

Women's basketball – Pride dented but Sengers defends team



Action as Caledonia Pride fight for the ball against Manchester Mystics at The Oriam

Caledonia Pride lost at high-flying Westfield Health Sheffield Hatters but coach Bart Sengers saw positives in the performance.

Indeed, the Scots cut the deficit to 48-39 at one stage and then missed lay-up chances which would have closed the gap further.

The English side, who are in the top three in the Women's British Basketball League, survived to move to a 69-50 victory.

Sengers felt his squad started well but then hit early foul trouble which hampered progress.

Still, Pride were within five points at the end of the first quarter but let it slip.

Sengers added: "We were better in the second-half when we scored 31 points and our defence worked well against a physical team."

"I am disappointed at the scoreline as we failed to take a number of chances but we continue to learn."

The girls move on and prepare for another tough test next against league pace-setters Nottingham Wildcats at their arena in the Midlands next Saturday.

Indoor hockey – Inverleith face Grove Menzieshill in indoor final




Inverleith, the holders, will play Grove Menzieshill, last season's runners-up, in the Division One final of Scotland's men's indoor hockey league on Saturday (4 February 2017).

The Edinburgh side brushed PSL Team Sport Clydesdale aside 11-1 in their final pool game yesterday before edging city rivals Grange 7-4 in the semi-final.

Dundee-based Grove beat Western Wildcats 11-1 in their final pool game and then beat Bromac Kelburne 7-5 in the semi-final.

Uddingston Riva were relegated and Western now face a play-off to remain in Scotland's top league.

Get down to the Botanics to see the snowdrops

 The Scottish Snowdrop Festival begins on 1 February 2017 at Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh as well as their gardens at Dawyck and Logan.

There are many varieties of snowdrop to see down at Inverleith

where they have specialist snowdrops which will be pointed out to you on a guided walk.

As well as real snowdrops the [RGBE](#) also have a range of gifts displaying snowdrops. There are mugs, egg cups, plates and jugs – take time to look in the shop on your visit.

Speedway – Monarchs yet to name Ben Fund rider

✘ Edinburgh Monarchs are expected to have a rider in the Ben Fund Bonanza at Glasgow on Sunday, March 12 and Tigers Richie Worrall can't wait.

Richard Lawson and Aaron Summers join Worrall with Nike Lunna likely to line up at reserve.

Former Tigers Ben Barker and James Sarjeant are also listed with Barker the only rider to have competed in all eight previous events, winning at Birmingham in 2012.

Berwick Bandits' Kevin Doolan and Lewis Bridger will take part with Newcastle represented by former Edinburgh Monarchs star Stevie Worrall and Workington have Thomas Jorgensen and Ty Proctor.

It is the intention of Ben Fund chief Paul Ackroyd to have at least a couple of Grand Prix riders racing.

Worrall will be competing in his fourth Bonanza and said: “As soon as I saw it was at Glasgow I asked to be in the meeting.

“It’s for a good cause – for a couple of years now I’ve not had to call on the Ben Fund though it did help me out a few years ago.”

Hearts Sign Choulay



In what has already been a busy January transfer window, Hearts have added to their squad with the on-loan signing of Stoke City winger Moha El Ouriachi Choulay – known as Choulay – until the end of this season.

The 21-year-old Moroccan, whose former clubs include Espanyol and Barcelona, may feature in Sunday’s Ladbrokes Premiership game with league champions Celtic at Celtic Park.

A Traditional Kick-Off Time for the Edinburgh Derby? Fat Chance!



It was inevitable the forthcoming William Hill Scottish Cup fifth round tie between Hearts and Hibernian would be kicking

off on a day and time to suit television. As soon as Rod 'I am Swaying' Stewart and former Hibs manager Alan 'Number 6 – no, make that number 9') Stubbs made the draw last Sunday afternoon, fans of both Edinburgh clubs knew the tie would almost certainly be played on a Sunday.

Thus, Sky Sports have chosen the Edinburgh derby for live coverage with the game now kicking off at 12.30pm on Sunday 12th February at Tynecastle. The good folk of Gorgie will have their Sunday lunchtime peace blown to smithereens.

Television ploughs so much money into football these days that the broadcasting companies can dictate games will kick-off any damn time that pleases them. There is still the Uefa ruling, of course, which says no games kicking off at 3.00pm on a Saturday can be televised live but this means the likes of Sky, BT and, to a lesser extent, the BBC can select any other time of their choosing.

