

Gulf Weekly

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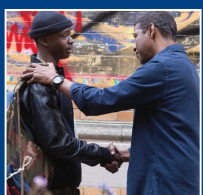
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HEAD TO HEAD



ST CHRISTOPHER'S SCHOOL: Dr Simon Watson

THE two leading British-curriculum private schools in the kingdom have welcomed children for the start of the new academic year with new men at the helm.

Both learning establishments have long been rivals aiming to entice expats and local parents to place their children and pay hefty schools fees of more than BD2,000-a-term for the oldest pupils.

They have regularly received top marks from local and international inspectors, both have waiting lists for certain age groups and both are set to build new secondary schools.

Their glowing reputations and their ambitious expansion plans proved too tempting for the dynamic duo, who both suffered a seven-year itch to move on from their highly-successful senior positions to take up the new challenges in Bahrain.

One has the daunting task of stepping into the shoes of an educationist titan who ruled the roost for 23 years and the other joins an establishment which in recent years has had a conveyor belt of senior heads, albeit he's the first appointment under its new ownership regime.

They haven't met yet but both St Christopher's School's principal Dr Simon Watson and the British School of Bahrain's executive head Jeff Smith both agreed to speak to *GulfWeekly's* Editor Stan Szczotka about the reasons they have come, what they can bring to the kingdom's education scene and to share their hopes, aspirations and dreams for the schools under their wings.



BRITISH SCHOOL OF BAHRAIN: Jeff Smith

Turn to Page 4-5



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Italian sensation

HOSPITALITY EXCLUSIVE

By STAN SZECOWKA
editor@gulfweekly.com

ITALIAN celebrity Chef Giancarlo 'Xbe' Perbellini is back in the kitchen, doing what he loves best, preparing for this week's grand opening of his signature restaurant in Bahrain.

The Gulf Hotel Bahrain Convention Centre & Spa's La Pergola has been rebranded as La Pergola by Perbellini following a stunning BD200,000 redesign and extensive refurbishment, as revealed in *GulfWeekly*.

To ensure nothing goes amiss, Chef Xbe (pronounced Perbe) has been diligently working with his team of chefs putting the finishing touches to the menu and staging special pre-opening tasting sessions.

"I'm so excited to be here in Bahrain," he said, "and thrilled at how the restaurant looks. I like it a lot – the combination of the sea and the desert is just as I hoped for and envisaged."



HANDS ON: Celebrity Chef Giancarlo 'Xbe' Perbellini at home in the kitchen in Bahrain

Beautiful sea-blue walls with matching covered comfortable seats have been cleverly combined with lit golden panels that conjure a

vision of bubbles rising from a sea bed. The theme in Chef Xbe's heart was 'from the earth to the sea'.

One of the kingdom's oldest

Italian restaurants, which, to be honest, had felt a little staid and dated, has been transformed into a vibrant, airy, cool, comfortable and contemporary dining destination.

The new design of La Pergola by Perbellini has been inspired by his outlet Al Capitan, a winning vibe he wanted to mirror here. As well as celebrating the cuisine, restaurant reviewers have also highlighted its 'warm and welcoming ambience in the heart of Verona'.

He says the aim was always to create a similar buzz in Bahrain with a feel that encapsulates the desert sands alongside the waves and beauty of the Arabian Gulf.

As well as the look and ambience of the restaurant, he knows Italian food connoisseurs and regulars of the Gulf Hotel outlet will judge him on the quality of the fare on offer.

"We will make something fresh. A new concept – we look at traditional Italian cuisine in a modern way, with our eyes and with our hearts," he promised. "I believe people in Bahrain will enjoy the experience as we make real Italian dishes



ALL SMILES: Chef Xbe inside La Pergola by Perbellini and, below, ambassadors and VIPs all set to savour the flavour

full of those familiar tastes but with a twist."

Amongst the delights delivered during last weekend's tasting sessions attended by VIPs, ambassadors, business executives and members of the media, was the Risotto alla Milanese, Olio di Finocchio e Arancia, a Milan interpretation of a classic northern Italian rice dish, cooked in a broth dish which results in a divine, thick and creamy concoction, as highlighted in last week's *Eating Out* review.

British businessman Stephen Harrison, who was one of the diners last Thursday evening, agreed, telling the chef as he visited the diners to get their reactions: "The risotto ... I have been to Milan many times but that was stunning."

As predicted, the Filetto di Manzo Pire de Patate

Affumicate, a divine pan-fried Angus beef fillet placed on a layer of smoked mashed potatoes, alongside olive pesto and slowly-cooked tomatoes, was a main course that also bowled over the guests.

It's been a busy time for Chef Xbe who also opened a new restaurant in Milan in April to much acclaim. And, of course, the two-Michelin starred culinary king is one of Italy's most celebrated pastry chefs, a legend amongst his peers. Coming from a long line of pastry makers held in high regard since 1890, he is acclaimed for his desserts.

"That's still my passion," he said, shortly after serving an exquisite Meringa, a fresh fruit Panna Cotta-style dessert with meringue.

The culinary celebrations are just about to begin ...

● *Eating Out British-style at the new Bulls Head: Page 11*

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BIG-HEARTED Fatima Al Mansoori, who has been in Kerala offering support and comfort to flood-hit families, has flown back to Bahrain to be told that the Indian community here would like to acknowledge the compassion she has shown.

The Pravassy Association of Angamaly – Nedumbassery (PAAN) in the kingdom has chosen her to receive its annual Best Social Worker Award at an awards ceremony to be staged on September 28.

The accolade will be handed over to her at a ceremony by Supreme Court judge, Justice Kurian Joseph. He will be flying to Bahrain from India for the event to be staged at the Marmaris Hall in Salmaniya.

Surprised Fatima, 35, said: "I'm deeply honoured and grateful for the appreciation shown. Being valued nourishes the soul."

"I just felt a pressing need to go to the flooded areas and help in any way I could, even if it meant simply providing emotional support, to listen to the victims' stories or simply to be there to hold their hands."

She used the power of social media to highlight, in real time, what was happening on the ground and her efforts were broadcast across India, at home and abroad.

"People have lost so much, in fact in many cases everything they possessed, as houses and whole communities collapsed under the floods," she told *GulfWeekly* at the time. "I was anxious to highlight the reality of this harsh and painful disaster, so that the suffering could be felt and better understood and make people fully aware of the needs of the people."

Later her focus was to provide integrative psychosocial mental health support to help prevent further suicide incidents that were happening as a result of post-flood trauma.

PAAN Bahrain was established in Bahrain in 2006 and its members are involved in cultural, philanthropic and charitable activities. Honorary president Poulouse Pallippadan said its award panel decided to honour Fatima for her 'selfless services to humanity' and 'especially her support towards the flood-affected families'.

As reported in *GulfWeekly*, the well-known yoga teacher and practitioner was set to conduct a short course at Mangalore University and visit a Keralite friend's family home as well as an eco-project in the region as part of her Indian trip itinerary.

Her plans suddenly changed when weeks of heavy

Film role and gratitude

COMMUNITY REPORT

By STAN SZECOWKA
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monsoon rains triggered landslides and floods. Instead of fleeing the area she set off in the direction of the disaster. She visited rescue centres, temporary schools and safe buildings used for sleeping accommodation for the homeless and witnessed the devastation up close, including a collapsed house in which people died, and the scene of a landslide.

More than 350 people were killed, most of them in landslides, and 725,000 people had to take refuge in relief camps. A big clean-up operation and reconstruction work is now underway and Fatima aims to continue to highlight and raise awareness of the continuing plight faced by the flood survivors.

Her campaign will be boosted by an appearance in a movie too, focusing on the river. Director Vijeesh Mani, who specialises in making environmental films, heard about her activities and asked her to help in his latest production called *Puzhayamma*.

"The director happened to see one of the recent videos of my contribution to the flood relief effort," she explained. "He wanted to include me in his film as the part he envisioned had a direct connection. I didn't have to learn any lines or anything as my character was really just me. I improvised on set and came up with my own dialogue."

Getting ready for the shoot was demanding with make-up, lights and action all part of the process. "The experience was best described as 'muddy and rough' because the whole film was shot in and around the river," she said.

"I've done live TV and recorded interviews in the past but this was a totally new experience. However, it helped that I was working with an experienced crew, alongside professional actors



ON THE SCENE: Caring Fatima visiting one of the rescue centres and being prepared for her movie debut

and a make-up artist who was very talented too!

"Although I have been asked several times to act in the past I'm just not interested. The only reason I accepted this role was because it had a direct connection to what I had been doing in Kerala and it's a subject that I'm passionate about. *Puzhayamma* is about river pollution – the movie is unique and has a deep message."

"My mission remains the same, to deliver support to those who need it, shed light on the situation and continue to spread awareness. All forms of media can be powerful tools to help accomplish these things."

Help from Bahrain has been swift. His Majesty King Hamad assigned the Royal Charity Organisation to send relief material and expatriate associations set up relief drives. The Indian Club set up a committee to help co-ordinate activities.

There are an estimated 400,000 Indians in Bahrain, making them the largest expatriate group in the

country, and the majority are from Kerala.

Fatima also hopes to promote and help bring business to the region as it slowly recovers. She has visited Rajah Island, home to one of the best

ayurvedic traditional medicine retreat destinations in Kerala, and met with its management to discuss the possibility of future collaborations in staging yoga retreats.

She also visited Chandigarh to speak about using yoga as a way to cope and recover from addictions and collaborate on a research project with

neuroscientist Professor Akshay Anand.

"I have carried out a programme in Bahrain at the psychiatric hospital drug rehabilitation department and the patient feedback was excellent," she said. "Dr Akshay will be able to show me how to document results scientifically."

Finally, she hopes to rearrange her original schedule and return to Mangalore University to deliver a series of lectures in the near future in her role as an adjunct professor at the department of human consciousness and yogic sciences.

● Indian School Bahrain rallies to the cause: Page 14



VIP VISIT: Supreme Court judge, Justice Kurian Joseph



AT YOUR SERVICE: The association's Davis Girvasis, Pancily Varkey, Poulouse Pallippadan, Francis Kaitharath and Sinto Antony

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EXPERIENCED Jeff Smith has celebrated his 55th birthday by stepping into the newly-created position of overall executive head of the British School of Bahrain (BSB) and will also fulfil the role of head of senior school ... the latest arrival in the top post following a whirlwind of senior management changes in recent years, writes Stan Szczotka.

He replaced Julie Anne Gilbert who had earlier 'expressed her wish' to return to a previous role of head of infants, and the seniors' former head, Khalil Ahmed, whose services were dispensed with suddenly by new international owners, Inspired, which also operates private schools across Europe, Australia, Africa and Latin America.

Jeff dismissed any suggestion the position could be considered a poisoned chalice judging from the brevity of recent incumbents, saying: "I don't know many schools that don't go through a period in their history where there is similar disruption, at my last school they had previously had three directors in three years! There are many highly-renowned schools that go through difficult times."

From the English northern town of Bolton, Jeff has a British Army military background and is married to Heather. They have three children, Helen, 27, a senior staff nurse, Joseph, 26, an NHS physiotherapist and Elliot, 21, who has just finished his degree in sports sciences and is just starting a two-year Masters at Newcastle. They have a grandchild, Sebastian, three, and one on the way.

He's more than just a safe pair of hands and packs a powerful educational résumé having joined the teaching profession in the UK as a physics graduate, rising swiftly up the ranks to head of science and deputy head.

He moved overseas to Indonesia for his first headship in 2003 at the British International School in Jakarta, moved back to Europe to lead Guernsey Grammar School before growing Dubai's Deira International School from 1,100 to 1,700 students and improving its assessment from 'acceptable' to 'outstanding'.

"The school had some problems when I got there seven years ago," he explained. "There needed to be a big upgrade, they needed to improve on the teaching and learning processes and there were a lot of management issues."

"I had always looked at

Leading the way ahead



BENCH BUDDIES: Jeff takes time out for a photograph with some of the pupils before their sports lesson begins at the British School of Bahrain

spending six or seven years in a school and managed to gain a bit of a reputation for improvement, so when I got approached about this, I relished the challenge of the whole BSB project.

"I saw its potential and I liked what I heard about Inspired's views and plans. We can already see ways to get things moving quickly. We are going to do a tremendous amount of work."

"The school has a good reputation and its examination results, like the ones they've just got for A levels and GCSEs, have been exceptional, but there was an admittance by all that it needs to develop its leadership."

"It's about bringing all three schools together under one model rather than operating as three quite independent entities. It's about bringing it together, with equal standards all the way through the school, with a common assessment practice and united themes."

"There is always room for improvement. This is not going to be a school that sits on its laurels and thinks that we are there and have arrived, we are going to be monitoring and evaluating very closely and we are actually going to be always looking to change and improve things."

"It's going to be about whole school development with our teachers, middle leaders, leading the development."

"The other thing we will be developing is our parental

relationships. I have a very open door policy. I've already had a lot of parents and children coming in and it's great to meet them. They give you so much information, you get a good picture of what needs developing straight away."

He appreciates when there's constant change at a strategic level of governance and management, understandably, staff members 'do not feel safe and comfortable' and that can be a problem.

"You have to win back hearts and minds," he said. "I have spoken to the staff about putting their trust back in the system. There are some fantastic people here and they just need an opportunity to develop."

"I also met a lot of the students too when I came here on my initial walk around. They sort of interviewed me. It absolutely confirmed what I had heard about the students at BSB, about their good nature, their goodwill, how they work together and just how lovely they are."

"Although international students tend to work well in schools, this was a bit special. When you visited the place there was a special atmosphere and relationship between the staff and the students. It's a funny thing, you can sense and pick it up and I certainly sensed it."

Finding out background information on BSB was a simple affair; the senior staff changes in the past decade have been well documented

in this newspaper, with head teachers coming and going and it once witnessed a mass exodus of staff as 60 per cent of teachers and senior managers either handed in their notices or failed to have their contracts renewed.

The school, however, is now part of a global group educating more than 26,000 students across an international network of 32 schools on five continents. Inspired's group education director Dr Stephen Spurr is a well-respected name in education circles, a former Eton College head of classics, headmaster of Clifton College and Westminster School.

"At first it was more a process of 'do I believe in what Inspired wants to achieve and does its plans match my aspirations?' I found very good alignment – we know exactly where we want to go and what needs to be done," Jeff said.

One of BSB's unique selling points since it moved from its 'Dickensian' home in Adliya to Hamala in 2008 was having a 'one site for all ages' campus. But the school now has 2,650 pupils on its roll and space, plus traffic congestion around the site, has become a challenge to put it mildly.

Inspired earlier this year announced plans to build a separate senior school which would allow more space on its current campus for younger pupils.

The proposal excited Jeff. "It was part of the draw,"

he admitted. "The idea of specialised exam year focussed groups, Year Nine and above, is something they do at some of the very best independent schools in the UK. It is the model they are proposing here and certainly it's one I have bought into and agree it's the way forward, so, yes, it was part of the draw."

Land, he has been told, has been secured reasonably close by and the proposed timescale to open the new secondary school doors is September 2020 which he described as 'sensible'.

"What they are doing at the moment is looking at different models, architectural plans and deciding which way to go," said Jeff.

That regular but beautiful theme of Bahrain's warm welcome raised its pretty head again too. "Bahrainis want to work with you and they are very, very welcoming. That was my first impression," he said.

BSB is a member of the Council of British International Schools (COBIS) and during his time in Dubai, Jeff's school became active members of rival network the British Schools of the Middle East (BSME), and he frequently came across St Christopher's School former principal, Ed Goodwin.

"Ed was the kingpin, the guru, and I had spoken to him at conferences," he said, "and when I came here I took the opportunity of going to see him because I knew he was retiring."

