

Gulf Weekly

The community newspaper at the heart of Bahrain

March 22 - 28, 2017

GULF AIR BAHRAIN GRAND PRIX'S OFFICIAL WEEKLY

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2017 FORMULA 1 GULF AIR BAHRAIN GRAND PRIX
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SCHOOL RÉVOLUTION

THE French School of Bahrain, also known as Lycée Français MLF de Bahreïn, is undergoing a significant revamp this summer, with a BD2m expansion project aiming to bring some *je ne sais quoi* to its thriving Busaiteen location.

One of the most pivotal moments in French history was the Revolution from 1789 to 1799 and an educational one is now taking shape far from the homeland.

The development will include new classrooms while upgrading the current ones, and new IT and educational equipment in each class. There will be state-of-the-art science labs, plus music and art rooms.

Head teacher Christian Chale said: "The planning of the school expansion started in 2013 and was approved by the Ministry of Education in 2016. Construction of the various elements of the expansion are currently nearing completion and we expect the works to be fully completed by next month. "Furthermore, a new gymnasium is also expected to be built in the summer, which will take approximately four months to complete."

Another change, in line with



CLASSROOM SOLIDARITY: Head teacher Christian Chale with students at the French School of Bahrain

EXCLUSIVE
By **KRISTIAN HARRISON**
kristian@gulfweekly.com


a growing number of schools in the kingdom, is that students in secondary school are now

using tablets as a learning aid and have already replaced many of the textbooks used in lessons. Although, unlike some, the expensive equipment is being provided by the school.

The current building has been completely renovated and refurbished as part of the overall expansion programme. The new classrooms are equipped with modern

elements including electronic boards, while some of the portable buildings that are currently being used for classes will be demolished.

Turn to Page 2



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TAKING SHAPE: Workers on site this week and, right, an artist's impression of the finished project which is expected to be completed by next month with a gymnasium added in the summer

Future looks bright for the French

From Page 1

The existing centre will continue to house kindergarten and primary school, whilst the new development, which is located just opposite the current building, will cater for the senior pupils.

The school was founded in

1976 as a means of catering to the small French community in the kingdom at the time. Starting from a small villa in Salmaniya, the well-respected learning establishment, in which French, Arabic and the English language is spoken by many of its pupils, has become one of the main

institutions on the island.

It caters to 700 students comprising 56 different nationalities, and follows the French curriculum from kindergarten through to the final year of high school. It was initially founded under the auspices of the French Government Department

of Education but is now managed directly by the Mission Laïque Française, which is a non-profit organisation which works to spread the French language and culture by creating and running schools outside France.

Christian, who has been in

Bahrain for four years and has been a head teacher for 15 years including stints in his native France and Lebanon, is very happy to call the kingdom his home and believes the future is very bright for the French community.

He explained: "Living and

working in Bahrain has been a wonderful experience and the people have been very welcoming.

"The French community is thriving, and with the school being extremely accessible we hope to see it grow now that we have a true top-class facility ready to launch."


**2017 FORMULA 1
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كل النساء مرحب بكن

I ENJOYED reading about counsellor Christine Man-nion's role at St Christo-pher's School on the cover of last week's *GulfWeekly* and the concerns she raised about social media.

It should be noted that in recent weeks schools have been urged to teach young people about how to identify 'fake news' by a top educationist who was one of the main speakers at a leading conference in the Gulf. Andreas Schleicher, the

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's education director, wants teenagers to look beyond the social media 'echo chamber', where they might hear only views like their own.

"Distinguishing what is true from what is not true is a critical judgement," Mr Schleicher, who had been addressing the Global Education and Skills Forum (GESF) in Dubai, told the BBC.

"Exposing fake news, being aware that there is something like fake news, that there is something that is not necessarily true, that you have to question, think critically - that's a very important task."

The OECD aims to develop global policies focused on improving economic and social well-being and Mr Schleicher is planning to include questions about such 'global competencies' in the next round of the influential

international Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) tests.

He says schools need to equip young people with the skills needed to navigate the digital world, with unreliable claims on social media and falsified news. "In the past, when you needed information, you went to an encyclopaedia and you could trust that the information would be true," added Mr Schleicher.

But now he says young people go to Facebook or news websites and need to be able to evaluate what is reliable.

It will be interesting to see how schools in Bahrain tackle the subject.

J. Simpson, Saar.

THE Bahrain Writers' Circle Monthly Meeting will take place on Monday, April 10, at 7.30 pm at Umami restaurant, Block 338 area, Adliya and the Bahrain Writers' Poetry Circle Meeting two days later at the same time and venue.

Please note that throughout April every Wednesday rehearsal meetings will be staged for the Colour of Life Poetry Festival.

The Bahrain Writers' Creative Workshop will also take place on Monday, April 17.

Claudia Hardt, Bahrain Writers' Circle.
<http://bahrainwriterscircle.net/>

● **Editor's note:** The Colour of Life Poetry Festival will be staged on Saturday, April 29 at 7.30 pm at JJ's.

Morag from Manama

An expat wife settling down in Bahrain



played brilliantly, although the defeat accompanied by *Sing Low, Sweet Chariot* reverberating around Twickenham, was hard for any Scot to take.

Next, back in bonny Scotland, Wee Jimmy Krankie has demanded

a second referendum on Scottish Independence.

What happened to the 'once in a generation' opportunity, and the pledge from Scotland's former First Minister Alex Salmond to not bring back another referendum if Scots chose to remain in the UK?

I'd like to know when Nicola Sturgeon is actually going to start doing the job she is meant to be doing instead of continuing to throw her dummy out of the pram!

Meanwhile, in Bahrain ...



THE WHISPERER
You don't know me; I know you, I know what's being said about you. I'm the 'whisperer'. I am socially mobile: Arab, Brit, Indian, Pakistani, American and the rest, they all invite me and share their world with me. Not much gets past me but if you think it may have done, email me on ...

...editor@gulfweekly.com



PENSIONER Patricia Richardson proved you're never too old to try something new. At the age of 86 she became the oldest woman to fly at Gravity Indoor Skydiving, Bahrain.

Her courage and love for life and adventure received the admiration of her family, other participants and the entire team at the Sakhr

attraction. "It was amazing! I felt completely energised and exhilarated," she told the Whisperer.

Patricia, visiting her son on a trip from her home in the UK, who enjoys swimming and yoga, added: "I'll be back soon, and maybe at the age of 90 I'll be brave enough to jump out of a plane to skydive!"

EducationMatters

SOcial Studies can be a very dry subject, littered with facts that students don't really need to know, only to regurgitate in exams that measure how much they can remember, not what they understand, writes **Chris Fenton**.

So when a head teacher challenged his teachers to start all of their Social Studies planning with the phrase: "The children walk into the classroom and find....." he found that the learning quickly became irresistible and the phrase challenged teacher's imaginations to build learning on many levels.

Children always respond to things that are unusual or unexpected, so this idea gave teachers an opportunity to think of imaginative ways to teach some of the drier topics and allowed them to create a fuss to get their points across.

One Grade 3 teacher ran with the idea and merged

science and geography objectives through a 'Planet Earth' theme, by introducing a new character to the classroom - and kicking over a few chairs in the process.

So, 'the children entered the classroom and found....' that a kerfuffle had taken place in the corner. Glitter (space dust) was everywhere and it appeared that a spaceship had landed (charcoal scrapings in a circle on a desk). Next to it was a note in a plastic cylinder, covered in goo.

The letter was from Zog, who claimed that his planet (Gog) was much better than Earth: more unusual animals, better weather and more stunning landscapes. Gog then challenged the class to prove him wrong.

The children were indignant. After identifying where Earth fits in to our solar system and the unique features that make it habitable, they split into investigation parties to discover wild and interesting nuggets of information to

prove him wrong. Facts were the order of the day and, once the children had collected them, they filed a report to send back to Gog.

As the class learned about Earth's unique geographical

features they exhibited a growing sense of pride. But Zog had given them other questions to answer, such as why he could sometimes see large black spots in the ocean and why the 'white bits' at

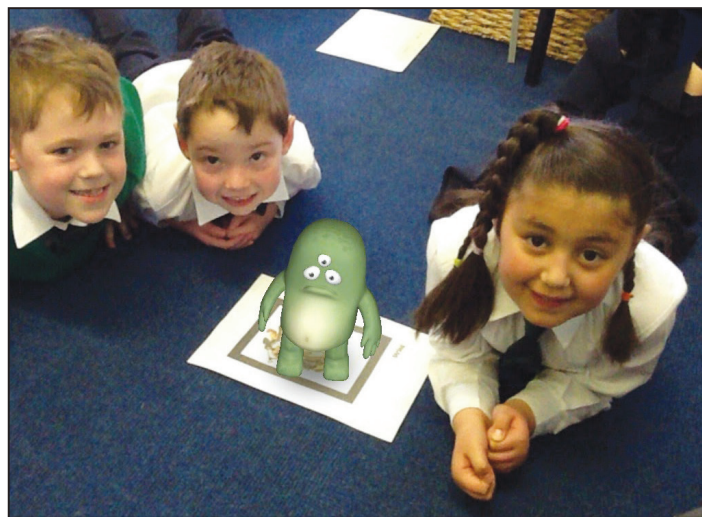
each end of the planet were getting smaller.

Eventually, the true learning experience of this exercise became apparent and the penny started to drop. They had extended

their knowledge by learning about man-made disasters and their impact, and then applied facts to a new context (Zog), leading to wider understanding. Suddenly they not only understood the uniqueness of our planet but saw the potentially disastrous impact of mankind's carbon footprint. But the best bit is they had worked it all out for themselves.

Creativity in the classroom is the catalyst that makes learning enriching for students and gives context to the sometimes dry facts that often litter school curricula. A good school will encourage staff to try new things and not control them by insisting that exam results are the only thing that defines a successful school.

For a school to be truly outstanding though, school management should empower their staff and trust that they know their children well enough to teach them in the ways that inspire them.



Art under the microscope!

CHAOTIC life mixed with chilled interludes together inspire American artist Pamela Arent and she is looking forward to watching her contemporary abstract visual art pieces come under the microscope at a major exhibition opening tomorrow in the kingdom.

The mother-of-two's work will be amongst the delights on show at Art Bahrain Across Borders - ArtBAB 2017 – which will be open to the public until Sunday in Hall 1 of the International Exhibition & Convention Centre in Sanabis.

Pamela, who works from a dedicated art studio on Reef Island, has been focused on her latest challenge for the past two years. "I work from a state of mindfulness in the belief that all life forms are connected and to be respected," she explained. "I'm greatly affected by energies around me. Colours, sounds, chaos and serenity ... all make their way into my work through the transfer of my energy into the act of mark making."

"My work is heavily influenced by colour theory and my studies in the natural sciences."

The Minnesota-born 47-year-old took an unusual step into the world of art from a science background although she always enjoyed developing her creative side through painting, sculpture and other mediums ...

COMMUNITY REPORT

By STAN SZECOWKA
editor@gulfweekly.com



and first found inspiration focusing on images captured and magnified by a lens.

"I completed my undergraduate degree in biology from Carleton College in Minnesota with the intention of applying to medical school," she explained. "During my studies in college, I found the process of creating art to be a natural and necessary counter balance to the analytical and scientific way of thinking required for the rigorous studies in the sciences."

"In order to squeeze in art studies and get approval I created an independent study where I drew what I saw from looking in microscopes. I drew skulls and bones and objects collected in nature."

"I carried a microscope around with me in my school bag. I remember it was very heavy and cumbersome."

"My favourite classes in college were the science labs. Mixing the chemicals, doing experiments and having to record and draw the lab set-up and the results observed by the human eye and via magnification was so fascinating for me."

"I excelled when I could communicate my ideas and understanding of the world around me visually versus verbally or through writing."

The pull of the art world eventually won out and after many years of painting through the night while keeping a day job she got



PICTURE PERFECT: Pamela at work at her studio and, below, pieces of her artwork

accepted into and graduated with a Master of Fine Arts (MFA) from Parsons School of Design, New School, New York City.

"My current body of work has been developed over the past two years. It primarily consists of acrylic paint on canvas and water colour, ink and pencil on paper."

"Part of my process consists of mixing and manipulating colour on paper and canvas in multiple layers that blend, shift and change

as they overlap and combine."

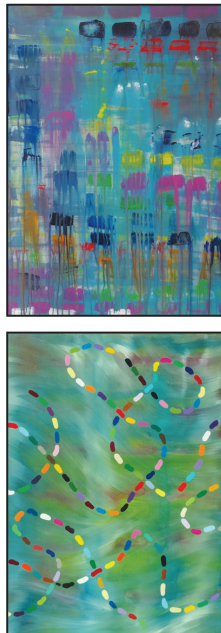
"I don't have a favourite piece as I find relevance in everything I create. My work is all connected and is a constantly evolving body that informs itself. Whether


a piece is successful or not from an aesthetic view does not necessarily matter to me. Sometimes the biggest failures lead to a very meaningful breakthrough!"

Art lovers would probably


suggest Pamela is being modest. Her work is in much demand and often fetches between \$1,000 and \$5,000 per piece.