Sunday lunchtime for the latest instalment of Hearts v Hibernian in the Scottish Cup – it's turning into a serial now – is not too inconvenient for the citizens of Edinburgh and the Lothians even though this does impact on pre-match drinking rituals in the pub. However, for fans of both clubs who live outside the Lothians then this kick-off time is less convenient.

I know of Hearts fans who live in Aberdeen and who regularly attend games. The challenge for them is to make it to the capital city for about noon – no easy task if you're relying on Scotland's public transport system. Granite City based Hearts fans will realise the first train from Aberdeen to Edinburgh on a Sunday is at 9.05am – which, arriving at the Haymarket around 12.20pm (daring to assume the damn thing will be on time) would mean taking on the attributes of Usain Bolt to make it to Tynecastle in time for kick-off.

Television doesn't seem to care if some fans can't make it to

re-arranged kick-off times. They've paid their money so the fans – the paying customers – will just have to like it or lump it.

The emergence of satellite television in the last few decades has transformed fixture schedules from something by which you could set your watch to something akin to a lottery of dates and times. It's a far cry from my informative years as a football fan in the early 1970s when a vital Scotland game or a big European club match couldn't be shown live on either the BBC or STV (just the two broadcasters back then) because Albion Rovers were playing Clydebank in a vital Reserve League (West) clash.

I recall Willie Allan, the then SFA Chief Executive, speak of the threat of hell and damnation if television was allowed to cover football games live on a regular basis. If memory serves me correctly, the Rangers –Hearts Scottish Cup final of 1976 was the last final not covered live on television. Had it been, Hearts might have got to the official kick-off time without being a goal down (the game kicked off at two minutes to three and Derek Johnstone put Rangers in front 60 seconds later)

Allan's critics were large in number but, given where football is now – at the behest of television and its ridiculous money – he may have had a point.

A few years ago, Hearts played a Uefa tie against VfB Stuttgart at Tynecastle – on a Thursday evening with a 9.00pm kick-off to suit the needs of German television. Very family friendly that decision turned out to be.

There have been numerous other occasions throughout the years where Hearts and Hibs fans have faced rising at some ungodly hour to make it to Inverness, Dingwall or Aberdeen for a lunchtime kick-off. Indeed, Hearts will play in the Granite City on 18th March; a Saturday, yes, but a kick-off time of 12.15pm is far from convenient.

Hibernian are likely to return to the top flight of Scottish football next season and the Hearts-Hibs Premiership games will be back on the fixture list. But, we all know there is as much chance of the Edinburgh derbies kicking off at 3.00pm on a Saturday as Donald Trump winning the Nobel Peace Prize. Our only hope in the years ahead is for another all-Edinburgh Scottish Cup final – this is one fixture which, thankfully, remains on a Saturday afternoon at 3.00pm.

Sadly, the fans have to put up with the inconsideration of sports broadcasters. What the football authorities and clubs should remember, however, is while they eagerly snatch the large wads of cash from the television companies, some fans may give up on the game, their frustrations at having to make considerable sacrifices having reached breaking point.

However, there is one other possibility for a Saturday afternoon Edinburgh derby. Now if only Spartans could get promoted to the SPFL and Edinburgh City stay up...

Another boost for Hibs' promotion hopes with victory over Queen of the South



Hibs hopes of automatic promotion took another boost this afternoon with a 1-0 win over on-form Queen of the South at Palmerston Park.

That result, coupled with Dundee United's draw against Dunfermline leaves Hibs eight points clear at the top of the

table, with a vastly superior goal difference.

Head Coach Neil Lennon made two changes to the starting XI that beat Bonnyrigg Rose last weekend. Ross Laidlaw took over in goal from the injured Ofir Marciano and John McGinn replaced Chris Humphrey.

New signing Scott Gallacher was listed amongst the substitutes.

Queen of the South fielded three former Hibs' players, John Rankin, Stephen Dobbie and Dan Carmichael.

Hibs took time to adjust to the artificial surface and Grant Holt spurned a good early chance by firing over from 12 yards.

James Keatings then went close with a left foot trike from the edge of the area and Andrew Shinnie shot wide under pressure from Queens' defenders.

In the 22nd minute McGinn sent in a dangerous cross and Jason Cummings attempted an acrobatic overhead kick although he would have been better leaving it to Holt who was in a position to take a free header.

Moments later Laidlaw did well to save a long range effort from Rankin.

Just before the break, Shinnie had a chance but his strike flew just over the bar from the edge of the area and the teams went in level at half time.

