

EURO 2020 FINAL
24-PAGE SPECIAL

ILLUSTRATION: JAMES COWEN

SPORT
INSIDE



The hands of history

Gareth Southgate has taken the Three Lions to the brink of glory. Read the portrait of a very English hero by David Walsh, the journalist who knows him best *pages 4-5*

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TOURNAMENT
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it's who you play with /

William HILL

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Euro 2020 final England's date with destiny

Wayne Rooney

I'm happy the final is against Italy, I think we go in as favourites. 'Sir Harry' is one of the best finishers I've ever seen and Sterling has repaid Gareth's faith. England can have a field day at Wembley



If England win Euro 2020 – and maybe even if they don't – I reckon this time next year we'll be looking at Sir Gareth Southgate and Sir Harry Kane. A couple of other England players might get knighted too but I definitely think there'll be a public demand for "Sir Harry". For what he did at the World Cup, and now to captain England to a Euros final, Harry is loved – and deservedly so.

He's one of the best finishers I've seen, a natural goalscorer who works incredibly hard. The consistent quality of his ball-striking is like Frank Lampard's and let me explain what I mean by "natural", in case it is taken as disrespectful. Harry's ability is natural but the reason he is so good is that he has consciously worked to hone it. Lamps was the same. A lot of players stay behind after training to practise shooting, but don't have the same technique and knack for improving as those two.

I was sitting directly in front of Harry's wife, Kate, at Wembley when he lined up the penalty against Denmark. I took 60 penalties in my career and never felt nervous about

them on the pitch. I didn't realise how different it is as a spectator.

As Harry faced Kasper Schmeichel, I was thinking about how Kate must be feeling. The nerves were bad enough for me. You could see her relief as we all celebrated when he scored the rebound after Schmeichel saved. It was typical of Harry to ignore the miss and stick the rebound away. It looks better on the stats as well – it doesn't go down as a pen but an open play goal.

Harry's mental strength has been a feature of England's Euros. Even when he didn't score in the group stage I still thought he could win the Golden Boot and I look at the difference between now and when I played with him at Euro 2016. In that tournament, when Harry wasn't scoring, he got frustrated and took on shots he shouldn't. He began making wrong decisions. Whereas this time he stayed calm, believed in himself and focused on getting in the box more.

I wrote, after the Scotland game, that once he started doing that the goals would come and sure enough all his four strikes were from inside the six-yard box.

I think Harry knows he's England's main player. He's the captain, the one others in the group will be relying on to decide the final and deep down he's aware of that. When that sort of pressure is on you and you're not scoring it can eat away at you a bit. When you do score it releases you and you become not only more confident but, in a strange way, hungrier. You make better decisions. It lifts a weight and sharpens your mind.

I can see the signs in Harry's game. In the first games he was coming deep to link but then staying deep, waiting to make another pass or for it to drop out to him at the edge of the area but against Denmark I watched him come deep, play the ball wide and sprint into the box. It's exactly what you want him to do: a small adjustment that's making a big difference.

He is a mature player now. In 2016 he was taking corners and that wasn't on him – it was what the coaches wanted him to do – but I think if Gareth Southgate asked him to do it now, he'd politely say no. When I look at his development I see the influence of both Mauricio Pochettino and José Mourinho. Pochettino, in terms of how Harry presses the ball and José in that habit of going deep to link.

People complain about foreign managers coming into the Premier League but they have helped these England players and another is Raheem Sterling, who has picked up so much from Pep Guardiola. Raheem has always been a talented, explosive player but his final third play, his goalscoring and assists, have developed massively. Those runs he makes coming from wide into an inside channel cause opponents so many problems, dragging their centre backs out. He must have made them six or seven times against Denmark and it's where the penalty came from.

Inside runs – it's how Guardiola wants Manchester City to play. You

WATCHING BRIEF

LAWRENCE DALLAGLIO



Where are you watching the match?

Unless my efforts to get a ticket are successful, at home in west London with my family

Favourite England player?

Mason Mount, not just because I am a Chelsea fan but because I like the way he is assured beyond his years and wants to get on the ball

What's your prediction?

England to win but it will almost certainly go to extra-time – it always does when we are in these big finals. Just think of our victories in the football, rugby and cricket World Cup finals

see Kevin De Bruyne making them from deeper positions. Gareth and Steve Holland deserve praise for making such good use of them tactically and encouraging Raheem to go out and play his game. At the beginning of Euro 2020, people debated whether Raheem should start and he has repaid Gareth for his faith.

A bit of backing – that's all Raheem has ever needed. He took a lot of criticism at Euro 2016 and during the tournament I said to the press and public, "Don't kill this player." I felt the criticism was completely unjust. I saw, in training, the work he puts in to becoming a better player and, in games, how hard he works both on and off the ball for the team. And most of all he's a very good person. The gap between that and the way some of the media portrayed him was enormous.

He was hammered for buying his

THE REFEREE: BJORN KUIPERS

Kuipers was the referee when these teams met at the 2014 World Cup, both sides' tournament opener that Italy won 2-1.

He is said to be the world's richest referee having made millions running branches of a Dutch supermarket chain.



ENGLAND HOW THEY RATE

By Ian Hawkey

JORDAN PICKFORD 7/10
Age: 27, Caps: 37, Everton
An impeccable direct free kick by Denmark ended a run of eight hours without conceding.

KALVIN PHILLIPS 7/10
25, 14, Leeds United
No finalist has made more tackles at Euro 2020, despite probably not expecting to start every match.

KYLE WALKER 8/10
31, 60, Manchester City
Excellent in both aspects of his right-back role, defensive containment and attacking charge.

BUKAYO SAKA 8/10
19, 8, Arsenal
His one-on-one duelling, acceleration and industry secured him a hotly contested wing berth.

JOHN STONES 8/10
27, 48, Manchester City
Unruffled by having different partners. Vigilant, always alive to how to turn regained possession into opportunity.

MASON MOUNT 7/10
22, 20, Chelsea
Missed two games through self-isolation, but has the manager's trust. He has a vital job in delivering dead balls.

HARRY MAGUIRE 8/10
28, 36, Manchester United
Missed the first two matches but well into his imposing stride. Dominant against Germany, on the scoresheet against Ukraine.

RAHEEM STERLING 9/10
26, 67, Manchester City
England's most decisive player. Goalscorer in narrow wins, always proactive, seldom predictable.

LUKE SHAW 8/10
25, 15, Manchester United
Not selected to start the opening match, he has owned the left flank since. England's leading supplier of assists (three).

HARRY KANE 8/10
27, 60, Tottenham Hotspur
Has recovered his bearings, his sharp eye for the spaces to slip into and the passes to make. Has four goals in the knockouts.

DECLAN RICE 7/10
22, 23, West Ham
Luka Modric, Toni Kroos – Rice has looked unfazed against some daunting opponents in a breakthrough month.

TOTAL
85/110



EDDIE KEOGH

Kane and Sterling have both been influenced by their foreign managers and will be crucial for Southgate in the final



OTHER FORMER PLAYERS MAY FEEL GUTTED BUT I'M JUST SO PROUD OF GARETH'S BOYS

How do I feel about England being in a major final at last? The first word that comes to mind is proud.

I have played for our country with a quite a few of members of the present squad and captained the Three Lions under Gareth Southgate.

After the Denmark game when they were standing at the touchline, singing *Sweet Caroline* to their loved ones

in the stands, I was standing there directly facing them with one of my sons on my shoulders. Proud. I'm just proud.

It is so good to see an England team doing so well and so pleasing to see those lads and Gareth and his staff getting their rewards. I have played more competitive games for England than anyone and went to six tournaments without getting near a final, but I'm just happy — and lucky — to have been at Wembley to witness what these boys have done, and celebrate.

We're seeing history being made. It would be incredible if England could win today.

I know, 100 per cent, that there are former players who'll be a bit gutted because they didn't get to do something like this. That's their point of view.

Everyone's different, but my feeling is that Gareth and these players deserve every plaudit, not just because of how they've performed at Euro 2020 but over the previous three or four years.

I still feel part of it, but in a different way than before. I am part of it as a fan and going to matches as a supporter is something I have never been able to do before, in my adult life.

Witnessing these matches with my wife and children and seeing the joy it brings to your kids and all the kids, seeing the emotions of the players' families throughout the game — I have just loved it.

Tonight I'll be at Wembley, with my kids again — I'm a lucky man. Come on lads. Come on England.

ON TV

Italy v England
6.20pm BBC One,
6.30pm ITV; ko 8pm



ITALY HOW THEY RATE

By Ian Hawkey

GIANLUIGI DONNARUMMA 7/10

Age: 22 Caps: 32, PSG

It is clear why Paris Saint-Germain will make him one of the best-paid goalkeepers. Good at saving penalties.



JORGINHO 9/10

29, 34, Chelsea

An impressive protector and passer. Only Spain's Pedri has covered more ground at Euro 2020. Form is worthy of Ballon D'Or.



GIOVANNI DI LORENZO 7/10

27, 12, Napoli

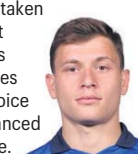
Opportunity came after Alessandro Florenzi's injury. Tenacious, combative and versatile.



NICOLÒ BARELLA 8/10

24, 28, Inter Milan

A brilliantly taken goal against Belgium. His energy makes him first choice for the advanced midfield role.



LEONARDO BONUCCI 7/10

34, 108, Juventus

Vice-captain and rock at the back beside Chiellini. His long passing and safaris up the pitch are key.



FEDERICO CHIESA 8/10

23, 31, Juventus

Two expert finishes, different in style, have pushed Italy through the knockouts. His reputation has soared.



GIORGIO CHIellini 7/10

36, 111, Juventus

Concerns about the captain's stamina after 210 minutes of knockout action in the past eight days. Strength is formidable.



CIRO IMMOBILE 7/10

31, 51, Lazio

Two goals from first two group-stage starts; none since. His work off the ball is appreciated, though.



EMERSON PALMIERI 6/10

26, 18, Chelsea

Replaced the excellent, injured Leonardo Spinazzola. Did OK against Spain.



LORENZO INSIGNE 8/10

30, 46, Napoli

His favourite manoeuvre wears no disguise: to cut inside from the left flank and curl into the far corner. Two goals.



MARCO VERRATTI 8/10

28, 44, PSG

Was still recovering from injury until the last group game. He has been pugnacious and smooth in possession.



TOTAL 82/110

Euro 2020 final England's date with destiny

DAVID WALSH



Chief Sports Writer

It is a cliché but not without truth: adversity introduces a person to their inner self. For Gareth Southgate the evening of October 19, 2009, was one of the worst. It had begun well. The young Middlesbrough team he managed, average age 22, had beaten Derby County 2-0 at the Riverside Stadium. That left them one point off the top of the Championship. At the post-match press conference he joked that the result “should keep me in a job for the next five days”.

He thought he was being funny. A little over an hour later he was asked if he could stop by for a chat with the chairman, Steve Gibson, and the chief executive, Keith Lamb. He didn't for a second imagine what was coming. Gibson told him the club considered that it was time for a change: “After a few days, you'll feel relieved.”

Southgate had been nurtured in a particular way. Clive's way, you might say. Clive Southgate was a manager with IBM and also manager of his son's football team. On the drive home after games, Gareth would mention something unflattering about a team-mate, and Clive would say, “But son, he's better in the air than you are.” If ever Gareth went down with an injury, Clive stayed away. Not right to make a fuss over your boy.

When Gibson sacked him, Southgate didn't complain, or even ask why. By the time he reached home that Monday night Alison and the kids had gone to bed, knowing that the team had won. His mind racing, his head spinning, sleep was out of the question. Instead he sat down and made a list of the things that he would need to return to his former employer, Middlesbrough FC.

Obvious stuff like the car, the mobile phone, the laptop, and less obvious things. He listed them all. Next morning he told his family the news. Mia, the older of the two children, was upset. That morning at school she was due to speak at assembly and now said she didn't want to do it. Her parents explained that it would be better if she did speak. “No matter what happens with Dad's job, life goes on,” Southgate told his daughter.

I spoke to him at that time and he was so pleased that the ten-year-old Mia spoke at assembly that morning.

Two days after being sacked he returned to Middlesbrough's training ground and said his goodbyes. He even dropped into Lamb's office and mentioned to the chief executive that he felt ready to get back into management. Lamb sheepishly admitted that the club had approached Gordon Strachan almost three weeks before. He told Southgate this so he wouldn't hear it from anyone else first.

Southgate considered the possibility of smacking Lamb, but settled for clearing up one point. “Keith,” he said, “you know the chairman talked about how in a few days I would feel relieved it was over? I've thought about that and I wonder if, after eight years, you guys know me at all?”

Something our colleague Martin Samuel wrote in the *Daily Mail* the other day resonated. Don't think of Southgate as a nice guy but rather as a

The man behind the manager

Based on years of unique access, this unrivalled portrait reveals how Gareth Southgate has won the nation's hearts and why, finally, the 'good guy' might come first

good guy, he said. It's a subtle but important distinction. Since becoming England manager Southgate has made hundreds of calls, many that the public would not have agreed with, but most turned out to be right.

The ageing Wayne Rooney was one of his first big decisions. He selected Rooney and then made sure that the exit of the country's leading goalscorer was respectfully handled. “I definitely didn't expect the manager to drop him,” Danny Rose, the former Tottenham Hotspur and England left back, said at about that time. “As soon as we saw that, we knew that the gaffer wasn't somebody to mess with. It was a huge shock, especially when Wayne then announced he was retiring from international football.”

It began in October 2016, with a guaranteed four games as caretaker. The FA wanted Southgate to manage England, but first the governing body wanted to gauge the public mood. Concerning the audition, Southgate was determined that if he was to fail, he wanted to go down doing things the way he thought they should be done. The longer he has been in the job, the more astute his decision-making has become.

One of England's finest centre backs, and now a respected pundit, Rio Ferdinand was scathing in his criticism of Harry Maguire, who was not fully fit, being included in the Euro 2020 squad. No one anticipated Bukayo Saka starting games for England, let alone becoming one of the strongest performers. And if England fans had picked the team, it's unlikely that Raheem Sterling would have started against Croatia.

On the day of the Denmark game, the semi-final, Southgate and his first friend in football, Andy Woodman, exchanged text messages. Woodman wished his mate well. Southgate said that it felt like he was dealing with another “orange-peel-at-Mitcham-station moment”. Woodman laughed. Mitcham station, a long time ago.

They were kids in their first year at Crystal Palace. Apprenticed to a trade called football. They earned £27.50 a week and got regular bollockings from Alan Smith, the youth-team manager. After training they might play a game of pool and then run to catch a train that left West Croydon on the half-hour. Mostly, they missed the train by a minute. Dead on their feet, they sat on a bench and waited for the next train.

Southgate was 17, Woodman 16. In Southgate's memory, Woodman is peeling an orange, tossing the skin on to the tracks. They wondered about the world they had entered.

In time their names would change. Wally Downes, a coach at Palace, heard the well-spoken but deliberate delivery of Southgate and said he sounded like the TV presenter Denis Norden. So they called him “Nord”. Downes could be cruel and he called Woodman “No Eyes”, which was tough for a goalkeeper to take. To tell the truth, “No Eyes” preferred “Woody”.

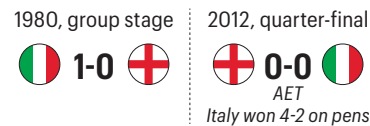
On that bench, they talked about the present. Did Smith rate them? And was he right when he described them as plankton at the bottom of the ocean, waiting for basking sharks to come and eat them up? They dreamt too. Would they make it in the game,

EUROS FINAL FACTFILE

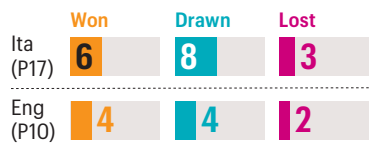
Head-to-head Played 27



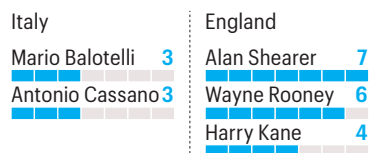
Euros head-to-head



Record in Euros knockout matches



Most Euros goals



play for England, drive flash cars, get invited on to *A Question of Sport*?

Instinctively they knew that plankton was their most likely fate – only their friendship was in their own hands. And so they agreed a pact. It wasn't original or anything, just some-

thing they had seen from two of the senior players at Palace, Ian Wright and Tony Finnigan.

Wright and Finnigan were close and they struck a deal that if one got a decent contract, he would buy the other a nice watch. It was Finnigan who first made the breakthrough, joining Blackburn Rovers. First thing he did was send Wright a nice watch.

As they sat on the bench at Mitcham station, at what seemed like a crossroads in their young lives, “Woody” and “Nord” struck the same deal: the one who makes it big will buy the other a nice watch.

It wasn't something he ever let on, but Southgate had a thing about playing for England. At 12 he got the Admiral kit that the team wore for the 1982 World Cup in Spain. In his back garden, he wore the shirt and slammed balls into a small goal. In that moment, he was Bryan Robson.

Now he and Woodman are in their early twenties, still at Palace and still avoiding the sharks. It's June 1994 and they're lying on a beach in Crete; Woodman, his girlfriend, Anna, and Southgate. The previous day Ireland had beaten Italy at the US World Cup.

“You got any Irish connection?” Anna asked Southgate.

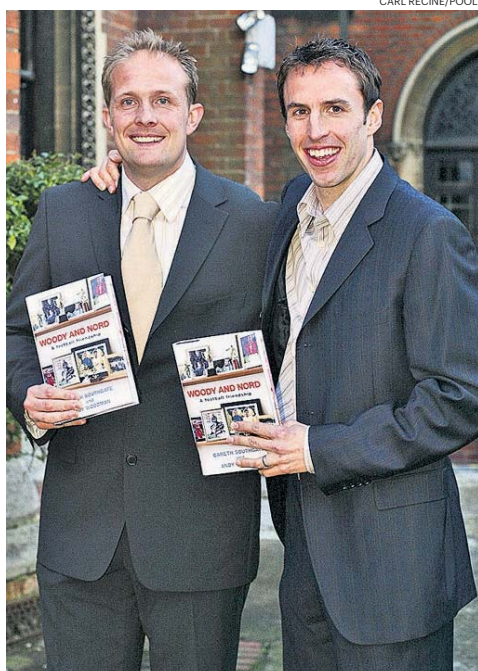
“No,” Southgate said, abruptly. “Well, you could probably find one if you looked hard enough,” Woodman said.

“I'm English, I want to play for England,” Southgate replied.

“Well, one Irish cap is better than no English cap,” Woodman persisted.

“I'm not qualified to play for Ireland. England is my country.”





Southgate's pride in leading England has been apparent at Euro 2020; top right, with his old friend Woodman in 2004, at the launch of the book they wrote together; above right, at his wedding to Alison in 1997

When he looked back, he saw a career that had been less than the one he wanted

"Oh, 'England is my country,' is it?" Woodman said.

"Come off it, Gareth," Anna said. "Do you really believe you'll play for England?"

"Maybe I will," Southgate said, in a way that ended the conversation. That day Woodman and Anna knew they had really got into his ribs.

He went on to play 57 times for England. Went to two World Cups, missed that penalty at the 1996 European Championship and was never able to make up for it. At the 1998 World Cup in France, he was playing great and then got injured. If that was cruel, his experience at the 2002 World Cup was soul-destroying: Sven-Goran Eriksson was the manager and Southgate was an unused substitute.

By then he was almost 32 and seeing the game from the twilight zone where a senior player begins to think like a manager. There was so much about the set-up that wasn't good. Eriksson had come with a reputation forged in continental leagues and there was an expectation that he would be tactically astute. That's not what Southgate saw.

"Sven gave us a definite and easily understood game plan without broadening our tactical approach. We need to expand our game to succeed at the top level," Southgate said after that World Cup. As for Eriksson's management, Southgate thought he was good with some players, not with others, which amounts to lousy management. After being left out of the team, Southgate asked Eriksson what he needed to do to improve.

Basically he was told that he would always be in the squad but the man-

WATCHING BRIEF

EDDIE JORDAN, F1 COMMENTATOR



Where are you watching the match?

In an Irish bar in Sotogrande, southern Spain, glued to the television for all the analysis.

Favourite England player?

Mason Mount. He has such a massive influence on how England play.

What's your prediction?

3-1 to England.

ager picked the team, and that was it. Neither was Southgate convinced that England's players were ambitious enough. On the day before the 2002 quarter-final loss to Brazil at Shizuoka, Southgate thought he saw something that foretold the following day's result. They squad had just had a light training session at the stadium.

"As we walked off," Southgate recalled, "we briefly saw the Brazilians, who were also having a run on the pitch. I couldn't help noticing that when our lads looked at them, it was with a touch of awe. Ronaldo, Rivaldo, Roberto Carlos; it was like we saw them as superior to us. When it came to the critical points in the match, we did not believe in ourselves. After their second goal, our self-belief disintegrated. Like we knew all along that they were better than us."

I recall a conversation we had around that time. He was getting to the end of his career, maybe not disillusioned but out-of-sorts with the game. He would say he loved the game but he wasn't sure if he liked it. When he looked back, what he saw was a career that had been less than the one he wanted.

"There have been disappointments, principally the frustration of not playing for one of the top clubs," he said. "Perhaps this was how it was meant to be. You are given so much, but not all that you want. Over the last few years I have felt too often that I may have to wait for a career in management to have a shot at fulfilment."

England has been his shot at fulfilment and he is making the most of it. He deserves whatever good things come his way. Each of us will have our memories of him. My favourite is of a Saturday afternoon in January 2004. I had covered Arsenal v Middlesbrough at Highbury. The London side won 4-1, Middlesbrough were poor. On his way from the stadium, he sent a text.

"Look," he wrote, "I know we're friends, but I don't want that to affect what you write. I played poorly and you've got to say that." I hadn't thought he played that badly but took his word for it. Find, if you can, an athlete in any sport who would send that text to a journalist.

Woodman is now the manager at Bromley, the National League club. He took over last season and is doing well. His mate is still his mate and doing OK with England. When "Woody" was 30, Southgate missed the party because Middlesbrough had a game. He sent a card and a sizeable cheque: "Get yourself that watch."

And now, this evening at Wembley Stadium, another orange-peel-at-Mitcham-station moment awaits us.



Substitute Grealish's withdrawal on Wednesday barely raised an eyebrow

Alyson Rudd

Sports feature writer of the year

Southgate showing it is possible for England manager to be popular and single-minded



There are things you do not do as England manager, such as haul off Gary Lineker when you desperately need a goal from your captain to progress to the knockout rounds of the Euros. This is what Graham Taylor did to mass cries of incredulity against Sweden in 1992. How dare he. It's our team after all.

Club managers have much more freedom to be controversial, experimental, detached or unpopular simply because they have so many games in which to right any wrongs and a whole season (maybe) for the wrinkles to be ironed out. England managers are judged under such an intense microscope that it is extremely difficult for them to be bold.

They are either too cautious, too foreign, too inept or too arrogant. Every fan wants the man in charge to choose the players they would choose, play the system they would play, make the same substitutions.

This is entirely untenable. The England manager can only succeed if he backs his own judgment but to do so is to risk being sacked for a lack of empathy, for losing touch with the public. Is it even possible for an England manager to be popular and single-minded? Is it possible to love an England manager even when he does not start the nation's favourite player? Is it possible to applaud an England manager when, after belatedly bringing that fan's favourite off the bench, he then withdraws him from the game 35 minutes later?

It has taken Gareth Southgate five years to reach the juncture where he can not only resist the clamour for a popular, likeable, daring player, in this case Jack Grealish, to start every game but to be able sub him even though he was a sub – and not be criticised. There were no boos ringing around Wembley, no commentators wondering if taking off the Aston Villa winger would dampen his enthusiasm or create a rift in the dressing room.

Southgate has spent the past five years sifting through the rifts, absorbing the criticism of his

relatively prosaic midfield after the defeat against Croatia in the 2018 World Cup semi-final, nodding as fans labelled him as too safe, too cautious. Always, he speaks of the future.

The World Cup disappointment would provide invaluable experience for the next tournament. Even at the start of these Euros, Southgate was looking over the horizon, still building, still learning. Heck, he did not even want the job in the first place and came in as emergency cover when Sam Allardyce resigned after only one game in charge of the national team. Perhaps that is the key. Had he been plotting to take over from his vantage point as England Under-21 manager, we would have seen the odd Machiavellian glint in his eye and been wary of a man who might be saying one calm and intelligent thing but thinking

To succeed they must back their own judgment but that risks being sacked for lacking empathy

another. Instead, he has been ever so slowly building a relationship not only with the players and staff, not only with the media, but with the public.

Had Denmark equalised and England been knocked out on penalties then of course his every decision would have been questioned. Evaluation is always affected by outcome but taking Grealish off was an act of a coach putting common sense before crowd pleasing.

"You subbed a sub, it's not nice," Southgate said, not even trying to dress up the decision to take off Grealish as something else. Somehow, he has become politically astute without trying to be political, understanding that honesty and consistency, in the end, pay dividends.

Euro 2020 final England's date with destiny

Southgate: Please do not boo Italy anthem

- Phil Foden a doubt as manager likely to name unchanged side
- Fan heckling 'will just motivate opposition even more'
- Players stunned by good luck message from Tom Cruise

Jonathan Northcroft

Gareth Southgate will take his shot at destiny with what is likely to be England's first unchanged line-up in three years after a foot injury all but ruled Phil Foden out of the Euro 2020 final. The Manchester City star missed training after suffering a knock in practice on Friday.

Southgate was already leaning towards naming the same starting XI used in Wednesday's semi-final win against Denmark, and Foden's issue would appear to quash any potential for last-minute second thoughts.

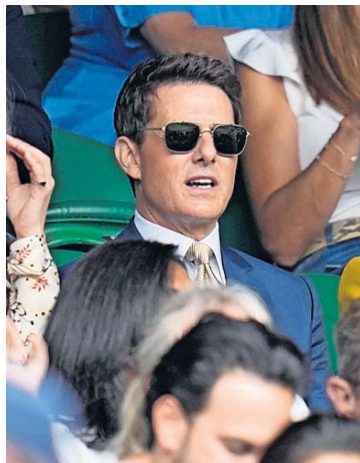
England will face Italy in their bid for a first major title since 1966 with Bukayo Saka on the right of an attack completed by Harry Kane and Raheem Sterling, with Declan Rice, Calvin Phillips and Mason Mount in midfield, Jordan Pickford in goal and a back four of Kyle Walker, John Stones, Harry Maguire and Luke Shaw. The previous time Southgate named an unchanged starting XI was against Croatia in the semi-final of the World Cup in 2018.

"He's got a very slight foot injury which he felt after training [on Friday] and I have to say he's doubtful," Southgate said of Foden.



PAUL ELLIS

Walker leads England in training yesterday after their address from Cruise, below, via video call



"It's not something that would keep him out for a long time but it might be that [the final] comes too soon."

After a vocal section of England supporters at Wembley booed Denmark's national anthem, Southgate asked for home fans not to do the same when the Italian anthem is played before kick-off. "We would always ask our fans to be respectful of the opposition. We would hope for the same when we travel and I know when our anthem is booed it does inspire me a bit more when I'm away from home," he said. "Whatever the intentions might be, there's a good chance you're giving more motivation to the opponent."

He revealed that his team talk – which will take place at the Grove Hotel, Hertfordshire, where England stayed last night, rather than Wembley – is likely to be more low

MANCINI: ITALY'S SMALL GUYS CAN WIN

The Italy manager, Roberto Mancini, says that England are the stronger side going into today's final at Wembley, but "occasionally the small guy wins". The Azzurri have some of the smallest players at Euro 2020 and Mancini said that England "are a very physically capable side. They are stronger than us from that perspective, but you play football with the ball on the deck and we hope that we can do a better job on that score and hope those will be important qualities tomorrow."

key and subtle than anything Churchillian. "I didn't say very much at all before the semi-final because I felt the team was totally prepared," he said. "I normally assess where they are during the day. We usually have a meeting about set plays in the morning and then I'll speak to them before we leave the hotel."

"You're two hours before the game at that point. You want the message to resonate but it's about how you make the players feel. We don't need them getting overhyped. There will be enough energy and excitement around the stadium."

Southgate's squad did receive a motivational address on Friday, from an unexpected source – Tom Cruise. The players were watching a premiere of the Hollywood icon's forthcoming *Top Gun: Maverick* movie, at the cinema room at their St George Park tournament base, when Cruise joined them via a video call.

"They were very fortunate," Southgate said. "I don't know whether they're supposed to have said this, because they all had to sign a form. They had a preview of a film and they had Tom dial in to speak to them, which was, I would imagine, quite surreal. I was in a meeting watching videos of Italy, but that's another story."