● More ArtBAB 2017 details on Page 9






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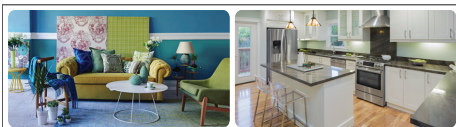
DR. MANOJ KURIAN PHILIP
Specialty: Ophthalmology
Practising in: Manama

Training/Schooling:

- MBBS Kasturba Medical College Mangalore, DOMS, MS (opthal) J.J. M Medical College Davangere.

Certificates/Qualifications:

- Fellow in Pediatric ophthalmology and general ophthalmology Aravind Eye Hospital Madurai.



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Nabisco Ritz Cracker 41gm 14+2 free – BD1.350
Mazola Frying Oil 2x1.8ltr – 20% off – BD3
Lays Potato Chips Ketchup 2x170gm SP – BD0.995
Downy Fabric Softner 1ltr – 20% off – BD1.550
Almarai Triangle Cheese Kids 8's 4+1 free – BD1

Geant Sanabis

Royal Dansk Danish Butter Cookies (2 X 454gm) – BD2.650
Nescafe My Cup Pouch (30 X 20gm) – BD1.850
Maggi 2 Minutes Chicken/Curry Noodles (10 X 77gm) – BD0.900
Olive Sunflower Oil (2 X 1.5ltr + 1.5ltr free) – BD2.650
Indomie Cup Noodles (6 X 60gm) – BD0.975
Maza Pasta Assorted (4 X 500gm) – BD1.100

New 'boutique of happiness' opens

THE first-ever French perfume brand Roger & Gallet 'shop-in-shop' in Bahrain has opened at Nasser Pharmacy in Manama.

The opening ceremony was recently held in the presence of Minister of Health Faeqa bint Saeed Al-Saleh, and French ambassador Bernard Régnault-Fabre, along with L'Oréal Middle East and Nasser Pharmacy senior management, VIP guests and members of the media.

Dr Fadhel Al Arrayed, chairman of Nasser Pharmacy, said the company was 'excited' about partnering with the makers of an international, prestigious luxury product which boasts a heritage stretching back more than 150 years.

Roger & Gallet's story began when Armand Roger and Charles Gallet, partners, brothers-in-law and entrepreneurs, created the first Boutique de Bonheur, a 'boutique of happiness' in the heart of Paris.

The company became the official supplier to the royal courts, and



OPENING CEREMONY: The ribbon is cut by the guest of honour

in 1932, the crème de la crème of Parisian society was beating a path to its door. Later, opera singer Maria Callas and Hollywood actress Marilyn Monroe would also leave their signatures in the Visitor's Book.

● **RETAIL EXTRA:** The Paris Gallery Group of Companies has announced a five-year plan aimed at strengthening its retail presence in the region. Thirty new stores for its various brands and subsidiaries will open.

LuLu Sanabis

Al Arabi Vegetable Oil 1.8ltr. 2pcs – BD2.395
Sampaguita Jasmine Rice 10kg – BD3
Mohsen Long Grain Sella Rice 20kg – BD9.490
Kraft Cream Cheese Spread 500gm 2pcs – BD1.990
Tyson Whole Chicken 900gm 10pcs – BD6.290
Pistachio Roasted Salted per kg – BD4.990

MegaMart Manama

Almarai Milk Powder 2.5kg – BD4.995
Almarai Milk Powder 1.8kg – BD3.950
Pringles Original 2x165gm 10% off – BD1.390
Lipton Yellow Label Tea Bag 200 Bags + 48 Bags free – BD3.475
Pepsi 9x150ml – BD1.025
McVitie's Bars Choco 6x30g – BD0.675

Alosra Supermarket

Mandarin per kg – BD0.485
Grapes Black US per kg – BD1.560
Grapes Red Seedless per kg US – BD1.265
Grapes Red W-Seeds per kg US – BD1.165
Pears Small per kg – BD0.855
Potato Sweet Australia per kg – BD1.930
Carrots Baby pre-packed – BD0.655

GulfWeeklyBookClub – in association with The Bookcase



BOOK OF THE WEEK with Robert Jennings. All Behind You, Winston: Churchill's Great Coalition 1940-45, Roger Hermiston, ISBN 9781781316641 (Aurum Press) BD4.900 for Gulf Weekly Book Club members

DID you know that England and France almost became one country in an attempt to repel Hitler's forces (rejected by the French at the last minute)? Or that Churchill was fond of afternoon naps?

I thoroughly enjoyed this book. Churchill was a great wartime British Prime Minister, but he was not alone. In Hermiston's book, *All Behind You, Winston - Churchill's Great Coalition 1940-45*, he tells the compelling story of the men and two women in Churchill's government who helped win the war, primarily on the Home Front.

Many of those characters have been forgotten - eclipsed by the great man's giant shadow - and the book seeks to recover the memory of the likes of Lord Woolton, Sir John Anderson, Lord

ALL BEHIND YOU, WINSTON

CHURCHILL'S GREAT COALITION 1940-45



ROGER HERMISTON

Beaverbrook and Ellen Wilkinson. A fantastic read for those interested in Churchill and the people who helped him succeed.

READ IT NOW IN PAPERBACK

Caesar, Adrian Goldsworthy, ISBN 9780753821589 (W&N) BD7.400 for Gulf Weekly Book Club members

IN MY opinion, Hollywood films still do not come close to the excitement and drama of that of Ancient Rome.

From the very beginning, Caesar's story makes dazzling reading.

In his late teens, he narrowly avoided execution for opposing the military dictator Sulla. He was decorated for valour in battle, captured and held to ransom by pirates,

and almost bankrupted himself by staging games for the masses.

As a politician, he quickly gained a reputation as a dangerously ambitious maverick. By his early 30s he had risen to the position of Consul, and was already beginning to dominate the Senate. His affairs with noblewomen were both frequent and scandalous. Not to mention Cleopatra.

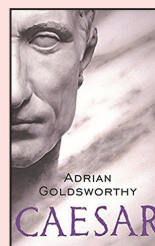
MY FAVOURITE READ OF THE WEEK

The Art of Thinking Clearly: Better Thinking, Better Decisions, Rolf Dobelli, ISBN 9781444759563 (Sceptre) BD4.900 for Gulf Weekly Book Club members

AN INTERESTING social science book, which is broken into multiple small chapters, perfect for reading on the go. I certainly have fallen for some of these human errors, for example, have you ever invested time in something that, with hindsight, just wasn't worth it? Overpaid in an eBay auction? Continued doing something you knew was bad for you? Sold stocks too late, or too early? Taken credit for success, but blamed failure on



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The Art of Thinking Clearly

Rolf Dobelli

external circumstances?

These are examples of cognitive biases, simple errors we all make in our day-to-day thinking. But by knowing what they are and how to spot them, we can avoid them and make better choices - whether dealing with a personal problem or a business negotiation, trying to save money or make money, working out what we do or don't want in life and how best to get it.

THE Bookcase has teamed up with *GulfWeekly* to launch a regular Book of the Week column with Robert Jennings reviewing the non-fiction and business and Linda Jennings checking out the latest fictional titles.

Readers can join the Gulf Weekly Book Club by emailing

bookclub@gulfweekly.com with their names and contact details.

It will entitle them to free membership to The Bookcase Reward Scheme, normally costing BD1, which gives 10 per cent off every day and 20 per cent discount on Mondays if the customer has 'liked' the store's

Facebook page.

Yes, and on top of that, we will be offering Gulf Weekly Book Club members ONLY a special 25 per cent discount from the shop price of all books featured on the page throughout the entire month during which they were reviewed.

● **READERS** can continue to pick up a **FREE** copy of the travellers' guide *101 Things to See & Do in Bahrain* by joining the **FREE** Gulf Weekly Book Club while supplies are available.

This essential read, published by Arab World Tours and

retailing at BD2, includes a pullout map.

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Techtronic Specials



Your guide to the best in-store deals of the week

	Item	Make and Description	Store	Price
1	Television	LG 65-inch Super UHD TV (65UH850V), IPS 4K quantum display, billion rich colours, ultra-luminance, HDR super with Dolby Vision, smart TV with web OS, sound designed by Harman/Kardon, colour prime plus, 3D colour mapping, contrast Maximiser, local dimming, mono screen, ultra slim, bright metal design, magic sound tuning, smart sound mode, ultra-surround, magic zoom, magic mobile connection, wide viewing angle.	LG, Sehla showroom	BD799.900
2	DJ Mixer	Pioneer DJ Mixer, DJM S9, two-channel battle mixer for sera to DJ, fully configurable magvel pro crossfader and customisable FX buttons and pads.	Gajria Electronics	BD220 Flat 70% discount
3	Smartphone	Smartphone, 5.2-inch FHD super LCD, 4GB Ram, 64GB Built-in memory octa core CPU (2.0+1.1), 16MP rear / 16mp front camera, finger print sensor, Bluetooth /Wi-Fi / LTE and dual sim.	Home Electronics	BD198
4	Air Fryer	Black & Decker Air Fryer 4ltr capacity (AF300), air fryer 4ltr / 1.2kg, with timer 60min, overheat protection.	Kewalram & Sons	BD55.700
5	Air conditioner	White Westing House, Window AC -1.5 ton, rotary (WWW186WD-WW).	Y.K. Almoayyed & Sons - EHA	Was BD114.990 Now BD99.990 Cash back BD15
6	Television	Samsung 55-inch Smart LED TV (UA55K6500BKXZ), smart TV, curved TV, 1080 FHD, USB, HDMI.	Lulu Hypermarket	BD229.900
7	Washing Machine	Samsung Top Washer 13kg, (WA135730SS/SG).	Geant	BD129.990

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GADGETS OF THE WEEK

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Sporty Waterproof Bluetooth Speaker

This Bluetooth device is a useful waterproof bathroom speaker, meeting the latest standard 3.0 technology. It features Bluetooth stereo sound, perfect sound quality and outstanding bass effect. Supports TF cards.
Cost: BD5



Kitty Shape LED Message Board

A cute message board with an included glitter pen that can be used to leave messages and much more. The alarm clock shows date, temperature as well as a timer. It's a multi-function item that is simple, lightweight and decorative.
Cost: BD7



Thermal Sensitive Colour Changing Mug

A really hot item! The 300ml ceramic mug is decorated with heat-sensitive colour-changing ink that goes yellow once it warms above 70 degrees Celsius.
Cost: BD2.500



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Trotting along in total sync

THE equine world is about to go hi-tech with the introduction of the world's first made-to-measure riding saddle that connects to a mobile phone to rein in the advantages of modern technology.

The 'world's smartest saddle' has been unveiled by Voltaire Design, founded by a young Frenchman six years ago, a company which has quickly grown from three people working in a garage to more than 70 craftsmen collaborating at a modern workshop.

They are known for their unique blue stripe pattern on the underside of all Voltaire saddle trees which were inspired by the iconic red sole of Louboutin designer high heels.

"Blue Wing is the world's first smart saddle," said Brice Goguet. "This is the first-ever connected saddle. It can tell you for how long you rode your horse, how much time you spent walking, trotting, cantering. It can tell you the length of your horse's stride and the

TECH REPORT

By **STAN SZECOWKA**
editor@gulfweekly.com



course you jumped.

"If your horse goes more to the left or right, it will track that. It can tell you the speed you went and after you ride the same horse five times, it will recognise your horse immediately.

"Blue Wing gathers and sends data to a smartphone, putting all this information into the rider's hand, immediately. The sport is getting more technical, horse management more detailed, every little facet counts, and really, industry sources ask, when you think about it, why hasn't there been a smart saddle until now?"

With a price tag starting at around BD2,600, whether it takes off is another matter. Oliver Walter, a senior judge and organiser of dressage events for the Bahrain Royal Equestrian and Endurance Federation, better known by its acronym BREEF, is not totally convinced.

"It may be useful for long distance endurance

events, which is particularly popular here, and maybe even cross-country and for those carrying out a specialised task like measuring gait," he said. "But most trainers and experienced riders know their horses and don't need an app to tell them what's right in front of them.

"And to be honest, unless the price is right, horse people will not pay that sort of money!"

Top branded saddles cost around BD1,500 but most popular adjustable saddles fetch between BD700 and BD800, with different shapes and sizes depending on the discipline, explained Oliver, 26, a British expat from Kent, who moved to the kingdom last September and now manages the popular Dilmun Stables.

Voltaire has the unfailing support of American's leading lady rider Beezie Madden, who became a partner rider almost as soon as the company was started. It is hoping the techy saddle will take off Stateside first and spread in popularity across to the Gulf States.



RIDING HIGH: A sensor being set up on a saddle manufactured by Voltaire design, installed in the French Basque country, below, Oliver Walter, dressage coach and manager of the Dilmun Club Stables





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Today (March 22)

The Seafarer by the Manama Theatre Club opens at the British Club of Bahrain.

Shows will take place every night until Saturday, with tickets on sale at BD7 from the British Club and Al Osra Saar and Amwaj Islands.