Hibs took a deserved lead in the 52nd minute after McGinn volleyed home from a James Keatings floated corner to the back post.

The Doonhamers almost equalised immediately but Laidlaw produced a fine save to deny Dobbie.

From then it was one way traffic as Hibs looked to add to

their lead and the large travelling support claimed for a penalty when McGinn tangled with Scott Mercer on the edge of the area but the referee waved play on.

Queens' keeper Lee Robinson did well to tip the ball round the post from a Holt strike then he did well to scramble clear a low David Gray cross.

Liam Fontaine was booked for obstruction on substitute Derek Lyle and Gray was also shown a yell for a foul on Lyndon Dykes.

Martin Boyle replaced Cummings then with five minutes remaining Lennon made a double substitution, taking off Keatings and Holt and replacing them with Jordon Forster and Brian Graham.

The hosts threw everything forward in a bid to grab an equaliser but Hibs comfortably held on to secure all three points.

After the game Neil Lennon told BBC Scotland: "I thought we were excellent and the scoreline could have been a bit more in our favour.

"For long periods I thought we controlled the game, probably didn't penetrate as we would have liked first half, but in the second half we had a really good spell for about 25 minutes. Obviously, we got the goal and their goalkeeper made a couple of fantastic saves to keep them in it.

"John McGinn was exceptional and deserved his goal. He was the one player even in the first half trying to thread balls through and cut Queens open.

"We've only 19 fit players today and I would like to get at least one more player in certainly to bolster us."

Hibs face Ayr United at Easter Road next Saturday.

Queen of the South: Robinson, Marshall, Dowie, Brownlie, Rankin, Dobbie, Jacobs, Thomson, Thomas, Mercer, Carmichael.
Subs: Hamill, Higgins, Lyle, Atkinson, Dykes, Murray, Bell

Hibs: Laidlaw, Gray, Fontaine, McGinn, Fyvie, Holt, Stevenson, Keatings, Shinnie, McGregor, Cummings. Subs: Gallacher, McGeouch, Boyle, Forster, Humphrey, Graham, Crane

Referee Steven McLean

Attendance 3007

Theatre review – Lysistrata: King's Theatre ****



Read all about it! Girl Power/Sex Strike – Athenian Bookies
Put Nookies @ 300/1 – Bar.

A week previous to this performance America and beyond witnessed unprecedented scenes of mass protest in which women were the principal protagonists.

Voicing, in their view, a collective outrage of antipathy towards the inauguration of misogynist Donald Trump as Resident Evil to The White House. His perceived rivers of effluent speeches building walls not bridges and, not least his 'off-mic/off-his pants' lewd braggadocio, lends this production's context a prescient insistentcy.



Photos Greg Macvean

Juxtaposed alongside this post-truth alternative reality Lysistrata's Athenian warrior menfolk are confronted with some discomfiting alternative facts.

Distraught and helpless as the death-toll mounts in the interminable Peloponnesian Wars with Sparta, the good women of Athens kick up one hell of an Acropolis row declaring no more sex in the city. This nookie embargo is celebrated with saucy relish in The Attic Collective's debut, premier farrago of surrealist inversion of power and authority. Aristophanes' fifth century BC anti-war comedy of leg-trembling confusion anticipated the Vietnam protest slogans 'Make Love/Not War'. Not so much, 'Not in my name.' More so, 'Not in my bed.'

Thus, in the spirit of the original Aristophanes via Carry On Devil may care smutty and mucky innuendo, this energetic ensemble of shoot-from-the-lip iconoclasts predicate their muse with the ethos of: what ever is saucy enough to goose your grandma is game on. The ruder, riper and gamier the better – with menacing chaotic erotica.

Daring derring-do you want some, in the face experimental, they are not to be gainsaid by eshewing a hefty handful of inflated phalli. Pathetic fallacy writ large. Indeed, by the gland full and then some. Excitable, frenetic, playing scandalously knicker-loose with the text (Trump and Bounder Boris get a curdling cameo of distain) Director, Susan Worsfold, allows the cast a broad and bawdy canvas to splatter the racy dialogue and tribal chorus chants with abandon. The use of auto-tune/vocoder effects is less convincing, lending a Euro-Pop tacky incongruity.



Ballsy, blousey, burlesque – with more than a naughty nuance of Aubrey Beardsley slinky, kinky delinquent decadence, The Attic Collective are lithesomely hunky, funky and decidedly spunky.

