrived from Changchun Yatai and Bayer Leverkusen respectively. Jack Rodwell and Jack Robinson had also been signed earlier in the window.

"I've been delighted with our transfer business, it's been structured, a lot of work goes into it," Wilder said. "It's not a case of a player gets mentioned and we go for him. We've studied these players for a long time. Two with a view to a permanent deal and Sander is a big one. You make these decisions to make you better going into the

Crystal Palace

0

Crystal Palace's failure to make more of good first-half chances proved costly when Vicente Guaita spilt Oliver Norwood's corner into the goal. Joel Ward's red card was downgraded to yellow after the referee Andy Madley looked at the pitch-side monitor.

Key moment

Christian Benteke was inches away from connecting with Jordan Ayew's driven low cross just before half-time.

Sheffield Utd

1

Match briefing

RATINGS

Crystal Palace (4-3-3): V Guaita 4 — J Ward 6, J Tomkins 6, G Cahill 7, P van Aanholt 6 — J McCarthy 6 (M Meyer 80min), L Milivojevic 7, J McArthur 7 (C Kouyaté 85) — J Ayew 6, C Benteke 5 (A Townsend 76), W Zaha 7. **Subs not used** W Hennessey, S Dann, M Kelly, J Riedewald. **Booked** Ward, Tomkins, Milivojevic.

Sheffield United (3-5-2): D Henderson 6 — C Basham 6, J Egan 7, J O'Connell 7 — G Baldock 5, S Berge 7 (J Lundstram 67, 6), O Norwood 7, J Fleck 6, E Stevens 8 — B Sharp 5 (L Mousset 64, 6), O McBurnie 6 (B Osborn 90). **Subs not used** M Verrips, P Jagielka, L Freeman, J Robinson. **Booked** Baldock, Fleck.

Referee A Madley.

second half of the season, to raise standards with your other players and to add to the group that has done fantastically well. We are in a great position as a club. The quality we have signed, the results we are getting even when we are not at our best — we give ourselves a good chance. We

are in a good place but the key is not to pat ourselves on the back."

Wilder's optimism was only strengthened after an own goal by Vicente Guaita, the Crystal Palace goalkeeper, had given his side victory. By contrast, Roy Hodgson, the Palace manager has had a more frustrating

transfer window with Cenk Tosun, the forward signed on loan from Everton and missing on Saturday through injury, the only addition.

A move for Nathan Ferguson, the West Bromwich Albion full back, fell through on Friday because of medical grounds, as well the club's refusal to match West Ham United's offer of a permanent move for Jarrod Bowen, the Hull City forward. Hodgson's priority is to improve on a run of results that has brought Palace only three league wins in 17 league games.

"We know that we need to make more inroads into improving our squad," he said. "Everyone is on the same page. [Chairman] Steve Parish, [director of football] Doug Freedman and the American owners are going to have to do a lot of thinking, alongside myself, about what the best way forward is. In the next transfer window we are going to try to make sure this team gets stronger."

Zaha's raw deal, Matthew Syed, page 16

How many Arsenal players does it take to stop Burnley?

Rodriguez finds himself surrounded as Arsenal defend in numbers at Turf Moor



Arteta frustrated by turf bore

Burnley

Arsenal

0

0

RATINGS

Burnley (4-4-2): N Pope 6 – M Lowton 6, J Tarkowski 8, B Mee 9, C Taylor 7 – J Hendrick 6, A Westwood 8, J Cork 6, D McNeil 7 – C Wood 7, J Rodriguez 6. **Subs not used** J Hart, R Brady, E Pieters, A Lennon, P Bardsley, M Vydra, K Long. **Booked** Tarkowski.

Arsenal (4-2-3-1): B Leno 6 – H Bellerin 8, S Mustafi 6, D Luiz 7, B Saka 7 (L. Torreira 46min, 7) – M Guendouzi 7, G Xhaka 5 – G Martinelli 5, M Özil 5 (J Willock 63, 7), P-E Aubameyang 6 – A Lacazette 5 (E Nketiah 87). **Subs not used** E Martinez, Sokratis, D Ceballos, N Pépé. **Booked** Torreira, Xhaka, Özil.

Referee C Kavanagh.

IAN WHITTELL

Mikel Arteta has been desperately waiting for the green shoots of recovery to appear but it was the long grass at Turf Moor that concerned him more as his Arsenal side recorded their 13th league draw this season.

The Spaniard's underwhelming start to life in the Arsenal dugout since taking charge on December 23 continued. The club are enduring their worst Premier League campaign for a quarter of a century, although he had Jay Rodriguez, the Burnley forward, to thank for the league table not looking even more gloomy this morning for his tenth-placed side.

Burnley stopped a run of 11 consecutive defeats against Arsenal, although a first victory in this fixture since 1974 should have been secured when Rodriguez arrived unmarked to meet Dwight McNeil's 78th-minute header, only to volley against the crossbar.

From Arteta's point of view, though, on top of more practical concerns about a side whose rank mediocrity is summed up by the number of draws they have had from 25 league games this season, came observations about the state of Burnley's playing surface.

"The conditions were difficult," Arteta said as he raised a hand. "The grass was this long. They didn't put any water on it and that is not a very helpful thing to play football."

"Absolutely I expected that. But just because I was expecting it, that doesn't make it easier to play the game."

"It's their game. They do really well what they do. It's their strength, you're allowed to do it, so we have to adapt. We adapted really well in some moments and in some others it wasn't the grass. It's the quality and what they do they do really well and we could not cope with that in the right way."

One upshot of Arteta's complaint will undoubtedly be merriment among Burnley supporters, who waged a game-long baiting contest with David Luiz, the Arsenal defender who had accused Sean Dyche's side of playing "anti-football" in a post-match interview last season.

His every touch was greeted with a chant of "anti-football" while he and Matteo Guendouzi engaged in what appeared to be, relatively, good-natured exchanges with home supporters on the subject as they made their way off the field.

But while Arteta had the good grace not to claim that there was anything untoward in the preparations made by the groundstaff at Turf Moor, barely six weeks into his new job it is hard not to detect a hint of frustration gnawing away at the 37-year-old. "I hope it doesn't take time," said Arteta when asked if he will have to wait for Arsenal to turn in a consistent 90-minute performance.


Match briefing

2 minutes

Alexandre Lacazette headed wide, unmarked, from ten yards from a Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang cross

James Tarkowski made a strong tackle to deny Lacazette, who looked poised to score

A long spell of Burnley pressure ended with Jeff Hendrick noddng wide from Dwight McNeil's cross



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KEY MOMENT

Rodriguez hit a volley against the underside of the bar that bounced down but goalline technology ruled no goal

"The last four games, two we played with ten men, which is not easy. But we need more consistency. We were fantastic in some moments but we were so sloppy and put ourselves in big trouble with a lot of unnecessary situations. We have to improve because that gives the opponent an opportunity when there is not really a scenario for something to happen."

Arteta, to his credit, could not be faulted over his ambition in his team selection, perhaps mindful of his club's excellent record against Dyche's club.

Turf Moor on a blustery February afternoon does not seem to be a match made in heaven for Mesut Özil but Arteta selected him, along with Alexandre Lacazette, and might have been rewarded for some bold decisions in a strong opening.

Lacazette, though, was guilty of a couple of early misses, along with other errant shooters, and the loss to injury of Bukayo Saka, the left back, at half-time took its toll after the break.

"We started really well. We could have scored at least two," Arteta said. "But after 20-25 minutes we started to concede a lot of unnecessary free kicks, throw-ins, corners and when that happens you can't find any continuity in your play."

"I was very disappointed with the way we started the second half. The first 15 or 20 minutes we could not control any aspect of the game and we allowed a lot of crosses and second balls inside our box and were lucky not to concede."

Rodriguez's miss was the closest Burnley came to

Lacazette was guilty of two early misses for Arsenal

scoring, a goal that even Arteta admitted they deserved, although in one spell early in the second half they laid siege to Arsenal with a run of seven consecutive headed efforts on Bernd Leno's goal.

That Arsenal should emerge unbeaten from those circumstances was hardly disastrous, therefore, but the draw leaves Arteta with only one win from his seven league games in charge and the team in their lowest position at this stage of a season since 1995.

Yet, in this most congested of Premier League seasons, Arsenal still stand only five points from the top five as do a Burnley side who have dispelled any lingering relegation fears with a run of seven points from games with Leicester City, Manchester United and Arsenal.

"I'm a realist," Dyche said. "There are some very tough challenges in the Premier League, especially on the back of us losing four and people wondering about us."

"I'm pleased to say we focus on facts, not perception, and that's a really healthy return against three very good sides. The players deserve it because they worked very hard to turn those key moments in games our way."

Dyche, meanwhile, could not resist pointing out his belief that Arsenal players seemed intent on taking a closer look at the grass for themselves — the manager agreeing with his supporters, who felt the visitors were guilty of going to ground far too easily.

"It is lovely to watch when people are falling over, it is my favourite part," he said, sarcastically. "The game is in a fantastic state. No one wants to address it apart from me, so I am absolutely happy with the state of the game."



BORING, BORING ARSENAL!

Arsenal are the first top-flight team since Man United in 1980-81 to draw as many as 13 of their first 25 games

W W L D D W D W L D D L D D L W L D D L W D D D D

Henderson like a Swiss

PAUL JOYCE

Northern Football
Correspondent
At Anfield



Jürgen Klopp's focus could have been preoccupied with the usual suspects. There was the genius of Roberto Firmino and the relentless energy of Mohamed Salah but instead he was drawn to the player who personifies the mentality that is propelling Liverpool towards history.

Running, tackling, organising, snarling, shooting, scoring, passing and assisting was Jordan Henderson, a Swiss Army Knife of a footballer who was the last to leave the pitch and deserved the resounding ovation that came with his slow trek to the tunnel.

"It is all about showing respect for the opposition with the attitude," the Liverpool manager said. "Hendo is one example. There are plenty of others."

"But did he look like the captain of a team that is 19 points ahead? Not for a second. It looked like if we lose we are relegated. That is how the boys were. That is the only way for us to win a game."

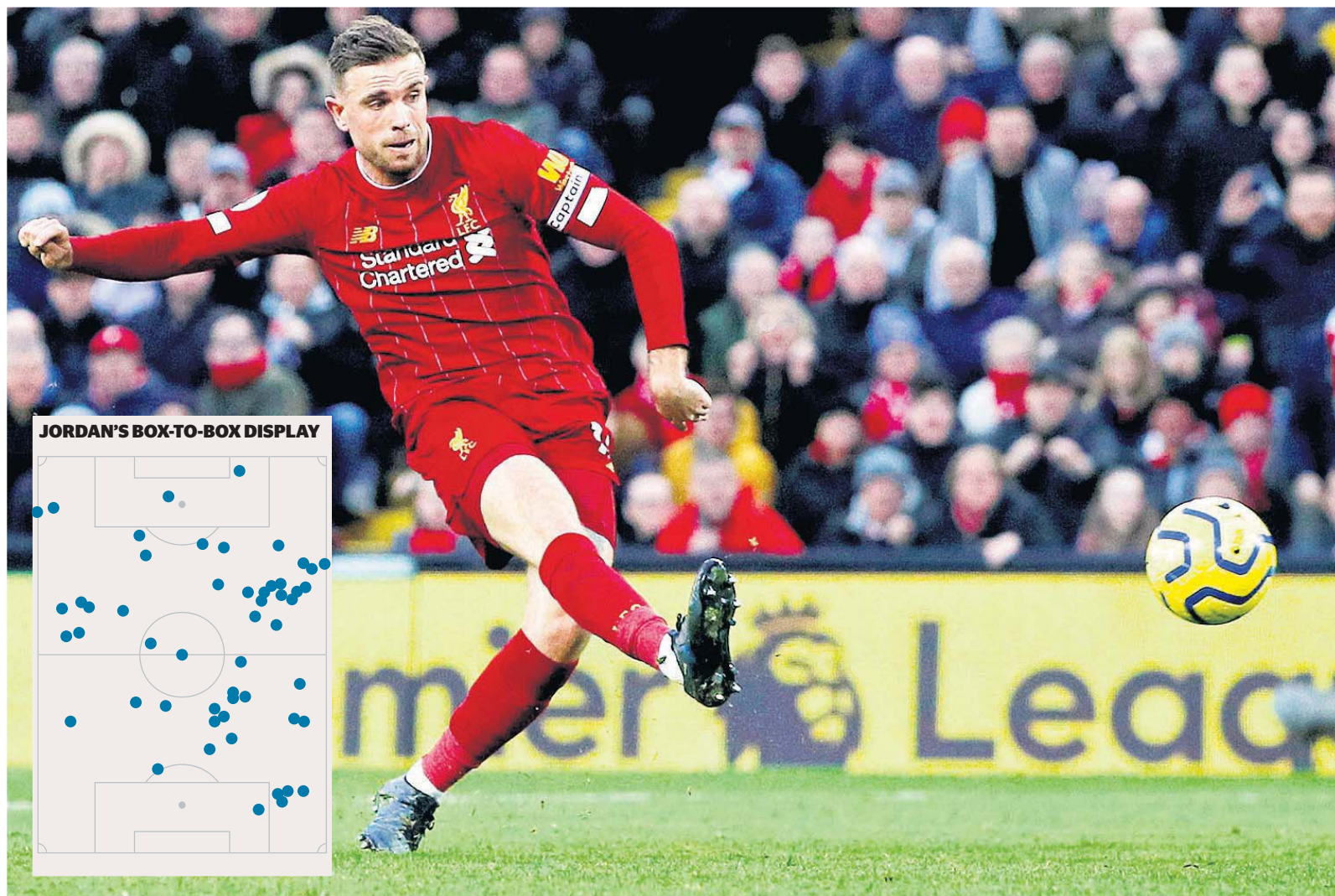
"It is always the same." Notwithstanding that Liverpool's lead at the top of the Premier League is so yawning that Klopp had genuinely mistaken the size of their advantage — it was 22 points after a strong second-half performance put Southampton in their place — but his sentiment perfectly encapsulated the outlook that sets his side apart.

