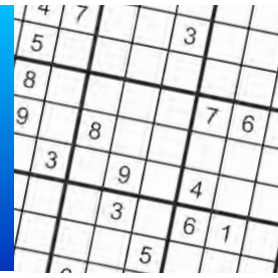




Inside

The biggest news stories of recent weeks, and views from top columnists



plus
**Coffee
Break**
puzzles

Debt Crisis in Portugal



Protestors in Lisbon's Comercio Square during a workers unions' demonstration. Photo: Associated Press

Svetlana De Melo

With its economic climate still at a strain, the Portuguese government has newly announced the rise in taxes. The government is hoping to keep the faltering bailout programme on track, and the country away from further debt. Furthermore, the government has broadcasted the reduction in Portugal's income tax bracket from eight to five thousand, replacing the social security tax which was cut due to its unpopularity.

On Wednesday, the Portuguese finance minister Vitor Gaspar unveiled the astonishing 4 per cent increase, while stating, "The adjustment is harder than anticipated." He also revealed 2013 unemployment forecast to be at a risen 16.4 per cent compared to this year's 16 per cent. Mr Gaspar blamed the undesirable increase of unemployment on the abandonment to ease efforts

on hiring costs.

These newly formatted budget measures, were given the seal of approval from the European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso, a former Portuguese president, who emphasised to pay out the latest instalment of the €78bn bailout. He further added his expectations of his fellow Eurozone partners to follow suit.

With increases in spending cuts, and economic reforms prolonging the recession, it's no surprise that the economy shrank by 1.2 per cent in the second quarter compared to the first. Along with Portugal's largest trade union, CGTP to call a mid-November strike opposing the latest moves, and Portugal to try to decrease its deficit below the European target of 3 per cent GDP, the government has a lot to work for to keep the country stabilised.

News In Brief

Curiosity rover uncovers evidence of water on Mars

Sam Kohn

"Clear evidence" of water on Mars has been found by the Curiosity rover during its study of the nearby planet.

The discovery came 55 days after Curiosity landed on Mars, when it

broadcasted images of never-before-analysed areas of land to NASA.

Scientists have concluded that the rock formations "heavily suggest" that there was once a fast-flowing stream of water there.

Largest protests in Greece for six months

Sam Kohn

Europe's fragile financial calm was shattered on 26 September, after vio-

lent riots broke out in Spain and Greece.

The initially peaceful 24-hour general strike quickly spiralled out of control, with revellers throwing gasoline bombs and bricks at riot police.

Police were forced to use tear-gas to deter the crowds, which were rioting to protest the revelation of further spending cuts issued by the Greek and Spanish government.



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Abu Hamza to be extradited "immediately" after failed appeal

Alex Forster

Abu Hamza, along with four other terror suspects, is to be extradited to the US within days after 14 years of asylum in the UK. Lawyers for the preacher had told judges that their client required an MRI scan to gather whether deteriorating health would be unfit to plead in court.

However, Justices Thomas and Ouseley ruled that there was no substance to these claims, saying that they were "wholly unpersuaded". It appears that this was simply a further attempt to delay deportation, after the

European Court of Human Rights refused a previous appeal.

Hamza has been fighting such a decision for over 10 years, having been indicted in the US of 11 terror-related offences. The cleric is thought to have been involved in the taking of 16 hostages in Yemen in 1996 and conspiring to found a jihad training camp in Ohio, USA between 2000 and 2001. Meanwhile, he has publicly supported violent jihad in Afghanistan against UK, US and NATO forces.

Mr Bary and Mr Al-Fawwaz are set to face trial for their involvement in bombings against the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam in 1998, attacks that Osama Bin Laden claimed to have co-ordinated. Al-Fawwaz faces 270 counts of murder in relation to the attacks.

The final pair, Ahmad and Ahsan, stand accused of creating and hosting a website aimed at

helping potential terrorists as well as charges of conspiracy to kill.

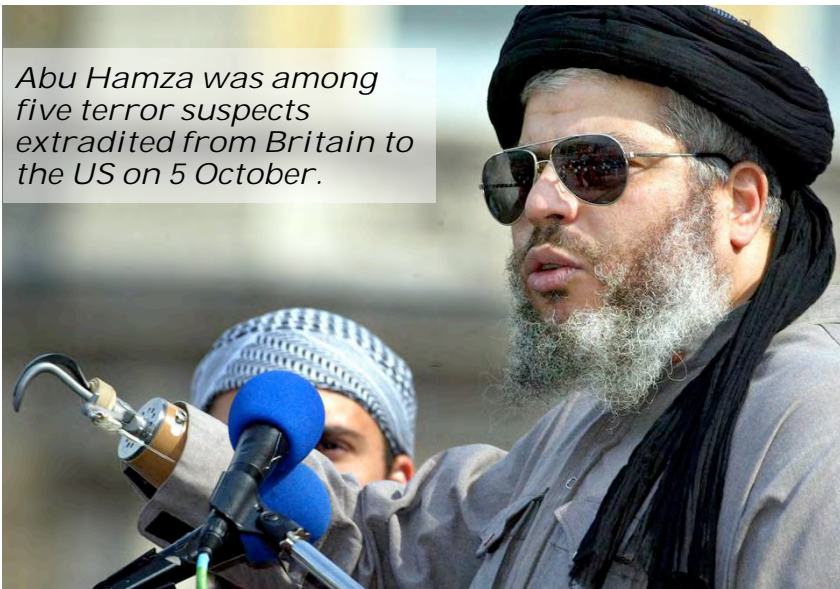
The decision looks to have brought an end to an issue that successive UK governments, since Tony Blair's first term as Prime Minister, have failed to conclude.