He's yet to meet Ed's replacement although he knows of Dr Simon by reputation.

"I don't know him but, hopefully, we will get together soon and meet up. If you know Dubai, there was tons of rivalry between different schools and we got rid of that. If you work with people at head of school level you can achieve so much and feed off each other, share information and help each other."

"Yes, I'll be holding my hand out to St Chris. I've heard a lot about the new guy and his qualities and I'm sure we will want to work together in the future."

Since the acquisition of the school by Inspired, investment has been made to make improvements and enhancements, including an expanded and redesigned cafeteria, a redesigned entry in infants, a new library in the senior building and enhanced drama and music rooms.

The owners believe the appointment of Jeff as executive head and head of the senior school, and the newly-defined and strengthened management structure working with him, including Julie Anne as head of infants and Robert Howe as head of juniors, was an inspired move with 'a leadership team of the highest calibre'.

"These are exciting times for the school and children as we build on the existing success of BSB," Inspired said.

DR SIMON Watson has flown into Bahrain with his family from Malaysia to take over as principal of St Christopher's School, replacing veteran educationist Ed Goodwin who sat in the principal's chair for 23 years, writes Stan Szczotka.

He's already set out to win the hearts and minds of his 400-strong team of teachers and support staff with an open, inclusive style of management and he plans an all-out offensive to bring the whole community on board.

Simon, 50, from Devon, first carved a career in the UK before culturing it on the international stage with stopovers in the Czech Republic, New Zealand, Denmark and Malaysia and he portrays a quiet confidence. He knows what he wants and he knows how to achieve it.

"I have a lot of respect for what Ed has done here, he has created a wonderful school," he said. "My style would tend to move towards the more collaborative, looking for ways we can involve the community, whether it's teachers, students and parents, looking at how they can identify the areas to be worked on."

"With a school like St Chris, where things are in place and things are working, we're not really looking to shake it up a great deal – we're really looking at building on its strengths, looking at identifying the opportunities."

"We've already had a big session on the first day of term with the staff (before the school opened its doors to the pupils). It was workshop-based, getting their feedback and they were very appreciative, they liked it."

"We talked about values and I shared my three – passion, empathy and mutual respect. I talked at some length and I got them to list their own values."

"I think that for me 'mutual respect' is significant because we have to respect the children we teach and they, in turn, will respect you."

"I emphasised the relationships between children, adults and children, and with parents, and how important it is to make sure we get the right boundaries between being welcoming and maintaining the safety and security that we all want. It was quite an interesting session."

He added that when it comes to reaching out and embracing the community, he's not only talking about his own teachers, pupils, parents and the school's governors, but other learning establishments, businesses and organisations in the kingdom. "Those relationships might already exist but I need to feel what they are and maintain them,

Showing some respect



TABLE MANNERS: Dr Simon meets pupils as it brings his collaborative style into play at St Christopher's School

and, if they're not there, to establish them," he said.

Simon was also "really looking forward" to the children getting back to school and "seeing what it's like, getting the noise and the buzz around".

He was well settled in Malaysia as principal of one of the country's leading schools, Kolej Tuanku Ja'afar, and was also chair of the Federation of British International Schools in Asia (FOBISIA) ... but the lure of St Chris and its expansion plans proved irresistible.

"I was there for seven years and really enjoyed the school, enjoyed working with the students, the staff, and the governors were very supportive."

"Now there are new challenges, new opportunities. St Chris has a good reputation so it's about coming to a school that is already at a high level and taking it further."

He admits it's a "different sort of challenge" to his last port of call where he "had to lift it up quite quickly".

One big draw was the planned move to open a new St Christopher's secondary school which has been bubbling in the pot for years.

"It was a big attraction," he admitted. "I had done a lot of building work at my previous school, building a new primary school, refurbishing and bringing on new buildings, so I have a lot of experience."

"Coming here, with the potential of building a whole new senior school, doesn't happen very often in a principal's lifetime, so that was a great opportunity that I wanted to take and, hopefully, it will come to fruition."

Sources have told *GulfWeekly* that land close to the infant and junior school site in Saar has come close to being secured but a few planning issues, not related to the particular school project, between the land's owners and relevant government departments, still need to be ironed out. "It would be good to get a site that is closer and more accessible," he said.

The currently cramped secondary school is situated in the packed Isa Town education quarter and Simon has still to meet with Tim Murray, the chair of governors' of the not-for-profit school, and the consultants the school is working with on the project, for an update.

St Christopher's started from modest beginnings in 1961 in a villa and now caters for more than 2,300 pupils, aged three to 18, from around 70 nations.

Being the father of four daughters has provided him with plenty of homework when it comes to understanding children. His wife, Dr Lucy Bailey, is also a respected educationalist, worked as an associate professor of education at the University of Nottingham's Malaysia Campus and has taken up a lecturing post at Bahrain University.

Their eldest daughter, Anahita, 18, is studying at Harvard University in the US, and the three youngest, Pietta, nine, Katiyah, 13, Miranne, 15, are, like their dad, settling into new school life at St Chris.

The family has been pleasantly surprised by the warmth and hospitality they have encountered since touching down here on

August 13, something long-standing expats perhaps take too much for granted.

"We travelled with Gulf Air which was a great flight – we'd never flown with them before and it was really good," said Simon. "We landed and everything was so smooth at immigration, which compared to previous experiences in other countries, was amazing!"

"Everybody we have met so far, whether they are expat or Bahraini, has been so welcoming and friendly. Only yesterday we went to one of the local restaurants in Isa Town to sample some traditional Bahraini food. They were so nice, falling over themselves to give us what we wanted, whether we wanted spicy or not spicy, whether we wanted eggs. They were so friendly and they even ended up taking photographs of us to put on the board."

"I think the overwhelming feeling and experience is the fact that Bahrainis are so welcoming, so friendly and really happy to help wherever they can."

One thing he will not be doing immediately, is looking for a central role within the British Schools of the Middle East (BSME) platform. Ed held a similar position in the schools' organisation as Simon enjoyed in its Asian equivalent.

"I think an organisation like BSME gives opportunities to the students and allows them to participate at different levels so I think that's really important for the school."

"For the teachers there's lots of professional development opportunities too which might not be

available within one institution."

"There's a network allowing head teachers to talk about the latest issues and also initiatives coming out of the UK."

Conferences and workshops can be staged and experts invited over and hosted with costs shared.

"It's an important path for the school but I'm not looking to become involved in BSME in the same way as I was in Asia. I don't know what's going to happen in the next few years but, at the moment, I am focusing on St Christopher's."

Simon is being supported by his top team, senior school stalwart and head Nick Wilson, Ian Fellows, head of the junior school, who

moved up this school year from the infant school, and his replacement in that position as head, newcomer Nat Dickinson.

His message is simple: "Come with an open mind and ready to embrace the new leadership of the school and look at how we can become an ever stronger community," he said.

"I'm a different person to Ed and consequently the way I will run the school will be different. My leadership style will be different and it will be interesting to see when you ask me these questions in a year whether I have achieved what I had initially set out to do."

Noted. It's already in the editor's 2019 diary.



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2. Kissan jam mix fruit 500gmx2 – BD1
3. Cottage air freshener 3x300 ml/p – BD1
4. Ice cream bar variety mix 191.4gm – BD1.490
5. Maza pure sunflower oil 2ltr – BD1

Note: This offer is available in Carrefour Hyper Market until Sunday.

Al Jazira Supermarket Zinj

1. Jacquot truffles ballotin 6x200gm – BD1.350
2. Cemoi lemon truffles 6x150gm – BD1.350
3. Cemoi chocolate bar 82percent cocoa 6x100gm – BD0.750
4. Cemoi chocolate almonds bar 4x100gm – BD0.750
5. Cemoi flaky pear truffles 6x150gm – BD1.350

Lulu Hypermarket

1. Spanish whole green & black olives/kg – BD0.925
2. Australian lamb leg bone-in/kg – BD2.350
3. LuLu frozen chicken 1000gm 10pcs – BD8.290
4. LuLu sunflower oil 1.8ltr 2pcs – BD2.290
5. Marwa mineral water 200ml 4pcs – BD1.390
6. McCain thin cut potato frites 2.5kg – BD1.500

Jawad Supermarket

1. Filiz vermicelli 4x400gm – BD1
2. Emborg broad beans 450gm – BD0.900
3. Alfares dumpling mix 2x500gm sp – BD0.600
4. Nature Valley granola bar apple crunch – BD1.100
5. Americana mix vegetable 450gm – BD0.525
6. Al Khaleej vermicelli 4x400gm – BD1

It's official ... the big store is truly open!

THOUSANDS of shoppers have been flocking to the newly-opened IKEA furniture store in Bahrain after last week's VIP ribbon-cutting ceremony.

It was officially inaugurated by Deputy Prime Minister Shaikh Khalid bin Abdulla Al Khalifa who joined VIPs, government officials and special guests' for the official unveiling 24-hours before the doors opened to the general public last Wednesday.

The opening was held under the patronage of the Crown Prince HRH Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister.

Saud Al-Sulaiman, CEO of Ghassan Ahmed Al Sulaiman Furniture Trading, who brought the Swedish furniture giant to the



RIBBON-CUTTING: Shaikh Khalid performs the ceremony as staff members, below, celebrate the occasion with plenty of smiles

kingdom after first opening IKEA branches in Saudi Arabia, welcomed the guests.

Around 200 people attended the inauguration before touring the 37,000sqm two-storey structure ... the calm before the storm as the IKEA shop team welcomed the hoard of shoppers who found their way to Salmabad over the weekend.



Techtronic Specials

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

	Item	Description	Location	Price
1	Vacuum Cleaner	LG turbo drum vacuum cleaner (VP8622NNT), 2,200 watts, durable and strong stainless steel, micro filter, biggest dust capacity and 21ltr.	LG, Sehla showroom	BD70
2	Printer	Printer 2130 HP.	Carrefour Hyper Market	BD9.990 My Club price: BD8.990 Note: this offer is available until Sunday.
3	Smartphone	Nokia 5 (TA1053) 4G LTE Dual sim Smartphone 16GB, 5.2-inch IPS LCD screen, Android OS, OCTA-core 1.4 GHz Cortex-A53, 2GB RAM, 13MP rear and 8MP front camera and fingerprint.	Sharaf DG	BD54.990
4	Washing Machine	Indesit washing machine (IWC81481ECOUM.M), 8kg and 1,400RPM.	YKA Almoayyed & Sons	BD119.990
5	Steamer	Black & Decker (HST1200) 1,200W handy garment steamer.	Kewalram & Sons	BD19.500
6	Television	LG 43-inch UHD Smart LED TV (43UJ651V), USB movie and HDMI.	Lulu	BD129.990

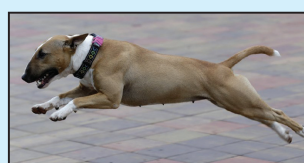
Email your gadget stories to editor@gulfweekly.com

WHEN pet-lover Robert Hasek began jogging with his dog, Darwin, the three-mile runs were making the bull terrier sick with fatigue.

Hasek was surprised, thinking his dog led a healthy lifestyle. To solve the mystery, he strapped a Fitbit to Darwin and discovered he was actually only active in his presence. Otherwise, Hasek said: "He's lying, sleeping and doing nothing. He's lazy!"

Mutts on the move

The businessman sensed an opportunity and developed one of the world's first dog fitness trackers. Two years later, production and sales of the Actijoy fitness trackers have begun, with one unit costing about BD113. On top of the GPS tracking device that a variety of pet collars already offer, it tracks the



intensity of the dog's activity and comes with an internet-connected bowl that monitors food and water consumption.

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GADGETS OF THE WEEK

What is it called? Snapchat Spectacles v2

What does it do? The glasses feature a tiny camera that allows the wearer to easily record and upload a video to Snapchat with a tap of a button. It's waterproof and you can add your prescription in the glasses.

Visit www.amazon.com

Cost: BD56



What is it called? The Oregon Trail Handheld Game

What does it do? It's a retro computer game with 1980s graphics brought back to life in handheld form. It teaches people about the realities of 19th-century pioneer life on The Oregon Trail.

Visit www.amazon.com

Cost: BD14



What is it called? MousePad+

What does it do? It's a portable wireless charging mouse pad for iPhones or Android phones. It has a 7.5W charging capability for iPhone 8/X and up to 15W charging for Android devices. It's made from leather and wool.

Visit <https://awesomestufftobuy.com/>

Cost: BD11



FinTechFocus

Editor Stan Szczewka takes a look at the world of financial technology and beyond ...

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Artificial intelligence impact

PREPARATIONS are forging ahead to stage the third Middle East & Africa FinTech Forum in the kingdom, under the patronage of the Central Bank of Bahrain (CBB), which organisers claim will be the 'premier' conference of its kind in the region.

Details were announced by Bank ABC and AFS (Arab Financial Services) who say the forum, to be held early next year, will once more bring together internationally-renowned thought leaders, practitioners and innovators from the FinTech and artificial intelligence (AI) arenas to discuss a wide range of issues including the future of banking, potential impact of AI and how it will transform the future, open banking, crowd-sourcing and financial inclusion.

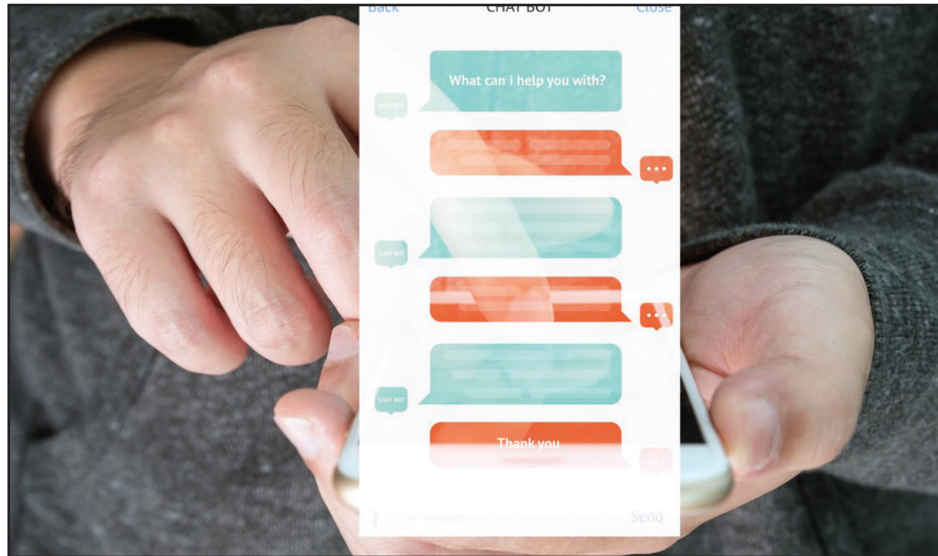
Sael Al Waary, deputy group CEO of Bank ABC and chairman of AFS, said: "Banking is beyond disruption. Huge advances in digital capability, AI, and greater financial inclusion are changing the way we do banking."

"Our FinTech Forum will build upon the success of the past two years and focus on the key opportunities and challenges of FinTech and innovations."

The goal for banks is to proactively communicate the information customers want before frustration and fury sets in when they call a contact centre or branch and look for an alternative way to do business.

Understandably, the potential customer is not keen to search information through keyword-based search engines or wait a long time over the phone or in a queue. Natural-language search engines and chatbots can overcome these issues and allow the customer to search for information like 'how to open a bank account' in a simple, immediate and conversational way.

In general, these easy-to-use, intuitive and multichannel tools reduce time and provide people with



NEW INNOVATIONS: Forum set to discuss ways to improve customer service with new technology. Right, Rasheed and Sael, below, flashback to the last forum



the customer experience they want, maximising it at the same time.

