

## **Celtic reject late bid for McGeady as Keane tops frantic day of deals**

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### **Body**

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In a day of frantic activity, the Parkhead club recruited the Republic of Ireland captain from Tottenham Hotspur until the **end** of the season. They also swiftly rejected an increased bid thought to be **near**-- £10m from Birmingham City for McGeady.

The arrival of Keane prompted scenes of celebration as thousands of fans gathered outside Celtic Park last night. The striker was greeted with roars as he said: It s unbelievable. It s no secret I have always been a Celtic fan. He pledged to do his best to bring success to the club as he brandished the iconic No.7 shirt that has been worn by Jimmy Johnstone and Henrik Larsson. Keane, the Republic of Ireland s all-time top scorer with 41 goals, told a packed press conference: To get a reception like that was brilliant.

He had decided to come to the club because he wanted to play football . He added: I have come here at the peak of my career. I want to help Celtic win the league. Keane will be at Rugby Park tonight for the match against Kilmarnock and hopes to be involved . It s up to me to come here and do well, he said.

The Celtic board has thus backed Tony Mowbray in his search for the Clydesdale Bank Premier League title with eight signings in the transfer window. Keane was joined at Parkhead by Diomansy Kamara, the Senegalese striker signed on loan from Fulham, and Edson Braafheid, the Bayern Munich left-back, also signed on loan. Mowbray has also recruited Ki Sung-Yueng, Jos Hooiveld, Thomas Rogne, Morten Rasmussen and Paul Slane. Celtic concluded a sale. Scott McDonald left Celtic yesterday to sign for Gordon Strachan s Middlesbrough for £3.5m.

But it was the signing of Keane that Celtic proved the most sensational of the window. The 29-year-old striker has been linked consistently with a move to the club. Peter Lawwell, the Celtic chief executive, revealed last night that he had been trying to enlist the player for some time.

He did not take a lot of persuading, he said of the talks with Keane yesterday. He would not be drawn on whether the striker could become a Celtic player permanently. But he added coyly: Players who come to Celtic rarely want to leave Celtic.

Keane has made 25 appearances for Spurs this season but has recently been confined to the substitutes bench. He arrives at Celtic with the blessing of his manager, Harry Redknapp. He needs to be playing and to go to Celtic is a dream come true for him, Redknapp said last night.

Keane signed for Spurs in 2002, making almost 254 appearances and scoring 108 goals, before joining Liverpool for around £20m in July 2008. However, he went on to make only 15 appearances for the Anfield side and rejoined Spurs in February 2009 for £12m, taking his cumulative transfer fees to more than £70m. His previous clubs include Wolverhampton Wanderers, Coventry City, Inter Milan and Leeds United.

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His remarks have been interpreted as an attack on the Sexual Orientation Regulations that forced Catholic adoption agencies to consider gay couples as potential adoptive parents.

The Government also suffered defeats in the House of Lords last week after churches voiced concerns that the provisions of the flagship Equality Bill could expose them to legal challenges if they refused to employ sexually active gay people and transsexuals.

The Pope said: Your country is well-known for its firm commitment to equality of opportunity for all members of society.

Yet, as you have rightly pointed out, the effect of some of the legislation designed to achieve this goal has been to impose unjust limitations on the freedom of religious communities to act in accordance with their beliefs.

In some respects it actually violates the natural law upon which the equality of all human beings is grounded and by which it is guaranteed.

Equality campaigners criticised the comments and the National Secular Society said it was organising a protest against the Pope's visit, which was confirmed almost a year after he was invited to Britain by Gordon Brown.

Carl Watt, director of Stonewall Scotland, said: The Equality Bill is a good thing where it impacts upon the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people it ensures they are treated as fairly as anyone else. It does not curb the freedom of religious groups.

Human rights campaigner Peter Tatchell said the Pope's comments amounted to a coded attack on the legal rights granted to women and gay people. He said: He seems to be defending discrimination by religious institutions and demanding that they should be above the law.

Keith Porteous Wood, executive director of the National Secular Society, said: We have no objection to him coming as a spiritual leader but we do have a problem with him coming to Britain as a head of state. We don't believe that the Vatican should have that degree of power and we don't believe the Government should be paying for a formal visit.

The doctrine that the Vatican and the Pope promotes is very much contrary to what the vast majority of people believe is appropriate, including many Catholics. His views on homosexuality and birth control are totally unrepresentative and this [visit] gives him a platform, which we don't think is appropriate.

The controversy comes amid divisions within the church in Scotland over the traditional Latin Mass, which is being championed by the Vatican.

Figures compiled by the Archdiocese of Glasgow ahead of the Pope's visit revealed only 26 out of 52,000 practising Catholics in Scotland's largest diocese choose to take part in the traditional form of worship.

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Scottish Catholic Media Office spokesman Peter Kearney said: We certainly share these same concerns that have been raised by the Pope. While this legislation would advance the rights of some minorities, it would effectively remove the rights of others, such as faith groups.

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A FLAGSHIP Scottish theatre will be spared harsh budget cuts, The Herald understands.

The Citizens Theatre in Glasgow, which includes the young people's theatre group TAG, was identified last year as one of the high-profile institutions that could lose out as the council tries to cut costs in the coming years, as it is by far the biggest recipient of art funds from the council.

However, major grants given to the Citizens, worth more than £450,000, and the Tron Theatre, at £200,000, may not be cut severely, The Herald has been told.

However, some of Scotland's world famous festivals, orchestras and theatres are facing significant funding cuts in the coming years.

The Edinburgh International Festival, the world's leading arts festival, is facing cuts of more than £200,000 in the next three years, with other festivals facing a 1.5% cut this year, followed by 3.5% cuts in the following two years.

The RSNO, which could also face cuts in funds from Glasgow and Dundee, is likely to lose nearly £6000 in funding from the capital.

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It is the fall-back option of the manager under duress, the last throw of the dice for the desperate gambler. For some, like Harry Redknapp, it can be the time of year when reputations are reinforced. For others such as Gordon Strachan, when they are seriously undermined.

Tony Mowbray was not the only manager to adopt a scatter-gun approach to the end of the January transfer window. While the Celtic manager was completing deals for Edson Braafheid, Diomansy Kamara and Paul Slane yesterday, Gordon Strachan, his predecessor at Parkhead, was ushering through the late purchases of Scott McDonald from Celtic, and Lee Miller, the Aberdeen and Scotland striker.

There was even time for some business with the arch-wheeler-dealer Redknapp, with Mowbray securing Robbie Keane from Tottenham Hotspur on loan for the rest of the season and Strachan adding the promising Spurs right-back Kyle Naughton to his ranks.

For Strachan, just as it has been for Mowbray, this was a board putting its money where its mouth is a recognition that both managers will be given every opportunity to achieve their respective goals, be it promotion to the Premier League or a 43rd Scottish league title.

McDonald became the fifth player to reunite with his old manager. It would have been six had Gary Caldwell opted for the Riverside Stadium instead of a move to Wigan Athletic, but there is a rationale behind Strachan s thinking which extends beyond mere sentimental myopia.

Much mirth has been made following the en masse arrival of Strachan s duds at Middlesbrough, but the signings deserve a more reasoned analysis than that.

McDonald, Stephen McManus and Barry Robson were key figures in a Celtic side which lifted the title little more than 18 months ago. They are seasoned Champions League campaigners, and internationalists. They were also Strachan s men and for that they paid a price whether deemed guilty by association or because they felt unwanted when their mentor moved on. Willo Flood and Chris Killen, peripheral figures, under Strachan were never really

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given the opportunity to prove their worth under Mowbray, but have a pedigree at Championship level while the latter is also a regular goalscorer in international football for New Zealand.

It may be that Killen, however, finds himself on the fringes once more with the arrival of Miller and McDonald. He will take little comfort from the fact that McDonald scored 50 goals in 88 league appearances for Celtic after joining the club in the summer of 2007. The Australian's arrival at Middlesbrough is timely and he will be entering a dressing room with familiar faces and a manager who values him.

Strachan has positioned the north-east club on the shoulder of those sides occupying the play-off places. The least Steve Gibson, the Middlesbrough chairman, will expect is promotion through the back door.

Granted, Strachan has lost his best player in the highly-rated Adam Johnson, who secured a move to Manchester City for an undisclosed fee just as the transfer window closed, but his mark on the Middlesbrough squad after just one transfer window is significant.

As is Mowbray's on Celtic's. Strachan was roundly criticised for failing to act last season with the title all but in the bag. Twelve months on, his successor has been given the backing to overhaul a 10-point deficit all of his own making.

Bravery can bring about the downfall of even the most astute gamblers. Or it can bring rich rewards.

THE VERBAL vote of confidence in a manager is not worth the paper it is not written on. The actions of the Celtic board last night have a value far surpassing the millions they have spent in the transfer window. The message from the East **End** of Glasgow is that the revolution may be bloody, even messy, but it will be bankrolled.

The signing of Robbie Keane acts as a stunning headline to a fascinating story. Tony Mowbray's position has been undermined by whispers. Celtic shouted out a rebuttal. Money does not talk in football, it screams.

The Keane coup is a central part of the Mowbray revolution. It signifies that Celtic are not frightened to spend and that they are prepared to back their manager. If any further evidence was needed one just had to be at Celtic's training ground yesterday. The Republic of Ireland captain joins Diomansy Kamara, Edson Braafheid, Ki Sung-Yueng, Jos Hooiveld, Thomas Rogne, Morten Rasmussen and Paul Slane as arrivals during the transfer window.

The rural retreat of Lennoxton has also **witnessed** a bloodbath reminiscent of a Chicago February of times past. Mowbray has been portrayed as weak, indecisive and vacillating by his critics. The strongest evidence suggests, however, that Skinny Tony is a ruthless hitman. Mark Brown, Willo Flood, Chris Killen, Gary Caldwell, Stephen McManus, Danny Fox, Barry Robson and Scott McDonald are players who regularly featured on matchdays, even if Brown and Flood were to be found on the bench. Mowbray has counted them out.

Others have gone, too. Graham Carey, Cillian Sheridan, Ben Hutchinson, Simon Ferry and Ryan Conroy are out on loan. It would have taken a good offer to prise Andreas Hinkel from the club but it could have been done. Lee Naylor survives until the summer. Speculation continues over Scott Brown's long-term future. Others **stay** on sufferance.

Basically, Mowbray has taken Aiden McGeady and Artur Boruc aside and left the rest to be picked off by other clubs. It is an audacious, highly risky strategy but it will find favour with many Celtic fans.

The media has concentrated fire on Mowbray but a substantial section of the support has become tired of the mediocrity offered up in a calendar year that has **witnessed** one title surrendered to Rangers and another almost pledged to the Ibrox side.

The Mowbray revolution raises the big questions. The first is: will it work? The second: how long will be Mowbray be given?

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It is difficult to answer the first. Football restricts all definitive statements to the field of play. Let's wait and see. What you do is try and bring quality footballers in, said Mowbray when asked how quickly his reconstructed team would gel.

They have to be quality if they are to replace the ones we've let go. Ultimately the team will be judged on the pitch over the period of time whether that be 16 games [left in the league] or invariably for us the next game.

Mowbray now has Marc-Antoine Fortune, Rasmussen, Kamara, Georgios Samaras and Keane jousting for two striking spots. How will he make it work?

That's the balancing act for any coach. You try to get the chemistry right in the team, he said of his options before the Keane deal was completed. The team is about balance and sometimes that's not right because of injuries or suspensions. I just want to create as many good options for this football team and, hopefully, we'll get the chemistry right.

It is a problem that every other manager in Scotland would love to solve. The Mowbray signings have a degree of versatility. Rasmussen is a stereotypical front man but Kamara can play wide and Keane can play up front, in the hole or wide in a midfield four.

The other major question on Keane is just how can Celtic finance this deal? Is it just a gamble to win the league, thus pressurising Rangers financially? This reasoning suggests that if Celtic win the title the Ibrox side could be looking at a difficult Champions League qualifier, with still no buyer for the club. This, in turn, could force an exodus of Rangers players.

But Rangers are still 10 points in front at the top of the Clydesdale Bank Premier League. Celtic's strategy can not be based on mere hope.

There are only two possible sources for the funding of the Keane move. It is not a cheap bit of business. When West Ham United enquired about the availability of the Tottenham Hotspur striker, they were told that Spurs wanted a £1m loan fee and the striker's £70,000-a-week wages had to be paid in full.

This was too rich for the East London club. So how can it be a viable option for a club surviving on the scraps offered by the SPL?

The first observation is that Celtic have no debt. The second is that the club's majority shareholder is Dermot Desmond. The Irish businessman had input into the arrival of Roy Keane at Celtic. It would be no surprise to learn that he helped in the transfer of the striker from Spurs.

Peter Lawwell, the Celtic chief executive, also hinted late last night that the Glasgow club might not have to pay all of Keane's wages. He said an agreement had been made with Spurs over the salary, fuelling speculation that the North London club may be making some contribution to their captain's salary. Lawwell, though, would not elaborate, citing that the agreement was confidential.

A substantial bill will have to be paid for the international striker. But there are solid business reasons, too, for bringing Keane to Celtic Park.

More than 20,000 seats have remained empty at some home matches. That is a lot of unbought pies and programmes. The top-dollar seats in the executive boxes have been particularly hard hit by the recession in both the economy and Celtic's fortunes. Half-season tickets have also been offered on a regular basis to a largely uninterested public.

This has all changed with one stroke of a pen. Tickets for Celtic games will be at a premium. Merchandising, too, will be given a boost. It will not be a difficult task to spot a shirt with Keane stamped on it in the West of Scotland, and beyond, later this week.



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Celtic have lifted their supporters. There will be excitement about seeing a player of Keane's undoubted ability on a Scottish football field. But this must be complemented by tangible success.

And this brings up the second major question: how long will Mowbray be given? Will Celtic tolerate failure this season in the hope that the manager is building a side capable of sustained domestic success and of competing in the Champions League?

The enduring joy and constant irritation of football is that it defies any notions of certainty. Keane could fail, Mowbray could fall and the hopes of Celtic could drown in the dangerous waters of change.

But Celtic have invested in their future and, crucially, their manager. The stock of the board has already risen in the eyes of the fans. The team must follow suit. The revolution has started. Its first test awaits tonight at Rugby Park.

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This has all changed with one stroke of a pen. Tickets for Celtic games will be at a premium. Merchandising, too, will be given a boost. It will not be a difficult task to spot a shirt with Keane stamped on it in the West of Scotland, and beyond, later this week.

Celtic have lifted their supporters. There will be excitement about seeing a player of Keane's undoubted ability on a Scottish football field. But this must be complemented by tangible success.

And this brings up the second major question: how long will Mowbray be given? Will Celtic tolerate failure this season in the hope that the manager is building a side capable of sustained domestic success and of competing in the Champions League?

The enduring joy and constant irritation of football is that it defies any notions of certainty. Keane could fail, Mowbray could fall and the hopes of Celtic could drown in the dangerous waters of change.

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But Celtic have invested in their future and, crucially, their manager. The stock of the board has already risen in the eyes of the fans. The team must follow suit. The revolution has started. Its first test awaits tonight at Rugby Park.

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Rod Stone, the group's chairman, said about half of the nation's 32 local authorities had cut back on cultural spending in recent years.

He added: The next three years are likely to be even more challenging. Local authorities will continue to be vital to culture; it remains to be seen if culture remains vital to local authorities.

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Actor Colin Firth and Livia Giuggioli last night attended the UK premiere for *A Single Man* at The Curzon in Mayfair, London. The actor, who stars as gay college professor George Falconer in *A Single Man*, said at the movie's UK premiere in central London that there are still "invisible boundaries" that gay actors struggle to cross.

He said: "There might be risks for a gay actor coming out. The politics of that are quite complex, it seems to me.

"If you're known as a straight guy, playing a gay role, you get rewarded for that. If you're a gay man and you want to play a straight role, you don't get cast - and if a gay man wants to play a gay role now, you don't get cast.

"I think it needs to be addressed and I feel complicit in the problem. I don't mean to be. I think we should all be allowed to play whoever - but I think there are still some invisible boundaries which are still uncrossable."

:: *A Single Man* is released in UK cinemas on February 12.

## ends

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FRANCE has honoured Ewan McGregor by naming him a knight in the prestigious National Order of Arts and Letters.

The Scots star was named along with his co-star Jim Carrey in the forthcoming gay romance *I Love You Phillip Morris* as a recipient of the prestigious award, which marks their significant contribution to the arts in the country.

They will be given a silver medal each. Previous recipients include the actor Dennis Hopper, who was given the title of commander and Stacey Kent, the Grammy-nominated jazz singer.

McGregor also had a starring role in the 2001 Baz Luhrmann film *Moulin Rouge*, set in Paris.

Culture minister Frederic Mitterrand, the openly gay nephew of the former president Francois Mitterrand, declared his undying love for the stars at a ceremony to launch the film in Paris. He said: I love you Jim Carrey! I love you Ewan McGregor!

He added that French moviegoers feel the same.

Carrey plays a con man who meets the love of his life, McGregor, in prison, then comes up with elaborate escapes and masquerades to free himself and the object of his affections.

SCOTLAND'S largest police force has taken a major step towards a move away from its historic headquarters location in the centre of Glasgow to a new site in the east end of the city.

Strathclyde Police's governing body has agreed a £1m full business case looking at designs and costs for a new HQ, which would see its nerve centre shift from Pitt Street, in the commercial heart of Glasgow, to a riverside site within the vicinity of the Commonwealth Games area.

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A new building is anticipated to cost in the region of £45m and will be home to up to 1200 uniformed and civilian staff

It could be fully operational in four years time and would sit alongside the M74 extension and the East **End** Regeneration Route, which will link the M8 with the M74.

Land worth up to £7m will be made available free to the force by development agency Clyde Gateway, the body responsible for injecting new life and business into the swathes of land around the Commonwealth village in Dalmarnock and Parkhead, as well as parts of South Lanarkshire.

Clyde Gateway is also providing the £1m for the feasibility study, which was agreed by the Police Authority yesterday.

It follows two years of speculation that Chief Constable Stephen House had been keen on a move away from Pitt Street, where it has been for over 35 years.

Councillor Paul Rooney, chair of the Strathclyde Police Authority, said It is well documented that the current facilities at force headquarters in Pitt Street are no longer fit for purpose.

THE mystery of the disappearing Rolf Harris painting came before the Court of Appeal yesterday.

Lovers On The Seine was bought by collector Dean Hardy from the Castle Galleries in 2004 and is said to be worth over £100,000.

Mr Hardy arranged for the painting to be stored at the galleries head office and warehouse at Tachbrook Park, Warwick. But it was noticed that the painting had disappeared in 2005.

When Mr Hardy died, his family took Castle Galleries and its associate, Washington Green Fine Art Publishing Company, to court. A High Court judge sitting in Birmingham ruled the painting had been dishonestly appropriated by Washington Green and he gave £107,000 damages.

There was no finding against Castle Galleries, which had been put into administration.

Yesterday, Philip Marshall QC, representing Washington Green, argued it had never possessed the painting it was always with Castle Galleries.

The family's lawyer said Mr Hardy was not told about the loss, despite asking about it, and no insurance claim was made. The appeal judges reserved their ruling to a later date.

HE has picked some of the world's most famous and expensive multi-millionaire footballers during a 24-year career as Manchester United's manager.

Cristiano Ronaldo, Eric Cantona and David Beckham are just some of the star names that trip off Sir Alex Ferguson's tongue.

Yesterday, the Glasgow-born boss revealed that, despite signing such household names, he can still remember off by heart the names of his team-mates in his former school's squad.

Sir Alex, 68, was meeting pupils at his alma mater, Govan High School, in the city's south side, when he was shown a black and white photograph of himself wearing his striped number 10 shirt.

Then he was Alexander Chapman Ferguson, simply another cheeky schoolboy, so determined to make it as a professional footballer that he failed to apply himself academically.

Although several have since died, the former inside forward said he still keeps in touch with the remainder of the team. He was also quick to remember the under-16 squad's successes and the name of the teams who beat them.



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I still remember my time on the school under-16 football team vividly, he said.

We won the Whitefield Cup, the Castle Cup and the Under-15s Cup. We did lose a game to Calder High from Lothian, I remember that.

Our under-18 team was also beaten by Holyrood and St Mungo schools. The school had a good academic record and a very strong sense of discipline. It's important to remember your roots.

On a whistlestop tour of his former home town, Sir Alex also viewed Glasgow South West Regeneration Agency's Orkney Street Enterprise Centre and drugs charity the Preshal Trust.

However, it was at Govan High School, which this year celebrates its centenary, that the former Rangers player spent the most time.

Although he would have given any of his players his famous hairdryer treatment for being late, the managerial legend was 15 minutes behind schedule for his speaking engagement as he was mobbed by eager young autograph hunters.

The school's dux, David Whitten, 16, was given the honour of making a vote of thanks at a special assembly.

David, from Drumoyne, said he was terrified to be sharing the stage with his hero. He said: I was shaking and panicking beforehand. I was so nervous. Sir Alex is a sheer inspiration.

It's so good to see that it doesn't matter what area you come from, you can achieve anything you set your mind to.

It's also amazing to think that at the age of 68 he's still in the position and managing one of the biggest clubs in the world.

Govan's most famous son spoke of his pride in his former school and the strong ethos of discipline that marked his school days. He told pupils and staff about his fond memories of Govan High, today Glasgow's smallest secondary school with a role of just 344.

Although the football manager is its most famous former pupil, the school also boasts Tony Blair's father Leo as alumni along with Bill Martin, an Ivor Novello-winning songwriter,

The school, then based in Langlands Road, opened its doors to its first pupils in February 1910, but was destroyed by fire in the 1960s.

A replacement school opened in Ardnish Street in 1969, its current location.

Govan High boasts the city's only fully-working hairdressing salon, a swimming pool and a full-size dance studio, and is to celebrate 100 years with a year-long series of events.

Sir Alex also told pupils: You have no worries about the future of this place with your headteacher you're in very good hands.

Headteacher Iain White added: We are so pleased that Sir Alex Ferguson and many other past pupils have agreed to take part in our centenary celebrations.

He is an inspiration for us all and shows that if you work hard and follow your dreams, they really do come true.

Sir Alex last night attended a civic reception of 220 guests held by Lord Provost Bob Winter at Glasgow City Chambers.

Robbie Keane has always been a player in search of appreciation, something beyond the affection of the crowd and the respect or admiration of his team-mates. It is that sense of self-esteem, of dignity even, that comes with

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being central to the ambition of his side. The periphery, where he has occasionally found himself during his career, is so galling to Keane that it anguishes him.

His talent is something enigmatic, capable of moments of sublime ingenuity, but still vulnerable to the kind of anxious impulses that leave him looking aghast in front of goal. What we can be sure of is that he possesses the ability, something natural and intuitive, to beguile some of the game's great clubs and figures. But then we can also say that at the very highest level, where the best players are enabled by a profound, almost chilling, sense of belonging, Keane has faltered.

In moving from Wolves to Coventry for £6.5m in 1999, Keane became the most expensive teenager in English football, and by 19 he had signed for Internazionale. Yet he lasted only four months in Milan and Sir Alex Ferguson once remarked that he would not have paid more than £500,000 to Wolves for the striker. This is the essence of Keane, a gifted talent, but one who can still divide opinion.

He is considered bullishly self-confident, and so cocksure that he dribbled impishly round senior players when he took part in his first Republic of Ireland training session at 17 while shouting, so who is this John Aldridge? Yet those who have closely observed his career also talk of an insecurity, something that lies beneath the surface and can explain the rush to leave Inter and Liverpool when he considered himself unwanted.

The goals come often enough, so that at 29, Keane is the Republic of Ireland's all-time top scorer and 10th in the list of Barclays Premier League scorers with 121. That his time at Liverpool **ended** after six months in January last year was due to the doubt of Rafa Benitez. The Spaniard may have been reluctant in valuing Keane, but he also insists on rigid adherence to his tactical plan, an approach that distrusts spontaneity.

But this is Keane's great strength, his impetuosity, with his quick feet, sharp mind and agile movement spreading a kind of distress among defenders. At Tottenham and with Ireland, he thrived in a role that allows him to flit around the front line, dropping deep or peeling out wide when the notion takes him, but always with a keen eye for devastating bursts into the penalty area. To profit from Keane, a team must adapt themselves around him.

Faced with rescuing Spurs from relegation, Harry Redknapp brought the striker back to White Hart Lane 12 months ago and made him captain. He lifted the place with his personality and enthusiasm, Redknapp later remarked. Yet Jermain Defoe became the team's talisman, while Keane drifted from prominence.

He has not played a full fixture since last September and was at the heart of the unauthorised trip to Dublin by 16 Spurs players at Christmas that so angered Redknapp.

There is something unorthodox to Keane. He began the somersault goal celebration that became his trademark as a 12-year-old at Crumlin United. He is also deeply sentimental, so that he often reaches for the emotional engagement of a transfer. When he joined Liverpool, he spoke of the great joy of signing for the team he followed as a boy. But like most football fans in Ireland, he shared that devotion with an affection for Celtic.

In a sense, Keane's move reflects that of Craig Bellamy, another player capable of brilliance but whose career seemed still to be fulfilled when he joined Celtic on loan in 2005. At Parkhead, Keane will be engulfed by adoration, but will also find the prominence that he cherishes.

He found meaning in Scotland once before, when he played against Dundee United and Stirling during a pre-season tour with Wolves in 1997. He impressed enough to make his debut in the first game of the season against Norwich. He scored twice. This move will bring another opportunity to declare his worth.

1980 born, Dublin, July 8

1994 chooses to join Wolverhampton Wanderers

1997 signs first professional contract

1998 makes international debut for the Republic of Ireland as substitute

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1999 joins Coventry City for £6m to become most expensive teenager in Premiership and scores twice on debut

2000 joins Inter Milan for £13m on five-year deal in July. Moves in December to Leeds United on loan until end of season

2001 transferred to Leeds in £12m deal

2002 joins Tottenham Hotspur for £7m

2004 becomes all-time Irish international record goalscorer with double in 2-0 win over Faroe Islands, surpassing Niall Quinn's total of 21 and moving on to 23

2005 storms off after failing to feature as a substitute against Birmingham City; fined £10,000 and forced to train with reserves

2006 signs new five-year Spurs contract

2007 becomes only the 13th player to score 100 English Premier League goals

2008 wins the League Cup with Tottenham in 2-1 extra-time defeat of Chelsea at Wembley. Joins Liverpool in a deal worth £20.3m in the summer, but it takes him until November to score first league goal

2009 returns to Spurs for initial £12m, taking career transfer fees to £70.3m

2010 moves to Celtic on loan

THE road to the World Cup will wind through a series of Scottish football grounds for Edson Braafheid, writes Hugh MacDonald.

The 26-year-old Dutchman has signed for Celtic on loan from Bayern Munich in an effort to consolidate his place in the Netherlands squad for South Africa. The left-back has arrived in Scotland after taking advice from Bert van Maarwijk, the Dutch coach.

I called Van Maarwijk and explained the situation to him. He said it would be a good step for me to come to Celtic, said Braafheid. He said this would be a good club. In the past, a few Dutch players have played for Celtic and he has been in touch with them over the years. They all said positive things about the club, so Van Maarwijk felt it would be good for me.

Braafheid also talked to Marc-Antoine Fortune, the Celtic forward who was his team-mate at Utrecht. He told me some good stories about Celtic, said Braafheid. He told me that it was a big club, with a nice stadium and some of the best supporters around. He said there was a great atmosphere at the games and that's what I wanted to hear. He also said the coach was really happy that he might be able to sign me. That was also important.

I need to play games, but they have to be at a good level. That's why Celtic suits me. The moment the club called me, I said yes because I knew the level at Celtic is very high.

Braafheid would not rule out a long-term deal at Celtic but his focus is on playing his way into a World Cup berth.

With Celtic, it is the same as Bayern. They have to be champions every year, so the pressure is high, added Braafheid, who will not play tonight against Kilmarnock but who has targeted a winning end to a season he has so far spent on the sidelines in Munich.

Now it is 10 points with one game in hand, he said of the gap at the top of the Clydesdale Bank Premier League. That gives a clear goal of what has to be done for the rest of the season.

For me, it's not just about coming here, playing games and leaving again. Every time I play for a club I want to win prizes. And there are two prizes Celtic can win this season. My goal is very clear on that.

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THE king has long gone, but his reign may have helped usher another period of prosperity for Celtic. Henrik Larsson has now moved into management but his playing days provided the inspiration for Diomansy Kamara, the 29-year-old striker, who has joined Celtic on loan until the end of the season.

I loved Larsson s kind of play when I was younger, said Kamara who completed his move from Fulham yesterday. I loved George Weah during his days at Paris St Germain and Larsson. Larsson was not the same kind of player as me, but he had great skills and scored amazing goals. He was my hero.

Kamara, who played for Celtic manager Tony Mowbray at West Bromwich Albion, sees the move to Scotland as his opportunity to reignite a career that stalled because of serious knee injuries.

My main goal is to stay fit and I hope the supporters love me, he said after completing his first training session at Lennoxtown. He did much to make the latter ambition come true by saying: It was an easy decision to make because Celtic are a massive club. When Tony Mowbray rang me three days ago to tell me Celtic were interested in signing me, I said yes .

I know him and it is a dream for me to play at Celtic because my football hero was Henrik Larsson. I know the Scottish League is not the Premiership, but I am so happy to come here because the fans are amazing. Playing in a stadium like Parkhead is a dream for every player.

Much of this can be ascribed to the footballer s desire to make a good impression, but there is no doubting Kamara s sincerity when he talked about how important the move north could be for him. At 29, the Senegalese internationalist needs to play regularly and he hopes to extend his stay in Glasgow. I am on loan at the moment, but I have spoken with Tony and there s the option of a contract for another three years, he said. I want to be part of the project going on here for the next few years.

The Mowbray factor was crucial to the signing. I had chances to go back to France and there was something in England, but I worked with Tony Mowbray at West Brom and he knows exactly what I can do and where I can play, said Kamara. That is the most important reason I chose Celtic.

I played the best football of my career when I was with him at West Brom. I love training with him and I could play behind a big striker or right or left.

Kamara, who has never visited Scotland before, revealed he had some knowledge of Scottish football by referring to the good form of Hibernian, who beat Celtic only last week. He was not dismayed by his departure from the Barclays Premier League. The Premiership is the best league in the world, but Celtic and Rangers would do so well if they could get down there, he said. I think they would be in the top five.

He is ready for the fray, making himself available for tonight s game at Rugby Park. It is nice for me to be able to play immediately and we have a good challenge. We can fight for the title, he said.

Kamara was not daunted by the gap at the top of the Clydesdale Bank Premier League. Yes, there are 10 points in it, but we have a game in hand and we will reduce that by winning at Kilmarnock, he said. We also have two games against Rangers and the title will be open if we win those games. We can win the title. There is, of course, the Scottish Cup as well.

I know it will be hard, but we need to win something this year. It is hard for Celtic to end a season having won nothing. I love to play with pressure on me and I know the fans are crazy. They are the best supporters in the world. Parkhead also has an atmosphere like Anfield and I just want to see it.

Kamara also shrugged off references to his injury problems. I feel so good now. I am 100% fit and I don t feel anything at all in my knee. I had to be fit to come here. I wouldn t have signed if I was feeling any kind of pain. I have taken my time to come back strong and I am ready.

He will have to be if he is to have any chance of replicating just some of the feats of his football hero.

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Diomansy Kamara

age 29 position Forward

height 6ft 1in

international appearances Senegal 49 (9 goals)

career 07-present Fulham; 05-07 West Bromwich Albion; 04-05 Portsmouth; 01-05 Modena; 99-01 Catanzaro; 98-99 Red Star 93, Paris

Edson Braafheid

age 26 position left-back

height 5ft 9in

international appearances Netherlands 5 (0 goals)

career 09-present Bayern Munich; 07-09 Twente Enschede; 03-07 Utrecht

THE king has long gone, but his reign may have helped usher another period of prosperity for Celtic. Henrik Larsson has now moved into management but his playing days provided the inspiration for Diomansy Kamara, the 29-year-old striker, who has joined Celtic on loan until the end of the season.

I loved Larsson s kind of play when I was younger, said Kamara who completed his move from Fulham yesterday. I loved George Weah during his days at Paris St Germain and Larsson. Larsson was not the same kind of player as me, but he had great skills and scored amazing goals. He was my hero.

Kamara, who played for Celtic manager Tony Mowbray at West Bromwich Albion, sees the move to Scotland as his opportunity to reignite a career that stalled because of serious knee injuries.

My main goal is to stay fit and I hope the supporters love me, he said after completing his first training session at Lennoxtown. He did much to make the latter ambition come true by saying: It was an easy decision to make because Celtic are a massive club. When Tony Mowbray rang me three days ago to tell me Celtic were interested in signing me, I said yes .

I know him and it is a dream for me to play at Celtic because my football hero was Henrik Larsson. I know the Scottish League is not the Premiership, but I am so happy to come here because the fans are amazing. Playing in a stadium like Parkhead is a dream for every player.

Much of this can be ascribed to the footballer s desire to make a good impression, but there is no doubting Kamara s sincerity when he talked about how important the move north could be for him. At 29, the Senegalese internationalist needs to play regularly and he hopes to extend his stay in Glasgow. I am on loan at the moment, but I have spoken with Tony and there s the option of a contract for another three years, he said. I want to be part of the project going on here for the next few years.

The Mowbray factor was crucial to the signing. I had chances to go back to France and there was something in England, but I worked with Tony Mowbray at West Brom and he knows exactly what I can do and where I can play, said Kamara. That is the most important reason I chose Celtic.

I played the best football of my career when I was with him at West Brom. I love training with him and I could play behind a big striker or right or left.

Kamara, who has never visited Scotland before, revealed he had some knowledge of Scottish football by referring to the good form of Hibernian, who beat Celtic only last week. He was not dismayed by his departure from the

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Barclays Premier League. The Premiership is the best league in the world, but Celtic and Rangers would do so well if they could get down there, he said. I think they would be in the top five.

He is ready for the fray, making himself available for tonight's game at Rugby Park. It is nice for me to be able to play immediately and we have a good challenge. We can fight for the title, he said.

Kamara was not daunted by the gap at the top of the Clydesdale Bank Premier League. Yes, there are 10 points in it, but we have a game in hand and we will reduce that by winning at Kilmarnock, he said. We also have two games against Rangers and the title will be open if we win those games. We can win the title. There is, of course, the Scottish Cup as well.

I know it will be hard, but we need to win something this year. It is hard for Celtic to end a season having won nothing. I love to play with pressure on me and I know the fans are crazy. They are the best supporters in the world. Parkhead also has an atmosphere like Anfield and I just want to see it.