Kane, England's captain, described the final as an opportunity "that is there to take and grab" and that his squad are "excited" by the chance "to create your own history".

The 1966 World Cup is the only tournament England have won previously and Kane is conscious of the public fervour behind his team. "We are not representing ourselves, we are representing the country and we want the country to look at us and be proud of what we are doing, on and off the pitch," he said.

"We had that in Russia, we felt like we reconnected with our fans and this tournament was about going one step further and trying to win it."

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José Mourinho

Spain pushed Italy – Southgate can learn from that by using Kane to disrupt majestic Italian midfield



I am sitting in Rome, where I can see all the Italian flags in the windows of flats. T-shirts, flags and scarves are being sold in the streets. I am sure London is a bit different, a bit special with 1966 and hosting the final and all the build-up, but it is a very big deal here in Italy too.

I met the mayor of Rome and she is trying everything to have the Stadio Olimpico open, with big screens and fans inside. They are building an atmosphere and they believe in a team which had a fantastic record even before the Euros.

Here and there they joke about the penalty for England in the semi-final, which wasn't a penalty. But they are pretty confident.

I think Italy are ready, but I can't say they are favourites. These were the two teams most compact from the beginning of Euro 2020. They both had the advantage of playing their group games at home – Italy in Rome, England at Wembley – which gave them a capital of confidence, of support, of self-esteem from the first game.

They both deserve to be in the final as solid, pragmatic teams. They knew what they wanted to do – not concede goals, be as compact as possible, always be in control. Both teams are based on a very strong midfield and that is a key area of the game.

THE MIDFIELD BATTLE

It was a big decision by Gareth Southgate to stick with Calvin Phillips and Declan Rice, a very strong statement: we are not here to entertain. It's a big lesson for those who think that the most important thing in football is to be beautiful. In the end we realise what this country wants most is to win the Euros.

Italy's midfield is super-talented, with Jorginho, Marco Verratti, Nicolò Barella. It's not easy to stop them playing but you can try to stop them creating by being compact, letting them have the ball but being in a very strong zonal block.

Since Italy stopped playing against fragile opponents they have not had too many chances, but it is still difficult to take the ball from them and control the game.

If Jorginho is playing for Chelsea and you block him, if you have a No 10 who presses and closes him, it's difficult for them. But if you do that to Jorginho with Italy, he moves position, takes the opponent away and leaves the space for Verratti. And then you have a problem, because Verratti is as good as Jorginho with that support and link play. Verratti comes and Barella comes and they keep moving the ball.

England can learn from Spain, the team who created the most problems for Italy. In an unexpected way, they did not start Álvaro Morata or



Italy's Bonucci, right, and Chiellini are model centre backs but they will find it much harder if Sterling runs at them

This is the war of the coaches now. With Grealish decision, Southgate showed great belief in himself and his team

players. They must go there and do what is automatic for them. They don't need to think too much.

Against Denmark, the one player you could feel was breathing in a different way to normal was Jordan Pickford. He had a couple of mistakes that could have been costly, but you could feel stability from the others.

WAS SOUTHGATE RIGHT TO TAKE OFF GREALISH?

It was a move from a coach who made a clear decision that the team is more important than anything, and it doesn't matter about the emotional consequences. The important thing is the team and if you are not ready to understand this then you are not ready to belong to my group.

In that sense, I would say Southgate showed great belief in himself and in his concept of a team. But to me it still leaves the question, was Jack Grealish the only player he could take out? Was there someone else who was less fresh?

The second question is whether England needed that move, and I don't think so – Denmark were running out of gasoline, physically and emotionally. I didn't see any threat from Denmark at all. I thought Grealish, a fresh Marcus Rashford, would kill them with a third goal.

Sometimes you are winning 1-0 or 2-1 and you feel you are in danger. You feel you have to close the door. I made a substitution of a substitute with Juan Mata [for Manchester United] in the Community Shield in 2016. I took Mata out to secure the result with a more physical player.

I couldn't see any threat from the Danes so you could question the move but, actually, for me the most important thing is the concept of the team. The coach made his move for that and when things work out well, like they did for England, everyone can have a good feeling.

PREPARE TO SUFFER

Don't ask me to predict the result, or say who I want to win. I work in Italy so I cannot say England. I cannot say Italy because you will not let me back into the country. I just want a phenomenal final, and emotion until the last kick. I don't want a 3-0 game, and I don't expect it. If it's 3-0 I'm going out for a walk. I would say to fans that you have to be prepared for everything, including extra time and penalties. You may only be able to enjoy it after the game.

WATCHING BRIEF

VICKY MCCLURE, LINE OF DUTY STAR



Where are you watching the match?

With the family in Nottingham. It's my first time home for a while and I wanted to be with Mum and Dad.

Favourite England player?

Marcus Rashford because of everything he's done.

What's your prediction?

2-1 to England

another striker, but Dani Olmo. With him in midfield, when Spain had the ball they had four midfield players, and that was difficult for Italy. They had to defend and survive.

Harry Kane can do the same. As a No 9 he can drop, he can go into areas where, instead of Jorginho being focused on Mason Mount, he is divided between Mount and Kane. Or Barella, instead of pressing higher, has to think about going more side to side. This is the war of the coaches. This is what they are doing now, thinking now, analysing now. This last day is when the players are resting and the coaches are working.

THREAT OF STERLING

For me, it was not a penalty against Denmark, but Raheem Sterling does

it very well, seeing the space, invading the area. Then it is a very risky situation for a defender, because every touch can create a VAR situation.

Leonardo Bonucci and Giorgio Chiellini are teachers on how to be a centre back. They know everything about the job, but there is no doubt it's more difficult for them if Sterling is attacking inside. It is easier to have a striker to mark, where one can press and the other can cover. If nobody is there, and an extra man is floating, it's much more difficult.

NO TEAM SURPRISES

If I see a surprise in the starting teams, I think it's a wrong move, because you cannot come to the final and add extra pressure on the

Euro 2020 final England's date with destiny

EDDIE KEOGH/THE FA & PAUL ELLIS

HOW THREE LIONS

Gareth Southgate's influence has been total after decades of failure on global stage

JONATHAN
NORTHCROFT



Football Correspondent

Blackbirds squawked in an old tree by these fields in the middle of England, as journalists licked ice creams from the catering van and worked at picnic tables in the small, tented media village. The sun fought with clouds. A gentle breeze blew. Mason Mount grinned at the lovely silliness of it all when, from the BBC radio tepee, came a loud rendition of *Sweet Caroline*.

"Poor listeners," somebody quipped but, in fairness, as the song says, good times never felt so good. Not around the England football team anyway. Not for anyone scarred by Iceland, bemused by Baden-Baden, or turned off by all the wasteful, vainglorious, seldom unifying and often antagonistic nonsense of England at tournaments since this millennium began.

What Friday, the final media day at St George's Park, felt like was how all the others have felt – relaxed and natural. What it did not feel like was the pressured environment of a major tournament.

That is the magic of Gareth Southgate, who came by on a buggy and, smiling, gave his zillionth broadcast interview before disappearing to continue preparations for his country's biggest game since the Beatles and the Cold War and black and white TV and Bobby Moore and 1966.

Good times never felt so good – not to the England squad in camp. Mount's description of life inside it was "very relaxed", with a "family atmosphere" and "close bonds" between players and staff that "make it very easy to feel comfortable and spend a lot of time together".

England packed up yesterday evening and, after five weeks largely based at the national football centre in Staffordshire, finally left for good, taking a two-and-a-half hour coach journey down country B roads, urban A roads and major motorways, to the Grove Hotel in Hertfordshire, arriving late in the evening.

From there, they will depart for Wembley today. They could have stayed down there after beating Denmark in Wednesday's Euro 2020 semi-final but the players wanted to go back to "SGP". Previous generations of England players labelled it "boring" but this group have taken to referring to it, in interviews, as "home".

Their living quarters since June 8 were SGP's on-site Hilton hotel, con-



Sterling plays basketball, left, as Rice tries golf, below, Sancho and Saka have fun in the pool and Maguire takes aim on the oche



verted to keep 26 young athletes, plus support staff, fresh and happy, despite the confinements of living in a Covid bubble. Nobody has really got any closer to their families than speaking to them from behind a barrier at Wembley games but the noise of kids whooping and partners chattering are a continuous soundtrack in public areas of the camp, thanks to players speaking to loved ones on tablets and smartphones.

From Southgate and the likes of Ian Mitchell, England's psychologist, comes a constant reminder: "Make sure you check in with your family." Players do so while relaxing together and end up speaking to each other's children. Before arrival, the FA operations team customised each room, placing pictures of friends and family by players' bedsides and on the walls.

The hotel reception area was converted to a basketball court and because of its popularity as a communal area, Southgate gave talks to the group there and held ceremonies such as handing out caps. Sometimes, Bryce Cavanagh's performance department had it covered with exercise mats and used it for stretching and recovery work. Upstairs, what is normally a Starbucks was converted to a juice bar, furnished with books and magazines, and was another popular area where players lounged and played their favourite game, Uno.

Yet the "star" of the camp proved to

ENGLAND'S FINAL WEEKEND ITINERARY

YESTERDAY

4pm Left St George's Park, Burton-on-Trent, for The Grove, Watford
7pm Gareth Southgate and Harry Kane held final pre-match press conference at The Grove
8pm Dinner followed by relaxation, massage treatments, bed

TODAY

8am Breakfast
10am Final match analysis and tactics talk
Midday Light exercise
1pm Lunch
2pm Sleep/relaxation
4pm Pre-match meal
5.30pm Depart The Grove for Wembley
6.15pm Arrive at the stadium
8pm Match kick-off



be the cinema theatre, installed in the hotel ballroom. There were daily showings – no, not *The Italian Job* but premieres of films not yet on general release. Cavanagh's team placed massage beds there, leading to competition among the players to book the best beds nearest to 9pm. Their fix was *Love Island*, shown nightly on the big screen to the group – many enjoying it while getting a rub from the masseurs.

There were hot yoga sessions in the cinema room, too. Sometimes popcorn. The philosophy of trying to keep life in camp fresh drove Omar Meziane, England's chef. The highlight was a barbecue where Ed Sheeran sang, players were allowed beers and there was Bud Light on tap.

There were smaller food surprises. An ice-cream van pulled up outside the hotel one day, and the squad rushed out for cones. There was a visit from a fast food truck, doing roast meats. Players got that feel of letting their hair down, even though everything consumed was part of the England nutritionists' plan.

Having good camps is only part of the art of tournaments, and Southgate oversaw an equally benign environment at the World Cup in Russia. The reason, at Wembley on Wednesday, Southgate was out in the centre circle taking applause from all corners as players faced the family section and joined another chorus of *Sweet Caro-*

line was pure and simple. The football. England are in the final of Euro 2020 because of the football.

The football that helped them to win a European Championship opening match for the first time in history, beat Germany in a tournament knockout match for the first time since 1966, score four in a knockout game for the first time since 1966, break a record for minutes spent without conceding a goal, break their semi-final hoodoo in that 2-1 epic against the talented Danes. The football: not bad, from a manager who on the eve of the finals had to stomach a Twitter hashtag trending #SouthgateOut.

YOU could pick many starting points at which this journey began, but the best might be a golf resort near Daventry. It was where, in the autumn of 2010, the FA held an informal two-day get-together for executives and coaches responsible for technical strategy. Sir Trevor Brooking, its director of football development, drew up a list of external invitees which included Sam Allardyce, Tony Mowbray, Paul Elliott and a certain Gareth Southgate.

England had just embarrassed themselves at another World Cup and while the themes of the conference were wide-ranging (it included a presentation on relative age bias in youth coaching), the real action took place when delegates sat down over tepid



'The team will have been prepared for going 1-0 down, 1-0 up and how they're going to see out the last 10 minutes'

coffees, and perhaps the odd glass, and discussed all that was wrong with the English game. Robert Sullivan, now chief executive of the Football Foundation and then the FA's head of corporate affairs, ended up sketching a diagram of what to fix.

It began with a wide base – kids' grassroots football – and included layers such as club academies, coaching development, and the FA redefining its elite playing strategies (a project that became "England DNA"). It tapered to the sharp point of the senior England team. The sketch resembled a rocket lying on its side, showing the sheer size of what needed doing. Who on earth could get this huge, unwieldy, rocket pointing skywards?

Brooking's first move was to hire an ally, and former England player, to become the FA's head of elite development – Southgate. In January 2011, the former Middlesbrough manager joined the FA national development manager Nick Levet on a crusade of selling a new vision of children's football, featuring small-sided games, reduced goal sizes and skills development, around the country.

It was a long, lonely task and sometimes the reaction from change-resistant county FA officials was abusive. "Not many elite managers would spend Thursday night at Chelmsford Town Hall fielding questions from the floor, but that's Gareth," says Adrian Bevington, formerly managing director of the old FA Club England department. Bevington was influential in Southgate's recruitment and supported him for his next FA post, Under-21 manager, which he took up in 2013 after a spell working for ITV.

Southgate had also played a key part in forming and rolling out the Elite Player Performance Plan, which revolutionised club academy football, and helping a new FA technical director, Dan Ashworth, revamp coach development. With the under-21s he quickly showed his gift for managing England teams.

Long before Southgate became senior England coach in 2016, it dawned on Sullivan and other "deep FA" operatives that here was a person who might actually be able to bring all the parts together – elite teams, coaching, youth, grassroots, communications. Herewas England's rocket man.

When Roy Hodgson succeeded Fabio Capello in 2012, Southgate had input to the appointment but he was passed over when the FA replaced Hodgson with Allardyce after Euro 2016. To Bevington, who left the FA in 2014, that was always the wrong call. He will forever remember a trip with the under-21s that encapsulated Southgate's knack for producing results on the pitch and the right culture off it.

England won a tough away game in Croatia to reach the European Championship. There was an airport bar and a wait for the flight home. A group of under-21s approached the coaches' table. "Gareth," they said (as opposed

to "gaffer", Bevington noted), "is it OK to have a beer?"

"Of course," said Southgate. The players returned from the bar with a tray of drinks and handed them out to FA staff. Only after ensuring everyone else was watered did they return to get their own beers. The striker of that team was Harry Kane, the left back was Luke Shaw.

Sullivan observed: "Gareth would probably be the best technical director the FA could have as well as the best chairman, as well as the best bid ambassador. But his true passion and talent is the coaching." Those hashtags and all the silly pre-tournament noise from critics reflect the battle Southgate has had to convince a certain lobby of his credentials.

After England got to the 2018 World Cup semi-finals, instead of acknowledging the coach this lobby talked of his "tactical limitations" being shown up by the sides who defeated England – Croatia and Belgium. They compared Southgate unfavourably to super-managers such as Pep Guardiola and Jürgen Klopp.

England's stodgy periods on the pitch in the Euro 2020 group stage, especially against Scotland, were taken as proof that Southgate was squandering an inheritance of talented youngsters, and this writer was not free from doubts. Before the second-round tie with Germany I wondered whether England were "growing into the tournament" (their narrative), or simply not playing well enough to progress.

Well, the rocket man has launched us all into the lake. Look at Euro 2020 from a coaching point of view. Specific tactical ruses have dismantled opponents – such as Kalvin Phillips hounding high up the pitch to disrupt Croatia's midfield, or switching to 3-4-3 against Germany, or using Bukayo Saka to expose the defensive achilles heel of Denmark's Joakim Maehle, hitherto one of the tournament's stars. Expert use of substitutes. Superb game-management and in-game management.

In this, Southgate's assistant, Steve Holland, having learned under José Mourinho, Rafa Benítez, Antonio Conte and Guus Hiddink at Chelsea, plays an important part. "I think what people don't see is how you prepare for different occasions during the game. That team will have been prepared for going 1-0 down, 1-0 up and how they're going to see out the last 10 minutes. All coaches do this and Gareth and Steve are particularly good at it. It's refreshing to see all the small adjustments England make [during games]," says Wayne Rooney, Southgate's first England captain.

Italy, with legends in defence, quality in midfield, brilliance in goal and energy in attack, are a step up from any side England have faced. But England have played six, conceded one and achieved an extraordinary xG against of 3.2. If you're not into xG (expected goals) all you need to know is that this means that not only are teams not scoring against England, they are barely getting close to scoring against England.

AFTER a final tactical meeting in the morning, a walkaround, lunch, rest and a light pre-match meal, Southgate and his players will leave The Grove for Wembley. They will drive, on their bus, past banners and well-wishers, down the stopped roads of a giddy nation, towards their home stadium and its arch of hope. They will think of

their families, of their public, of these hard 18 months of pandemic, and if they are champions they will donate their £9.6 million bonus to the NHS.

They will change, warm up, come back in for final instructions and words of motivation, then go back out, stand together, belt out their national anthem together, take the knee together – and be ready.

What happens next will decide whether Gareth Southgate becomes immortal to the wider world. But anyone who ever visited Planet England before he took charge will remember what he has already achieved, for ever.

WATCHING BRIEF



IAN BRODIE, MUSICIAN AND CO-WRITER OF 'THREE LIONS'

Where are you watching the match?
It's 90 per cent certain that I'll be at Wembley, hopefully with David Baddiel and Frank Skinner. For us to go to the game together would be really fantastic. There's talk of things...

Favourite England player?

Not a player, but Gareth Southgate. He's the puppet master. I've disagreed with his team selections and I've been wrong every time.

What's your prediction?

My head doesn't have a clue but my heart says England will win. I don't even care if it's on penalties.

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HOPE



Southgate and his stars have taken the plaudits but their success owes much to the unrivalled work of a team of analysts who pore over every detail, especially penalties

GREGOR ROBERTSON



If Harry Kane is to hoist the Henri Delaunay Trophy skyward at Wembley tonight, England's triumph will be a story with many authors. Gareth Southgate, the manager, whose measured and competent leadership has felt like a timely tonic for the nation; Steve Holland, the assistant manager, the value of whose tactical and coaching insight has been immeasurable; Kane, the captain and leader and a united group of players, unburdened by the weight of past disappointments, devoid of ego.

There are many more, of course, but perhaps the most important figure you may never have heard of is Rhys Long, the FA head of performance analysis and insight – and particularly so if England win on penalties.

Long, who hails from south Wales, joined the FA in 2016, having previously worked for Wasps and the Welsh Rugby Union. He was Warren Gatland's head of performance and analysis when Wales won the grand slam in 2008 and 2012, and held the same role during the British & Irish Lions tours in 2009 and 2013.

Long oversees a team of performance and data analysts who work across the spectrum of England's youth, men's and women's teams. The team he has assembled works from a "hub" at St George's Park and includes data scientists responsible for coding and contextualising data. One of these experts is Alex Thomas, who holds a master's degree in theoretical and mathematical physics and joined the FA four years ago from Swansea City, where one former colleague remarked that he "could probably work for Nasa" one day.

Four of Long's performance analysts meanwhile – Steve O'Brien, Mike Baker, Daniel Parker and Peter Clark – have been in England's camp throughout Euro 2020. "If there's a team meeting, Steve and Mike are the ones responsible for formatting that presentation for Gareth and Steve [Holland] to deliver," one source says.

Hours of footage, pored over late into the night, may be reduced to six or seven minutes of concise footage for the team. But the information Long's team have furnished Southgate has influenced every key decision. England's overarching strategy, a pragmatic approach that may not have been thrilling or popular but has resulted in five clean sheets from six games, is rooted in analysis of the World Cup and European Championship holders, France and Portugal, who kept

THE SCIENCE BEHIND THE SUCCESS

four clean sheets on their way to lifting the trophy.

England's tactical game plans this tournament were the result of almost 18 months of work. So when Southgate started Kieran Trippier at left back against Croatia, or matched up Germany's 3-4-3 formation, or resisted the clamour for Jack Grealish to start, they were decisions based on hours of in-depth analysis.

The same will be true against Italy tonight. One of Long's masterstrokes has been the way in which he has utilised the FA's gamut of resources. Not long after the draw was made for the 2018 World Cup, all of England's youth development coaches, from under-15s through to under-20s, were assigned one national team to study. "You continued watching them throughout the tournament, and then if England drew your team you'd go in to camp and deliver the presentation," one coach explains. "The analysts would help us gather all the clips, stats, and whatever the coach needed to deliver the presentation."

In preparation for this summer's tournament, the process was changed slightly, with groups of two or three coaches assigned to every Euro 2020 group, each containing four teams. Financial losses as a result of the pandemic prompted the FA to make 124 positions redundant last year, and FA coaching staff and analysts were not immune from the cull.

Still, those close to England's camp believe the depth of their analysis and preparation have been unrivalled. As England have progressed to every round of the tournament, a detailed analysis of the next opponent was already waiting for the England manager and his coaching staff.

After the 4-0 win against Ukraine in the quarter-final in Rome, Southgate and Holland opened their laptops on the flight home and immediately began the process of analysing Denmark, their next opponents.

WATCHING BRIEF

DANNY MILLS,
FORMER
ENGLAND
DEFENDER



Where are you watching the match?

At BoxPark Wembley, with the fans.

Favourite England player?

Kalvin Phillips. The Yorkshire Pirlo will show the Italians how it's done.

What's your prediction?

1-0 to England. Then 1-1. Then extra time, when it will be 2-1 to England.

Long is one of the most experienced analysts in British sport. He is part of a group of heads of analysis who share information and best practice from English rugby, tennis, cricket and the English Institute of Sport. But those who have worked with him say that one of his biggest strengths is a recognition of technology's limitations.

The area of Long's work that could be most decisive tonight, however, is his research on penalty kicks. Long drove the comprehensive study into England's longstanding neurosis from the spot in the two years leading up to the World Cup in Russia.

Jordan Pickford's water bottle, adorned with the likely direction of Colombia's penalty-takers in the last 16, made headlines when the England goalkeeper saved Carlos Bacca's kick. Yet that snippet barely scratches the surface. "You would not believe the work that has gone into penalties," said one coach privy to the study.

Every detail has been pored over – different types of kicks, run-ups, directions, the order of takers – and their effect on success rates measured. Among many findings, England know that their best penalty-takers should always go first; that there is an optimal period of three to five seconds between the referee's whistle and beginning the run-up; and that even if you miss, negative displays of emotion should be concealed.

Despite England's shoot-out success in Russia, and again against Switzerland in the Nations League third-place play-off in Guimaraes in 2019, that research is continuing and continues to influence England's practice.

Once again, they will be ready if penalty kicks stand between England and an end to 55 years of hurt. "The biggest thing is routine, and the psychology around that," one source says. "Every member of staff knows their role, right down to where they stand, and who they stand next to, during a penalty shoot-out. And in training they replicate it, right down to the number of steps the players walk from the halfway line."



Euro 2020 final England's date with destiny

'England need to do a job on Jorginho'

West Ham manager is one member of the Tartan Army who wants England to win - but stopping Chelsea man is key

DAVID MOYES



I am writing this on a train as it crosses the border just after Lockerbie and what I'm about to say may surprise you. I'll be at the final and really want England to win. I'm a very proud Scotsman who, when younger, followed his country everywhere as a member of the Tartan Army, but England has been very good to me.

I've been very fortunate to have had a long career as a player and manager in English football, and England winning would be great for the English game. At West Ham United, I also have a young player in Declan Rice who has done fantastically well at Euro 2020 and who I've no doubt will go on to win another 50-plus caps. Nothing would give me more pleasure to see Declan do well today - and score the winning goal.

But I have to say that this is a very close game to call. I don't believe there is a favourite. It's a brilliant match-up between a team, in Italy, that started the tournament in sparkling form and continued that way, and a side that has grown into the tournament and arrive at a final in their own stadium, with the advantage that their home support will bring. I would not

MOUNT OUT TO STOP JOKER JORGINHO

Chelsea team-mates Mason Mount and Jorginho are expected to go up against each other today and the 22-year-old Englishman said of the Italy star: "He's a prankster. There's one [prank] that's quite common. When we go out to training there's this big microwave which heats the boots up so that when you put them on they feel nice and [the leather] is not tough and hard. When you have studs that are metal and take them out, they get boiling hot..."

So? "So when Jorginho walks out and everyone is putting their boots on, he will put a hot stud on your leg. It burns! He has done that a couple of times to me. He did it in that first season when I had come back [after a loan spell at Derby]. But I know the drill now and look out for it."

Mount hopes to provide inside knowledge that will help England curb him. "He's very good on the ball and gets the team ticking. Playing and training with him, I know a lot more about him than some of the other boys in the group, so I can give a few tips about what he's strong at."

be in the least bit surprised if this one goes to extra time and beyond.

SYSTEMS

I think both teams will set up similarly. While it's conceivable England could switch to a back three, I don't expect them to. Instead, we should have both managers using a version of 4-3-3/4-2-3-1 and what fascinates me about this is that although Chelsea just won the Champions League with a back three, it remains a system that throughout history has been very rarely used by tournament winners.

I predicted a few back threes at these Euros and teams such as Belgium, Germany, Ukraine, Denmark and Holland did set up in that way. But here we are again, with another finals about to be won by a

Morata's goal showed Italy can be opened up with pace and England have it in their forward line



EURO 2020 RESULTS

GROUP A

	P	W	D	L	Pts
Italy (Q)	3	3	0	0	9
Wales (Q)	3	1	1	1	4
Switzerland (Q)	3	1	1	1	4
Turkey	3	0	0	3	0

RESULTS

Turkey 0 Italy 3, Wales 1 Switzerland 1; Turkey 0 Wales 2, Italy 3 Switzerland 0; Italy 1 Wales 0, Switzerland 3 Turkey 1

GROUP B

	P	W	D	L	Pts
Belgium (Q)	3	3	0	0	9
Denmark (Q)	3	1	0	2	3
Finland	3	1	0	2	3
Russia	3	1	0	2	3

RESULTS

Denmark 0 Finland 1, Belgium 3 Russia 0; Finland 0 Russia 1, Denmark 1 Belgium 2; Finland 0 Belgium 2, Russia 1 Denmark 4

GROUP C

	P	W	D	L	Pts
Holland (Q)	3	3	0	0	9
Austria (Q)	3	2	0	1	6
Ukraine (Q)	3	1	0	2	3
North Macedonia	3	0	0	3	0

RESULTS

Austria 3 N Macedonia 1, Holland 3 Ukraine 2; Ukraine 2 N Macedonia 1, Holland 2 Austria 0; Ukraine 0 Austria 1, N Macedonia 0 Holland 3

GROUP D

	P	W	D	L	Pts
England (Q)	3	2	1	0	7
Croatia (Q)	3	1	1	1	4
Czech Republic (Q)	3	1	1	1	4
Scotland	3	0	1	2	1

RESULTS

England 1 Croatia 0, Scotland 0 Czech Rep 2; Croatia 1 Czech Rep 1, England 0 Scotland 0; Czech Rep 0 England 1, Croatia 3 Scotland 1



SPORT



ENGLAND ON TOP
PAKISTAN BEATEN AGAIN IN LORD'S ODI
PAGE 11



Ashleigh Barty, the No 1 seed, savours her three-set victory on Centre Court

26 positive Covid cases in SA camp

Brenden Nel

South African rugby officials have flown their chief security officer and chief medical officer to the Springbok camp to ensure that Covid protocols in the team's bio-bubble are followed to the letter, following a major outbreak of the virus. South African newspaper *Rapport* said that the group now had 26 positive Covid cases – 14 of whom are players, including the World Cup-winning captain Siya Kolisi.

The newspaper reported that SA Rugby's chief executive Jurie Roux read the riot act to the team this week, warning of the severe financial consequences if the British & Irish Lions tour is cancelled because of a Covid outbreak. Roux reportedly then sent

SMITH'S LIONS CALL-UP

Marcus Smith has been drafted in to the Lions squad in South Africa as Finn Russell faces a race to be available for the first Test on July 24. The Scotland stand-off is managing an achilles issue and was not fit to take his place among the replacements for last night's game against the Sharks. Smith, who played for England against Canada yesterday, will fly out today as cover.

Rory Steyn – a security consultant who was once president Nelson Mandela's chief bodyguard – to the camp along with their chief Covid committee officer to ensure that players don't break the bio-bubble protocols.

Players have to undergo a medical before playing Tests to ensure no lasting damage was done to their heart and lungs by Covid and the process can delay their return by up to 17 days. The first Test is scheduled for July 24.

The Lions coach Warren Gatland said on Friday night he expected the South Africa A and Stormers games – the next two fixtures for the tourists – to be swapped. It was also reported that the Stormers game could be scrapped altogether, with two games against the A side, allowing the Springboks to give their squad some game time before the Test matches.