Whilst the issue is not at an end altogether, with all the men still to face trial, it is broadly expected that all defendants will be found guilty. Moreover, every single man faces at least one allegation that has brought a death penalty ruling in previous cases.

Now, though, Home Secretary Theresa May can claim to have done what none of her predecessors had been able to, by successfully securing a court ruling to forcibly remove Hamza from the UK. This comes only months after the proceedings appeared to have halted, after Mrs May's office failed to hand over the relevant paperwork to EU courts before the deadline.

Abu Hamza has since pleaded not guilty to terror charges in a New York court.

Abu Hamza was among five terror suspects extradited from Britain to the US on 5 October.



My View

Helen Gilmour

Are Gove's plans for the GCSE taking us back to the 1970s?



The Education Secretary has new plans for exams in this country, and I'm sure this didn't come as a surprise to many: in fact it's probably something that we should have been expecting ever since the Tories came in to power via a coalition in 2010. Nevertheless, that

doesn't mean that people aren't fuming about it.

Gove has decided to do away with the GCSE system we have now, and with it abolishing modular exams as well as coursework, all in favour for his 'new' idea. The system will involve one single exam at the end of two years of study, something which provides a retro throwback to the 1970s, putting the current Year Seven in uncertainty about their futures. In reality, this supposed 'modernisation' of the exam system is nothing more than a step back in time. The only thing that can be certain is that Michael Gove has doomed at least this one year group into complete insecurity as to what is going to happen. The words 'guinea pigs' spring to mind; these students being the ones that will suffer the most from these changes.

However, there is hope. This latest change has resulted in the complete alienation of voters in the education sector. This, alongside the fact that the Conservative Party failed to achieve a majority in the 2010 general election and have estranged many more members of the electorate, means that the likelihood of them being firmly voted in to power is somewhat diminished.

In the meantime, Gove's 'reforms' have resulted in ambiguity and doubt for both students and teachers.

Exciting new use for waste food

Hong Kong lab to make succinic acid from waste food

Jack Cooper

Approximately 1.5 billion tons of uneaten food is disposed of each year by the human population every year, an unnecessary and avoidable epidemic of wastefulness. Much of this food waste is simply left to decompose, which is not environmentally friendly in any sense. However, Carol Lin from the City University of Hong Kong is developing a new method which could ensure food waste is used for the benefit of mankind.

Carol Lin, a biochemical engineer, has developed a technique in which micro-organisms are used to break down the starch found in many foods into succinic acid, a chemical that is a key component of biodegradable plastics. A certain strain of fungus is added to starchy food in order to break down chemical bonds, releasing sugars and a nitrogen compound. A particular type of bacteria is then added to the sugars to produce a variety of useful chemicals, including succinic acid.

The potential impact of this method is huge, as it would give waste food a purpose, reduce the environmental impact of waste food and increase production of eco-friendly biodegradable plastics. Currently however, the process is very inefficient; generating only 81kg of succinic acid per ton of food waste, and the transportation of food waste is proving difficult due to its tendency to decompose.

Despite these setbacks, Carol Lin is confident that the process will become widespread, with the low cost of processing making it a very viable method for producing the acid.

Although the conversion of waste food into biodegradable plastics will not completely solve the problem of wasted food material, it will contribute to a solution.

15-year-old Megan Stammers found safe and well

Sam Kohn

Megan Stammers, the 15-year-old from East Sussex who went missing on 20 September has been found in the south-east of France.

The missing schoolgirl was found along with her 30-year-old maths teacher, Jeremy Forrest, who has been arrested on suspicion of child abduction.

Megan told her mother that she was going to a sleepover at a friend's, but was reported missing after failing to appear at school the following day. After eight days on the run, she has been reunited with her family who are said to be "thrilled".

J. K. Rowling continues to spread magic

Sam Kohn

J. K. Rowling has released her first novel since the *Harry Potter* series; *The Casual Vacancy*.

The release was met with mixed reviews from critics, with many reviewers responding negatively to the vast change in writing that Rowling has undergone.

The bad press, however, seems to have had little effect on the public, with the novel becoming "the fastest-selling book in three years" following unprecedented demand.

US military Afghanistan death toll exceeds 2,000

Sam Kohn

Two American soldiers were killed in Afghanistan during an exchange of fire between the US military and the Afghan army,



The US death toll in Afghanistan has surpassed 2,000 since the invasion in 2001. It passed the 1,000 mark in 2010. Photo: Sgt Kyle Davis/USA

bringing the US military death-toll in the country to 2,000.

The statement was released on 30 September by an unnamed official, and is the result of eleven years of involvement in Afghanistan.

Tension between coalition forces and Afghan allies has been rising due to a suspected rise of "insider attacks", which prompted the US to release a statement, assuring that "there is a very strong relationship between us and our Afghan allies".

Photo: Brendan Smialowski/AFP/Getty Images



Controversial plans for badger cull continue

Jack Cooper

The Government have decided to continue with plans to implement a badger cull, despite extensive resistance to the idea from the public. An estimated 100,000 badgers will be shot by trained marksmen in an attempt to prevent the spread of bovine tuberculosis in cattle, an infectious disease that primarily affects the lungs.

