

# Gulf Weekly

The community newspaper at the heart of Bahrain

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# COUNTRY LEGEND

## COMMUNITY REPORT

By STAN SZECOWKA  
editor@gulfweekly.com



ONE of country music's legendary songwriters and performers has touched down once more in the kingdom after frustrating flight delays and a summer of stunning shows, recording sessions and more than a touch of sadness.

Rusty Golden, described recently by a musical critic and US radio host as 'that electric kind of performer that pulls in a room just by walking on stage' will be saying 'howdy' to his fans and making new friends at his favourite Juffair venue from tomorrow evening.

The show's about to start at Big Texas Barbeque & Waffle House inside Best Western Plus - The Olive Hotel and it's all thanks to a family connection that a man who can boast five No 1 records, two of which were named 'Song Of The Year', a Grammy Awards nomination as well as a Songwriter of the Year accolade, can call Bahrain 'his second home'.

Rusty said: "A great country song is like a three-

minute movie. You can make someone feel real emotion sadness, laughter and everything in between. Music is the universal language. "A great country song tells a story. Most of the themes

of those stories touch the soul. Someone falls in love. Someone gets their heart broken and they fall out of love. Sometimes they never get over it.

"Country songs sometimes

deal with family issues too. Everyone has a mother and a father. Sometimes you don't see eye-to-eye with them but one day, when they're gone, you realise they were doing the best they could."

The music industry has very much been a family affair and remains so to this day.

Rusty grew up in and around it. When he was seven his father, William Lee, moved him and the family, mother, Frogene, and brothers Craig and Chris, from Brewton, Alabama to Nashville, Tennessee so that he could pursue his career in music as a member of the Oak Ridge Boys (ORB).

Within six years the ORB became one of the most popular groups in the land, selling in excess of 42 million records, including the classic *Elvira*, a song that's been keeping the family's bills paid since 1981, according to Rusty.

In 2015 the act was inducted into the Country Music Hall Of Fame as well as being members of the famous Grand Ole Opry.

By the age of 13, Rusty was out on the road first playing drums until watching English rocker Elton John perform in Nashville in 1972. Inspired, the day after the show Rusty gave his drumsticks to his brother, Chris, and started teaching himself to play the piano.

Turn to Page 4



Photograph: Michael Jenkins

ON SONG: Rusty Golden live on stage

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# Touchdown for air show



SITTING IN STYLE: The Challenger 850 interior, right, Dr Siegfried and, above right, Al Worden

**E**XCITEMENT is soaring for one of the kingdom's flagship events as the Bahrain International Airshow (BIAS) prepares to take off later today.

A number of agencies and businesses, both local and global, will be touching down in the kingdom and showcasing their exhibits across the show's four days.

Foremost of these is Bahrain's recently-launched National Space Science Agency (NSSA). As part of its awareness programmes, a series of workshops are being held to familiarise prospective students with space science and the impact of space on the future, as well as arranging practical workshops for younger children to educate and encourage them to learn more about space.

Other awareness activities include a practical presentation about nano-satellites, their components, communication systems and controls, as well as electronic presentations related to education curricula and research in the kingdom.

Following the space theme, American astronaut and Apollo 15 Command Module Pilot, Al Worden, is coming to Bahrain for the first time as an ambassador for the US aerospace industry.

Worden's week-long schedule includes official appearances at the event, as well as participation in coinciding military and student programmes.

Worden will address the Second Manama Air Power Symposium, which will be attended by Chiefs of Air Staff from around the world on the eve of the air show. He will also make presentations

**COMMUNITY REPORT**  
By KRISTIAN HARRISON  
kristian@gulfweekly.com

to a gathering of the Royal Bahrain Air Force and a Bahrain University audience, all to promote multilateral cooperation in aerospace and space exploration.

Of course, the focus of many will be on the aircraft themselves, and the BIAS will feature an estimated 110 civil and military aircrafts. It will also host a number of flying and static aircraft displays, with several airlines showcasing their aircraft including Gulf Air, which will be displaying their new Dreamliner Boeing 787 and Airbus A320neo.

The FAI Aviation Group, an associate of sovereign wealth fund Mumtalakat, will be showcasing the Bombardier Challenger 850 business jet. This ultimate lavish aircraft offers spacious cabins, maximum flexibility for VIP transport and air ambulance requirements.

Dr Siegfried Axtmann, chairman of FAI, said: "We are very proud to be making our debut at this exciting show and to be showcasing our newest family member in the 25-strong FAI fleet."

"We are looking forward to meeting with aviation delegates and friends of Bahrain at this prestigious event which is co-organised with Farnborough International in the UK. We can see that Bahrain Airport, thanks to considerable investment, is ideally positioned to develop into a significant hub, not only for regional traffic but also for transitory traffic to Asia. During the event we are looking forward to hearing and seeing about what more it has to offer."




"We have heightened interest in the region. This is because in 2017 we welcomed a strategic new investor from Bahrain - Mumtalakat. They were attracted to our market-leading position serving the intercontinental air ambulance patient transport market, in which we are active worldwide, supported by qualified medical personnel and state of the art medical technology."

"We fly 13,000 hours annually and our clientele includes the world's leading insurance and assistance companies, NGOs and prominent health authorities in the wider GCC region."

The Challenger 850 model features a comfortable three-zone cabin perfect, the company says, for luxury VIP travel at a competitive price. In air ambulance configuration, it can accommodate one patient (in full intensive care unit stretcher configuration), plus up to 10 escorts depending on the condition of the patient.

BIAS takes place from 10am until 6pm until Saturday. Tickets are priced at BD10 for adults, BD5 for children aged two-to-16, and free for under-tuos.

● For more information, visit [www.bahraininternationalairshow.com](http://www.bahraininternationalairshow.com)




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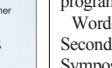
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# Lest we forget

**T**HE rain lashed down in an almighty downpour as ambassadors, VIPs, senior servicemen and guests gathered at the British Embassy for the Armistice Day Centenary Remembrance Day Service.

But just minutes before the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month the weather cleared and the planned event went ahead in the gardens of the British Embassy.

Dean of St Christopher's Cathedral, The Very Rev'd Chris Butt, led the service assisted by the Mission to Seafarers' chaplain, The Rev'd Stephen Thanapaul.

British Ambassador, Simon Martin, hosted the service and wreath laying ceremony and was joined by members of the diplomatic corps and representatives from the British Armed Forces, as well as service personnel from several nations and members of the

## COMMUNITY REPORT

By STAN SZECOWKA  
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British community.

"This is always a very special event and this year, 2018, marks the extra special anniversary of the centenary of the Armistice," he said. "This event provides us with an opportunity to remember the contribution of British and Commonwealth military and civilian servicemen and women involved in the two World Wars and later conflicts".

Visiting Chelsea Pensioners John Griffiths (Late SGT), 73, Peter Henry (Late WO1), 71; and Hugh Craig (Late WO1), 68, hosted by the Bahrain British Business Forum (BBBF), also attended.

An additional Bells for Peace celebration was held at St Christopher's Cathedral, as part of an international bell-ringing programme to mark the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War.



GARDEN GATHERING: Dean, The Very Rev'd Chris Butt leads the service, below, ambassador Simon with BBBF chairman Khalid Al Zayani and guests arriving caught in the downpour



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## From Page 1

Six years later he performed on Larry Gatlin's Number One album release *Love is Just a Game*.

In 1978 while in Los Angeles and, in between playing a concert at the legendary Roxy Theatre, Rusty started making plans to write and record his own songs and by age 20 he was recording at Quadraphonic Studios in Nashville for ABC Records.

He went on to form The Boys Band with friends and record a debut album for Elektra/Asylum Records which yielded a Top 40 single and the first music video for MTV produced in Nashville in 1982.

In 1984 Rusty received a gold record for his song-writing contributions on the Oak Ridge Boys album *Bobbie Sue*.

Rusty decided to concentrate on his songwriting by signing with PolyGram Music and his songs were recorded by country and pop stars. Also, during this time he continued working as a musician on tour and recording with various artists. Starting in 1994, and for 15 years afterward, Rusty promoted his own concerts in the US.

It's when things are running smoothly that life often kicks you where it hurts.

Fast forward to 2002 and, after returning from performing at a private party for *Fortune* magazine at the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame Show, he decided to check himself into hospital after falling ill. Within three days he underwent a quadruple heart bypass in Nashville.

"Life has thrown me a few curveballs," he said. On the day we started this interview Rusty has just found out that one of his dearest friends and band-mates, bass player Don Breland, had passed away. It coincided with the death of R&B icon Aretha Franklin and, in 1977, on that day, the world lost Elvis Presley. And, another old songwriting buddy, Tony Joe White, who penned the hit *Polk Salad*

*Annie*, famously performed by Elvis, also passed away shortly before Rusty stepped on the plane.

While recuperating from the bypass at his mother's home, Rusty started pondering his future and the past that had got him 'where he was ... or wasn't' ... and he decided to write a gospel song.

"Musically, it was a return to everything I grew up on," he explained. The song *John in the Jordan*, performed by Ernie Haase & Signature Sound, hit No 1 in the charts and Rusty soon found fans in that genre wanting to hear more.

Rusty went on to achieve further chart-topping song writing success with *What Salvation's Done For Me* (The Booth Brothers) *I Want to Thank You* (Karen Peck & New River) *Between 12 and 33* (The McKameys) and *A Different Light* (recorded by brother, Chris - Country Gospel's Male Vocalist of the Year 2018).

*What Salvation's Done For Me* and *I Want to Thank You* were voted Song of the Year, in 2007 and 2008 respectively, and were both nominated for Grammy Awards.

Since 2015 Rusty has released two critically-acclaimed projects, *Angels* and a 'recovery-themed' album called *Sober* which *Billboard* magazine's Deborah Evans Price described as the 'best work this gifted singer/songwriter has ever delivered'. "The most compelling music always comes from real life and Rusty Golden has long had a gift for distilling experience into insightful, poignant songs. Sung with passion and conviction," she added, "spend some time with this album. You'll be richer for the experience."

A piece of luck, good fortune and loose family connections led to the star heading to Bahrain, bringing along a beloved Western buckskin jacket given to him by his father, who will be celebrating his 80th birthday

# Rusty's back with



in January, because he thought it would help show that 'real American Country & Western music had finally come to the Middle East'!

"Had my cousin Carl not been married to the sister of the lady who pays me ... chances are very slim that I would've ever gotten to visit Bahrain," said Rusty. "And now, after three years of getting to know the kingdom, the US ambassadors, recording parts of my new album here and making lots of new friends ... that would have been a real tragedy for me. I will now be celebrating my fourth Christmas and birthday here this upcoming season!"

Big Texas Barbeque & Waffle House is owned by restaurateur Milly and logistics businessman Radford Cox, with managing partner Bryan Malone, playing an important role too.

"It's very much a family affair," said Radford, whose mother Winnie Jo is currently visiting from her

home in Oklahoma.

Rusty finally touched down in the kingdom last week and, like most of Rusty's life, it wasn't without incident. He was one of more than 100 American Airlines passengers who missed their connections to the Middle East at Chicago's O'Hare airport and had a 24-hour delay.

His recent months back home in 'Music City', which Nashville has long been referred to by natives and visitors alike, have proved productive.

"I've finished with my brand new release which I actually started recording at Studio 77 in Bahrain last year," he said. "I'm not sure if I stressed enough that not only has Bahrain become a place of inspiration for my song-writing but I actually did quite a bit of recording in Adliya."

He also filmed a music video for one of the songs at the stunning new Monthaven Mansion concert venue at

MUSIC MAN: Rusty, left, his new album and, right, with Bryan, Milly, Radford and mum, Winnie Jo at the entrance of Big Texas Barbeque & Waffle House



an intimate show with some fans paying \$500 for a seat.