Cait Irvine as the eponymous heroine is viperously vixen and schemingly feral in her purpose exploiting the luxuriously golden cartouche set design to announce her denouement ultimatum to the priapically challenged envoys of Athens and Sparta. Base, crude and lewd The Attic Collective may be playing their zeitgeist cards just right. Trumps notwithstanding. This cock-sure, frisky risqué and irreverent schlock-bluster debuts on the same day that The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientist pushed forward 'The Doomsday Clock two minutes & thirty seconds closer to midnight. But a mile or so away from this theatre, almost 100 years ago, a young soildier recovering at Craiglockhart would begin drafting a poem – *Dulce Et Decorum Est*.

<http://www.edtheatres.com/lysistrata>

Photos Greg Macvean t 07971 826 457

Speedway – jacket sell-out for happy Monarchs



Sam Masters models last season's racejacket. Picture courtesy of Mike Hunter and Edinburgh Monarchs

Edinburgh Monarchs report a success off the track as they head towards the opening of the new speedway season.

For the past few seasons the club have offered supporters the opportunity to purchase a team race jacket with their name printed on the back.

They were looking for seven sponsors with each one paying £180

(£150 plus VAT).

For that the purchaser receives their name or their business name at the top of the jacket.

Then, at the end of the season, the sponsor is presented with the race jacket by the rider who has most often worn it during the season.

Now comes news that the 2017 racejacket sponsorships have sold out and co-promoter John Campbell said: "Thank you for your wonderful support.

"Those who have purchased one will be contacted in the coming days."

Ice hockey – two huge games as Capitals bid for play-offs



Action from a recent Elite League clash at Murrayfield where Capitals are back in action on Sunday night after a trip to Coventry Blaze on Saturday. Picture by Ian Coyle

Jacob Johnston eyed this weekend's tough double-header and declared: "These are two huge games for us."

Edinburgh Capitals travel to play-off rivals Coventry Blaze tonight (Saturday, 7pm) for the first time in the league this season and host Manchester Storm, who are also in the play-off mix, tomorrow (Sunday, 6pm).

Coach Michal Dobron's team edged Storm 2-1 at Murrayfield last Sunday, a result which has boosted moral for the Elite

League's bottom club.

They have 23 points from 32 games and eighth-placed Blaze have 29 points from 36 outings.

Johnston, a 28-year-old defenceman from Sudbury, Ontario, said: "The guys are happy with the win (over Manchester) on Sunday."

And he revealed that Capitals could be at full-strength. Johnston added: "We have been playing some really good hockey over the past few games so it was nice to be rewarded last Sunday.

"This weekend we have two big games and we need to beat both teams to give us a good opportunity to earn a play-off spot."

Elsewhere, Fife Flyers visit Braehead Clan (Saturday, face-off 7pm) looking for their first win in Glasgow in the league this term.

The Kirkcaldy club have lost 6-3 and 4-3 but are fourth with 38 points from 33 games in the ten-strong table following three straight wins.

Clan have won their last two and are two points behind but have played three more games.

Second-bottom Dundee Stars are at seventh-placed Manchester Storm (Saturday, face-off 7pm) looking for a second road win there this season have triumphed 3-2 on penalty shots earlier this term.

They also lost 4-1 on their second visit and frustrated coach Marc Lefebvre ordered his men to shoot.

He said: "We want to make an extra pass or play instead of shooting the puck."

Witness appeal after man attacked in Newtongrange



Police are appealing for witnesses after a man was attacked in Newtongrange last night.

The assault happened in Lady Road Place around 8.30pm when a 29-year-old man was approached by a group of youths and one of them struck him to the face. He required hospital treatment for his injury.

The suspect who struck the man is described as around 15-years-old, around 5ft 5in tall, of slim build and wearing a black top with the hood up.

Officers are now appealing for anyone who witnessed the incident and who may have information that can assist them in tracing the suspect.

Similarly anyone who saw a group of youths gathered outside the shop on Gardener Crescent around 8pm last night to get in touch.

Detective Constable Ian McCandlish of Dalkeith CID said: "This unprovoked attack left the injured man requiring hospital treatment and we are keen to trace the individual concerned.

"Anyone who was in the vicinity of Lady Road Place or Gardener Crescent in Newtongrange around 8pm last night is asked to get in touch."

Anyone with information is asked to contact officers on 101 or anonymously via Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Scots to face the Auld Enemy in 2019 UEFA European Under-21 Championships



Scotland will take on the Auld Enemy in 2019 UEFA European Under-21 Championship Qualifying Group 4 after being drawn against England at Thursday's draw in Nyon.