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MARGO MacDonald, the independent MSP attempting to make assisted suicide legal in Scotland, warned last night that it could not apply to people with cognitive disorders as author and Alzheimer's disease sufferer Sir Terry Pratchett called for a tribunal to help seriously ill people to die.

As polls showed a majority of people backed assisted suicide, Sir Terry said he would offer himself as a test case before such a strictly non-aggressive tribunal, which would include a legal expert in family affairs and a doctor who had dealt with serious, long-term illness.

They would have to judge whether someone was of sound and informed mind look to prevent abuses acting for the good of society as well as that of the applicant.

The best-selling author, who suffers from a degenerative strain of Alzheimer's which affects visual processing called Posterior cortical atrophy (PCA) used the Richard Dimbleby Lecture last night to put forward his tribunal idea for what he preferred to refer to as assisted death.

We should strive for a good rich life well lived, and at the end of it, in the comfort of our own home in the company of those that love us, have a death worth dying for, he said.

In his address provided by actor Tony Robinson as he sat nearby, he added: Care is a lottery and there are those of us who don't wish to be cared for, who don't want to spend their time in anyone's waiting room, to have the right not to do what you are told by a nurse, not to obey the doctor, a right in my case to demand here and now the power of attorney over the fate of THE Terry Pratchett that at some future date I will become.

Ms MacDonald has put forward a Bill in Scotland that she hopes will allow those whose lives have become intolerable a dignified death at home. She said her proposals would not apply to people with severe cognitive conditions, such as Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia as there appeared to be no way of guaranteeing it was what the person wanted.

She said: I applaud Terry Pratchett for bringing the issue out into the open and causing a debate, causing people to think about it and examine it.

I have been doing that for well over a year and I haven't come up with a way in which you could legislate and be absolutely certain the safeguards you have built in to defend someone would stand up for those with illnesses such as Alzheimer's.

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My Bill rests on the principals of autonomy of the patient, the capacity of the patient, that it is physician assisted and that there is a very strong supporting system. These four elements must be there.

With Alzheimer s, that group of illnesses, people don t have capacity so someone else would have to take the decision.

The Alzheimer s Society said it could not support a change in the law on assisted dying or euthanasia. People with

dementia need better end-of-life care to provide them with the choice, comfort and dignity they deserve, a spokesman said.

Sir Terry is not alone in his desire to debate end-of-life choices, but his view is a very personal one.

Sir Terry told the audience at the Royal College of Physicians in London: If I knew that I could die, I would live. My life, my death, my choice.

He was to say that many GPs would support the right to die and that turning to the medical profession to help was sensible .

THE arguments for and against a change in law on assisted suicide are complex and challenging and there are a range of views within the medical profession, as within wider society.

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The primary goal of medicine is still seen as promoting welfare and giving all patients as good a quality of life as is possible.

The concept of assisted dying risks undermining this goal.

SIR Terry Pratchett, the best-selling author who suffers from Alzheimer s disease, made an impassioned plea for assisted death for seriously ill people last night.

Actor Tony Robinson delivered Sir Terry s Richard Dimbleby Lecture, a task that appeared to be beyond the author s powers of endurance. He sat nearby as Mr Robinson spoke.

He said: We should strive for a good rich life well lived, and at the end of it, in the comfort of our own home in the company of those that love us, have a death worth dying for.

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Sir Terry suffers from a degenerative strain of Alzheimer s which affects visual processing called posterior cortical atrophy.

Margo MacDonald, the independent MSP who has Parkinson s, has put forward a Bill in Scotland that she hopes will allow those whose lives have become intolerable a dignified death at home.

She said her proposals would not apply to people with severe cognitive conditions, such as Alzheimer s and other forms of dementia, as there appeared to be no way of guaranteeing it was what the person wanted.

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I AM a strong supporter of Assisted Dying, principally on ethical grounds. I believe in the right of individuals to chose when, where and how they die, if that is practically possible.

In the nineteenth century women became free at last of the tyranny of belonging, first to their fathers and then to their husbands. In the last century we were eventually allowed the freedom to decide whether and when to have a child.

It is surely logical that if we can now control the start of life, somebody else s life, at that, we should also be able to choose the time and manner of its ending?

In the Netherlands, where assisted dying has been legal, under strict regulations, for over 10 years, less than 2% of all deaths are legally assisted. It is not as though there will be a queue of elderly people demanding an Exit Certificate.

THE doctor who failed to spot Baby P s broken back and ribs days before his death is facing fresh allegations of misconduct.

Consultant paediatrician Dr Sabah Al-Zayyat applied for a job after the death but failed to inform the employer she was facing General Medical Council (GMC) action, it was alleged.

She will appear before the GMC s fitness to practise panel later this month accused of a catalogue of allegations relating to her treatment of baby Peter Connolly in 2007.

A GMC spokeswoman said the panel will investigate allegations that the consultant failed to carry out an adequate examination of or arrange further investigations in relation to that child when she saw him.

A multi-millionaire has been allowed to keep wild boar and elk on his 23,000 acre Highland Estate.

Paul Lister, who wishes to add wolves and bears to his estate, won the right to keep boar and elk on his Sutherland estate, despite concerns it denied the public its legal right to roam.

Mr Lister keeps 17 wild boar and two European elk on the 450-acre Wilderness Reserve he established two years ago.



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But its high fences have caused offence, with one hillwalker lodging a complaint that they infringed his right of responsible access established by Holyrood's land reform legislation in 2003.

As a result the council's access officer had objected to the renewal of Mr Lister's licence.

Chairman Alasdair Rhind, a councillor in Easter Ross, said: There were concerns from our access officer about the right to roam, but our legal advice was that we were to consider the application under the Dangerous Wild Animals Act 1976, and that act only.

He said that the renewal of the licence would mean it would remain in force until December.

David Gibson, of the Mountaineering Council of Scotland, said: The Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 clearly provides access-takers with the right to cross areas of wild land and this right may be compromised by the actions of the Alladale Estate.

TWO primary schools in Glasgow could be closed as part of moves to rationalise the city's estate and improve the quality of facilities.

Under the plans, Glasgow City Council has proposed the closure of Stonedyke Primary, in Drumchapel, and St Mark's Primary, in Tollcross with pupils moving to neighbouring schools.

Officials said both primaries had been earmarked for closure because they were half empty and were also in a poor condition.

Three other primary schools St Roch's, in Royston, Thornwood, near Partick, and St Joseph's, in St George's Cross are to benefit from a £6 million refurbishment package.

There will be implications for staff at the schools, although the council said there would be no compulsory redundancies.

The moves are also likely to be unpopular with parents. Last year, families across the city attacked the council after it unveiled plans to shut 13 primaries and 12 nurseries in the city to bring in savings of £3.7m a year.

However, the council has also invested heavily in new and refurbished facilities since 2002 with more than £550m spent on the school estate since then.

Yesterday, Jonathan Findlay, Glasgow's executive member for education, insisted the proposals would benefit the education of the children involved.

He said: Experience from previous merger programmes has shown that moving children from crumbling schools with low rolls to schools in better condition with larger rolls and greater staff numbers not only improves the environment within which children are educated, but expands the opportunities available in terms of both the school curriculum and other social and sporting activities.

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As polls showed a majority of people backed assisted suicide, Sir Terry said he would offer himself as a test case before such a tribunal, which would include a legal expert in family affairs and a doctor who had dealt with serious, long-term illness.

The best-selling author, who was due to use the Richard Dimbleby Lecture last night to put forward his tribunal idea, said: 'I think society, in order to be comfortable with people taking assisted dying, would want to know that there is as much protection against the vulnerable being somehow led into it, possibly by greedy relatives.'

'I want to live as long as I can and get the most of life, but I want to make certain when the time comes, when I should really be dying, I'll die.'

Ms MacDonald has put forward a Bill in Scotland that she hopes will allow those whose lives have become intolerable a dignified death at home. She said her proposals would not apply to people with severe cognitive conditions, such as Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia as there appeared to be no way of guaranteeing it was what the person wanted.

She said: 'I applaud Terry Pratchett for bringing the issue out into the open and causing a debate, causing people to think about it and examine it.'

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The Alzheimer's Society said it could not support a change in the law on assisted dying or euthanasia. People with dementia need better **end**-of-life care to provide them with the choice, comfort and dignity they deserve, a spokesman said.

Unfortunately, the society hears many reports of people receiving care that falls far short of this. Sir Terry is not alone in his desire to debate **end**-of-life choices, but his view is a very personal one.

Sir Terry was to tell an audience at the Royal College of Physicians in London: If I knew that I could die, I would live. My life, my death, my choice.

He was to say that many GPs would support the right to die and that turning to the medical profession to help was sensible.

MORE than 6000 Peugeot and Citroen cars were yesterday recalled in the UK.

The recall is part of the European-wide recall of 97,000 Peugeot 107 and Citroen C1 models as they are fitted with the same accelerator pedal used in the Toyota Aygo, one of the models being recalled by the Japanese firm.

The French car maker said: Toyota has announced a recall on eight of its models to solve a potential accelerator pedal issue.

PSA Peugeot Citroen has decided, in line with its stringent quality policy, to launch a similar programme for a selected range of Peugeot 107s and Citroen C1s, which are produced in co-operation with Toyota in a shared plant.

This precautionary recall concerns less than 10% of Peugeot 107s and Citroen C1s in Europe.

An immediate independent investigation is needed into harsh benefit rules that are leading to people with serious mental health problems being inappropriately told they are fit to work.

Opposition parties called for the inquiry after The Herald revealed that Citizens Advice bureaux all around Scotland had been inundated with appeals against the UK Government's Employment and Support Allowance (ESA).

The SNP also raised the matter in the House of Commons.

ESA, a sickness and disability allowance, was introduced in October 2008 to replace incapacity benefit.

Before qualifying, claimants must go through a work capability assessment with a healthcare professional from the private company Atos.

In one case, according to the mental health charity SAMH, a man with a history of mental illness took an overdose after being told by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) he had to return to work. The DWP had been given contact details for the man's GP and psychiatrist, but had not contacted them.

In the House of Commons yesterday, the SNP's work and pensions spokesman John Mason asked the minister for the disabled, Jonathan Shaw why Atos regularly ignored patients' own GPs. The minister replied that Atos did take GPs' representations into account but added that seminars were being arranged for Atos and DWP staff, so we can set out in detail how those medical assessments are carried on.

Following the debate, Mr Mason said the Government's benefit reform had increased pressure on vulnerable people.

These are the very people who need society's protection and it is utterly unacceptable that the system in place to help is heightening mental strain and anguish, he said. It's simply wrong that people with genuine disability and incapacity should face such harsh treatment.

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The Liberal Democrats also called for an investigation. The Shadow Scottish secretary Alistair Carmichael said: There is not an MP in Scotland who cannot tell you from his or her own constituency caseload that doctors are being used by the DWP to cut the number of people on benefits.

This is something which now requires a thorough investigation which is independent of the government and the companies it employs.

FUNDING to help disadvantaged students gain access to some of Scotland's most prestigious universities and ensure they graduate may be withdrawn under new proposals.

The Scottish Funding Council (SFC) is considering restricting financial support for widening access and retention to universities who have the highest proportion of students from disadvantaged areas.

Funding previously shared across all institutions could be closed to the universities of St Andrews, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Heriot-Watt.

Mark Batho, chief executive of the SFC, said: Our intention for the year is to remove the premium from four higher education institutions that have received small proportions of premium.

TREES are growing faster due to man-made global warming, a study suggests.

In one forest studied by researchers, an extra 1.8 tonnes of timber per acre is appearing each year.

The trees, in the US state of Maryland, are sprouting up more quickly than at any time in the past 225 years, say the scientists.

The accelerated growth was put down to rising levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide, higher temperatures, as well as longer growing seasons.

Researchers who spent more than 20 years tracking the growth of 55 stands of mixed hardwood forest plots made the discovery.

They compared trees ranging from five to 225 years old. More than 90% of the stands were found to have grown two to four times faster than expected.

The stands were grouped by age, proving it was a recent phenomenon.

POETRY is often about stripping naked the writer's innermost thoughts and emotions onto the printed page, but yesterday three lovers of verse took the philosophy further and disrobed in the unlikely surroundings of Edinburgh Central Library. Charlotte Murray, Ava Mueller and Lynda MacGregor had henna tattoos placed strategically on their backs to form the words Carry Your Hearts, at the launch of the Carry A Poem reading campaign, coordinated by the Edinburgh UNESCO City of Literature Trust and the Scottish Poetry Library. The aim is to encourage and inspire the city's residents to carry poems they love with them wherever they go. Actor Alan Cumming and local school pupils are also supporting the scheme. The aim is to get people to look, talk and think about poetry and carry a poem with them. Lots of people can recite poetry off by heart, but don't carry them with them. There's always one for every occasion - so take it with you! said a spokeswoman.

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Picture: Julie Howden

A GOOD Samaritan was killed and another left fighting for his life after they were struck by a van as they helped two victims of a car crash.

The 47-year-old man was killed and a 39-year-old male was left in a critical condition in hospital after they were knocked down near Linwood, Renfrewshire, on Sunday.

In a separate road tragedy, a two-year-old girl and her teenage sister were orphaned after their parents were killed in a road accident.

Toddler Nicola Lukjansky was in the family s green Vauxhall Frontera with her parents, Karina and Vladimir, when it left the road and slid down an embankment in icy conditions on the A90 between Peterhead and Fraserburgh.

Although Nicola survived with her 18-year-old sister Katerina, their mother and father, who moved to Scotland four years ago from eastern Europe, were killed instantly.

In the Linwood tragedy, the two men had stopped their cars to help a 71-year-old woman who had crashed her Volkswagen Polo on the A737 Linclive spur.

The car had spun off the road after colliding with an oncoming Seat Leon driven by a 25-year-old woman at 8.20pm.

Both men were struck by a Vauxhall Combo van being driven by a 48-year-old man.

Emergency services quickly attended but the 47-year-old man died at the scene. The 39-year-old is currently being treated for head and leg injuries at Glasgow s Southern General Hospital.

The 71-year-old driver of the Volkswagen Polo was taken by ambulance to the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Paisley where she is being treated for a shoulder injury. Her condition was last night said to be stable.

Inspector Paul Reilly, of Dumbarton Road traffic policing department, said: The two men were assisting the elderly injured woman when they were stuck by the van on the carriageway.

Unfortunately this tragic incident also shows how dangerous busy roads can be, and I would urge anyone who witnesses a road crash on a busy road not to walk along the carriageways, but contact the emergency services.

Meanwhile, Nicola Lukjansky is recovering from severe leg injuries in Royal Aberdeen Children s Hospital. Her sister has refused to leave her bedside.

A close family friend said: They were a really lovely family. It s a tragedy for that little girl. She had her mum and dad one minute then they were taken away the next. It s awful. She won t understand what has happened.

Police are trying to work out whether or not the subzero temperatures and icy conditions played a part in the accident.

Officers investigating the Linwood tragedy appealed for any witnesses to contact them urgently on 01389 822017.

A THIRD round of detailed ground investigations on the site of the proposed new Forth road crossing will begin later this month in a bid to prevent costs of up to £2.3 billion escalating during construction.

Transport Scotland, the Government agency overseeing the project, is anxious to avoid unforeseen problems similar to those that have beset construction of Edinburgh s tram system.

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A major factor in its delays has been unexpected ground conditions such as graveyards and uncharted gas and water mains adding to the cost and length of preparatory work.

The eight-week investigation, which will cover marine conditions and approach roads, has been instigated at the request of two consortia, Forthspan and Forth Crossing Constructors, which are bidding to build the replacement bridge.

Its announcement came as parliamentary authorities published a list of the 88 individuals and organisations who have formally objected to the Bill authorising the bridge's construction.

They include residents in North and South Queensferry as well as bodies and companies including Network Rail, RSPB Scotland and Edinburgh Airport, as well as West Lothian and Edinburgh councils.

CONTESTANTS could lose £1 million in a new Channel 4 game show.

Participants are given the hefty sum at the start of the show, which will be broadcast live from a secret secure location, but will have to watch their cash disappear down trapdoors if they answer incorrectly.

Channel 4 has commissioned the show, provisionally entitled The Drop, from Endemol, the TV company behind Big Brother.

Contestants will be plucked from social networking websites and even other Channel 4 programmes in what producers say will revolutionise how TV gameshows are cast.

The Drop will go out over a week next year, with viewers watching the show one day and living in the secret location hoping to take home £1m the next.

Prospects for the financially troubled Highland Airways, which serves some of the most fragile island communities, appear to be improving.

Bookings had been suspended at the beginning of last week and, while there has also been uncertainty over the pay of the airline's 100 employees.

However a statement on the airline's website reports some headway in its efforts to achieve financial stability: The company is making good progress in its discussions with a potential new partner who will bring strong synergies and new opportunities to the business.

This development presents the airline with a very promising and timely means to address current difficulties.

The motivation of the Board throughout has been to secure the delivery of the valued services that we offer and also to secure the employment of our highly skilled workforce in Scotland, Wales and the rest of the UK.

We are now accepting bookings on all our scheduled flights until the **end** of February.

Bookings beyond that point are not currently open, but will be released as soon as possible.

## LAST NIGHT

\* Barclays Premier League

Sunderland 0 Stoke City 0

Att: 35,078

P W D L F A Pts

Chelsea 23 17 3 3 57 19 54

## Celtic reject late bid for McGeedy as Keane tops frantic day of deals

Manchester United 24 17 2 5 56 20 53

Arsenal 24 15 4 5 60 28 49

Tottenham Hotspur 24 12 6 6 45 25 42

Liverpool 24 12 5 7 42 26 41

Manchester City 22 11 8 3 44 30 41

Aston Villa 23 11 7 5 31 18 40

Birmingham City 23 9 7 7 22 23 34

Everton 23 8 8 7 33 34 32

Blackburn Rovers 24 7 7 10 25 40 28

Fulham 23 7 6 10 26 28 27

Stoke City 22 6 8 8 19 26 26

Sunderland 23 6 6 11 30 40 24

Wigan Athletic 22 6 4 12 24 47 22

West Ham United 23 4 9 10 29 38 21

Bolton Wanderers 22 5 6 11 29 44 21

Wolverhampton Wanderers 23 5 6 12 19 40 21

Burnley 23 5 5 13 23 46 20

Hull City 23 4 8 11 22 48 20

Portsmouth 22 4 3 15 19 35 15

\* Coca-Cola Football League 2

Bury 1 Rochdale 0

Lowe 78 Att: 6528

P W D L F A Pts

Rochdale 28 17 5 6 58 26 56

Bournemouth 27 15 4 8 32 29 49

Bury 27 14 6 7 38 35 48

Rotherham United 24 13 6 5 37 24 45

Notts County 24 12 7 5 52 21 43

Shrewsbury Town 28 11 9 8 39 34 42

Chesterfield 27 13 3 11 38 34 42



# Celtic reject late bid for McGeady as Keane tops frantic day of deals

Aldershot 26 11 8 7 43 33 41

Dagenham & Redbridge 26 11 7 8 39 34 40

Accrington Stanley 24 12 3 9 38 34 39

Morecambe Town 27 9 11 7 46 41 38

Port Vale 26 8 13 5 30 25 37

Northampton Town 28 9 10 9 38 37 37

Burton Albion 27 10 7 10 41 41 37

Crewe Alexandra 27 10 4 13 43 44 34

Bradford City 26 8 9 9 37 42 33

Macclesfield Town 25 6 11 8 30 37 29

Barnet 27 7 8 12 27 36 29

Lincoln City 25 8 4 13 19 32 28

Torquay United 27 6 8 13 36 40 26

Hereford United 25 6 8 11 27 36 26

Cheltenham Town 26 5 10 11 29 43 25

Grimsby Town 27 3 11 13 20 41 20

Darlington 24 3 2 19 13 51 11

## INTERNATIONAL

\* friendly

Jamaica 1 Canada 0

Shelton 68

## EUROPE

\* Portugal. Liga Sagres

Leixoes 1 Maritimo 2

TODAY (7.45pm unless stated)

\* SFL. Co-operative Insurance Cup

Semi-final Hearts v St Mirren (Fir Park Stadium)

\* Clydesdale Bank Premier League

Aberdeen v Falkirk, Kilmarnock v Celtic (7.30)

Irn-Bru Scottish League

## Celtic reject late bid for McGeady as Keane tops frantic day of deals

\* Division 2 Cowdenbeath P Stirling Albion P

\* Division 3 Livingston v Queen s Park

\* FA Cup, sponsored by E.ON

Round 4 Replay Crystal Palace v Wolverhampton Wndrs (8pm), Wigan Athletic v Notts County

\* Barclays Premier League Hull City v Chelsea

\* Coca-Cola League Championship Preston North **End** v Barnsley, Watford v Sheffield United

\* Coca-Cola League 1 Colchester United v Carlisle United, Stockport County v Oldham Athletic, Walsall v Charlton Athletic, Leyton Orient v Bristol Rovers

\* Coca-Cola League 2 Accrington Stanley v Barnet, Crewe Alexandra v Torquay United, Hereford United v Lincoln City, Rotherham United v Bournemouth

Northern Ireland

\* Carling Irish Premiership Cliftonville v Institute, Glenavon v Newry City

\* Co-operative Insurance Irish Cup.

Semi-final Glentoran v Portadown (Windsor Park)

EUROPE

\* Italy. Coppa Italia. Semi-finals (8pm)

Fiorentina v Internazionale, Roma v Udinese

\* Netherlands. Eredivisie (7pm) Groningen v ADO Den Haag, NAC Breda v AZ Alkmaar, NEC Nijmegen v Willem II Tilburg, VVV-Venlo v SC Heerenveen

LATE RESULT

\* SPL Clydesdale Bank Under-19 League

Rangers 6 St Johnstone 1

Kal Naismith 1 Darren Kelly 86

Kane Hemmings 7, 60 Archie Campbell 17, 51 Chris Scott 38

P W D L F A Pts

Celtic 11 6 4 1 27 10 22

Rangers 10 6 2 2 24 12 20

Hamilton Academical 11 6 2 3 20 25 20

Dundee United 11 5 4 2 24 20 19

St Mirren 13 6 1 6 27 26 19

Falkirk 11 5 3 3 18 15 18

## Celtic reject late bid for McGeady as Keane tops frantic day of deals

Aberdeen 11 5 0 6 23 19 15

Hibernian 12 4 2 6 17 24 14

Motherwell 10 4 0 6 27 23 12

Hearts 9 3 2 4 17 14 11

Kilmarnock 13 3 1 9 18 31 10

St Johnstone 10 1 3 6 11 34 6

Cowdenbeath P Stirling Albion P

Allan Moore was left disappointed after Stirling Albion's re-arranged match with Cowdenbeath was called off for a second time because the pitch at Central Park is still frozen.

Moore's side face Ross County this weekend and the Forthbank manager was wanting to use the game to help prepare his men to face the in-form first division: We could do with some match action before facing County. I was hoping to work on the shape we are going to adopt at Dingwall for part of the game at Cowdenbeath but that won't happen now.

Arbroath yesterday signed Callum Booth from Hibs on loan while Clyde have brought striker Jordan White back for a second loan spell from Dunfermline

JIMMY CALDERWOOD, the Kilmarnock manager, hopes his familiar new faces will help make Tony Mowbray's new-look Celtic side appear to be strangers in the night at Rugby Park this evening.

While Mowbray hogged the headlines on transfer deadline day as he added Robbie Keane, Diomansy Kamara and Edson Braafheid on loan deals to recent arrivals Morten Rasmussen, Joos Hooiveld, Ki-Sung-Yeung and Thomas Rognes, Calderwood recruited Scott Severin, his former captain at Aberdeen, and Rob Kiernan, both on loan from Watford, as well as striker Chris Maguire from the Pittodrie ranks on a similar arrangement.

While Calderwood can reasonably expect at least two of his three new signings to slot in with minimum fuss, he believes the rough and tumble of the Scottish Premier League can unnerve Celtic's latest recruits.

He said: We've had Celtic watched, but there could be three or four different names in. No matter what team Tony puts out, it'll be a very strong team and we know how difficult it is going to be, but Scotland isn't the easiest place in the world to come and play at first. They'll get up to the pace of the game eventually, but in the beginning it might take them a while to settle.

I remember talking to [the then newly-appointed Rangers manager] Paul Le Guen when we [Aberdeen] went to South African pre-season at the same time. I said to him that the first touch [in the SPL] has to be right because the next one is a tackle. He took it as a joke, but I was being serious and he found that out quickly.

You've always got to get in their faces. Let's not beat about the bush, they'll have more quality than us and that's no disrespect to my boys. But you can't let good players have the time to play. If you are going to beat Rangers or Celtic, that's the way to do it.

Meanwhile, Calderwood hopes Kevin Kyle, who scored in the 4-4 draw with Dundee United at the weekend, is back to his best now that the captain's armband has been passed to Manuel Pascali.

He said: Kevin came to me about the captaincy - he thought it was affecting his game. I told Kevin we'd do something about it and he is playing with a smile on his face again. Hopefully this is the start of a really good run for him.

### Celtic reject late bid for McGeady as Keane tops frantic day of deals

West Ham have bolstered their striking options by completing the signing of the South Africa internationalist, Benni McCarthy, on a two-and-a-half-year deal from Blackburn Rovers.

The London side have also taken the former Tottenham striker, Mido, on loan until the end of the season from Egyptian side Zamalek.

It was all quiet on transfer deadline day at the Barclays Premier League leaders Chelsea, while rivals Arsenal and Manchester United also failed to enter the market.

Wigan, meanwhile, won the race to sign highly rated youngster Victor Moses from Crystal Palace in a deal thought to be worth £2.5m. Moses has agreed a three-and-a-half-year contract at the DW Stadium while the Bolivia striker, Marcelo Moreno, has also joined on loan from Shakhtar Donetsk.

One of the busiest Premier League sides yesterday was Fulham, who brought in Stefano Okaka and Nicky Shorey on loan from Roma and Aston Villa respectively.

The Fulham manager, Roy Hodgson, has also signed German youngster Christopher Butchmann from Liverpool and allowed Diomansy Kamara, Tony Kallio and Wayne Brown go out on loan to Celtic, Sheffield United and Bristol Rovers respectively.

Steve Bruce, the Sunderland manager, has also had a busy day as he looked to boost his chances of survival by announcing the signing of the former Rangers defender, Alan Hutton, on loan until the end of the season.

Daryl Murphy and David Healy have left the Stadium of Light to join former manager Roy Keane at Ipswich on six-month loan deals while Nyron Nosworthy has joined Sheffield United on loan.

The Burnley manager, Brian Laws, snapped up Jack Cork on loan from Chelsea and also extended the loan deal of Portsmouth striker David Nugent until the end of the season.

Portsmouth's relegation rivals, Hull, managed to stave off Wolves' interest in Stephen Hunt while also letting Peter Halmosi, Daniel Cousin and Will Atkinson to join Szombathelyi Haladas, Larissa and Rochdale respectively.

Other major moves included Marcus Bent joining QPR on loan from Birmingham while in the Coca-Cola Championship, Geremi left leaders Newcastle for Turkish side Ankaragucu and West Brom signed Feyenoord attacking midfielder Andwele Slory on a free transfer.

#### \* CLYDESDALE BANK PREMIER LEAGUE

##### ABERDEEN

In Paul Marshall (Man City, loan), Steven MacLean (Plymouth, loan), Jim Paterson (Plymouth, loan)

Out Lee Miller (Middlesbrough, undisclosed), Maurice Ross (Beijing Guoan, free), Chris Maguire (Kilmarnock, loan) Tommy Wright (released), Jonathan Crawford (Peterhead, loan)

##### DUNDEE UNITED

In Dusan Pernis (MSK Zilina, free)

Out Nicky Weaver (Burnley, free), Mark Fotheringham (Anorthosis Famagusta, free), Kevin Smith, Johnny Russell (Raith Rovers, loan)

##### FALKIRK

In Enoch Showunmi (Leeds United, free), Colin Healy (Ipswich, loan), Jack Compton (Weston-super-Mare, free), Paul Sludden (East Fife, loan ends)

## Celtic reject late bid for McGeedy as Keane tops frantic day of deals

Out Chris Mitchell (Ayr United, loan), Brian Allison (Stirling Albion, loan), Kjartan Finnbogason (Sandefjord, loan ends), Toufik Zerara (released), James Bloom (Alloa, loan)

## HAMILTON ACADEMICAL

In David van Zanten (Morton, free), Stuart Elliot (Doncaster Rovers, free), Mickael Antoine-Curier (loan, Dundee) Brian Easton (Burnley, free), Joël Thomas (Colchester United, loan)

Out Gary Mason (released), Leon Knight (Queen of the South, free), Guillaume Beuzelin (Olympiakos Nikosia, free), Kevin Welsh (Alloa, free), Marvin Andrews (Queen of the South, free)

## HEARTS

In Ryan Stevenson (Hearts, undisclosed) Out Rocky Visconte (Ayr United, loan)

## HIBERNIAN

In Graeme Smith (Brighton, free), Mark Brown (Celtic, free)

Out none

## KILMARNOCK

In Jamie Adams (Partick Thistle, loan), Scott Severin (Watford, loan), Rob Kiernan (Watford, loan), Chris Maguire (Aberdeen, loan)

Out Mark Brown (loan ends)

## MOTHERWELL

In none

Out Yassin Moutaouakil (Charlton, loan ends), Paul Slane (Celtic, undisclosed)

## ST JOHNSTONE

In Cilian Sheridan (Celtic, loan)

Out Jonatan Johansson (released), Andy Jackson (Arbroath, loan)

## ST MIRREN

In Rory Loy (Rangers, loan), Graham Carey (Celtic, loan)

Out Stephen McGinn (Watford, undisclosed), Mo Camara (released), Dennis Wyness (released)

## RANGERS

In none

Out Jerome Rothen (Ankaragucu, loan ends), Pedro Mendes (Sporting Lisbon, £1.5m), Andrew Shinnie (Dundee, loan), Paul Emslie (Peterhead, loan), Rory Loy (St Mirren, loan), Steven Lennon (Lincoln City, loan)

\* SCOTTISH LEAGUE. DIVISION 1

## AIRDRIE UNITED

In Simon Storey (free) Out none

Celtic reject late bid for McGeady as Keane tops frantic day of deals

AYR UNITED

In Ryan McGowan (Hearts, loan), Chris Mitchell (Falkirk, loan), Rocky Visconte (Hearts, loan)

Out Bryan Prunty (released), Chris Aitken (Stirling Albion, free), David Gormley (Alloa, loan), Scott Agnew (Stranraer, loan), Ryan Stevenson (Hearts)

DUNDEE

In Andrew Shinnie (Rangers, loan), Ben Hutchinson (Celtic, loan) Out none

DUNFERMLINE ATHLETIC

In none

Out Scott McBride (Cowdenbeath, free)

INVERNESS CALEDONIAN THISTLE

In none Out none

MORTON

In Michael Tidser (Celtic, free)

Out David van Zanten (Hamilton Acad, free), Brian Wake (Gateshead, free)

PARTICK THISTLE

In Bryn Halliwell (Clyde, free), Greg Shields (Carolina Railhawks, loan), Ryan Conroy (Celtic, loan), Martin Grehan (Stirling Albion, undisclosed)

Out Jim Hamilton (Livingston, free), Ricky Little (Queen s Park, free), Willie Kinniburgh (Clyde, loan)

QUEEN OF THE SOUTH

In Marvin Andrews (Hamilton Acad, free), Leon Knight (Hamilton Acad, free), Scott Fox (Celtic, free), Joe Hamil (Livingston, loan)

Out Steve Tosh (Livingston, loan), Gerry McLaughlin (Arbroath, loan)

RAITH ROVERS

In Kevin Smith, Johnny Russell (Dundee Utd, loan)

Out none

ROSS COUNTY

In none Out none

\* SCOTTISH LEAGUE. DIVISION 2

ALLOA ATHLETIC

In Kevin Welsh (Hamilton Acad, free), David Gormley (Ayr United, loan), Bryan Prunty (Ayr United, free), James Bloom (Falkirk, loan)

Out Mark Ferguson, Steve Barker (Shotts Bon Accord, free), Hugh Kerr (Sauchie, loan)

## Celtic reject late bid for McGeady as Keane tops frantic day of deals

## ARBROATH

In Gerry McLaughlin (Queen of the South, loan), Andy Jackson (St Johnstone, loan), Callum Booth (Hibernian, loan)

Out none

## BRECHIN CITY

In none

Out David White (Newtongrange Star, free)

## CLYDE

In Adam Strachan (Dumbarton, free), Willie Kinniburgh (Partick Thistle, loan), Neil McGowan (Ayr United, free), Scott Findlay (free), John Stewart (Peterhead, free), Jordon White (Dunfermline, loan)

Out Jamie Doyle (released), Paul Stewart (released), Alan McFadden (released), Lee Graham (Dunfermline Athletic, loan ends), Darren Walker (released)

## COWDENBEATH

In Scott McBride (Dunfermline, free)

## DUMBARTON

In None

Out Adam Strachan (Clyde, free)

## EAST FIFE

In None

Out Paul Sludden (Falkirk, loan ends), Darren Gourlay (released)

## PETERHEAD

In Paul Emslie (Rangers, loan), Jonathan Crawford (Aberdeen, loan)

Out John Stewart (Clyde, free)

## STENHOUSEMUIR

In none Out none

## STIRLING ALBION

In Chris Aitken (Ayr United, free), Brian Allison (Falkirk, loan)

Out Ross McCord (Dundee United, loan ends), Martin Grehan (Partick Thistle, undisclosed)

\* SCOTTISH LEAGUE. DIVISION 3

## ALBION ROVERS

In none

Celtic reject late bid for McGeedy as Keane tops frantic day of deals

Out Bobby Barr (Livingston, released)

ANNAN ATHLETIC

In none Out none

BERWICK RANGERS

In Harry McGregor (Dunfermline, loan)

Out none

EAST STIRLINGSHIRE

In none Out none

ELGIN CITY

In none Out none

FORFAR ATHLETIC

In none

Out Stephen McNally (released)

LIVINGSTON

In Bobby Barr (Albion Rovers, free), Jim Hamilton (Partick Thistle, free), Steve Tosh (Queen of the South, loan)

Out Joe Hamill (Queen of the South, loan)

MONTROSE

In Steven Nicholas (free)

Out Paul Watson (Abroath, loan ends), Chris Herd (Turriff United)

QUEEN S PARK

In Ricky Little (Partick Thistle, free)

Out none

STRANRAER

In Scott Agnew (Ayr United, loan)

Out Lee Sharp (Arthurlie, loan ends)

\* IN ENGLAND (selected deadline-day moves)

Asmir Begovic, Portsmouth to Stoke City, £3.25m

Marcus Bent, Birmingham City to Queens Park Rangers (loan)

Leon Best, Coventry City to Newcastle United (undisclosed)

Daniel Cousin, Hull City to Larissa (loan)



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Stephen Dobbie, Swansea City to Blackpool (loan)

Daryl Duffy, Bristol Rovers to Carlisle United (loan)

Geremi, Newcastle United to Ankaragucu (undisclosed)

David Healy, Sunderland to Ipswich Town (loan)

Alan Hutton, Tottenham Hotspur to Sunderland (loan)

Adam Johnson, Middlesbrough to Manchester City (undisclosed)

Shelton Martis, West Bromwich Albion to Doncaster Rovers (undisclosed)

Benni McCarthy, Blackburn Rovers to West Ham United (undisclosed)

Marcelo Moreno, Shakhtar Donetsk to Wigan Athletic (loan)

Mido, Zamalek to West Ham United (loan)

Victor Moses, Crystal Palace to Wigan Athletic (undisclosed)

Daryl Murphy, Sunderland to Ipswich Town (loan)

Kyle Naughton, Tottenham Hotspur to Middlesbrough (loan)

Nyron Nosworthy, Sunderland to Sheffield United

David Nugent, Portsmouth to Burnley (loan)

Stefano Okaka, Roma to Fulham (loan)

Tamas Priskin, Ipswich Town to Queens Park Rangers (loan)

Jay Rodriguez, Burnley to Barnsley (loan)

Nicky Shorey, Aston Villa to Fulham (loan)

Andwele Slory, Feyenoord to West Bromwich Albion (free)

Akpo Sodje, Sheffield Wednesday to Charlton Athletic (loan)

Michael Tonge, Stoke City to Derby County (loan)

Javan Vidal, Manchester City to Derby County (loan)

Dunfermline Ath v Queen of the South

Jim McIntyre, the Dunfermline manager, was last night hoping to secure international clearance in time to hand new signing Sam Morrow his debut in tonight's rearranged match with Queen of the South.