There will be no let-up in their pursuit either, with the timing of the winter break allowing a group of players who have thus far been imperious to recharge for two weeks, given that the first team will not feature in tomorrow's FA Cup fourth-round replay against Shrewsbury Town. The chance to reset means that there are endless possibilities of what they could go on to achieve.

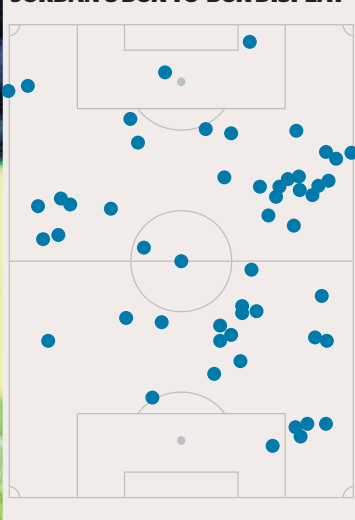
They stretch far beyond a first title since 1990, and the minutiae that could come with that, such as going past Manchester City's records of 100 points and 32 wins in 2017-18, and could include a successful defence of their Champions League crown.

At the heart of everything, thereafter, will be Henderson, who was deployed in an advanced midfield role for the first time since November 30 and responded with a goal and an assist. In the preceding 14 games in which he featured, he had

Firmino laid on his side's first two goals



JORDAN'S BOX-TO-BOX DISPLAY



played as a No 6 due to Fabinho's ankle injury and Liverpool won every one.

Still, Klopp said it was an easy decision to start fit-again Fabinho in the pivot role and push Henderson into what he would regard as his natural habitat, one which allows him to run free, helping out in both penalty boxes and everything in between.

Those managers envious of Klopp can be extended to include Gareth Southgate, who does not possess a player such as Fabinho and who is likely to ruminate on which role Henderson will be asked to perform in the summer.

There is no doubt that Henderson will start at Euro 2020 and using him as the deepest midfielder allows the England manager more leeway to choose two from players such as Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain,

Match briefing

Liverpool 4 **Southampton 0**

Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain drilled the ball low into the bottom corner to open the scoring. Jordan Henderson's calm finish from Roberto Firmino's pass made it 2-0 before Henderson played through Mohamed Salah for a third. The Egypt striker scored again from close range.

Key moment

In the 47th minute, Southampton's Danny Ings tricked his way into the penalty area and claimed he was brought down by Fabinho. Liverpool then broke upfield to open the scoring.

RATINGS

Liverpool (4-3-3): A Becker 7 — T Alexander-Arnold 6, J Gomez 6, V van Dijk 7, A Robertson 6 — Fabinho 7, J Henderson 8 (A Lallana 88min), G Wijnaldum 6 (T Minamino 81) — M Salah 7, R Firmino 8, A Oxlade-Chamberlain 6 (N Keita 73). **Subs not used** Adriaen, D Lovren, J Matip, D Origi.
Southampton (4-4-2): A McCarthy 7 — J Ward-Prowse 6, J Stephens 6, J Bednarek 6, R Bertrand 6 — M Djenebo 6 (S Boufal 82), O Romeu 6, P Hojbjerg 6, N Redmond 6 — D Ings 7 (C Adams 70, 6), S Long 6 (M Obafemi 69, 6). **Subs not used** A Gunn, J Vestergaard, W Smallbone, K Danso. **Booked** Ward-Prowse, Stephens. **Referee** K Friend.

Jack Grealish, Dele Alli, James Maddison, Mason Mount, Harry Winks and Ross Barkley.

Playing him as a No 8 in front of either Winks, or Declan Rice, would leave room for only one more midfielder if England persist with a 4-3-3 formation.

How Southgate unravels the conundrum, which permutation he believes offers him greater control, will heavily shape England's prospects and Henderson's hopes of another silver lining from what is becoming the season of his dreams.

Southampton could rue the referee Kevin Friend's refusal to award Danny Ings a penalty seconds before Oxlade-Chamberlain opened the scoring and the enterprise and intent in the visiting team's approach for an hour was invigorating.

Considering all the managers who find themselves unable to reverse a downward spiral, Ralph Hasenhüttl deserves much credit for pointing the club forward again after that run of seven league games without a win, which included that 9-0 home thumping by Leicester City.

Of course, it is testament to the resilience and quality that Liverpool possess that once again they worked out how to prevail and pressed their

foot to the floor after the interval. The old Graeme Souness quote from his time as Liverpool captain that "if you want to fight, we'll outfight you. If you want to play football, we'll beat you at that, too", has never been more pertinent than this season when whatever the test, whatever the trap, it has been passed.

Firmino conjured three assists in total — the back-heel flick that set up Oxlade-Chamberlain simply sumptuous — to leave his manager purring about a player whose failure to score at Anfield since last April does not detract from his continued importance.

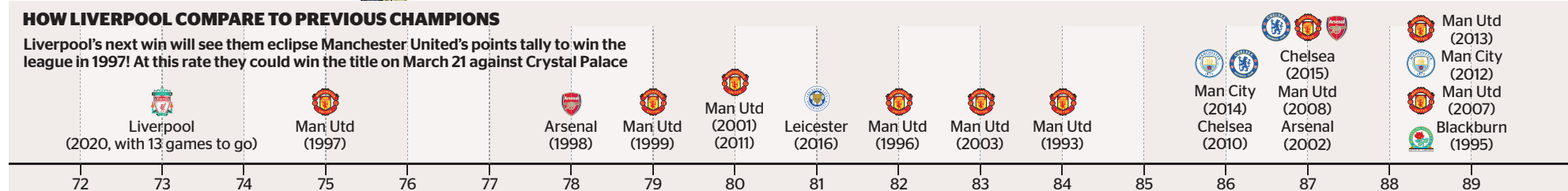
"He is just exceptional," Klopp said. "A very football-smart person, obviously. In the first half, in between a really tight formation of Southampton, the way he drops and keeps the ball, how he makes things happen is very special, absolutely."

"Then even a player like Bobby needs an address where he can send the ball, because he cannot take the ball and turn and run alone. How he uses the skills of his mates is special. "I do not know a player like him, that is true."

Then again, given Liverpool's superiority, he could say that about most of his squad.

HOW LIVERPOOL COMPARE TO PREVIOUS CHAMPIONS

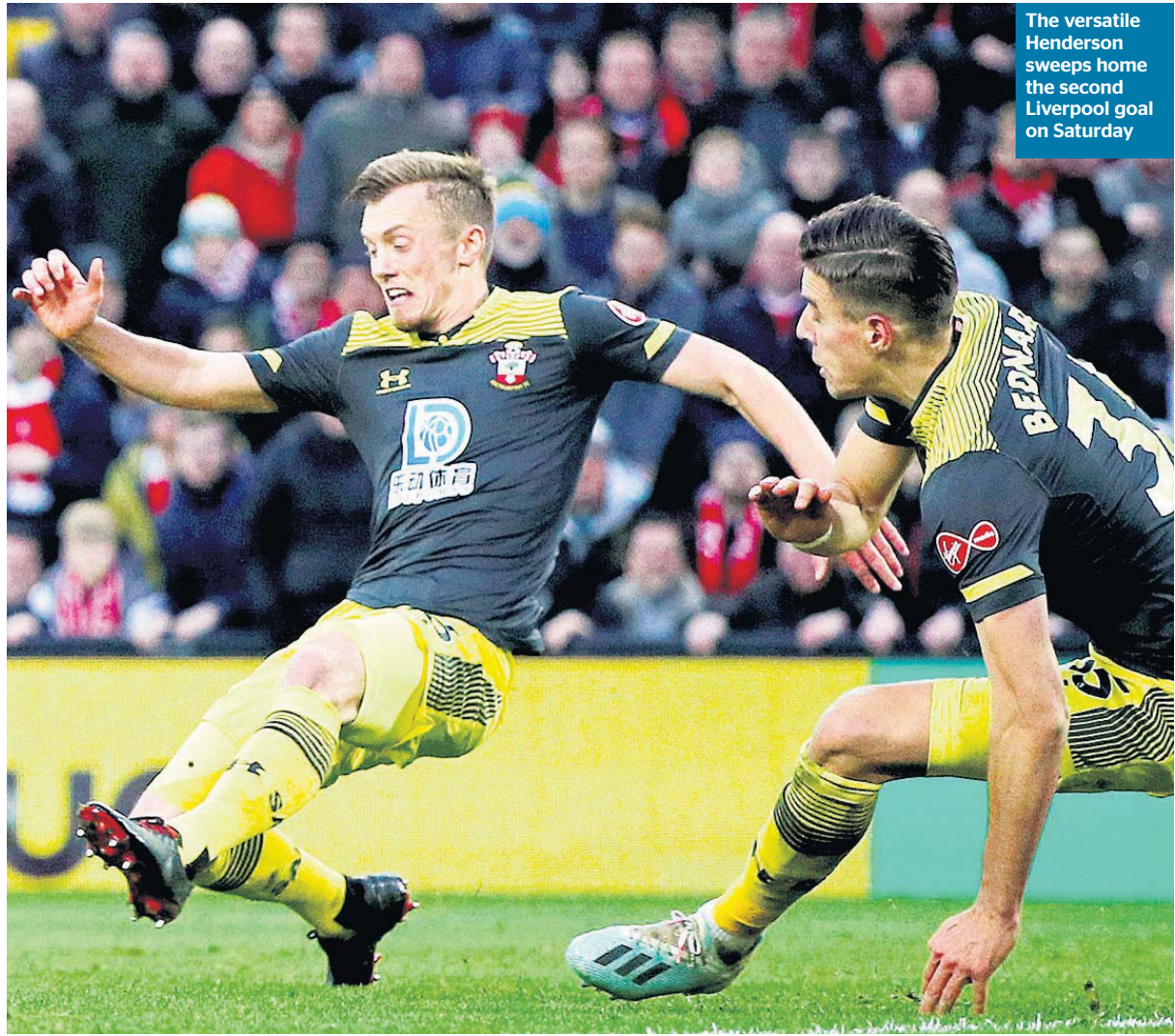
Liverpool's next win will see them eclipse Manchester United's points tally to win the league in 1997! At this rate they could win the title on March 21 against Crystal Palace



Army Knife

PHIL NOBLE/REUTERS

The versatile Henderson sweeps home the second Liverpool goal on Saturday



Which Liverpool stars make my unbeaten XI?

THE DEBATE

TONY CASCARINO

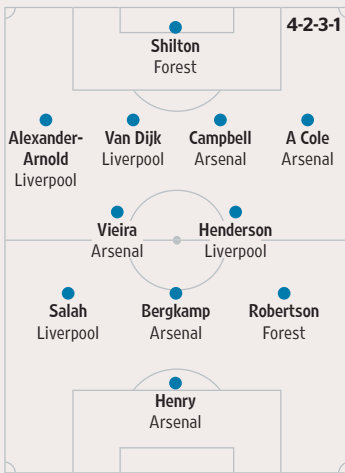


Liverpool's victory over Southampton took them to 42 games in a row unbeaten, equalling the mark set by the great Nottingham Forest side, who won the title in 1978 and went on to lift the European Cup in 1979 and 1980. Avoid defeat away to Norwich City in a couple of weeks and they will overtake Brian Clough's giants.

Next in Liverpool's sights will be the record of 49 matches unbeaten by Arsenal's Invincibles in 2003-04. But how many of Jürgen Klopp's 2019-20 champions-elect would get into a team made up of players from all three of those squads?

Trent Alexander-Arnold gets in because it is astounding how good he is at such a young age. He will

MY TEAM OF INVINCIBLES

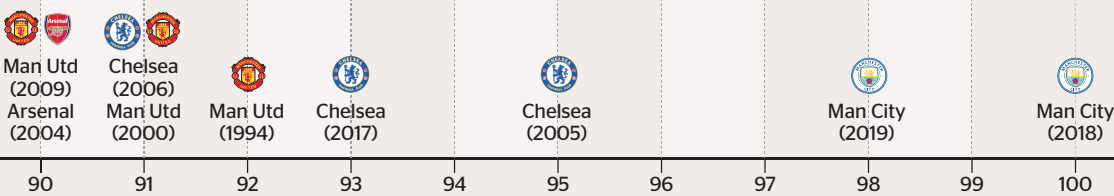


achieve huge things in the game. Virgil van Dijk makes the game look so easy but he works hard to push himself to become the best centre back in the world. He embodies the best of Tony Adams, Vincent

Kompany and John Terry. I know Jordan Henderson is the flavour of the month at the moment but since he left Sunderland for Anfield nine years ago he has grown into a supreme midfielder. And Mohamed Salah was an easy choice. He has had three unbelievable seasons back-to-back. Remarkable consistency.

The Arsenal Invincibles in my list were fairly easy choices, too. Sol Campbell's sheer pace and physical presence put him ahead of old-fashioned defenders like Kenny Burns and Frank Clark. Ashley Cole was a marvellous defender, tenacious, stamina, while Patrick Vieira stood out for his power and drive. Then we have the class of Dennis Bergkamp, the complete No10 behind the frightening pace and ruthless accuracy of Thierry Henry.

In goal, Peter Shilton has to get the vote as the outstanding goalkeeper of his time, while Forest winger John Robertson was so deceptive. He never looked as though he could get past anyone but he did and set up numerous goals with wicked crosses.



WINTER'S WEEKEND WONDERS



Chief Football Writer on invention at Anfield and purpose at Old Trafford



Oxlade-Chamberlain back to most vibrant

1 Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain. Always brings something different to games, always gives everything, always offers a goal threat. Sadly too often inhibited by injury, the 26-year-old has returned to his most vibrant form, playing the most intelligent, decisive football of his career. The

timing of his runs is impressive, his touch allows him to take passes in his stride while not losing that healthy pace, and his eye for goal has brought him seven goals for Liverpool (and one for England). Versatile, too, filling the Sadio Mané role against Southampton after shining in midfield against West Ham. Surely pushing for an England starting place.