Bovine tuberculosis is a major problem for the cattle industry since infected cows cannot have their milk sold and must be killed, causing particular financial and personal hardship on farmers. Badgers have been proven to be capable of transferring the disease to cattle via urine and faeces, and so it is hoped that a cull will reduce the number of new infections amongst cattle, although the potential effectiveness is not fully known.

However some in the scientific community have questioned the impact of culling, citing a previous badger culling trial that was conducted in England, which showed culling to cause the movement of badgers to other areas, therefore spreading the disease to previously unaffected places. Independent scientists have stated that "badger culling has positive and negative effects on bovine TB in cattle and is difficult, costly and controversial."

There are alternative methods to preventing the spread of bovine tuberculosis, such as vaccinating badgers, and increasing security of cattle in order to stop potential contact with badgers and badger contaminants. These methods have been shown to be effective both economically and practically. However, the Government has chosen to pursue the badger cull in addition to previous measures.

There has been widespread public outcry, with many celebrities speaking against the cull. Brian May, guitarist of the band Queen, initiated an online petition against the cull which has amassed more than 100,000 signatures, the amount required for it to be considered for a House of Commons debate.

Coffee Break

Puzzles and brainteasers from *The Stag*.

Puzzles created by Jemima Coulson

Connectives Wordsearch

Words to find: also, because, but, due, finally, firstly, furthermore, however, lastly, therefore, whereas

F	Z	W	H	E	R	E	A	S	I	E	M	V	D	R
N	U	I	N	H	W	B	E	H	S	C	T	H	R	T
E	H	R	R	N	T	U	F	U	I	R	G	H	M	B
E	K	A	T	S	D	N	A	H	M	S	A	H	H	U
O	O	T	A	H	T	C	H	Y	I	F	R	I	T	T
O	E	H	H	E	E	L	E	W	L	C	T	D	B	D
F	T	T	E	B	T	R	Y	R	A	T	U	H	M	S
R	I	U	A	P	D	T	M	C	R	E	A	E	R	A
E	O	N	D	I	E	D	H	O	R	I	I	U	S	H
S	R	D	A	E	E	E	O	A	R	V	D	O	B	L
L	R	M	T	L	E	D	H	O	W	E	V	E	R	A
E	H	E	H	W	L	Y	T	X	I	M	S	O	A	S
S	N	T	N	G	A	Y	C	B	N	E	S	S	E	T
E	G	L	O	E	N	Z	S	V	A	L	O	H	M	L
T	H	E	R	E	F	O	R	E	A	T	M	C	S	Y

Sudoku

Standard rules apply. Each sub 3×3 box has to contain all the numbers 1 to 9 (inclusive); so too does each row and each line.

	2		6				7	4
4	7	8	3	2		5		
			7		9	1	2	
	6	4				8		
5								1
		7				6	9	
	4	3	1		6			
		5		3	4	2	1	6
6	1				8		5	

Is £40m a fair price to reverse sexuality?

A well-known Hong Kong billionaire has offered a \$65m (£40m) reward to any man able to woo his lesbian daughter.

Molly Phillips

Cecil Chao, a property and shipping tycoon anxious to marry off his lesbian daughter, has publicly announced that he will pay \$65m to the man that can win her heart.

After the rumour emerged that Gigi was already married to her girlfriend of seven years, Chao dismissed it as "fake" and said that seeing as her chances of finding a man were now ruined, he must provide an incentive, hence the \$65 million marriage bounty.

Not surprisingly, a lot of men have already approached Chao regarding the offer. He says: "I don't mind whether he is rich or poor. The important thing is that he is generous and kind-hearted."

Cecil Chao describes his daughter as "...a very good woman with both talents and looks. She is devoted to her parents, is generous and does volunteer work." Chao's 33-year-old daughter, Gigi Chao, has suddenly been bombarded with thousands of offers of dates and marriage proposals. When asked how she responded to her father's actions, Gigi said: "I wasn't angry at all. I was really quite touched." She adds: "It is his way of saying 'baby girl I love you and you deserve more.'"

While homosexuality was decriminalised in 1991, Same-sex unions are not recognised in Hong Kong and Gigi insists that although he refuses to accept her sexuality as a social statement, he is open to it as an 'in-the-closet' lifestyle choice.

It is confirmed that Gigi and her girlfriend Sean Eav had an 'unexpected' church blessing in France in April of this year however, when asked whether she considers herself married, Gigi said "I don't think I'm at a privilege to give you a straight answer... my father has reverently denied this statement and it would be inappropriate for me to just outright and contradict him."

My View Jack Cooper

There's positives to be found.

Though some may find it surprising, I have been both disgusted and happy as a result of the news story concerning a Chinese billionaire offering £40 million to any man who can 'turn' his lesbian daughter straight.

Of course, my initial reaction was negative, not quite anger since I have become desensitised to such blatant discrimination, instead feeling exasperation that people still believe that being homosexual is a choice. There is a multitude of evidence proving that homosexually is not a choice but something you are born this, yet there are those who still live under the belief that it is a decision made as easily as picking what to eat.

However, I soon realised that the release of this story revealed a huge amount about how far society has progressed in the past few decades. If this story had occurred in the 1980's, almost all of Britain's media would have been sympathetic towards the father, since homophobia was an inherent part of life then. They would have most likely used this story to promote the misconception that homosexuality can be 'cured'.