Sealed with a

Barty beats Pliskova to claim first Wimbledon crown

kiss



Barty held off a late surge from Pliskova, below, to win her second grand slam title — and first Wimbledon crown

ALYSON RUDD



on Centre Court

On the 50th anniversary of Evonne Goolagong's first Wimbledon singles crown, arguably her biggest fan won her first adult title at the championships. Ashleigh Barty wore, as she has throughout, an outfit designed to honour her hero and as she sealed the title she sank on to her knees, then peered out from under her cap as if she could not quite dare to see what Centre Court looks like when you have just won the tournament you dreamt of winning as a youngster.

"I hope I made Evonne proud," the 25-year-old Australian said, her voice trembling with emotion.

Barty immediately scrambled up into the stands to hug her team after what was an absorbing, if curious, match. The two first-time finalists took turns to be beset by nerves and it is to Karolina Pliskova's credit that she did not crumple after a dreadful start but played her part in ramping up the tension.

"I never cry," the beaten Czech told Centre Court as she struggled to maintain her composure after her 6-3, 6-7, 6-3 defeat.

Barty keeps her cool to punish nervy Pliskova

The two first-time finalists took turns to be beset by nerves in an absorbing match

"You have made my dream so special," Barty told the spectators. Asked to talk through the winning point, she replied: "I can't remember it."

It was, simply, too tied up in how much effort she had put into being fit to even take part, having suffered a hip injury that threatened to force her withdrawal before the fortnight began.

Pliskova slipped during the first point, thereby continuing the motif of

this year's championships — which have been beset with controversy as to the state of the show courts — as Barty held to love. In the second game Barty lobbed Pliskova and because the Czech did not react everyone assumed the ball would drift long, but it landed well within the baseline.

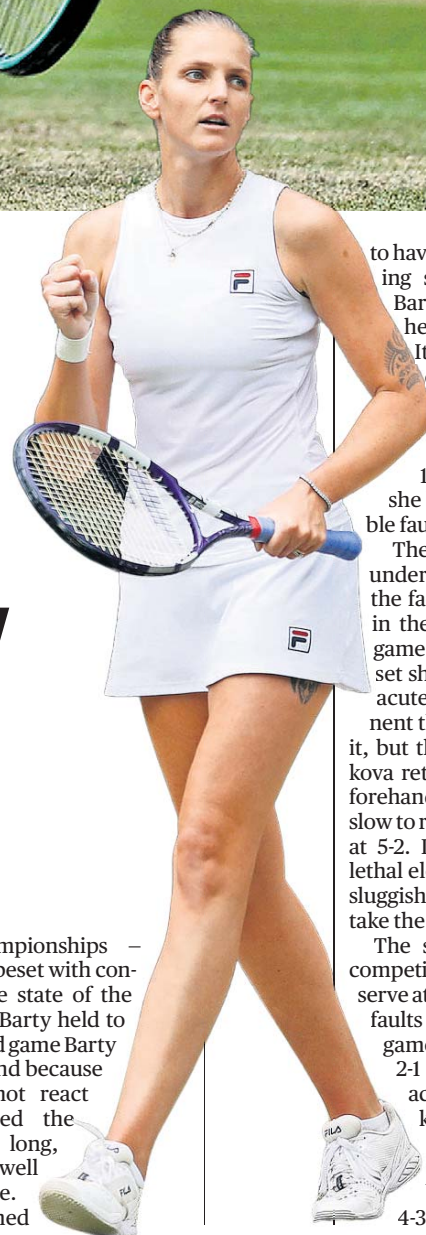
Pliskova seemed

to have stage fright, losing her opening service game to love. Then Barty, who won the junior title here ten years ago, held to love.

It was all very strange. No one enjoys watching a competitor freeze. There were the inevitable huge cheers when Pliskova won her first point for 15-30 in the fourth game, but she lost it all the same with a double fault to gift Barty a 4-0 lead.

The Australian then wobbled under no real pressure, other than the fact that Pliskova stayed longer in the rallies, and lost her service game for 4-1. As Barty served for the set she unleashed one of her more acute angles, so alien to her opponent that she did not even reach for it, but then, quite unexpectedly Pliskova returned with a cleverly placed forehand winner that Barty was too slow to react to and the set stayed alive at 5-2. Pliskova held for 5-3, with a lethal elegance where there had been sluggishness, but Barty served out to take the set 6-3.

The second set was much more competitive, both players holding serve at the start. Consecutive double faults from Pliskova in the third game helped Barty to break for a 2-1 lead, then she summoned an ace to go 3-1 up, only for Pliskova to break back, looking calm and serene as if the first set had never happened. She backed it up by holding for a 4-3 lead. Suddenly she was mov-



MATCHSTATS

◆ Barty ◆ Pliskova

7	Aces	6
7	Double faults	5
67	First serve win %	67
54	Second serve win %	35
180	Fastest serve (km/h)	186
157	Average serve (km/h)	169
62	Net points win %	53
6	Break points won	4
75	Break points win %	80
30	Winners	27
29	Unforced errors	32
88	Points won	78

ing with agility and possessed something akin to zest. She shrugged dramatically as two close challenges went in Barty's favour and the Australian held serve for 4-4.

A backhand winner down the line from Pliskova brought a roar of appreciation. It was a shot that smacked of confidence and promised that maybe the crowd might witness a three-set match as she held for 5-4. It went to 5-5 as a wag shouted, incongruously, "Come on Barty, let's go party."

A second-serve ace from Pliskova who, at 6ft 2in is one of the tallest women on the tour, spoke of improved confidence. But it was undermined by her inability to crouch down at the net to finish a long exchange which she deserved to win. A wild backhand then a wild forehand gave Barty break point, which she took after a weak Pliskova backhand.

Barty, though, served for the title without conviction and the second set went to a tie-break packed with quality. Pliskova led 5-2 courtesy of a lob every bit as deft as the one that had left her isolated at the start. The subsequent cheer was intense and Barty's double fault handed the second set to Pliskova. What had threatened to be a speedy, unmemorable final gravitated towards something of a classic.

Barty held at the start of the third, but Pliskova stuttered with her serve and netted a simple volley to give her opponent an early break and a loose forehand from the Czech allowed Barty to race to a 3-0 lead. Pliskova then held with an assuredness that too often was hidden. The damage in the final set had been done, although the rallies were by now captivating.

With Pliskova serving to stay in the match, both players produced some fine, even intricate, net play. The Czech was by now comfortable at the net, even intimidating, and held serve in style. Barty served, with some nerves, for the championship and an error from her opponent finally gave her a maiden title.

Pliskova, 29, will wonder when her first grand-slam title will ever come. She has, when not too nervy, a game that truly comes alive on grass.

'To play pain-free was incredible'

Barty was not told how bad her injury was before tournament, but still took title

Stuart Fraser

It was only after winning her first Wimbledon adult title that Ashleigh Barty became aware of the severity of the hip injury that had threatened to derail her summer.

Five weeks ago the world No 1 was forced to retire midway through the French Open. She felt a twinge in her left hip during the build-up to the tournament and the pain gradually worsened to the point where it became unbearable at a set down to Magda Linette in the second round.

As Barty rested, hoping she would be fit enough for Wimbledon, her support team received information from medical experts in Australia that suggested it was best not to turn up at the All England Club.

Remarkably, perhaps irresponsibly in the eyes of some, they decided not to inform her until she entered the locker room yesterday as the new champion after her three-set victory against Karolina Pliskova.

"Chatting to my team now, once we've come off the court, they kept a lot of cards close to their chest and didn't tell me a lot of the odds and information that they'd got from other specialists," Barty revealed last night. "There weren't too many radiologists in Australia who had seen my injury. In a sense, it was a two-month injury.

"Being able to be able to play here at Wimbledon was nothing short of a miracle. I think them not telling me

that just proved how much we were against the odds. To be playing pain-free through this event was incredible. It's funny, you can think positively, you can plan, and sometimes the stars do align and you can chase after your dreams.

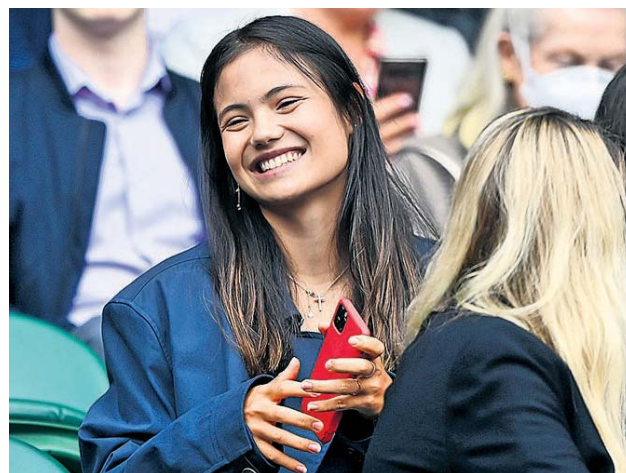
"Certainly now, after chatting to them, it looked a lot less likely than I felt, statistically. I think it's been an incredible month."

This is the biggest moment of the 25-year-old's career. Barty was already a grand-slam singles champion through winning the 2019 French Open, but Wimbledon is the tennis tournament that is most popular in her sports-mad homeland. Since winning the junior title here in 2011, her crafty game style has had her earmarked as a contender for the main prize on the lawn of SW19.

The significance of the occasion was clear when Barty failed to serve out the match at 6-5 in the second set, overcome by nerves with the finish line in sight. One of her great skills is thinking her way out of trouble, and

'I think them not telling me just proved how much we were against the odds. It's funny, sometimes the stars do align and you can chase after your dreams'

British teenager Emma Raducanu took in the women's final from the royal box



British pairs extend their dominance of wheelchair doubles titles

Rebecca Myers

British players dominated the wheelchair finals at Wimbledon yesterday, winning titles in the men's and women's doubles.

Alfie Hewett and Gordon Reid took the men's title 7-5, 6-2 after an agonisingly close opening set against the in-form pair Joachim Gerard and Tom Egberink, while Jordanne Whiley and partner Yui Kamiji took their sixth Wimbledon doubles title against Lucy Shuker and Kgothatso Montjane, winning 6-0, 7-6.

Briton Andy Lapthorne also won the third-place play-off in the quad wheelchair singles after beating compatriot David Wagner, with whom he had won the quad doubles on Friday.

After a confident start by Hewett and Reid, they were pushed to the

limits in the opening set by their Belgian and Dutch opponents. It was the first time the two pairs had met at Wimbledon and it proved to be a hugely entertaining match, with the Britons breaking serve in the opening game and a 17-shot rally opening the second.

They were Hewett and Reid's fourth and Whiley and Yui's fifth Wimbledon wheelchair doubles titles, respectively. Whiley, who was beaten in the semi-finals of the women's singles by top seed and two-time former champion, Diede de Groot, the previous day, thrived alongside long-time partner Yui.

The chemistry between the pair, who are close friends – Kamiji will be Whiley's bridesmaid at her wedding next year – seemed to make the difference, after Montjane and Shuker's led in the second set. It is the duo's 17th grand-slam doubles title.

It was also Whiley's first title in SW19 since giving birth to her son, Jackson, in 2018. She won the 2017 doubles while pregnant with him. "It's amazing to be back," she said. She will also partner Shuker at the Paralympics in Tokyo.

Despite the one-sided first set, which was taken by Whiley and Yui in just 19 minutes, Montjane and Shuker fought back with a strong performance in the second set to

MEN'S FINAL REPORT
For Stuart Fraser's Centre Court report, see THE TIMES



Whiley plays a shot en route to another win

she quickly settled to ensure she came out on top in the decider.

"It is the most incredible feeling I think I've ever experienced on a tennis court," Barty said. "There was certainly disbelief. I've worked so hard my whole career with my team and with people that mean the most to me to try and achieve my goals and my dreams. To be able to do that today was incredible.

"There was some ups and downs. There were runs of momentum. The challenge today was trying to control my service games. I wasn't able to do that every time, but I felt like I was building in the right way.

"Trying to serve out the match in the second set, I gave Karolina a look-in. She grabbed it with both hands. Being able to reset at the start of the third was really important, just for me to continue to turn up each and every point. That's all I was really focusing on, just trying to do the best I could in every given point, regardless of what the scoreline was."

Pliskova, 29, remains the best active female player without a major trophy but there was the sense afterwards that she is confident she will soon shed this dubious status. After a challenging first half of the season, her return to form has given her renewed impetus before the US hard-court swing.

"I would say this was very important," the Czech said. "Definitely now I have more trust and more belief to go in the next grand slams. It's been a while since I was actually in the second week, so I just hope everything's going to be a bit better now. Let's see what's going to happen in the US Open. There's still a chance. I played the final there [in 2016], so it's not impossible."

leave Whiley and Yui 3-2 down.

Montjane, who arrived as a wild card this year, will make history when she plays in the final today against favourite De Groot, becoming the first black South African woman to play in a Wimbledon final. She showcased her flair in the second set, with gravity-defying angles on her returns, often pushing Whiley and Yui to the edges of the court.

Hewett and Reid, too, succeeded by using so much of the grass that, at one point, Egberink almost collided with the bags on the side of the court. There were heart-stopping points from Gerard, in particular, who is a former world No 1 in wheelchair singles and a former Wimbledon doubles champion.

Hewett said they had felt the weight of expectation but their experience as a partnership had helped them to overcome any nerves.

"When you're winning a lot, you have this aura and confidence as a partnership that we can go on and dominate any match," he said. "That comes from years of working together and being in those moments where we've maybe not succeeded.

"When we go out, we just want to give it our all and, right now, we're riding a good wave and carrying this momentum. We don't rest on our laurels."

ITALY'S **other** BIG HOPE

Berrettini faces the toughest challenge in tennis today but has game to worry Djokovic

STUART FRASER



Tennis Correspondent

Matteo Berrettini has steamrolled his way through the British grass-court season, and now he seeks to avoid crashing into the human wall that is Novak Djokovic on Centre Court today.

In all corners of the All England Club yesterday, people pondered how on earth the first-time grand-slam finalist from Italy can get the better of the 19-times major champion from Serbia. Yes, Berrettini has only dropped four of 32 sets at Wimbledon and the Queen's Club, but the scale of the task that awaits him now is on another level to anything he has faced over the past four weeks.

At least Berrettini knows what to expect. The 25-year-old has stood across the net from Djokovic twice before, losing in the group stage of the 2019 ATP Finals and again in the quarter-finals of last month's French Open. The latter should provide a much-needed source of inspiration, having taken a set on the clay of Roland Garros.

The faster surface here might also give Berrettini some hope. He



is at his best on grass, firing down serves at speeds of up to 139mph and then using his powerful forehand to dictate the rallies. If he can maintain these two key strengths of his game to perfection this afternoon, then perhaps he can cause problems.

"I do think Berrettini has a shot at this," Pat Cash, the 1987 Wimbledon champion who now works as a pundit for the BBC, said. "He's not as complete a player as [Stefanos] Tsitsipas but the grass just gives him another leg up. That serve and forehand is the biggest. I can think of [Andy] Roddick, but this is almost another level. I can't think of a better one-two combination.

"You think of the weapons. What do you need to beat Djokovic? You need to stop him returning serve. Novak will get the majority of them back, but then you've got to damage his consistency and put him on the run. You can't play Novak on his terms. Berrettini has the opportunity, he's got the game to do it on his own terms and that is what I think is exciting. The



Berrettini is appearing in his first grand-slam final while Djokovic aims for a 20th win

Skupski win makes it three Britons in mixed final



Rebecca Myers

A British player is guaranteed to win the mixed doubles final today after Neal Skupski and his American partner Desirae Krawczyk lit up No 1 Court by beating John Peers and Zhang Shuai 3-6, 7-6 (7-4), 7-5 in a thrilling semi-final. The pair will play Harriet Dart and Joe Salisbury for the title in a three-quarters British match.

The crowd gave a standing ovation to the Liverpool-born player and his partner after he showcased superb serves to them the edge in a hotly-contested battle that lasted two-and-

Skupski put on a serving masterclass

a-half hours. Skupski said he had "never heard anything like it" after he rode high off the support of the home crowd to come back from a set down.

In the end, it was the women's serves that proved definitive as Krawczyk held her nerve to win the 11th game of the final set, while Zhang and Peers wavered to concede the final game.

Skupski, 31, had never been beyond the quarter-finals at Wimbledon. He partnered with Jamie Murray in 2019, when the pair were knocked out in the first round. Krawczyk, meanwhile, is on a career high after winning the mixed doubles at Roland Garros last month with Salisbury, who will be an opponent today. The match will be Dart's maiden grand-slam final.

Peers, who has reached the doubles final of every grand slam apart from Roland Garros, and Zhang, who has a career-high doubles ranking of ninth in the world, proved formidable opponents. It was their second appearance in the Wimbledon mixed

doubles semi-finals and both were ruthlessly efficient at the net, with Peers controlling the game in the first set. After six games that followed the pattern of the serve, the Australian-Chinese pair cut through, winning the set with relative ease.

In the second set, however, they wobbled, and an extraordinary 124mph ace from Skupski tipped the scales in their opponents' favour. Peers and Zhang had put 85 per cent of their first serves in play in the first set but that statistic dropped to 59 per cent by the seventh game of the second, and Skupski and Krawczyk began exploiting their weakness. After the Briton leapt to return a ball from Peers in the 12th game, the Australian lay flat on his back on the court, spent.

The tie-break proved the decider, with Skupski buoyed by a crowd boosted by an influx of extra fans after the women's final had finished.

Peers and Zhang had been two points away from victory but the game was visibly slipping from their grasp. Another stellar ace from Skupski pushed the pair to 3-0,

although they stumbled to 3-3 before rallying to win the tie-break.

The serving order gave the British-American pair an advantage in the final set, and they thrived on it, leading from the first point. The 12th game finally proved to be the break they needed.

Skupski said it felt "surreal" to be in his first grand-slam final and credited Krawczyk with her "great move" at the end to win the match. "It's nice to be playing against two Brits," he said of the impending final. "Joe is a good friend and whoever comes up on top, it will be a nice thing for British tennis. I'm really looking forward to it."

Dart, the 24-year-old Londoner, called the atmosphere during her semi-final win with Salisbury on Friday "unreal" and Skupski also expressed surprise at the support he had received. "I thought it would be empty because of the ladies' singles final," he said. "It was unbelievable – the noise they were giving through the match and especially on the match point we had. I've never heard anything like it."

GETTY IMAGES

TALE OF THE TAPE

◆ Djokovic ◆ Berrettini
At Wimbledon 2021

12h48m	Time on court	13h41m
184	Games played	203
19	Sets played	21
626	Total points	665
279	Winners	285
85	First serve win %	82
57	Second serve win %	61
63	Aces	101
17	Double faults	12
69	Break points	60
38	Break point win %	47
5	Service broken	5

Career stats

Age	34	25
Height	6ft 2in	6ft 5in
Turned pro	2003	2015
Career matches won	961	97
Career win %	83	64
World ranking	1st	9th
Career titles	84	5
Career prize money (\$m)	149.8	6.5
Head-to-head wins	2	0

His serve and forehand is the biggest. I think of Roddick but this is almost another level

mental side of it, of course, is another thing. Tactically he has the game to beat Novak but whether you can keep it up for five sets is another story.

“We’ll see how he goes. I don’t think he’s going to be too fazed by being in the final. If he gets his first service game out of the way, I think he’ll settle pretty well. I’ve been impressed. They always said that when the going gets tough, the Italians go shopping. Not in this guy’s case. He’s a great competitor.”

Djokovic has long been aware of the threat that his opponent poses. While Berrettini’s triumph at the Queen’s Club Championships last month was the biggest title of his career, he has consistently been ranked inside the world’s top ten since October 2019.

“He’s one of the best players in the world in the last 12 months I think,” Djokovic said. “He’s had some big wins, against Dominic Thiem in Australia [at the ATP Cup] and reached the semi-finals of the US Open two years ago. He’s working his way up.

“With big weapons in the serve and forehand, he can play well on any surface. Obviously grass favours his game even more. If he serves big, as he did throughout the entire tournament, it’s tough to break his serve, to go into the rhythm, to find a good position to return and make him play.”

If anyone is capable of neutralising the Berrettini serve, it is Djokovic, as he is up there with Andre Agassi as one of the greatest returners in history. Another strength is his own serve, which is often underestimated. While not particularly fast at a top speed of 125mph this fortnight, he is able to place the ball in the corners so accurately.

“I believe in my return,” Djokovic said. “I think the return has served me very well throughout my career. Hopefully I’ll be able to get a lot of those serves back and wait for my chances.

“I will have to also serve efficiently myself, as I’ve done in the semi-final. I think I served very well, especially

DJOKOVIC CAN ECLIPSE THE GREATS

by Tim Henman



Who do I think will be the best male player of all time? Novak Djokovic. You look at the way he is playing, with his intensity and consistency. I have said for a couple of years that he will be the male player with the most grand-slam wins.

I reflect on when Pete Sampras retired, and I was playing in that era. Once he got to 14 [grand-slams] I would have bet my bottom dollar nobody would get to that in the next 15 to 20 years. To have three of them — Djokovic, Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal

— who have flown by and won 59 between them is absolutely staggering. Djokovic has 19 and looking at his fitness, motivation, hunger and desire, I see him challenging Serena Williams [who has 23] and Margaret Court [24] in terms of the total number of singles grand-slam titles won.

I really think the calendar grand slam is on this year. The difference

from when Rod Laver did it in 1969 is that three of the four grand-slam events — the Australian Open,

Wimbledon and the US Open — were on grass. Given the time that Djokovic is playing in, I think in men’s tennis it would be the greatest achievement in the open era.

Tim Henman is part of the BBC’s Wimbledon line-up. Watch the men’s singles final from 1.05pm on BBC One



Berrettini takes an ice bath as he prepares for his first major final

when I needed a first serve to get myself out of trouble.

“It’s the final. It’s really anybody’s game. He’s arguably the guy who has been in the best form on grass courts this year, winning Queen’s. He’s red hot. It’s going to be a great battle.”

Another intriguing element surrounding today’s contest is the part played by the crowd.

Despite all that he has done in the sport, so often Djokovic finds himself with minority backing at Wimbledon. He appeared particularly riled during his third-round match against America’s Denis Kudla, occasionally

roaring towards his detractors after winning a point.

“The only small vulnerability I think for Djokovic is sometimes when he feels the crowd is against him,” Tim Henman, the former British No 1, said. “Djokovic will have good support but I think the crowd will support the underdog.

“There have been times when that frustrates him. That goes back to his desire to be loved, as well as being the best player that has ever lived. I commented on his match against Kudla, he was up a set and a break, and suddenly he was raging at the crowd.

“He has very good support but I think he tries to compare that support to Roger [Federer] and Rafa [Nadal]. To me they are two of the most popular athletes in any sport, so I think that’s fundamentally where his problems lie. He isn’t in the same league of popularity as Federer and Nadal, but he still has very good support wherever he plays. Would I rather be the most popular or best player that ever lived? I certainly would choose the latter.”

ON TV TODAY

Wimbledon men’s singles final
1.05pm BBC One, play starts 1.30pm



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LIONS MAKE HARD WORK OF

STEPHEN JONES



Rugby Correspondent
At Loftus Versfeld

The crazy tour rolls on. You need about 15 different airline reservations to be certain of making the next game, wherever it is. But the news from Pretoria, deserted Pretoria, is that the British & Irish Lions suddenly remembered at half-time – they were only level at 26-26 – that they were not actually in a Super Rugby candy-floss festival.

In the second half they went for the jugular, making fin soup of the Sharks with seven second-half tries as their looseness in the first half was a distant memory, the likes of Anthony Watson and a supporting cast taking the Lions over the Highveld horizon.

The slightly ironic climax included Conor Murray arriving in the match to celebrate his appointment as new captain, only to depart soon, yellow-carded for killing the play.

No doubt coach Warren Gatland gave a half-time reminder to the Lions of their possibilities. It was so wonderful to see Watson involve himself – he can sometimes drift out to the wing. Jack Conan, Elliott Daly, Jamie George, Tadhg Beirne and Tom Curry scored tries in the second-half barrage as the Lions pulled clean out of sight.

How can you sift evidence in a game like this? It was disappointing that the Lions' scrum did not do more damage and the second-half scrum-rage with the props changed – Wyn Jones and Kyle Sinckler came surging on – appeared more effective.

But one or two matters are hardening. Chris Harris and Duhan van der Merwe must surely be inked in to the Test team already, and even though he was a controversial selection for the tour, Exeter's giant Jonny Hill has done himself no harm whatsoever. He may not make the Test team, in a position where Maro Itoje has not had the chance to assert himself and his won-

derous ability as yet. But Hill is playing outstanding, grafting rugby. He is mobile for a big man, puts himself about and is gilding the jersey as he rumbles along.

The back row is also fascinating because Beirne had an excellent game, as far as you can deduce, but it seemed that the Lions will need the estimable Courtney Lawes on the blind-side flank for his lineout capability with Itoje slotting into the second row with Iain Henderson.

And the next match – whoever it is against and wherever it is played – is vital for Tom Curry. The phenomenon from Sale looked indecently lively when he came on. He is by yards the fastest back row and the most tenacious and indomitable. One typical Curry game next up will cement his position and prove the rather un-Curry sort of game he turned in in his first match was a one-off.

Hill is playing outstanding rugby. He is mobile for a big man and puts himself about

And the Sharks? Just superb, though they lost Jaden Hendrikse, their scrum half, to a red card for a bonkers forearm smash on Dan Biggar. There was much criticism that the Lions were playing the same lot twice in a few days but the remarkable thing about the weekend Sharks – only four players reappeared for yesterday – was not how bad they were but how superb. They were not first choices but gave it the kitchen sink.

It also reminded you that at heart, South Africa is the greatest rugby nation in the world for sheer talent. Over 100 players born here are professional rugby players across the world away from their old country. Yesterday, a further 46 players were away with the Springboks, of which nine are Sharks.

So, to come out and contend so well against the Lions was highly commendable, this group a far better team than the Lions met in Johannes-

burg on Wednesday and the likes of Mpilo Gumedede and Dylan Richardson in the back row and also Anthony Volmink at full back were competitive.

Naturally, the Lions played into their hands by whizzing the ball wide, and even though it is one of rugby's running disasters that the laws now make it difficult to play dominating rugby, at least the Lions could have tried instead of entering a feat of the World Dodgy Passing championships.

By the time all the flying balls had been intercepted, the Sharks had scored four tries – Volmink scoring twice and other tries from Thaakir Abrahams and Hendrikse.

The Lions had scored four themselves – they opened with Van der Merwe cruising through to make a try for Chris Harris. There were driving tries from George and Beirne and Van der Merwe scored himself after a break by Biggar. At half-time there was far more evidence that the Lions were entering into a party spirit than trying to dump a decent opponent.

Enough was enough, they started driving in a narrow front and, in the dreadful old dirge-like coach tripe, they earned the right to go wide. The tour rolls on, this way and that. Who knows where and who knows when? But the Lions know full well that thunderous battles are ahead and they are all on a wavelength.

Finally, the towering Loftus Versveld made you sadder about the lack of followers than ever. The last time the Lions were here, in 2009, the vast far stand was a seething mass of pure Lion red. We miss you. But your men are travelling well.

Scorers: Sharks: Tries Volmink 2 (10min, 35), Abrahams (14), Hendrikse (23), Kok (52).

Cons Cronje 3.

Lions: Tries Harris (4), George 2 (20, 54), Van der Merwe (25), Beirne 2 (38, 63), Conan (47), Daly (50), A Watson 2 (58, 79), Curry (66) **Cons** Biggar 8.

Sharks A Volmink; M Potgieter, W Kok, M Koster (R Jonker 65), T Abrahams; L Cronje (B Chamberlain 59), J Hendrikse; N Mchunu (M Majola 56), V Vuuren (T Bholi 60), W Herbst (L Adriaanse 56), Le R Roets (C Wright, 48), R Hugo, D Richardson, M Gumedede (J Labushagne 48), P Buthlezi (D Jooste 60), K Mchunu, J Ward, C Bosch. **British & Irish Lions** L Williams; A Watson, E Daly, C Harris (B Aki 68), D van der Merwe; D Biggar, G Davies (C Murray 47); R Sutherland (W Jones 56), J George (K Owens 56), T Furlong (K Sinckler 56), C Lawes, J Hill, T Beirne, H Watson (T Curry 60), J Conan (S Simmonds 56).

DAN SHERIDAN



Van der Merwe was on the scoresheet again – the Scot is staking a serious claim to start in the Test team

LIONS PLAYER RATINGS

Stephen Jones

TOTAL
104/150

15, LIAM WILLIAMS 8/10

Age 30 Ht 1.88m Wt 85kg

He was as rock-solid as ever under the high ball, he will come more and more into the tour as the games get tighter.

