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CRUNCH TIME FOR CAMERON

Negotiations go down to the wire as possibility of EU exit loom large

DAVID CAMERON was fighting desperately on Friday to keep alive his last-ditch bid to secure an EU reform deal which will allow him to call a referendum on British membership on June 23.

With sentiment hardening in Brussels against granting the Prime Minister the concessions he is seeking, Cameron warned EU leaders that he was ready to walk away from their summit without a deal unless they gave ground on key British demands and provided him with a "credible" package he can sell to voters.

As officials began intensive negotiations expected to stretch through the night, the PM conferred with European Council president Donald Tusk on how to keep the deal on track, following discussions which Downing Street said showed little sign of bridging differences with a number of the other 27 EU states.

The Prime Minister urged fellow leaders to agree a new "live and let live" settlement which he said could resolve the "festering" problem of Britain's relationship with Europe for a generation. But as the first session of talks broke up on Thursday evening, a Number 10 source said there was more work to do on key issues including migrant welfare, child benefit, relations with the eurozone, treaty change and a British exemption from the requirement for "ever-closer union".

With leaders due to return to the negotiating table at breakfast-time to assess progress made overnight, the possibility remained that a summit described by Mr Tusk as "make or break"

could end without a breakthrough, almost certainly delaying a referendum until after the summer.

"The Prime Minister left them in no doubt that we are only going to do an agreement at

this summit if we make some real progress from where we were at 8.30 this evening," said the Number 10 source.

"If we don't, we are not going to have an agreement at this summit.

"There is some real hard

work to do overnight and we have got to see real progress."

Despite a string of European leaders, including German Chancellor Angela Merkel, saying they were ready to be constructive

about finding a resolution to Britain's concerns, the Downing Street source said Mr Tusk shared the PM's assessment that more movement was needed to secure a deal.

"While many countries cont. on page 3, col. 1

Music to our ears at Cal State Northridge...



The Band of the Royal Marines and the Pipes, Drums, and Highland Dancers of the Scots Guards visit the Valley Performing Arts in Northridge next Sunday for an afternoon of classic military music. (see page 6)

Cilla leaves £15m to her sons

Singer and TV star Cilla Black has left more than £15.2m of her UK estate to her sons, according to her will.

The Liverpool-born performer died of a stroke aged 72 after a fall at her Spanish villa last year.

The beneficiaries are listed as her children Robert, Ben and Jack Willis with a further £20,000 left to Penelope Walker, understood to have been her long-standing housekeeper.

Black's husband Bobby Willis died of cancer in 1999 and she never remarried.

Born Priscilla Maria Veronica White, she found fame in the 1960s before becoming a TV host.

The former Blind Date and Surprise! presenter was sunbathing when she lost her balance, fell and hit her head, which knocked her unconscious on 1 August.

She was buried in Liverpool on 20 August following a service at St Mary's Church in the Liverpool suburb of Woolton.

Supreme Court overturns controversial murder law

■ Momentous decision could mean dozens of high-profile cases will be re-tried

IN A MOMENTOUS legal decision that could leave British courts tied up for years in retrials, the Supreme Court ruled on Thursday that a controversial law which has allowed people to be convicted of murder even if they did not inflict the fatal blow has been wrongly interpreted for more than 30 years.

The joint enterprise law has been used to convict people in gang-related cases if defendants "could" have foreseen violent acts by their associates.

However, judges ruled it was wrong to treat "foresight" as a sufficient test.

Their decision could pave the way for hundreds of prisoners to seek appeals.

It will apply in England, Wales, Northern Ireland and most UK overseas common law territories but not in Scotland, which has its own rules on joint enterprise.

Campaigners against joint enterprise welcomed the ruling, saying it would mean a fairer law - but some murder victims' relatives said they were worried about possible appeals.

The ruling came after a panel of five Supreme Court judges considered the case of Ameen Jogee, who had been convicted under joint enterprise of the murder of former

Leicestershire police officer Paul Fyfe in 2011.

The court heard that Jogee had "egged on" his friend Mohammed Hirsi, who stabbed Mr Fyfe in the heart. Both men received life sentences for murder.

Jogee had argued he was not inside the house when the incident took place, and could not have foreseen what his friend intended to do.

Joint enterprise law has been used to convict and hand down long sentences in several high-profile cases:

Stephen Lawrence: David Norris and Gary Dobson were convicted under joint enterprise in 2012 for the 1993 murder of Stephen Lawrence. He was stabbed to death by a gang in a racially motivated murder in Eltham, south-east London, when he was 18.

Garry Newlove: Three teenagers - Adam Swellings, Stephen Sorton and Jordan Cunliffe - were jailed for life for the 2007 murder of Garry Newlove. He was attacked after he confronted a group outside his house in Warrington, Cheshire.

Shakilus Townsend: Samantha Joseph was jailed for 10 years for the 2008 killing of Shakilus Townsend, 16, after acting as a "honey trap" to lure him to his



PROBLEMATIC CASES: Ameen Jogee (center), was sentenced for murder even though his friend Mohamed Hirsi (left) did the actual killing of victim Paul Fyfe in 2011; and Samantha Joseph (right) was jailed for ten years for her role in the 'honey trap' slaying of 16 year old Shakilus Townsend in 2008

death. Joseph led Shakilus to a quiet cul-de-sac in Thornton Heath, south London, where he was beaten with baseball bats and stabbed six times by her older boyfriend Danny McLean. They were both convicted of murder.

Delivering the judgement, Lord Neuberger said it was wrong to treat "foresight" as a sufficient test to convict someone of murder.

"The court is satisfied after a much fuller review of the law than in the earlier cases that the courts took a wrong turn in 1984. And it is the responsibility of this court to put the law right," he said.

The judgement refers to a ruling by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in a case in which three gang members armed with knives burst into the home of a prostitute and her husband in Hong Kong, intending to collect a debt.

The husband was stabbed to death at the hand of at least one of the gang members. All three were convicted of murder.

However, the change to the law is not retrospective - so anyone appealing would have to show that they would suffer "substantial injustice" if they were not allowed to appeal, according to one legal expert.

In Jogee's case, the Supreme Court "set aside" his conviction - meaning the verdict in his original trial no longer stands.

However, the ruling does not mean Jogee will walk free, as the court found he was unquestionably guilty of at least manslaughter, and there was evidence that he could have been guilty of murder.

Jogee's mother Rachel Whitehead said she was "absolutely delighted" her son was no longer convicted of murder, and

hoped he would soon be free.

She called joint enterprise "a lazy law", saying: "It should never have been invented. It's just been used to convict innocent people of crimes they didn't commit."

'Pack of animals'

Simon Natas, a lawyer who has worked with campaign group Joint Enterprise Not Guilty By Association, said the "historic" ruling would make the law "fairer for everybody".

But Lorraine Fraser, whose son Tyrone Clarke was killed by a gang in 2004, said she thought the law should stay in place. Four men were found guilty of Tyrone's murder by joint enterprise. "They were a pack of animals around him and they all pleaded not guilty in court," she said, adding they should not be allowed to appeal."



171 Pier Avenue, Ste. 121 • Santa Monica, CA 90405
Tel (310) 452-2621 • FAX: (310) 314-7653
E-mail: editor@british-weekly.com
www.british-weekly.com • twitter.com/BritishWeekly

MANAGING EDITOR: Neil Fletcher
DEPUTY EDITOR: Nick Stark
CONTRIBUTING WRITERS: Alan Darby Drake, John Hiscock, Eileen Lee, Dave Kershaw, Anthony Matthews, Carolan Nathan, Anne Shaw, Bernard Sidman, Nick Stark, Craig Bobby Young
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Cameron:

cont. from page one

said they wanted to help keep Britain in the EU, there wasn't much sign of how they are planning to do that in practice," said the source.

Meanwhile, Mr Cameron faced demands from other EU states for a "no second chance" agreement to pre-empt the possibility of a second referendum.