But now the majority of Britain's media has either reported this story in a neutral and factual tone, or supported the daughter by mocking the father for his womanising and opening inferring that there is no such thing as a cure for being gay. Of course there were exceptions, but there always are.

It is events like this that restore my confidence in the progression of gay rights. This story has proven what I have come to realise, that society has become overwhelmingly accepting of homosexuality in the UK, allowing those like myself to be open about their sexuality without fear of recrimination.

Refugee heckled at Labour Party Conference

Labour Party delegate heckles refugee young woman as she praises her school.



Joan al-Assam, a Year 11 student from Paddington Academy, speaks at the Labour Party Conference in October.
Photo: Paul Ellis/AFP/Getty Images

Raphael Hill

A Year 11 student at the semi-independent Paddington Academy was heckled during her speech at the Labour party conference in Manchester.

The Year 11 pupil was explaining how her school successfully encouraged the arts when one delegate shouted: "A lot of comprehensives do the same". The women shouted during Assam's speech but she nevertheless continued the speech after the interruption and was applauded by the audience once she had finished speaking.

Academy schools, such as Furze Platt, have caused controversy before on the grounds that the schools were no longer sufficiently under the influence of the local authorities. The academies were first created by David Blunkett in 2000 but remodelled and incentivised by Michael Gove in 2010. As of July 2012, the number of academies has reached 1957, double that of last year. They allow headteachers greater control over the funding of the school as funding comes directly from the government and private companies or individuals. Some Labour politicians, most notably ex-leader Neil Kinnock, have criticised their implementation but, given that a student from one of these schools was showcased during the Labour party conference, there is less chance of these criticisms influencing the Labour Party's upcoming manifesto for the next election. However, Labour's position since the 2010 manifesto has remained unclear.

The heckler has polarised opinions within the Labour party. The majority, including Ed Miliband who stated it was 'totally wrong', feel that it was bad-form to disrupt the young woman and that her comments were justified.

However, some analysts have pointed out that academy schools are a concern of many traditional Labour voters who have little faith about the new academies and free schools. They also remarked that it was wrong to allow a young, pro-academies woman to stand up and speak in front of a crowd where she was likely to face opposition.

Labour summit success

Rumman Shaikh

As party conferences go, Labour's in Manchester was a huge success for the party and the city. By the end of the conference, you only need to look at the numbers to see its success. Labour opened up a fourteen-point gap over the Conservatives and the under pressure Ed Miliband also won some praise.

What interested most people was not the policies being put forward but the way Mr Miliband represented himself, something that everyone was looking forward to, even before the conference began. Miliband certainly rose to the occasion delivering perhaps his best speech yet. Not a very hotly-contested category, admittedly, but it is the only time he has come across as being as likeable and good-humoured as he is in person. He was walking, talking, coming out with a few decent jokes. From memory he delivered an almost word-perfect speech, although in its weaker parts it did sound like a medley of mini-speeches. He quoted Disraeli, claimed the 'one nation' mission for Labour, and even anger about debt.

His policies were somewhat overshadowed by the resoundingly successful speech but they would have raised a few eyebrows. His policies ranged from the improbable to the unworkable. He described a tax-cut as the government writing a cheque to the worker, that the money people earn is the state's by right. Class war, the unofficial theme of this Labour conference, was everywhere in his speech. Luckily for him, though, not many would have listened to his whole speech but only the best bits.

His best bits were very good and the delivery was excellent. He attacked David Cameron's policies, was careful on jokes, but still tried to show some sense of humour, something we see lacking in most politicians and at the end he very convincingly said: "This is who I am. This is what I believe. This is my faith." Hence finishing in the same confident tone he started with, he turned the conference into a major success.

Incredible underwater photographs taken



Sam Kohn

Stunning photographs have been taken by Andrew Tuohy as he captured the moment his hand-gun was triggered underwater. The tornado effect was captured when he shot a bullet from his 1991 Kimber pistol in to an empty swimming pool.

My View

Jess Kirby

Privacy is a thing of the past.

Sometimes the things in life that are meant to make us feel safer do the exact opposite, the most recent example being the sixteen-megapixel, high definition CCTV cameras scanning our streets and making Britain one of the most watched over societies in the world. The best-known justification for the huge amount of cameras studying our every move being 'Most of them don't work anyway' no longer applies, as the most pedantic of crimes are now being recognised, which could sadly be said to be allowing some of the bigger things to slip through the cracks. Gone are the days of unrecognisable, grainy, monochrome images; privacy is a thing of the past due to the 360-degree view that can pick out your face in a crowd for half a mile away.

The Surveillance Commissioner for the UK, Andrew Rennison, is said to have warned the government of the upcoming public backlash if the public are not informed and the cameras not regulated. However, the public don't seem to be as bothered as they should be over society resembling *Big Brother* more and more, as technology advances. Granted, not everyone is thinking of this as a potential cause of an uprising, but the facts are out and, if anything, they support the need to be concerned.

Surely the money we have could be spent on far better means of crime prevention, instead electronics capable of 'gait analysis'?

All that can be done now is to wait in anticipation to see whether these new surveillance systems actually make a difference, or if they just cause as much trouble as the crimes they're aiming to prevent.



US Navy develops secret software to hijack smartphones

Alex Forster

Malware is a form of software developed to disrupt computer operation, often used by criminals to illegally procure information from electronic devices.