10, DAN BIGGAR 7/10

Age 31 Ht 1.88m Wt 90kg

He exuded authority. Sad that Russell is unable to mount a challenge but doubtful that Biggar would have been shaken from the fly-half position.

4, COURTNEY LAWES 8/10

Age 32 Ht 2.01m Wt 113kg

He can move effortlessly between the back and second rows, probably the most lively ball-carrier. Has a freshness after missing much of the season.

14, ANTHONY WATSON 6/10

Age 27 Ht 1.88m Wt 93kg

Not really his type of game, made one good run in the first half but would have preferred a more northern hemisphere-style contest.

9, GARETH DAVIES 6/10

Age 30 Ht 1.78m Wt 90kg

One of several players intercepted rather frequently, and this is not his type of game – the harder the contest, the better he plays.

5, JONNY HILL 6/10

Age 27 Ht 1.96m Wt 111kg

Played the whole game, no sign of decline towards the end; the sort of hardcore forward who shows there is no need to throw the ball about.

13, ELLIOT DALY 6/10

Age 28 Ht 1.84m Wt 83kg

He showed much of his craft, but he was also just a little erratic, which counts against him when they establish the final order of centres.

1, RORY SUTHERLAND 6/10

Age 27 Ht 1.83m Wt 113kg

He can be a fierce, fine scrummager but he is still struggling to get up on the high plateaux. Worthy contender but is he a dominator in Tests?

6, TADHG BEIRNE 8/10

Age 29 Ht 1.98m Wt 113kg

Might be seen to greater effect in a closer game with more contestable breakdowns. Certainly one of the better Lions here, and a try scorer.

12, CHRIS HARRIS 9/10

Age 30 Ht 1.88m Wt 104kg

Just improving and impressing more all the time. He looked unflustered by pressure and unworried by contact, is on his way to really good things.

2, JAMIE GEORGE (CAPT) 7/10

Age 30 Ht 1.80m Wt 109kg

Captain for the day, a brace of tries, and no daylight for Gatland as he tries to work out which of three world-class hookers he chooses.

7, HAMISH WATSON 6/10

Age 29 Ht 1.85m Wt 102kg

Not really his type of game, made one good run but would have preferred a more northern hemisphere style to show himself to better effect.

11, D VAN DER MERWE 8/10

Age 26 Ht 1.93m Wt 105kg

Another man growing on this tour. He is powerful but also has a footballing nous and it was his easy break early on which kicked the Lions into shape.

3, TADHG FURLONG 6/10

Age 28 Ht 1.84m Wt 119kg

As long as he comes out fighting in the Tests all is well, but he and the front row were by no means as impressive as they might have been.

8, JACK CONAN 7/10

Age 28 Ht 1.93m Wt 114kg

Not the game he wanted and needed but no doubt that he is chasing hard at the heels of Taulupe Faletau and thoroughly justifying himself.

SHARKS



'WE MUST IMPROVE'

The Lions fly half Dan Biggar said after yesterday's game: "I think we've got to be wary that the three games we've had out here, we know that we're going to come up against very different opposition when it comes to the Tests, and we know that we're going to have to improve."

"We're really pleased to have scored a lot of points and a lot of tries but I think we're under no illusions that it's probably going to be a huge step up when we go to Cape Town."

On Marcus Smith's call-up as cover for Finn Russell, he said: "It's not as if we've brought someone along who's had a rubbish season! He has been flying for Quins towards the end of the year, he's thoroughly deserving of his call-up and I'm sure he's going to add to the group."

Stuart Barnes

Warm-up matches are now a meaningless circus for the Lions – the Tests are all that matter



The pandemic is accelerating the trend of Lions tours. The Sharks' four first-half tries yesterday were a reflection of criminal complacency on the Lions part. Once eagerly awaited, provincial matches are now nothing more than warm-ups. Empty arenas remind us that Lions tours are not what once they were.

Back in 2009, Ellis Park had no excuse for the empty stands when they faced the Golden Lions. The official figure was 22,000. It was nothing like that.

The locals knew the truth. So did the local media. Tours have boiled down to three games; the Tests. Saturday was a circus. Where once the tour circumnavigated New Zealand and South Africa, now it must pander to the professional concern on the part of clubs to keep fixtures down. The carnival is a big-city-big-bucks extravaganza and 2021 is only magnifying the reality of the situation – one that TV, the travel sector and various tourist boards would rather not admit.

Given the state of the South African nation (and it wasn't a matter of hindsight to guess both the size of the problems and the region where the outbreak would be greatest) the Lions would have been better off staying in Europe with a hybrid of warm-up games; flying straight into South Africa for the Tests. There is only an hour's time difference. No jet lag.

They could have faced the home unions and a French Barbarians side before jetting off. It would have been a more relevant preparation. But even then we are kidding ourselves when suggesting these matches dictate selection. Maybe in the days before the saturation coverage on TV and professional coaching, when coaches lacked a chance to see players up close. Now, the Lions management have intimate knowledge of their squad's strengths and weaknesses before jetting off.

The vast majority of the 2021 Test squad are already in place. The positions up for grabs will be

decided in the privacy of closed session practice, not the irrelevance of yesterday's entertaining basketball match.

As many as 12 of the starting XV for the first Test are penned in. The selection is based upon a combination of Test form, Lions history with Warren Gatland and strategy to deal with the particular opponents.

In 1997 the Lions picked, in Tom Smith and Paul Wallace, a pair of props to get under the South African back row. Maybe this vintage will focus on a lineout to reach higher than the important South African lineout weapon. Let's begin our selection at loose-head. 1 – This place is up for grabs. Wyn Jones had a fine season but Rory Sutherland has solid foundations and extras around the pitch. 2 – In theory it is a three-way fight. In practice, Jamie George's

'Warren Gatland has as many as 12 of the starting XV for the first Test penned in already'



Gatland learnt little yesterday

accuracy under pressure, as proven in 2017, makes him firm favourite. 3 – Tadhg Furlong.

4 – Maro Itoje.

5 – Jonny Hill is getting game time with Itoje and is a competitive jumper. Tadhg Beirne, Iain Henderson and Courtney Lawes will battle it out behind closed doors.

6 – Lawes, prominent as a second row yesterday, is also a contender on the blind side, as is Beirne and possibly Taulupe Faletau.

7 – Tom Curry didn't impress against the Sharks. Hamish Watson's form against inferior opposition is also irrelevant. His lack of lineout inches is not.

8 – Faletau is favourite but Jack Conan is an alternative with the Wales star shifted to No 6.

9 – It was Conor Murray even before he was made captain.

10 – Dan Biggar is the man.

11 – Josh Adams. Eight tries in three games but a shoe-in before the Lions played Japan.

12 – There is no hurry to rush Robbie Henshaw back into action. He is being prepared for the first Test. Expected by many to play 13, his iron defence alongside Biggar makes him a perhaps surprise inside-centre selection from a South African perspective.

13 – It will be a surprise if they haven't done their homework regarding Chris Harris. Elliot Daly is making headlines in the Anglo-Saxon media but the Gloucester centre has the sort of game to blunt South Africa in the 13 channel. He wore the 12 shirt yesterday but then again Rory Sutherland could have worn 14.

14 – Anthony Watson. A proven Lion whose best performances at Test level tend to be on the wing where his finishing and chasing game are maximised.

15 – Liam Williams is the best aerial option. Stuart Hogg is getting the captaincy honours but the Wales star will get the Test 15 shirt unless Hogg finds inspiration on the training field, far from prying eyes.

HOW DID THE BENCH DO?

This was all good news. Kyle Sinckler and Wyn Jones made much more of a mess of their opposite numbers than the starting props had – although perhaps the second-half Sharks were inferior.

Sam Simmonds had a gallop towards the end and looked at ease in the company but Dan Biggar had to stay on the field as they are temporarily short of fly-halves, with Russell suffering problems with his Achilles. Eight out of 10 for the collective.

IF TEST TEAM WERE NAMED TODAY

- 15 A Watson
- 14 J Adams
- 13 C Harris
- 12 R Henshaw
- 11 D van der Merwe
- 10 D Biggar
- 9 C Murray (c)
- 1 M Vunipola
- 2 J George
- 3 T Furlong
- 4 M Itoje
- 5 J Hill
- 6 C Lawes
- 7 T Curry
- 8 T Faletau

LIONS WHO ROARED AND THOSE WHO COUGHED

ANTHONY WATSON

The best news for the tourists was probably in the second half of this match when the England wing started cruising his way along acres of the field.

He is a devastating runner in tight and open play and made and gets ever closer to confirming the Test starting berth he enjoyed four years ago in the series in New Zealand.

WYN JONES AND KYLE SINCKLER

There was also good news up front when the Wales loose-head Jones and English tight-head Sinckler proved themselves true contenders.

Jones and Sinckler may well have to settle for a place on the bench in the Test match-day squad but both are coming to the boil nicely as the series (hopefully) looms ever closer.

ELLIOT DALY

Playing again in his favoured 13 position, he probably became too enmeshed in the wide game that the Lions overdid. However, you do feel for him because he tended to take the rap when movements broke down or when the interceptions were made.

The less said about the fluffed pass that cost his side a try the better, however.

TADHG FURLONG

The Irishman did not act on the going as he might have. He is in no danger of missing out on the Test but the Lions might have expected him to dominate the weakened Sharks, who struggled to cope with the Lions pack with more power than he wielded on the day.

Fingers crossed, the tougher the opposition, the more we will see of that power.

Stephen Jones

The voice of rugby

Siege mentality of Lions and their desire to finish tour has inspired me



Ken Owens, the Llanelli Lion, who is one of three world-class hookers on this tour (God help Warren Gatland when he has to choose his Test starter) spent almost the whole of Wednesday in his Johannesburg hotel room.

The 34-year-old spent his time playing Candy Crush Saga on his phone. In fact, Owens was the unofficial No 1 in Britain but his personal best performance has been overwhelmed by the No 1 in the world, the Bristol Bears rugby player Niyi Adeolokun. "I've got quite a bit of work to do to track him down," he said. "When I heard about him I got back in my box."

Owens had time on his hands. He was confined to his room as though he was incarcerated in a cell. He knows the feeling full well in this horribly restricted lockdown of rugby life. "We did it with Wales for the autumn series and then again in the Six Nations," Owens said.

But even by the tortuous standards on this tour, Wednesday was a new experience – two Lions had tested positive, the whole party had to be given the PCR test with the match that evening against Cell C Sharks hanging in the balance. Even though the tests all came back negative the Lions were still in their hotel about an hour away from the ground when they should have been beginning their warm-up. It was another of the torrent of difficulties encountered here in the face of the evil virus besieging the nation.

There has been a barrage of opinion reaching South Africa all week from the old countries that the tour should be aborted; many seemed to feel that it is infringing great traditions by battling along its lonesome path. One observer at home said that it was "demeaning" for the Lions to have had to play an already weakened Sharks not only on Wednesday but again in Pretoria yesterday.

Gareth Davies – the former chairman of the Welsh Rugby Union and one of very, very few outstanding administrators the sport has unearthed in the past two decades – came out strongly, clearly viewing the tour a disaster and vaguely insulting to the whole history of Lions tours.

But it may be significant that the opinion seems to differ sharply when you draw an Equatorial line across the arguments. It may be significant that no one in the Lions party is less than totally dedicated to getting the job done no matter what, and no one in the small group of camp followers in other professions – reporting, technical, etc – differs.

It may be the sharing of similar privations, or it may be that inspiration is something that comes from being up close but some of us are becoming increasingly inspired by the tenacity and professionalism of these Lions in the face of the

enemy (the virus, not the Springboks). South African rugby is suffering badly too. Some of us are rooting for both teams in their battle.

Owens was asked how they had managed to deliver some sort of pre-match preparation with everything up in the air on Wednesday.

"Just like every week, we just fronted up. It's never ideal, you want to prepare properly for a match and everyone has their own routines," he said. "But it just shows the spirit we have in the camp, and we just bought into it. Of course it was a strange day, we got the, 'Stay in your rooms' message first thing in the morning but we trust the medical staff and the conditioning staff and the management, they are absolutely outstanding. They made sure we had food and nutrition in our rooms, and stretch bands and everything we needed to warm-up."

He did acknowledge that it is hard to judge progress when up against some rather lacklustre opponents, although he did point out that playing at altitude always makes everything difficult. But he was by no means dismayed and thought that the Lions were making progress.

"Take the scrum. It is still early for

There is no question that Gatland and his staff have ascended into contention for team of the year

us and we are really working on the combinations in the front row. I haven't played with Kyle Sinckler for four years, and Mako [Vunipola], Luke Cowan-Dickie and Tadhg Furlong haven't scrummaged together. But we have absolute quality out here, we are really challenging each other and we're going after it pretty hard."

There is ample opportunity for the tour of the 2021 Lions to encounter more problems. But I have them narrow favourites to finish the job, and the tour will unquestionably spark into life as the Tests approach. You do wish both teams an unfettered period of preparation now, and the South Africa public absolutely deserve to see their World Cup heroes in the flesh for the first time – the sketchy warm-up against Georgia aside.

Owens clearly spoke for every player. "There is a siege mentality here to do everything we can to finish this tour off, and everything we need to do, we will do," he said.

There is no question that Warren Gatland and his staff have ascended into contention for any team of the year trophy. The good news is that rugby can still be elevated, even at the highest level, by team spirit and togetherness.

Smith shows he's worthy of Lions call-up

ALEX LOWE



At Twickenham

Marcus Smith had just retaken the field for the second half of England's cakewalk against Canada when news filtered into the stands at Twickenham that he had been called up by the British &

Irish Lions. Down there on his field of dreams, Smith was unaware and carried on plotting and scheming behind a crushingly dominant performance from his forwards, stitching together an improved, ruthless England display, albeit against game but horribly outclassed opposition.

The Harlequins fly half will want to move into Twickenham. Over the course of the past three weekends here, Smith has won the Gallagher Premiership title, scored a try on his England debut, against the United States, and now earned a Lions call-up in the middle of his second Test appearance. Fans shouted from the stands to try to pass the message on to the 22-year-old. "Lion, Lion," they chanted after he flung out wide another of his delicious passes.

Eddie Jones, the head coach, kept Smith on the field until the 65th minute, by which time England had accelerated into a 70-14 lead. Smith, who kicked all nine of his conversions, received a rousing ovation from the crowd and disappeared immediately down the tunnel, where he learnt of his call-up from Charlotte Gibbons, England's operations manager.

Warren Gatland, the Lions head coach, turned to Smith to provide injury cover for Finn Russell, who has an achilles issue, because he likes the freedom with which he plays. In truth, this was not a game that required him to produce too many rabbits from hats, as he has done all season for Harlequins; there was none of his trademark hitch-kicks, just an intelligent performance that played to England's twin strengths of power up front and pace out wide. Canada, defeated 68-12 by Wales last week, could not cope with England's assault on either front.

England scored ten tries in total, including two contrasting hat-tricks made in Newcastle, from Jamie Blamire, the hooker, and Adam Radwan, the wing. Joe Cokanasiga powered over for two more tries, taking his



Radwan scores England's eighth try and his second. The 23-year-old would touch down again to complete his hat-trick and wrap up a fine day

MATCH STATS

	England	Canada
9 Tries	2	
52 Possession %	48	
55 Territory %	45	
83 Scrums won %	100	
81 Lineouts won %	86	
503 Metres run	137	
7 Turnovers conceded	8	
14 Penalties conceded	16	

England tally to 11 in as many Tests and Ellis Genge blasted through four Canada defenders to crown a destructive performance with a deserved try.

Canada, coached by Kingsley Jones and Rob Howley, had a go and credit to them for that, kicking for the corner rather than taking penalty shots at goal and they were rewarded with two tries, from Ross Braude, the scrum half, and Kainoa Lloyd, the wing. But to extend one of Jones's analogies from the United States game last week, this was a warm water test, which will temper how many absolute judgments can be made on the new breed.

There will be more intense challenges in the autumn when South Africa and Australia visit Twickenham.

This has been a summer of discovery for Jones, a chance to work with a new group of players in the hope of uncovering a few gems who can cope in the furnace of the 2023 World Cup in France, by which time it will have been 20 years of hurt since Jonny Wilkinson's drop-goal in Sydney.

Jones's theme to his players this week was that "every day is an audition" for the chance to break into the senior squad. Genge has emerged over the past month to be a leader in the camp and he was a force to be reckoned with, carrying 11 times,

ALEX DAVIDSON

ENGLAND PLAYER RATINGS

by Alex Lowe



15, FREDDIE STEWARD 8/10

Age 20, Club Leicester, Ht 1.96m, Wt 101kg

Will be frustrated not to have prevented Canada's second try but he should make the senior squad in November.

13, HENRY SLADE 8/10

Age 28, Club Exeter, Ht 1.88m, Wt 87kg

Some lovely distribution at outside centre helped to get England's wide attacking game ticking and almost bagged a try for himself.

11, ADAM RADWAN 8/10

Age 23, Club Newcastle, Ht 1.78m, Wt 86kg

A brilliant finisher with pace to burn, Radwan burst on to the international scene with an electric hat-trick on his debut.

9, HARRY RANDALL 8/10

Age 23, Bristol, Ht 1.73m, Wt 79kg

Limited opposition but he has looked the real deal over the past couple of weeks. Should start in the autumn.

2, JAMIE BLAMIRE 8/10

Age 23, Club Newcastle, Ht 1.85m, Wt 113kg

Two caps and four tries for the Newcastle hooker, who has enjoyed a dream start to Test rugby

4, HARRY WELLS 8/10

Age 27, Club Leicester, Ht 1.96m, Wt 110kg

Described as "old school Leicester", Wells brought all those characteristics to bear and helped England improve their maul defence.

6, LEWIS LUDLOW (CAPT) 7/10

Age 26, Club Gloucester, Ht 1.90m, Wt 105kg

Fortunate not to be sent off but otherwise worked hard and did not expect a month ago to have led his country (twice).

8, ALEX DOMBRANDT 8/10

Age 24, Club Harlequins, Ht 1.90m, Wt 118kg

The open game suited his skill set and he made the most of his chance, galloping with ball in hand and supplying a scoring pass.

14, JOE COKANASIGA 8/10

Age 23, Club Bath, Ht 1.91m, Wt 112kg

Took his England try tally to 11 from 11 with two more scores and he looks to be enjoying life again after a tough year.

12, DAN KELLY 8/10

Age 20, Club Leicester, Ht 1.83m, Wt 96kg

A strong, unfussy debut from the Leicester centre whose attitude and ability came highly recommended by Steve Borthwick.

10, MARCUS SMITH 8/10

Age 22, Club Harlequins, Ht 1.70m, Wt 82kg

An intelligent performance that allowed England to play to their strengths; kicked all his goals and received a Lions call-up.

1, ELLIS GENGE 9/10

Age 26, Club Leicester, Ht 1.85m, Wt 117kg

Destructive in the scrum and blasted through four defenders to score his try, which typified his performance in the loose.

3, JOE HEYES 8/10

Age 22, Club Leicester, Ht 1.93m, Wt 126kg

An impressive breakthrough season for the Leicester man, capped with two England appearances. A strong start.

5, CHARLIE EWELS 8/10

Age 26, Club Bath, Ht 1.98m, Wt 108kg

Conceded a few too many penalties but played a key role in tightening up the scrum timing.

7, SAM UNDERHILL 9/10

Age 24, Club Bath, Ht 1.90m, Wt 110kg

Another commanding performance from a flanker who could easily have been on the Lions tour, operating a class above the rest.

TOTAL

121/150

'Randall and Smith, who is to become a Lion, are a partnership for now, never mind future'

making 65 metres, beating five defenders and making ten tackles.

Harry Randall and Smith in the half backs are a partnership for the present, never mind the future, and this could be a sliding doors moment in the England team, with Ben Youngs and George Ford watching on after being given the summer off.

New to the Test stage were Dan Kelly, who acquitted himself very well on his debut at inside centre, Alex Dombrandt, the No8 who relished galloping into space and Harry Wells, the lock, who contributed to a formidable forwards performance.

Sam Underhill has delivered two towering displays this month. It was he who got the ball rolling, chasing the kick-off and winning a turnover penalty inside ten seconds.

Smith kicked it for the corner, Blamire hit Wells with the throw, looped around to join the back of the maul

and scored the first of his three tries after 59 seconds. His next two would be carbon copies. Canada conceded a penalty try after 12 minutes, with Reegan O'Gorman sent to the sin-bin for pulling down another maul. England would score three times against 14 men. Radwan hit the after-burners to score a brilliant first Test try and Cokanasiga scored twice in four minutes.

Lewis Ludlow, the England captain, was lucky not to be sent off. He tried to step into a ruck and his knee cracked Jake Ilnicki's nose. The verdict was yellow, because his actions had been clumsy rather than forceful.

Canada scored their second while Ludlow was off but England were barely tested thereafter, with Radwan and Blamire completing their hat-tricks and Smith discovering he was to become a Lion.

Scorers: England: Tries Blamire 3 (1min, 40, 59), penalty try (13), Radwan 3 (15, 50, 61), Cokanasiga 2 (20, 23), Genge (46). Cons Smith 9.
Canada: Tries Braude (10), Lloyd (33). Cons Nelson 2.
England F Steward; J Cokanasiga (J Marchant 60), H Slade, D Kelly, A Radwan; M Smith G Furbank (65), H Randall (D Robson 51); E Genge (B Obano 56), J Blamire (C Langdon 59), J Heyes (P Hill 47); H Wells (for C Chick, 59) C Lawes, L Ludlow (L Ludlam 54), S Underhill, A Dombrandt.
Canada C Coats; C Davis, B Lesage (Q Ngawati 51) L Kratz (B Lesage 57), K Lloyd, P Nelson (R Povey 74), R Braude (W Percillier 47), D Sears-Duru (L Murray 74), A Quattrin (E Howard 56), J Ilnicki (C Keith 29), R O'Gorman (M Smith 51), C Keys (D Carson 62), C Thomas, L Rumball, S Vikilani (C Keys 68).

WALES SECOND STRING BATTLE FOR A DRAW WITH ARGENTINA

A depleted Wales and a 14-man Argentina drew 20-20 after Jarrod Evans missed a last-gasp penalty in yesterday's first Test at the Principality Stadium.

Juan Cruz Mallia, the Argentina full back, was sent off for a high tackle in the 29th minute when Wales led 6-3. The sides were briefly down to 13 v 14, however, as moments earlier the referee Matt Carley lost patience with the opposing props Nahuel Tetaz Chaparro and Dillon Lewis, and sent both to the sin-bin.

Argentina responded brilliantly to lead 13-6 by half-time and were 20-6 ahead soon after.

Wales, lacking their ten British & Irish Lions and with two injuries, struggled with their set pieces and the breakdown, and wasted multiple raids into the Argentina 22. But they eventually levelled the scores with eight minutes to go.

Evans lined up a 40-metre effort in the final minute but it went wide. Argentina had earlier missed three

penalty attempts in a match watched by 7,828 spectators.

After a scrappy first quarter as a Wales second string butted up against a battle-hardened but frantic Argentina, the red card seemed to settle both teams. Mallia



Owen Lane finds his path blocked

accidentally hit the head of the Wales scrum half Kieran Hardy with his own in a tackle and gave the referee no choice.

Argentina reset and grew patient, registered a penalty and then regained the lead before half-time from lineout ball. Julian Montoya charged to the line and the former captain Pablo Matera ran through the fly half Callum Sheedy to score, with help from Jerónimo de la Fuente.

De la Fuente then scored a converted try after good work from Nicolás Sánchez and Santiago Chocobares, and Argentina led 20-6. Hardy and Sheedy were duly replaced by Tomos Williams and Evans and the change was inspiring. Williams helped to set up a try for Will Rowlands and scored a brilliant one of his own. He disrupted a scrum to regain the put-in, and as the Wales scrum held, he broke on the blind side and scored.

The teams meet again at the same venue next Saturday.

Players are more isolated than ever

PAUL
MCGINLEY



Not long after I turned professional in 1992, I was lucky enough to enjoy a private dinner in Spain with Jack Nicklaus, his son Gary and his agent at the time, Roddy Carr. After a terrific evening of enlightenment from Nicklaus, he left me with advice that resonates now more than ever. It was along the lines of, "Your career will have many twists and turns but always remember that I've pretty much spent 90 per cent of my time losing at this game and 10 per cent of the time winning and I'm the most successful player to have ever played the game."

This wasn't a negative or arrogant statement. It was a simple fact about professional golf as well as the importance of perspective.

Golf is one of the most demanding games mentally as so much can be out of your control even when playing your very best. Luck or that one lapse in concentration at the wrong time can cost you more than one shot.

Add to that the fact that it is a sport where the performers have little long-term security in their working rights other than for the year they are playing – basically a one-year contract of employment – have financial commitments such as a family and mortgage to meet, and have to travel around the world to earn a living. Each week they join 155 of the world's best players to prepare and play two rounds where only the leading 65 out of that 156 will get paid. It's a brutal dynamic.

Because of the high demands on concentration, playing well is closely linked to your everyday life. To borrow a phrase from a leading psychologist within the game, "what happens off the course is brought onto the course". Rarely have I witnessed a professional continue to play well when going through a seismic change in their private life such as a divorce.

Getting away from the game is key whether that be getting out of your hotel room in the evenings or weeks off spent recharging your emotional



STREETEER LECKA

Internal criticism can put golfers in a bad place – that can be exacerbated by reading social media

battery. Less is often more but what I've seen on tour is that players become obsessed with the game, over-practice, and lose all sense of enjoyment in trying to dig themselves out of a hole. Caddies and spouses are not immune to the stresses as their lives are often determined by the player's success on the course. It can get even more complicated when kids and financial pressures come into play.

I have witnessed this strain too often on players who are further down the road in their careers and have very little by way of off-course income or investments. Their poor play, missed cuts and small income deepen a depressed mindset that becomes even more susceptible to poor golf.

I have been thinking about those players and that vicious circle a lot in this past year for obvious reasons. While I have empathy for young tennis players such as Naomi Osaka and Emma Raducanu and golfers such as Matthew Wolff and Bubba Watson who have also shared their mental issues, my real empathy lies with the people further down the food chain in sport, particularly the ones trying to pay bills and with families to support.

Just entering a players' lounge in golf nowadays you will witness first hand many players checking their phones. From experience, it's either checking scores or their social media feeds where comments are about them are directly posted. While the effects of a negative feed are obvious, a positive feed can also lead to

'Professional sport can be brutal. My advice is not to make it more brutal: leave your phones alone'

increased expectation and the associated pressure to perform.

It's no coincidence that those tennis and golf stars I cited compete in individual sports where the restrictive bubble they must submit to can sharpen those mental and emotional tensions.

I certainly do not believe that the words of sports commentators are the biggest problem. Opinions in sport

are important and commentators are there to give them. Being part of the media now I have been hung out to dry on social media with a distorted take on what I've said that lacks any context. While dispiriting to experience, it comes with the territory.

We admire mental strength in athletes, we praise it as a separating factor when we want to accentuate a great performance. England's performance at the Euros has been highlighted because they have showed mental strength yet, from some of the remarks this past week, you would think that commentators are not allowed to comment on a perceived frailty. That's a disconnect.

And it's a new one. To use a golf example, how many times were Sergio García's frailties, especially on the greens, held against him when he failed to close out chances to win majors? I'm sure he didn't like the criticism but he didn't object to the right of the media to make that criticism – and was eventually rewarded at the 2017 Masters.

I can't speak for tennis (though I suspect it's the same) but golfers rarely watch the sport on TV when at tournaments and if they do, like in a players' lounge, it's without volume. They do, however, follow comments on their phones while competing. That's the biggest problem here. Being alone in your room at night with your thoughts and internal criticism is the worst place to be mentally. It can be exacerbated through your timeline on social media channels. That's why it's important to get out. Unfortunately, Covid restrictions make this so much more difficult. I wonder if the recent very public cases in individual sports and the subsequent debate are a part of the collateral damage these restrictions are having.

Tom Watson once said that the best way to deal with pressure is to not let it build in the first place. The importance of a team around athletes, doing all that is possible to keep the focus on performance not external comment and offering strong emotional support has never been more relevant than right now.

Professional sport can be a brutal place. My advice to everyone playing at the Open at Royal St George's this week is not to make it any more brutal: leave your phones alone.

Detry puts on show to stay on course for Open spot

SCOTTISH OPEN

Alasdair Reid

Belgium's Thomas Detry reckons he could swim from his homeland to the Open Championship at Royal St George's in Kent. The way he is playing, you suspect he could walk across the water as well.