Fernandes could be part of the solution

2 Bruno Fernandes. One decent debut doesn't make a reputation but the purposeful Portugal midfielder looks part of the solution to Manchester United's problems. Fernandes, 25, is prepared to take responsibility, take charge, take the game to opponents. The midfielder is a leader, directing Fred and Andreas Pereira around (and boy do they need guidance), bringing more than deliveries into the final third. Fernandes, who signed from Sporting Lisbon for £47 million, is also bringing poise, direction and hope. United fans will pray that he doesn't get dragged down by the team's brittle belief, instead inspiring them.

Wilder writing his own Hollywood tale

3 Chris Wilder. This column should really be renamed Wilder's Wonders. Sheffield United's honest, uplifting manager has his team fighting above their weight most weeks, playing with cohesion and intelligence. After leading his beloved Sheffield United up from League One, then the Championship, Wilder is steering them towards Europe. It could be that all roads lead to Roma — from Rochdale in three years. The Band of Brothers from Bramall Lane is one of the great storylines, a Hollywood tale with an art-house budget. Jürgen Klopp will clearly head the running for Manager of the Year but Wilder is up there.

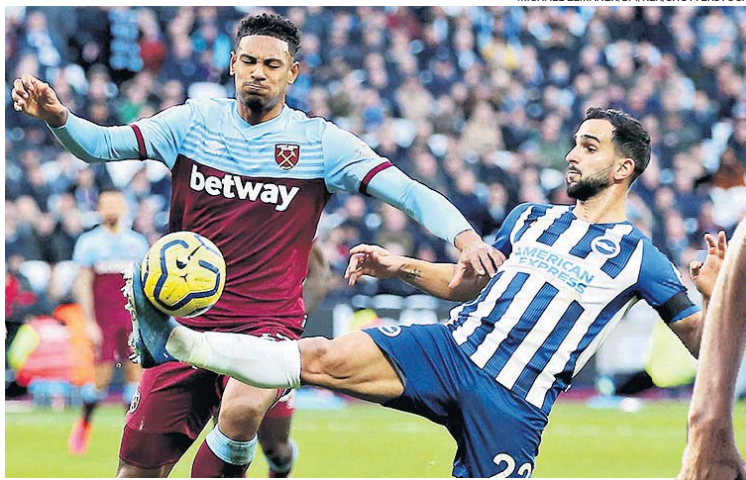
Howe remains strong in turbulent times

4 Eddie Howe. Management can be so emotionally and physically exacting, especially for somebody like Howe who cares so deeply about his staff, players and fans at Bournemouth. Howe's eyes have betrayed the pressure he has been under of late but his determination and abilities, let alone the respect in which Bournemouth players clearly hold their manager, have seen him guide the club through turbulent waters. Howe has stayed strong, kept sending positive messages to his players, kept handling the media inquisition and been rewarded with two wins on the spin, however nervy the ten-man 2-1 victory over Aston Villa was.

Smith Rowe stands up to be counted

5 Emile Smith Rowe. Trailing 3-0 at Fulham after 31 minutes, Huddersfield Town faced humiliation. They craved a leader, and a teenager stood up to be counted. Smith Rowe quickly struck, then supplied the assist for Steve Mounié in a comeback ultimately in vain but still notable for the 19-year-old's mature influence. The attacking midfielder player already looks a smart loan signing by Danny Cowley. Arsenal will clearly benefit too, as Smith Rowe gets game time and good coaching. He has played in the EFL Trophy, the EFL Cup, the Europa League and the Premier League this season. This spell in the Championship could prove the making of him.

thegame



Haller is struggling as a lone striker, scoring two goals since October

Haller desperate for helping hand

GARY JACOB

Putting aside the recurring calamities at the back, another headache for West Ham United is how to get the best out of Sébastien Haller to help them to stay up. The forward is struggling, low on confidence and has the fans on his back.

Haller's two league goals in nearly four months, since October 5, is a miserly return for a striker, let alone one who cost £45 million. While his form is undoubtedly one reason that the team have fallen from the top three to the bottom three places since October, it paints a distorted picture.

Haller excelled in one tactical system at Eintracht Frankfurt, but he has struggled playing in another at his new club. Last season at Eintracht he operated mostly alongside Luka Jovic and Ante Rebic. He scored 15 league goals and assisted nine others. At West Ham he has mostly played as a lone striker and not only has he been isolated without support but starved of balls into the penalty area.

Certainly he has seemed to be feeling the pressure, snatching shots and being on his heels. Even worse, he has sometimes not even managed a shot, something he was guilty of again on Saturday. His three most recent league goals took 40 shots, compared with him scoring three times from his first seven shots for the club.

The question is whether David Moyes will radically change the shape of his side now that Jarrod Bowen is on board having scored 16 league goals at Hull City this season. Certainly the West Ham manager will have options — Bowen, Michail Antonio, Robert Snodgrass or Felipe Anderson, who should be fit in a fortnight or so — to give Haller better support.

Behind them Tomas Soucek showed on his debut that he could be an astute signing. Three times early on the midfielder ran into the area and showed why he got 21 league goals for Slavia Prague since the start last season.

The problem is that time is ticking for Moyes and his team face a tough run-in, including playing the traditional "big six", starting with Manchester City and Liverpool. There could be a deluge of goals if West Ham's backline repeat mistakes of late. They could be blamed for both Liverpool goals in midweek and each of the three that saw Brighton & Hove Albion come back from 3-1 down. It took the tally to six errors

Match briefing

West Ham Utd 3 **Brighton** 3

Issa Diop poked home from a Robert Snodgrass free kick before the latter doubled West Ham's lead. Brighton responded, and from a corner Lukasz Fabianski punched the ball which hit Angelo Ogbonna and went in. Pascal Gross gave Brighton hope and they completed a comeback when VAR overturned a decision to chalk off Glenn Murray's goal for handball.

Key moment

Seconds after Arthur Masuaku came on in the 74th minute he made a poor clearance, which was compounded by dithering from Diop and Ogbonna, allowing Gross to trickle the ball into the net.

RATINGS

West Ham United (4-1-4-1): L Fabianski 6 — R Fredericks 6, I Diop 5, A Ogbonna 5, A Cresswell 6 — D Rice 7 — R Snodgrass 8 (M Lanzini 85min), M Noble 7, T Soucek 7 (P Fornals 85), M Antonio 8 (A Masuaku 74) — S Haller 6. **Subs not used** D Randolph, F Baluena, P Zabaleta, A Ajeti. **Booked** Ogbonna.

Brighton (4-2-3-1): M Ryan 6 — M Montoya 5 (E Schellotto 72), A Webster 6, L Dunk 6, Bernardo 5 — D Pröpper 7, D Stephens 7 — P Gross 7, A Mooy 6 (S March 72), L Trossard 6 — G Murray 6. **Subs not used** D Button, N Maupay, A Jahanbakhsh, A Connolly, S Alzate. **Booked** Stephens.

Referee M Oliver.

leading to goals and only three teams have a worse record this season.

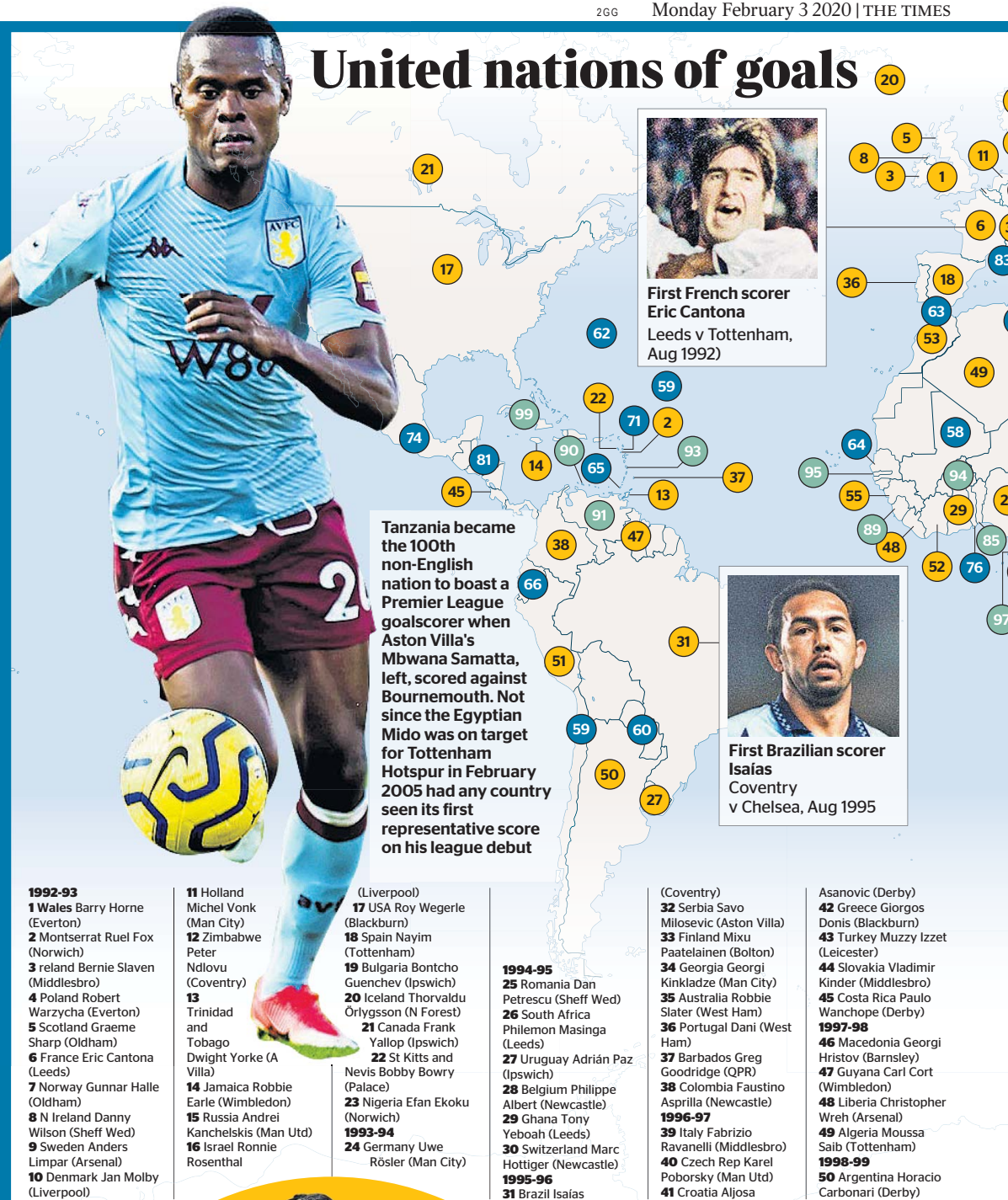
Issa Diop got the jitters alongside Angelo Ogbonna. Moyes has the option to use Pablo Zabaleta's experience and switch to three centre backs, a system he used to help West Ham survive in 2018. They have lost 19 points from a winning position this season, more than any other side.

"We were on such a high and then a low and football is cruel at times," Snodgrass said. "I don't care how we play, we must believe that we can beat anyone. We have been here before."

For Brighton, there was satisfaction in watching Glenn Murray score the equaliser. The forward, 36, has started just four league games this season and might have left the club last month. Graham Potter has been under pressure from some fans and had a difficult week after his father passed away.

"We will fight and do our best and some days we will not be successful but we will dust ourselves down and try to improve," Potter said. "If people are not happy with that, then that is no problem for me."

United nations of goals



Game in numbers

Bill Edgar on a tale of tall title-winners and a man born to score an own goal

Back to back

In only two games in the Premier League era has a defender scored twice in stoppage time of either half — and both cases have been recorded in Everton's past two

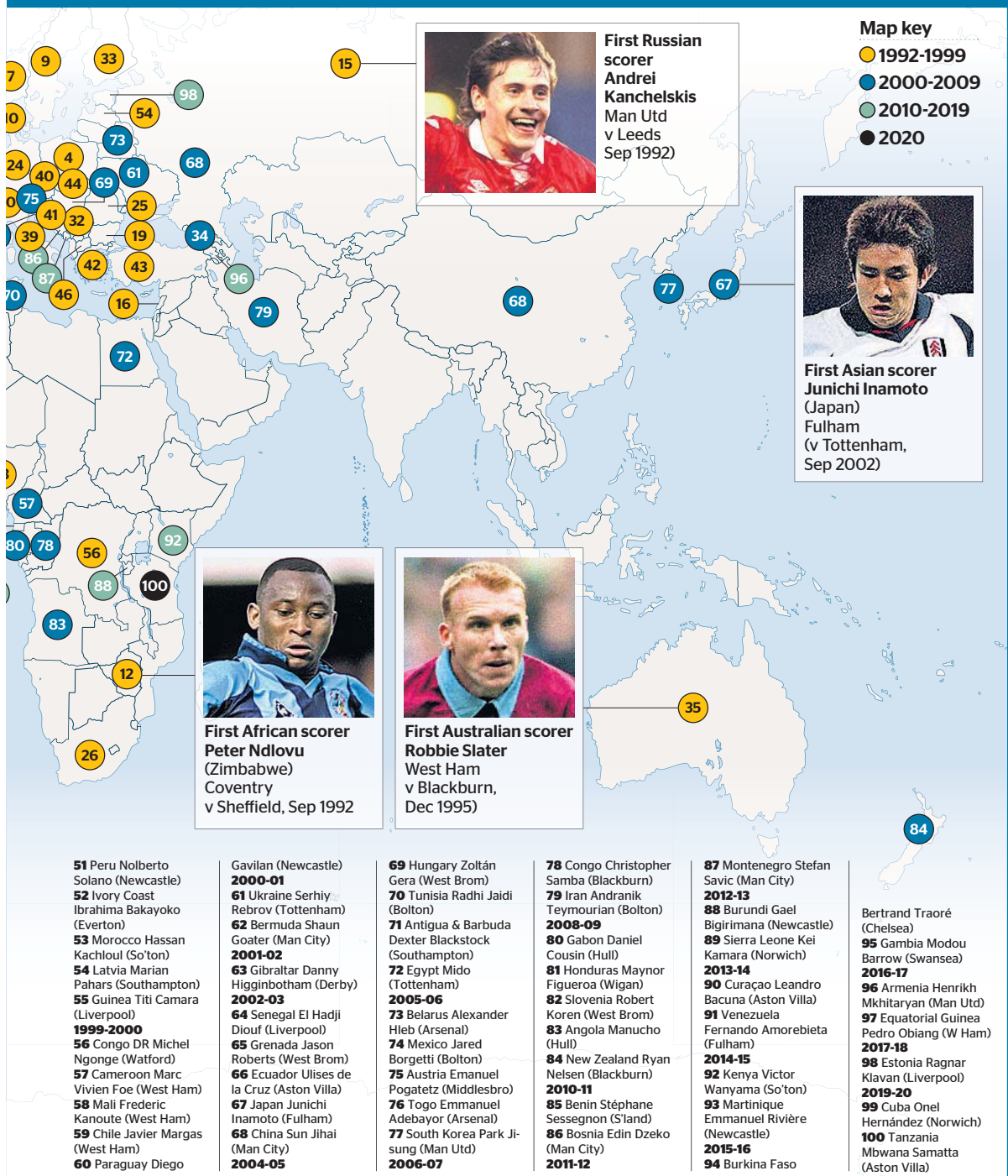
matches: by Florian Lejeune for Newcastle United and Yerry Mina for Everton. In each instance the player pulled the away team back from 2-0 down to 2-2. Pre-Premier League goal times (before 1992) are not recorded comprehensively.