Now, malware named *PlaceRaider* has been developed by the US Navy at Indiana University. The purpose is to control smartphone cameras, the information from which is then transmitted to an external source.

In effect, this can build a remote spy network for US armed forces, allowing them a vast amount of images when the data from a number of phones is compiled. Researchers from the university also suggest that it could easily be placed inside popular apps like Instagram, instantly gaining access to files from across the world.

The Navy has stated that it will continue to fund such software due to the potential benefits to operations where there is a direct risk to a number of civilians. Furthermore, the application to the pursuit of terror suspects could allow authorities to build a 3D map around any target, removing much of the risk from such an operation.

Nonetheless, this will still face a great deal of ethical opposition, as government-sponsored thievery of private information is likely to come up a great deal of opposition and can be argued to contradict the US Constitution. So, it remains to be seen whether the software will ever be allowed to come into practical use.

Meet Flexi-Gran, the 86-year-old gymnast

Sam Kohn

Meet 86-year-old Johanna Quaas, the oldest competing gymnast in the world. The lycra-donning grandma impressed large crowds at the 2012 Cottbus World Cup in Germany with her impressive floor and beam routines. She hopes to inspire anybody and everybody with her story, saying that it's "never too late".



Murray silences doubters to finally clinch elusive Grand Slam

At 02:04 on 11 September 2012, one of the longest waits in world sport had finally ended. 76 years after Fred Perry lifted the Wimbledon trophy aloft, Andy Murray ended the wait for a Brit to hold one of the Grand Slam cups.



Andy Murray holds the US Open 2012 trophy, having beaten Novak Djokovic, as the Scot claimed his first Grand Slam. Photo: Getty Images

James Ashe

It truly was a remarkable achievement for the 25 year old who had lost his last 4 grand slam finals and after Djokovic had brought it back to 2 sets all, many (myself included) had started to think it was going to be a fifth. But Murray didn't. After four hours and 54 minutes of truly breathtaking tennis, the Scot finally prevailed 7-6 7-5 2-6 3-6 6-2 in a wonderful final. This was late night sport at its best and at the end as Djokovic looped a back-hand long, Murray sank to his knees. The relief on his face was clear for everyone in that stadium – and around the world – to see. He had finally lived up to the pressure, hype and expectation that he has had to live with for the past decade.

Andy Murray is a notoriously boring man. Many feel he is devoid of emotion and incapable of smiling, but after that win; even if you hate the guy you have got to be happy for someone who has endured so much criticism, before finally proving all of them wrong. The perennial

loser in grand slam finals has finally broken his duck. Now the question is how many more? Under the leadership of his excellent, yet emotionless coach Ivan Lendl, there should hopefully be many more to come. This should be the catalyst for the floodgates to open. If it does, and Murray's excellent form continues into next year, one thing is almost certain, it won't be a 76 year wait for the next one.

Since Fred Perry's win in 1936, there have been numerous British nearly-men in the world of mens tennis, Andrew Castle, John Lloyd, Greg Rusedski and of course Tim Henman but as Murray served his way to his grand slam victory to end all those years, it was a fitting way to end a brilliant summer of sport tucked away on satellite television in the middle of the night. By the end of the match the whole stadium was on their feet; even his coach was smiling. Just. After the huge successes of Britain's Olympic and Paralympics teams and the win in the Tour de France, part of me even thinks Britain should just retire from sport. I mean, how are we going to top this?

My View

Andrea Reive

Thinking outside the penalty box.

As the hysteria and excitement generated by the Olympics finally dies down, one thing is certain: it is unlikely to be forgotten. Enthusiasm for sports such as athletics has never been higher, and yet it is the less-mainstream sports that it seems the Olympics has had the greater impact on. It was all about raising awareness; little-known sports such as Handball and Canoe Slalom gained a level of publicity that they could never have dreamed of before.

In our society, sports like Handball are in danger of falling by the wayside. And although the Sports Industry is more diversified than even 20 years ago, still too much pressure is being put on young people to excel in mainstream arenas. It is hard to imagine 'big' sports such as Football disappearing, but the fact that lesser-known sports could be struggling is just as disturbing. Especially when they seem ideal for people who want to stay fit, but are not inclined to train seven days a week.

Sports are thrust upon us from a young age and, for a lot of us, that's not something we're comfortable with. Many people find themselves in the position of wanting to have a go, but not being athletically gifted enough to breach the First Eleven ideal. Finding a solution to this problem, coupled with the excitement for sport the Olympics inspired, could very well lead to an uptake in participants for these lesser-known pastimes. Certainly sports such as Water Polo, Lacrosse and Underwater Hockey are every bit as fun and enthralling as Football, Rugby or Netball, and they require far different skill sets, giving young people a wider variety than they ever knew existed.

Mainstream sports do not cater to everyone, just as not all sports need to be club-organised for people to have a good time. Obscure, niche sports, such as Quidditch (not played in the way J.K.Rowling imagined it, I'm sure), are unlikely to be sanctioned by local sports institutes. They may not have a World series, or even a National team. But if chasing someone dressed all in gold while being pelted with dodge-balls isn't fun, then I don't know what is!

'Racist'

John

Terry

banned

and

fined by

FA

Lewis Baker

John Terry banned and fined by the FA after being cleared in court.

Almost 2 months after being cleared in court of racially abusing QPR's Anton Ferdinand, ex England skipper John Terry has been fined £222,000 and banned for four matches.