The former Hibernian striker has joined the East **End** Park club until the **end** of the season after becoming available when former club Derry City were expelled from the League of Ireland for financial irregularities.

However, since striking an agreement with the former Northern Ireland under-21 cap on Thursday, the Pars have so far struggled to receive the necessary paperwork from the Irish FA to complete the deal.

Morrow is desperate to face former Easter Road mentor Tony Mowbray in Sunday's Active Nation Scottish Cup match with Celtic but may be denied the chance to press his case against Queens this evening.

## Celtic reject late bid for McGeady as Keane tops frantic day of deals

McIntyre said: We re still trying to get clearance to play Sam Morrow but the Irish FA are dragging their heels a bit. It s been so slow and we didn t expect it but hopefully it will come through in time for the Queens game.

Saturday s meeting of the teams was postponed because of a frozen pitch but McIntyre insists he is not concerned over the reduced recovery time for Sunday s glamour tie with Celtic and is more focused on closing the gap on first division leaders Dundee following their surprise home defeat to Ross County on Saturday.

Of course the Celtic game on Sunday is a great game to look forward to but this game against Queens is just as big in terms of our league position, added McIntyre. It s important to claw back some points on the teams above us and try and get closer to the top.

Obviously, all the teams are looking for Dundee to drop points but when they do we ve got to make sure we take advantage of the situation. That s something Queen of the South will be hoping to do. It will be a tough game as they are a good side and won 4-1 at East End Park earlier in the season.

The Fifers are set to be without Graham Bayne, Stephen Glass, Scott Muirhead and Steven McDougall through injury.

Recent history, however, favours a Queens side who could move within eight points of Dundee with three games still in hand. The Doonhamers have won on their last four trips to East End Park and, despite being held to a draw, produced an exhilarating attacking display against Dundee last time out. Manager Gordon Chisholm said: We could do with another performance like that but we also need to start taking more of our chances.

Dundee s result on Saturday was a bonus for us but they still have the points on the board and we have to try to make our games in hand count.

Marvin Andrews, who has rejoined the Dumfries club following a recent loan spell, could feature along with Livingston s Joe Hamill who has signed a loan swap deal that sees Stevie Tosh heading to Almondvale. Stephen McKenna is free of suspension while Leon Knight is another likely starter for the visitors.

Prediction Away win

Last season 2-1, 0-2

MARK McGHEE moved quickly last night to offset the loss of Lee Miller to Middlesbrough with the loan-signing of striker Steven MacLean from Plymouth Argyle.

MacLean, the former Rangers forward, became the Aberdeen manager s principal target after Gordon Strachan secured Miller s services in a surprising £500,000 deal.

Former Dundee United and Motherwell left wing-back, Jim Paterson, has also joined the Pittodrie club on a further loan deal until the end of the season.

The new arrivals will give Aberdeen a boost as they attempt to overtake Hearts and move into fifth place in the Clydesdale Bank Premier League with a victory over Falkirk at Pittodrie tonight.

McGhee said: I m very pleased to have Jim Paterson and Steven MacLean here, particularly on the back of losing Lee. We need somebody particularly now that Lee has gone to link the play, to be a centre-forward that can hold the ball up for us. Steven s a boy that can take it in, and he s got a good goalscoring record.

Jim, he was a player who when he left me at Motherwell had been our best player. He is an experienced player as well and that will be good for our young players. Both players will go straight into the squad for tonight s match.

McGhee insisted it would have been wrong to deny Miller a move to the Coca-Cola Championship club. I wouldn t want somebody to do that to me, stand in my way, said McGhee of the 26-year-old who finished top scorer at

## Celtic reject late bid for McGeady as Keane tops frantic day of deals

Aberdeen for the last two seasons. He does make a difference to us, however, some things are outwith my control in that respect and I have to respect the situation.

Jamie Langfield, the Pittodrie goalkeeper, said of Miller's departure: It's a massive blow to the club on and off the pitch, he said. Lee was a great lad to have about the place. But I think he is going back to England as a better player.

## Livingston v Queen's Park

Gary Bolland's Livingston side have an immediate opportunity to restore their advantage at the top of the table after last Saturday's postponement allowed East Stirling to join them on 38 points.

They face a Queen's Park outfit who have won their last three matches, but are still without Zander Cowie and Martin Ure. Bolland may not risk Stevie Tosh, who joined the club last week in a loan swap deal which saw Joe Hamill heading to Queen of the South, but fellow new signing Jim Hamilton, who was released by Partick Thistle last month, will be included. Bolland said of the veteran striker: He will bring a new dimension to our play which could be vital in the second half of the season.

THE Conservative lead over Labour is continuing to narrow as the pre-election clashes intensify, with Lord Mandelson yesterday accusing the Tory leadership of wobbling on economic policies that, he warned, would strangle the recovery at birth.

Yesterday, the fifth snapshot in a row put the Conservative lead below 10 points.

A ComRes telephone poll of 1000 people undertaken at the weekend sees the Tory lead cut month on month from nine points to seven.

The details are: the Conservatives unchanged on 38%; Labour up two on 31% and the Liberal Democrats also unchanged on 19%.

If repeated at a General Election, David Cameron would be 24 seats short of an overall majority in a hung parliament.

However, the Tory leader received better news when a magazine poll of 2000 professional women aged from 31 to 50 showed they were nearly three times more likely to vote Conservative than Labour; 30% to 11%.

Although 46% said they were still undecided.

Today, Gordon Brown will seek to cast Labour as the party of renewal with a speech on the constitution.

The Prime Minister is expected to promise to legislate as early as next week for a post-election referendum to bring in the Alternative Vote for Westminster.

He is also due to promise fundamental reform for a wholly or largely elected House of Lords.

Yesterday, the pre-election skirmishes continued with Lord Mandelson, accusing the Tories of being in disarray after Mr Cameron assured voters that there would be no swingeing cuts in his first year in office.

This appeared to suggest the Tory leader was toning down his hard-edged policy of moving faster and deeper than Labour in cutting the UK's ballooning £178 billion budget deficit.

The Business Secretary told reporters: Instead of bobbing around like a cork in water, David Cameron should level with the British people.

He branded the Conservative leader and George Osborne, the Shadow Chancellor, a Laurel and Hardy duo.

## Celtic reject late bid for McGeady as Keane tops frantic day of deals

Conservative HQ hit back, insisting it was not they but the Labour leadership who were in chaos on economic policy.

THE latest attempt to sign off a Holyrood report into the release of the man convicted of the Lockerbie bombing may founder again today.

SNP members are furious that sections of the report have been leaked.

From its outset, the Justice Committee inquiry into Kenny MacAskill's handling of the Megrahi decision broke down along rigid party lines, with Labour leading the attack.

The lines of questioning made clear where the inquiry was going that the minister would be condemned for his handling of the decision to grant Megrahi compassionate release on medical grounds.

But the SNP members are believed to have been seeking to ensure their counter-views defending the minister are at least reflected in the final report.

However, at the weekend, in a leak that Nationalists are saying came from Labour, extracts of the report were given to the media. The SNP's Stewart Maxwell will today ask committee chairman Bill Aitken to initiate a leak inquiry.

A TOUGH new stance on Freedom of Information requests by the Scottish Government has been condemned in a Holyrood motion.

LibDem MSP Robert Brown claims the new rules are being used to block requests for information about the decision to scrap the Glasgow Airport Rail Link.

Mr Brown said: The secretive approach taken by the SNP Finance Secretary John Swinney is outrageous. The project is of major if not seminal significance to Glasgow and the West of Scotland.

ALMOST 60% of MPs believe Scotland will never become independent while only 30% of Labour MPs back the idea of allowing the Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly to have stronger tax powers, according to a survey.

The snapshot was produced by the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR), which asked a series of questions about the post-devolution settlement. Of the 646 MPs at Westminster, some 114, around 17%, responded. The think-tank insisted this was in line with similar surveys of MPs' views.

On the issue of Scottish independence, 1% thought it would happen in the next five years, 15% in the next 20, 4% in the next 50 and 58% never.

While only 30% of Labour MPs agreed with the statement about tax powers, support from Conservative MPs was stronger at 55%.

THE head of Glasgow Airport has reiterated her opposition to the scrapping of a rail link with the city ahead of a crucial parliamentary vote tomorrow when Labour will attempt to have the project reinstated.

Amanda McMillan, managing director of the airport, said its reputation would suffer and businesses, tourism and employment would be negatively affected by the cancellation of the Glasgow Airport Rail Link (Garl).

In a letter to MSPs ahead of voting on the Scottish Government's Budget Bill, she said Finance Secretary John Swinney's decision last year to axe the project leaves a gaping hole in the airport's surface access strategy, an issue which has a crucial bearing on passenger choice.

Mrs McMillan added: Unless action is taken to address this challenge, the reputation of our airport and our ability to attract passengers beyond metropolitan Glasgow will be seriously damaged.

Ultimately this has implications for business, tourism and employment throughout Glasgow and Scotland. The future of Glasgow Airport is an issue of national importance.

## Celtic reject late bid for McGeady as Keane tops frantic day of deals

Mrs McMillan called for a comprehensive review of surface access needs for the airport if Garl cannot be saved.

Our message to MSPs is clear. If Garl is abandoned, we need to consider other measures to improve surface access, she said. The cancellation of Garl cannot be an end to the matter.

A serious challenge remains: how to ensure continued access to an asset on which our nation's economy depends. Doing nothing is simply not an option. If passengers cannot easily access Glasgow Airport, they will choose another airport.

In her letter, Mrs McMillan highlighted the airport's significant economic contribution to the west of Scotland and the country as a whole, its role as Scotland's principal long-haul and transatlantic gateway and the vital contribution it makes to Scottish tourism and business competitiveness.

Robert Brown, Liberal Democrat MSP for Glasgow, said: This is an important statement from BAA. They are an integral stakeholder in Garl but it sounds like they haven't had much engagement from the Scottish Government.

LABOUR MPs have been accused of being desperate to get off Brown's sinking ship after Nigel Griffiths became the 83rd from the party to announce he will stand down at the General Election.

So far 128 MPs in all, around a fifth of the 646 total, have said they will be leaving Westminster.

Approached by The Herald last month about suggestions he was about to announce he would be standing down, Mr Griffiths, flatly denied them.

However, on Sunday night the former Enterprise Minister and close ally of Gordon Brown told his local party in Edinburgh South, which he has represented since 1987, that he would not be seeking re-election.

He planned instead to take up a once in a lifetime job offer as the director of an international education institution based in London.

Around a quarter of Labour's 349 MPs have said they will not be standing again.

John McFall, Labour MP for West Dunbartonshire, also announced on Friday that he would be stepping down. He and Mr Griffiths revealed their intentions just days before the three-month countdown to an expected May 6 poll.

Beyond that point, the party's ruling National Executive Committee takes over control of choosing a candidate from a local constituency branch and can, if it wants, draw up an all-women shortlist.

Former Edinburgh councillor Mr Griffiths has a majority of just 405 and holds the Conservatives' fourth target seat in Scotland. It needs a 4.5% swing to turn it blue.

Angus MacNeil of the SNP said: With Nigel Griffiths adding his departure to those of other MPs, it is clear Labour MPs are desperate to get off Brown's sinking ship.

Last year, Mr Griffiths escaped a standards investigation after reports that he had cheated on his wife with another woman in his study at the House of Commons.

At first, the 54-year-old dismissed the claims in a Sunday tabloid as absolutely groundless, but confessed after pictures of the liaison were published.

In 2002, he was criticised by the Commons authorities for not informing them that he owned the property he was using, at taxpayers' expense, as his constituency office.

HEALTH Secretary Nicola Sturgeon signed off hundreds of pounds of improper expenses claims made by her spin doctor, it has emerged.

After enquiries by The Herald, her special adviser Noel Dolan repaid the money to the Scottish Parliament.

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Dolan claimed cash for hotels and taxis during an SNP conference in 2006, in a clear-cut breach of Holyrood's rules.

The SNP blamed an administrative error for the claims and said Sturgeon did not receive any of the money herself.

The claims were made under the Party Leader's Allowance available to Ms Sturgeon and her staff when she was head of the SNP in Holyrood. Alex Salmond was then based at Westminster.

The rules governing the allowance state it must be used for the extra duties that fall on party leaders, such as giving speeches or attending public events.

Party political activities, such as conferences, are explicitly excluded under the rules.

According to official records, Dolan charged the public £260 for four nights' accommodation at a Holiday Inn during the SNP conference in Perth in October 2006, as well as £25 in taxi fares to and from the venue.

The claims were accepted by the parliamentary authorities as valid.

After The Herald queried the expenses last week, the SNP admitted they were wrong, but said Dolan had acted alone and Sturgeon was not involved.

However the Parliament later confirmed that Sturgeon had signed off Dolan's claims, and that it had been her responsibility to check they were accurate.

An SNP insider said the refund was deeply embarrassing for Ms Sturgeon, who has a reputation for being great on details.

Noel has never been the sharpest knife in the cutlery drawer, the source added.

A parliament spokesman said: Any reimbursement claim must comply with the Parliament's expenses scheme. We can confirm the member of staff concerned has repaid the amount in full to the Parliament.

An SNP spokeswoman said: This is a legitimate expense by the member of staff concerned but due to an administrative error it was claimed from the wrong source.

It should have been claimed from the SNP as indeed correctly happened in all other years. The member of staff has therefore refunded the Parliament and will be reimbursed by the party.

On Friday, Ms Sturgeon announced she will marry partner Peter Murrell, SNP chief executive, in Glasgow in July.

CIVIL servants leading the fight against terrorism could be putting the public at risk by being unable to adapt to meet an unpredictable and changing threat, a report has warned.

Some of those leading the national counter-terror effort are paralysed by a dangerous institutional inertia, a group of MPs said. The Home Affairs Committee accused Whitehall officials, spy chiefs and senior police officers of settling on sub-optimal solutions.

It warned it was not confident that Government institutions have the desire to constantly adapt to the changing threats of violent extremists. Keith Vaz, chairman of the committee, said: Too often in this inquiry we saw suggestions for reforms to the counter-terrorism structure rebuffed because it works well at the moment, or the benefits are not yet proven.

We are very concerned that a degree of inertia has set into the Government's counter-terrorism planning and operations. The threat is ever present and ever changing and Government must above all be ever ready to adapt and innovate to meet this challenge.

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The MPs said existing Government counter- terrorism committees should be merged to form a National Security Committee which should be chaired by the Prime Minister or Home Secretary and assisted by a National Security Adviser in the style of the former US secretary of state Condoleezza Rice.

The committee called for the scrapping of control orders because it is fundamentally wrong to deprive people of their liberty without explaining why.

I Record Of The Year Use Somebody Kings Of Leon

I Album Of The Year Fearless Taylor Swift

I Song Of The Year Single Ladies (Put A Ring On It) Beyonce

I Best Female Pop Vocal Performance Halo Beyonce

I Best Male Pop Vocal Performance Make It Mine Jason Mraz

I Best Pop Vocal Album The E.N.D. The Black Eyed Peas

I Best Dance Recording Poker Face Lady Gaga

I Best Hard Rock Performance War Machine AC/DC

I Best Metal Performance Dissident Aggressor Judas Priest

Best Rock Album

I 21st Century Breakdown Green Day

I Best Rap Album Relapse - Eminem

I Best Country Album Fearless Taylor Swift

A man who murdered and chopped up his friend before scattering his body parts across two counties has been **jailed** for life.

Stephen Marshall, 38, was yesterday branded pure evil as he was told he would serve a minimum of 36 years in prison.

His girlfriend Sarah Bush, 21, was **jailed** for three years and nine months for perverting the course of justice.

The severed remains of Jeffrey Howe, 49, from Southgate, north London, were discovered across Hertfordshire and Leicestershire last year.

He became known as the jigsaw man after the series of macabre finds.

After the sentencing at St Albans Crown Court, Detective Superintendent Michael Hanlon of Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Major Crime Unit said: The act of dismembering Jeffrey Howe can only be described as pure evil.

Bush, of no fixed address, was acquitted of murdering Mr Howe but pled guilty to helping to dispose of his body parts and giving false information about his whereabouts when police were investigating his disappearance.

She was sentenced to three years and nine months imprisonment for the first offence and to two years and three months for the second one, with the two terms to run concurrently.

During the three-week trial, the court heard Marshall, of Ayot Path, Borehamwood, Hertfordshire, had connections with the criminal underworld and had boasted of his skill at butchering corpses.

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One witness told of his links to a criminal family in London known as the Adams family, for whom Marshall claimed to have chopped up bodies.

His lawyer, Peter Doyle QC, told the court yesterday that Marshall had been asked to assist with the dismemberment of four bodies those of men who had been killed by others.

This happened while he was working as a nightclub doorman between 1995 and 1998, Mr Doyle said.

Passing sentence, the judge, Mr Justice Cooke, told Marshall: Mr Howe looked up to you and was scared of you and the evidence is you exploited that.

He described him as a man with a record of violence and past association with hardened criminals who could be affable one moment and domineering the next.

Mr Howe had let the couple live at his flat when they needed a place to stay and it was during this time, on March 8 or 9 last year, that Marshall stabbed him in the back.

The pair then took over his property, began helping themselves to money from his bank account and sold his belongings.

Mr Justice Cooke told Bush: You were well aware of what Stephen Marshall had done.

You took advantage of Mr Howe in life and then after his death you used his money.

Mr Howe s family said no prison term was long enough for what Marshall and Bush had done.

They described Mr Howe as a jovial, charming character who had a heart of gold.

In a statement read out by police on their behalf, they said: Jeffrey is greatly missed by us all. We are still finding it extremely difficult to come to terms with Jeffrey s death.

Jeff was hardworking and was at his happiest when he made his parents proud.

We hope that all those who have known and cared for Jeff will remember him for his larger than life personality and generosity.

Suicidal tendencies may be driven by genetic defects that affect nerve cell growth, research suggests.

The finding follows previous research showing suicide can run in families.

Scientists investigated genetic variants among 394 patients diagnosed with depression, including 113 who had attempted suicide. Their DNA was compared with that of 366 healthy individuals. The results were confirmed by a larger-scale follow-up study.

Five single-letter changes in the genetic code were found to be significantly more common among individuals with a history of suicide attempts.

The variants affected two genes associated with nerve cell formation and growth.

The research was led by Dr Martin Kohli, formally at the Max Planck Institute of Psychiatry in Munich, Germany, and now at the John P Hussman Institute for Human Genomics in Miami, USA.

Reporting their findings in the journal Archives of General Psychiatry, the authors write: The genetic risk factors for suicide appear to be independent from the underlying psychiatric disorder.

Channel 4 s biopic of the late politician Mo Mowlam was the highest rated drama for the station for more than eight years.



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The film, starring Julie Walters, drew an average of 3.5 million viewers when it was screened at 9pm on Sunday night.

The story of the former Northern Ireland Secretary's battle with cancer and her efforts to unite Ulster's leaders had a peak audience of 3.7 million viewers, according to overnight ratings.

A spokeswoman said it was Channel 4's highest rating drama since at least 2001.

Audience figures also showed that C4's final series of Celebrity Big Brother went out on a high, beating last year's finale shows.

The second of Friday night's programmes, in which cage fighter Alex Reid was named the winner of the series, had an average of 4.1 million, with a quarter of TV viewers tuning in.

A RECORD number of people 6.4 million filed their self-assessment tax return online this year.

The figure accounted for more than three-quarters of the total number of returns submitted by the January 31 deadline, HM Revenue & Customs said.

The number of people filing online was up 12% on the 5.8m who did so in 2009. Last year's figure showed an increase of around 50% on 2008's total of 3.8m.

Friday, January 29, was the busiest day for online filing, with 384,638 returns received. Between 4pm and 5pm of that day was the busiest hour, with 39,512 tax returns filed.

Around 730 people logged on to HMRC's website to file their tax return on Christmas Day and 2175 on Boxing Day. Just under 20,000 did it on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day.

Financial Secretary to the Treasury Stephen Timms said filing online is easier and quicker and HMRC processes your return faster, so any money you owe is repaid more quickly.

Those who missed the January 31 deadline incur a £100 late payment charge. If the form has still not been submitted by July 31, they are liable for a further £100 penalty. They also have to pay interest on any unpaid tax.

BEYONCE may have won most of the prizes, but it was a Scottish cat lady who garnered most praise at the star-studded Grammy Awards ceremony in Los Angeles yesterday morning.

Though she was not invited to attend the glamorous event, Susan Boyle was there in spirit as the host invoked her name to bring the elite crowd back down to earth.

You may be the coolest people in the world, but this year your industry was saved by a 48-year-old Scottish cat lady in sensible shoes, comedian Stephen Colbert told the assembly of musical luminaries.

However, with a record-breaking haul of six new awards to fit on to her already-crowded mantelpiece, American R&B star Beyonce Knowles was the undisputed queen of this year's Grammys night.

The 28-year-old singer is now the most successful female artist in any one year at the awards, breaking free from a pack that included Amy Winehouse and Nora Jones with five wins apiece. She now has 16 Grammys, including those won with her former group Destiny's Child.

Beyonce's best-selling hit Single Ladies (Put A Ring On It) scooped the award for best song, edging Kings of Leon and Lady Gaga into runner-up spots. The single, from her 2008 album I Am...Sasha Fierce, was a Christmas Number One in the US, where it was Beyonce's fifth consecutive chart-topping release.

In the battle for best album, however, Beyonce's onstage persona Sasha Fierce was overshadowed by a younger female. Fearless, by country starlet Taylor Swift, took that accolade and was one of four wins for the 20-year-old.

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Other artists turning heads on Sunday night or early on Monday morning, for Scottish viewers included New York pop act Lady Gaga, who threatened to steal the show when she took to the stage in a green sequined bodysuit complete with wings.

The unofficial prize for most outlandish costume was won by Imogen Heap, according to popular opinion, with an ensemble that left many observers scratching their heads.

Described by one website as a *twit dress*, her frock featured a huge necklace displaying live messages from her Twitter feed, and it was accessorised with a TV-screen handbag that played videos fans were sending to her account.

The few British winners on the night included Jeff Beck, for best rock instrumental performance, and English heavy metal outfit Judas Priest.

AC/DC, fronted by Glasgow-born brothers Angus and Malcolm Young, picked up the first Grammy of their career for best hard rock performance.

CONFIDENCE is high at St Johnstone and manager Derek McInnes is full of belief his team can become club legends by beating Rangers in Wednesday's Co-operative Insurance Cup semi-final.

The Perth outfit have reached a fourth semi-final in three years, having lost to Hibernian in the same tournament in January 2007 and suffered subsequent Scottish Cup losses at the penultimate stage to Celtic in April 2007 and Rangers a year later.

Saints have ousted Hibs and Dundee United this season to earn their showdown with Rangers at Hampden, and go into the tie buoyed by Saturday's morale-boosting victory over Hearts. McInnes insists his team can go one step better than their previous hat-trick of disappointments and produce a shock by reaching the final.

We've been to three semi-finals now and, yes, we've done well but let's see if we can get to a final and see what happens then.

I believe we can do it, I believe we're good enough and I think the players think we're good enough we'll find out on Wednesday if we can be.

We're here to be successful. We want to try to be remembered as a team that got to a cup final and hopefully lifted a trophy. That's the motivation for us all.

SOME people stay in football management until the undertakers arrive to take them away. For others, the experience is condensed into a much shorter timeframe but is no less eventful as a result.

Tom Hendrie emerged as suddenly and spectacularly as a firework, illuminating Scottish football only to fade away almost as quickly as he had arrived.

There was a neat symmetry to his coaching career. From combining managing part-time lower league clubs with working as a maths teacher, he moved into full-time football in the first division, spent a season in the Scottish Premier League, had another spell in the first division, before returning to part-time management and the education system.

Now only the teaching remains. His involuntary absence from football has allowed him time to reflect on his achievements during a dramatic, four-year spell in charge at St Mirren when he led the Paisley club to the SPL after an eight-year wait, as well as to a League Cup semi-final appearance in 2001, their last in that competition until tonight.

It eventually all ended in bitterness and recriminations but, for a time, it seemed as if Hendrie could do no wrong.

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Looking more relaxed than any teacher ought to after a day trying to educate unruly teenagers, he smiles at the recollection of how he inherited a group of workmanlike first division players, and somehow got them promoted 18 months later.

I was as surprised as anyone when we went on to win the league that season, he said. There was no expectation that St Mirren would have a good season, certainly not for us to win it.

But everything just fell into place and we went all the way to win the title. There was a fantastic feelgood factor going around Paisley. For the first time in a long time they had a football team playing well, scoring goals and sitting top of the league.

Hendrie became an instant hero around the town but was not always as popular among opposing managers and fans.

There was a suspicion that he was not a football man despite a playing career that took in spells at Dundee, Meadowbank Thistle and Berwick Rangers, as well as leading Alloa Athletic to the third division title as manager.

Given football's propensity to promote from within, it led to Hendrie being cast as something of an outsider.

Football and education don't seem to be the best of friends, he shrugged. When I went into full-time football, because I had an academic background, people thought I was a different breed, a different type. It was unusual to have people in football with that background and it still is.

I was probably treated a bit differently by football people as a result. I had to win my acceptance from the full-time managers.

His refusal to pick faults with his own team often saw him labelled as arrogant and over-confident, a stance that did not go down well with some opponents. In one infamous cameo, an enraged Gary Mackay, then Airdrie United manager, chased Hendrie down the tunnel after a match before jumping on his back.

When we were doing well, I had a lot of problems with other managers talking from dug-out to dug-out. People were fed up with me constantly saying how good my team was. People took it the wrong way. There were a lot of back-biting and bad words said about me but I was just trying to do my best for St Mirren. I think to get players to play for you, you have to show a supreme belief in them. Sometimes people mistook that as me showing a supreme belief in myself.

With any available funds needed to make their Love Street stadium SPL-compliant, Hendrie was given little money to improve the playing squad when St Mirren reached the top flight in 2000. It was little surprise they were relegated after just one season.

I wasn't daft. I knew we had punched above our weight to get promoted but that the team was nowhere near good enough to stay in the Premier League. We had to go and strengthen. But if I went for anybody in Scotland I was getting beat left, right and centre by first division clubs who could offer more money.

By Christmas we were six or seven points clear of Dundee United. And that was a massive turning point. I went to the chairman then and told him we needed to buy players then if we were to capitalise on that lead we had. But the board said they were not prepared to gamble the financial future of the club on staying up.

After relegation, most of the squad was gradually sold off and St Mirren floundered in the first division. Hendrie knew the tide was turning and he was sacked in September 2002.

Feeling the club had not paid what was due to him, he threatened to take legal action, before eventually settling out of court. It severed whatever relationship he had with St Mirren, a situation that has not been repaired to this day.

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The way it all **ended** was messy and not nice. It s probably the worst part of my football career. These things are never easy but the board had made certain promises to me that they didn t keep. I just stood my ground and fought for what I felt was right for me.

It s a bit sad. I was at the last game at Love Street working for Hearts. A few people saw me and said I should have been out on the park with all the other former players and managers. But that invitation never arrived.

Hendrie looks at the subsequent career path of Jimmy Calderwood, manager of Dunfermline Athletic when they were promoted alongside St Mirren in 2000, and wonders how life might have turned out if he had been allowed to invest in the squad.

You look at Jimmy Calderwood who went up with Dunfermline and spent a fortune, and kept them up for a good few years.

His career went through the roof. He went to Aberdeen and did well there and now he s at Kilmarnock. When he went to Dunfermline they were £3m in the black and he left with them £12m in debt. So he spent £15m and did really well. I managed to make St Mirren a profit and got relegated.

St Mirren have **ended** up back in the Premier League, so things have worked out fine for them but, from my personal point of view, it s not been as good. I could still have been a Premier League manager now, who knows?

~

Jim Jefferies hopes he can savour another glory night at Fir Park to keep alive his chances of making it third time lucky in the League Cup.

The new Hearts manager has fond memories of his last semi-final at the Lanarkshire venue when in charge of Kilmarnock, namely a thumping 3-0 success over Falkirk just over three years ago.

Steven Naismith grabbed a hat-trick for Kilmarnock to provide Jefferies with one of the highlights of his career.

Hearts fans can only hope the ground is a lucky omen for their new manager tonight, with St Mirren standing in the way of a Co-operative Insurance Cup final place next month.

Jefferies, who could book a Hampden final just days after dramatically succeeding Csaba Laszlo, said: It was a fantastic evening back. The one big advantage of going to Fir Park is that it doesn t need a huge crowd to make a great atmosphere. But if it happens to be full, it ll be a cracking game. Hopefully we can do enough to be on top.

We know the pitch isn t going to be the best the way the weather has been recently. I don t think it ll be a silky soccer game, more a blood and thunder cup tie.

Kilmarnock went on to lose the final to Hibs in 2007, emphatically beaten 5-1, while Jefferies Hearts also lost the 1997 League Cup final to Rangers.

He added: It took me three visits to win the Scottish Cup [at Hearts in 1998] and I ve had two League Cup finals, so this is a chance to be third time lucky.

Musselburgh-born Jefferies has been welcomed with open arms back to Tynecastle given his success in charge from 1995-2000. Hearts are a different club now, one saddled with huge debt and currently cost-cutting under Vladimir Romanov, but Jefferies feels he is the type of experience figure required to build on Laszlo s work.

The 59-year-old, who is hoping the club can finalise deals for his desired backroom team of Billy Brown and Gary Locke, said: I think that is why we got a good reception on Saturday at St Johnstone.

Fans remember the side we built here, the passion we had for the club and the way we tried to play. They ve always had high expectations and we ve got to try to give them success.

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Jefferies made his first move into the transfer market last night when he signed Ryan Stevenson, the promising young Ayr midfielder, for an undisclosed fee with Rocky Visconte going to Somerset Park on loan until the end of the season.

Hearts support will be demanding victory tonight after back-to-back defeats by Aberdeen and St Johnstone but Jefferies has pleaded for patience.

I've got to know the players a bit better and we'll look to pick what we think is the strongest side available and hopefully get through to a final, he said.

But it's going to take a few weeks to get to know everyone. It's different to when I was last here, there are far more staff about for a start. But that's progress, football moves on.

I thought Csaba did a terrific job here, had his way of doing things, but everybody is different and we have to adapt now how we go about things.

It will take time, everybody is a bit apprehensive and that is normal. We'll endeavour to work hard to get this club right. Players are going to find a change, because everybody does it differently.

But I have been in the game a long time. Different routines might just spark something.

Jefferies will have no hesitation in calling on the club's group of youngsters if required. I think there is a good crop here, maybe a little bit less experienced than the ones I brought through last time. But the club has a great name for pushing youngsters through and as time goes on I'll be trying to make sure that tradition is kept. If we can get a win tomorrow night it will make the next few days a lot more enjoyable, as I can get a bit of time to do things.

John Fleck is still finding his way from being considered a player of great promise to something a little more meaningful. He is seeking substance, or to establish the credentials of his ability among the more hardened reputations of the Rangers first team, but he has at least gathered some achievements to his name.

In May 2008, he became the youngest player to appear in the Scottish Cup final, when he came off the bench against Queen of the South, and another cup competition might allow a return to Hampden for the 18-year-old. Fleck featured as a substitute in last season's League Cup semi-final, when Rangers defeated Falkirk, and he is likely to be involved in Wednesday night's encounter with St Johnstone at the same stage of the competition.

Fleck yesterday received the young player of the round award for his goal and shining performance in the quarter-final victory over Dundee last October, when Rangers sent a side containing a number of fringe players to Dens Park and won 3-1. Having scoring in the 3-0 victory over Falkirk at Ibrox at the weekend, there is now a sense of Fleck beginning to come of age.

It would be fantastic to play in another Hampden cup final, but St Johnstone will be a difficult game and we will need to play well to progress, Fleck said. Dundee made it difficult for us, but that made the result even more pleasing. To go to Dens and get a win with so many players missing that night says a lot about the character in our squad. I enjoyed playing up front in the second half as that is my natural position.

Fleck was joined in the first team that night by Jordan McMillan and Danny Wilson, with the latter now having become a regular in defence when either Madjid Bougherra or David Weir, the first-choice centre-backs, are missing. With Walter Smith, the Rangers manager, relying on younger players to add depth to his squad, the emergence of the kind of talent represented by Fleck and Wilson is significant.

Danny is getting stronger and has already played in Old Firm games and the Champions League, said Fleck. There are a lot of talented young players at the club and players like Andrew Little and Jamie Ness regularly train with the first team and are on the bench.

Tomorrow in The Herald: the impact on our health service and police forces

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Noel Gallagher's only two concerts planned for this year have been announced as part of a string of charity gigs climaxing with a performance of Quadrophenia by The Who.

Suede, JLS, Arctic Monkeys, The Specials and Depeche Mode are also among the line-up raising cash for the Teenage Cancer Trust.

