



"Putting people first"

# ISIS Interactive

The newsletter of ISIS Training  
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## Every Learner Matters

- Be Healthy
- Stay Safe
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve Economic well-being
- Enjoy and achieve through learning

### In this Edition

- Staying safe –
- Cyber bullying
- Austerity update
- How to reduce your driving costs
- Breaking the mould – Sharing those chores!
- Entertainment News

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Spring is coming!

## ISIS OFSTED Inspection Complete

### Thank you for your support!



The first OFSTED inspection since the change of ownership of ISIS Training was completed on 17 Feb. Due to confidentiality rules, we cannot comment or report on the results until the full inspection report is published by OFSTED. A special edition of ISIS Interactive will be published with full details of the inspection results.

### Magnificent Support

We would like to thank all of the learners and employers who were involved in the inspection process for their support, which was absolutely magnificent and all the staff at ISIS would like to express their thanks and appreciation for this support.

In particular the responses to the questionnaire on the OFSTED web site were outstanding. A total of 189 learners and 67 employers responded, this was way above expectations and one of the highest returns ever achieved by a Work Based Learning Provider. Obviously we rely on your support to be able to function and really appreciate it.

### Thanks to the Staff!

The management team would also thank all of the ISIS staff for their hard work and effort in preparing and being involved in the inspection. This has involved working long hours and making sure everything was in place as required for the Inspectors, as well as generally looking after them and even chaperoning them around.

### About OFSTED

Ofsted is the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills. OFSTED are a Government body set up to inspect and regulate to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages.

The new Ofsted brings together the wide experience of four inspectorates to make a greater difference for every child, and for all young people and adult learners, in England. Their educational, economic and social well-being will promote our success as a country.

OFSTED want to raise aspirations and contribute to the long term achievement of ambitious standards and better life chances for service users. Their educational, economic and social well-being will in turn promote England's national success. For further information about OFSTED, visit their website at:

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/>



### Neet Figures Rise

The proportion of 16-24-year-olds not in employment, education or training in England at the end of 2010 was up on previous years, official figures show.

A total of 938,000 - 15.6% of 16-24-year-olds - were Neet in December 2010, the highest final-quarter figure since 2005. The government said the number was "still too high".

Last week the youth unemployment rate hit a new peak. Read the full story at:

[www.bbc.co.uk/news](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news)

### Effects of scrapping EMA

Will the scrapping of the Education Maintenance Allowance mean the NEET figures will continue to rise? It is probably too early to make a realistic judgement. There is no real evidence to support this yet and the Government have not commented on it. However several opposition figures and business leaders opposed to the high level of spending cuts and specifically the scrapping of EMA seem to think it will be unavoidable. It will be interesting to watch how things develop over the next few months

## Austerity Update – How the cuts are affecting ISIS

### The Future or the Technology Exemplar Network – By Mick Gilroy

The future of the Technology Exemplar Network, of which ISIS Training are one of the 16 Exemplar providers, was confirmed at the LSIS Embracing Technology Conference in Birmingham on 2<sup>nd</sup> Feb 2010. Support for the network will be transferred from Becta to the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) and will continue to promote and support the use of technology throughout the FE sector through a peer support network consisting of 16 provider mini-networks, each led by one of the Exemplar providers. An extract from the press release detailing the transfer of support from Becta to LSIS is shown below. The full version can be found at.

<http://www.lsis.org.uk/AboutLSIS/MediaCentre/NewsArticles/Documents/Becta-JIScAdvance-LSIS-pressnotice.pdf>

#### Improving the use of technology across further education and skills

*Understanding and sharing the benefits of using technology within the further education and skills sector is the cornerstone of the day-long Embracing Technology for Success conference which takes place today – 2 February 2011.*

*The event also sees the launch of the transfer of technology support for the sector from Becta to LSIS combined with the signing of a Concordat between LSIS and JISC Advance. The Concordat sets out how the two organisations will work together to ensure coherent support to the sector to maximize the benefits of technology. The functions transferring to LSIS offer real value and expertise to support learning and skills professionals. Becta and LSIS have had a close and effective working partnership and the fact that the work is continuing is a positive testament to that relationship.*

### Newark Learners Take Action! – By Sophie Pateman

Last Thursday 17 Feb, I did a group discussion with our Newark Foundation Learning learners about the forthcoming cuts to the Connexions service, how this will affect the learners and the role Connexions have played in their lives. It was a fantastic discussion where we put the world to rights! I was thrilled to see the learners get really involved. All learners felt this service should not be taken away from them. This was followed up by a formal letter writing activity, where the learners got their thoughts and opinions down on paper to their local MP Patrick Merver.