Netherlands, Ukraine, Latvia and Andorra complete the group which is set to get under way in September.

Scotland's first match is against Netherlands at home on Tuesday, 5 September.

They will then travel to England on Friday, 6 October before a trip to Latvia four days later.

The teams will play each other home and away with the nine group winners qualifying automatically for the final tournament to be held in the summer of 2019 in Italy and San Marino.

The four best runners-up will compete in a play-off for the remaining two places.

Players are eligible for the 2019 UEFA European Under-21 Championship if they were born on, or after, 1 January 1996.

Scotland Under-21 coach Scot Gemmill said: "It's a tough group but it will also be a fantastic test for the players.

"I've said before that we need to continually challenge the

players if we want them to improve and these fixtures will certainly give them something to think about.

“Of course, the matches against England will add some spice to the mix but we’re looking forward to it.

“We have a bit of time between now and our opening match against Netherlands in September, including the Toulon Tournament in May, but we’ll do everything we can to ensure we are ready for the challenge ahead.”

Fixture list*

Tuesday, 5 September 2017 – Scotland v Netherlands

Friday, 6 October 2017 – England v Scotland

Tuesday, 10 October 2017 – Latvia v Scotland

Friday, 10 November 2017 – Scotland v Latvia

Tuesday, 14 November 2017 – Scotland v Ukraine

Friday, 23 March 2018 – Andorra v Scotland

Thursday, 6 September 2018 – Scotland v Andorra

Tuesday, 11 September 2018 – Netherlands v Scotland

Friday, 12 October 2018 – Ukraine v Scotland

Tuesday, 16 October 2018 – Scotland v England

2019 UEFA European Under-21 Championship Qualifying Round Draw

Group 1: Czech Republic, Croatia, Greece, Moldova, Belarus, San Marino

Group 2: Spain, Slovakia, Iceland, Albania, Estonia, Northern Ireland

Group 3: Denmark, Poland, Finland, Georgia, Lithuania, Faroe Islands

Group 4: England, Netherlands, Ukraine, SCOTLAND, Latvia, Andorra

Group 5: Germany, Israel, Norway, Republic of Ireland, Azerbaijan, Kosovo

Group 6: Sweden, Belgium, Turkey, Hungary, Cyprus, Malta

Group 7: Serbia, Austria, Russia, FYR Macedonia, Armenia, Gibraltar

Group 8: Portugal, Switzerland, Romania, Wales, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Liechtenstein

Group 9: France, Slovenia, Montenegro, Bulgaria, Kazakhstan, Luxembourg

* Fixture list may be subject to change

Neil Lennon expects a tough game at Palmerston Park



Head Coach Neil Lennon is expecting a tough game as Hibs travel to Palmerston Park to take on Queen of the South this afternoon but he is determined to see his side continue to strengthen their lead at the top of the Ladbrokes Championship by picking up three points.

The 'Doonhamers' have reacted well to new manager Gary Naysmith taking over and the artificial turf will cause selection problems for Lennon as he has a few players returning from injury.

Hibs currently sit six points clear of Dundee United in the race for automatic promotion and the players have been in good form of late so a large travelling support is expected to make the trip to Dumfries.

Speaking ahead of the game to Hibs' TV Lennon said: " The players have been buoyant this week. The training has gone well. It will be a difficult game as Queens have found a bit of form again under Gary (Naismith). They play good football and they have had a couple of really good performances of

late.

“They drew with Dundee United and beat Dumbarton so it will be a tough venue to go to.

“The new manager has come in and given them a bit of a bounce. He has bought in some good players in the loan market, Joe Thomson and John Rankin.

“They have good attacking intent and variation in the way they play.

“We are playing well and it was a great win last week. That will give the players a lot of confidence.

“Now that we’re ahead it is important to keep the pressure on and try to keep our foot down and build momentum, putting pressure on the teams that are trying to chase us.

“I’d certainly rather be in our position than anyone else’s.

“Paul (Hanlon) and Ofir (Marciano) are not far away. We are hoping that he (Marciano) may make the squad at the weekend, but if not we have brought in Scott Gallacher as cover subject to a medical.

“Dylan (McGeouch) is back training as well so we are getting the players back.

“With Paul it’s a pelvic problem and he can get a reaction to plastic pitches so this may be a game too soon.”

MSP surgery details for February

✘ Miles Briggs is a Conservative MSP for Lothian and he is holding surgeries on 6 February 2017 in various locations then.