● **See review on Page 13.**

Propel Consult, in strategic partnership with Tamkeen, will be hosting its first HR Innovation Conference at the Swiss-Belhotel in Seef. More than 100 human resources professionals from various sectors like banking, financial services, construction and engineering will be attending the event that will focus on current trends in the industry.



Popular Indonesian Chef Nugi, who was the opening star of Gulf Hotel Bahrain's Fusions restaurant back in 2001, is returning this month as special 'Guest Chef', where he promises to recreate the magic of his original fusion menu and more.

● **Watch the video interview:** www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ryd_E_dWtA&t=13s

An interactive exhibition is being held at the Bahrain National Museum highlighting Bahraini-British relations. The exhibition runs until April 30.

Crowne Plaza Bahrain is staging a steak night every Wednesday from 7pm at La Mosaïque Restaurant. For more details call 17531122.

As part of the ongoing 'Seasons of ART' initiative, ART Rotana Amwaj Islands is hosting Mahmood Al Ansari, a digital artist and calligrapher. A selection of his artwork has gone up at the hotel and will be kept for public display throughout the month.

Thursday (March 23)

The Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain is staging a Thali Business Lunch every Sunday to Thursday from 12pm-3pm at Nirvana. The price is BD9++ per person.

The Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain is offering customers a chance to celebrate special days at Cantina Kahlo with a complementary drink, chocolate cake and dedicated

birthday song from its Mexican trio. A valid ID with date-of-birth is required.

For further details call 17586499.

Le Meridien Bahrain City Centre will be hosting a seafood buffet from 6.30pm-11pm. The price is BD20 net, inclusive of soft drinks, and BD34 net, inclusive of a free flow of select beverages.

Al Areen Palace & Spa has unveiled a new menu at its Saffron restaurant for lunch from 12pm-3pm on Thursdays and Fridays and dinner from 7pm-11pm, daily except for Tuesdays.

For more details call 17845000.

Crowne Plaza Bahrain is hosting a seafood night every Thursday from 7pm at La Mosaïque Restaurant.

For more details call 17531122.

Friday (March 24)

Tony the Dogfather is hosting a garden party and sale day fundraiser from 11am-3pm at his rehabilitation centre in Saar.

For more details, call 39629889.

The Bahrain's Bay Kitchen at the Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay is hosting a Friday Brunch from 12.30pm to 3.30pm with five food stations serving Arabic, Western, Indian, Japanese and Chinese delicacies.

Priced BD37++ with selected beverages and BD27++ with soft drinks and juices. CUT by Wolfgang will also be offering its CUT Brunch every Friday from 12.30pm-3.30pm. The price is BD29++ inclusive of soft drinks, BD39++ inclusive of select beverages and BD49++ inclusive of sparkling drinks. For reservations call 17115044.

The Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain is hosting a Friday Brunch from 12.30pm-4pm at La Mer restaurant. The price is BD35++ per person inclusive of soft drinks and BD45++ per person inclusive of select beverages.

Le Meridien Bahrain City Centre will be hosting its 'Sweetest Brunch' from 12.30pm-4pm. The price is BD18++ inclusive of soft drinks or BD30++ inclusive of a free flow of select beverages. Book for 10+ people and receive a 20 per cent discount.

Crowne Plaza, Bahrain is hosting an Absolutely Fabulous Friday Brunch from 12.30pm at BD35 net per adult and

THE Gulf Hotel Bahrain's Mexican Festival is back on March 31, and will run until April 10. Flying in from Mexico are the renowned Mexican folklore ballet Yolitzi Widen De La Laguna.

AL AREEN Palace and Spa's Khaleeji restaurant, Saffron, is hosting a Turkish Food Festival from April 20, offering a variety of hot and cold mezze, as well as vegetarian fare and juicy meat dishes courtesy of a guest chef coming from Turkey. There will be a showcase of different Turkish brands, live entertainment by a Turkish music group and activities for children.

Furthermore, there will be an Easter Egg Hunt at the Grand Wadi Tent on April 16. This will feature an egg hunt,

BD12.750 net for children aged from seven to 12. A 'Brunch After-Party' starts from 4pm at The Patio and entrance is free.

For more information call 17531122.

Royal Golf Club's popular Jazzy Brunch takes place at Links restaurant every Friday from 12pm-4pm. The price is BD30 net per person inclusive of unlimited selected beverages and features a musical performance from Ahmed Al Qasim's Jazz Experience.

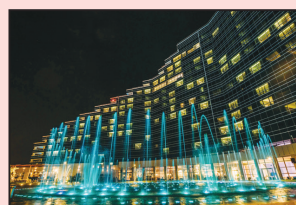
It is also serving 'Traditional Roasts with Trimmings' every Friday and Saturday. The price is BD10 net per person. There is also a three-hour unlimited beverage package priced at BD15.

Saturday (March 25)

The Anghamm Brunch is now available every Saturday at the Tapas and La Mer restaurant at Sofitel Bahrain Zallaq Thalassa Sea & Spa. It costs BD25 net inclusive of soft drinks and BD29 net with selected beverages. To reserve a table call 17636363.

The Bahrain's Bay Kitchen at the Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay is staging a Saturday Brunch from 12.30pm to 3.30pm offering a wide selection of Arabic favourites such as Lamb Ouzi and cold mezzes, costing BD18++ excluding beverages.

Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay will be staging a CUT 3-Course Menu at CUT by Wolfgang Puck every Saturday-Tuesday in March from 7pm-11pm and Wednesday to Friday from 7pm-11.30pm. The price is BD29++ inclusive of soft drinks. For reservations call 17115044.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

lunch buffet and live entertainment for BD13++. This includes Michal Sinderlar, an international magician and illusionist visiting from the Czech Republic.

THE ART Rotana Hotel & Resort in Amwaj Islands is hosting an Easter Brunch on April 16 from 12.30pm-4pm. It will include classic and seasonal dishes, live cooking stations

and a performance from the house band. After brunch, an egg hunt will begin for the little ones. The price is BD20 net with soft drinks, or BD34 with selected beverages. Children aged six to 12 can eat for BD10, and it's free for those under six.

For more information or reservations, email fb.art@rotana.com or call 16000111.

The hotel is also hosting a Café Del Mar World Tour Beach Party on April 28 from 2pm-Midnight. It will feature famous DJs and live performers straight from the iconic Ibiza location, including Deep Josh, Felix Da Funk, Luis Garcia and Franco Botto. Entrance is BD20 per person.

For ticket sales and more information, email fb.art@rotana.com or call 16000111.



CUT by Wolfgang will additionally be offering CUT on the Hour, a three-course meal in 60 minutes every day from 12pm-3pm. The price is BD19++ per person. For reservations call 17115044.

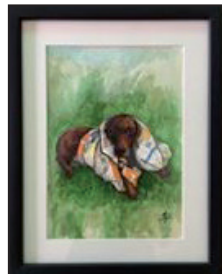
Sunday (March 26)

Crowne Plaza Bahrain is staging an FBI night every Sunday Night at The Harvesters & Terrace and Tracks Sports Bar from 9pm-1am. Drinks are 50 per cent off for employees of the food and beverage industry. For more details call 17531122.

Crowne Plaza Bahrain is hosting a set menu Business Lunch at Waves Seafood Restaurant every Sunday to Thursday from 12pm-3pm. The price is BD8 net per person for two courses and BD10 NET for three courses. For more details call 17531122.

Monday (March 27)

A Where's Baloo? Art sale will take place until March 30 in the Central Atria of the



Bahrain Financial Harbour's Harbour Gate. It will take place between 10am-2pm every day, with chocolate Labrador Baloo, the star of a children's book, appearing between 10am-Midday.

There will be 21 original watercolour artworks by artist Sunanda Docherty, some prints and photographs of Baloo and limited edition prints to suit every budget. All proceeds will go towards the RIA Centre in Adliya to support educational programmes for special needs children where Baloo works as a therapy dog.



Crowne Plaza Bahrain stages a French Night every Monday at La Mosaïque restaurant from 7pm. The price is BD14.441, not inclusive of drinks. For more information call 17531122.



The Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain is staging 'Social Media Mondays' at the Kahlo Club from 7pm-9.30pm. There is an a la carte menu and customers are eligible for one complimentary drink if they use the hashtag #catinakahlobh



ART Rotana is holding a Desi Dish Night at Choices restaurant, featuring a variety of aromatic curries. It takes place every Monday with buffet packages starting at BD15 net per person from 7pm-10.30pm.

For more information email fb.art@rotana.com or call 16000111.

Tuesday (March 28)

Al Areen Palace and Spa will present free cakes on Mother's Day for those dining at any of its restaurants today.



Al Areen Palace and Spa will also be offering a Mother's Day celebration package. The price is BD130 net for 150 minutes' worth of treatment for a mother and daughter. The package also includes a complimentary BD20 healthy food voucher.

The Al Hawaj Holiday Shopping Bazaar opens today at Bahrain International Exhibition Centre's Hall 2A with special prices on popular perfumes, make-up, skincare products, watches, gift-sets, luggage and accessories until April 1, from 9.30am-1.30pm and 4pm-10pm.

Enrique to star at BIC

A WIDE selection of musical acts will take to the stage during the Formula One weekend at Bahrain International Circuit.

Headlining the bill is Enrique Iglesias, the biggest Latin recording artist in music history. He will perform on Saturday, April 15, following F1 Qualifying.

The 41-year-old has been celebrated with just about every award an artist can receive, including multiple Grammys.

The son of legendary Spanish singer-songwriter Julio, Enrique has sold more than 130 million albums worldwide, released 10 studio albums plus two greatest hits compilations, and is a multi-platinum artist in numerous countries around the world.

Enrique has also notched 27 number one singles on the US Billboard Latin Songs Chart - his hit *Bailando* topped for 42 weeks and the accompanying music video gained 1.9 billion views on YouTube.

His most recent track *Duele El Corazon* got him his 14th number one Billboard Dance track, making him the king of the charts, beating Michael Jackson for the most number ones in US history.

Later on Saturday, Grammy-nominated electronic dance star Steve Aoki will take to the stage. He has collaborated with other major artists such as Linkin Park, will.i.am, Afrojack,



LMFAO, Iggy Azalea and Lil Jon, to name a few. Aoki was ranked 'Best DJ in America' by DJ Times in 2015.

On Friday, French DJ Klingande will bring his brand of melodic house music to Sakhr. He completes an all-star cast of that also includes three other

globally renowned DJs who will be performing on the Friday night, DJs Dimitri Vegas and Like Mike and MATTN.

For further information on the Formula 1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix, visit bahraingp.com or call the BIC Hotline on 17450000.



BAHRAIN International Circuit (BIC) will be hosting a pair of Open Track events for cars and motorbikes this weekend. The first will be an Open Track Night tomorrow followed by an Open Track Day on Saturday.

Thursday's action will be held under BIC's state-of-the-art floodlighting system along the 2.55km Inner Track from 4pm to midnight. On Saturday, BIC's 5.412km Grand Prix Track will be used from 9am to 5pm.

Open Track Night participants will be able to choose between driving for a whole night at BD105 or just for a half-night at BD75. A single 30-minute session can also be enjoyed for BD40.

For Open Track Day on Saturday, a full day will cost BD85, a half-day at BD60 and a single session at BD25.

Registration can be done at BIC itself on both days. However, those who book in advance can get a discount. Meanwhile, Clio Cup and Radical SR3 passenger rides will also be available on both occasions. The Clio Cup passenger ride comprises a single three-lap session of around 40 minutes, and it can be enjoyed for BD25.

The Radical SR3 boasts an RPE-Suzuki Generation 1,340 DOHC engine. It can go from zero to 100kmh in 3.4 seconds, and also has a six-speed sequential gearbox and paddle gearshift system. The SR3 passenger ride costs BD35 for a three-lap session of around 40 minutes.

For more details, visit www.bahraingp.com or call 17450000.

LE MERIDIEN Bahrain City Centre will be hosting a special F1-themed iteration of its 'Sweetest Brunch' from 12.30pm-4pm on April 14. The price is BD18++ inclusive of soft drinks or BD30++ inclusive of a free flow of select beverages. Book for 10+ people and receive a 20 per cent discount.



DURING the Formula One weekend, celebrity chef Wolfgang Puck will be in town at the Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay. On April 14 he will prepare a wide variety of home-made comfort foods for the CUT by Wolfgang Puck Friday Brunch, which will take place between 12.30pm-3.30pm and cost BD24++ or BD34++ per person depending on beverage choice.

On April 15, Puck will host a traditional American BBQ party with a medley of grilled meats and seafood from 8pm onwards. The price is BD69++ including beverages.

BAHRAIN'S second contemporary art fair, Art Bahrain Across Borders (ArtBAB 2017), held under the patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Sabeeha Bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa, wife of His Majesty the King and President of the Supreme Council for Women, promises to be a fusion of local, regional and international talent, with acclaimed artists and

galleries from all corners of the world uniting under one roof.

ArtBAB 2017 will see more than 60 participants converge on the Bahrain International Exhibition and Conference Centre from Thursday to Sunday, spanning Europe, the Middle East, Asia, Africa and the United States, and with a very strong presence from Bahrain.