Belgium - backed by France - proposed that the summit conclusions should state that any deal agreed this week is final and Europe will not come back with an improved offer if Britain votes to leave the EU.

The move is designed to quash the idea, backed by some Eurosceptics and reportedly floated privately by London mayor Boris Johnson, that a Leave vote would give the UK leverage to extract further concessions from the EU before a second poll.

With the 28 EU leaders still far from consensus, Britain's line on key welfare measures appeared to be hardening.

It is understood the PM has set his face against calls from eastern Europe for cuts in child benefit for offspring living overseas to be imposed only on new migrants.

Mr Cameron wants the new system - under which payments would be made at the lower rates of the migrant's homeland - brought in quickly and believes it is not acceptable for it effectively to be phased in over 16 years as the children of 34,000 existing claimants in the UK reach adulthood.

Addressing fellow leaders at the start of the two-day summit, Mr Cameron said the question of Britain's relationship with the EU had been "allowed to fester for too long".

He told them he needed a package that would be "credible" with the British people and strong enough to persuade them to vote to remain in the EU.

Independent to cease print run

■ Money-losing title to go online-only next month

The Independent and Independent on Sunday newspapers are to cease publication and go online only, its owner has announced.

ESI Media said The Independent, launched in 1986, would become "the first national newspaper title to move to a digital-only future".

It said there would be "some redundancies among editorial employees", with the number affected to be confirmed after a consultation period. The Financial Times said 100 jobs were at risk but a spokesman was unable to confirm the figure.

In a letter to staff, owner Evgeny Lebedev predicted other papers would follow suit. He said: "We will be the first of many leading newspapers to embrace a wholly digital future."

The daily newspaper's final edition will be published on 26 March and its Sunday sister title will publish for the last time on 20 March.

Over the years and under different owners, readership and advertising revenues have tumbled. From a peak of around 400,000 copies a day, circulation

has plunged to just over 40,000. The Sunday paper sells just under 43,000 copies.

Meanwhile, the publisher has sold The Independent's cut-price daily version, the i, to regional publisher Johnston Press for £24m. With a cover price of 40p, compared to The Independent's £1.60, it has a circulation of 275,000.

The newspapers are part of a group controlled by the Lebedev family. Its other media assets include London's Evening Standard and local TV station London Live.

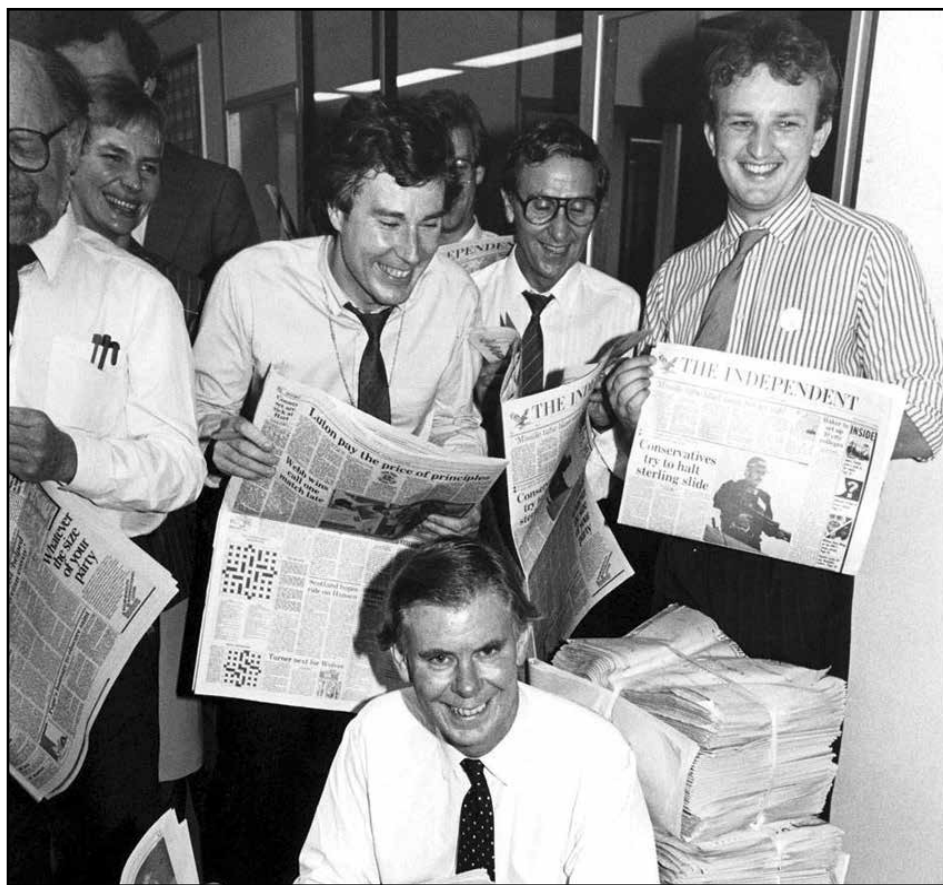
ESI said as part of its latest announcement that it was creating 25 new digital content roles.

It added that due to the expansion of independent.co.uk, new editorial bureaux would open in Europe, the Middle East and Asia and its US operation expanded.

'success story'

The publisher said that the Evening Standard "which continues to grow as a profitable and successful newspaper brand in its own right" would be unaffected.

The Independent was set up three decades ago by a group of journalists



HIGH HOPES: the paper was launched amid great fanfare in 1986

led by Andreas Whittam Smith with the slogan "it is - are you?" - emphasising its freedom from the influence of proprietors.

It has employed high-profile journalists including Andrew Marr, Robert Fisk, Will Self and Helen Fielding - whose Bridget Jones character started life as a column in the newspaper before becoming a hit novel and blockbuster film.

In 2010, ESI Media bought the titles from

Irish tycoon Sir Anthony O'Reilly for just £1.

Evgeny Lebedev said in a statement on Friday: "This decision preserves the Independent brand and allows us to continue to invest in the high quality editorial content that is attracting more and more readers to our online platforms.

"The newspaper industry is changing, and that change is being driven by readers. They're showing us that the future

is digital."

It was "the greatest Fleet Street success story of modern times", said Jonathan Foster on TheConversation.com, but it ended in "protracted tragedy". There are now fewer readers buying the paper than there are UK retailers selling it. Alexander and Evgeny Lebedev, who own both papers, have spent more than £65m propping them up - but their patience has finally run out."



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EU referendum: Palace denies Prince William endorsed 'In' campaign

■ Duke of Cambridge dragged into Brexit debate as Cameron enters final stretch of EU negotiations

Kensington Palace has denied that Prince William publicly suggested Britain would be better off in Europe.

In a week that saw David Cameron locked into the final stretch of EU negotiations ahead of a crunch summit this week, the Duke of Cambridge used a speech at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to emphasise the importance of our "ability to unite in common action with other nations".

Standing next to Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond, he said: "Right now, the big questions with which you wrestle – in the UN, NATO, the Middle East and elsewhere – are predicated on your commitment to working in partnership with others."

The timing of his comments drew comparisons to the Queen's intervention on the eve of the Scottish referendum, when she urged Scots to "think very carefully about the future".

However, a Kensington Palace spokesman

insisted that Prince William's speech was not about Europe. "He does not mention the word Europe once," he added.

The Prime Minister is hoping to agree a deal at the Brussels summit, which began on Monday, enabling a referendum to take place as early as June. He is seeking approval for draft proposals, which include an "emergency brake" on in-work benefits for EU migrants for up to four years, subject to permission from other member states, as well as a new "red card" system allowing states to effectively veto unwanted legislation if they can gain the support of 55 per cent of Europe's national parliaments.

setback

Four eastern European prime ministers have already "raised red flags" over the reform agenda. Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and the Czech Republic are apparently worried about the UK's plans to limit child benefit for EU migrants.