Detry goes into the final round of the abrdn Scottish Open at the Renaissance Club holding a share of the lead with England's Matt Fitzpatrick. He earned that privilege with a third-round 68 that featured an eagle at the par-4 fifth hole and a piece of sorcery at the par-3 17th, where he put his tee shot into a spectators' picnic and yet almost

holed out with his pitch. Detry is determined to lose his reputation as one of the nearly men of golf. He has come close to victory many times, and admits he needs a win to get over that psychological hurdle.

This is one week of his life when he might be happy with a little less, though. The 28-year-old has not yet earned a place in the Royal St George's field, but there are three places up for grabs here for the best finishers who have not already qualified for the Open.

Fitzpatrick is safe on that front, but he is still in a hurry to head south. The world No3, who birdied two of his last three holes on his way to a 67,

has a ticket for tonight's England-Italy clash at Wembley and he is determined to get there, even if it means missing the first half. He will certainly not relish the prospect of being involved in a five-man play-off here. "Once it [England reaching the final] happened on Wednesday I decided I had to try and go and hopefully tee times would work out. Now, I literally could not have put myself in a worse position," he said.

Detry and Fitzpatrick will have Jon Rahm breathing down their necks, although the world No1 slipped one back from the leaders yesterday with a round of 69.



LEADERBOARD

Leaders after third round

GB and Ire unless stated

199 M Fitzpatrick 66 66 67, T Detry (Bel) 66 65 68.

200 J Rahm (Sp) 66 65 69.

201 L Herbert (Aus) 69 68 64.

202 S Scheffler (US) 72 63 67, W Ormsby (Aus) 67 69 66, Lee Min-woo (Aus) 68 69 65.

203 X Schauffele (US) 67 70 66, L Westwood 65 67 71, R Palmer (US) 66 70 67, V Perez (Fr) 69 68 66, A Bjoerk (Swe) 72 68 63, A Otaegui (Sp) 68 70 65, D Law 67 67 69, P Harrington 67 68 68, R Ramsay 67 71 65.

ON TV TODAY

Scottish Open, final day

From 9.30am Sky Sports Golf

Cricket Second one-day international

STOKES LEADS THE WAY

SIMON WILDE



Cricket Correspondent

The biggest crowd to attend a cricket match in England since the golden summer of 2019 was provided with the most competitive contest so far in this white-ball segment of the international season. That is not saying much, it is true, but what more could anyone want than a tricky 240-odd run chase in the first ODI at Lord's since the World Cup final?

England won by a distance in the end, but they had to dig themselves out of a couple of holes.

A crowd of almost 23,000 seemed aware of the back story when they reserved their biggest cheer of the day for the entrance of Ben Stokes, England's stand-in captain, in his first ODI appearance here since that epic World Cup final two years ago (and his 100th ODI in all). Stokes had a quiet game, bowled for 22 aiming an extravagant swing that might have been more appropriate on the 10th tee at the Belfry, but he was an attacking leader in the field and most of his decisions came off.

The Lord's hum was back and it was a hum of appreciation, but the spectators were kept waiting for their entertainment, the start being delayed for 90 minutes by light rain, which reduced the game to 47 overs per side.

For much of the day the skies were grey and the floodlights on, which meant conditions favoured bowlers, and it will be for the bowling we saw that this game will be remembered. Hasan Ali kissed the turf on completing his first five-wicket haul since 2017,

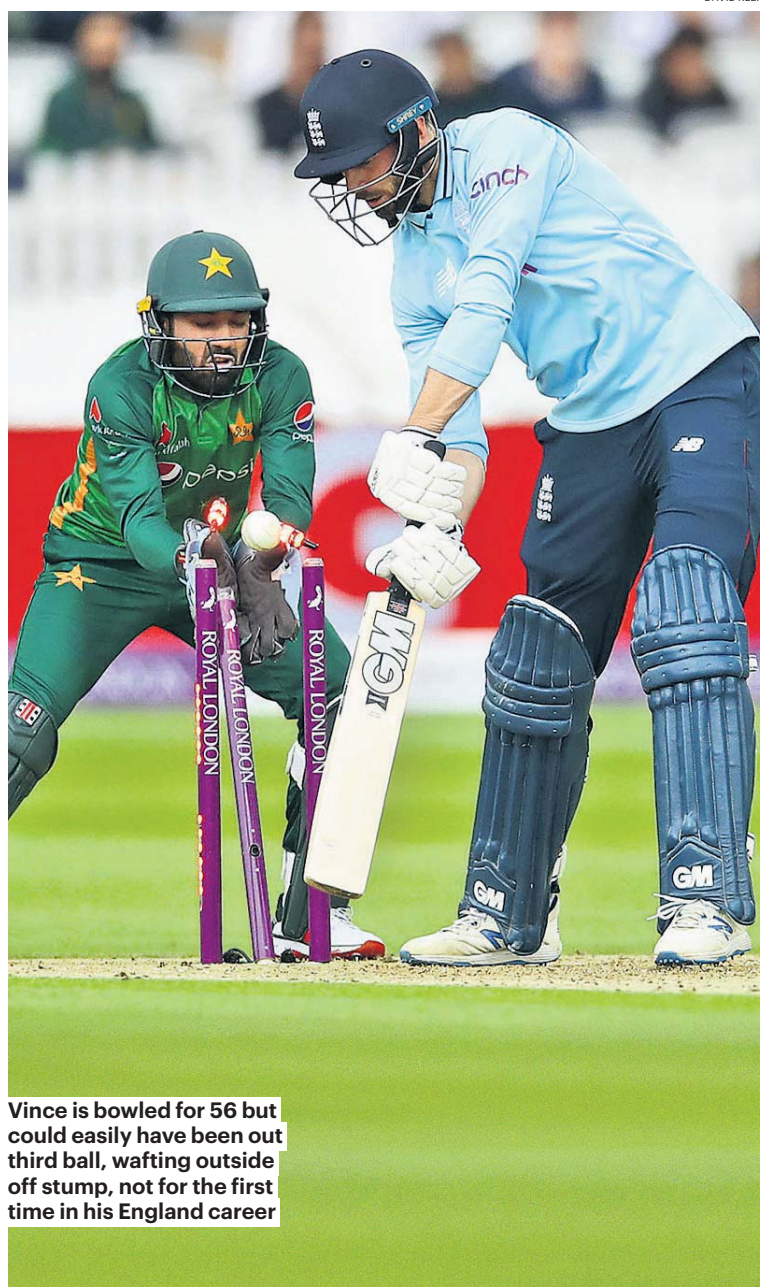
which included a burst of three in nine balls, among them the left-handers Stokes and John Simpson bowled from round the wicket, while Saqib Mahmood again made a huge impact for England in the powerplay (two for 11 here, to follow three for 27 in Cardiff).

Using the slope well from the Pavilion End to snake the ball this way and that, Saqib again removed cheaply Babar Azam, the world's No 1-ranked ODI batsman, as he had in Cardiff two days earlier, and then had Mohammad Rizwan caught behind off a ball that shaped away to perfection.

With Lewis Gregory also making an early strike, England took three wickets inside the first ten overs for the seventh time in eight white-ball matches this summer (a sequence to which eight bowlers have contributed). Saqib increasingly looks like a bowler whose moment has arrived. He has surely moved ahead of Tom Curran in the white-ball pecking order and his time as a Test cricketer cannot be far away. He has been James Anderson's apprentice at Lancashire for long enough.

Pakistan's run chase, which Saud Shakeel and Hasan Ali, who at one point struck 22 off four balls from Matt Parkinson, flickeringly kept alive, was effectively snuffed out by disciplined work in the field from Ben's Babes. Simpson took a brilliant catch off the face of Faheem Ashraf's bat.

England's makeshift team, unchanged from Cardiff, did well to muster 247 after Dawid Malan and Zak Crawley did little for their Test prospects by both falling for nought (as did Craig Overton, taking England's 2021 duck count across all formats to 35). The recovery was down to a fine partnership of 97 in 13.2 overs between Phil Salt, who reached a maiden international fifty in 41 balls, and James Vince, whose own half-century occupied five balls fewer.



DAVID KLEIN

Vince is bowled for 56 but could easily have been out third ball, wafting outside off stump, not for the first time in his England career

SCOREBOARD

Lord's (Pakistan won toss): England beat Pakistan by 52 runs

England	(balls)
P D Salt b Shakeel	60 (54)
D J Malan c Khan b Ali	0 (6)
Z Crawley b Afridi	0 (1)
J M Vince b Khan	56 (52)
*B A Stokes b Ali	22 (26)
†J A Simpson b Ali	17 (19)
L Gregory c Zaman b Rauf	40 (47)
C Overton c Rizwan b Ali	0 (3)
B A Carse b Rauf	31 (41)
S Mahmood c Rauf b Ali	8 (16)
M W Parkinson not out	7 (8)
Extras (w 5, nb 1)	6
Total (45.2 overs)	247

Fall: 1-9 2-21 3-118 4-134 5-156 6-160 7-160 8-229 9-233
Bowling: Afridi 8-0-37-1; Ali 9-2-0-51-5; Ashraf 6-0-45-0; Rauf 9-0-54-2; Khan 10-1-46-1; Shakeel 3-0-141

Pakistan	(balls)
Imam-ul Haq c Simpson b Gregory	1 (2)
Fakhar Zaman b Overton	10 (45)
*Babar Azam lbw b Mahmood	19 (15)
†Mohammad Rizwan c Simpson b Mahmood	5 (11)
Saud Shakeel c Overton b Parkinson	56 (77)
Sohaib Maqsood c Simpson b Overton	19 (17)
Shadab Khan c Parkinson b Gregory	21 (20)
Faheem Ashraf c Simpson b Parkinson	1 (9)
Hasan Ali c Overton b Carse	31 (17)
Shaheen Afridi not out	18 (31)
Haris Rauf c Simpson b Gregory	1 (4)
Extras (lb 5, nb 2, w 6)	13
Total (41 overs)	195

Fall: 1-1 2-25 3-36 4-53 5-86 6-115 7-118 8-152 9-192
Bowling: Mahmood 8-0-21-2; Gregory 8-0-44-3; Overton 9-2-39-2; Carse 8-0-44-1; Parkinson 8-0-42-2
Umpires: A Wharf and R Illingworth

■ England lead three-match series 2-0

■ **First ODI:** England won by nine wickets (Swalec Stadium). **Third ODI:** Tuesday (1pm, Edgbaston).

At one point, they struck seven fours in 11 balls, which included Salt taking 16 off an over from Ashraf. Do not get too excited about Vince. This was still Vince 1.0: he might have gone third ball, his customary edged drive falling just short of the slips. He later did not field due to a foot injury, his place filled by Will Jacks.

Pakistan bounced back hard, spinners Shakeel bowling Salt behind his legs for 60 and Shadab Khan foxing Vince on 54 with a googly, before Hasan piled in with his triple strike. England lost five for 42 but Babar surprisingly then withdrew Hasan from the attack and Gregory and Brydon Carse, both batting intelligently in their first ODI innings, posted 69, a record for the eighth wicket in a Lord's one-dayer. It proved to be the difference.

A partner who provides experience, insights and expertise.

As well as a rather convenient metaphor.

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SCOTTISH OPEN

BEEFY COULDN'T HAVE DONE

This week marks the 40th anniversary of one of the most remarkable months in English cricket history, three Test match victories over Australia in Leeds, Birmingham and Manchester that became known as "Botham's Ashes" by way of shorthand for logic-defying feats of sporting athleticism.

Ian Botham was certainly the central character of the drama. He started as captain but with England trailing 1-0 after two Tests and his own previously stupendous all-round form continuing to desert him he stepped down and was replaced by Mike Brearley, his predecessor and a man fêted for magical man-management.

Brearley duly worked his alchemy again and Botham the superhero was reborn, turning the three games on their head with a devil-may-care 149 not out at Headingley, a last-gasp five-wicket burst at Edgbaston and an explosive display of hitting at Old Trafford. But the lure of the Botham legend masked a more nuanced narrative in which each of these Tests would not have been won without significant contributions from others – the unsung heroes of '81.

GRAHAM DILLEY

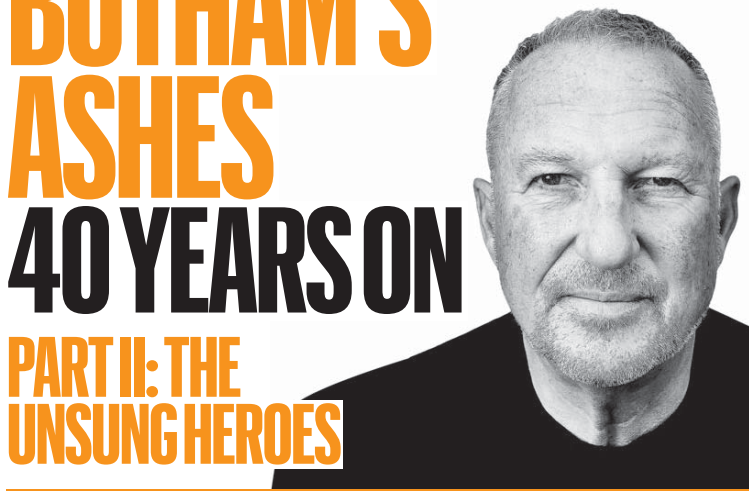
JULY 16-21, 1981: Third Test, Headingley: Australia (401-9 dec and 111) lost to England (174 and 356) by 18 runs

Graham Dilley, at 22, was the youngest man on the pitch and the great white hope of English bowling. He had an impressive build and action, and in terms of speed was the sharpest arrow in England's quiver, but he was prone to wavering self-belief. He had taken 12 wickets in the first two Tests but was not bowling well. His reaction to being selected was not positive. "First it was, 'Oh God, they've picked me in the 12.' Then, 'Oh God, they've picked me in the 11,'" he told Rob Steen in *500-1: The Miracle of Headingley '81*.

He and the other England seamers made poor use of helpful conditions on the first day and the crowd mocked him. When he bowled Ray Bright on the second morning he returned the favour, but for three days he cut a peripheral figure and with defeat looking inevitable took advantage of the refreshments at Botham's traditional Saturday night barbecue at his

BOTHAM'S ASHES 40 YEARS ON

PART II: THE UNSUNG HEROES



home in Epworth. Seven down in the follow-on and still 92 in arrears, England were at their lowest point 45 minutes before tea on the Monday when Dilley, wearing a borrowed helmet, walked out to join Botham. The bookies' odds were around 500-1. "I thought, 'Well, this is it. This is the last time I'll be doing this for some time.'" Dilley asked his partner what to do. "The game's gone," Botham said. "One ball or 20 balls, just enjoy it... Let's give it some humpty."

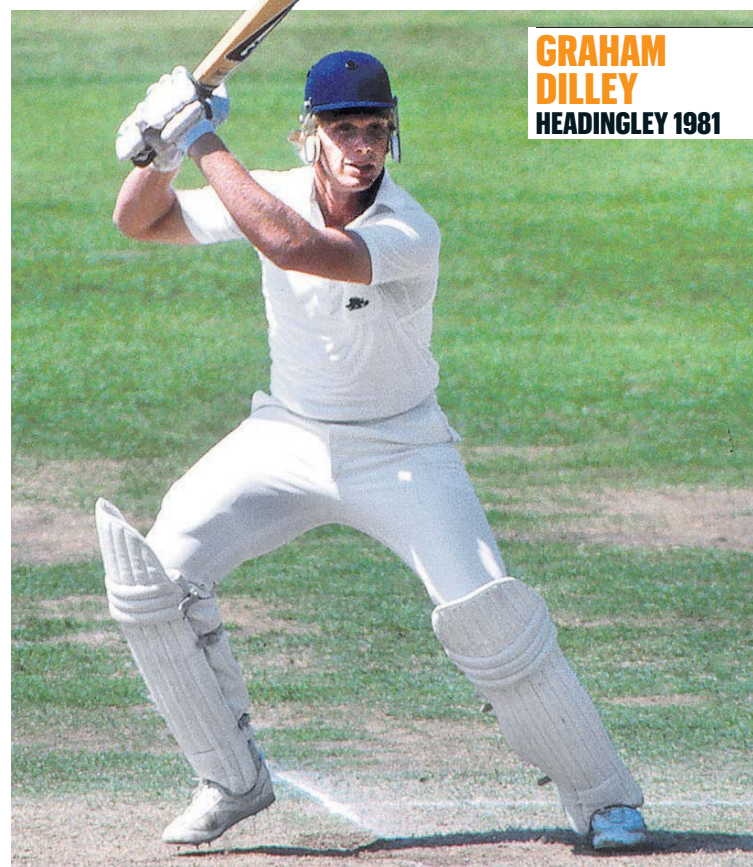
Dilley, a self-designated tailender, swung at anything in his arc, missed a few but connected with others, reducing Botham to laughter with an expansive blow through the covers. Surviving a run-out scare, he had by tea scored 25 and was closing in on Botham's score of 39.

Botham conceded that after the resumption he was galvanised by Dilley's hitting, or as he put it: "Picca [Dilley] kept on hitting, so I decided to join in ... [We] tried to see who could

From left: Dilley, Emburey and Allott are unsung heroes of England's 1981 Ashes victory

play the most idiotic stroke." Dilley, who struck Dennis Lillee for two glorious fours through the covers, added: "It became more like a benefit match, because what you did didn't matter. There was no game plan, just see who could hit the ball hardest."

Crucially, the Australians had relaxed and were now struggling to regain control, losing their lines against the left-handed Dilley and right-handed Botham. When Kim Hughes summoned Geoff Lawson, Botham encouraged him to take on the short ball, but the first bouncer almost brushed Dilley's nose. "I thought, 'There is no way that I'm trying that again.'" In the end, Terry Alderman went round the wicket to cramp Dilley for room and he was bowled off an inside edge for 56



GRAHAM DILLEY
HEADINGLEY 1981

JOHN EMBUREY

JULY 30-AUG 2, 1981: Fourth Test, Edgbaston: England (189 and 219) beat Australia (258 and 121) by 29 runs

John Emburey had not played at Headingley but it had been a close call. Brearley even thought that initially he had made a mistake leaving out his Middlesex colleague, but the off spinner was back for a pitch at Edgbaston that would keep bowlers of all varieties interested: there was to be no individual fifty in the match.

Emburey was England's most successful bowler in the first innings, taking four wickets, but Australia took a lead of 69 and when Emburey went out to bat in the second innings his side were effectively 85 for seven and in a parlous position. But when Mike Gatting, the last recognised batsman, then fell, Emburey rather like Dilley at Headingley had licence to play his shots with only Bob Taylor and Willis

75 balls in a rollicking stand of 117. Botham was now flying and with the help of Chris Old and Bob Willis another 104 were added, leaving a punch-drunk Australia to chase 130.

Brearley asked Dilley to open the bowling but – as Willis would find – it was difficult running up the hill into the wind and he gave way after two overs. However, his part was not finished. With Willis cutting a swathe through the Australian batting, Rod Marsh top-edged a short ball high to fine leg, to where Dilley had just moved. As he caught the ball in front of his face, Dilley had to step back, looking round anxiously to find he was just inside the rope.

England became the first Test side since 1894 to win after following on, but Dilley knew he would not feature in the next match. Within weeks he was in the Kent second team. But he returned to play another 29 Tests and ended with 138 Test wickets. He died aged only 52, in 2011.

Coolmore pays tribute after death of Galileo

RACING

One of the most influential horses in the history of Flat racing has died. Galileo, who won the Derby and went on to become the dominant stallion of the modern era, was put to sleep yesterday at the age of 23.

Born in 1998 and trained by Aidan O'Brien, Galileo produced a brilliant classic season in 2001, landing the Derby, the Irish Derby at the Curragh and the King George at Ascot. It was in retirement, however, that he proved even more successful for his owners, the Coolmore syndicate.

"It is a very sad day," John Magnier, who runs Coolmore, said, "but we all feel incredibly fortunate to have had Galileo here. The effect he is having on the breed through his sons and daughters will be a lasting legacy and his phenomenal success really is unprecedented."

Galileo, inset, sired 91 group one winners – Frankel being the most famous of all – while 20 of his sons have produced top-level winners of their own. His stallion fee remained a closely guarded secret but reports estimated it to have been

as high as £600,000. By covering more than 150 mares each breeding season, that would have made Galileo worth about £100 million to Coolmore every year.

"He was an unbelievable horse for everybody involved with him," O'Brien said. "He was our first Derby winner from Ballydoyle and we were so fortunate to have him. It's an incredible story and obviously we'll probably never see it ever again."

Galileo was put to sleep "on humane grounds owing to a chronic,

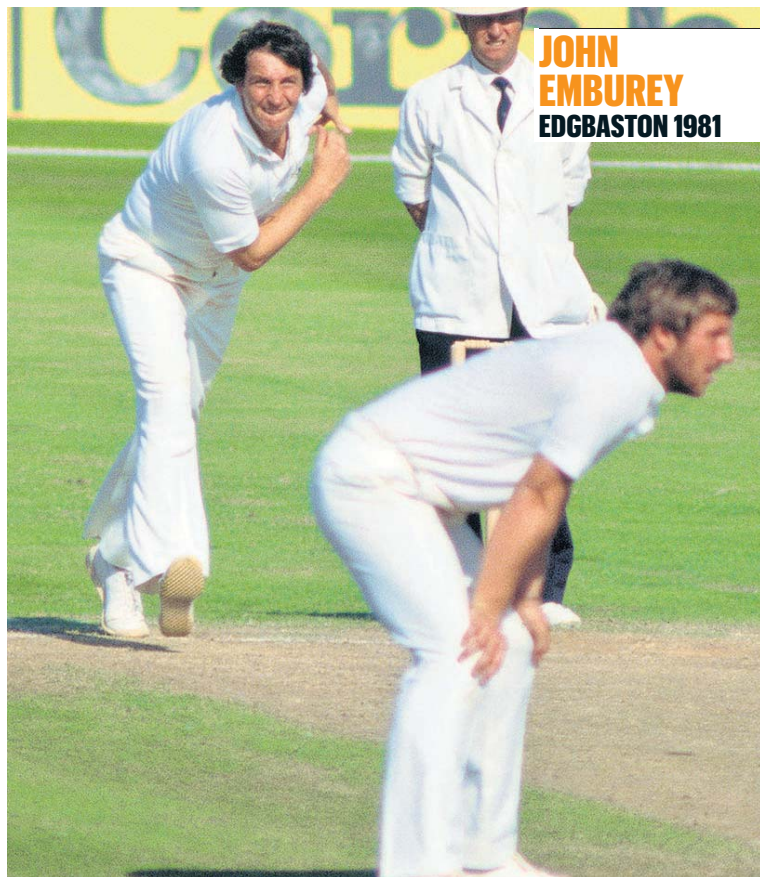
non-responsive, debilitating injury to the left forefoot".

At Newmarket yesterday, Starman powered to victory for Ed Walker and Tom Marquand in the Darley July Cup. The Duke of York Stakes winner went off at 9-2 and looked like he had a bit to do over a furlong out but he overcame the favourite Dragon Symbol and last year's winner Oxted by a length and a quarter and a short head.

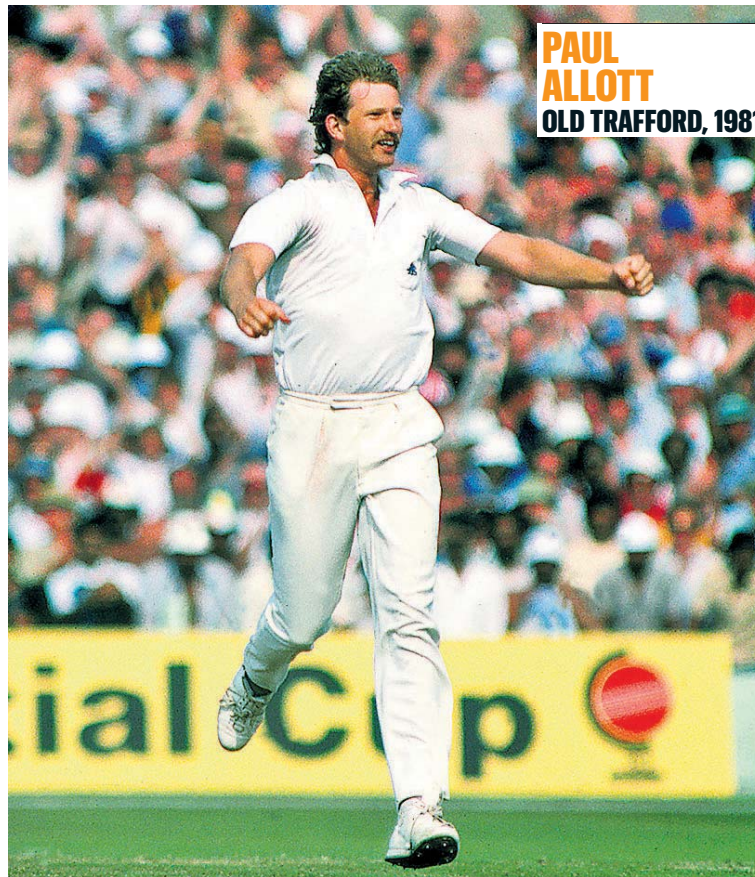
Walker, saddling his first group one winner, said: "It has taken its time, but better late than never. I always believed in this horse. I put a lot of pressure on myself and it's great that belief has been vindicated."



IT WITHOUT THEM



JOHN EMBUREY
EDGBASTON 1981



PAUL ALLOTT
OLD TRAFFORD, 1981

for company. In his usual idiosyncratic style, he struck 37 not out, meaning Australia's target rose to 151.

"I was an unorthodox player and didn't have a great technique," Emburey recalled. "At that stage, I hadn't started to improve as a batsman, as I did from '82 onwards. I was just trying to hang in and play some shots over midwicket. We eked out some runs which proved fruitful. It was not the 149 that Ian got or the 56 of Dilley [at Headingley], but on that pitch a lead of 150 was potentially a winning one."

"There's no doubt that the momentum of what happened at Headingley carried on to Edgbaston. It was a similar situation. In the dressing room, one or two guys were saying, 'This isn't lost, we just need to keep pegging away. The pitch is going to help us.'"

Australia lost three early wickets – Emburey catching Hughes at deep square leg – but Allan Border and Graham Yallop raised the score to 87 before Emburey removed both to

throw the game open. "I bowled a ball to Border that from nowhere just took off and caught his glove," he said. "There was no intent on my part ... it hit a crack or caught something on the pitch and reared up, Border couldn't control it, and it just popped up [for a simple catch]. Just before that, Brears had asked Ian to have a bowl and he didn't feel he should. He suggested Old. Then, Yallop gave a little bat-pad catch to silly mid-off to Ian and that's when he said, 'Perhaps now is the right time [for me] to bowl.'"

"Because of the situation, you were trying to get wickets but also keep it tight, which suited my style of bowling. I wasn't a bigger spinner of the ball but I had good control. But Ian wasn't going to adhere to any plan. He just ran in, hit the pitch hard and bowled straight. It was total aggression. Within half an hour, it was all over." Botham took the last five wickets for one run in 28 balls.

"Everything seemed to happen so

quickly. All of a sudden we were on a roll. The crowd at Edgbaston was amazing; it was one of the first Sundays of Test cricket in England and the atmosphere was incredible. They were behind us all the way, cheering everything. It was just frenzied."

Emburey was hopeful of the man of the match award. "I'd set the game up, but I didn't realise Ian had gone for only one run. When the figures were read out over the Tannoy I thought, 'Oh shit.' But the most important thing was it was a victory. Personally, it was probably the most pleasing of my [64] Test matches and more memorable because the crowd made it so."

PAUL ALLOTT

AUG 13-17, 1981: Fifth Test, Old Trafford: England (231 and 404) beat Australia (130 and 402) by 103 runs Paul Allott was not in the original squad for the fifth Test, only being added three days beforehand after Old was ruled unfit. Allott, 24, was in

his breakthrough season at Lancashire and taking more wickets than any other English bowler. Old Trafford was also his home ground. Even so, the news was a surprise. "If it hadn't been for injuries, I wouldn't have got picked," he reflects. "It [England selection] wasn't on my radar."

His first task was to get to know his new team-mates. "I'd grown up with David Gower and Mike Gatting through the age groups, but many of the others were my childhood heroes. Beefy had gone from despair to national hero in a couple of weeks and was his ebullient self. He tried to throw Boycs [Geoffrey Boycott] in all his kit in a bath of cold water. He was throwing mashed banana around as well, some of which stuck to my England sweater. I was mortified. The stains are still there 40 years later."

Allott immediately made an impact, with bat rather than ball. Coming in at 137 for eight, he added 38 with the limpet-like Chris Tavaré and

'I didn't have time to be nervous. The crowd was behind me because they'd seen me get fifty'

56 with Willis. "We put on 94 in those two partnerships and won by 103, so that was pretty much the winning margin. I remember the report in *Wisden* alluded to me making good use of the inside edge, which was true." Allott's 52 was his maiden first-class fifty; he went off to a standing ovation.

