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'It's lonely in parliament'

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Senior Tories tell Johnson to 'shut up and go away'

Aubrey Allegretti
Senior political correspondent

Senior Conservatives have told Boris Johnson and his allies to "shut up and go away" as the privileges committee prepares to sign off what is expected to be a damning report into his conduct.

MPs on the committee are understood to have received threats from members of the public over the weekend, following Johnson's decision to stand down as an MP after being told the result of the committee inquiry into whether he deliberately misled parliament over Partygate.

Some MPs loyal to the former prime minister, who sought to sway the committee's decision, are also said to be at risk of being investigated for a separate contempt of parliament.

The seven-strong committee, which has a Tory majority and Labour chair, will regroup at 11am today to finalise the conclusion to their year-long inquiry. They are likely to speed up the publication of their report, with the details of their findings made

public as soon as Wednesday. While Johnson cannot be given the sanction of a suspension now he has resigned, the committee could recommend he be refused a pass offered to former MPs allowing privileged access to parliament.

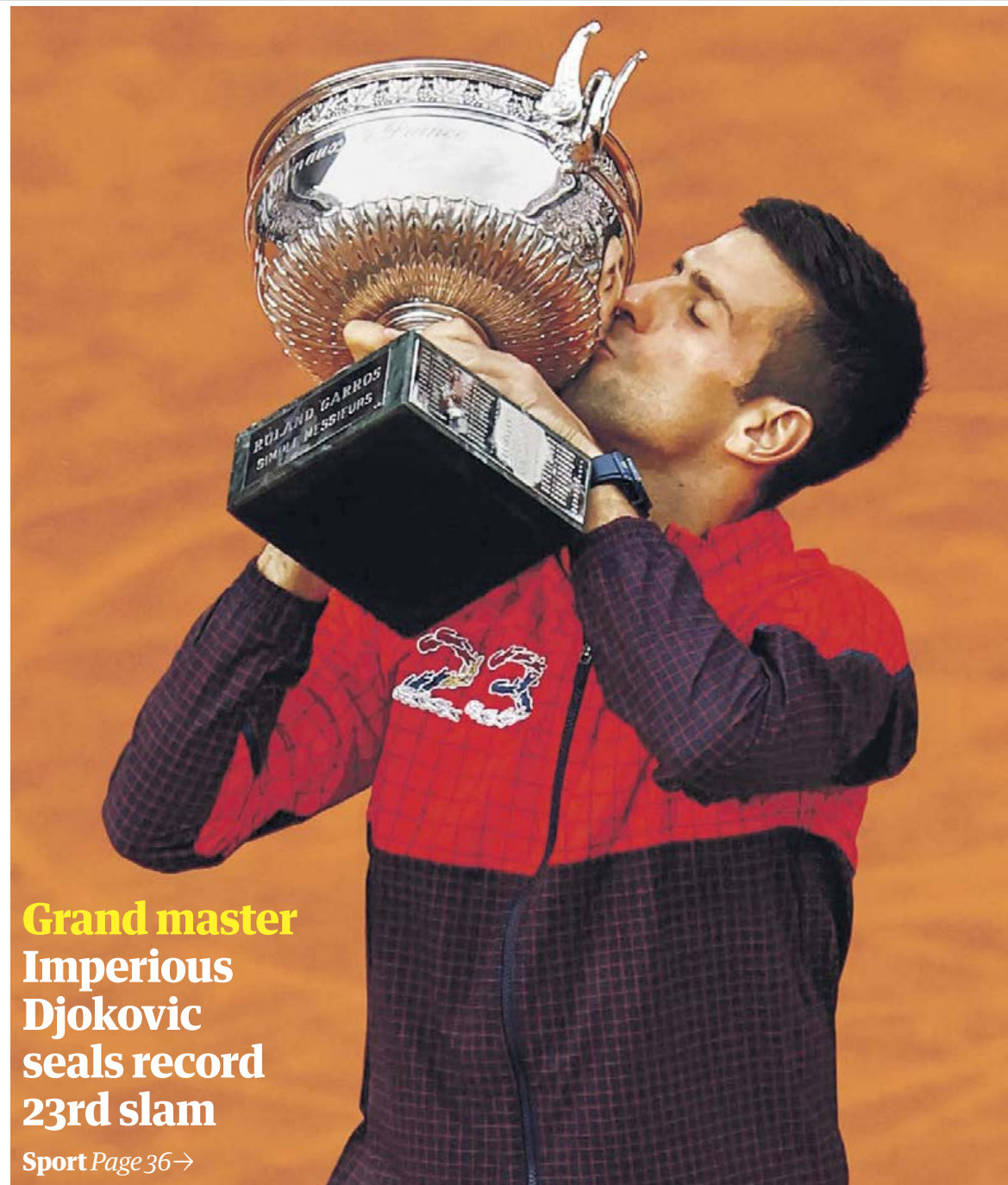
Such a move would be in the power of the Commons speaker, Sir Lindsay Hoyle. It has been recommended before by a parliamentary watchdog. An independent expert panel proposed the sanction for the former speaker John Bercow in its report on bullying, which was published after he stepped down as an MP.

Some of Johnson's allies are said to have urged Tory members to write to the privileges committee to try to influence its conclusions. The Guardian understands several MPs have held talks on the possibility of tabling a motion with a view to holding them in contempt of parliament.

Tim Loughton, a Tory MP and former minister, said Johnson should "shut up and go away" and branded his allies a "mob".

A government source said: "The witch-hunt narrative is held by a sad rump of

4 ➔



Grand master Imperious Djokovic seals record 23rd slam

Sport Page 36 ➔

PHOTOGRAPH: CLODAGH KILCOYNE/REUTERS

Sturgeon questioned for seven hours after arrest

Severin Carrell
Libby Brooks

Nicola Sturgeon has been questioned "as a suspect" by detectives investigating allegations of financial misconduct by the Scottish National party. The former first minister and SNP leader was arrested by

police yesterday morning and later released without charge pending further inquiries after voluntarily going to a police station.

In a statement last night, Sturgeon said her arrest had been "both a shock and deeply distressing". She added: "I know beyond doubt that I am in fact innocent of any wrongdoing."

6 ➔

Ofsted overhaul fails to change school gradings

Richard Adams
Education editor

Changes by Ofsted to the way it inspects schools have been criticised as "nowhere near enough" to reduce the high levels of stress involved, which were blamed for the recent death of a popular headteacher.

The changes announced today by Amanda Spielman, Ofsted's chief inspector, are intended to ease the burden felt by school leaders such as Ruth Perry, the head of a primary in Reading who killed herself in January after an Ofsted inspection lowered her school's grade from "outstanding" to "inadequate".

Despite the national outcry over

Perry's death, Spielman and the Department for Education have refused to budge on the most contentious issue: the labelling by Ofsted of schools in England with a single overall grade, such as "inadequate".

Perry's family and teaching leaders said Ofsted's proposals fell well short of the overhaul needed to make school inspections fairer and less devastating for the school leaders involved.

Prof Julia Waters, Perry's sister, said: "I am disappointed that no mention is made about removing harmful and misleading single-word judgments. I

2 ➔

Inside 12/06/23
Four sections
every day

News and Sport

Fears for tourists in fire

Three Britons missing after scuba diving boat catches fire in the Red Sea
 Page 9

Journal Outside G2

Opinions and ideas

Starmer's team are squashing anyone deemed too leftwing or disobedient
John Harris

Page 3

G2 Centre pullout

Features and arts

Emma Beddington

Ultra-processed foods are bad - but food poverty is far worse
 Page 3

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and the Observer
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Weather

Page 30

Quick crossword

Back of G2

Cartoon

Journal, page 4

Cryptic crossword

Back of Journal

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News



◀ **Donald Trump at the Georgia Republican party's convention, where he launched an inflammatory attack on the Department of Justice, the FBI and Biden administration**

PHOTOGRAPH: ANNA MONEYMAKER/GETTY

'I'll never leave': Trump vows to run for White House even if convicted

Sam Levine *New York*
Maya Yang

Donald Trump has pledged to continue his 2024 presidential campaign even if he is convicted of a felony, saying he would campaign from prison if necessary. "I'll never leave," the former US president told Politico in an interview carried out on his plane between two campaign events. He also dismissed the possibility of pardoning himself, telling the outlet: "I didn't do anything wrong."

US law does not bar Trump from running while under indictment, nor would it block him if he was convicted.

"These are thugs and degenerates who are after me," he said, continuing his use of inflammatory language to describe his opponents and extensive legal troubles.

The defiant comments from Trump came two days after the US Department of Justice (DoJ) charged him with 37 criminal counts related to his mishandling of classified documents and obstructing the department's investigation into the matter.

Trump, who is the leading contender in the Republican field aiming to snag the party nomination to fight Joe Biden for the White House, is the first former US president to face federal charges. He has already started seizing on the charges to appeal to

Republicans for support, holding them up as yet another example of the way political rivals are trying to persecute him. "The ridiculous and baseless indictment by the Biden administration's weaponised department of injustice will go down as among the most horrific abuses of power in the history of our country," he said during a speech at the Georgia Republican party's convention.

The former president also called his recent indictment "a travesty of justice" and repeated conspiratorial claims that Joe Biden had stashed secret documents in the Chinatown neighbourhood of Washington DC.

"We got to stand up to the ... radical left Democrats, their lawless partisan prosecutors ... Every time I fly over a blue state, I get a subpoena," said Trump in a meandering speech that attempted to bridge his legal troubles with campaign promises. He went on to launch a tirade against federal officials, saying, "Now the Marxist left is once again using the same corrupt DoJ and the same corrupt FBI, and the attorney general and the local district attorneys to interfere ... They're

cheating. They're crooked. They're corrupt. These criminals cannot be rewarded. They must be defeated. You have to defeat them.

"Because in the end, they're not coming after me. They're coming after you and I'm just standing in their way," he said.

About 48% of Americans believe Trump should have been indicted over his handling of classified documents, according to a new ABC/Ipsos study, while 35% believe he should not have been. There is a significant partisan split in responses reflecting the US's deep divides: 86% of self-identified Democrats say he should have been indicted, while 67% of self-identified Republicans say he should not have.

Trump leads a wide Republican presidential field fairly easily and most of his rivals have not used the indictment to attack him, a signal of the sway the former president still has over the Republican party.

"The weaponisation of federal law enforcement represents a mortal threat to a free society. We have for years witnessed an uneven application of the law depending upon political affiliation. Why so zealous in pursuing Trump yet so passive about Hillary or Hunter?" Florida's rightwing governor, Ron DeSantis, tweeted on Thursday.

In contrast William Barr, Trump's former attorney general, said he believed the former president may be "toast" following the indictment.

Speaking to Fox News yesterday, Barr said he was "shocked by the degree of sensitivity of these documents and how many there were".

"I do think we have to wait and see what the defence says and what proves to be true. But I do think ... if even half of it is true, then he's toast ... It's very damning."

Trump already faces criminal charges over a hush-money payment to the adult film star Stormy Daniels. More charges could come from the justice department and prosecutors in Atlanta related to his efforts to overturn the 2020 election.

Ofsted fails to change schools' single-word grading system

◀ **Continued from page 1**

can understand the need to provide clarity and simplicity for parents about an inspection, but too much is hidden or lost behind a headline judgment of just one or two words."

Waters added: "Ruth was not the first headteacher or teacher to take her own life following an Ofsted inspection. I am determined that she should be the last."

The biggest change announced by Spielman would allow schools rated inadequate solely because of errors in safeguarding procedures to be re-inspected by Ofsted within three months, giving school leaders an opportunity to quickly fix concerns. Such a policy could have benefited Perry's school, which would have been rated as "good" but for the procedural errors.

The changes would accelerate Ofsted's complaints procedures, allowing schools to appeal to its

independent ombudsman more quickly. Ofsted would also offer more support to school leaders during the inspection process, with heads able to externally consult a senior inspector for advice. Schools will also be given a broad timeframe for their next inspection of between a term to a year, but will still only receive one day's notice of the exact date.

Spielman said: "Since the sad death of Ruth Perry, there has been considerable debate around Ofsted's



▲ **Amanda Spielman said inspections could be revised without loss of focus**

work, and I want to reassure people that we are listening to their concerns, and thinking carefully about how we can revise aspects of our work without losing our clear focus on the needs of children and their parents. We have listened to many voices in this debate."

The education secretary, Gillian Keegan, endorsed the changes. Last week she met Perry's family and friends, and discussed the proposals.

Paul Whiteman, the general secretary of the National Association of Head Teachers, said: "It has taken far too long for the government and Ofsted to announce this relatively modest set of measures, and school leaders remain immensely frustrated at the lack of urgency and ambition being shown. While the government insists on consigning schools to simplistic single word judgments, the system will remain fundamentally flawed and put unnecessary pressure on school leaders."

Waters said she had been encouraged by the discussions with Keegan, but that much more needed to be done. "I welcome any changes that ease some of the burden on headteachers undergoing what can feel

like inescapable, ritual humiliation. But these changes do not yet go far enough.

"Parents, pupils and teachers deserve an inspection regime that they can trust and which supports schools to do the best for every child. 'Trial by Ofsted' must end."

Waters praised Ofsted's proposal allowing head teachers to share provisional inspection results with staff and governors before a final report is published. Waters said "it could certainly have helped to alleviate the terrible burden that Ruth was forced to bear alone" for 54 days, unable to discuss it with others.

Mary Bousted, the joint general secretary of the National Education Union, of which Perry was a member, said "more extensive and fundamental changes" were needed to limit Ofsted's damage to teachers' wellbeing.

"We need a reliable system, built on fairness and support, not surveillance and jumping through hoops"

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Music review

Conversational, joyful, tearful ... and worth a wait of 23 years

Joni Mitchell

Gorge Amphitheatre, Quincy

★★★★★

Matthew Cantor

Just a few years ago, the idea of a Joni Mitchell concert in 2023 seemed like an impossibility. The singer-songwriter hadn't headlined a concert in more than a decade when, in 2015, she survived a brain aneurysm and lost the ability to walk and talk.

But seven years later – after what her friend Brandi Carlile called a “magical transformation” – she took the stage again in a surprise performance at the Newport folk festival, joined by Carlile and other musicians. Afterwards, according to Carlile: “Joni said: ‘I want to do another show.’”

And so, on Saturday in rural Washington state, Mitchell played her first headline show in 23 years. The venue was the Gorge Amphitheatre, set against a backdrop of cliffs overlooking the Columbia River. For the Joni devotees, reaching this natural cathedral nearly three hours' drive from Seattle required a pilgrimage of sorts. But that was no obstacle.

Barbara Olson, 61, had travelled from Florida. “When I think about what she's been through – she's learned to walk three times in her life,” Olson said. “If she sings ‘I've looked at life from both sides now’ tonight, I am going to lie on the ground, and then I can die.”

Mitchell's performance was modelled after the “Joni Jams”

► *Joni Mitchell performing in Washington state on Saturday. The show was modelled on the ‘Joni Jams’ she hosts at her Los Angeles home*

PHOTOGRAPH: GARY MILLER/GETTY



she hosts at her Los Angeles home, where musicians from Paul McCartney to Chaka Khan to Harry Styles routinely gather. The intent, Carlile told the audience of 27,000, was to “invite you into the living room”. Thus the stage was set with a bottle of pinot grigio, a table topped with framed pet photos, and an array of sofas and chairs occupied by a band full of musical luminaries, including Annie Lennox, Sarah McLachlan and Marcus Mumford.

Carlile acted as a sort of informal MC while Mitchell, seated at the front and carrying a cane with a bear's head decorating the handle, played storyteller in a remarkable three-hour performance. With her vocal range more limited than it was, her singing felt conversational, as though she was relaying wisdom gained from her 79 years. The stories her songs told were all true but “they're not all *my* stories”, she said.

The last time Mitchell was at the Gorge she had been touring with Bob Dylan and Van Morrison

and forgotten the words to a verse of Dylan's, so she made one up. Morrison thought it rude, but Mitchell disagreed – Dylan loved it, she said. “There's nothing he likes better than to see me fuck up.”

While Mitchell's range is smaller, her voice hasn't lost its power – or her familiar slow vibrato. This was on particular display in songs such as *Both Sides, Now* and George Gershwin's *Summertime*. Other songs featured Mitchell and fellow performers sharing the lead vocals, sometimes in unison, sometimes crossing over, slightly out of sync. This brought an improvisational liveliness to songs including *A Case of You*, which received a standing ovation from the audience and the performers alike.

Her performances were interspersed with covers of Mitchell songs by others on stage, often prefaced by short speeches describing what her music meant to them. “You're such a visionary, such a legend, such an inspiration to all of us on the stage and out there,” Lennox said before singing



▲ An audience of 27,000 saw the singer-songwriter take the stage alongside other famous performers

*The range is smaller but her voice hasn't lost its power or familiar slow vibrato on songs such as **Both Sides, Now***

Ladies of the Canyon – a song she said had inspired her career.

Despite the heavy praise, Mitchell's performance felt ego-free. She laughed and cracked jokes between songs and further extolled the virtues of her fellow performers, never seeming to take the evening too seriously. That set the tone for a joyful show, though the momentousness of the occasion left more than a few audience members – and even some on stage – tearful.

For the encore, Mitchell picked up a guitar. It was surreal to see a legend who had barely been able to speak a few years earlier perform virtually solo, accompanying herself as she sang her song *If*, which she described as one of her favourites.

The lyrics offered hope to the listener: “If you can draw a crowd / And keep your virtue...” As tens of thousands celebrated her, Mitchell – whose wide appeal over the decades has never inhibited her consummate artistry – might have been singing about herself.

A breath of fresh air: ‘Dr Deep Sea’ emerges after 100 days underwater

Maya Yang

A professor who spent 100 days living and researching underwater has finally resurfaced. Joseph Dituri, a University of South Florida professor and retired US naval officer, emerged from a Florida Keys scuba divers' lodge after three months.



The 55-year-old biomedical engineer, nicknamed “Dr Deep Sea”, embarked on his journey on 1 March, when he entered Jules's Undersea Lodge, an underwater steel-and-glass hotel built 9 metres below the surface of a Key Largo lagoon.

On 13 May, Dituri was championed by Guinness World Records for spending the longest time living in an underwater fixed habitat. At the time, Dituri had been underwater for 74 days. Dituri went on to beat his own record after he resurfaced

◀ Prof Joseph Dituri inside the undersea lodge in the Florida Keys

on Friday. He said his underwater stay “was never about the record”. He told CBS: “It was about extending human tolerance for the underwater world and for an isolated, confined, extreme environment.”

Dituri was living underwater as part of Project Neptune 100, which was organised by the Marine Resources Development Foundation.

According to MRDF's website, “Project Neptune combines a long-term study of the physiological and psychological effects of compression on the human body, and uses the uniqueness of the mission and location to bring more awareness

of current marine research and the importance of conservation of our ocean's resources and processes.”

The University of South Florida said the hypothesis that led Dituri to embark on the project was that increased pressure has the potential to help humans live longer and prevent ageing-related diseases.

One of the changes that Dituri experienced while underwater was that the pressure caused him to shrink half an inch, according to the university. Other preliminary findings include a drastic improvement in his sleep, cholesterol levels and levels of inflammation.

4

**National
Politics**

Conservatives clash over Johnson's resignation as Farage offers him a deal

Continued from page 1

Boris worshippers, whose numbers are small."

In an attempt to distance Rishi Sunak from his predecessor-but-one, the energy secretary Grant Shapps said "the world has moved on" from Johnson. He suggested he was wrong to claim No 10 had promised all the MPs he nominated would be approved, saying: "Occasionally Boris wouldn't be all over the detail."

Shapps said MPs on the privileges committee should be allowed to "get on with their job" and played down Johnson's potential future in the Conservative party, telling Sky News: "I'm sure he's got many other things he wants to get on and do."

Jacob Rees-Mogg, knighted in Johnson's resignation honours, said he was hopeful about the former prime minister's chance of a comeback. He said Sunak should remain leader until the next general election - but predicted that "at some indeterminate date in the future when Rishi's hair has gone grey and he decides to retire," Johnson could come back "on his charger to save the nation".

While Sunak has made no public appearance since Johnson's resignation, he broke his silence on Twitter to tell followers he was "focused on your priorities".

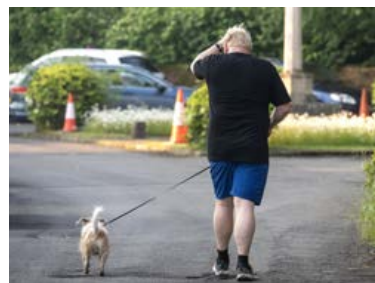
A flurry of campaigning has already begun for the three byelections triggered by the resignation of Johnson loyalists Nadine Dorries and Nigel Adams. Unlike at previous

byelections, Labour and the Liberal Democrats appear to have ditched an informal non-aggression pact in Dorries's seat. Senior figures from both parties and activists have already flooded the area - aware of the high prize that taking a constituency with a 24,000 Tory majority would be.

Anneliese Dodds, Labour's chair, and Shabana Mahmood, the party's campaign coordinator, raced there over the weekend. The Lib Dems, said it had been "our best start to a byelection campaign in living memory" and claimed to have already canvassed more than 10,000 homes, with the party's leader Ed Davey appearing yesterday and planning a return visit today.

Labour came second in the constituency with 14,000 votes at the last election, to the Lib Dems' 8,000. A three-way fight could lead the anti-Conservative vote to split, making the prospect of a Tory loss less likely.

Opposition parties have already been campaigning in Johnson's



▲ Boris Johnson with dog Dilyn out for a run near his Wallingford home

Uxbridge and South Ruislip seat, where the Tory majority is a relatively slim 7,000. They expect to increase their presence in Selby and Ainsty, vacated by Adams on Saturday.

Sunak was urged to call the three byelections swiftly. Robert Hayward, a Conservative peer and elections expert, said: "It would be better for the government to deal with this matter - whatever the result - and then be able to move on and deal with the issues of governance and the autumn party conference."

The House of Lords appointments commission sought to distance itself from a row between Johnson and No 10 over the MPs he nominated for peerages who were not accepted, including Dorries and Adams.

The commission confirmed it vetted and did not support eight of the nominees. It said the "usual processes" were followed and that it was "not involved in the appointment processes after providing advice".

Keen to capitalise on Johnson's frustration, the former Ukip leader Nigel Farage suggested he would be open to an electoral pact. "If he wants to defend his Brexit legacy, I want to defend my Brexit legacy too," Farage told the BBC. "Would there be a possibility of a new coming-together on the centre-right? It would be Boris Johnson, there would be other MPs that would join in with this as well."

Farage claimed up to 10 sitting Tories could join. Of Johnson he said: "I have discussed it with people very close to him and around him."



'People feel abandoned' Labour sets about taking former PM's stronghold

▲ The Labour candidate, Danny Beales, stops for an ice-cream during canvassing in Uxbridge and South Ruislip
PHOTOGRAPH: ANDREW MATTHEWS/PA WIRE

Doing the honours

How rewards became mired in recriminations

What was Johnson pushing for?

In an attempt to reward those who helped him in Downing Street, Johnson put forward at least 16 aides, colleagues and friends for peerages. It had been widely reported that among those were four sitting Tory MPs: the Scottish secretary, Alister Jack; the former Cop26 president Alok Sharma; Nigel Adams, a backroom operator who held a roving Cabinet Office brief, and the ex-culture secretary Nadine Dorries. But there was a curious delay to the list being approved.

Why the hold-up?

Initially, the delay was attributed to the large size of the list. The House of Lords Appointments Commission began vetting the names and ruled it would not be possible for the four Tory MPs nominated to hold on to their seats and move to parliament's upper house at the next election. They either had to commit to

standing down from the Commons and join the Lords within six months, or face being left off the list. Jack confirmed he would not step down early, ruling him out.

How did Johnson try to break the deadlock?

Johnson pushed for a rare face-to-face meeting with the prime minister to discuss peerages, which was granted on 2 June. Wary about the impending findings of the Commons privileges committee inquiry into claims he misled MPs over Partygate, which could have resulted in a byelection he was at risk of losing, he urged Sunak to act quickly. There were only three people in the room and accounts of what happened vary. It appears Johnson came away from the meeting believing he had been given assurances his list of peerages would be approved. But Downing Street insiders have suggested Sunak gave no such guarantee, and instead merely

signalled his intention to sign off on the approved list that came back from the appointments commission.

Why did the final list trigger such chaos?

In the end, only eight peerages were accepted by the commission, and the names of those who had been cleared to join the Lords was published on Friday. In a highly unusual move, No 10 declassified the list it had received from the commission in February. This was to show that Sunak had not himself removed any names.

So what happened to the missing names?

The commission decided during vetting not to approve some of the people on the list. It appears that Dorries, Adams and Sharma had been under the impression for months they would be on the final list. But it has become clear now that in order to join the Lords, they were meant to have either quit the House of Commons already or informed the commission that they were planning to do so.
Aubrey Allegretti

Alexandra Topping

Danny Beales was having dinner with his family on Friday when his phone began to vibrate insistently. "I was trying not to be rude, but eventually I couldn't ignore the calls anymore. I picked up, and a voice said 'have you heard the news?'"

The news that the Labour candidate for Uxbridge and South Ruislip had not yet seen was the resignation of Boris Johnson as MP for the constituency in advance of the findings of an investigation into the Partygate scandal.

"It was very unexpected, so there was a mix of emotions ... a bit of nervousness but excitement that we have a chance to put forward our case sooner than we thought," says Beales, on a break from canvassing yesterday.

The 34-year-old has not stopped knocking on doors since the news broke - and says he expects to be out canvassing for votes every day



'It is entirely possible for Labour to win this seat for the first time, but we're not taking anything for granted - it's going to be hard'

until the byelection triggered by Johnson's resignation takes place.

Of the three byelections dramatically triggered this week - resignations of the former culture secretary Nadine Dorries and Johnson loyalist Nigel Adams bookended that of Johnson - it is the former prime minister's seat that most excites Labour.

Uxbridge, with a Tory majority of 7,210, was a key Labour target, even before Johnson's shock departure. And though the Tory pollster Lord Ashcroft found that voters would have elected Johnson last week, Britain Predicts polling puts Labour on course to win the seat by 11 points.

But Beales will not yet let himself think about the fact that he may be an MP in weeks. "At the moment, I am trying to focus on the here and now [on] the next conversation," he says. "Obviously, I want it to be the case, I want to serve the area I grew up in. I'm really passionate about making a difference here. But ultimately, it's the voters that decide."

In conversations on the doorstep Beales stresses he wants to be a

present constituency MP - which he argues the west London suburb has lacked for the last decade. He tells them he's also worried about his mortgage, the cost of his weekly shop and his family members on NHS waiting lists.

"I think what matters most to people at the moment is that I understand what they're going through, I get what they're frustrated about," he says. "People feel really abandoned by politicians, really let down by lots of the promises that they've had over the last 15 years."

Beales, who recently gave up his job as head of policy and campaigns at the National Aids Trust, stresses his local roots. He has been a Camden councillor for a decade, but was born and grew up locally. He hasn't always wanted to be an MP, but underwent a political

awakening in his teens - watching his single mum work two jobs and struggle to make ends meet. The family was made homeless twice.

Labour is throwing everything at Uxbridge - the party's national campaigns coordinator, Shabana Mahmood, and shadow work and pensions secretary, Jonathan Ashworth, were in the seat on Saturday to campaign less than 24 hours after Johnson quit.

Beales knows there will be a huge amount of attention on the seat until polling opens. "I think we just have to make the case to those people who perhaps haven't voted for us before - who are really fed up, but not sure what to do - that they can put their trust in us," he says.

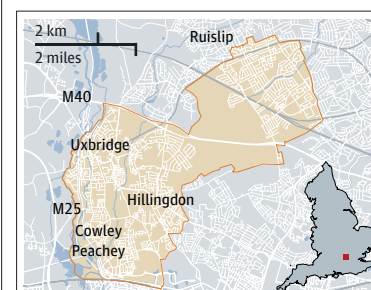
Does he expect to be standing in parliament making his maiden speech in the near future?

"People are incredibly fed up, they are saying they want change. So I think it is entirely possible for Labour to win this seat for the first time," he says. "But we are not taking anything for granted. It's going to be a hard-fought battle on the ground."

Byelections The three Tory seats up for grabs

Alexandra Topping

Rishi Sunak is facing three imminent byelections in England, likely to be seen as time- and attention-sapping by Conservative HQ. For Labour and the Lib Dems, however, they are a chance to get on the front foot.



Uxbridge and South Ruislip
Outgoing MP: Boris Johnson
Target: Labour
Majority: 7,210

Held by the Tories since its creation in 2010, Johnson won there with a majority of 10,695 in 2015, 5,034 in 2017 and 7,210 in 2019.

Only on Tuesday, polling by the former Tory deputy-chairman Michael Ashcroft suggested Johnson would win a byelection with 50% of the vote, with Labour's Danny Beales on 33% and the Liberal Democrat Blaise Baquiche polling only 6%, a point ahead of the Greens. But with Johnson's decision to stand down, Labour now has the seat in its sights. The Ashcroft poll has also been questioned, with modelling by Britain Predicts putting Labour on course to win the seat by 11 points.

The seat has a very diverse, mainly south Asian population; in the past 11 years the white British share of the population fell from 57% to 36%. In the May local elections the Conservatives retained control of Hillingdon which sits in the constituency. But the polling expert Luke Tryl, from More in Common, has also said Labour should be able to win.



Mid Bedfordshire
Outgoing MP: Nadine Dorries
Target: Labour/Liberal Democrats
Majority: 24,664

At first glance, Mid Bedfordshire seems as close to a typical Tory rural heartland as you could imagine, and has long been considered an ultra-safe seat. It's been in Conservative hands since 1931, it voted strongly to leave the EU in 2016, and the Tories have a sizeable majority of 24,664. But

after Nadine Dorries resigned on Friday, having reportedly been dropped from Boris Johnson's resignation honours, both Labour and the Lib Dems have increased their manoeuvres in the rural constituency, with a byelection likely to be fought this autumn.

The former culture secretary won 60% of the vote in the constituency at the 2019 general election, with Labour on 22% and the Lib Dems 13%. The seat consists of small towns and rural areas, and it is wealthier than the UK average.

The Lib Dems are insistent that - as a solid Tory seat in the South of England - they are the main challengers. They would need a 23.6% swing to win, smaller than the 25.2% they achieved in Chesham and Amersham and the 34.2% that won them North Shropshire last December.

Sources in the party have been quoted as saying Labour has a "natural ceiling" in rural Tory heartlands, and point to the fact the seat stayed blue in the Labour landslide of 1997.



Selby and Ainsty
Outgoing MP: Nigel Adams
Target: Labour/Liberal Democrats
Majority: 20,137

With a Conservative majority of 20,137 in 2019, Selby and Ainsty in North Yorkshire is hardly marginal. It has been in Tory hands since its creation in 2010, and Nigel Adams has defended it three times.

But the Johnson loyalist, who quit on Saturday after also reportedly being promised a peerage that didn't happen, has left the seat wide open to a Labour attack. In 2019 the Tories took 60% of the vote, while Labour took 25% and the Lib Dems 8.6%. Britain Elects polling suggests a very narrow Tory win. But while the Conservative majority is chunky, some experts argue that boundary changes mean that the new seat of Selby would be more marginal.

The seat has not always been Tory: pre-2010 the Selby seat went the way of the governing party at every election from its creation in 1983 and was a Labour marginal with decreasing majorities throughout the Blair and Brown years - before it switched in 2010. It is a mainly rural constituency, including the towns of Selby and Tadcaster, whose people have an income close to the national average and with lower than average reliance on social housing.



Sturgeon says she was shocked to be arrested over SNP donations inquiry

Continued from page 1

Sturgeon is the third senior figure in the SNP to be arrested as part of Operation Branchform, a Police Scotland investigation into allegations that more than £600,000 in donations for an independence campaign was mispent by the party.

Sturgeon was detained and interviewed by detectives for more than seven hours before being released from custody, travelling to an undisclosed address away from her home in Uddingston, on the outskirts of Glasgow.

A spokesperson for Sturgeon said she met the police “by arrangement”, in the knowledge she would be arrested and interviewed. “Nicola has consistently said she would cooperate with the investigation if asked and continues to do so.”

Her husband, Peter Murrell, the former chief executive of the SNP, was arrested at their home on 5 April after plainclothes officers arrived without warning. He was interviewed under caution for nearly 12 hours before being released without charge.

The police then searched their home and back garden, and also searched the SNP’s headquarters under warrant, removing boxes of documents and computers. A luxury motorhome parked outside Murrell’s mother’s house in Fife was also seized

and impounded by police as part of their investigation.