He also played alongside Carrie Underwood at the Grand Ole Opry, a legendary stage he's been playing on

since he was 18, and his latest release - a new five-song EP titled *Confessions* - has been ecstatically-received. Devon O'Day, the Afternoon Drive radio show



FAMILY AFFAIR: Rusty performing, centre, with his dad and brothers and, right, playing the piano at home in Nashville



# a taste of country



people who still buy music are downloading it. The royalty rates for artists and songwriters in the digital age is awful. You can have a song stream online 200 million times and your royalties may be \$900 if you're lucky.

"Back before the internet when people actually *bought* music at a place where music was sold ... in my lifetime that has included vinyl albums in the 1960s, 8 tracks – remember them anyone? – during the 1970s, cassette tapes in the 1980s and, then by the 1990s, compact discs (CDs) ruled.

"For me, the magic era of actually holding a vinyl album sleeve in your hands, putting the album on the stereo and as you listened, you would look at the artwork and be able to read not only the lyrics to see songs but find out who wrote the song - sorry folks, but in many cases the artists never wrote or, in some cases, played an instrument on their own albums.

"Anyway, I know that I may sound like an old guy reminiscing about the 'good old days' but for someone who was so inspired by the music to the point of obsession, those were the days!

"I loved reading who played each instrument, which recording studio was used and who mixed and mastered the final product.

"I realised that the age of the CD was numbered when car manufacturers stopped putting players in their vehicles. Fast forward

to today, unless you are Taylor Swift or a handful of acts who not only write or co-write their songs and still manage to sell millions of actual products (only she, Adele and Drake were certified platinum last year) let that sink in.

"So singer-songwriters like myself had to figure out how to continue making a living in the music business. I'm so thankful that I can play an instrument – the piano in my case – otherwise, I would have to depend on karaoke backing tracks.

"For the last 20 years I have paid the bills through songwriting, playing on other people's projects in the recording studio and on stage but because of the fact that lots of people listen to a song by visiting *YouTube* or whatever, the music business, and those who have depended on it to feed their families, has been hit hard.

"I'm so thankful for the phone call from my cousin back in October 2015 that set the wheels in motion for my being able to see a part of the world that I probably wouldn't have otherwise.

"I'm so thankful for the folks who not only built a stage for me to perform on, but have made me feel welcome and part of the family, which, by coincidence, I sort of am!"

He also aims to use his music industry knowledge to help up-and-coming musicians living in Bahrain and perhaps help promote some concerts here too.

"I would like to help find someone who is so talented

that needs someone with the connections I have and help them make their dreams come true," he said.

"I've been very fortunate and seen lots of my own dreams come true so it's my duty to help someone if I can. If I can find someone that can give me goosebumps, make the hairs on the back of my neck stand up and find out if they are a good person deserving to 'make it' I will do what I can to help them."

The Big Texas Barbeque & Waffle House in Juffair is an ideal location for US service personnel stationed with the US Navy's Fifth Fleet desperate for the sounds of home but the good food, ambience and music has also attracted a loyal following from locals and other expats working in the kingdom.

"Bahrain is such a cosmopolitan place with a diverse population of people from all over the world," said Rusty, "that's what the USA was founded on.

"I have made such wonderful friends who I keep in touch with when I'm back home in Nashville and I can't wait to meet up with them again.

"Thanks to Facebook and other social media platforms which for me, other than Facebook, is Instagram, Twitter and my YouTube channel RustyGoldenTV,

means I'm able to keep in touch.

"At the same time, because of the nature of the way it works, I'm often meeting people who will be shipping out or transferring to another locale and there's always a fresh crop of faces to see and names to remember.

"I try to live my life one day at a time. If you want to hear God laugh, tell Him your plans. If you were to have told me five years ago that I would be spending at least seven months out of the year in the Kingdom of Bahrain I would have thought you were crazy.

"I'm so glad that I took the chance that day in November 2015. I feel like I have a 'second home' here in Bahrain.

"I love it when the patrons come up to me and talk if for no other reason it makes us both feel like we're back home. I'm not hip hop, I can't play jazz or classical, I can't rap ... heck, I can't even wrap a gift. But if you like classic country and old time rock 'n' roll come see me."

● **Check out Rusty live tomorrow evening. He will also be on stage from 8pm every Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday during the next three months. For reservations, call 17360063.**

host on 650am WSM, said the new collection of feel-good love songs 'remind you to dance, to ride in a convertible holding hands with the music loud ... and that when you are in love, you are forever 16.

It begs the question, how come such a highly-regarded performer is playing in Juffair?

The answer, and the good fortune for music lovers here, lies in the current state of the music industry, battered and bruised and a bit like the publishing sector, finding its place in a digital world.

"Someone might say: 'but you're from Nashville, surely you can make money playing music there?' Well, not so much anymore," said Rusty.

"Because I have made my living as a songwriter since 1982, the music industry has completely changed since then. Heck, most








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# Zahra's



## zinger deals

Putting Bahrain's supermarkets under the spotlight and searching for the best deals

## Having an *app*-etite for family fun

**C**ITY Centre Bahrain's website has introduced a new feature called 'Kids Activity'.

The aim is to allow families to pre-plan the 'perfect day out' for their children from the comfort of their home by simply visiting the page.

It features a list of all children-related stores, events and facilities, categorised into different departments such as fashion, entertainment and toys, making it simpler for parents to find exactly what they are looking for and plan a fun day of great moments spent together.

Child-related offers and promotions are listed on the website, as well as kids' menus available at the mall's restaurants giving parents of even the pickiest of eaters an easier way to decide on a place to dine.

Planning a birthday party is a breeze too with all the information on the latest movie



releases and best party locations available on the new tab.

"We are pleased to launch a new feature on the website underlining our commitment to introducing exclusive and innovative services to enhance visitor convenience and a seamless customer journey," said Duaij Al Rumaihi, senior mall manager, at Majid Al Futtaim's

City Centre Bahrain

"Following a comprehensive evaluation of customer habits and their overall experience at the mall, we embarked on a mission to make significant customer-centric enhancements, both online and offline."

● For more details visit <http://www.citycentrebahrain.com/kids-activities>

### Carrefour Hypermarket

Arwa water 6x1.5ltr – BD0.550  
My Club price – BD0.490  
Kraft cheese spread org 3x230gm – BD1.690  
My Club price – BD1.490  
Coca Cola asst 3x1.25ltr – BD0.950  
My Club price – BD0.790  
Karami 1121 basmati rice 10kgs – BD5.750  
My Club price – BD4.990  
CP chicken 2x1,100gm – BD1.590

### Al Jazira Supermarket Zinj

Cadbury tiffin 12x200gm – BD1.800  
Cadbury taste Oreo 6x300gm – BD2.350  
Cadbury big taste triolade 6x300gm – BD2.400  
Hershey's canister snack almond 6x5.9oz – BD2.200  
Kit Kat senses hazelnut 6x200gm – BD2.700

### Lulu Hypermarket

Lulu corn oil 1.8ltr 2pcs – BD3.390  
Lulu milk powder pouch 900gm – BD1.990  
Lulu golden Sella basmati 5kg – BD3.590  
Lulu frozen chicken 1,000gm 10pcs – BD8.290  
Lulu chicken nuggets 250gm 2pcs – BD1

### Al Osra Supermarket

Pumpkin/kg – BD0.425  
Cranberries pre-packed 340gm – BD1.525  
Defrosted shrimps peeled 11/15 tail on/kg – BD7.995  
Potato sweet Australia/kg – BD2.295  
Apples gala per kg – BD0.650  
Macaroons assortment – BD0.325

# Michelle masters the market

**C**HEF Michelle Adrillana aims to put Filipino cuisine high on Bahrain's food radar by dishing out a selection of her country's flavourful fare with a modern twist at the Sheraton Bahrain Hotel, writes Mai Al Khatib-Camille.

The former professional singer flew in from Manila to share her culinary skills and special recipes at this week's Filipino Food Festival at Soie restaurant, staged in collaboration with Bahrain's Philippine Embassy, Philippine Airlines and World Travel Services.

"The purpose of this festival is to put Filipino food on the culinary map because I believe it's been left behind," said Chef Michelle, 40. "What diners will get is basically my world on a plate - the stories of my family, of my culture and the food that I grew up with."

"When I arrived in Bahrain, first thing I did was go to the central market because I believe to be able to



FILIPINO FARE: Chef Michelle and, right, some of her creations

understand the culture and people you will be cooking for, you really have to go to their market. I like to immerse myself in the culture of every country that I visit."

Chef Michelle, who runs a culinary consultancy and catering company named after her grandmother Salud by Adrillana, has created an a la carte menu for the occasion which runs until Friday.

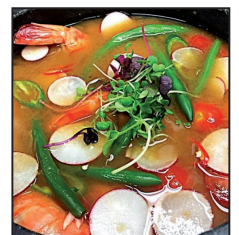
"In my opinion,

authenticity is having the flavours you grew up with in a dish that also has a story behind it...as long as it keeps Filipino flavours intact!" said the mother-of-two who also specialises in Western, European, Middle Eastern and Asian cuisine.

Diners are feasting on her interpretation of traditional fare such as adobo - a popular dish that involves meat, seafood or vegetables marinated in vinegar, soy sauce, garlic and black

peppercorns, browned in oil and simmered in the marinade - sisig, pansit and halo halo and according to Chef Michelle, her portions are large enough to share because that is very much a part of Filipino feasting culture.

Chef Michelle, who has been cooking for the past 10 years, has her own YouTube channel called *Mischief & Chef Michelle Adrillana*. After a successful singing career which took her



around Asia, she attended the International School for Culinary Arts and Hotel Management in the Philippines, graduating with honours. She aims to emulate the composure of celebrity chef Nigella Lawson with the strength of restaurateur Gordon Ramsay and continue to learn her art.

The festival is staged daily from 7pm to 11.30pm. For details, call 17533533.

Check out Editor Stan Szczotka's Youtube

interview with Chef Michelle with a guest appearance from Philippines Ambassador Alfonso Ver by scanning the QR code below.





# FinTechFocus

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

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**MANCHESTER United goalkeeper David De Gea would be a Real Madrid player now if football had embraced blockchain technology, a move some football pundits suggest now seems inevitable in the next couple of seasons.**

De Gea's switch from Old Trafford to the Santiago Bernabéu Stadium famously fell through in 2015 because the paperwork was not submitted in time for the transfer to be completed.

But the collapse of deadline day deals in such circumstances should soon become a thing of the past, according to experts who are in talks with a number of English Premier League clubs on the benefits of blockchain technology.

"There are major gains to be made with regard to sponsorships and the way clubs interact with all their business partners," said Omar Jackson, director of Cryptech World. "The buying and selling of players becomes faster, more efficient and more cost-effective if all the information needed to complete transfers is kept on a blockchain."

"This will be particularly important on deadline day to make sure last minute deals go through. It will also bring more transparency by

## Goal/chain reaction

recording payment of player and agent fees to show what percentages of transfer fees goes where.

"From the 2020-2021 season we could start seeing a lot more blockchain involvement in football, leading to players being bought and sold through crypto-currencies and even being paid in crypto."

Omar said that Cryptech World has been approached in recent weeks directly and indirectly by more than 10 football clubs, most of them from the Premier League, as well as the Championship, the second tier of English Football, La Liga in Spain and Serie A from Italy.

While discussions are at an early stage, the company says the foundations are being laid for revolutionary changes to the way top football clubs do business.

Omar believes that while football is taking the lead in embracing blockchain technology, its impact on the global sports industry will be magnified by developments across a wide range of team and individual sports such as cricket, Formula One, rugby, tennis, golf and boxing.

"Football is a business,

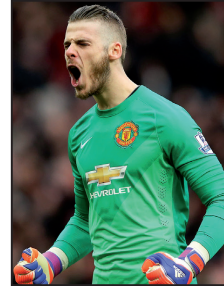
GAME ON: Omar and, right, De Gea



profit is vitally important to the clubs, and blockchain can help them cut costs massively, making many processes more efficient, saving time and money," he claimed. "We are welcoming these conversations and the clubs we're talking to are all

interested in learning more about how blockchain can benefit their business; there are many ways for this to happen."