Thirty-six Bahraini participants will showcase their work at the 'ArtBAB Pavilion', a section dedicated exclusively to Bahraini artists who are being funded by Tamkeen, the project owners. Expats living in the kingdom will also display their work. There will also be 10 galleries exhibiting at the fair, in the dedicated 'Gallery Pavilion'.

● See Page 5

THE Royal Golf Club is hosting a range of events and promotions throughout the month.

From Saturday to Thursday, there is 30 per cent off selected beverages between 5pm-8pm, while on Saturdays children aged 12 and under can eat for free with an adult main course.

Weekday special offers include the Monday three-course set menu at BD12, Tuesday all-you-can-eat ribs also for BD12, Wednesday 40 per cent off steaks and Thursday vine and dine which is a three-course dinner with beverage pairing at BD25 net from 7pm onwards.

Between Sunday and Thursday, there is also the Links Business Lunch, which features a starter or dessert, main course and soft drink for BD8 between 11:30am-3pm.

For reservations call 17751262.



MORE than 40 embassies, clubs, societies, and organisations, including 12 directorates of the Ministry of Interior (MOI), will take part in the latest Bahrain For All Festival which will be held from 4pm-10pm on April 7 at Prince Khalifa Park in Hidd.

The community event will feature a range of live shows, including performances by Hamad 'Mystro' Al Fardan and DJ Westlife. There will also be 250 market stalls for visitors to enjoy, as well as raffle draws with prizes.



Crowne-ing glory on big day!



COUPLES set to walk down the aisle could also step away with a package of prizes after enjoying their dream wedding receptions.

The Crowne Plaza Bahrain 'My Wedding' package offers a 15 per cent discount on events booked before June 30. What's more, those aiming to celebrate tying the knot between June and September will get the added benefit of being automatically included into a raffle draw with a chance to win:

- First - free wedding stage with wedding hall décor
- Second - 50 per cent off the total food package
- Third - 25 per cent off both the total food package and wedding stage and hall décor

There is also an opportunity to earn 60,000 IHG Rewards Club points, subject to terms and conditions, with a direct booking with Crowne Plaza Bahrain. These points can be used in any of the IHG hotels worldwide to book rooms or used to redeem gifts.

"Our purpose is to offer you the best possible options for reputable vendors, give inspiration and assist in coordination so you can enjoy your special day as a day like no other," a spokesman for the hotel said. "Entrust your dreams with our highly-skilled Crowne weddings team and allow us to take care of this most precious day - from the menu planning, theming,

flower-arranging and entertainment. We promise to exceed your expectations to create an experience which is unforgettable.

"If you're ready to book your wedding event, contact us now to find out how we can enhance the occasion."

Crowne Plaza Bahrain is a flexible venue and is often booked for business conferences and product launches too. Its venues are particularly popular for wedding occasions, from engagement parties to grand receptions as large ceremonial parties up to 1,000-strong can be accommodated as well as smaller gatherings of 30 attendees.

For more details, call Sameera on 39845255 or 17531122, extension 698.

BAHRAIN CINEMA CLUB - Wednesday, 7pm, Juffra

Film: *Moonlight*

Director: Barry Jenkins

Duration: 1 hr 51 mins

Cast: Alex R Hibbert, Ashton Sanders, Mahershala Ali, Naomie Harris

Plot: The film presents three stages in the life of a young black man as he grows from childhood to adulthood in Miami and grapples with surviving the poverty and problems that pervade his neighbourhood.

For details, call Huda Tabbara on 39682323.





Fashion Weekly

Keeping you in on the latest trends and what they wore in the past

Tips by Jalal, a fashionable man about Manama



IF YOU wonder what a man's grooming ritual may look like, check out Shiseido's award-winning skincare line that offers a cheat sheet of must-have products made to put the guess work out of a cleansing routine.

Using breakthrough technology, the brand has diversified a range of grooming products to help the skin at its most fundamental level, giving it just what it needs to function at its best and to

better resist visible signs of aging. With refreshing, yet effective hydrating products that essentially encourage the outcome of positive results, the products offer quick and visible results when applied consistently and efficiently.

For a desired outcome, it is recommended to follow a regulated skincare routine.

Here is a three-step plan to use with dedicated products that tackle every man's grooming needs.

1) CLEANSE AND SHAVE
A clear complexion starts with

perfectly cleansed skin. It is essential to remove dirt and excess oils without drying out the skin during shaving.

2) HYDRATE AFTER SHAVE

To help preserve optimal moisture levels for a feeling of comfort and protection against roughness, razor burns, environmental stress and dryness, it is essential to hydrate the skin following your shaving ritual.

3) TOTAL AGE DEFENCE

With age, the energy for cell repair and renewal is diminished, leading

to dryness, wrinkles and sagging. The 'Shiseido Men' age defence products claim to help maintain youthful looking facial contours, so that you are ready to conquer any business meeting or social event.

The products are available at Al Hawaj. For more information, call the store on 16160000.



There's Stella designs for all

DESIGNER Stella McCartney recently celebrated the launch of her first ever menswear collection and revealed her new women's Spring 2017 collection at the iconic Abbey Road Studios in an homage to music and fashion.

Alongside the collection presentation were live musical acts including DJ sets by Neneh Cherry, Paul Simonon of the Clash and Big Audio Dynamite's Dan Donovan, amongst many, and 'Stella's Supergroup' ... Gorillaz's Jeff Wootton with Beth Ditto, Sharleen Spiteri Mike D and DMC.

Guests that joined in to celebrate the evening included star-studded celebrities from the world of fashion and film such as Kate Moss, Orlando Bloom, Anna Friel and Twiggy.

Stella's debut menswear collection, available to pre-order before hitting the stores, draws on iconic art and sub-cultures across the eras to inject a new creative energy into timeless classics.



FASHION
By MAI AL KHATIB-CAMILLE
mai.alkhatib@gulfweekly.com

Combining a quintessential British-style that gently pushes boundaries between function and fashion, formalwear and

sportswear, the collection is animated in a selection of 12 looks staged within an arcade and game-room-themed activities.

The new women's Spring 2017 collection features

irreverent styles created by an unrestricted energy, clashing shapes and textures in unexpected ways.

The 'Stella woman', she says, embraces an eloquent individuality showcased in

the 18 looks on models as they playfully presented them in fun animated vignettes within the recording studio, a listening booth and DJ booth.

Accessories complement the collection including

the new Falabella Box bag, a structured hard-case version of the original Stella McCartney signature bag with a braided chain. Elyse, Binx and Odette shoes alongside the eco-friendly eyewear fabricated from bio materials were prominently displayed.

The Women's Collection will be available in stores starting this month. Staying true to the designer's commitment to sustainability every aspect of the collection has been considered to be made in an environmentally-responsible way and is consistent with her vegetarian philosophy, 'completely cruelty-free'.

And, 45 per cent of the menswear and 53 per cent of the women's collections come from sustainable materials including sustainable viscose, regenerated cashmere, organic cotton and denim, recycled nylon, sustainable wood and cork, and eco alter nappa.

Consistent to this approach, the event incorporated vegan treats and recycled and repurposed décor by Dres'd.



Eating Out

The places to dine in Bahrain plus culinary tips for the food connoisseur

Your window to the Gulf's industrial sector

GULF Industry
EXPORTERS IMPORTERS www.gulfindustryonline.com

A magazine that provides the region's industrial sector with a unique monthly review of everything that is of vital interest to readers.

www.gulfindustryonline.com

Brewing up local delicacies

WHENEVER my British family and friends fly into the kingdom for the first time, they always insist on getting a genuine taste of the Middle East and that normally means a trip to the souq for a Bahraini breakfast or a wander down Shawarma Alley at tea-time.

I like both ... but now I've got Tuesday at Mövenpick Hotel Bahrain marked down as a 'must visit' following the launch of Kababna, its 'fresh off the grill' theme night.

Executive Chef Iain Joyce and his kitchen team have joined together with Operations Manager Nizar El Lakkis to conjure up some exquisite Arabic cuisine and refreshments with a touch of local artistry to add to its authenticity.

The name tags on the food counters are pepper-grinding pottery pieces made in Ala a'ali and the sensational skewer holders placed on the tables for the freshly-grilled meat, vegetables and mushroom kebabs are a work of art and designed specifically for purpose in Isa Town.

It looks good and tastes even better. Nizar said: "Kababna is where quality and authenticity meet our culinary pride and innovation. The idea behind this new theme night is to go back to our local roots and flavours. I am positive our guests will appreciate every bite."

The Middle Eastern buffet showcases different types of kebab marinating and the varieties of offer are perfectly-



GLORIOUS GOURMET: Executive Chef Iain displays the kebabs and, right, operations manager Nizar with a pot of special tea leaves

GOURMET REPORT
By STAN SZECOWKA
editor@gulfweekly.com



grilled by the chefs in the show kitchen. A fresh twist on well-known and well-loved mezzehs and traditional salads is served both in its original form and with Chef Iain's special touch.

Diners can then choose the kebabs they wish cooked from a large selection of beef, chicken of hamour slices, or minced masterpieces, placed on iced trays. They can then pick from the display

of chili, peppers, aubergines, corn-on-the-cob and mighty mushrooms, as mentioned earlier.

Nizar began his career at Noga Hilton Geneva and moved back to his home country Lebanon, where he joined the pre-opening team of Holiday Inn. He has held a wide range of leadership positions across the globe and in 2002 started his journey with the Mövenpick family in Beirut where he worked for eight years. He's already made

a magnificent impression at the award-winning hotel by the airport too.

Fortunately, he hasn't forgotten his roots and remembers the Zohourat beverage with nostalgia, an astonishingly refreshing blend of wild flowers, herbs, leaves and fruits that make up the typical drink of Lebanon and Syria.

It makes for an ideal accompaniment to this fare and besides being a tasty, warming, caffeine-free pick-me-up I'm

told it also has wonderful health benefits. From soothing a troubled tummy to easing insomnia and calming a troubled mind, herbs have all sorts of healing powers. Drinking herbal tea can also be a great source of vitamins and minerals too.

But, who care, it tastes terrific and deserves its star treatment alongside the stunning displays of food choices.

No doubt, the night will be a massive hit with the local audience and I'm told visitors



from across the causeway are already flocking to the dining destination. But expat kebab lovers mustn't miss out, even if your visitors from Blighty have yet to arrive for their regular Easter break!

Kababna, the latest addition to Mövenpick Hotel Bahrain's culinary offerings happens every Tuesday starting at 7pm. The live grilling is the key highlight of the evening, with other gastronomic dishes, adding to the generous offer. This flavoursome night is set to be a hit and is priced at BD18 net for the open buffet and freshly-prepared juices and Arabian teas.

● See Chef Iain and Operations manager Nizar's interview with Stan by scanning the QR code or by visiting www.gulfweekly.com or our Facebook page.





Stepping out for walkies in the rain

PROUD pooches and their brave owners powered through inclement weather over the weekend to raise BD2,800 for the Bahrain Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (BSPCA).

The St Patrick's Day sponsored walk, which took place at the Animal Welfare Centre in Askar, featured a 2km walk for young children and a 4km walk for others as the skies intermittently poured rain on the participants.

Having already been postponed once on St Valentine's weekend due to storms, both the BSPCA and its undeterred army of supporters refused to let the heavens dictate their efforts once again.

Walkers were encouraged to either bring their own dog along for the occasion, or 'rent' one from the AWC for a small fee. In total, more than 150 people and 100 pooches stepped out for the good cause, many clad in waterproofs and umbrellas to shield themselves from the

driving rain.

On return to the AWC, walkers were welcomed by a BBQ sponsored by Alosra and a warming cuppa from the team at MAZA tea, as well as a plethora of raffle prizes.

This year's Most Sponsorship Money prize was won by Sarah Clarke. Walking her famous Labrador Baloo, who helps autistic children and those with communication challenges and is the star of a book, she raised an impressive BD565 for the BSPCA after doing the walk two weeks early, as featured in *GulfWeekly*.

And, Lana Furman and Nicola Thirsk raised BD700 between them. Funds will go towards the AWC and the Catch, Neuter, Replace (CNR) programme.

Fundraising co-ordinator Kate Gibson said: "It was wonderful to see such loyal support for the BSPCA - people really entered into the spirit of the event despite the weather."



Splashes of colour



COMMUNITY REPORT
By KRISTIAN HARRISON
kristian@gulfweekly.com

THOUSANDS of revellers dived in for a colourful celebration at the Lost Paradise of Dilmun Waterpark as the festival of Holi was celebrated with a day of fluorescent face painting and splashing in the waves.

Around 3,500 braved the changeable conditions on Friday and a little rain could not dampen their spirits in Sakhr as fun-lovers proved determined to spread goodwill and party all day and through the night.

Holi is a Hindu spring festival celebrated in India and Nepal, also known as the 'festival of colours' or the 'festival of love'. It signifies the victory of good over evil, the arrival of spring and the end of winter, and is used by many to meet others, play and laugh, forget and forgive and help repair strained relationships. It is also celebrated as a thanksgiving for a good harvest.

Cristina Fulgencio, senior marketing manager, was delighted with the turnout on the day and the atmosphere that was created.