The 10-night season, taking place between February and March, celebrates the charity's 10th year of music and comedy at London's Royal Albert Hall.

The event will reach its grand finale with The Who's performance of Quadrophenia.

Who singer Roger Daltrey, patron of Teenage Cancer Trust, said: When The Who first got together in 2000 to raise money for this brilliant charity, I had no idea we'd achieve so much from these shows.

In the last 10 years we've raised more than £8.7 million, helping Teenage Cancer Trust to open nine specialist cancer units for young people across the UK.

Our 10th anniversary shows are set to break all records for Teenage Cancer Trust.

Tickets go on sale on Friday. For more information go to [www.teenagecancertrust.org](http://www.teenagecancertrust.org).

AN anti-piracy maritime group has insisted it should be allowed to negotiate a payment for the release of two British hostages before their captors lose patience.

Paul and Rachel Chandler, from Tunbridge Wells, Kent, were captured while sailing from the Seychelles towards Tanzania more than three months ago.

A new video released by the pirates shows the couple making a desperate appeal for the Government to intervene in their plight.

The Foreign Office says that it will not pay a ransom for the couple.

But chairman of the Merchant Maritime Warfare Centre, Nick Davis, an experienced pirate negotiator, said he could not understand why he was not being allowed to help in securing their release.

He said: People are forgetting the key issue. Paul and Rachel have not got a clue what's going on. They are sat there in a hell hole wondering why people aren't helping them.

The door is open for them to be released. Somebody needs to pick up the gauntlet and run with it.

For the amounts involved I don't think it's worth trying to bring anyone to justice. We just need to get Paul and Rachel home.

We are the people who know what needs to be done, we just need to be allowed to do it.

Mr Davis said he could not act without the green light from the Foreign Office and the family.

He said he planned a £100,000 deal in November 2009 but the Foreign Office didn't return his calls.

He said that the price was likely to have risen in the meantime but would remain a pretty small sum in the scheme of things.

He said that he believed the pirates were unlikely to harm the couple and added: They don't want Paul and Rachel any more. It's costing them a lot of money to keep them alive.

I have a suspicion they will soon lose patience. The Government needs to understand that this could turn against them.

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Mr Miliband said the Foreign Office was working very closely with the Chandler family.

He told Sky News: Obviously there's a very high level of concern.

We're using all the networks that we have in that part of the world, and we've been very clear with the Chandlers here about how we're doing that.

COUNCILS are preparing to slash services for vulnerable groups as public sector budget cuts begin to bite across Scotland.

However, many are being accused of undermining the very types of provision that are likely to be vital to reshaping public services in the long term.

With an increasing elderly population and other pressures on council funding, the need in the future will be for more services to be delivered in the community, with people given support to stay in their own homes.

Charity chiefs are warning that many of the organisations providing this sort of support on behalf of councils may not survive the current round of belt-tightening exercises.

In Glasgow, a city-wide voluntary sector network is opposing the council's plans for grant integration, which include a target of 20% efficiency savings.

According to Glasgow Council for Voluntary Services, this may lead to the closure of several organisations and the complete disappearance of well-established and credible names from the Glasgow landscape.

Liz McEntee, head of external relations at the umbrella group, says: The proposals will affect young children at risk, the elderly, people with disabilities, people with addictions, those with physical and mental health problems, minorities groups, asylum seekers and refugees and young people and this list is not exhaustive.

Many charities fear such a list is representative of what is happening on a wider scale. Leaked plans from Edinburgh City Council include cuts to services commissioned by their children and families department, and the council has acknowledged that some organisations may be forced to close as a result.

Youth clubs, a women's support centre and a service for vulnerable children run by Barnardo's are among the potential targets for cuts.

Aberdeen is consulting on a budget which, if passed, would see the closure of a residential unit for vulnerable people, while the council also plans to axe a £100,000 grant to Citizen's Advice Scotland.

The picture materialising in other councils is similar. East Ayrshire proposes to save £20,000 by charging homeless clients for storing their possessions while they are waiting for accommodation, while Dumfries and Galloway is considering charging social work clients more for some services and cutting the budget for classes in English as a second language.

Lucy McTernan, head of policy for the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations, said: What's deeply worrying is that local authorities and others seem in danger of taking very short-term decisions, which could be very costly in the long term.

IN the grim financial world of present-day savings and future cuts, the arts have had to make a convincing claim for their worth and the importance of funding them.

Some of the major names in Scotland's cultural ecosystem – the Edinburgh International Festival, for example – look set to lose significant funds from local authorities in the coming years, while others appear to have dodged a financial bullet.

Certainly, in previous recessions, the arts were seen as the soft touch when it came to slashing local or national budgets.

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In the 1980s and early 1990s, some savage cuts were made to the nation's theatres, orchestras and arts companies, when some felt support for the arts perpetuated an elitist activity, and when the economic and social case for the support of the arts had not been properly articulated, or had not been listened to.

Although it is perhaps foolish, before some councillors even vote, to guess exactly how leading arts companies theatres, festivals, orchestras, bands, dance groups and arts centres will fare as councils try to cut a national figure of £270 million from their budgets, it appears this year's cuts may not be as destructive as some feared.

Insiders have told The Herald that none of the financial measures to be recommended by Culture and Sport Glasgow will endanger the future of any major arts organisation in the city.

Last year it was feared that one of the most famous theatres in the city, The Citizens Theatre in Gorbals, could be in the frame for a significant cut because it receives the largest single grant from the Glasgow City Council, one of more than £450,000. However, a source told The Herald: There will be nothing that will endanger what they do. The same is said to apply to another theatre in the city, The Tron, which receives a grant of £200,000 from the city. In Glasgow, it is not the bad news story, a source said.

Edinburgh also seems to have resisted the temptation to severely cut the budgets of arts bodies in the city. Some of the figures involved look stark with the Edinburgh International Festival receiving predicted cuts of £37,000, then £85,316 and then in 2012/13 a cut of £82,330. In total it will see its grant from the council decrease from £2.474m this year to £2.269m in 2012/13.

However, a source at the EIF said it was philosophical about the cuts. In proposing only a 1.5% cut in the coming year, the City of Edinburgh Council had shown faith and trust in the power of the festivals to help generate economic benefits for the city, an insider said.

Other venues in the city such as the Traverse, Royal Lyceum and Filmhouse, are likely to be hit by escalating cuts over the next three years of 2.5%, then 4.5% and another 4.5% reduction in their grants.

The Royal Scottish National Orchestra faces cuts of 3.5% this year nearly £2000 and then 4.5% and another 4.5% in 2011/12.

There is no doubt that local authorities are vital players in the cultural landscape.

A confidential report compiled for Vocal the voice of chief officers for cultural and leisure services in Scotland has found the total gross expenditure on culture and sport in local authorities is £752m, with the sector providing more than 6000 full-time jobs.

It also shows that in 38% of councils, funding for culture has declined in the last three years.

However, 46% said that arts and culture were a high priority. The three main dangers to continued cultural funding, it said, were reduced financial resources, competing priorities, and reduced staff resources.

IT may be known as the big day but more than 40% of Britons want to slim down before their wedding, a study revealed today.

While they would like to lose an average of 8lb (3.65kg), 12% of those questioned want to lose at least two stones (13kg) before walking down the aisle.

There appears to be greater pressure to get in shape for women, who want to lose twice as much as men an average of 11lb (4.58kg) compared with 5lb (2.25kg) according to the study by Greenbee Wedding Insurance.

The survey of more than 2000 people also found that 10% would spend more than a year making pre-wedding lifestyle changes.



### Celtic reject late bid for McGeady as Keane tops frantic day of deals

Scots were the most image conscious, with one in five wanting to lose more than two stones – almost double the figure in Wales and the South West (11%).

People in Scotland also expect to spend the most time – 8.01 months on average – on wedding preparations.

However, researchers found that 58% of men and 36% of women surveyed had no intention of losing weight at all.

John Brady, commercial director at Greenbee, said: Looking good on one of the most important days of life is understandably very important.

However, while losing the pounds in weight may be a key aim for many brides and grooms-to-be, looking after the pounds in your pockets and protecting your big day with wedding insurance should also be a key priority.

A GRANDFATHER has died from horrendous injuries after slipping on ice and being run over by a car.

Pensioner Robert Quigley, 73, was left with a fractured skull, broken pelvis and serious leg injuries after the freak accident.

The retired bricklayer had been in a dimly lit car park in Paisley, Renfrewshire, when he slipped and struck his head on the tarmac.

As he lay semi-conscious on the ground he was run over by a 4x4 after the driver failed to spot him.

Mr Quigley, who had 40 grandchildren and 20 great-grandchildren, fought for his life after the accident on January 16, but died at the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Paisley last Wednesday.

His distraught daughter Linda Kerr, 47, said: Everyone is devastated and we are really struggling to come to terms with my dad's death and how it happened.

Mr Quigley's death comes just 15 months after his best friend was killed after being knocked down just yards from the same car park.

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However, when the then 68-year-old was diagnosed with kidney cancer, his pension did not stretch to cover the extra expenses.

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Billy died in August last year, just six months after being diagnosed, but Elise says the extra help from Henri made that terrible time easier.

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Hundreds of mourners attended the funeral of Billy, father to Colin and Craig, pictured above left.

Colin, 41, added: Having Henri to help really made the difference to mum and dad. He would cycle out to visit no matter what the weather. He was fantastic.

AN advice service has been launched to help patients coping with long-term illnesses and assist their families in claiming financial support.

Based on the successful Macmillan Cancer Support benefits service, which has secured £60 million for cancer patients since it began, the scheme will involve Glasgow City Council, the Pension Service and the NHS.

The Long Term Conditions Financial Inclusion Partnership aims to ease the financial stress placed on people dealing with a range of long-term disabling conditions and is also supported by Chest, Heart & Stroke Scotland, Glasgow Housing Association and Job Centre Plus.

Gordon Matheson, the city council's treasurer, said: When someone experiences a serious long-term condition, such as heart disease or a respiratory illness, their life changes fundamentally.

Diagnosis can have a major affect on a family's income at a time when people may struggle to access benefits.

By introducing very tightly focused support that takes into account the customer's condition and the impact it has on every aspect of their life we can ease that stress and help them to concentrate solely on improving their health.

Targeted help for vulnerable people is a key priority for the council and I am certain this project can build on the success of our partnership with Macmillan Cancer Support to help thousands more protect both their health and their wealth.

The Macmillan scheme was founded in Lanarkshire six years ago and has since helped 20,000 people affected by cancer.

It was expanded 12 months ago to cover the Glasgow city area, giving support to a further 1200 cancer patients, their families and carers and raising £4m in Government financial aid.

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We know that our financial advice services are highly effective and we are convinced that this type of help will also be of great benefit to people with long-term medical conditions, their families and carers.

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There are currently 50 officers working throughout Scotland who have helped patients claim £30m in benefits.

A PUBLIC inquiry into the deadly superbug outbreak at the Vale of Leven Hospital has opened with a warning from the chairman that it will be limited in its ability to examine other high-profile cases of clostridium difficile infection.

A preliminary hearing for the inquiry, which will begin in June, was held at Dumbarton Sheriff Court.

Lord MacLean is chairing the inquiry and began by outlining the aims and procedures and emphasising that it would not be a criminal prosecution.

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ATP Tour

\* ENTRY RANKINGS (rolling 12-month ranking on which seedings and entry to tournaments are based)

SINGLES Points

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- 1 (1) Roger Federer (Swi) 11,350
- 2 (3) Novak Djokovic (Srb) 8310
- 3 (4) Andy Murray (Sco) 7800
- 4 (2) Rafael Nadal (Spa) 7670
- 5 (5) Juan Martin del Potro (Arg) 6400
- 6 (6) Nikolay Davydenko (Rus) 5290
- 7 (7) Andy Roddick (US) 4150
- 8 (8) Robin Soderling (Swe) 3375
- 9 (10) Jo-Wilfried Tsonga (Fra) 3235
- 10 (14) Marin Cilic (Cro) 2970
- 11 (11) Fernando Gonzalez (Chi) 2870
- 12 (9) Fernando Verdasco (Spa) 2760
- 13 (12) Gael Monfils (Fra) 2520
- 14 (13) Radek Stepanek (Cze) 2445
- 15 (16) Tommy Robredo (Spa) 2005
- 16 (15) Gilles Simon (Fra) 1915
- 17 (17) Tommy Haas (Ger) 1855
- 18 (18) David Ferrer (Spa) 1780
- 19 (22) Lleyton Hewitt (Aus) 1770
- 20 (20) Mikhail Youzhny (Rus) 1770
- 21 (19) Stanislas Wawrinka (Swi) 1765
- 22 (23) Juan Carlos Ferrero (Spa) 1555
- 23 (21) Tomas Berdych (Cze) 1545
- 24 (24) Ivan Ljubicic (Cro) 1450
- 25 (28) John Isner (US) 1440
- Other British
- 171 (171) Alex Bogdanovic (Eng) 290
- 249 (261) James Ward (Eng) 182
- 255 (254) Daniel Evans (Eng) 179
- 286 (314) Jamie Baker (Sco) 152

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291 (309) Joshua Goodall (Eng) 149

605 (511) Colin Fleming (Sco) 38

## DOUBLES

1 (3) Daniel Nestor (Can) 11,590

1 (3) Nenad Zimonjic (Seb) 11,590

3 (1) Bob Bryan (US) 10,480

3 (1) Mike Bryan (US) 10,480

5 (6) Lukas Dlouhy (Cze) 6295

6 (5) Mark Knowles (Bah) 5770

7 (8) Leander Paes (Ind) 5575

8 (7) Mahesh Bhupathi (Ind) 5015

9 (9) Andy Ram (Isr) 4860

10 (10) Wesley Moodie (SA) 4460

## British

53 (53) Ken Skupski (Eng) 1416

54 (47) Ross Hutchins (Eng) 1395

56 (54) Colin Fleming (Sco) 1366

89 (89) Jonathan Marray (Eng) 852

96 (96) Jamie Murray (Sco) 758

sony ericsson wta Tour

\* ENTRY RANKINGS (rolling 12-month ranking on which seedings and entry to tournaments are based)

## SINGLES Points

1 (1) Serena Williams (US) 9195

2 (2) Dinara Safina (Rus) 6480

3 (4) Caroline Wozniacki (Den) 5995

4 (3) Svetlana Kuznetsova (Rus) 5861

5 (6) Venus Williams (US) 5526

6 (7) Victoria Azarenka (Blr) 4960

7 (5) Elena Dementieva (Rus) 4705

8 (8) Jelena Jankovic (Srb) 3845

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9 (10) Agnieszka Radwanska (Pol) 3605

10 (17) Li Na (Chn) 3500

11 (13) Samantha Stosur (Aus) 3165

12 (12) Flavia Pennetta (Ita) 3160

13 (11) Marion Bartoli (Fra) 2985

14 (9) Vera Zvonareva (Rus) 2940

15 (16) Yanina Wickmayer (Bel) 2940

16 (14) Maria Sharapova (Rus) 2825

17 (15) Kim Clijsters (Bel) 2780

18 (18) Francesca Schiavone (Ita) 2720

19 (19) Nadia Petrova (Rus) 2440

20 (35) Zheng Jie (Chn) 2260

21 (23) Aravane Rezai (Fra) 2150

22 (28) Shahar Peer (Isr) 2085

23 (21) Ana Ivanovic (Srb) 2067

24 (20) Virginie Razzano (Fra) 2045

25 (24) Sabine Lisicki (Ger) 2035

British

83 (83) Elena Baltacha (Sco) 775

84 (87) Katie O'Brien (Eng) 769

127 (126) Anne Keothavong (Eng) 479

191 (203) Naomi Cavaday (Eng) 297

236 (238) Melanie South (Eng) 212

281 (262) Georgie Stoop (Eng) 160

282 (291) Naomi Broady (Eng) 159

313 (405) Laura Robson (Eng) 127

I Justine Henin (Bel) has 1600 ranking points which would place her No.38 but has only played 2 tournaments and must play 3 to earn a ranking

\* CHAMPIONS RACE (points won from events in calendar year only)

SINGLES 1 S Williams 2320, 2 Henin 1600, 3 Zheng Jie 970, 4 Li Na 961, 5 Azarenka 700, 6 Wickmayer 620, 7 Dementieva & Maria Kirilenko (Rus) 570, 9 Alona Bondarenko (Ukr) 560, 10 Petrova 502, 11 V Williams 500,



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12 Peer 490, 13 Clijsters 440, 14 Pennetta 420, 15 Schiavone 411, 16 Safina 400, 17 Kuznetsova 340, 18 A Rezai 330, 19 Sara Errani (Ita) 291, 20 Daniela Hantuchova (Svk) 290

Scotland suffered a double blow yesterday when Rory Lamont and Al Stokosch, two of those who started November's heroic win over Australia, were ruled out of Sunday's RBS 6 Nations opener against France.

Both have ankle problems and Lamont is staying with the Scotland squad as he continues his rehab, which in turn suggests that Stokosch may have a more serious problem since he is being sent back to his club Gloucester to be treated by their medical team.

The saving grace is that there is high-quality cover in both cases and their early withdrawal at least has the benefit of clarifying their situation, rather than leaving coaches wondering if they have done the right thing either way.

With Jason White, the former captain who replaced Stokosch during that defeat of the Wallabies, out with a long-term injury, the in-form Kelly Brown would seem likely to return and join Johnny Barclay and John Beattie, his Glasgow clubmates, in the back-row.

Lamont's withdrawal leaves a choice between the ever-reliable Chris Paterson, with his world class goal-kicking ability, and Hugo Southwell, his former Edinburgh clubmate, which leads into a nice topical discussion.

We are after all, in election year, so conservative or labour? Paterson or Southwell? Phil Godman or Dan Parks? Alex Grove or Graeme Morrison? Al Kellock or Jim Hamilton? The analogy is simplistic, but it cuts to the essence of the options facing Andy Robinson as he announces his first Six Nations Championship side as Scotland coach.

There are, of course, radical options, most obviously in the shape of uncapped Glasgow pair Ruaridh Jackson and Richie Gray. However, Robinson has enough quality available to believe he need not take too many risks, so in looking for the right combinations generally and in the key play-making area in particular, he is unlikely to deviate from those who have served him well.

That in itself represents a bit of a problem for Robinson because in terms of the way he wants to keep opponents guessing, the two players who are in terms of their skill sets best equipped to deliver a full array of options have had too little in the way of exposure to playing in that area.

In Paterson's case, a decade of agonising has left the most gifted back of his generation admitting to still pondering what might have been had he played more at stand-off. At the other end of the experience scale Jackson has shown, not least when working under Robinson in Romania with Scotland A last summer, that he potentially boasts the most rounded game of the four, but injury has blighted his season.

Jackson's loss was Parks' gain allowing him the run that has seen him regain peak form, but his natural playing style is least well suited to what Robinson seems to aspire to in terms of playing style.

The coach also knows that Scotland's attacking play, having been utterly uninspired throughout the decade-old Six Nations version of the International Championship, is an area commentators are fixated upon. It is a case of being as efficient with the ball as without it, but that is easier said than done.

Defensively we're making very good decisions and under pressure we're able to control and stay within the framework. In attack we need to be able to keep that shape and framework, but also make decisions under pressure and produce the execution under pressure, Robinson said.

It's a little bit easier to achieve in defence because you're aligned together and your roles are fairly simple, whereas in attack it's a little bit harder and what we're always learning is how we can take the shape we have in putting pressure on in defence to the attacking structure and the decision-making we need.

For us to be controlling the scoreboard we'll need our quicker guys with the ball in space. We've also got some strong ball-carriers, but when we get close to the line we just can't dive around the side. We've got to be able to move the ball.

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The best way of achieving that might be to align Godman's distributive skills with Alex Grove's reading of the game and Max Evans' instinctive ability to beat opponents.

Admittedly that may look a less than imposing midfield, especially if Paterson was behind them, since Southwell is two inches taller and more than two and a half stones heavier than Scotland's most-capped player.

That said, it might surprise a few to discover that, in terms of physical presence, that Scotland midfield would be only a collective two kilos lighter than the Ronan O Gara, Gordon D Arcy, Brian O Driscoll combination that has served Ireland so well down the years.

While the Brewin Dolphin Scottish Schools Under-18 Cup pauses before the final at Murrayfield a week on Thursday, the other layers of the competition have some distance to go before completion.

West schools are unrepresented in the Cup finals at under level. Hutchesons Grammar are in the final of the U15 cup but there will be a guaranteed presence in the final of the Plate with either Belmont Academy or Wellington School certain to be contesting the ultimate round.

The two Ayrshire schools are drawn in the semi-final of the U18 Plate but as yet the other two semi-finalists have still to be determined. The perennial backlog, made considerably worse by the recent cold snap, has meant that there are still two outstanding quarter-final matches to be played, Royal High School v Kelso High School and Banchory Academy v Linlithgow Academy.

Of the four, Royal High School have the pedigree, having been previous winners of the Plate competition and with home advantage they will be favourites to defeat Kelso High School. Banchory Academy v Linlithgow Academy is a tougher call but again home advantage for the Deeside team could be significant.

Down a level in the Bowl competition all four semi-finalists are now in place. Williamwood High School's 15-7 win over Calderglen High School earned the south Glasgow school a place in the semi-final with a home game against Berwickshire High School, where former Scotland winger Cammy Murray is an inspirational presence.

Berwickshire gave notice of their strength with a 95-5 quarter-final win over Ross High. The other semi-final will be between Kinross High School, who had a walkover against Tain Royal Academy and Aberdeen Grammar School.

Barely 24 hours after Andy Murray's emotional defeat by Roger Federer in the Australian Open final, the two men were back together again last night as they left Melbourne on the long flights back to Europe. As Federer and family weaved their way through the airport, Murray must have been wondering when he is ever to going to see the back of the world No.1.

Unfortunately for the Scot, that is unlikely to be too soon but Murray boarded his flight knowing that he is getting ever closer to the Swiss and that his own skills are bringing out the best in Federer, to the extent where he described his 6-3, 6-4, 7-6 win here as some of the best tennis he has ever played.

It will perhaps be of some consolation to Murray, then, that he is forcing the Swiss to improve again to stop him from winning that coveted first grand-slam title. As he posed with the trophy yesterday, after a night that included more than the odd glass of champagne, Federer admitted that Murray was pushing him hard.

He neutralises you very well, Federer said. He tangles you up in these rallies and you can't do anything about it because if you play too aggressively you lose and if you play too passively you lose.

You have to have this perfect balance, so for me to be able to come out and do it, when I'm well known for being hot-blooded on court sometimes and going after my shots time and time again, last night was a tricky situation. To come through those moments and prove myself again over all those years is amazing.

It was indeed amazing and Federer shows no sign of slowing. The way he has kept himself supremely fit and most importantly of all, largely injury free over the best part of a decade is a lesson to everyone, including Murray, who knows that winning one of the four major titles will be far from easy.

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At Wimbledon, Federer is still going to be favourite for the next few years, while on the clay Rafa [Nadal] is still the best player when he is fit, Murray said.

On the hard courts Roger plays great but there are guys who can win against him if they play their best. But if he is fit and motivated and his body holds up, which is the most important thing, then he can go on.

Look at someone like [Lleyton] Hewitt who has just had hip surgery, Roger has never had a surgery, he has kept himself in good shape and if his body holds there s no doubt he can play for another four or five years.

Murray is far from despondent though after a month of tennis in which he showed that his game is progressing all the time. The way he prepared for Melbourne was a success, obviously, and he is sure to be a threat at all the grand-slam events from now on.

I only dropped one set going into the final and beat some really tough players on the way. So it s been great, I enjoyed my time over here, just a shame the final didn t go my way, he said. There is obviously stuff I need to work on and get better at. I lost to the best player of all time so there s not too much that can get loads better in my game. I can improve on a few things, I ll keep working on my serve and physically I can still get better. I d have liked to have played better in the service box, I missed a few volleys I shouldn t have done.

His next tour stop is due to be in Marseille, starting on February 15, before he heads to Dubai and then to the United States for back-to-back Masters Series events in Indian Wells and Miami.

Managing his schedule in order to maximise his chances is uppermost in Murray s mind and if anything does not fit in, he will not be shy to change plans.

I don t feel I have to play every week so I can spend more time at home and pick my schedule a lot better, he said. I m more relaxed than I was 18 months or two years ago for sure.

John Higgins is now favourite to replace Ronnie O Sullivan as the sport s No.1 player next season following his win in the totesport.com Welsh Open.

The Wishaw player beat Ali Carter 9-4 at the Newport Centre on Sunday night to claim his 21st ranking title. With the comprehensive victory over the defending champion, the Scot has now pulled even further ahead of the O Sullivan in the current world standings.

Higgins is now so far ahead of O Sullivan in the provisional rankings that if he were to match his rival s performance in next month s China Open, he will be guaranteed the official top spot before they go to the Crucible in April.

I just want to win as many titles as I can, said Higgins. I ve had my time in the doldrums so when you are on a high you want to keep it going.

I ve always felt that ranking tournaments are the ones to go for so I m just delighted to add another one. I m feeling really confident at the moment and just taking it as it comes.

Higgins is also just one title away from levelling O Sullivan s 22 ranking title trophies, with Steve Davis (28) and Scottish compatriot Stephen Hendry (36) still the most successful players to have played the game.

China will be a big tournament because it could still be close, although Ronnie will probably have to win that to get back into the race, said Higgins. It would be good to have it sewn up before Sheffield. But in 1998, a chain of events had to go my way for me to get the No.1, and that s what happened, so I m not taking it for granted.

Higgins said that his 10-8 defeat to Ding Junhui in last month s Pukka Pies UK Championship final had given him extra motivation to win this year s Welsh title for the first time in 10 years.

I didn t enjoy losing the UK final so I was trying my hardest. The first five frames [on Sunday] were the hardest I ve concentrated in a long while. I really didn t want to lose this one.

## Celtic reject late bid for McGeady as Keane tops frantic day of deals

\* Scotland's Six Nations opener against France on Sunday is heading for a sell-out. Andy Robinson will take charge of the Scots for the first time in a championship match at Murrayfield (kick-off 3pm).

Last night, just over 6000 tickets were left for sale at the 67,500-capacity venue for the French meeting. £30 adult tickets are now sold out with only £50 and £70 tickets available. Students and U-18s can attend for £15, £25 or £35 where applicable. The Scottish Rugby Union will again continue with their policy of not selling on match day, but tickets can be bought in advance in person, on the phone (0844 335 3933) or visit [www.scottishrugbytickets.com](http://www.scottishrugbytickets.com)

THE Royal Navy's flagship aircraft carrier HMS Illustrious has arrived in Scotland for a £40 million upgrade as Gordon Brown prepares to underline the Government's commitment to a new generation of warships.

A green paper on defence, due to be published tomorrow, is expected to include pledges to maintain defence spending in the face of budget cuts elsewhere in the public sector.

The £4 billion, 65,000-tonne aircraft carriers being built on the Clyde and at Rosyth are due to go ahead and the PM will also promise investment in a Typhoon multi-role combat aircraft programme and joint strike fighter.

HMS Illustrious sailed under the Forth bridges yesterday and docked at Crombie in Fife, where preparatory work will be carried out before its maintenance and upgrade programme is due to get under way at Rosyth Dockyard in Fife in March.

The Ministry of Defence said the work will provide employment for around 300 people over the next 18 months.

Scottish Secretary Jim Murphy sailed out to welcome the 685ft ship as it headed up the Firth of Forth. Mr Murphy hailed the MoD contract with Babcock as a boost to the Scottish economy.

He said: UK defence contracts provide vital skilled work to companies in Scotland and have generated a welcome resurgence in our Scottish shipbuilding industry.

It's heartening to see businesses – some small family owned firms – with full order books, able to take on apprentices and give them a future.

Aircraft carriers have a crucial role within the armed forces and on operations worldwide, so these upgrades are part of the strategy to ensure we have the best people, the best equipment and capabilities to meet modern-day defence challenges.

The latest work on HMS Illustrious, which has participated in most major UK and Nato campaigns since it was commissioned in Portsmouth in 1982, will involve replacing 500 metres of pipework; 650 valves and all eight exhausts; painting the ship with 540,000 litres of paint; and making it more fuel-efficient.

The contract is part of a continuous programme of work at the dockyard before the assembly of two new Navy super carriers begins.

Concern has previously been raised that the new aircraft carriers would be placed under threat as cuts in public sector spending are pushed through over the next financial year.

In September, Shadow Chancellor George Osborne signalled that defence would be one area ripe for cutting when he referred to the approved projects, saying that he did not know the detail of the break clauses in the aircraft carriers contract.

It comes as the first strategic defence review in more than a decade is due to take place after the election of the next Westminster Parliament. It will consider the strategic needs of the UK, lessons learned from British involvement in wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as technological changes.

FORMER Doctor Who actor David Tennant is to star as former Scottish ambassador Craig Murray in a play on BBC Radio 4. Based on Murray's memoirs of his tenure in Uzbekistan, it's aired on February 20.

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GLASGOW S oldest building is to close for a month for renovation work. Provand s Lordship in Castle Street, which dates from 1471, is now a museum attracting 100,000 visitors each year. It will close on February 11 and reopen on March 14.

THE national charity for soldiers has said it needs to double its income to meet future demand for help. ABF The Soldiers Charity, which offers help such as adapting homes after injury, will have to increase fundraising from £7 million to £14m a year by 2015.

SUPERMODEL Elle Macpherson is to be the new presenter of Britain s Next Top Model. Macpherson replaces Lisa Snowdon as host of the show, which sees 25 aspiring beauties compete for a modelling contract. The new series will be screened this summer.

The sonnet to mark 1000 days since Madeleine McCann s disappearance from her family s holiday home in Portugal, composed by our unofficial northern laureate, Simon Armitage, reminds us how powerful words can be.

Sometimes, just a few lines can be more effective than reams of text. Less is more. Indeed, sometimes, silence can be the best poem of all.

It has been a good year for poetry so far. Christopher Reid won the £30,000 Costa Book of the Year for his verse collection A Scattering, while the poem Invictus, which has already had much publicity after Gordon Brown mentioned it as a favourite, will enjoy more attention when the film of the same name is released.

After the General Election, its line Beyond this place of wrath and tears will surely have an extra resonance for Mr Brown.

Reid s book is a tribute to his wife, Lucinda Gane, who died of cancer in 2005. Twenty-five years ago, the Scottish poet Douglas Dunn won the same prize with his collection, Elegies. Back then the prize was called the Whitbread Book of the Year (beer gave way to coffee in 2006).

Dunn s collection had the same inspiration as Reid s: the death of his wife. A poem could be written about these poets remembering their loved ones in verse.

Coleridge famously described poetry as the best words in the best possible order . When it works, it can give us lines that stay with us, just as little Madeleine s face does.

Often, we don t know that a line or phrase is from a poem. Dee Brown called his classic history of the North American Indian Bury my Heart at Wounded Knee. But how many know that the title is from the poem American Names by Stephen Vincent Benét? The line is so famous it was wittily adapted by the science-fiction writer Brian Aldiss. He called his memoirs Bury My Heart at W H Smith s.

What is the function of a parent? Are we here to guard and protect our children? Some of us excel at that. Or are we here to guide them through a set of life experiences that will set them up as confident, independent adults? If the latter, are we failing? It wouldn t be difficult in this risk-averse society.

Yesterday I read about a mother and child walking group in Yorkshire a simple but excellent enterprise that introduced children to the countryside. It was organised by health visitors and offered companionship, exercise, the opportunity to learn about plants and birds, and to enjoy the natural landscape.

It was, of course, crushed. The local Community Service decided there were too many uncontrollable risks during winter months . There will have been iced-over puddles to slip on, snow to sink into and snowballs to dodge.

I took a walk in the Pentland Hills one Sunday when our snow was at its peak. It looked like Switzerland. The slopes were freckled with families and parties of young people. They were skiing, snow- boarding, sledging and just sliding without asking anyone s permission. Did I pity the children? (Some must have gone home with bumps and bruises.) Did I look and think: what reckless parents? Of course I didn t.

## Celtic reject late bid for McGeady as Keane tops frantic day of deals

The children I pitied as I drove back to town were those trapped indoors in front of a television or computer all day. Not for them the thrill of hurtling downhill at speed with the wind in their face, the sight of sun glinting off virgin snow, the exhaustion at the end of a day out of doors and the corresponding pleasure of returning to a warm house for tea.

There is a new book which is climbing the best-seller list in the US and which is just about to go global. Initially it was spurned by publishers as too dangerous to print but was snapped up by parents through print on demand on the internet. It has an unlikely title: Fifty Dangerous Things (You Should Let Your Children Do).

Top among them are: own a pocket knife, play with fire, throw a spear and drive a car. The authors want parents to encourage their children to learn through experience.

To the average baby boomer, that's nothing new but what about today's children? How many of them lead a life circumscribed by home, car television and computer? For how many are outings restricted to trips to school, the shops or an afternoon at the cinema?

How many rely on electronic games and Wii for adventure and exploration? Isn't that where the real danger lies?

To my mind, children are at risk when their relaxation is circumscribed by a television in the sitting room and a computer in the bedroom. Their diet is high in sugar and their physical activity happens at school. Their knowledge and understanding of the world is all third-hand. No matter how much cash their parents spend on them, I say they are being neglected.

Gever Tulley and Julie Speigler, co-authors of the book, are recommending activities that instruct and empower a child.

If they climb a tree and fall, they'll climb it better the next time. If they light a fire and watch how much faster paper burns than sticks, they'll understand its purpose and its dangers in a way that no amount of telling will achieve.

Sit them on your knee to let them steer a car around a field or empty car park and they will feel its weight and its power. Give them a tool kit and allow them to hammer and saw old bits of wood. Instead of throwing out the old washing machine, help them take it to bits and work out how the insides function.

The book comes with a disclaimer. The authors accept no liability for injury. Yet I bet there's scarcely an idea in it that Baden-Powell didn't include in his Scouting handbook. (Well, I doubt he suggested that they lick a nine-volt battery or glue their finger and thumb together.)

But Baden-Powell understood that the best way to rear a happy child is to supervise them while they learn by experience. He empowered them. He challenged them to use their initiative and rewarded them with badges for their achievements.

I can remember seeing the wreck of a nephew returning from his first camping trip. He had pitched a tent on a damp patch, failed to sleep, cooked sausages that were raw in the middle and burned on the outside, explored the woods and returned home black and blue, exhausted, starving and utterly exhilarated.

I'm describing a childhood that used to be common currency. Country-dwellers climbed rocks, dug pits and made dens. Before traffic pushed people indoors, town-dwellers skipped and played ball and hopscotch in the streets and learned how to jump off a moving bus before it reached the stop or jump on as it was pulling away.