It seems that big banks have strong AI applications in development and some of them are already in use.

According to a survey conducted by Accenture on 600 bankers, 76 per cent of bankers think that over the next three years most banks will develop and make artificial intelligence interfaces available as their first point of contact for customer interaction.

The forum will examine technology's impact on both banks and humans, as well as the evolution of the customer experience. "We are witnessing massive growth in new AI-based solutions on our daily lives and a deeper understanding of these trends is critical to shape the future of the financial industry," added Sael.

He believes that hosting the third FinTech Forum reflects a 'commitment to Bahrain and the region as a whole'. "This event has become the most prominent FinTech conference in MENA and supports Bahrain's vision to become a leading FinTech hub," he said.

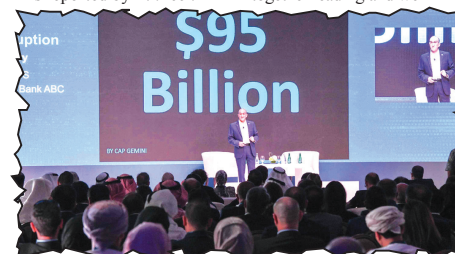
"More regional banks and financial institutions are expected to take part in the forum next year. Both Bank



ABC and AFS are committed to the development of new FinTech solutions and bringing these latest tech innovations to the region."

The FinTech Forum is set to feature the region's widest congregation of business leaders, FinTech entrepreneurs, policy makers and regulators, representatives of the investor community and some of the financial industry's largest organisations who will discuss and promote the next generation of FinTech innovations in payments, artificial intelligence, open banking and blockchain technology.

As reported by *FinTech*



Focus, AFS, a leading payments company, is the inspiration behind the popular digital bWallet, launched in partnership with telecom and Internet service provider, Batelco, which a growing number of smart phone holders are using to pay for goods and services instead of cash.

B. Chandrasekhar, CEO of AFS, said: "The trends are pointing towards cashless and frictionless modes of payments. We are already seeing a shift in adoption of these technologies in Bahrain."

The last MEA FinTech Forum successfully brought together leading and well-

regarded global experts and industry leaders in a highly-engaging format of talks and discussions addressing the most pressing issues in the fast evolving FinTech landscape.

More than 450 delegates attended the event, including representatives from the central banks of Jordan, Egypt and Bahrain and 40 banks and financial institutions from the MENA region.

In his opening speech at the event Sael told delegates that almost \$100 billion has been invested in FinTech globally since 2010 and he predicted a number of key developments in the industry in 2018, one of them being greater governmental support to promote FinTech innovation being generated, ringing true close to home with entrepreneurs and start-ups receiving backing, help and advice in partnerships with professional accelerators, for example, and CBB governor Rasheed Almaraj's support for this event.

He also noted that going ahead, customers will set the agenda to shape the future of banking, reiterating Microsoft's principal founder Bill Gates' words: 'We need banking but we do not need banks'. In addition, he foresees an explosion of frictionless payments in the region, as initiated by

bWallet service in Bahrain.

"While all of this is happening, Artificial Intelligence will find application in almost all areas of banking, from front-office, to credit scoring to even advisory ... and cloud banking will bring more scalability and agility at a lower cost," he added.

Sael predicts that Blockchain technology will soon become mainstream, revolutionising banking operations and financial inclusion for the two billion unbanked people around the world.

He concluded by emphasising the need for collaboration between banks and FinTech start-ups, which would combine capital and innovation, economies of scale and agility, customer data and customer experience, regulatory and technical know-how. "I have always believed that disruption is a catalyst of change and opportunity ... at AFS we are optimistic about what lies ahead," he said.

That optimism will likely continue to bear fruit at the 2019 forum which is expected to be an even bigger event with wide representation from all industries across the region. It will be held at the Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Bahrain on February 20-21, 2019.



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OIL & GAS NEWS

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Today (September 12)

Spend time with friends and family in an afternoon tea experience at the Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain's Lobby Lounge and Ritz Gourmet Lounge. Indulge in new items on the menu and enjoy the piano entertainment on Fridays and Saturdays. Afternoon tea is served from 3pm to 5pm priced BD21++ per set.

For details, contact 17586499 or email rc.bahrz.restaurant.reservations@ritzcarlton.com

Treat your special someone to a romantic dinner by the sea with a breathtaking view of the Arabian Gulf at the Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain. This is being held daily, on the sea breeze area or private island, from sunset to 10pm. Priced BD350 per couple at the sea breeze area and BD500 per couple at the private island.

For details, contact 17586499 or email rc.bahrz.restaurant.reservations@ritzcarlton.com

Relish this summer at the Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain by experiencing Thai mocktails by the infinity pool or perfecting your tan at beach cabanas. The Summer Beach Pass provides access to Royal Beach Club facilities and lunch at La Med Restaurant. Priced BD25 per person, Sunday-Thursday.

For details, contact 17586612.



Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain's spa provides a refreshing wellness package, complete with a full-body massage followed by Vitamin-C scrub to help protect your skin. Priced BD90 for 90 minutes. This package is available until September 30.

For details, contact 17586808 or e-mail rc.bahrz.spa@ritzcarlton.com



Celebrate your birthday at the Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain's Gourmet Lounge where celebratory afternoon tea, lunch, dinner menus and an inclusive birthday cake are provided. The special menu is available for a minimum of two

and maximum of 10 guests. This offer is ongoing until September 31.

For details and reservations, contact 17586499.

The Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay's poolside Italian restaurant, Vento, is offering a wide selection of pizzas from wood-fired ovens and artisan pastas. Available on weekdays from 11.30am to 11pm, and weekends from 11.30am to 12pm.

For reservations, contact 17115500.

The Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay is offering Family Spa bonding. Its 'Relaxed Us' offer aids muscle tension, releases stress and promotes wellbeing, 45 minutes for BD80. The 'Beautiful Us' offer is designed to cleanse, gently exfoliate and hydrate skin with a 100 per cent chemical-free product range from Australia and the UK, 45 minutes for BD85. The 'Glowing Us' offer is a special indulgent full-body treatment, 45 minutes for BD85.

For reservations, contact 17115000.



Reef Resort's lobby café Chocolaterie is offering an array of signature teas, coffees, pastries, and delectable hand-made chocolates. The ideal venue for morning coffee or afternoon tea. Every day from 4pm-6pm. Net price of BD4.

Reef Resort's Tokyo Reef restaurant features a specially-created set menu that is offered on weekdays (Saturday-Wednesday, closed on Mondays) and guests can watch as the chef prepares sushi and sashimi before their eyes. The promotion is BD15++ per person.

The Crowne Plaza Bahrain's band The Eye Candies will entertain every evening, except Saturday, at Harvesters.

The outlet is also dishing up a new Camel Burger and staging a Beast Burger Challenge which, if finished in the stipulated time, offers the meal for free, a T-shirt and wall of fame celebrity status. It runs daily from 11am to 9pm and is priced BD8.410. The hotel is also holding a

steak night every Wednesday from 7pm at La Mosaïque Restaurant priced BD18net, with the 1kg steak challenge too.

For details, contact 17531122.

Tomorrow (September 13)

There will be a Seafood Night at Ramada Hotel & Suites Amwaj Islands, every Thursday from 7pm-11pm. BD12++ for adults, BD6++ for children aged six to 12, children below six dine for free.

For details, contact 16000099 or email dining@ramada-manama-amwaj.com



Elite Resort & Spa hosts a sea & grill buffet dinner every Thursday and Friday from 7pm to 11pm at Al Naseem & La Brasserie priced BD12++ per person.

For details, contact 17313333.

Prime US beef and other gourmet cuisine will be on the menu at Mövenpick Hotel Bahrain's Al Murjan Ballroom from 7pm to 11pm. The Thursday Night Out is priced BD32net per person and includes selected beverages.

For details, contact 17460017 or email hotel.bahrain.fb@movenpick.com

Friday (September 14)

Enjoy a lavish experience at the Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain's restaurants by indulging in a culinary extravaganza at La Med, Italian classics at Primavera, exotic Indian fares at Nirvana and prime steaks and seafood at Plums. This will be held today from 12.30pm to 3.30pm, priced BD35 per person with soft drinks and BD39 per person with selected beverages.

For more details, contact 17586499 or email rc.bahrz.restaurant.reservations@ritzcarlton.com

At the Gulf Hotel Bahrain Convention & Spa's China Garden Restaurant, Chef Ding and his culinary brigade will be offering pan-seared Chinese delicacies.

For details, contact 17713000 or email info@gulfbahrain.com

The Gulf Hotel Bahrain Convention & Spa's Fusion Restaurant will be offering a unique steak wok, either grilled or wok-fried, with a choice of beef tenderloin, rib eye, or lamb chops today.

For details, contact 17713000 or email info@

gulfbahrain.com

The Crowne Plaza Bahrain's La Mosaïque Restaurant is hosting an International Theme Night Buffet every Friday, from 7pm onwards. Priced BD13net.

For details, contact 17531122.

The Wyndham Garden Manama in Juffair is offering a Friday brunch at Café Mosaic from 12.30pm to 4pm, where food and soft drinks are priced BD12++ while food and selected beverages are priced BD22++.

For details, contact 66316666 or email dining@wyndhamgardenmanama.com

A buffet is served every Friday from 12.30pm to 4pm at the Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain's La Med Restaurant, combined with drinks of your choice. Soft drinks priced BD30++, special beverages priced BD35++.

For details, contact 17586499.

Eat and party at the Reef Resort's Pool Delight with an unlimited seafood BBQ buffet accompanied by the chill out music from the Beat's Zone band. Every Friday from 7pm.

The Four Seasons Hotel's Bahrain Bay Kitchen is holding a Back-to-School Brunch Carnival. It takes place every Friday throughout September. Enjoy homemade delicacies prepared by Executive Chef Hyung Gyu Kim as well as the carnival fun with a photo-booth, face painting, still-walkers, balloon artists and goody giveaways. Priced BD25++ inclusive of beverages, BD35++ inclusive of special beverages, BD12.5++ for children up to 12, and free for children below five.

For details and reservations, contact 17115500.



The Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay is hosting Friday Brunch at CUT by Wolfgang Puck Steakhouse from 12.30pm to 3.30pm. Priced BD26++ per person including soft beverages, BD26++ per person including extensive beverage package for ladies,



and BD36++ per person including extensive beverage package.

Also at the hotel's CUT by Wolfgang Puck Steakhouse, a Bistro-inspired lunch is being hosted every day from 12pm to 3pm.

For details and reservations, contact 17115044.



The Crowne Plaza Bahrain hosts its Absolutely Fabulous Friday Brunch at Harvesters from 12.30pm to 4pm. It's priced BD31net for adults and BD8.75net for children aged seven to 12.

For details, contact 17531122.

Elite Crystal Hotel has a Friday Pool Party brunch at Waikiki from 1pm to 8pm with entertainment from DJ Santi, DJ Smiley and DJ Goose. It's free entrance for women with one welcome drink, BD10net for men with one complimentary beverage and BD25net inclusive of unlimited selected beverages and grills.

For details, contact 66666360 or 17360360.

The Mövenpick Hotel Bahrain's Construction-themed Friday Brunch offers a variety of food and a selection of drinks, a band and DJs from 12.30pm to 5pm at its Al Murjan Ballroom. It's priced BD36net per person, including unlimited beverages. Children aged six to 12 will receive 50 per cent price reduction and children under six dine for free.

For details, contact 17460017 or email hotel.bahrain.fb@movenpick.com

Saturday (September 15)

Spice up your weekly brunch with a culinary journey around Mexico at the Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain's Cantina Kahlo Restaurant. This will be held on Saturday, today and on September 22 and 29 from 12pm to 4pm. Priced BD35 per person with selected beverages and BD20 per person with soft beverages.

For more details, contact 17586499 or email rc.bahrz.restaurant.reservations@ritzcarlton.com

A Kids Special Movie Time takes place at Ramee Grand Hotel & Spa, Seef's second floor Banquet Hall every Saturday between 3pm to 5pm. Entry costs BD2, snacks included.

For more details, contact 36693693 or 36479898.

The Crowne Plaza Bahrain's Waves Seafood Restaurant is hosting a three-course business lunch, from Saturday-Thursday, 12pm to 4pm. The lunch is priced BD8net.

For details, contact 17531122.

Experience spa treatments at the Crowne Plaza Bahrain's bFit Health Club. They are providing facials, body scrubs and combined packages to help you relax and rejuvenate, while their massage therapy focuses on alleviating stress and encouraging well-being.

For more details and bookings, contact 17525812.

The Gulf Hotel Bahrain Convention & Spa is offering 'Art of Cooking' classes for those with busy lifestyles who have a passion for food. Classes feature demonstrations, from the building blocks of culinary practice to mouthwatering menus, led by professional chefs. Priced BD18net, including lunch. Seats are limited, book now.

For details, contact 17713000 or email info@gulfbahrain.com

Families can enjoy a buffet meal at the Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain's La Med Restaurant every Saturday from noon to 3.30pm. Soft drinks are priced BD15++.

For details, contact 17586499.



Enjoy an authentic Italian buffet at Ramada Hotel & Suites Amwaj Islands every Saturday, from 7pm-11pm. BD10net for adults, BD5net for children aged six to 12, children below six dine for free.

For details, contact 16000099 or email dining@ramada-manama-amwaj.com

Soak up the stunning views from the Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay's 50th floor and feast on Asian delights like Korean Fried Chicken Bao Buns, Wok Fried Shrimp Dumplings and Brisket Wontons at the Re Asian Cuisine by Wolfgang Puck's Saturday Brunch. The price is BD19++ and BD37++ with selected beverages.

For reservations, contact 17115046.

The Bahrain Bay Kitchen at the Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay is staging a Saturday Brunch from 12.30pm-3.30pm offering a wide selection of Arabic favourites such as Lamb Ouzi and cold mezzeh, priced BD16++ including soft beverages.
For details, contact 17115000.

Sunday (September 16)

Ramada Hotel & Suites Amwaj Islands is hosting a ladies breakfast for the price of BD4net, every Sunday until Thursday from 7am-11am.
For details, contact 16000099 or email dining@ramada-manama-amwaj.com

The Crowne Plaza Bahrain hosts an Italian Night at La Mosaïque Restaurant from 7pm featuring pasta, pizza and more priced BD13net for the food only and there is a separate beverage package.
For details, contact 17531122.

Monday (September 17)

Bahrain's award-winning Indian restaurant, Rasoi

by Vineet, at the Gulf Hotel Bahrain Convention & Spa, is offering an exclusive set menu by Michelin-starred Chef Vineet Bhatia, for the price of BD22++.

For details, contact 17713000 or email info@gulfhotelhahrain.com

The Crowne Plaza Bahrain has a French Night starting at 7pm and priced BD13net (food only) at La Mosaïque restaurant.
For details, contact 17531122.

The Mövenpick Hotel Bahrain has a Seafood Night offering the freshest catch-of-the-day, a buffet and live cooking station priced BD24net including soft drinks, or BD29net including unlimited selected beverages.
For details, contact 17460017.

Tuesday (September 18)

Ladies Night at the Gulf Hotel Bahrain Convention & Spa every Tuesday, where women get a 50 per cent discount for the hotel's lounges, spas and restaurants, excluding Raosi

by Vineet.
For details, contact 17713000 or email info@gulfhotelhahrain.com

The Wyndham Garden Manama in Juffair is hosting an American Night at its Player's Lounge with duo, Notre Viú on stage. Enjoy special offers on selected beverages and Angus steaks every Tuesday from noon to 2am.