Colin Beattie MSP, then the party’s treasurer, was arrested and questioned as part of the same inquiry on 18 April and also released later without charge, pending further investigation.

Last night Police Scotland said: “A 52-year-old woman who was arrested earlier today, Sunday 11 June 2023, as a suspect in connection with the ongoing investigation into the funding and finances of the Scottish National party, has been released without charge pending further investigation.”

“The woman was questioned by Police Scotland detectives after she was arrested at 10.09am. She was released from custody at 5.24pm. A report will be sent to the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service.

“The matter remains active for the



▲ A police patrol vehicle passes Sturgeon’s Glasgow home yesterday

purposes of the Contempt of Court Act 1981 and the public are therefore advised to exercise caution if discussing it on social media. As the investigation is ongoing we are unable to comment further.”

Sturgeon has repeatedly insisted she knew of no wrongdoing with the SNP’s finances or its handling of more than £600,000 in donations for a future independence referendum.

Speaking to reporters at Holyrood in late April, Sturgeon also denied the police inquiry had played a part in her decision to step down in February, after eight years as SNP leader and first minister.

Describing her husband’s arrest as “traumatic” and “very difficult”, she said: “I understand the view that some people might have, that I knew this was all about to unfold and that’s why I walked away. Nothing could be further from the truth. I could not have anticipated in my worst nightmares what would have unfolded over the past few weeks.”

Speaking earlier on Sunday morning on BBC One’s Sunday with Laura Kuenssberg, Humza Yousaf, Sturgeon’s successor as first minister and SNP leader, said he could not comment on the police inquiry. “I understand why you ask the question [but] as first minister I’ve got a really important duty not to be seen to prejudice or interfere in the live police investigation.”

Opposition leaders said Yousaf should now follow previous precedent by suspending Sturgeon from the party. He refused to suspend Murrell and Beattie after they were arrested, on the grounds neither had been charged or convicted.

Craig Hoy, the chair of the Scottish Conservatives, said the SNP had suspended other MPs under police investigation. “The SNP continue to be engulfed in murkiness and chaos. Humza Yousaf must now show some leadership and suspend his predecessor from the SNP,” Hoy said.

Analysis

Libby Brooks and Severin Carrell

Turbulent times for party determined to look to the future but hamstrung by its past

Both supporters and critics of Nicola Sturgeon were in sombre mood as they digested news of the former first minister’s arrest yesterday. To see Sturgeon – earlier in the day described by her successor, Humza Yousaf, as “one of the most impressive politicians Europe has seen over the last couple of decades” – and “arrested” in the same headline as the news alert flashed up on phones was a shock, despite speculation that it was inevitable given the ongoing police investigation into the finances of the Scottish National party.

There are plenty who find it inconceivable that a woman they have trusted and admired for decades would be involved in criminality related to the party she has dedicated her political life to. In a statement yesterday, soon after her release without charge, Sturgeon said she was “grateful so many continue to show faith in me and appreciate that I would never do anything to harm either the SNP or the country”.

Many are “scunnered” that, just as Yousaf was managing to wrestle the media narrative back to the Scottish government’s day job, the focus is back on the police inquiry, and the questions it raises around transparency and governance.

Critics point out that when she was leader, Sturgeon welcomed the suspension from the party of other SNP politicians involved in police investigations, including Natalie McGarry, Michelle Thompson and Derek Mackay. And likewise they believe the arrest of the former party leader is a profoundly serious moment for the SNP. When her husband, Peter Murrell, and the

then party treasurer, Colin Beattie, were arrested in quick succession, speculation was rife that Sturgeon would be next.

But as the weeks passed, this feverish anticipation diminished and Sturgeon seemed to gather herself. Friends suggest that her arrest was something she had anticipated – in contrast to the visceral shock over her husband’s arrest and the search of her home.

So where does her arrest leave the SNP? In April, MSPs, activists

and officials described the shock, denial and soul-searching as they grappled not only with the chaos prompted by the first arrests but by the fallout of the bruising leadership contest to replace Sturgeon which exposed deep rifts within the party over independence strategy and policy direction.

Polling has shown a marked fall in support for the SNP following Sturgeon’s resignation and the ensuing tumult, with strong indications that Scottish voters are now less likely to choose which party to back based on their constitutional preferences.

The expected byelection in Rutherglen and Hamilton West, the seat currently held by the former SNP MP and Covid rule-breaker Margaret Ferrier, will be a crucial test of this potential sea change in Scottish politics, with Labour viewing it as a way to send a message to voters UK-wide about its electability. But turmoil at Westminster over the weekend, resulting in another three byelections, could benefit the SNP if Labour’s resources and focus are split.

As SNP members continue to absorb this latest development, there is frustration and, among some, despair that the party’s future remains tied to unanswered questions about its past.

Polling has shown a marked fall in support for the SNP following Sturgeon’s resignation and the ensuing tumult

Mile-long wildfire burns in Scottish highlands on hottest day of the year

Rachel Hall

Firefighters were yesterday still tackling a wildfire near Inverness that burned throughout Saturday night and reportedly stretched for more than a mile. Six fire engines were sent to Daviot, a village in the Highlands, after the fire broke out on Saturday afternoon.

The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service told people nearby to stay indoors and to close all windows and doors to prevent smoke inhalation. Evacuated residents have been told not to return yet.

A spokesperson said: “Operations control initially mobilised one fire appliance to the scene, increasing to six appliances and specialist resources. As of Sunday 11 June, three

appliances and specialist resources remain on scene to make the area safe. No casualties have been reported.”

It is understood that hail and torrential rain in Inverness were helping firefighters control the blaze but the service extended a very high wildfire warning until today as a result of a lack of rain, hot weather and little wind, which it said was the “perfect combination” for wildfires.

People were urged not to light fires in the countryside, to carefully dispose of cigarettes and to avoid leaving bottles strewn about, which can focus the sun’s rays and cause smouldering.

Duncan Macpherson, a Highland councillor for Inverness South, tweeted that the fire “stretches over a mile long between Craggie and Moy and presents an almighty challenge for the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service”.



▼ The wildfire at Daviot, near Inverness, was fought by six fire appliances and specialist resources

PHOTOGRAPH: ANDY WALKER/ALAMY

The fire started near a caravan park at about 2.45pm on Saturday, the hottest day of the year so far in Scotland.

Much of the rest of the UK also recorded its hottest day of the year on Saturday, with temperatures reaching 32.2C in Chertsey, Surrey. They were also high yesterday, although blue skies and sunshine were interrupted by thundery showers in some places. Temperatures in Inverness reached 24C.

Weather warnings were issued by the Met Office for thunderstorms and rain today.

A Met Office meteorologist, Dan Stroud, forecast “a fine and hot start” to today with temperatures rising quickly during the morning and likely to spark a few thundery showers. “It will widely be 24C to 28C on Monday, with some spots sitting at the 30C to 32C mark. It will be warmer than Monaco, where it has hit 24.7C on Sunday and is expected to be 22 to 24C on Monday,” he added.

Slightly cooler temperatures are on the way from tomorrow, the forecaster added.

Additional reporting PA Media

NHS England to send out mental health teams to help rough sleepers

Robert Booth
Social affairs correspondent

The NHS will deploy street mental health teams in English locations from Devon to Doncaster in an attempt to curb a rise in rough sleeping.

Fourteen outreach teams will aim to get more rough sleepers counselling, medication or other treatments and will seek out people “who have often been through incredibly traumatic experiences to ensure they get the help they need”, said Prof Tim Kendall, NHS England’s clinical national director for mental health.

The latest data shows a 15% annual rise in new rough sleepers in London, while an England-wide snapshot taken last autumn revealed a 26% annual rise.

The £3.2m plan comes amid warnings of cuts to council homelessness budgets that charities fear will worsen the problem.

Homeless Link, which represents frontline organisations, welcomed more mental health support but, in the context of cuts, described it as “robbing Peter to pay Paul”. Reductions in support for rough sleeping would lead to far greater need for mental health support, said its policy director, Sophie Boobis.

The new NHS clinics extend an existing scheme that has proved successful in places such as Hull, where a team including a psychiatrist, psychologist and social workers took on 33 new cases last month. Michael, 48, who was helped by the Hull clinic when he was found sleeping in a shop doorway, said he had been “at the gates of hell” and used to dread waking up in the morning, but after a long period of help “now I can’t wait to get up”.

Common mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety and panic disorder are more than twice as high among homeless people, with cases of psychosis up to 15 times as high, NHS England said.

The new outreach teams will be established in Brent, Westminster and Camden in London; Somerset and Devon; Medway, Slough, Windsor and Maidenhead in the south-east; Peterborough and Great Yarmouth; Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin; the East Riding, Sheffield and Doncaster in Yorkshire; and Greater Manchester.



▲ Rough sleeping opposite the Palace of Westminster in London

At least one in ten mothers say they struggle with baby bonding

Rachel Hall

More than one in 10 women struggle to bond with their baby, with the majority saying they are given no support from healthcare staff, a survey has found.

Nearly three-quarters (73%) of women say they received no information or advice on bonding with their baby in the first few weeks after birth,

despite National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (Nice) guidance recommending they assist with emotional attachment to encourage healthy child development.

The respondents said societal pressure to enjoy pregnancy, and assumptions that bonding would happen automatically, left them feeling guilty and afraid when it didn’t, according to a survey of more than 1,000 mothers undertaken by the Parent-Infant Foundation.

Factors that can affect bonding during pregnancy include the mother’s physical and mental health and past trauma, such as baby loss.

Tamora Langley, the head of policy at the Parent-Infant Foundation, said: “We understand staff are under huge time pressures, but checking on emotional wellbeing as well as physical wellbeing needs to become the norm.

“With training, a wider range of professionals and practitioners should be able to have conversations about emotional attachment and bonding.”

The Royal College of Midwives chief executive, Gill Walton, said staff shortages mean midwives often don’t have time to help with bonding.

She called for a national strategy to recruit and train midwives so “these vital areas of care become the norm”.

One woman in the survey said: “I thought there was something wrong with me because I didn’t instantly love my son, and everyone else says things like, ‘It’s the most magical time giving birth’.”

An NHS spokesperson said: “We encourage services to keep up to date with the latest Nice guidance so they can provide the best level of care to women and their babies. Our recently announced delivery plan for maternity and neonatal services sets out commitments to provide personalised care and support plans, which can include advice on baby bonding.”

Rule change would give police 'near total' control of protests, says lawyer

Damien Gayle

Police will have “near total discretion” over which protests to ban if lawmakers approve the government’s latest changes to Great Britain’s public order regime, a leading human rights lawyer has said.

Secondary legislation in parliament this week will empower police to impose conditions – including changing timings, locations and routes, and imposing noise restrictions – on protests they believe “may” cause “more than minor” disruption.

It will significantly lower the threshold for serious disruption, the criteria that allows for police interference with protests, which is currently defined as “significant” or “prolonged” disruption to the day-to-day life of the community. The legislation applies to England, Wales and Scotland but not Northern Ireland.

“The threshold would be so low

that it could lead to police imposing conditions on protests which would breach the rights of protesters,” said Adam Wagner, a barrister with Doughty Street Chambers.

“In my view, this could give the police a far wider, nearing total, discretion as to which processions or assemblies could be made subject to conditions.”

A protest act as typical as a peaceful march attended by hundreds of people, closing roads and stopping traffic, would “undoubtedly” be considered serious disruption within the meaning of the proposed changes, Wagner said.

“Although such conditions can in theory be challenged in advance by judicial review, including on human rights grounds, the reality is that this is well beyond the reach of most protesters as they may lack the time, experience and capacity, it is very costly and such challenges do not generally attract legal aid,” he said.

“This leaves individuals who

▼ The legislation would allow the police to restrict protests that could cause ‘more than minor’ disruption

PHOTOGRAPH: JUSTIN TALLIS/AFP/GETTY



‘If we allow the government to get away with this repressive change, other ministerial decrees will follow’

Jenny Jones
Green party peer



want to protest with the choice of simply acquiescing to the conditions restricting their protest or risk arrest, detention and prosecution for breaching them, and hoping to successfully defend any prosecution at trial.”

The Public Order Act 1986 (Serious Disruption to the Life of the Community) Regulations 2023 will be debated for 90 minutes in the Commons today, and then in the Lords tomorrow, where it will face a fatal motion tabled by Jenny Jones, the Green party peer.

The Lords rejected the same measure when it was tabled as an amendment to the recent Public

Order Act 2023. Its return has raised concerns among peers and senior lawyers about the constitutional implications of the use of secondary legislation to revive measures only recently rejected by lawmakers.

Lady Jones said: “If we allow the government to get away with this repressive change to the laws of protest, which parliament has already rejected, then other ministerial decrees will follow that see major changes to environmental and workplace protections.”

Friends of the Earth, which commissioned Wagner’s legal opinion, and dozens of other campaigning organisations including the Women’s Institute, the Quakers and Amnesty International, have asked peers to back Jones’s motion.

The government said the new legislation was intended to give police the powers to break up slow marching protests. Supporters of the measure said elected MPs had not voted on it as an amendment to the Public Order Act 2023, but would now have the chance to do so.

A Home Office spokesperson said: “A handful of selfish individuals should not be able to bring our roads to a halt, day after day and people must be able to go about their lives freely. That is why we are introducing a new definition of serious disruption, to give police the confidence they need to clear roads quickly.”

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One in 15 in UK changed sexual identity in six years, study finds

Amelia Hill

One in 15 people – almost 7% of the UK population – changed their sexual identity over a six-year period, a new study suggests.

Women aged over 65 are one of the most “sexually fluid” groups, the research found, challenging the assumption that moving between heterosexual and non-heterosexual identities is more common among younger people.

Women, individuals who are not white, and less educated people were most likely to report a change in their sexual identity.

“We carried out this research because although we knew that sexual identity is fluid, we don’t know just how fluid it is,” said the study’s lead author, Prof Yang Hu of Lancaster University.

“We also wanted to know how this fluidity varies across different demographic groups.”

Almost 23,000 individuals were observed twice over six years by researchers from Lancaster University, using data from the United Kingdom household longitudinal study.

Researchers found that a significant minority (6.6%) of the cohort had changed their reported sexual identity over that period.

The study’s main findings show that sexual identity mobility is:

- Higher among young people aged 16-24 (7.9%) and older adults aged 65 and over (7.4%), compared with those aged 25-64 (5.0%-6.2%).

- 10% less likely among men (5.7%) than women (6.3%).

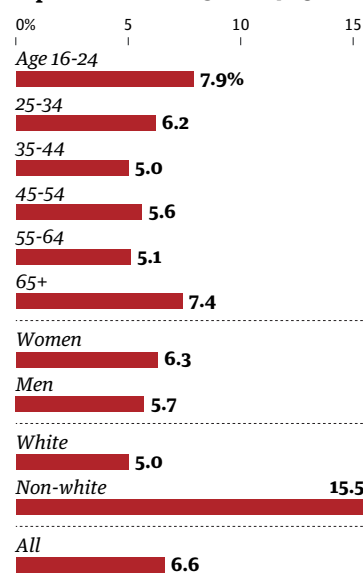
- Three times more likely among non-white minority ethnic individuals (15.5%) than among white people (5.0%).

- More likely among less educated people.

The research is published in *Demography*, the journal of the Population Association of America.

Hu was particularly intrigued by the finding that sexual identity does

Overall, 6.6% of respondents changed their sexual identity reports from 2011-13 to 2017-19



Source: *Demography*, using data from the UK Household Longitudinal Study

not stabilise over a lifetime. “That assumption has given rise to much research focusing on adolescence as a critical stage of sexual identity development,” he said.

“But our findings suggest that changes in sexual identity represent an equally worthy research topic among the elderly and indeed across the full lifespan.”

The research does not explore the reasons behind the changes in sexual identity but Hu hypothesised that people in middle life might be less likely to change their sexual identity because of pressure from the work environment and other social institutions.

The research was welcomed by the LGBT Foundation. “We hope that this research can challenge several societal assumptions – [and raises awareness] that people can come out more than once, that this is common, and that this should be respected as part of someone’s journey,” said Ibtisam Ahmed, the head of policy and research.



Hot shoe shuffle

People dance salsa on the bandstand in Hyde Park, London, yesterday, where temperatures topped 30C.



PHOTOGRAPH: KEVIN COOMBS/REUTERS

Britons missing after fire breaks out on Red Sea scuba diving boat

Ruth Michaelson

Three British tourists are missing after a scuba diving boat they were cruising in caught fire off Egypt’s Red Sea coast yesterday, authorities have said.

A further 12 British nationals were rescued along with 12 Egyptian crew members and brought to safety at the nearby diving resort of Marsa Shagra, about 13 miles north of the town of Marsa Alam, according to local officials. The fire was caused by

an electrical short circuit on the boat, named Hurricane, a statement from Egypt’s Red Sea governorate said.

A spokesperson for Tornado Marine Fleet, the company operating the diving boat, said the incident occurred at Elphinstone, a reef known as a spot for diving with sharks.

“Today at 6.30am at Elphinstone, while doing the diving briefing, Hurricane caught fire,” they said. “There are three missing British passengers out of 15 passengers. All other 12 passengers plus two guides and 12 crew were transported to another boat and reached the nearest land safely. Now,

we are bringing the boat back to the marina under authority supervision.”

Preliminary investigations indicate that the fire started in the boat’s engine room. A search party has been launched to find the remaining three British tourists, whose identities have not been revealed.

Images posted on social media



▲ Social media showed a boat on fire near the resort of Marsa Alam, Egypt

showed a white motor yacht on fire at sea, with thick smoke billowing into the sky.

“We saw smoke from the boat, it was around 9km [5 miles] from the beach,” said Ahmed Maher, a diving manager at Marsa Shagra.

A Foreign Office spokesperson said: “We are in contact with local authorities following an incident aboard a dive boat near Marsa Alam, and are supporting British nationals involved.”

Fatal boat accidents are rare in Egypt. In 2021 a boat capsized in a lake near the city of Alexandria, leaving five people dead, of whom three were children.

In April, the Egyptian navy rescued 37 people from a tourist boat that had capsized in the Red Sea, including 14 British tourists.

Chloe Mitchell murder inquiry launched after remains found

PA Media

Detectives investigating the disappearance of Chloe Mitchell have launched a murder inquiry after suspected human remains were found in Ballymena.

Mitchell, 21, was last seen on CCTV in the early hours of Saturday 3 June in Ballymena town centre. Two men arrested in connection with the case remained in police custody last night.

DCI Richard Millar, of the Police Service of Northern Ireland, said: “Sadly, today detectives have recovered suspected human remains in Ballymena, and while there has been no formal identification, we have now launched a murder inquiry into the circumstances surrounding the disappearance of 21-year-old Chloe Mitchell, who was a high-risk missing person. Tragically, we now have reason to believe that Chloe was murdered. Our thoughts are very much with Chloe’s family.”

A 26-year-old man arrested on Thursday in Lurgan, County Armagh, in connection with the investigation, continued to be questioned yesterday after officers secured a 36-hour extension to his detention. A second man, aged 34, was detained in the Ballymena area on Saturday.



▲ Chloe Mitchell was last seen in Ballymena town centre on 3 June

MP urged watchdog to allow £10,000 party gift from 'Mongolian friend'

Henry Dyer

The prime minister's trade envoy to Mongolia lobbied the Electoral Commission to permit a £10,000 donation to his party association from a "Mongolian friend", documents show.

Daniel Kawczynski, the Conservative MP for Shrewsbury and Atcham, contacted the independent electoral watchdog on 20 April, days after his return from a week-long trip to Mongolia in his role as trade envoy accompanied by the UK ambassador.

Kawczynski said the friend was "a personal contact, and was separate to my role as an envoy". He declined to identify the would-be donor and said he travelled to Mongolia on a regular basis in a personal capacity as well as in his role as trade envoy.

He told the commission he did "not understand why British passport holders should be treated differently from foreign passport holders when

it comes to political parties" and requested a meeting at the House of Commons with the watchdog's chief executive, Shaun McNally, to discuss his "concerns" on the longstanding political finance rules banning donations from overseas donors.

Kawczynski claimed that "many jurisdictions around the world" permitted political donations from foreign passport holders. Research by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, a UN observer, suggests 70% of countries ban foreign donations to political parties.

The letter was sent from Kawczynski's parliamentary email address. The members' handbook on the use of these taxpayer-funded accounts say they should not be used "for activities that could be considered party political campaigning or fundraising".

In a statement, Kawczynski said he had used his Commons email as he "wanted to seek advice and



▲ Daniel Kawczynski, left, in Mongolia with the British ambassador, Philip Malone. The Tory MP did not identify the prospective donor PHOTOGRAPH: FCDO

clarification in my capacity as a regulated donee (a member of parliament)".

Kawczynski added: "Throughout I have followed the prevailing law on political finance, and I took advice from the Electoral Commission to ensure that I do." Kawczynski confirmed to the Guardian that the donation had been offered to his party association, not to him personally.

The email was copied to the chair of the 1922 Committee, Sir Graham

Brady, the chief whip, Simon Hart, and to another member of the whips' office, Jo Churchill. Kawczynski said he included them in his email to the watchdog as part of his attempts to "understand, ask and challenge, collectively, with colleagues" the rules on electoral finance.

This was because a potential £10,000 donation had been offered to his local association. Kawczynski said he benefited from the resources of his local association. "They spend

'Rules shouldn't be always constantly pickled in aspic in perpetuity'

Daniel Kawczynski
Conservative MP

funds on literature, promoting me, and all the other things that they do to support me as the member of parliament," he said.

Kawczynski said taking a donation from a "nefarious state" would be inappropriate, but "taking it from a friend who you've known from many years from overseas and having the ability to secure donations from overseas donors is certainly for debate.

"These rules and regulations shouldn't be always constantly pickled in aspic in perpetuity. Things do change, and I think it's perfectly permissible for parliamentarians, people at the cutting edge of trying to secure donations for their local parties, to be able to test and challenge and scrutinise and debate, yes."

A government spokesperson said foreign political donations remained banned and added: "One of the Electoral Commission's roles is to provide advice on such matters to political parties and regulated donees."

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English and Welsh fraud case delays double in eight years, despite fall in prosecutions

Haroon Siddique

Legal affairs correspondent

Delays to fraud cases in England and Wales have doubled in eight years, prompting criticism that not enough is being done to deliver justice.

The rise in delays came despite the number of fraud cases coming through the courts having dropped to barely a third of 2014 levels, according to an analysis by the Criminal Bar Association (CBA).

In the final quarter of 2022 there were 447 fraud cases that took on average 497 days to complete from charge. By comparison, it took 242 days on average for the 1,294 fraud cases to be completed between October and December 2014.

In 2022, one in 15 adults were victims of fraud. There were 3.7m fraud offences in the year to September 2022, according to the England and Wales crime survey, accounting for about 40% of all crimes.

In the year ending March 2021, the national reporting centre Action Fraud received victim reports totalling a loss of £2.35bn while the cost to society of fraud against individuals is believed to be about £7bn a year. However, the number of fraud prosecutors dropped from 221 in 2015 to 167 in 2021.

Last year Kwasi Kwarteng, then the business secretary, was accused of being disrespectful to fraud victims after he defended Boris Johnson's claim crime had fallen 14%, which was only true if fraud was excluded.

Kirsty Brimelow KC, the CBA chair, said: "The whole criminal justice system is in crisis. There are too many cases and not enough barristers and not enough court staff to manage the listing of cases. Defendants often are on bail in fraud cases and so their cases will wait for the completion of those cases where defendants are remanded in custody."

"With a backlog of over 60,000 cases [for all crimes in crown courts], the delays are getting longer. There also is a lack of judges who try fraud cases. Slashing of money [going] into the criminal justice system has created a perfect storm. It is victims of crime and, in fraud, the economy that suffers."

The CBA found delays were even worse for fraud cases where the

defendant was on bail. In the last quarter of 2022, 268 cases of bailed defendants on trial for fraud offences concluded, taking a record 632 days on average. Only rape trials involving bailed defendants took as long to complete in the crown courts. In 2014, the 833 fraud trials that were completed between October and December took 291 days on average.

The shadow attorney general, Emily Thornberry, said: "According to the government's own fraud strategy, there is only one prosecution for

497

The days on average that it took 447 fraud cases to complete from charge in the final quarter of 2022

every thousand fraud offences committed in England and Wales. What this latest analysis reveals is that even fraud cases that do result in charges are taking years to complete.

"We desperately require root-and-branch reform of our entire approach to tackling the fraud crisis, including making it easier and quicker to prosecute the criminals responsible."

A government spokesperson said: "These figures demonstrate the impact of the pandemic and last year's industrial action on the wider outstanding court caseload, given completion times for fraud cases were broadly stable up to the end of 2019.

"We've since taken decisive action to speed up cases going through the system, including lifting the number of days courts can sit and recruiting more judges, so victims can get the swift access to justice they deserve."

The CBA said delays had continued to rise post-pandemic despite fewer cases, and its industrial action "merely highlighted pre-existing delays in a chronically underfunded criminal justice system".

'Voice from the past'

Harp once owned by cousin of Jane Austen restored to sing again

Steven Morris

When the musician and restorer Mike Parker tracked down the harp, it was broken and stained, a shadow of the instrument played by a beloved relative of Jane Austen.

But after careful restoration the harp began to sing sweetly again and this weekend was played in the apt surroundings of Chawton, the Hampshire village where the novelist lived and worked.

The 250-year-old instrument was once owned by the novelist's cousin - and later sister-in-law - Eliza, who is believed to have been the inspiration for the harp-playing



Mary Crawford in Mansfield Park. "It's not in perfect condition, but the incredible thing is the fact it has survived," said Parker, who found the harp in Belgium.

"When I got it, it was pretty derelict, it was grotty. It had 150 years of nicotine on it. The neck had been badly broken, it needed to be fixed. Once I got it tuned and up to pitch, what came out of it was this beautiful, lovely little sound."

"It was a voice from the past. I heard a sound that modern instruments just don't have. It sang when the world was different."

The Holtzman harp was made in 1777 in Paris, where Eliza, who had married a captain in the French army, Jean-François Capot de Feuillide, began to play it.

As the French Revolution unfolded, Eliza de Feuillide and her husband fled to England via

Belgium, where her harp stayed. Her husband returned to Paris and was guillotined after he was found guilty of supporting the monarchy.

Eliza later married Austen's brother Henry and, though her cherished Holtzman remained in Belgium, she continued to play.

In Mansfield Park, Austen wrote of her character Mary Crawford: "The harp arrived, and rather added to her beauty, wit, and good-humour; for she played with the greatest obligingness, with an expression and taste which were peculiarly becoming."

Parker stumbled across the harp's existence while he was researching Eliza's collection of manuscripts. He was tipped off that the harp had survived and was being offered for sale by one of her descendants. He travelled to Belgium and bought it.

"Eliza was a really interesting character," he said. "I was familiar with her partially because of the Jane Austen connection, but I didn't know much about her or her circumstances so I have ended up doing a lot of work on her. I have a lot of respect for her."

Eliza's harp was quite small, said Parker. "It plays two octaves

'The neck had been badly broken. Once I got it tuned what came out was this lovely little sound'

Mike Parker
Musician and restorer



◀ **Mike Parker**
performing at Chawton village hall, Hampshire, yesterday on the restored harp once owned

by Eliza de Feuillide, cousin of the novelist Jane Austen, above

PHOTOGRAPHS: OLLIE THOMPSON/SOLENT NEWS; ALAMY

lighter. It produces a very bright, silvery sound.

"It's a more gentle sound, it wasn't meant to be played in a large room, but in salons, it was for at-home entertainment, something you might hear in French drawing rooms."

Parker's recital took place at Chawton village hall - with a pheasant squawking along at one point - and raised money for the brain injury charity Headway.

After the performance of music from the late Georgian era he said: "It was nerve-racking, especially in the hot weather. Just before I started, one of the strings needed retuning because of the humidity, but it was a lovely night."

"It went really well. People were interested in Eliza, who usually gets overshadowed by Jane Austen, so it was nice to shine a light on her."

Inside
This is how it feels
to be champions
Guardiola and De
Bruyne on City's treble
Page 42 →



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Uefa treated us like cattle after final, say Manchester City fans

Daniel Boffey
Istanbul

Uefa has been accused of treating fans at the Champions League final in Istanbul like cattle, with Manchester City supporters unable to return to their city centre hotels until past 3am

after a late kick-off and a scramble for shuttle buses at the end of the game.

A chaotic “free-for-all” outside the Atatürk Olympic Stadium caused buses laid on to return fans to the centre of Istanbul, more than 15 miles away, to stand for more than an hour and a half before they could start to make the journey back, fans said.



“The stars aligned’ Jubilant supporters revel in the treble

Robyn Vinter
North of England correspondent

Theo Michael Owen was celebrating his 21st birthday in May when he was involved in a life-changing car accident. With his neck broken in five places, the lifelong Manchester City fan spent four weeks in a coma in the Royal Preston Hospital.

Whiling away the hours in his hospital room while watching him slip in and out of consciousness, his family spoke to him about football and the upcoming Champions League final. They were worried his injuries were so severe he would never have the capacity to talk again. But yesterday morning his lips moved, for the first time since the crash, and slowly he mouthed: “MCFC the treble”.

Some supporters of City and Internazionale said they were unable to even get on a bus and were charged as much as €300 (£256) for a taxi from the remote İkitelli district on the far western outskirts of the sprawling Turkish city. Such a journey would normally cost about €15.

“What’s the point of having a fantastic showcase final, with fireworks and all the rest, but not having any infrastructure to get fans back,” said Steve Redmayne, 41, who had travelled with his father, Colin, 74, and son Joe, 14. “It was a shambles. When we finally got on a shuttle bus back, it sat for 90 minutes without moving. We got back after 3am. We paid €150 (£128) for a taxi there, too, as the queues for the shuttle buses going to the stadium were horrendous.”

The final, won by a single goal by Manchester City, kicked off at a local time of 10pm to accommodate the demands of broadcasters.

Many Manchester City fans had already endured an arduous journey to the stadium after being advised by Uefa not to use the Metro but to take buses laid on at the port quarter of Yenikapi.

Those who secured a seat on a bus between 1pm and 3pm spoke of a smooth system, but fans arriving after 4pm faced queues of up to three hours. Many instead took taxis but traffic ground to a standstill on the main road to the stadium, leading to fans running down the highway as they tried to make kick-off.

Uefa had organised fan zones at either end of the stadium, and

‘It was a shambles. When we finally got on a shuttle bus back, it sat for 90 minutes without moving’

Steve Redmayne
Manchester City fan

City fans said this was well-organised until one of three bars ran out of beer at 6pm – four hours before the start of the game – causing a crush. In the stadium, alcohol was not on sale and fans said they were charged as much as €20 for a bottle of Pepsi.

A 68th-minute goal by the defensive midfielder Rodri sealed victory, and their first Champions League title, for City.

They are the second English club, after Manchester United in 1998-1999, to win the treble after this season’s FA Cup and Premier League triumphs.

Paul Cross, 51, a project manager from Preston, said it was a shame the occasion had been marred by a “free -for-all” after the game. He walked for up to half an hour with others to a nearby village before he ended up sharing a taxi with an Inter fan.

“But they were staying close to the airport and so we had to get a taxi back from there as well,” he said. “We finally got here at 2.20am

but there were still people coming back after 3am and later.”

In February, Uefa was accused of bearing “primary responsibility” for the catastrophic organisational and safety failures of last season’s Champions League final between Liverpool and Real Madrid at the Stade de France in Paris.

French police used teargas and pepper spray on fans as huge numbers of people were crushed together. Uefa, the French police and government ministers had claimed without any basis in fact that the problem had been the fault of thousands of Liverpool fans arriving without valid tickets.

“How does Uefa get away with treating people like cattle?” asked Jeff White, 62, from Salford.



◀ *City fans welcome their heroes at Manchester airport yesterday*

PHOTOGRAPH: TIM GOODE/PA

▼ *Theo Michael Owen as a boy in his City kit. His first words since waking from a coma were about his team*

PHOTOGRAPH: ROBERT OWEN

◀ *Supporters burst out of pubs to celebrate in Manchester city centre on Saturday night*

PHOTOGRAPH: JOEL GOODMAN/LONDON NEWS PICTURES



Manchester City’s meteoric rise over recent years culminated on Saturday night with a Champions League win, making them only the second English men’s team to complete the treble, after they scooped the Premier League and FA Cup trophies.

“He’s been obsessed with City his whole life,” said his father Rob Owen. “[People] don’t understand the importance of football, what it means to us.”