The next day, Friday 22 Feb, Rebecca from Connexions popped into the centre, to speak to the learners about the Connexions cuts. The letters the learners wrote are going to be hand-presented by the learners themselves to Patrick Mercer this Friday. I'm really proud of the learners - they felt that strongly about it, they wanted to do this - well done!

### But the Gravy Train continues for some!!

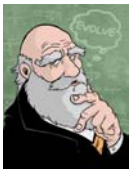
A new reality show starting on BBC 3 called ironically "Working Girls" features young people who continue to live the high life through the benefits system, despite continued government promises to crack down on benefit scroungers. The so called "star" of the show is a 20 year old dubbed the "Cheryl Cole of Reading" for no apparent reason, who gets £800 a month from the state, including housing benefit, council tax benefit and job seekers allowance, when she is fully capable of working but finds work boring. She says it is not her fault, she is not a scrounger, but the government will pay her for doing nothing and it is really easy to claim benefits.



### Can eating Banana's kill you?

This is an urban myth with an element of truth to it, due to the high level of potassium in banana's, too many can make you ill and in extreme cases could be fatal. The accepted number seems to be more than 7, but it would be extremely difficult to eat seven bananas in one sitting!

To prevent "suicide by banana" or unintentional overdoses, many public places that provide complimentary fruit, will make sure there are always less than seven bananas in the fruit bowl!



### The Darwin Awards

The Darwin Awards highlight cases of extreme stupidity where people have killed or seriously injured themselves by carrying out dangerous stunts or activities without thinking of the risks and health and safety implications involved. Amazingly some of these people actually think that what they are doing is perfectly safe! Find out more at:

[www.darwinawards.com](http://www.darwinawards.com)

## Health and Safety

### On line Risk Assessments available at the [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk) By Sandra Portess

The HSE have been busy developing a variety of on line risk assessment tools. The latest addition is the shop risk assessment for use by employers working in small low risk shops. The tool will allow those working in this type of workplace to produce a tailored risk assessment by selecting relevant hazards and thinking about how they are controlled. The tool is an excellent prompt to help employers appropriately assess risks and hazards in their environments. Also available are a variety of 'static' classroom assessments ranging from catering to motor vehicle all with good worked examples.

**May the Roof Above Us Never Fall in** - According to the **Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents**, every year in the UK around 4,000 people are killed and 2.7 million are injured in accidents in their homes. Ranking in the top ten accidents are:

**Collision** – especially children with objects and other people. Figures estimate around 400,000 injuries are due to collisions in the home!!!! So slow down, it is better than a visit to A and E.

**Burns and Scalds** – children are prone in this area and an ever growing number of injuries are due to hair straighteners!

**Falls** – there are almost 100,000 falls within households reported every year. For adults, the majority of incidents involve steps or stairs, so make sure that no objects are left on stairs! Toys and laundry seem to be the top culprits. Make sure when using step-ladders that they are in good condition and are placed on a sturdy, flat surface.

**Gardening** – falls and cuts from dangerously sharp or rusty cutting implements are some of the pitfalls, not to mention bites and stings from creepy crawlies. Accidents in the garden total a staggering 500,000 a year, approaching gardening sensibly especially when using sharp or mechanical instruments should ensue that you still possess ten green fingers by autumn.

**Electrocution** – there are around 3,000 incidents involving electricity each year. Statistics show that faulty wiring and a combination of water and power can have lethal results. It goes without saying that no one should attempt any wiring or other electrical jobs if unqualified

**Cuts and abrasions** – Most cuts seem to occur during food preparation, around 300 000. Surprisingly a high number happen while washing up, so wash sharp knives separately.

**Falling objects and tripping over flooring** – there are around 180,000 hospital visits due to tripping on carpets and rugs.