And in a setback for the PM a new poll has

suggested that one in three companies would leave the UK in the event of a Brexit.

A survey of more than 700 British and German companies operating in the UK found almost a third would consider moving jobs out of the country if Britain left the union.

The poll by the Bertelsmann Foundation, the German-based think tank, showed "strong pro-EU sentiments across the entire business community", reported *The Guardian*. Eighty per cent of the retail, IT, manufacturing, energy, telecommunications and finance companies surveyed said the UK should remain in Europe.

Announcing on Monday that his bank was to keep its headquarters in the UK, HSBC chairman Douglas Flint warned that it could shift up to 1,000 investment banking jobs from London to Paris in the case of a Brexit.

A leading economist has also warned that Britain leaving the EU would damage other



WILLIAM: raised eyebrows after he spoke of the importance of Britain's 'ability to unite in common action with other nations'.

member states.

Jennifer McKeown, the senior European economist at Capital Economics, laid out a series of "headaches" for the EU if the UK

McKeown, the senior European economist at Capital Economics, laid out a series of "headaches" for the EU if the UK

voted to leave, including lower investment, more migration, a smaller budget and less influence on the global stage.



Emma Thompson describes Britain as a "cake-filled" and "misery-laden" island

Movie star Emma Thompson has faced a backlash after warning it would be "madness" for the UK to vote to leave the European Union.

The Love Actually actress (pictured, above) warned that a vote for an exit from the EU was a "crazy idea" and delivered a bizarre tribute to Britain as a "cake-filled" and "misery-laden" island.

Tory MP Stewart Jackson dismissed Thompson's comments,

branding her an "overpaid, leftie luvvie" while fellow Conservative Eurosceptic Steve Baker accused her of "doing our country down".

Thompson made the comments while promoting new film *Along In Berlin* at a press conference in the German capital on Monday.

She described living in "a tiny little cloud-bolted, rainy corner of sort-of Europe ... a cake-filled misery-laden grey old

island".

Asked how she would vote in the upcoming referendum, she said: "I feel European even though I live in Great Britain, and in Scotland as well."

"So of course I'm going to vote to stay in Europe. Are you kidding? Oh my God, of course. It would be madness not to. It's a crazy idea not to. We should be taking down borders, not putting them up."

STEPHEN FRY has promised to quit Twitter for good after suffering a wave of criticism for the 'bag lady' joke he made during the Bafta awards at the weekend.

The writer and actor brought suffered a hailstorm of criticism after joking about the appearance of his friend Jenny Beavan when she collected the award for costume design at the glittering London ceremony. Railing against his critics, Fry said Twitter was once "a secret bathing pool in a magical glade in an enchanted forest". Now, he said, "too many people have peed in the pool for you to want to swim there any more".



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Glasgow-Edinburgh bullet train has been shunted aside, claim critics

The Scottish Government has been accused of "dropping" flagship plans for a bullet train between Glasgow and Edinburgh after it emerged there have been no meetings held on the proposals for more than a year.

First Minister Nicola Sturgeon previously hailed the prospect of journey times between Scotland's two biggest cities being cut to less than half an hour with

waiting for the UK-wide High Speed rail plan.

"We will not wait for Westminster to bring high-speed rail to us," she told a Glasgow conference in 2012.

But ministers have since been forced to admit that Scotland will have to wait on the HS2 route coming north from England before such a service can be put in place.

And calls for the business case for the route to be released under

Freedom of Information laws have now been rejected by ministers - despite about £750,000 having been spent on the proposals so far.

Liberal Democrat leader Willie Rennie said: "What the SNP Government want is to keep this hidden so people can't see them rewriting history."

"They want people to forget that they made a ridiculous promise to have a bullet train up and running between

Edinburgh and Glasgow before HS2 had even got as far as Birmingham, let alone Scotland. They have quite clearly scrapped those plans given they haven't met on a single occasion to discuss them over the past year.

"But we all know the SNP's attitude towards freedom of information. They'd much rather keep people in the dark but the public deserves to know about the business case behind the Edinburgh-Glasgow plans and what

three-quarters of a million pounds of their money has been spent on."

Transport Scotland chiefs say the request to release the report was declined because the public may be "misinformed" if unfinished or incomplete information is disclosed.

A Transport Scotland spokesman said: "When the draft Edinburgh to Glasgow high speed rail study was submitted to ministers for consideration in

2014, it made clear that its delivery is dependent upon the details of route options on the cross-border high speed rail line. This is due to the requirement to maximise economic benefits by sharing as much track as possible to minimise cost to the public purse.

"The HS2 Ltd study is now nearing completion and future work on the Edinburgh to Glasgow high speed rail link will be informed by its findings."

Trainspotting actor really loves him some Charlie...

TRAINSPOTTING actor Ewan McGregor has appealed to his fans to send love after

Laser beam forces plane to return to Heathrow

A Virgin Atlantic passenger jet heading to New York was forced to return to Heathrow this week after its pilot was dazzled by a laser beam from an unknown source.

Flight VS025 from London was abandoned at around 9.30pm on Sunday. The co-pilot reported feeling unwell after the incident and it was decided it was safer to cut short the transatlantic crossing and return to

his friend and TV companion Charley Boorman was injured in a motorcycle accident.

The decision was a "precautionary measure", said Virgin Atlantic spokesman Jaime Fraser, adding: "We are working with the authorities to identify the source of the laser."

Such incidents are increasingly common as powerful handheld lasers become cheaper and more widely available than ever.

Boorman, who appeared with McGregor in two hit TV travel documentaries, was injured after he collided with a car while attending the global launch of a new motorcycle in Portugal on Wednesday.

The 49-year-old TV presenter and travel writer later took to Twitter to reveal he had been left with screws in his ankle after breaking his leg.

McGregor has been firm friends with Boorman since the pair met on the set of *The Serpent's Kiss* in 1997 and went on to star in two motorcycle documentaries, the *Long Way Round* in 2004 and



BIKING BUDDIES: McGregor and Boorman starred in two "Long Way" TV shows

Long Way Down in 2007.

McGregor tweeted to his 896,000 fans this week: "My mate @charleyboorman had a nasty crash today in Portugal. He's ok but in hospital. Send him your

love guys."

His dedicated fan base were happy to help, with more than one thousand messages of love flooding in.

Boorman has previously said he hopes to join up with McGregor

for a third instalment of the 'Long Way' series, which would start in South America and end up in Alaska.

And he told his own twitter followers he was feeling terrible before his surgery.



Tragic end for rising band

All four members of the up-and-coming British pop group Viola Beach were killed along with their manager last Saturday in a horrific car crash close to Stockholm.

Kris Leonard, River Reeves, Tomas Lowe, Jack Dakin (above) and manager Craig Tarry, who were aged between 19 and 32, were killed when their hire car plunged more than 25 metres (82ft) from a road bridge into a canal. Witnesses say a gap in the bridge had been opened to allow ships through, but warning lights were flashing and other cars were waiting at the safety barriers when the band's car sped past. The Warrington-based group had played their first ever gig outside the UK just hours earlier.

British children are 'laziest in the world', says study

An international study has named youngsters in the UK as among the worst in the world for helping out with household chores and said primary schoolchildren spent less time on homework than those in any other country surveyed. British kids also had the lowest satisfaction with their appearance and body image.

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Royal Marine Band and Scots Guards Highland Dancers to perform in Northridge

THERE are few sights more stirring and evocative of Britain's proud military history as a really proficient military band and that's just what aficionados can enjoy next Sunday (Feb. 28th) when the Band of the Royal Marines and the Pipes, Drums, and Highland Dancers of the Scots Guards visit the Valley Performing Arts in Northridge.

The ensemble boasts some of the finest instrumentalists found in military service today and are known for captivating audiences with expertly delivered music and dance. Rich in heritage and culture, performing in uniform and traditional kilts, the performers evoke the same reverence that has enraptured

audiences for hundreds of years. Indeed, when one gets lost in the music full flow it's no great feat of the imagination to imagine the trepidation Napoleon's troops – or indeed any of Britain's military foes over the years – may have felt at facing such a formidable outfit.