Cryptech World says blockchain will also help football clubs eliminate the traditional problem of forged



match day tickets, tackle the issue of touts snapping up blocks of tickets to sell at inflated prices and, perhaps most importantly, help bring down the cost of football and supporting football clubs to the man on the street.

The recent move by France's Paris Saint-Germain to partner with blockchain platform socios.com highlights how clubs can use their own crypto-currencies to build a stronger bond with fans, says Omar. PSG is launching a Fan Token Offering (FTO) giving supporters access to branded club tokens. These will make it easier to buy club merchandise and tickets, and also give fans voting rights on matters such as player-

of-the-month awards and stadium music.

"All team sports, especially cricket, can benefit enormously from blockchain. F1 will be a huge arena to implement the technology too," he added.

With offices in Dubai and London, Cryptech World invests in ideas and start-ups utilising blockchain and actively trades the top four crypto-currencies in the world, namely Bitcoin, Ethereum, Ripple and Litecoin. The company recently signed a sponsorship agreement with Britain's former world boxing champion, Amir Khan.

As for De Gea, he is out of contract in the summer although Manchester United do have a clause the club can trigger to extend it by another season. But reports suggest officials are trying to agree terms on a new deal to show their appreciation for his fine form.

However, according to one English national newspaper, the goalkeeper wants a huge pay rise. Whether it's by cash or crypto-currency, whether he stays or whether he goes, one thing is guaranteed ... he'll be coining it in.

THE Second Annual Islamic Finance Innovation Day (IFID) Forum is set to take place in Bahrain on November 26, looking at the important role of 'next generation fin-novators' in the drive for FinTech development and adoption in the Islamic banking and finance industry.

The event is being supported once more by strategic partner, the Bahrain Economic Development Board (EDB), which has played a central role in establishing the kingdom as a fast growing regional FinTech hub, in addition to a leading Islamic finance centre.

## We're looking at the next generation of fin-novators

The event, taking place at the Wyndham Grand, Bahrain Bay, aims to offer a fresh perspective into the Islamic FinTech debate by showcasing the voices of rising stars in the industry. David Parker, executive director, financial services, EDB, said: "We are pleased to be once again supporting IFID. We're particularly excited this year to be giving young professionals in Islamic FinTech a platform to voice their views and discuss the development and sustainable

growth of the industry.

"Over the past year, there have been significant strides made in FinTech innovation in Bahrain by both the private and public sectors, including the launch of the region's largest FinTech Hub, and we are proud to back initiatives that encourage and foster the growth of the ecosystem."

The forum will feature a series of discussions that will explore the views of young Islamic finance professionals on the pace and impact of FinTech innovation on the

industry today, existing obstacles and new methods and approaches for growth and development.

Topics to be covered in three interactive panel sessions include:

- Accelerating FinTech adoption, educating, empowering and leveraging the power of young professionals
- Islamic FinTech Innovation Labs: views from the inside.

The panellists and speakers will be announced shortly, but organisers promise they will

include young professionals already making their mark on the industry, or undertaking training that will hopefully enable them to help lead the next wave of Islamic FinTech innovation.

It will also engage senior strategy and HR specialists from leading Islamic financial institutions, education and training providers and other related FinTech experts.

IFID is being held in cooperation with the Global Islamic FinTech Huddle, an event focusing on connecting

all stakeholders across the Islamic FinTech ecosystem. The huddle, organised by REDmoney Group, will take place at the hotel in the morning preceding IFID.

Other organisations supporting the forum are industry partners including the Responsible Finance and Investment Foundation (RFI), a global non-profit organisation focused on building awareness, promoting research and encouraging convergence in responsible finance.

● For more information visit <https://redmoneyevents.com/main/event> or call 17749759.

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**Today (November 14)**

The Zahle Lebanese restaurant is hosting a Lebanese Festival from today until Saturday. **See panel: P9**

The Crowne Plaza Bahrain's famous steak night starts from 7pm at La Mosaïque Restaurant priced BD18net, with the 1kg steak-eating challenge too.

For details, contact 17531122.

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.bahz.restaurant.reservations@ritzcarlton.com

Treat your special someone to a romantic dinner by the sea at the Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain. This is staged daily at the sea breeze area and 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.bahz.restaurant.reservations@ritzcarlton.com

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 Sunday.

For details, contact 17586808 or e-mail rc.bahz.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 Sunday.

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 sessions. 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.

For details, contact 17531122.

**Tomorrow (November 15)**

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@ramadamanagermanama-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 (November 16)**

Friends of St Christopher's is hosting its annual Festive Fayre at the school's premises in Saar from 11am to 3pm. Entrance fee is BD1 and it features a Santa's Grotto, entertainment, games, raffle prizes, gifts and more.

Enjoy a lavish dining 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.bahz.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@gulfotherbahrain.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 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.

Elite Crystal Hotel has a Friday Pool Party brunch at Waikiki from 1pm to 8pm with entertainment from DJ Santi, DJ Smile 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 (November 17)**

More than 150 artists and designers will be selling their products at the annual Snowflake Craft Fair today.

# Leisure Guide



Listings, lifestyle, travel, entertainment and sporting events by Kristian Harrison

The event is being run by the American Women's Association at the Diplomat Radisson Blu Hotel from 11am-4pm. Entry fee is 500fills.

Check out The Crowne Plaza Bahrain's new Pearl of Arabia-themed night from 7pm at La Mosaïque Restaurant, priced BD13net, with a special beverages package available too.

For details, contact 17531122.

The Awali Ladies Hospitality Group is hosting its Awali Festive Fayre from 11am-3pm at the Bapco Club in Awali. Entry is 500fills and a table rent costs BD20. All proceeds go to charity.

For more information, call 39850372 or email alhbahrain@gmail.com

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

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

A Kid's 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. It is providing facials, body scrubs and combined packages to help guests relax and rejuvenate, while 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 mouth-watering menus, led by professional chefs. Priced BD18net, including lunch. Seats are limited, book now.

For details, contact 17713000 or email info@gulfotherbahrain.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@ramadamanagermanama-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 (November 18)**

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@ramadamanagermanama-amwaj.com

The Crowne Plaza Bahrain holds 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 (November 19)**

Check out The Crowne Plaza Bahrain's new One Night in Bangkok-themed night from 7pm at La Mosaïque Restaurant, priced BD13net, with a special beverages package available too.

For details, contact 17531122.

Bahrain's award-winning Indian restaurant, Rasoi by Vineet, at the Gulf Hotel Bahrain Convention & Spa,



is offering a new set menu by Michelin-starred Chef Vineet Bhatia, for the price of BD22++.

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

The Crowne Plaza Bahrain's Harvesters Back to School-themed party starts at 9pm. Entry is free.

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.

gulftelbahrain.com

### Tuesday (November 20)

Celebrity chef Wout Bru will visit the award-winning Fusions restaurant at the Gulf Hotel Bahrain from today until November 24.

For reservations, call 17713000.

See panel below.

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

For details, contact 17713000 or email info@

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 barbeque



restaurant, where there is a wide selection of meats, salads, hot appetisers, side dishes and drinks selection to complement the meals. 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

Mosaique 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.



THE Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain welcomes back classical pianist, Tiziano Zanella, for Italian-inspired evenings at the resort's signature Lobby Lounge, until December 1, from 5pm-10pm. To complement the experience, guests can enjoy a special afternoon tea menu from 3pm-7pm for BD21 per set.

Born in Venice, Zanella began playing the piano at the age of five. At the age of 25, he became artistic director and chief conductor at the famous Caffè Florian in Piazza San Marco in Venice.

His repertoire includes classical pieces and lighter music. He is currently the pianist in residence at the Hotel Danielli, a Luxury Collection Hotel in Venice.

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

### THANKSGIVING

IT'S THAT time of year when family, friends and loved ones are thanked for their support throughout the year ... and also when food fans feast on American-style festive favourites.

Thanksgiving, currently celebrated on the fourth Thursday in November, has been an annual tradition in the US by presidential proclamation since 1863 and later by state legislation.

Historically, Thanksgiving has traditionally been a celebration of the blessings of the year, including the harvest. On November 22, the kingdom's hotels will celebrate the occasion with a number of special events.

The Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay is hosting numerous promotions over Thanksgiving weekend. On November 22, there will be 'A Taste of Thanksgiving with Wolfgang Puck at Azure,' where guests can enjoy deep-fried turkey with cranberry-apple compote, brioche stuffing and Kabocha Pumpkin Pie, alongside live DJ entertainment. This will take place from 6pm-midnight for the price of BD39.

On November 23, Bahrain Bay Kitchen will

put on a Thanksgiving Brunch featuring roast turkey and all the trimmings. This takes place between 1pm-4pm and is BD25 with soft drinks and BD35 with a selected beverage package. Children aged five to 12 receive a 50 per cent discount, and under-fives are free.

Finally, the hotel is offering a feast for Thanksgiving and Christmas, available for home delivery or pick up from November 21 to December 31. A roast turkey with chestnut stuffing, turkey sauce, cranberry chutney, mash potato, Brussels sprouts and carrots is priced at BD80++ for eight people. People can also opt for the roast beef meal that comes with mashed potatoes, roasted vegetables and rosemary sauce starting from BD20++ per kg (per kg serves four to five people).

For reservations and orders, contact 17115500.

Other hotels and restaurants are also celebrating the occasion. The Big Texas Barbeque & Waffle House at the Best Western Plus - The Olive Hotel is hosting two buffet spreads; one next Thursday evening from 6pm till midnight and with a brunch on the following day from 11am to 4pm.

Both are priced BD25-inclusive, BD20 for children aged 10-16, and free for children aged nine and under.

For bookings, call 17360063.

Wakiki at Elite Crystal Hotel is hosting a special Thanksgiving dinner on November 22 from 7pm-11pm, featuring live grills, a lavish buffet, a live band and entertainment. It costs BD8++ with soft beverages or BD15++ with selected beverages.

On the same night, Al Safir restaurant at the Sheraton Hotel Bahrain will also present a Thanksgiving Dinner, featuring turkey with trimmings, vegetables, sweet potatoes and natural jus. Takeaway orders are also available if booked 24 hours in advance.

Call 17533533 for more information.



DON'T MISS the Black Friday Sale at the Westin and Le Meridien City Centre Bahrain hotels on November 30 from noon to 9pm. Visitors will receive 50 per cent off on food and beverage and spa treatments at the popular hotels.

Black Friday is an informal name for the day following Thanksgiving Day in the US, the fourth Thursday of November, which has been regarded as the beginning of the country's festive shopping season since 1952, although the term Black Friday did not become widely recognised or used until the early 2000s.



JEWELLERY Arabia 2018 will be held at the Bahrain International Exhibition and Convention Centre from Tuesday until November 24.

The five-day event will feature more than 550 local, regional and international exhibitors showcasing the latest jewellery, gems and watch designs. Entry to the exhibition is free.

For more information, please visit www.jewelleryarabia.com.

AMERICAN TV personality and celebante Paris Hilton will be visiting the kingdom on November 21 to launch her new perfume Platinum Rush with Al Hawaj Group.

The business-savvy model, singer, actress and DJ is delighted to be unveiling her new scent at the City Centre Bahrain store at 5.30pm and has taken to Al Hawaj's social media account @alhawajbh to share the news with fans.

The 37-year-old launched her first fragrance in 2004, named after herself, of course, and its success increased business for her production firm Parlux Fragrances by more than 40 per cent.

The triumph was then followed by Just Me and Heiress. She then created her Can Can perfume and even had a line for men called Just Me, Paris Hilton Man and Heir.

Paris looks set to follow in the footsteps of her great grandfather Conrad Hilton, the founder of Hilton Hotels, with plans to open properties in Dubai, New York and Las Vegas.



CELEBRITY chef Wout Bru will visit the award-winning Fusions restaurant at the Gulf Hotel Bahrain from today until November 24 and will host a cooking class on his final appearance.