**Pets** – believe it or not around 50, 000 injuries are reported! And last but not least

**Socks and Tights** – astoundingly around 10, 000 people a year are injured in incidents involving socks and tights. The most common scenarios reported are women falling while putting them on, and men tend to put their backs out while getting their socks on, not to mention slipping, skidding and catching.





## Staying Safe



Every Learner Matters  
"Stay Safe"

### Cyber bullying and Staying Safe on-line.....By Mick Gilroy

#### How to beat Cyberbullying

- Never give your email address, on-line contact information or mobile phone number to people outside your trusted circle of family and friends.
- Never respond to any abusive texts or emails as this is often what the bully wants you to do.
- Let someone who may be able to help know about the problem. Your parents, a close friend or someone you can trust.
- Keep a record of any offensive or abusive texts or emails you have received as evidence.
- Change your email address or mobile number if the cyberbullying continues.
- Even if the cyber bully is anonymous – using a fake name or someone else's identity for example – there may be a way to track them through your Internet service provider.
- If all else fails, contact the police – especially if it involves threats of violence, extortion, obscene or harassing messages or pornography.

Think safety  
Act safely  
Be safe

There have been lots of stories in the news recently about cyber bullying and social networking sites being used to abuse individuals and organisations. Some people see the sole reason to use a number of social networking sites as a vehicle for abusing or bullying people. One of the most controversial sites, "Little Gossip" was closed down this week due to the children posting on-line messages which amounted to "vicious" cyber-bullying.

This is an extract from the BBC Web site Newsbeat section, discussing the use of the site. You can read the full article at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsbeat/12452972>

*"Little Gossip allows users to write gossip about named individuals they know while maintaining their anonymity. The site said in December it would stop under-18s using it and would remove schools from the list of institutions about which users can post gossip. But this week, at least 78 UK schools and 155 sixth form or further education colleges were still on the site, with many users still able to post messages. Deputy Chief Executive of the charity Beatbullying, Richard Piggin, says his organisation has been contacted by a "large number" of individuals and schools complaining about the website.*

*We're hearing about threatening reports, a lot of vicious rumours, a lot of cyber-bullying that's taking place between young people," he says. "The website seems to have the sole purpose of allowing young people to write horrible things about each other anonymously." The website's terms and conditions say posts should not be "sexist, homophobic, racist or otherwise harassing or intentionally harmful to specific people". But many offensive comments remain on the site, with a post referring to a named girl in Year 8 (13- or 14-years-old) at school in Berkshire as an "ugly bitch".*

### Sexting' By Children.....Researched by Pip Whiteman

Child protection experts say unprecedented numbers of teenagers are sharing sexually explicit images with each other and then posting them online. Ministers have called it a 'worrying trend' that 38% of children between the ages of 11 and 17 have received an inappropriate message either through text, email or internet messaging. Research from **Beatbullying** found that among those youngsters, 70% admitted that they knew who had sent it.

The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (Ceop) has found that teenagers often take pictures to share with a girlfriend or boyfriend. Peter Davies, chief executive of Ceop said: "We know that young people are increasingly using technology not only to stay in touch, but to explore their sexuality and to push the boundaries in what they send and to whom they send it."

Further information and case studies relating to this article can be found at

[www.lbc.co.uk](http://www.lbc.co.uk) (A London talk radio station)

# Economic Well-being

## 5 ways you can reduce your driving costs

By Pip Whiteman



Every learner Matters  
"Achieve Economic Well-being"

Information obtained from [www.consumereducation.com](http://www.consumereducation.com)



**1. Plan your route** – getting lost can be costly and it isn't just time that you waste. Whilst people realise that failing to plan their route before setting off may lead to increased journey times due to the time they spend aimlessly driving around, what people often fail to consider is the extra fuel they use trying to find their intended destination. Whilst sat-navs have gone some way to neutralising this problem, those who don't have a sat-nav should definitely be sure to familiarise themselves with their route before setting off.

**2. Remove excess weight and check tyre pressure** – another thing that a huge number of motorists are guilty of is needlessly carrying excess weight in their cars. The problem with this is that weight impacts fuel consumption which in turn increases the amount of petrol you use. Items that are regularly carted around for no reason include golf clubs and roof racks, despite the fact that they aren't needed 95% of the time. Another factor that motorists should be aware of is that under inflated tyres can also impact fuel consumption. Tyres that are inflated to their recommended pressure can improve consumption by up to 2%. Whilst this may not sound like much, this adds up over the year. An added benefit of this is that correctly inflated tyres also make your car safer to drive.