After a four-day hearing, the Chelsea defender was found guilty of using racist language towards Ferdinand when the two teams met last October at Loftus Road. The F.A. released a statement simply identifying what they believe Terry had done wrong. He has been charged for using abusive and/or insulting words and/or behaviour towards Queens Park Rangers' Anton Ferdinand, which included a reference to colour and/or race.

Even though the F.A. have imposed these sanctions, Terry is still denying the charges. He does however admit to swearing at Ferdinand and also using the word 'black', but he insists he was only repeating what he heard Ferdinand accuse him of saying. It seems though that the QPR defender finally feels he has received justice, after accusing Terry of using racist language towards him.

The verdict came just days after Terry retired from international football. Many believe the court case and also the F.A hearing had a lot to do with Terry's retirement from international football, however many of his team mates continue to support him and believe he is not guilty.

Review: *The Campaign*

Director: Jay Roach; Studio: Warner Bros Pictures; Rating: 15



Jack Clifton

The Campaign, starring The Hangover's Zach Galifianakis and funny-man Will Ferrell, is a 97-minute comedy that tells the story of Camden Brady (Ferrell) and Marty Huggins (Galifianakis) throughout their epic battle for a seat in Congress to represent the 14th District of North Carolina.

The incompetent and seemingly unprofessional Camden Brady is running for his fifth term as Congressman unopposed, despite his evident unconcern regarding matters such as policy and budgets. In his opinion, the slogan 'America. Jesus. Freedom' is enough to win over the crowds – a phrase that he admits is meaningless, yet one that 'people sure love.'

However, the revelation of Brady's secret affair with one of his supporters causes his campaign to suffer, and Brady's biggest backers – the sinister Motch brothers – begin searching for a new candidate who they can easily manipulate to oppose Brady in the run for Congress.



It is here that we are introduced to Marty Huggins, the clueless yet loveable tourism director who enjoys nothing more than devoting ample amounts of time on his two pugs. After being persuaded to stand up against Brady, Marty is given an extensive makeover by his newly appointed campaign manager Tim Wattley. This includes reinventing Marty as a successful entrepreneur and, much to Marty's dismay, the disposal of his two 'un-American' dogs.

The following conflict that occurs between Brady and Huggins is thoroughly entertaining, as the two candidates begin to employ increasingly shocking and occasionally desperate tactics in order to outdo and humiliate one another, leading to numerous

laugh-out-loud moments – something that it to be expected from director Jay Roach, the man responsible for the Austin Powers movies.

With the American presidential election coming up, the timing for *The Campaign* couldn't be better. Ferrell and Galifianakis do not fail to amuse throughout their classic comedy showdown, making this one film you don't want to miss.

Review: *The Sweeney*

Director: Nick Love; Studio: Vertigo Films, Embargo Films; Rating: 15



Morgan Miller

A team of detectives investigate a robbery that ended in the homicide of a young woman, while also being under scrutiny from Internal Affairs because of their unorthodox methods.

When a combined robbery and homicide ensues in a jewellers, detectives Regan (Ray Winstone) and Carter (Ben Drew, better known as British rapper Plan B) must hunt down the gang involved. The *Sweeney*, directed by Nick Love, is the first film to be made based on the popular 1970s television show. Although this film is mostly filled with harsh violence and coarse language, it's much more than that.



The plot has depth and holds the attention of the audience. The relationship built between Regan and his female co-worker Nancy (Hayley Atwell) engages viewers and gives emotion to the movie amongst all the action.

The chemistry between experienced Regan and newcomer Carter is created through both Winstone and Drew's very convincing performances. Ray Winstone always gives a good performance and audiences know what to expect from him, however Drew shines in this film by adding needed humour but keeps up his hard persona, definitely establishing himself as a serious actor. I think we'll be seeing a lot more from Ben Drew on the big screen in years to come.

The ending lends itself to a sequel, so if you haven't already, make sure you check *The Sweeney* out and look forward to what comes next.

Superstar singer Adele records lead song in *Skyfall* soundtrack

Cherrie Ip

Adele's recording of the *Bond* theme-song was revealed to the public via her Twitter page at 0:07am on 5 October as part of Global James Bond Day. The singer tweeted a picture of the booth set on 1 October at 2.30pm, sparking global interest when thousands of her Twitter followers retweeted the image.

However, this came as no surprise to the public. About a year ago, she accidentally hinted at the secret on ITV's *The Jonathan Ross Show*. She blabbed: "I'm going back in the

studio in November, fingers crossed... well this is actually a theme, what I've got to do for, um. Wow. That's really giving something away, isn't it?"

Adele wrote the song as in collaboration with the producer Paul Epworth, who had accompanied her with the success of her album *21*. The star has revealed that she was originally hesitant to be involved with the lead track, but her views changed once she was shown the script and heard ideas for the song.

London-born Adele said: "I fell in love with the script and Paul had some great ideas for the track and it ended up being a bit of a no brainer to do it in the end." She also went on to say: "when we recorded the strings it was one of the proudest moments of my life."

It is safe to say that Adele will not be working for the secret service of MI6.

The film *Skyfall* is due for release on 26 October, starring Daniel Craig. Adele's song is now available to buy.

London 2012: "We have shared some wonderful days, haven't we?"

You can talk of legacy all you like, but the sad fact is that London 2012 is over, says **Andrew Burdett**.