For details, contact 66316666 or email dining@wyndhamgardenmanama.com

At the hotel's Via Brasil Restaurant, the Cuban duo, First Class, Martha and Claudia, will perform live. Indulge in a Brazilian-style all-you-can-eat barbecue restaurant, where there is a wide selection of meats, salads, hot appetizers, side



dishes and drinks selection to complement your meal. Located on the rooftop of the hotel, the restaurant provides scenic views overlooking the Bahrain skyline, open from 7pm-2am.
For details, contact 66316666.

The Crowne Plaza Bahrain has a Catch of The Day Seafood Night starting at 7pm and priced BD18net (food only with beverage package available) at La Mosaïque restaurant.
For details, contact 17531122.

The Crowne Plaza Bahrain's bFit Health Club is offering swimming classes every Monday and Wednesday. Classes for children aged eight to 11 are from 4pm-4.45pm, classes for children aged five to seven are from 5pm-5.45pm, and adult classes are from 6pm-6.45pm. The classes are priced BD40 per month for bFit Crowne Plaza Bahrain members, and BD50 per month (eight sessions) for non-members. For bookings, contact 17531122.

DRAGON CITY PRIZE DRAW



SHOPPERS at Dragon City Bahrain could drive away in a Mitsubishi Outlander 4WD, the main prize in a 'start of the new school year' draw. They will receive an entry ticket for every B20 spent up until October 13 at the massive mall at Diyar Al

Muharraq. The draw will take place on the following day.

The popular shopping destination Dragon City is the home to more than 787 commercial units, effectively making it the largest wholesale and retail trading centre in the kingdom.

BAHRAIN JAZZ FEST



ALL THAT JAZZ: An act entertains the crowd at last year's show

THE second edition of the Bahrain Jazz Fest is set to take place on the grounds of the Royal Golf Club on October 26. The open-air music festival will feature international and local jazz artists and musicians, and is expected to attract more than 5,000 fans.

The festival will feature nine award-winning acts from around the world including Ana Popovic (US), Indian Ocean (India), Swing Ninjas, Cut Capers (UK), The Kiffness (South Africa) as well as influential Bahraini bands Likwid, Ala Ghawas and the Havaneros.

There will also be a number

of jazz workshops and local music events at various venues in September and October leading up to the open-air festival.

The event is open to all ages and will take place from 11am-11pm. In addition, there will be family activities organised. The festival will also feature a second community stage that will profile up-and-coming locally-based bands.

The festival tickets are priced at BD20 for adults and BD10 for juniors, with free admission for children aged six and under. A discounted early bird promotion ends on September 24.

AN art exhibition with a twist will be launched in Bahrain this week, whereby 18 teams of writers and artists have come together to meld words and art for a perfect poetic purpose.

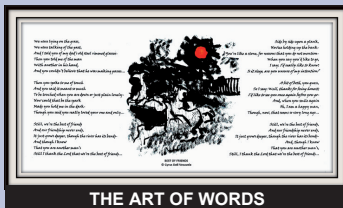
'Confluence - Where Words and Images Meet' has been organised by the Bahrain Writers' Circle (BWC) and will be held from Sunday until September 20 on the second floor of Harbour Gate, Bahrain Financial Harbour. It is open from 11am-8pm and admission is free.

Rohini Sunderam, a founding member of the BWC, is delighted that exhibition is finally ready to be unveiled after months of planning.

She said: "The idea initially came about because we realised that many of our poets often illustrated their works with stock photos and drawings and posted them on Facebook or Instagram.

"So, we thought, why not see if there is enough interest among the poets to have an exhibition? A number of them were excited by the idea so we invited our prose members to join us.

"The name was decided on more or less at the first meeting in February when the concept of a merging of art and words was first discussed. I think it was our member Preeti Rana who came up with the word and the more we discussed it the better it sounded. There is no other connotation of 'confluence' other than 'coming together' or the merging of art and words."



THE ART OF WORDS

Shortly after the plan was in place, it was left to the poets and artists to team up, or in some cases where writers were artists in their own right, go solo.

Some members teamed up with BWC members who are also artists, like Herz AlBanki, a photographer who has partnered with more than one of the circle's writers, whereas others collaborated with artist friends outside of the BWC.

The only criterion was that the writer in the team had to be a BWC member. In some cases, the art lead to the words, whereas in others, the words or poetry formed the basis of the inspiration.

One pair consisted of writer Claudia Hardt and artist Marion Akanji, who created three pieces based on Claudia's poem titled My Little Pearl, Lulu.

Marion said: "For Confluence, I have collaborated with my long-time friend Claudia, a long-standing member of the BWC and someone who was so kind to provide me some of her poetry to inspire

me to create some wonderful pieces of art for this very special occasion - The Fusion of Words and Art.

"The concept of 'myPOETRYbox' shall provide the viewer and art lover access to poetry on a daily level by being integrated into daily life by being 'ARTtoGO', which can be easily integrated into your daily routine of having a cup of coffee or tea with family and friends as a centrepiece of your table decoration as well as highlighting your bookshelves and family libraries."

Claudia concurred: "Working with Marion is always an inspiration. For a long time I was looking into the opportunity of having my poems being transformed into art.

"As much as I admire poetry, I admire art. So, it was a natural confluence that we both teamed up for this unique occasion!"

Harbour Gate has become a hotbed of art and inspiration over the past couple of years, and the venue was delighted to host the exhibition once it heard about the plans on the grapevine.

Rohini added: "This is the first time that the BWC has organised such an exhibition and we are very excited that this idea has come to fruition and, depending on the response and feedback, we may do it again.

"We'd like to thank Harbour Gate for providing this marvellous venue and Akram Miknas for both sponsoring our brochure and inaugurating the exhibition."

DATES FOR THE DIARY



Nigeria celebrates its independence

The Nigeria@58 Independence Gala will be held at The Diplomat Radisson Blu Hotel on September 28 from 7pm featuring a buffet, five hours of unlimited beverages, a fashion show, a cultural dance and other activities.
For details, visit www.eventbrite.com

Back to School

The Crowne Plaza Bahrain is hosting a Back to School-themed party at Harvesters on September 24 from 9pm. Entry is free.
For details, contact 17531122.

Bollywood Karaoke Night

The Crowne Plaza Bahrain's Spices Indian Restaurant is hosting its monthly Bollywood Karaoke Night from 7pm, where you can sing the night away with friends and family whilst indulging in a savoury buffet. Priced BD8.6net (food only) and BD12net (with special beverages).
For details, contact 17531122.



Ashtanga Yoga Workshop
Join Nathalie Najem in a week of

Ashtanga yoga, which will be held from October 5-12 at Namaste Bahrain, located on Budaiya Highway.
For more details, visit www.namastebh.com/Nat and for bookings, contact 17591565.

Rick Ross Concert

American rapper Rick Ross will be performing in Bahrain on October 25

at 7pm at The Crowne Plaza Bahrain with a special guest. His debut album Port Of Miami debuted at the top spot on the US Billboard 200 album chart. Ticket prices vary, visit www.eventbrite.com for tickets.



Film: Big Fish

Director: Tim Burton

Duration: 2hrs 5 mins

Cast: Ewan McGregor, Albert Finney, Billy Crudup, Alison Lohman, Jessica Lange, Helena Bonham Carter, Marion Cotillard

Plot: When Edward Bloom (Albert Finney) becomes ill, his son, William (Billy Crudup), travels to be with him. William has a strained relationship with Edward because his father has always told exaggerated stories about his life, and William thinks he's never really told the truth. Even on his deathbed, Edward recounts fantastical anecdotes. When William, who is a journalist, starts to investigate his father's tales, he begins to understand the man and his penchant for storytelling.

For details, call Huda Tabbara on 39682323.

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Fashion Weekly

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

Who's left holding the bag?

OVER the years Parisian fashion house Chloé has produced a series of 'must-have' handbags sending celebrities and accessory fanatics into a tizzy every time a new collection appears.

The cult-like following all began in 2005 when the brand launched its slouchy Paddington bag featuring a gold padlock which was spotted on the arms of celebrities such as Jessica Alba and Kate Bosworth.

Thirteen years later and Chloé's still has the 'wow' factor with a new line that will surely impress and have shoppers clamoring to stores



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

to get their hands on the chic and functional creations.

The autumn / winter 2018-19 accessories aim to 'further the vision' that creative director Natacha Ramsay-Levi established with her feminine debut collection while reflecting an expanded field of inspiration.

As first seen on the runway, each new bag design will highlight the season's silhouettes through a varying proposition in texture, colours and recurring Chloé signatures such as the small horses embroidered onto leather.

New features include the quilted leather or the *spazzolato sfumatto* smoked treatment, and the baroque C emblem arranged as a decorative motif. Rounded shapes – a hallmark of the house – create a coherent message; and, as always, the versatility of each style remains essential.

Without further ado, here are the bags:

The Tess:

This rounded day bag, which is making its debut this season, features two straps of varying widths and the signature O – a recurring House reference to infinite femininity – in gold and silver finishes.

It is sophisticated and compact and available in smooth leather with shimmering highlights, as bi-material leather and suede, or encrusted with small horses on earth-toned leather inspired by the collection's prints. Style tip: Wear the bag cross-body to highlight its timeless design.

The Roy:

Although it is conceived as a day bag, it features special detailing for a touch of elegance. It boasts two large O rings in perfect balance as an updated Chloé signature and the material contrast is another aspect with suede, smooth leather, glossy lambskin, and a gradation effect among the options. The Roy Bucket transposes these elements into a roomy, wearable style with broad appeal.



The Drew Bijou:

Introduced in 2014, the Drew is considered an iconic House design with its day-to-night functionality and a double-lock clasp that reinforces a restrained yet precious

statement. The bag is adorned with a chain composed of multiple rings evoking a bracelet.

A long leather strap counterbalances the jewellery reference. As a bag that

swings fluidly in the hand with graceful ease, this Chloé signature piece becomes a dynamic collectible.

The brand can be snapped up at Saks Fifth Avenue in City Centre Bahrain.



Eating Out

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

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ONE of Bahrain's most popular expat clubs has transformed its iconic Bulls Head outlet with a major refurbishment and expansion for the first time in more than a quarter of a century.

Its official opening extravaganza will be staged tomorrow evening but *GulfWeekly* was invited in just 24-hours after the doors reopened to sample the ambience of this delightful new meet-and-greet lounge and dining destination, alongside, of course, comforting cuisine on the menu.

Delighted general manager Stephen Chartres says he has been 'overwhelmed' by the positive feedback from members and guests. He admitted to being extremely anxious as to what the reaction might be for such dramatic changes at the hostelry but the start of the migraine he was suffering had more to do with an earlier long and arduous shopping excursion with his young family to IKEA.

"It was 26 years old, it was tired and dated and desperately in need of a refurbishment. I wanted to capture a clean, modern look while still retaining the feeling of historic home comforts," he explained.

Founded in 1974, the Dilly grew from humble beginnings when a trio of expats were looking for somewhere to relax after a hard week working at smelting giants, Alba.

They struck upon the idea of creating a club that was initially hosted in the front room of a house in Budaiya Gardens. It was called the Bulls Head and meetings were held twice a week. As the club started to grow a small villa was rented and the members took it in turns to work behind the counter and light up the BBQ. Expansion

continued so its executive committee took a risk and relocated to where the Country Club is today.

The move paid off sweetly and the club finally settled into its current premises in Saar in October 1988 with the blessing of the kingdom's ruler at the time, the late Shaikh Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa, and opened under his patronage.

Working on a collection of cut-out photographs of happening hostelrys back home in the UK Stephen had taken a shine to, the baton for the new Bulls Head was passed to Projects Construction, the company which has successfully rebuilt the club's adjacent sports lounge.

Deputy GM John Beddall, a club member, worked closely on the concept with his team and the project took just an astonishing four weeks to complete.

"All the cast iron table legs have been taken from the old Bulls Head tables and been recast and placed on new handcrafted furniture," said Stephen. "We have a Tudor-esque style ceiling for the dining area above a Georgian-style lounge giving the feeling of a ye olde traditional travellers' inn, one that had naturally been extended over the decades."

The expansion has been facilitated by pushing into former changing rooms (replaced by upgraded facilities poolside) and a large store area, creating 40 per cent extra floor space and doubling the seating available to diners. Outside, a new terrace complements the one created by the sports lounge, and also acts as a viewing



DELIGHTFUL DINER: Inside the new look Bulls Head at the Dilmun Club in Saar, and, right, service with a smile from Brendah

GOURMET EXCLUSIVE
By STAN SZECOWKA
editor@gulfweekly.com

area for the children's play area as well as the tennis and netball courts.

The good lady wife, Kathryn, and I found a cosy table inside overlooking the terrace and the tennis action taking place in front of a giant hording highlighting the latest Mercedes-Benz models.

We settled down and I decided to keep within the theme and go for some traditional British cuisine (although the menu caters for all tastes with an extensive Asian and Italian section too), and most of the main courses are priced between BD3 and BD4.

The tables, by the way, were terrific; wood cleverly split by a resin which appears to flow like a river, well in keeping with the numerous black and white framed images of Blighty, including one of the River Thames and the Houses

of Parliament.

The Bulls Head decoration is delightful throughout with flowers on display, distinct lighting, cool clocks and comfortable chairs.

The kitchen team is led by Executive Chef Tej Tamang but on Saturday night we were looked after by his colleague, Chef Lijesh.

I went for a prawn cocktail starter. This seafood standard was at one point top of the pops in British gastronomy. Today, no one can say for sure how it came to life, however, it was most certainly boosted in the UK by the popular 1960s TV chef Fanny Cradock. Shortly afterwards, just about every restaurant, whether it be a pizzeria, steakhouse or something else, served you a prawn cocktail as a starter.

The Dilly's offering (surprisingly delivered on a plate rather than in a glass) featured a generous helping of delicious prawns placed on fresh salad, covered with a

dollop of Marie Rose creamy tomato and mayonnaise sauce.

Kathryn, one of the billions of people currently on the crazy Keto diet, went for the tom yum soup, carefully putting aside the divinely-smelling slices of garlic toasted bread, and chose a meat dish with vegetables and an egg for her main course.

I've been supporting her Keto-calling at home and, as a result, have been craving carbohydrates, so used this dining out experience as another excuse to go wild. I chose a meat pie and chips. Thick gravy to accompany it was placed in a pot but they could have saved on the washing up by pouring it over the meat pie in the kitchen!

The service was swift and top marks go to waitress Brendah for bringing her friendly smile and slick style to the table.

The superb service matched the venue's new look. Stephen said the reactions

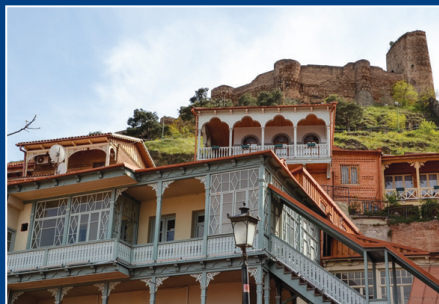
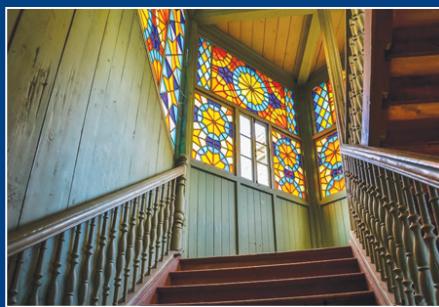
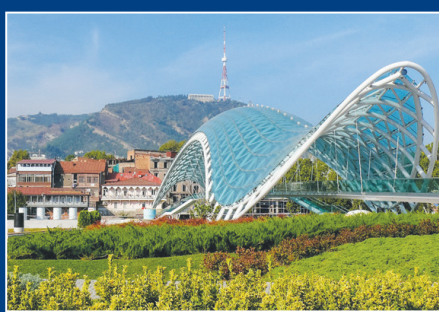


to the changes were better than he could ever have dreamed of. "On the first night I had to take myself away for 10 minutes and sit in a quiet office to regain my composure," he said. "I must admit I had suffered some sleepless nights because so much of the design was mine and, of course, the venue had been the same for such a long time ... and here we were dishing up a radical new look."