The development of music in the Royal Marines is inextricably linked with the evolution of British military bands. Lively airs and the beat of the drum enabled columns of marching men to keep a regular step. The drum was the normal method of giving signals on the battlefield or in camp. As long ago as the days of Drake and Hawkins the drummer's rhythm would advertise

the changing watches or beat the men to quarters. The band trace their lineage back to 1767, when Royal Marines Divisional Bands were formed at Chatham, Plymouth, Portsmouth and Deal. Today all Royal Marines Bands are required to provide every imaginable musical ensemble including orchestras and dance bands. To achieve this, most musicians, except solo specialists, are required to attain an acceptable standard on both a string and a wind instrument. As a result of this special amalgam of expertise, Royal Marines musicians are regarded as one of the most versatile in the military musical world. The Corps of Drums receive an equally thorough training and



BEST OF BRITISH: the band's origins date back to 1767

pride themselves on maintaining the highest standards of drill, bugling and drumming.

The sound of the pipes has long instilled a great sense of pride and passion which has inspired Scottish soldiers in the heat of battle. Indeed, the effect that the pipes had on the highland warriors was such

that they were banned following the Jacobite Rising by the supporters of Bonnie Prince Charlie in 1745. Equally, there are few more haunting and evocative sounds than a lament played on the pipes at times of mourning and remembrance.

The concert kicks off at 3pm and tickets are

priced between \$30-\$65 and can be purchased by visiting www.valleyperformingartscenter.org or by calling (818) 677-3000. Valley Performing Arts Center is located on the campus of California State University, 18111 Nordhoff Street, Northridge, at the corner of Nordhoff and Lindley.



ODD COUPLE: Sigourney Weaver guests stars in next week's Doc Martin on KCET

'Ripley' samples an alien culture on Doc Martin

KCET's popular British dramedy *Doc Martin* welcomes a high profile guest star this week as Sigourney Weaver makes a surprise visit to the sleepy seaside community of Portwenn.

The actress, best known for her role as Ripley in the *Alien* film franchise, stars in the episode "Facta Non Verba," (airing Thursday, Feb. 25th at 8pm) playing an American tourist who is sent to the grumpy

doctor's practice to get a prescription refilled. Once there, she argues with the Doc (Martin Clunes) over what kind of medication she needs and is appalled at the way the doctor speaks to his assistant, ultimately offering up advice on how to stand up to him. All of this is icing on the cake for Martin after he and his wife tell their therapist about a recently failed date night, which leads to the couple questioning

their ultimate compatibility.

Weaver is reportedly a longtime fan of the long-running show, which stars Clunes as Dr. Martin Ellingham, a former London high-flyer turned fish-out-of-water whose truculence and tactlessness cause mayhem in a small Cornish community. The show has logged seven series over 11 years and is one of British TV's biggest-ever export success stories.

Tickets almost gone for Consul-General's Q&A with BABC in Orange County

A very few tickets are still available to see British Consul-General Chris O'Connor speak at the Orange County chapter of the British American Business Council's Young Professional Luncheon on Friday, March 4th. The event kicks off with a noon lunch followed by conversation and Q&A with Mr. O'Connor, who has been the local consul general since 2013. He represents the UK government in Southern California, Arizona,

Nevada, Utah and Hawaii, promoting trade and investment, scientific cooperation, creative and media collaborations and educational partnerships between the UK and the southwestern United States. He also oversees delivery of essential consular services to a 600,000-strong British resident community and British visitors numbering over a million per year. Prior to his current role, Chris was UK Ambassador to

Tunisia from 2008-2013. He has worked in British embassies in Cairo, Riyadh and Beirut as well as the British High Commission in Ottawa and the UK Delegation to NATO. He was head of the UK Foreign Office Middle East Peace Process Team in London from 2003-2005.

Chris speaks Spanish, French and Arabic.

For tickets visit www.babcoc.com. Address disclosed upon registration.

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Photo © Robyn Churchill



ODD COUPLE: Jackman and Egerton star in *Eddie the Eagle*

Eddie the Eagle takes flight again...

REMEMBER Eddie the Eagle? Well, you're not alone. The unlikely story about a never-say-die British no-hoper who found global fame in the ski-jump at the Calgary Olympics has all the classic elements of a great movie, and someone has finally made one.

Released on February 26th and starring Taron

Egerton and Hugh Jackman, *Eddie the Eagle* tells the tale of Michael "Eddie" Edwards (Egerton), an unlikely but courageous British ski-jumper who never stopped believing in himself – even as an entire nation was counting him out. With the help of a rebellious and charismatic coach (Jackman), Eddie

takes on the establishment and wins the hearts of sports fans around the world by making an improbable and historic showing at the 1988 Winter Olympics.

Eddie the Eagle is directed by Dexter Fletcher, with a screenplay by Sean Macaulay and Simon Kelton. In limited release February 26th.

Eddie the Eagle is directed by Dexter Fletcher, with a screenplay by Sean Macaulay and Simon Kelton. In limited release February 26th.

BABC hosts Crowdfunding breakfast in Santa Monica

THE BEACH cities of Santa Monica and Venice have become hotbeds for technology startups in recent years and an upcoming Business Breakfast from the British American Business Council reflects that new reality.

The LA Beach Crowdfunding event on Thursday, February 25th from 7.30-9.15am at the Fairmont Miramar Hotel & Bungalows, (101 Wilshire Boulevard in Santa Monica) features moderator **Brian MacMahon** of Expert Dojo, a knowledge base which enjoys access to thousands of experts and mentors who will help any entrepreneur find out whatever they need to know to pursue their small business dream. Brian also speaks all over the world on how to start, grow and expand any business.

The event's featured panelists are **Alon Goren**, founder of Investedin.com, who has has developed



Santa Monica's Fairmont Miramar hotel

technology that powers websites and financial transactions for Fortune 500 companies and well-known foundations such as Coca-Cola, ATB Financial and Global Philanthropy Group. He also created a white label fundraising portal for individuals and businesses hoping to crowdfund ventures independently of major platforms.

Also on the panel is **Mark Hiralde** of Petillon Hiralde LLP. Mark is a securities attorney with Mitchell Silberberg & Knupp LLP. He testified before the Securities Subcommittee of the U.S. Senate Banking Committee about the

JOBS Act, drafted legislation to be introduced this year in the California legislature and is the author of **Crowdfunding: A Practical Guide to the SEC's Final Rules for Raising Capital.**

The final panel member is **Taylor MacPartland**, a Northern California native and founder of FilmBreak, an audience engagement and crowdfunding agency.

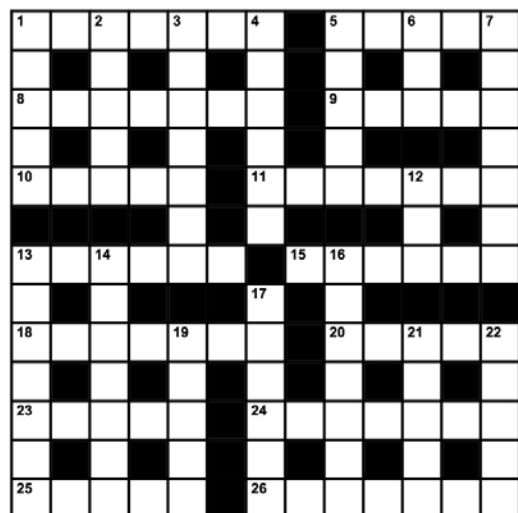
Tickets are priced at \$50 for BABC members and \$35 for non-membes. Advance reservations are required. For your BABC discount, email Joanna@babcla.org