**3. Reduce your speed** – obviously the main reason why you should drive at sensible speeds is because it is safer for both you and other road users. There are however other incentives to reduce your speed. One is the impact it can have on your fuel consumption. Research has shown that driving at 70mph uses 9% more fuel than driving at 60mph and driving at 80mph rather than 70mph uses up to 25% more fuel. Reducing your speed can clearly have an impact on your fuel consumption. A further reason why you should avoid driving at excessive speed is that if you were to be caught speeding, you could be hit with either a driving fine or ban. Those who have been convicted of speeding face higher insurance premiums so speeding can have a major impact on your finances.



**4. Reduce your mileage** – this is another factor which has many benefits, the first of being that it reduces the amount of petrol that you use. Secondly, choosing to either walk or cycle short journeys instead of driving is good for your health and avoids using your car for short journeys which is when your engine is likely to be at its least efficient. A third reason why you should consider reducing your mileage is that it can reduce your insurance premiums. Insurance companies will reduce your premiums if you drive fewer miles as the less time you spend on the road, the less likely you are to be involved in a traffic accident.



**5. Compare insurance providers** – it's amazing that so many people are unaware of how much car insurance costs can vary from one insurance provider to the next. The number of people that auto-renew their insurance policy without getting quotes from other insurance providers is staggering and it is costing motorists significant amounts of money. That is why all motorists should be sure to shop around when the time comes to renew your insurance policy. Whilst you might expect this to be a long and arduous process, price comparison sites such as [www.moneysupermarket.com](http://www.moneysupermarket.com) make it easy for drivers to shop around and compare quotes from a huge number of insurance providers, ensuring that motorists don't over pay for their policy.

The office of national statistics has completed a survey on the various house hold tasks men and women like to do with some surprising results.

**Top 10 Favourite Chores Men**

1. DIY
2. Washing the car
3. Decorating
4. Cooking
5. Tidying the house
6. Hoovering
7. Washing dishes
8. Making beds
9. Washing clothes
10. Ironing clothes

**Top 10 Favourite chores Women**

1. Tidying the house
2. Cooking
3. Washing dishes
4. Decorating
5. Hoovering
6. Making beds
7. Washing clothes
8. Ironing clothes
9. Washing the car
10. DIY

**• Did you know?**

- ❖ 6% of men stay at home and are their children's primary carers, mainly because their partners earn my money than them, a 10% increase since 2000.
- ❖ 70% of women admits they actually enjoy doing housework. Whilst 50% of men said they also enjoy housework.
- ❖ Single women spend 10 hours a week on housework whilst single men spend only 7. However this increases to 15 hours a week for women when they move in with a partner and decreases to 5 hours a week for men!
- ❖ The top job for men around the house is putting the rubbish out, whilst for women it is cooking and washing the dishes.

## Breaking the Mould

### Equality and the new man.....



In these days of equality there are so called "new men", who are quite happy to take their share of responsibility and do jobs that were previously the exclusive preserve of females. A great step forward you might think, but unfortunately there are just some domestic tasks that men, no matter how hard they try just cannot manage. Here are some tasks that absolutely defeat me and millions of other men who want to be helpful!

- **Using Cling film** – Cling film is a fabulous invention, but like hundreds of other men I just cannot get the hang of it. For example when I try to wrap a piece of cheese, I cut a piece roughly the right size, which immediately folds itself into a long thin strip. I then manage to either cover half the cheese or the cling film ends up in neat round ball in my hand. My wife comes along, informs me the problem is that I use too much, takes a piece of cling film about the size of a postage stamp and in seconds expertly wraps it around said piece of cheese. This procedure also applies to tin foil as well where no matter how large a piece I tear off, it is never enough to cover the roast.