First, I have an apology. I was wrong to knock the idea of the UK holding the Olympics, arrogantly claiming it would be cheaper to send any Brits wanting to watch an Olympic sport First-Class on Eurostar to Paris. (Although, in the depths of the Euro-crisis in early June, there was a definite feeling in France of 'We're glad you rozz-beefs got lumbered with them after all'.) I was also wrong to ridicule Locog's ticketing system and then laugh at the incompetence of G4S. In the words of an initially "cheesed off" Boris Johnson: "No other country or culture in the world would have a situation where the mayor of the host city goes into a ballot for tickets for his family and gets rejected." And it's hard to argue that the presence of a helpful, courteous, and well-humoured Army around the Park did anything less than improve the world's (and our own) perception of our Tommies.

If you didn't apply for tickets for anything, it's your loss. Being from a non-sporting family, it was, in hindsight, a little ambitious to only apply for Opening and Closing Ceremony ballots. Obviously, these proved fruitless for us (although I do know a few friends and fellow Furze Platt students who were among the 80,000 at the shows). Instead of giving up hope of attending an event, we re-entered and re-entered and eventually ended up with tickets for the preliminary rounds of Women's Basketball – that 'pinnacle' of the Olympics. Still, just being in the Park was incredible. As you walked in, there was such a warmth to all who greeted you that you yourself felt like an athlete walking into a stadium, with countless people cheering and celebrating your arrival.

So we've won the fight, scored the goal, and hit our target. And other such clichéd phrases under the strained semantic field of success in sport, to show our satisfaction at being able to claim we staged this "greatest of games". No one can honestly say that they 'knew it would be all-right all along'... but it turned out to be. The long-prophesied 'London traffic meltdown' never really materialised. Most of the empty seats in the venues eventually found warm bottoms to comfort. The hugely controversial surface-to-air missiles on that block of flats thankfully never needed to be deployed. But, on the subject of hitting a target, our Great British teams thrashed the ones they'd been set: TeamGB finished with 65 medals (25 of them Gold) compared to their target of 48, while ParalympicsGB (who beat their target of 103 medals on Day 8) left the Athletes' Village in third place on the table, with 120 medals in their bags (actually eighteen more than second-place Russia), including 34 Golds.

Now, as the circus packs up and heads for Rio, I'm sad that the thing we've all been following for weeks, months, and years – with both excitement and anticipation, and yet (until it actually began) a strange, irrepressible sense of doubt – is now over.

Just think of all that we saw and learnt about our-

selves as a race – we are relentlessly pushing limits, adamantly defying belief, and continually breaking records. The posterboys and girls of this summer performed well (Rebecca Adlington earned Bronze medals in the 400m and 800m freestyle swim events, and Tom Daley got a medal of the same colour in the Men's 10m platform dive), but it's the new household names of Jessica Ennis and David Weir that grabbed the top prizes. Be honest: had you heard about Mo Farah – let alone the now-famous 'Mobot' – before the proceedings got underway? The Somali-born British athlete won Gold in both the 5,000m and 10,000m, and now shares the two medals with his newborn twin daughters. No doubt that that very new generation will be inspired by their daddy's strength and stamina.

A once famously self-deprecating lot, we took pride in our tiny island nation – so small we could be swallowed up in one mouthful by the other medals-tables leaders – and forgot what it was like to bottle up our emotions, as we cried with either sincere pity or great joy at the sight of our home-side sportsmen either losing or winning their games.

London, the fearsome capital city at the heart of last summer's obscene riots, *this* summer was the friendliest place on the planet.

But, the 'Games Makers' – the pink-and-purple-clad army of 70,000 delightful volunteers, who really did make the Games what they were – have taken off their uniforms for ever. And, tightly as we all want to hold onto that huge buzz of goodwill-to-all-men, it is sadly – perhaps slowly, but absolutely certainly – dying. Then the heated debates over why the hell we spent so much money on something we clearly couldn't afford (the initial total budget of £2.4bn was high, but it was a figure that rose to £9.4bn in March 2007). Unfortunate comparisons to the Millennium Dome will be made, and someone will say in a Blairite fashion: 'Hindsight is a wonderful thing; governments shouldn't try to run sporting events'.

My hope, though, is that after that's all happened and we're all terribly disheartened, a phoenix will rise from the ashes like the one from the Olympic Closing Ceremony's dismantled cauldron, and (as Eric Idle told us to at the end of 'Round One') we'll all "look on the bright side" once again. With any luck, new uses will soon be found for all of the permanent buildings at the Park. (Sounds fanciful? Think of The Dome – now home to the world's busiest music venue.) We'll remember how run-down and poor the East of London was before 2005 and then notice: 'Wow, it's now got one of the biggest shopping centres in Europe'. And we'll suddenly cry: 'My goodness, it's served by the most modern transport infrastructure in the country'. And we'll quietly realise that, 'Actually, back in 2012, didn't we do well after all?'.

Being Maria

In September, **Lorna Young** appeared in an amateur production of *West Side Story*, starring alongside fellow FPSS-members in a 30-strong cast. Here, writing exclusively for *The Stag*, she remembers the experience.

When I auditioned for the role of Maria in Stage One Youth's production of *West Side Story*, I never thought I would actually be given the role.