So if you have any issues that he can help you with here are the details :



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Speedway – Bandits bosses promise excitement next season



Scott Courtney promises action for new-look Bandits next season

Scott Courtney admitted on-track silverware was hard to come by for Berwick Bandits last season but he claims the club lead the way in some very significant areas.

Courtney, one of the club's new owners, said: "Last season we managed to execute some very innovative things at Berwick, although track covers have often been discussed and even attempted in the past, we were able to create the formula and execute the task successfully on two occasions.

"Olympus Marquees were instrumental in helping out with supplying the material for the corners and also helping out with the man power alongside our brilliant track staff on match day

"We also took on board the opinion of the fans and the most common complaint was long and sometimes unnecessary delays to the meeting.

"I presented my ideas to the previous owner John Anderson. We discussed the possibility of functioning double medical cover and the rest as they say is history.

“We experienced all the usual thrills and spills of a season but the show never once suffered any frustrating delays.”

Track improvements are well underway for this season and the Courtney brothers, Gary Havelock and all the staff at Berwick Bandits Speedway Club have made it their top priority to bring the best version of Berwick Speedway to the tapes on Saturday 18 March.

Hearts Sign Striker Bikey



Hearts have signed 21-year-old French striker Dylan Bikey from League Two side Stirling Albion. Bikey has made a significant impact at Forthbank since his arrival in November from French side Dieppe, scoring 9 goals in 9 games.

Bikey, who had been training with Hibernian and had been expected to sign for Neil Lennon’s team, goes straight into the Hearts squad for the Ladbrokes Premiership game at Celtic on Sunday.

Bikey told the Hearts website:

“This is a new challenge for me,” he said. “It’s a big club with a big stadium and it’s a Premiership team, so I’m very happy to play for Hearts.”

Meanwhile, Hearts expect to complete the signing of striker Esmael Goncalves from Anorthosis Famagusta on Monday.

Today is the first day of the Chinese New Year

☒ Kung Hei Fat Choi!

Today marks the beginning of the Chinese New Year which lasts until 15 February 2017.

The only real sign of this that we have seen are the paper lanterns on Multrees Walk, but we have listed some events that we have discovered.

This is the tenth sign in the Chinese Zodiac. Chinese signs last for a year rather than just a month and each year takes its time to come around in the twelve year system.

Lucky numbers for roosters : 5, 7 and 8

Something to avoid today – don't eat porridge for breakfast as it is a sign of being poor...

This is the year of the rooster, and anyone born under this sign might have these characteristics :

- Rooster: Honest, energetic, intelligent, flamboyant, flexible, diverse, confident.

You are promised the biggest Chinese New Year Celebration Party at The Cav 3 West Tollcross tonight Saturday 28 January 2017 from 23:00. [More details here.](#)

At The Three Sisters on the Cowgate they will have a [Chinese street food Pop-up](#) in their yard tomorrow Sunday 29 January 2017 from 12 noon.

☒ On 5 February 2017 there will be an open day at Yee's Hung Ga on Lower Gilmore Place with performances of Dragon and Lion dancing! From 1.30pm. [More details here.](#)

The Edinburgh New Year Market is being held at Bainfield Café Bar from 12noon on 28 January 2017 where they will have snacks and show you how to do calligraphy. [More details here.](#)

On 3 February 2017 the Confucius Institute for Scotland is hosting a party from 6-9pm at Abden House 1 Marchhall Crescent. There will be Mah-jong, Chinese knots, Karaoke and Chinese chess. [Tickets here for the free event.](#)

And if you fancy making your own Chinese food then there are several Chinese supermarkets in Edinburgh with PCY Oriental at 199-201 Leith Walk, Hua Xing Chinese Supermarket at 48 Ratcliffe Terrace and the Aihua Supermarket at 36 West Crosscauseway. You will find everything you need to make your own dumplings at home. But at Matthews Foods at 36 Inglis Green Road they not only sell you the ingredients but there is a restaurant on site. The Imperial Palace specialises in Cantonese and Szechuan cooking.

One of our favourite Chinese restaurants is still the Kweilin on Dundas Street but closely followed by the little tiny restaurant on the corner of Canon Street called The Jade Garden which is principally a takeaway but has some seats – add your restaurant tips below!

Taisteal – an exotic excursion based on Scotland's

bountiful larder



Taisteal, situated in a prominent position in affluent Stockbridge and producing food which catches the eye and excites the taste buds

Speaking to Michelin-trained chef Gordon Craig about food is an experience and an education. Tasting what he produces is exiting and liberating.