The British Weekly Crossword by Myles Mellor. #203

Across

- 1 Cows eat them (7)
- 5 Tawdry (5)
- 8 Diana Ross, once (7)
- 9 Picture (5)
- 10 Porterhouse, e.g. (5)
- 11 Seized (7)
- 13 Chicken (6)
- 15 Was a good dog, perhaps (6)
- 18 "A Horse with no name" singers (7)
- 20 Tall grasses (5)
- 23 Do, as a puzzle (5)
- 24 Earth circler (7)
- 25 Meal extras (5)
- 26 Marketing wear, often (1-6)

Crossword by Myles Mellor



Down

- 1 Anesthetizes (5)
- 2 Golden Delicious, for one (5)
- 3 Stereo's audio (7)
- 4 Disco Sister (6)
- 5 Fine dinnerware (5)
- 6 Paleozoic or Cenozoic (3)
- 7 Made, as a case (7)
- 12 Pay for (3)
- 13 Campus groups (7)
- 14 Pedaled (7)
- 16 From one end to the other (7)
- 17 Element of a pageant contest (6)
- 19 List details (5)
- 21 Make a record of (5)
- 22 Genres (5)

Solution to Puzzle #202

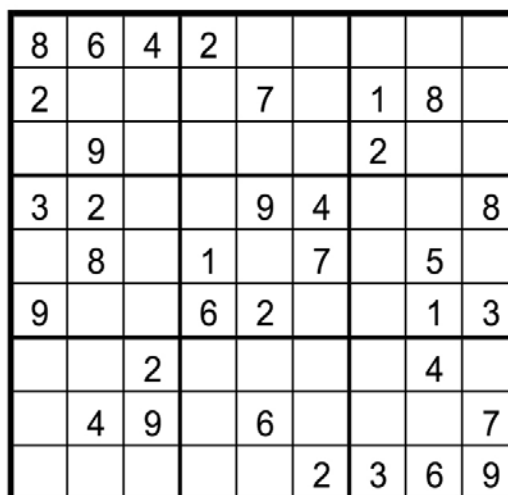


The British Weekly Sudoku by Myles Mellor & Susan Flanagan #203

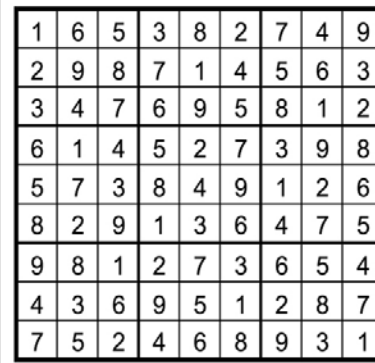
SUDOKU by Myles Mellor and Susan Flanagan

Each Sudoku puzzle consists of a 9X9 grid that has been subdivided into nine smaller grids of 3X3 squares. To solve the puzzle each row, column and box must contain each of the numbers 1 to 9. Puzzles come in three grades: easy, medium and difficult.

Level: Medium



Solution to Sudoku #202



Stargazing with Annie Shaw



ARIES: Your financial situation could be getting a boost as early as this coming week, so look for an opportunity and then grasp it with both hands; but don't forget to also keep a rein on your spending.

TAURUS: The sun moving into Pisces will bring to a head a situation that has been unresolved for some time now. Therefore it's best to deal with this promptly and do not hesitate to ask advice from someone who knows.

GEMINI: You will be travelling (emotionally or otherwise) to a place where you can put things in order. This is a month or two of new beginnings in most parts of your life and you will be wise to let go of past regrets and move forward feeling better.

CANCER: Movement is good for you and this week it's all around you and in the family also. Be strong and understanding when a friend approaches you for advice. Be honest and at the same time be discreet...this is the best way to handle this.

LEO: Tackle what must be done and make it your priority to spend time relaxing, not stressing. The best month of the year will be March so catch up on work and make sure you have all your ducks in a row and have fun doing it.

VIRGO: Ask yourself if you are working on your particular plan for the New Year. If it is a change of work or home this will happen if you work at it now. The sun in Pisces, which is opposite to you, can make you somewhat anxious.

LIBRA: Be prepared to be surprised and perhaps a little miffed as you find that all is not in place as you expected. Therefore the greatest plans of mice and men speak loudly here. Best to help sort it out with out any drama.

SCORPIO: You may be feeling a bit down these past few days due to plans changing or people not coming through with promises in your life. Remember that old rule: what's for you won't pass you by. You are in for a much more interesting few weeks ahead.

SAGITTARIUS: Just remember that if things don't always go the way you planned, life is an adventure. You need to this while that when your boss Jupiter is sitting in the earth sign of Virgo. It will not be forever just relax.

CAPRICORN: Listening to your inner voice is the clue to your next move, whatever area this may be. Remember this is not the first time you have been in a slump of sorts and you got your self out of it. So head up, shoulders back and move forward.

AQUARIUS: You will always get back what you put out and so just be careful you don't say too much to another that can set you back a mile (or two). Keep your thoughts to yourself and you will be more relaxed than ever come this week ahead.

PISCES: Neptune your boss has arrived in grand style and he can and will bring you a surprise or two, until he is more comfortable you are his home for some time ahead. Then as the year progresses you can mellow out and have yourself plenty of happy times.

Jolly Good

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Sword of Destiny: revisiting the classic world of Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon

Exclusive interview
with author Justin
Hill and a review of
his companion book
to the first-ever film
produced by Netflix

Rating: ★★★

"I was working on a historical novel about the Viking king Harald Hardrada, when my editor called me up out of the blue and asked me if I'd be interested in working on a novelization of the script of *Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon: Sword of Destiny*," says author Justin Hill.

"I'd seen the first film when it came out, and was blown away by the combination of beauty and action, which seemed to suit my style. And, I loved the idea of a writing a Chinese *Game of Thrones*."

The original *Crouching Tiger* novel was written



by Wang Dulu. Netflix rebooted the story to create an original screenplay, then Hill adapted the new screenplay back into a novel. There are still epic sword fights, but the new story sheds new light on why and how the characters do what they do. It's an epic quest with female and male warriors fighting for good or evil.

Green Destiny is the sword that conquered the world. Seventeen

years ago legendary fighter Mubai died protecting it. Duke Te hides the sword. When he dies, four warriors are called on to guard the formidable weapon. Shulien was Mubai's lover and secretly had their child. Honor demands she must go to protect the sword from warlord Hades Dai. Young fighters Wei-fang and Snow Vase, join her. Shulien's former fiancé, Silent Wolf, who was presumed dead, returns to help defeat Hades Dai. Shulien realizes they are still connected.

Hill, who has written stories about both modern and historical China, first traveled to China in the winter of 1992 where he worked for a volunteer organization in rural Shanxi province. He stayed in rural China for most of his twenties and started writing books set in China.

"We're familiar with

books being changed into movies, so to go the other way round and turn a script into a book was a really novel experience," say Hill not noting the pun. "One of the most interesting things was how differently scenes worked on the page and on the screen. A script relies on so many other people."

Hill studied books of old photos of China and read first person accounts of the times from Chinese voices, such as Ida Pruitt's interviews in *Daughter of Han*, and *Old Madam Yin*. He read all the Chinese classics and literature set in the transition period at the end of the Qing Dynasty.

Hill first book was *A Bend in the Yellow River* (1997), when he was 22. *The Drink and Dream Teahouse* (2001), a novel set in modern China, was his first attempt at writing fiction. A penniless student at

the time, the story sold at auction for a record-breaking £150,000 and was named the Washington Post Book of the Year 2002, translated into 16 languages and was even banned in China.

He has since been nominated three times for the Booker Prize. Among the awards he has won are the Thomas Cook award in 2003 for *Ciao Asmara* and the Somerset Maugham Award in 2005, for *Passing Under Heaven*.

After writing exclusively about China Hill moved on to eleventh century England and the Battle of Hastings, with his 2011 tome *Shieldwall* named a Sunday Times Book of the Year. The sequel, *Viking Fire*, will be out next year.

Hill, who spent almost all of his adult life in China, recently moved the family back to his native North Yorkshire.