Maria, a young woman who has recently moved from quiet, calm Puerto Rico to exciting, modern Manhattan finds herself falling in love with a sweet local boy called Tony, despite the fact that he is a member of a gang that opposes her brother's gang. This vibrant musical explores life for youths in 1950's America as they face gang violence, love and lots of raging hormones. I knew the role would be a challenge, but with the help of an amazing director, Lloyd White, a fantastic choreographer, Ursula Embleton and a phenomenal musical director, Peter Dodsworth I knew I could give it my best shot.

One of the most challenging aspects to playing Maria

forming a convincing stage kiss without laughing is harder than it seems!

Another challenge was mastering the classic Spanish accent spoken by the Puerto Rican gang, the Sharks. Luckily for me, I had taken Spanish at GCSE and therefore my

“A challenge was portraying Maria as feisty in earlier scenes, yet independent and confident towards the end, when she is able to declare her love for Tony despite it being forbidden.”

accent wasn't too awful, although it was hard not to slip back into a posh British accent at times.

For the cast as a whole, the scene that took the most work was the 'Dance at the Gym.' This eight minute long number explores many dance styles, from the Mambo right up to Ballet. The first rehearsal we spent on this scene showed a big contrast compared to the final product. As a performer, one of the most inspiring and encouraging things is being able to see how far you are able to progress as a group. One individual in particular who showed such incredible progression was Niven Willet. This talented young man went from being 'the quiet one' to singing the whole of 'Somewhere', probably the most iconic song from this musical, single handed! It just goes to show what hard work and determination can do.

One of my favourite moments from performing the play would have to be the end of the 'Tonight' duet. The wonderful backstage crew built an incredible set, consisting of two eight foot high balconies and a drug-store, complete with chairs and door, and set up some beautiful lighting effects produced not only from the rigged lights on the ceiling, but also on stage. The end of this duet showed the legendary Romeo and Juliet balcony scene and as we sang our final notes together, beams of yellow light from around the stage shot in all directions creating a truly romantic picture. I also loved that moment because whilst gazing into each other's eyes, we were secretly playing a "game" to see who could hold the last note the longest, which gave us both a cheeky grin.

Maria has to be one of the best roles I have ever had the pleasure of playing and I was fortunate to be surrounded by such talented people. Musical theatre is such a wonderful thing, as it not only allows you to push yourself as a performer and exceed your potential, but also to meet amazingly talented people. There is nothing quite like the experience of putting on a show with a group of fellow performers. Through the fun times and the tough, you become like a family who are always there to encourage and inspire you and in the end, you get to share the feeling of producing something truly magical together.



Dan Embleton as Tony and Lorna Young as Maria, in Stage One Youth's production of *West Side Story*. Photo: George Riddell

was being able to portray the progression of her character and her relationship with Tony. She starts off as a very innocent but slightly feisty girl when she falls in love with Tony at first sight, and changes into an independent and confident young woman when she is able to declare her love for him despite it being forbidden. However, this difficult task was made much easier for me by the fantastic acting skills of Tony who was played by my good friend Dan Embleton. I'll admit, when the director said "right we need you to kiss" I thought well this going to be awkward considering my boyfriend (who played my brother) was sat in the rehearsal watching. I soon found out that per-

Mayor opens remodelled FPSS Sixth Form Centre

Andrew Burdett

The Mayor of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead officially opened Furze Platt Senior School's new Sixth Form Centre on Monday, 1 October 2012, as a summer of redevelopment works came to an end.

Councillor Colin Raynor gave a brief address to the 30 invited pupils, school staff, and representatives from the company that had carried out the work. In it, he spoke of his "pride" in Furze Platt being an RBWM school, highlighting its many achievements over the years.

"It's a great school, and with this new Centre it's even greater – I wish my school had had something like this.", he said. "Now it comes down to you to work hard, study hard, and achieve what you want to achieve and are capable of."

The change is drastic – completed in the space of just a few months, there's new ICT suites, quiet study rooms, more seminar-style classrooms, a bigger office for Head of Sixth Form Steven Richards, and a larger, more open reception space. The new Common Room has modern, comfortable furniture, and is complete with its own sink, microwave, and (as is turning out to be extremely popular with students) a hot-drinks machine.

Speaking at the ceremony, Tanya White, Headteacher, said: "It's wonderful to have this excellent facility, which is so much better than what we had before. Back in 2004, when I was just starting at Furze Platt, work had just finished on improving the last incarnation of the Sixth Form Centre. It was adequate for its time, but we now have more A-Level students than ever, so this is a much-needed improvement."

Headboy Max Fishwick and Headgirl Lisa Hibbit held the ribbon as it was cut by the Mayor.

The total cost of the work on the Sixth Form Centre was £180,000, which includes the creation of a patio garden with outdoor furniture as an external social meeting place for Sixth Form students at the school. Last year, the school spent a reported £1 million on redeveloping the buildings housing the Drama and Music departments (creating, in the process, a sound recording studio and fully-equipped end-on theatre space) and in making Circle, the specialist autistic support unit, a far more welcoming building. In the last five years, science laboratories have been modernised and more have been created, the interior of the English block has been completely refurbished and reshaped, and departments have been unified by bringing classrooms for each subject closer together.



RBWM Mayor Colin Raynor opens the new Sixth Form block in October. (Photo: Andrew Burdett)

THE STAG: VOICE OF THE STUDENTS £180,000: was it worth it?

"Yes: the long-term benefit will be great, and will outweigh the short-term costs."

– Glenn Smith

"No: it's good and more modern, but the common room could be a bit bigger."

– Sophie Mahmud