Both a two-star Michelin chef and a TV celebrity, Bru presented several cooking programmes at Vitaya and VTM, including a performance as guest judge in My Restaurant. He also judged the second season of the Flemish version of Masterchef and is a

popular panel member on the Junior Masterchef series.

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



THE Zahle Lebanese restaurant is hosting Lebanese Festival from today until Saturday. Lebanese entertainment icons Dabke, fronted by famous singer Imad Rifai, will be flown in especially for the event which features authentic Lebanese cuisine.

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

## New lounge opens with style and panache

JUMEIRAH Royal Saray Bahrain's new Havana Club lounge has been officially opened with a classy celebration at the beautiful Seef location.

Attendees were spoilt for choice with lavish furniture adorning the floor, with the interior softly lit with atmospheric spotlights.

Guests gazed in wonder at elaborate pictures hung on the wall, which showed both contemporary and classical Cuban culture, whilst similarly nice views were offered through the lounge doors which opened out onto a scenic pool and sea view.

The outlet offers a Spanish-inspired tapas menu, an extensive beverage selection and features live entertainment adding to the authenticity of the theme. Resident Cuban trio Intention will be performing at the venue six days a week.

Due to Havana's inspirations, like its contemporary and neoclassical artistic identity with tints of Hispano-Moorish influence, the lounge aims to invoke 'intellectual and flavourful' conversations and offer the widest range in Bahrain of a product that Havana is famous for.

The location is ideal for either social, relaxing gatherings or for more business-

orientated commercial outings.

Visitors were warmly welcomed by general manager Zeki Ozal, marketing and communications manager Hanane Msalek and director of food and beverage Moustafa ElGayar, who offered tours of the venue and socialised with an obvious enthusiasm.

It was only the opening night, but already many in attendance were waxing lyrical about the Havana Club and were planning their next visit. On this evidence, it's sure to become one of the kingdom's most popular hotspots.

For more information, call 77707070.





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# Fashion Weekly

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

## Classic wardrobe essentials



**T**HE functional and timeless COLLECTION of Style brand, better known as COS, is offering fashion lovers a new line inspired by the wonders of light and the illumination of nature.

The Swedish label, which has been boasting modern takes on classic wardrobe essentials since 2007, has created a colourful collection for men and women featuring a range of printed fabrics, chic accessories, cosy jackets and jumpers as well as other fall winter necessities.

'T'is the season for comfort after all and with COS's minimalistic designs that can



**FASHION**  
By MAI AL KHATIB-CAMILLE  
[mai.alkhatib@gulfweekly.com](mailto:mai.alkhatib@gulfweekly.com)

be mixed and matched, outfits can be taken from day to night like a breeze.

The light and earthy vibe is reflected through the collection's varying shades of greens, yellows and blacks.

Women are all set for the chilly season with long hooded puffer coats for BD109, ridged-sole ankle boots for BD99 and frill-neck printed blouses for BD40.

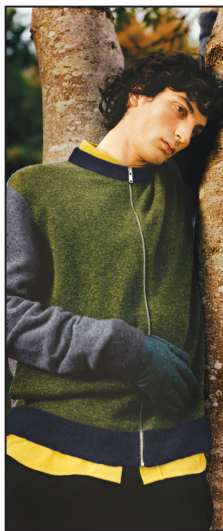
Meanwhile, the fellas can still look cool while keeping warm in a silk shirt with hidden buttons for BD80, a colour block zip up jumper for BD45 and a wide-leg

jersey trouser for BD45.

Other items that will attract female shoppers include a wool jacket with a large collar for BD80, A-line wool skirt with seams for BD60, a high neck cashmere jumper for BD90, a wide-collared wool coat for BD139, a velvet wide leg trouser for BD60 and a long beaded leather necklace for BD16.5.

Men will look stylish in a wool-yak roll-neck jumper for BD45, a long quilted coat for BD139, a padded sleeveless vest for BD50 and slim wool trousers for BD50.

Those interested in purchasing some of the new pieces can check out the store at City Centre Bahrain.





# Eating Out

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

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**T**HERE are a few occasions in this profession where you can sit, look out at a stunning view and have a moment of clarity about how lucky you are to be a part of something.

Thursday evening at the Four Seasons Hotel Bahrain Bay was one of those times, as a pop-up version of celebrity Chef Wolfgang Puck's legendary Spago restaurant came into town.

Yours truly was invited to the one-off event, which brought a true taste of Beverly Hills to the kingdom at the celebrated CUT by Wolfgang Puck restaurant.

No stone was left unturned. From the small details such as uniforms, cutlery and branding to the arrival of two Michelin-starred Chef Tetsu Yahigi from Los Angeles to oversee proceedings, this was a night to remember.

Chef Tetsu joined award-winning Executive Chef Brian Becher on an island-wide tour encompassing local farms, markets and fisheries to ensure that only the very best local ingredients were used in the dishes, keeping in line with Spago's tradition.

It proved to be a roaring success across nine courses, each one more sensational than the last.

First up were the appetisers, headlined by the Maple Syrup Macaroon with Peninsula Farm's Goat, Egg Jam and Coffee. A peculiar mix one might think at first, but this mighty mouthful hit every corner of the palate as it melted on the tongue.

The Miso Tartlet with Cuttlefish, Cucumber and Smoked Eggplant was a feast for the senses and the Fried Sesame Ball stuffed with Thai Coconut Curried Crab truly emphasised Chef Tetsu's Asian influences.

Each course was accompanied by a carefully

## Glorious Spago special



QUALITY CUISINE: Delightful dishes on display and, below left, Yussouf, below right, star chefs Tetsu and Brian



**GOURMET REPORT**  
By KRISTIAN HARRISON  
[kristian@gulfweekly.com](mailto:kristian@gulfweekly.com)

selected beverage which was delivered by assistant restaurant manager Yussouf Kiamil. This knowledgeable star from Istanbul deserves a special mention for his impeccable service throughout the evening.

It's clear he had done his homework as he recited the ingredients and background of each dish and drink ... and to do this over nine courses and five hours for more than a hundred guests is worthy of the highest praise. Bravo!

After stepping outside on to the balcony to take in the views of the kingdom's night-time skyline and Bahrain Bay, including the new beach

which has been built at the hotel, guests were called back in for the first of the main courses.

Now, I am far from a seafood fan, but I made a promise that for one night only, I would at least try everything that was put in front of me. With so much love, care and attention put into each dish, it would be frankly rude not to!

So it was with some trepidation I tried the Beluga Caviar with Cauliflower Hummus and Black Lemon Blini, but I immediately had no regrets as the assortment of flavours assaulted the senses to satisfying effect.

The Sashimi of Red Snapper and the Charred Octopus served in a Coconut Water

Ceviche continued with the seafood theme. They didn't make a believer out of me, but I made sure I gave them a chance!

Much more up my alley was the Goat Ricotta Gnocchi with Dates, Pistachio and Wild Mushrooms. Wow! This was incredible, a truly delicious concoction with perfect texture and a touch of sweetness.

One final surprise from the sea came in the shape of flaky and flavoursome Steamed Wild Black Sea Bass with Wasabi and Edamame. But it was the Bahraini Lamb Grilled Rack and Glazed Shank that stole the show.

Meat, specifically lamb, is best when it falls off the

bone, and that's exactly what it did here. It was even lent an extra special kick from the Mahyawa dressing, so good that I wished I could have had a further nine courses of this dish alone!

After taking some time to let the food settle and having a chat with the two culinary wizards, it was time for my just desserts before the melancholy drive home.

Sweetening the taste buds was a White Chocolate Goat Cheese with Gooseberries, creamy to perfection, before the final pièce de résistance, the Roasted Cacao Nib with Whipped Ganache and Sour Cherry.

This crispy delight packed so much flavour into its small frame that I was

convinced there was some magic involved! I doff my cap to both Chef Tetsu and Chef Brian for bringing this wonderful concept to life with such aplomb ... and I'm already eagerly anticipating its triumphant return!

● Check out Kristian's YouTube interview with the dynamic duo by placing your smart phone over the QR Code.





# We're all on the run

**THEY** came in all shapes and sizes; fit ones, fat ones, old ones and younger ones representing companies, causes and community groups for the annual gathering of the much-loved Bahrain Marathon Relay (BMR), writes Stan Szcwoka.

The 37th edition of the run, which aims to raise funds for numerous charitable events and societies in Bahrain, was organised by the Bahrain Round Table and Rotaract Bahrain.

More than 3,350 participants in 208 teams made their way to Sakhir to the Bahrain International Circuit (BIC) where the first leg runners picked up their baton and lined up for the 10am start.

There was a carnival atmosphere, most competitors wearing their team colours or the pink official relay marathon shirt, although one brave fella insisted on running in his smart business suit, with number attached. Although there were sounds of thunder above the clouds remained well behaved.

The categories were open men & mixed, schools under-18, open women, hotels, schools/college over-18, sports & social clubs, telecommunication/IT, financial institutions, #househarriers (running clubs in Bahrain and Saudi Arabia) and the construction sector.

For the second year running (more like jogging) the Szcwoka family, namely me and my 15-year-old son, Stan Jnr, put on the blue shirt of The Mission To Seafarers Jersey – a worthy cause for an island inhibitor as the organisation provides help and support to the 1.5 million crewmen and women who face danger



THEY'RE OFF! GulfWeekly photographer Honey Sharma captures the excitement at the start of the re

every day to keep our global economy afloat.

The Mission works in more than 200 ports, including the one in Bahrain, caring for seafarers of all ranks, nationalities and beliefs.

Through its global network of chaplains, staff members and volunteers it offers practical, emotional and spiritual support to seafarers through ship-visits, Flying Angel seafarers' centres and a range of welfare and emergency support services.

They've occasionally made the headlines here helping

penniless abandoned sailors whose vessels have been impounded because the vessel owners owe vast sums, or have gone bust.

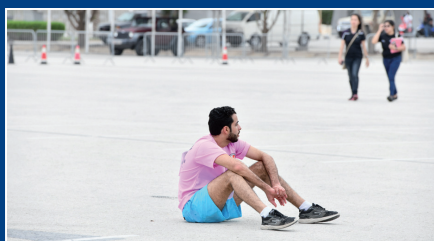
As I lined up at the start I couldn't help but remember my first relay marathon two years earlier when I was desperate to lose weight and took up the challenge laid down by our former sales manager, the late Camille Jones, to sign up as guests for the Tekkers Trim team.

I was so determined to try and beat her time that I got

bitten by the running bug and have never looked back. I'm sure she's smiling from above at the monster she created who now actually enjoys a morning jog.

The start was fun. Stan Jnr, who ran the opening leg last year, had warned me that the worst part was running down and then up the entrance into the BIC track but the route had been changed this year so we avoided the steep incline. Thanks guys!

I'm not sure who measured the course but the planned





# Run and having fun



Runners at the Bahrain International Circuit

There were certainly a lot for the organisers to cheer too. The event is expected to raise BD50,000 this year.

The Bahrain Marathon Relay began 38 years ago as a fun run with only a handful of teams. Today, through the dedication of the organisers – The Bahrain Round Table and Rotaract Bahrain, part of Rotary International – and their valued sponsors, the event has grown to become one of the largest charity sporting events in the kingdom of Bahrain, helping to promote the value of team spirit and a healthy lifestyle across the kingdom.

“We were overwhelmed by the participation and spirit of the crowd that matched a perfect weekend with lovely weather at the BIC,” Rotaract Bahrain treasurer and BMR organising committee member Hishang Kewalram told our sister newspaper, the *Gulf Daily News*.

“The number of teams over the years has gone up, which speaks of the popularity of the event.”

Over the years, funds raised must be getting on for a million dinars. The event’s success has led to many deserving causes being supported from special Braille computers for the blind to specialised wheelchairs for disabled athletes.

The clubs have also purchased incubators for the neo-natal unit at Salmaniya Medical Complex, countless minibuses for charities and small community endeavours such as paying the printing bills for greetings cards designed by the special needs children at Sneha, run by the Indian Ladies Association, so that they could sell them for much more.