That was before the authorities got it into their communal head that life should be risk free. You only have to look at Haiti and wonder what good it does the people that every plastic bag on the island probably carries a warning that it could suffocate.

We live on the crust of a small molten planet spinning through space and we think we can make life safe? It's a joke.

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Mothers develop an instinct to protect when they are pregnant. It s very strong in some of us me included. I was far too over-protective a parent, to my great regret. Yet, looking back, even my kids had a tool kit, a pen knife, a bow and arrows, picnics with fires and bicycles.

Parental fear needs to be channelled into action. Children shouldn t be kept from the experience of danger but mentored through it.

It s something mankind has known and practised since we lived in caves. It s something we have unlearned and our new ignorance is being encouraged by nonsensical and self-protective laws and guidelines.

Health and safety has nothing to do with either health or safety. It has to do with money; with protecting the service provider or licensing authority from injury claims.

Well, there s more to life than money. And more to a decent childhood than a computer screen. I ll add a suggestion to Tulley s list. I suggest children should make a collection of Health and Safety booklets and (with parental supervision) torch them on a bonfire.

We should have a bonfire of daft health and safety rules

Light a fire and watch how much faster paper burns than sticks

A PRIMARY school teacher tells us she was talking to her class about how her young son had just had his first haircut, and that she had kept a curl as a keepsake.

The class looked bemused so she explained about keeping things because you felt sentimental about them.

I know what you mean, Miss, said one of her class. When my cat died, I kept his paw.

THE government has announced plans to try to halve the number of smokers in England by 2020.

Surely the easiest way, said one golf club philosopher, is to give them more cigarettes?

READER Dougie McNicol was surprised to hear a BBC Radio Scotland sports reporter state that Celtic manager Tony Mowbray must be concerned about the timing of the brown stuff coming out .

He thought that a very rude suggestion until he realised it was merely a comment on the stories claiming that player Scott Brown was to be sold.

ALL that hurt and humiliation, said the chap in the pub the other night. Footballer Wayne Bridge [pictured] should get a medal for putting up with the revelations about John Terry and his former girlfriend.

After all, he added, he s not going to get one playing for Manchester City.

THE death of legendary newspaper editor Max McAuslane reminds former colleague Ken Thomson of when the Mirror Group bought over the Daily Record, and Mirror editorial director Hugh Cudlipp was introduced to Max, who was then the Record s news editor.

Some people say that I m a bit of a bastard, said Hugh, attempting to lighten the moment. What do you think?

Well, I haven t really known you long enough to form an opinion, replied Max.

WE appear to have kicked over a hornets nest of town rivalry by suggesting that folk from Airdrie were surprised to discover that neighbouring Coatbridge had a library.

The reason for the library in Coatbridge, says one Airdrieonian, is with drink sales banned till 10am, they need somewhere warm to go until they can buy their Buckfast.

Surely not.

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A READER in Lanarkshire discovered his blue recycling bin had been stolen from his garden and local legend has it that wayward neds burn them to sniff the fumes.

The council charges you sixty quid for a new one, unless you report it as stolen, so he duly phoned the police.

The officer taking the details down then asked if he wished a visit from Victims Support, but he felt on balance he could just about cope with the loss of his bin without them.

2004 West Ham United striker Jermain Defoe signed for Tottenham Hotspur for £7m on transfer deadline day, with Bobby Zamora moving the other way as part of the deal.

2006 Graeme Souness had his contract as Newcastle United manager terminated, with Glenn Roeder assisted by Alan Shearer taking charge of first-team affairs.

2007 The Italian football federation announced the suspension of all football in Italy following the death of a police officer during trouble at the Sicilian derby between Catania and Palermo.

2009 Liverpool confirmed they had reached agreement for the transfer of Robbie Keane back to Tottenham Hotspur, just six months after signing the striker from the north London club in a £20.3m deal.

1 Which American city is home to NBA basketball outfit the Celtics?

2 Which two men will drive for Renault in the 2010 Formula One season?

3 In snooker, who were the beaten semi-finalists in last week's Welsh Open?

4 Which player is currently fifth in the men's ATP world tennis rankings?

5 Which three clubs has Celtic new boy Diomansy Kamara represented in the Barclays Premier League?

today

Bowls Welsh International Open BBC2 Wales, 1pm.

Football Clydesdale Bank Premier League, Kilmarnock v Celtic ESPN, 7pm. FA Cup, fourth-round replay, Crystal Palace v Wolverhampton Wanderers ITV4, 7.30pm.

tomorrow

Athletics The BSD Bank Meeting from Dusseldorf Eurosport, 6.10pm.

Bowls Welsh International Open BBC2 Wales, 2pm.

Football Eredivisie, FC Twente v Heracles ESPN, 7pm. Co-operative Insurance Cup, semi-final, Rangers v St Johnstone BBC1 Scotland, 7.30pm. FA Cup, fourth-round replay, Leeds United v Tottenham Hotspur ITV1, 7.30pm. Copa del Rey, semi-final first leg, Sevilla v Getafe Sky Sports 2, 8.30pm.

Answers: 1 Boston. 2 Robert Kubica and Vitaly Petrov. 3 Stephen Maguire and Ronnie O Sullivan. 4 Juan Martin Del Potro. 5 Portsmouth, West Bromwich Albion and Fulham.

## Average Points

1 (1) Tiger Woods 13.34

2 (2) Phil Mickelson 7.75

3 (3) Steve Stricker 6.88



## Celtic reject late bid for McGeedy as Keane tops frantic day of deals

4 (4) Lee Westwood (Eng) 6.65

5 (5) Jim Furyk 5.42

6 (6) Martin Kaymer (Ger) 5.27

7 (9) Paul Casey (Eng) 5.20

8 (7) Padraig Harrington (Irl) 5.14

9 (11) Rory McIlroy (NIrl) 5.13

10 (8) Henrik Stenson (Swe) 5.10

11 (10) Ian Poulter (Eng) 5.05

12 (12) Geoff Ogilvy (Aus) 4.97

13 (13) Kenny Perry 4.61

14 (14) Sergio Garcia (Spa) 4.29

15 (15) Robert Allenby (Aus) 4.29

16 (16) Sean O Hair 4.17

17 (31) Robert Karlsson (Swe) 4.13

18 (19) Retief Goosen (SA) 4.00

19 (17) Stewart Cink 3.99

20 (20) Ernie Els (SA) 3.96

#### SELECTED Average Points

21 (18) Ross Fisher (Eng) 3.93

32 (52) Alvaro Quiros (Spa) 2.83

33 (29) Luke Donald (Eng) 2.78

34 (50) Michael Sim (Aus) 2.72

40 (43) Oliver Wilson (Eng) 2.59

41 (38) Soren Kjeldsen (Den) 2.59

42 (39) Francesco Molinari (Ita) 2.53

44 (41) Anders Hansen (Den) 2.51

45 (42) Graeme McDowell (NIrl) 2.47

48 (47) Simon Dyson (Eng) 2.38

65 (64) Ross McGowan (Eng) 1.96

70 (72) Chris Wood (Eng) 1.89

## Celtic reject late bid for McGeedy as Keane tops frantic day of deals

72 (70) Justin Rose (Eng) 1.83

84 (90) Shane Lowry (Irl) 1.65

87 (84) Martin Laird (Sco) 1.62

92 (88) Anthony Wall (Eng) 1.59

100 (101) Darren Clarke (NIrl) 1.43

124 (128) Richie Ramsay (Sco) 1.25

163 (161) David Drysdale (Sco) 1.03

186 (179) Gary Orr (Sco) 0.93

Shoaib Malik has been named as Pakistan captain for Friday's Twenty20 international against Australia.

Malik will take over from Shahid Afridi, who has been banned for two T20 matches after being found guilty of ball tampering during the fifth one-day international defeat by Australia in Perth at the weekend.

The Pakistan Cricket Board have moved quickly to fill the void with Malik reclaiming the role he once had. He was first appointed captain in May 2007 after the World Cup and led Pakistan in three Tests and 36 ODIs, before handing over the reins to Younus Khan in early 2009. Malik will be the third captain on this tour, after Mohammad Yousuf and Afridi.

Meanwhile, chief selector Iqbal Qasim has also announced his resignation.

He has stepped down in the aftermath of defeat in the fifth one-day match at the WACA yesterday.

EVENTSCOTLAND, the government-sponsored agency, has given a long-term commitment to support golf in Scotland well beyond the 2014 Ryder Cup at Gleneagles, writes Jim Black.

Mindful of what has happened in Ireland since the 2006 match was staged at the K Club and the subsequent withdrawal of government funding, Robbie Clyde, EventScotland's project co-ordinator for the 2014 Ryder Cup, is adamant that the same will not be the case in Scotland.

There has been no Challenge Tour or Senior Tour event in Ireland since the Ryder Cup and only the late intervention of the sponsors 3 saved last year's Irish Open from being removed from the European Tour schedule.

Clyde, speaking following the announcement that Macdonald Hotels Spey Valley Course will host the Scottish Hydro Challenge for the next two years at least in conjunction with the sponsor's £1m three-year deal, also stressed the importance of the organisation's commitment to the development of young Scottish talent.

He said: The Scottish Hydro Challenge completes our portfolio across every level of the game, with the Open back at St Andrews, the Seniors at Carnoustie and the return of the Scottish Ladies Open. Our commitment is long-term. When we sat down with Ryder Cup Europe we suggested that we commit to investment in golf tournaments beyond 2014 specifically to avoid what has happened in the past when funding dried up.

The agency is contributing £150,000 to the Challenge Tour event, which is being brought forward several weeks to June.

Last year's tournament, won by the Scot Jamie McLeary, was staged at Aviemore at the **end** of July and clashed with the Scottish Amateur Championship. The June 10-13 date this year ensures there will be no fresh conflict of interest.

### Celtic reject late bid for McGeedy as Keane tops frantic day of deals

The organisers also hope to persuade several prominent Scots from the European Tour to compete for the £28,000 top prize after former Open champion Paul Lawrie's presence last year raised the profile of the tournament.

Michael Sim, the Aberdeen-born Australian, cemented his place in the world's top 50 with his joint second place finish in the Farmers Insurance Open in San Diego that took him up 16 places yesterday to world No.34.

The 25-year-old, who earned his PGA Tour card via the Nationwide Tour last year, finished a shot behind winner Ben Crane of the US, who jumped 53 places to No.56.

Scotland's Martin Laird closed with a four-under-par 68 for joint 27th place but fell three places to world No.87. He will need a finish like Sim's at this week's Northern Trust Open at the Riviera Club in Los Angeles to meet his target of making the top 64 who will start the WGC-Accenture World Matchplay Championship in Tucson in just over a fortnight.

Richie Ramsay, however, moved up four places to world No.124 after his joint 32nd in the Qatar Masters and will head to the Dubai Desert Classic this week in a mood of growing confidence. Marc Warren was top Scot in joint 20th place and entered the world's top 300 at No.279.

Lee Westwood just missed out on reaching his highest-ever world ranking. He would have moved above the American Steve Stricker into third place had he finished runner-up to Robert Karlsson in Doha, but he bogeyed the 16th and missed birdie putts on the last two greens. Westwood, last year's European Tour No.1, who slipped to joint-third, stays as world No.4, while 2008 money list winner Karlsson climbs from 31st to 17th.

The Spaniard Alvaro Quiros was second and, by moving to No.32, has virtually assured himself of a return to Augusta for the Masters in April. The top 50 earn invitations the week before.

England's Ross McGowan and Spaniard Gonzalo Fernandez-Castano, meanwhile, are in position to profit from the expected absence of top two Tiger Woods and Phil Mickelson from Tucson. Mickelson is taking the week off, while there is no indication that Woods will end his indefinite break from golf for an event backed by one of the sponsors who have dropped him.

The tournament is for the game's leading 64 available players and, with one week to go in qualifying, McGowan is No.65 and Fernandez-Castano No.66.

athletics

### Cross Country

\* East Borders Winter League Rd 4, Berwick

Men 1 N Ford (Vegan Runners) 27.42, 2 G Wilkie 27.48, 3 C O'Brien 28.02 (both Corstorphine). Veteran: S Whittle (Carnethy Hillrunners) 28.14. U20: A Robertson (Lothian Runners) 30.16. U17: 1 A Redpath (Dunbar) 15.35, 2 S Somervail (Jedforest) 16.02, 3 A Govan (Dunbar) 18.59

Women 1 R Anderson (Dunbar) 34.36, 2 I Joiner (unatt) 34.43, 3 V Lomax (Edinburgh AC) 35.18. Veteran: S Johnston (Corstorphine) 35.28. U17: 1 M Sweeney-Baird (Lasswade) 21.21, 2 H Chapman (Dunbar) 25.45

\* Murray Construction Lewis & Harris Winter League (Rd 2), Stornoway Castle

Men (6.2km) 1 A Dunlop (unatt, vet) 24.32,

2 J Pritchard 26.45, 3 R Munro 28.19 (both Stornoway Runners). U15 (3.8km) 1 C MacDonald (Stornoway) 15.00, 2 D Mackellar (Scott School) 15.01, 3 M Smith (Stornoway) 16.27. U13 (3.1km) 1 C MacLean 13.20, 2 J Sullivan 13.34 (both Stornoway), 3 M MacMillan (Sy School) 13.50. U11 (1.6km) 1 D Duffy 6.52, 2 K Munro 7.05,

3 H MacKenzie 7.07 (all Sy School)

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Women (4.6km) 1 C MacLeod 25.14, 2 J Millar 25.51 (both Stornoway Runners), 3 C Rodman (unatt) 27.41, U17 (4.6km) 1 J MacIver 23.07,

2 K MacIver 23.18, 3 C Stewart 24.23 (all Stornoway). U15: (3.8km) 1 R Munro 13.52,

2 A MacIver 20.18 (both Stornoway). U13: (3.1km) 1 P Mackellar (Scott School) 14.25, 2 I Bain (Back School) 14.49, 3 C Thomson (Stornoway) 14.56. U11 (1.6km) 1 C Bain (Back School) 7.22, 2 K Thomson (Sy School) 7.52, 3 C Graham (Back School) 8.13

\* Speyside Runner North District Winter Lge Rd 4, Nairn

Men 1 B Livesey 36.27, 2 R Paterson 37.03 (both Forres), 3 J Riddle (Highland Hillrunners) 37.20. Veteran: C Donnelly (Lochaber) 38.14. Teams: 1 Forres Harriers 385, 2 Moray Roadrunners 354, 3 Keith & Dist AC 354. U17: 1 D Shand (Moray RR) 18.48, 2 C MacLeod (Inverness) 18.49, 3 J Little (Moray RR) 20.04. Team: 1 Moray Roadrunners 295

Women 1 M White (Inverness) 19.41, 2 M Davey (Forres) 20.59, 3 E Duncan 21.42 (both Forres), Teams 1 Forres Harriers 293, 2 Inverness Harriers 292, 3 Nairn Roadrunners 263. U17: 1 K Rogan (Forres) 13.43, 2 R Taylor (Buckie High) 14.09, 3 S MacKinnon (Caithness) 15.03

## Road Running

\* Victoria Park City of Glasgow Race Series, Scotstoun

Senior (2½ miles) Men 1 R Connolly 18.03, 2 A Hamilton 19.40, 3 K McVey (veteran) 19.41

Women 1 S Branney (vet) 18.09

Juniors (2 miles) Boys U17: 1 E Sloan-Dennison 9.19, 2 C Prior 10.17, 3 P McFarlane 10.52.

U15: 1 M Aitchison 9.10, 2 L Boyle 9.29,

3 L McLoone 9.54. U13: 1 E Urquhart 11.10.

U11: 1 D Sinclair 13.00

Girls U15: 1 M Milliken 11.37. U13: 1 G Black 11.12. U11: 1 H Little 12.03

## bowls

nWBT Gravells Welsh International Open, City of Swansea Club, Swansea. Day 3

Welsh National Singles. Semi-finals J Roberts (Heatherton) bt S Rees (Port Talbot) 7-5 9-4,

J Greenslade (Sully) bt D Gough (Severn Valley) 10-2 9-5

Final Greenslade bt Roberts 5-9 11-5 2-0

IGreenslade is already playing in the event so Roberts gets the vacant place and meets Mervyn King today at 1pm today

Welsh International Open. Rd 1 (Q) T Stone (Eng) bt (12) K Kerkow (Aus) 7-6, 12-4

Rd 2 (15) S Skelton (Eng) bt (Q) G Beath (Aus) 7-5 8-3, (3) M Royal (Eng) bt (Q) J Hanlan (Sco) 6-6 11-3

## cricket

\* International Twenty20 Series

# Celtic reject late bid for McGeady as Keane tops frantic day of deals

Colombo. Afghanistan 121-9 (D Johnston 4-22), Ireland 124-5. Ireland (5pts) bt Afghanistan (1pt) by 5 wkts

## DARTS

\* Players Championship, Purfleet, Essex (Eng unless stated)

Final P Nicholson (Aus) bt M King 13-10

Semi-finals King bt C Osborne 10-8, Nicholson bt P Taylor 10-9

## golf

\* PGA Tour. \$5.3m Farmers Insurance Open, Torrey Pines, North Course (6874 yards. Par 72) & South Course (7568 yards. Par 72)

San Diego, California (US unless stated)

Final Round. 275 B Crane 65 71 69 70 276 M Sim (Aus) 73 62 70 71, M Leishman (Aus) 68 69 71 68, B Snedeker 71 68 68 69 277 M Allen 72 66 74 65, E Els (Rsa) 70 69 69 69, R Fowler 67 70 70 70, A Prugh 67 71 73 66 278 DA Points 68 65 74 71, N Watney 71 70 69 68, R Allenby (Aus) 67 69 72 70, L Glover 71 67 68 72, R Imada (Jpn) 65 68 70 75, C Howell III 71 69 70 68 279 KJ Choi (Kor) 72 66 69 72, M Every 65 70 72 72, K Sutherland 74 67 70 68, T Merritt 69 72 67 71 280 P Mickelson 70 67 70 73

Others. 282 J Rose (Eng) 71 69 72 70, F Jacobson (Swe) 71 69 72 70 283 M Laird (Sco) 71 70 74 68 284 B Weekley 67 73 73 71, S Ames (Can) 74 68 69 73 287 L Donald (Eng) 70 72 72 73 289 A McLardy (SA) 71 70 73 75 290 R S Johnson (Swe) 71 70 75 74

\* Midland Scotland Alliance, Lundin Links (Par 71)

Scratch. 67 A Lockhart (assistant, Ladybank) 68 G Brown (assistant, Montrose) 71 M Brown (Monifeith, +2) 72 M Pirie (pro, Pitlochry), C Donnelly (pro, Balbirnie Park), G Finlay (Ballumbie Castle, +1), C Mathieson (assistant, Falkirk Tryst)

Handicap. 65 J Leddy (Bathgate, 9) 66 A Mason (Thornton, 7) 69 S Graham (Arbroath, 4), J Rennie (Dunfermline, 13), D Redford (Murrayshall, 8), N Ballingall (Lundin Links, 6)

Teams. 57 P Brookes (pro, Pitreavie), Redford, C Westland (Alloa, 11), D Hutchison (Murrayshall, 6)

## judo

\* Sarah Adlington, the British No.2 from Coventry who lives and trains in Edinburgh, finished third in the over-78kg category of the first women s World Cup of the year in Sofia, Bulgaria yesterday, writes Robin Morris. She lost to Slovenia s Lucija Polavder, the eventual winner, in the semi-finals but beat the Russian Elena Ivashchenko to take third place.

## netball

\* Co-operative British Superleague

TONIGHT. Celtic Dragons v Glasgow Wildcats (Cardiff)

\* CENA Edinburgh District League, Week 12, Westwoods HC, Fettes Caledonian Hawks 38 Holyrood Thistles 59, Edinburgh Scarlets 41 Edinburgh Onyx 66, Edinburgh Uni II 41 Edinburgh Royals 35, Phoenix 22 Holyrood Tartans 36

\* GNA Glasgow District League, Week15.

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Div 2 Cardonald 44 Harmony Row III 45, Glasgow South Saltires II 35 Cumbernauld 49, Scotstoun II 42 Harmony Row II 56, St Stephens II 51 Harmony Row IV 33

Div 3 Eastbank II 34 Strathclyde Police RA II 30, Helensburgh 34 Scotstoun III 37, St Mirren 36 Bellahouston III 29

squash

\* Alan Clyne, the 23-year-old Scottish No. 1 from Inverness, ran into a leading seed after qualifying for the PSA Motor City Open in Michigan and was beaten 11-9, 11-7, 11-4 by the former world No.1 Karim Darwish of Egypt, writes Robin Morris. Edinburgh-based Clyne at a career-high No.68 in the world rankings, lost out to the world No.2 Gregory Gauthier of France last week.

\* PSA. Motor City Squash Open, Detroit

Semi-finals (1) K Darwish (Egy) bt (7) O A Aziz (Egy) 11-4 11-5 11-3, (3) M A Iskandar (Mal) bt (2) T Lincou (Fra) 5-11 11-8 10-12 11-3 11-4

Rd 1 Darwish bt (q) A Clyne (Sco) 11-9 11-7 11-4

\* WISPA. Burning River Classic, Cleveland, Ohio (Eng unless stated)

Rd 1 (1) A Waters bt (q) E Beddoes 9-11 11-5 11-6 11-3, (q) J King (NZ) bt (6) E Kheirallah (Egy) 9-11 11-9 11-6 9-11 11-5, (3) M Perry (Irl) bt (q) A Blake (Irl) 8-11 11-7 8-11 11-1 11-9, (7) S Teran (Mex) bt L Briggs 11-7 5-11 11-2 12-10, (5) K Brown (Aus) bt (q) S Kippax 8-11 8-11 11-8 13-11 11-6, R El Weleily (Egy) bt (4) L Massaro 10-12 4-11 11-4 12-10 11-5, (8) I Stoeher (Fra) bt D Lloyd-Walter (Eng) 11-9 11-4 11-9, (2) O A Kawy (Egy) bt L Khan (US) 11-6 11-9 11-6

tennis

atp WORLD tour 250

\* \$442,500 SA Tennis Open, Johannesburg, South Africa

Rd 1 (wc) R de Voest (SA) v (5) R Ram (US) 7-6 (7-3), (8) S Robert (Fra) bt B Evans (US) 3-6 6-2 6-2, S Darcis (Bel) v L Recouderc (Fra) 6-3 3-6, B Kavcic (Svn) bt T Ascione (Fra) 1-6 7-5 6-3

\* PBZ Zagreb Indoors, Croatia

Singles. Rd 1 (3) J Melzer (Aut) bt D Brands (Ger) 6-4 6-3, O Rochus (Bel) bt I Kunitsyn (Rus) 4-6 6-2 7-5, I Marchenko (Ukr) bt S Bolelli (Ita) 6-2 6-4, (wc) I Dodig (Cro) bt (8) E Korolev (Kaz) 7-6 (11-9) 6-4, M Kukushkin (Kaz) bt M Zverev (Ger) 6-4 6-3, (4) V Troicki (Srb) bt R Schuettler (Ger) 6-3 6-2

Qualifying. Final Rd (6) R Bemelmans () bt J Ward (Eng) 7-6 (7-3) 7-6 (7-4)

Rd 2 Ward bt (2) M Ilhan (Tur) 6-7 (4-7) 6-4 7-6 (7-5)

Rd 1 Ward bt A Lupieri (Ita) 6-4 3-6 6-3

Doubles. Rd 1 (1) F Cermak (Cze) & M Mertinak (Svk) bt C Fleming (Sco) & K Skupski (Eng) 6-4 6-3, (4) R Hutchins (Eng) & J Kerr (Aus) bt (wc) F Skugor & I Zovko (Cro) 7-6 (7-4) 7-6 (7-5)

\* Movistar Open, Santiago, Chile

Rd 1 P Luczak (Aus) bt (8) P Starace (Ita) 7-6 6-4,

(wc) J Aguilar (Chi) v J Chela (Arg), M Granollers (Spa) bt M Vassallo Arguello (Arg) 6-4 3-6 rtd,

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M Daniel (Bra) v A Martin (Spa), N Massu (Chi) v (2) J Monaco (Arg)

## ATP CHALLENGERS

\* 85,000 Heilbronn Open, Germany

Final (1) M Berrer (Ger) bt A Golubev (Kaz) 6-3 7-6 (7-4)

Semi-finals Berrer bt (8) A Dolgoplov (Ukr) 6-2 6-3, Golubev bt J Ouanna (Fra) 6-7 (3-7) 7-5 7-6 (13-11)

PETE STEINDL, the Saltires coach, last night refused to press the panic button after his T20 troops slumped to a disastrous ten-wicket defeat against Kenya.

The Saltires, bidding to build confidence ahead of next week's crucial World Cup qualifiers in the UAE, stuttered to just 109-9 at the Gymkhana Ground, Nairobi.

The hosts then raced to an easy triumph with 45 deliveries to spare.

Steindl admitted: It is hard to take any positives from a game like that. For the first three and a half overs things were going exactly to plan and we were scoring freely. But then it just went wrong and we simply lost our way.

Our total was nowhere close to what we needed on a decent wicket and we know there are areas where we must improve.

The Saltires, who needed a sudden-death super over to beat minnows Uganda on Sunday, started brightly with Fraser Watts and Ryans Watson punishing the home attack.

Watts hit two huge sixes in his 16 while Watson plundered three boundaries as they raced to 28-0 in three overs.

However, Watson departed immediately after for 13 before the Saltires lost Watts, Jan Stander and Kyle Coetzer with the total on 47.

Wickets continued to tumble at an alarming rate and it was left to Majid Haq, batting at No.9, to top-score with 21 as Scotland staggered into three figures.

The issue was virtually settled when David Obuya smashed two fours and two sixes as Gordon Goudie's first over went for 20 runs. Obuya went on to finish unbeaten on 60 from 48 balls while Steve Tikolo made 46no.

The Saltires will be back in the nets this morning in a bid to find the winning formula ahead of their return matches against Uganda tomorrow and Kenya on Thursday.

Steindl, whose side have a final warm-up game in Dubai next week, added: We will not over-react to what has been a bad day. The guys know they have what it takes to be successful in this format of the game and we will remain positive.

Meanwhile two of Scotland's qualifying group rivals clashed in Colombo yesterday with Ireland carving out a five-wicket win over Afghanistan.

bowls

Scottish interest going into the second round of the Welsh International Open at Swansea remains at three after WBT Tour Card winner Jamie Hanlan lost to the No.3 seed Mark Royal, writes Anne Dunwoodie. The 19-year-old from Bonnyrigg squared the first set at 6-6, but Royal turned up the pressure from the opening end of the second set, scoring a treble, and went on to seal the set 11-3 and win by one and a half sets to a half.

curling

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This year's Scottish Junior Championships start today and for the first time will be staged in Curl Aberdeen, writes Mike Haggerty. In the men's event, the field of 10 teams includes defending champion Graeme Black, from Lockerbie, and Perth's Glen Muirhead, whose team qualified at the weekend in second place for the senior championship final stages.

Eleven teams, split into two groups, make up the women's field, which includes three Lockerbie skips, Anna Sloan, Lauren Gary and Hannah Fleming.

### cycling

Claire Thomas had a fruitful weekend in Belgium with successive cyclocross wins against strong competition, writes Colin Renton. The Scottish road race champion shrugged off her lack of experience in the discipline to post the first leg of her double at Nederzwalm on Saturday and was back in the saddle 24 hours later to record another victory at Ardooie.

nDanilo Di Luca was suspended for two years for doping at last year's Giro d'Italia. The Italian Olympic Committee's anti-doping court imposed the ban after Di Luca tested positive for the advanced blood booster CERA following two stages of the 2009 race. CONI's anti-doping prosecutor had sought a three-year ban. Di Luca was already suspended for three months in 2007 the year he won the Giro after being implicated in another drug case.

### golf

Fraser Fotheringham lost in the last 16 of the New South Wales Amateur championship at Royal Sydney, writes Nick Rodger. The Nairn youngster beat No.12 seed Reece Hodson by one hole in the morning's opening matchplay round but lost to the fifth seed, Jake Higginbottom, 4 and 3 in round two.

nThe Royal Liverpool club at Hoylake was announced yesterday as the venue for the 2012 Ricoh Women's British Open, the first time that the club that has held the men's Open Championship 11 times has hosted this tournament, writes Douglas Lowe.

To avoid a clash with the Olympic Games in London it will be staged at the later date of September 13 to 16.

nTomorrow's North-east Alliance competition has been switched from Buckpool to Edzell, where there is no snow on the course. Tee times arranged for Buckpool will be carried over to Edzell although they will be flexible to accommodate Edzell members playing the course. First tee time is 8.15am.

nThe Paul Lawrie-sponsored Scottish schools championships will be held over Murrayshall's two courses at New Scone, Perth on Monday, June 7. The England v Scotland schools international will be hosted by Fairhaven Golf Club, Lytham St Annes on Monday, September 13.

### ice hockey

Fife Flyers yesterday confirmed they will play Dundee CCS Stars in a re-arranged Northern League fixture at Kirkcaldy on Saturday (7.15pm), writes Nigel Duncan. Fife are in second spot in the league with 16 points from 11 games while Stars are third with 15 points from the same number of starts.

Solway Sharks lead the table with 20 points from 12 games.

Highly charged emotion makes for good television and adds spice to public discussion on controversial issues but it is not the ideal basis for legislation. The latest move in the long-running debate over assisted suicide is the call by Sir Terry Pratchett, the best-selling fantasy author, for tribunals to decide whether individuals should be given assistance to die within the law.

The idea is to overcome the main objections to legalising assisted suicide: that someone who is permanently disabled or has an incurable or terminal illness may feel pressured to **end** their life because they feel they are a burden or that relatives or others who stand to gain financially exert undue influence.



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Like the MSP Margo MacDonald who introduced End of Life Assistance (Scotland) Bill in the Scottish Parliament last month, Sir Terry suffers from an incurable condition. In his case it is the early-onset Alzheimer's disease. Both deserve credit for facing the prospect of losing physical or mental capacity before death and initiating serious debate on a topic on which public opinion appears to be changing.

Ms MacDonald's Bill and Sir Terry's proposal both envisage an objective assessment of the mental and physical state of the patient as a safeguard. That would be necessary but there are practical difficulties. The majority of doctors are opposed to assisted suicide and euthanasia; that would make it difficult to find sufficient numbers of psychiatrists and physicians to adjudicate and does not resolve the question of who administers the fatal dose if the person who is ill cannot do so.

The most recent opinion poll showing a majority in favour of legalising assisted suicide for the terminally ill follows two high profile court cases which came to opposite verdicts. Both involved mothers who deliberately administered fatal drug doses to their adult children with severe long-term conditions. The difference was the clearly stated desire of the patient. There is little doubt that both acted from the deepest compassion and, therefore, won considerable public opinion that prosecution was unnecessary and conviction unjust. The law should be clarified but the difference between suicide and murder must remain clear.

Dr Angus Macdonald (Letters, January 30) makes a number of valid points regarding the recently published Nuffield Report, in particular the inappropriateness of measuring the success or otherwise of healthcare delivery using a number-crunching approach.

The World Health Organisation's European office has published extensive research in relation to healthcare organisation and delivery in Europe. In terms of healthcare planning, it is acknowledged that a comparative analysis is difficult for a variety of reasons and that the loci for healthcare decision-making often reflect administrative boundaries that were created for very different reasons. WHO specifically cites the devolved system in the UK in this respect.

Countries with large populations such as France and Germany tend to have a corporate approach where investment in healthcare facilities is often driven by the need to maximise the financial return on investment, irrespective of the appropriateness of care. The overprovision of expensive machines such as MRI scanners creates a need for greater use and thereby increased patient activity to justify the investment. While improved patient outcomes in some areas may occur, it is not automatic. More worryingly, basic needs are often not met as a consequence of such an investment strategy.

For example, unplanned cervical screening for women in Germany tends to be opportunistic, with no planned call and recall system. The net result is that German women undergo up to 50 cervical smears during their lifetime, compared with only seven in Finland.

Using the Nuffield analysis, the German system would represent a greater efficiency in the use of staff and equipment, and covering a greater number of the population perceived as being at risk. Yet the death rate from cervical cancer in Finland is half that of Germany.

To use numbers and throughput to make comparisons between small population countries such as Finland and Scotland, as against large population countries such as England and Germany, should, therefore, be treated with extreme caution.

Robert Menzies,

2 Burnbrae Gardens, Falkirk.

ON this day in 1913, New York City's Grand Central station opened. The station, situated at 42nd Street and Park Avenue in Midtown Manhattan, is the largest train station in the world, with 44 platforms and 67 tracks.

Platforms are on two levels, both below ground, with 41 tracks on the upper level and 26 on the lower.

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When the Long Island Rail Road's new station, beneath the existing levels opens, Grand Central will offer a total of 75 tracks and 48 platforms. The terminal covers a total area of 48 acres.

Grand Central Terminal has been used in numerous film and tv productions over the years, including Men in Black, Armageddon, North By Northwest and romantic-comedy One Fine Day.

Although officially called Grand Central Terminal since opening, many people continue to refer to it as Grand Central station.

Correspondents to this page are correct in denouncing the lack of investigative rigour displayed in the questioning of those giving evidence to the Chilcot Inquiry. I would ask them why they expect anything different.

The membership and remit of this inquiry is specifically designed to allow confirmation of information that is already in the public domain but not to allocate blame or to punish; it is simply a tactic that is designed to shut the public up.

Tony Blair was never on trial at the inquiry; he was simply allowed to state the obvious, which was that his was a presidential-style of governance in which he made the decisions, either on his own or with a coterie of hand-picked yes-men. They, in turn, were too involved in protecting their own careers; thus they did not challenge him as they knew it was political suicide to do so.

The decision that Blair made in his exchanges with President George W Bush, whether right or wrong, is not significant. However, that he was unilaterally making the decisions is the antithesis of democratic government and is the crux of the matter. What the inquiry has accidentally and incontrovertibly exposed is that we don't live in a democracy. Parliament itself is conducted in an undemocratic manner and those who manipulate the system are untouchable by the electorate. Is this really the kind of democracy we are trying to force on Afghanistan?

David J Crawford,

Flat 3/3 131 Shuna Street, Ruchill, Glasgow.

In seeking to defend his decisions over Iraq, Tony Blair emphasised to the Chilcot Inquiry how the atrocity of 9/11 instantaneously changed the tolerance of risk for the government and people of the US, even venturing to suggest that sooner or later the same approach might be used upon Iran.

For a US public which had never had to bear the outrage of enemy bombing of its home territory, as Mr Blair said to Chilcot, the tolerance of risk in America had changed for ever.