Defenders scored eight Premier League goals on Saturday, the joint most on one day since September 23, 1995. Mina and Chelsea's Antonio Rüdiger are the first pair of defenders to score twice on one day in the top flight for ten years. On the first day of the second month of the year (Saturday), in the first minute of the second half, Chelsea's first goal against Leicester City was scored by their No 2 (Rüdiger). The latter player became the first to score as many goals as his shirt number in a Premier League match since Asmir Begovic, the Stoke City No 1, netted from a clearance against Southampton in November 2013. Arouna Koné, the Wigan Athletic No 2 and striker, scored twice against Reading earlier that year.

Klopp is top

Before Jürgen Klopp became their manager, the best 34-game points haul in Liverpool's league history was 85 (assuming three for a win throughout); they have gained 100 from their past 34. Liverpool are heading for the highest top-flight points tally (111 at this rate), guided by the "highest" title-winning manager since the Second World War: at 6ft 4in, Klopp will be the tallest since 1945 and probably the

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thegame

Lerma paying price for tough-guy image

RICK BROADBENT

Fans of a certain age get misty-eyed at talk of football's hard men. They did high tackles and low morality with grouchy panache, but can anyone really be a hard man in 2020?

Jefferson Lerma has a reputation as one. His sending-off after losing his duel with Jack Grealish means he has now received ten yellow cards and one red in his 22 league games this season. Grealish, meanwhile, has been fouled more than anyone else. This suggests that Grealish is the victim, but it might be the other way round.

There was a crushing inevitability about the Colombian's fate although Bournemouth hung on to climb out of the bottom three. The first yellow card came after only 18 minutes. The second arrived just after the interval for a fairly innocuous block. "You're joking me," Eddie Howe mouthed. Later, he claimed that Lerma's reputation was preceding him. "Some of the bookings this season have been very harsh," Howe said. "Other players wouldn't have ended up with the same punishment. Unfortunately for Jeff, he has put himself in that position. It is very difficult to change people's opinions."

This perceived enforcer has made a mere 32 tackles this season, putting him 80th in the league, level with Sadio Mané. Another quirk of modern refereeing is the special rules for goalkeepers. Aaron Ramsdale was careless when mistiming a punch and striking Bjorn Engels. "We could have had a penalty when he was punched in the face," said Dean Smith, the Aston Villa manager.

Lerma was sent off after fouling Grealish twice

Match briefing

Bournemouth 2	Aston Villa 1
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RATINGS

Bournemouth (4-3-2-1): A Ramsdale 6 — A Smith 7, S Francis 6, N Aké 7, D Rico 7 — P Billing 7, J Lerma 7, D Gosling 7 — H Wilson 6, R Fraser 7 — C Wilson 6. **Subs not used:** A Boruc, S Cook, A Surman, D Solanke, L Cook, J Stanislas, S Surridge. **Booked** Lerma, C Wilson. **Sent off** Lerma.

Aston Villa (3-4-3): P Reina 6 — E Konsa 6 (sub: B Engels 46min, 6), T Mings 6, K Hause 6 — F Guilbert 6, D Luiz 6, M Nakamba 6 (sub: Trézéguet 80, 6), M Targett 6 — A El Ghazi 6 (sub: K Davis 59, 7), M Samatta 7, J Grealish 8. **Subs not used** O Nyland, H Lansbury, C Hourihane, A El Mohamady. **Booked** Mings, Luiz, Hause. **Referee** A Taylor.

HIS CARD IS MARKED

Most yellow cards in Premier League since August 2018

Jefferson Lerma (Bournemouth).....	21
Étienne Capoue (Watford).....	20
Luka Milivojevic (Crystal Palace).....	19
Jorginho (Chelsea).....	17
Sokratis (Arsenal).....	17
José Holebas (Watford).....	17



Bournemouth deserved the victory, though. Grealish twice went close, but Philip Billing had one of his best games yet and swept home the first goal. Nathan Aké added the second after a Ryan Fraser shot was parried. Villa scored a headed goal for the first time this season, via the league's first Tanzanian player, on his first league appearance. Mbwana Samatta will surely need to remain influential if Villa are to avoid the 2011 fate of Birmingham City who made the League Cup final before being relegated.



Mina scores the first of his two goals in first-half injury time against Watford

tallest ever. Liverpool have gone three years without losing a match starting at 3pm on a Saturday (Hull City beat them on February 4, 2017).

Drawn out

Arsenal are on course to be the first team to draw half their top-flight games over a season since Norwich City in 1978-79. Mikel Arteta's record of eight points from his first seven league games is worse than that of all but one of Arsenal's managers since the First World War (counting three points for a win throughout). Having started five Tottenham Hotspur matches in a row for the first time, Giovani Lo Celso is

becoming the most significant GLC in London since Ken Livingstone's heyday in the 1980s.

Regional success

Aston Villa, who lost to Bournemouth, were the first team to start a Premier League match with two players from Eastern Africa (UN definition): Tanzania's Mbwana Samatta and Zimbabwe's Marvelous Nakamba. Norwich City, the Premier League's most easterly club, have kept three clean sheets away in the league this season — at the most westerly, southerly and northerly grounds (Everton, Bournemouth and Newcastle).

Homespun Chelsea

This season Chelsea have given more league starts to English players aged 21 or under (54) than they did over the previous 16 seasons combined since Roman Abramovich bought them in 2003 (53). West Ham United's Angelo Ogbonna is the first player with a surname starting "Og" to score an own goal in the top flight since John Ogilvie for Leicester City against Bolton Wanderers in March 1959.

No half measures

Four Premier League games on Saturday featured four goals in one half, the most such cases on one day for more than eight years. None of the past 53 shots from Premier League free kicks have found the net. Two League One matches saw Bolton score a second-half goal in a 2-0 home win: Bolton did so, as did James Bolton for Portsmouth.

Barren pair

There have been two goalless draws in Saturday evening matches featuring two top-flight teams in 2020 — Manchester United against Wolverhampton Wanderers in both cases (one league, one FA Cup).

Toothless Newcastle face harrowing identity crisis

MARTIN HARDY

On Saturday Newcastle United ended the day in mid-table in the Premier League and were loudly jeered by their fans. Norwich City remained bottom, yet their players were applauded by their 1,500 or so travelling support.

Afterwards, Daniel Farke, the Norwich head coach, took questions about the style of his team, the 12 corners and the 20 shots they had created. There was praise. Todd Cantwell was the most creative player on the field by a distance.

Steve Bruce, by contrast, apologised for how bad his Newcastle team had been. For the ninth time this season they were goalless. For the third game running they were awful.

Football and Newcastle often makes little sense, but right now it is beyond head shaking. Inside the confusion of league placings and non-goalscorers signed for huge sums, lies a question of style. Their supporters like a football team to play with flair and the present one is desperately short of that. There is still no identity. "Defensively we are fine, difficult to beat and play against but we have to

Match details

Newcastle 0	Norwich 0
-----------------------	---------------------

RATINGS

Newcastle (5-2-3): M Dubravka 8 — D Yedlin 5 (V Lazaro 54min, 5), F Fernández 7, J Lascelles 6, C Clark 7, M Ritchie 6 — I Hayden 5 (S Longstaff 56, 6), N Bentaleb 5 — M Almirón 7, Joelinton 5, A Saint-Maximin 5 (D Rose 79). **Subs not used** K Darlow, F Schär, F Lejeune, C Atsu. **Booked** Yedlin, Bentaleb.

Norwich (4-2-3-1): T Krul 7 — M Aarons 7, C Zimmermann 7, G Hanley 6, S Byram 7 — A Tettey 7 (O Hernández 88), K McLean 6 — L Rupp 8 (M Vrancic 89), O Duda 7, T Cantwell 8 (E Buendia 67, 5) — T Pukki 6. **Subs not used** R Fährmann, J Lewis, T Trybull, J Drmic. **Booked** Cantwell. **Referee** M Atkinson.

offer more on the counter and look after the ball better," Bruce, the Newcastle manager, said. Entering February it is no clearer what style of play Newcastle are shooting towards. Bruce would like to play two central defenders, the players prefer three. Part of his mandate was to blend £80 million-worth of forwards with Rafa Benítez-style organisation and that has not happened. Norwich seemed more coached and refined, creating genuine chances. It left yet more questions about this complicated Newcastle season, and few answers.

thegame

Kepa's stats do not add up to £72m goalkeeper

TOM RODDY

Back in his pomp, Frank Lampard possessed the kind of quality in striking a ball that would wrong-foot goalkeepers more often than not. The fresh-faced Lampard would aim to hit across the modern, lighter balls to make them dip and swerve, and he would practise the technique against Petr Cech, then Chelsea's goalkeeper, at the club's Surrey training base.

"Even big Petr ends up palming a shot that is coming straight at him into the net if you catch it right and it suddenly changes direction," Lampard wrote in his 2006 autobiography *Totally Frank*.

Even big Petr. Lampard's suggestion was that it took something rather special to beat Cech, the man who conceded only 15 goals in his first season at Stamford Bridge in 2004-05. How Lampard, now head coach at Chelsea, must wish Cech had been available to him on Saturday rather than watching on from the stands at the King Power Stadium as the club's new technical adviser.

Lampard had decided it was time to drop Kepa Arrizabalaga, the world's most expensive goalkeeper, to the substitutes' bench for game away to third-placed Leicester City, instead turning to the veteran Willy Caballero. The decision, Lampard emphasised, had not been made lightly. This was something he had been considering for a while.

For occasional observers, Lampard's decision could have appeared harsh. Out of the Premier League's so-called "top six" clubs, only Arrizabalaga and Liverpool's Alisson are yet to make an error that led to a goal against their team. Bernd Leno has made two mistakes that saw Arsenal concede, as

Match briefing

Leicester
2Chelsea
2

Harvey Barnes equalised for Leicester with a deflected shot after Antonio Rüdiger had headed Chelsea in front. Ben Chilwell beat Willy Caballero at his near post but Rüdiger scored again.

Key moment

Rüdiger's trailing hand stopped a cross by Barnes in the 93rd minute but Lee Mason denied Leicester a spot kick.

RATINGS

Leicester City (4-1-4-1): K Schmeichel 6 — Ricardo 7, J Evans 6, C Soyuncu 6, B Chilwell 7 — H Choudhury 6 — A Pérez 6, Y Tielemans 7 (D Praet 80min), J Maddison 6, H Barnes 7 — J Vardy 7 (K Iheanacho 80). **Subs not used** J Justin, C Fuchs, J Ward, M Albrighton, D Gray. **Booked** Maddison, Evans. **Chelsea** (4-3-3): W Caballero 5 — R James 7, A Rüdiger 8, A Christensen 5, C Azpilicueta 6 — N Kanté 6, Jorginho 6 (M Kovacic 74), M Mount 7 — C Hudson-Odoi 6, T Abraham 6 (R Barkley 83), Pedro 5 (Willian 74). **Subs not used** K Arrizabalaga, M Alonso, F Tomori, M Batshuayi. **Booked** Jorginho, Kovacic. **Referee** L Mason.

6

League games in which Chelsea failed to win despite scoring first. Only West Ham have a worse record with seven

has David De Gea at Manchester United and Hugo Lloris at Tottenham Hotspur. Rarely has it been Arrizabalaga who the camera has focused on in those moments.

Yet the issue with the Spaniard emerges when you explore the number of shots he saves. This season, that figure is 41 from 72 efforts on target. That works out at a save percentage of 55.6 per cent and, compared with the rest of the Premier League, is pretty woeful.



CHELSEA NEED AN ALISSON

Chelsea have conceded 19 more goals than Liverpool despite facing a similar number of shots

Total shots faced

Chelsea.....221
Liverpool.....242

Shots on target faced

Chelsea.....77
Liverpool.....70

Goals conceded

Chelsea.....34
Liverpool.....15



Kepa, left, watches from dugout

Caballero can fix Chelsea's problems now but at 38 is not the long-term solution

Only Southampton's Angus Gunn has a worse record (54.6 per cent), and he was the poor man picking the ball out of the net for a record nine times at home to Leicester in October. Plus, Gunn has only played

ten league games this season. Compare Arrizabalaga's record with that of Alisson, who arrived in the Premier League 20 days earlier than the Spaniard in 2018, and for £4million less than the record

£72million Chelsea paid Athletic Bilbao. Alisson saves 87 per cent of the shots that threaten his goal.

With players such as Virgil van Dijk and Fabinho providing protection in front of him, Liverpool's goalkeeper does face far fewer shots — just 46 compared with Arrizabalaga's 72. Yet Leno has been tested 124 times this season at Arsenal and stopped 91 of those, a save percentage of 72.6. These numbers don't make pleasant reading for anyone with an interest in Chelsea succeeding, and Lampard is known to be a stats man.