- **Putting the dog harness on!** – Because our dog is quite excitable we use a dog harness when taking her for a walk to prevent her from strangling herself on her lead! When it is time to take the dog for a walk, my wife calls her name, gets her to sit and puts the dog harness on expertly in seconds. When I try this I normally have to chase a hysterical dog around the room, because she is so excited she is going for a walk (The dog not the Wife). When I eventually get the harness over her head I am faced with a complicated tangle of straps and clips. Wife comes along orders the dog to sit, which she obediently does, then with a few deft flicks and a reassuring clip of the catch, the harness is in place without any sign of having to untangle a single strap!



- **Using the Washing Machine** – A man will load the washing machine with the same amount of laundry, he will use exactly the same setting as his Wife/Partner and measure exactly the same amount of the same brands of detergent and conditioner and even put in a colour catcher sheet for good measure. However the results are inevitable, the white wash will come out grey and the colours will either run, be dull, or washed out! One of life's unexplained mysteries!



**Hanging the washing out** - We have two washing lines in our back garden, which my wife can quite easily fit about 3 loads of washing on, with a bit to spare. On the odd occasion when I am requested to hang the washing out I can manage to fit about 5 shirts and a pair of socks on them, as apparently I hang it out all wrong, even though I use the exactly the same 2 peg method as my Wife, but she has yet to explain to me how she defies the laws of physics by finding space that doesn't exist!!



## Read All about It! Classic Newspaper Headlines

In these days of 24 hour news channels instant access to the internet and information being available in seconds, newspapers are no longer a main source of news and indeed some news stories are even out of date before the papers have been printed. But newspaper editors have always been very good at generating headlines that attract the reader's attention, even though they are sometimes economical with the truth. Here are some of the best headlines over the years.....



**Gypsy Invasion On its Way!** – This referred to the millions of Romanian Gypsies who were supposed to be going to descend on the UK following the entry of Romania into the European Union. Did it happen? Of course not, it was just another typical immigration scare story.

**Swan Blake!** Another immigration story, this referred to allegedly starving EU migrant workers killing and eating Swans from our rivers, Lakes and ponds. Was it true? There were a couple of isolated incidents, but certainly not on the scale the newspaper claimed. (Not too sure what the Blake referred to)

**Now they're after our fish!** – A follow up story to the above that claimed Anglers were incensed because said starving EU Migrant workers were unsportingly not throwing the fish they caught back, but were taking them home to eat! Apparently it just wasn't British, but neither were the people eating the fish!!

**Old Fool to run the Country** – This referred to the 1983 General Election where it looked likely that "Donkey Jacket Wearing" Michael Foot, as he was always referred to, the rather elderly and eccentric Labour leader at the time might actual win the election. He didn't and Margaret Thatcher was duly re-elected, mainly because she single handedly won the Falklands War. The paper rather embarrassed themselves a year later by vociferously supporting the 74 year old Ronald Reagan in the US Presidential election. No fool like an old fool Eh!

**Scientists announce that practically everything can kill you** – This rather sarcastic headline came after a wave of warnings about the harm to your health a number of food, drinks, products, objects and lifestyles could cause. However, we are still bombarded today with similar warnings so nothing has changed!

**Canoe who we've found!** – One of the funniest headlines in recent years and referred to the so called "Canoe man" John Darwin, who supposedly died at sea, but resurfaced 5 years later claiming to have lost his memory. The Daily Mirror found he had been alive and well, living in Panama and he was subsequently jailed for fraud.

**Matron is Back!**- A story in a right wing newspaper that claimed the government were going to solve the problems in the NHS by bringing back the matron figure, as portrayed by Hattie Jacques in the Carry on Films, to rule the wards with a rod of iron. Did it happen? No, Hattie was unfortunately otherwise engaged and explained she wasn't REALLY a Matron!

**Freddy Starr Ate My Hamster!** – One of the best ever headlines referred to an alleged incident involving the comedian Freddie Starr. When after the residents of a house he was staying at refused to make him a sandwich, he put their Hamster between two slices of bread and proceeded to eat it! Was it true? Apparently not but it gave a huge boost to Freddie's career, before he became completely fed up with the story being repeated so began charging people £1 to talk about it and say if it was true or not!

**Ignited Colours of Benetton-** A rather cruel sports headline that referred to a Renault F1 racing car that was sponsored by the clothing company Benetton (slogan United Colours of Benetton) crashing and bursting into flames.