Book Corner with
Gabrielle Pantera

They live in a lovely little village on the Hambleton Hills overlooking the Vale of York, about five miles from where he grew up.

Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon: Sword of Destiny by Justin Hill (Author), Wang Dulu (Author - pen name of Wang Baoxiang) Trade Paperback, 320 pages, Publisher: Weinstein Books; Mti edition (January 26, 2016), Language: English, ISBN: 9781602862876 \$14.99. The Netflix film is released on February 26th.



Are you ready for some Toscars?

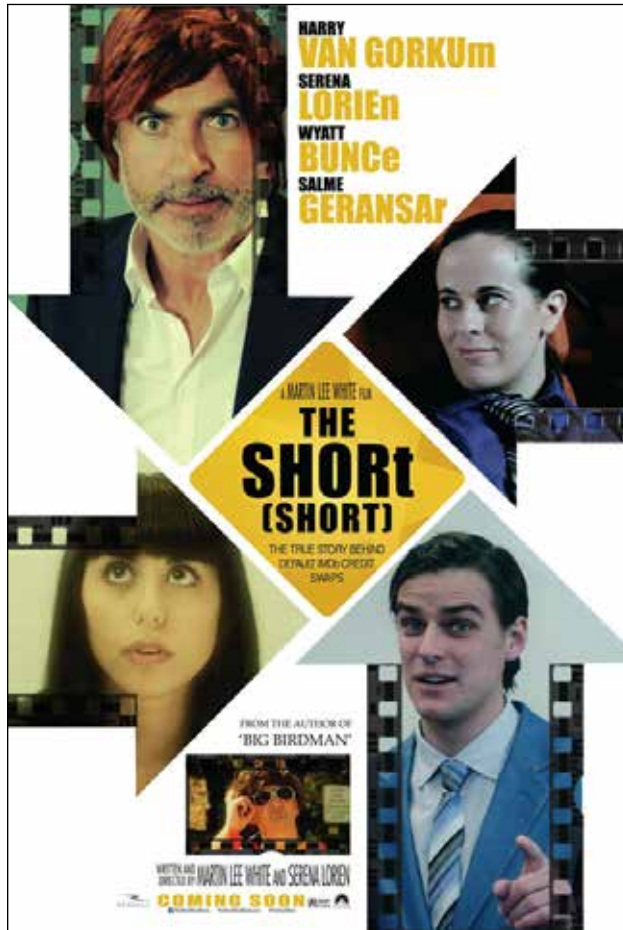
HEY BRITLINGS!
It's Toscar time and do we have a show for you!
For the uninitiated, The Toscars, now in their 9th year, tap into the creative genius of the Brits in LA community to create five minute short parodies of the Best Picture nominees of that 'other' sound-alike award show!

Our teams have three weeks to write, direct, cast, shoot, edit and score their masterpieces. This year's show will be MC'd by Emmy award winner, Jai Rodriguez from the popular TV show "Queer Eye For The Straight Guy".

The eight teams of up to ten members will be judged by the newly formed Whacademy, (made up of 40 former winners and participants

of years past) in 10 categories including best whacting, (acting) best cutter (editor), best tunes (score), best looking (DP) and others.

The night will start with a red carpet and cocktail reception in the courtyard of the Renberg Theatre in West Hollywood followed by the screening of the 8 films which will segue straight into the awards. And we have some really fun awards presenters lined up including Devious Maid's Brianna Brown, Black Sails' Hakeem Kae-Kazim, Arrow's Jimmy Akingbola, Screenwriter Jake Thornton, Tom Markley, a Hollywood talent agent, Louisa Spring, a talent manager, who looks after major British talent as well as



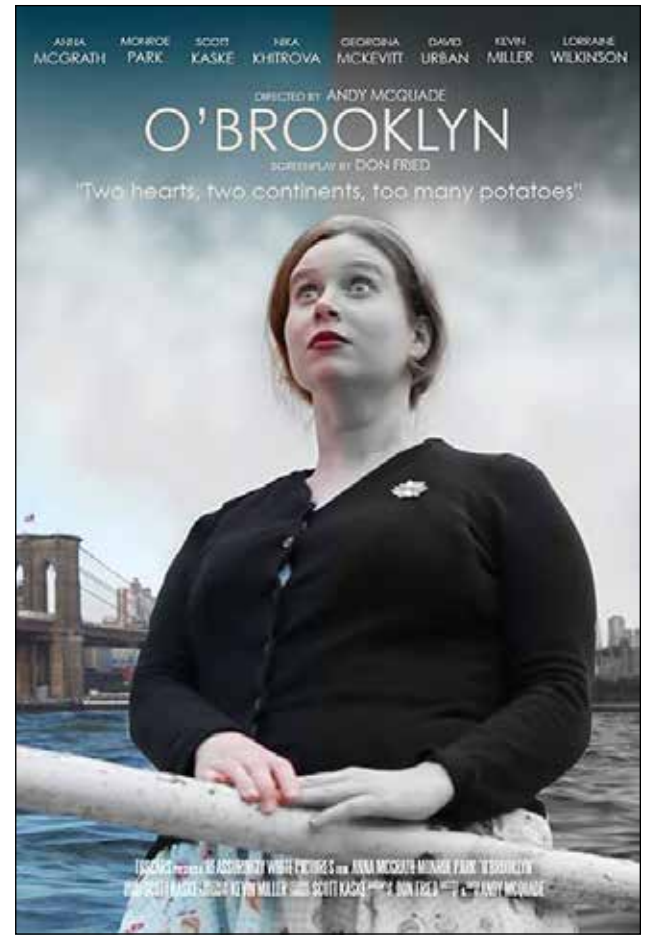
the Postlethwaite twins from "Peaky Blinders". And we have British host Tamsin Eames from ITV's "This Morning" covering the ceremony and also giving away an award. And finally we also have a surprise Oscar nominee joining us to give out the coveted best film award.

Afterwards we will celebrate all the winners for a dessert reception and commiserate with

the others. But one thing that is guaranteed is a lot of fun will be had. If you are interested in joining us visit www.toscars9.eventbrite.com for more details and to buy your tickets.

Good luck to all teams and may they all get a taste of a fist!

Here's this year's crop of posters:
Enjoy!
Craig Young



THE WHALE & ALE

MENU RESERVATIONS VISIT US ONLINE

James Hendricks & Simon Spalding at The Whale & Ale

Thursday, February 25th | 7-10 pm

On Thursday, February 25th, The Whale & Ale will have a unique treat for those who love the Sea Shanties!

MAKE A RESERVATION

James Hendricks & Simon Spalding, a dynamic duo of historical and maritime music, are returning to the Whale & Ale to perform sea chanteys, Civil War songs, ballads & fiddle tunes! The show will run approximately 7-10 pm.



Hello... Where Did My Audio Go?

■ Adele's Grammy Return Ruined!

Sadly, what was supposed to be a triumphant return to The Grammys after a four-year career break turned into Brit singer Adele's heart "break".

The singer's powerful voice cut out shortly after she launched into singing her hit "All I Ask" at the event in Los Angeles.

This was to be the star's eagerly anticipated big moment, but the performance was marred by sound issues – one of many in a shambolic night for broadcaster CBS. Coming mere minutes after news broke that Rihanna had cancelled her performance on doctor's orders and a no-show from Lauren Hill, the technical



FLUSTERED: Adele

glitches did not go down well with fans who anticipated another killer performance, but instead were left confused.

Our favorite singer Adele, sounding ... Um, flat? Oo-er!

Diehard followers raced to adjust the volume on their TV sets, Adele could be seen singing, but the only audio was the misplaced sound of what appeared

to be a clanking sound in the background as she sang, her microphone cut out briefly and Adele's voice didn't have its usual punch. The singer looked distracted, flashing irritated looks as she powered through the song, backed only by a piano and bathed in a lone spotlight.