Though there have been no clear moments when the TV cameras have focused in on Arrizabalaga after dropping a clanger, it has been those shots seemingly within reach that have posed the problem. No dip or swerve has been required.

Think St James' Park last month when Isaac Hayden's last-minute header for Newcastle United passed Arrizabalaga with relative ease. Think Dan Gosling's looped kick that caught him in no man's land in the defeat by Bournemouth. Think Héctor Bellerín's late equaliser for Arsenal, which Lampard described as "soft".

After a frustrating transfer window in which Chelsea failed to bring in the attacking reinforcements that he so desperately wanted, another new signing may now be on Lampard's wish list. Caballero can be a short-term solution, despite being beaten far too easily at his near post for Leicester's second on Saturday. His save percentage is 74.5 since signing for Chelsea in 2017, and he is capable with his feet.

So what now for the world's most expensive goalkeeper? Chelsea have invested heavily in Arrizabalaga, with his fee accompanied by a seven-year contract that doesn't expire until the summer of 2025. Recouping that will prove tricky, so the onus may be on turning him into the goalkeeper they expected him to be.

After this week's winter break, Chelsea face crucial games against Manchester United and Tottenham Hotspur, two of the teams chasing them down for fourth spot. Who is picked in goal for those games will be indicative of his thoughts heading towards the summer and next season.

"I will take a few days off," Lampard said. "I'm not travelling anywhere far but it will be nice to spend family time. This job is consuming and I've probably given my wife too much chat about football so I'll try to refrain for a few days and then get back to work."

Whether that work is improving Arrizabalaga or chasing a replacement remains to be seen. But Lampard and Chelsea can't afford to dip or swerve any more.

Walcott doing all he can to keep pace with Everton's 'young pups'

PAUL ROWAN

Theo Walcott at 30 is a somewhat frightening thought given that he seems to have been around for ever. One of the most genial men in football showed that it is far too early to write him off after his lung-busting run in the last minute for that rare collector's item — a comeback goal for Everton to secure an away win.

"I have been doing everything to keep myself up with these young pups," Walcott said. "I still have a lot of football to play in these legs, even if the groins are feeling tight now. I was pleased to keep up with Moise [Kean] who's 19 and Richie [Richarlison] is about 22, so it's not bad. If they can run at that pace at my age they will be doing well."

A few minutes earlier Walcott had

found himself in another promising position but played one of those inexplicably sloppy passes that summed up why he has always been such an infuriating player.

"I cramped up," Walcott said. "I managed to get a bit of gel into me and that helped me get through. It is one of those things that happens when you run at pace."

It would be wonderful if Carlo Ancelotti, who took over at Everton in December, manages to get more consistency out of Walcott.

"Our manager gets a sense of calmness around the players," Walcott said.

Walcott snatched all three points with a late winner



"He instills confidence in you. He is so relaxed, he just talks to you like a human being, he doesn't treat you any different. He has a

Match briefing

Watford
2Everton
3

Adam Masina and Roberto Pereyra put Watford 2-0 up but they were pegged back just before half-time with a Yerry Mina double, both from corners. Fabian Delph was sent off but Theo Walcott won the game for Everton in the 90th minute.

Key moment

Richarlison's ability to carry the ball at his feet when running at speed and then find the killer pass was the crucial element in Everton's winning goal.

RATINGS

Watford (4-2-3-1): B Foster 5 — A Mariappa 6, C Kabasele 6, C Cathcart 6, A Masina 6 — N Chalobah 6 (D Welbeck 57min, 5), É Capoue 6 — R Pereyra 7 (I Success 75), A Doucoure 6, G Deulofeu 6 (I Pussetto 82) — T Deeney 6. **Subs not used** H Gomes, J Holebas, W Hughes, A Gray. **Booked** Success, Masina.

Everton (4-4-2): J Pickford 6 — D Sidibé 6, Y Mina 8, M Holgate 6, L Digne 7 — A Iwobi 6 (M Kean 65, 5), F Delph 5, G Sigurdsson 6 (M Schneiderlin 67, 6), T Walcott 7 — D Calvert-Lewin 6 (M Keane 73), Richarlison 7. **Subs not used** M Stekelenburg, S Coleman, L Baines, Bernard. **Booked** Mina, Holgate, Delph. **Sent off** Delph.

Referee C Pawson.

great squad to work with and has only been there a small amount of time so that is why the last ten days have been important."

This was a good recovery after

Everton's last game when they conceded two goals in injury time against Newcastle United at home and only got a point.

Having had last weekend off because of another early FA Cup exit, Walcott revealed that Everton had held a social to make up for their Christmas party being cancelled after the sacking of Marco Silva in December. "You could see people coming out of their shell a little bit more," Walcott said. "And today we worked hard for each other. This stuff has happened to us, so it is nice that it has been flipped."

When Fabian Delph was sent off in the 70th minute it looked like that might put a stop to Everton's revival — it being more than two years since they recovered from a goal down to win a game — but Walcott made it look easy in the end.

GOING BACKWARDS

After three seasons of steady improvement, Anthony Martial's goal ratio in the Premier League has slowed this season:

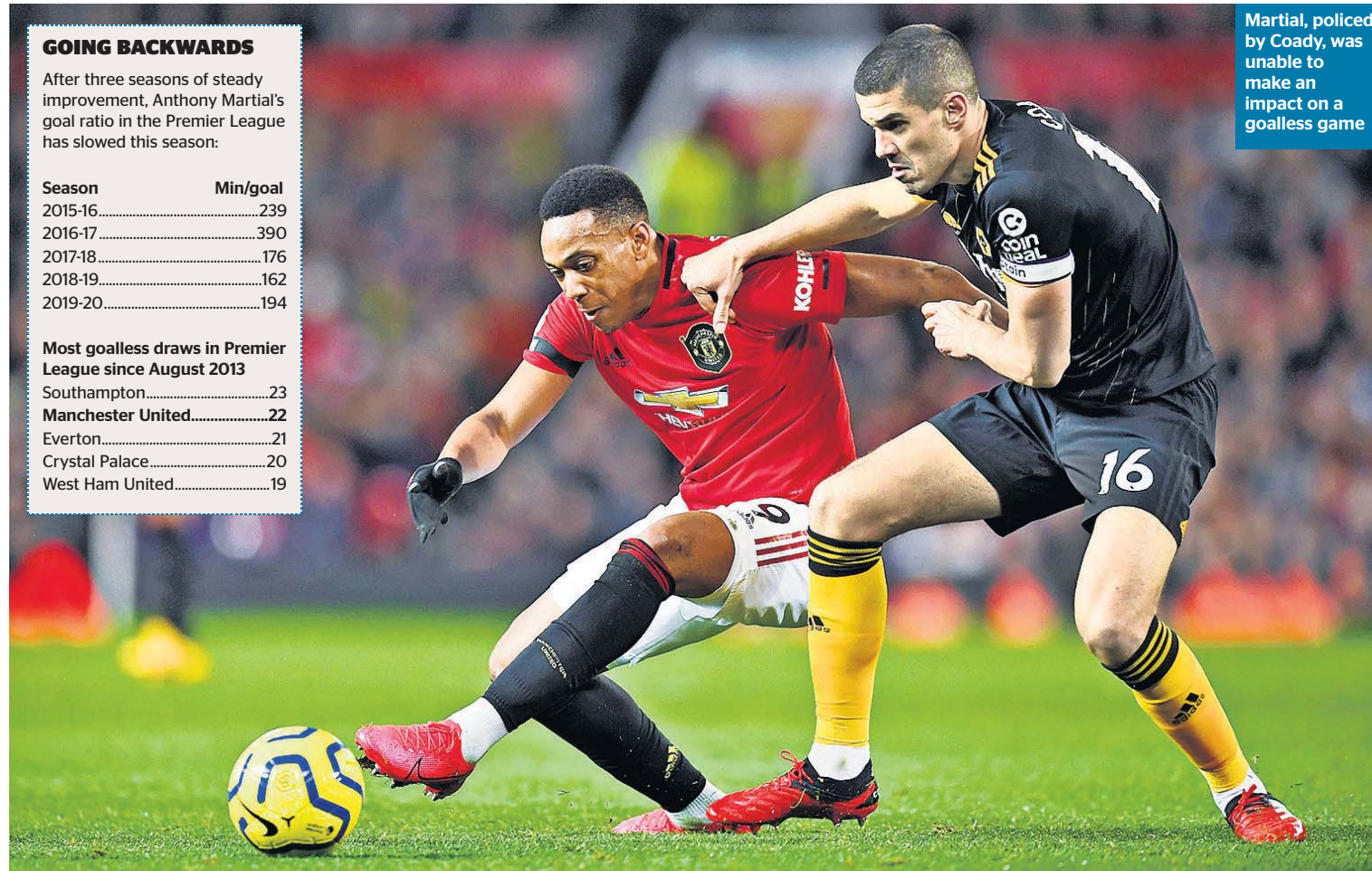
Season	Min/goal
2015-16.....	239
2016-17.....	390
2017-18.....	176
2018-19.....	162
2019-20.....	194

Most goalless draws in Premier League since August 2013

Southampton.....	23
Manchester United.....	22
Everton.....	21
Crystal Palace.....	20
West Ham United.....	19

CLIVE MASON/GETTY IMAGES

Martial, policed by Coady, was unable to make an impact on a goalless game



Martial's decline continues but where does blame lie?

PAUL HIRST

Mike Phelan threw his hands down in disappointment, spun on his heels and headed towards the bench. Manchester United's assistant manager was not happy with what he had just seen.

The source of Phelan's irritation was Anthony Martial. Twice in the space of two minutes, Martial had made the kind of errors one expects to see from a rookie striker, not one in his fifth season at United.

With 76 minutes of United's goalless draw against Wolverhampton Wanderers gone, Romain Saïss's misplaced pass rolled across the edge of the Wolves box. Juan Mata had timed his run perfectly and was about to unleash a shot with his favoured left foot, but Martial inexplicably pinched the ball off his team-mate while he had his back to goal and nothing came of the attack. Phelan planted his hands on top of his head. One minute later, he threw them to his side after Willy Boly, the Wolves defender, muscled Martial aside to prevent him from collecting Bruno Fernandes's pass on the edge of the area.

It was not the first time that Wolves' defenders had got the better of the 24-year-old Frenchman. Boly set the tone in the second minute when he rose high to beat the United striker to a header. Then it was Conor Coady's turn to steal in ahead of Martial. Later on, Wolves's third centre back Saïss got in on the act, brushing the striker off the ball with ease.

For United fans, there are few players as infuriating to watch as

Match briefing

Man United 0 Wolves 0

Adama Traoré shot just wide of the United goal before debutant Bruno Fernandes squandered his first goalscoring chance by driving Luke Shaw's pull-back straight at Rui Patrício. David De Gea denied Raúl Jiménez by tipping his shot over the crossbar.

Key moment

Aaron Wan-Bissaka found Diogo Dalot with a pinpoint cross in stoppage time but the full back headed inches wide.

RATINGS

Manchester United (4-2-3-1): D De Gea 7 – A Wan-Bissaka 7, V Lindelöf 7, H Maguire 7, L Shaw 7 – Fred 6, A Pereira 6 (M Greenwood 72min) – J Mata 6 (J Lingard 88), B Fernandes 7, D James 5 (D Dalot 88) – A Martial 5. **Subs not used** S Romero, P Jones, T Chong, B Williams. **Booked** Lindelöf, Shaw, Fernandes.
Wolves (3-4-3): R Patrício 7 – W Boly 7, C Coady 7, R Saïss 7 – M Doherty 6, R Neves 7, J Moutinho 7, J Otto 6 – A Traoré 7 (D Podence 76), R Jiménez 7 (L Dendoncker 90+1), D Jota 6 (P Neto 70, 6). **Subs not used** J Ruddy, B Jordão, M Gibbs-White, M Kilman. **Booked** Moutinho, Neves.
Referee P Tierney.

Martial. One minute he can appear to be one of the best forwards in Europe, the next he disappoints.

Other than Daniel James, no outfield player in red had fewer touches in Saturday's game than Martial. He is averaging a goal every 161 minutes in all competitions this season, which is not good enough for a frontline striker. Sergio Agüero is averaging almost a goal a game for Manchester City. Jamie Vardy scores once every 118 minutes for Leicester City while Danny Ings's average at Southampton is one goal every 123 minutes.

Martial's form has dipped in recent weeks, which is one of the main reasons why United have failed to catch Chelsea even though the London club have dropped points in nine of their past 13 league matches.

In his past five matches Martial has had just four shots on target and only one of those has found the back of the net – against Norwich City. In Saturday's game, he did not shoot once.

Who is to blame? The player himself has to shoulder some of the blame, of course. On Saturday he played with his back to goal too much. Martial is at his best when he is side on and running in behind defences. Raúl Jiménez, the Wolves striker, looked far more agile and willing to run at the opposition defence than United's No 9.

There are other factors too. United have lacked creativity in midfield all season, although they have rectified that problem to a certain extent by signing Fernandes, who performed reasonably well on his debut. "Anthony was isolated. I felt sorry for him in the first half," Ole Gunnar Solskjær, the United manager, said. "It's hard when you don't have runs in behind."

Solskjær and the club must take some of the blame too. United's failure to sign another striker last summer has meant that Martial has played far too often. Saturday's game was his 25th start. Last season, he started 26 games.

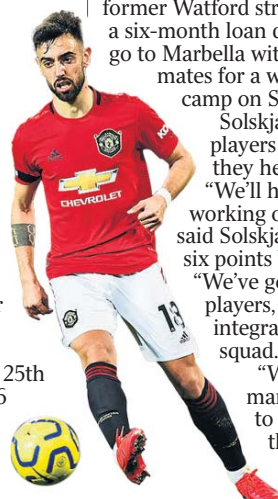
Fernandes showed some promise on his debut

Martial has played 90 minutes 15 times this season, which is three more than he did in the whole of last season. Odion Ighalo will ease Martial's workload to an extent but it is clear that the Frenchman needs a rest. "He's giving us everything. He's started the last seven games and he's running 20 per cent more than what he did when I came here," Solskjær said of Martial. "We'll give him more support and rest when he deserves it. "I've praised him, I've sat down with him and I'm delighted with him. "I know that he's tired, but he's never dodged a training session. He's training, he's available for every game, so we are delighted with the boy."