Unlike Mr Blair, many affected by the Lockerbie atrocity have avoided the idea of retaliation by force against the responsible country, pressing for the use of justice. They see that the atrocity was an act of revenge, and that to seek revenge for it in turn is to abandon the intellectual high ground, and to sink to the philosophy favoured by some terrorists.

Throughout the day of December 21, 1988, Heathrow authorities knew that there had been a break-in, yet they did not know who had broken in, or what the motive might have been. At a time of known increased terrorist threat, they continued the lucrative flow of outgoing flights until the bomb exploded on Pan Am 103 that evening.

When criticising an accepted theory, it is useful to produce a simpler and more credible alternative.

So, what if the Heathrow break-in was, indeed, the route for getting a bomb on to the Lockerbie aircraft? For a start, the Iran/Syria grouping with their pressing revenge motive and their unique possession of this technology would be centre stage, with Malta, Frankfurt and Megrahi irrelevant. Such a theory is unexplored: why is that?

Why did the news of the break-in lie hidden for 12 years? Who was complicit in concealing it? What was their motive for doing so? We know that the Metropolitan Police (and, therefore, presumably the Thatcher government) knew of it. Why did they keep quiet?

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Does this throw any light on why Mrs Thatcher and every Prime Minister since, including Mr Blair and Gordon Brown, has for 21 years refused us the inquiry to which we have an inalienable right?

So long as Mr Blair and all who have shared his office and establishment continue to rely blindly upon a solution to the worst terrorist atrocity ever to occur in their country, which seems fatally flawed, they put at risk more civilised routes through international justice. Their way stands to bring a blight upon all our futures.

In the end history, not Chilcot, will judge them.

Dr Jim Swire,

Rowans Corner, Calf Lane, Chipping Campden, Glos.

Listening to witnesses at the Chilcot Inquiry reinforces the opinion that the Blair government's obsession with spin, and its distortion of the interpretation of wording and argument, were fundamental to this country committing to an illegal war.

Prior to the Chilcot Inquiry, it had been established beyond reasonable doubt that the crucial vote in Westminster to endorse military action in Iraq was obtained only by a deliberate distortion of facts and use of language within dossiers and debate underpinned by blatant scaremongering.

However, what has emerged during the inquiry is surely even more devastating for our democracy. This has shown that the modern-day political culture of spin even permeated the blatant evolution of the legal justification to allow the UK to participate in the Iraq invasion.

The inquiry has painted a disturbing picture of Mr Blair's chosen inner circle, aided by his Washington legal cheerleaders, helping the then attorney general, Lord Goldsmith, eventually to arrive at a bizarre, convenient and most timely legal judgment, surely flawed in international law.

UN resolution 1441 made no direct reference to the accepted key UN euphemism of 'all necessary means' that translates as a mandate for the use of force by member states.

Unsurprisingly, the unequivocal legal advice from the Foreign Office, corroborated by a recent Dutch review of the legality of the war, was that resolution 1441 did not constitute the right to use force and would amount to a war crime of aggression under international law if used as the basis for invasion.

Lord Goldsmith even accepted this straightforward interpretation of resolution 1441 for months as preparation for war was ongoing. He explained his extraordinary change of judgment on the basis that 1441 didn't actually say that the UN Security Council had to make a further decision; neither did it say that force couldn't be used.

Coupled to the Washington legal mentors relaying tales (unverified, of course) of the negotiating history with the French, this miraculously convinced Lord Goldsmith and provided a legal cover for the UK to join the Iraq adventure.

The depressing conclusion is that the adoption of spin is now so deep-rooted in our political system and institutions that it enabled our country to sleepwalk into an illegal war that undermined the authority of the UN and international law.

Dr Glenn Thomson,

87 Cartvale Road, Glasgow.

You can almost hear the collective excitement of upper and middle management of our local authorities in preparation for their focus groups, task forces and studies required to address the £270m savings that have to be made in Scotland.

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There ll be some special stationery to be printed, a new department to be named, a chief executive to be appointed and some non-executive members and support staff to be found. Perhaps there ll also a bonding trip to somewhere, helped no doubt by a series of essential golf tournaments.

Then they might throw in a fact-finding visit to a warm and sunny Caribbean island to see at first hand how they manage their ballpoint pen procurement.

No doubt the HM gurus and senior paper-clip officers are anticipating a busy season, so time to alert the employment agencies that more staff will be required to lay off teachers and lollipop ladies. Or we could get rid of the former and employ more of the latter.

Jon Jewitt,

38 New City Road, Glasgow.

THE sum spent online by UK consumers in 2009, making Birtons the biggest online spenders in Europe with nearly one-third of all internet purchases across the continent, according to price comparison site Kelkoo.

THE number of councils that spent hundreds of pounds fixing street signs because of spelling and punctuation mistakes and missing information. Westminster City Council paid £1185 on apostrophes.

It is, of course, the duty of Glasgow City Council, MPs and MSPs to fight Glasgow s corner, so their pressure on the Scottish Government in respect of the Glasgow Airport Rail Link (Garl) is understandable. However, they do have to recognise that all government projects involve a certain amount of robbing Peter to pay Paul, and Scotland does exist north of Glasgow.

For those, like myself with no railway nearer than 40 miles, and a restricted service between the capital and the nearest railhead after 8.30pm, the constant carping because two planned rail improvements have been cut to one sounds downright greedy. Do I live in the wilds where such lack of services can be expected? No, I live in the oil area of the north-east which makes a not inconsiderable contribution to the money available to spend. I may envy, but by no means begrudge, the rail improvement retained, but come off it, Glasgow, think yourselves lucky.

Dot Jessiman,

Upper Oldwhat Croft, Turriff.

For anyone interested in efforts to mitigate climate change, in maximising the benefits of public transport, in making Glasgow a better place to live, work and to visit, the letters in support of the government s decision to cancel the Glasgow Airport Rail Link project make depressing reading.

This project is of great merit even within the limited terms of linking Glasgow by rail to its airport (that this link does not already exist is a cause for astonishment outwith Scotland). In the general picture of ensuring the Scottish rail system develops to maximise its potential to play a leading role in meeting 21st-century social, environmental and economic needs, Garl is a major element when linked with the Glasgow Crossrail project. A new assessment of Garl has proposed a feasible and more cost-effective route that would reduce Transport Scotland s £175m to around £120m. It also indicates construction would be a year quicker, meaning it could be in place for the Commonwealth Games (an important part of Glasgow s bid).

Garl has support from local authorities, MSPs, First ScotRail, Glasgow Airport, the business community and the wider public. The present situation is greatly damaging to the government s credibility. Surely it must take on board the widespread and carefully argued objections to the decision to cancel Garl and look at the project afresh.

Brian Balmain,

17 Battery Place, Rothesay, Bute.

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Three recent developments in technology have made the tram v trolley bus debate redundant. The choice will be between hydrogen-powered or battery-powered buses. A low-pressure way of storing hydrogen has been found, and battery technologists have ways to increase dramatically the charge capacity and decrease the charge time of batteries.

These advances will allow buses (and cars) to be powered from non-polluting, green, off-peak energy sources, not the peak-time, fossil-fuelled generation required by trams and trolleys at their busiest.

So, local authorities and transport chiefs can look forward to pollution-free city centre public transport without the costly, disruptive, ugly and route-restrictive infrastructure of trams or trolley buses and with the benefit of utilising green electricity.

Dr Alex B Gardiner,

12 Hillside Drive, Bearsden, Glasgow.

Councils, faced with a budget shortfall, are searching for economies that will cause the least pain. With Scottish local authorities required to save £270m and education, social work and essential infrastructure having first claim for protected funding, the axe must fall on grants to arts companies, community groups and voluntary organisations.

In this situation, the arts have traditionally been regarded as a luxury and, thus, the first candidates for cuts. In both Glasgow and Edinburgh, therefore, arts bodies have been bracing themselves for a severe drop in income. More than 150 bodies which share £3m of funding distributed by Culture and Sport Glasgow on behalf of the city council have been anticipating cuts of between 5% and 20% and the possibility that they might be unable to carry on. Chief among them was the renowned Citizens Theatre, which, as the recipient of the largest grant of £450,000 a year, feared it would be in line for the biggest cut and possible closure.

It now appears as if the reduction in grants will be at the bottom end of the range (possibly averaging below 5%), at least for this financial year, and that the Citizens will be able to continue. But it is likely to have to scale back some of its more ambitious plans.

However, the Edinburgh International Festival, which, despite increased competition remains the world's leading arts festival, is facing cuts of more than £200,000 over the next three years, with funding for the other festivals cut by 1.5% this year and 3.5% in the following two years. That will have an economic impact on Edinburgh and the rest of Scotland because a reduced offering will deter the number of visitors from the rest of the UK and overseas.

The Royal Scottish National Orchestra, like the other national companies funded directly by the Scottish Government, also depends on council grants and will be severely affected by the loss of nearly £6000 from Edinburgh and the significant cuts in funding from Glasgow and Dundee which are certain to follow.

Councils are only one source of funding for arts companies. Most also depend on grants from the Scottish Arts Council (about to become Creative Scotland) and the National Lottery, as well as a variety of trusts. All these alternative sources are also suffering shortfalls. Commercial sponsorship will also be at a premium, but banks have an opportunity to restore goodwill by stepping into the breach (preferably using funds freed by capping bonuses).

Economic pain is unavoidable but it is encouraging that those charged with deciding how public funds are shared out are acknowledging that arts organisations are significant employers and important contributors to the social fabric.

The lesson from the resounding success of this year's Celtic Connections must not be missed. The big name concerts were sold out before the 18-day festival started, ticket sales kept pace with last year despite the recession (which saw a drop in overseas visitors) and attendances reached 100,000, not only for concerts but workshops and talks. It lifted the spirits of a great cross-section of people from different musical and cultural traditions, and showed that arts events can be simultaneously high quality, inclusive and commercially successful.

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The local authorities' willingness to continue providing the arts with a share from the rapidly shrinking pot is to be applauded, but all those who believe that culture is important must play their part by visiting the galleries and museums and buying their tickets for concerts, plays and shows.

1709 The real Robinson Crusoe, Alexander Selkirk, was rescued after spending five years on the uninhabited islands of Juan Fernandez.

1972 A mob in Dublin burned down the British Embassy in protest at the Bloody Sunday killings in Londonderry the previous weekend.

1979 Sex Pistol Sid Vicious died of a heroin overdose in New York.

1986 Russian President Mikhail Gorbachev blamed Leonid Brezhnev for years of stagnation and promised radical reforms.

1990 South African President F W de Klerk lifted the 30-year ban on the African National Congress, the South African Communist Party and 30 other anti-apartheid organisations.

There was also a cunzie house or Mint in Dundee (Letters, January 30). During a brief period of office relocation, cunzie officers from Edinburgh moved to Dundee to escape the 1585 plague, before relocating to Perth. The Scottish Mint relocated again to Dundee, for security reasons, in 1651 along with many rich refugees; indeed, the first Duchess of Buccleuch was born that year in Dundee when her dad was preparing the cunzie house for a bit of quantitative easing .

Sadly, Cromwell's forces under General Monk laid siege to the city following the Battle of Dunbar, tricking their way past drunken guards during an unhappy happy hour. But 60 of Monk's ships then foundered on a sandbank in the Tay, taking his loot to the bottom of the river.

In 2002, a group of underwater archaeologists from St Andrews University teamed up with Scottish Natural Heritage and a grandson of Jacques Cousteau in an attempt to retrieve this treasure. If Finance Secretary John Swinney now needs £2.5bn, there may be an SNH map on file.

Neil Robertson,

4 Glamis Terrace, Dundee.

Calum MacKellar describes how opinion polls on assisted suicide will give varying results depending on how the questions are phrased (Letters, February 1). The point is well made and this is why we cannot simply decide our legislation by plebiscite. However, he makes an assertion that in all but the rarest cases, modern palliative care eliminates the suffering of terminally-ill patients .

Dying people have many ways in which to suffer, and (naming only a few) to pretend that we can eliminate all the different kinds of pain, nausea, vertigo, itching, convulsions, breathing difficulties, anxiety, agitation and general misery that may be involved is profoundly unrealistic. So there is an issue here that some people would like the option in our law to avoid this suffering, while other people believe in a moral law that we should do what we can to reduce the suffering except end life.

Allan MacKenzie,

42 Union Road, Inverness.

IT may sound like heresy but there were people who had serious doubts about bidding to bring the Commonwealth Games to Scotland in 2014. Bitter memories remain of the debt-ridden 1986 Edinburgh Games and the fiasco of bully-boy Robert Maxwell's intervention to save them. Not that having the taxpayer dig deeper to fund the event is unusual: the 1990 Auckland Games lost twice as much as Edinburgh and, more recently, the government had to put up £100m to bail out the 2002 Manchester Games.

## Celtic reject late bid for McGeedy as Keane tops frantic day of deals

This year's Games in Delhi have been beset by controversy and, only a few weeks ago, it was reported not one of the 17 venues had been completed. The final bill is expected to be 280% over budget. At least the Manchester Games were hugely successful and played a large part in regenerating the city, bringing in investment and creating thousands of jobs.

They were part of the inspiration and justification for Scotland's bid. The important word in that sentence is Scotland although Glasgow will benefit most, the bid was made in Scotland's name and it's the Scottish taxpayer, not just those who live in the city, who will help pay for it.

That's why Holyrood's Public Audit Committee did an invaluable job last week in demanding explanations for the costs. It elicited information from officials which led Tory finance spokesman Derek Brownlee to comment despairingly that this was just another project out of control and Labour's James Kelly to say it was staggering that inflation costs had not been factored into the budget.

There were reasons during the Games bidding process for not taking inflation into account, but whether they were sound reasons is another question.

If junketing were a Commonwealth Games sport, federation officials would be gold medal winners, but the number of times the event has been nowhere near the budget estimate suggests they should take a refresher course in basic arithmetic and find a formula allowing bidders accurately to reflect final costs.

Inept answers from the officials appearing before the Audit Committee did little to inspire confidence. Including a contingency fund of £80m, the budget currently stands at £454m. But an answer from Liz Hunter, the Scottish Executive's director of equalities, social inclusion and sport, suggested the contingency fund would be used to mop up inflation.

That isn't the understanding of senior people at Glasgow City Council who believe the additional money was to pay for unexpected circumstances such as building or technical problems.

No-one expected to find traces of asbestos on the site of the velodrome in the East End, for example, and that's what the contingency cash is there for. It's not just the evidence presented at Holyrood that should raise concerns about what is going on with the preparations. The north-west of England, having learned from the Manchester Games, is working hard to cash in on the 2012 London Olympics by offering countries training in the area the chance to pre-book for the 2014 Scottish Games.

It's good business practice and already Australia's swimmers, athletes from Thailand and around a dozen nations from the Oceania group of countries in the Pacific are either interested or have already signed up to the deal.

Are these initiatives being matched in Scotland? Holyrood committees are often populated by too many inarticulate MSPs unable to formulate questions. However, the Public Audit Committee and not for the first time under its convener, Hugh Henry has delivered a wake-up call, on this occasion, to everyone involved in the organisation of Glasgow 2014.

A key part of the bid, the airport rail link, has probably gone for good and austerity will be the economic watchword between now and the Games. There is no scope for a spiralling budget. Mr Henry's committee has identified serious weaknesses and he will revisit the subject. If it's not too heretical, some other Holyrood committees might want to do the same.

If junketing were a Games sport, federation officials would win gold

Sir Norman Fowler, politician, 72; David Jason, pictured, actor, 70; Graham Nash, singer, 68; Andrew Davis, conductor, 66; Libby Purves, broadcaster, 60; Ken Bruce, broadcaster, 59; Christie Brinkley, model, 56; Stephen McGann, actor, 47.

AHEAD of what would have been Bob Marley's 65th birthday on February 6, his legacy was in evidence at the Grammys when, 28 years after his death, three of his sons were nominated for prizes, and two of them won.

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Stephen Marley's *Mind Control* (Acoustic Version) won the Grammy Award for Best Reggae Album. It is a digital-only follow-up to his 2007 Grammy-winning solo debut, *Mind Control*. This is the seventh time Stephen has won a Grammy.

Bob's eldest son, 41-year-old Ziggy Marley, picked up his fifth Grammy, this time in the children's musical album category for his all-star project, *Family Time*.

I admire Billy Bragg's attack on the bonuses of private bankers. But why does he bank with NatWest? As a socialist, he should be with the Co-operative Bank.

Bob Holman,

76 Balgonie Road, Glasgow.

Congratulations to Tom Shields on the pitfalls of flying Ryanair. I will only fly with it now as a last resort.

Allan J Chisholm,

Kilvaxter Cottage, Killin.

Two men are standing on a platform in the Glasgow Underground, bonded momentarily as both miss a train by seconds. One notices a sign asking passengers, please, to report anything they consider suspicious. He says to the other man: I think I better tell them I don't like the look of this Chilcot inquiry.

Trust the man on the Clapham omnibus (in this case the inner circle of the Glesca subway) to get somewhere near the heart of the matter.

Chilcot and his fellow inquisitors are letting their witnesses off ever so lightly. It may be politeness and they will come in with damning conclusions. I will not rush to Ladbroke's to bet my heating allowance on such an outcome.

At the beginning of his evidence, a nervous Tony Blair did look like the accused. In the face of pedantic and pusillanimous questioning, the consummate actor-politician took over. Blair emerged unrepentant and, in his own mind, irreproachable. We know it was a Prime Minister who did it and ran away to be an international business consultant, a highly-paid public speaker and owner of £15m worth of town houses and country mansion.

I am prepared to enter a plea of mitigation on Blair's behalf. He did it for patriotic reasons. Not because he didn't have the cojones to say no to George W Bush. Not because he had been talking to God and God said: Yea verily go and bomb the children of Iraq.

The patriotic reason was the British government wanted to get a share of Iraq's oil. It was a Blair petroleum moment.

He was in the footsteps of British Prime Ministers who routinely invaded nations for no reason other than to steal their natural resources.

Blair may also have wanted to prove by joining in as junior partner in the potentially lucrative invasion of Iraq that New Labour really is the party of big business.

British companies did get a piece of the Iraqi oil action after years of being frozen out.

So Blair gets away with some more damage to his already threadbare credibility.

Gordon Brown, whose crime was to stand by and do nothing, may not be so fortunate when he faces the inquiry a couple of months before he seeks endorsement in the General Election.



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MSPs should finally sign off their report today into the release of the man convicted of the Lockerbie bombing. The Justice Committee has been so bitterly divided on the issue it has been unable to agree how to reflect that division in its report.

The Finance Committee will continue consideration of the Public Services Reform Bill, with opposition MSPs who support the general idea of a bonfire of the quangos less keen to boost ministerial power. The new Forth crossing will dominate the Transport, Infrastructure and Climate Change Committee as a panel of experts answers questions on the project. Meanwhile, Communities Minister Alex Neil will announce £25m for council house building in Edinburgh.

DAYTONA 24-HOUR Airdrie's Ryan Dalziel feels his victory in the opening event of this season's Grand AM Series on Sunday is the perfect payback after the suffering of 2009, writes Kenneth Stephen.

Dalziel saw race deals fall apart twice due to the global financial mess and his seat in the Rangers FC car in the Superleague Formula also went because of lack of cash.

However, after victory in the biggest endurance event in American racing, the 27-year-old said: I feel my career is relaunching in 2010 and this is obviously a perfect start.

It was a crazy range of emotions in the final minutes of the race, but obviously I am delighted with the outcome. I don't really think it has sunk in yet what we have achieved.

Dalziel and his Action Express Racing co-drivers Terry Borcheller, Joao Barbosa and Mike Rockenfeller blunted the threat of the Ganassi cars. Dario Franchitti's Riley was forced to retire after 16 hours, but the Ganassi No.1 car finished one minute behind after a bruising battle.

Dalziel, who will now compete in the remainder of the Grand AM series with Starworks Motorsport, added: The Ganassi cars are the benchmark and for 16 hours we raced with them on the same lap. Ultimately, we won the race through our own pace and not anyone else's misfortune.

JUST when it seemed the snow and frost may have been a thing of the past, it has returned, especially at Newcastle, where a meeting is scheduled tomorrow.

An inspection has been called for 2pm today after snow, and plenty of it, engulfed the course.

It started to fall on Friday evening and after temperatures dipped below freezing on successive nights, it has still not shifted.

Temperatures are due to rise, but another frost is forecast. James Armstrong, clerk of the course, said yesterday: We had three to four inches of snow on Friday into Saturday.

It has not shifted for two days, and although we have had strong sun, it was never above 1°C or 2°C. We are forecast 3°C. We should know by 2pm tomorrow, but the worry is Tuesday night into Wednesday, we are forecast more frost.

Exeter will also check their racing surface today ahead of tomorrow's planned fixture.

Elsewhere, officials at Folkestone are optimistic about their chances of racing today, despite calling a precautionary inspection at 7.30am.

Clerk of the course Andrew Waitt said: We had a frost last night, but the temperature is forecast to go up so, hopefully, we'll be fine.

It is a far cry from winning the Cheltenham Foxhunter Chase at the Festival to a little novices hurdle at Taunton on a Tuesday afternoon, but this is the scenario concerning Cappa Bleu.

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It was a case of smiles all around at National Hunt racing's premier track that day in March, but matters have gone rather off course since.

In fact, this afternoon in Somerset Cappa Bleu starts out on the recovery trail in the Deane Veterinary Centre Novices Hurdle. The eight-year-old started the season with hopes of reaching the top under rules having looked a bit special in the amateur ranks.

However, having finished only third on his first start at Aintree, he suffered a crashing fall when well fancied for the Hennessy. He had a fair old slap in the Hennessy and basically we just wanted to start again, really, said trainer Ewan Williams.

It didn't do him any favours having a bad fall like that. Obviously, he was thrown in at the deep end, but I think that, unless I go back to the start with him, I'm not going to give him the best possible chance.

He needs his confidence back and hopefully a nice clear round will help him enjoy the job again. It's a good thing he can run in races like this. He won the Foxhunter after only a handful of point-to-points, he then ran in a novice chase over the wrong trip, on the wrong track and ran in the Hennessy where his inexperience came to light.

So at least we can run him in novice hurdles because I wouldn't have fancied running him against the big boys in handicaps. We'll use the rest of this season to build up his confidence. He's in the Blue Square Gold Cup [at Haydock on February 20] and he'll be entered in some of the handicaps at Cheltenham, but I'd just like a couple of runs over hurdles so we can start again.

He's just one of those that is paying for being successful last year. Hopefully he can be Grand National horse. He's high class but professional racing has been thrust on him.

Elsewhere, Alan King expects to be double-handed in next month's World Hurdle with Karabak and Katchit being aimed at the race.

Former champion hurdler Katchit returned to form at the weekend, finishing third behind Tidal Bay in the Cleeve Hurdle. However, Karabak was a late defector on Friday morning with King not quite happy with a scope as his stridle continues to recover from their early-season ailments.

I still have a few who are not quite right and as I was not 100% happy with Karabak's final scope, we opted out of Cheltenham, said King. I did not want to take any chances.

My original intention, anyway, after his run against Big Buck's in the Long Walk was to go straight to the Festival, so it is not a problem.

Katchit might not have the speed of old, but the enthusiasm is certainly still there and he never stopped battling up the hill. I was absolutely delighted with that run, and the World Hurdle will be his next race.

Time For Rupert is 20-1 for the World Hurdle having booked his place when second in the Cleeve. Rupert ran a faultless race to split an Arkle winner and a Champion Hurdler in his trial, said trainer Paul Webber. He travelled the best he has ever done through this race, a sure sign that he is developing and improving still.

Wolverhampton

VALENCIA. Ricardo Tormo circuit, 15.26pm local time. The Mercedes W01 rolls out of the team's garage sparking a frenzy among photographers, camera crews and journalists.

After more than three years in retirement, Michael Schumacher, the seven-times world champion, was back. And this was only a test.

With just 94 minutes of the day-long session remaining, Schumacher, in the unusual guise of Mercedes Silver Arrow after 14 seasons of Ferrari red, took to the track.

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After team-mate Nico Rosberg completed most of the initial set-up work on the opening day of the first test, the 41-year old certainly belied his age, completing 40 laps of the four kilometre track in three separate stints, noticeably eclipsing Rosberg in the second of those.

For the record, Schumacher finished third quickest of the eight drivers on show yesterday, with his best lap one minute 12.947seconds, just 0.373sec behind former Ferrari team-mate Felipe Massa who was making his own return to the sport.

In fact, it proved to be a day for the comeback kings as Pedro de la Rosa, now with Sauber after years as a tester for McLaren and whose last race was also Brazil '06 along with Schumacher, split Massa and the legendary German.

All eyes, though, were on Schumacher, who surprised himself at how he felt upon climbing back into the cockpit of an F1 car.

In a way it's like 1991, honestly, said Schumacher. When I came into F1 I was shocked in the first lap, then I was extremely excited in the second and further laps.

Today I feel like a little boy that has his toy in his hands and just enjoys himself.

Given the 14 seasons he spent at Ferrari, including 11 as a driver during which time he won five of his titles, understandably there was a pang of emotion when he saw close friend Massa in his car.

It was a strange sensation seeing my old car on the track and me not sitting in it, added Schumacher. But it's good to see my brother [Ralph] on track, in the car, and I look forward to seeing my friends down at Ferrari some time this week.

Assessing his own car, one that is an evolution of last season's Brawn GP that won both the constructors' and drivers' titles, the wily veteran was giving little away.

I think we have done a very good job, said Schumacher. The guys have done a superb job. We made a few control checks and the car ran reliably. We did about 80 laps, if I am correct, and for the first day that is a superb job.

For Massa his return was also special, not least as he definitively proved there are no lingering after-effects following his crash in qualifying for last year's Hungarian Grand Prix.

Massa required life-saving surgery and a metal plate inside his skull, the scar from which is clearly visible above his left eye. I'm now 100% ready to return to racing, said Massa. I was zero afraid, and Hungary did not come into my mind at all.

Lawyer: attacker to be moved from clinic Eds: APNewsNow. ROME (AP) - A lawyer for the man who attacked Italian Premier Silvio Berlusconi in December says a judge has agreed to the defendant's transfer from a Milan psychiatric hospital to a treatment community. Gian Marco Rubino told The Associated Press on Monday that doctors treating Massimo Tartaglia will decide when his client should move to the community under house arrest - probably in the next few days. Tartaglia was arrested and **jailed** after he hurled a souvenir statuette at the premier at the **end** of a pro-Berlusconi rally on Dec. 13 in Milan. Berlusconi suffered a broken nose and other facial injuries. The 42-year-old Tartaglia has a history of psychological problems. Rubino said the judge ordered the name of the treatment center not to be disclosed.

President Barack Obama has sent his budget plans to Congress, forecasting the Government spending a record \$1.66 trillion more than it takes in through taxes.

The president yesterday blamed the huge deficit on the decisions of his predecessor George W Bush, previous Congresses and his administration's steps to prevent an economic collapse.

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Obama said that in normal circumstances he would have worked to pay down the yearly deficit immediately, but costly steps were needed to help an economy in freefall.

We won't be able to bring down this deficit overnight, given that the recovery is still taking hold, he said in a televised statement from the White House.

We will continue, for example, to do what it takes to create jobs. That is reflected in my budget. It is essential.

He asked lawmakers to follow his lead on reducing waste and to avoid grandstanding.

The budget proposal reflects pressure on Obama ahead of the November congressional elections to cut unprecedented growth in the US debt.

Obama and the Democrats are trying to regain their political footing after the surprising loss of a Massachusetts Senate seat long held by the late Senator Edward M Kennedy. That vote cost them their supermajority and appears to have indefinitely stalled efforts to pass healthcare reform legislation.

In the meantime, Obama pledged in his State of the Union address last week to make job creation his top priority.

After a protracted battle on healthcare dominated his first year in office and led to a string of Democratic election defeats, the administration hopes its new budget will convince Americans that the president is focused on fixing the economy.

The \$3.83 trillion budget includes a huge tranche to lower double-digit unemployment about \$100bn in tax incentives to hire workers and improve the nation's infrastructure and energy sector. The spending jump will be partially offset by higher taxes on wealthy Americans families earning more than \$250,000 yearly through plans to let tax cuts expire.

As written, the spending plan surpasses last year's then-record \$1.41 trillion gap.

It reflects a continuing flood of Government spending designed to ease the worst economic downturn since the 1930s Great Depression.

Republicans complained about Obama's proposed tax increases and said the huge projected deficits showed he had failed to get government spending under control.

However, administration officials argued that Obama inherited a deficit already topping \$1 trillion when he took office.

Senator Judd Gregg, the top Republican on the Senate Budget Committee, warned the country was sinking into a quagmire of debt and said Obama's stimulus plan had failed to create jobs. These circumstances call for a bold, game-changing budget that will turn things around, he said. Instead, the president has sent us more of the same.

Obama wants \$192bn in war spending for the next year-and-a-half, a hefty sum aimed at escalating the war in Afghanistan despite its waning popularity.

The request reflects his recent decision to send 30,000 more troops to Afghanistan to blunt a growing insurgency there.

The \$192bn request includes \$33bn to pay for the troop buildup this year, and the remaining \$159bn would pay for overseas military operations in the government's 2011 budget year, which begins on October 1.

AFGHANISTAN: A bomb killed a US soldier in Kandahar yesterday, Nato has said.

The American death toll has risen ahead of an additional 37,000 US and Nato forces being sent to the country as part of President Barack Obama's war strategy.

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At least 29 US troops died in January, more than double the 14 deaths recorded in the same month last year, making it the deadliest month since November, when 30 died.

Nato and Afghan forces also killed seven militants on Sunday, the Afghan army said.

JERUSALEM: The Israeli military said it has reprimanded two high-ranking officers for approving the firing of artillery shells toward a UN compound during the Gaza Strip war last year.

Israel announced the punishment in a document submitted to the United Nations last Friday in response to a UN report that has accused Israel's military of committing war crimes. Israel is trying to stave off the report's central threat of launching war crimes proceedings if it does not carry out an independent investigation into the military's conduct during the fighting.

The artillery attack, which took place while more than 700 Palestinian civilians were taking refuge, set ablaze a warehouse that services more than one million Gazans and destroyed food and other aid. UN chief Ban Ki-moon was visiting the region at the time, and three people were wounded, UN officials said.

Israel has said militants fired on its troops from the compound a charge the UN disputes. AP

PRESIDENT Barack Obama has axed Nasa's \$100 billion plans to return astronauts to the moon.

The move came on the seventh anniversary of the space shuttle tragedy that triggered the return to the moon plan.

The White House said the programme was too much like the 1960s Apollo mission and needed large budget increases just to get astronauts on the moon by 2030.

In the budget proposal released yesterday, the White House instead promised a new approach but gave no details. Obama also proposed \$6 billion over five years to encourage firms to build private spaceships that Nasa could rent.

President George W. Bush proposed the moon mission after the 2003 space shuttle Columbia disaster. Nasa has already spent \$9.1 billion on the programme.

The space agency's budget would grow to \$19bn in 2011 under the plans, with an emphasis on science.

It adds \$6bn to NASA's budget over five years and draws upon American ingenuity to enable us to embark on an ambitious 21st century programme of space exploration, the proposal reads.

We are launching a bold new effort that invests in ingenuity for developing more capable and innovative technologies for future space exploration, it says.

The budget also proposes a re-vamp of the Kennedy Space Center in Florida, where staff have feared cutbacks, as part of making Nasa more efficient.

A major focus of this effort will be to create the 21st century launch facilities and infrastructure needed... transforming the facility to more effectively support future Nasa, commercial, and government launches, it says.

RUSSIA: Attackers have fired grenades at the headquarters of the interior ministry of Ingushetia, which runs the region's police, killing a policeman.

A ministry spokeswoman said at least two other people were wounded in the attack in Nazran, the region's principal city.

Recent increasing violence in Ingushetia has been linked to an Islamist insurgency rocking Russia's Caucasus region.

THE Dalai Lama's envoys have been told that Beijing will not hold a debate over Tibet's sovereignty, a senior Chinese official has said.

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It indicates the first of such talks on the region in 15 months did not produce any breakthroughs.

Du Qinglin, head of a government department in charge of the talks, told the Tibetan spiritual leader's emissaries that China's national interest was inviolable, and there can be no room for discussion, no room for compromise on territorial issues, the official Xinhua News Agency said.

At the last talks in 2008, the Dalai Lama's envoys proposed a way for Tibetans to achieve more autonomy under the Chinese constitution—a key demand of the minority community.

But China apparently rejected the plan, saying it would not allow Tibet the kind of latitude granted to Hong Kong and Macau.

Chinese officials insisted that they would only address the return of the Dalai Lama, who fled to exile in 1959. AP

OBAMA BUDGET-SPACE UPDATE 1 UPDATE 1-Obama budget would cut NASA moon plan \* Companies to take over space taxi flights \* NASA to focus on future technologies for Mars, beyond (Recasts and updates throughout with actual budget figures) By Irene Klotz CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. Feb 1 (Reuters) - President Barack Obama's proposed budget gives NASA a \$6 billion 5-year boost but aborts early attempts to return to the moon and turns over space transportation to commercial companies. The space agency's budget would grow to \$19 billion in 2011 under the proposed budget released on Monday, with an emphasis on science and less spent on space exploration. It "adds \$6 billion to NASA's budget over five years and draws upon American ingenuity to enable us to embark on an ambitious 21st Century program of human space exploration," the budget proposal reads. But the plan ends the Constellation program "which was planning to use an approach similar to the Apollo program to return astronauts back to the Moon 50 years after that program's triumphs." The budget notes that an independent panel found the moon program was years behind schedule. "Instead, we are launching a bold new effort that invests in American ingenuity for developing more capable and innovative technologies for future space exploration," it reads. The new budget, which is subject to change by Congress, also extends operations at the International Space Station past its planned retirement date of 2016, suggesting such potential additions as inflatable space habitats. Obama's proposal hands over more space operations to the commercial sector, saying it will create thousands of new jobs and hold costs down. NASA already has spent \$9 billion on Constellation and likely would owe millions more to cancel existing contracts. Prime contractors on the Ares rocket program include ATK Launch Systems, Pratt & Whitney Rocketdyne and Boeing Co. Lockheed Martin is the lead contractor on the Orion capsule. NASA already has contracts with Space Exploration Technologies and Orbital Sciences Corp to deliver cargo to the station. SpaceX and other firms also are developing spaceships that can carry passengers to orbit and back. The budget also proposes a re-vamp of the Kennedy Space Center in Florida, where staff have feared major cutbacks, as part of making NASA more efficient. "A major focus of this effort will be to create the 21st century launch facilities and infrastructure needed at Kennedy Space Center, transforming the facility to more effectively support future NASA, commercial, and other government launches," the budget reads. Florida Senator Bill Nelson has promised to fight efforts to cut back NASA's Florida operations. (Additional reporting by Maggie Fox in Washington, Editing by Sandra Maler and Vicki Allen)

HAITIAN and US officials are considering a trial in the United States for 10 Americans who were arrested while trying to bus children out of Haiti without documents or permission.