Congratulations and carry on the good work.



opening 2.6km trek only measured 2.26km on my *Runkeeper* app ... but I’m not complaining.

I had to run back to the car park, pick up the car and collect Stan Jnr who was busy playing in a morning football tournament in Saar for Juventus Academy Bahrain, get him changed, fed and watered and ready in place to pick up the baton for the penultimate Leg 15.

I’d agreed to end and complete his leg should he injure himself but fortunately,

apart from a little bruising and a burn following a reckless slide tackle, he was fit to go.

The police were out in force and I was impressed with the way they managed the traffic and the occasional grumpy motorist wanting to get somewhere quick. There was one steadfast police motorcyclist following a rather large lady who was making a spirited attempt to finish her leg, ensuring she was safe. I’m sure she was capable by the determined look on her face but I was more worried the

officer might fall off his even wobblier machine as it was travelling so slowly. He might have been better off pushing it.

We made our way to the finish line after Stan Jnr had passed on the baton for the final time to witness our last man come trudging home to the sounds of Michael Jackson on the speakers and the cheers from supporters.

This year’s fastest teams were Joud, Bapco and Meem Bahrain but everyone who took part picked up a medal and looked proud as punch.





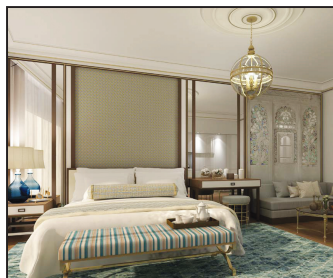
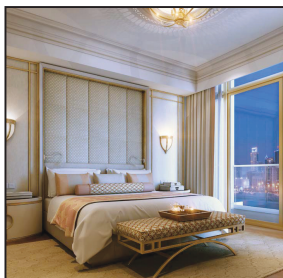
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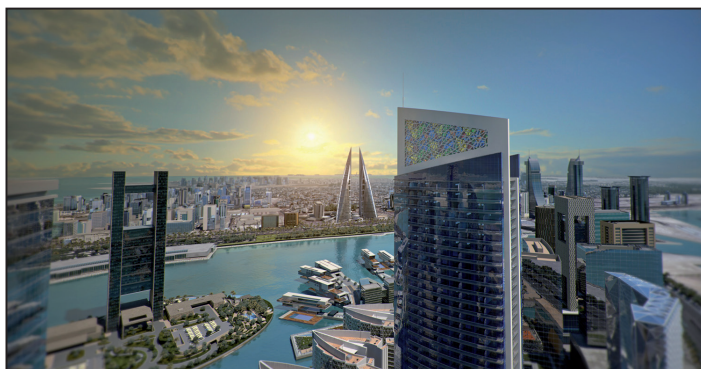
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# Property Weekly

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



## Golden touches reach high



**D**EVELOPERS launched their highly-anticipated residential development project Golden Gate with razzmatazz and a touch of technological flare at the Four Seasons Hotel in Bahrain Bay.

The joint venture between Bahraini-based company Kooheji Golden Gate and Indian real estate companies Ajmera Realty and Mayfair Housing was unveiled to the media with a reception

on Saturday, a big screen presentation, a hosted question-and-answer session and a little box of tricks, thanks to a downloaded app on the smart phone.

Guests were also treated to a first look of the property in its entirety, plus a 360-degree virtual reality tour, where they were able to walk through it and enjoy a virtual experience of living in the homes.

Chairman of Kooheji Golden Gate, Ishaq Al Kooheji, said: "The

innovation and creativity that we have shown will only propel Bahrain into the spotlight, making the kingdom an exemplar of excellence in the real estate industry."

The project is situated in the heart of Bahrain Bay. Golden Gate will be developed over 140,000 square metres providing striking views of the waterfront and iconic Bahrain landmarks.

It aims to boast the tallest residential towers in the country, consisting of two towers with 45 and 53 stories and a total of 746 luxurious apartments, starting at BD45,000.

Luxurious leisure facilities will complement the residences with indoor and outdoor pools for adults and children featuring slides and water castles, waterfall, and a tropical garden

A recreation area will host activities such as aerobic classes, yoga, pilates, taekwondo, step classes, and ballet and a jogging track will offer a handy circuit out of the sun. Gyms for men and women will feature multiple workstations and the will be jacuzzis, steam rooms and saunas to aid recovery.

The development stands out with its design that has set out to fuse both Bahraini and Indian cultures, paying homage to their rich cultural backgrounds, explained Manoj Ajmera, MD of Ajmera Realty.

Nayan Shah, chairman of Mayfair Housing, added that he believes Bahrain Bay has the potential of being one of the best waterfront developments in the world.

The project is set to be completed in around 36 months.



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# InteriorsWeekly

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

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**T**HE first place people tend to flop and relax after a long day's work is in their living room which is why that space should be cosy and inviting.

Emirati retailer 2XL Furniture & Home Décor believes that the use of rich fabrics and accentuating accessories is what creates the perfect balance to achieve that functional, classical and comfortable look and feel.

The French-inspired brand, which was recently granted the title of Best Home Store at the InsideOut Readers Choice Awards 2018, suggests that homeowners can make a sleek and sophisticated style statement by investing in a sofa set that looks lux and is still easy to maintain surrounded by pops of colour and other intricate details.

"Our latest range of sofas – be it classic or modern – reflects elegance and comfort," said Amit Yadav, head of marketing at 2XL. "With a palette of soothing

neutrals and rich textures you can create beautiful living rooms perfect for relaxation and entertainment."

Apparently, beige is the new black especially in varying shades of cream and ivory with strategic pops of gold. Maroon tones on pillows also create a chic setting. By incorporating the walls, be it using printed wall paper or contrasting colours, it can complement the couch as well as add a sense of space. Enrich the palette of your room with accessories such as a stunning chandelier.

Other colours that could add impact to your room are silver and grey with a hint of black. Ivory couches with matching arm chairs also look stunning against a backdrop of patterned accent wall in a darker shade with



matching cushions.

The soft hues will beautifully contrast with a black lampshade. Also,

an abundance of white décor will make a room feel spacious yet cosy. A focal point such as a silver

chandelier will add that luxurious feel while mirrors act as great accessories to enrich a space.



**SocialScene**

## Diwali delight



WYNDHAM Garden Manama in Juffair hosted a Diwali buffet dinner at its Indian restaurant, Jashan, at the poolside. The festival

of lights event, held in association with Radio Mirchi, attracted more than 50 guests. Radio DJs Ved and Shruti



hosted a series of games too, including a pani puri challenge, lassi challenge and a question-and-answer session about the restaurant.

## Opening party



REEF Resort's opening party by Playlist at its Sunset Saloon lounge attracted more than 580 guests. The event was organised by DJ Mysterioo Arif, in collaboration with the resort, to help showcase the beauty of the destination. Other DJs at the decks were DJs Ramy and Nacim.



## Lounge launch



MORE than 200 people, including invited guests and members of the press, attended the opening of Ramee International Hotel, Juffair's recently-launched lounge called Madness.



The event, which was inaugurated by Sunil Norampat, the hotel's GM, featured an electric performance by resident band Empire. Other highlights of the evening was a laser and light show and music provided by an in-house DJ.

## Mafia moments

MARRIOTT International staged a mafia-themed party at the Westin City Centre Bahrain to celebrate Marriott International Global Customer Appreciation Week.

More than 200 guests, dignitaries and ambassadors enjoyed an array of live cooking stations and a special dance performance from the Westin and Le Méridien City Centre Bahrain's housekeeping staff.

Guests also won a variety of vouchers in



competitions staged throughout the evening and others won hotel stays around the globe, including a stay in the French capital of Paris, in a raffle draw. A DJ spun the decks while a saxophonist played along.



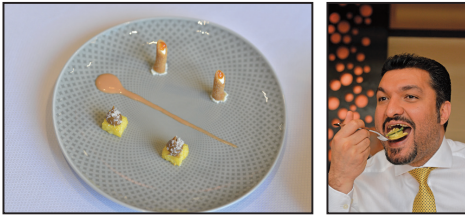
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# SocialScene

Why wait a month! Join Social Scene every week

## Perbellini prowess



TWO-MICHELIN starred Chef Giancarlo 'Xbe' Perbellini presented a chef's table to members of the media during his recent visit to his new signature Italian restaurant - The Gulf Hotel Bahrain Convention & Spa's La Pergola by Perbellini. *GulfWeekly* was represented by sales and marketing manager, Jalal Jaffar.



## In focus



THE Lions Club of Bahrain has donated two blood pressure machines to the NBB Home for the Elderly in Isa Town.



Y.K. Almoayyed & Sons (YKA) awarded 12 of its employees, across all its divisions, with certificates for their excellent performances, presented by MD Mona Almoayyed. CEO Alok Gupta and Sonu Duggal, group human resources manager, also attended the ceremony.



THE Indian School Bahrain (ISB) staged Malayalam Day celebrations in connection with the Kerala Piravi which recently marked the birth of the Indian state of Kerala. The celebration, held at the ISB Jashanmal Auditorium, was inaugurated by Malayalam writer and cultural activist Raju Iringal by lighting a traditional lamp. Students, teachers and school executives all took part in the event which featured cultural dances and competitions.

## Society stroll



THE Al Sanabel Orphan Care Society organised a walkathon at Seef Mall as part of a campaign to raise awareness about breast cancer.

## Staff gathering



THE Ithmaar Bank annual staff gathering took place at the Ritz Carlton, Bahrain where CEO Ahmed Abdul Rahim, paid rich tribute to its employees thanking them for their contributions both to the bank and, by extension, to the national economy.

## Teacher training



INTERNATIONAL trainer and maths consultant Karen Wilding conducted a series of workshops for teachers and learning support staff from

13 different schools recently. The workshops focused on how to provide engaging opportunities for mathematical exploration in all areas of the

curriculum, and how to make learning about mathematical concepts meaningful, practical and age appropriate for young children.

A certificate of attendance was awarded to all participants and the workshop was hosted by The Budaiya Pre School at its premises in Saar.

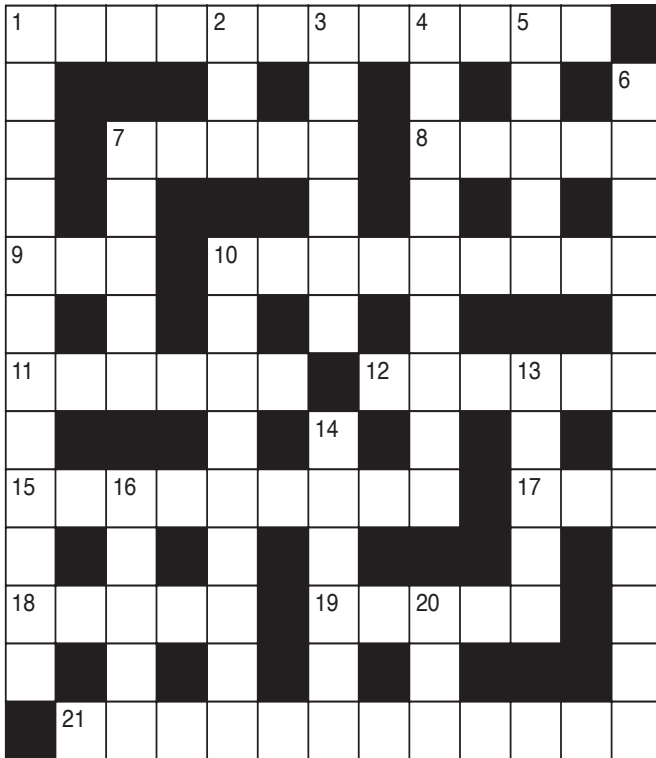


# Time Out



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## crossword break



Solutions in next week's issue.