**Super Cally Go Ballistic Celtic are Atrocious** – One of the best ever sports headlines that refers to Scottish giants Celtic being knocked out of the Scottish cup by minnows Inverness Caledonian Thistle 3 -1 at home in 2000. They actually repeated the feat again in 2003, but by then were an established Premier League club so the shock wasn't as great and anyway, nobody could beat the original headline!

## The ISIS Team

**WBL Operations Manager**  
Mary Turnor

**WBL Managers**  
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Vanessa Everington (Boston)  
Nicky Bush (AAT)

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**E-learning Manager**  
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**E2E Boston**  
Kayleigh Pantou (Team Leader)  
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Marianne White

**E2E Gainsborough**  
Vicky Mitchell (Team Leader)  
Hannah Parker  
Flick Scott

**Marketing Team Lincoln**  
Richard Appleton  
Paul Farmer

**Marketing Team Boston**  
Pam Bambridge  
Andrea Young

**Apprentices**  
James Hine (IT)  
Danielle McKweon (Admin)

## ISIS Staff News

### Arrivals, Departures and Movements

Since the last edition we have one new permanent staff member, two new Apprentices and three departures. We welcome **Daniel Atkin**, our new part-time Hospitality & Catering Learning Advisor, who will be based in Boston, **James Hine**, our new IT Apprentice who will be working in the IT Department whilst studying for his ICT Practitioner Level 2 Qualification. We also have a new Admin Apprentice **Danielle McKweon**, who is studying for her Business & Administration qualification working with the Lincoln Admin team. Its farewell to **Damien Greef** who has finished his IT Apprenticeship and has moved on to a new full time job with the LCS Group on Grimsby. Also farewell to **Helen Penistan** who has completed her Business & Administration Apprenticeship.



**David Wright** one of our Lincoln Office Business Development Brokers, is leaving us to begin a completely new career as a Holistic Therapist. He is setting up his own practice specialising in Reiki and other Holistic therapies and we wish him well in his new career. If you are interested in Holistic therapies, why not visit his web site at [www.davidthomaswright.com](http://www.davidthomaswright.com) to see what is on offer.

### Accolades for our Learning Advisors and Support staff

We continue to receive really positive feedback from our learners and employers regarding the training and support we provide. This was received from an employer following the completion of training.

*"Friendly and approachable trainer, access to specialised trainer to help with numeracy module, flexible and understanding over candidates personal problems which caused delays"*

Our Learning support Tutor Liz Uden has recently completed an ESOL course with a class of learners and every one of them gave very positive feedback about the course and especially the way Liz delivered the course. The feedback included how flexible the course was, how friendly, approachable and patient Liz was and her excellent subject knowledge. Well done Liz!!

### Exam Time for ISIS Staff

As part of the Continuous Professional Development (CPD) of the ISIS Training team, all staff have recently been involved in taking a series of tests to ensure their skills and knowledge are of the highest levels. All of the Learning Advisors recently took the EDI **Principles and Practices of Assessment** test, which all passed and recorded some extremely high scores. The Internal Verifiers also took the Understanding the Principles and **Practices of Internally Assuring the Quality of Assessment**. Again all passed and recorded very high scores.

The next stage in the Professional development programme is to continue to increase the staff IT Skills with a programme of In-house training which will lead to all staff achieving **Functional Skills in ICT** at a minimum Level 2. To prepare for the training all staff took an ICT initial and diagnostic assessment, just like the learners do and recorded some very impressive results. The CPD programme ensures ISIS Training staff will continue to remain amongst some of the best in the business.

**Sporting Clichés and Rules of Commentating!**

I love watching sport on TV any sport that is, with the exception of Fishing, which is a waste of a good sit down by a river bank and Rugby League, because I don't see the point in a contact sport where you get a free kick for being tackled too many times! I get excited when Britain does well at any sport, (see photo!) especially the Olympics and happen to think that Sky Sports is one of best inventions of the 20th Century. However all the sports have their own clichés associated with them and the commentators for each sport abide by their own set of unwritten rules which can be very annoying to the dedicated viewer like me.