He defies convention and introduces diners to a exotic and uplifting new world.

Who, for example, would place a rabbit – yes, rabbit – samosa in soup? That's just for starters.

To get a feel for the way the 32-year-old Glaswegian thinks about food you must visit Taisteal, one of Edinburgh's newest restaurants.

Competition is fierce in Scotland's capital as the recession bites deeper, and potential clients think twice about investing in a night out.

However, Gordon already has a strong CV buttressed by working in top restaurants including Leith's Plumed Horse and the much-decorated, Peat Inn, near St Andrews and working with the Roux Brothers in London.

His reputation was further enhanced by successfully establishing Field and Field Grill House, in Edinburgh's fashionable Stockbridge.

Taisteal – which means journey or to

travel – is an apt name for the atmospheric and relaxing diner which sits in an enviable position as you stroll down from Princes Street.

Gordon loves to travel, not to seek out the sites and tick another box on his world list, but to seek out new ideas to introduce into his menu.

Pictures of his travels adorn the walls at Taisteal. Inspiration derived from those frequent visits to far off lands assault your senses.

He opened Taisteal in January after a fact-finding trip to China. His undoubted passion for food, and what you can do with it, shines through.

His research, built up over the years, has resulted in intricate dishes which stimulate and satisfy.

However, he is also fully aware of dietary considerations as those close to him have concerns in this sensitive area.. Stimulation is in the presentation. The pan fried scallops arrived and the colourful plate was like an art form

Delicate pastry sails were interspersed with pomegranate seeds and minute cubes of black pudding. The visual affect was stunning and the delicate taste of the perfectly-cooked fish was sharpened by the satay sauce. A triumph and I was later informed that this is one of his signature dishes.

Carrot soup with lemongrass plus rabbit spring roll had several diners around us looking quizzical when it was suggested. We had to have it.

The soup, cooked with coconut (good for those with lactose intolerance) and a touch of ginger, had me itching to get home

and look for a recipe. Simple ingredients given a cunning twist. Superb, and the product – a large bowl – arrived piping hot.

Little things mean a lot at the top end of the trade (the spiced-up, home-made popcorn taster to start was unexpected and enjoyed) and Gordon, supported by Daniel James, who have worked as a team for several years, go to great lengths with their on-plate detail.

That was exemplified once again in the main courses. Roast hake arrived on a warmed plate with new potatoes, curried cauliflower, mussels and golden raisins. The raisins provided a sharp edge to the superb dish, the fish flaking to the touch of the fork.

Maple and five spice Gressingham duck breast provided Gordon and Daniel with a platform to show their innovation.

The breast is slowly cooked in a water bath to retain moisture during the process. My knife slid through the meat which was beautifully red in colour, just the way I like it.

Grilled pak choi plus edamame beans, a preparation of immature soybeans in the pod found in the cuisine of China, Japan, Korea and Hawaii, an idea gleaned from his recent trip to the Far East, accompanied the spectacular dish. However, the Shitake samosa, which was a delight in itself, did not, for me, complement the dish because of the oily nature of the samosa.

Gordon's mission is to take elements of fine dining, backed by an extensive wine list and a selection of classic and contemporary cocktails, and present the package in a more relaxed environment.

Scotland's sumptuous larder provides a brilliant platform for him and his kitchen staff to show their creativity.

Front of house manager, Craig Brown, and our delightful waitress with a radiant smile, help produce an exceptional experience.

[Taisteal](#): open Tuesday to Sunday, lunch from 12pm to 2pm: dinner from 6pm to 9.30pm at 1 Raeburn Place, Edinburgh EH4 1HU: t: 0131 332 9977

Hard Rock launch new #SignatureSeries merchandise

Hard Rock Café Edinburgh sent us a goody bag today with a taste of the merchandise they have just launched along with Pitbull, a Grammy® award-winning international superstar.

We got a T-shirt and a glass for our long cocktails but why are they launching this range?

The Pitbull Signature Series : Edition 35 shirt is inspired by the global star, Mr Worldwide, supporting the SLAM Foundation. This will support learning opportunities for children around the world.

✘ Pitbull commented, “Music and education have always been a driving force in my life. Partnering with the [Hard Rock Heals Foundation](#) for my Signature Series shirt will benefit SLAM! (Sports, Leadership, Arts and Management) in its effort to help students from all walks of life achieve their highest potential.”

A percentage of the retail price of each **Pitbull Signature Series** shirt sold will be donated to SLAM through the Hard Rock Heals Foundation. The new Signature Series shirt features

Pitbull's famous moniker, "Mr. Worldwide," in vibrant turquoise and pink lettering in homage to his Miami upbringing.