He need not have worried. The smiles on all the faces of staff members and customers prove he has a winner on his hands.

They'll be more smiles tomorrow night with a grand opening family festival kicking off at 8pm. They'll be a bouncy castle for the kids, live music from Paul Taylor who pays homage to Robbie Williams and Freddie Mercury, along with Latin party diva Mikaela Carrizo, plus beverage product tasting, a curry buffet and BBQ.





THERE are direct flights from Bahrain to Tbilisi, Georgia. In fact, as soon as you board the plane to Tbilisi, the first thing you will notice is the high number of travellers who are transiting via Bahrain – many Saudi Arabian nationals, for instance, take holiday flights and change planes at Bahrain, writes travel writer Sufyan bin Uzayr.

Georgia offers an electronic visa for most nationalities. Also, most people with Bahraini residence permits or work visas are eligible for visa-free stay (that ranges from 30 days to 90 days or more). While my Indian passport was not on the visa-free list, my Bahraini residence permit entitled me to visa-free stay up to 90 days in Georgia. Sweet!

Upon arrival at the Shota Rustaveli Tbilisi International Airport, immigration was a breeze. The officer on duty asked for a routine set of documents, namely, return ticket, hotel booking and bank statements.

Outside the airport, there were stalls for a wide variety of things – banks, currency exchange and, of course, SIM cards. Magti, Georgia's largest telecom operator, is well known in the region for its reliable reception and 4G+ network. The first time I visited Tbilisi, I made the mistake of going for Beeline (the queue was shorter at their counter so you can't blame me). While Beeline is good within city limits, once you venture out into the countryside, outside of Tbilisi, you will find yourself struggling for network coverage.

Tbilisi has an air of enigma attached to it. Maybe it's the weather or the old architecture, but one can stay outdoors all day in Tbilisi and not get tired.

Compared to central and western Europe, life in Tbilisi is slow. As a former Soviet city, Tbilisi's infrastructure has a mix of both old and new.

The city's metro lines are pretty good and not very crowded. Roads are fine too, but traffic lights not strictly observed, especially by the natives.

City buses, locally called Marshrutka, are easy to find. However, most bus and taxi drivers speak little or no English.

The people are friendly and most of them would go out of

When Georgia

Beautiful natural landscapes, mountains, scenic beauty that leaves you spell-bound - that's Georgia for you. Yes, we are talking about the ex-Soviet state

that has been making of late. More and more days head to this small country for tourism.

the way to help a foreigner. If you stop by to ask for directions, you can expect some free advice along the way. "Yes, take the right turn to get to the old market. Oh, and don't forget to bargain!"

Georgians love their food. Every street has food shops, and eating between meals is a common practice. However, I had some trouble finding Halal meat products in Tbilisi.

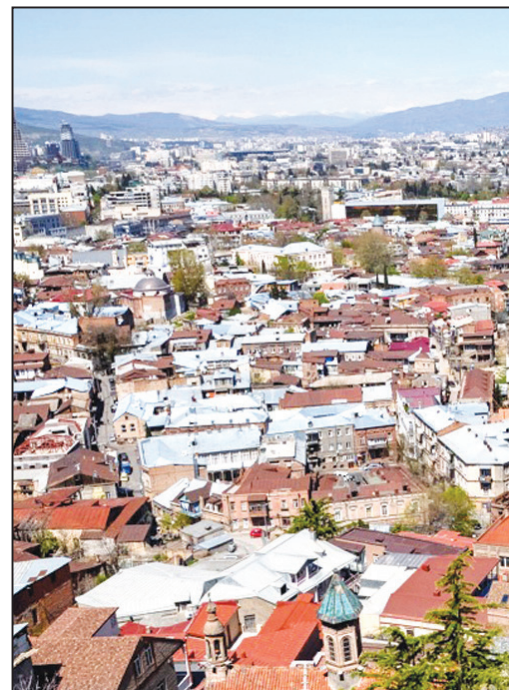
Virtually every popular non-veg dish had bacon in it. This was more common in the upscale circles – after a while, I gave up all hopes of finding non-vegetarian food that I could eat. I started telling everyone that I'm a vegetarian, simply to avoid explaining why I was turning down their offers of bacon and beef. Things are different in other cities, such as Batumi, where Halal food is easier to find.

Drinking running tap water is not uncommon in Tbilisi. Of course, filtered water is available, but a good number of local residents simply consume water from the tap: "Hey, our government filters it for us!" they say.

As for language, note: let's be honest, English-speaking skills are not a metric of anything. Georgia is a multilingual society by all means. But considering the fact that *GulfWeekly's* audience is predominantly English-speaking, it's something that is worth mentioning.

Georgian is a slightly difficult language to grasp for a non-native speaker, so be sure to have a local translator nearby if you are venturing somewhere far out in Georgia. Russian is spoken by most people in Tbilisi, even in rural areas. Arabic speakers can be found in the city, but not in the rural areas.

With that said, in my opinion,



English-speaking abilities are really below par in Tbilisi. This was a slightly shocking discovery for me – I have not had any trouble speaking in English to folks from places such as Baku, Minsk or Kiev.

Once again, knowledge of English (or lack thereof) does not matter to many people. But if your primary language is English and you are planning a trip to Georgia anytime soon, this is something that you should bear in mind.

Georgia's economy, much like that of any other ex-Soviet country, is still recovering from the after-effects of the Cold War.

Median wages are rather low but the cost of living, in general, is acceptable. Internet, food, transport, rent, and virtually

everything else that you might need to live properly is affordable.

However, two things deserve to be mentioned.

First, the banking sector in Georgia is extraordinarily well developed. You can walk in to any bank, open an account, and get your personalised ATM card, internet banking credentials and other stuff delivered to you within 48 hours. Furthermore, banks in Georgia are not averse to opening accounts for non-residents.

But it does not stop at that. Even the smallest of bank branches in Tbilisi allow users to open multi-currency accounts.

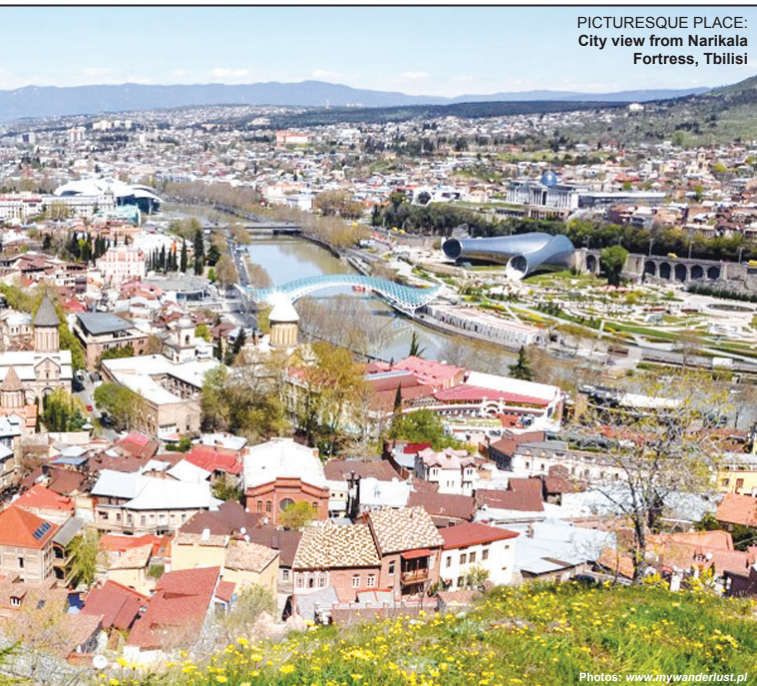
I noticed several Georgian entrepreneurs and business people chose to keep their



's on my mind

ng steady progress
ore visitors nowa-
all mountainous
Luckily for me, I get

to combine work with pleasure. I have
made multiple visits to Georgia this
year, and each one has been nothing
short of spectacular.



PICTURESQUE PLACE:
City view from Narikala
Fortress, Tbilisi

Photos: www.mywanderlust.pl

and blessed with natural scenery.

With the increasing number of tourists coming to Georgia, many families in Tbilisi have made hospitality their primary occupation.

It is not uncommon for a Georgian family to rent out two spare rooms in its house and call it a 'budget hotel'.

In fact, 'hotel' has become a very vague term in Tbilisi because every other household is a hotel. Got five rooms in your house and a family of three? Keep two rooms to yourself, and rent out the remaining three online! Congrats, you now have your own hotel!

Similarly, businesses related to taxis and cabs, tour guides, etc. are very common in Tbilisi. Informal currency exchanges happen quite a lot too – small shopkeepers selling cosmetics and soft drinks would gladly convert your foreign currency into GEL.

Also, Georgians are aware of the fact that Gulf Air flies regularly to Tbilisi, and they are almost always expecting tourists from Bahrain!

Based on what I saw in Tbilisi, Georgia is a laid-back country blessed with scenic beauty. With a moderate cost of living, Tbilisi is a good pick for anyone looking to get closer to Europe. This explains why many digital nomads are flocking to Georgia of late and applying for residence permits.

For people looking for a quick getaway from their work routine, or a small holiday, Tbilisi is barely three hours' flying time from Bahrain.

With no hassle for a visa and the availability of budget-friendly hotels, Georgia is, in my opinion, a worthy destination for your next vacation ... or a return visit!



money not in Georgian Lari (GEL), but in Euro (or very rarely, dollars (USD)).

Their reasons were rather straightforward – the fluctuation of Russian Ruble has caused a trust issue with local currencies

in the region. There is a very small section of entrepreneurs who wonder if their corporate money is safe in GEL. Euro, on the other hand, evokes a better sign of trust and does not seem to be collapsing anytime

soon. Kudos to Georgian banks for making life easier for their customers.

Secondly, tourism plays a very vital role in Georgia's economy. Georgians are aware of the fact that their country is beautiful

GEORGIANS know their history well. As you walk around the city, you can ask any passersby about the history or background of a monument (assuming he or she can speak English).

But this is only selective knowledge. Information pertaining to Tbilisi's Islamic heritage is often unknown to the common folks here – ask anyone about Tbilisi's days as al-Tiflis or the Emirate of Tbilisi, and they will give you a confused look.

Speaking of that ... Islam in Georgia, nearly 10 per cent of its total population is Muslim. In the past, it was fairly common for Georgian rulers to embrace Islam,



the most notable example being King Vakhtang VI of Kartli. Under Caliph Uthman ibn Affan (RA), al-Tiflis (Tbilisi) developed as an important city due to its close proximity to both the Arab lands and

Europe. Ever since 2011, Georgia has had its own department to manage the affairs of Muslims in the country.

In Tbilisi, I noticed a gentle sense of secularism overall. Owing to tourists coming from the Arabian Gulf and Turkey, Islamophobia is not paramount in the city.

Georgians are a welcoming group of people – on two separate occasions, receptionists greeted me with 'Salam'. There are mosques in almost every major city, and a good number of students from neighbouring Muslim countries study at Georgian universities.



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In focus



STUDENTS, parents and teachers of the Indian School Bahrain (ISB) rallied together to collect urgently-needed supplies for the victims of flood-hit Kerala.

More than 1.3tons of relief essentials such as clothes, cleaning materials, sanitary items, toothbrushes, shoes, gloves and non-perishable food items have been freighted to agencies for distribution.

The collection process was supervised by ISB hon. chairman Prince S Natararan, hon. vice-chairman Jaifar Maidani, hon. assistant secretary NS Premalatha, hon. member finance Binu Mannil Varughese, hon. members Ajaya Krishnan, Deepak Gopalakrishnan and Saji George, plus school officials. "On behalf of the Indian School I express my gratitude to the community members who responded to our call for help," said Prince.



BAHRAIN Islamic Bank (BisB) has signed a joint venture agreement with Royal Ambassador Property Management, a real estate property management company, to provide private financing for potential residents of the Fontana Project development.



THE latest batch of Lulu Group staff members has taken part in a Customer Service Excellence Training Programme held by The Nine Training Centre at the Wyndham Garden Hotel, Juffair. The Tamkeen-supported initiative was attended by more than 20 participants.



THE German Orthopaedic Hospital extended its gratitude to patients and well-wishers after reaching a special milestone of patient visits. Its 100,000th visitor was fitness sports coach, Mohamed Alamar, who previously had successfully undergone spine surgery at German Orthopaedic Hospital. He was met by Dr Heiner Abel, managing and medical director, and Dr Maik Priester, orthopaedic consultant, and presented with a certificate and plaque.

SocialScene

Why wait a month! Join Social Scene every week

Breathing easy



BREATHE Pilates Studio, the first fully equipped BASI (Body Arts and Science International) Pilates system studio in the GCC, opened its doors in Bahrain with a launch event offering the public a taste of the classes its team of certified trainers will offer.

Breathe founder and head instructor, Nada Al Barzinji, who trained under the mentorship of BASI Pilates leaders in the US, welcomed Pilates enthusiasts to the studio located near the Al Osra roundabout in Saar.

Toasting time

THE Toastmasters Club at GPIC organised a lecture on the importance of developing public speaking skills. Set up in 2008, the club is the only one in Bahrain to hold meetings in both Arabic and English.

The Toastmasters programme is one of the core training programmes at the company aimed at enhancing communication and leadership skills of the company's employees and trainees.



Work experience

CREDIMAX recently wrapped up its summer internship programme hosting students from the University of Bahrain. Chief executive Yousif Ali Mirza said it helped them gain work experience and offered an insight on what it will take to succeed in their chosen careers.



Handicraft workshop



AS part of its ongoing efforts to preserve Bahrain's traditional crafts and industries for future generations, the Handicrafts Directorate, representing the Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority, distributed certificates to its Anaqda Workshop participants at Al Jasrah Handicrafts Centre.

The workshop conducted by trainer, Zakiya Ali Essa, focused on embroidery skills and stitching techniques using metal threads.



Education Matters



An educational insight and comment by head teacher Chris Fenton

IT'S the first week of term and the entrance to a primary school on the island is busy with a throng of parents and children in the playground, milling around as they all begin to get used to the routines of the new school year and the names of their new teachers.

The doors open and children make their way into their classrooms. Parents wave, turn away, walk to their cars and start their days, somewhat safe in the knowledge that the school they have just dropped their child off at has their safety as well as their educational interests at heart. For the majority of parents on the island, however, this is a false sense of security.

A few parents can be significantly more confident of their child's safety than others. This is because robust and rigorous criminal

record checks are made to assess a teacher's suitability to spend time in the company of their children. In fact, it is a term of their employment and without a cleared criminal or homeland Ministry for Education check, employment cannot commence.

Other parents, however, don't have the luxury of peace of mind since it is not an actionable law on the island which means it comes down to the discretion of school owners rather than the Ministry for Education to decide if someone is suitable to teach in their school or not.

Since schools want pupils, (because bums on seats means cash in the bank) that means that, begrudgingly, they have to employ teachers and, so long as they satisfy the ministry by holding that precious resource of a degree and a teaching certificate, then who cares if they've been struck off for beating pupils, murdered their mother



or ran amok with an assault rifle in a supermarket, they're in.

Schools on the island that do insist on criminal background checks do so because it is a school policy and, of course, based on experience and common sense.

If it were a country-wide

policy or in fact even a law, then all parents could feel as equally safe that the same name they and their child learned at the beginning of term isn't languishing on a police database or a barred teachers list in their country of origin, but it isn't and that means that child safety in schools has become a

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clampdown on false degrees was heralded on the island. It was announced that there were many people working in Bahrain in professions such as engineering, education and even medicine that had falsified their degrees to assume their positions.