Brearey then surprised him by asking him to open the bowling, as he had with Dilley in Leeds, seeking to capitalise on a player's buoyant mood. This time it worked better.

"Perhaps only Brearey would have done this. In the dressing room, he came over and said, 'That was a great effort with the bat, now I'd like you to take the new ball with Bob.' I didn't have time to be nervous. The whole crowd was behind me because they'd seen me get fifty. Then Bob took three wickets in an over and I got Graeme Wood with the first ball of the next over. We had taken four wickets in seven balls and after what had happened at Headingley and Edgbaston a passage of play like that meant you couldn't hear yourself think. The crowd was unbelievable." Australia folded to 130 all out in just 30.2 overs, a collapse Brearey described as almost incredible on such a true pitch.

England made such heavy weather of their second innings, grinding their way to 104 for five off 69 overs, that they almost allowed Australia back into the game, before Botham dramatically changed gear against the second new ball, romping from 28 to 118 in 49 balls. "He played some remarkable shots and once he started doing that with the confidence he'd got from the last two Tests he was unstoppable," Allott added. "It was probably only an hour or so, but he sapped the Australians. They had thought they were still in with a chance of the Ashes."

After Botham was out, England added 151 for the last four wickets. Allott was last man out for 14, but Brearey was still not satisfied, even though Australia were left 506. "I was quite jolly but Brearey said, 'Mmm, I wanted a few more actually.' And it was hard work bowling them out. I got Wood again, caught down the leg side, and Lillee to a great catch by Beefy."

"It was my first Test. I'd scored my first fifty on my home ground, I'd taken four wickets, and we'd won the Test and the Ashes. I knew it could only be downhill from there."

GENERAL RESULTS

CRICKET

Charlotte Edwards Cup: Group A: Canterbury South East Stars 127-7; Southern Vipers 130-3 (G Adams 50). **Vipers won by seven wickets.** **Leicester Lightning** 81 (G Davis 4-12); Central Sparks 84-4. **Sparks won by six wickets.** **Group B: Taunton Western Storm** 106-9 (A MacDonald 4-17); Northern Diamonds 110-9. **Diamonds won by one wicket**

FOOTBALL

Scottish Premier Sports Cup: Group A Cove 2 Stirling Albion 3; Peterhead 0 Hearts 2. **Group B** Elgin 0 Arbroath 1. **Group C** Montrose 3 Broxa 0. **Group D** Brechin 0 Livingston 3; Cowdenbeath 0 Raith 1. **Group E** Albion 0 Ayr 0 (pens: 4-2). **Group F** Airdrieonians 1 Annan 1 (pens: 4-5); Queen of South 0 Queen's Park 1. **Group G** East Kilbride 0 Kilmarnock 2. **Group H** Partick 2 Dunfermline 4

Friendly matches AFC Fylde 0 Blackburn 1; Ashton United 1 Oldham 2; Atherton 0 Salford 3; Badshot Lea 1 Aldershot 2; Bamber Bridge 3 Preston 8; Barton 1 Scunthorpe 4; Bath 0 Cardiff 5; Berwick 2 Workington 0; Bognor Regis 0 Burton 3; Brigg 0 Belper 3; Charlton 1 Celtic 2; Chester 0 Sheffield Wednesday 2; Cinderford 0 Cheltenham 3; Crawley 6 Horley 1; Cray Valley 1 Sutton Common 3; Dartford 0 Ipswich 1; Didcot 0 Hungerford 4; Doncaster 4 Rossington Main 0; Dorking 2 Horsham 1; Folkstone 3 Eastbourne 3; Frickley 1 Grimsby 5; Golcar 1 Mossley 5; Harrogate 0 Huddersfield 1; Haringey 1 Chelmsford 3; Havant & Waterlooville 2 Portsmouth 5; Hebburn 2 Corinthian 1; Hitchin 0 Stevenage 1; Leamington 1 Coventry 3; Longridge 1 Bolton 3; Luton 4 Rochdale 0; Market Drayton 0 AFC Telford 1; Motherwell 0 Millwall 2; Newcastle Town 2 Port Vale 6; North Ferriby 2 Pickering 0; Nuneaton 1 Buxton 4; Padiham 4 Ramsbottom 2; Peterborough 8 Bedford 0; Portstewart 1 Knockbreda 3; Radcliffe 0 Fleetwood 2; Reading 1 Lincoln 0; Rotherham 1 Parkgate 0; Skelmersdale 2 Widnes 3; Southport 0 Blackpool 2; Sutton Coldfield 0 Bromsgrove 2; Tamworth 1 Bedworth 1; Thackley 3 Bury AFC 5; Trafford 2 Curzon Ashton 2; Tranmere 1 Rangers 0; Walton

Casuals 1 Hastings 2; Welling 3 Gillingham 3; Welwyn Garden 1 Royston 1; Wimborne 4 Christchurch 0; Worksop 4 Emley 0

GOLF

European Tour abrdn Scottish Open (Renaissance Club, North Berwick): **Leaders after third round** (GB and Ire unless stated): **199** M Fitzpatrick 66 66 67, T Detry (Bel) 66 65 68, 69 68 64. **200** J Rahm (Sp) 66 65 69. **201** L Herbert (Aus) 69 68 64. **202** S Scheffler (US) 72 63 67, W Ormsby (Aus) 67 69 66, Lee Min-woo (Aus) 68 69 65. **203** X Schauffele (US) 67 70 66, L Westwood 65 67 71, R Palmer (US) 66 70 67, V Perez (Fr) 69 68 66, A Bjoerck (Swe) 72 68 63, A Otaegui (Sp) 68 70 65, D Law 67 67 69, P Harrington 67 68 68, R Ramsay 67 71 65. **204** J Thomas (US) 65 69 70, T Fleetwood 66 70 68, R MacIntyre 68 69 67, I Poulter 66 68 70, A Levy (Fr) 70 66 68, J Veerman (US) 70 67 67, A Quiros (Sp) 66 68 70, J Walters (SA) 69 67 68, M Pavin (Fr) 69 69 66, J Senior 64 67 73, C Sharvin 70 66 68

US PGA Tour John Deere Classic (Silvis, Illinois): **Leaders after second round** (US unless stated): **129** L List 66 63, **130** Sebastian Munoz (Col) 63 67, **131** L Glover 68 63, C Hadley

63 68, B Hagy 67 64, R Moore 65 66, C Reavie 64 67, A Schenk 67 64, C Seiffert 68 63. **132** P Rodgers 67 65, N Taylor (Can) 67 65. **133** J Dufner 68 65, D Ghim 66 67, R Henley 67 66, H Lebloda 64 69, K Na 67 66, J Vegas (Ven) 67 66

Women's Aramco Team Series (Centurion Club, St Albans): **Leaders after third round** (GB and Ire unless stated): **206** M Skarphord (Nor) 73 65 68, A Thitikou (Tha) 71 65 70, **207** C Hull 69 70 69, **208** G Hall 71 64 73. **210** A Nordqvist (Swe) 72 69 69, **211** A Hewson 72 70 69, S Kyriacou (US) 70 70 71, **212** C Williams 71 70 71, K MacDonald 67 73 72, L Hall 70 74 68. **213** Lee Min-woo (Aus) 72 73 68. **214** L Fuentstueck (Ger) 68 74 72, S Schmidt (Ger) 72 71 71, D Dagar (India) 75 70 69, A Thompson ((US) 73 71 70, G Bjoergvinsdottir (Isl) 71 74 69, N Garcia (SA) 73 73 68

LPGA Tour Marathon Classic (Sylvania, Ohio): **Leaders after second round** (US unless stated): **130** N Hataoka (Jap) 61 65, **132** M Hariga 66 66, **133** E Szokol 67 66, A Lee 67 66. **134** J Kupcho 69 65, Chella Choi (S Kor) 68 66, G Piller 69 65, L Stephenson 65 69, E Henselait (Ger) 70 64, **135** D Kang 70 65, A Jutanangura (Tha) 66 69, M Khang 68 67, T Suwannapura (Tha) 68 67, M Castrén (Fin) 66 69, C Kim 68 67

RUGBY LEAGUE

Betfred League One

West Wales 18 Rochdale 30

RUGBY UNION

Tour match

Sharks 31 British & Irish Lions 71

International matches

England 70 Canada 14
Ireland 71 USA 10
New Zealand 57 Fiji 23
Wales 20 Argentina 20

European Championship

Holland 28 Portugal 61

TENNIS

All England Championships (Wimbledon; seeds in brackets): **Men: Doubles: Final** (1) N

Mektic (Cro) and M Pavic (Cro) lead (4) M Granollers (Sp) and H Zeballos (Arg) 6-4 7-6 (7-5) 2-6 2-1. **Women: Singles: Final** (1) A Barty (Aus) bt (8) Karolina Pliskova (Cz) 6-3 6-7 (4-7) 6-3. **Doubles: Final** (3) Hsieh Su-wei (Twn) and E Mertens (Bel) bt V Kudermetova (Rus) and E Vesnina (Rus) 3-6 7-5 9-7. **Mixed doubles: Semi-final** (7) N Skupski (GB) and D Krawczyk (US) bt (11) J Peers (Aus) and Zhang Shuai (China) 3-6 7-6 (7-4) 7-5. **Boys: Singles: Semi-finals** V Lilov (US) bt (1) Shang Juncheng (China) 6-3 6-1; S Banerjee (US) bt S Gueymard Wayenburg (Isr) 7-6 (7-3) 4-6 6-2. **Doubles: Quarter-final** E Butvilas (Lith) and A Manzanera Pertusa (Sp) bt V Lilov (US) and P Privara (Slova) 6-3 3-6 10-7. **Semi-finals** Butvilas and Manzanera Pertusa bt G Bueno (Per) and A Vallejo (Par) 6-4 6-4; D Rincon (Sp) and A Shelbayh (Jor) bt S Banerjee (US) and K Isomura (Jap) 6-4 6-2. **Girls: Singles: Semi-finals** A Mintegi Del Olmo (Sp) bt (8) L Fruhvirtova (Cz) 6-3 7-5; N Schunk (Ger) bt (1) V Jimenez Kasintseva (Ando) 6-4 4-6 6-4. **Doubles: Semi-finals** (1) K Dmitruk (Bela) and D Shnaider (Rus) bt R Brantmeier (US) and E Kalieva (US) 6-3 6-2; S Costoulas (Bel) and L Hietaranta (Fin) bt (2) L Fruhvirtova (Cz) and P Kudermetova (Rus) 2-6 6-2 10-8

TODAY'S RACECARDS

Perth

Going: good to soft-soft in places

Rob Wright's tips: **2.15** Homme D'Un Soir. **2.50** Sketrick. **3.25** Class Bishop Lady. **4.00** Ming Dynasty. **4.35** Gordon's Jet. **5.10** Amalfi Doug. **5.45** Sarvi

2.15 GENERATE INCOME FROM HORIZON PARKING NOVICES' HURDLE (GBB RACE) £4,193: 2M (5)

1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5

Betting: 1-4 Homme D'Un Soir, 3-1 Home Fire, 33-1 Brave Bain, 66-1 Unknownmeaning, 100-1 Kicks Before Six

2.50 EVENT PARKING WITH HORIZON PARKING NOVICES' HANDICAP CHASE (GBB RACE) £3,594: 3M (8)

1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5

Betting: 1-4 Homme D'Un Soir, 3-1 O Connell Street, 4-1 Staple Head, 6-1 Sketrick, 8-1 Holme Abbey, 14-1 Spider's Bite, Avoid De Master, 20-1 Southern Girl

3.25 HORIZON PARKING LOWE PERTH RACECOURSE HANDICAP HURDLE£3,159: 3M (11)

1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5

Betting: 11-4 Lord Condie, 4-1 Pammi, 11-2 Class Bishop Lady, 6-1 Dancing Doug, 7-1 On A Promise, 10-1 Spereck, 14-1 others

4.00 HORIZON PARKING MANAGE OVER 3000 CARPARKS HANDICAP CHASE £7,407: 2M (5)

1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5

Betting: 6-1 Silver Star, 15-8 Ming Dynasty, 7-2 Duke Of Navan, 14-1 Monsieur Co, Lucky Flight

4.35 HORIZON PARKING SALE OF SPACES HANDICAP HURDLE £3,159: 2M 4F (2)

1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5
1	2	3	4	5

Betting: 3-1 Penywen Taverner, 7-2 Adjuvant, 4-1 City Runner, 11-2 Oh Herbets Reign, 8-1 Point Lymas, 10-1 Let's Fly Again, 12-1 others

2.25 BYERLEY STUD BRITISH EBF NOVICE STAKES (GBB RACE) (DIV 2) £5,400: 7F (10)

1	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	5	6	7	8	9	10

Betting: 7-2 Tralee Hills, 4-1 Cozone, 5-1 End Result, 11-2 Crown Power, 6-1 Angel On High, 10-1 Partly Island, 12-1 others

RACING RESULTS

Ascot

Going: good

1.50 (7f) 1 Atrium (Louis Steward, 16-1); **2** Flying Secret (12-1); **3** Desert Angel (28-1). **11 ran.** ¼, ½, C Fellows. **Total:** £16.00; **CSF:** £3.60, £3.30, £5.30. **Exacta:** £88.80. **CSF:** £176.97. **Trifecta:** £1,695.60

2.25 (1m 6f 34yd) 1 Vindolanda (K Shoemark, 20-1); **2** Future Investment (7-2); **3** Buriram (16-1). **9 ran.** ns, 1¼, C Hills. **Total:** £20.20; **CSF:** £4.90, £1.70, £2.80. **Exacta:** £110.00. **CSF:** £87.44. **Tricast:** £1,164.87. **Trifecta:** £1,489.50

3.00 (7f 213yd) 1 Tilsit (K Shoemark, 4-1 fav); **2** Century Dream (9-2); **3** Al Shoukri (5-1). **9 ran.** NR: Duke Of Hazzard, ¼, 1, C Hills. **Total:** £4.30; **CSF:** £1.50, £2.20, £2.20. **Exacta:** £20.10. **CSF:** £21.97. **Trifecta:** £99.20

3.35 (5f) 1 Significantly (C Lee, 11-2 fav); **2** Hurricane Ivor (11-1); **3** Mondammej (13-2); **4** Tis Marvellous (13-2). **18 ran.** NR: Get It, Mulzim, Sh hd, nk, K R Burke. **Total:** £6.90; **CSF:** £2.00, £1.90, £2.40, £2.20. **Exacta:** £60.80. **CSF:** £57.25. **Tricast:** £422.88. No 18 Get It (33-1) was withdrawn not under orders. Rule 4 does not apply. **Trifecta:** £566.30

4.10 (1m) 1 Achelois (David Probert, 6-5 fav); **2** Araf (18-1); **3** Madame Tantzy (1-7). **7 ran.** 2¼, 1¼, A M Balding. **Total:** £1.90; **CSF:** £1.60, £5.60. **Exacta:** £18.50. **CSF:** £25.44. **Trifecta:** £132.40

4.45 (1m 3f 21yd) 1 First Light (R Havlin, 11-2); **2** Dhushan (11-4 fav); **3** Glen Again (12-1). **9 ran.** ¼, nk, J T Gosden. **Total:** £4.90; **CSF:** £2.20, £1.30, £3.10. **Exacta:** £19.70. **CSF:** £20.17. **Tricast:** £170.76

5.20 (7f) 1 Top Secret (R Havlin, 12-1); **2** Spanish Star (12-1); **3** Be Prepared (15-2). **12 ran.** NR: Captain Claret, Qasab, Nk, 3l, Muir Grassick. **Total:** £13.50; **CSF:** £5.00, £4.00, £3.00, £3.00. **Exacta:** £177.50. **CSF:** £151.20. **Tricast:** £1,180.87. **Trifecta:** £2,741.20

Placepot: £495.20 **Quadpot:** £91.10

Chester

Going: good to soft

2.15 (5f 15yd) 1 DeVina Angel (Hayley Turner, 6-4 fav); **2** Costa Eside (10-3); **3** Curra (2-1). **4 ran.** Hd, 2l, Tom Dascombe. **Total:** £2.10. **Exacta:** £5.10. **CSF:** £6.58. **Trifecta:** £6.90

2.50 (6f 17yd) 1 Mountain Brave (F Norton, 9-1); **2** Fizzy Feet (4-1); **3** Ey Up It's Maggie (11-4). **5 ran.** ns, 1¼, M Johnston. **Total:** £14.40; **CSF:** £2.30, £2.00, £4.30. **Exacta:** £43.70. **CSF:** £100.00

3.25 (7f 17yd) 1 Safe Voyage (Jason Hart, 15-8 fav); **2** Matthew Flinders (11-2); **3** Oh This Is Us (12-1). **8 ran.** NR: Documenting, 2¼, 1¼, J J Quinn. **Total:** £2.70; **CSF:** £2.70, £2.80. **Exacta:** £13.90. **CSF:** £12.93. **Trifecta:** £97.90

4.00 (1m 6f 87yd) 1 Oman (Jason Hart, 9-2); **2** Star Caliber (13-2); **3** Annandale (4-1). **5 ran.** 2¼, 1l, R M Beckett. **Total:** £4.40; **CSF:** £1.80, £2.40. **Exacta:** £11.50. **CSF:** £16.06. **Trifecta:** £50.70

4.35 (1m 2f 70yd) 1 Berrahri (Marco Ghiani, 11-1); **2** Heart Of Soul (100-30); **3** Gabriel The One (16-5 fav). **12 ran.** NR: Salam Zayed, Nk, ¼, J R Best. **Total:** £9.30; **CSF:** £2.90, £1.70, £1.60. **Exacta:** £47.10. **CSF:** £45.87. **Tricast:** £148.99. **Trifecta:** £318.10

5.10 (6f 17yd) 1 Fools Rush In (Hayley Turner, 11-4); **2** Sir Benedict (3-1); **3** Cuban Breeze (5-1). **5 ran.** 1l, Tom Dascombe. **Total:** £2.80; **CSF:** £1.40, £1.80. **Exacta:** £9.30. **CSF:** £11.15

5.40 (7f 127yd) 1 The Kodi Kid (William Carver, 4-1); **2** Golden Melody (11-4 fav); **3** State Patrol (12-1). **7 ran.** ¼, ¾, A M Balding. **Total:** £4.70; **CSF:** £3.40, £1.80. **Exacta:** £16.00. **CSF:** £15.00. **Trifecta:** £136.10

Placepot: £173.30 **Quadpot:** £17.70

Newmarket

Going: good to firm (good in places)

1.30 (7f) 1 Ardbraccan (S M Levey, 13-2); **2** Calm Skies (11-8 fav); **3** Bouquet (18-1). **9 ran.** NR: Salve Japan, ¼, ¼, R Hannon. **Total:** £6.70; **CSF:** £2.00, £1.10, £4.60. **Exacta:** £17.00. **CSF:** £15.65. **Trifecta:** £168.50

2.05 (7f) 1 Spirit Of Bermuda (Tom Marquand, 12-1); **2** Rising Star (33-1); **3** Star Of Emarataj (12-1). **11 ran.** NR: Liberated Lady, ¼, ¼, W J Haggas. **Total:** £13.90; **CSF:** £5.00, £2.90, £2.90. **Exacta:** £309.40. **CSF:** £342.15. **Tricast:** £4,766.50. **Trifecta:** £2,562.60

2.40 (1m) 1 Royal Fleet (W Buick, 5-6 fav); **2** Latest Generation (9-1); **3** Titan Rock (11-1). **6 ran.** NR: Seasett, ¼, 2¼, C Appleby. **Total:** £1.50; **CSF:** £1.20, £3.50. **Exacta:** £8.90. **CSF:** £9.05. **Trifecta:** £33.80

3.15 (7f) 1 Native Trail (W Buick, 11-4); **2** Masekela (12-1); **3** Dhabab (9-5 fav). **9 ran.** Sh, hd, 1¼, C Appleby. **Total:** £2.80; **CSF:** £1.40, £3.00, £1.20. **Exacta:** £31.30. **CSF:** £35.06. **Tricast:** £73.40. **Trifecta:** £119.80

3.50 (7f) 1 Motakhayyel (L Dettori, 11-2); **2** Fundamental (5-1); **3** Lord Rapsallion (33-1). **18 ran.** NR: Karibana, Raising Sand, 3¼, 1¼, R Hannon. **Total:** £6.50; **CSF:** £1.60, £1.90, £4.70. **Exacta:** £47.30. **CSF:** £30.22. **Tricast:** £889.26. No 11 Karibana (33-1) was withdrawn not under orders. Rule 4 does not apply. **Trifecta:** £1,698.20

4.25 (6f) 1 Starman (Tom Marquand, 9-2); **2** Dragon Symbol (7-2 fav); **3** Oxted (11-2). **19 ran.** 1¼, sh, hd, E Walker. **Total:** £5.80; **CSF:** £1.90, £2.70, £2.70. **Exacta:** £11.80. **CSF:** £11.80

5.00 (1m 4f) 1 Duke Of Condicote (M Harley, 11-1); **2** Graphite (33-1); **3** Pied Piper (7-1). **8 ran.** NR: Autonomy, Gold Souk, Love Is Golden, Og Legend, 1¼, ¼, A King. **Total:** £13.60; **CSF:** £2.20, £5.30, £1.80. **Exacta:** £210.60. **CSF:** £285.55. **Tricast:** £2,696.73. **Trifecta:** £3,968.90

Placepot: £180.10 **Quadpot:** £6.30

York

Going: good (good to soft in places)

1.45 (7f 192yd) 1 La Trinidad (Rowan Scott, 13-2); **2** Ebury (22-1); **3** Fame And Acclaim (16-4). **4 Dubai Mirage (15-2). 17 ran.** NR: Horticard, Irreverent, ¼, 2l, R Fell. **Total:** £7.50; **CSF:** £2.20, £5.00, £3.40, £2.40. **Exacta:** £170.80. **CSF:** £147.37. **Tricast:** £2,187.77. **Trifecta:** £1,093.90

2.20 (1m 5f 188yd) 1 Hukum (Jim Crowley, 3-1 fav); **2** Outbox (18-1); **3** Fujaira Prince (100-30). **10 ran.** NR: Ilarab, 1¼, 1¼, Owen Burrows. **Total:** £3.10; **CSF:** £1.40, £3.50, £1.80. **Exacta:** £51.50. **CSF:** £56.06. **Trifecta:** £198.80

2.55 (2m 56yd) 1 Gooabinor (P Mulrennan, 12-1); **2** Ghadbaan (5-1 fav); **3** Flint Hill (7-1). **14 ran.** NR: Nataleena, Proton, ¼, nk, D McCain Jnr. **Total:** £12.90; **CSF:** £4.40, £2.30, £2.70. **Exacta:** £94.10. **CSF:** £67.34. **Tricast:** £464.63. **Trifecta:** £813.10

3.30 (6f) 1 Atomic Lady (D Allan, 9-2); **2** Silken Petals (7-2 it-fav); **3** Jersey Rose (14-1). **9 ran.** NR: Makalu, 1¼, ¾, T D Easterby. **Total:** £4.60; **CSF:** £1.80, £1.50, £2.90. **Exacta:** £271.00. **CSF:** £20.85. **Tricast:** £205.55. **Trifecta:** £214.80

4.05 (1m 2f 56yd) 1 Johnny Drama (Joshua Bryan, 22-1); **2** Coakloroon (40-1); **3** Strait Of Hormuz (14-1); **4** Dawaan (14-1). **20 ran.** NR: Data Protection, Palavecino, Hd, ns, A M Balding. **Total:** £23.70; **CSF:** £7.70, £7.70, £4.70, £3.80. **Exacta:** £1,140.60. **CSF:** £704.53. **Tricast:** £1,048.36. **Trifecta:** £4,748.43

4.40 (5f) 1 Winter Power (D Allan, 9-4 fav); **2** Moss Gill (16-5); **3** Urban Beat (6-1). **10 ran.** NR: Bedford Flyer, 1l, nk, T D Easterby. **Total:** £2.50; **CSF:** £1.40, £1.30, £1.90. **Exacta:** £9.80. **CSF:** £8.70

5.15 (6f) 1 Capote's Dream (Jim Crowley, 8-1); **2** Mr Wagyu (20-1); **3** Ghatnagar (16-1). **4 Danzan (4-1 fav). 19 ran.** NR: Triggered, Sh hd, rd, 1 Ward. **Total:** £9.00; **CSF:** £2.50, £2.80, £2.60, £2.00. **Exacta:** £137.00. **CSF:** £171.33. **Tricast:** £2,603.26. **Trifecta:** £3,218.40

Placepot: £655.90 **Quadpot:** £119.50

Hamilton

Going: good

5.50 (5f 7yd) 1 Lady Lade (S H James, 4-7 fav); **2** Piranheer (50-1); **3** Doomsday (4-1). **4 ran.** 1¼, 2¼, K Dalgleish. **Total:** £1.40. **Exacta:** £19.10. **CSF:** £19.12. **Trifecta:** £37.80

6.20 (5f 7yd) 1 Soapys Sister (S H James, 13-2); **2** Shesadabber (9-1); **3** Stronsay (2-1 it-fav). **6 ran.** NR: Thrilla In Manila, ¼, nk, K Dalgleish. **Total:** £5.50; **CSF:** £2.70, £2.70

6.50 (6f 6yd) 1 Strike Red (J Garrity, 3-1); **2** Toussard (7-2); **3** Coase (9-4 fav). **16 ran.** NR: Fendale, 2l, 1¼, R A Fahey. **Total:** £3.30; **CSF:** £1.80, £1.60. **Exacta:** £10.60. **CSF:** £13.67. **Trifecta:** £29.50

7.20 (1m 5f 16yd) 1 Euro Implosion (S H James, 11-2); **2** Carrn A Chlamain (5-1); **3** Fandabidoz (100-30 Co fav). **7 ran.** Hd, nk, K Dalgleish. **Total:** £6.10; **CSF:** £2.70, £2.70. **Exacta:** £26.20. **CSF:** £31.63. **Trifecta:** £92.10

7.50 (1m 3f 15yd) 1 Tommy R (Harry Russell, 3-1); **2** Love Of Zoffany (15-2); **3** Ayr Express (9-4 fav). **8 ran.** 1l, 1¼, Phillip Makin. **Total:** £4.30; **CSF:** £1.40, £1.90, £1.40. **Exacta:** £26.10. **CSF:** £25.95. **Tricast:** £58.95. **Trifecta:** £62.80

8.20 (1m 68yd) 1 Antagonize (Gianluca Sanna, 4-1); **2** Chinese Spirit (12-1); **3** Absolute Dream (4-1). **13 ran.** NR: Valley Of Flowers, ¼, 1¼, B Smart. **Total:** £4.80; **CSF:** £2.20, £2.60, £1.50. **Exacta:** £49.40. **CSF:** £48.88. **Tricast:** £208.76. **Trifecta:** £315.50

8.50 (1m 68yd) 1 My Little Queens (Jamie Gormley, 15-8 fav); **2** Kornflake (20-1); **3** Water Iris (4-1). **7 ran.** ¾, 1¼, R A Fahey. **Total:** £2.40; **CSF:** £1.60, £6.10. **Exacta:** £27.00. **CSF:** £40.68. **Trifecta:** £75.00

Placepot: £135.30 **Quadpot:** £17.40

9.20 (1m 3f 160yd ch) 1 Flamingo's Court (B Hayes, 10-2); **2** Shopping Around (11-2); **3** Broder (11-2). **15 ran.** NR: Fenlon's Hill, Greenway Machine, Island Master, Wade Harper, 6¼, 1l, A McNamara. **Total:** £12.90; **CSF:** £5.40, £5.50, £1.90. **Exacta:** £102.20. **CSF:** £61.57. **Tricast:** £345.57. No 15 Fenlon's Hill (66-1) was withdrawn not under orders. Rule 4 does not apply. **Trifecta:** £368.00

3.05 (2m 3f 160yd ch) 1 Flamingo's Court (B Hayes, 10-2); **2** Shopping Around (11-2); **3** Broder (11-2). **15 ran.** NR: Fenlon's Hill, Greenway Machine, Island Master, Wade Harper, 6¼, 1l, A McNamara. **Total:** £12.90; **CSF:** £5.40, £5.50, £1.90. **Exacta:** £102.20. **CSF:** £61.57. **Tricast:** £345.57. No 15 Fenlon's Hill (66-1) was withdrawn not under orders. Rule 4 does not apply. **Trifecta:** £368.00

3.40 (2m 3f 160yd ch) 1 T Tune The Chello (Rachael Blackmore, 11-10 fav); **2** Reine Fee (8-1); **3** Icee M B A (50-1). **13 ran.** 1l, 1¼, H De Bromhead. **Total:** £1.70; **CSF:** £1.10, £1.40, £4.80. **Exacta:** £12.50. **CSF:** £11.24. **Trifecta:** £205.30

4.15 (2m 6f 50yd ch) 1 Fairhyll Run (B J Cooper, 85-40 fav); **2** Our Friend (17-2); **3** Centurion Steel (13-2); **4** My Oaklahoma (25-1). **16 ran.** NR: Mister Bells, Mornus, 1¼, 1l, J P Ryan. **Total:** £2.90; **CSF:** £1.10, £2.50, £1.70, £2.70

4.50 (2m 6f 50yd ch) 1 Double Windsor (S W Flanagan, 33-1); **2** Black Samurai (4-1 fav); **3** Dundeedy Lad (10-1). **15 ran.** NR: Northern Love, Olive D'Haguenet, Railway Muice, Tick Along, 8¼, ¼, D M O'Brien. **Total:** £50.90; **CSF:** £10.50, £1.10, £5.30. **Exacta:** £335.50. **CSF:** £157.10. **Tricast:** £1,476.56. **Trifecta:** £903.20

5.25 (2m 6f 50yd ch) 1 Blustery (P T Enright, 40-1); **2** Rubiana (10-1); **3** Mahler Of Autumn (25-1). **15 ran.** NR: Change Hill, Court Adjournd, Fightforthorses, Wareedy, ¾, 1¼, R Tyner. **Total:** £35.20; **CSF:** £4.00, £5.60, £4.30, £17.50. **Exacta:** £461.00. **CSF:** £414.22. **Tricast:** £9,896.77

ANATOMY OF ...THE BRITISH GRAND PRIX

The flagship race of British motorsport returns to Silverstone this week with Lewis Hamilton desperate to extend his record of wins...