For a club that has spent most of its history in the shadow of its storied neighbour Manchester United, it has been a long journey. The club has been transformed since Sheikh Mansour, an Abu Dhabi royal, bought it in 2008, particularly since the current manager, Pep Guardiola, joined in 2016. The rest, they say, is history.

At the Etihad Stadium yesterday, Man City supporters snapped up new club shirts with “Champions

of Europe” written in gold above the number 23, for the year it all happened.

“It’s surreal. It hasn’t really sunk in yet,” said Tom Baird, who was born in 1999, the year City were promoted to the second division.

His fiancée, Keira Pye, added: “It’s the thing you’ve been dreaming about your whole life. The stars aligned. We were all over the place at the start of the game but once Pep talked to them at half time, he calmed them down.”

Despite losing star midfielder Kevin De Bruyne to injury in the first half, the team secured a 1-0 win from Internazionale of Milan with a goal by Rodri in the 68th minute. Manchester City’s victory was their 300th under Guardiola.

Fans swarmed Piccadilly Gardens in the centre of Manchester on Saturday night, bursting out of the city’s pubs in celebration of the historic win.

Police descended on the revellers and a police vehicle was smashed but only one arrest was made as the majority of people “took part in the celebrations safely and respectfully”, Greater Manchester Police said.

Baird and Pye watched the game at home with family. “My dad just sobbed,” said Baird. “He’s seen us a lot worse than I remember. He’s 57, never in his lifetime has he ever seen anything like this.”

Pye agreed: “The amount of stick that they got back then when Man U were doing so well.”

Baird, who spent yesterday morning rewatching the game, added: “It’s just the best time of my life. I’m going to get a tattoo. I haven’t thought much about it but maybe the Champions League trophy and the date.”

The pair put the win down to Guardiola’s management but had suddenly developed a soft spot



Kevin De Bruyne celebrates

for Ederson, the team’s Brazilian goalkeeper, who saved three goals in seven minutes during the final in Istanbul. “He’s the man of the match by a country mile,” Pye said. “He won us the treble, as far as I’m concerned.”

The couple acknowledged the win would not have come without the large sums of money poured in over recent years, enough to make it unpopular among the older clubs.

In February, the Premier League charged Man City with breaching financial rules on 115 occasions over multiple years. “If it gets proved, we deserve to be punished,” Baird said. “But different teams dominate over different periods, it could be anyone. There’s a pendulum, a swing.”

Pye agreed. “We might not do it again. Every team deserves to have their moment in the sun.”

The finances failed to cast much of a shadow over City’s home ground, which was teeming with families on a sunny Sunday.

“Amazing,” was how Steve Allwood felt, having driven from Nottingham yesterday morning with his daughter, Jodie, and seven-year-old grandson, Zachary, who was clad in a full Man City kit.

“I said it right from day one, we were going to win the treble. I should have put money on it. It was worth a tenner at the start of the season. I just thought this was our year. We’ve been so close for so long, knocking on that door.”

The club plans an open-top bus parade through the city today. But for Theo, the celebration will be confined to his hospital room, which will be newly adorned with the Man City flag his father bought yesterday. He is being weaned off the intubator, allowed to breathe alone for 15 minutes at a time four times a day, and is regaining consciousness. He will soon be transferred to the spinal unit at Southport to begin a difficult journey of recovery.

“It will be a long road,” Rob said. “I’ve contacted the club about Theo but I haven’t heard anything yet.”

“I’ve got pictures of him as a kid wearing every City kit. The club’s always been so important to him. I know it would mean a lot to him to hear from them, give him a boost.”

He added: “My daughter’s in the hospital with him now and she was trying to talk to him but he just wanted to watch the highlights.”

Influencers advertising nicotine products to viewers as young as 12

Sarah Marsh

Highly addictive nicotine products are being advertised to young people by influencers on social media, a charity has warned.

Velo nicotine pouches, small white bags that people put under their lips, are being pushed by British American Tobacco (BAT), one of the biggest tobacco firms in the world.

Since the Guardian flagged the posts to Instagram, the social media platform, owned by Meta, has removed the content.

Analysis of a social media campaign by BAT to promote Velo pouches, conducted between January and May this year by the nonprofit group Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, shows more than a quarter of the audience was between 12 and 24 years old.

Eleven influencers published 48 posts to an audience of more than 1.4 million people – the majority of whom were in the UK. According to Klear, a social listening platform that

analyses influencer audiences, 28% of the audience viewing this content were under 24.

Facebook and Instagram outlaw adverts promoting the sale of use of tobacco or nicotine “unless they are cessation products”. The policy prohibits “tobacco products, vaporisers, electronic cigarettes, or any other products that simulate smoking”.

A Meta spokesperson, representing Instagram, said: “We don’t allow ads or branded content that promotes tobacco-related products on Instagram, and we’ll continue

to remove content that breaks our rules, like we did in this case. Brands can post about tobacco-related products, but this is restricted to adults over the age of 18.”

Caroline Renzulli, international communications officer for the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids, said the marketing was “totally absurd” for portraying Velo as a “cool lifestyle product that you should try out even if you’re not a smoker”.

She said: “By using DJs, lifestyle influencers and gamers, BAT is ensuring that it is reaching nonsmokers and potential new customers with these Instagram campaigns. It is equating a highly addictive product with aspirational influencer content.”

Velo posts have even included influencers posting under a popular social media format known as GRWM, which stands for “get ready with me”. This is when influencers film themselves getting dressed to go out for their followers.

“In the past few months, I’ve found about a dozen UK influencers who have either appeared on BAT



28%

Proportion of audience for a social media campaign promoting Velo nicotine pouches found to be 12-24

channels to promote Velo or are using their own platforms to push Velo on Instagram,” Renzulli said.

One poster was D’vey, a disco and house DJ based in London, who has 62,400 followers on Instagram. A reel on his account showed him performing at a ski resort. The caption said “giving them a show on the snow. Come with me to Tomorrowland [sic] winter”. It was followed by the hashtag #youvegott-velo. The video has since been taken

down by Instagram. D’vey has been approached for a comment.

Billie-Jean Blackett, a model and radio presenter, who has appeared in season five of the Netflix reality show The Circle, also promotes the product. She posted: “Unlimited vibes for the @velo.unitedkingdom pre party before Tomorrow!”

The post has since been taken down by Instagram. Blackett has been approached for comment.

Velo originated in Scandinavia but is owned by British American Tobacco. On Velo’s website it says it appeals to a broader audience thanks to an “attractive price positioning” relative to traditional tobacco.

A BAT spokesperson said: “We are clear that our tobacco and nicotine products are for adults only and should never be used by those underage.

“BAT’s approach to brand partnerships goes beyond the Advertising Standards Authority’s own threshold on advertising age-restricted products, which requires companies to only work with individuals with an adult audience of at least 75%.

“When assessing who to engage for our brand partnerships, we require any individuals we work with to be above the age of 25, and BAT conducts due diligence to ensure that the significant majority of an individual’s followers are above the age of 18.”

‘British American Tobacco is equating a highly addictive product with aspirational content’

Caroline Renzulli
Tobacco campaigner

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*Each April, the monthly price shown plus out of bundle charges will increase by the CPI rate published in Jan of that year + 3.9%. This will not affect your monthly Device Plan payments: vodafone.co.uk/pricechanges. Vodafone EVO: Device Plan Credit Agreement (over 3-36m) + Airtime Plan required. You can pay off your Device Plan early, and if you do, keep your Airtime Plan on a 30-day contract or leave. £144 saving: Airtime was £23pm until 31.05, now £17pm, hence (£23pm - £17pm) x 24 months = £144, ends 27.06. Roaming: charges may apply depending on which plan you are on. See vodafone.co.uk/global-roaming for details. Reliable award-winning network: The UK relies on Vodafone as a network provider as it: i) powers critical national infrastructure and 77% of emergency services, ii) has coverage in 99% of UK homes, iii) covers 96% of the UK and iv) has won numerous awards. Details at vodafone.co.uk/network. For full terms please visit vodafone.co.uk/terms. Finance subject to status and credit checks. 18+. Direct debit required. Credit by Vodafone Limited, FCA Number: 712210, Vodafone House, The Connection, Newbury, Berkshire, RG14 2FN.



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Time, gentlemen Pall Mall clubs leave doors ajar to female members

Amelia Gentleman

Mild signs of a potential willingness to modernise have been observed in some of London's establishment clubs in the past few weeks, led by the announcement that, after a wait of 166 years, women will finally be allowed to become members of Pratt's.

The decision by the owner has been met mostly with resigned acceptance by the club's membership, which includes at least a dozen MPs, and has triggered renewed discussion of possible reform at the remaining hardcore handful of gentlemen's clubs that refuse to admit women.

Members of the Beefsteak,

another men-only dining club joined by MPs, actors and judges, believe it is now likely it will also be obliged to change its rules to admit women. A renewed drive by campaigners was also launched last week to persuade members of the Garrick, who include Michael Gove and the actors Benedict Cumberbatch and Hugh Bonneville, to allow women to join.

At the Athenaeum, which has allowed female members since 2002, an organised movement by about 70 members to block further modernising changes was rejected at last week's annual general meeting, with an intervention from Theresa May, who introduced a procedural motion that shut down discussion of motions to preserve the club's "traditional ethos".

The need for change is being felt at many of London's Pall Mall clubs, despite their reputation as outposts



of an unchanging Britain frozen somewhere in the 1950s, partly because rising food and energy prices have brought cost of living issues to the attention of members of clubs located in old, draughty buildings with high overheads.

Changes at Pratt's - where the Conservative MPs Nicholas Soames, Hugo Swire and Kwasi Kwarteng are members - were brought in "with immediate effect" in May by the owner, William Cavendish, without consultation. However, there will probably not be any perceptible change to membership in the near future, because the process of proposing and seconding new members takes considerable time, requiring 25 people to support a nomination by writing their names in a book in the club and later committee approval.

"There has been chuntering, people saying, hmmm, we don't like

▲ The image of the stuffy London club, top, is changing. Clubs such as the Athenaeum, above, now admit women and others are modernising

'You wouldn't exclude members based on race, religion or sexuality, so we urge the Garrick to allow female members'

Emily Bendell
Campaigner



this, complaining they weren't consulted," a Pratt's member said, adding that younger members were beginning to feel belatedly that the status quo was indefensible.

Emily Bendell, the founder of a clothes business who campaigns for the Garrick to admit women, wrote to a handful of the club's most prominent members, noting that eight years had passed since 50.5% of the membership voted in favour of female members, a vote that fell short of the required two-thirds majority needed for a rule change. "A second vote is long overdue," she wrote.

"I'm sure you would not be a member of a club that excluded members on the basis of race, religion or sexuality, so we urge you to call for a new vote to allow female members at the Garrick."

Her campaign has been met with bemusement by some (mostly male) commentators who question the need to fight for equality at a tiny group of elite institutions, but she argues the existence of men-only clubs that have senior male lawyers and politicians as members "negatively impacts women's professional advancement".

Last week's failed attempt by a faction of Athenaeum members to resist changes to the club centred on a desire to "restore quiet harmony". Its failure suggested most members recognised reform was necessary. A new sub-group within the club, named the 1824 group (the year the club was founded), wrote to members protesting: "We sense that the traditional ethos of our club is step by step being eroded and moving towards something which appears more like a corporate run facilities-based hotel/restaurant."

The former prime minister Theresa May, who like her husband, Philip May, is an Athenaeum member, intervened with a procedural motion, blocking discussion of all motions proposed by the 1824 group, according to the historian Felipe Fernández-Armesto, who was one of the 1824 group's organisers. "I was literally shouted down," he said.

"We were trying to enshrine the perception of the club not as a business, but as a meeting place of intellectuals. A lot of us have become very dissatisfied very recently because the club is being driven at a furious pace towards incorporation as a business. There's a commercialisation happening across clubland," Fernández-Armesto added.

The Travellers Club (which has diplomats among its members), White's (which has never allowed women inside the building, with the occasional exception of the late Queen), Brooks's and Boodle's all remain resistant to admitting women.

Even at clubs that chose to let women in decades ago, the proportion of female members remains low. Although the Athenaeum began admitting women 21 years ago, its membership remains overwhelmingly male; only 28% of the 147 new members were women in 2022-23, only 7% were under 40 and only two were under 30.

MPs' Channel crossings report finds Albania is a safe country

Diane Taylor

Albania is a "safe" country and people who flee from there to seek sanctuary in the UK should not routinely be granted asylum, according to a report published today by a cross-party group of MPs.

The report from the home affairs select committee found little evidence to indicate significant numbers of Albanian nationals were at risk in their own country but accepted that some Albanians making asylum claims, mainly women, had been trafficked. It recommended that this group should only be returned to Albania if appropriate safeguards were in place.

The committee decided to look at Albanian arrivals to the UK because



▲ People being helped ashore after a boat rescue in the Channel last year

of the large spike in numbers last year. In 2022, more than a quarter of the 45,755 people who crossed the Channel in small boats came from the country and most claimed asylum. In the space of a year the number of Albanians arriving in the UK by this route had jumped from 800 to 12,301. The reasons for the steep rise are unclear and numbers have dropped again significantly in recent months.

The report said Albania was not at war and was a candidate to join the EU. There was no clear basis for the UK to routinely accept thousands of asylum applications from Albanian citizens, the report said.

Until June last year, 51% of asylum claims from Albania were initially accepted. Nine countries, including Germany, accepted no asylum claims from Albania.

The report said that a key driver of migration from Albania to the UK was the economy and that improved awareness of work visa programmes would support formalised migration, providing an alternative to people-smuggling gangs.

The committee chair, Labour's Dame Diana Johnson MP, said: "Changes in migration will inevitably place strain on any system, but the government must do much more to ensure it can better handle these stresses. Most importantly it must improve the speed of decision-making and clear the backlog."

David Neale, a legal researcher with expertise in Albanian migration who provided evidence to the committee said the report was "very disappointing", and it had ignored his evidence that many Albanians were fleeing to escape a cycle of revenge which could pit families against each other over generations.

"Existing country guidance case law makes clear that the Albanian state does not generally provide adequate protection for victims of blood feud, and it is clear in my view that the evidence relied on by the Home Office is insufficient to justify departing from this," he said.

Data undermines Jenrick's claim of asylum seekers lying about age

Diane Taylor

A claim made in parliament by the immigration minister that up to a fifth of adult male asylum seekers pretend to be children when they arrive in the UK has been undermined by the Home Office's own data, which shows the actual figure is just 1%.

The factchecking organisation Full Fact has obtained freedom of information (FOI) data showing that between 1 January and 7 November 2022 about 1% of all males arriving on small boats at Western Jet Foil holding facilities claimed to be under 18 but were later found to be over 18.

Full Fact has written to Robert Jenrick asking him to correct the

20%

Proportion of men seeking asylum Robert Jenrick said pretended to be under 18. Data shows the figure is 1%

parliamentary record or provide data that supports his claim. Last November, Jenrick told parliament: "At times, up to 20% of the adult males who arrive at Western Jet Foil claim to be under 18, when clearly the number is substantially less than that."

An initial request Full Fact made to Jenrick last November to provide evidence to support the 20% claim or to correct the parliamentary record in accordance with the ministerial code went unanswered. The organisation then submitted an FOI request and received the data after several months of delay by the Home Office.

It is not the first time Full Fact has raised concerns about the government's use of immigration statistics. On 7 March, the home secretary, Suella Braverman, accused Labour of leaving a far bigger asylum backlog than the government was currently dealing with. However, when Labour left power in 2010 the backlog was 18,954 and at the end of December 2022 it stood at 161,000.

Full Fact raised concerns with the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR) about ministers' use of unpublished data and on 21 November the OSR's director general, Ed Humpherson, wrote to Matthew Rycroft, the permanent secretary for the Home Office, to highlight the importance of transparency of statistics.

The Home Office has been approached for comment.

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The Guardian Newsletters

'So dangerous' Gambling firm to have formal role at inquest for first time

Emily Dugan

When Annie Ashton looks back on her final weeks with her husband, Luke, she wonders how often he gambled on his phone sitting beside her on the sofa, unnoticed.

Luke Ashton took his own life on 22 April 2021, aged 40. It was only after his death that Ashton looked at his phone and discovered he had been gambling in secret through the pandemic. "Sometimes it was over 12 hours' worth of gambling. He was betting over 100 times a day, just using his phone," she said.

A major inquest in Leicester on Wednesday will look at the role that gambling played in Luke's death and whether more could have been done to prevent it.

Flutter, the parent company of Betfair - where Ashton said Luke did most of his betting - is officially included as an interested person. It is thought to be the first time a gambling group has been formally involved in an inquest, which will examine whether interventions by Betfair were adequate.

Ashton, 41, is haunted by how easy it was for Luke to gamble in secret on his mobile. "We used to watch our soaps together. I would not have thought for a second that having a phone in your hand is strange," she said.

Her husband, who was on furlough from his job in a printing company, had a history of gambling problems but Ashton thought he had stopped two years earlier. "Gambling destroyed him from the inside," she said. "It controlled him, it consumed him and then it destroyed him. It is so dangerous."

Luke had started betting on football at the weekend with friends, but Ashton said the problem grew when a friend introduced him to exchange betting, where you bet on horses to lose as well as win.

In summer 2019, he said he couldn't afford a birthday present for her and that money was tight. It was only when she found a letter about a loan for many thousands of pounds that he finally admitted the extent of his betting. "He said he absolutely hated gambling," she



◀ Luke Ashton, pictured with his wife Annie, had a history of problem gambling. He took his own life in 2021



▲ Annie Ashton wants to see the introduction of a 'Luke's law' to ban sites from offering free bets

PHOTOGRAPH: FABIO DE PAOLA/THE GUARDIAN

said. "He couldn't believe how he had gambled so much. He was just trying to win back money to pay off the loans."

When they cleared the debt and moved to a new house with their two children, Ashton thought that chapter was over.

After 2017, Luke opted out of marketing from Betfair; however, he received a monthly £5 free bet available to all users. Ashton has campaigned against free bet offers and called for the introduction of a "Luke's law" to ban them.

She said: "I just don't see it as being something that should happen, especially when we know people are losing their lives and the amount of damage gambling actually does to someone."

On 21 April 2021, Ashton was in the classroom where she worked as a primary schoolteacher when her watch flashed up with a text from Luke. He was being sent to Scotland for delivery work and would be turning his phone off to save the battery. When he had not returned

that evening, she put it down to the long drive. But when there was no sign of him the next morning, she began to panic. She called the police and his boss, who said he had never sent him to Scotland and that Luke had told him his van was off the road.

Eventually they were able to track his phone and earbuds to a flat in Yorkshire. When the police arrived they found him dead.

The family's lawyer, Merry Varney at Leigh Day, said: "The inquest into Luke's death provides an opportunity for a full and fearless investigation into Annie's allegation that gambling caused her husband's death, and an opportunity for lessons to be learned and future lives protected."

Ian Brown, the chief executive of Flutter UK and Ireland, said: "We wish to reiterate our sincere condolences to Mrs Ashton and her family. We are truly sorry for their loss. Across Flutter UK&I, we are absolutely committed to safe gambling and to protecting all our customers."

"We hold ourselves to the very highest standards in the industry. We are constantly learning and updating our processes and we

'Luke was betting over 100 times a day, just using his phone. Sometimes it was over 12 hours' worth'

Annie Ashton
On her late husband's gambling

have made many changes over the past three years to make gambling with our brands even safer. We will, of course, incorporate any additional learnings from this tragic case into our controls."

Ashton hopes the inquest will help give her some answers as to how the jovial man she fell in love with came to take his own life. "I just want Luke's voice to be heard. I want them to know that he was just a normal person, and it's happened to him, and more needs to be done to protect people that are suffering."

In the UK and Ireland, Samaritans can be contacted on freephone 116 123, or email jo@samaritans.org or jo@samaritans.ie

Wembley puts in place help for fans with dementia

Matthew Weaver

Wembley has become the first national stadium to be dementia-friendly as part of a UK scheme to encourage all sports grounds to do the same.

Changes introduced include training for stewards on dementia awareness; an overhaul of Wembley's website to make it more accessible; and widening the stadium's chaperone service to include people with invisible disabilities and not just wheelchair users.

The changes are the result of a review of the stadium for which people affected by dementia reviewed their matchday experiences.

But Wembley has not yet gone as far as pioneering the dementia-friendly changes made at Swansea City. Its stadium provides ear defenders for those with dementia who become overwhelmed by noise. It also has an inclusion room to provide a quiet space for watching games, and the first and last steps on stairs in the stands are painted red to help those with perception problems.

Liam Boylan, the director of Wembley, said the changes it had made were "the first steps in ensuring that those affected by dementia are not excluded from the beautiful game".

The changes at Swansea and Wembley are part of an initiative, run by the Alzheimer's Society and backed by the Football Association, to try to ensure all football grounds are welcoming to people with dementia.

The charity says 900,000 people in Britain are living with dementia, a figure that is predicted to reach a million by 2025, and that those with dementia often find matchdays too disorienting and overwhelming, because of noise levels, the size of venues and difficulties with communicating effectively.

The Alzheimer's Society has produced a guide for dementia-friendly sports clubs and venues that it wants to see widely adopted.

Its chief executive, Kate Lee, said: "We want to see all sports showing their commitment to giving fans with dementia a smooth journey from sofa to stands." She said she hoped the guidance "helps foster a more inclusive, accessible and welcoming environment for sport fans with dementia, so they can continue to be at the heart of the action".



▲ Wembley's stewards will be given training about dementia awareness

SUDAN EMERGENCY

YOU CAN HELP MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN FLEEING THE VIOLENCE

Following the outbreak of violence in Sudan, hundreds of thousands of people have fled fierce fighting in Khartoum, the Darfur region and other parts of the country.

This crisis is fast-changing and unpredictable, but UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, has the reach, partners and local knowledge to get aid through to refugees and people forced to flee. UNHCR's work in Sudan and surrounding countries, however, was already critically underfunded before the present conflict broke out. We need your support to help replenish emergency supplies and get them to people who need them.

An urgent gift of £82 could help provide people fleeing the conflict with protection and essentials like shelter and clean water.

Over 220,000 people have fled to neighbouring countries and more than 840,000 have been displaced inside Sudan by the fighting. The vast majority are women and children.

People are sleeping out in the open or under trees and urgently need protection and lifesaving essentials, medical care, food and water. UNHCR has deployed emergency teams along the borders to provide emergency support and is working closely with partners to support those who have arrived and to identify locations to safely host additional arrivals.



UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi has said: *"UNHCR, together with the rest of the UN, remains in Sudan in support of its people. It continues to operate wherever it has safe access and is also using some of the community networks established during the pandemic. UNHCR intends to scale up operations everywhere in Sudan as soon as possible."*

The situation is volatile and extremely worrying, but with a gift of £82 today, or whatever you can afford, you could help to save lives.

£82 could help provide shelter, clean water and protection to people fleeing the violence in Sudan.

Give now to help save lives at **unrefugees.org.uk/sudan-guardian**

Call **0800 029 3883**, scan the **QR code**, or fill in the form below

I would like to give: ☐ £82 ☐ £164 ☐ Other £ _____

☐ I enclose a cheque made payable to **UK for UNHCR OR**

☐ I would like to make a donation by debit/credit card

Card no.

Expiry date

/

Signature

Date

☐ Tick here, if you don't want to receive an acknowledgement by post

Title First name Last name

Address

Postcode

Email*

Phone*

*Please provide your details to receive updates by email and/or phone on the impact of your support, future appeals and details of the other ways you may wish to help.



A minimum of 75% of your gift will directly help people fleeing the violence in Sudan
United Kingdom for UNHCR is a registered charity in England and Wales (1183415).

Please return this form along with your cheque to:

Freepost UK FOR UNHCR (you don't need a stamp)

Increase your donation by 25p for every £1 you donate

☐ I would like UK for UNHCR to claim Gift Aid on this donation (currently 25p for each £1 donated), as well as any donations I make in the future and have made in the past four years to UK for UNHCR, until I notify you otherwise. I confirm I am a UK taxpayer and I understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference. I understand that council tax and VAT do not qualify. If your circumstances change or you have any questions, please contact our Supporter Care Team on **0800 029 3883** or email **supportercare@unrefugees.org.uk**

giftaid it

Respecting your personal data: We will use your details to process your donation and to keep you up to date with our work, fundraising activities and other events. You can read more about how we use your data in our Privacy Policy **unrefugees.org.uk/privacy-policy** You can opt out of any communications at any time by contacting our **Supporter Care Team** using the details above.



Today, you could help save a life. Scan now to give online.



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency
United Kingdom for UNHCR

Bottled water report calls for limit on ads and 10p tax to fight plastic pollution

Zoe Wood

Restrictions should be put on bottled water advertising and a 10p tax should be added to shrink-wrapped packs to curb the UK's 10m bottles-a-day habit, according to campaigners hoping to tackle the plastic pollution crisis.

Despite the supposed plastics backlash inspired by TV shows such as the BBC's *Blue Planet*, big water brands are forecast to report growth of more than 10% over the next four years, equivalent to an extra 280m bottles, a new report by consultancy Retail Economics said.

The report, commissioned by campaigners - including the groups Refill and Whale and Dolphin Conservation, as well as the filter firm Brita - argued that brand advertising played a "critical" role in burnishing the "desirability" of bottled water.

The creation of dedicated brands has seen annual bottled water consumption in the UK increase from just one 300ml can a head in the mid-1970s to 37 litres a head in 2021, according to Retail Economics' chief executive, Richard Lim.

Britons spent £1.6bn on branded and supermarket own-label bottled water in 2021. This used about 3.5bn bottles, or 10m a day, Lim estimates. With brands the driving force behind the growth, they account for £1bn of sales and 2.5bn bottles. Buoyed by advertising, this footprint could be 2.8bn bottles by 2026, Lim said.

"We need to make changes to turn the tide on this issue before it's too late," said Lim of the white paper, which recommends restricting advertising and promotions and putting environmental labels on bottles.

10m

Estimated number of bottles of water a day bought by Britons in 2021, based on a spend of £1.6bn

While carrying a reusable water bottle has become the norm for many people, the study found that just over half, or 51%, drink bottled water once a week or more. The frequency was highest among millennials, at 61%, based on a sample of more than 2,000 households.

The research established that more than half of all bottled water was being drunk at home or at work, places where tap water is available.

"Plastic bottled water is a scar on our society," said David Hall, the UK managing director of Brita. "Plastic bottled water takes about five seconds to make, five minutes to use, and a staggering 500 years to break down in landfill. It's one of the main culprits of the worldwide plastic pollution crisis."

A small number of big companies are behind the majority of branded bottled water sales in the UK. They include Highland Spring; Danone, which owns Volvic and Evian; and Nestlé, with Buxton mineral water.

The report recommends the government should treat bottled water in the same way as foods sold in England that are high in fat, salt or sugar, removing them from prominent positioning in shops. On packaging, it says wrappers on multipacks are "tantamount to a plastic bag" and should be treated like them. It suggests a 10p charge under existing plastic bag levies or, as with plastic straws and stirrers, a ban.

A spokesperson for Danone UK & Ireland said its Evian and Volvic brands "enable consumers to make healthier hydration choices they can enjoy conveniently", and that in the UK and Ireland it had committed to using 100% recycled plastic in its bottles by 2025.

"Increasing recycling rates also have a role to play, and a unified, consistent deposit return scheme is vital to this," they said. "Any restrictions on advertising for the category would risk inadvertently driving consumers towards less healthy beverage options."

Eleven teenagers arrested after boy, 16, fatally stabbed in Bath

PA Media

Eleven teenagers have been arrested on suspicion of murder after a 16-year-old boy was fatally stabbed in Bath on Saturday night.

Emergency services were called to an address on Eastfield Avenue at about 11pm after reports of a

stabbing, Avon and Somerset police said. Members of the public provided the boy with first aid before paramedics arrived, but he died at the scene.

A 35-year-old woman was also stabbed in the incident and attended Royal United hospital for treatment. She was later discharged.

Six boys and two girls aged between 15 and 17 were removed from a bus near the crime scene 30



▼ Mary Malone, Nima Taleghani and Laura Checkley deliver joyous performances in Tom Fowler's play

PHOTOGRAPH: HELEN MURRAY

Theatre review

A comic dystopia filled with fluorescent unease

Hope Has a Happy Meal

Royal Court, London

★★★★☆

Emma John

The winning scene that opens Tom Fowler's play proves we are in the hands of a writer with a knack for comedy as well as a cast who can deliver on it. It introduces us to Hope, a woman returning to her homeland after 24 years to find it has become a corporation-run police state.

When Hope befriends Isla, a young woman raising her baby nephew, the two quickly find themselves on the run. Naomi Dawson's design combines with Annie May Fletcher's sound to establish just the right note of

cheerfully fluorescent unease for the none-too-distant dystopia Fowler has imagined.

Laura Checkley's charismatic protagonist makes a delightful pairing with Mary Malone's Isla as the two negotiate a feverish escape involving train toilets and unlikely underground resistance volunteers, picking up a depressed but terribly sweet forest ranger (Nima Taleghani) along the way.

Part *Thelma & Louise*, part reverse *Wizard of Oz*, the comic beats are neatly balanced with darker material

The resultant escapade feels part *Thelma & Louise*, part reverse *Wizard of Oz*, and Lucy Morrison's direction neatly balances the comic beats with darker material, including a nightmarish gameshow hallucination. Felix Scott gives a panoply of excellent performances, from a brutal cop to a hopeless ex-husband, and there is enough vim and vigour to the production that when Isla announces: "This is, like, the best adventure ever," you're just about prepared to overlook the horrible thing that's being sanctioned in the basement.

However, the content-light third act loses pace and exposes some fairly blunt messaging. By the time Hope arrives at her ultimate destination with what her sister Lor describes as her "ticking time-bomb of chaotic shit", the script is running on empty.

The reveal to Hope's backstory isn't as interesting as the shenanigans that precede it, and we never discover what motivated her to come back at this particular moment. All we really end up learning is that everyone is finding life hard, what with the climate crisis, fascists and whatnot. But this is still a witty endeavour, sharply directed and joyously performed.

Until 8 July

minutes later and arrested on suspicion of murder.

Yesterday, two 15-year-old boys and another aged 16 were also arrested on suspicion of murder, Avon and Somerset police said. They all remain in police custody. A post-mortem examination to determine the cause of the boy's death would take place in due course, police said.

Ch Insp Ronald Lungu, of the Bath Neighbourhood Team, said: "This is a tragic incident and our thoughts are very much with the family of the boy who has died."

"They were informed of what happened as soon as possible and

are understandably devastated. Specialist family liaison officers will be assigned to them to provide them with support and keep them updated."

Lungu added: "We've identified a number of witnesses and we'll be taking formal statements from them in due course, but we're also keen to hear from anyone who was at the address at the time who hasn't yet spoken to police."

"The community can expect to see a significant police presence in the area today, and for the next few days, while officers and police staff carry out a number of actions including

forensic examinations, a review of CCTV footage and house-to-house inquiries.

"I appreciate this is a concerning incident and I'd like to reassure people that a thorough inquiry is taking place."

"However, should anyone have any questions I'd encourage them to make contact with their local neighbourhood policing team, who will be carrying out extra patrols in the area."

Any witnesses, or anyone who has other information that could help the investigation, is asked to phone 101 and provide the call handler with the reference 5223136640.

World

Ukraine claims counteroffensive has liberated three villages in Donetsk

Julian Borger
Kyiv

Ukraine's armed forces yesterday claimed to have liberated three frontline villages in western Donetsk, almost a week after the launch of counteroffensive operations.

Soldiers were shown in video footage raising the Ukrainian flag over the village of Blahodatne, south of the town of Velyka Novosilka, one of the main axes of the counteroffensive so far. Other troops filmed themselves with their unit's banner in Neskuchne. Later yesterday, the deputy defence minister, Hanna Maliar, said a third village, Makarivka, had been taken. It is believed to have fallen yesterday morning.

"In the areas where our troops are on the defensive, no position was lost," Maliar said on Telegram.

They are the first settlements that the armed forces have officially confirmed as liberated since the start of the counteroffensive. Another settlement further south, Urozhaine, was being fiercely contested, according to Russian military bloggers.

"By the way, we didn't move our main forces yet," a Ukrainian officer texted from the front. "So there are grounds to believe in the best."

"In total, in one week of assault operations around Velyka Novosilka, Ukrainians managed to liberate around 95 sq km of the ground," a Ukrainian military blogger wrote.

The advance south from Velyka Novosilka represents the most significant gains of the counteroffensive to date, but Ukrainian forces still have some way to go before they reach Russia's main fortified defensive line.

Yesterday, railway lines supplying the Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia region and Crimea were reportedly blown up in two sabotage attacks,

one on a railway bridge at Yakymivka in Zaporizhzhia and another in Kirovskoye in Crimea.