Using that as a precedent how many teachers, principals, security guards, kitchen staff, grounds men, bus drivers and school administrators do you think there are working in schools in Bahrain that really shouldn't be?

The reality is, nobody knows, because nobody's checking.

matter of equality. To put that another way if you can pay for it you'll get it, if you can't, you won't.

To be even blunter, the level of security you can expect for your child in their classroom depends on the amount of money you can afford to pay each month. And that stinks.

Recently a national

REVIEW: *The Rolling Clones - The Gulf Hotel Bahrain, Convention & Spa's Sherlock Holmes*

*'You make a grown man cry
'You make a grown man cry
'You make a grown man cry'*

It's the sing-along chorus to the Rolling Stones classic *Start Me Up* but it meant so much more to me.

I couldn't help but shed a tear for my late friend Mark Humphries who recently passed away after a desperate battle against cancer. He was buried yesterday.

I have him to thank for helping me woo Kathryn, the woman who became my wife.

We had met in a nightclub and she cheekily agreed to go on our first date on the condition I persuaded the legendary *Hull Daily Mail* restaurant reviewer to pen a piece about her dad's fish 'n' chip diner in Beverley. Fortunately, he wrote a very positive review ... and he ended up being my best man at our wedding!

He performed his party piece at the reception, joining the band on stage for his great impersonation of Mick Jagger.

He'd have loved to have joined the party at Sherlock Holmes and would probably have joined charismatic Alex 'Mick' Larke on stage. With that thought, it really was time to wipe away the tears and party in memory of my mate Mark and The Rolling Clones really know how to deliver a dynamic dose of rock 'n' roll.

They wowed the crowd with a non-stop montage of Stones classics,

all the greatest hits from *Jumping Jack Flash* to *Satisfaction*, played with a tightness and purpose and close your eyes you'd be hard to notice the difference, squint when you reopened them and the fun wigs and mannerisms will make you look twice!

They had the revamped venue rockin' on Thursday night and by all accounts the Friday brunch set was equally impressive.

The band hit the road in 1997 and the current line-up of Alex, Dan 'Ronnie Wood' Ketteridge, Aaron (Keith Richards) Clarke, Rob (Bill Wyman) George, Gary (Charlie Watts) Bentley and Dale (Chuck) Richardson (NOTE: Session musician Chuck Leavell has performed on almost every Rolling Stones studio album released) have been on the road from their UK homes in Hertfordshire and Essex for six years.

It was their first time in Bahrain as a band, although Alex had performed for a Night with Mick Jagger solo gig at the Dilly. After the show I told the lads about Mark. "Don't worry, they said, we're used to it," said Alex. "You'd be amazed how many times we hear stories like that. It's the music and the Stones ... they bring back memories."

Rock on The Rolling Clones. Rock on Mark (RIP).

— Stan Szczowka



ON STAGE: The Rolling Clones rock the house down and gets the fans jumping, below, fans in the frame, the late Mark Humphries and the band get in the act





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Property Weekly

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

Dream home in top location

A spacious contemporary villa is available for rent in the popular Saar area. The semi-furnished three bedroom home, which is laid out with tiles, marble and parquet flooring, features two living rooms, a separate dining area, as well as a guest closet and a large kitchen on the ground floor.

The kitchen includes breakfast-bar-style-island giving families more preparation room for cooking or enjoy quick meals. There is a second kitchen for heavy-duty cooking as well.

The bedrooms are on the first floor including another living area. All rooms consist of built-in wardrobes and ensuite bathrooms.

The gated property also boasts a landscaped garden, a private swimming and two car parks. There is also a maid's room.

It is located close to Saar Mall and the Al Nakheel Centre, Saar Cinema as well as St Christopher's Junior School and an array of restaurants, coffee shops and expat members' clubs.



FACTS AT A GLANCE

Location: Saar
Rental price: BD1,300 exclusive (negotiable)
Living rooms: 2
Bedrooms: 3
Bathrooms: 2
Additional information: There is a garden area and private swimming pool.

For further information on this and other homes call Star Real Estate's Kathryn on 39722131.



starrealstate.bh

ROVE RESIDENCE

Modern Townhouses in Al Jasra

BD 1,200 with private pool exclusive / BD 1,000 without pool exclusive

Each Semi-furnished villa features the following:

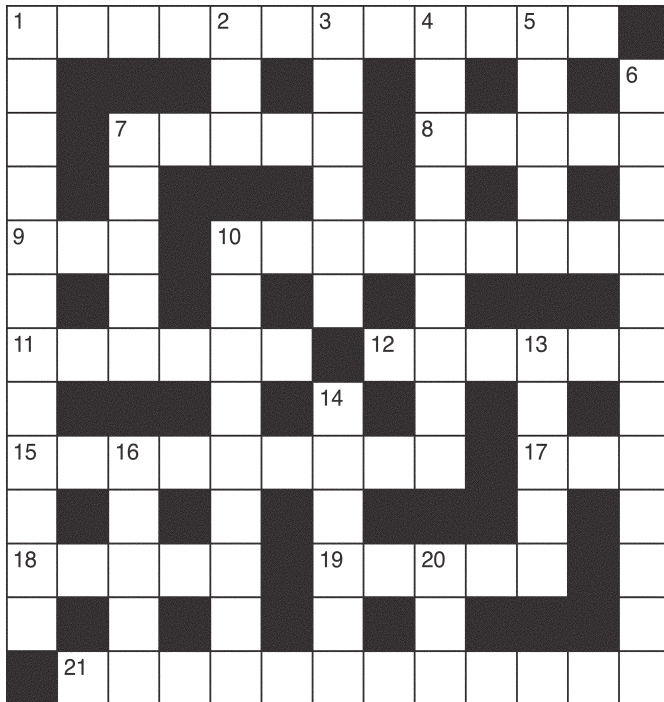
- 4 En-suite Bedrooms
- Living Room
- Outdoor Kitchen
- 2 Parking Spaces
- Servants Quarter, Laundry Room
- 4.5 Bathrooms
- Indoor Kitchen
- Small Private Garden
- Pool, Gym

Time Out



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crossword break



Solutions in next week's issue.

ACROSS

1. Chat (12)
7. Storey (5)
8. Severe (5)
9. Bashful (3)
10. Dispel (9)
11. Deduce (6)
12. Bog (6)
15. Need (9)
17. Female bird (3)
18. Stadium (5)
19. Lazy person (5)
21. Unlawful (12)

DOWN

1. Concurrent (12)
2. Self (3)
3. Emphasise (6)
4. Evidence (9)
5. Musical drama (5)
6. Immoderate (12)
7. Lobby (5)
10. Lay waste (9)
13. Loathe (5)
14. Swimsuit (6)
16. Fishing basket (5)
20. Garland (3)

who, what, where, when

WHO ... is the lead singer with the band The Flaming Lips?
WHAT ... Arkansas-born actor claims to have a phobia of antique furniture?
WHERE ... in Africa is the lake Chott Melhrir?
WHEN ... did the Nobel Prize-winning writer Henri Bergson die?
WHO ... succeeded Nelson Rockefeller as Vice President of the US?
WHAT ... group recorded the 1969 No 1 UK single *Ob-La-Di Ob-La-Da*?
WHERE ... in Europe are the cities of Bialystok and Lublin?
WHEN ... did Albert Schweitzer win the Nobel Peace Prize?

just so

gene ration

↓
END

ME
LA



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

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

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

darn tough sudoku

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

Sudoku

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

Sudoku

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

Last Week's Leisure Solutions

CROSSWORD BREAK:

Across: 4 Probity; 8 Blithe; 9 Penance; 10 Cruise; 11 Obtain; 12 Register; 18 Uncommon; 20 Infant; 21 Pallor; 22 Mortify; 23 Blotch; 24 Readily.

Down: 1 Obscure; 2 Divulge; 3 Thesis; 5 Rhetoric; 6 Beauty; 7 Tocsin; 13 Truthful; 14 Emulate; 15 Anarchy; 16 Income; 17 Wanted; 19 Oracle.

JUST SO: Three blind mice, Short and sweet, St. Bernard, The brain of Britain

WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN:

Charles Manson; Blackbird; Cornwall; 1998; Daniel Clowes; Schicklgruber; California; 1959.

Darn Tough Sudoku

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

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Write to the editor

Follow Stan on Twitter @stanszewcowa
Your views make all the difference – email Stan Szcwowa at editor@gulfweekly.com

I READ with interest the article in last week's *GulfWeekly* about women being encouraged to enter the financial sector by a female group from FinTech.

It was clear that including women in this sector has great advantages in terms of improved outcomes and in general the article gave a very positive view of women's roles in business and finance.

It was a great pity however that the headline included the term 'girl' in reference to what was clearly a serious article about adult women.

When we call women 'girls' we are using the force of language to make them smaller, we infantilise them by using a term that refers to females under the age of 18. We resist and deny their maturity, their adulthood and their true power.

I doubt very much that 'boy power' would have been used in a similar article about young men.

Vicky Honar, by email

● **Editor's note:** Vicky, I'm glad you liked the article and I am happy to clarify and justify the headline used. The full headline read: 'Girl power rocks the sector'. It should be pointed out that 'girl power' is a slogan that encourages and celebrates women's empowerment, independence and confidence. The slogan's invention is credited to US punk band Bikini Kill, who produced a feminist publication called *Girl Power* in 1991.

IT has become an ever so common phenomenon seeing news about the increasing effects of plastic, and other types, of pollution.

One would think, especially with such widespread awareness and reports, that we are moving towards reduction and prevention ... but only the opposite seems true.

There have been many reports lately, of wildlife found dead with their bodies chockfull of plastic waste and of once beautiful and pristine beaches littered with garbage.

It is alarming, for steps aimed at reduction are not at all difficult to implement.

It leads me to believe that only when such steps are mandated by government,



VISION ALERT: Children advised to cut back on their screen time to save their sight

AROUND one quarter of school-age children have some form of vision problem, such as short sightedness, astigmatism, cataracts, colour blindness, lazy eye or genetic diseases. Many of these problems begin well before school age and can go undetected, and so screening at an early age is an important part of the prevention, detection, diagnosis and treatment process.

Here are three steps for healthy school-ready vision:

1. Manage screen time

Tablets, gaming computers and smartphones can help with hand-eye coordination and for the stimulation of neurons in the brain. However, they also have bright screens and these can create side effects such as dryness of the eyes, eyestrain, blurry vision, focusing issues and

headaches. Children stare at screens intensively and don't blink as much while using devices and so tears don't spread across the eyes leading to dryness. Parents should try to limit the screen time for children to no more than 20 minutes at a time.

2. Outdoor time is great vision

Recent research from Canada shows that children who spend more time outdoors may reduce their risk of developing near-sightedness. Children seem to be becoming near-sighted at younger ages, around six to seven, rather than 12 to 13 as their eyes are constantly focusing on objects that are very close to them. The study shows that for each additional hour of outdoor time per week, the risk of a child developing myopia drops around 14 per cent – this may be due to the brighter light outdoors

and the fact that there is more to look at outdoors, so the eyes are working harder.

3. Early and regular eye tests for children

Most causes of poor vision are easily correctable if they are picked up and treated in time. A child's eyesight does not fully develop until the age of nine and if a condition like amblyopia (cross eyes or squint) or lazy eye (which can lead to permanent vision loss) is diagnosed early enough, the better the chances of successful treatment and complete recovery. Early vision screening is very important and children's vision should ideally be tested by the age of three or four. Nursery schools should also check children's eyesight, and notify parents if they suspect anything.

Eye tests for children are essential – they are quick, simple and painless and can help prevent serious vision related problems in later childhood or in adulthood. They can also pick up those problems that may inhibit the child's development at school and performance in the classroom; it is surprising how many 'disruptive children' at school turn out to have a simple vision problem that is distracting them in the classroom.

Parents should aim to manage kids' screen time, get them outdoors when appropriate and ensure they have regular eye tests.

Dr Darakhshanda Khurram, consultant paediatric ophthalmologist.

I ENJOY reading head teacher Chris Fenton's *Education Matters* column. In reference to last week's

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

PARENTS lament their teenagers' noses constantly in their phones, but they might want to take stock of their own screen time habits.

A recent study from the Pew Research Centre found that two-thirds of parents are concerned about the amount of time their teenage children spend in front of screens, while more than a third expressed concern about their own screen time.

Meanwhile, more than half of teens said they often, or sometimes, find their parents to be distracted when they are trying to have a conversation with them.

The study calls teens' relationship with their phones at times 'hyper-connected' and notes that nearly three-fourths check messages or notifications as soon as they wake up. Parents do the same, but at a lower if still substantial rate – 57 per cent.

Big tech companies face a growing backlash against the addictive nature of their gadgets and apps, the endless notifications and other features created to keep people tethered to their screens.

Experts say parents have a big role in their kids' screen habits and setting a good example is a big part of it. "Kids don't always do what we say but they do as we do," said Donald Shifrin, a professor of paediatrics. "Parents are the door that kids will walk through on their way to the world."

THERE is an opportunity for corporates and individuals to support Al Mabarrah Al Khalifa Foundation's Rayaat programme sponsoring students pursuing their baccalaureate, masters and medicine degrees.

It offers several benefits to students, including covering all university fees as well as book costs, monthly financial incentives according to academic attainment, access to workshops and training opportunities in different sectors. Rayaat also fosters a culture of 'social responsibility' by instilling volunteerism and community outreach throughout its duration.

This year the programme included 40 scholarships for the Baccalaureate degree, along with Her Highness Shaikha Moza bint Hamad Al Khalifa Medical Grant in collaboration with the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland – Medical University of Bahrain (RCSI Bahrain).

For further information, please contact 17499909 or email scholarship@mkfbh.org Al Mabarrah Al Khalifa Foundation.

article about the new school year, I thought he might enjoy this cartoon. I live next door to a teacher and I'm sure I heard the screams!

Pauline, Saar.

● **Education Weekly:**
Page 15



Youth Talk

By Sarah Belal



will we ever see change in a positive direction.

Fortunately, there are earth-conscious pioneers challenging the status quo. Notable among those is environmental activist, entrepreneur, and blogger Lauren Singer who, following in the footsteps of French campaigner Bea Johnson, has aimed to produce as little trash as possible.

Lauren can fit her rubbish from the last four years in

a single jar. She does this by refusing to consume single waste disposables, thoroughly making use of reusable items such as glass etc., composting all her food waste and making her own toiletries at home.

This approach goes further than just sorting out your waste for recycling. This method of striving to not create any, popularly known as Zero Waste, has slowly been garnering attention on social media, so there is hope to our world waste problem.

While it is true that what we have at hand is an issue of global scale, heavily influenced by marketing and consumerism, we can all do our part in being more aware of our carbon footprint.



ACTIVIST:
Bea Johnson

Film Weekly

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



Punching power

THE *Equaliser* came from nowhere back in 2014, being one of the most thrilling action films of the year. Inevitably with this genre, a sequel follows (amazingly, this is prolific actor Denzel Washington's first-ever role in a follow-up) and they usually fail to recapture the magic.

The *Equaliser 2* doesn't buck this trend, but that isn't to say it's bad.

Washington plays Robert McCall, a righteous vigilante with an implacable sense of righteousness, and no small amount of talent when it comes to violent killing. McCall quietly works blue collar jobs, eats in modest local diners, and is slowly working his way through the 100 best books in the Western Canon at the behest of a fallen wife.