### ACROSS

1. More lengthily (12)
7. Lock (5)
8. Unadorned (5)
9. Pastry dish (3)
10. Articulate (9)
11. Character (6)
12. Vex (6)
15. Ill luck (9)
17. Tavern (3)
18. Out (3,2)
19. Exceeding (5)
21. Unique (12)

### DOWN

1. Putting off (12)
2. Regret (3)
3. Convention (6)
4. Spying (9)
5. Hear of (5)
6. Irrational (12)
7. Handle (5)
10. Maybe (9)
13. Result (5)
14. Of sound mind (6)
16. Attack (3,2)
20. Choose (3)

### who, what, where, when

WHO...did Alfred Burke play in the UK television series *Public Eye*?

WHAT...was the subtitle of the first film to star Mike Myers as *Austin Powers*?

WHERE...in Europe are the cities of Kosice and Presov?

WHEN...did the rock group Slade receive an Honorary Fellowship from the University of Wolverhampton?

WHO...played John Lennon in the 1985 US TV film *John & Yoko: A Love Story*?

WHAT...1956 film features the character Anna Leonowens?

WHERE...was variously described by the US press as Johnson's Polar Bear Garden, Walrusia and Russian Fairy Land?

WHEN...was the Prime Minister of Iran, Dr. Muhammad Mossadeq, deposed?

### just so

nx grind grind

DETTED

HOPE

HOUSE

## 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

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

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

### darn tough sudoku

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

Sudoku

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

Sudoku

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

### Last Week's Leisure Solutions

#### CROSSWORD BREAK:

**Across:** 4 Abridge; 8 Crafty; 9 Allowed; 10 Unseen; 11 Enigma; 12 Brickbat; 18 Handicap; 20 Fiasco; 21 Remote; 22 Confide; 23 Clears; 24 Inkling.

**Down:** 1 Scrubby; 2 Caustic; 3 Streak; 5 Bulletin; 6 Ironie; 7 Gleams; 13 Beholden; 14 Acrobat; 15 Appease; 16 Disown; 17 Useful; 19 Deeply.

**JUST SO:** Heart of darkness, Around the world in 80 days, Nineteen to the dozen, Women and children first.

**WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN:**

Nick Nolte; Wyoming; New Westminster, British Columbia, Canada; 1992; Patrick Marber; Billings; Madagascar; 1997.

### Darn Tough Sudoku

1	7				2			
			8		4		6	
		8						2
	2				7	3		1
	8						9	
5		4	9				7	
4						5		
	1		7		5			
			2				8	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](mailto:editor@gulfweekly.com)



ON SATURDAY, November 4, The Ritz-Carlton, Bahrain held its ninth annual swimming challenge at the Royal Beach Club to raise money for the Friendship Society for the Blind. More than 70 participants came out to 'swim-for-a-cause' raising a final donation of BD1,500. Sponsors for the event included Dr Mohamed Alolayan Orthodontics & Dental Centre and supporting partner, Red Bull. **Winners of the 200ms and 1km heats were:**

Under 10 Boys (200 Metres)  
First Place: Louise Cornee (03:32:48)  
Second Place: Ryle Hassett (04:04:49)  
Third Place: Callum Lynn (04:04:64)  
Under 10 Girls (200 Metres)  
First Place: Maya Malhas (03:58:82)  
Second Place: Ileana Cornee (04:09:26)  
Third Place: Dora Bukla (4:21:98)  
Men's Open (1 Kilometre)  
First Place: Zoral Bilal (12:44:30)  
Second Place: Liam Mashal (12:46:48)  
Third Place: Adham Gomac

(13:17:05)  
Women's Open (1 Kilometre)  
First Place: Asma Le Falher (11:59:23)  
Second Place: Sana Le Falher (12:28:97)  
Third Place: Christina Hammeroud (12:36:87)

**Amanda M. Williams,**  
Associate Director of  
Public Relations,  
The Ritz-Carlton,  
Bahrain.

BIG MASSIVE THANK YOU for such fantastic coverage in last week's *GulfWeekly* with reference to our annual cake-mixing celebrations! Truly amazing and I'm grateful for all your support to us.

**Najia A. Zainal, media & PR manager, Elite Hospitality Group.**

BAHRAIN has surpassed its previous ranking in the 2018 HSBC Expat Explorer Survey as the top destination in the Middle East region for individuals from across the world to resettle and enjoy an exceptional quality of life. Each year, the survey

serves as a trusted assessment of expats' experiences in relocation and career growth across the world. In the 2018 survey, Bahrain's position improved to fifth-ranked country in the world for expat satisfaction, up from ninth in 2017.

The HSBC survey, conducted globally among 22,000 respondents, evaluates expat sentiment across three major components: economics, experience and family. Bahrain's standing improved markedly across each of these areas in the 2018 index, up by 12, 5 and 4 positions respectively, compared to 2017. The primary drivers of this strong performance include wage growth, opportunities for career progression, work-life balance, job security, access to quality child care



and the welcoming social fabric of Bahrain.

We are consistently ranked as the top location in the MENA region to live, work and raise a family. From the exceptional primary and higher education available here, to the ways we are transforming public services, including housing and health care, Bahrain continues to represent a prime destination for expats to seamlessly integrate into our society and thrive.

Bahrain is the only MENA nation in the 2018 HSBC survey rankings to have improved its position among the top 10 destinations considered. Other key indices, such as 2018 *InterNations Expat Survey*, also rank Bahrain highly as a location for expats to settle and flourish.

For the second year, Bahrain also achieved the number one global ranking in the *InterNations* survey, demonstrating high performance on factors such as 'ease of settling in', 'feeling at home' and 'digital life'. These factors indicate that Bahrain

## THE WHISPERER

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

...[editor@gulfweekly.com](mailto:editor@gulfweekly.com)



FASCINATING T-shirt image sent to the Editor this week – do you think someone's trying to tell him something?

remains an open society in transition to capitalise on a transformative ecosystem in which the companies of the future can excel and grow.

**Dr Simon Galpin, MD of the EDB.**

THE BSPCA team is delighted to invite you to join us on Thursday, November 22, for an evening of murder, mystery and intrigue at the British Club.

Bring your friends along to make up a table of sleuths, and see if you can help Inspector Plank to solve the crimes at St Cakes School!

Hurry up and buy your tickets from the Thrift Shop, British Club or the AWC - BD15 includes a three-course meal and the evening's entertainment, including a school disco. We will also have a super raffle with the star prize of 2x tickets to anywhere in Gulf

Air's GCC network (terms and conditions apply).

We are very lucky to be supported in this event by the wonderful Manama Theatre Club, Gulf Air and the British Club and can't wait to see you on the 22nd. Don't forget - fancy dress is expected at this event and so school wear will be inspected and fines handed out for any 'unsuitable' attire!

There are 10 people to each table, and please let us know when booking your tickets if there are any vegetarians in your group. Doors will open at 7pm and the evening will commence at 7.30pm.

**Whatsapp Kate on 37733415 or Rachel on 66608901 for more information.**

**BSPCA, by email.**  
● More events in Leisure Guide: Pages 8 & 9

WHEN I first got to university, I was quite excited about the prospect of doing my minor in French on account that I might be able to do that a semester abroad. However, when I asked around about other students' experience studying it, I found out that many had graduated still not able to speak it!

I see that a lot of people attempt picking up another

## Youth Talk

By Sarah Belal



language in their lives, but few actually manage to see through with it, and that makes me worry about whether my efforts at learning languages will end in vain.

I have since been told that this is subjective, all up to the individual and how determined he or she is about learning the language.

Since I feel like it is the minor best suited to me, I decided to go with French anyways, and so far it's been good (although pronunciation is a toughie, and I think always will be; it's French!).

It seems to me that the best way to successfully pick up a new language is to reside for some time in the country whose language you're learning. That way you are forced to put your howsoever-little language skills to the test. But what if this is not an option?

Luckily, we live in a time that is quite conducive

to picking up a second language. With the internet, you can supplement your time in the classroom with plenty of 'after school' TV, video and audio that makes the learning process even more fun.

There are also plenty of useful apps, websites and YouTube tutorials and channels dedicated to helping you on your

quest to speaking a new language.

What keeps me going studying Korean, besides the fact that I find the language to be incredibly charming, is that they've got a great entertainment industry through which I can get more exposure to the language. I am sure I can find the same for French.



# Film Weekly

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

## Simply magnifico

**E**XTRA incisors — that's how a young Freddie Mercury, played with magnetism and breath-taking physicality by Rami Malek, explains his four-octave vocal range to prospective bandmates.

The moment arrives early in *Bohemian Rhapsody*, a film that doesn't share Mercury's surfeit of incisors; it has none. Which is not to say this conventional, playing-it-safe portrait of an unconventional band offers nothing to chew on. Or that it doesn't acknowledge the tale's darker facets. It does, ever so lightly, all the while fervently emphasising what's sweet and upbeat about it.

Someday another feature about Queen might go deeper, which might or might not make for a better movie. Who says every rock 'n' roll biopic has to wallow in 'Behind the Music' confessional?

The involvement of band members Brian May and Roger Taylor, as consultants and executive music producers, has more than a little to do with the gentle sheen that tamps down unruly narrative possibilities. But their involvement also amps the material's musical authenticity. To the filmmakers' credit, and even though they don't entirely avoid the clunky factoid-itis that often plagues the genre, this is a biopic that favours sensory experience over exposition. It understands what pure, electrifying fun rock 'n' roll can be.

The pop-opera-epic of a 1975 single that gives the feature its name — the likes of which radio had never heard before and hasn't since — is smartly peppered through the narrative: the first songwriting instincts, beginning with the melody; the exuberant, wacky and seriously inventive recording session; the momentous performance at 1985's Live Aid benefit concert for Ethiopia.

That last bit arrives in the bravura sequence that caps the film (and which, remarkably, was the first to be shot). Bryan Singer, who was replaced by Dexter Fletcher well into the shooting schedule, is the movie's credited director, and his affinity for large-scale spectacle is evident. The finished product is energetic, if not always smooth, its affection for Mercury and Queen indisputable even when the drama is undernourished.

The screenplay doesn't so much flow as leap from one 'aha' moment to the next. It begins in 1970 London, where art student Farrokh Bulsara has already changed his given name to Freddie, to the pained disapproval of his traditional Parsi father (Ace Bhatti). The further switch to a stage-friendly surname is just a few 'aha' moments away.

Stepping into the void left by a local quartet's departing singer, Freddie is the spark igniting a whole new level



### BOHEMIAN RHAPSODY

**STARRING:** Rami Malek, Lucy Boynton, Gwilym Lee

**DIRECTOR:** Bryan Singer

**GENRE:** Biographical/Musical

**RATING:** PG-13

**RUNTIME:** 134 Mins

of ambition for guitarist May (Gwilym Lee), drummer Taylor (Ben Hardy) and bass player John Deacon (Joseph Mazzello) — all of whom, unlike Freddie, have a Plan B if the music thing doesn't work out. As to the indefinable, transcendent something known as band chemistry, the movie doesn't quite penetrate the mystery. The lads call themselves misfits playing for misfits, which hardly captures what makes them unique among rock acts. But when *Bohemian Rhapsody* zeroes in on their musical give-and-take, it's clear that four creative spirits have joined forces.

When it clicks, the humour, both scripted and improvised, effortlessly underscores the characters' bond. The actors are convincing in the musical sequences, which rely on Queen recordings (and sometimes use Malek's voice in the mix). At crucial points in the offstage story, though, the performances of Lee, Hardy and Mazzello are reduced to reaction shots. Given the easy camaraderie and charged artistic mission that these performers conjure, there are too many wasted dramatic opportunities. As a result, the group's tensions and rifts don't register with the intended force, and Mercury's growing imperiousness never truly feels like a threat to the band's cohesion.

That's no fault of Malek's. Taking on a daunting task, he more than delivers.

Though he's only an inch shorter than Mercury was, he generally comes across as smaller and more delicate, and with his distinctive, enormous eyes, he'll never be a ringer for the frontman. But, outfitted with the famous overbite and an exquisite array of costumes, and moving with a ferocious, muscular elegance, Malek is transformed.