She said: "The event was hugely successful and the Indian community in particular really came out in droves to support the event. The weather wasn't the best, but it's a waterpark so who cares about the rain! It became almost like a rain dance in the end!"

"We are delighted that the vast majority of those who came were families, as that's who we love to cater for. We at LPOD are proud and happy to welcome different communities for various events, and this is just one in a long list that we have planned for this year!"

Entertainment was provided by three local DJs, plus top international spinner DJ Lemon who is hugely popular on the Bollywood scene. There were also traditional Dhol and Bhangra dancers providing musical merriment to the aquatic festivities.



JOINING IN: Fun-lovers enjoy some Holi happiness at the Lost Paradise of Diimun Waterpark d



at waterpark



During a special day of celebration



REVIEW: *The Seafarer* – Manama Theatre Club – British Club

THERE was little need for sound effects during an exclusive press preview night of the Manama Theatre Club's latest offering before it opens to theatre-lovers tonight.

A storm raged overhead with lightning flashes and rain thundering down on to the roof of the Brit Club in weather more likely to be witnessed across the Irish Sea than the Gulf.

The scene was aptly set for a devilishly dramatic piece of dark comedy, a supernatural ghost story and a modern day tale of guilt and the demon 'drink', with a clever twist and some stunning performances by a five-strong male cast.

It is Christmas Eve in Baldoyle (or perhaps a compound off Budaiya), a coastal suburb north of Dublin City, and Sharky, played by St Christopher School's English teacher Ben Davies, has been forced to return home to live with his cranky blind brother Richard (Dan Moloney).

Life appears to have dealt Sharky a bad hand but it's about to get a whole lot worse when the man he lost his sweetheart to, charmer Nicky Giblin (Lee Cudmore), comes to play cards with a businessman in tow, Mr Lockhart (Khaled Al Dossary).

The rascal and family friend Ivan Curry (Ashley Kingstone) is already in situ after a heavy session and looking like a few of my friends did the night after the recent St Patrick's Day Ball at the Radisson-Blu.

Stunningly, only Moloney is the one true Irishman amongst them, and they have mastered the tongue superbly, no more so than Al Dossary, a Saudi-born Bahraini, who meticulously studied his refined Dublin accent and pulls it off magnificently.

That's not all, he truly oozes stage presence and amplifies evil when he's at



his cruelest and calmest best and, without giving the plot away, let's just say that there's more to Mr Lockhart than meets the eye and poor old Sharky has crossed paths with him before.

There's a lot more at stake than money and only one winner ... perhaps.

This is a riveting theatrical experience and director Hannah Turner, pictured above, must be delighted she determinedly pushed for this production to be staged after watching it performed on Broadway. The production team also includes director Mike Enright, assistant producer Carrie Bell and a superb set designed and managed by Karen Ralph.

I must warn readers, it's adult-only, not for the faint-hearted or those easily upset by the use of colloquial expletives. But it's a great craic with mightily memorable performances by the complete cast.

Stan Szczewka

● **Editor's note:** The show runs until Saturday and tickets priced BD7 are available from the British Club and Al Osra Saar and Amwaj Islands. For more details visit www.facebook.com/manamatheatreclub



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BUSINESS SCENE

GFH Financial Group (GFH) has announced its new board of directors, whose appointment was recently confirmed for the 2017-2019. The 10-member board has endorsed the appointment of Shaikh Ahmed bin Khalifa Al-Khalifa, right, as its new chairman and Dr Ahmed Al-Mutawa as vice-chairman.



As chairman, Shaikh Ahmed brings to this role more than two decades of experience including senior positions in banking, advisory, ministerial posts and holds a position on other board memberships, the company says.

Additional members of the new board include Kamal Abdulla Bahamdan, Mazin Mohammed Al-Saeed, Jassim Mohammed Al Seddiqi, Rashid Nasser Al-Kaabi, Ghazi Faisal Al-Hajri, Mosabah Saif Al-Motairi, Bashar Mohammed Al-Mutawa and Hisham Ahmed Alrayes.

Shaikh Ahmed, said: "I'm extremely proud to join the board of GFH Financial Group as its chairman during this exciting time of further development for the group following the delivery of strong progress and results in 2016."

"Following the recent AGM, and the announcement of a new strategy, which will focus on the acquisition of financial institutions, infrastructure investments, and other strategic assets, GFH is now entering a new phase of growth over which I am pleased to be presiding alongside a world-class board and management team."

"I would also like to acknowledge the efforts of Dr Ahmed Al-Mutawa who has served as chairman over the past three years and played an invaluable role in guiding GFH to where we are today – a growing regional market leader and a well-diversified institution and global investor."

The company's Extraordinary General Meeting held earlier this month for the 12-months ending December 31 at the its Bahrain Financial Harbour headquarters reviewed and approved a number of matters put to shareholders.

Key among these were the proposed recommendation of the board to increase the authorised capital to \$2.5bn and endorsing GFH's new strategy to acquire financial institutions, infrastructure investments, and investment assets by way of swapping the shares of the investors and shareholders of the target companies with GFH shares through issuance of new shares by increasing the issued and paid up capital from \$597.99 million up to \$1.49 billion.

● See *harbourside plans in PropertyWeekly: Page P18*

Social Scene

Why wait a month! Join Social Scene every week

Heart to heart



BATELCO has launched a new programme under the theme of Heart to Heart, aimed at enhancing its employees' lifestyle and wellbeing. Former *GulfWeekly* columnist, author and nutritionist Alia Almoayed gave a presentation on healthy eating habits to launch the initiative.

Diversity conference



THE Coca-Cola Bottling Plant of Bahrain celebrated International Women's Day with a Women's Diversity Council conference at the Swiss-Belhotel Seef.

Female achievements



KPMG in Bahrain held an event at the firm's headquarters to commemorate International Women's Day (IWD). IWD is a global initiative celebrated annually to mark the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women.

Partner and head of advisory Ramachandran Narayanan commended five members of staff for achieving professional qualifications in 2016. Attendees also heard from staff about inspirational stories of influential women who had changed and shaped their lives and careers.

Special gifts



CITY Centre Bahrain celebrated International Women's Day, recognising the achievements of its women staff members with special gifts and an exclusive tea party, hosted at Furn Dome located at the Westin, one of the mall's adjoining hotels.

Food donation

TONY the Dogfather's Animal Rescue & Rehabilitation Centre received a BD500 pet food donation following the Paws & Tails Carnival organised by Lulu Hypermarket, as featured in last week's *GulfWeekly*. The event was staged on the second level car park of Galleria Mall. Regional director Juzer Rupawal revealed that the dog show could become an annual event.



Prominent roles



VIVA Bahrain commemorated International Women's Day with a celebration praising the achievements and prominent role of its female employees on social and corporate levels. The event was attended by female employees from all departments during which they were awarded appreciation certificates by the management for their valued contribution to the company's success.

Watch us go on world tour!

A FAMOUS flying masterpiece, the Breitling DC-3, touched down in Bahrain on a record-breaking world tour and a part of high-flying celebrations organised by the Swiss luxury watchmaker and aviation chronograph specialist, writes Stan Szecowka.

Marking its 77th birthday this year, the DC-3 aims to become the oldest plane to circumnavigate the world and will also land in Jordan, Qatar and the UAE during its epic journey from March to September.

The Douglas DC-3 (DC for Douglas Commercial) twin-engine propeller plane made its maiden flight in 1935, at a time when Breitling had introduced its first on-board chronographs for civilian and military aircraft.

Nicknamed the 'Normandy landings plane' during the Second World War, it enjoyed its moment of fame in June 1944. More than 16,000 were built and most major airlines acquired them as part of their fleet. They normally seat 20 passengers and boast a cruising speed of 241 km/h (130 knots).

This DC-3 HB-IRJ was delivered to American Airlines and flew for the first time in 1940. It was used by the American military between 1942 and 1944, before resuming service on behalf of various commercial airlines.

It has been restored by a group of dedicated enthusiasts and now flies under Breitling colours and participates in a variety of air shows around the globe.

Captain and owner of the Breitling DC-3, Francisco Agullo, speaking shortly after landing at Bahrain International Airport last Saturday morning, said: "It's a challenging airplane to fly."

"It's a very stable platform but you only have to look at



WINGS AWAY: The propellers turning on the historic aircraft

modern aircraft and see that none of them have a tail wheel – this one has! That means that if you have a cross wind it gets a little unstable on the ground.

"You land with the front wheel first and then lower the tail-end, whereas with modern aircraft you do exactly the opposite. This is just muscles, cables and pulleys – there are no hydraulic servos helping the pilot to steer the aircraft."

"It's a bit like comparing an old truck with a new car. You can steer the latest model with two fingers and it will go wherever you want it to, modern airplanes are exactly like that too."

"This, you really have to fight when you have a crosswind like we had the other day – 30 knots – that's when you really have to work!"

Perhaps it was a blessing in disguise on a blustery morning that a planned flight up into the skies with a media pack onboard was cancelled inexplicably for security concerns, but journalists were allowed to step on board for a tour of the beautiful beast, sit in the cockpit and drool in delight when the captain fired

up the engines on the tarmac.

Today there are fewer than 150 DC-3 aircraft in flightworthy condition worldwide including a dozen still carrying goods and passengers in Columbia, for example, but few will look as spectacular as this perfect specimen carrying into illustrious cargo of pristine timepieces.

The world tour, which takes in the Middle East, India, South-East Asia, North America and Europe, started and will end in Breitling's home country of Switzerland, after taking off from Geneva earlier this month and landing back in September at the Breitling Sion Airshow 2017.

When the DC-3 stopped over in the kingdom it provided selected VIPs and members of the media with the opportunity to get up close. The press pack was welcomed by Yaquby Stores general manager Asif Jiffry and Jana Klaamas, head of retail operation at the Breitling Boutique, in Moda Mall.

To celebrate the world tour, Breitling has introduced a 500-piece limited edition of its famous Navitimer aviation

chronograph, of which 25 models will be made available for the Middle East market and will sell for a staggering BD3,295 each.

This steel Navitimer 01 (46 mm), powered by Manufacture Breitling Caliber 01, will notably be distinguished by its case-back engraved with the Breitling DC-3 World Tour logo.

Enthusiasts will have to wait until the autumn to get their hands on this model – all 500 pieces will travel aboard the Breitling DC-3 around the planet, to ensure they are truly part of the entire adventure.

Each watch will be delivered with a certificate signed by the flight captain and stamped with the stopover locations.

Aed Adwan, Breitling Middle East, said: "As a privileged partner of aviation, Breitling has demonstrated its commitment to safeguarding aeronautical heritage by supporting the restoration of legendary aircraft such as the Douglas DC-3."

"Through this world tour, Breitling is once again displaying its determination to share its passion for aviation with a broad audience,

FACTFILE

BREITLING DC-3 WORLD TOUR 2017 FRANCISCO AGULLO

- Captain and owner
- Nationality: Swiss
- Year of birth: 1969
- Flight hours: More than 12,500 hours, 3,500 as co-pilot and 9,000 as captain.

His passion for aviation started when he was a child. After completing an engineering degree in aerodynamics and mechanics he decided to become a bush pilot, initially in Northern Canada and a few years later in Africa. After returning to Europe, he became an airline pilot, flying Douglas and Boeing airliners.

● In 2000, he created, with his friends, the Super Constellation Flyers Association which operates today one of the last two airworthy Lockheed Super Constellation in the world. Today he looks after the beautifully-restored Breitling DC-3.

● Francisco has accumulated his flight hours in 45 different aircraft types. He is captain on private jets and flight instructor/examiner on the DC-3 and Super Constellation.



ON ABOARD: Captain Stanley, above, is allowed to sit in the pilot's seat as long as he doesn't touch any of the instruments, right, Jana Klaamas, Breitling head of retail operations and Asif Jiffry, GM Yaquby Stores, welcome the Breitling DC-3 crew to Bahrain

especially in the Middle East where we specifically included stopovers in four different countries."

The Breitling DC-3, which undergoes 100 hours maintenance for every hour flown, is taking its grand world tour in several stages, punctuated by numerous stopovers providing opportunities to organise events and take part in air shows. It will be an amazing accomplishment for this legendary plane, aviation enthusiasts agree.

A privileged partner in the conquest of the skies, Breitling says it is demonstrating its commitment to 'safeguarding the aeronautical heritage' by supporting the restoration of legendary aircraft – such as the

Lockheed Super Constellation as well as the Douglas DC-3.

For every mile travelled on the trip, \$2 will be donated in a charitable endeavour to help earthquake victims in partnership with The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund.

● Want to hear what the engines sound like? Scan the QR code and savour the moment with GulfWeekly on YouTube.