He even has a gimmick. When McCall charges into a room to do damage to a large number of Russian pimps and scumbags, he times himself via stopwatch as if he's trying to beat his own record. McCall is essentially a comic book superhero. It's easy to see, then, why Washington and director Antoine Fuqua would want to make *The Equaliser 2* and convince Washington to reprise a character.

McCall is undoubtedly a fun character to play and offers both the director and the actor a chance to present a heroic vigilante with both thrilling violence as well as actual moral indignation.

He's certainly a delight to watch, at least in fits, as *The Equaliser 2* contains some wonderful self-contained moments from McCall in both an action fight capacity and in a civic-minded activist capacity.

Indeed, so eager was Fuqua to see McCall in action that *The Equaliser 2* introduces him twice: first, aboard a Turkish train, where he is seen taking out high-level gangsters with spinning

THE EQUALISER 2

STARRING: Denzel Washington, Pedro Pascal, Ashton Sanders

DIRECTOR: Antoine Fuqua

GENRE: Action thriller

RATING: PG15

RUNTIME: 121 Mins

kicks and well-placed fists, and again in a Boston high-rise where he beats a cadre of wealthy yuppies after they mistreat a woman.

While the secondary establishment of McCall's badass cred is not needed for the film as a whole, it's still fun to see a rich, arrogant delinquent get sliced in the neck by his own sharpened platinum credit card.

When he's not breaking bones and taking names, McCall is making ends meet as a Lyft driver (the screenplay namechecks Lyft at least a dozen times) and conversing with the colourful locals.

McCall can also be found cleaning the graffiti off of his Boston apartment building and reading the 100th book in his quest, Marcel Proust's *In Search of Lost Time: Time Regained*.

We also witness McCall actively reaching out to an at-risk teen named Miles (Ashton Sanders) who teeters between a life at art school and a life as a criminal. McCall even has a chance – late in the film – to give Miles a speech about the power of character and the importance of making the right choices.

As one would expect from Denzel Washington, it's an excellently acted scene, providing a touching and intense moment of surprising depth and salient, modern morality.

As a film, however, *The Equaliser 2* runs roughshod through its motions, an unfortunately consistent aesthetic that has run through a lot of Fuqua's film

work. The film, for all its great fights, excellent acting from Washington, and tone of general righteousness, feels largely flimsy.

The plot is unfocused, and characters are forgotten about for great spans of the film's overstuffed two-hour running time; Bill Pullman is introduced early in the film, and then doesn't appear again for 40-odd minutes.

It features notable deaths and aggressively brutal violence (there are several messy headshots, multiple stabbings, and one harpoon through the face), but the film's action is haphazardly delivered at random points throughout its narrative; that is to say when it should be ramping up, it typically stops for an extended breath.

What's more, the villain, once his identity is revealed, is one of the more generic you may encounter. His speeches aren't moving or novel and the motivation is boring, and the actor playing the villain doesn't possess any note of threat or sinister power. The villain is just a dull, dull person.

Luckily, McCall's own resolute strength of character – wonderfully shouldered by Washington, easily one of the greatest of all working actors – makes up for a lot of the film's writing weaknesses, elevating *The Equaliser 2*, ever so slightly, from a nondescript summer thriller into something watchable.

Here is a violent, cool superhero who cares about the community at large more than he cares about punching bad guys. In a way, that's a nice change of pace. Should Washington and Fuqua decide to revisit McCall again, it wouldn't be unwelcome.

● Now showing in: Cineco, Seef II

KRISTIAN'S VERDICT



1 popcorn – stay home
5 popcorns – start queuing

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www.oilandgasnewsonline.com

Bite-sized trailer

The Predator

DIRECTOR: Shane Black

CAST: Boyd Holbrook, Trevante Rhodes, Jacob Tremblay, Keegan-Michael Key

PLOT: When a young boy accidentally triggers the universe's most lethal hunters' return to Earth, only a ragtag crew of ex-soldiers and a disgruntled science teacher can prevent the end of the human race.

SHOWING IN: City Centre, Juffair Mall, The Avenues, Seef I & II, Saar, Wadi Al Sail, Seef Muharraq



Down a Dark Hall

DIRECTOR: Ben Lewin

CAST: Paul Rudd, Connie Nielsen, Mark Strong

PLOT: Kit (AnnaSophia Robb), a difficult young girl, is sent to the mysterious Blackwood Boarding School when her heated temper becomes too much for her mother to handle. Once she arrives at Blackwood, Kit encounters eccentric headmistress Madame Duret (Uma Thurman) and meets the school's only other students, four young women also headed down a troubled path. Kit and her classmates discover that Blackwood Manor hides an age-old secret rooted in the paranormal.

SHOWING IN: City Centre, The Avenues, Seef II, Seef Muharraq



BlacKkKlansman

DIRECTOR: Spike Lee

CAST: John David Washington, Adam Driver, Laura Harrier

PLOT: It's the early 1970s, and Ron Stallworth (John David Washington) is the first African-American detective to serve in the Colorado Springs Police Department. Determined to make a name for himself, Stallworth bravely sets out on a dangerous mission: infiltrate and expose the Ku Klux Klan.

SHOWING IN: City Centre, The Avenues, Seef II, Seef Muharraq



imdb movie charts

Current Position	Title	Weekend Takings	Gross to date
1.	The Nun	\$53.5M	\$53.5M
2.	Crazy Rich Asians	\$13.6M	\$136.2M
3.	Peppermint	\$13.3M	\$13.3M
4.	The Meg	\$6.0M	\$131.6M
5.	Searching	\$4.5M	\$14.3M
6.	Mission: Impossible - Fallout	\$3.8M	\$212.1M
7.	Christopher Robin	\$3.2M	\$91.7M
8.	Operation Finale	\$3.0M	\$14.1M
9.	Alpha	\$2.5M	\$32.4M
10.	BlacKkKlansman	\$1.6M	\$43.5M

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Motoring Weekly

Steering you to the best deals on wheels

Tale of timeless adventure

FOR more than 75 years the Jeep brand has been indelibly linked to freedom, adventure, authenticity and passion – core values that its makers say are embedded in the DNA of every vehicle.

Throughout its history, fans of the marque have championed its 'Go Anywhere. Do Anything.' philosophy as a way of life, not just a slogan.

Historically, Jeep has long been considered the authentic sport-utility vehicle. Today the company offers a broad line-up of vehicles that continue to give owners a sense of security to handle any journey with confidence.

The Jeep story, however, began way back in July 1940, when the US military informed vehicle makers that it was looking for a light reconnaissance vehicle with a very specific set of criteria: 600-lb load capacity; a wheelbase less than 75 inches; height less than 36 inches; smooth-running engine from three to 50 miles per hour; rectangular-shaped body; four-wheel drive with two-speed transfer case; fold-down windshield; three bucket seats; blackout and driving lights; gross vehicle weight below 1,300-lbs.

Delmar Gerle 'Barney' Roos, executive vice president and chief engineer of Willys-Overland Motors, designed the Willys Quad, and prototypes were produced for testing in record time and delivered to the army in the summer of 1940. Approval to build 70 sample vehicles was then granted and these were delivered in November 1940.

The next round of contracts was issued in March 1941, with Willys producing a further 1,500 Quads. With modifications and improvements, the Willys Quad became the MA, and later the MB. But the army, and the world, came to know it as the Jeep.

Some claimed that the name came from the slurring of the letters 'GP', the military abbreviation for 'General Purpose'. Others say the



vehicle was named after Eugene the Jeep, a popular character from the Popeye cartoon strip. Whatever its origin, the name entered into American vocabulary and, for a while, served almost as a generic title for off-road vehicles.

Willys-Overland went on to build more than 368,000 vehicles, and the rugged, reliable olive-drab vehicle would forever be known for helping win a world war.

The Jeep name was trademarked after the war with a plan to turn the vehicle into an off-road utility vehicle for the farm – the civilian Universal Jeep. One of Willys' slogans at the time was 'The sun never sets on the mighty Jeep.'

Jeep civilian vehicles – and their model codes – soon become legends in their own right.

The 1940s

Jeep CJ-2A: The first civilian Jeep vehicle, the rugged and versatile CJ-2A was marketed as 'the all-around farm workhorse'. It could do the job of two heavy draft horses, operating at a speed of four miles per hour, 10-hours-a-day, without overheating the engine, and was to serve agriculture and industry all over the world in a thousand different ways.

Willy's Wagon: America's first all-steel station wagon, the model 463 Jeep Station Wagon featured a three-tone paintwork that simulated the 'woodie' look. The no-maintenance all-steel utility vehicle wasn't prone

to weathering, peeling or squeaks like the old style 'woodies' and its fold-down tailgate hatch was ahead of its time and can be credited with the origin of the 'tailgate party'.

The 1950s

Jeep CJ-3B: The CJ Model was updated in 1953, becoming the CJ-3B, with a taller front grille and hood than its military predecessor in order to accommodate the new Hurricane F-Head four-cylinder engine. The CJ-3B remained in production until 1968 and a total of 155,494 were manufactured in the US.

Jeep CJ-5: 1955 saw the introduction of the CJ-5, with a rounded front-fender design. It was slightly larger than the CJ-3B, as it featured an increased wheelbase and overall length.

Jeep CJ-6: Featured a 20-inches longer wheelbase and offered more cargo space. Its 155-horsepower engine almost doubled that of the standard four-cylinder engine, and it was the first time a Jeep CJ could be equipped with a V6.

The 1960s

Jeep Wagoneer / Grand Wagoneer / Cherokee (SJ): In 1962, Jeep introduced the Wagoneer – the father of all luxury 4x4 SUVs. It was packed with innovation and industry firsts – the first automatic transmission in a 4x4 vehicle; the first overhead-cam six-cylinder truck engine, the first 4x4 vehicle with an independent front suspension; the first

automatic full-time 4x4 system.

The SJ line was in production for more than 28 years with only minor technical changes and when production ended, was the longest continuous automotive production run, on the same platform, in US automotive history.

The 1970s

Jeep Cherokee (SJ): The new Cherokee was a sporty, two-door version of the Wagoneer and featured bucket seats, a sports steering wheel, and racy detailing designed to appeal to younger, more adventurous drivers.

Jeep CJ-7: The seventh generation of the original vehicle and the first major change in Jeep design in 20 years. It had a slightly longer wheelbase to allow space for an automatic transmission and featured squared-off door openings.

The 1980s

Jeep Cherokee (XJ): When the all-new XJ series made its debut in 1984, it scored an unprecedented sweep of the '4x4 of the Year' awards from three primary off-road magazines. A revolutionary vehicle, it was 21-inches shorter, 6-inches narrower, 4-inches lower, and 1,000 pounds lighter than the full-size Wagoneer (SJ) and was built with a revolutionary uniframe instead of a traditional chassis-and-frame.

Jeep Wrangler (YJ): In 1983, the growing market for compact four-wheel-

drive vehicles still sought the utilitarian virtues of the Jeep CJ series, but consumers were also seeking more of the 'creature comforts' found in passenger cars. The response was to introduce the 1987 Jeep Wrangler (YJ).

The 1990s

Jeep Grand Cherokee (ZJ/WJ): The Grand Cherokee (ZJ) replaced the Wagoneer as a midsize luxury SUV in 1992 and was a design class many automakers would rush to imitate. The first SUV equipped with a driver side airbag, it set new standards for on-road ride, handling and comfort in an SUV and proved immediately popular, winning dozens of awards.

Jeep Wrangler (TJ): Considered the ultimate escape machine, the TJ offered outstanding on-road handling and legendary off-road capability – it was the fifth Jeep brand vehicle to win the 4x4 of the Year award.

The 2000s

Jeep Wrangler and Wrangler Unlimited (JK): In 2004, Jeep offered a stretched version of the TJ – the Wrangler Unlimited. 10-inches longer in wheelbase (103-inch) and 15 inches longer in overall length, the Unlimited offered two inches more rear leg room, more interior space, and greatly enhanced on-road handling.

Jeep Grand Cherokee (WK): 2011-present The latest generation Jeep Grand Cherokee – the vehicle that has long defined what a premium SUV should be

– delivers an unprecedented combination of best-in-class fuel economy and driving range, a choice of leading powertrain options, legendary benchmark capability, world-class craftsmanship, premium on-road driving dynamics, and more than 70 safety and security features as well as an array of advanced user-friendly technology features, such as the award-winning Uconnect 8.4-inch (213.36 mm) touchscreen radio with integrated climate and infotainment controls, and 7-inch (177.8 mm) TFT customer configurable multi-view display cluster.

Jeep Renegade (BU): 2014-present

The Jeep Renegade marked the brand's first entry into the small SUV market, with the Trailhawk version being the most capable small SUV ever.

Jeep Cherokee (KL): 2014-present

It revolutionised the midsize SUV segment when it was launched, and the latest 2019 model boasts a new, authentic, more premium design, more interior comfort and convenience, delivering everyday practicality with outstanding ride and handling characteristics, independent front- and rear-suspension systems with world-class body torsional stiffness, high-efficiency nine-speed transmission and more than 80 safety and security features.

Jeep Compass (MP): 2018-present

The new Jeep Compass offers an unmatched combination of attributes that includes legendary and best-in-class 4x4 off-road capability, contemporary and authentic Jeep design, excellent on-road driving dynamics, open-air freedom and a full array of advanced user-friendly connectivity and safety technologies.

"The excitement and innovation keep coming from Jeep, the brand that never stops evolving and innovating," said a spokesman for Behbehani Brothers, the Jeep dealers in Bahrain.

● For more details, call into the showroom in Sitra or call 17459955.

EXCITEMENT is growing over the coming launch of the new A-Class Saloon which Mercedes-Benz says will be in the showrooms early next year.

The latest member of the marque's family of compact cars will include the Edition 1, an exclusive special model to be unveiled at the launch.

Both on the exterior and in the interior, the model comes with numerous colour highlights in copper, such as on the pins of the diamond radiator grille.

The Edition 1 is shod with 19-inch AMG multi-spoke light-alloy wheels, copper-painted with a high-sheen finish.

Additional standard features will include LED high performance headlamps, sport seats with adjustable head restraints and ambient lighting. The Edition 1 will be available in all engine variants and selected paint finishes.

The new A-Class will also come with the latest driving assistance systems to give the driver cooperative support.

Launch buzz



COOL COMPACT: The A-Class

Mercedes-Benz says this will give it the highest level of active safety in its segment, with functions adopted from the S Class. For the first time, the A-Class will be able to drive semi-autonomously in certain driving situations.

"Active Distance Assist DISTRONIC and Active Steering Assist now support the driver even more conveniently in keeping a safe distance and steering, and the vehicle speed is now also

automatically adjusted on bends, at road junctions and on roundabouts," a spokesman said.

An optional head-up display projects important information onto the windscreen to reduce the degree to which the driver is distracted from what is happening on the road. There is also less eye fatigue for the driver, as the eyes do not constantly have to refocus between close-up and long-distance vision.

The all-new MBUX

multimedia system - Mercedes-Benz User Experience - has ushered in a new era in terms of connectivity. A unique feature of this system is its ability to learn thanks to artificial intelligence. MBUX can be customised if desired and adapts to the user. As a further option, it features intelligent voice control, which is activated by saying 'Hey Mercedes'.

For Mercedes matters, contact 17785454 or visit the Al Haddad Motors showroom in Tubli.



MODEL MOMENT: The 2019 Avalon on display at the showroom

Slick sedan unveiled in style

TOYOTA has proven itself as a manufacturer for many demographics over the years, but it's the luxury, premium sector that is receiving a boost with the launch of the new 2019 Avalon.

Ebrahim K Kanoo, the kingdom's distributor of the Japanese marque, unveiled the sleek sedan at its showroom in Sitra on Saturday with a starting price of BD12,700.

Randy Stephens, chief engineer of the model, said: "Throughout development, we focussed on the new Avalon being authentic and exhilarating."