Along with signs that the counteroffensive was beginning to gain momentum, at least in one area, there was more evidence yesterday of the rifts in Russia's military leadership. Yevgeny Prigozhin, the head of the Wagner group mercenary organisation, rejected a move by the defence minister, Sergei Shoigu, to put Wagner fighters under ministry control by ordering all "volunteer detachments" to sign contracts with the ministry by the end of the month.

"Wagner will not sign any contracts with Shoigu," Prigozhin said.

Across the whole front, progress had been slow and gruelling for the Ukrainians in the first week of the counteroffensive, as Russian soldiers generally held their ground in heavily fortified and mined positions. But military analysts said Kyiv had so far committed a fraction of the 12 brigades it had held in reserve.

The Institute for the Study of War (ISW) thinktank said in its daily report yesterday: "Ukrainian forces are currently attempting an extraordinarily difficult tactical operation - a frontal assault against prepared defensive positions, further complicated by a lack of air superiority - and these initial assaults should not be extrapolated to predict all Ukrainian operations."

"The Russian military remains dangerous and Ukrainian forces certainly face a hard fight, but Ukraine has not yet committed the vast majority of its counteroffensive forces and Russian defences are not uniformly strong along all sectors of the frontline."

The ISW reported that the area around Velyka Novosilka was one of at least four main directions of Ukrainian attacks over the weekend, the others being around Bilohorivka in Luhansk, about six miles west of Luhansk city; Bakhmut in northern Donetsk, and western Zaporizhzhia.

On the Black Sea, media in Moscow reported that a Russian naval intelligence collection vessel, the Priazovye, had come under attack from six Ukrainian drone boats.

The reports said the Priazovye had been able to repel the attack and video footage posted on social media showed guns being fired from a ship's deck at small, unmanned boats, one of which exploded.



'We have lost her heritage'
Floods from collapsed dam claim folk artist's masterpiece - her home



▲ Polina Rayko painted the walls of her house in Oleshky with images inspired by the natural life in the floodplain that backed on to her garden, including a trio of owls, left

PHOTOGRAPHS: VGORU.ORG

'Ukraine faces a hard fight, but it has not yet committed the vast majority of its counteroffensive forces'

Institute for the Study of War

Republican right turn DeSantis attempts to outflank Trump

Page 24

Jungle survival Colombian children reunited with families

Page 25



'Her main and only artwork was this house. We have lost her physical presence'

Oksana Semenik
Art historian

◀ *An aerial view of flooding in Oleshky, home to the folk artist Polina Rayko, in the wake of the Kakhovka dam collapse*

PHOTOGRAPH: AP

Emma Graham-Harrison

Polina Rayko only took up a paintbrush at the age of 69, her only canvas the walls of her modest village home. But in just six years she created a national treasure and became a well-known folk artist in southern Ukraine.

That house – decorated with images inspired by the rich natural life of the floodplain that backed on to Rayko's garden – is the latest casualty of the Kakhovka dam collapse.

Rayko, who died in 2004, had spent her life in Oleshky, in southern Kherson province, among those areas worst affected by the flood unleashed last week. It is under Russian occupation, so no one has been able to assess the state of the house she had turned into a masterpiece, but the limited news that has filtered out is devastating.

"The last thing we know is that the neighbours said the first floor of their house was flooded, which means that Rayko's will be submerged up to the roof," said

Simon Khramtsov, an artist and designer from Kherson who works with the foundation that preserved Rayko's work. "If something survives, it will be fragmentary."

The waters could go down or, if more of the dam collapses, rise further. The house could even be washed away. But its traditional structure means even a few days underwater is likely to have caused extensive irreparable damage.

"Most likely, we will lose it because the house was made of *samanna* [an unfired mixture of clay, straw and sand] covered with silicate bricks," said Oksana Semenik, an art historian and journalist who runs the Ukrainian Art History account on Twitter.

"Her main and only artwork was this house. We have lost her heritage and her physical presence," she said.

Rayko was part of an important tradition of naive or folk art in Ukraine that inspired more formally taught contemporaries.

Perhaps the most famous of her predecessors in this tradition, the painter Maria Prymachenko, has also been a target in this war. An attack on her native Ivankiv set a museum housing many of her

works on fire. Some were lost and locals risked their lives to save 25.

The invasion launched by the Russian president, Vladimir Putin, does not simply aim to annex Ukrainian territory; it means to erase Ukrainian culture, history and heritage. Monuments and art treasures have been frequent targets.

The destruction of Rayko's masterpiece comes on top of another, human loss. The Ukrainian artist Viacheslav Mashnytskyi, one of the first to discover Rayko and her great champion in the region, has been missing since last year.

When Russian troops were driven out of the region last autumn, friends found bloodstains at his house and his furniture overturned, but no trace of the artist himself.

"His fate is still unknown. He was an important figure in Ukrainian art and especially for Kherson," Semenik said.

Rayko started painting as a way to process her grief after enduring a wave of tragedies including the loss of her husband and the death of her only daughter in a car crash. Her son became an addict, was abusive to her and was eventually arrested.

She had no training and no special equipment, starting out with paint and brushes from a local hardware shop. She only painted for six years. But her reputation spread across the region – from the frescoes in a Kherson supermarket inspired by her work, to the pilgrimages young artists made from Kyiv and other cities to visit her home.

For the chef Olia Hercules, who is also from the Kherson region, Rayko's art offered a path through her own trauma in the wake of Russia's full-scale invasion of her homeland. She was captivated by a documentary on the artist, she said, and her description of the liberation she found in painting, the sensation it gave her of "soaring in the sky, like I was flying".

"I was inspired by her story, what happened to her, how she dealt with it," said Hercules. "This is an amazing way to process grief, so I started painting my kitchen door. It's nothing perfect, nothing too artistically perfect but it really helped me.

"At that time I was listening to the very heavy news from Kherson, but painting made it easier to stay informed and have this process. It helped me a lot with my psychological state."

In a post on Instagram sharing images of Rayko's art, Hercules wrote: "I cannot stop crying. I grieve today and every day for every human, animal, bird, plant, insect, and also art that is being destroyed in my home region. An irreversible, painful loss for us all.

"Please remember her and her beautiful house full of unique art, now under the murky water of the catastrophic flood."

Moscow US musician under arrest over drugs charges

Andrew Roth

A US citizen arrested in Russia on drugs charges this week is a military veteran who lived in Moscow for nearly a decade, working as a musician, rock band manager and even appearing in an interview for the late food and travel journalist Anthony Bourdain.

Travis Michael Leake and a friend, Valeria Grobanyuk, were arrested earlier this week in a drugs raid that has the potential to further ignite tensions between Washington and Moscow, as the State Department has warned Americans to steer clear of Russia due to the invasion of Ukraine and a number of recent arrests of US citizens.

"I don't understand why I'm here. I do not admit my guilt," said a man on camera identified by Russian state media as Leake. "I do not believe that I could have done what I am accused of, because I do not know what I am accused of."

The case comes months after the arrest of American journalist Evan Gershkovich, who was detained in March on espionage charges that are widely viewed as politically motivated. Reports have suggested that Russia may seek to exchange Gershkovich for a number of Russians, including suspected spies.

According to social media posts and friends, Leake was a frontman for the band Lovi Nochi, which translates as "catch the night".

In Facebook posts before his arrest, Leake tried to calm relatives who were worried about him staying in

Russia after Moscow launched its invasion of Ukraine.

"Thank you to everyone who has expressed their concern about my wellbeing during this time of conflict between Russia and Ukraine," he wrote on 26 February last year, just two days after Russia's invasion.

"I am a guest in Russia, and as such, I have always believed that I have no right to press any political opinion, whether for or against whatever subject may be in question."

In subsequent posts, he complained about foreign companies leaving Russia and photos of the relatively high ruble to dollar exchange rate, telling his friends that he had "almost universally positive [encouragement] for my decision to remain here in Russia from people of all backgrounds".

In another post, he called the US president, Joe Biden, a "tool".

CNN reported that it had filmed Leake in a segment of *Parts Unknown* in Moscow and St Petersburg in 2014 with the food and travel writer Bourdain. In it, the network said, Leake had complained about censorship on the US music television station MTV.



▲ *The man identified by Russian state media as Travis Michael Leake*

South Africa Summit's host seeks to avoid Putin arrest

Patrick Wintour
Diplomatic editor

South Africa may abandon its role as host of this year's Brics summit of emerging economies to avoid international pressure to arrest Vladimir Putin, who is wanted by the international criminal court (ICC) on war crimes charges.

As a party to the Rome Statute – the treaty underpinning the ICC – Pretoria would be required to arrest the Russian president and send him to the Hague for trial.

China and India, if either hosted the summit in August, would not face the same obligation, leading

some South African officials to suggest handing the summit to Beijing. Brazil, the fifth member of the Brics bloc, is also an ICC member, so faces the same dilemma as South Africa.

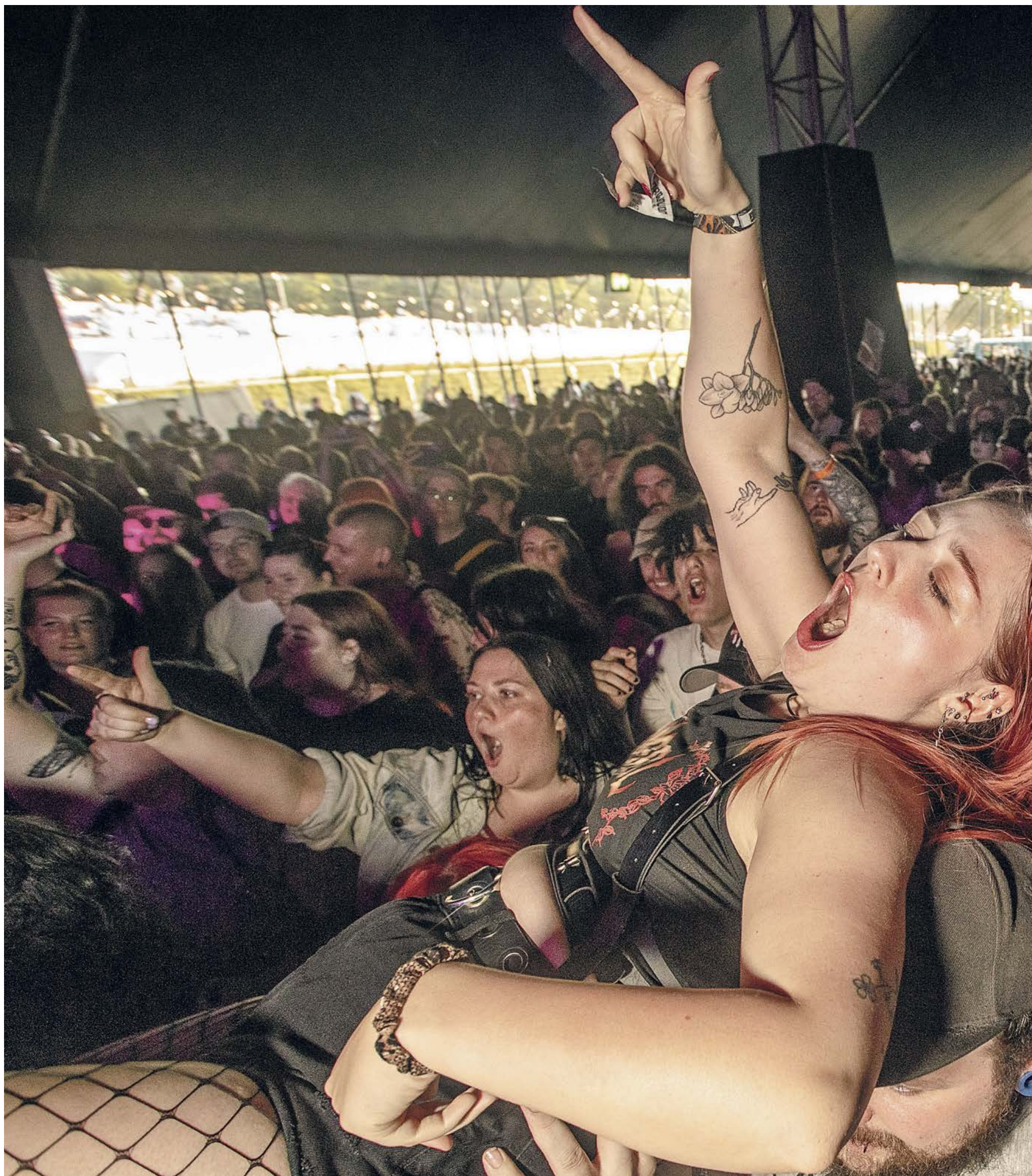
In a flurry of diplomatic activity round Ukraine, South Africa is seeking support for a new peace plan. On Saturday, the president, Cyril Ramaphosa, briefed the Chinese leader, Xi Jinping, on an upcoming visit by African leaders to Russia and Ukraine. China has its own peace mission under way, and it is not clear what the African mission might add.

Ramaphosa has recruited Zambia, Senegal, Republic of Congo, Uganda, and Egypt to his peace delegation.

Ukraine hopes to capitalise on the proliferation of peace plans emerging from the global south by staging a peace conference in July, possibly in Denmark, at which Kyiv would set out its terms for a settlement.

The aspiration is that Ukraine's counteroffensive will have changed the dynamics of the war, and the global south will realise that Putin needs to leave Ukraine.

Eyewitness



▼ **Castle Donington, Leicestershire**
Music fans fill the mosh pit during
a set by the US pop-punk band
State Champs, who headlined the
Avalanche stage on the opening

night of the Download festival at
Donington Park last Thursday.
The festival marked its 20th
anniversary over the weekend
PHOTOGRAPH: CHRIS BETHELL/THE GUARDIAN



World's nuclear arms stockpile rises in 'one of most dangerous periods in history'

Daniel Boffey
Chief reporter

The number of operational nuclear weapons in the arsenals of the major military powers is on the rise again according to a leading thinktank, whose analysts warn the world is "drifting into one of the most dangerous periods in human history".

At a time of deteriorating international relations and the escalation of nuclear sabre-rattling, there are now an estimated 12,512 warheads globally, of which 9,576 are in military stockpiles ready for potential use, up

86 on a year ago. The rise brings to an end the period of gradual decline that followed the cold war. The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (Sipri) suggested 60 of the new warheads were held by China.

The other new weapons are attributed to Russia (12), Pakistan (five), North Korea (five) and India (four).

The increase in battle-fit warheads comes despite a statement in 2021 from the UN's five permanent security council members – the US, Russia, China, the UK and France – that "nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought".

Russia and the US together possess

almost 90% of all the nuclear weapons globally. In addition to their usable nuclear weapons, the two powers each hold more than 1,000 warheads previously retired from military service, which they are gradually dismantling.

Of the total of 12,512 warheads in the world, which includes those that are retired and awaiting dismantlement, Sipri estimates 3,844 are deployed with missiles and aircraft.

Around 2,000 of those – nearly all of which belong to Russia or the US – are kept in a state of high operational alert, meaning they are fitted to missiles or held at airbases hosting nuclear bombers.

Sipri notes, however, that the full picture is difficult to judge as a number of countries, including Russia, the US and Britain, have reduced their level of transparency since Vladimir Putin launched his full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

China, the world's third biggest nuclear power, is believed to have increased its number of warheads from 350 in January 2022 to 410 in January 2023. That arsenal is expected to keep growing, but Sipri predicts that they will not surpass the arsenals of the US and Russia.

The report adds, however, that China has never declared the size of its nuclear arsenal and many of its assessments rely on data from the US defence department. Hans M Kristensen, associate senior fellow with Sipri's weapons of mass destruction programme, said: "China has started a significant expansion of its nuclear arsenal. It is increasingly difficult to square this trend with China's declared aim of having only the minimum nuclear forces needed to maintain its national security."

Estimated total nuclear stockpiles

January 2023

Russia 4,489

US 3,708

China 410

France 290

UK 225

Pakistan 170

India 164

Israel 90

N Korea 30

Source: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute annual report

France (290) and the UK (225) are the world's next largest nuclear powers, and Britain's operational arsenal is expected to grow further following an announcement two years ago that it was raising its limit from 225 to 260 warheads.

Of the 225 UK warheads, 120 are said to be operationally available for delivery by Trident II D5 submarine-launched ballistic missiles, with about 40 being carried on a nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine that is on patrol at all times.

Britain has said, however, that it will no longer publicly disclose its quantities of nuclear weapons, deployed warheads or deployed missiles in light of increased global tensions.

The new British policy is just one sign of a breakdown in cooperation over the future of nuclear weapons.

Dan Smith, a director at Sipri, said: "We are drifting into one of the most dangerous periods in human history. It is imperative the world's governments find ways to cooperate in order to calm geopolitical tensions, slow arms races and deal with the worsening consequences of environmental breakdown and rising world hunger."

US elections DeSantis veers right to take votes from Trump

David Smith
Washington

Donald Trump is not the most rightwing candidate running for the White House. That is a statement few would have thought possible after the former president's nativist populism reshaped the Republican party.

But as the Republican primary election for 2024 gathers pace, Trump finds himself eclipsed on the right by Ron DeSantis, the governor of Florida, who is betting that the party's voters are spoiling for an even more extreme agenda.

From Covid to crime, from immigration to cultural issues, DeSantis is staking out territory that leaves the 76-year-old frontrunner fending off a once unthinkable criticism: he might be a bit too liberal.

"DeSantis's strategy for now is that he is going to try to outflank Trump to the right, and there's opportunity there," said Bill Whalen, a research fellow at the Hoover Institution thinktank at Stanford University in California. "He can go after Trump's record as president on spending. He can go after Trump on refusing to address



entitlement [benefit] reform, which Republicans seemed to abandon writ large."

This week, Trump was indicted on charges of mishandling classified documents at his Mar-a-Lago estate in Florida. DeSantis did not attempt to capitalise but rather condemned the "weaponisation of federal law enforcement". However, in his first 10 days on the campaign trail, DeSantis has assailed Trump from the right.

He told a conservative radio host "this is a different guy than 2015, 2016", before deriding bipartisan criminal justice reform legislation – which Trump championed – as "basically a jailbreak bill" letting dangerous people out of prison.

On immigration, DeSantis has played to the base by flying migrants from Florida to Massachusetts and California while arguing that Trump "endorsed and

tried to ram" an "amnesty" bill through Congress. The governor even claimed Trump's signature issue for himself by asserting that he would finish building a wall on the US-Mexico border.

DeSantis can point to a hard-right record in Florida and suggest that he gets the job done in contrast to Trump's unfulfilled promises at the White House. He has accused Trump of "turning the reins over" to Anthony Fauci, America's top infectious disease expert, during the Covid pandemic while he says he kept Florida open for business. "We chose freedom over Faucism," DeSantis told voters last week.

Whalen said: "What DeSantis is going to attack him on is that Donald Trump turned loose Anthony Fauci. Trump at no point fired anybody. Trump let Fauci drive children's healthcare policy. If Trump wants to engage with

▲ Ron DeSantis, who is seeking the Republican nomination for the presidency, campaigns in Oklahoma

PHOTOGRAPH: NATHAN J FISH/AP

this on a conversation over who handled Covid better – boy, if I'm Ron DeSantis, bring it on."

Extraordinarily, Trump finds himself on the defensive over what many regard as one his few positive achievements: the development of coronavirus vaccines in less than a year. Campaigning in Grimes, Iowa, he received a pointed question

'Woke is an existential threat to our society'

Ron DeSantis
Governor of Florida

from a woman who claimed that "we have lost people because you supported the jab", a reference to conspiracy theories about mRNA vaccines, which have been credited with saving millions of lives.

DeSantis has also taken a swipe at Trump for saying he did not like the term "woke" because people struggle to define it. The governor retorted: "Woke is an existential threat to our society. To say it's not a big deal, that just shows you don't understand what a lot of these issues are right now."

The skirmishes imply that DeSantis and Trump are running separate races. While the governor is aiming to woo Republican primary voters who have spent years embracing extremism, Trump is already looking ahead to a general election against Joe Biden, where moderate swing state voters are critical.

But the posturing might come to nought, as history suggests policy can be less important to voters than personality. Larry Jacobs, director of the Center for the Study of Politics and Governance at the University of Minnesota, said: "DeSantis has been a governor, a member of Congress. For all of his rhetorical policy stances and the policies he's signed into law, he's still part of the government. Sure, Trump was president, but he has carved a place for himself as a demagogue, running both for and against the political and economic system in America."

Trump allies dismiss DeSantis as an imitator who rings hollow. Roger Stone, a political consultant and self-proclaimed "dirty trickster", based in Florida, said: "He can try to sound like Trump, he can try to position himself like Trump, but I don't think those are his real politics. He's an establishment Republican. If you have a choice of seeing the Beatles or seeing a Beatles tribute band, which one are you going to go see?"



▲ The wreckage of the Cessna, which crashed on 1 May and was found 15 days later. Below and right,

soldiers attend to siblings after they were located by a sniffer dog on 9 June, having survived by

eating cassava flour and fruits from the jungle

PHOTOGRAPHS: COLOMBIAN ARMY, COLOMBIAN PRESIDENCY, AFP/GETTY, REUTERS



Mother of Amazon rescue siblings 'told them to leave before she died'

Mat Youkee Bogotá
Sam Jones

The mother of the four young Colombian siblings who managed to survive for almost six weeks in the Amazon jungle clung to life for four days after their plane crashed, before telling her children to leave her in the hope of improving their chances of being rescued.

Details of the woman's final days came as further information emerged about the children's astonishing feat of endurance.

Their father, Manuel Ranoque, told reporters yesterday that his wife, Magdalena Mucutuy, had survived the crash but perished four days later.

"My daughter has told me that their mother was alive for four days," said Ranoque. "Before she died, she said to them: 'Maybe you should go.'"

The children – aged 13, nine, four and 11 months – were travelling with their mother from the Amazonian village of Araracuara to San José del Guaviare when their Cessna plane crashed after the pilot reported engine failure in the early hours of 1 May.

A military sniffer dog found the siblings, who are members of the Huitoto Indigenous community, on Friday after they had spent more than a month in an area where snakes, mosquitoes and other animals abound.

The children's great-uncle Fiden-cio Valencia said the siblings had survived by eating *fariña*, or cassava flour, and by using their knowledge of the rainforest's fruits.

"When the plane crashed, they took *fariña* [from the wreckage], and with that they survived," Valencia told reporters outside the hospital where they are expected to remain for a minimum of two weeks.

"After the *fariña* ran out, they began to eat seeds," he added. The children appear to owe their lives to the eldest sibling, Lesly, who kept them safe and nourished by using the knowledge of the rainforest her mother had passed on to her.

The timing of their ordeal was also in the children's favour. Astrid Cáceres, the head of the Colombian Institute of Family Welfare, said the youngsters had been able to eat fruit because "the jungle was in harvest".

Valencia, who visited the children in the Bogotá hospital where they are recuperating, said they were "shattered but in good hands and it's great they're alive ... We were in the darkness, but now dawn has broken."

A search team found the plane on 16 May in a thick patch of the rainforest and recovered the bodies of the three adults on board, but the children were nowhere to be found.

Colombia's army flew 150 soldiers with dogs into the area, where mist and thick foliage greatly limited

visibility. Dozens of Indigenous volunteers also joined the search.

Soldiers in helicopters dropped boxes of food into the jungle. Planes fired flares to help search crews at night, and rescuers used speakers that blasted a message recorded by the siblings' grandmother telling them to stay in one place.

As the search progressed, soldiers found small clues that led them to believe the children were still alive, including footprints, a baby bottle, nappies and pieces of fruit that looked as if humans had taken bites out of them.

Gen Pedro Sánchez, who was in charge of the rescue effort, said the children were found 3 miles away from the crash site, in a small clearing. He said rescue teams had passed within 20-50 metres of where the children were found on a couple of occasions, but had missed them.

"The children were already very weak," Sánchez said. "They were only strong enough to breathe or reach a small fruit to feed themselves or drink a drop of water in the jungle."

Some confusion remains as to why the children were not found earlier, given that search teams had passed so close to them.

Their great-uncle said that fear had probably led them to hide from their rescuers. "They were afraid out there, with the dogs barking," said Valencia. "They hid among the trees ... they ran."



'My daughter has told me that their mother was alive for four days'

Manuel Ranoque
The children's father



The children may have been frightened of the uniformed search party because their father had previously been threatened by members of a dissident unit of the demobilised Colombian rebel group the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia.

It has also emerged that a military rescue dog called Wilson played a key role in the discovery of the children. The siblings told officials that they had spent time with Wilson, a Belgian shepherd, but that the dog had later gone missing. As well as discovering the baby's bottle, Wilson is thought to have left tracks that led the search team to the children. Cáceres confirmed that Lesly had said they were accompanied by "a dog who was lost, that didn't know where to go and which accompanied us for a while".

The Colombian military said the dog, who had received a year's rescue training, could have become disorientated by the heavy rains and poor visibility and that his behaviour may have been affected by contact with wild animals. Soldiers came close to rescuing Wilson twice, only for the dog to run away. The army wrote on its Twitter account: "We are united to return our canine commando Wilson from the jungle. The operation isn't over until we find him!"

Colombia's president, Gustavo Petro, who joyfully announced the discovery of the children on Friday, met them in hospital on Saturday. "The jungle saved them," said Petro. "They are children of the jungle, and now they are also children of Colombia."

The Colombian singer Shakira also celebrated the children's rescue, tweeting: "The suffering of Lesly, Soleiny, Tien and Cristin and the miracle of their lives have shaken us all and have given us the greatest example of unity and resilience."

► A makeshift boat heading for Italy that was found by Tunisian authorities about 50 miles off the coast of the city of Sfax

PHOTOGRAPH: FETHI BELAID/AFP/GETTY IMAGES



EU may give Tunisia €1bn to help finances and stem migration

Lisa O'Carroll
Brussels correspondent

The European Union is considering more than €1bn (£855m) in aid for Tunisia to rescue state finances and deal with a migration crisis, the European Commission president, Ursula von der Leyen, said yesterday.

Speaking in Tunisia, Von der Leyen said €900m would be macrofinancial assistance while an immediate €150m would support a reform agenda set by the International Monetary Fund.

She said this could be ready “as soon as the necessary agreement is found”, without elaborating.

A further €105m will be funnelled

into a new partnership with Tunisia to combat people-smuggling, human trafficking and deaths at sea.

The EU chief was visiting Tunisia with the Italian and Dutch prime ministers, Giorgia Meloni and Mark Rutte, who are keen to strike a partnership deal with the North African country to stem migration and people-smuggling to Europe.

The EU, like other big donors, has so far made its support for the country conditional on Tunisia finalising a loan programme with the IMF, but President Kais Saied has rejected key reforms required by that plan.

On Saturday, the president also pushed back at a Turkey-style refugee partnership, saying that his

country would not act as Europe's border guard.

The EU is concerned that if the economic crisis in Tunisia deepens Europe will face an even bigger increase of irregular migrants trying to cross the Mediterranean this summer.

Saied has said that cuts to subsidies and restructuring of state-owned companies, which his own government proposed to the IMF to reassure lenders they would be repaid, risked igniting a social explosion. Any agreement based on different reforms could take months more to negotiate.

Meloni, who also visited Tunisia last week, has pressed for the IMF to relax conditions for the loan. She said yesterday that the EU and Tunisia had already signed a joint declaration, which she hailed as an important step “towards the creation of a real partnership”.

€150m

The cost of a Medusa digital cable link with Europe to support research and education in Tunisia

She said there was “an important window of opportunity” to finalise the aid agreement before the European Council meeting at the end of June. It was not clear if Tunisia would still need to finalise its IMF programme to qualify.

Yesterday the EU laid out details of a partnership programme that would strengthen economic and trade ties with Tunisia, including a comprehensive air transport agreement that could help tourism and a €150m “Medusa” digital cable link to Europe which it said could support research and education in the country.

It also signed a memorandum of understanding on renewable energy.

Von der Leyen said the EU would also expand opportunities for young Tunisians to study, work and train in the EU to help them develop skills that could be used to boost the Tunisian economy.

The Tunisian pact comes just three days after EU member states agreed radical reforms to its proposed migration laws allowing Italy to deport economic migrants to countries such as Tunisia if a deal with the country enabled such returns.

British girl, 11, shot dead while playing in garden in western France

Kim Willsher
Paris

An 11-year-old British girl was shot dead as she played on swings in the garden of her family home in a village in western France on Saturday.

The girl's father and mother were also injured in the attack in the village of Saint-Herbot in the Finistère department of Brittany. The girl's eight-year-old sister escaped unhurt.

The Thornon family, who had lived in the village for around five years, were enjoying a barbecue in their garden and the girls were playing on swings at around 10pm on Saturday when a man appeared with a gun and fired several shots.

Eleven-year-old Solenne Thornon was killed immediately and her father, 52-year-old Adrien, was shot in the head. He was taken to hospital, where his condition was described as critical.

The girls' mother, Rachel, aged 49, reported to be a local home help, was shot in the back and the head but was out of danger, the public prosecutor Carine Halley said. The youngest girl, Céleste, aged eight, escaped to a neighbouring property and raised the alarm.

Halley said a 71-year-old Dutch man who lived in the same village was in custody over the shooting. His wife was also being questioned.

French media reported there had been a conflict between the British family and their neighbours over a plot of land.

An investigation for the murder of a minor and attempted murder has been opened.

Halley said initial evidence suggested the suspect “emerged suddenly with a gun and fired several times in the direction of the victims”.

She told French journalists: “The motives for this tragedy are not yet known. It appears there had been a conflict between the two neighbours for several years over a piece of land adjoining the two properties.”

Marguerite Bleuzen, the mayor of Plonévez-du-Faou, said: “We knew the family well. There is a village fête every year and they always came.”

She added: “It's completely incomprehensible to have shot a child. This happened without any warning. Nobody can understand how this could have happened.”

A neighbour told journalists: “We heard noises and thought they - either the children or the parents - were playing with fireworks.”

“Then the youngest girl came running, shouting ‘my sister is dead’. We went and saw the girl was dead and her father and mother were injured.”

Another local resident said: “The neighbours complained about noise but they [the family] didn't make any more noise than anyone else.”

‘Unabomber’ Ted Kaczynski died in jail by suicide - report

Associated Press

Ted Kaczynski, known as the “Unabomber”, who carried out a 17-year bombing campaign that killed three people and injured 23 others, killed himself, four people familiar with the matter told the Associated Press.

Kaczynski, who was 81 and suffering from late-stage cancer, was found unresponsive in his cell at the federal medical centre in Butner, North Carolina, at around 12.30am on Saturday. Emergency responders performed

CPR and revived him before he was transported to a hospital, where he was pronounced dead later on Saturday morning, AP was told by staff who were not authorised to publicly discuss Kaczynski's death and spoke on condition of anonymity.

His death comes as the US Bureau of Prisons has faced increased scrutiny in the past several years following the death of the wealthy financier Jeffrey Epstein, who also died by suicide in jail in 2019.

Kaczynski had been held in the federal supermax prison in Florence, Colorado, since May 1998, when he was given four life sentences plus 30

years for a campaign of terror that set universities nationwide on edge. He admitted carrying out 16 bombings from 1978 and 1995, permanently maiming several of his victims.

A Harvard-educated mathematician, Kaczynski lived as a recluse in a dingy cabin in rural Montana, where he carried out a solitary bombing



▲ Ted Kaczynski in 1996. He was 81 and suffering from late-stage cancer

spree that changed the way Americans mailed packages and boarded aircraft.

His targets included academics and airlines, the owner of a computer rental store, an advertising executive, and a timer industry lobbyist. In 1993, a California geneticist and a Yale University computer expert were maimed by bombs within the span of two days.

Two years later, he used the threat of continued violence to convince the New York Times and the Washington Post to publish his manifesto, a 35,000-word screed against modern life and technology, as well as damages to the environment.

The tone of the treatise was recognised by his brother, David, and David's wife, Linda Patrik, who tipped off the FBI, which had been searching for the Unabomber for years in the nation's longest, costliest manhunt.

United front Amazon workers defiant over strikes

Page 29



27

Business

Economy will escape recession but risks remain, experts warn

**Mark Sweeney
Larry Elliott**

Britain will be left with deep scars from the pandemic despite narrowly escaping a second recession within three years and growing signs of an economic pick up, according to new forecasts.

A report by the accountancy firm KPMG has found that the economy enjoyed a better start to the year than it had thought and is now expected to grow by 0.3% this year, compared with its previous prediction of an uplift of just 0.1%.

However, British households and businesses are set to suffer more financial pain with the Bank of England expected to raise the base interest rate - currently 4.5% - three more times this year to tame the stubbornly high rate of inflation.