It remains to be seen whether Ighalo is good enough to start games regularly to ease Martial's workload. The 30-year-old is expected to report over the next couple of days having flown to the UK from China. The former Watford striker, who joined on a six-month loan deal on Friday, will go to Marbella with his new team-mates for a week-long training camp on Saturday.

Solskjær has given his players five days off before they head to Marbella. "We'll have a good camp, working on different things," said Solskjær, whose team are six points behind Chelsea. "We've got a few new players, hopefully we can integrate them into the squad."

"We've had to rely on many of these players to play more games than they should, so it'll be a nice break."



VAR WATCH

Bill Edgar on the week's big decisions



DECISIONS OVERTURNED

West Ham v Brighton
Brighton's Glenn Murray was initially deemed to have controlled the ball with his arm before scoring but VAR decided the ball hit his chest. Time taken to make the decision: **1min 55sec**

Crystal Palace v Sheffield United
Joel Ward was shown a red card by referee Andy Madley for his tackle on United's Enda Stevens but VAR believed it was only worth a yellow. Madley agreed after looking at the pitch-side monitor. Time taken: **2min 9sec**

Tottenham v Manchester City
Mike Dean waved play on when Serge Aurier challenged City's Sergio Agüero in the penalty area but eventually he halted play to give a spot kick on VAR advice. Time taken: **2min 3sec**

Decisions overturned this season

Total
75 in 250 games
(1 per 3.3 games)

Goals chalked off

38 (Sheff Utd 5, West Ham 4, Aston Villa 3, Man City 3, Liverpool 3, Wolves 3, Arsenal 2, Brighton 2, Burnley 2, Chelsea 2, Crystal Palace, Leicester 2, Tottenham 2, Everton 1, Bournemouth 1, Norwich 1)

Goals awarded

9 (Bournemouth 2, Crystal Palace 2, Arsenal 1, Leicester 1, Newcastle 1, Liverpool 1, Brighton 1)

Penalties awarded

12 (Man Utd 3, Man City 2, Aston Villa 1, Brighton 1, Crystal Palace 1, Watford 1, Burnley 1, Chelsea 1, Wolves 1)

Penalty struck off

4 (Chelsea 1, Leicester 1, Man City 1, Southampton 1)

Penalty retake ordered

4 (Man City 2, Leicester 1, Arsenal 1)

Red card

5 (Ryan Bertrand, Southampton; Son Heung-min, Tottenham; Christian Kabasele, Watford; Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang, Arsenal; Ben Godfrey, Norwich)

Red card overturned

3 (Chris Basham, Sheff Utd; Aaron Cresswell, West Ham; Joel Ward, Crystal Palace)

Average time taken to make decisions 1min 31sec

IF VAR HAD BEEN AROUND

June 30, 1998: World Cup round of 16: Argentina 2 England 2 (Argentina won 4-3 on pens)

When Diego Simeone clattered into David Beckham from behind, the grounded England player flicked his boot at the Argentinian's leg. It was arguably unsporting behaviour (yellow card) rather than violent conduct, yet Beckham was sent off and became a pariah in his own country. England's ten men kept the score at 2-2 for more than an hour before succumbing in a penalty shoot-out.

thegame

Bale in shadow of Real's new stars

IAN HAWKEY MADRID

Zinedine Zidane, the head coach of a Real Madrid undefeated since mid-October, made a serious misjudgment at the weekend. He owned up to it immediately, and, having corrected the error, resisted compliments about how deftly he had changed his mind.

At stake was extending Madrid's invincible run, now 21 matches across competitions, in the capital derby at the Bernabéu, where Atletico, the visitors, had not lost in La Liga against their neighbours since 2012. Zidane had packed his midfield, five across the middle, with the centre forward Karim Benzema combining with them rather than waiting for the pass to chase. Real looked blunt.

So Zidane looked along the substitutes' bench for somebody, or somebodies, to offer an alternative: some speed, directness; maybe some better target-man options for the sorts of crosses that Sergio Ramos had met and miscued. As it happens, Madrid possess an ideal footballer for all those needs. He is a four-time winner of the Champions League. He was once the most expensive purchase in the sport. He is a man who has made handy contributions in derbies against Atletico in the past. Unfortunately for Zidane, that man had been left out of Real's matchday party of 18.

It had been the coach's decision, he acknowledged. "Gareth Bale was available," reported Zidane to an assembled media grown weary of second-guessing whether injury, careful management of his recuperation or tactical nuance explain the Welshman's absences from Real line-ups. "But I have to choose, and I chose other players."

"But," he added, "Gareth is focused, he'll be training well, and I will be counting on him until the end."

That line, delivered less than 24 hours after the close of a winter transfer window during which discussions — Tottenham Hotspur pushed the idea furthest — about how much it would take to relieve Real of Bale's €500,000-per-week (about £420,000) salary had led nowhere, is now Zidane's standard answer on Bale. It is delivered matter-of-fact, but designed to strike a very



Rodrygo
Age: 19
Signed from Santos for £37.9m in 2019

Eden Hazard
Age: 29
Signed from Chelsea for £150m in 2019

Vinicius Jr
Age: 19
Signed from Flamengo for £38.7m in 2018

3

Goals scored by Gareth Bale in 15 appearances for Real Madrid in all competitions this season

Saturday in the derby, making two substitutions at half-time, dismantling his thick-set midfield and introducing the 19-year-old Vinicius Junior on the Real left flank and zippy Lucas Vázquez on the right. Vinicius promptly set up the only goal of the game within ten minutes, having altered the tempo markedly.

Zidane also changed his posture on Bale within weeks of showing him the imaginary door in July. Almost nobody second-guessed that Bale would start for Real in the first three La Liga fixtures of the season. The transfer window was still open: Zidane had all but shoved the player through it, before discovering that Bale would not blink under pressure.

Nor will Zidane, who will continue to find uses for Bale's occasional brilliance in what has become an improbable Real pursuit of four possible trophies within the first five months of 2020 — the Spanish Super Cup having been claimed in January, the lead in La Liga secured, a Copa del Rey quarter-final against Real Sociedad to be contested on Thursday, and Manchester City arriving in the Champions League in three weeks' time.

But Bale does look less vital. Vinicius' display against Atletico has been heralded as a threshold moment for the Brazilian, in

whom Real invested €45 million as he turned 18. Eden Hazard is close to returning from three months out with an ankle fracture and there will be roles up front for Vázquez and another precocious winger, Rodrygo.

"Bale has missed the train," thundered yesterday's *ABC*, the Spanish newspaper. "Vinicius and Lucas have overtaken him on the ladder, a ladder based on reality not cachet." To say so that starkly may be to underestimate the enigmatic Bale. And it portrays Zidane as dogmatic, when he is more and more skilful at changing his mind.

EUROPEAN ROUND-UP

Cristiano Ronaldo scored for the ninth game in a row as the Serie A leaders Juventus bounced back from a rare defeat to beat Fiorentina 3-0 yesterday. He converted penalties towards the end of each half to equal a club goalscoring record set by David Trezeguet in 2005. Ronaldo now has 19 goals in 19 league matches this season. Matthijs de Ligt added Juventus's third

in injury time with a header.

But even Ronaldo's prowess is being overshadowed as Erling Braut Haaland continues his astonishing form at Borussia Dortmund. The 19-year-old Norwegian, who signed for the German club last month, scored two more as Union Berlin were thrashed 5-0, taking his tally to seven goals in fewer than three full

games. England's Jadon Sancho also scored — his eighth in the past nine league games. Haaland is the son of the former Manchester City and Leeds United midfielder Alf-Inge Haaland and it was a good weekend for the Maldini family in Italy with Daniel, the 18-year-old son of Paolo (and grandson of Cesare) making his debut for AC Milan in their 1-1 draw with Verona.

different note to last summer, when the Real head coach advised Bale, very publicly, he "should leave now".

Yet the more Zidane establishes his authority, the more he can change his mind, and doing so, seem not weak nor xenophobic, but quite wise. He changed his mind last March about the job itself, coming back to it ten months after resigning. He changed his mind on

Bale's value to Real Madrid has never been less clear



Cushing 'heartbroken' to be leaving City after six years

MOLLY HUDSON

The expert eye on the women's game



Nick Cushing parted with sweet sorrow from Manchester City yesterday to begin his new life as assistant manager of New York City FC, leaving his old team top of the Women's Super League.

"It almost breaks my heart a bit to think that it's over," said the departing City manager after his side had defeated Arsenal 2-1 at home. "Because it's been so good and after a result like that I almost want to stay and finish the year."

"You invest so much time in building relationships and on winning that you create a bit of a monster and then you have to walk away from it.

These last five games have felt like I've split up with my girlfriend but I'm still living in the same house as her."

Pauline Bremer broke the deadlock for City on the stroke of half-time as Arsenal could only partially clear Caroline Weir's free kick. The ball fell to Pauline Bremer, whose effort dribbled over the line after a deflection.

City's second goal was a trademark goal from a Cushing side. Keira Walsh, 22, a childhood fan who joined the club from Blackburn Rovers back in 2014, produced an inch-perfect cross for Lauren Hemp, 19, to head home. Apart from the trophies that Cushing has brought to the club during his

Bremer, right, broke the deadlock just before half-time



six years in charge, he's had a huge influence on young English talent.

Arsenal, to their credit, fought back. After a goalmouth scramble in which Ellie Roebuck saved Beth Mead's goalbound effort, Danielle van de Donk powered home from close range. It seemed unlikely with over 30 minutes to go that the score would remain at 2-1 — twice Vivianne Miedema fired towards goal, and twice seemingly nothing other than the will to win for Cushing dragged the ball away from the goalline.

After the match, in an emotional presentation on the pitch, the captain, Steph Houghton, pledged to win the league for her departing manager and they remain in pole position to do so.

Chelsea dominance

The biggest threat to Houghton's promise remains Chelsea. They demolished West Ham, scoring eight unanswered goals, moving to second in the table just one point behind City. Crucially, they have a game in hand on both City and Arsenal, and are not even at full strength with striker Sam Kerr and midfielder Ji So-yun away at Olympic qualifying.

Six different goalscorers found the net for Chelsea, with braces for Maren Mjelde and Bethany England. The result left the West Ham manager, Matt Beard, questioning whether he was the man to take the club forward.

Houghton has promised to win the league for her departing manager

Sodden pitches

Two out of six of the weekend's Women's Super League fixtures were postponed due to waterlogged pitches. Prenton Park, home of

Liverpool women and Tranmere Rovers, and The Hive, where Barnet, Tottenham Hotspur women and London Bees play, succumbed to a combination of over-use and poor weather. Liverpool chief executive officer and chairman of

Liverpool Women, Peter Moore, said: "I speak regularly with Mark Palios at Tranmere and we had a solid pitch yesterday but overnight rain saw it deteriorate despite the best efforts of all the hard-working groundstaff at Tranmere acting in conjunction with our own grounds team."



Joker in pack ready to play his pranks on Liverpool

Jason Cummings is back for more having scored twice in the first game, says **Gregor Robertson**

With Jason Cummings, it is hard to know quite where to begin. Last week, thanks to the FA Cup, a wider English audience got its first fleeting taste of the man who calls himself the "Cumdog" when the Shrewsbury Town forward leapt off the bench to bag a brace and earn a well-deserved replay for the Sky Bet League One club against Liverpool in the fourth round at Anfield tomorrow.

North of the border, Edinburgh-born Cummings's notoriety has already been entrenched after goalscoring and occasional off-field exploits for Hibernian and Rangers. However a training ground video, which went viral, is perhaps the best place to begin to try to explain why Terry Butcher, who handed an 18-year-old Cummings his Hibernian debut, calls him "mental, but mental in a nice way."

Once you have seen the images of Cummings wearing only his pants, a headband, a football sock on one arm and a pair of trainers, with "Cumdog" (his wrestling alter-ego's name) scrawled across his chest in marker pen, swaggering into the Hibs' training ground canteen to do combat with Grado, the Scottish wrestler, well, they are hard to forget.

A series of elaborate wrestling moves that would imperil a weaker man's back followed and left Neil Lennon, the manager at the time, in hysterics, clapping and chanting "Cumdog" with the rest of the Hibs squad. "There are not enough personalities in the game and

Cummings interrupts a Sky Sport interview last week



he's all personality," Lennon said afterwards. "It's all harmless with him. Allied to that he's a good footballer as well and I would not change anything about him."

Whatever Scottish football lacks in quality it certainly makes up for in humour and there were echoes of that sketch when a half-naked Cummings, 24, strolled behind Dave Edwards, his Shrewsbury team-mate, during an interview with Sky Sports at the club's training ground last week. He can't help himself and Cummings, it would be fair to say, also has the gift of the gab. When it was put to Cummings, live on BBC, that Ian Wright had predicted he would come on and grab a goal, the 24-year-old did not miss a beat. "Ah, Wrighty knows his stuff," he said before adding that he had regularly voted for the pundit on *I'm a Celebrity ... Get Me Out of Here!*

On a similar theme, there was the time, in September 2014, when Cummings scored a double in Hibs' 3-1 win against Rangers at Ibrox, then later boasted about having shown "the touch of an angel" in the build-up to his opener against Ally McCoist's side. Or the time when Cummings said his left foot could "open a tin of beans" after another double, this time against Hamilton Academical in the first leg of Hibs' Premiership promotion/relegation play-off in May 2014. It was some "zing" he said, a word which is tattooed on his left foot, not far from a picture of his Bulldog, Carlos, on his left calf, and

then there is that sinister, wide grin inked on his right hand which he cups to his mouth in a celebratory pose. It resembles the smile of The Joker, whose face is also a prominent tattoo on Cummings's left thigh.