Alluded to but left off screen is Mercury's tabloid-fodder walk on the wild side, which Sacha Baron Cohen, earlier cast in the project, has said he'd hoped to explore. Malek's devouring gaze suggests Mercury's sexual appetites but also an aching innocence. Barely out of his 20s when Great Britain decriminalised homosexuality, the singer isn't eager to attach a label to his way of life. He's not interested in being a symbol or a spokesman.

And ultimately, the film is more concerned with Mercury's profound love of performing, and the identity he forges onstage. It's all there in the way the newbie rocker wrestles with the mic stand, awkwardly at first and then taming it like a beast. From there, his confidence soars along with the band's fame, his look morphing from haute hippie to catsuit to stylised leather.

The rough edges of Freddie Mercury's story might be smoothed over in this telling, the indulgences and debauchery sugarcoated. Is this the real life? Is this just fantasy? It's a little bit of both. But, caught in a landslide of dispiriting headlines, at a moment when connection, curiosity and openheartedness feel like endangered species, the lingering exhilaration of that concert scene is pretty darn magnifico.

● **Now showing in:** Cineco, Saar, Seef II, Avenues, Mukta

### KRISTIAN'S VERDICT



1 popcorn - stay home  
5 popcorns - start queuing

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### Bite-sized trailer

#### Overlord

**DIRECTOR:** Julius Avery

**CAST:** Jovan Adepo, Wyatt Russell, Mathilde Ollivier

**PLOT:** With only hours until D-Day, a team of American paratroopers drop into Nazi-occupied France to carry out a mission that's crucial to the invasion's success. Tasked with destroying a radio transmitter atop a fortified church, the desperate soldiers join forces with a young French villager to penetrate the walls and take down the tower. But, in a mysterious Nazi lab beneath the church, the outnumbered G.I.s come face-to-face with enemies unlike any the world has ever seen.

**SHOWING IN:** City Centre, Juffair Mall, The Avenues, Seef II, Saar, Wadi Al Sail, Oasis Mall Juffair, Seef Muharrag



#### The Grinch

**DIRECTORS:** Yarrow Cheney, Scott Mosier

**CAST:** Benedict Cumberbatch, Cameron Seely, Rashida Jones

**PLOT:** The Grinch tells the story of a cynical grump who goes on a mission to steal Christmas, only to have his heart changed by a young girl's generous holiday spirit. Funny, heartwarming, and visually stunning, it's a universal story about the spirit of Christmas and the indomitable power of optimism.

**SHOWING IN:** City Centre, Juffair Mall, The Avenues, Seef II, Saar, Wadi Al Sail, Oasis Mall Juffair, Seef Muharrag



#### A Private War

**DIRECTOR:** Matthew Heineman

**CAST:** Rosamund Pike, Jamie Dornan, Tom Hollander

**PLOT:** In a world where journalism is under attack, Marie Colvin (Rosamund Pike) is one of the most celebrated war correspondents of our time. Colvin is an utterly fearless and rebellious spirit, driven to the frontlines of conflicts across the globe to give voice to the voiceless, while constantly testing the limits between bravery and bravado.

**SHOWING IN:** The Avenues, Seef II, Seef Muharrag



### imdb movie charts

Current Position	Title	Weekend Takings	Gross to date
1	The Grinch	\$66M	\$66M
2	Bohemian Rhapsody	\$31M	\$100M
3	Overlord	\$10M	\$10M
4	The Nutcracker and the Four Realms	\$10M	\$35M
5	The Girl in the Spider's Web	\$8M	\$8M
6	A Star Is Born	\$8M	\$178M
7	Nobody's Fool	\$7M	\$24M
8	Venom	\$5M	\$206M
9	Halloween	\$4M	\$157M
10	The Hate U Give	\$2M	\$27M



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# Motoring Weekly

Steering you to the best deals on wheels

## Perfect time for prize bids

**A** GULF-WIDE initiative has been launched to help develop new innovations and systems in the autonomous and eco-friendly vehicle sector.

All six countries have signed up to participate in an awards project instigated by The Emirates Authority for Standardisation and Metrology (ESMA) and entrants will be tasked with finding solutions to challenges faced in the region.

Abdulla Abdulqader Al Maenei, director general at ESMA, announced that the major vehicle manufacturers worldwide - through the award - will adopt and sponsor the winning projects by developing and applying ideas and allowing the winners to pay onsite visits to vehicle production lines of these companies and check out the latest technology they are using.

He said: "One of the important aspects to be considered within the electric mobility system in the region is weather, which is very hot and humid during summer. Thus the durability of the battery, fast charging and the capacity of charging and wireless charging and disposal of batteries plays an important role in future mobility."

"The automotive and transport sector faces a future that may radically differ from its present and past, especially as there are many trends and innovations ranging from decentralization in the field of energy and IoT and artificial intelligence, all of which combine together to radically transform the global transport and mobility ecosystem", he explained.

"The digital and technical revolution in the automotive sector, such as self-driving and AI, has the potential to fully transform the mobility system. In ESMA we recognise that the real potential of these technologies cannot be fully realised unless the legislative and technical base is set for them.

"We contribute to



**HEATED CHALLENGE:** Call for bright minds to come up with solutions to make electric cars essential forms of transport across the Gulf region, below, Abdulla

achieving this vision by developing the necessary regulatory frameworks and infrastructure for technical specifications.

"The transformation of the region's mobility sector and supporting fast adoption of green, smart and autonomous transport systems and mechanisms have been part of the vision of making the GCC a global centre."

Accordingly, GCC bodies will be given a certificate of conformity to the electric vehicles.

Bahrain has been leading the charge in recent months. At the Mobility 360 Innovation in Sustainable Mobility Conference held in Sanabis in September, plans were announced to launch an experimental station to charge electric cars early next year, as part of efforts to reduce carbon emissions.

This new award initiative is divided into three categories. The first covers sustainable mobility, which will enable

projects that care about reducing gas emissions and other air pollutants, through increasing reliance on clean energy.

The second category is digital innovation, which relies on the use of solutions and applications to improve connection and communication between vehicles, and translates the vision of smart and

sustainable cities.

The third category addresses the green infrastructure, which includes projects such as batteries, charging systems and stations, safe disposal of batteries in an environmentally friendly manner.

Along with the announcement, an exhibition in the UAE featured

450 delegates from 18 countries showcasing the latest technologies. Government agencies, auto manufacturers and suppliers of infrastructure solutions presented their initiatives and products.

An electric vehicle (EV) may be powered through a collector system by electricity from off-vehicle sources, or may be self-

contained with a battery, solar panels or an electric generator to convert fuel to electricity.

EVs were among the earliest automobiles, and before the pre-eminence of light, powerful internal combustion engines, electric automobiles held many vehicle land speed and distance records in the early 1900s.

In the push for a greener environment, they have shot back into fashion and industry trends are increasingly aimed towards hybridisation, and eventually, fully electric cars charged at mobile power stations.

It is believed that the region's reluctance to accept electric cars to date is because batteries discharge much more quickly when temperatures are high, thereby reducing the driving range drastically.

Further details of how to participate in the awards project will be revealed shortly.





# All set for a classic

**A**s excitement grows for this coming weekend's 21st anniversary edition of The American Mission Hospital (AMH) Island Classic charity golf tournament at His Majesty King Hamad's private golf course in Saffriya, keen golfers were busy fine-tuning their playing prowess at Awali.

Over the past couple of weeks Ali Musbah and his course maintenance team have really had their work cut out for them as rain flooded the Awali Golf Club's sand course cancelling one competition ... and in recent days they were once again left in the same boat.

Fortunately, the course was in great condition for last week's American Mission Hospital sponsored medal competition.

The day itself also produced some amazing golf with close scoring in all three flights. However, home on holiday



ALL SMILES: Overall competition winner Bronson with Hodgkinson, Tovey and Rampersad and, right, Rashid smiling on the evening

from boarding school in India, 16-year-old Tharun Bronson ran away from the rest of the field posting a nett score of 59.

The impressive result ensured he would take first place with Nathan Sundaresan six points adrift in second place. Friday's lowest gross score of 74 was posted by Rashid Ahmed Abdulla making him the Medal Winner. The AMH

medal competition also served as a qualifier for the KPAO matchplays, now the top 16 in each of the three flights will play matchplay with the Kingsbury (1st Division) acting as the Club Championship of Awali Golf Club.

Club Captain Serwin Rampersad extended a warm welcome to Julia Tovey, AMH's group CEO, who



presented the prizes.

Plans are now in full swing to stage the AMH Island Classic, one of the most popular events on the sporting calendar. Funds raised in recent years have been channelled towards providing free medical camps around the kingdom under the hospital's renowned community outreach programme, said Julia.

GulfWeekly has already signed up to act as a media sponsor and any other companies wishing to support the initiative should contact Shama Abbas in the marketing department by calling 17177711, visiting [www.amh.org.bh](http://www.amh.org.bh) or emailing [communications@amh.org.bh](mailto:communications@amh.org.bh)

## Fighters thrilling the crowds

TOP MIXED martial arts competitors from around the world are in action this week in the kingdom in a bid for medal success and hoping to be crowned 2018 IMMAF world champion.

The sporting event, held as part of the Brave International Combat Week, features fighters from 55 countries battling it out in the ring at Khalifa Sports City Stadium in Isa Town.



ALL ACTION: HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa, His Majesty's Representative for Charity Works and Youth Affairs, Supreme Council for Youth and Sports (SCYS) chairman and Bahrain Olympic Committee (BOC) president, and HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa, First Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Council of Youth and Sports and President of Bahrain Athletics Association, along with other dignitaries.

"Brave International Combat Week 2018 is a treasure to the sporting heritage of the Kingdom of Bahrain," said Mohammed Shahid, president of Brave Combat Federation. "The event will create opportunities for growth in the sectors of business, tourism, technology and media."

The championship opened last Sunday, with an inaugural ceremony attended by HH Shaikh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, His Majesty's Representative for Charity Works and Youth Affairs, Supreme Council for Youth and Sports (SCYS) chairman and Bahrain Olympic Committee (BOC) president, and HH Shaikh Khalid bin Hamad Al Khalifa, First Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Council of Youth and Sports and President of Bahrain Athletics Association, along with other dignitaries.

During the opener, aspirational fighter Mohammed Buhaz'a, who has Down syndrome, battled his role model Shaikh Khalid in a bid to achieve his dream of competing in the ring.

The championship finals continue until Saturday starting at 11am and the closing ceremony will be staged on Sunday at 8pm.

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# True champions shine again

**T**EN years after securing his first Formula One title at Interlagos, five-time world champion Lewis Hamilton won the Brazilian Grand Prix on Sunday and helped his Mercedes team take the Formula One constructors' title for the fifth straight year.

It was Hamilton's 10th victory of the season, finishing 1.4 seconds ahead of Red Bull's Max Verstappen.

But it could have been a very different outcome for the British driver, who struggled with engine problems and medium tyres as he waited for rain that never came.

Hamilton's second win in Sao Paulo was only possible after Force India's backmarker Esteban Ocon clashed with race leader Verstappen on lap 44, causing both cars to spin. At the time, the Red Bull driver led Hamilton by five seconds.

"That incident put us back in contention," Hamilton said of his rival's setback. "Max is that go-getter guy and every now and again it bites you. But I am really, really proud here, I don't care about anybody else."

Off the track, the 21-year-old Dutchman later confronted – and pushed – former Formula 3 rival Ocon, who refused to apologise despite the stop-go punishment he was given during the race. The Force India driver finished 15th.

Verstappen managed to stay in the race after the incident and get closer to Hamilton in the final laps, but it wasn't enough for his second consecutive victory. "I hope I can't find him in the paddock



ACROSS THE LINE: Happy Hamilton takes the chequered flag and cuddles the trophy on the podium after disaster for mad Max Verstappen



now," Verstappen said of Ocon before he met the Force India driver after the race.