*"Scotland were the red hot favourites in the new Highland dancing champions League"*

Take locations for example. **India** has hosted many different sporting events, for example the last Commonwealth games were held in India. But whenever the England cricket team go there it is universally referred to as **The Sub-Continent** and never by its rightful name of India. Players say how they are looking forward to touring **The Sub-Continent**, Commentators tell us how difficult it is playing cricket in **The Sub-Continent**, yet strangely the Indian cricket team are not referred to as The Sub-Continent. A commentator would never say for example that Sachin Tendulka was one of the best players to ever play for the sub-continent.



Tennis commentators always think the players can hear them and they might disturb their concentration. So always start speaking in hushed tones and whispers and as the game gets more exciting, get only slightly progressively louder. Hello? Wake up! You are in a sound proof commentary box, the players cannot hear you and neither can the people listening on TV and Radio because you are talking so quietly!

In Golf the highest scores are a Birdie, an Eagle and an Albatross. (There is also a Condor but this is very rare) But lately commentators have dropped the indefinite articles of "A" and "An" and annoyingly refer to these as Birdie, Eagle and Albatross. For example **"Lee Westwood is going for Birdie"** or **"Tiger Wood's scored Albatross on that hole"**. It doesn't make sense, sounds stupid so stop it immediately!



Nationality is another strange issue. When the Tennis player Andy Murray is losing (which to be fair is quite often) he is the dour, miserable Scot, but when he is winning is the best **British** player since Fred Perry! The England cricket team who have been tremendously successful in Australia recently are made up of a mixture of English, Welsh, Irish and South Africans. But they won the Ashes for *England*, not Great Britain or the United Kingdom!

Athletics commentators introduce the track athletes by their name, as they are lining up to begin the race. For example Usain Bolt of Jamaica, Paula Radcliffe of England (even when she is representing Great Britain or the UK) but in female races when there is a Russian in the field it is always **"and next the Russian"**, followed by her name.



Darts commentators are extremely loud at all times, that is the rule, whilst Snooker commentators are very quiet, similar to Tennis commentators. Football commentators use more clichés and catchphrase than any other and refer to England winning the World Cup in 1966 at every possible opportunity. Football Manager's just invent words to describe their team's performance such as Ian Dowie's **"Bouncebackability"** which made it into the Oxford Dictionary. Left-footed players always have a **"sweet left foot"** or an **"Educated left foot"** whilst right-footed players just have normal feet. But I think the one thing we have all learned recently is not to question a woman's knowledge of the off-side rule as it can seriously damage a Sports Presenter's career!!

## Entertainment News



On the TV we are faced with a new round of reality shows yet again, with **Dancing on Ice** being on for the foreseeable future. One of the contestants (Try to guess which one) has undergone a radical reformation, got clean, slim and healthy and the obligatory DVD, Book and Magazine photo shoots all came along. Now well done for her efforts, but how on earth did she make her legs grow 6 inches longer as seen in the photographs?

I think she must have been on the airbrush diet.....Just as we thought we had seen the last of **Big Brother**, Channel 5 have bought the franchise and are resurrecting it for the few people that can either receive, or actually watch Channel 5..... Some good drama's on at the moment with ITV's **Marchlands** and BBC's **The Outcasts** being the pick of the bunch. Love the suspense of Marchlands, but after a good start I thought Outcasts was just typically predictable science fiction fare.....A moment that will be shown for ever on bloopers and "**All right on the night**" type shows, **Jason Manford** on his Friday night **Comedy Rocks** show asked if anyone in the audience knew what the female fashion "Vajazzling" as made famous on "**The only way is Essex**" was. One girl (about 20'ish) said she did, was passed the microphone and gave a very explicit description live on air, using all the appropriate (or inappropriate) terms for the body parts involved! Jason was speechless and could only reply, "Well that's one way of putting it!"..... **Cheryl Cole** has been told to drop her Geordie accent if she is to take part in the US version of X Factor, I can't wait to hear the result, you can take the girl out of North Shields.....