"He got absolutely slaughtered by the [Hibs] players after that interview," Butcher tells *The Times*. "You sometimes think, maybe he should be a bit more humble. But no, Jason isn't like that. He wanted to have his moment of glory. He's a crazy



Tickled ink: Cummings has a ready-made smile imprinted on his hand with which to celebrate his goals and an image of The Joker on his left knee

kid sometimes. But one that you really warm to very quickly."

If you are beginning to think that Cummings is a bit of a barnpot, well, you would be on the right track but, the thing is, there is a player beneath all the banter, bravado and high-jinks. "Through all the bluster he's actually quite a down to earth, smart boy,"

Lennon has said. "He knows he's got something, and he's quite cold. He sees the white in the goalkeeper's eyes and nine times out of ten, he scores. So there is intelligence in there somewhere."

Cummings won his second Scotland cap less than two years ago (go on, you can insert your own joke

CUMMINGS FACTFILE

Born Edinburgh

Age 24

Caps Scotland 2. Goals 0

Clubs

2013-17 Hibernian: Games 114, goals 55

2017-19 Nottm Forest: Games 14, goals 1

2018 Rangers (loan): Games 15, goals 2

2018-19 Peterborough (loan): Games 22, goals 6

2019 Luton Town (loan): Games 5, goals 1

2019-20 Shrewsbury Town: Games 14, goals 3

here about how hard those are to come by these days) and he has already packed a fair amount into his career. The forward was released by Heart of Midlothian at 16 and briefly worked as a gardener until their Edinburgh rivals took a chance on him. "I was getting up at half seven in the morning pulling out weeds, getting muddy hands and sitting in a stinky van," he said in 2014. "I wouldn't fancy going back to do that so that's why I'm trying to make the most of this chance."

That season ended with Cummings missing the penalty that relegated Hibs to the second tier but he scored 71 goals in 149 games for the Easter Road side and was part of the team that won the club's first Scottish Cup in 114 years in 2016.

Promotion from the Championship was sealed the following year and it felt like a bit of a steal when Nottingham Forest paid Hibs about £1 million for his services in 2017.

A double in a 3-2 EFL Cup win against Newcastle United was the high water mark of his time at the City Ground and similarly during loans at Rangers, Peterborough United and Luton Town, consistency has been elusive, leaving supporters to wonder what might have been.

"He's sampled both big cities in Scotland and done well," Butcher says. "England's a different kettle of fish. But when Ian Wright said he'll come on and score, that was exactly my feelings. He'll always do something in a game; it might be mad or bizarre, but he'll do something that makes you remember who he is."

"He's unpredictable. He can score out of the blue and turn games; that sort of special player. He's got time. He's not reached his full potential. But games like Liverpool can give a player a big G-up, make you think, 'Right, where do I want to go and what do I have to do?' Hopefully that will be the case for Jason."

LIVERPOOL v SHREWSBURY TOWN
FA CUP FOURTH-ROUND REPLAY
TOMORROW, 7.45PM, TALKSPORT

CHAMPIONSHIP ROUND-UP

Performance of the week (team) Wigan Athletic. In April, Wigan's win away to Leeds United cost Marcelo Bielsa's team automatic promotion. An own goal from Pablo Hernández saw the result repeated on Saturday. Wigan have won only three of their past 37 away games and two of them have been at Elland Road.

Player of the week Said Benrahma (Brentford). The

Algerian scored a clinical hat-trick in the 5-1 win away to Hull City, earning a booking after the first for revealing a T-shirt with the slogan "Je t'aime Papa" in honour of his late father. Benrahma has now scored eight league goals — with five assists — this season.

Goal of the week Bobby Reid (Fulham). The forward had to control a high ball on his chest on the touchline before cutting

infield, passing three defenders and scoring the opening goal of the 3-2 win over Huddersfield Town with a superb shot in the tenth minute.

Rising star Rhian Brewster (Swansea City). Four league starts into his professional career on loan at Swansea City from Liverpool, the 19-year-old scored his second goal in the 1-1 draw away to Preston North End.



Brewster has now scored two goals on loan at Swansea

Villain of the day Lewis Grabban (Nottingham Forest). Leading Birmingham City 1-0 just before half-time, Grabban's casual approach to his penalty saw it saved by Lee Camp. As the home team came back to win 2-1, Grabban compounded that miss when he shot over from six yards.

Stat of the week A 2-0 win over Luton Town took West Bromwich Albion back to the

top despite it being their first win in eight league games.

Quote of the week "All of the boys know that we're the best team in the Championship. We deserve to go up. We've shown that, even last season and this season especially with our performances, dominating game after game. So we believe that we can get over the promotion line." Leeds forward Tyler Roberts.

THE JOURNEYMAN

Gregor Robertson visits Accrington

Stanley bid emotional farewell to brave Kee

"All I want to be in my life is the best person I can be," Billy Kee says. "And I can't be that in football. That's what it's come down to."

Kee has not played for Accrington Stanley all season. The 29-year-old striker's most recent appearance, and goal, for the Sky Bet League One club came in a 5-1 win against Plymouth Argyle in April. He has spoken with great candour and bravery about his struggles with anxiety and depression, about the "rat in my head" that would not stop running, about the darkness that enveloped him and threatened to drive away his wife, Leigh, and his family, whom he "lives and breathes for".

The news of Kee's retirement last week, therefore, did not come as a shock to those close to the club where he is so revered but Saturday was a chance to say goodbye. Kee was serenaded during a touching presentation before kick-off. Fans held aloft his number, 29, which the club have retired. A banner read: "Billy Kee... Hero ... Legend... Friend". Tears pooled in Kee's eyes. "It's a special club," he says.

Kee, who was born and raised in Leicestershire, first played for Stanley in 2009-10, on loan from Leicester City, his boyhood club. He returned in 2015, after spells at Torquay United, Burton Albion, Scunthorpe United and Mansfield Town. Defenders always knew they were in for a battle with Kee (I speak from experience): a wily, bruising striker who scored 84 goals in 239 games for Stanley, including 26 in the club's remarkable League Two title-winning campaign in 2017-18.

Friends and family gathered in the directors' box on Saturday and there would be a pint or two with Andy Holt, the owner, and John Coleman, the manager, during the £1-a-pint "winners' hour" after Stanley beat AFC Wimbledon 2-1.

Kee wears a broad smile but last summer, after a gruelling season, the gnawing thoughts took hold again. "In the summer, I wanted to take my life, I just couldn't cope, I wanted to get away from it all," Kee says. "I've not enjoyed football for years. The pressures, the stress, living away from family a lot. Your body fat having to be on point all the time. I wasn't sleeping for days on end. I worry too much. What fans are thinking, reading fans' forums and stuff. I couldn't switch off from it.

"I would wake up every Saturday, thinking, 'I hope the game's off. I hope it rains loads.' The modern footballer has to be perfect. I know we all have issues — and a lot of people struggle with mental health, in and outside of the game. But [footballers] are all proper athletes, individuals who have to be very strong mentally so they can be at the



Kee, who has spoken with candour about the anxiety and depression that forced him to quit football, acknowledges the Stanley fans

level they need to be at. And I can't do that.

"When you're coming home and taking it out on your family, it wasn't fair. I put it down to stress. I didn't understand all my feelings. It was only during the last eight months or so that I realised that I can't be healthy around football."

Kee briefly stepped away from football, in 2016, and laboured on a building site with his dad. Despite it all, leaving behind those 90 minutes on a Saturday was a wrench. "I know I'll miss it," he says. "If you put me out on that pitch now I'd do all right, I'd fight. But there's more to life than 90 minutes."

He can now admit that bulimia was behind fluctuations in his weight. There have been visits to an eating disorder clinic, counselling and medication. If voicing his struggles convinces one person to seek help it will be worth it, says Kee who thinks there are more footballers with mental health issues than is realised.

In an era of sport science and marginal gains, Kee always felt like something of a throwback, in truth. A part of him has always yearned for normality. "I'm a lad who loves a pint, loves a kebab, loves my mates," he grins. "That's more important to me than trying to fit into the world of football."

He has returned to the building site, "labouring, laying bricks, keeping busy from six in the morning to five at night," he says. "I've really enjoyed it. I can see a future outside of football now. Maybe I could play [football] part-time at a level I can enjoy, where it isn't about the money. It's never been about the money for me. Happiness is more important.

"An old man in the pub once said to me, 'You look after yourself, everything else will be all right'. That's what I've done: I'm looking after myself. It's time for the next step on my path."

Good luck to Billy Kee.

Premier League

			Home					Away								
		P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	FORM	NEXT (Last meeting)
1	Liverpool	25	13	0	0	35	9	11	1	0	25	6	45	73	WWWWW	Norwich (a) (4-1)
2	Manchester City	25	8	2	2	31	12	8	1	4	34	17	36	51	WWDWL	West Ham (h) (5-0)
3	Leicester	25	8	3	2	26	14	7	1	4	28	12	28	49	WLLWD	Wolves (a) (0-0)
4	Chelsea	25	5	3	4	16	12	7	2	4	27	22	9	41	DWLDD	Man Utd (h) (1-2)
5	Tottenham	25	8	2	3	25	12	2	5	5	15	20	8	37	LLDWW	Aston Villa (a) (3-1)
6	Sheffield Utd	25	5	2	5	13	11	4	7	2	13	12	3	36	LWDLW	Bournemouth (h) (1-1)
7	Manchester Utd	25	6	5	2	24	12	3	3	6	12	17	7	35	LWLLD	Chelsea (a) (2-1)
8	Wolves	25	4	5	3	18	17	4	6	3	17	15	3	35	LDWLD	Leicester (h) (0-0)
9	Everton	25	6	3	3	15	13	3	3	7	16	24	-6	33	LWDDW	Crystal Palace (h) (0-0)
10	Arsenal	25	4	5	3	18	18	2	8	3	14	16	-2	31	WDDDD	Newcastle (h) (1-0)
11	Burnley	25	6	1	6	16	18	3	3	6	12	20	-10	31	LLWWD	Southampton (a) (3-0)
12	Newcastle	25	5	5	3	12	12	3	2	7	12	24	-12	31	LDWDD	Arsenal (a) (0-1)
13	Southampton	25	3	2	7	13	28	6	2	5	18	18	-15	31	WWLWL	Burnley (h) (0-3)
14	Crystal Palace	25	4	4	5	10	13	3	5	4	12	16	-7	30	DDDLL	Everton (a) (0-0)
15	Brighton	25	4	5	3	16	13	2	3	8	14	24	-7	26	DLDDL	Watford (h) (3-0)
16	Bournemouth	25	4	4	5	15	19	3	1	8	10	19	-13	26	LLLWW	Sheff Utd (a) (1-1)
17	Aston Villa	25	5	2	5	16	21	2	2	9	16	26	-15	25	WLDWL	Tottenham (h) (1-3)
18	West Ham	25	3	3	7	20	25	3	3	6	10	18	-13	24	LDLLD	Man City (a) (0-5)
19	Watford	25	3	5	5	13	17	2	3	7	10	22	-16	23	WWDLL	Brighton (a) (0-3)
20	Norwich	25	3	3	6	18	25	1	3	9	6	22	-23	18	DLWLD	Liverpool (h) (1-4)

RESULTS

Bournemouth 2	Aston Villa 1
Billing 37	Samatta 70
Aké 44	10,722
Sent off: J Lerma (Bournemouth) 51	
Burnley 0	Arsenal 0
21,048	
Crystal Palace 0	Sheffield United 1
25,170	Guaia (og) 58
Leicester City 2	Chelsea 2
Barnes 54	Rüdiger 46, 71
Chilwell 64	32,186
Liverpool 4	Southampton 0
Oxlade-Chamberlain 47	53,291
Henderson 60	
Salah 71, 90	
Manchester United 0	Wolves 0
73,363	
Newcastle United 0	Norwich City 0
52,204	
Tottenham 2	Manchester City 0
Bergwijn 63, Son 71	61,022
Sent off: Zinchenko (Man City) 60	
Watford 2	Everton 3
Masina 10, Pereyra 42	Mina 45+1, 45+4
21,229	Walcott 90
Sent off: F Delph (Everton) 71	
West Ham 3	Brighton 3
Diop 30	Ogbonna (og) 47
Snodgrass 45, 57	Gross 75
59,952	Murray 79

TOP SCORERS

17 Vardy (Leicester, below)
16 Agüero (Man City)
14 Aubameyang (Arsenal)
14 Ings (Southampton)
14 Salah (Liverpool)
14 Rashford (Man Utd)

TOP ASSISTS

15 De Bruyne (Man City)
10 Alexander-Arnold (Liverpool)
7 Buendia (Norwich)
7 D Silva (Man City)
7 Mahrez (Man City)
7 Firmino (Liverpool)

TOP SAVES

103 Dubravka (Newcastle)
93 Leno (Arsenal)
86 Ryan (Brighton)
83 Ramsdale (Bournemouth)
82 Krul (Norwich)
79 Foster (Watford)



TV HIGHLIGHTS WITH BILL EDGAR

TOMORROW

Oxford United v Newcastle United, FA Cup, BBC1, 8.05pm

Having failed for the second round in a row to beat lower league opposition at home Steve Bruce's side face a tough night. After a goalless first game much of the TV audience will no doubt welcome an early goal for the home side.

WEDNESDAY

Tottenham v Southampton, FA Cup, BT Sport 1, 7.45pm

Southampton can trouble anyone and will have had an extra day to prepare themselves.

FRIDAY

Bristol City v Birmingham City, Championship, Sky Sports Football, 7.45pm

The home side have won four in a row without conceding a goal so they will fancy their chances.