The aborted Baptist rescue mission has become a distraction for a crippled government trying to provide basic life support to millions of earthquake survivors. Haiti's courts and justice ministry were destroyed in the disaster, which also killed many judicial officials.

But the government said that the Americans—however well-intentioned—must be prosecuted to send a strong message to traffickers.

There can be no question of taking our children off the streets and out of the country, communications minister Marie-Laurence Jocelin Lassegue said. They will be judged—that's important.

Since their arrest on Friday the group have been held inside two concrete rooms, without being charged.

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One of their lawyers said they were being treated poorly. There is no air conditioning, no electricity. It is very disturbing, Attorney Jorge Puello told AP from the Dominican Republic, where the Baptists hoped to shelter the children in a beach hotel.

One of the Americans, Charisa Coulter of Boise, Idaho, was being treated at the University of Miami's field hospital in the capital.

Speaking from a green Army cot, the 24-year-old said: They're treating me pretty good. I'm pretty confident that it will all work out.

Their detained spokeswoman, Laura Silsby, conceded that she had not obtained the proper Haitian documents, but told AP that the group was just trying to do the right thing amid the chaos.

ITALY'S military intelligence agency was aware, or maybe even complicit in, the CIA-led kidnapping of an Egyptian terror suspect from the streets of Milan, an Italian judge said.

However, that state secrecy drew a sort of black curtain around the role of Italy's secret services in the kidnapping, making it impossible to make a legal decision regarding the responsibility of Italian agents, the judge said.

Judge Oscar Magi made the comments in the reasoning for his November guilty verdicts against 23 Americans and two Italians in the 2003 kidnapping of the Egyptian cleric.

After being kidnapped in Milan, Osama Moustafa Hassan Nasr was transferred to US bases in Italy and Germany. He was then moved to Egypt, where he says he was tortured. AP

UNITED STATES: Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation is launching a \$1 billion venture featuring an unmanned Black Hawk helicopter as military demand rises for technology to fight two wars.

The helicopter maker, based in Connecticut, said Sikorsky Innovations, intended to speed the transformation of the mechanical helicopter into a computerised aircraft.

It also will promote projects designing helicopters to fly faster, simulate vision and monitor their own performance.

MILWAUKEE: Andy Warhol kept boxes of soup cans, receipts, fan mail and thousands of photos he later used as inspiration for his giant paintings.

Now more than 180 museums and galleries around the United States are benefiting. The New York City-based Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts has donated more than 28,500 of Warhol's photos, worth \$28 million.

This is a little-known body of Warhol's work, said curator Jenny Moore, I think most people are familiar with the paintings and even the sculptures. We wanted to let a broader audience gain access to his photographic work, which is the basis of much of his artistic production.

A FEMALE suicide bomber detonated an explosives belt while walking with Shi'ite pilgrims in Baghdad yesterday, killing at least 41 people and wounding more than 100, officials said.

It was the first major strike this year against pilgrims making their way to the southern city of Karbala to mark a Shi'ite holy day. It raised fears of an escalation of attacks when the pilgrimage culminates on Friday.

The bomber hid the explosives underneath an abaya—a women's black cloak that covers from head to toe—as she joined a group of pilgrims on the outskirts of the Shi'ite-dominated northern neighbourhood of Shaab, said Maj. Gen. Qassim al-Moussawi, Baghdad's top military spokesman.

Raheem Kadhom, 35, was standing about 150 yards away when he says a huge fireball erupted among the pilgrims.

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Pilgrims were on the ground, covered in blood and crying for help, he said. Banners were all over the ground and covered in blood.

The blast was so powerful it knocked some out of their slippers and shoes, which were scattered across the ground, Khadhom said.

Many ran to the aid of the pilgrims. Some put the wounded in cars, taking them to hospitals rather than wait from ambulances, Kadhom said.

Hundreds of thousands of Shi'ites make the pilgrimage to Karbala this week, marking the end of 40 days of mourning that follows Ashoura, the anniversary of the death of Imam Hussein, one of two revered Shi'ite figures buried there. AP

Obama seeks \$192B for wars Eds: Will be led from Gates, Mullen budget announcement at Pentagon at 1 p.m. EST. With BC-US-Budget By ANNE FLAHERTY, Associated Press Writer WASHINGTON (AP) - President Barack Obama wants \$192 billion in war spending for the next year-and-a-half, a hefty sum aimed at escalating the war in Afghanistan despite its waning popularity. The request reflects Obama's recent decision to send 30,000 more troops to Afghanistan to blunt a growing insurgency there. Despite doubts among many Americans, including those in his own political party, Obama sees the decision as critical to bringing the war to a conclusion. His plan calls for troops to start leaving Afghanistan in July 2011. "The United States must prevent the Taliban from turning Afghanistan back into a safe haven from which international terrorists can strike at us or our allies," Obama said in his budget. The government has already shelled out a combined \$1 trillion since 2001 for the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Obama's \$192 billion war budget rivals the \$245 billion request made in 2007 by President George W. Bush, after announcing that more than 20,000 combat troops would be sent to Baghdad. Congress was expected to endorse the budget plan even though several anti-war Democrats oppose the troop buildup and others are looking for ways to lessen the war's burden on the nation's deficit. Some lawmakers have proposed a special "war tax" to cover the costs, while Republicans have suggested taking money from Obama's \$787 billion stimulus package. The \$192 billion request includes \$33 billion to pay for the troop buildup this year. The remaining \$159 billion would pay for overseas military operations in the government's 2011 budget year, which begins Oct. 1. Some of the 2011 money was expected to go toward Pakistan, including \$2 billion to reimburse Islamabad for operations along its Afghan border.

THIS drama of family and formulae become a Broadway sensation at the beginning of the century, and was prematurely hailed as a new American classic. However, it was only David Auburn's second play, and in parts of the script this really shows.

Early on, one character tells another: When your dad was younger than both of us, he made major contributions to three fields: game theory, algebraic geometry ... with all the naturalism of a megaphone address to the audience.

Theatre about brain-boggling fields need not be alienating, as director Ian Grieve demonstrated a few years ago with *Humble Boy*, a brilliant comedy about metaphysics. His production of Auburn's play, however, gets off to a shaky start and never really bursts into life, and much of the blame for this lies with one of Kenny Miller's costumes.

When we're introduced to Catherine (Neve McIntosh) on her 25th birthday, she's curled up in a chair with a magazine, wearing a crisp white shirt, little pants and trendy woollen socks. She looks like she's starring in a Marks & Spencer Christmas advert; actually, she's depressed.

After an awkward first scene, the plot follows an entirely predictable path. While the cast do their best to bring two-dimensional characters to life (and Helen Logan gives an enjoyable turn as Catherine's brash sister Claire), what's missing is a sense of why we should care about anything that happens. The proof of the title remains a mystery, the story's most dramatic events are in the past (but not captured by any of the flashbacks) and despite all the references to madness, ultimately all that seems to be at stake is a semi-decent job at a university.

HH



## Celtic reject late bid for McGeady as Keane tops frantic day of deals

Paul Carrack, Glasgow Royal Concert Hall, tonight 7.30pm

Celtic Connections may be done for this year, but here's a chap with connections of his own. Carrack would still be remembered if he'd only written the classic How Long? for pub-rock band Ace, a hit on both sides of the Atlantic 35 years ago. Since then, however, he has played with Roxy Music, Squeeze (singing Tempted at producer Elvis Costello's behest), Nick Lowe and John Hiatt. Oh, and Mike + The Mechanics.

There aren't many areas where the word manipulate enjoys a positive spin or draws in queues of people willing to have their perceptions of reality tickled and tweaked.

Simon Hart, artistic director of Manipulate, the Visual Theatre Festival that returns to Edinburgh's Traverse next week, says the growing popularity of the work that Manipulate champions is a sign of our times.

We're so ready now to distrust the spoken word that's very noticeable in the way we respond to our politicians, says Hart.

This shift in trust and engagement has, according to Hart, given us a chance to catch up on our European counterparts: this third Manipulate season features live performances from Portugal, Germany and Spain, but also includes Snapshots, short experimental forays into various forms of visual theatre by six Scottish-based artists who are new to making work for older and adult audiences.

I've lost count of how often puppetry has been re-discovered, hailed as a great new thing ... and a year later, it's off the radar again, says Hart. We've seen Robert Lepage use it in his work. Lately there's been War Horse in London's West **End**. Animation? It's everywhere. Not just the Wallace and Gromit films but in a number of advertisements on television and in cinemas. The strange thing is, these are all too often seen as exceptions, whereas they are just the tip of what's already out there. We could fill our festival over and over with quality work that has been made for adult audiences. Work that looks at dark, intense issues that you couldn't do on stage in any physical, pictorial way.

Last year at Manipulate, full houses bought into the notion that wee strips of foam rubber could spring into life as a cunningly athletic alphabet or that an old-fashioned brass tap could become the gnarly old skinflint in a brilliant staging of Moliere's The Miser. This year we are invited to explore the rooms that Circolando (Portugal) conjure up on stage, but which they suggest are also living inside our heads: memories.

Traverse 2 will house 1945, a sound sculpture that melds images and echoes of the past to question our ideas of history and time. There's a whiff of the medieval Dance of Death in Salto.Lamento, a kaleidoscope of nightmares put together using puppetry and movement, by German company Figurentheater Tübingen.

It's a rich feast and going by last year's turn out it's a welcome addition to an adventurous Traverse programme envisaged by artistic director Dominic Hill.

Hill's own enthusiasm for the kind of work fielded by Manipulate saw the festival move with him from Dundee Rep, where it was first staged in 2008. Hart still hankers for the programme to have offshoots all across Scotland. A survey showed 65% of our audience were first time attenders at the Traverse. I'd like to think that was a kind of thank you to Dominic for his support, says Hart.

The third Manipulate Visual Theatre Festival is at the Traverse, Edinburgh, from February 2-6.

HE left Depp to walk the plank, showed Denzel the door and made Clooney look like an also-ran. For Clint Eastwood, being named America's favourite movie star recently might not have been an achievement on a par with winning four Oscars, but it showed again how unforgettable the man with no name is to generations of moviegoers. And at 79 years old, as his new movie Invictus shows, he's not done yet.

The true tale of how Nelson Mandela used sport to help bring a divided South Africa closer needed a big director to do it justice, and few in today's Hollywood can match Eastwood for stature. As he enters the ballroom at Claridge's

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in London ahead of the film's UK premiere earlier this week, he looks like a movie star, walks like a movie star and charms like one too.

'Am I talking too loud for you, kid?' said Eastwood in jest as a technician arrived on stage midway through the session to reposition the microphone. Everyone, most of all the young sound man, laughed. Dirty Harry had growled again, making everyone's day.

Eastwood first played the bearer of a .44 Magnum in 1971, the same year he made his directorial debut with the thriller *Play Misty for Me*. He's continued to play both sides of the camera since, racking up 55 years as an actor and 39 as a director.

I sort of planned on not working at this time of life, he concedes, but the urge to make movies has never gone away. If anything, it's becoming stronger. Eastwood's career has had its lows – starring opposite an orangutan, for one – but since *Unforgiven* in 1992 he's been largely confounding Norma Desmond's law. The older he gets, the bigger and better the pictures become.

I enjoy work more than I ever have, or just as much, and I'm at an age when I can take on more challenges because I know more. I've been lucky enough to work in a profession I've really liked, so I figure I'll continue until somebody hits me over the head and says 'get out'.

His last stint as a leading man was playing neighbour-from-hell Walt Kowalski in 2008's *Gran Torino*. At the time he said it would probably be his last appearance in front of camera. Today, however, he's in a 'never say never' mood.

*Million Dollar Baby*, his Oscar-winner with Hillary Swank, was meant to be his swansong. He thought it would be good to quit acting while he was at the top, and not be like a prize-fighter who fights one too many fights. But then *Gran Torino* came along, complete with a part for a man his age, so he thought why not? I'm still saying that.

It will always depend on the part, he says. You just never say never. When I started directing I thought that after a few years I'd get tired of looking at myself on the screen and would say, 'Let's not do that any more.' But then every once in a while something pops up. I'm not saying it won't happen again, but the odds are getting less.

Eastwood and the odds have had a few run-ins before. Born in San Francisco on May 31, 1930, into a blue-collar family, he has described his heritage as English and Scots and maybe a little Irish. He was 25 before he left military service and minor jobs and made it to the foothills of Hollywood as a bit player. His first credited part was lab technician in *Revenge of the Creature*.

It was an era when contract players had similar life spans to pit canaries. Eastwood was determined to use his time on the studio well. Once finished for the day on his own film, he would visit other sets to watch how directors worked.

He was still of a mind to learn when he came back to the same lot (by then under a different studio) as a leading man after making his name on television (*Rawhide*) and Sergio Leone's westerns. It's a process that's never stopped. Every picture you learn something about people and yourself, about what's going on in the world.

For *Invictus* he immersed himself in rugby and South African politics, meeting Mandela along the way. He's an extremely charismatic man. He has that million-dollar smile when he walks in a room, everybody wants to smile with him.

Morgan Freeman, who plays Mandela in the film, arranged the meeting. Freeman had become friends with Mandela over the course of trying to bring to the screen his autobiography, *A Long Walk to Freedom*. When *A Long Walk* proved too colossal to condense, Morgan turned to John Carlin's book about the 1995 Rugby World Cup, *Playing the Enemy: Nelson Mandela and the Game that Made a Nation*.

When the option of Eastwood directing came up, Morgan, an executive producer on the film, had everything he needed to go ahead. The two had worked together on *Unforgiven* and *Million Dollar Baby*, with Freeman admiring

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Eastwood's no-nonsense directing style. He's quick; if he's got it in one take, he's moving on. I appreciate his quietude, which represents strength and control.

Eastwood has attracted many similar comments over the years. He knows what he wants, goes the refrain, and he gets it, often in one or two takes. If you start doing 30 or 40 takes usually you're lost, you don't know what you're looking for, he says. I like to think I know what I'm looking for, whether right or wrong.

Matt Damon, who plays captain of the Springboks, Francois Pienaar, in *Invictus*, is another fan of the Eastwood directorial style. He must be—he's currently filming another picture, *Hereafter*, with him. Eastwood, he says, is a director who cuts on camera. There's no shooting lots of footage and editing it later. You know that you are in able hands.

Asked to name his favourite film, Eastwood hesitates. Once a film is done it's up to someone else to make a judgement on it. *Unforgiven* is mentioned, along with *Letters from Iwo Jima*, the companion piece to the equally outstanding Second World War drama *Flags of our Fathers*.

He might be 80 this May, but at heart he's still that same youngster, wandering around a studio lot, looking for something new to learn. Watch and learn, Johnny, Denzel and George, watch and learn.

*Invictus* opens nationwide this Friday.

FOR a game like golf that prides itself in high morality and integrity, the worst insult you can level at a fellow player is to call him a cheat, and you could almost sense Phil Mickelson, the world No.2, bristling when Scott McCarron fired the allegation in his direction at last week's Farmers Insurance Open at Torrey Pines in California.

You only have to remember back to last year's Open Championship at Turnberry to understand how inflammatory the c-word can be. That, of course, was how Sandy Lyle referred to his fellow Scot Colin Montgomerie's favourable replacing of his ball after a rain delay in Indonesia all of five years previously.

Lyle's remarks, in bitterness at being constantly overlooked as Europe's Ryder Cup captain—the honour went instead to Montgomerie—led to four days of public bickering that completely overshadowed the run-up to the tournament.

So what had Mickelson done to arouse the ire of a player little known on this side of the Atlantic but who has standing because he sits on the PGA Tour's 16-man Player Advisory Council?

Mickelson had a 20-year-old Ping Eye 2 wedge in his bag, that's what. While it breached the new rules for top professionals that limit the volume of grooves and the severity of their edges on irons, this particular club fell through an obscure loophole in the law because of an agreement back in the early 1990s between the manufacturers and the PGA Tour. It's cheating, and I'm appalled Phil has put it in play, McCarron reportedly told the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

For the benefit of those who have not been following this grooves saga, the new rule was introduced in an attempt to lessen the amount of spin on the ball and hence control that players had coming out of the rough. In turn, this is hoped to put a greater premium on driving accuracy, a skill that tour statistics showed conclusively had become close to redundant.

Eyes will be peeled this season to see if it works, and one sign will be driving distance figures. If these fall then it will indicate that players are willing to sacrifice distance in return for the greater control they will have from the fairway. And that's what the authorities want to see.

For mere mortals at club level, incidentally, there is no need to worry. You have until 2024 at the earliest to continue to use irons made before this year, but for the tour professionals it is here and now, and Mickelson is not the only one to use these antiques which are causing a flurry of trade on eBay.

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John Daly and Hunter Mahan are among those who are also using the Ping Eye 2 wedges, the loophole for which is closed outside of the United States and Mexico.

For McCarron to call Mickelson a cheat, and by implication all others using them, is clearly below the belt and he might have been better directing his criticism at the authorities who allowed this situation to develop.

As Mickelson who is arguably the greatest short-game magician in the world and doesn't need such dubious assistance pointed out: the club is legal, pure and simple. Besides, he indicated he was using it in protest at what he perceives as a shambolic way the PGA Tour are policing the new rule because he had submitted ostensibly legal irons for approval and they had been rejected while these dastardly Ping Eye 2s were patently illegal and yet approved. As a player, when you ask the PGA Tour or the USGA or whatever, all that matters is if they re approved, he said.

Tim Finchem, the PGA Tour commissioner, is due to meet players today in Los Angeles prior to this week's Northern Trust Open at the Riviera club, and it promises to be a lively meeting.

Mickelson, meanwhile, has handed the matter over to his lawyers in the belief that he has been publicly slandered by McCarron, thereby setting the scenario for the incident to grow arms and legs.

A public spat is the last thing the PGA Tour needs in the wake of the indefinite leave taken by world No.1 Tiger Woods following allegations of cheating on his wife. That, incidentally, is a matter not covered in any way or form by the Rules of Golf.

Disciplinary action could follow against McCarron, who is certainly making a name for himself this season, and not for his golf, which has led to three PGA Tour victories over the years but nothing better in the major championships than a 10th-place finish. It makes him a good player, but well short of legendary status. Yet he is fast gaining the reputation of being the tour's biggest motormouth.

He criticised rising star Anthony Kim just over a week ago for being enticed by a six-figure appearance fee to play in the Abu Dhabi Championship instead of supporting the Bob Hope Classic in his California homeland. Few others see anything other than the freedom of a top player, within limits, to go where he likes.

If McCarron is reacting to what he views as behaviour that goes against the spirit of the game, he might like to examine his own use of the belly putter. It, as all golfers know, is a club that is anchored against the stomach to guard against the hideous effects of the yips and is viewed by purists as short of golf as it should be honourably played.

A public spat is the last thing the PGA Tour needs in the wake of the leave taken by Tiger Woods

Warriors are not guilty of ignoring their supporters

IN the article Anger after Glasgow Warriors snub loyal supporters , Kevin Ferrie asks that Glasgow Warriors players change their attitude , so I must highlight the attitude these players currently have.

The Glasgow Warriors players are currently in the midst of their best season by sitting atop the Magners League. This alone is a major achievement for a Scottish club. At the same time, the players fulfil 1200 community visits each year, have attended supporters events arranged by the club and regularly mix with fans in both bars at Firhill as well as away games.

Indeed, Herald Sport (Jan 29) published an article on Street Rugby that included a quote from Warriors prop, Jon Welsh, in which he encourages children to take part in the initiative.

With regards to the game at Biarritz, I **witnessed** many Warriors players taking time after the game to speak to supporters, sign autographs and have their pictures taken.

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So to see in Herald Sport two articles alleging that the Warriors completely cold-shouldered their fans was extremely disappointing.

Kenny Baillie, chief executive, Glasgow Warriors

Swift exit was result of a disappointing display

I support the articles (Herald Sport, Jan 28) condemning the lack of acknowledgement of the travelling supporters by the Glasgow Warriors players, and I believe we will not see this sort of behaviour again after such public disapproval.

However, given the 30-point swing in Biarritz's favour in the second half, I believe the swift exit to the dressing room shows their disappointment at their performance and the need to analyse what went wrong.

As I look forward to heading to Murrayfield for Sunday's match against France, I hope that, in the immediate aftermath of the Heineken Cup tie, the Glasgow players were looking for ways to prevent similar domination by the French pack two weeks on.

E Martin, Glasgow

A REVIEW of one of the later Miles Davis albums described him as being surrounded by funk clatter. Listening to this, it was very clear what that meant.

The Peatbog Faeries are based in Skye. They are, probably, a band rooted in the traditional music of their homeland. It is a little difficult to tell. Despite several of them sporting kilts and their two young fiddlers being stripped to the waist and daubed with mystic runes, they tried their best to sound like Earth, Wind and Fire. They failed, of course. Nobody sounds like EWF and certainly not this lot. Almost all of it passed in a mid-paced funk plod. Not one of the tunes was distinguishable from another and each followed the same, boringly predictable, format. They set up what passed for a groove and then had Peter Morrison play the same solo, either on pipes or whistles, in exactly the same way, in exactly the same place. By the end of the show, his weedy-diddling was beginning to have the same effect on these ears as chalk on a blackboard.

The highlight of the night (and we had two drum solos to contend with) was a blistering duet by the two painted fiddlers. Happily, the rest of them cleared off and let these boys tear the roof off with a couple of superb Scottish dance tunes.

They would make a great traditional band and should leave the funk to those who can do it.

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THE PEATBOG FAERIES, OLD FRUITMARKET, GLASGOW

Stuart morrison

HH

Ken Clarke's Jazz Greats

Radio 4, 1.30pm

Bluff and blokish Ken concludes his foot-tapping series with a profile of Sonny Rollins, regarded as one of the most influential saxophonists in contemporary jazz. That aside, we can't be the only ones who've noticed that Clarke seems to get more satisfaction from this programme than from politics. Is he being lined up as a successor to Humphrey Lyttelton? Also concluding tonight: Jon Ronson (Radio 4, 11pm), another off-the-wall conversation, this time titled Ambition.

Today's highlights

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In the face of considerable competition, the value for money award at this year's festival goes to this 15th birthday showcase of a great Glasgow independent label. Adrian Crowley, an acquisition from the Fence Collective, played his first tune on the dot of 7.30pm and the nouveau-folk dance pulse of The Phantom Band faded away bang on midnight. There were seven bands and the slick changeovers were covered by screenings of (often charmingly hand-knitted) videos for the music of bands from the label's illustrious past. With tickets at £15, that was five-and-half-pence a minute.

Crowley was charming and has a voice of great warmth and depth, and Zoey Van Goey confirmed their position as one of Glasgow's most fascinating bands, but the anticipation for the live debut of The Unwinding Hours was palpable. A shuffling of the deck by former Aereogramme men Craig B and Iain Cook, there is even greater contrast in their new and unfamiliar combinations of instruments between moments of delicacy and kidney-juggling bass volume. The Phantom Band later added visual enhancements to another version of the same range in their very fine closing set.

Alun Woodward fielded a 10-strong band with brass, strings and box in his Lord Cut Glass guise, playing songs full of musical and lyrical wit, and his former cohort in The Delgados, Emma Pollock, must surely increase her profile when her second solo disc, The Law of Large Numbers, comes out at the beginning of March if the material previewed here is any guide. In between them, Arab Strap's Aidan Moffat and his Falkirk neighbour Bill Wells unveiled their new collaboration, a partnership of cocktail jazz soundscapes and very droll lyrical escapes that also whetted the appetite.

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CHEMIKAL UNDERGROUND 02 ABC, Glasgow

Keith Bruce

HHHHH

My Child Won't Speak

BBC1, 11.35pm

YOUNG girls chatter like china teacups on a rickety train. They're incessant. Quite simply, they command attention.

Well, not always. Red, Megan and Danielle appear to be three perfectly normal, healthy girls. But there is something puzzling about each of them. They all have selective mutism: a condition which means they can speak but, most of the time, don't. Why? This documentary hopes to shed some light.

In Northamptonshire, most people who know her have never heard eight-year-old Red talk. Instead, she communicates using a whiteboard, markers and a cloth. Her grandfather, John, has never heard her speak a word, and it's breaking his heart.

In Dover, 10-year-old Megan goes cheerleading every Thursday, but she never cheers. The only place she talks freely is at home: at school she never utters a word. Her teacher fears she is virtually invisible in class and it's affecting her education.

Danielle, from Caerphilly, is 15. A year ago she was still answering questions with a whiteboard, but now she is starting to open her mouth and speak. Yet a simple trip to the shops can render her silent once again.

In order to be like other girls their age, the three must confront their personal fears and anxieties about using their voices. My Child Won't Speak, part of BBC1's Being Mum season, joins them on their individual journeys as they start to find a way forward.

Brian Beacom

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## Scots At War

STV, 9pm

There are those who will view this three-parter, in which former SAS Major Ken Hames travels to Afghanistan with the Royal Regiment of Scotland, as offering insight and colour into the dark, dangerous world of soldiering. Indeed, Hames has the knowledge and background to connect with the soldiers.

But there are also those who consider the very idea of the programme inappropriate. And it's certainly true to say that it doesn't deal with issues of political justification. Instead it focuses on the personal stories of those in uniform.

## Shameless

Channel 4, 10pm

It was inevitable that this cult drama, which was once so cutting-edge, would slide toward soap opera. It's simply what happens when popular shows run for so long. That said, Shameless still manages to retain some of its kitchen-sink sensibility – albeit a sink that's blocked up with bile and resentment.

Tonight, Mimi Maguire sparks war when she declares that Kelly is unfit to be a godmother. This places Mimi's son Shane in a difficult position: to side with mum or the wife? Meanwhile, drug baron Paddy is feeling the credit crunch.

This winter reflection from Andrew Young shows the Scots poet-cleric at his lyrical best. The Highland hills prompted some of the most memorable pieces in his *Selected Poems* (Carcaret, £9.95) – Lesley Duncan

## Loch Luichart

Slioch and Sgurr Mor

Hang in the air in a white chastity

Of cloud and February snow

That less to earth they seem to owe

Than to the pale blue cloud-drift or

The deep blue sky.

Though high and far they stand,

Their shadows over leagues of forest come,

Here, to a purer beauty thinned

In this true mirror, now the wind,

That held it with a shaking hand,

Droops still and dumb.

As I push from the shore

And drift (beneath that buzzard) I climb now

These silver hills for miles and miles,

Breaking hard rock to gentle smiles

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With the slow motion of my prow

And dripping oar.

Businessman and sailor;

Born July 9, 1949; Died December 15, 2009.

DAVID Clark, who has died aged 60 after a three-year battle against cancer, was a successful Glasgow businessman and an accomplished sailor. He was also a man with an irrepressible humour and a well-honed west of Scotland sense of the ridiculous whose opening greeting to both friends and colleagues was often: Have you heard the one about

Born in the south side of Glasgow in 1949, Dave, as he was known to all, was the fourth generation of his family to be involved in the printing trade in Scotland.

The firm of David J Clark was founded by his great-grandfather and, for many years, was based in Cadogan Street in the centre of Glasgow. He joined the business from school and, after studying at the London College of Printing, helped his father and uncle expand it into a company highly regarded by customers throughout Scotland for the quality of its printing.

As technology advanced, he noted that modern printing was not best done over three floors and, in 1988, he took the business to new premises in Elliot Street where he installed the latest Heidelberg full-colour printing machines. Together with other state-of-the-art facilities, these high-speed printers enabled Mr Clark to produce the very best in the way of company reports, prospectuses and similar high-quality documents.

Despite growing success, extended family pressures eventually resulted in the business being sold, with Mr Clark joining the new owners for a few years. He then left printing to become a specialist business adviser, helping small companies in the east end of Glasgow.

One particular firm soon appreciated his knowledge and experience and, in 1998, he returned to printing when he became chairman of 21 Colour Limited, then a small specialist quality printer.

Under his guidance, 21 Colour steadily developed into a highly successful multi-faceted print business that now employs more than 50 staff.

He continued his involvement with the print industry and with many other formal and informal business interests until a few weeks before his death.

When Mr Clark was 12, his family moved to Largs. Here his father, also David, renewed his enthusiasm for sailing and, with his brother and sister, the young Dave Clark was soon introduced to the waters of the Clyde and west coast.

As well as the family cruising holidays, he developed a keen interest in yacht racing. Joining Largs Sailing Club as a cadet and later Fairlie Yacht Club, he quickly established a reputation as a formidable helm. Over some two decades in his series of Eauvation yachts, he won many prizes in the various regattas and points series, including success at Cork Week, West Highland Week and the Scottish Series in Loch Fyne.

Mr Clark's interest in sailing also resulted in him and friends initiating the development of the very successful marina at Largs.

While sailing was Mr Clark's passion, he involved himself in many other sporting activities, including cycling, skiing and hill-walking. In 2001, with three companions, he completed a 1001-mile cycle run from Land's End to John O Groats, raising a substantial sum for charity. Until a few months ago, a cycling day from Largs back to Largs via Ardrossan, Arran, Kintyre, Cowal, Bute and Wemyss Bay was a regular outing.



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Although at times appearing to be highly irreverent in his humour, Mr Clark was also a man with deeply held Christian views.

After joining Fairlie Parish Church, he became an elder and until September last year was the session clerk.

His love of music he was an accomplished guitar player and drummer caused him to initiate a praise band within the church. This brought much joy to the young people who played in the group and also to most, but maybe not all, of the more elderly members of the congregation.

His faith, together with his inimitable sense of humour, carried him through the good times and bad, and particularly with the pain of the very radical treatment he agreed to try in an attempt to stem his cancer.

Not for a moment did he let the knowledge of how the disease would progress dilute his zeal for life or curtail his many activities.

Dave Clark married his school sweetheart Liz in 1972 and he is survived by her and his son David and daughter Amy.

## 25 YEARS AGO

SCOTTISH Conservatives are expected to censure the government today when they vote in Perth on the controversial payment of cold climate allowances. The Scots have until now shown loyalty to Mrs Thatcher, but the motion before the executive criticises the decision to give payments for higher heating costs in England, while excluding Scotland.

## 100 YEARS AGO

A GOOD deal of distress still exists in Ayr owing to lack of employment. Up to date 345 applications for relief have been made. Food tickets are being supplied to the families, and 500 children are being fed every day at the soup kitchen.

\* The National Union of Students has launched a campaign calling on Scottish students to use their vote in the forthcoming general election to vote against tuition fees. The online Vote for Students campaign is urging voters to support any candidates who will oppose an increase in top-up fees in the next Westminster parliament.

\* Since last April, 86 new social enterprises have benefited from a share of a £500,000 government fund, it was announced yesterday. The Social Entrepreneurs Fund is run by Firstport and Scotland UnLtd, to dispense start-up cash, support and advice to new start businesses which place social or environmental aims at the core of their ethos. \* Public sector union Unison and fellow trade union Unite, have signed a recognition agreement with the Scottish Police Services Authority, allowing the two unions to represent SPSA staff. Unison says the agreement will help protect staff in the face of rapid modernisation and pressure on public sector finances.

A YOUTH project that works with young people involved in gang culture has been given more than half a million pounds by the Big Lottery Fund.

The Youthpoint Glasgow project is operated by Aberlour in the south west of the city, where problems include high levels of social deprivation, crime, drug and alcohol dependency and recognised violent gang culture.

The money will enable the project to continue to develop and expand to other parts of the city.

Youthpoint was founded in 2003, initially as a pilot project. It is currently funded jointly by Aberlour, Strathclyde Police, local Housing Associations and a number of other agencies.

Aberlour's Chief executive, Addie Stevenson, said of the Big Lottery Fund grant: This is a very generous sum and one which will allow us not only to continue with the vital work we currently do with young people in the south west

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of Glasgow, but also to expand it to other areas of the city where it is much-needed and to develop supportive partnerships between like-minded organisations and groups.

She said Youthpoint aimed to realise the wasted potential within some city communities. We carry out street-based youth work, offering alternative activities for young men and women at risk of involvement in anti-social behaviour, crime or perhaps even gangs, and who might be facing exclusion from school or their community, she added.

One young person who attends Youthpoint said her experience had given her more confidence.

Helen said: The project has made me see that I could have gone down a different path, such as going out drinking and getting into bother. The support and guidance from the project has made me a better and more caring person.

The BIG Lottery Fund Scotland Chair Alison Magee said: The project is a good example of taking something that works, and using the knowledge gained, to make a real difference through best practice.

By going out on the streets and encouraging young people to move away from anti-social behaviour and street crime, we give them a chance to make positive choices as they move towards adult life.

THE author Terry Pratchett last night called for euthanasia tribunals to enable people with life-limiting illnesses to get help to end their own lives.

His call comes after Margo MacDonald's End of Life Assistance (Scotland) Bill was launched at the Scottish Government. Both may be welcomed by some as an attempt to clarify the issue around assisted suicide. But for many in the disabled people's independent living movement, including those in the Not Yet Dead campaign, such proposed legislation smacks of discrimination. Both Mr Pratchett and Mrs MacDonald see disability as being a terrible tragedy bestowed upon the individual, whereas the independent living movement sees disability as a social phenomenon resulting in discrimination and reduced quality of life.

Mrs MacDonald's bill is designed to decriminalise the act of assisting someone to die, if the person has either been diagnosed as terminally ill and finds life intolerable, or is permanently physically incapacitated to such an extent that the person is unable to live independently and finds life intolerable. He or she must have requested such assistance twice.

However, it leaves open the meaning of the words intolerable and independent, which may well lead in the future to legal, and moral, confusions. In the Bill, what constitutes life being intolerable is left to the individual perception of the person seeking assistance, subject to psychiatric assessment.

What constitutes independent living is the ability to live without the need for any assistance; for the Bill expressly states that no matter how intolerable you may find life to be, so long as you do not need assistance to live you cannot be assisted to die.

To those in the independent living movement, independent living means ... disabled people of all ages having the same freedom, choice, dignity and control as other citizens. It does not mean living by yourself or fending for yourself. It means rights to practical assistance and support to participate in society and live an ordinary life.

To hear Margo MacDonald use the absence of choice, control, freedom and dignity essential elements for independent life and living to advocate for death and dying makes the blood of many disabled people run cold.

These elements are now enshrined as rights under the UN Convention of Rights of Disabled People; it is the absence of such rights which makes life intolerable, not their physical incapacity.

It is quite wrong of people to think that being denied such rights to live, should give disabled people the right to be assisted to die.