"We've seen a slightly stronger momentum for the UK economy," said Yael Selfin, the chief economist at KPMG UK. "The UK economy has

so far avoided a technical recession. But risks are still elevated. A stickier inflation will see monetary policy tightening even further, increasing the risk of unwelcome side effects, among other potential headwinds."

KPMG said that while inflation eased to 8.7% in April - down from 10.1% in March and a peak of 11.1% last October - it was not falling as fast as had been hoped.

The firm expects the Bank to continue its run of 12 consecutive increases in the base rate, hitting a peak of 5.25% later this year.

"Inflation is on the way down, but the pace of moderation is slower than we previously thought," said KPMG.

It said there was some positive momentum, including Ofgem lowering the energy price cap to £2,074 a year for a typical household as wholesale gas prices fell, and the services industry receiving a post-pandemic boost due to pent-up demand.

The accountancy firm has pencilled in 1.1% growth for 2024, with inflation expected to fall back

to 2.9% and the Bank's interest rate forecast to settle at 5%.

Another accounting firm, BDO, reported that a 10-month high in output from the services sector delivered a confidence boost for businesses in May while recruitment activity remained resilient.

BDO said its "optimism index" grew for the second consecutive month to 99.75, up by 1.53 points to its highest reading since August, when concerns of a recession first set in.

Separately, the embattled Confederation of British Industry (CBI) has reversed its forecast for this year of a 0.4% decline and now expects growth of 0.4%. However, it said the pandemic would leave the UK economy 7% smaller than it would have been had the global health crisis

0.3%

The rate by which the economy is expected to grow this year, according to KPMG forecasts

never happened. It said that among other leading developed nations only Germany had suffered worse scarring. Germany and Ireland have both fallen into a technical recession this year, defined as recording two consecutive quarters of negative growth.

While narrowly avoiding a recession, the CBI said 2023 would prove challenging for households and businesses. For the first time since the recession of the early 1980s, it expected real household incomes - a measure of living standards - to fall for two successive years.

The business lobby group last week won support from its remaining members to continue speaking for firms after vowing to reform its culture and governance after allegations of sexual misconduct reported by the Guardian. Its relationship with the government remains on hold.

Rain Newton-Smith, the CBI's new director general, has made forecasting a key part of her organisation's strategy as it battles to survive.

"Businesses and consumers alike will be relieved that the UK economy has avoided recession and will re-enter growth territory in the second half of this year," she said. "But firms want to see growth - and productivity - pick up pace. We want to see the UK at the top of the global league tables once again."

Yorkshire Water boss's decision to waive bonus labelled 'hollow act' by union

Alex Lawson

The boss of Yorkshire Water's decision to forgo her annual bonus due to public anger over sewage pollution of rivers has been labelled a "hollow" gesture by a leading union, after it emerged she was already in line for a windfall of more than £1m from a previous role.

Nicola Shaw, who joined from National Grid last year, will receive share awards worth £1.3m from the energy network operator next month under a long-term incentive plan initiated in 2020, according to its annual report released last week.

The award - worth about double the payout she declined - threatens to undermine her decision last month to forgo her bonus at Yorkshire Water.

Gary Carter, a national officer at the GMB union, said: "Nicola Shaw painted herself as a martyr for giving up her Yorkshire Water bonus, despite the fact she was set to trouser more than a million quid in share options from a previous job.

"Refusing a bonus, while pocketing a fortune in the background, makes for a pretty hollow act of contrition."

Shaw joined the chief executives of Thames Water and South West Water publicly stating on the same day last month that they would refuse their bonuses, amid criticism of water companies' pollution records.

She later said: "I get why people are angry - seeing sewage in our rivers and seas isn't right. We should have a system that befits the 21st century. So, on behalf of Yorkshire Water, I am sorry. We should have acted more quickly to change the situation.

"That's why I have decided to refuse any bonus this year as I want us to make progress."

Her bonus at Yorkshire Water would have been between £600,000 and £800,000, on top of her £574,000 salary. The firm also agreed to pay expenses of "up to £140,000" for Shaw to relocate to Yorkshire.

Shaw was granted "good leaver" status by National Grid on resigning from her role as executive director, meaning she was entitled to the share awards. She received a separate share award from the energy company worth about £1.8m last year.

Yorkshire Water said: "Any payment that Nicola Shaw will receive from National Grid relates solely to and was earned during her time there, has been fully disclosed and is completely unrelated to her work at Yorkshire Water."

Timpsons rings up dividend of £12.8m as sales bounce back

Sarah Butler

The Timpson family paid themselves a £12.8m dividend last year as dry-cleaning, key cutting, watch repairs and photo processing bounced back at the high street stalwart after pandemic lockdowns - but shoe-mending sales remained downtrodden.

The family-owned Timpson Group includes Snappy Snaps, Johnsons dry cleaners and a small group of pubs alongside its namesake shoe-repair and key-cutting business. It doubled comparable profits to £36.5m in the year to 1 October 2022 and sales rose to £297.4m, up about 40%.

Sir John Timpson, the chair, who took the business from shoe shops into services, said sales of key cutting, watch repair and photo processing had all recovered since the Covid lockdowns. The return to holidays abroad has caused a surge in demand for passport photos at Snappy Snaps, while car-key cutting is growing fast.

However, Timpson bemoaned the fact that shoe repairs had not bounced back because of a rise in trainer-wearing during the pandemic. The service now only makes up a "modest part" of the group's trade.



"Look at what people are wearing," he said. "I was at a concert on Sunday and 100% of people were wearing trainers or some sort of leisure shoe, and they don't get those repaired. The best part of the shoe repair business is people wearing really nice shoes to go to the City and that's still not back."

The group plans to open 40 new outlets this year - mostly "pods" in supermarket car parks which offer repairs and key cutting - but Timpson said he did not think that shoppers had deserted high streets, where the group has more than 800 outlets.

"Some of our highest turnover shops are on the high street," he said. "People have got the wrong vision for the high street. People see empty shops but some need to be empty as we have got too many. They need to be turned into something else - housing, more services for people."

Amid rising wage costs, Timpson said the business, which offers staff perks including company holiday homes and mental health support, had found a way to operate with many outlets being run by just one person, with support from regional managers

▲ *Timpsons said key cutting and photo processing had bounced back but shoe repair sales were still low*

PHOTOGRAPH: GRAHAM TURNER/THE GUARDIAN

who could step in to cover time off. Timpson Group is also expanding into vending machines - offering simple key cutting and photo ID.

The end of pandemic restrictions has also enabled the group to restart its programme of recruitment from prisons. It now takes on about 150 ex-offenders a year, who make up more than 10% of its workforce.

Delays ahead

Why Labour's green plans got a red light

Larry Elliott
Economics editor



Dread of the financial markets is part of the Labour party's DNA. This primal fear has been passed down the generations. Ramsay MacDonald, Clement Attlee, Harold Wilson and James Callaghan were all battle-scarred from attempts to defend the pound. Though the signs point to a big Labour victory at the next election, the mood at the top of the party remains cautious. For months, Rachel Reeves has been on a charm offensive in the City, sending out a message that she will take no risks with the public finances. Now the shadow chancellor has gone a step further. Scaling back

the party's green prosperity plan, Reeves has said the promised £28bn investment will not materialise until the second half of the next parliament. It had been assumed the commitment was from year one of a Labour government but, she insists, fiscal stability comes first. Reeves says circumstances have changed since Labour made its pledge two years ago, and she is right. Inflation is a lot higher and so are interest rates. It is not just mortgage payers who are being stung by higher borrowing costs: the government is as well. What's more, Liz Truss's short-lived economic experiment last autumn means the markets see the UK as a riskier bet. The return to financial orthodoxy under Rishi Sunak and Jeremy Hunt brought down market interest rates, but signs that inflation will prove



▲ Labour's £28bn green investment spending is now to build gradually

harder to shift have caused them to shoot up again. For Reeves and the Labour leader, Keir Starmer, the market turmoil is a double-edged sword. On one hand, it makes a Labour win more likely; on the other it raises an obvious question. If this is what the markets can do to a Tory government then what are they likely to do to us? So Reeves intends to follow the example of Gordon Brown, who in 1997 stuck to tough plans inherited from Kenneth Clarke and faced down calls to spend more. This was not a universally popular decision on the left, where

expectations were high after 18 years of Conservative rule. Reeves can expect the same reaction. For a start, there is a big gap between Labour's rhetoric and what it is actually planning to spend. The £28bn commitment amounts to a little more than 1% of annual national output. Nor is it all new money. The small print makes clear it involves taking whatever spending Starmer inherits from Sunak and "ramping it up" to £28bn. As things stand, the net increase in spending will be closer to £20bn. There's a valid argument that even this would run into capacity constraints. There would be green skills shortages, supply bottlenecks and a surge in imports. Labour will need to show its green prosperity plan offers value for money. Not all state investments are good ones. That, though, is not really what Labour is arguing. Reeves's case for a gradual build up in spending is much more about hitting fiscal rules and keeping the markets sweet than it is about capacity constraints. Labour does not want to be in the position – as it was in the 1960s and 1970s – of borrowing heavily in the first two years of a parliament only to face a financial crisis that forces retrenchment as the next election approaches. The problem with this approach

is twofold. First, by the time Labour gets round to raising its green investment, other countries may have streaked ahead. Second, Labour agrees time is running out to deal with the climate crisis. As Reeves pointed out, the Office for Budget Responsibility says delaying action by a decade doubles the cost of transition. Serious action requires serious investment. It requires governments to make the case for different fiscal rules if existing ones fail to make a distinction between borrowing to provide a long-term asset and for current spending. It requires making the case for green quantitative easing, on the grounds that if money can be created to cope with a financial crisis (2008-09) and a health crisis (2020) why should it not be created to cope with a climate crisis? Reeves would have a job turning on the green printing press in the current high-inflation environment. Truss's behaviour has entrenched the idea borrowing is bad and governments have to live within their means. But financial orthodoxy has a cost. With a fair wind, in four years' time Labour could be spending slightly more on greening the economy than the Conservatives are now. That's not transformative. It is an attempt to have your cake and eat it.


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◀ *Amazon workers (from left) Garfield Hylton, Salar Kazim and Darren Westwood in Brighton*

PHOTOGRAPH: GRAEME ROBERTSON/THE GUARDIAN

'We're not going away'

Strikers bullish about battle for unionisation at Amazon

Heather Stewart

Jeff Bezos has got more money than he could spend in 100 lifetimes. He built the company up but we've kept it going." On a sunny shingle beach in Brighton, Darren Westwood and his colleagues are reflecting on the year-long battle to make their voices heard at Amazon.

The three men have received a warm welcome here at the GMB's annual congress, where they have shared their story with fellow activists - and won the support of the Labour leader, Keir Starmer.

"That spaceship, that boat of his - he would have none of that if it weren't for his workers," says Westwood's colleague, Garfield Hylton.

Later this week, the GMB will concede defeat - for now - in its fight for formal union recognition at Amazon's huge Coventry warehouse, known as BHX4. But in their black-branded T-shirts, the three men - Westwood and Hylton, both 58, and their 27-year-old colleague Salar Kazim - are

insistent the momentum remains with them. "We're not going away: we're only going to grow. Sooner or later, we'll have recognition in Coventry," says Westwood.

"From the time that we started, and we grew like this, it is all the time a pleasure," says Kazim, who is originally from Kurdistan, in northern Iraq. "The best time was during the strikes: we were together, we were talking, and it is really good being involved."

With chatting all but impossible on the packing lines, their campaign has built firm bonds - despite the wide range of languages spoken on site. Hylton says: "You've got Polish, Brazilian, Lithuanian, Estonian, Swahili. You need to have a map of the world!"

The trio describe a high pressure working environment inside BHX4, with every move monitored. Any anomaly - such as a few minutes without scanning an item - can bring a laptop-wielding manager to their work station. "They can monitor you, per minute, per task - it's micromanagement," says Hylton. "It's called 'scanner adherence' - you have to be scanning every minute, to show a constant, rapid scan."

All three men talk of how physically demanding the job is: Westwood says he once clocked up 10 miles on a shift; Kazim says he once walked 20 miles. Breaks are time-limited, and some roles involve lifting heavy loads. "When you do a concentrated job, you don't realise how much your body is being punished," says Kazim.

Having worked intensely through the Covid crisis, when at-home shopping soared, staff in Coventry hoped for a generous pay rise when the pandemic abated. "We are the ones who worked through the pandemic: we risked our lives," says Kazim.

So when managers announced an increase of just 50p an hour last August, taking the basic rate to £10.50, some staff felt insulted - a reaction shared at other Amazon sites, where spontaneous protests broke out. In Coventry, some workers walked off the packing lines and gathered in the canteen. Later, they arranged to discuss their grievances at a rendezvous point outside the local Primark.

Organisers from the GMB's West Midlands region had been building up a presence at Amazon for more than a decade, mainly focusing on

a site in Rugeley, 40 miles away. When they got wind of the protest in Coventry, they sped over.

"We got to Primark, we got our hi-vis on, we just started chatting to people," recalls the GMB activist Rachel Fagan. "We just listened to what they wanted ... They were saying, 'these workers have had enough, and they want to tell their story'." Westwood says he had previously felt no need for a union - but he and his colleagues turned to the GMB, to help them channel their anger into organising.

With Amazon well-known worldwide to be sceptical about unions, there followed an intensive period of secret recruitment.

Messages appearing on screens inside the building in recent days (and seen by the Guardian) told staff, "the union wants you to pay £14.57 every month for them to speak for you - we believe having a voice shouldn't cost you anything".

By word of mouth and WhatsApp, the organisers inside the warehouse built their numbers from a few dozen to more than 100; by September, they were balloting for strike action. That first ballot was lost, by just a handful of votes, but they went for a re-run a few weeks later, as membership

"The best time was during the strikes: we were together, talking, and it's really good being involved"

Salar Kazim
Amazon Coventry worker

continued to build. Just after midnight on 25 January, dozens of workers left the building before the end of their shifts and walked into the freezing night, kicking off the first ever strike action against Amazon in the UK.

"That first walkout was spectacular," says Westwood. "I didn't think it would work: not because I didn't trust what we were doing, but because of the pressure. It was only 50 or 60 people, but because they were coming out in dribs and drabs, it just felt awesome."

They were demanding a pay rise to £15 an hour, but the GMB's Fagan is frank about the fact they were also using the industrial action to give the staff a platform to tell their stories. "People say, what's the point of having industrial action when you've only got 30, 40, 50 members in a workplace? Well, we used it, we knew that the world's eyes would be on it," she says. They won the support of the local Labour MP, Taiwo Owatemi, and US union activists who had recently secured recognition at an Amazon warehouse in New York joined an online rally to show solidarity and exchange tips.

Amazon awarded its staff another pay rise earlier this year, and has also improved conditions for working parents - something it has trumpeted in slick online ads.

Over the course of the dispute, which most recently saw workers involved in two three-day stoppages, GMB membership has increased dramatically, to more than 800. The union believed that was enough to convince the Central Arbitration Committee, which has the power to order a firm to recognise a union, that it had more than 50% support at the site.

That hope was dashed last Thursday, however, after the committee agreed with Amazon that as many as 2,700 staff are employed at BHX4.

The GMB suspects Amazon of going on a hiring spree to scupper its bid for recognition, something the company denies. "It happened at breakneck speed - we don't know where they found all these fresh faces," says Hylton. But the GMB has reluctantly admitted defeat for now, rather than risk losing a recognition ballot, which would bar it from reapplying for three years.

A spokesperson for Amazon says: "We respect our employees' rights to join, or not to join, a union. We offer competitive pay, comprehensive benefits, opportunities for career growth, all while working in a safe, modern work environment."

Back in Brighton, Westwood, Kazim and Hylton, fresh from addressing delegates about their experiences, say they've already achieved change, by working together. "By talking, you share things: you realise you're not in isolation," says Hylton.

"It makes you feel a bit angry, to be honest, but now they're seeing that we're standing up."

Weather

Monday 12 June 2023

UK and Ireland Noon today

Sunny

Mist

Fog

Sunny intervals

Hazy

Mostly cloudy

Overcast/dull

Sunny showers

Sunny and heavy showers

Light showers

Rain

Sleet

Light snow

Snow showers

Heavy snow

Ice

Thundery rain

Thundery showers

Temperature, °C

Wind speed, mph

Windy

35C

30

25

20

15

10

5

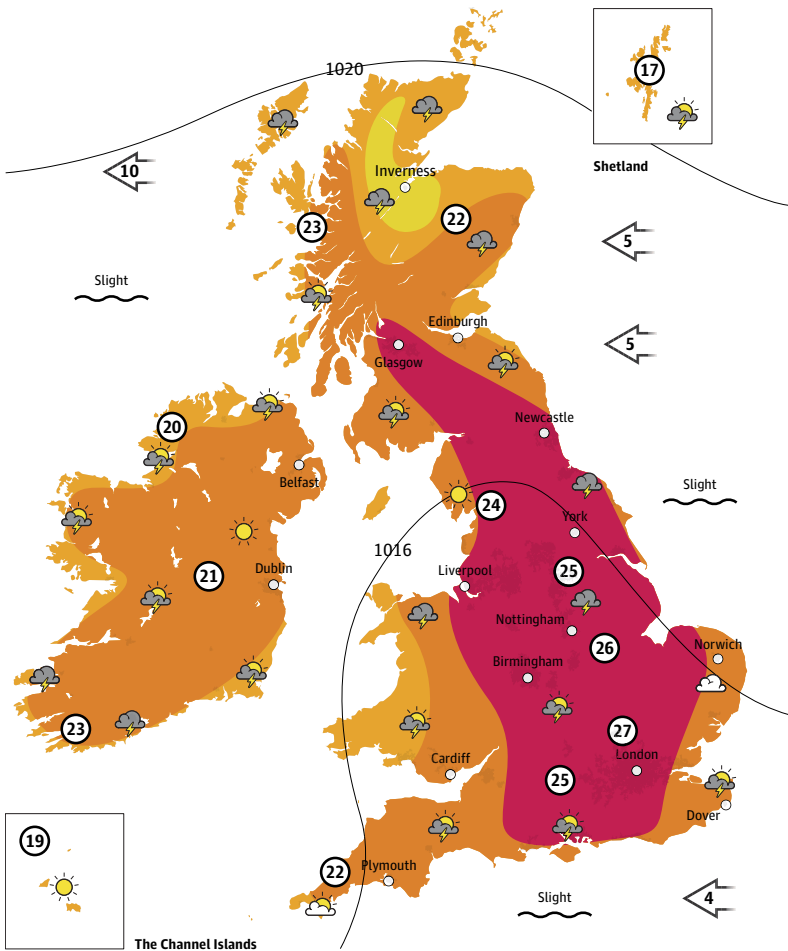
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-5

-10

-15

-20



Forecast

Low **14** High **27**

Tomorrow

Low **12** High **26**

Wednesday

Carbon count

Daily atmospheric CO₂ readings from Mauna Loa, Hawaii (ppm):

Latest

10 Jun 2023 424.10

Weekly average

04 Jun 2023 424.38

11 Jun 2022 421.29

11 Jun 2013 399.37

Pre-industrial base 280

Safe level 350

Source: NOAA-ESRL

Around the UK

London

Lows and highs

16 27

Precipitation

65%

Air pollution

Moderate

Manchester

Lows and highs

14 27

Precipitation

65%

Air pollution

Moderate

Edinburgh

Lows and highs

11 22

Precipitation

55%

Air pollution

Low

Belfast

Lows and highs

15 25

Precipitation

80%

Air pollution

Moderate

Birmingham

Lows and highs

14 25

Precipitation

90%

Air pollution

Low

Brighton

Lows and highs

15 20

Precipitation

65%

Air pollution

Low

Bristol

Lows and highs

15 20

Precipitation

90%

Air pollution

Low

Cardiff

Lows and highs

15 20

Precipitation

90%

Air pollution

Low

Newcastle

Lows and highs

10 25

Precipitation

65%

Air pollution

Moderate

Penzance

Lows and highs

14 19

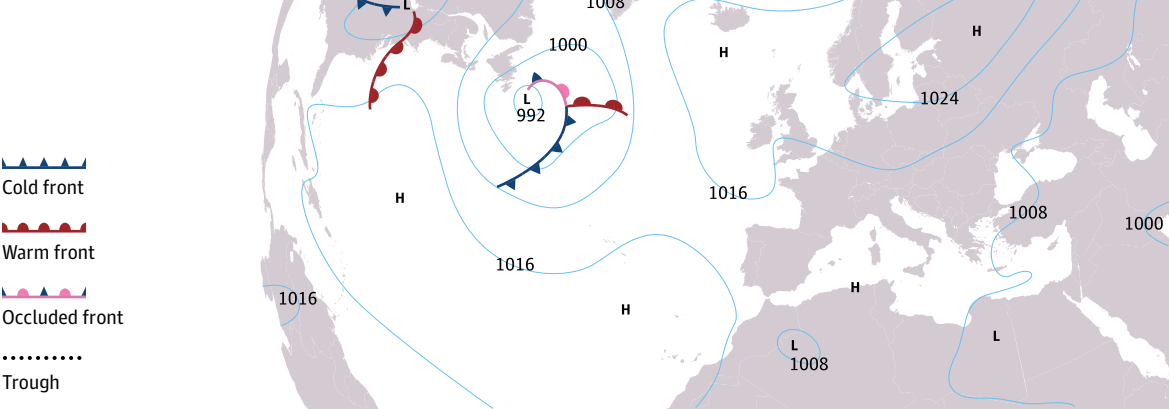
Precipitation

5%

Air pollution

Low

Atlantic front



High tides

Aberdeen	0904	3.7m	2209	3.6m
Avonmouth	0235	11.1m	1508	10.8m
Barrow	0703	8.1m	1945	7.7m
Belfast	0642	3.3m	1940	3.0m
Cobh	0052	3.5m	1321	3.4m
Cromer	0227	4.2m	1426	4.5m
Dover	0705	5.7m	1919	5.9m
Dublin	0720	3.8m	2015	3.5m
Galway	0040	4.3m	1329	4.2m
Greenock	0749	3.1m	2045	2.9m
Harwich	0726	3.6m	1943	3.5m
Holyhead	0600	5.0m	1857	4.7m
Hull	0206	6.3m	1403	6.5m
Leith	1025	4.9m	2311	4.8m
Liverpool	0645	8.3m	1928	7.9m

London Bridge	0931	6.5m	2155	6.3m
Lossiemouth	0708	3.5m	2010	3.4m
Milford Haven	0139	6.0m	1416	5.7m
Newquay	0038	6.0m	1315	5.7m
North Shields	--	--	1113	4.5m
Oban	0138	3.3m	1420	2.9m
Penzance	0008	4.8m	1250	4.6m
Plymouth	0103	4.8m	1352	4.6m
Portsmouth	0710	4.1m	1957	4.4m
Southport	0546	8.0m	1836	7.6m
Stornoway	0241	4.2m	1539	3.8m
Weymouth	0121	0.9m	1412	0.7m
Whitby	--	--	1146	4.9m
Wick	0649	3.0m	1953	2.8m
Workington	0709	7.3m	1955	6.9m

Sun & Moon

Sun rises 0443

Sun sets 2117

Moon rises 0206

Moon sets 1451

New Moon 18 June

AccuWeather.com

Forecasts and graphics provided by AccuWeather ©2023

Lighting up

Belfast	2201 to 0448
Birm'ham	2129 to 0444
Brighton	2114 to 0447
Bristol	2127 to 0454
Carlisle	2149 to 0433
Cork	2153 to 0515
Dublin	2153 to 0456
Glasgow	2203 to 0432
Harlech	2141 to 0451
Inverness	2214 to 0417
London	2117 to 0442
M'chester	2137 to 0441
Newcastle	2146 to 0427
Norwich	2119 to 0431
Penzance	2132 to 0512

Starwatch

In the northern hemisphere, June is the perfect time to track down the constellation of Hercules, the son of Zeus and hero of Roman mythology. It sits high in the southern sky at this time of year, identified by the central four stars that make up a keystone shape.

The chart shows the view looking south at midnight on 13 June, although Hercules will be visible all month. It has no really bright stars but is home to one of the most attractive globular star clusters in the northern hemisphere. The great star cluster in Hercules is catalogued as M13. It is just visible to the naked eye in rural places devoid of light pollution.

For the rest of us binoculars will usually do the trick. Gaze along the line between the two westernmost stars in the keystone, and the fuzzy blob of M13 will appear. Containing about 300,000 stars, it sits at the Milky Way boundary, some 25,000 light years away. **Stuart Clark**

Around the world

Algiers	28	Lisbon	23
Ams'dam	29	Madrid	26
Athens	27	Malaga	29
Auckland	16	Melb'rne	15
B Aires	12	Mexico C	31
Bangkok	32	Miami	31
Barcelona	26	Milan	28
Basra	47	Mombasa	30
Beijing	30	Moscow	18
Berlin	27	Mumbai	33
Bermuda	25	N Orleans	33
Brussels	30	Nairobi	25
Budapest	22	New Delhi	41
C'hagen	22	New York	24
Cairo	34	Oslo	25
Cape Town	16	Paris	28
Chicago	22	Perth	17
Corfu	28	Prague	21
Dakar	32	Reykjavik	11
Dhaka	35	Rio de J	26
Dublin	21	Rome	28
Florence	28	Shanghai	30
Gibraltar	27	Singapore	32
H Kong	31	Stockh'm	22
Harare	25	Strasb'g	31
Helsinki	22	Sydney	20
Istanbul	26	Tel Aviv	27
Jo'burg	17	Tenerife	28
K Lumpur	33	Tokyo	23
K'mandu	27	Toronto	20
Kabul	32	Vancouv'r	23
Kingston	32	Vienna	22
Kolkata	37	Warsaw	21
L Angeles	21	Wash'ton	26
Lagos	30	Well'ton	13
Lima	23	Zurich	27

Cricket

Shrubsole bows out as Vipers cruise to cup win

Page 33 →

Tennis

Still got it: Murray wins grass-court title in Surbiton

Page 38 →



Sport



▲ Ange Postecoglou has been tempted by the bright lights of the Premier League after completing the Double with Celtic

JANE BARLOW/PA

Life after love

Celtic have no reason to rue Postecoglou's move south – they face other problems

Ewan Murray



Celtic's supporters must know not to fall for managers. Ange Postecoglou's exit for Tottenham maintained a theme which dictates those fans will surely be careful not to be seduced by the Australian's successor. These marriages are only ever of convenience. Neil Lennon, Postecoglou's immediate predecessor, is an iconic Celtic figure who was subjected to vile abuse before time was called on his second tenure. Brendan Rodgers was revered in the east end of Glasgow before he, like Postecoglou, was coaxed by the bright lights of the Premier League. That Rodgers leapt shortly before delivery of an eighth consecutive title infuriated a noisy element of the Celtic support, as if such landmarks resonate anywhere beyond Scotland and Leicester were supposed to time the sacking of Claude Puel accordingly.

Speculation linking Rodgers with a return to Celtic refuses to fully dissipate. He has told friends he intends to take a year away from the dugout after the wounding manner in which things imploded for him at Leicester. Managers routinely have such ideas; they are often altered by what is perceived as the right offer. Rodgers likes money but he does not need it. The Northern Irishman has made no secret of a desire to work abroad.

Rodgers has little or nothing to gain by taking on a second Celtic stint. Eventually he realised his broader reputation was hardly being enhanced by harrowing European nights. Celtic will play in the Champions League once more next season and could of course receive a lucky draw. Yet Postecoglou's lauded XI was comfortably bottom of Group F in this campaign.

Dermot Desmond, Celtic's principal shareholder, can be a persuasive man. Desmond is acutely aware he needs to deliver a "name" to placate supporters who are hurt by Postecoglou's relatively swift departure. If there is lingering discontent about Rodgers, Desmond is unlikely to care.

That Celtic are not willing to make it straightforward for their assistant manager, John Kennedy, to follow Postecoglou to London at least implies they are not particularly amused by recent events. This would also suggest Celtic believed for most of the season just completed that Postecoglou would remain in post for one more tilt at the Champions League. Succession planning has never been a Celtic forte. Instead, there is an obsession with prevailing in Scotland's two-horse domestic scene. Rodgers loved Glasgow but, naturally, lost his appetite for the football environment.

If the Rodgers link does amount to nothing, Kjetil Knutsen and Enzo Maresca are known to have admirers inside Celtic's boardroom. Knutsen's sterling work with Bodø/Glimt has earned him admirers and job links galore but, curiously, no move. Now 54, Knutsen will know he has to seize a bigger opportunity some time soon. He appears to suffer from the lack of broader respect afforded to Norwegian coaches. Postecoglou was once in a similar scenario, with Celtic providing the ideal platform for him to showcase his talents. There are parallels, too, in that Knutsen would want to implement a clear style of play.

Maresca impressed Desmond and others when interviewed by Celtic before. Any coach under Pep Guardiola clearly knows what they are doing and the example of Mikel Arteta will be cited by those who believe Maresca is bound for glory of his own. His short, ill-fated time in charge of Parma in 2021 raises red flags. Celtic have fished in the City Football Group pond before, including with Postecoglou, but this appointment would carry huge risk.

Rik De Mil, the assistant manager at Club Brugge, AZ Alkmaar's Pascal Jansen, Daniel Farke and Graham Potter have also been linked with Celtic. De Mil and Jansen look to have bright futures. Potter could reasonably believe his role in the omnishambles at Chelsea will be overlooked by Premier League clubs given his success at Swansea and Brighton. Moving to Scotland, so soon after being regarded as the hottest managerial property in England, would be viewed as taking two steps back. Farke's career has stalled.

Celtic, extraordinarily for a club of such size, have no director of football. Their model has been so intrinsically linked to Postecoglou for two years that they are now in a tricky position. It is not a given that their new manager will have to oversee a rebuild but this individual has to earn the trust of five Japanese players – two of them, Kyogo Furuhashi and Reo Hatate, are massively influential – and vice versa. Postecoglou shaped the squad precisely as he wanted, with positive results meaning he was implicitly trusted by directors. Scratching below the surface, Celtic in so many ways resemble an analogue football club in a digital age.

Perhaps Celtic have no reason to rue Postecoglou's switch. Clubs the world over would be perfectly content with two profitable years from a manager who is poached by someone further up the food chain. Had Postecoglou flopped, nobody would have been remotely interested in him anyway. Celtic have to determine whether they are happy with potential replication of that storyline or want longer-term stability.

What they actually need is someone who will broaden their horizons. They require a visible pathway for youth players, a level of performance that can at least make reasonable inroads in Europe and a reputation which leaves other huge entities in small leagues across the continent dripping with jealousy. The manager who ticks those boxes – and who will be given leeway to see a world beyond Ross County – is their man.

Football

FIFA UNDER-20 WORLD CUP
Third place playoff: Israel 3 South Korea 1
Final: Uruguay 1 Italy 0
INTERNATIONAL FRIENDLIES
Mexico 2 Cameroon 2; Panama 3 Nicaragua 2
WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL FRIENDLY
Zambia 1 Tanzania 0
SERIE A
Relegation playoff: Spezia 1 Verona 3
Cricket

LV= COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP
Division one (day one of four)

Essex v Somerset
Chelmsford Essex (3pts) lead Somerset (1) by 360 with six first-innings wickets remaining
Essex First innings

NLJ Browne c Kohler-Cadmore b Davey.....	33
AN Cook lbw b Davey.....	128
*T Westley c Rew b Overton	37
PI Walter b Aldridge	27
MJJ Critchley not out	119
BMJ Allison not out	4
Extras (lb6, nb6)	12
Total (for 4, 96 overs).....	360
Fall 66, 136, 188, 341.	

To bat FIN Khushi, SR Harmer, tWEL Buttlemann, SJ Cook, JA Porter.	
Bowling Henry 17-4-75-0; Overton 17.5-6-36-1; Aldridge 15.1-1-78-1; Davey 17-1-76-2; Bashir 29-6-89-0.	
Toss Essex elected to bat	
Umpires NJ Long and DJ Millns.	

Kent v Surrey	
Canterbury Surrey (3pts) trail Kent (2) by 283 runs with eight first-innings wickets remaining	
Kent First innings	
T Mueyee c Sibley b Abbott	21
BG Compton c Jacks b Abbott	9
DJ Bell-Drummond lbw b Clark	0
JL Denly b Abbott	0
* JA Leaning c Foakes b Clark	0
tJM Cox c Clark b Abbott	133
JDM Evison c Foakes b Moriarty	58
Hamidullah Qadri c Foakes b Atkinson	5
MR Quinn b Atkinson	10
WA Agar c Sibley b Worrall	51
A Singh not out	1
Extras (b1, lb10, nb2)	13
Total (82.2 overs)	301
Fall 34, 35, 35, 35, 41, 162, 167, 199, 299.	