Non-League, women, Scotland and Europe

Vanarama National League

AFC Fylde 1	Boreham Wood 2
Williams 33	Tshimanga 19
1,258	Fyfield 73
Aldershot 1	Harrogate Town 1
Bettamer 44	Kerry 70
1,704	
Barnet 2	Hartlepool 1
McCallum 64	Sweeney (og) 75
Akinola 80	1,321
Sent off: G Holohan (Hartlepool) 48	
Barrow 2	Torquay United 1
Rooney 71	Cameron 63
Quigley 75	2,586
Eastleigh 2	Woking 0
Payne 11	1,885
Barnett 19	
Ebbsfleet United 1	Sutton United 1
Ekpiteta 7	Beautymen 50
979	
Halifax Town 2	Bromley 1
Maher 32	Kizzi 45+2
Rodney 42	2,026
Sent off: J Holland (Bromley) 30	
Notts County 3	Chesterfield 0
Boldewijn 51	6,347
Wootton 59, 76	
Solihull Moors 0	Maidenhead 2
797	Akintunde 66
	Alfa 85
Stockport 0	Dover Athletic 2
4,506	Effiong 49, 80
Sent off: P Turnbull (Stockport) 38	
Wrexham 0	Dag & Red 0
4,024	
Yeovil 1	Chorley 1
Richards 88	Hall 45
2,729	
Sent off: C Hall (Chorley) 72	

Barrow 32	19	6	7	62	32	30	63
Harrogate Town 33	16	8	9	50	40	10	56
Halifax 33	16	7	10	49	45	4	55
Yeovil 33	15	9	9	57	40	17	54
Boreham Wood 32	14	10	8	48	34	14	52
Notts County 32	13	11	8	49	33	16	50
Bromley 33	14	8	11	54	45	9	50
Solihull Moors 32	13	8	11	42	32	10	47
Dover Athletic 32	13	8	11	41	41	0	47
Woking 33	13	8	12	43	50	-7	47
Barnet 30	12	10	8	45	37	8	46
Stockport County 33	13	7	13	44	50	-6	46
Hartlepool 33	11	11	11	49	47	2	44
Sutton United 33	10	12	11	41	38	3	42
Torquay 33	12	6	15	53	59	-6	42
Eastleigh 32	10	11	11	39	45	-6	41
Maidenhead 33	12	5	16	41	48	-7	41
Aldershot 33	10	10	13	37	45	-8	40
Wrexham 33	10	9	14	42	43	-1	39
Dagenham & R 32	9	10	13	34	39	-5	37
Chesterfield 33	8	10	15	42	57	-15	34
AFC Fylde 31	7	10	14	37	50	-13	31
Ebbsfleet United 33	6	12	15	41	62	-21	30
Chorley 33	4	14	15	29	57	-28	26

North

AFC Telford 2 Altrincham 2; Alfreton Town 2 Hereford 0; Blyth Spartans 0 Boston United 1; Brackley O Farsley Celtic 1; Darlington 0 Guiseley 3; Gateshead 4 Leamington 2; Gloucester 1 Spennymoor 2; Kettering 0 Curzon Ashton 0; King's Lynn Town 0 Kidderminster 2; Southport 3 Bradford Park Avenue 3; York 4 Chester 2.

South

Braintree Town 1 Weymouth 1; Chippenham 1 Dartford 5; Concord Rangers 0 Havant & Waterlooville 0; Dorking Wanderers 0 Bath City 0; Dulwich 5 Chelmsford 3; Eastbourne Borough 1 Hemel Hempstead 1; Hampton & Richmond 7 Hungerford Town 1; Slough 0 Oxford City 1; St Albans 1 Welling 2.

BetVictor Northern League

Premier Division FC United of Manchester 3 Mickleover Sports 3; Gainsborough 1 Basford 0; Grantham 1 Buxton 3; Lancaster 2 Warrington Town 1; Matlock 1 Hyde 1; Morpeth 3 Radcliffe 1; Nantwich 3 Bamber Bridge 2; Scarborough 3 Ashton United 1; Stalybridge 2 South Shields 2; Whitby 3 Atherton Collieries 1; Witton Albion 2 Stafford Rangers 2.

BetVictor Southern League

Premier Division: Central AFC Rushden & Diamonds 3 Redditch United 0; Alvechurch 0 Leiston 0; Banbury United 0 Bromsgrove Sporting 1; Biggleswade Town 0 Stratford Town 1; Coalville Town 1 St Ives Town 2; Kings Langley 1 Barwell 1; Lowestoft Town 0 Nuneaton Borough 2; Needham Market 4 Hednesford Town 3; Rushall Olympic 3 Royston Town 1; Stourbridge 1 Peterborough Sports 6; Tamworth 1 Hitchin Town 0. South Beaconsfield Town 2 Weston-super-Mare 2; Blackfield & Langley 0 Chesham United 2; Hartley Wintney 2 Dorchester Town 0; Hayes & Yeading United 2 Gosport Borough 1; Hendon 2 Yate Town 1; Merthyr Town 1 Metropolitan Police 2; Poole Town 2 Swindon Supermarine 0; Salisbury 2 Tiverton Town 2; Taunton Town 3 Harrow Borough 2; Truro City 2 Farnborough 1; Walton Casuals 0 Wimborne Town 2.

BetVictor Isthmian League

Premier Division AFC Hornchurch 4 Enfield Town 0; Bishop's Cleeve 0 Wingate & Finchley 1; Bognor Regis Town 1 Kingstonian 1; Brightingsea Regent 0 Potters Bar Town 0; Carshalton Athletic 1 Worthing 2; Chesham 1 Leatherhead 3; Corinthian Casuals 1 Lewes 0; Cray Wanderers 2 Horsham 1; East Thurrock United 1 Folkestone Invicta 3; Haringey Borough 1 Bowers & Pitsea 1; Merstham 1 Margate 0.

Women's Super League

Brighton 1 Everton 0; Chelsea 8 West Ham 0; Manchester City 2 Arsenal 1; Reading 1 Manchester United 1. Postponed Liverpool v Birmingham; Tottenham v Bristol City.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Man City	14	12	0	2	35	6	29	36
Chelsea	13	11	2	0	42	8	34	35
Arsenal	14	11	0	3	37	11	26	33
Man Utd	12	6	1	5	20	9	11	19
Everton	12	6	0	6	17	16	1	18
Reading	13	5	3	5	19	24	-5	18
Tottenham	13	5	1	7	12	22	-10	16
West Ham	12	4	1	7	15	30	-15	13
Brighton	14	3	3	8	10	28	-18	12
Birmingham	11	2	1	8	5	20	-15	7
Liverpool	12	1	3	8	4	13	-9	6
Bristol City	12	1	3	8	8	37	-29	6

MATTHEW SYED

The DNA of sport



Rotational fouling must be stopped now – it's institutionalised bullying

SEBASTIAN FREI/MB MEDIA/GETTY IMAGES

I am not sure which of the various epithets most adequately captures the phenomenon. Rotational fouling, perhaps? Take-it-in-turns fouling? Gyratory fouling? Whatever we call it, one thing is clear: football has to get on top of this scourge.

Wilfried Zaha has particular reason to have a gripe about this depressing problem. In Crystal Palace's game against Sheffield United on Saturday, it was like that scene out of *Airplane* where the stewards line up one by one to give the panicking passenger a good, hard slap.

Sander Berge was the first to step on to the carousel, fouling Zaha in the third minute. A little later, George Baldock stepped up to the plate, fouling Zaha once more. He did so again in the 18th minute (pulling Zaha back, for which he received a yellow card) and in the 34th minute, with studs planted on his foot. By now you would have hoped that Andrew Madley, the referee, was cottoning on to Baldock's serial offending, so United rotated.

A little before half-time, Chris Basham fouled Zaha, then in the 68th minute it was John Fleck, then in the 77th minute John Egan and in the 90th John Lundstram. The only surprise is that Zaha didn't get a boot to the ankle from Chris Wilder, the United manager, as well as his kit man and assistant physio as he walked off at full time. Wasn't that in the game plan too?

Some will say that it has always been thus. I remember a wizened Manchester United fan telling me that he had watched a game where George Best was fouled by all ten opposition outfield players over the course of 90 minutes, a doubtless apocryphal tale but one that captures something about the heritage of rotational fouling. It certainly isn't a modern contrivance.

The difference today, though, is the level of premeditation, the way it is orchestrated with such Machiavellian precision. Troy Deeney, the Watford striker, let the cat out of the bag, perhaps unintentionally, when he said: "You take it in turns kicking Zaha. I know no one wants to hear that, but you go, 'You hit this time, you hit him the next time.' You don't have the same player tackle him because you know you're going to get booked."

This interview, incidentally, was given in 2018 and barely raised a whimper, perhaps the most eloquent indication of how deeply rotational fouling has become entrenched within modern football. The pundits call it "professional". They call it "clever". It is, to my mind, none of these things. A more adequate term is cheating.

Zaha, for his part, is seething. It is clear that these tactics are not merely influencing the outcome of games, but endangering his physical longevity as a player. "I know that for a fact [opponents are out there to hurt me] but I just don't know what to do any more," Zaha said after a game last season. "I end up arguing with referees because today the guy studded me in my shin — do they need to break my leg before anyone gets a red card?"

I know that Zaha isn't perfect, and his tendency to whine at referees has been widely condemned, but can you really blame him? It is like the victim of a weekly burglary complaining to an apathetic police force. On the past five occasions that a player has been fouled at least eight times in a single Premier League game, Zaha has been on the receiving end three times. These

Traoré, the Wolves winger, often finds himself the victim of rotational fouling



Baldock, the Sheffield United player, takes his turn to hack at Zaha, a regular target for such practices

included matches against Tottenham Hotspur and Manchester United; on the latter occasion, he was fouled an extraordinary ten times.

This is why it is surely time for a new directive, providing referees with the retributive tools to get on top of this menace. Take Crystal Palace's game against Watford in December, where players kicked Zaha for 90 minutes, a clear and obvious attempt to neutralise a talented player, but where the challenges were deployed outside the box (to avoid conceding a penalty) and where the rotational logic ensured that no single player risked a sending-off.

The solution isn't difficult to glimpse. At present, an offender can be given a yellow card for cumulative fouling. That's to say, there is a well-established norm that if a player commits three fouls, each one of which is below the threshold for a yellow, the aggregate effect can be sufficient for a caution to be given anyway. You often see referees pointing to the different places on the pitch that these cumulative offences were enacted as they brandish the card.

Isn't it time to extend this logic to victims, too? The moment a single player is fouled twice in a game, the referee should significantly lower the threshold for subsequent fouls on that specific player. That would ensure that the next time an opposition player tried to bring him down, they would receive a yellow card, with the

HOW ZAHA FELL FOUL OF BLADES

Wilfried Zaha was fouled eight times against Sheffield United by six different players:

3min Sander Berge
13min George Baldock
18min Baldock (booked)
34min Baldock
44min Chris Basham
68min John Fleck (booked)
77min John Egan
90min John Lundstram

next offender receiving a red. This would end, or at least mitigate, individuals being repeatedly fouled throughout a game.

This isn't just about Zaha, of course, but the many others who have been victimised, such as Adama Traoré, of Wolverhampton Wanderers, who was hacked down by three different Tottenham players over 15 second-half minutes in a Premier League match in December. Three yellow cards were shown for these offences (no red card, of course) and Spurs went on to win 2-1. The previous week, Brighton & Hove Albion offered the same "tactic", with three different players booked for fouls on Traoré.

I could go on. For the point is that this form of institutionalised bullying has become endemic in the game, rarely commented upon, let alone condemned. This is not just an indictment of football, but its docile administrators. It is time for rotational fouling to end, once and for all.

thegame

LEAGUE ONE ROUND-UP

Performance of the week Sammie Szmodics scored twice as Peterborough United recorded a superb 4-1 win away to promotion rivals Ipswich Town.

Player of the week Marcus Browne, the Oxford United midfielder who is on loan from Middlesbrough, continued a strong campaign with both goals in a 2-1 win over Blackpool that pulled his side to within three points of the play-offs.

Goal of the week Jamie Murphy, the Burton Albion winger, appeared to be going nowhere until he cut into the area and curled in a superb finish, the first goal in a 3-2 loss away to Rotherham United.

Rising star Dennis Politic, the 19-year-old Romanian, scored his fourth of the season in Bolton Wanderers' 2-0 home win over Tranmere Rovers, just Bolton's fifth victory of a troubled campaign.

Villain of the week With his side 1-0 down, Will Norris, the Ipswich Town goalkeeper, took the bizarre decision to try and take on Szmodics inside his own six-yard area, succeeding only in being easily tackled and gifting Peterborough another goal.

Stat of the week 96. The minute in which Elvis Bwomono scored Southend United's winning goal in the 2-1 victory over Lincoln City. It was Southend's first home league win of the season.

Quote of the week "The linesman needs to be braver to make those big calls ... if officials want to progress to the next level they've got to be prepared to stand strong and make those calls because for me they are both penalties." Frustrated Sunderland manager Phil Parkinson on two unsuccessful spot kick appeals in the 2-0 defeat away to Portsmouth.

LEAGUE TWO ROUND-UP

Performance of the week A 3-0 home win for Oldham Athletic over Bradford City, with all three goals coming in the first half, lifted them into a comfortable mid-table place and resulted in the losers dropping out of the play-off places.

Player of the week Nicky Maynard, the prolific Mansfield Town veteran, now has 15 goals for the season after netting twice in the 2-2 home draw with Carlisle United.

Goal of the week A left-foot shot from 25 yards by Odin Bailey was the first of two equalising goals for Forest Green Rovers in the 2-2 draw away to Grimsby Town.

Rising star Ruel Sotiriou, Leyton Orient's 19-year-old forward who spent November on loan at non-League Dover, has scored five times since Boxing Day after hitting two in the 3-0 win away to Stevenage.

Villain of the week A straight red card for Gary Sawyer for a bad foul on Jordan Green ensured an edgy final five minutes for Plymouth Argyle in the 1-0 home win over Newport County.

Stat of the week 20. Minutes it took Eoin Doyle to return to scoring form with Swindon Town, after rejoining the club permanently last week, in the 2-1 home win over Exeter City. He had failed to score in his previous four matches, back with former employers Bradford City, but now has 24 goals in 23 games for the League Two leaders this season.

Quote of the week "The phrase I used to all the boys was, 'I want people to see a different animal this week' and I think we did." The Cambridge United caretaker manager Mark Bonner, who replaced Colin Calderwood on Tuesday, after his side ended Colchester United's 16-game unbeaten run 2-1.