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At a time when politicians are cutting vital assistance to disabled people, because they give greater value and priority to other areas of public expenditure, disabled people's tolerance of a consequential poorer quality of life will be gravely tested.

If this bill becomes law, it won't be their impairments which will cause them intolerable pain and discomfort, but a society which has turned its back on them; and points to the exit door.

Jim Elder-Woodward is a disability rights activist and retired social work manager.

Tribunals call, Page 4

CAMPAIGNERS have called for the resignation of a leading councillor after Edinburgh City Council was forced into a humiliating climbdown over attempts to contract-out care.

Plans by the city council to tender care and support services for nearly 800 vulnerable people in the city will be effectively dropped on Thursday when a report to the council finance committee will confirm that the scheme cannot continue.

The services affected include support for people with physical or learning disabilities, mental health problems, or hearing loss. As a result of the original process, all but 51 of 777 service users in the city were facing an upheaval in their care arrangements. The council said the procedure would save the city £2.4m. But their actions provoked a storm of protest, with protesters, many in wheelchairs or affected by other disabilities, protesting loudly outside a series of meetings and lobbying councillors and MSPs.

This week's report follows an independent investigation by accountancy and consulting firm Deloitte, which criticised the council's handling of the affair, warning that its execution had not been sufficiently meticulous or thorough. Deloitte also queried the way rankings of bids received for the services had been changed during the tendering process.

The campaigners' strategy of encouraging people to apply for money to pay for their own services has also been vindicated. Under direct payment rules, service users in the city were entitled to request funds to decide for themselves who should provide their care.

So many applied that the council refused to process new requests for direct payments, before being forced to back down over that issue too. Now Deloitte, and the council, have confirmed that with 80% of those affected having chosen direct payments, the contracts the council wished to award have become unviable.

Ian Hood, Coordinator of the Learning Disability Alliance Scotland, claimed the Deloitte report showed council officials had interfered with the bidding process to ensure that cheaper services were given preference. He said sources within the council had told campaigners that good quality voluntary organisation services had been deliberately downgraded in favour of cheaper services.

Mr Hood added: Five hundred people have applied for Direct Payment to buy their own service rather than trust the council's tender process. Edinburgh Council now needs to learn that it cannot treat people with disabilities in the same way they treat paper clips or potholes. It must review the process that it has used to ensure that this never happens again. And we hope that other councils also learn that putting vulnerable people up for sale is not acceptable.

He also said Councillor Paul Edie should resign over the issue. In October he accused politicians who managed to stall this process of 'student politics'. Now it is clear that without their action the care and support tenders would have been awarded now. Even as late as December 1st, Mr Edie was claiming the tender award process was robust.

It is now clear that he did not exercise sufficient scrutiny of the departments he was in charge of and took the words of council officials implicated in the process without sufficient checking. Up until this point we were prepared to give him the benefit of the doubt, we now believe his position is untenable.

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Lesley Clemenson, the parent of David, one of those affected by the tender said, This process has had a devastating effect on individuals. My son has had a terrible time. I hold Paul Edie responsible and heads should roll for this mess.

Council Leader Jenny Dawe said: Councillor Edie has my full support and backing. Our focus is now on ensuring those vulnerable people in the city continue to receive the care and support they need and that future procurement processes are robust. A review of the Care and Support Service procurement process is being carried out by the Chief Executive to see what lessons can be learned.

However the victory for campaigners is not an absolute one. The council is now planning to award direct payments to those who have applied, but only at the rate which the lowest bidder in the tender process said they could deliver services for - £15.04 an hour. This means those who receive direct payments may have to move providers anyway, if they cannot get the services they currently receive for that rate.

Ian Hood said no confidence could be placed in any bids received during the tendering process, and said prices achieved under the disputed system were therefore flawed. We intend to support individuals to challenge through the courts any attempt to reduce their Direct Payments without taking into account their individual needs, he added.

An Edinburgh City Council spokesman said: Because of shortcomings identified in the tendering exercise and the high level of applications for Direct Payment it is no longer feasible to award the contracts as originally planned.

The Chief Executive s report identifies the need to ensure service continuity and also to demonstrate Best Value by maintaining service standards and securing the budgeted financial savings. It is, therefore, proposed to apply a ceiling on Direct Payments of up to £15.04 and to negotiate reductions in the rates charged by existing providers which exceed this amount.

Tom Aitchison, the Council s Chief Executive, said: Officials will prepare a full Commissioning Strategy for these important services for consideration by the Council in the summer and we will ensure that the shortcomings in the previous procurement exercise are fully addressed before any new commissioning process begins.

By that time the majority of Direct Payment applications will have been processed and we also expect that the Scottish Government will have issued guidance on the procurement of these services.

Encouraging economic reports lifted stocks yesterday and bolstered hopes that the recovery is in better shape than many had believed.

The Dow Jones industrial average rose 118 points after falling in the final two days of last week. Energy stocks led the market higher following a strong earnings report from Exxon Mobil.

Gains in manufacturing and personal incomes helped shore up the market s sentiment after three straight losing weeks that left stocks with a loss for January. Investors were already becoming more optimistic thanks to news on Friday that the economy grew at the fastest pace in six years in the final three months of 2009.

The market exhaled today, said Mike Shea, managing partner at Direct Access Partners LLC in New York. This has been a very skittish market for the last three to four weeks.

The strongest piece of economic news came from the Institute for Supply Management, which said its index of US manufacturing activity grew for a sixth straight month in January to the strongest level since August 2004.

The Dow rose 1.2%, the S&P 500 gained 1.4%, and the Nasdaq composite index was up 1.1%.

Britain s top share index closed 1.1% higher yesterday, helped by upbeat US manufacturing data, with banks and commodity stocks topping the list of gainers.

The FTSE-100 closed up 58.89 points at 5247.41, having dipped to 5163.57 earlier in the session. The index **ended** 0.8% higher on Friday.

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Experts said the rise also had technical causes.

We're reaching a point where this correction (from the January high) has given up almost as much as the last major correction in the FTSE which was June/July last year, said Angus Campbell, head of sales at Capital Spreads.

(It would) seem like not a bad time for bulls to come back into the market, particularly since the overall upward trend remains.

Banks added the most points to the index, extending Friday's bounce back, with HSBC, Standard Chartered, Barclays, and Lloyds Banking Group putting on 1.4% to 4.3%.

Royal Bank of Scotland jumped 7.9%.

RBS is making very strong efforts to try and sell some of its assets. If they get lucky with Sempra and some of their property portfolio, that would show a very strong initiative to strengthen the balance sheet, said David Buik, partner at BGC Partners.

JPMorgan Chase and Sempra Energy may carve up commodities venture RBS Sempra, sources said, as pressure on US banks to limit proprietary trading forces JPMorgan to rethink.

JPMorgan is still in talks to buy RBS Sempra's global oil business and all assets outside North America, while Sempra Energy is in talks to buy out all of the North American power and gas business, the sources said. Sempra owns 49% of RBS Sempra and RBS owns the rest.

UK shares were lifted by data showing the manufacturing sector in the US grew in January and at a faster rate than expected, The Institute for Supply Management said. It followed strong data from Australia, China and the euro zone.

Life insurers joined in the rally by financials. Legal & General, Aviva, Standard Life and Prudential rose 1.5% to 3.8%. Commodity issues rebounded after earlier falls, thanks to a recovery in metals and crude.

Among the miners, Vedanta Resources, Kazakhmys, Fresnillo and Lonmin added 4.2 to 5.2%. Oil majors Royal Dutch Shell, BP and BG Group climbed 0.2% to 1.3%.

Utilities were in demand after reports that midcap Northumbrian Water could receive a £1.7 billion takeover offer from the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan, which holds 27%.

In a trading update, Northumbrian said it expected group revenue for 2009/10 to be in line with the previous financial year.

Its shares topped the FTSE 250 leader board, up 11.8%, while Severn Trent and United Utilities gained 4% and 2.8%, respectively.

SIGMA Capital, the AIM-listed Scottish investor in technology, property and green energy, yesterday said it was planning a maiden dividend for shareholders on the back of an anticipated boost to profits.

Edinburgh-based Sigma said in its latest trading update yesterday that it expected pre-tax profits to come in at more than £900,000 – driven largely by a gain on spin-out Frontier, its university intellectual property commercialisation subsidiary – compared with a £500,000 loss the year before.

However, Sigma also said in its pre-close update for the year to the end of December that revenues from services were expected to fall to £2.4m, compared with £4.7m last time.

Sigma last year reversed into a PLUS-quoted investment company and re-listed it as Frontier IP Group in May, a deal which saw it realise a gain of £3.6m.

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Meanwhile, the company also said that a conservative approach to the value of its investment in SI Limited Partnership No.7 a £39.8m development of leisure and office development in the heart of Aberdeen will result in a charge of £2.7m, and that the investment had now been written down to nil.

Sigma also said that its venture capital fund management activities were trading profitably.

Its property investment subsidiary showed a small loss at an operating level before one-off charges.

by the Bank of England in setting monetary policy and the most up-to-date indicator of activity, may be painting a stronger picture than official GDP data.

CIPS seasonally-adjusted purchasing managers index for manufacturing, a composite measure of activity in the sector calculated using data on new orders, production, employment, supplier performance and stocks of purchases, rose from 54.6 in December to 56.7 in January.

The January figure was not only well above the level of 50 which separates expansion from contraction but also the highest manufacturing PMI reading since October 1994 thus signalling the fastest monthly pace of expansion by the sector for more than 15 years.

The manufacturing output sub-index in the PMI survey rose to a 43-month high in January.

David Noble, chief executive officer at the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply, said: This is very positive news and a great way to start the year.

Although the manufacturing sector represents a smaller proportion of total UK GDP than 10 or 20 years ago, it is still a very important part of the economy.

It is therefore encouraging to see such strong growth and it suggests we are coming out of recession much quicker than previously feared.

One of the most encouraging aspects of this month's PMI is the turnaround on the jobs front. For the first time in 21 months there has been an increase in employment, albeit only a slight one. Employment is usually a lagging indicator so it suggests that firms are becoming much more confident about the future.

Rob Dobson, senior economist at survey compiler Markit, said: January data point to a robust start to 2010 for the UK manufacturing sector.

The headline PMI hit a 15-year high as growth of new orders and production accelerated and employment rose for the first time since April 2008.

The main driver of growth was a surge in new export orders, as improving global market conditions and the ongoing weakness of sterling led to the sharpest rise in foreign demand recorded in at least 14 years.

The survey therefore raises hopes that the sluggish recovery from recession signalled by GDP data in the final quarter of last year will have gained momentum as we move into 2010.

The pound rose from a session low of \$1.5905 to around \$1.5940 in the immediate wake of the strong manufacturing PMI survey.

Continued from Back Page

The Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs visited the first day of the United Auctions pre-sale show of pedigree bulls at Stirling to present prizes to the Aberdeen Angus winners.

The overall championship in the Aberdeen Angus bull show went to the April 2008-born intermediate champion Blelack Lord Hildalgo, from Neil and Graeme Massie, of Dinnet, Aberdeen.

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Overall reserve went to May 2008-born junior champion, Tonley Alonso, from Neil Wattie, of Alford, also Aberdeen.

Whilst there were a number of useful bulls on display, as always there was a tail end that breeders should have left at home, or would have benefited from the early use of burdizzos. That was particularly true of the Beef Shorthorns, a minority breed where there is only limited demand for the very best.

Despite that, minister Richard Lochhead was full of praise for the breeders and the overall quality of stock on display.

Some breeders were disappointed that Scottish Government officials weren't present to bid for bulls as the decision on the future of the bull hire scheme, due in early January, had still to be made.

Mr Lochhead deftly passed the buck and explained that the report was being considered by his colleague, Environment Secretary Roseanna Cunningham, and her decision would be revealed shortly.

Putting aside that minor setback, Mr Lochhead was more upbeat about the prospect of a Scottish eradication scheme for Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD), although he wouldn't be drawn on timescales or whether compensation would be paid for persistently infected animals that had to be culled.

He confirmed that Scotland's chief vet is in discussion with industry to see how to support the eradication of BVD and added: Scotland is leaps and bounds ahead in promoting animal health and BVD is now high up the agenda.

At ANM's second sale of Single Farm Payment Entitlements on Friday, 840.37 units were sold with the average multiplier of 2.1 mirroring the previous sale, whilst the top multiplier was 2.4. This is based on the standard Euro conversion rate of 0.9093. In all, 24 lots were sold with the highest value of 623.14 euros and the lowest 4.63 euros.

John Gregor, ANM general manager commented: Over 2500 units forward were of low euro value which seemed to lack demand. Higher value lots were more sought after.

At St Boswell's yesterday, 67 prime heifers sold to 198p/kg and averaged 168.1p (-1.2p on the week). Assuming Scottish beef type cattle kill at 58%, that average price equates to 289.8p dead weight.

To convert the prime beef live weight prices quoted, divide them by 0.58. Some 78 prime bullocks sold to 186p and averaged 165p (-3.4p). Five young bulls sold to 159p and averaged 153.2p.

Some 104 beef type OTM sold to 137p and averaged 96.2p. 2319 prime hogs sold to 237.8p/kg and £122/head and averaged 202.3p (-4.1p). The 1057 cast ewes sold to £145 and averaged £75.76.

Walleys Marts held their fortnightly sale at Castle Douglas yesterday when 245 store cattle were sold. Bullocks sold to 214.1p/kg for Simmentals and averaged 174.43p, whilst heifers sold to 188.2p and averaged 164.52p. A larger show of 75 OTM averaged 91.1p/kg.

Another good show of 412 store hogs met recent high rates and sold to £78 for Suffolks.

PRESIDENT Barack Obama, stung by widespread opposition to his flagship health-care reform plan and the recent loss of a Senate seat in the Democratic fiefdom of Massachusetts, has made job creation a key theme of the budget he sent to Congress yesterday.

Obama's \$3.8 trillion spending plan for the 2011 budget year that begins on October 1 tries to navigate between the opposing goals of pulling the United States—the world's biggest economy—out of the worst slump since the Great Depression of the 1930s and dealing with a budget deficit that soared to a record \$1.42 trillion last year.

Concern about runaway deficits has given the opposition Republicans campaign fodder for congressional elections later this year and has emboldened their efforts to block Obama programmes, including health-care reform. America has no state-run system like the NHS in Britain and millions of people cannot afford the high-cost coverage of private insurance.

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Obama's proposed budget predicts the national deficit will peak at a record-busting \$1.56 trillion equal to 10.6% of the economy measured by gross domestic product in the current fiscal year, then dip in 2011 to \$1.27 trillion, or 8.3% of GDP, and to \$828bn in 2012.

Dubbed an old-style liberal tax-and-spender by his conservative Republican opponents, Obama is under pressure to persuade investors and big creditors like China, which holds billions of dollars in US Treasury bonds, that he has a credible plan to control the country's deficit and debt over time.

However, analysts on this side of the Atlantic were generally downbeat about the plan.

Marc Ostwald, a senior strategist at Monument Securities in London, said: When the deficit is that size and you want to cut it meaningfully, you have to do more. It is still tinkering around the edges.

One has to look at more meaningful things in terms of what will actually reduce the deficit, (which is) the revenue picture.

This is really something that is going to have an impact on equities, rather than the dollar or Treasuries.

Peter Dixon of Commerzbank added: Probably the spending cuts are not really sufficient to generate the kind of savings required to get the US fiscal balance back in order anytime soon. It looks like we are going to have a situation where the budget deficit, and consequently the amount of debt, is an issue.

To boost jobs, Obama is setting aside \$100bn in 2010 in tax credits aimed at small businesses as well as investments in clean energy and infrastructure, before starting to tighten the country's fiscal belt the following year.

The unemployment rate in the United States is running at 10%, near a 26-year high, and is above 17% if the number of Americans who have given up looking for work is included. US growth jumped by 5.7% at an annual pace in the fourth quarter, but this has yet to translate into greater hiring.

That \$100bn price tag is below a \$174bn bill passed by the House of Representatives the junior chamber in December but higher than an \$83bn proposal that surfaced last week in the Senate.

On the anti-recession front, congressional sources said Obama's new budget will propose extending the popular Making Work Pay middle-class tax breaks of \$400 per individual and \$800 per couple throughout 2011. They were due to expire after this year.

The spending blueprint will also propose \$250 payments to Social Security recipients to bolster their finances. The President will also seek a \$25bn increase in payments to help recession-battered states.

The new budget will set off months of debate in the Democrat-controlled Congress, especially in an election year in which Republicans are hoping to use attacks against government overspending to gain seats.

Obama has argued that he inherited a deficit of more than \$1 trillion from the Bush administration and was forced to increase spending to stabilise the financial system after the collapse of the Lehman Brothers investment bank in 2008 and to fight the recession.

White House officials said they were ready to make some tough choices to get the deficit under control. Communications director Dan Pfeiffer wrote on the White House website that the budget would propose to terminate or cut back more than 120 programmes, including the NASA space agency's project to return to the moon, saving about \$20bn in the fiscal year.

The military, veterans, homeland security and big benefit programmes such as Social Security and Medicare, health care for the elderly, would not feel the pinch.

Cuts would not fall equally on all domestic agencies, with some seeing budget cuts to free up spending for programmes that the administration wants to expand such as education and civilian research efforts.



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To meet his promise of getting the deficit down to 3% by 2015, Obama will rely on an 18-member debt commission, made up of Democrats and Republicans, to recommend steps to take. Polls show many Americans are worried by the parlous condition of their country's finances and Obama's emphasis on fiscal restraint could appeal to politically independent voters, who moved away from Democrats in the Massachusetts race.

The budget also includes higher taxes on the wealthy and a plan to levy a fee on the biggest US banks to raise an estimated \$90bn to recover losses from the government's \$700bn bail-out fund. This has outraged Wall Street but is popular with working class Americans.

PETROFAC, the oil and gas giant that is a big employer in Aberdeen, is reported to be considering hiving off its investments in North Sea fields into a business that could be floated on the stock market or sold.

The Financial Times said that a demerger of a unit that has stakes in the West Don and Don Southwest fields off Shetland was one of a number of options that managers at Petrofac are considering.

Petrofac combines an exploration and production business with a services operation that works for other firms in oil and gas provinces like the North Sea. The company believes owning the two operations creates valuable synergies.

By separating the E&P business, Petrofac could raise some money and clarify its structure.

The company said: Petrofac has a strategy of creating value in assets held by its Energy Developments unit by leveraging the capabilities of the group's services businesses.

Options with regard to individual assets are kept under regular review and if an opportunity arises to crystallise value on attractive terms for our shareholders, an announcement would be made at that time, Petrofac said.

THREE out of four owners of small businesses have used credit cards or personal savings to fund their business over the last 12 months, according to a survey which reinforces demands for banks to increase lending to minnows.

Research for the Federation of Small Businesses shows that business owners have been using up their resources in a way that could mean they can not exploit any upturn in the economy or leaves them vulnerable to a continued downturn.

In a survey of 1000 businesses across Scotland, the FSB found that 38% used their own savings to fund activity.

A further 14% had dipped into the reserves of family members.

More than one in five, 22%, had used personal credit cards.

The findings indicate that firms are resorting to costly credit card borrowing and using savings at least partly because they find it hard to get affordable credit from banks.

A third said a key factor in improving their economic prospects would be the banks lending more and lending more fairly.

The FSB said the results showed that the banking marketplace isn't functioning effectively for the small business community.

Howard Archer, UK economist at Global Insight, said data on borrowing by businesses in December published by the Bank of England yesterday showed that lending levels remained worryingly low.

The FSB warned that there could be dire consequences if the situation did not improve.

Many businesses have used up their cash reserves, said Scottish Policy Convener, Andy Willox. The cupboard marked emergency is bare and, if the issue of bank lending is not resolved urgently, businesses will not have the working capital to take advantage of the recovery.

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The federation renewed calls for the appointment of a financial intermediary who could help firms in Scotland access bank funding and highlight problems to the Government.

Many small firms have also faced delays in getting payments from customers.

Some 30% were paid slowly by government agencies and quangos or by private sector customers.

Around one in four said they had been paid late by local authorities or the NHS.

Conversely, 87% had been paid by the Scottish Government within 10 days of submitting invoices.

Despite widespread difficulties in accessing finance, 32% of respondents in Scotland expect to expand over the next 12 months.

Around a quarter, 27%, believe that the business climate will improve, while 24% fear that it will deteriorate.

ROYAL Bank of Scotland yesterday denied it had any imminent plans to sell, and then lease back, its headquarters at Edinburgh's Gogarburn.

The bank has previously sold property including the London headquarters of its private banks Coutts and Drummonds.

It was reported yesterday that the sale of the £305m Gogarburn complex was being considered as part of a strategic review by chief executive Stephen Hester.

A spokeswoman said: We constantly review all of our portfolio of property to ensure it is managed as efficiently as possible. Sale and leasebacks have been undertaken on many of our properties in the recent years, but not for Gogarburn, and we have no immediate plans to do so.

Hester has maintained that he won't be moving the company's HQ.

The bank is also facing the renegotiation of an outline £2.5bn deal to sell its RBS Sempra commodity trading joint venture.

JP Morgan is reported to only be interested in the international operation, around half the business.

It is thought that RBS's partner Sempra Energy may attempt to buy out the rest of the business.

RBS's sale of much of its asset management business completed yesterday. Aberdeen paid £84.7m for £13.5bn of assets and a team of funds of hedge funds and multi-manager operatives.

Meanwhile RBS yesterday said Simon Penney would head up its wholesale and investment bank in the Middle East and Africa to strengthen its debt capital markets and structured finance business.

EUNICE Lancaster, general manager of micro-finance operation DSL Business Finance, yesterday invoked US President Barack Obama in her efforts to transform her operation's not-for-profit business support model into the real ethical alternative for business banking.

Lancaster was speaking to The Herald as Govan-based DSL, which was originally set up with cash from the Body Shop and provides unsecured loans to small businesses to which traditional banks are unlikely to lend, announced that the agency last year had received applications from small Scottish firms for almost £3m more than double the value of applications in 2007, the year the financial crisis began.

There is clearly growing demand for our kind of finance, said Lancaster, the daughter of a Greenock shipyard worker who is quietly bringing about a small-business revolution by encouraging entrepreneurship in some of Scotland's poorest and most deprived areas, pulling people into the fabric of the wider economy.

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We continue to receive many more applications than we have money to lend, she said.

Meanwhile, Obama, during his first State of the Union address last week, has pledged to provide small businesses in the US with a new range of tax breaks and better access to bank loans.

The Obama administration has already increased investment in community development finance initiatives (CDFIs), from \$50m to \$400m.

Lancaster said: In the States, which certainly has a much greater tradition of supporting CDFIs which is essentially what we are they set up special funds to dispense wholesale capital to community development finance initiatives.

That is something I would like to see happen here. It would not only be beneficial to us, but to CDFIs across the UK.

At the moment, all our funding comes from the repayment of our loans and from the bank loans we have taken out ourselves, which limits how effective we can be.

Lancaster added: It would be nice to have access to cheaper money, which we could then pass on to support more small businesses.

It is interesting to note that as a response to the banking crisis in the US, the Obama administration has increased investment in CDFIs similar to DSL.

Could they offer a real ethical alternative to banks for business lending?

I also think that quite apart from all the disillusionment with the big banks and bonuses, better support for CDFIs would provide more variety and more options for businesses seeking funding, which can only be a good thing.

Meanwhile, the latest annual lending figures from DSL which is considered an ethical lender because it has no shareholders, takes no profit and pays no bonuses to staff reveal that while bank lending to businesses virtually came to a standstill around the world last year, small Scottish firms were turning in increasing numbers to DSL.

The figures also reveal that DSL, which runs a £1.5m loan fund for small and start-up businesses, charities and social enterprises, was significantly over-subscribed.

In 2009, the micro-finance operation received applications for a total value of around £2.8m, compared with £2.7m in 2008. However, in 2007, just before the worst of the recession began, it received only £916,000 worth of applications.

Under the government's Enterprise Finance Guarantee scheme, DSL offers loans of up to £30,000 to small firms even if they have no security, are not considered credit worthy or have been turned down by the bank for a loan.

Small firms which apply for loans must appear before a Dragons Den style approvals panel, where volunteers from the world of business and finance assess the applications.

Lancaster added: Small and start-up firms are continuing to have difficulty getting bank funding and are turning to alternative lenders like DSL.

We are also finding that the type of firms approaching DSL is changing we are seeing more established businesses and high growth start-ups.

Before the banking crisis, many of these businesses wouldn't have a problem securing bank finance but now they are finding that is no longer available to them and they're turning to DSL.

She added: We like to think we operate like the old-fashioned bank manager. We get to know our clients and their business. We look at the whole picture and not just the figures.

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DSL, which has helped more than 600 businesses across Scotland to create 2000 jobs with £7m of investment, recently expanded into Edinburgh as well as east and central Scotland.

FEARS over a housing market slump have been sparked by the first fall in mortgage approvals in over a year last month.

However, the amount of unsecured credit unexpectedly rose over December as individuals spent on credit cards in the run-up to Christmas.

The Bank of England said 59,023 mortgages were approved in December, down from 60,045 in November.

Mortgage approvals hit a record low of 27,162 in November 2008.

Mortgage lending was at £1.2bn in December, down from £1.6bn in November.

Howard Archer, chief UK economist at IHS-Global Insight, said: The dip in mortgage approvals in December reinforces our suspicion that housing prices are likely to suffer a limited relapse during the coming months, and will be essentially only flat over the year as a whole.

However, unsecured consumer credit showed its first monthly rise since June 2009, increasing by £52m.

Credit card borrowing rose by £195m, while other loans and advances fell.

Archer said the modest rise in unsecured consumer credit may be due to people cutting back their net repayments of loans to help pay for Christmas.

Former Lloyds Group chairman Sir Victor Blank has been appointed to advise the Government on attracting investment from overseas. Sir Victor was named yesterday as an unpaid member of a new advisory panel set up by Prime Minister Gordon Brown and Business Secretary Lord Mandelson last month as part of the Government's growth strategy. The businessman stepped down from the Lloyds board last year in the wake of its troubled takeover of the crisis-hit HBOS bank.

His departure was thought to have been hastened by the absence of public support for him from the Government quango UK Financial Investments, which handles the taxpayer's stake in banks including Lloyds. Now he will advise another quango, UK Trade and Investment, on how to attract billions of pounds of investment into the UK. A UKTI spokeswoman said: The panel are going to help the Government take a systematic and strategic approach to relationship management with the leading companies investing in the UK.

AQUAMARINE Power, the Edinburgh-based marine energy company, yesterday announced the appointment of Richard Round as chief finance officer. Round, 51, joins Aquamarine from Novera Energy, one of the UK's leading renewable energy generators, recently acquired by Infinis Energy. Round's previous roles also include finance director of AIM-listed Cambrian Mining and Anglo Asian Mining, where he continues to sit on the board as a non-executive director and chairman of the audit committee.

Dawson International gave long-suffering shareholders a rare boost yesterday when it reported healthy demand for its knitwear in both its UK and US operations in the final quarter of 2009.

The shares rose 0.5p to 2.25p as Dawson said sales and profits for continuing operations would be ahead of market expectations for the year.

The cashmere specialist, which sells Scottish-made couture knitwear through Borders-based Barrie and Chinese-made garments through Dawson Forte in the US, said: A strong final quarter from both our UK and US knitwear businesses more than offset continued weakness in our home furnishings business.

The UK business benefited from the timing of high margin sales to couture customers which significantly improved margins in the final quarter, Dawson said, though that would unwind to some extent in the current quarter. The US

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knitwear business sustained sales and margins through the final quarter in spite of the fragile US economic environment.

Dawson Forte, formerly run by group chief executive Andy Bartmess, has regularly outperformed the rest of the business.

The weak pound against the dollar had helped squeeze margins in home furnishings, the company said, and though the second half had seen an improvement the business was likely to report a small loss.

Dawson sold its Todd & Duncan spinning mill, the last in Scotland, to Chinese cashmere giant Zhongyin five months ago, in a deal worth over £10m including a working capital injection for Dawson. The group said yesterday it had anticipated a trading loss in the months prior to disposal. This proved to be the case with the business also requiring an additional provision of £0.5m for doubtful debts.

An unexpected bonus last year was a \$1.5m repayment of a \$10m debt owed by another Chinese company, King Deer, and dating back to the £4m sale by Dawson of assets in China in 2002. The group said a payment plan had been agreed but it was retaining a provision for the remaining debt.

Giovanni Ghione, who left the board 18 months ago under former chairman Mike Hartley, has returned to the board at the behest of majority shareholder Peter Gyllenhammar, whose Leeds Group owns 29%. Leeds installed its protégé David Bolton to replace Hartley last May.

Dawson also warned its full-year results will be impacted by a deteriorating pension deficit.

The founders of Artemis Investment Management have regained a significant stake in the business to bring one of the sector's Scottish success stories back into owner management.

The Edinburgh-based group has teamed up with US fund house Affiliated Managers Group (AMG), which specialises in backing boutiques, to buy the business back from BNP Paribas/Fortis, which acquired it by default in the 2008 carve-up of previous majority holder ABN Amro.

The split of the equity is yet to be finalised, but Artemis's management team will have meaningful stakes alongside major shareholder AMG.

Senior founders John Dodd and Mark Tyndall netted more than £50m apiece 16 months ago as the Artemis management team raked in £317m from selling its one-third stake to two-thirds holder Fortis, when a change of control clause was triggered.

That deal valued the business at £964m, but the fall in sector values since then suggests management may have bought their stake back a little more cheaply.

AMG are very sensitive to the big picture numbers, said Artemis spokesman Ross Leckie yesterday. Multiples in the space have fallen.

It is the second UK investment for AMG after buying into the Genesis boutique.

The group says it has £145bn of assets across 200 investment products.

AMG's chief executive officer Sean Healey said: We believe an independent Artemis will be well positioned for further growth in both the retail and institutional markets in the UK, Europe and the Middle East.

Tyndall commented: By partnering with AMG, we will become part of a high-quality organisation with global scale and a proven partnership approach. This will provide both the management team and successive generations with meaningful equity stakes that align our interests with those of our clients. At the same time, this structure will preserve the successful characteristics and core elements of our business.

## Celtic reject late bid for McGeady as Keane tops frantic day of deals

Artemis, created by four former Ivory & Sime managers in 1997, grew rapidly after ABN acquired a 58% stake in 2003 and bolted on its unit trusts.

Funds grew from very little a decade ago to £5bn in 2005 and over £16bn by late 2007. The past two years' market turmoil has seen that fall back to £10bn, but Artemis has continued to attract highly-regarded managers from rivals such as the former Jupiter star William Littlewood to add to the likes of Adrian Frost and Tim Steer. Artemis employs over 100 staff, evenly split between Edinburgh and London, though only its founding quartet of managers Tyndall, Dodd, Lindsay Whitelaw and Derek Stuart are based in Edinburgh, with 14 in London.

Fortis acquired the stake in 2008 in the break-up of ABM but immediately put it up for sale. The Artemis management was said to have been trying to mount a buy-out at that time but failed to find a financial partner.

But in October 2008 Fortis was forced to buy out the management's 33% stake, after no deal was forthcoming and the sale clause in the original deal with ABN was triggered.

Despite netting the £317m, including pay-outs of between £18m and £26m to four managers and £5m to non-executive Hamish Grossart, Artemis's management said it was not the preferred solution.

UK manufacturing activity stormed ahead at its fastest pace for more than 15 years in the opening month of the new decade and the sector increased its workforce for the first time since April 2008, a key survey has revealed.

The survey from the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (CIPS), which also shows export orders growing at their fastest pace since comparable records for overseas demand began 14 years ago, provides some much-needed good news on the UK economy.

Fears over the UK's ability to stage a sustainable recovery from its deepest downturn since the Great Depression days of the 1930s were stoked last week when data from the Office for National Statistics showed the country only just exited recession during the fourth quarter of last year with 0.1% growth in gross domestic product.

The City had forecast quarter-on-quarter growth of between 0.2% and 0.9%.

There are worries that UK economic output could fall again in the current quarter, as consumers rein in spending after being willing to pay out more to fund Christmas.

The return of the VAT rate from 15% to 17.5% last month and impending end of the car scrappage scheme on February 28 have been cited as other factors which could drag activity down.

Yesterday's manufacturing survey from CIPS provides some room for hope that the recovery can continue in the opening quarter of 2010.

However, manufacturing is a much smaller part of the economy than services nowadays.

The disappointing rate of growth in the fourth quarter of last year stemmed primarily from the dominant service sector, which managed expansion of only 0.1%.

UK manufacturing output rose by 0.4% quarter-on-quarter in the final three months of last year, signalling the sector may have benefited from a boost to competitiveness in overseas market-places arising from the weakness of sterling.

On top of that, economists have been concerned that CIPS surveys, although followed closely

GANNETT, the US publisher whose UK arm owns The Herald and Evening Times, yesterday posted better-than-expected fourth-quarter profits as deep cost cutting helped overcome a 14% decline in revenue on shrinking advertising sales. Gannett, whose flagship publication is USA Today, said its quarterly profit came in at \$133.6m, compared with \$4.7bn a year earlier when the company took a massive writedown of assets.

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Gannett, like the entire newspaper publishing industry, has experienced a steep decline in print advertising sales as more people get their news on the internet. The company's publishing division recorded a fall in total revenue of 15.4%, while ad revenue fell nearly 18%. Total operating revenues fell 14.4% to \$1.5bn.

MARC Bolland, Marks & Spencer's new chief executive, will start in May on a near-£1 million salary and a golden hello worth £3.9m in shares, writes Douglas Hamilton. The former Wm Morrison chief executive has been released early from his 12-month contract with the supermarket group to take on the top job at M&S on May 1. His £975,000 salary is just short of current M&S boss Sir Stuart Rose's £1.13m basic pay, but M&S said it would pay cash and shares awards worth up to a potential £6.3m.

Irish airline Ryanair raised its profit forecast and said an industry slump it has exploited to expand at the expense of less nimble rivals was set to continue, sending its shares sharply higher. Europe's biggest low-cost airline led blue-chip risers after it said it was still gaining market share from leading flag carriers Air France-KLM and British Airways and Deutsche Lufthansa. The environment out there is, from Ryanair's perspective, great, because it's awful, chief executive Michael O Leary said. The airline revealed it had increased its net profit guidance for the full year to 275 million from the lower end of a range of 200m- 300m. O Leary said profits would grow over the next 12 months.

## Graphic

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MAGNIFICENT SEVEN: Robbie Keane, pictured at Celtic Park last night, will wear the shirt made famous by Jimmy Johnstone and Henrik Larsson. Picture: Nick Ponty

## Classification

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