Bowling Worrall 16.2-1-55-1; Abbott 17-3-52-4; Clark 15-5-40-2; Atkinson 16-2-57-2; Moriarty 13-0-70-1; Jacks 5-0-16-0.	
Surrey First innings	
*RJ Burns c Quinn b Agar	15
DP Sibley not out	1
GP Atkinson c Quinn b Agar.....	0
Extras (nb2)	2
Total (for 2, 10.4 overs).....	18
Fall 18, 18.	
To bat TWM Latham, JL Smith, tBT Foakes, WG Jacks, J Clark, SA Abbott, D Moriarty, DJ Worrall.	
Bowling Quinn 4-3-3-0; Agar 3.4-0-15-2; Singh 3-3-0-0.	
Toss Kent elected to bat	
Umpires RJ Warren and JD Middlebrook.	

Lancashire v Hampshire

Southport Lancashire (3pts) trail Hampshire (0) by three runs with nine first-innings wickets remaining

Hampshire First innings

JJ Weatherley c Bell b Bailey	15
FS Middleton c Salt b Williams.....	0
NRT Gubbins lbw b Blatherwick.....	16
*JM Vince b Williams	15
tBC Brown c Bohannon b Bailey.....	6
LA Dawson c Hartley b Bailey.....	9
FS Organ c Salt b Williams.....	2
KHD Barker b Hartley.....	44
MS Crane c Bailey b Blatherwick.....	18
KJ Abbott c Williams b Hartley.....	2
Mohammad Abbas not out	0
Extras (lb5, nb10)	15
Total (60.4 overs).....	142

Fall 10, 20, 49, 57, 69, 72, 76, 134, 142.

Bowling Bailey 14-4-29-3; Williams 15-8-14-3; Balderson 7-1-29-0; Blatherwick 12.4-3-25-2; Mitchell 7-0-30-0; Hartley 5-2-10-2.

Lancashire First innings

tPD Salt not out	76
GP Balderson b Dawson	51
JJ Bohannon not out	12
Extras	0
Total (for 1, 35 overs).....	139

Fall 115.

To bat RP Jones, DJ Mitchell, *DJ Vilas, G Bell, WSA Williams, TE Bailey, TW Hartley, JM Blatherwick.	
Bowling Barker 8-1-44-0; Mohammad Abbas 11-3-40-0; Abbott 9-2-32-0; Dawson 5-0-16-1; Crane 2-0-7-0.	
Toss Lancashire elected to field	
Umpires RJ Bailey and NA Mallender.	

Nottinghamshire v Warwickshire

Trent Bridge Warwickshire (3pts) lead Nottinghamshire (1) by 361 runs with five first-innings wickets remaining

Warwickshire First innings

RM Yates c Moores b Ball	13
AL Davies lbw b Harrison	93
*WMH Rhodes b Ball	37
SR Hain b James.....	100
DR Mousley c Moores b Paterson	87
E Barnard not out	12
DR Briggs not out	4
Extras (b4, lb5, nb6)	15
Total (for 5, 96 overs).....	361

Fall 23, 97, 169, 340, 348.

To bat tMGK Burgess, Hasan Ali, C Rushworth, OJ Hannon-Dalby.

Bowling Hutton 19-3-69-0; Ball 13-2-52-2; Paterson 21-3-61-1; James 16-1-59-1; Mullaney 5-0-15-0; Harrison 18-0-72-1; Montgomery 4-0-24-0.

Toss Warwickshire elected to bat

Umpires SJ O'Shaughnessy and PJ Hartley.

The week ahead



Ben Stokes will lead England into the first Ashes Test on Friday

Today
Football
International matches
Germany v Ukraine (5pm); Morocco v Cape Verde (8pm)
Tennis
WTA/ATP Rothesay Open
Nottingham (to Sun) <i>BBC Red Button/BBC online</i>
WTA/ATP Libema Open
Rosmalen, Netherlands (to Sun)
ATP Stuttgart Open
Germany (to Sun)
Cycling
Men's Tour de Suisse
Switzerland (to Sun) <i>Eurosport 1</i>
Darts
Players Championship
Hildesheim, Germany (to Tues)
Racing
Lingfield, Pontefract, Southwell, Windsor

Tomorrow
Football
Under-21 friendly match
Rep of Ireland U21 v Gabon U23 (5pm)
Basketball
NBA Finals
Game 5 Miami v Denver (1.30am) <i>Sky Sports Main Event/Sky Sports Arena</i>
Racing
Ayr, Brighton, Salisbury, Wetherby

Wednesday
Football
Uefa Nations League
Semi-final Netherlands v Croatia (7.45pm) <i>Viaplay Sports 1</i>
International friendly
Kenya v Pakistan (noon)
Cricket
Only Test (first day of five)
Bangladesh v Afghanistan, Mirpur (5am)
Ice Hockey
Stanley Cup Finals
Game 5 (if required) Florida v Vegas (1am) <i>Viaplay Sports 2</i>
Racing
Great Yarmouth, Hamilton, Haydock, Kempton, Newton Abbot

Durham v Glamorgan	
Riverside Durham (3pts) trail Glamorgan (3) by 386 runs with 10 first-innings wickets remaining	
Glamorgan First innings	
Zain-ul-Hassan c & b Miles	24
AG Salter c Robinson b de Leede	43
Haider Ali lbw b Coad	4
CA Ingram c Robinson b de Leede	60
SA Northeast c Robinson b Miles	60
*KS Carlson c Robinson b Miles	162
WT Root b Raine	45
tCB Cooke lbw b Raine	7
AW Gorvin b Raine	0
T Van der Gugten not out	7
J R Harris b Miles	0
P Sisodiya b Raine	4
Extras (b6, lb7, w3, nb18)	34
Total (92.5 overs)	390
Fall 55, 80, 81, 249, 340, 363, 379, 379, 379.	
Bowling Raine 24.5-4-79-4; De Leede 13-3-59-2; Miles 22-4-73-4; McAlindon 10-0-79-0; Patel 22-3-81-0; Borthwick 1-0-6-0.	
Durham First innings	
SJC McAlindon not out	4
AZ Lees not out	0
Extras	0
Total (for 0, 1 overs)	4
To bat MA Jones, DG Bedingham, *SG Borthwick, tOG Robinson, G Clark, B De Leede, BA Raine, AY Patel, CN Miles.	
Bowling Van der Gugten 1-0-4-0.	
Toss Glamorgan elected to field	
Umpires PR Pollard and N Pratt.	
Gloucestershire v Leicestershire	
Bristol Gloucestershire (Opts) lead Leicestershire (1) by 108 runs with seven first-innings wickets remaining	

Gloucestershire v Leicestershire
Bristol Gloucestershire (Opts) lead Leicestershire (1) by 108 runs with seven first-innings wickets remaining

Thursday
Football
International matches
Argentina v Australia (11am)
Uefa Nations League
Semi-final Spain v Italy (7.45pm) <i>Viaplay Sports 1</i>
Under-21 friendly match
Scotland U21 v Norway U21 (5pm)
Golf
US Open
Los Angeles, California (to Sun) <i>Sky Sports Golf</i>
Meijer LPGA Classic
Belmont, Michigan (to Sun)
LET German Masters
Berlin (to Sun)
Athletics
Diamond League Oslo
Norway
Racing
Great Yarmouth, Haydock, Newbury, Nottingham, Worcester

Friday
Football
International matches
Poland v Germany; Sweden v N Zealand (6pm)
European Championship qualifying
Group B Gibraltar v France <i>Viaplay Sports Online</i> ; Greece v Republic of Ireland <i>Viaplay Xtra</i> . Group C Malta v England <i>Channel 4/All 4</i> ; North Macedonia v Ukraine <i>Viaplay Sports Online</i> . Group D Latvia v Turkey <i>Viaplay Sports Online</i> ; Wales v Armenia <i>S4C/S4C Online</i> / <i>Viaplay Sports 2</i> . Group I Andorra v Switzerland <i>Viaplay Sports Online</i> ; Belarus v Israel <i>Viaplay Sports Online</i> ; Kosovo v Romania <i>Viaplay Sports Online</i> . Group H Denmark v Northern Ireland <i>Viaplay Sports 1</i> ; Finland v Slovenia <i>Viaplay Sports Online</i> ; San Marino v Kazakhstan <i>Viaplay Sports Online</i>
Under-21 friendly match
Ukraine v Republic of Ireland (5pm)
Rugby league
Betfred League 1
Dewsbury Rams v Rochdale (7.30pm)
Cricket (6.30pm unless stated)
First Test (first day of five)

England v Australia, Edgbaston (11am) <i>Sky Sports Cricket/Sky Sports Main Event</i>
Vitality Blast
North Group Durham v Derbyshire, Riverside; Northamptonshire v Lancashire, Northampton; Yorkshire v Leicestershire, Headingley; Worcestershire v Warwickshire, New Road (5.30pm)
South Group Essex Eagles v Glamorgan, Chelmsford (7pm); Middlesex v Kent, Lord's (6.15pm); Somerset v Surrey, Taunton; Sussex v Hampshire, Hove (7pm) <i>Sky Sports Cricket</i>
Formula One
Canadian Grand Prix Practice
Montreal (6.30pm) <i>Sky Sports F1</i>
Basketball
NBA Finals
Game 6 (if required) Denver v Miami (1.30am) <i>Sky Sports Arena/Sky Sports Main Event</i>
Cycling
Women's Tour de Suisse
Switzerland (to 20 June) <i>Eurosport 2</i>
Rowing
World Cup II
Varese, Italy (to Sun)
Racing
Aintree, Chepstow, Fontwell, Goodwood, Sandown, York

Saturday
Football (7.45pm unless stated)
European Championship qualifying
Group A Cyprus v Georgia <i>Viaplay Sports 1</i> ; Norway v Scotland (5pm) <i>Viaplay Sports 1</i> . Group G Lithuania v Bulgaria (2pm) <i>Viaplay Sports 2</i> ; Montenegro v Hungary (5pm) <i>Viaplay Sports 2</i> . Group E Albania v Moldova <i>Viaplay Sports Online</i> ; Faroe Islands v Czech Republic <i>Viaplay Sports Online</i> . Group F Azerbaijan v Estonia (5pm) <i>Viaplay Sports Online</i> ; Belgium v Austria <i>Viaplay Sports 2</i> . Group J Iceland v Slovakia <i>Viaplay Sports Online</i> ; Luxembourg v Liechtenstein <i>Viaplay Xtra</i> (2pm); Portugal v Bosnia-Herzegovina <i>Viaplay Xtra</i>
International matches
Brazil v Guinea (8pm)
Rugby league
Betfred Challenge Cup
Quarter-finals Hull KR v Salford (noon)

<i>Viaplay Sports 1</i> ; Hull FC v St Helens (2.30pm)
Betfred Championship
Toulouse v Sheffield Eagles (5pm)
Cricket
Vitality Blast
South Group Gloucestershire v Kent, Bristol (7pm)
Formula One
Canadian Grand Prix Qualifying
Montreal (9pm) <i>Sky Sports F1</i>
Ice Hockey
Stanley Cup Finals
Game 6 (if required) Vegas v Florida (1am) <i>Viaplay Sports 2</i>
Racing
Bath, Chester, Hexham, Leicester, Sandown, Utttoxeter, York

Sunday
Football
Uefa Nations League
Third-place playoff TBC v TBC (2pm) <i>Viaplay Sports 1</i>
Final TBC v TBC (7.45pm) <i>Viaplay Sports 1</i>
Under-21 friendly match
Scotland U21 v Norway U21 (1pm)
Rugby league (3pm unless stated)
Betfred Challenge Cup
Quarter-finals Wigan v Warrington (2.30pm); York v Leigh (5pm) <i>Viaplay Sports 1</i>
Betfred Championship
Barrow Raiders v Widnes Vikings; Bradford Bulls v Halifax Panthers; Featherstone Rovers v London Broncos; Newcastle Thunder v Keighley Cougars; Swinton Lions v Batley Bulldogs
Cricket (2.30pm unless stated)
Vitality Blast
North Group Derbyshire v Yorkshire, Chesterfield; Lancashire v Durham, Old Trafford; Leicestershire v Worcestershire, Grace Road; Northamptonshire v Nottinghamshire, Northampton
South Group Glamorgan v Gloucestershire, Sophia Gardens; Middlesex v Essex Eagles, Lord's; Surrey v Hampshire, Kia Oval
Formula One
Canadian Grand Prix
Montreal (7pm) <i>Sky Sports F1</i>
Racing
Doncaster, Salisbury

CHARLOTTE EDWARDS CUP FINAL
Doncaster Blaze 114-8. Southern Vikings 118-3 (DN Wyatt 50). Southern Vipers beat Blaze by seven wickets with 38 balls to spare.

Tennis
FRENCH OPEN (Roland Garros, Paris)
Men: Singles: Final: N DJOKOVIC (Srb, 3) bt C RUUD (Den, 4) 7-6 (1) 6-3 7-5
Women: Doubles: Final: Hsieh S-w & Wang X (Tai/Chn) bt L FERNANDEZ & T TOWNSEND (Can/US, 10) 1-6 7-6 (5) 6-1

LEXUS SORBITION TROPHY (LONDON)
Men: Singles: Final: A Murray (GB) bt J Rodionov (Aut) 6-3 6-2
Women: Singles: Final: Y Wickmayer (Bel) bt K Swan (GB) 2-6 6-4 7-6 (1)

Rugby union
WOMEN'S ALLIANZ PREMIER 15s
Semi-final: Exeter 24 Saracens 21
SEVENS EUROPE SERIES (Portugal)
Men: Semi-finals: Georgia 14 France 7; Great Britain 14 Ireland 17.
Third place playoff: France 21 Great Britain 14
Final: Georgia 10 Ireland 19
Women: Semi-finals: Ireland 0 France 29; Poland 7 Great Britain 31.
Third place playoff: Poland 7 Ireland 20
Final: Great Britain 7 France 19

Rugby league								
BETFRED SUPER LEAGUE								
	P	W	D	L	F	A	PD	Pts
Catalans Dragons	15	11	0	4	410	236	+174	22
Warrington	15	11	0	4	377	255	+122	22
Leigh	15	10	0	5	336	229	+107	20
Salford	15	10	0	5	339	269	+70	20
St Helens	14	9	0	5	313	191	+122	18
Wigan	15	9	0	6	333	253	+80	18
Hull K R	15	8	0	7	314	252	+62	16
Leeds	15	6	0	9	291	294	-3	12
Hull	15	6	0	9	246	403	-157	12
Huddersfield	14	5	0	9	223	268	-45	10
Castleford	15	3	0	12	171	388	-217	6
Wakefield	15	1	0	14	111	426	-315	2
Wakefield 24 Leeds 14								

BETFRED CHAMPIONSHIP
Barrow 18 Keighley 16; Bradford 32 London Broncos 16; Newcastle 12 Batley 26; Swinton 8 Halifax 46; Whitehaven 36 Widnes 12

BETFRED LEAGUE ONE
Cornwall 6 Dewsbury 30; Doncaster 42 Rochdale 20

BETFRED WOMEN'S SUPER LEAGUE								
Group one								
	P	W	D	L	F	A	PD	Pts
York	3	3	0	0	104	22	+82	6
St Helens	3	2	0	1	70	48	+22	4
Wigan	3	1	1	1	56	68	-12	3
Warrington	3	1	1	1	58	90	-32	3
Leeds	3	1	0	2	110	72	+38	2
Huddersfield	3	0	0	3	44	142	-98	0
Huddersfield 24 Warrington 32; St Helens 26 Wigan 4								
Group two								
	P	W	D	L	F	A	PD	Pts
Leigh	3	2	1	0	89	40	+49	5
Barrow	3	2	0	1	98	36	+62	4
Salford	3	2	0	1	64	94	-30	4
Featherstone	2	1	0	1	48	27	+21	2
Bradford	3	0	1	2	40	88	-48	1
Castleford	2	0	0	2	14	68	-54	0

▲ Loughborough celebrate with the trophy after beating London in the Netball Super League Grand Final

HARRIET LANDER/GETTY IMAGES FOR ENGLAND NETBALL



Barrow 48 Castleford 6; Bradford 28 Salford 34; Leigh 19 Featherstone 18

Golf

VOLVO SCANDINAVIAN MIXED (Stockholm)

Leading final scores (GB/Ire unless stated): **267** D Whitnell 66 61 70 70. **270** S Crocker (US) 74 67 64 65. **273** A Van Dam (Neth) 72 69 63 69; Y Paul (Ger) 65 68 68 72. **274** G Cowley 69 72 64 69; R Ramsay 68 66 69 71; P Waring 69 69 68 68; S Kjeldsen (Den) 67 70 69 68. **275** M Jordan 71 68 66 70; A Björk (Swe) 70 69 68 68. **276** H Townsend (Swe) 71 70 71 64. **277** M Sagström (Swe) 72 69 64 72; D Gavins 74 69 67 67; A Noren (Swe) 74 68 68 67; E Pepperell 72 69 71 65; D Law 72 71 66 68; M Southgate 70 70 71 66; A Hidalgo (Sp) 67 71 68 71; L De Jager (SA) 66 76 65 70; F Lacroix (Fr) 66 72 68 71. **278** J Walters (SA) 67 70 71 70; J Catlin (US) 70 66 72 70; J Guerrier (Fr) 69 70 70 69; N Nørregaard Møller (Den) 65 73 70 70; D van Driel (Neth) 73 67 68 70. **279** M Warren (Fr) 72 66 66. **280** K Broberg (Swe) 69 74 66 71; A Rozner (Fr) 69 70 70 71; S Söderberg (Swe) 71 72 65 72; J Janewattananond (Tha) 71 67 70 72; R Hisatsune (Jpn) 74 70 63 73. **281** I Lindblad (Swe) 73 69 69 70; S Forsström (Swe) 72 71 68 70; M Baldwin 70 69 76 66; H Long (Ger) 70 73 69 69; R Mansell 70 74 73 64; T Pulkkanen (Fin) 68 70 70 73; M Kawamura (Jpn) 70 70 69 72; J Axelsen (Den) 71 69 72 69.

RBC CANADIAN OPEN (Toronto, Ontario)

Leading third-round scores (US unless stated): **202** C Pan (Tai) 70 66 66. **204** T Fleetwood (Eng) 70 70 64; H Higgs 71 66 67; M Hubbard 68 70 66; R McIlroy (NI) 71 67 66; A Novak 69 68 67; J Rose (Eng) 69 69 66. **205** A Rai (Eng) 67 69 69; N Taylor (Can) 75 67 63. **206** C Connors (Can) 67 69 70. **207** J Byrd 68 69 70; B Wu 71 69 67. **208** D Ghim 71 68 69; T Hatton (Eng) 72 64 72; N Lashley 70 68 70. **209** H Endycott (Aus) 72 68 69; C Hadley 67 70 72; A Hadwin (Can) 71 68 70; Yuan C (Chn) 68 67 74. **210** M Fitzpatrick (Eng) 68 73 69; Kim S (Kor) 68 70 72; B Todd 68 69 73; T Potter Jr. 73 67 70.

SHOPRITE LPGA CLASSIC (New Jersey, USA)

Leading final scores (US unless stated): **199** A Buhai (SA) 69 65 65. **200** Kim H-j (Kor) 67 65 68. **202** Liu Y (Chn) 65 70 67. **203** D Holmqvist (Swe) 64 67 72; N Madsen (Den) 67 71 65. **204** Joo S-b (Kor) 66 70 68; H Nomura (Jpn) 68 71 65; Oh S-h (Aus) 68 72 64; Shin J (Kor) 65 70 69; A Thititkul (Tha) 68 67 69; A Valenzuela (Swi) 71 67 66. **205** M Alex 73 65 67; C Noja (Ger) 68 67 70. **206** F Ayaka (Jpn) 68 68 70. **207** B Do 71 64 72; M Katsu (Jpn) 73 67 67; A Nordqvist (Swe) 66 70 71; M Reid (Eng) 72 69 66; M Steen 70 73 64; L Stephenson 70 73 64; Yin R (Chn) 71 67 69.

Cycling

CRITÉRIUM DU DAUPHINÉ (France)

Stage eight (Le Pont-de-Claix-La Bastille-Grenoble Alpes Métropole, 152.8km): **1** G Ciccone (It) Lidl Trek 4hr 6min 4sec; **2** J Vingegaard (Den) Jumbo Visma +0:23; **3** A Yates (GB) UAE Team Emirates +0:33; **4** B O'Connor (Aus) AG2R Citroën +0:49; **5** G Martin (Fr) Cofidis +0:54. **Overall standings:** **1** J Vingegaard (Den) 28hr 28min 39sec; **2** A Yates (GB) +2:23; **3** B O'Connor (Aus) +2:56; **4** J Hindley (Aus) Bora Hansgrohe +3:16; **5** J Haig (Aus) Bahrain Victorious +3:47. **Selected others:** **13** M Poole (GB) DSM +6:53; **24** J Shaw (GB) EF Education EasyPost +17:39;

TOUR DE SUISSE (Switzerland)

Stage one (Einsiedeln-Einsiedeln, 12.7km) **1** S Kug (Swi) Groupama FDJ 13min 31sec; **2** R Evenepoel (Bel) Soudal QuickStep +0:06; **3** W Van Aert (Bel) Jumbo Visma +0:10; **4** M Sheffield (US) Ineos Grenadiers +0:11; **5** J Price-Pejtersen (Den) Bahrain Victorious +0:17.

ZLM TOUR (Netherlands)

Stage five (Oosterhout-Oosterhout, 158.5km): **1** O Kooij (Neth) Jumbo Visma 3hr 27min 6sec; **2** S Welsford (Aus) DSM; **3** J Mareczko (It) Alpecin Deceuninck; **4** A De Kleijn (Neth) Tudor Pro Cycling; **5** Y Havik (Neth) Beat Cycling all same time. **Overall standings:** **1** O Kooij (Neth) 16hr 18min 37sec; **2** S Welsford (Aus) +0:13; **3** N Eekhof (Neth) DSM +0:15; **4** A Edmondson (Aus) DSM +0:16; **5** C Bol (Neth) Astana Qazaqstan +0:21. **Selected others:** **9** M Cavendish (GB) Astana Qazaqstan +0:38

Netball

SUPER LEAGUE PLAYOFFS (Copper Box, London)

Third-place playoff: Surrey 38 Manchester 55
Final: London 48 Loughborough 57

Hockey

FIH PRO LEAGUE

Women: Netherlands 3 Australia 3 (Australia win 2-1 on pens)
Men: India 2 Argentina 1

Ice hockey

NHL PLAYOFFS

Final: Florida 2 Vegas 3 (Vegas lead best-of-seven series 3-1)

Baseball

MLB

Atlanta 2 Washington 6; Baltimore 11 Kansas City 3; Chicago White Sox 5 Miami 6; Cleveland 5 Houston 0; Colorado L San Diego L; Detroit 5 Arizona 7; LA Angels 2 Seattle 6; Milwaukee 6 Oakland 8; New York Yankees 3 Boston 1; Philadelphia 7 LA Dodgers 3; Pittsburgh 2 New York Mets 1; San Francisco 0 Chicago Cubs 4; St Louis 3 Cincinnati 4; Tampa Bay 7 Texas 3; Toronto 7 Minnesota 6

NBL

East London 5 Essex 6; East London 2 Essex 13

Greg Wood's racing tips

Lingfield 2.00 Blindedbythelights **2.30** Obama Army **3.00** Meng Tian **3.30** Invincible Tiger **4.00** Bobby's Blessing **4.30** King Of Speed **5.00** Hover On The Wind
Southwell 2.15 Stepney Causeway **2.45** Miss Antipova **3.15** Chess Player **3.45** Shandancer **4.15** Mrs Kinsella **4.50** Nadim **5.25** Having A Barney **Windsor 5.08** My Genghis **5.40** South Kensington **6.10** Shadow Dance **6.40** Queen Emma **7.10** Swayze (nap) **7.40** American Rose **8.10** Party Island **8.40** Ciao Adios
Pontefract 6.00 Soul Seeker **6.30** Neverstopdreaming **7.00** Carrigillihy **7.30** Giovanni Change **8.00** Iron Sheriff **8.30** Crypto Quest (nb) **9.00** Pearl Eye

Sport

Cricket Charlotte Edwards Cup final

Wyatt gives Vipers winning bite as Shrubsole bows out in style

The Blaze

114-8

Southern Vipers

118-3

Southern Vipers win by seven wickets

Raf Nicholson

New Road

Southern Vipers retained their Charlotte Edwards Cup title in style, winning by seven wickets with 34 balls to spare, after The Blaze made just 114 for eight in their 20 overs.

It proved a fitting swanswong for player-coach Anya Shrubsole, whose final act for her team was a return of 4-2-24-2, earning her the player of the final award.

Vipers' openers Maia Bouchier and Danni Wyatt then followed up their century opening stand in Saturday's

semi-final with a 67-run partnership off 41 balls, which broke the back of the chase - Wyatt bringing up a 27-ball half-century.

In an emotional post-match interview, Shrubsole confirmed that she will be retiring from cricket after The Hundred, though she said she had not made a decision about whether she would continue as Vipers' assistant coach after this season.

"I think through the course of this tournament it just became clear to me that my time was up," she said. "I carried on playing because I really enjoy playing, but the pain element of it made it not particularly enjoyable at times, so in lots of ways it was a pretty easy decision to call it a day.

"I've got a lot of life left in me and I'd like to be able to walk around, take the dogs out for a walk, and for it not to hurt. I've played cricket since I was 16 - when you give that up it's never

easy, but I knew it was the right time."

After thunderstorms forced players off the field on Saturday, the Worcestershire groundstaff pulled off a successful mopping-up operation to ensure play got under way at 10.15am on the reserve day.

East Midlands team the Blaze, playing in their first Finals Day after their rebrand from Lightning at the end of last season, had resumed on 53 for four, 9.3 overs into their innings.



▲ Anya Shrubsole signs off in style with a player of the match display

LV= County Championship

Tasty Salt puts Lancashire firmly in charge

Tanya Aldred

The grass was brittle-dry at Southport, a hot-fire outfield begging for quick runs. And it was Lancashire who made the most of the conditions, first bowling Hampshire out for 142, with three wickets each for Will Williams and Tom Bailey, and then letting fly with the bat. Phil Salt, opening

the innings for Lancashire for the first time in red-ball cricket, eyed up the Championship's best attack and advanced. He was dropped on four in the first over, off the hard working Keith Barker, and then pounced, combining flambéed attack with, as stumps approached, watchful defence. Lancs finished the day just three runs behind, with the loss of only George Balderson, to the approval of more than 1,500 spectators in fold-up chairs and sunhats.

At Canterbury, Jordan Cox turned Kent's day upside-down with a sparkling century, transforming a miserable 41 for five into a respectable 301 all out. Wes Agar then took two early Surrey wickets to further twist the tale. Sam Billings was left out of the Kent side after "mutual discussions

about form". Alastair Cook, an old-fashioned knight in a sudden surfeit, reached his 74th first-class century accompanied by heat and a welcoming Chelmsford pitch. He was joined in the three-figures club by Matt Critchley, whose gung-ho hundred for Essex wearied the Somerset attack. New Taunton signing Shoaib Bashir, a 19-year-old off-spinner, was put through his paces, fizzing down 29 overs.

Yorkshire, winless in the first tranche of Championship cricket, had a good day. Perhaps buoyed by their T20 Blast successes, they filleted Derbyshire for 111, Matt Fisher picking up a career-best five for 30, Ben Coad three for 28. By the close, Yorkshire were already 161 ahead, with five wickets in hand. Shan Masood collected his highest score of the season, Dawid

They needed to come out swinging if they were to have any chance of making a competitive total.

Instead, they nurdled singles; Marie Kelly steadfastly made her way to an all-run 26 not out, off 36 balls. It took 27 balls after the resumption before Nadine de Klerk finally slapped Georgia Adams over the mid-wicket boundary.

Charlie Dean helped keep them quiet, picking up the wickets of Sarah Glenn - who drove straight into the hands of long-off in the 14th over - and knocking out De Klerk's leg stump.

In reply, Grace Ballinger's first over went for 17 as Wyatt and Bouchier (25 off 20) picked off boundaries at will during a mammoth 61-run powerplay.

Bouchier fell in the seventh over, bowled by Glenn after swinging at one too many, while Wyatt was adjudged lbw to De Klerk just five balls after bringing up her half-century.

With just 27 runs still needed, a powerfully struck cameo from England's Freya Kemp (13 off eight) whittled the total down, and Vipers' captain Adams (16 not out off 12) then chipped in with back-to-back boundaries to take her side home.

Malan unbeaten on 76. Elsewhere, Sussex fought back against Worcestershire, rain again haunted Gloucestershire, and a century from Sam Hain put Warwickshire in a strong position against Nottinghamshire. Kiran Carlson conjured up another bewitching century, his fourth of the season, as Glamorgan were all out just a sneeze short of 400 at Durham.



▲ Essex's Alastair Cook was out for 128, trapped lbw by Josh Davey

out of London on Friday there was a party atmosphere in anticipation of what was to come, drinks were being taken and new friends being made. Le Mans always has the celebratory air of a reunion but this one felt special, almost as if 30 years had passed since the last.

When the No 51 Ferrari 499P of Italy's Alessandro Pier Guidi, Antonio Giovinazzi and Britain's James Calado took the flag they had come out on top after a blow-for-blow battle that had lasted for almost all of the 24 hours over the No 8 Toyota of Sébastien Buemi, Brendon Hartley and Ryo Hirakawa. In front of a sold-out crowd of 300,000, there had been scant seconds in it for all but the final hour and a half, when a late crash for the Toyota proved costly. By the time the clock counted out the final moments, Ferrari had completed 342 laps and still had only 1 minute and 21 seconds on their rival.

The tone had been set from the beginning, a frenetic opening six hours interrupted by sudden downpours that disappeared almost as soon as they had arrived. Ferrari, Toyota, Porsche, Cadillac and Peugeot,



▲ Alessandro Pier Guidi, Antonio Giovinazzi and James Calado

Motorsport

Ferrari take Le Mans 24-hour race with thrilling win after 50-year gap

Giles Richards

Circuit de la Sarthe

Driving into history with a stone-cold classic race to mark its 100th anniversary, the centennial 24 Hours of Le Mans delivered on every level, not least in an equally historic return to the top for Ferrari at the Circuit de la Sarthe. For half a century the Scuderia have not competed in the top class at Le Mans, but they came back in style, taking a mighty victory after an immense struggle in a vingt-quatre more than worthy of the occasion.

Le Mans has long been inextricably linked with Ferrari but the Scuderia last competed here at the top level in 1973 and while they have won nine times before, the last was back in 1965. The scale of their achievement this year cannot be underestimated. Given it was at the first attempt after

the lead changed hands between them all as they raced into the night but by mid morning it was a two-way fight between Ferrari and Toyota.

Both ran at relentless pace and repeatedly exchanged the lead until the Toyota's late crash. Ferrari being Ferrari there was, of course, a last twist as on the final pit stop, the car sat in its box unable to restart. The seconds ticked away as blood drained from faces across the garage. Yet there was no panic, the nerves were held, Pier Guidi gave his reluctant prancing horse the requisite sugar lump, and off it went for him to guide the Scuderia home.

Ferrari's Formula One driver Charles Leclerc was at the race to support his teammates and the irony of them delivering such an impressive car with a fearsome straight line speed that was the differentiator in a highly competitive field will probably not be missed at Maranello.

A win, then, for the ages that must be added to the pantheon of some of Le Mans' greatest meetings, a race proving itself to be in rude health despite having already put 100 years on the clock.

Sport

Cricket World Test Championship final

Australia's focus turns to Ashes after seeing off Kohli and India

Simon Burnton
Kia Oval

Now for the Ashes. Australia secured the first and biggest (physically) of the two trophies they hope to bring home with them from England by wrapping up victory against India in the World Test Championship final, winning by an emphatic 209 runs after a performance that, for all the penultimate-day catch-related micro-controversy, demonstrated unarguable superiority.

India arrived for the final day in search of a miracle. To pull off what would have been a world-record run chase, or even to cling on for the draw that would have led to them sharing the trophy, they needed Virat Kohli to pull a rabbit out of the hat – and to do it extremely slowly. He lasted just half an hour.

Scott Boland looks an unlikely sporting hero. He has the build of a farmyard labourer, as if he might be as good at shifting bales of hay as he turns out to be at shifting batters. After each delivery he walks back to his mark in the manner of someone who is not at all keen on actually getting there. There is not so much a spring in his step as a winter, deep and dark and foreboding.