Verstappen was given an unusual punishment for the pushes and insults he aimed at Ocon – he will have to perform two days of public service at the direction of motorsport governing body FIA within six months.

Ferrari's Kimi Raikkonen joined Hamilton and Verstappen on the podium. His teammate Sebastian Vettel, who is second in the overall standings, placed sixth.

Hamilton celebrated his win and his team's fifth title with samba dancers on the podium, as Verstappen left still fuming. "This is what everyone works for, we really pulled together as a unit this year," Hamilton said. "That's real history in the making for the team. If I were to stop today with Mercedes,

I would always remember this day and that I was a part of it and that's so cool."

"This has been a seriously tough year and everyone on this team has fought so hard, harder than we've ever fought and we're the most united that we've ever been – which is not expected when you've had success in previous years and could easily drop the ball. The guys have been continuing to raise the bar."

"Today was such a tough race for me, but I really wanted to deliver and win this for the team. It has such a big knock-on effect; everyone on the team can now go into the last race and into the winter, knowing that they won the world title and that they're legends."

His teammate Valtteri Bottas finished fifth and team boss Toto Wolff was equally

delighted. "We just wrote Championship history – but winning the fifth double World Championship feels so surreal. Who would have thought this would be possible when we embarked on this mission eight years ago? If anyone had mentioned this record back then, we would have told them they are crazy. And yet, here we are, having just equalled the Ferrari record from the Schumacher years."

Mercedes now has an insurmountable 620 points against Ferrari's 553. It was Hamilton's 72nd victory in Formula One, a much celebrated one after all the problems he faced during the race.

In the first part of the race Hamilton kept the advantage he acquired by taking his 10th pole position of the season. Bottas overtook Vettel

for second place, and for a moment it seemed Mercedes had the race in the bag already.

Verstappen, the winner of the Mexican GP two weeks ago, started in fifth and quickly overtook the two Ferraris, conquered Bottas on lap 10 and showed he would challenge Hamilton for the win.

After the world champion pitted on lap 19, it appeared Mercedes had made the wrong decision by giving Hamilton fresh tyres before his rivals. Verstappen only stopped 16 laps later.

With 31 laps to go, Verstappen successfully challenged Hamilton and started building a lead before clashing with Ocon.

The British driver initially opened a lead of five seconds over Verstappen. But the

Dutchman started climbing back on every lap, thanks to Hamilton's engine problems and medium tyre deterioration.

The race at Interlagos marked the first time since 1970 there were no Brazilian drivers on the grid. Still, attendance was higher than last year's race when Felipe Massa bid farewell driving a Williams. Race organisers said around 150,000 fans attended over three days, 10,000 more than last year.

Massa, who lost the 2008 title to Hamilton and is now a TV pundit, was sorry for Verstappen, but impressed with Hamilton's luck on Sunday. "We are both huge fans of Ayrton Senna, who nailed some lucky wins every now and then. Only true champions like Hamilton nail wins like this, when all seems lost," the Brazilian said.

## Alonso aims to win the unofficial triple crown with victory at Indianapolis

TWO-TIME Formula One champion Fernando Alonso and his McLaren team will return to the Indianapolis 500 next year.

Alonso said he wants to be the second driver in history to win the unofficial triple crown of motorsport with a victory at the historic American speedway.

Alonso and McLaren made the announcement at the Brazilian

Grand Prix. The Spanish driver is retiring from F1 after the Abu Dhabi season-closer on November 25.

Alonso and McLaren, working with IndyCar team Andretti Autosport, competed in Indianapolis in 2017. Alonso led parts of the race before abandoning it.

They will return under the name

McLaren Racing. If the 37-year-old Alonso wins the Indy 500 on May 26, it will add to his victories in the Monaco Formula One Grand Prix and the 24 Hours of Le Mans.

"I've made clear for some time my desire to achieve the triple crown," Alonso said.

"I had an incredible experience at Indianapolis in 2017 and I knew

in my heart of hearts I had to go back if the opportunity was there."

The only driver to win all three was Graham Hill of Great Britain, who got Monaco in 1963 the first time, the Indy 500 in 1966, and Le Mans in 1972.

Despite disappointing seasons with McLaren in F1, Alonso said the team was his first choice for an IndyCar return.



DETERMINED BID: Alonso



game ratio (2.38) of any manager in Premier League history (min. 25 games).

**TOP MATCH:** Manchester City's Ilkay Gundogan scores against Manchester United in Sunday's Premier League clash which ended in a 3-1 victory for the Sky Blues. Will the two clubs be playing against each other in a European Super League in the near future?



# Big clubs look for cash gain

**A**CCORDING to *Der Spiegel*, a prominent German newspaper, several clubs – including Real Madrid and five Premier League teams – have discussed forming a 16-team European Super League that could begin as soon as 2021.

As part of the plans, the clubs allegedly discussed 'an option for leaving the national leagues and their football associations behind entirely'.

The new league, independent of European governing body UEFA, would consist of a 16-team competition with a group stage and knockout round to begin in 2021.

The breakaway league would consist of 11 core founding members and five additional guest teams, with the founder clubs immune to relegation and guaranteed spots in the league for 20 years.

The 11 founder teams, it is suggested, would be Spain's Barcelona and Real Madrid; England's Arsenal, Chelsea, Liverpool, Manchester City and Manchester United; Italy's Juventus and AC Milan; France's Paris Saint-Germain and Germany's Bayern Munich.

In addition to the core



founding members, they would be then joined by five more guest clubs on a rotating basis – Atletico Madrid, Borussia Dortmund, Inter, Roma and Marseille.

Any such league would potentially doom the Champions League as well as affect the order of their respective domestic leagues.

I find this idea completely abhorrent. A breakaway European Super League would have serious and lasting implications for the long-term sustainability of professional football, and kill any notion of the already-diminished belief that the sport is all about the fans.

The concept has been aired periodically for two decades or more. At times it's been framed as an idle threat leveraged for better treatment, like an eight-year-old insisting he'll run away from home, but there are moments when it seems chillingly plausible, like an 18-year-old claiming he'll never leave.

The latest bout of speculation can probably be pitched somewhere in the middle. All of the ring-fenced

clubs are global forces in their own rights. They have big grounds, many fans, high revenues, recent success and world-class players in many positions.

On the business side of things, why wouldn't they want to stuff their coffers even more?

Contemporary football is already decried as a money-oriented business machine, which in some ways is true. However, there is still some hope left.

I believe on balance, it's better than 'old school' football, especially in the 1970s and 1980s and even the early 1990s before Sky truly dug their claws in. It may seem facetious of me to claim that as someone born in 1991 and who grew up as a Manchester United fan gorging on success fed by Murdoch's money, but while there was less money involved, and it was more rooted in soul, community and passion, 'the good old days' was rife with hooliganism, unsafe stadia and was unavailable to many.

These days, football now is shown on TV or online on

a near 24/7 basis. Moreover, racism has declined in grounds (in England at the least, though there are more stringent efforts to curb this in other countries compared to past eras), and women feel more comfortable to attend games. There is also far less societal stigma over women enjoying, playing, and liking football, compared to past eras.

Stadiums also are in better shape and have superior facilities providing a nicer experience for fans. And more money has signalled a greater scope in seeing players from around the world and has arguably expanded football's reach.

Contemporary football is not perfect, but on balance, the progress since the 1980s has been positive.

This Super League though,

in my view at the least, would be a step too far. It would kill football as we know it. If it is indeed a closed shop with invitees then this is undesirable in many ways.

Football's glory, in part, is rooted in progression, advancement and anything being able to happen.

Leicester City, Montpellier, are Deportivo La Coruna are teams in England, France, and Spain respectively that are not traditionally amongst the largest in their countries. But they all have won the Premier League, Ligue 1 and La Liga within the past 20 years. Could this happen again?

One also cannot ignore the grassroots of the game, or even non-league set-ups. Would they be extinguished? This would have a major effect on the game and make

it essentially unrecognisable.

That said, talk of some kind of Super League has been on the agenda for some time, and this is no surprise. However, the make-up and constitution of this supposed grouping is concerning, to state the least.

Football being money driven is a fact of life that many, whilst not liking it nor approving, have come to accept it grudgingly. This alleged Super League, though, is a step towards a monetary-driven footballing dystopia, which many may not approve of, welcome, nor renounce.

Luckily, for now, world governing body FIFA seem to agree. President Gianni Infantino has issued a warning to the clubs over their plans, declaring that players involved in such a tournament could be banned from participating in the World Cup.

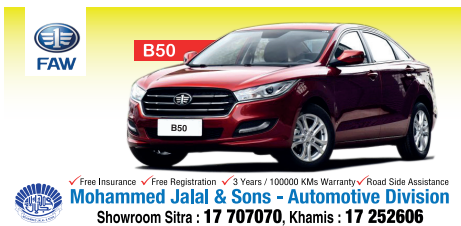
"Either you are in or you are out – this includes everything," he said. "People are still quite reasonable, however I trust certainly the club owners and presidents to be able to have a discussion."

In a future article, I'll explore deeper reasons for why I believe a European Super League would kill football as we know it and be one step too far for even this most greedy of sports.



PLAYING TOUGH: President Infantino





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## READY FOR ACTION

**B**AHRAIN'S U19s national cricket team is hoping to knock the competition for six as they prepare to jet off to Thailand for a prestigious global tournament.

The group of 18 players has been practising intently for more than six months, focusing on key skills and mental preparation for pressurised run chases as they seek to claim glory for the kingdom.

The ICC U19 Cricket World Cup Asia Division 2 qualifiers will take place from December 9-14 at various grounds in Bangkok and Chiang Mai.

Bahrain will be competing as one of 10 teams at the tournament and have been placed in a group alongside Hong Kong, Maldives, China and Kuwait.

In the other group are Saudi Arabia, Bhutan, Thailand, Qatar and Oman. The top team from each group will qualify for the Asia Division 1 qualifiers for a spot in the U19 Cricket World Cup in 2020.

Each team will play the others in their pool in 50-over round-robin matches. Under the watchful eyes of head coach Azeem Ul Haque the players have been honing

## ACTION



**CRICKET**  
By KRISTIAN HARRISON  
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their skills in daily training sessions at the Cricket Bahrain Association's (CBA) ground in Isa Town and at Alba Club.

Haque believes that the team is extremely talented and could go far. He said: "The team has been undergoing strict training exercises since August, with physical conditioning. More recently we've focused on skills and scenario practice matches to coach discipline in high pressure situations."

"The players are very talented and it's a pleasure to work with them. I don't have specific targets for the tournament, but I believe they are good enough to go there and compete strongly, or even win the group. This is by far the best selection of youngsters we've had in Bahrain."

The team's prospects are strong thanks to a rigorous selection process. In early August, open trials were held at the Pakistan Club and Indian Club for 80 players, with selectors visiting numerous schools in the area. Then, another 90 players were vetted in September upon their return from summer holidays.

By October, the number was whittled down to 42 and

put through various fitness and skills tests, before the final 18 for the Thailand tournament was selected.

The remaining players will stay in Bahrain as part of the development programme.

Captain Jagan Vijayakumar will lead the side.

Ul Haque said: "There is tremendous ability within the squad and they are very good players who have come on leaps and bounds in terms of confidence and teamwork."

"Every day they are working on fitness and on grass, which is good preparation for the conditions they face in Thailand. We've played plenty of scenario games to train match situations such as target bowling, batting sensibly, and I've also spoke to them about how to prepare mentally and handle pressure."

"We go to Thailand with high hopes that they will do Bahrain proud."

The team's participation in the tournament is being sponsored by the Royal Bahrain Hospital and Arab Financial Services. In a statement, the CBA said: "Both the sponsors are great believers in youth development, particularly on the sports field, and welcome the opportunity to contribute to providing a platform for Bahrain's upcoming national cricketers in the highest level of global competition."



TRAINING SESSION: Bowling, batting and fielding under scrutiny, below, the squad



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