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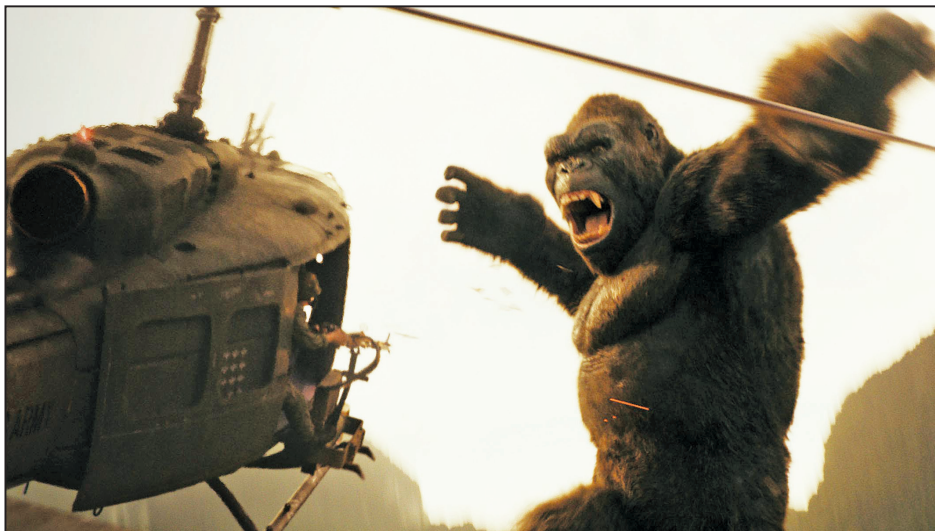
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Film Weekly



Movie-loving Kristian Harrison checks out the big screen releases on show in a cinema near you

Kong strikes back



KONG: *Skull Island* is a movie that I really didn't think I needed to see. Did I want to sit through a couple of hours of yet another Hollywood rehash of a classic that had already been remade terribly a decade earlier?

Not really, but I'm very glad I did as this is a rollicking, enjoyable flick that flies through its run time, providing thrills and spills to kick off the summer blockbuster season in style.

The first thing to establish is that if you're expecting the 1930s, the Empire State Building, biplanes and blonde damsels, you've come to the wrong place. Try a 1973 napalm-scented Southeast Asia instead.

It's a time when the US has officially decided to abandon the Vietnam War and the fight for national security is as frantic as ever. Monarch, a corporation dedicated to hunting down unidentified terrestrial organisms, has discovered new satellite photos of an uncharted island said to be as legendary and cursed as the Bermuda Triangle.

After convincing the government to finance an expedition to the island, a group of highly-trained military escorts set off to investigate. They are led by Colonel Packard (Jackson), anti-war photographer Mason Weaver (Larson), and a former British SAS tracker James Conrad (Hiddleston), the latter of whom has been hired to be their guide on the island itself.

Of course, as common monster movie logic should indicate, things quickly go awry when they arrive via helicopter on Skull Island, dropping bombs to try and map the terrain of the island, much to the chagrin of a certain 100-foot ape. From there *Kong: Skull Island* kicks

KONG: SKULL ISLAND

STARRING: Tom Hiddleston, Samuel L Jackson, Brie Larson

DIRECTOR: Jordan Vogt-Roberts

GENRE: Action/Adventure

RATING: PG-15

118 MINS

it into high-gear, as the helicopters engage in an unexpected battle with Kong himself, who emerges from the mountains of Skull Island standing against a searing red sunset that truly emphasises his status and power.

King certainly is both visually and physically impressive. This film manages to give the character something that none of the previous live-action films have - a pre-existing reputation and mythology before he even sets foot off of his beloved homeland. To the native people of Skull Island, Kong is a god, protecting them from the other dangerous creatures that roam the land.

Director Jordan Vogt-Roberts has done a terrific job ramping the beast up to be a skyscraper-sized simian; a truly awe-inspiring force of nature that returns to the imposing bipedal, upright design of the original rather than a four-legged anthropomorphic gorilla as seen in more recent efforts.

This is essentially an adrenaline-fueled montage of carnage and destruction, and Vogt-Roberts wastes little time introducing Kong, showing off the character's power and design with a confidence that only makes this version of Kong seem that much more terrifying and dangerous.

There are moments when it feels more like an amusement park ride than a

traditional monster movie origin story, taking full advantage of the set piece and stylistic opportunities available. The fact that the film buys into its B-movie aesthetic and runs with it just makes it even better. I honestly can't remember having this much pure fun with a movie in a long time.

The film's characters and emotional moments don't match up to the visual and stylistic aspects of the film, unfortunately, and a lot of that can be attributed to the fact that *Skull Island* has too big a cast. A plethora of supporting characters come and go, and the most prominent flaw is that too much time is spent trying to flesh these guys out for little gain.

You have the 'been there, done that' veteran who isn't fazed by anything anymore, the pilot who's been stranded on the island for years, and a handful more. They get a few minutes of screen time, an emotional speech, then chomped by a monster. Meanwhile, the main cast are largely ignored, and seem to exist to be slapped on a marketing poster to entice audiences with their famous faces.

This is a minor quibble though, as ultimately, we're here for Kong and awesome action and not humans crying about the state of the world and their lot in life. On this note, *Kong: Skull Island* delivers on exactly what it sets out to do, which is deliver a gorgeous monster movie filled with the kind of action and destruction that audiences have never seen from a *King Kong* film before. It's hard to imagine it doing a much better job than it does.

● **Showing at: Cineco, Seef I, Seef II, Saar, Wadi Al Sail**

KRISTIAN'S VERDICT



1 popcorn - stay home
5 popcorns - start queuing

Bite-sized trailers

Beauty and the Beast

DIRECTOR: Bill Condon

CAST: Emma Watson, Dan Stevens, Luke Evans

PLOT: Disney's animated classic takes on a new form, with a widened mythology and an all-star cast. A young prince, imprisoned in the form of a beast, can be freed only by true love. What may be his only opportunity arrives when he meets Belle, the only human girl to ever visit the castle since it became enchanted.

SHOWING IN: Cineco, Seef II, Wadi Al Sail, Saar, Al Jazeera, Dana, Novo, Mukta A2



Sleepless

DIRECTOR: Baran bo Odar

CAST: Jamie Foxx, Michelle Monaghan, Dermot Mulroney

PLOT: *Sleepless* stars Jamie Foxx as undercover Las Vegas police officer Vincent Downs, who is caught in a high stakes web of corrupt cops and the mob-controlled casino underground. When a heist goes wrong, a crew of homicidal gangsters kidnaps Downs' teenage son. In one sleepless night he will have to rescue his son, evade an internal affairs investigation and bring the kidnappers to justice.

SHOWING IN: Cineco, Seef I, Wadi Al Sail, Saar, Novo, Mukta A2



Hidden Figures

DIRECTOR: Theodore Melfi

CAST: Taraji P. Henson, Octavia Spencer, Janelle Monáe

PLOT: *Hidden Figures* is the incredible untold story of Katherine G Johnson (Taraji P. Henson), Dorothy Vaughan (Octavia Spencer) and Mary Jackson (Janelle Monáe), all brilliant African-American women working at NASA. They served as the brains behind one of the greatest operations in history: the launch of astronaut John Glenn into orbit, a stunning achievement that restored the nation's confidence, turned around the Space Race and galvanised the world. The visionary trio crossed all gender and race lines to inspire generations to dream big.

SHOWING IN: Cineco, Seef II, Wadi Al Sail, Saar, Dana, Novo, Mukta A2



imdb movie charts

Current Position	Title	Weekend Takings	Gross to date
1	Beauty and the Beast	\$170M	\$170M
2	Kong: Skull Island	\$29M	\$110M
3	Logan	\$17M	\$184M
4	Get Out	\$13M	\$133M
5	The Shack	\$6M	\$43M
6	The LEGO Batman Movie	\$5M	\$167M
7	The Belko Experiment	\$4M	\$4M
8	Hidden Figures	\$1M	\$166M
9	John Wick: Chapter 2	\$1M	\$90M
10	Before I Fall	\$1M	\$11M

Motoring Weekly

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Get your Kicks on the road!

JAPANESE car giants Nissan are hoping to make a spring splash with their latest creation, the new Nissan Kicks compact crossover which made its bow at a glitzy ceremony at the Y K Almoayyed & Sons showroom in Sitra.

The latest member of the Nissan fleet, first unveiled at the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, has been designed with an aerodynamic philosophy to optimise fuel consumption and minimise noise.

Other design quirks include the V-motion grille, the boomerang head and taillights, and the coupé-style roof with a wrap-around visor look to the windscreen and side glass. The interior is spacious too, with the familiar gliding wing shape stretching the width of the dashboard.

Ranjit Nair, senior manager of sales and marketing, said: "The new Nissan Kicks was developed to be the most innovative, stylish and functional crossover in its class. It is equipped with advanced technologies making the vehicle comfortable to drive, in



MODEL MOMENT: The new Nissan is unveiled, right, director Mohammed Almoayyed



MOTORING
By KRISTIAN HARRISON
kristian@gulfweekly.com

addition to being strong and stable thanks to the advanced chassis control technology."

Such technology includes the Around View Monitor (AVM) that is displayed on the seven-inch colour touchscreen to make parking easier. Using four cameras, placed at the front and rear of the car and in both door

mirrors, AVM creates a bird's eye 360-degree view of the car which can be displayed on the central monitor and used as a parking aid.

Furthermore, Nissan Intelligent Mobility uses smart tech to reduce stress for drivers through innovations such as the Moving Object Detection system (MOD). When the MOD system detects a moving object, such as a pedestrian, a warning is

sounded to alert the driver to the hazard and prevent a potential accident.

Under the bonnet, the Kicks has a 1.6L engine which produces 118BHP and 149Nm of torque.

The aforementioned screen is simple to use and provides access to functions such as navigation, audio and Bluetooth phone connections. A second screen is located



in front of the driver and relays information from the on-board drive computer, audio system and navigation systems, as well as displaying warnings. Vehicle settings can also be easily adjusted using the four-way selector on the steering wheel.

Other safety features include Active Trace Control, Active Ride Control and Active Engine Brake. Active Trace Control is an innovative way to prevent a sudden loss of grip while driving as it works by applying brakes to wheels individually making it more stable on the road.

Similarly, Active Ride Control helps stabilise the

car if it hits any bumps in the road or anything that will cause a 'bounce' effect on the suspension by applying the brakes for a split-second after the encounter.

Finally, the Active Engine Brake is the last of the electric trio, which stabilises the speed when the accelerator is released while approaching a corner. This 'cruising' effect is often associated with automatic and CVT gearboxes.

The Nissan Kicks is available now for test drives from the Y K Almoayyed & Sons showroom in Sitra. Prices will be announced shortly. For more information, call 17734218.

RANGE Rover has launched a new luxury car - only the fourth model in almost 50 years.

The Velar, named after an ancient prototype, will go on sale later this year with the flagship model promising super car levels of performance.

It was recently unveiled to the world at the Design Museum in London and will fit in between the Evoque and Range Rover Sport models.

Engineered and built at Jaguar Land Rover's Solihull plant in the UK's West Midlands, it will take on rivals in the medium-sized SUV market such as the Audi Q5 and Porsche Macan.

It has clearly been popular already with reports that it has attracted more pre-orders than any other model in Land Rover history.

Luxurious touches inside the cabin include hidden-

Flagship model promising new delights

until-lit controls and a state-of-the-art Touch Pro Duo infotainment system. On the outside super-slim matrix-laser LED headlights and burnished copper-coloured detailing highlight the design flourishes.

There is also an option for Matrix-Laser LED headlights which can cast a full beam to 550m. Another feature are the flush deployable door handles - a Range Rover first - which feature subtle LED illumination and pop out when the car is unlocked. Once the car goes above 5mph they slide back in to maintain the sleek lines.

There is a 632-litre luggage compartment and air suspension is standard on six-cylinder models. A state-of-the-art audio system can be ordered to provide a surround

sound to all occupants through 23 speakers.

Land Rover say the new model, which takes its name from the original 1969 Range Rover prototype, offers 'luxury, refinement and all-terrain capability never before seen in the midsize SUV segment'.

Engineers have fitted it with a sophisticated all-wheel drive system as well as class-leading ground clearance and wading ability. Inside, the Velar has two high-definition 10-inch central mounted touchscreens for the infotainment system and car controls.

Jeremy Hicks, Jaguar Land Rover UK managing director, said: "Velar brings increased choice to new and existing customers in a growing SUV market."

There will be six engine options available. The petrol engine will put out 247bhp and hit 0-60mph in 6.7 seconds. A more powerful, 296bhp version of this engine is set to join the Velar range later.

More potent power plants include a 375bhp supercharged V6 petrol engine, capable of taking the Velar to 60mph in only 5.3 seconds, which will be popular in Bahrain.

Available as the Velar and Velar R-Dynamic, the range will offer the following trim levels - Standard, S, SE or HSE. Black and Luxury Exterior Packs are also options.

All models have the go-anywhere ability associated with the off-road brand. More than 430,000



DRIVING AHEAD: Jaguar Land Rover CEO Ralph Speth poses alongside the new Range Rover Velar during its unveiling at the London Design Museum in London

Land Rovers rolled off the production line in a record-breaking 2016, with sales driven by the Range Rover Evoque and Land Rover Discovery Sport. The overall company, Jaguar Land Rover, sold more than 583,000 cars in 2016, topping the half-million mark for the first time. Hannane Laidouni, Euro Motors' Jaguar Land

Rover marketing manager said the new model 'looks spectacular!'. She added that the Range Rover Velar is expected to be unveiled in Bahrain in October or November and prices will range between the Range Rover Evoque (around BD22,000) and the Range Rover Sport (around B 42,000).