MOST WINS BY DRIVER

Lewis Hamilton 2008, 2014-17, 2019-20

Jim Clark 1962-65, 1967

Alain Prost 1983, 1985, 1989-90, 1993

Nigel Mansell 1986-87, 1991-92

Year of first GB GP

1926

Year of first GB GP

WINS BY GB DRIVERS

Aintree

1955 Stirling Moss (Mercedes)

1957 Stirling Moss, Tony Brooks (Vanwall)

Silverstone

1958 Peter Collins (Ferrari)

Aintree

1962 Jim Clark (Lotus-Climax)

Silverstone

1963 Jim Clark (Lotus-Climax)

Brands Hatch

1964 Jim Clark (Lotus-Climax)

Silverstone

1965 Jim Clark (Lotus-Climax)

1967 Jim Clark (Lotus-Climax)

1969 Jackie Stewart (Matra-Ford)

1971 Jackie Stewart (Tyrrell-Ford)

1977 James Hunt (McLaren-Ford)

1981 John Watson (McLaren-Ford)

Brands Hatch

1986 Nigel Mansell (Williams-Honda)

Silverstone

1987 Nigel Mansell (Williams-Honda)

1991 Nigel Mansell (Williams-Renault)

1992 Nigel Mansell (Williams-Renault)

1994 Damon Hill (Williams-Renault)

1995 Johnny Herbert (Benetton-Renault)

1999 David Coulthard (McLaren-Mercedes)

2000 David Coulthard (McLaren-Mercedes)

2008 Lewis Hamilton (McLaren-Mercedes)

2014 Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes)

2015 Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes)

2016 Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes)

2017 Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes)

2019 Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes)

2020 Lewis Hamilton (Mercedes)

MAJOR EVENTS

1926 Robert Sénéchal and Louis Wagner of France win the first British Grand Prix

1950 First FIA British Grand Prix won by Italy's Giuseppe Farina

1955 At Aintree, Stirling Moss becomes the first British winner with his first grand prix victory

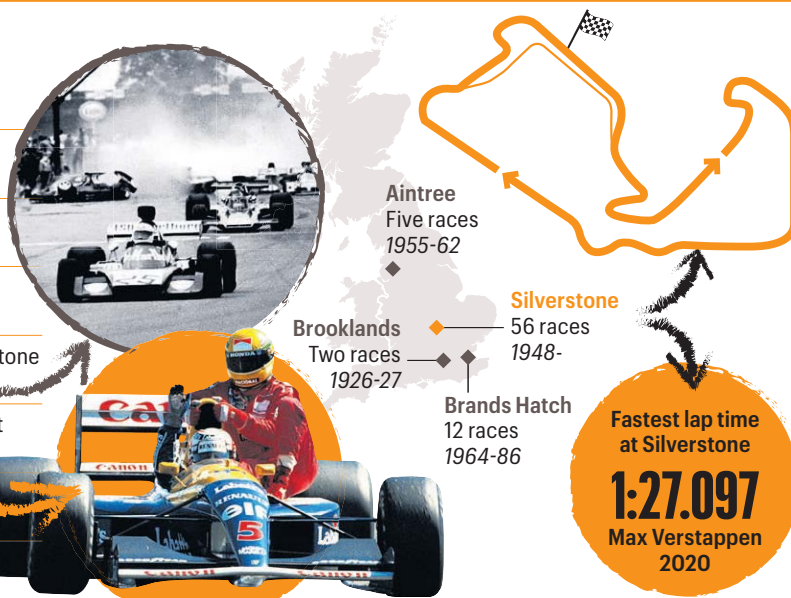
1965 Britain's Jim Clark wins race for a fourth consecutive time

1973 Jody Scheckter mistake at Woodcote (Silverstone corner) causes 11-car pile-up on first lap

1991 Winner Nigel Mansell gives Ayrton Senna a lift after Senna ran out of fuel after finishing

2008 Lewis Hamilton outclasses field for famous first win in the rain

2019 With his sixth victory, Hamilton sets the record for most British Grand Prix wins



LESSONS FROM A LIFE IN SPORT CHRISTIAN MALCOLM

The Commonwealth silver medallist and UK Athletics head coach on cakes and Usain Bolt



WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

When I was three or four, I'd race up and down the streets of Newport and I'd be quicker than the older kids. At 11, a schoolteacher encouraged me to go to a club in Cwmbran. I did the 80m hurdles, the 80m sprint, the long jump. I won all three.

MY BREAKTHROUGH MOMENT

My art teacher said: "You're amazing, trust me — my husband was an Olympic gold medallist." I thought: "If he was, you wouldn't be teaching at this rough school." Turned out he was Lynn Davies, the 1964 Olympic long jump champion. But I didn't think athletics would be a career until I became world junior champion at 100 and 200m.

THE COACH I LOOKED UP TO...

Jock Anderson, a short Scotsman who didn't mince his words. He coached me from the age of 13 to 26. He never gave compliments, so when he said, "If you're as willing to put the work in as me, you can be one of the world's best sprinters," it was a game changer.

MY CHILDHOOD HERO...

Linford Christie. He'd come down to the Cwmbran Stadium. Even before he knew who I was, he was talkative and engaging. They say never meet your heroes, but he lived up to it and more.

RUNNING NEVER GOT ANY BETTER THAN...

Commonwealth Games, Kuala Lumpur, 1998. I won a competition where I could invite two people to come out and watch me for free. I asked my mum and my girlfriend (now wife). Seeing my mum during my lap of honour after winning silver and giving her a huge hug was the most memorable moment: we didn't even have a car when I was growing up.

THE HANGOVER TO END ALL HANGOVERS...

At the Athens 2004 holding camp, I got ill. The boys won Olympic relay gold without me. I was elated — then I realised I wasn't part of it. That sticks and I've struggled with it. You could say I gave myself a hangover that night.

MY FAVOURITE STADIUM

The old Letzigrund in Zurich

The atmosphere was unbelievable. It was compact and the crowd were next to you if you were in lane eight.

MY TOUGHEST OPPONENT

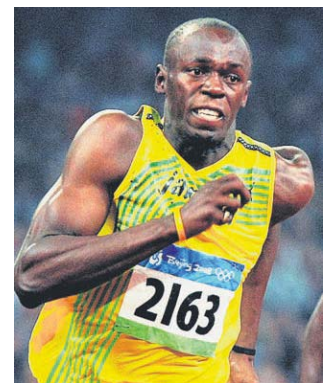
Usain Bolt. In the 200m final in Beijing in 2008, me and Kim Collins crossed the line and just shook our heads. That said, I always raced him believing I could be competitive. You never knew if he'd have an off-day.

I LEARNT MOST FROM...

Travelling to Sydney for the World Junior Championships in 1996. I'd never even been on holiday before. It taught me not to be afraid of the unknown.

MY GUILTY PLEASURE

I love to bake cakes. Bread and butter pudding, ginger cake, chocolate sponge. Am I good? Let's just say I make them to my own taste.



Bolt left sprint rivals trailing

THE DAY I KNEW THE GAME WAS UP

At the start line at London 2012, the adrenaline wasn't there like it once was. That's when I knew, but it took me a year to admit it to myself.

MY ONE REGRET

I chose to do the 100m and 200m at the 2001 World Championships. It cost me the 200m title. By the 200m semi-final I was knackered.

BEST ADVICE FOR A YOUNG SPORTSPERSON

Don't be afraid of fear. Fear is adrenaline; adrenaline brings out the energy which allows you to raise your game and control nerves.

Christian Malcolm is Olympic head coach for the British Athletics Olympic world-class programme, supported by UK Sport and the National Lottery. Visit britishathletics.org.uk

YOUR NEXT DOWNLOAD

GOLD RUSH: OUR RACE TO OLYMPIC GLORY

BBC1, BBC IPLAYER
Winning just one gold medal, the British Olympic team returned from Atlanta 1996 36th in the medals table, bumbling amateurs sandwiched ignominiously between Ethiopia and Belarus and with two poverty-stricken divers caught

selling their official kit on the streets.

They were christened the Team Of Shame. Needless to say, Tokyo will be rather different. For all its inappropriate titular use of "Our", Gold Rush absorbingly explains why.

The short answer, as former prime minister John Major explains, was National Lottery funding: "Money is the



Team GB won one gold

root of all progress." With decent funding, athletes had time to prepare and sprinters such as Tesco worker Darren Campbell could give up their day jobs, while the governing bodies could plan for the long-term and build effective backrooms. The result, as Tokyo should confirm, is a nation finally punching at its weight.

John Aizlewood

DAVID WALSH

Chief Sports Writer
Quillan, France

It is early afternoon in Quillan and at the Place de la Republique, people sit at outside tables, drinking beer, eating pizza, and a marching band belts it out. Quillan was once an important staging post on the road from Carcassonne to Perpignan. Only 3,000 live here but today the town is vibrant.

Three hours from now, Quillan will welcome the Tour de France. On old stone walls and fixed to shop windows, there is a sign that says, "C'est notre Tour." For the first time in its history, the Tour is coming to Quillan. After leisurely lunches, the square empties around 3.30pm and everyone troops away to the Boulevard Charles de Gaulle where the riders will finish the 14th leg of the race.

The finishing straight is 300m long and there's a space for everyone. Those with overlooking apartments stand on balconies sipping wine and pointing their mobile phones down on the straight. This scene, which has been acted out in so many places over so many decades, is quintessentially and beautifully French.

Bauke Mollema is a 34-year-old Dutch rider. His peers like him because he's a down-to-earth sort. He's got a partner Jane, two sons Thomas and Tim, and Julien is their daughter. As a family they go on camping holidays. When not training or being a dad, Bauke likes to read. His favourite book is Mark Manson's *The Subtle Art of Not Giving a F****.

Which is funny because the reason Mollema is respected is because he does give a f***. A few days ago he looked at the stage to Quillan on Google maps and thought, "This is one I might be able to win." Goodness knows his Trek-Segafredo team needed something from the Tour after two weeks of frustration.

"For the team, the big goal was to win a stage," Mollema said afterwards. "We have a lot of guys that are able to do it. You need to pick the right moment. You look at the road book and if you see a stage that you think is right, you concentrate on that. So for the two previous stages I went easier, not spending much energy, trying to recover as much as possible. When you do this, you have more motivation. You think more about the details of the stage you think you can win."

So for two first two hours of this 183km stage from Carcassonne, there was the usual frenzy of attacks and counter attacks. Think of it as someone selling a limited number of lottery tickets and everyone wanting to buy. It's a market complicated by the general classification (GC) teams' insistence on determining who escapes and who doesn't. Anyone considered a threat is kept under lock and key.



It was a relatively stress-free day for race leader Pogacar on the 183km route to Quillan

A MOMENT OF GLORY

14TH STAGE RESULTS

Rider	Team	Time
1 B Mollema (Hol)	Trek-Segafredo	4hr 16min 16sec
2 P Konrad (Aut)	BORA-hansgrohe	at 1min 4sec
3 S Higuera (Col)	Education-Nippo	same time
4 M Cattaneo (It)	Quick-Step	1:06
5 M Woods (Can)	Israel Start-Up	1:10

GREEN JERSEY

Rider	Team	Pts
1 M Cavendish (GB)	Deceuninck-Quick-Step	279
2 M Matthews (Aus)	BikeExchange	187
3 J Philipsen (Bel)	Alpecin-Fenix	174

YELLOW JERSEY

Rider	Team	Time
1 T Pogacar (Slove)	Team Emirates	56:50:21
2 G Martin (Fr)	Cofidis	at 4min 4sec
3 R Uran (Col)	Education-Nippo	5:18
4 J Vingegaard (Den)	Jumbo-Visma	5:32

At 39 minutes down on GC, Mollema was allowed to buy. He has been around, knows the drill and won a stage of the 2017 Tour. For the first hour out of Carcassonne, he stayed out of the skirmishes. Bided his time and hoped there would be no escape. This was more judgment than gamble and he called it right.

When the break formed, he was in it. There were 14 of them. He felt good and everyone knows that if Mollema is on a good day, he can attack from a group, poach a lead and keep it. "I was waiting for the right moment to attack," he said.

"In the beginning we worked well together in the group. Then riders started to save some energy and they don't do their turns at the front. That's why I attacked quite early. I felt good today and had the confidence that I could do a long solo to the finish. At one point I was looking back and I saw there was nobody on my wheel and I just went. I had a gap straight away."

Mollema broke free 40km from the

finish. Michael Woods, Mattia Cattaneo, Patrick Konrad and Sergio Higuera were his nearest pursuers and though the gap was never much more than a minute, it stayed at that. It didn't matter how hard the chasers rode, they couldn't close. On the Boulevard Charles de Gaulle the locals welcomed the winner into town by banging on the barriers. After taking one long backwards glance, Mollema began to celebrate 150m from the line.

A moment of personal glory and also a big victory for the team. French rider Guillaume Martin got into the break, gained 5½ minutes on the GC contenders and jumped from ninth to second. Not too many were concerned as Martin's efforts on the road to Quillan will take a toll over three upcoming days in the Pyrenees.

For race leader Tadej Pogacar it was a relatively stress-free day in yellow. His UAE team did a lot of riding at the front but after the frantic first two hours, things calmed down. The GC rode at a speed that reflected how

hard it has been for the last two weeks and how difficult it's going to be in the Pyrenean stages. Pogacar was asked if his rivals had the energy to attack him.

"That's a good question," he said. "I don't think there's much [energy]. Everybody is really getting tired and it's hard to make a breakaway. We will see over the next few days how the others are feeling. Maybe it's just me, thinking everyone is tired because I am also a little tired."

After his heroics on the leg to Carcassonne, it was a day for Mark Cavendish to recover. He finished in a 19-rider group, 25min 34sec down on Mollema but he looked a lot less wasted than he had 24 hours before. He has now got a day in the Pyrenees followed by a rest day, then two more days in the Pyrenees. In other words, many miles to go before he sprints.

ON TV TODAY

Tour de France, 15th stage
12.14pm Eurosport 1

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Send your letters to:
The Sports Editor,
The Sunday Times,
1 London Bridge St,
London, SE1 9GF
email: sportletters@sunday-times.co.uk

England might well be in their first football final for 55 years but may I remind readers than not one of the current squad could do what Mark Cavendish achieved on July 11 —

ride for 200k+ in temperatures of 28C, and win a sprint at the end to equal the stage-wins record in the Tour de France set by Eddy Merckx. It's called perspective.

Trevor Hobday, Clitheroe

While watching Wimbledon it is irritating to hear British commentators refer to offensive play when

they mean attacking play. The American meaning of offensive is completely different from the British meaning and has no place in a British commentator's

vocabulary. What next? Will they be referring to the "semeye" final?
Mark Syder, Merseyside

How many televised events nowadays are

spoiled by radio-type commentaries? Have the culprits forgotten the audience are watching without the constantly annoying unnecessary babble?
Brian Willis, Cheam



Much of Italy's play comes through Jorginho sitting deep in midfield so Mount will have an important job trying to stop him

From the start, England have looked like a machine, more powerful and athletic than other teams

team who predominantly employ a four-man defence.

THE DEFENCES

England and Italy are the best sides, defensively, in the competition. England have more athleticism at the back but Italy have more experience. At 34 and 36 respectively it's incredible that Leonardo Bonucci and Giorgio Chiellini are about to play another major final. They embody the Italian culture of defending.

Clearly, their vulnerability is speed. When you get older as a centre back you try to play much deeper and don't enjoy bigger spaces. You like things to be tight. For Bonucci and Chiellini there is the complication that Italy play with a high press, which generally demands that your centre backs are on the halfway line. What helps them is having Jorginho sitting in front of them, and Marco Veratti doing his share of screening work. It means that Bonucci and Chiellini aren't dragged out of their slots too often and the key to both of them is footballing intelligence.

They read the game so well and understand that getting caught wide or too far up the pitch is not beneficial to them. They are not afraid, at times, to follow their man and get tight, which does leave space behind – but they're savvy enough to know when and when not to do so.

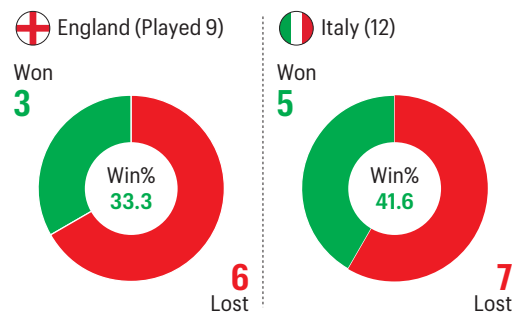
Álvaro Morata's goal for Spain against Italy in the semi-final showed they can be opened up with pace and England have it in their forward line. That said, Chiellini and Bonucci have played nearly 1,500 games between them and I'm sure many opponents have imagined they would expose them for pace, but very few actually have – because of their brains.

JORGINHO

England have done a pretty good job in stopping key opposition midfield players. They limited Toni Kroos, of Germany, and Kalvin Phillips did a great job on Croatia's Mateo Kovacic. Gareth Southgate has used Phillips aggressively against opponents who can dominate games but Jorginho's deep positioning might affect Phillips's capacity to disrupt. Mason

BUT WHAT IF IT GOES TO PENALTIES?

Finalists' major tournament shoot-out records



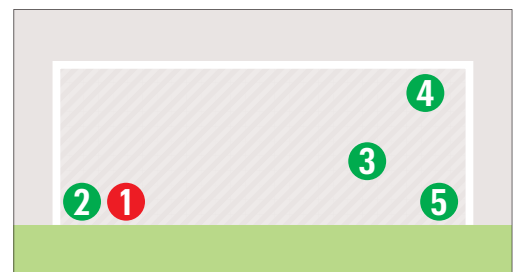
England players' penalty records*

◆ Taken ♦ Scored

	For club	For England	Overall
H Kane	36 Taken, 32 Scored	13 Taken, 11 Scored	88%
M Rashford	11 Taken, 9 Scored	3 Taken, 3 Scored	86%
R Sterling	4 Taken, 1 Scored	1 Taken, 1 Scored	40%
J Sancho	3 Taken, 3 Scored	0 Taken, 0 Scored	100%
D Rice	2 Taken, 1 Scored	0 Taken, 0 Scored	50%
K Trippier	2 Taken, 0 Scored	0 Taken, 0 Scored	0%
J Grealish	1 Taken, 0 Scored	0 Taken, 0 Scored	0%
J Henderson	1 Taken, 1 Scored	0 Taken, 0 Scored	50%
M Mount	1 Taken, 1 Scored	0 Taken, 0 Scored	100%
D Calvert-Lewin	0 Taken, 0 Scored	1 Taken, 1 Scored	100%

*Does not include penalty shootouts

Where the Italians put their kicks in semi-final v Spain



1 M Locatelli	Saved	✗	4 F Bernardeschi	Scored	✓
2 A Belotti	Scored	✓	5 Jorginho	Scored	✓
3 L Bonucci	Scored	✓			

Mount is likely to have a big role in trying to deal with Jorginho.

Jorginho is one of the players of the tournament. He is one of the best at starting the play and Italy, as much as any side at these Euros, enjoy playing out. If you can do a job on Jorginho, you have the opportunity to win possession, break off him and end up with a scoring chance – but I love Jorginho's energy for the game, his appetite for working hard to get himself on the ball, then his ability to suck in an opponent and pop the ball away from them, one touch. I don't think his passing is quite Kroos-level but

give him licence and he will make passes and dictate play all day. In the build-up phase of the game he is one of the very best I've seen.

ENGLAND'S POWER AND ATHLETICISM

From the start, England have looked like a machine, fast, quick and more powerful and athletic than other teams. They have beaten nearly all their opponents through having extra legs. Phillips ran 15km against Denmark – trust me, those are huge

Teams involved in most Euro shoot-outs

- Italy
- Spain
- England
- Holland
- Czechoslovakia/Czech Republic
- France
- West Germany/Germany
- Portugal
- Switzerland
- Denmark
- Poland
- Croatia
- Sweden
- Turkey

Teams who have lost the most Euro shoot-outs

- England
- Italy
- Holland
- France
- Spain
- Switzerland
- Croatia
- Denmark
- West Germany/Germany
- Poland
- Portugal
- Sweden

numbers, an incredible amount of energy to put into one game. Obviously, there's more to football than good running stats – or we would get marathon runners to play – but Phillips has plenty of ability. What he has done is no surprise to anyone who has watched him in the Premier League.

However Italy aren't as far away from England, athletically, as other teams they have faced in the knockout stage. Roberto Mancini's team work just as hard as Gareth's and Jorginho has covered more ground than any player in the tournament. Have England met their match?

CAN ENGLAND PLAY THROUGH ITALY'S PRESS?

Italy press high and press hard and it's a factor of which England will have to be mindful, especially given that Gareth was unhappy about the quality, at times, of England's attempts to play through the Denmark high press.

There are two ways to deal with it. You either try to beat the press with great passing out from the back and good use of the ball from your goalkeeper. Or you simply don't give the opposition opportunity to press you.

If you press high against Manchester City, for example, Ederson is liable to kick the ball over your centre backs for Raheem Sterling, Riyad Mahrez or someone else to spin and run behind you. Jordan Pickford has the ability to play great long passes and it wouldn't surprise me if England have something in mind like using Jordan's kicking against the Italian pressing.

In John Stones and Harry Maguire, England have two of the best centre backs in the tournament at playing from the back – but in Jordan they have an alternative weapon.

THE FORWARD LINES

Sterling is in my team of the tournament and Harry Kane has found his scoring form at the right time. But I like Italy's forward line too. Individually, none of their front three makes you go "wow" but they have quality. Ciro Immobile had a spell outside Serie A at Borussia Dortmund and it didn't work out, but he leads the line well, though not in the way of a typical, big centre forward – he's much more mobile than that.

The players either side of him excite me most. Lorenzo Insigne's work rate is through the roof. For an attacker with so much talent on the ball, to put so much work in for his team, with his pressing, is very impressive.

Federico Chiesa is another who is incredibly talented and a hard worker. Italy have been such a good watch, thanks to their energy and positivity and their forwards have played big part in it.

GROUP E

	P	W	D	L	Pts
Sweden (Q)	3	2	1	0	7
Spain (Q)	3	1	2	0	5
Slovakia	3	1	0	2	3
Poland	3	0	1	2	1

RESULTS

Poland 1 Slovakia 2, Spain 0 Sweden 0; Sweden 1 Slovakia 0, Spain 1 Poland 1; Sweden 3 Poland 2, Slovakia 0 Spain 5

GROUP F

	P	W	D	L	Pts
France (Q)	3	1	2	0	5
Germany (Q)	3	1	1	1	4
Portugal (Q)	3	1	1	1	4
Hungary	3	0	2	1	2

RESULTS

Hungary 0 Portugal 3, France 1 Germany 0; Hungary 1 France 1, Portugal 2 Germany 4; Germany 2 Hungary 2, Portugal 2 France 2

KNOCKOUT STAGE

ROUND OF 16

June 26
Wales 0
Denmark 4
Italy 2
Austria 1 (AET)

June 27

Holland 0
Czech Republic 2
Belgium 1
Portugal 0

June 28

Croatia 3
Spain 5 (AET)
France 3
Switzerland 3 (AET; 4-5 pens)

June 29

England 2
Germany 0
Sweden 1
Ukraine 2 (AET)

QUARTER-FINALS

July 2
Switzerland 1
Spain 1 (AET; 1-3 pens)
Belgium 1
Italy 2.

July 3

Czech Republic 1
Denmark 2;
Ukraine 0
England 4.

SEMI-FINALS

July 6 (Wembley)
Italy 1 Spain 1
(AET; Italy 4-2 on pens).

July 7 (Wembley)

England 2
Denmark 1 (AET)

FINAL

Today (Wembley)
Italy v England

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Euro 2020 final England's date with destiny



Vialli, left, and Mancini have steered Italy to the Euro 2020 final after the national team failed to qualify for the 2018 World Cup

THE ODD COUPLE...

GRAEME SOUNESS



When I first met a 19-year-old Roberto Mancini, at Sampdoria, he reminded me of somebody – me, at that age. He was petulant and thought he knew it all, a bit like I'd been as a teenager at Tottenham Hotspur. Every ten minutes in training the arms would go up, the head thrown back in the classic dramatic gesture as if to say, "What are you doing, you fool?" if he wasn't happy with you.

As you can imagine, that went down well with me. He had an opinion and there was nothing shifting it and we had words several times. I remember one game, where he told me where to go using Italian swear words that my limited vocabulary extended to. I told Trevor Francis, who had more Italian, to translate that there would be consequences if he spoke to me like that again.

I signed for Sampdoria in 1984 because Paolo Mantovani, the owner and a gentleman, wanted an experienced player to help the talented young team they had. In particular, they had two exceptional strikers who would go on to have great careers. Roberto and Gianluca Vialli, who is now part of Roberto's staff with Italy.

They were nicknamed "the goal twins" because of their partnership and friendship, but were very different young men. Vialli hung on every word that people were telling him and Roberto knew everything at 19. He was superior technically, he had all the clubs in his bag, but didn't work as hard as Vialli.

In my two years at Sampdoria there was more fights with blows being exchanged than in my seven years at Liverpool. There was a lot of squaring up. Training was very intense, but they were young men on the way up and it was great to be around.

The owner had a real soft spot for Roberto and there was a lot to admire

AND ME

Mancini the know-it-all, Vialli the listener: my old team-mates are now Italy's dugout double act



In my two years at Sampdoria there was more fights with blows exchanged than in my seven years at Liverpool

about him. He was handsome with star quality and he played the part, he knew where he was destined to go and acted accordingly. A lot of arrogance and attitude, similar to how I would have been perceived at that age, maybe a bit too much.

I'd be lying if I said I knew he was management material back then. He didn't have too many questions because he knew all the answers. He wasn't a student of the game in terms of hanging on every word and wanting

to learn from everybody he came across.

I only worked with Roberto for two years, but I wouldn't describe him as someone like that. Yet he obviously had a genuine love of the game, which has lasted. That's why he is still doing it because it is difficult being a manager today. He's had some great jobs and generally done very well wherever he's been, including winning the league and FA Cup at Manchester City.

I'd imagine Vialli is perfect for the background role he plays in Italy's set-up. He's a diplomat, an intelligent boy, a thinker, good with people and humble. Of course, he'd get angry and upset at times, too, but not as quickly as Roberto and I'd imagine that's still their personalities.

The Italians back then did think more deeply about the game than we did, although we have since caught up. They saw it as a science, something you studied. I learnt so much

when I was there, even from the young guys I played with, and tried to bring that back to Britain with me when I became a manager.

Italian teams have always been talented technically, but have often played with the handbrake on. Roberto's team have played with the handbrake off, but it's still there, deep in their DNA, if it's not going the way they want it to, to sit in, as they did against Spain, and say, "Come on then, let's see what you've got."