Even after the "Rolling in the Deep" singer's voice resumed, the volume wavered, before it eventually stabilized after five to six seconds.

And the sound issues did not stop with Adele – with Justin Bieber's subsequent set also beset with problems and the live stream for the event going down.

The SIX Grammy award winning songstress could

be seen briefly reacting to the sound issues, her eyes opening wide. But ever the professional, she kept singing – although fans detected that the usually pitch perfect star seemed slightly off her game.

Adele made no further acknowledgment of the mishap until she returned to the audience – at which point the distraught looking star was seen animatedly discussing the errors with her long-term partner Simon Konecki.

Adele took to Twitter to explain the disruption with a rare tweet.

'The piano mics fell on to the piano strings, that's what the guitar sound was,' explained the star.

'It made it sound out of tune. S*** happens.'

Rather than wallowing, Adele then consoled herself with a burger – surely a rare treat for the newly slimline star.

Personally I still think Adele was one of the most talented artists of the evening ... she'll survive service this mishap!



DO ME A FAVOR, OPEN THE DOOR... Macca and his 'not VIP enough' friends were denied entry

Even being in the greatest band of all time doesn't guarantee you'll be let into a party – as Sir Paul McCartney found out this week.

The former Beatle was turned away from a Grammys after-party thrown by the rapper Tyga on Sunday night – and it was all captured on camera by celebrity site TMZ.

Macca, who was with his wife Nancy Shevell, was refused entry to the Argyle nightclub twice in Hollywood on Monday evening after a bouncer failed to recognise him.

He was turned away

along with singer Beck and actor Woody Harrelson.

He jokingly told Beck: 'How VIP do we gotta get? We need another hit.'

Beck, who won the Album Of The Year gong at the music industry's big bash, quipped: 'Next year!'

When informed of the incident Tyga turned to Twitter to hit back at suggestions the snub was deliberate, tweeting: "Why would I deny @ PaulMcCartney. Stop it. He's a legend," before blaming the snafu on the doormen.

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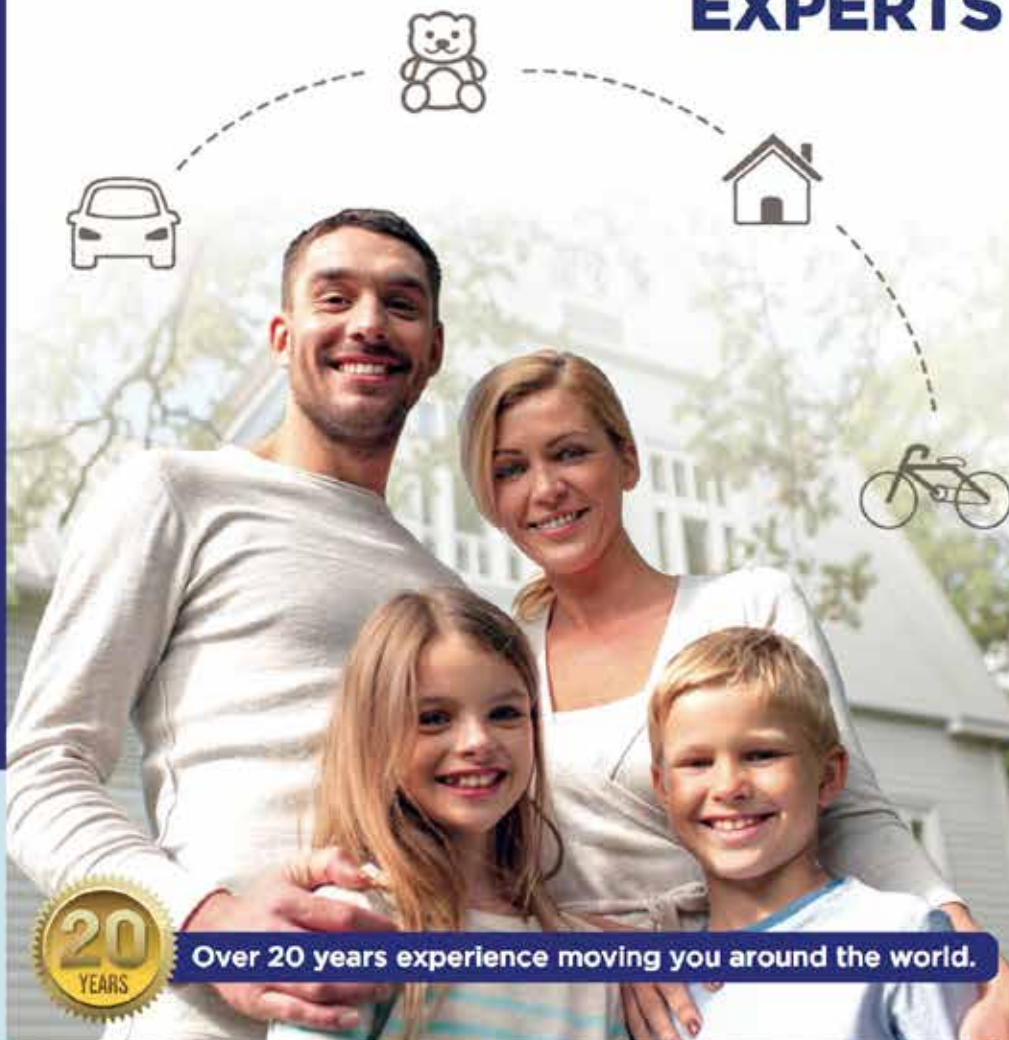


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British Weekly SPORT

Six Nations: England find a new hero in Joseph

England's comprehensive 40-9 Six Nations win over Italy on Sunday had the critics purring at Eddie Jones's powerful new outfit - and the man at the center of it, outside center Jonathan Joseph.

Joseph (pictured, above right) is "a wrecking ball reborn", said Oliver Brown in *The Daily Telegraph*. The "fulcrum" of England's attacks, he scored a hat-trick of tries. It was "quite a turnaround" for the Bath player. This time last year, he took the Six Nations by storm with a series of "eye-catching displays".

"Joseph was tipped for great things at the World Cup - yet he injured himself in the tournament's opening game, and by the time of England's dead rubber against Uruguay, he "cut a haunted figure". Now he has put his troubles behind him, and brings to the side "devilish" speed and "near-flawless" tackling. Joseph is sure to be "instrumental" in England's efforts to lift the Six Nations trophy.

Maro Itoje could also make the difference, said Stuart Barnes in *The Times*. The Saracens flanker made his international debut against Italy, coming on in the second half. Not that he looked like a novice: having spent



the season playing opponents "off the park", the 21-year-old "powerhouse" was at the heart of England's best work. A politics student at London's School of Oriental and African Studies, who writes poetry in his spare time, Itoje must start in the tournament's remaining games. Tipped as a future captain, he is England's "man for the future" - and also an "ideal candidate for the present".

So it comes as no surprise that Eddie Jones has retained the same 23 players as England prepare to host Ireland in a week's time.

The England coach has not opted to shuffle his pack, with the exception of Ollie Devoto, an unused replacement in their opening weekend win over Scotland before being left out in Italy, who is retained as injury cover in the backline.

Alex Goode sustained a minor ankle injury in his second-half appearance from the bench in the Stadio Olimpico.

With a full weekend of Premiership action and a rest week for the RBS 6 Nations, the rest of England's players have been released back to their clubs - including Sale No.8 Josh Beaumont

RUGBY UNION

RBS Six Nations

FRANCE.....10 IRELAND.....9
France—T. Medard, C. Plisson, P. Plisson.
Ireland—P. Sexton (3).

WALES.....27 SCOTLAND.....23
Wales—T. G. Davies, Roberts, North.
C: Biggar (3), P: Biggar (2).
Scotland—T. Seymour, Taylor, C: Laidlaw,
Weir, P: Laidlaw (3).