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Property Weekly

A guide to the best properties home and abroad – edited by Mai Al Khatib email: mai.alkhatib@gulfweekly.com

Work starts on harbourside

GFH Real Estate (GFHRE), the real estate arm of GFH Financial Group, has commenced work on its \$150 million Harbour Row Project, a new residential and commercial destination in the heart of Bahrain's capital city and located on the waterfront of the iconic Bahrain Financial Harbour.

Harbour Row has been envisioned by its developers to bring to market 'world-class amenities, prestigious lifestyle brands and global citizens together in a vibrant development'.

It will include around 475 residential units across six buildings.

In addition a broad range of expected retail outlets are proposed and other related facilities to offer similar scenes to that of other financial hubs around the world such as London Docklands, South Beach Miami and Sydney Harbour.

Having completed site preparation and mobilisation activities upon their appointment in December 2016, Al Moayyed Contracting (AMC), the project's main contractors, have now begun with works on Harbour Row starting with the commencement of foundation and piling works, which will encompass the execution of 575 contiguous piles and some 200 structural piles.

GFHRE has also appointed DG Jones & Partners as the project's manager and cost consultant and Aref Sadeq Designs as the supervision consultants.

Majed AlKhan, CEO of GFHRE, said: "We are delighted to announce the start of works at Harbour Row in cooperation with Al Moayyed Contracting, our partners in the construction of this landmark project."

"This is an important milestone in our efforts to create a new and unique value proposition and one that is developed to the highest and most exacting international standards for innovation in urban living to match those across



STARTING CEREMONY: Executives and the site team at the launch event

the world's best-known waterfront cities.

"As was promised, we have launched works on time and according to plan in the first quarter of 2017. Importantly, this puts us in a strong

position to also complete the development of Harbour Row on schedule for the benefit of our partners and those that have already invested in the project including homeowners. "We now look forward

to swiftly moving ahead and reaching additional milestones on target together with the best-in-breed team of consultants and partners that we have assembled and engaged."



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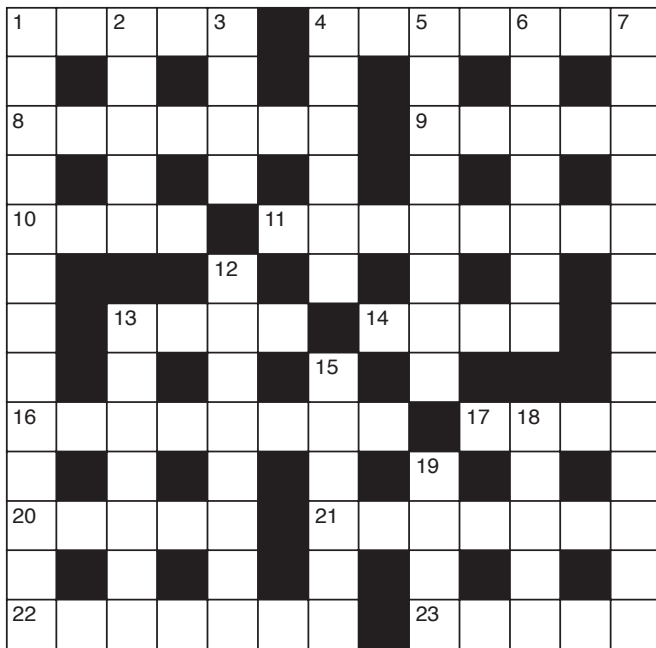
cerebrally crust & crema



WIN COFFEE-FOR-TWO at crust & crema by answering this quiz question and emailing your answer to editor@gulfweekly.com
Which country drinks the most coffee per capita? a) Norway b) U.S.A c) Finland c) Italy
 Entries must be received by noon on Sunday. The first correct one out of the bag will win the prize and the lucky reader will be emailed a coupon. Normal *GulfWeekly* contest rules apply. The Editor's decision is final.

Quiz winner: Reader MARGARET COUTINHO won a breakfast by correctly answering that a) Seven million tons of coffee is produced each year worldwide.

crossword break



Solutions in next week's issue.

ACROSS

1. Demise (5)
4. Feign (7)
8. Singer (7)
9. Wrong (5)
10. Candid (4)
11. Reference (8)
13. Forehead (4)
14. Stupefy (4)
16. Last (8)
17. Loyal (4)
20. Muscle (5)
21. Heighten (7)
22. Beseech (7)
23. Dulcet (5)

DOWN

1. Shameful (13)
2. Plentiful (5)
3. Cure (4)
4. Sickly (6)
5. Empty (8)
6. Issue (7)
7. Separation (13)
12. Begin (8)
13. Flagrant (7)
15. Climb (6)
18. Scope (5)
19. So (4)

who, what, where, when

WHO ... wrote the novels *A Farewell to Arms* and *The Sun Also Rises*?

WHAT ... country did the international footballer Marcelo Salas represent?

WHERE ... in Europe is the region of Wallonia?

WHEN ... did the rock group Deep Purple release the album *Deep Purple in Rock*?

WHO ... wrote the autobiographical novel *La Fanfarlo*?

WHAT ... sort of creature is a rudd?

WHERE ... in South America is Mount Cotopaxi?

WHEN ... in 1936 did the UK's Jarrow March begin?

just so

MONARCH



SBINSLGE

N QUESTION

darn tough sudoku

So you think you're good enough at Sudoku to crack this baby? Remember, we were the first in the Gulf to bring you this bit of Japanese mayhem...so we don't kid around

Last week's sudoku

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

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

darn tough sudoku

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

Sudoku

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

Sudoku

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

Last Week's Leisure Solutions

CROSSWORD BREAK:

Across: 3 Profusion; 8 Item; 9 Humiliate; 10 Soiree; 11 Child; 14 Moist; 15 Deed; 16 Yield; 18 Land; 20 Aware; 21 Treat; 24 Depart; 25 Converted; 26 Slur; 27 Imprudent.

Down: 1 Dissemble; 2 Deficient; 4 Roue; 5 Faith; 6 Shield; 7 Oath; 9 Hefty; 11 Chest; 12 Debatable; 13 Adventure; 17 Dazed; 19 Driver; 22 Acid; 23 Form; 24 Dean.

JUST SO: It's up to you, Look back in anger, Mister right, Put into words.

WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN: Aneurin Bevan;

A yellow sun with a human face known as the Sun of May; Amsterdam, 1934; David Mamet; Shoeless Joe; Erinsborough, 1981.

Darn Tough Sudoku

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

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- Overseeing the accounting function including the development of the policies and procedures, chart of accounts, as well as the AP/ AR/ payroll and inventory costing activities and transactions.
- Leading the liaison and negotiations with the external auditors on audit work plans, timetables, resourcing and fees
- Overseeing and supervising the treasury strategy and undertaking treasury planning and banking relationship management
- Overall Tax and VAT strategy and planning in compliance with local market regulations
- Managing the insurance policies and relationships with insurance brokers, optimizing costs and minimizing risks across the business

Requirements:

- 12+ Years of experience, at least 5 of which as a Financial Controller
- Previous experience of working in the UAE ideally with education or services industry exposure
- Bachelors in Accounting or Finance; MBA preferred
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Golf Weekly

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Hole lot of happiness in cup

PROMISING young Bahraini golfer Ali Al Hakam won the third round of the Audi quattro Cup Series at the Royal Golf Club with an impressive 38 stableford points, just one point ahead of runner-up Yousif Janahi.

The pair's achievements were a little overshadowed though by two competitors achieving a rare hole-in-one during the competition. Men's vice captain Sanjay Lal first aced the seventh hole of the club's challenging Montgomerie championship course, followed soon after by Barry Hobday on hole 12.

Jim Lanceley continues to top the series order of merit



MARCH WINNER: Ali Al Hakam in action, happy Hobday and vice captain Lal on course for success

for the second consecutive month with 99 points while Rob Lane now holds second place with 92 points.

A field of more than 50 players turned out to do battle in the prestigious series which will be played out over a total

of six rounds at the Royal Golf Club. The series winners of the Bahrain tournament will have an opportunity to go forward and compete in the world finals, which this year will be held at the prestigious Quivira Golf Club



in Cabo San Luca, Mexico, in December.

With around 100,000 players competing in 750 tournaments in 54 countries annually, the contest has developed into the biggest worldwide amateur golf

tournament series. To register for the next Audi quattro Cup Series competition, which will be taking place on Friday, April 21, email golf@theroyalgolfclub.com

Results:
1st Ali Al Hakam (38 points),



2nd Yousif Janahi (37). 2s Club: Ben Elsworth & Saqr Al Noaimi (hole 7), Steven Hill (hole 16), Claus Hansen (hole 12). Hole in One: Barry Hobday (hole 12) & Sanjay Lal (hole 7).

Playing in the rain

GOLF TIP
By NIKKI HUNTER
Royal Golf Club Head Teaching Professional

DUE to the uncharacteristically wet weather Bahrain is currently facing, a lot of golfers are struggling to adapt to the changing conditions. It is worth bearing in mind the following points in order to salvage a score whilst playing in the rain.

● Keep as dry as possible, using an umbrella or staying in the golf cart as long as possible

● Wearing a hat can keep rain from your face and head

● Spare towels and gloves (playing without a glove will be more effective than using a wet glove)

● Understand the Rules - you can get a free drop from casual water ('Casual water' is any temporary accumulation of water on the course that is not in a water hazard and is visible before or after the player takes his stance)

● Take extra club, as there will be less roll upon impact with the ground

● Long irons are notoriously difficult to strike with any consistency in the wet. Height is particularly difficult to achieve. Where possible use a wood; with the lower centre of gravity it should help get the ball airborne

If you would like to book a golf lesson with a Royal Golf Club PGA teaching professional, call 17750777 ext 302.



TOUGH CHALLENGE: The Pros' team made up of Waine, Foster, Stimson and Dutton

Mighty members shine

THREE teams managed to beat the Royal Golf Club's team of PGA Professionals in the club's annual Pros Challenge.

First place went to the team of brothers Badea and Ebrahim Esbai and playing partners Fahad Al Hakam and Khalifa Daij, who achieved a team nett score of 58.1.

The runners-up team, consisting of Ifthikhar Butt, Naem Khan, Rehman Tipu and Atta Yousafi, had a nett score of 59.3 while the husband and wife pairings of David and Dena Wales and Rob and Debbie Lane came third with 59.9 nett.

The Professionals' team, consisting of director of golf Philip Waine, golf sales manager Ben Stimson, tournament coordinator Adam Dutton and newly-

arrived retail manager Oliver Foster achieved a team nett score of 60.

"Well done to the three teams who beat us and to all those who participated," said Dutton after the match. "This is a popular annual tournament for our members with those managing to beat the pros enjoying bragging rights for the rest of the year!"

Results:
1st Ebrahim & Badea Esbai, Fahad Al Hakam & Khalifa Daij (gross 62/nett 58.1), 2nd Ifthikhar Butt, Naem Khan, Rehman Tipu & Atta Yousafi (gross 68/nett 59.3), 3rd David & Dena Wales, Rob & Debbie Lane (gross 65/nett 59.9). Pros' Team: Adam Dutton, Philip Waine, Ben Stimson & Oliver Foster (60).

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Motor Sport

Bahrain International Circuit – the home of motorsport in the Middle East

THE GP2 Series will officially become the FIA Formula 2 Championship when the 2017 season starts in Bahrain next month.

This follows an agreement between Formula One Group and the sport's governing body, the International Automobile Federation (FIA).

The joint announcement was recently made at the World Motor Sport Council held in Geneva, Switzerland.

Started in 2005, the GP2 series has firmly established itself on the world stage as one of the premier one-make racing championships.

And the FIA Formula 2 Championship aims to continue to provide the same opportunities for young driver talent to demonstrate their abilities in front of Formula 1 teams as they compete on world-renowned circuits, on a car created to ensure that the challenge for the teams is also maintained.

With Formula 1 at its peak, Formula 2 (F2) joins the ranks of single-seater FIA championships, which aim to nurture talented drivers from karting through Formula 4 and Formula 3 before they enter the world stage.

With F2 in place, motorsport will be more accessible to both drivers and fans, the sport's organisers believe.

Since GP2's inaugural season, many drivers from the series have graduated from the championship to Formula 1 every year.

The GP2 Series was launched by now-former F1 chief Bernie Ecclestone and former Renault team principal Flavio Briatore in 2005 as a training ground for up-and-

IT TAKES TWO!



ON TRACK: GP2 will set off in Bahrain and, below, from left, Nato and Ghiotto

coming racing drivers.

F2 previously served the function from 1948 through 1985, when it was replaced by Formula 3000. The format was revived in 2009 through 2012 when it was disbanded again. Another attempt at bringing it back failed in 2015.