In the semi-final, they sussed that Spain were better at keeping the ball and reverted to type. It was a case of "contropiede" as they call it. They said: "You have the ball but remember we have players that can hurt you on the break."

They will start on the front foot and try to outplay England, but if it's not happening be prepared for them to stay in their shape and defend and try to nick the game. If they go ahead, they can wait and pick you off. You don't want to be in that situation against them, chasing the game, that's what they want more than anything. They are a dangerous team to play against.

I can't say I'm Jorginho's biggest fan. If Italy don't get the ball on the first press, watch the Chelsea midfielder trying to get back goal side. It's difficult for him. He hasn't got great dynamism and struggles. England's energy in there could see him off. I was surprised that Roberto didn't take him off against Spain when they couldn't get hold of the ball for long periods in there.

England are a mean machine. Their priority is to stop you playing and, with the form that Raheem Sterling is in, he can create havoc against anybody. Even if Italy double up on him, at some stage he's going to get one-on-one in the box with the last defender. Good luck with that.

The stars are aligned for England. This is their sixth match at Wembley, the way the games have worked out. Yet Italy have seen off better teams to reach the final from the stronger side of the draw and common sense tells you this is England's toughest task: the fact it's the final and Italy haven't been beaten for 33 games.

WATCHING BRIEF

RICK ASTLEY, POP STAR



Where are you watching the match?

At home in London

Favourite England player?

Harry Maguire, and not just because I'm a Manchester United fan, although maybe it does help!

What's your prediction?

I can't see either team romping it, so I'll plump for England 2 Italy 1

Hurt. Hurt. Hurt. Hurt. Hurt.
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Hurt. Hurt. Hurt. Hurt. Hurt.
Hurt. Hurt. Hurt. Hurt. **Hope.**



55 years of hurt. 1 day could make it history.
Very proud partner of England.

Euro 2020 final England's date with destiny

MASSIMILIANO FERRARO



Italian passion is second to none – and they'd love to beat the English again

If you thought England was

football mad...

JOHN FOOT



Italy is a football-mad country. It has three daily sports papers, plus innumerable local publications, 24-hour radio stations dedicated entirely to the game (or sometimes even to one club) and numerous local television channels. When I lived in Italy, my favourite part of the day was having a cup of coffee in my local bar in Milan, accompanied by the usual back and forth about Juventus, Milan, Inter and, of course, the referee (the favourite topic of any Italian fan). I was in the city when Italy won the World Cup in 2006 and the noise was deafening. Everyone was out in their cars, flags were being waved everywhere, and those who weren't outside were banging pans and shouting from their open windows.

Italy's national team unite the country and even manage (especially if they are winning) to briefly defuse fierce local rivalries. For 90 minutes, Italians seem to forget that a player is from Naples or plays for Napoli or Juventus. Once the clubs start playing again, they can return to their natural state of hatred of the other team and their personnel.

Euro 2020 has shown how deep-rooted the stereotypes are in this country about Italian football, and Italians in general. People seem obsessed with Roberto Mancini's "elegance" – yet the Italy coach is simply wearing a suit and tie. Mancini's assistant Chicco Evani's designer glasses have come in for much disdain – ignoring his trophy-studded playing

career and successful transition to management. Many of these stereotypes have no basis at all in reality or history. Italy's 2020 team have mostly played thrilling attacking football. But the cliché about the defensive Italian teams of the past – the shadow of catenaccio – has loomed large in commentaries and analysis. Hence the love for Giorgio Chiellini, who seems to hark back to that somewhat imaginary past both physically and in his playing style.

Yet, Italian football has not been defensively minded for 30 years or so. Arrigo Sacchi's incredible Milan team of the late 1980s and early 1990s can be said to have invented the pressing game, and always played to win whatever the circumstances. There is often a confusion between defensive football and simply being very good at defending, which is something the Italians have always valued. They also seem to have the uncanny ability to produce a world-class goalkeeper every 20 years. Gianluigi Buffon was a key figure in that 2006 victory and Gianluigi Donnarumma has been the best goalkeeper in the tournament, and will be around for years to come given that he is only 22.

But what about the s***housery? There were 15 epic minutes at the end of the quarter-final against Belgium when Italy used every trick in the book. Much has been made of Ciro Immobile's miraculous recovery from injury in that game, especially in the British media. On TV, Clive Tyldesley called for Immobile to be banned.



In Rome, fans congregate to watch the semi-final against Spain, which prompted wild celebrations, above, with players such as Giovanni Di Lorenzo, below, carrying the weight of their expectation

Gianni Brera, the Italian sports journalist, once wrote that "fair play, in Italy we have never heard of it". Brera also argued that the Italians were too weak to play attacking football and the perfect game would end 0-0.

However, after the semi-final against Denmark in which a laser pointer was shone in the face of Kasper Schmeichel, the Danish anthem was booted, not to mention the Sterling "penalty", who can claim to hold the moral high ground? Perhaps England have learnt from the Italians – winning is all that counts? Lee Dixon's

England have learnt from Italy – winning is all that counts, nothing else matters



WATCHING BRIEF

GRAEME SWANN



Where are you watching the match?

Like every England game so far, from my couch. And like every game so far, I'll have a pizza halfway through the first half.

Favourite England player?

If I'm forced to pick, it's Jadon Sancho. I hope he starts.

What's your prediction?

England to win in normal time. 3-1.

confession that he "didn't care" if Sterling had dived or not, was telling. But you can't have it both ways.

Italy and England have a deep and complicated history – where sport, politics and conflict are intertwined. British doctors and others brought the game to Italy in the late 19th century and founded the first clubs, many of whom still have English names. British coaches introduced professionalism and training techniques to the Italian game. 1934, Italy won the World Cup at home, in a tournament stage managed by Achille Starace, Benito Mussolini's spin-doctor. Soon afterwards they travelled to London to play England, who hadn't even bothered to enter the competition.

What took place on a rainy night at Highbury has since become the stuff of legend. It was a brutal game, and the Italians listened to it through the biased voice of Nicolò Carosio, the commentator who became the key interpreter of fascism through the medium of radio. England swept to a 3-0 lead, tackles flew in, blood was everywhere. Then the genius of the mercurial forward Giuseppe Meazza took over. He scored twice and came close to a third. England won 3-2 and could still claim to be the "masters" of the game. It was known as the "Battle of Highbury", as a defeat was presented, back home, by the regime, as a victory – with the players being dubbed "the lions of Highbury".

Italy's inferiority complex continued during and after the Second World War. It was not until 1973 that Italy finally defeated England (in Turin) and their first victory at Wembley was in the same year, thanks to a goal by a certain Fabio Capello. Since then, Italy have dominated the fixture, winning again at Wembley with a brilliant goal from Gianfranco Zola, knocking England out of the Euros in 2012 with a disdainful Panenka penalty from Andrea Pirlo, and winning again at the 2014 World Cup thanks to a Mario Balotelli header.

Who will prevail in the Euro 2020 final? Already, true to form, there are dark mutterings in the Italian press about conspiracies and plots, and powerful forces who are organising England's inevitable victory. In Italy, nothing is ever as it seems. The referee needs to be proved innocent. England have not beaten Italy in a match that counts for something since 1977. Yet, it is at home, and the 1966 omens are strong.

John Foot is Professor of Modern Italian History at the University of Bristol and author of *Calcio: A History of Italian Football*

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Euro 2020 final England's date with destiny



SIMON HUGHES



The final of the European Championships at Wembley comes two years on from the 2019 Cricket World Cup final, that unforgettable occasion at Lord's when England finally broke their World Cup duck, by, as the New Zealand commentator Ian Smith declared, "the barest of margins".

There are many parallels with the scenario that Gareth Southgate's team now face: the pressure and expectation of playing the final at home, the journey of exhilaration and frustration, the cravings of a trophy-starved nation. So as Southgate's side arrive at their denouement it may be instructive to convey how Eoin Morgan's team approached their own climax.

In a series of interviews with team members for a documentary I'm producing on England's Cricket World Cup triumph, the overriding themes are players alternately distracting themselves in the lead-up to the final and confronting their feelings head on, and not being afraid to do so.

Jos Buttler, who, perhaps surprisingly, does experience moments of self-doubt, found talking to the team psychologist, David Young, helpful. "The day before the final I kept thinking we'd never have a better chance of winning the World Cup," Buttler said. "The team we had, the momentum we had built up, the fact that it was at Lord's – it felt like a golden opportunity, but what if we didn't do it? Young said it was fine to feel that, embrace it, and then let it go."

This was the same advice that he had offered before England's must-win World Cup game against India. Players were encouraged to express their feelings to the group, and most found the honesty of the likes of Ben Stokes, who admitted that he was nervous and worried about losing, and therefore being eliminated from the competition, immensely reassuring. Embracing their feelings empowered the team. "Revealing our nerves helped us realise that things can go right as well," Buttler added. "You can play the greatest game of cricket you've ever dreamt of producing." Which, against India, and then Australia in the semi-final, England did.

It is also important to retain perspective, to remember what you have already achieved and not be bur-

Buttler savours that winning feeling at Lord's but had been anxious the previous day until the team psychologist encouraged him to embrace his fears

Southgate's men can learn a lot about handling pressure from the cricketers who won the 2019 World Cup

This is how it feels, lads



GARETH COPLEY

'England will win. There are a lot of similarities with our journey. The omens are good'

dened by expectation. Buttler sought out Morgan in the team hotel the day before the final. "I felt he was a calm person who would make me feel good," he said. "We met for a cup of tea in the foyer to discuss how we were feeling and the journey we'd been on. It was important to realise it wasn't just about what would happen tomorrow but the tremendous four-year campaign we'd been on. It wasn't just about getting there; it was about the way we'd played and the way people had enjoyed watching us play.

"My wife and daughter were with me. It was a good distraction. It normalises things. I was feeling confident. We had played three of our best games in a row to get to the final, and we had already beaten New Zealand in Durham. I felt like we were the best team in the tournament."

The diversity of that England team, not only in background but in thoughts and attitudes, was invaluable. Jason Roy, so fundamental to England's fortunes for his aggressive batting and headstrong nature, diffused any negative thoughts before the crucial India match by saying, "All we've got to do is win four games and we've won the World Cup."

He was equally bullish on the morning of the final. "I tried to keep my head as clear as possible, and not think too much about what I want to achieve," Roy said. "I let my instincts take over. I had done so much training leading into that day, I didn't need to be thinking, 'Do this, do that' – just let it happen. The important thing for me is to trust the process. So as I was walking out to bat I just said to myself, 'Bat like you did in the nets yesterday and you'll make runs.'" He wasn't hugely successful with the bat on the day, but did execute the winning pick-up and throw with clinical effectiveness.

Does Buttler, an excellent footballer himself, think England will win? "Yes. There are a lot of similarities with our journey. The omens are good. Even the way the ball came back to Harry Kane after that missed penalty [against Denmark], and the way he confidently put it away. At the start of the game the best approach is just to think, 'In 90 minutes it'll all be over, and we'll know the result.'"

PITCHING IN: ENGLAND'S STARS ARE ALREADY HEROES FOR THEIR ALTRUISTIC WORK

The England squad will make a donation to NHS charities with their Euro 2020 prize money from their Euro 2020 run, win or lose today against Italy. The players have donated their international match fees to worthy causes for more than a decade but they have also supported many as individuals. These include:



Marcus Rashford

The 23-year-old Manchester United forward, inset, became the youngest person to top *The Sunday*

Times Giving List, after helping to raise £20 million for FareShare, which fights hunger and tackles food waste. Last year he forced a change in government policy over free school meal vouchers for about 1.3 million children. He was awarded an MBE in the Queen's birthday honours list last year.

Raheem Sterling

England's best player at Euro 2020 made a "substantial" donation to victims of the Grenfell Tower fire

disaster fund and paid for 500 pupils from his former school to attend the 2019 FA Cup semi-final between Manchester City and Brighton & Hove Albion at Wembley.

Harry Kane

The England captain sponsored the shirts of League Two Leyton Orient, where he had a five-month loan in 2011, donating the space to three causes: NHS heroes, mental health and children's hospice charities. He has renewed the deal for the 2021-22 season, supporting vulnerable armed forces veterans.

Jordan Henderson

The Liverpool midfielder, with other club captains, was a driving force behind Premier League players donating part of their salary to NHS charities during the early stages of the pandemic. In January, Henderson, inset, became the first official NHS Charities Together Champion, raising funds for and supporting more than 240 NHS charities across the UK. He was awarded an MBE last month for his charitable work.



Harry Maguire, Declan Rice and Calvin Phillips

The Manchester United captain Maguire has donated food parcels, while West Ham United's Rice and Leeds United's Phillips have been contributors to food banks.

Mason Mount

The 22-year-old Chelsea midfielder is patron of Together for Short Lives, which raises funds to help children with life-limiting conditions and families in need of support.



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Euro 2020 final England's date with destiny



Rod Liddle

Please win, England (so we can bury that bloody awful song 'Sealions on a Shirt')



Great mysteries of the Euros, No 1. Why do female football supporters look so happy when their teams have just conceded a goal? The camera pans across to the suddenly stricken hordes and there are the women, still having the times of their lives, grinning through their face paint and waving their flags – while the men beside them are racked with misery, despair and fury, wrenching their hair out.

This is a generalisation – it excludes, for example, that little German girl crying her eyes out (although I suspect that is because she dropped her burger). Perhaps we men invest a little too much in the performances on the pitch, living our lives vicariously through the antics of extremely flawed human beings.

Mystery No 2 is the success of Gareth Southgate – although this is scarcely a mystery for the majority who rated him all along. I didn't, being wearied of his stultifying caution. He seemed to me a good, decent man elevated above his station, having scarcely excelled as the Middlesbrough manager.

How wrong can you be? That he is the most successful England manager since Sir Alf Ramsey is not an opinion, but a statistical fact. Clearly, his psychological impact upon the players has been crucial: they look like a team.

Furthermore, the cautious tactics have worked. It no longer matters that we looked lumpen and bereft of imagination against Scotland (and, for long periods, against Croatia). As Southgate said, the important thing in group games is not to lose. One goal conceded in eight matches and through to the final. I think we would all have settled for that, no? The knee-bending still grates me for a host of reasons – and yet, psychologically, Southgate was probably right to persist with it once he faced criticism. It will have bolstered that us against them mentality in the squad, which is vital to winning a tournament.

Nor did we scrape home against Denmark: the Danes were absent from the game for 75 minutes and only Kasper Schmeichel kept them in it. Their sour grapes and moaning rangles a little. If they really think they were cheated out of it then they are blind to the truth – perhaps

someone is shining a laser in their eyes. The penalty? Sure, it was soft at best. Harry Kane had a far stronger claim when he was hacked down in the area a little earlier on – it seemed to me a certain penalty. But the laser business clearly did not affect the goalkeeper unduly as he saved the penalty – maybe we should shine a laser at Jordan Pickford whenever a shot is coming his way and gently guide him towards the ball. Anyway, you Danes: park yourself in your own penalty area for 75 minutes and against a decent team you will in the end get clobbered – a penalty, a rogue bounce, a deflection. You reap what you sow.

Mystery No 3 is Raheem Sterling – or, more accurately, the apparent disdain in which he is held by some England fans. I simply don't get it. For what it's worth, I think he is the best forward we have had for at least a quarter of a century and probably a long way beyond, through the consistent effectiveness of his contributions to each performance. Paul Gascoigne, Wayne Rooney and Michael Owen might all challenge that assertion, I suppose – but none was quite so central to England performances in game after game after game.

Almost every dangerous England move has had Sterling at the heart of

It no longer matters that we looked lumpen and bereft of imagination against Scotland

it – either as instigator or goalscorer. More than Harry Kane or Luke Shaw he is surely the first name on the team sheet. And yet at the outset of the tournament there were doubts as to whether he would even get on the pitch and his selection was described as “controversial”.

Yes, he had a poor season by his standards for Manchester City, but his performances for England have long been of the highest quality. So, too, his commitment and team spirit: did you see the head held in utter anguish when he underhit that back-pass to allow Thomas Müller a chance to score in the Germany game? The man was distraught. And the flak the bloke takes on social media – for what? For winning games at times single-handed? He is in the form of his life and clearly enjoying every moment. Long may he reign.

Today? Oh gawd, more unbearable tension. This is the one time I would argue for the Southgate cautious approach: I do not think that this is going to be a rip-roaring final, it will be a contest of suffocation. To my mind it

WATCHING BRIEF

CLIVE TYLDESLEY, FOOTBALL COMMENTATOR

Where are you watching the match?

On my sofa with my wife and my wine. I've spent the past 30 years in television so I know how much work goes into a live broadcast and I want to appreciate it and enjoy this final without distraction.

Favourite England player?

It's corny but Gareth Southgate. The mood, tone and commitment of this team come from him. He has schooled them to play matches, not occasions and he has found ways to win those matches.

What's your prediction?

England. I don't believe Italy have a player to keep you awake the night before a final.



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At least one Denmark fan was happy

Euro 2020 final England's date with destiny

WHAT THE NEIGHBOURS THINK

Behind England's march to final are two tales of what might have been for Ireland

IRELAND



Paul Rowan

Nobody will sing *God Save The Queen* more lustily on the pitch at Wembley tonight than Declan Rice, whose commitment to the cause is intense, whatever the cause may be.

As a teenager playing for Ireland his zeal was such that he tended to go over the top. He posted messages such as "UP THE RA. Wait Till We Draw England" to his rather bemused young Irish team-mates.

For that naive gesture he would apologise when he became an England player and his Instagram post suddenly emerged out of nowhere. Such youthful indiscretions being dredged up have become a theme in modern sport, but in Rice's case it at least shows how wholeheartedly he throws himself into things, until a bigger challenge comes along. The latest challenge was breaking into the England team and establishing himself in the starting line-up.

Jack Grealish did not perform such a screeching U-turn when he switched from Ireland to England. While he played at under-21 level for Ireland, Grealish made it clear that he might switch to England. He and his father Kevin, who was never far from his side in those days, seemed oblivious to the pressure for him to make more green-tinted prognostications about his international future.

When I spoke to Grealish after an Ireland Under-21 game back in March 2014 in Dublin, he flicked back his hair and commented: "For the next couple of years, I want to play for Ireland. That's not saying I'm not going to go back to England. I'm just saying you never know what's going to happen."

Grealish's approach was a bit like his football; subtle, nuanced and evasive. Rice was more like the battering ram he can be as a player.

In both cases they were under pressure from men a lot older than themselves. Grealish, three years older than Rice, was the first to come under pressure to declare his hand, but instead he took a time out from international football. He would come to Dublin to collect an FAI award and



Rice and Grealish were depicted on a mural in Dublin last month but in the colours of England rather than Ireland

'Losing the best Ireland player in a generation meant that the pressure was on Rice when he emerged shortly after as potentially the next best player of a generation'

WATCHING BRIEF

CHRIS WADDLE, FORMER ENGLAND FOOTBALLER



Where are you watching the match?

I'll be watching it in the pub. You can't beat the atmosphere.

Favourite England player?

Oh, it has to be Kyle Walker. I love everything he does.

What's your prediction?

I've got to predict England. But in extra time. I can't see it happening in 90 minutes and I can't see it going to penalties either.

hook up with the Irish part of his family – like Rice he has Irish grandparents – but not to play football.

The Ireland manager at the time, Martin O'Neill, rang the then Aston Villa manager, Tim Sherwood. "I would have said to Martin that I can't sway the boy either way," Sherwood said on Friday. "Martin was making sure that the boy made his own decision rather than me being English trying to push him that way."

In May 2015, O'Neill, who was expected to resolve the matter, wanted to name Grealish in the Ireland senior squad for a friendly against England and a competitive game against Scotland.

He was unable to contact Grealish on the morning of the squad announcement, however. Journalists waited in the press room for more than an hour, wondering what was going on while frantic phone calls were being made behind the scenes.

Once training at Aston Villa had finished for the day, Grealish told O'Neill that he was declining the invitation. Grealish was more positive when he met the then England manager Roy Hodgson, reportedly in an executive box at Villa Park later that year. Ireland had lost its most skilful midfielder to put on a green jersey since Liam Brady.

Ireland's loss of its best player in a generation meant that the focus was on Rice when he emerged shortly after as potentially the next best Ireland player of a generation. There was a neediness around the Ireland

camp about getting reassurances from Rice that he was not about to follow Grealish in opting for England. He kissed the badge, he sang the anthem lustily.

"It's good that you sing it before the games. It means something to you, it's passionate," he said.

When Rice was asked, after earning his second senior cap for Ireland in a friendly against the United States in June 2018, about speculation that he might switch to England, he replied: "It's all a load of crap to be honest." But it was not. Ireland's fortunes were starting to plummet.

By contrast, England had reached the semi-finals of the 2018 World Cup

under Gareth Southgate, who seemed to have his finger on the pulse when it came to dealing with young players and moulding international sides.

Push came to shove when Rice, having played in three senior friendlies, rejected a call-up to the Ireland squad for Uefa Nations League games. Those were competitive fixtures and if he played he would have had to stick with Ireland. Like Grealish, Rice decided to take a time out from international football.

Rice's club West Ham United – where he was being compared to Bobby Moore – and his agent clearly felt that the player's future rested with England. Southgate took Rice on a tour of St George's Park and spelt out clearly where he saw the player's role in the England team. From the other side, the FAI's autocratic chief executive John Delaney, was working behind the scenes to get Rice back.

Minutes from an FAI board meeting in October 2018 read: "Father [Sean Rice] texted the CEO and said 'I am desperate for Declan to continue playing for Ireland and have gone hoarse speaking to him about it'.... Agent is the issue, Southgate has not been in contact with him since."

It also emerged that Rice had witnessed an awful row between Ireland's assistant manager, Roy Keane, and a senior player, Jon Walters, at the training ground in Dublin earlier that year. "He was present when the Jon Walters issue occurred," the minutes noted. "This



The pair wore Irish green in their youth



may be worrying him and he should be reassured that he is not in any way connected with the controversy.”

The O'Neill era was crumbling and the following month he was sacked. Poor results and Keane's rows with players were cited, but Delaney also told the board that the Rice issue was one of the reasons why he had lost confidence in the manager. O'Neill's successor, Mick McCarthy, was charged with the task of getting the team back on track and coaxing Rice into a return.

McCarthy and one of his assistants, Robbie Keane, visited the Rice family home in west London, where framed pictures of Rice in his Ireland jersey hung on the walls. McCarthy declared afterwards: "I'd build my team around Declan and he could be our future captain. Becoming a player with 100 caps would give him a nice profile."

Such blandishments, along with promises of as many tickets for the extended Rice family as the FAI could muster, were all to no avail. In February 2019, Rice phoned McCarthy and told him of his decision, prompting an angry reaction from McCarthy and a return phone call to apologise.

The following month, Rice was announced as Ireland's young player of the year, again much to McCarthy's annoyance. But the vote could not be altered even though the show had moved on – for Rice and Grealish, all the way to the final of the Euros at Wembley.

Jonathan Northcroft

It used to be fun when England failed... they've let down all Scots



SCOTLAND



Sitting in a bar in Rio, with old friends from the Scottish press during the 2014 World Cup, we laughed as one of the lads summed it all up.

"England," he said. "They never let you down." With a chortle we raised glasses to another great English tournament failure.

Bitter Scots? Not at all. Don't get us wrong. The respect, and indeed when it comes to the club game, love, for English football is huge and we all experience nationality in different ways but, in mine, only the tiniest minority of fellow Scots bear any genuine ill will towards the English.

We don't sit at tournaments obsessing about how England will do and praying they fail. It's just that it used to be rather fun when it happened. Fun, because of the "big country" pomposity England used to arrive with at finals. Fun because of the bombast on back pages.

Fun because of that section of

England fans who, with their songs about German bombers and "no surrender" and aggression towards the foreigner, or the other, did feel like something of a menacing pollutant wafting over Hadrian's Wall. Fun because it denied bandwagon-jumping opportunities to governments in Westminster we didn't vote for.



The National makes its stance clear

But Gareth Southgate and this present group of England players really have let us down. They have let us down utterly. Maybe they have even changed the conversation for good and let us down irrevocably.

I hope so, because Gareth and these lads are impossible to dislike, impossible not to respect and all too possible to admire. They represent everything good that England offers, its diversity, modernity, generosity, dignity, innovation, skill, courage and decency. And they are damn good at the football bit. Just as in 2018, they have not stunk out a tournament or gone out early. Instead they have been one of the best things about it and stayed until the end.

With their courage in fighting racism, feeding of underprivileged schoolchildren and donations to the NHS, they are significant in a way we can only hope our national team are one day able to become. They changed the way England are supported, persuaded a majority of their fans on taking the knee and made Wembley a carnival place.

WATCHING BRIEF

DAVID LLOYD,
CRICKET
COMMENTATOR



Where are you watching the match?

At home. There's a pandemic which is spiralling out of control.

Favourite England player?

Raheem Sterling. His pace and his way with a skilful dribble gives me the same excitement I felt when I watched George Best.

What's your prediction?

Stalemate. It will go to penalties. Then it will be redemption time for Gareth Southgate.

Personally? My dad is English, wife and kids are English, home is in England so trust me when I say I've always liked the English. I've always loved their clubs and players (well, most of them) too. I've reported on their national team for 20 years and wanted them, on a rational and professional level, to do as well as possible. Now it's possible to also feel the same in my gut.

Just don't start about football "coming home" – that's a whole other debate.

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Ipswich Town 'legend' Mariner dies at 68

Striker helped Suffolk club to FA Cup and European glory as well as playing for England at 1982 World Cup

Peter Wilson

Tributes have been paid to former Ipswich Town and England striker Paul Mariner, whose death at the age of 68 was announced yesterday.

Mariner, who also played for Plymouth Argyle, Arsenal and Portsmouth, as well as for clubs in the US, where he also coached, and Australia, died of brain cancer on Friday.

He played for Ipswich during their great Bobby Robson era, helping the Suffolk club to two trophies. In a tweet, Ipswich called him a "legend".

A statement from his family read: "We regretfully inform you that Paul passed away peacefully on July 9 surrounded by his family, after a brief battle with brain cancer.

"We would like to thank all the people who came to see him through

his illness for their support and for the messages that were sent to him, they meant a great deal to him and us. A special thank you must go to the NHS and the unbelievable care he received when he most needed it and for that we, as a family, will for ever be in your debt.

"Paul lived a full life and was fortunate enough to represent a group of fantastic football clubs as well as his country, all of which meant the world to him.

"Anyone who knew Paul will attest to his fantastic sense of humour, his passion for life and for his work. He will be sorely missed by everyone who was ever around him and by those most close to him."

John Wark, who shared Ipswich's success with Mariner, said: "He was my best mate. As a footballer he was unbelievable. He came into the club and made a difference immediately."

Michael Thomas, who was at Arsenal with Mariner, tweeted: "So sad to hear of the passing of Paul Mariner. What a special & funny man he was... I will be forever grateful for

how he took care of us youngsters at Arsenal."

Mariner, considered one of football's "gentlemen", scored 139 goals in 339 games in eight years with Ipswich during which they won their first and only FA Cup, in 1978, and a Uefa Cup in 1981.

A target man, easily identifiable by his long dark hair, who was strong in the air and skilful on the ground, Mariner was so feared by opponents that Robson remembered an incident in his autobiography, *Time on the Grass*, when they were in Austria for a European Cup Winners' Cup tie against Wacker Innsbruck in 1978 and Mariner was one of four players who broke curfew.

"Next day the Ipswich directors were entertained by their Innsbruck counterparts, and Rudolph Samms, the Innsbruck director who was also chief of police, said to Patrick [Cobbold, the chairman]: 'We have arrested Paul Mariner after last night's incident'. Patrick looked concerned. 'But don't worry,' added Samms. 'We will release him after the

'Anyone who knew Paul will attest to his fantastic sense of humour, his passion for life and his work'



Mariner scored 13 England goals

match." Mariner played but was sent off during extra time. Ipswich, though, held on for a 1-1 draw to go through 2-1 on aggregate.

Mariner, born in Farnworth, Bolton, won 35 England caps, scoring 13 times. He was a member of Ron Greenwood's 1982 World Cup squad – the first time they had qualified in 12 years – playing in all five of England's matches before they went home undefeated after the second group stage. He scored in the opening game, a 3-1 win against France, best remembered for Bryan Robson's goal after 27 seconds.

He started his career with non-League Chorley before moving to Plymouth, in the third tier, in 1973. He helped them to win promotion in 1974-75 and, after 61 goals in 155 games, signed for Ipswich, then of the first division, in October 1976 for £120,000. He moved to Arsenal for £150,000 in 1984 and Portsmouth two years later on a free transfer.

Mariner returned to Plymouth as head coach and then manager during the 2009-10 campaign.

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