ITALY.....9 ENGLAND.....40
Italy—P: Canna (3).
England—T: Ford, Joseph (3), Farrell, C:
Farrell (3), P: Farrell (2), Ford.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
England	2	2	0	0	55	18	4
France	2	2	0	0	33	30	4
Wales	2	1	1	0	43	39	3
Ireland	2	0	1	1	25	26	1
Scotland	2	0	0	2	32	42	0
Italy	2	0	0	2	30	63	0

who travelled to Italy as a reserve.

It indicates Jones will not make changes to the matchday squad for next week's match with Ireland, his first home match since taking over from Stuart Lancaster.

"I thought they boys went well, the second half in particular we are really happy with how it went," he told reporters.

"It's a good place to be in heading into the next game in two weeks.

"The way the game went today, defensively we were outstanding and that gave us turnover ball which we thrive off and boys making yards there.

"It's great for us to be heading home now, our crowd is outstanding. It will be a great game they are tough team to play against it.

"With how that second half went we can carry that momentum on into the game."



TARGET MAN: Marseilles marksman Michy Batshuayi

Spurs boost as Batshuayi deal gets closer and Eriksen recommits

Spurs believe they are in pole position to steal Marseille striker Michy Batshuayi from under the noses of rivals West Ham thanks to the promise of Champions League football next season.

The two London clubs are locked in a battle to lure the Belgian forward from France, but the *Daily Mirror* says Spurs are "confident" of getting their man, while even the Hammers' local paper, the *Brentwood Gazette*, suggests that the Lilywhites are in "advanced talks" with the striker, who would cost around £25m.

If he does arrive at

White Hart Lane, then Batshuayi could be linking up with Christian Eriksen, who is set to sign a new contract with Spurs, having rediscovered his mojo after a heart-to-heart with boss Mauricio Pochettino.

The Dane, who operated as a number ten behind Harry Kane last season, has been forced to roam the flanks this term thanks to the rise of Dele Alli, explained the *Evening Standard*. The disappointment of being played out of position prompted him to hold talks with the manager, but Pochettino has soothed Eriksen's feelings, and now he is

expected to sign a four-and-a-half-year contract worth around £50,000 a week.

Tottenham will take an away goal into the second leg of their Europa League last-32 tie with Fiorentina after a draw in Italy on Thursday.

Spurs took the lead in the first half when Ben Davies was fouled inside the area and Nacer Chadli stepped up to roll the ball home from the spot.

However, Federico Bernardeschi equalised when his deflected strike looped into the net.

Dele Alli shot over late on for Spurs, but a draw was a fair result.

O'Sullivan turns down 147 break as £10,000 'not enough'

Snooker's bad boy Ronnie O'Sullivan is back in the headlines after deliberately passing up the opportunity of a 147 break at a tournament in Cardiff because the prize money was not sufficient.

Up against Barry Pinches and on course to clear the table, the 40-year-old player asked how much the maximum was worth. After finding out he was in line for a pay-out of "only" £10,000, he opted to pot the pink rather than black off the penultimate red to score 146, much to the palpable disappointment of the crowd.

There is a rolling

jackpot for scoring a 147 break, which starts at £5,000 and increases at every ranking tournament. The last maximum was scored by Australian Neil Robertson at the UK Championships in December, earning him £40,000 and resetting the prize fund.

O'Sullivan's actions have been criticised by players and promoters. World Snooker chairman Barry Hearn described them as "unacceptable" and "disrespectful", reported the BBC. He also expressed his annoyance on Twitter.

Fellow player Ali Carter, who has beaten cancer and suffers from

Crohn's disease, was also angry. "He should have made the 147 and given the money to charity - to Cancer Research or Crohn's Disease or something like that," he said. "He should have helped someone out, but he's only thinking of himself again. Unfortunately that's his problem, isn't it?"

World number two Mark Allen described O'Sullivan as a "bit of a nutcase", but added it was "disappointing" the prize money for maximum breaks was not as high as it once was. "Hopefully it rolls over a few times and I can make one and make a few quid," he said.

MEDIOCRE MAN UNITED!

■ Europa League: Another feeble show from Van Gaal's men as Danish minnows snatch first leg lead

Manchester United produced another underwhelming display as they lost to Danish side FC Midtjylland 2-1 in the first leg of their Europa League last-32 tie Thursday night.

United were without a number of injured players, including Wayne Rooney, and lost David de Gea in the warm-up.

They took the lead through Memphis Depay's shot but Sergio Romero, who stepped in for De Gea, was unable to prevent Pione Sisto equalising.

United's Jesse Lingard hit the bar before Paul Onuachu struck the winner.

After losing to Sunderland 2-1 on Saturday, the Red Devils are six points shy of the top four in the Premier League, leaving qualification for next season's Champions League very much in the balance.

Winning the Europa League could represent their best chance of reclaiming a place in Europe's elite club competition, but if they are to do that they will have to be much better than they were against

opponents who had not played for 71 days because of the Danish winter break.

That includes in the second leg of this tie, which is at Old Trafford in a week's time.

Midtjylland were only formed in 1999, the year United won their famous Treble, but what they lack in history they made up for with application and ability.

With 13 first-team players out and facing a side whose analytical tactical approach makes them a serious threat from set-pieces, United suffered a major setback when goalkeeper De Gea injured himself in the warm-up.

That meant a first United start in four months for Romero, but the Argentine proved an able replacement with three good saves.

One was a block to deny Vaclav Kadlec, who ran through unchallenged, just 56 seconds before United broke the deadlock through Depay's close-range finish from Lingard's cross.

Romero also produced a superb one-handed diving stop to keep out

a powerful goalbound header from Onuachu in the second half.

Between those two saves, he could not stop Sisto pulling the hosts level with a shot that found the net via the shin of Chris Smalling.

Romero was equally powerless to keep out Onuachu's winner - a low drive after the substitute beat Juan Mata on the edge of the box.

Wayne Rooney's absence allowed Depay to make his first start since Boxing Day and gave Anthony Martial the chance to start up front.

Depay, the top scorer in the Dutch league last season prior to his £31m move to Old Trafford, had scored once in his previous 20 United appearances.

And while his display in Denmark was not a notable improvement on past performances in a United shirt he was able to add a goal to his modest tally of goals for the season, which now stands at six.

But the Dutchman, like the rest of the United team, offered little in the second half as the home side came back to win.



NO EASY GAMES? Juan Mata battles with Nikolay Bodurov Thursday night



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Sun 2/21 FA CUP

8am Chelsea v Man City

Mon 2/22 FA CUP

1130am Shrewsbury v Man United

Tue 2/23 Champions League

11.45am Arsenal v Barcelona

11.45am Juventus v Bayern Munich

Wed 2/24. Champions League

11.45am PSV v Atletico Madrid

11.45am Dynamo Kyiv vs Man. City

Thurs 2/25 Europa League

10am Liverpool v Augsburg

Noon Man United v Midtjylland

Noon Spurs v Fiorentina

Rooney linked with shock China move

Manchester United are understood to be open to selling Wayne Rooney to a Chinese Super League club in the summer - but only if they make a marquee signing.

United have received an offer from a Chinese club for their 30-year-old captain, who is sidelined for six weeks with a knee injury.

Rooney, 30, could earn at least £500,000-a-week in the Far East, however United would need to offset his potential departure with an eminent replacement

their global partners would approve of to promote their products.

Despite a few chastening seasons at United, Rooney remains the most marketable player at the club due to his longevity and success at Old Trafford, as well as with the England national side.

Rooney is expected to surpass Sir Bobby Charlton as the club's record goalscorer and remains United sponsors' most requested player to plug their brands.

Last week, Woodward

acknowledged the Chinese Super League could benefit United in the transfer market.

"So far, this is the biggest window in preparation for the next season, so I do think there'll be more activity in the summer, but it's very, very difficult to predict the impact that will have," Woodward said in United's quarterly conference call.

"If nothing else, it [Chinese Super League]'s another useful market if we're looking to sell any players."

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