He bowled the first over of the day, a crowd still full of optimism cheering even the dot balls, and there were six of them. Pat Cummins took the

second, as India slowly felt their way into their work. Ajinkya Rahane hit to point for a couple, Kohli running forwards for the first and jogging backwards for the second, eye always on the ball. If he wasn't wearing spikes he would probably have been



▲ Nathan Lyon congratulates Scott Boland for his contribution

Scoreboard

Kia Oval Australia beat India by 209 runs

Australia 469 (TM Head 163, SPD Smith 121; Mohammed Siraj 4-108) and 270-8dec (AT Carey 66no)

India First innings 296 (AM Rahane 89, SN Thakur 51)

India	Second innings (overnight 164-3)	Balls	4s	6s
V Kohli c Smith b Boland	49	78	7	0
AM Rahane c Carey b Starc	46	108	7	0
RA Jadeja c Carey b Boland	0	2	0	0
KS Bharat c & b Lyon	23	41	2	0
SN Thakur lbw b Lyon	0	5	0	0
UT Yadav c Carey b Starc	1	12	0	0
Mohammed Shami not out	13	8	3	0
Mohammed Siraj c Boland b Lyon	1	6	0	0
Extras (lb2, w6, nb5)	13			

Total (63.3 overs) 234

Fall 41, 92, 93, 179, 179, 212, 213, 220, 224.

Bowling Cummins 13-1-55-1; Boland 16-2-46-3;

Starc 14-1-77-2; Green 5-0-13-0; Lyon 15.3-2-41-4.

Umpires R Illingworth and C Gaffaney.

moonwalking. "Kohli, Kohli, Kohli," they chanted.

And then they fell quiet. The decisive over started oddly, Kohli on strike, the ball beating the bat, Alex Carey collecting, nobody really appealing but Australia – urged on, it seemed, by Marnus Labuschagne at point – deciding to review anyway and finding that UltraEdge also thought it was not out.

Two balls later, however, Kohli was gone, Steve Smith taking an excellent catch at second slip, diving to his right to collect it two-handed. Never mind their batting and bowling: Smith at slip and Cameron Green at gully are spectacular assets. Two balls later Ravindra Jadeja followed, nicking through to Carey, and from there it was a matter of time.

Rahane produced a measure of resistance and a few lovely shots, including two immaculately timed straight drives in successive Mitchell Starc overs. But in Starc's next over he too was gone, the ball kissing the edge on its way to Carey. He scored 46, three fewer than Kohli, and left India's tail fully exposed.

Nathan Lyon did the rest, taking three of the four remaining wickets including an excellent delivery to dismiss Shardul Thakur lbw, drifting across the batter before turning back in. Soon enough Australia stood one wicket from glory and they took it twice, Mohammed Shami saved on review – the ball having clipped pocket rather than bat – before, just five balls later, Mohammed Siraj reverse-swept straight to backward point where Boland waited, the most fitting of matchwinners, to take the catch.

India went into the last day needing to score 280 across three sessions without losing all their wickets. In the end they did lose all their wickets, in just one session, while scoring only 70.

"I thought we started well, winning the toss and putting them into bat," Rohit Sharma said. After five days' play the problem for India was that the only time they looked in control of the game was before it started.



Analysis

Geoff Lemon *Kia Oval*

Late bloomer Boland works his way into contention with ability that is a knack, not a fluke

'Scotty Boland, he's now my favourite player. He always has been, but he continues to be my favourite." Sure the Australia captain, Pat Cummins, might have displayed some confusion about time and continuity. But his sentiment was what mattered, after another decisive bowling burst from the Victorian quick opened up Australia's path to victory in the World Test Championship final.

It is difficult for anyone not to feel some affection for Boland, unless you're especially invested in a team he is opposing. Partly it's the "that could be me" factor. You have a player who was ignored by Test selectors until the age of 32. Undemonstrative by nature, free of glamour in appearance or in cricketing style. A state-team bowler who pounded in with a heavy tread to bowl on a length at a moderate pace, toiling in the middle of grand cricket grounds in front of almost nobody.

And of course "that could be me" is a fallacy, because nobody else spent those years like Boland honing their craft, but the idea that a complete unknown could walk into elite sport and excel is a lot of fun. Anyone can get a kick out of imagining themselves in that spot.

Boland was largely unknown when he arrived and excelled, taking six wickets in 19 balls against England in the Boxing Day Test of 2021. Even more compelling was that his six for seven in the second innings came after far more workmanlike figures of one for 48 in the first. He had played a few limited-overs matches for Australia five years earlier but that had been it.

So the perception of an honest trier having his day in the sun appealed to people. Implicit in the affectionate response was also the perception that it was a fluke, that he would drop back behind Australia's proper quicks once all were fit, and that if not he would soon be sorted



Scott Boland celebrates the wicket of Virat Kohli yesterday

out by players operating at a level above his. Instead, the wicket burst has become the Boland signature. Undroppable after Melbourne for his second Test in Sydney, he had sequences of two wickets in eight balls, then two in three balls. To finish the Ashes in Hobart he took three in 21 balls.

He waited nearly a year for his next match, then took three wickets in an over against West Indies. Against South Africa in Brisbane it was again two in three balls – in both innings.

So it was on form in this final when Boland dismissed Virat Kohli and Ravindra Jadeja in three balls, and almost made it three in four when KS Bharat frantically gloved a bumper over first slip. His setup used immaculate control over 12 balls, making Kohli hang back for inward movement, before one fuller drew him into a drive – but not full enough, leaving room to seam away. Then around the wicket to Jadeja, inward movement leaving the left-hander.

It was still only Boland's eighth

**World's
best ready
to take on
England**

*Pat Cummins
holds up
the ICC Test
mace to
celebrate
Australia's
victory over
India*

PAUL CHILDS/
ACTION IMAGES/
REUTERS



Test, but that makes eight of Australia's last 18, and most he has missed have been in Asia with two or three spinners. Across those matches, the Boland multiple strike has proved not to be a fluke, but a knack.

This is the most astonishing part of the equation. Boland was first picked because he had spent 10 years bowling on a Melbourne Cricket Ground surface that could only be woken with a kiss from a prince. His seasons for Victoria generally required between nine and 14 overs per wicket. Endurance and perseverance without assistance were his offering.

In this sense, coming up a level has made his job easier. Test pitches have been comparatively lively in recent years, and access to them means that Boland's weapons are more powerful. The precision with which he delivers the seam, and the force he uses to bang it into the pitch, give him the lavish sideways movement that does such damage. Pace in the surface makes his short ball

unexpectedly nasty. And on any surface, he has his old tools of accuracy and consistency.

Boland is now 34, but sports science has moved the window for cricketers later. First it was the idea of batters peaking in their 30s, then spinners, now older fast bowlers are common. Access to dedicated support as an international must have helped his fitness. Boland seems to improve through a match, rather than tire. His first-innings returns are a respectable 11 wickets at 27, but in the second innings he has 22 wickets at 8.18.

Starting the previous Australian summer, Boland was behind the Big Three: Cummins, Mitchell Starc and Josh Hazlewood. By now, although injuries again gave him his chance, perhaps the Big Three are not the Big Three any more. Perhaps he wins a start in his own right. The Scott Boland story stood out for its impossibility, but with each performance it looks more possible.

'We haven't used the word legacy - but it would be a milestone'

Mitchell Starc is determined to help Australia win an Ashes series in England for the first time in two decades

Andy Bull

Mitchell Starc can't stop fidgeting with his baggy green cap. "Sorry," he says, breaking off his answer to run his finger under the rim and then tug again at the brim. It is a replica of the one awarded to every Australian player when they make their debut. The marketing team wanted him to put it on for a photoshoot, and Starc just doesn't feel comfortable. "This one feels so wrong." Like most Australian players, Starc has only ever had one of them. His is "a lot older, and a lot smellier". He's had it for 13 years, and after all that time any other just doesn't sit quite right.

Starc, wickedly fast and armed with a yorker that's paid for at least a couple of dozen podiatrists to buy new kitchens, has proved himself one of the great white-ball bowlers. He has been the world No 1 in 50-over cricket for long stretches of the past decade, and was the leading wicket-taker in both of the past two one-day World Cups. Given all that he could, and should, be one of the richer cricketers on the circuit. Except he hasn't played a single game of franchise cricket, in the Indian Premier League, the Big Bash, or any other league, in more than eight years.

It has not been because of injuries, or for want of offers - "I've had some pretty good ones". It's just that when it came down to it, he didn't want to. Stories about how he's skipped another IPL auction are a clickbait staple. "Being able to spend time with my family is part of it," Starc says. His wife, the new Australia women's captain, Alyssa Healy, has her own playing schedule, and chances for them to both be home together are pretty rare. "But it is also about getting myself in a position where I can play my best cricket for Australia. I'd certainly love to play in the IPL again, but my goal for a long time has been to be at my best for Australia, no matter the format."

Starc played with the Royal Challengers Bangalore in 2014 and 2015. "I enjoyed it, likewise I enjoyed my time at Yorkshire 10 years ago, but Australia will always sit at the top." Going by the prices of his teammates, he would likely be around \$10m (£8m) richer if he'd gone the other way. "I don't regret any of it, money will come and go but I'm very grateful for



Mitchell Starc took four wickets in the one-off Test against India

the opportunities I've had. Over a hundred years of Test cricket and there's been less than 500 men who have played it for Australia, that in itself makes it very special to be a part of it."

Starc has a handsome contract with Cricket Australia, but still he is obviously not in cricket just for the money. "There's nothing I love more in cricket than to sit back with my teammates at the end of a Test win and reflect on the success we've had that week. To be able to pull on the baggy green with a lot of my close mates, guys I've grown up in the game with. I mean, franchise cricket is great, but you can be bought or sold or traded in 12 months, whereas this is an opportunity I've been fortunate enough to have over 10 years now."

It is, Starc admits, "an interesting moment" for international cricket. "There's more and more franchise cricket, and more and more talk about 12-month franchise contracts, where it would potentially be like football, where you have an international window, or you need clearance from your club to go and play international sport. The traditionalist in me still hopes there is a generation

'There's nothing I like more than to sit back with my teammates and reflect on success'



▲ Starc celebrates with Nathan Lyon after getting Umesh Yadav out
GARETH COPLEY/ICC/GETTY IMAGES

of boys and girls who want to represent their country in Test cricket. But the easy money is in franchise cricket, it's the fast track to notoriety."

For the next eight weeks, at least, the sport will run to a slower tempo and there will be something more than money at stake. Australia beat India in the World Test Championship final at the Oval and now go straight into the Ashes. For Starc, and the generation of players he has grown up with, it is a chance to prove themselves the best team in the world, and become the first Australian side to win a series in England in more than 20 years.

"We haven't used the word 'legacy', but we're an experienced group, have been together for a fair bit of time, had a good bit of success, and this is definitely something we'd love to achieve. Especially having missed out here last time [in 2019] when we drew that series. We want to go one step further, to win an Ashes in England would be a major milestone." For Starc personally, he wants to put right his experiences here in 2019, when he played only one Test. Australia's plan that year was all about being economical, and Starc says he got too caught up in trying to change the way he bowls.

"Four years down the track I've played a bit more cricket, and have a different mindset about how I'd like to go about it."

Of course, England are playing a very different kind of cricket this time, too. "The way England have gone about their cricket in the last 12 months, it's not a fluke. They've done it against different teams in different conditions. They're challenging the norms of Test cricket, certainly in the pace of play." He still wonders whether they will be able to stick to it. "For all the hype from outside, I still think it's going to be based on conditions. If we have traditional English pitches, which nip around, and if the overhead conditions play a part, will they still be so aggressive with the Ashes on the line? The way they're talking suggests yes, but whether we see it in practice will be another thing."

And besides, batting that way against everyone else is one thing, but surely he believes that doing it against him, Pat Cummins and Josh Hazlewood is a different business? Starc's grin says more than his answer. "I guess we'll find out over the next six weeks."

All-conquering Djokovic claims No 23 and record

Tumaini Carayol
Roland Garros

Since his emergence at the top level of professional tennis 18 years ago, Novak Djokovic has used the dizzying bar set by Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal before him as inspiration to push himself to his limits, never doubting that he would one day rise above it.

What once seemed impossible eventually became inevitable. Yesterday, Djokovic finally surpassed his great rivals in the most significant category of all as he defeated Casper Ruud 7-6 (1), 6-3, 7-5 to clinch his 23rd grand slam title, breaking his tie of 22 with Nadal.

This historic victory means that Djokovic is now the men's sole grand slam record holder, alongside countless other records. After years of being blocked by Nadal, the greatest claycourter of all time, at the French Open, Djokovic also now has three titles in Paris and he is the first man to win each grand slam tournament three times. He will also return to No 1 for a record-extending 388th week as the best player in the world.

"Every single player dreams of being on this stage and winning the trophy at least once in their career. I'm beyond fortunate in my life to win 23 times, it's an incredible

feeling," Djokovic said during his on-court speech.

While he still covers the court with more flexibility and ease than most athletes at their physical peak, these achievements at his age have only added another layer to his greatness. Djokovic is now the oldest Roland Garros singles champion in history at 36 years and 20 days. He has also won the last three grand slam tournaments he has contested - he did not travel to the US Open last year due to the United States banning unvaccinated visitors - compiling a 21-match grand slam winning run.

Few people gave Ruud, the fourth seed, much of a realistic chance against the third seed Djokovic, but after contesting the French and US Open finals last season against Nadal and Carlos Alcaraz, Ruud knew what level it would take for him to match Djokovic in a grand slam final.

Ruud started the match vaporising his forehand as he took an early break, while Djokovic started the match poorly. He played passively while he sprayed forehands and missed over-heads. The benefit of being Djokovic, though, is that he always has options. He dug in and he relied on his legs as he soaked up a series of stinging Ruud forehands before retrieving the early break.

Still, the Norwegian kept his head up. The decisive moment of the

match came while he led 5-4 with Djokovic serving. Ruud opened the game with some inspirational play, including a successful tweener lob to lead 0-30. But at 5-4, 30-30, Ruud gifted a forehand error on an easy second serve return. Sensing Ruud's tension, Djokovic pounced. He held serve, he forced a tiebreak and then he picked Ruud's weaker backhand apart to take the set. "He just steps up," Ruud said. "Either he plays ridiculous defence or he plays beautiful winners. Just doesn't do any mistakes. He either lets you go for too much or he plays a beautiful winner."

By the second set, the Serb's nerves had evaporated. He dictated from inside the baseline, pulverising his forehand, and he continued to

methodically break down Ruud's backhand as he neutralised his serve. Djokovic controlled the contest until the end, patiently waiting for his moment to clinch the decisive break late in the third set before closing out one of the greatest successes of his career. After the final point, he collapsed to the ground before climbing up to his player box.

In recent years, Djokovic has repeatedly explained that his priorities have changed after so many years of success at all levels. Grand slam tournaments are what motivate him now. The past two weeks have been a comprehensive reflection of that approach. He spent much of the clay season struggling with form and an elbow injury that forced him to withdraw from the Madrid Open. But with a historic grand slam title on the line he has met every challenge.

"He has this software in his head that he can switch when a grand slam comes," said Goran Ivanisevic, Djokovic's coach. "Grand slam is a different sport comparing to other tournaments. The day we arrived here, he was better, he was more motivated, he was more hungry."

During his speech, Djokovic noted that since he was a young child his goals were always to win Wimbledon and be No 1 in the world. He has surpassed those goals more than 10 times over. While the No 1 ranking and grand slam titles used to be the ultimate goal for all aspiring players, this fading, unforgettable era of greatness with Djokovic, Serena Williams, Nadal and Federer has changed how people view success in the sport.

When young players state their goals these days, they often want to be the best of all time. That bar, 23 grand slam titles, is now in the stratosphere.

Most grand slam titles

Men's singles		Aus	Fr	Wm	US
23	Novak Djokovic <i>Serb</i>	10	3	7	3
22	Rafael Nadal <i>Sp</i>	2	14	2	4
20	Roger Federer <i>Switz</i>	6	1	8	5
14	Pete Sampras <i>US</i>	2	0	7	5
Women's singles		Aus	Fr	Wm	US
24	Margaret Court <i>Aus</i>	11	5	3	5
23	Serena Williams <i>US</i>	7	3	7	6
22	Steffi Graf <i>Ger</i>	4	6	7	5
19	Helen Wills Moody <i>US</i>	0	4	8	7

Djokovic goes flat out in Paris

Novak Djokovic falls to the ground after beating Casper Ruud, claiming his 23rd slam and third in France

CHRISTOPHE PETIT-TESSON/EPA



History maker 'I don't want to say that I'm the greatest'

Tumaini Carayol
Roland Garros

Novak Djokovic says he is as motivated as ever to continue pushing forward after winning a men's record 23rd grand slam title at the French Open.

"[The] journey is still not over," Djokovic said. "I feel, if I'm winning slams, why even think about, you know, ending the career that has been going on for 20 years. So I still feel motivated, I still feel inspired to play the best tennis on these tournaments the most, you know, grand slams. Those are the ones that count, I guess, the most in history of our sport."

Yesterday the third-seeded Djokovic defeated Casper Ruud, the fourth seed, 7-6, 6-3, 7-5 to break his tie with Rafael Nadal of 22 grand slam titles. It is Djokovic's third French Open title, meaning he has become the first man to win each grand slam tournament three times.

Alongside the men's record for grand slam singles titles, Djokovic holds the all-time record for grand slam singles titles and Masters 1000 events. Despite the evidence that he is statistically the most successful men's player in the game's history, Djokovic said he is hesitant to claim the title as the greatest.

"I don't want to say that I am the greatest, because I feel it's disrespectful towards all the great champions in different eras of our sport that was played in a completely different way than it is played today," Djokovic said. "So I feel like each great champion of his own generation has left a huge mark, a legacy, and paved the way for us to be able to play this sport in such a great stage worldwide."

After Djokovic clinched the title, Nadal, who is recovering from his recent hip surgery, sent a congratulatory message to Djokovic on Twitter: "Many congratulations on this amazing achievement, 23 is a number that just a few years back was impossible to think about and you made it," the Spaniard wrote.

Djokovic's coach, Goran Ivanisevic, insisted he never doubted his player would be able to step up after a difficult clay season. Ivanisevic said: "Like [Andy] Roddick said, I read, he takes the legs, then he takes your soul, then he digs your grave and you have a funeral and you're dead. Bye-bye. Thank you for coming."

'If I'm winning slams, why even think about ending the career that has been going on for 20 years'

Novak Djokovic

Analysis**Jonathan Liew** *Roland Garros*

◀ Djokovic celebrates winning his 23rd grand slam singles title
THIBAUT CAMUS/AP PHOTO

Wily record holder becomes uncontested keyholder to the house that Nadal built

No longer the polite and begrudging ripple of applause. No longer the soft shuffle of designer shoes towards the exits. This time the sound of triumph would be resounding and unqualified: from the plush seats where Zlatan Ibrahimović and Tom Brady were on their feet, to the windswept upper tiers where the cascade of Serbian flags caught the evening Parisian light. Roland Garros, and by extension the lineage of men's tennis, is now the house of Novak Djokovic.

He wore a royal red training top emblazoned with the number 23. He gave his victory speech in flawless French. And in the moments before he was called forward to accept the trophy, Djokovic was to be found reclining in his chair, eyes closed, a broad and cryptic smile on his face. He took his time, spoke for as long as he chose, because in your house you can do whatever you want.

For years this was the house of Rafael Nadal, and spiritually perhaps it still is. Nadal was not here to witness his all-time men's grand slam title record being taken from him. But he will have been watching, aware that if it did not happen now it would happen in London, or New York, and there was nothing he or the gallant Casper Ruud could do about it.

The GOAT thing. Must we? Can we not? Men's tennis has an opportunity to move beyond this boring exercise in counting things and arguing about them. We get it: you have a favourite player and you like him very much. But can we now put a moratorium on this until Carlos Alcaraz gets to at least 15?

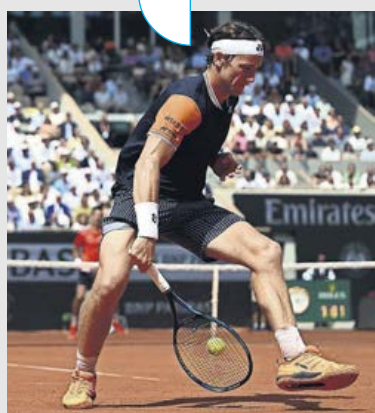
Ruud, who collapsed so spectacularly against Nadal 12 months ago, was at least a wiser and more resilient presence here. He arrived with big dreams and an even bigger topspin forehand:

looping through the sticky air, kicking viciously off the clay, a stroke that generates - rev for rev - heavier spin than any other in tennis. The plan was to lift Djokovic out of his hitting zone, forcing him to hit from around his ears. It was his only plan. But it was a pretty good one.

And as Djokovic served at 5-6 in the first set, the picture seemed to be blurring a little. Djokovic looked uncomfortable. He had played three drop shots and two overheads, and flubbed the lot. At which point he did what he often does in the crucial moments: he confected a row with the umpire, Damien Dumusois, over his pace of play, followed it with the best game of his match and for the next hour dismantled this final piece by piece.

No other athlete on earth can will himself into a devastating fury like

Ruud arrived with big dreams and an even bigger topspin forehand looping through the sticky air, kicking viciously



▲ Casper Ruud pulls off a tweener against Djokovic at Roland Garros

this. Whatever it takes - a line call, the crowd, an injury that exists entirely in his head - Djokovic can turn on his piqued berserker mode as if flicking a switch. The tempo raises. He grunts a little louder. Those incredible yogi legs splay wider, shrinking the court before your eyes. And how useful that these tantrums seem to coincide with the key moments. Djokovic played 55 tie-break points at this year's tournament. He won 42 of them, and made no unforced errors.

And for the rest of the match Ruud looked like what he was: straight man, dancing partner, human canvas. Djokovic rolled out his box of tricks: the second-serve ace, the impossible rescue winner, an entire game of moonball forehands. In the VIP box, Kylian Mbappé scrolled idly through his phone. A Mexican wave went round. The Serbians slowly raised the volume.

You can always spot the Djokovic fans at a grand slam tournament. There is a definite type at these events. Bored-looking blond men in designer shades. Crudité-thin women who for some reason refuse to use their jacket sleeves. Against this backdrop of clinking champagne glasses and easy unearned wealth, the boisterous Team Nole crews stand out like a breadstick in a Martini. What must it be like to glimpse this walled garden party from the outside, particularly when you started life with as little as Djokovic did? If you build yourself a glass palace, don't be surprised if people want to break the windows.

Roger Federer is gone now. Nadal is on his way out. Alcaraz is making a hell of a noise, but is still basically scaling the walls with a molotov cocktail, still trying to storm the palace rather than occupy it. Djokovic had to go through this same process, and it probably took him longer than anyone. But here he is: top of the heap, a triple champion at every grand slam tournament, his records safe for a generation and Nadal's public singing his name.

This is Djokovic's world now. You can shout whatever you like before a point and all you will get is a shush from the people around you. You can essentially advocate wiping Kosovo off the map and face no consequence. On the internet and in the corridors of power, the doctrine of self-actualisation - the idea that the world exists simply to fulfil your chosen destiny - is no longer sociopathy but orthodoxy. No wonder Djokovic was smiling in his chair. He is no longer the unruly trespasser, but the man who owns the deeds and the keys.

Third Paris power play sets Swiatek on path to greatness

Fourth grand slam triumph is proof the world No 1 has what it takes to become one of the game's top champions

Tumaini Carayol

In the days leading up to the 2020 French Open, Iga Swiatek was struggling through one of the biggest crises of her career. Having started the Covid-delayed autumn clay-court season with lofty hopes in her first year since graduating from high school, expectations were high. But in her final warmup event, the Italian Open, she endured a desperate, "traumatic" defeat against Arantxa Rus, the world No 71, in the first round.

Swiatek retreated back to Poland with her small team, where they held talks about her direction and progress. Doubt festered in her mind. When she arrived at Roland Garros, the then 18-year-old struggled through practice, unable to escape her negative spiral. Her mood was so low that she made a bet with her sports psychologist, Daria Abramowicz, to see if she could just get through one training session without any drama.

Swiatek spent the days before the tournament questioning her future.

"I remember just being on the Jean Bouin [Roland Garros practice courts] before the tournament, practising there," Swiatek said last month. "I literally had the talk with Daria if it makes sense to continue everything because I felt so bad. I felt like, I don't know, my expectations were just pretty high. I felt really bad on court. Always tense and stressed, even when I was practising."

Two weeks later Swiatek won the French Open aged 19, and ranked No 54. It was both her first grand slam title and her first tour level title, which she clinched by demolishing the field, losing only 28 games in seven matches and not coming close to conceding a set.

As joyful as her first grand slam title was, Swiatek also struggled to wrap her mind around her transformation. It had taken place in the early days of the Covid pandemic, with just 1,000 spectators allowed on the grounds each day. The whole scenario felt strange. In the years since she has often described feeling that aspects of her first win were "coincidental". She felt she needed to win the French Open again in order to confirm the victory.

After recovering from a break

down in the deciding set to defeat Karolina Muchova 6-2, 5-7, 6-4 in the final on Saturday, Swiatek is now a three-time champion in Paris and a four-time grand slam title winner at 22 years old. There are no remaining doubts about her greatness.

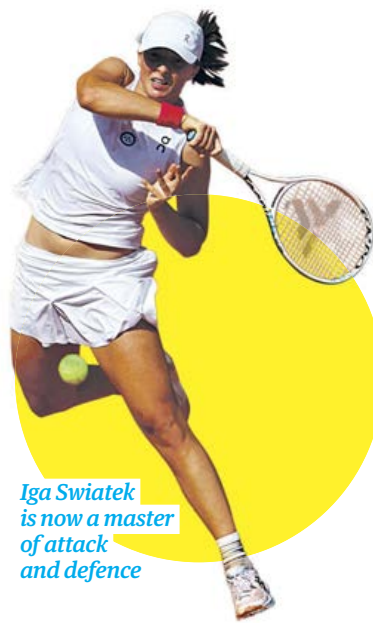
While there are no guarantees for the future, the early years indicate she is on the path to a generational career. Her 28-2 (93%) Roland Garros record alone is astounding. Her career win-loss record is 248-61 (80%). An 80% win rate is the marker of sustained excellence.

The manner of her win felt even more meaningful because of the fortitude required. Beyond Serena Williams, there have been few frontrunners as accomplished as Swiatek in recent years. She has mastered the art of tearing through draws and smothering opponents with her skills in attack and defence. Learning to become similarly effective when things turn against her and she finds herself in a dogfight has been a work in progress.

Against Muchova, the way in which Swiatek locked down her game and struck her return of serve while trailing 4-3 in the third set was as spectacular as the many times she has crushed opponents with her vicious, heavy topspin forehand.

The circumstances around each of Swiatek's Roland Garros triumphs have been starkly different. After her teenage breakthrough in 2020, in 2022 she arrived under the pressure of her historic 37-match winning run, desperate to ensure it was not a slamless streak. This year she faced the challenge of following up her superb season and maintaining her spot at the top of her sport. Had Aryna Sabalenka matched her performance in Paris, she would have lost her No 1 ranking.

Even after her toughest grand slam final yet, she seemed far less drained by her achievement than in previous years, perhaps more prepared for what is to come next. After a short break she will begin her preparations for the grass-court season as she looks to become more comfortable on her worst surface, and to move closer to greatness by winning Wimbledon for the first time.



Iga Swiatek is now a master of attack and defence

▼ *Andy Murray lifts the Surbiton Trophy after his straight-sets victory*
ZAC GOODWIN/PA



Tennis

Murray boosts Wimbledon hopes with Surbiton win

Scot defeats Rodionov 6-3, 6-2 to earn a seeding for the All England Club next month

Reuben Rosso-Powell

Andy Murray stepped up his preparation for Wimbledon in style with a straight-sets victory against Jurij Rodionov in the men's final of the Surbiton Trophy.

Murray defeated the Austrian 6-3, 6-2 to secure a seeding at SW19 next month for a tournament he has won twice. "I've chosen to come and play here, and in Nottingham [next week] to hopefully get lots of matches under my belt - so this week has been the perfect start," Murray said.

Having seen off Australia's Jordan Thompson in the semi-finals on Saturday, Murray turned on the power to dismantle Rodionov in just over an hour.

The pair jostled for the lead in a competitive opening set. Murray's serve was a vital weapon on the day,



▲ *Katie Swan lost the final to Yanina Wickmayer in a third-set tiebreak*

and he produced crucial aces in the early stages to move 5-3 ahead. He closed out the first set and showed signs of his best through intricate shot selection that often sent his opponent scrambling across the turf in sweltering conditions. The former world No 1 also hit a number of class forehands that forced errors.

With Murray leading the second set 3-1 Rodionov showed signs of a comeback but the No 2 seed's serving snuffed out any threat before a downpour suspended play. The match resumed nearly three hours later and Murray reasserted himself to claim a well-deserved victory.

After the match, Murray said: "My kids are always asking me when I go away if I am going to come home with a trophy - and it's been rare over the last few years. They actually came two minutes before the rain started and my wife had to take them back home, so they missed the end of the match. But I think they watched it on TV - so Sophia, Edie, Teddy and Lola, I'll bring you all a trophy tonight."

Of Novak Djokovic's French Open triumph, Murray said: "I am happy for him, he deserves it. When he beat me in the final of the [2016] French Open he lost motivation so maybe he can take his eye off the ball for the next few weeks heading into Wimbledon!"

Meanwhile, Katie Swan's defeat by Yanina Wickmayer in the Surbiton final confirms Katie Boulter will be the British No 1 again today. Wickmayer came back from a set down to win 2-6, 6-4, 7-6 (1). **PA Media**

Champions League final

Proud Inter feel journey is only just beginning

Italian club's unlikely run to final has strengthened their standing and instilled hope despite FFP constraints

Nicky Bandini

As Internazionale waited to collect their Champions League runners-up medals at the Ataturk Stadium on Saturday night, André Onana hurled down his gloves and grabbed Lautaro Martínez by the face. It was not immediately clear if the goalkeeper was consoling his teammate or chastising him, the forceful body language reflecting all at once Inter's despair at chances missed against Manchester City and their pride for having earned them.

"I told him football is like this, it's hard and unfair," Onana said. "But we played a great game, and we will be back. It's hard to swallow, but working like this we will get back to another final."

All around them, teammates were struggling to process the emotions. Inter played the game they had intended to, standing toe-to-toe with a City team who entered as heavy favourites, ceding possession but not position as they pressed and disrupted up the pitch. They carved out the better chances.

"The ball just wouldn't go in," said Federico Dimarco, who saw one header come back off the crossbar and another off the shin

of his teammate Romelu Lukaku. A point-blank effort from the Belgian was kept out by Ederson's knee. The penultimate touch of the game was the City goalkeeper's save to deny Robin Gosens at a corner.

Winning finals requires good fortune and better timing plus talent and hard work. Pep Guardiola was not bluffing when he told the Italian broadcaster Mediaset that the truest achievement was not to win this trophy but to make a habit of "always being there at the end".

Inter want to believe this is only a starting point. The midfielder Nicolò Barella said last week that the path to Istanbul had begun with defeat by Sevilla in the 2020 Europa League final and "from that pain we started to win trophies". They secured a Serie A title the next season under Antonio Conte. They have since claimed the Coppa Italia and Supercoppa Italiana twice each with Simone Inzaghi.

The sense of momentum is real. Inter had not reached the Champions League knockout stage in a decade before Inzaghi took charge, and he pointed to the last-16 defeat by Liverpool last year as another crucial step in their development, a 1-0 win in the

Teammates were struggling to process emotions. Inter had stood toe-to-toe with City



▲ *André Onana grabs hold of Lautaro Martínez after Inter's defeat*

Football In brief

England

Dunk and Bellingham ruled out of qualifiers

Gareth Southgate will be without Jude Bellingham and Lewis Dunk after they withdrew from England's European Championship qualifiers against Malta and North Macedonia. Real Madrid-bound Bellingham is still suffering with the hamstring injury that ruled him out of Borussia Dortmund's heartbreaking season finale, when they let slip the Bundesliga title by drawing 2-2 at home to Mainz. Dunk has withdrawn from the squad through injury and will

not travel to the national football centre. Southgate will have five members of Pep Guardiola's side in his squad for this month's qualifiers, with John Stones, Jack Grealish, Phil Foden, Kyle Walker and Calvin Phillips all due to join up with the group after enjoying their celebrations. Southgate believes England can benefit from Manchester City's Champions League success. With City's triumph coming after Declan Rice lifted the Europa Conference League with West Ham earlier in the week, Southgate said it can be good for the national team. "It's absolutely brilliant for all our guys who have been involved," Southgate said. "To start with Declan, his first experience of lifting a trophy so ... fabulous for him. Then the boys at City have had a phenomenal season. I'm delighted for all of them. It's great

second leg at Anfield representing a moment when his team began to understand what was required.