GP2 cars are built by Dallara and powered by 4.0-litre V8 engines furnished by Mecachrome. The rebranded

series will presumably continue with the same machinery introduced in 2011 until they need to be replaced by a new design.

FIA Formula 2 Championship CEO Bruno Michel described the move as 'a great opportunity for our drivers, our teams and our partners'. "After 12 amazing GP2 seasons which have provided an incredible show for fans and took 28

drivers to an official Formula 1 seat – including two World Champions – we have decided along with the FIA to become known as the FIA Formula 2 Championship," he added.

"The FIA has fully embraced GP2's core values which will now be adopted by Formula 2; a powerful, safe and challenging car, enthralling races, and a training ground to enter Formula 1 with a particular focus on cost control."

Since its inception the GP2 Series was designed to reflect five core values: performance, cost control, entertainment, safety and preparation.

GP2 lap times are highly competitive with the final few rows on the F1 grid.

Engines which provide over 612bhp, plus ground effects and proper slick tyres make the cars powerful and tricky beasts to handle.

The 2017 season will

contain 11 rounds, 10 supporting the F1 World Championship test when he topped the penultimate session in Barcelona, setting a qualifying style lap of 1:27.834 to take home the first pre-season bragging rights ahead of Oliver Rowland (0.054) and Alexander Albon (0.105). In the final session of the test, Luca Ghiotto stopped the clocks at 1:29.565 to top the afternoon ahead of Johnny Cecotto (0.262) and Nyck De Vries (0.426).

With little in the way of unreliability affecting the grid, the teams will analyse their data before turning their attention to the next pre-season test, which will run for three days in Bahrain from next Wednesday.

The GP2 season starts in the kingdom on April 15-16 as a support to the Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix weekend motorsport bonanza.

FIA FORMULA 2 CHAMPIONSHIP

PREMA Racing

01. Charles Leclerc (MON)
02. Antonio Fuoco (ITA)

Racing Engineering

03. Louis Delétraz (SUI)
04. Gustav Malja (SWE)

RUSSIAN TIME

05. Luca Ghiotto (ITA)
06. Artem Markelov (RUS)

ART Grand Prix

07. Nobuharu Matsushita (JAP)
08. Alexander Albon (THA)

DAMS

09. Oliver Rowland (GBR)
10. Nicholas Latifi (CAN)

Campos Racing

11. Ralph Boschung (SUI)
12. Roberto Merhi (ESP)

MP Motorsport

14. Sergio Sette Camara (BRA)
15. Jordan King (GBR)

Trident

16. Nabil Jeffri (MAS)
17. Sergio Canamasas (ESP)

Rapax

18. Nyck de Vries (NED)
19. Johnny Cecotto (VEN)

Pertamina Arden

20. Norman Nato (FRA)
21. Sean Gelael (INA)

Bitter experience to pay dividends for driver with point to prove

JOLYON Palmer, by his own admission, did not make much of a mark on Formula One last season.

But the 'other Brit' on the starting grid, now that Jenson Button has departed and left Lewis Hamilton as the country's only active world champion, is hoping to leave a stronger impression second time around.

"One point. Yeah. I didn't make a big dent into it," the Renault driver said of his 2016 tally from 21 races. "I'm really confident that it will be a much better season. I haven't got a lot of doubt about it."

Last season was a hard slog in a car best forgotten. Announced by Lotus as a driver before Renault completed their takeover of a team

in desperate need of finance, Palmer was in danger of being squeezed out after the French manufacturer signed Nico Hulkenberg for 2017.

Instead, it was Denmark's Kevin Magnussen who left for Haas and Palmer the one who stayed ... which was just as well, because he had no Plan B.

"I honestly think you learn more in the difficult times," said Palmer. "And really, last year there were times where I had to pull myself together. The year started quite difficult and I had to regroup and get my head straight for doing what I could the rest of the year. And having come through that, now I'm sat here with that experience which a lot of drivers don't have.

"You're on the back foot and in a fight for survival. I've come through that and now hopefully we are going to have a much stronger year, and I know I can dig deep and when the pressure's on, shine through."

Renault are aiming for fifth place overall, a big improvement from ninth last year, but Palmer will still be occupying a very different space from Hamilton. There are no gold necklaces, Hollywood red carpets or private jets in the life of one of the few F1 drivers with a university education. Mention the word 'bling' and he smiles.

"You know what, I think that's a long way away," said Palmer, who shares an apartment in London with

his sister when not living out of a suitcase.

A champion in the GP2 feeder series at the fourth attempt in 2014 - Hamilton won it first time out in 2006 - Palmer acquired a reputation for steady improvement that was also evident last year.

He will need to shift up a gear against Le Mans winner Hulkenberg, who brings a wealth of experience from Williams and Force India and will be expected to lead the team, but Palmer said he felt a lot more relaxed.

"I know what to expect, I know how it works and I've got a good relationship with the management here," he said. "I feel like hopefully we're set up for the future as a team now."



STEADY PROGRESS: Renault Sport F1 Team's British driver Palmer

Mini Olympics kicks off in style

THE official opening ceremony of the 4th Mini Olympics was held on Monday at Isa Town Sports City's Bahrain Volleyball Association gym in right royal style.

Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, representative of His Majesty for Charity Works and Youth Affairs, chairman of Supreme Council for Youth and Sports and president of Bahrain Olympic Committee (BOC), attended the event adding to the excitement for children in attendance.

The Mini Olympics is organised by the BOC, in association with the Ministry of Education, assisted by individual sporting associations determining the nature of each competition.

The BOC's aim is not to provide another outlet for existing excellence to shine, rather to encourage the emergence of new talent while facilitating additional participation in sport.

Following an opening address from the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports assistant general secretary and Bahrain Olympic Committee general secretary Abdulrahman Askar, Shaikh Nasser officially declared the event open before meeting youngsters involved in the opening ceremony.

"We are very pleased and proud to bring this event every year, in an attempt to promote the values and principles of the Olympic among government



FLAME BURNING: The Olympic torch, Shaikh Nasser at the ceremony and one of the Bahraini-clad dancers steps forward

By ABU GEORGE
abu.george@gulfweekly.com

and private schools in the Kingdom, and motivate them to practice sports activities and follow a healthy life style," explained Askar.

"We look to discover promising sports talent, build a solid foundation and involve them in competitive sporting activities organised by sports clubs and associations.

"We are also keen to establish competitive sports activities organised at schools."

The entertainment commenced with 12 primary school pupils dancing and twirling hula hoops decorated in Olympic designs, finishing by forming the Olympic rings in an imaginative and well-coordinated display.

This was followed by another group, beautifully dressed in Bahraini attire, demonstrating traditional dancing before other children, representing the various sporting disciplines, stepped into the stadium accompanied by the marching band of the Indian School.

The BOC and individual associations are being particularly challenged this year with the event, which runs until March 30 at a variety of venues across Bahrain, being larger than ever before.

Aimed at individual schools, more than 2,000 local and expatriate students are expected to participate with 42 government and private schools having entered.

The action commenced on Thursday with a 3-on-3 basketball tournament

followed by the preliminary group matches from the cricket competition, although many of the games were washed away by the rain!

The first medals were presented to Dar Kulaib who claimed the mini volleyball tournament gold medals, overcoming both teams from Al Nasser in the process.

Bahrain Volleyball Association president Shaikh Ali bin Mohammed Al Khalifa, joined by his son Shaikh Mohammed bin Ali Al Khalifa, honoured the top three teams at the prize presentation ceremony.

Competitions among the 14 sports on display are divided into different age categories for boys and girls with activities ranging from Jiu Jitsu and Taekwondo to Gymnastics and Taekwondo while there is also space for a Duathlon, perhaps aimed at breeding future triathletes.

New sports present include cricket, hockey and karting with the first two also introducing girls-only events for the first time in Bahrain.

Football will be the most active sport with matches played at junior, intermediate and senior levels across a variety of venues.

The curtain will be drawn on the Mini Olympics by athletics and hockey with medals being presented on March 29, leaving attention to be focused on the closing ceremony the following day.

The activities have been specifically selected to be engaging to the participants while fun for spectators ... so climb out of your armchair to go and watch!



THANK YOU

To all the participants, attendees and sponsors for contributing to the success of our "Karting 4 Schools" activity, which was held on Friday 10th March 2017.

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MY HEART IS SET ON WINNING TITLE AGAIN

RACING WITH PASSION: Mercedes AMG Petronas F1 Team's driver Lewis Hamilton



DECISION TIME: Buemi

Buemi facing race dilemma

SPEED KING Sébastien Buemi, a former Bahrain resident whose family still lives in the kingdom, is facing a racing dilemma.

After becoming the first driver to win three Formula E rounds in a row, as reported in *Gulf Weekly*, he spoke exclusively of a crunch decision he now faces.

"It feels great," he said. "I did not expect to win the first three races in a row but looking ahead, I have a potential clash with the WEC. I might end up missing the two races from New York and this could hurt me very much regarding the championship. So the objective is clear, I must try to win as many points as possible!"

Buemi, who drives for Toyota in WEC and Renault e.dams in Formula E, is the most high-profile name of those affected if both the Nurburgring WEC and New York Formula E races take place on July 16.

There had been suggestions that the former might be pushed back a week, as the German GP has been removed from the F1 calendar.

Buemi, the reigning Formula E champion, has won in Argentina, Hong Kong and Morocco and leads the standings by 29 points from Brazilian Lucas Di Grassi with the next race in Mexico City on April 1.

Much in demand, he is still a reserve driver for Formula One's former champions Red Bull and although he would love another crack at the F1 challenge he appears satisfied with his lot... but never say never. "My job is now more in the simulator as testing became really restrictive over the last few seasons."

"I will do everything I can to get an opportunity but my current situation is very good with Toyota in the WEC and Renault Formula E. It would need to be a great option for me to leave my current teams."

LAST season was the one that got away for Lewis Hamilton and the triple Formula One world champion is not prepared to let that happen again in 2017. His heart is set on reclaiming his crown.

The Briton has won more grand prix races than anyone still driving around a racetrack, and knows all the tricks as he starts his 11th season. He is the outright favourite for sport pundits ahead of Sunday's season-opener in Australia.

There could still be a few bumps in the road ahead, however.

For those who fear the Mercedes man will have it easy following the retirement of Nico Rosberg, the German team mate who beat him to the title while winning fewer races, there is an alternative scenario. "Imagine Ferrari are great

and the championship is being fought between Sebastian Vettel, with four world championships and Lewis, with three," 1996 world champion Damon Hill told reporters. "That's going to be an exciting battle."

It could happen, with Ferrari fastest in pre-season testing and raising suspicions that their new SF70H car has closed the chasm between Mercedes and the rest. Vettel is the second favourite.

Mercedes have won 51 of the last 59 races, and all but two of 21 last year. Former Red Bull ace Vettel and veteran team mate Kimi Raikkonen, Ferrari's most recent world champion in 2007, drew a blank in 2016 and have plenty of pressure on them to succeed.

There is also the possibility, albeit remote despite Rosberg's surprise decision to retire only days after winning his first title, that Hamilton does something explosive.

"Lewis is an emotional beast and there might be a situation where he just goes: 'I've had enough and I don't want to do it,'" said Hill. "If it's not going well for Lewis, then he does have a tendency to make his feelings known."

Hamilton is huge box office, a global celebrity and familiar face even in America. And Americans like winners. But it would do no good for Formula One, in a new era of faster cars and US-based owners Liberty Media calling the shots in place of ousted 86-year-old supremo Bernie Ecclestone, if Hamilton runs away unchallenged.

With Valtteri Bottas still finding his feet after joining from Williams as Rosberg's replacement, and yet to win a race, that is also quite possible.

Bottas has never been beaten by a team mate over a season, but he has spent all his time at Williams... and Hamilton is something else.

"Nico had his guts turned

inside out to win that championship last year," said Hill. "Hamilton is a fearsome competitor. I think he'll redouble his efforts after last year."

Red Bull's Max Verstappen and Australian Daniel Ricciardo, who each won a race last year, can also be counted on for thrills and their new car could be more competitive than testing times have indicated.

Williams have the youngest and least experienced driver on the grid in Canadian 18-year-old rookie Lance Stroll but he is better placed than Belgian standout Stoffel Vandoorne at McLaren. Vandoorne, who did one race last year, has replaced the departed 2009 champion Jenson Button in a car plagued with reliability problems.

The sport has a new look, with fatter tyres and wider cars that also look more aggressive. That has seen lap times slashed, with drivers able to take many

corners flat out even if cars are slower on the straights.

Whether they can overtake any more easily remains an open question, and the more durable tyres are likely to lead to fewer pitstops.

"Let's hope the racing's fantastic, but don't hold your breath, I'd say," commented Hamilton after the first pre-season test.

The same sentiment might well apply to anyone hoping to beat the Briton this season.

"Mercedes are the clear, clear favourites. They have won 50 races in the last three years, we've won five and Ferrari three. Do I have to say more?" Red Bull principal Christian Horner told the *official F1.com* website.

Race fans will know more by the time the Formula 1 roadshow rocks into Bahrain for the new season's third race on April 16.

● **Motor Sport: Page 23 and F1 weekend news: Page 9**