Since its debut in 1994 and

evolution over four generations, the Toyota Avalon has been embraced by drivers both in the Middle East and globally - with total sales surpassing 1.5 million.

The new model's cabin features an enhanced in-vehicle nine-inch multimedia display, a 10-inch coloured and adjustable head-up display (HUD), wireless charging system for smartphones, ambient illumination, dual-zone automatic air conditioning system, 14-speaker JBL surround sound system, multi-adjustable power and ventilated front seats, as well as 60:40 split folding rear seats.

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MotorSport

All the best action from Formula One

Fast forward for Bahrain Grand Prix in draft calendar plan

THE 21-race Formula One draft calendar has been revealed but is subject to approval by the FIA World Motor Sport Council when it meets on October 12... with an early date planned for the weekend F1 extravaganza in Bahrain.

The order of races is otherwise very similar to this year's apart from the Chinese GP effectively swapping places with Bahrain and becoming the third destination on the circuit rather than the second. The race in Shanghai will be the 1,000th grand prix since F1's inception in 1950.

The season will begin with the Australian GP in Melbourne on March 17 before the F1 circus arrives in the kingdom for the race on March 31. Brazil is set to stage the penultimate race on November 17 with the season's annual conclusion taking place in neighbouring Abu Dhabi on December 1.

The calendar also includes races in Germany and Japan. The German GP was scrapped in 2017 but was reintroduced in July and Mercedes-Benz will be the title sponsor for next year's race. And,

F1 also renewed its agreement with the promoter of the Japanese GP for a further three years, until 2021.

Not everyone, however, is pleased with the potential line-up of dates. Texas Motor Speedway president Eddie Gossage has lambasted Formula One bosses for their 'infamous indifference' toward motor sport fans after the draft calendar for 2019 was revealed.

The schedule would flip the traditional autumn pairing of the races in Austin and Mexico City, putting the Mexican Grand Prix first for the first time.

Pushing the US Grand Prix back a week to November 3 would conflict with NASCAR's play-off race on the same day at Texas Motor Speedway, about a three-hour drive north of the Circuit of the Americas. A similar scenario happened in 2014.

"Shame on Formula One for doing this to the fans," Gossage said. "Fans have recognised this as the NASCAR date on this weekend since its inception long before Circuit of the Americas was built. "I would think a lot of fans – myself included – would enjoy

going to both races. Now Formula One is making fans choose only one. Yet another bad call by Formula One showing their infamous indifference toward the fans."

Circuit of the Americas President Bobby Epstein did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Mexico City race organisers are also likely to be unhappy as the Mexican GP would be on October 27, several days ahead of its national Día de los Muertos holiday celebrations, despite their desire to link the two events.

All set for milestone season

THE longest running and only regional motorsport series, with races in more than one country, is back for a milestone season.

The Porsche GT3 Cup Challenge Middle East (GT3CCME), managed by Lechner Racing on behalf of Porsche Middle East and Africa since its inception in December 2009, has unveiled an action-packed 2018/19 calendar.

The anniversary season sees several changes to its format, while continuing to hold its exhilarating championship finale as the official support race of the 2019 Formula 1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix.

Such is the global reputation and growing appeal of the highly-successful one-make series, the landmark 10th anniversary highlights its accomplishment of developing emerging, regional talent.

Continuing this legacy, organisers Lechner Racing have reformatted the championship to add more action-packed racing into the rounds than ever before.

The new season consists of 15 races over six weekends. Instead of just two, Rounds 1, 3 and 5 will now feature three races. The additions aim to test driver focus and endurance, while also making the fight for the title more difficult, with added points on offer to disrupt the championship table significantly.

Walter Lechner Snr,



ON TRACK: Porsche GT3 Cup Challenge Middle East returns for historic 10th outing

manager of the Porsche GT3CCME and Lechner Racing, a veteran racing driver who started his own motorsport career more than four decades ago, said: "Looking back over a decade at more than 100 races and 120 drivers, I'm both proud and excited about what we've achieved and the opportunities ahead of us."

"The set-up of the series allows young, local talent to learn from and compete against international and

veteran racers. This formula has helped us grow into one of the best motorsport series offered in the region and the only one racing in more than one country.

"I'm very proud of the success the team and the drivers have seen here



IN CHARGE:
Walter Lechner, founder and organiser of Porsche GT3 Cup Challenge Middle East

in the Middle East and on European tarmac. Last year's champion, Al Faisal Al Zubair of Oman, is a fine example of the results this championship has achieved.

"We welcome all racing enthusiasts from the region to contact us regardless of their experience, as we can provide guidance and coaching if and when required. The Porsche GT3CCME really is the pinnacle of racing in the Gulf

and a breeding ground for regional talent who go on to compete at international level."

Season 10 will open at Dubai Autodrome on November 16, before moving to Bahrain International Circuit the following weekend.

The championship will then head back to the UAE to test drivers at Yas Marina Circuit and again in Dubai, with the final decisive rounds in Bahrain.

The season will conclude with an official support race to the 2019 Formula 1 Gulf Air Bahrain Grand Prix at the end of March, the only regional racing series to do so.

Markus Peter, MD of Porsche Middle East and Africa FZE, added: "The 10th anniversary of the Porsche GT3CCME is a fantastic achievement and a testament to Walter's passion for the sport and this region. He and his team have provided an authentic motorsport platform in the Middle East, significantly enriching the region's sports culture for the past decade."

"Through the GT3CCME many local racing talents have been and will continue to be prepared for international competition, whilst other contestants are able to enjoy the sport in a very competitive series under professional management."

"The diversity of drivers, from nationalities to age, experience to career aspirations, is proof of its popularity and showcases Lechner Racing's ability to provide coaching and mentoring for all levels. We look forward to many more exciting races ahead."

The series gives official drivers access to the latest Porsche 911 GT3 Cup race car, the same model used for international motorsport editions, such as the Porsche Carrera Cup and the Porsche Mobil 1 Supercup, the official F1 support race.

STANDING a few feet away from the Grand Slam trophy which she had just won, Naomi Osaka started crying.

The 20-year-old Asian star had just beaten her childhood idol Serena Williams, bidding for a record-equalling 24th Grand Slam title and her first since giving birth, in the US Open final.

Still wearing the black visor she had worn throughout the 6-2 6-4 victory, Osaka - the first player from Japan to win a major tournament - pulled it down over her face to cover the emotion.

During what should have been the happiest moment of her career, they did not seem to be tears of joy.

Boos rang around Arthur Ashe Stadium - not directed at her, but at a sense of injustice felt by most of the 24,000 crowd against American superstar Williams.

"I felt bad at one point because I'm crying and she's crying. You know, she just won," said former world number one Williams, 36.

So, how did it get to this point? How was one young woman's greatest moment of her career, probably life, ruined in such fashion?

Murmurs of dissent were first heard when Williams, who had already lost the first set at Flushing Meadows, was given a code violation at 2-1 in the second after chair umpire Carlos Ramos ruled that her coach Patrick Mouratoglou was signalling tactics from the stands - which is not allowed.

Williams was seriously irked. "We don't have any code," she told the Portuguese. "I don't cheat to win. I'd rather lose."

After the match, Mouratoglou admitted in a television interview he had been coaching - but added 'I don't think she looked at me' and 'everybody does it'.

If the pair do not have a code, as Williams says, and if she did not see him make any



GLUM GLORY: Winner Osaka holds her trophy aloft and, below, Williams lays into the umpire with a finger-pointing rant

VOICE OF SPORT

with Kristian Harrison



signals, then she has a right to feel aggrieved - but with her coach, not the rule book.

The United States Tennis Association, which runs the tournament, issued a statement later backing Ramos. It said he acted: 'in accordance to the rules'.

While Williams says she wants to 'clarify' what Mouratoglou was thinking and saying, the Frenchman cannot be blamed for her anger escalating.

When Williams lost her serve later in the set, the mood in the stadium

changed completely. First, the American smashed her racket, and when Ramos gave her another violation - again a correct one - she exploded.

"I didn't get coaching. You need to make an announcement that I don't cheat. You owe me an apology," she told the umpire. "I have never cheated in my life. I have a daughter and I stand for what's right for her. I have never cheated."

By now Ramos was getting the sort of treatment reserved for a pantomime villain.

From that point it was a matter of when, not if, Osaka went on to clinch victory.

She broke serve again for a 4-3 lead and then more drama unfolded when Williams continued to rant at Ramos. "You stole a point from me. You are a thief," she said.

That earned Williams a third violation for verbal abuse, Ramos announcing he had penalised her a game as a sense of confusion and disbelief swept around the stadium.

An emotional Williams remonstrated further with Ramos and called for the tournament referee in what was rapidly becoming a chaotic situation.

Those pantomime boos quickly turned more menacing, however.

Loud jeers rained down on to the court. Some spectators were on their feet, some had their thumbs pointing down, and some shouted abuse at the umpire.

Osaka, somehow, kept her cool. Although Williams held to love immediately after the game penalty, the 20th seed maintained the composure she had showed from the start to take her second match point.

That was the moment Osaka, who was brought up in New York after her family moved over from Japan, had dreamed of since picking up a racket - beating her idol in a Grand Slam final.

Still it felt like it was not the special moment it should have been.

Boos continued to be heard at the end of the match and again when the presentation began.

Osaka began to cry - a heart-wrenching moment which was hard to watch.

That's when Williams, 16 years older than her opponent, intervened as her maternal instinct kicked in.

To me, this felt more than a little hollow. Poor Osaka's greatest hopes and dreams had been accomplished, yet simultaneously destroyed, by her idol - the woman she'd written school projects on when she was learning the game.

Williams is a fantastic player, easily the greatest female to have played the game, but great winners also often make poor losers. This isn't the first time she's lost her rag on the court and likely won't be her last.

What's worse is she played almost every card in her hand too. Victim? Check. Sexism? Check. Motherhood? Check. In fact, I'm actually amazed she didn't come out with the race card.

Naturally in this modern day, the row has been centred on the sexism angle and due to this, Williams has received far more support than she deserves instead of being widely condemned.

The fact remains that the umpire was right to penalise her on all accounts, but the main argument is that he could have showed some understanding of the occasion and given her a warning.

Williams felt aggrieved that she was penalised for being coached, but obviously never looked at her coach so it seems like it came from nowhere.

That's the issue to take up with her coach, though.

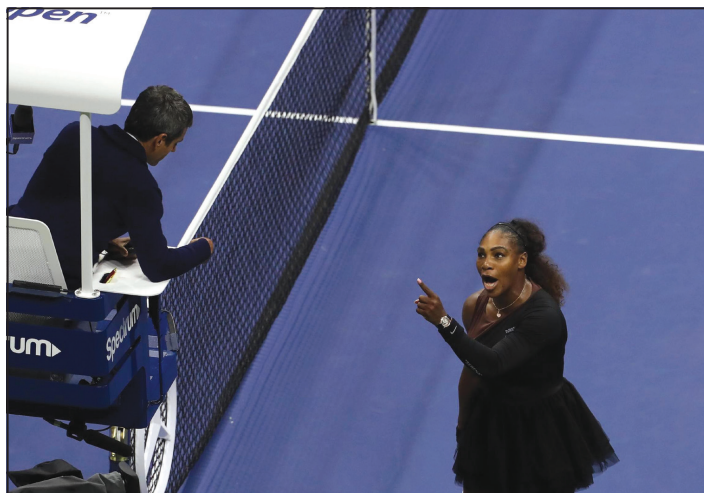
There's also the narrative that male players get away with chirping away at the umpire and get told to get on with the game instead of being penalised. This argument does have some merit, as anyone who ever watched former champ John McEnroe would attest to. In fact, the Women's Tennis Association (WTA) has backed Williams' claim.

"The WTA believes that there should be no difference in the standards of tolerance provided to the emotions expressed by men versus women," WTA chief executive Steve Simon said in a statement.

Some former players, such as Lindsay Davenport, suggest umpire Ramos should have tried to 'defuse the situation' before issuing a game penalty.

From my point of view, this comes down to inconsistent umpiring rather than the letter of the law. This should be the issue focussed on and dealt with, rather than lending credence to Williams' arrogance and poor sportsmanship.

And most importantly, let's celebrate Osaka's victory, which should be the true story here. Surely it's the first of many to come.





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STAYING POWER!

McLAREN has taken significant strides to overturn its on-track fortunes by promoting teenage Lando Norris into the hot seat as part of its new driver line-up for 2019.

The team, partly-owned by Bahrain's sovereign wealth fund Muntalakat, has struggled in recent years with an uncompetitive car, leading to disenchanted star Fernando Alonso leaving the sport to pursue winning opportunities in other series.

Belgian Stoffel Vandoorne has also been dropped after a number of unconvincing performances. Spaniard



MOTORING
By KRISTIAN HARRISON
kristian@gulfweekly.com

Carlos Sainz will join Norris in the cockpit after moving from Renault.

The British 18-year-old has been the team's reserve driver and took part in first practice sessions in Belgium and Italy in 2018. "This is a special moment, one I could only hope would become reality," said Norris. "To be announced as a race driver for McLaren is a dream come true."

Norris is a title challenger in the Formula 2 feeder series this year, sitting second in the championship having won on his debut from pole position. Since joining McLaren's Young Driver Programme in early 2017, Norris has conducted race simulation work for the team in addition to participating in testing.

"For the remainder of 2018, my focus remains firmly on the Formula 2

championship," he said. "My objective is to win the title before joining McLaren full-time, which will be tough, but I will fight as hard as I can for the remaining four races."

"I'll also be working closely with McLaren at every opportunity to learn as much as possible from the drivers, engineers and mechanics to give myself the best preparation."

Comparisons have been made with Lewis Hamilton, who also joined McLaren as a rookie in 2007, missing out on the title by one point but subsequently becoming one of the most successful drivers in the history of the sport.

However, Norris remains level-headed about his chances, and is under no illusion that the papaya orange McLaren he will be stepping into is far from the front-runner that Hamilton's silver arrow was more than a decade ago.

The teenager, from the



YOUNG GUN: Lando Norris happy to be involved in a work in progress and, left, testing the McLaren and Alonso with Brown

English city of Bristol, said: "Growing up, I've always watched Lewis and aspired to have some attributes from him, mainly his speed. His raw pace is probably the best of everyone on the whole grid, so there are bits you want from different drivers. And being compared to someone who could be about to win five world championships, who's won four, it's not a bad thing."

"Rule Number One is beat your team-mate. Apart from that, it is going to be a tough year. We are not going to be winning, or competing against Ferrari and Mercedes. I would like to think we can make a step forward from where we are, however."

"As much as I would have loved to partner Fernando, as much as I admire him and loved working with him, for

the longevity of McLaren and helping them improve, having Carlos will mean we can push each other a lot together."

"Fernando would definitely help the team improve but it is good that teams have fresh starts every now and again. I don't think it's a bad or good thing I'm going against Carlos."

"We are not going to be winning next year or probably the year after. It will probably be a few years. I'm just hoping whatever I do is going to be good enough. I want to be with McLaren and I want to win with McLaren. I don't think that is going to be next year, so it is more of a longer project."

Whether Norris forges a successful career or not will depend on both his ability behind the wheel and his

team to provide him with a competitive car.

McLaren chief executive officer Zak Brown said he had promoted Norris because he was 'convinced he is a star of the future,' but at the same time admits that the team has a responsibility to nurture that talent. He explained: "McLaren are in rebuilding mode, and to have two extremely quick young drivers, one with a good amount of experience, one inexperienced, is a good combination, considering the five-year horizon. We pretty quickly got to the conclusion that Lando was the right driver."

"We need to manage him carefully and not get ahead of ourselves with comparisons to other drivers."

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