How high can you build, though, on uncertain foundations? Inter are facing up to another summer of difficult decisions as they attempt to balance the books. The club posted losses of more than €245m (£209m) in 2021, then €140m in 2022. From 2024 they will enter into a three-year monitoring period of their financial fair play settlement agreement with Uefa, during which their aggregate football earnings deficit must not exceed €60m.

Reaching the Champions League final this season has strengthened their position, bringing in close to €100m in prize money as well as additional gate receipts and a last-minute shirt sponsorship deal with Paramount. Yet Inter, who are due in 2024 to repay a €275m emergency loan from Oaktree Capital taken out to cover post-pandemic operating costs, still need further steps to break even.

At least one high earner can be subtracted from the wage bill, with Milan Skriniar out of contract and headed for Paris Saint-Germain, but others whose deals expire this month present the club with dilemmas. Edin Dzeko, for instance, is 37 years old and wanted by Fenerbahce, but he played a central role in Inter's run to this final. If he leaves, then who starts up front with Martínez? Inter would love to extend Lukaku's loan from Chelsea, but again the financial realities are complicated. It is only two years since the Premier League club paid £97.5m to sign him from Inter in the first place.

The club president, Steven Zhang, who was struggling to contain his emotions at full time on Saturday, insisted "the players who had a good season with us will continue with us".

Inzaghi, who has one year left on his contract, said he would take a few days before discussing next steps with club leadership. "I am sure we will be back to play another Champions League final," the manager said. Inter believe they are at the start of a journey, not the end. But there are major obstacles to be navigated on the road ahead.

to see them enjoying themselves and brilliant for us." **PA Media**

WSL

Women's game sees revenues rocket by 60%

Women's Super League clubs saw their aggregate revenues rise by 60% in a record-breaking 2021-22 season, according to new figures published by Deloitte. Clubs brought in combined revenues of £32m, up from £20m in the previous season, with the increases driven by new and improved commercial and broadcast deals. The higher revenues helped clubs bring down their aggregate wages-to-revenue ratio from 92% to 78% despite wages rising to a combined total of £25m, up 37%. Deloitte noted that revenues should continue to rise. **PA Media**

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**The
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De Bruyne savours sweat and sacrifice as treble dream comes true

Even after being forced off with injury in a second final the midfielder epitomised his club's fighting spirit

David Hytner



Kevin De Bruyne's wife, Michèle Lacroix, was not worried. She knew that Manchester City would beat Internazionale on Saturday night to win their first Champions League title. She was convinced it was their destiny. She has been all season.

"I don't know why my wife said in August: 'You're going to win the Champions League,' but she always maintained I would," De Bruyne said. "She said before the game: 'You'll be fine, you'll win it.' In the end, it's a little bit of a shame because I have to tell her she was right. So that's not the best."

It did not go as De Bruyne had dreamed it on a personal level. The midfielder has managed a hamstring problem since the quarter-final second leg at Bayern Munich on 19 April. In the red zone with minor tears, he was told there was a danger it could go completely, which it did, forcing him off in the 36th minute.

De Bruyne had been strong-armed out of City's only previous Champions League final against Chelsea in 2021, Antonio Rüdiger's notorious upper body check leaving him with a broken nose, fractured eye socket and concussion. So a treble of sorts. De Bruyne will have a scan but he knows that grade three hamstring tears mean up to three months out. This is what can happen when you push your body through 57 games for club and country over a punishing season.

As heads cleared after City's 1-0 win, Inter broken by Rodri's 68th-minute goal and Ederson's resistance at the end, it felt as though there was something in the notion of destiny. An hour or so after the final whistle, as Pep Guardiola waited for a lift in the bowels of the Ataturk Olympic Stadium in between media commitments, gold winners' medal around his neck, he could not help but stare at a nearby TV. It was showing the replays of Romelu Lukaku's 89th-minute header, the one that the Inter substitute had met unmarked at close range. And he still put it too close to Ederson,

who blocked with his legs, Rúben Dias completing the clearance.

"Can you believe Lukaku has not scored that?" Guardiola was asked. It was unclear whether he heard the question. The City manager simply blew out his cheeks and turned towards the lift, a posse of luminous-bibbed stewards holding up their camera phones for selfies, Guardiola in the background as the doors closed.

The excellent Federico Dimarco looped a header against the crossbar on 71 minutes and Ederson tipped over another header, this one from the substitute Robin Gosens, at the very last. But Lukaku's header felt like *the* moment for Inter.

On another day, it goes in. Or maybe it rebounds off Dias and goes in. Not this time. City's triumph felt like the counterpoint

to their undeserved semi-final defeat to Real Madrid last season. Or the agony of the VAR-dictated exit against Tottenham in the 2019 quarter-final. The 2021 final was a part of it, too.

City were not their usual selves against Inter, especially in the first half when they lacked aggression and Rodri could get nothing going. Their opponents played above themselves, Simone Inzaghi getting his tactics spot on. City had gears to move up and into but they did not really do so. Then again, Champions League finals that clinch trebles are not to be played, they are to be won, as some other mob could tell them.

"It was written in the stars," Guardiola said or, certainly, in City's muscle memory. There were colourful scenes afterwards, in the dressing room and into the mixed zone, the area through which players and staff walk in front of the media before boarding the team bus. You heard Jack Grealish before you saw him, the winger striding through with Fleetwood

As heads cleared after City's 1-0 win it felt as though there was something in the notion of destiny



De Bruyne celebrates with the Champions League trophy

Mac's Everywhere blaring from a boom box.

Erling Haaland pretended to snore as he waited for Rodri to finish an interview; the centre-forward was next and then he was not because he did not want to wait any longer. John Stones wandered through with a Heineken. Would he stop for a chat? "Guys, I've not had a beer for 11 months!" he replied. In other words, let me have this moment. Kyle Walker smiled broadly. "I just want to say: 'Thank you,'" he offered, with a flourish.

For the City support in Istanbul, there are memories that will never die, the chaotic nature of the place somehow amplifying them. After Liverpool's 2005 triumph here, fans experienced 10-hour delays at Sabiha Gokcen airport and a ticket to any airport in England became enough; flights were boarded like buses. The authorities almost lost control, their only soothing move to play You'll Never Walk Alone over the public address system.

It was not that bad for City's followers. This is Istanbul, a city

▼ *Kevin De Bruyne savours the adulation of Manchester City's fans*
DAVID RAMOS/GETTY IMAGES



Celebration time

Fans in Manchester can join the City players' treble celebrations this evening as they undertake an open-top bus parade through the city centre. The bus bearing Pep Guardiola, the squad and the Premier League, FA Cup and Champions League trophies is scheduled to depart from Tonman Street, Deansgate, at 6.30pm and will travel via St Mary's Gate, Cross Street and King Street before finishing on the corner of Princess Street and Portland Street. The players will then take to a stage in Oxford Street at around 7.30pm for further acclaim.

2

Only two cities each boast two clubs to have won the Champions League: Manchester (United three times, City once) and Milan (Inter three, Milan seven).

where the traffic is a nightmare and a marvel, where seat belts in the back of high-speed, quick-breaking taxis appear as optional as motorcycle helmets.

De Bruyne epitomised the all-for-one spirit, giving everything he had to drive the journey to its end point. There were times after his substitution when it looked as though he was the assistant manager on the touchline.

"I've been struggling with the injury since Bayern Munich away," De Bruyne said. "It was all small ruptures but here I snapped it all the way. I've been told for two months there's a possibility I was at risk but, you know, you take it."

"I was there for my team and did what I needed to do. I missed some games but the games like Arsenal, Bayern and Madrid ... I managed to do it. I had some personal things that happened with my family on top of that and I managed that. It's a shame it went the way it did for me but we go away winning the Champions League so there's nothing bad towards it."

Rodri says City 'can do it again'

➡ **Continued from back page**

moment I thought about shooting strong but then I realised there were six or seven players in the area and I was like: 'No, I'm going to put it in the first post.' The end result was incredible but there was half an hour still to go so it was a big effort from all of us."

Rodri, meanwhile, has been named as the Champions League player of the year by Uefa as seven City players made the team of the season and Haaland took goal of the season honours.

Rodri was joined by six City stars in the team of the season as Haaland, Kevin De Bruyne, John Stones, Rúben Dias, Bernardo Silva and Kyle Walker were all included. City also scooped the goal of the season award through Haaland for his acrobatic strike against Borussia Dortmund during the group stages.

In News **City fans' fury**
Uefa treated us like cattle at Istanbul final, say supporters *Page 12* →

Analysis

Jonathan Wilson *Istanbul*



Guardiola confirms what we all knew - victory simply burnishes his legend as an all-time great

Would it have mattered to posterity if Pep Guardiola had not won the Champions League again? Would it have mattered if he had remained stuck on two European titles, his last triumph Barcelona's sumptuous 3-1 victory over Manchester United at Wembley in 2011?

We can tell ourselves that we know what Guardiola is, how he had transformed football and our understanding of what is possible; that we know the magnitude of Arrigo Sacchi, who won two European Cups, and Rinus Michels, who won one, and Valeriy Lobanovskyi, who didn't win any; but, still, it feels appropriate to have it confirmed, just as it was fitting to have Lionel Messi's greatness confirmed at the World Cup.

And this is a tragedy of football's modern age: this season has seen the consecration of an all-time great player and an all-time great manager, and yet it will be remembered as the season when sportswashing won. Messi won in Doha, played for a Qatari club and shills for Saudi tourism. Guardiola won in Erdogan's Turkey, manages an Emirati club and was an ambassador for Qatar. And that cannot but taint their genius.

Three Champions Leagues/European Cups pulls Guardiola level with Bob Paisley and Zinedine Zidane, one behind Carlo Ancelotti. The assumption in 2011 was that he would keep racking up the European titles but, even after his 12-year hiatus, there seems little reason now, so long as he remains at City, why he should not go on to equal and probably surpass Ancelotti. City are a club built in his image with extraordinary resources and a marketing department that has secured a series of incredible sponsorship deals; they are the best side in the world and their pre-eminence should continue.

Comparing that to, for instance, the achievement of Brian Clough at Nottingham Forest, suggests the folly of becoming too obsessed by adding up trophies. Besides, Guardiola deserves more than to be defined by his Champions Leagues alone. He has changed what is considered possible in football. His appointment at Barcelona in 2008 marked the beginning of a new era.

Football was in a period of astringency. The dominant managers were José Mourinho, Marcelo Lippi and Rafa Benítez. Greece had won the European

Championship just four years earlier. The game was ripe for revolution. Improvements in pitch quality, especially, but also in ball and boot technology, meant that a first touch could be taken for granted. The liberalisation of the offside law and the crackdown on the challenge from behind made life easier for technical midfielders: as defensive lines dropped deeper, the playing area in effect increased, and it became harder for opponents physically to intimidate midfield creators. It was Guardiola who recognised the game could become almost entirely about the manipulation of space.

The whole ethos of the game changed. Before 2008, there had been only one season in which the knockout stages in the Champions

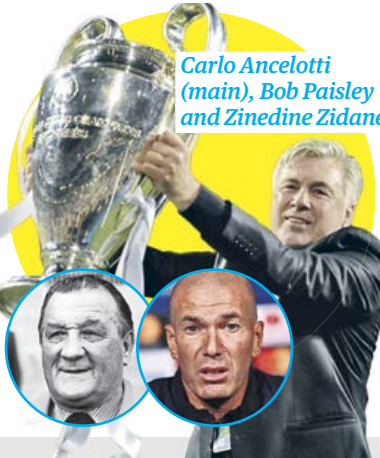
Biggest winners

Managers with the most European Cup/Champions League victories

- 4 Carlo Ancelotti** 2003, 2007, 2014, 2022 *Milan, Real Madrid*
3 Bob Paisley 1977, 1978, 1981 *Liverpool*
Zinedine Zidane 2016, 2017, 2018 *Real Madrid*
Pep Guardiola 2009, 2011, 2023 *Barcelona, Manchester City*

2 wins each

José Villalonga	1956, 1957	Real Madrid
Luis Carniglia	1958, 1959	Real Madrid
Béla Guttmann	1961, 1962	Benfica
Helenio Herrera	1964, 1965	Inter Milan
Miguel Muñoz	1960, 1966	Real Madrid
Nereo Rocco	1963, 1969	Milan
Stefan Kovács	1972, 1973	Ajax
Dettmar Cramer	1975, 1976	Bayern Munich
Brian Clough	1979, 1980	N Forest
Ernst Happel	1970, 1983	Feyenoord, Hamburg
Arrigo Sacchi	1989, 1990	Milan
Ottmar Hitzfeld	1997, 2001	B Dortmund, Bayern Munich
Vicente del Bosque	2000, 2002	Real Madrid
Alex Ferguson	1999, 2008	Man Utd
Jupp Heynckes	2004, 2010	Porto, Inter
José Mourinho	1998, 2013	Real Madrid, Bayern Munich



Carlo Ancelotti (main), Bob Paisley and Zinedine Zidane

League yielded an average of more than three goals a game. Since then there has been only one season in which it did not. Nobody has had such a profound impact on how the game is played since Michels - who, of course, via Johan Cruyff, has had a huge influence over Guardiola.

But as well as innovation and influence, football is partly about numbers and ticking off the silverware - at least for managers of elite clubs. That Alfred Hitchcock or Stanley Kubrick never won an Oscar, or that Martin Amis or Dame Muriel Spark never won the Booker, is a quirk at the end of their careers; it says more about the politics and subjectivity of such awards than it does about them. Football has a very clear and objective measure of who deserves to win: goals. Style and process are hugely important, and results at times don't give the full picture, but ultimately the game is about scoring more goals than the opponent, or at least not scoring fewer. And Guardiola, over 10 seasons, kept failing to do that in key European ties.

There was some bad luck, there were inexplicable collapses, but most of all there were baffling tactical decisions, most notably the use of Ilkay Gündogan on the left in a 4-4-2 at Liverpool in 2019, the adoption of a back three against Lyon in 2020 and leaving out Fernandinho against Chelsea in 2021. Overthinking became the great Guardiola glitch. When tactical tweaks work, such as restoring John Stones to right-back on Saturday, they are not overthinking but merely thinking. Had he not won a third Champions League, overthinking might have been his legacy.

As it is, it feels as though his career has entered a third phase. There was the young radical, who won two Champions Leagues and changed how the game was played; there was the mature coach with the flaw, the fear of being countered against that paradoxically opened him up to the counter; and now perhaps there is the serial winner, burnishing his already gleaming legacy with further silverware.

He has a rare longevity: 14 years between his first and most recent Champions League is a year short of Jupp Heynckes's mark and five short of Ancelotti. That speaks of his capacity to evolve: *Guardiolismo* is a philosophy in constant flux. This City - Erling Haaland, Stones pushing into midfield, and often four centre-backs - is just its latest incarnation.

Guardiola would have been considered a great even if he had been stuck on two Champions Leagues for ever. If only to head off the most tedious of quibblers, this third comes as welcome confirmation.

Sport

Football Champions League final

▼ City players cradle the trophy as their plane arrives home at Manchester Airport, where they were greeted by fans
MCFC; TIM GOODE/PA IMAGES



City's ascent to European superpower is a victory for politics in football

Nobody wants to talk about repressive regime behind the club but Abu Dhabi pushes sport as a source of soft power

Barney Ronay
Istanbul



Well, that's that done. So. What now? Perhaps the funniest moment of the Champions League final at a smoke-tainted Ataturk Stadium was the sight of the tuxedo-clad Hungarian classical musician Adam Gyorgy thundering his way through the tournament tune on a gleaming pitchside grand piano pre-kick-off, trying hard to give this hammy faux-anthem some verve and twinkle.

All the while, 100 metres off to his left, 10,000 blue-shirted Manchester City fans booed every flourish, every attempt to inject a little feeling into the occasion. No, Adam. Please. It's not you. It's just, well, it's kind of a long story.

It was that kind of evening, full of surprising textures. Although in many ways this was also the perfect Big Football final. Here we have a

global TV product staged inside a dictator-built stadium, featuring a dictator-owned champion team and another in a state of ongoing FFP-induced financial levitation. And in the middle of that lighted bowl the old familiar centrepiece, a game that is still capable of communicating beauty and pleasure, watched by a group of people still capable of being moved by the spectacle, still able to feel something, even if that something is the urge to boo an earnest Hungarian pianist.

The first lesson from Saturday is that City are deserving champions. This is by some distance the best football team in Europe. City may or may not, as L'Équipe suggested in its report on the game, be "moral in the way in which the club has built its strength", but the team itself is a model of aesthetics and good practice. Not to mention, as is often overlooked, "a generous and magnificent loser" in their previous defeats, which will make it even sweeter to win with a bit of a grind.

Pep went with the super-secure quadruple centre-back system in Istanbul, which has coincided with a powerful drawing down of the shutters. There is a tactical irony. Signing Erling Haaland has had the unexpected consequence of transforming City into a defensive force. The four centre-backs are in

part to compensate for Haaland's lack of touches higher up the pitch and the ever-constant fear of counterattack. You wonder how many Champions League titles they might have won if Guardiola had simply played his best pure defenders more often. It probably means something that City won in Istanbul with Haaland completing only three passes in 90 minutes.

Other positives: by the end City had four English outfield players on the pitch, evidence that this outsourced entity can still speak to the parks and pitches and levels down the pyramid that gave us players such as Kyle Walker and John Stones. City have

played beautiful football, scored wonderful goals, changed the game around them. The players seem nice. The ripped jeans Euro-bro outfits were pretty cool.

City's victory means this was also a day when football changed in a very basic sense. For the first time the world's premier club competition was won by a nation-state team. The most powerful, most successful club in the world is now owned, funded and run as a public relations glove puppet by a repressive nation state.

Those who watch and consume this sport don't have to care about any of this. It's not the end of anything just yet. Barcelona and Real Madrid have mortgaged the future to keep up with the present. Those good old boys will still be drinking whisky and rye. In any case footballing success has never really been pure. Every club era is built out of ruthlessness, money and egomaniacal owners. But this

is something new, a club era built instead from state power and the hands of an anti-democratic state, a machinery that is, by its nature, not soft or benevolent or free of collateral baggage.

Before kick-off the sense of power-flash was present in the stuff at the edges. The VIP tunnel had the usual ooze of *flâneuring* celebs. Here is Aleksander Ceferin, Uefa's chief executive, fingers crossed, trying not to look at the travel chaos behind him. Here is Luis Figo in sunglasses so large they seemed to cover at least 40% of his face. Here is Salt Bae, the world's leading celebrity meat-slicer, working the carpet, never at any stage removing his salting arm from behind his back, always on.

In the event Salt turned out to be the only notorious butcher in the house as rumours of an appearance by Bashar al-Assad of Syria proved unfounded. But other power brokers did turn up.

After the treble What happened next for United in '99?

When Manchester United won it in 1999, Alex Ferguson went for stability, making modest changes for the following season: £1.5m on Quinton Fortune from Atlético Madrid, £4m on Inter's Mikaël Silvestre. The sticking point was a successor to Peter Schmeichel: Mark Bosnich returned from Villa on a free and struggled; Massimo Taibi joined from Venezia for £4.5m and was worse. Veteran Raymond van der Gouw stepped in; Ferguson later solved it with £7.8m Fabien Barthez.

The results

Not encouraging, at least at first. United lost August's **Charity Shield** 2-1 to Arsenal, then the **Uefa Super Cup** 1-0 to Lazio later that month. In October the reserves lost in the third round of the **League Cup**, 3-0 to Aston Villa, but in November United won the **Intercontinental Cup** against Palmeiras in Tokyo - the first and last British winners before it was abolished. They then skipped defending the **FA Cup** to play in the inaugural **Club World**

Cup, where they failed to get out of their group. Ferguson said later: "We did it to help England's World Cup bid. That was the politics. I regretted it because we got nothing but stick and terrible criticism when really, it wasn't our fault." In the **Premier League** though, it quickly clicked: United retained the title with a record 18-point margin and 97 goals scored. In the **Champions League** they won their group, but lost over two legs of their quarter-final to Real Madrid.

Sheikh Mansour of Manchester City was present to see his second ever game. Just as significant, his brother was also there, Mohamed bin Zayed al-Nahyan, the current president of the UAE. Family business, meet family club. And this is at least an unobstructed view of the power dynamic in play.

There is no need to run through the human rights record of City's owners. Repressive laws and the crushing of free speech, war crimes and "black sites" in Yemen, a conflict for which the UK continues to supply arms. How about the arbitrary detention and deportation of 375 African migrant workers, seized from their homes "on the basis of skin colour", locked up, subjected to degrading treatment without any form of process, according to a Amnesty International report. One Nigerian worker reported being handcuffed in her night clothes and sexually assaulted by police before being taken to a prison camp. As she complained, police officers said: "Emirates give. Emirates take."

And yes, nobody really wants to talk about this. The football is on. And these are, after all, the sports pages. But the fact is the people making this part of the football chat are not journalists, haters or Manchester United fans. The people making us talk about this are the government of Abu Dhabi, who insist on pushing sport as their personal publicity megaphone, source of soft structural power, wealth extraction, and reverse-colonial interest in biddable post-industrial cities.

City's ascent is total victory for politics in football. What it means now is more of the same from other interested parties, with all the attendant fallout and compromise. As Qatar stalks the fringes, as Saudi Arabia embeds itself at Newcastle, the prospect of a regional ego-duel played out through this fragile old cultural industry should be a cause for genuine concern. Take your eyes off the money. This is not how sport is supposed to work.

It will mean more strain too on the financial rules, and more narrowing of the always-narrow pyramid. The financial cheating charges against City, all denied, feel like a structural inevitability, a basic friction between the approach to business of a multi-billionaire absolute monarchy, and the urge

The most successful club is now run as a public relations glove puppet by a nation-state



▲ Manchester City's owners enjoy the Champions League triumph

to protect the existing order in a Victorian community sport.

But the fact is the rules do exist. Victory in the final comes three years since City completed their appeal in Lausanne against being banned from the same competition, charges that were then overturned. There will presumably be medals now too for the selected 11 that day (yes: City brought 11 lawyers to the courtroom), all part of that lingering threat of simply consuming European football's governing body in litigation, one vast footballing Slapp (strategic lawsuit against public participation) suit.

Who knows? Perhaps City can now take that same spirit into the domestic courtroom and complete an unprecedented double, taking down Uefa's in-house legal team and the 115 Premier League charges outstanding. Perhaps the question will be posed in time as to who is the real key signing of the current era? Erling Haaland, king of goals? Or Lord Pannick, Kings Counsel?

Either way, expect more fuel for what seems the most likely outcome of the next few years, a basic schism in the way elite club football will be run; and a further junking of those old structures which go against the governing ethos of billionaire globalism.

The same goes, for now, for the Premier League's dominance of world football, the hoovering up of talent, expertise, coaches, players, eyeballs, power. It is no coincidence that City bolted on Barcelona's own in-house brain trust, then rose to a similar position of dominance, while Barcelona have done brainless and self-destructive things. And this is of course a system that will devour itself, kill the competition, suck the product dry. Nation state propaganda-football gives. Nation state propaganda-football takes.

As a final note there is the wider note, not so much of unease but of coldness. What does this model of sport actually express? The pre-existing expertise of others? The triumph of global capitalism? The fact that boundless government-backed financial stability, plus boundless talent and expertise will equal success? The overriding emotion at the end of City's victory in Istanbul seemed to be relief, satisfaction at a job done, an outcome that seemed inevitable, not so much heart and soul and celebrations as the satisfaction of well-to-do middle-aged tourists visiting the Grand Canyon because it's on the bucket list and coming away saying, "well, it was a trek but I'm glad we went".

At times it can feel as though the dominant emotion of City's transformation is anger, defiance, a hunger for incoherent online argument. It is a great shame that there is no coherent sense of care, duty and regulation in any form of club ownership, not just this one, no sense of caution and scepticism, just sharp elbows and the desire, lets face it, for a little easy escapism. That structure is now fully embedded. And as of Saturday night the game has changed for good, moving just a little further down its own unmapped journey.

Records may tempt Guardiola to stay on at club built for him

Chance to surpass Ferguson's records at Manchester United could convince City manager to prolong stay at champions

Jamie Jackson

The crowning of Manchester City as European champions and treble winners may cause Pep Guardiola to ask himself, again, a familiar question: how much longer can he manage his gilded side?

One answer is found in the irresistible quality of the 2022-23 Champions League, Premier League and FA Cup victors. The team that Guardiola built is so dominant and, seemingly, so unstoppable that it is a natural fount of the energy and drive required to rejuvenate the Catalan for the foreseeable future.

In the early hours of yesterday morning, after receiving rippling applause in the Ataturk Stadium's media room following the 1-0 defeat of Internazionale, Guardiola was an intriguing blend of exhaustion and defiance. "Don't ask me about next season," he said before, later, insisting that "knowing me" there will be no falling away when the defence of their titles begins in August.

By then the Community Shield may have been added, the

European Super Cup final versus Sevilla in Athens will be four days away, and Guardiola's eye will be on the Club World Cup in December as this trophy-addict tilts at a clean sweep of honours.

Yet when Guardiola's tenure might reach its endgame is a poser he has tossed about more than once during his seven-year reign. At the start of the season just ended, 12 months remained on his contract, and there was surprise from confidantes when he signed a fresh two-year deal during the World Cup. When he took over back in the summer of 2016 there had been the sense of a perfectionist coach who would remain in charge for a finite time - then a three-year contract.

This, remember, was the man who had just completed a three-year span in charge of Bayern Munich, preceded by a 12-month sabbatical, and whose four seasons at Barcelona (2008-12) ended in resignation with Guardiola citing how a stint at that "kind of club" felt an "eternity". Under him, City are now that kind of club, too. One in the elite rank that is favourite for every competition they enter, which brings a particular pressure.

From a certain angle, the triumph on Saturday can be viewed as the natural finishing line to all Guardiola has worked towards since striding on to the Etihad campus; and, too, what he was hired to do. For years there were denials that the chairman, Khaldoon al-Mubarak, his sporting director, Txiki Begiristain, and chief executive, Ferran Soriano, had ever ordered Guardiola to bring the European Cup to east Manchester.

In recent weeks the stance altered: he began speaking of City

From an angle, Saturday's triumph can be viewed as the natural finishing line to his work



◀ Manchester City's chairman Khaldoon al-Mubarak will want to keep Pep Guardiola at the club beyond his current contract which ends in two years
TOM JENKINS/
THE GUARDIAN

being a "big club" only once they claimed the continent's premier trophy. In part that may have been the ever-shrewd coach calculating that his players needed to hear this as motivation because, after losing the 2021 Champions League final against Chelsea in Porto, he would forget playing down the tournament's import, and instead talk up the absolute need to be the Europe's No 1 club.

It worked: City's first European Cup and Guardiola's third as a manager ensured the treble as the team from the town's blue zone joined the one from the red - Sir Alex Ferguson's 1999 Manchester United vintage - as immortals, and sealed his status as an all-time great (if not already secured).

What else, then, is there to achieve at City? Again, the word is eyebrows will be raised if Guardiola stays on beyond the next two seasons, as he will then have managed the side for nine years. Departing in summer 2025 would also make impossible any tilt at a challenge that might keep Guardiola's uber-competitive juices flowing: overtaking Ferguson's remarkable record at United of 13 Premier Leagues, five FA Cups, four League Cups, two European Cups, one European Cup-Winners' Cup, one European Super Cup, one Intercontinental Cup and one Fifa Club World Cup.

Guardiola's City honours roll stands at five Premier Leagues, one European Cup, two FA Cups and four League Cups. Win the European Super Cup and Fifa Club World Cup and Ferguson's tally in these is equalled, which Guardiola has already done in the League Cup. He now has half as many European Cups with City as Ferguson, is three behind in FA Cups, and eight in the Premier League. Yet by one metric Guardiola is ahead of what Ferguson achieved in more than 26 years at United: trophies per-season.

Disregarding Charity/Community shields, Ferguson's count ended on 28, for a ratio of 1.05 a season, while Guardiola's 12 have come at 1.74, so if he continues the Scot's haul would be eclipsed in around a decade.

Might this tempt Guardiola? Ten years is an age in elite management yet Guardiola will be only 62 in 2033, 12 months younger than Carlo Ancelotti is now, and as the XI that sealed Champions League glory hardly teams with gnarled veterans he may have to construct only one more great team to outstrip Ferguson.

And there is another reason why he may be drawn, yet again, to extend his tenure. At 52 and in his prime, where else would he go? Coaching in Italy remains a target but could he really enjoy what he does now at a Serie A side, or elsewhere?

Because as much as the all-conquering City is the team that Pep built, in this golden second phase of Sheikh Mansour's ownership, in which Soriano and Begiristain were headhunted to give him the best possible chance of success, this is the club configured for the man from Santpedor.

23

A class apart

Djokovic storms to record grand slam title win in Paris

Tumaini Carayol & Jonathan Liew Pages 36-37 →

The Guardian
Monday
12 June
2023



Sport

Jack Grealish and Erling Haaland hold the Champions League trophy on their flight to Manchester after triumph in Istanbul
TOM FLATHERS/MANCHESTER CITY/GETTY



Australia eye 'era-defining' Ashes after world Test win

Simon Burton
Kia Oval

Pat Cummins said he was preparing for an "era-defining" few weeks after leading his Australia side to victory in the World Test Championship final just five days before the Ashes get under way at Edgbaston. "We've seen it as one big tour with two huge titles to play for," he said. "It's good to tick the first one off."

This match featured the best teams of the past two years of Test cricket, Australia ultimately defeating India by 209 runs, with a fresh cycle about to get under way in Birmingham.

"I'd say whether we like it or not Ashes tend to define eras and teams," Cummins said. "I think the great thing about this final is we feel like we played awesome cricket for the last two years, so to be there at the end holding the trophy feels really well deserved. Away Ashes are bloody hard to win, I think it's been 20-odd years [actually 22], so it's not going to be easy but if we were to win it that is legacy-defining stuff, yeah."

Rohit Sharma, whose India side have lost in the first two WTC finals, said he would prefer the title to be decided over three matches not one. "I would love that," he said, "but is there time? But in a big event like this you need fair opportunities to both teams. You work hard for two years and then you only have one shot at it."

Cummins perhaps understandably disagreed: "Ideally you'd have a 50-match series but Olympics come down to one race to win gold, NFL, NRL seasons have finals. It's sport."

Sharma hinted that he was ready to adopt a full Bazball approach to Test cricket. "We want to do something different," he said. "There will be some talks about what brand of cricket we want to play in the next two years, and who are the guys who can do it for us. That's the question we need to find answers for."

Report and analysis Page 34 →



▲ Pat Cummins said Australia have ticked off the first of two huge titles*

European high flyers

Rodri urges City to be serial winners and build legacy

Jamie Jackson
Istanbul

Rodri believes Manchester City's first Champions League triumph can be the launchpad to build a legacy akin to that of Real Madrid, Bayern Munich, Barcelona and Milan as clubs who are serial winners of the trophy.

The 26-year-old's goal against Internazionale at the Ataturk Stadium proved decisive and sealed City

the treble, moving Pep Guardiola's side alongside Manchester United's 1999 vintage as only the second English team to achieve the feat. Rodri immediately focused on defending the trophy next season.

"It was so important to win against Inter because we can build a legacy for the future," he said. "We can trust in ourselves that we did it and this is what teams like Real Madrid, Bayern Munich, Barcelona, AC Milan - these kind of clubs - did in the past. So yes

Champions League special

Barney Ronay Victory signals a new club era built from state power Page 42 →

David Hytner Why the De Bruynes knew triumph was City's destiny Page 40 →

Jamie Jackson How long will Pep stay on? Page 41 →

we believe we can do it again. That's why it's so important.

"This [winning the competition] talks a little bit about life - you have to try and push, even though some years it's not been fair for us. Sport is like this. You have to keep going and keep going and in the end God gave this amazing present for all of us. The good point is we won but we created a culture and we won more."

"Guys like Erling [Haaland], 22-year-olds, and the lads coming now we have a very good squad for the next years."

Of his winning goal, Rodri said: "From my point of view I want to thank the team. They trusted me to come here and now scoring the most important goal in the history of this club. We deserve it. What a season."

"I think it was the only time I went forward in the game because Inter was so narrow I wanted to make sure the two strikers weren't comfortable. In that moment I just saw the space. In the first