Continuing my search for a decent radio station, I tried **Smooth Radio** (The home of the hits) and found ex radio 1 DJ **Simon Bates** doing the Golden Hour on a wet Thursday morning. I listened to it from 9:15 until 1025, so it was obviously more than an hour but I don't think the Golden 70 Minutes would be a very good title. Simon Bates was famous for his legendary "**Our Tune**" slot on Radio 1, where listeners sent in heart rending stories about tragedies in their lives some of which had happy endings, but an awful lot of them didn't! After the story was read out they asked for the track that reminded them most of that tragic time (why would you do that?) which was always inevitably "**Without You**" by **Nillson** or "**All by Myself**" by **Eric Carmen**. Apart from rare memorable occasions like a recovering schizophrenic asking for "**Paranoid**" by "**Black Sabbath**" Any way the Golden Hour was OK, I'm always up for a bit of nostalgia, but the recurring jingle was. "The golden hour...but what year is it?" Listeners then phone in or email with their guesses but Simon never says what year it actually is, because he wants you to listen right till the end, but just reads out their guesses "*Jordan from Essex thinks its 1973, Maude from the East End thinks its 1944, and asks is the war still on? Etc.* He then starts giving clues such as "Man landed on the Moon" (I know that Simon! It was 1977) or "It was the Queens silver Jubilee and there were lots of street parties" (was it 1969 Simon?) Or most worrying If all "It was the year England won the World cup" (Was it 2010 Simon?). Any way I never did get to hear what year it was, because I got to my destination and couldn't be bothered to sit in the car for the extra 5 minutes. However it's not the worst radio station I have listened too and will definately try again. Maybe I'll find The "**Hairy Cornflake**" **Dave Lee Travis** doing darts on the radio, or one of the other "hilarious" spots he used to regularly have on his Radio 1 shows, then I will definitely reach for the re-tune dial.....



Nostalgia is also the name of the game currently in the Rock and Pop scene with lots of bands reforming or going on tour to play their classic albums. On the reformation front, **Jarvis Cocker** has got **Pulp** back together to play the summer festivals, **Suede** have had a successful reunion and continue to tour, whilst **The Libertines** have also played some successful comeback dates. Not to sure how long this reunion is going to last or if it was just a one off, hard to tell with Pete Doherty. **John Lydon (AKA Johnny Rotten)** has reformed **PIL (Public image Ltd)** and is talking about yet another **Sex Pistols** reunion. This time he wants to make it more long term and even write some new material. Obviously all you ever get at a Sex Pistols gig is their classic album, as they only ever made one! Other notable reunions, mainly in the Heavy Rock/Metal category are Courtney love's **Hole**, **System of a Down**, **Limp Bizkit**, **Creed**, **Faith No More** and **Stone Temple Pilots**. The biggest ever pop reunion in the history of the world ever (apart from The Beatles, who obviously can't reform) is **ABBA** and recently they have dropped hints that they could reform for a one off charity concert, so watch this space.....Bands currently playing Classic Album tours are **Primal Scream** playing **Screamadelica**; **The Wedding Present**, **Bizzaro**; **The Levellers**, **Levelling the Land**; (*Playing at Lincoln Engine shed on 30<sup>th</sup> March*) **Echo and the Bunnymen**, **Crocodiles** and **Heaven up Here**; **Rush**, **Moving Pictures**; and lots more besides, check the music press or the internet for other bands doing similar tours.....Going to see a band on the basis of one hit is a very hit and miss experience, as I learned when I made the unfortunate mistake of going to see political rockers **Chumbawumba**, because I liked their one hit wonder, **Tubthumping**. After 20 minutes of their politically inspired drivel, a rather large and disillusioned punter ran to the front of the stage and screamed "*For Christ sake play Tubthumping and then \*\*\*\* off!!*" After 10 minutes of further abuse they duly played the song, which was greeted as if they were the best band in the world. Unfortunately they took this to mean the crowd actually liked them, so decided to continue playing, only to give up after another few minutes, mainly to dodge the increasing amount of abuse and objects being hurled in their direction. Not the best £15 I have ever spent!!.....Another classic mistake at a Rock Festival was to replace Goth band **Placebo**, who pulled out at the last minute, with New Age Hippies, **Kula Shaker**, who somehow were available, but not to bother telling the assembled crowd (Although here were rumours going around the site that they weren't playing) Imagine the scene as 1000's of Goths who had took their place at the front of the stage ready to rock out to Placebo, witnessed Kula Shaker coming on and playing their Indian inspired hippy music. It was worth the entrance fee for that alone and I quite enjoyed Kula Shaker as well!!

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