Charity merchandise is a big part of what Hard Rock does. It has raised millions for charitable causes around the globe.

*Today we got a goody bag...from..... [@HardRockEdin](#)
[#SignatureSeries](#) [pic.twitter.com/96HP8FfBtp](#)*

– Edinburgh Reporter (@EdinReporter) [27 January 2017](#)

Visit [HardRock.com](#) for additional details on Hard Rock's Signature Series, or [Rockshop.HardRock.com](#) to purchase the new Pitbull Signature Series: Edition 35 merchandise.

Pompadour launches new Saturday lunch



The Pompadour by Galvin launches Saturday Lunches

Situated in one of Edinburgh's most vibrant locations at the West End of Princes Street, Saturday lunches at The Pompadour by Galvin promise to be a wonderful way to celebrate the weekend.

Michelin-starred chef brothers Chris and Jeff Galvin have created two menus for guests to enjoy surrounded by the timeless elegance and charm of the unique dining room.

3-course lunch menu – £29

5-course tasting menu – £45

Both menus feature the very best Scottish ingredients that change with the seasons.

SATURDAY LUNCH 3-COURSE MENU

£29 for 3 courses

Starters

Globe artichoke ravioli, root vegetables, nage barigoule

Old Spot pork cheek & jowl, crackling, pickled cabbage & shiitake dashi

Chargrilled smoked eel, lobster bisque, shaved fennel

Mains

Jerusalem artichoke & truffle risotto

Loin & faggot of Edinglassie estate venison, pommes Anna, red cabbage & cranberries

Tagine of Perthshire pheasant, pastilla, confit lemon & harissa sauce

Desserts

Apple tarte Tatin, vanilla ice cream

Valrhona Manjari chocolate crémeux, dark rum, muscovado & coconut ice cream

Plateau de fromages, poached quince & honeycomb

SATURDAY LUNCH MENU GOURMAND

£45 for 5 courses

Globe artichoke ravioli, root vegetables, nage barigoule

∞

Old Spot pork cheek & jowl, crackling, pickled cabbage & Shiitake Dashi

∞

Tagine of Perthshire pheasant, pastilla, confit lemon & harissa sauce

∞

Plateau de fromages, poached quince & honeycomb

∞

Valrhona Manjari chocolate crémeux, dark rum, muscovado & coconut ice cream

The Pompadour By Galvin

Waldorf Astoria Edinburgh – The Caledonian

Princes Street

Edinburgh, EH1 2AB

Tel. 0131 2228975

Email. pompadour.reservations@waldorfastoria.com

www.thepompadourbygalvin.com

Twitter: [@galvinpompadour](https://twitter.com/galvinpompadour)

Lothian Buses named policing partner of the year



At the Scottish Police Excellence Awards today Lothian Buses was crowned as policing partner of the year. The main reason for the capital's bus company rising above its competition was that it has a dedicated Transport Liaison Officer.

This move has been in place since 2015 when the bus company and Edinburgh Police decided to collaborate to tackle incidents and issues on the transport network.

Police Scotland appointed PC Julie Cochrane who has worked with the bus company's staff to address crime and ant-social behaviour.

Commenting on the win Claudine Molloy, Head of Operations Lothian Buses said: "We are delighted to be working in partnership with Police Scotland, so to win this award further cements the great work we have done together over the past 18 months.

"We share the same values around community safety and I'm confident that our work together has and will continue to benefit our staff, customers and the wider community."

Police Scotland Inspector, David Happs added: "This award recognises the commitment of Police Scotland and Lothian Buses to work together to provide safe travel throughout the city for the large number of local residents, visitors and staff that use this network on a daily basis.

"We have already observed a large reduction in the number of

incidents of antisocial behaviour through focussed joint initiatives and intervention. I anticipate the innovative school education programme delivered jointly by Constable Julie Cochrane and Lothian Buses' Community Engagement team will deliver further long term benefits to the Edinburgh community."

As part of the partnership strategy, Lothian Buses and PC Cochrane designed a schools liaison programme to deliver a behavioural change communication workshop to high school pupils. In the first eight months of last year, the workshop was presented to 22 local schools engaging with over 1200 young adults. Overall feedback from pupils reported a 96% positive learning experience.

Enforcement activity was also carried out following reports of antisocial behaviour in areas of Edinburgh.

Photograph by Ian Georgeson t 07921 567360

Women's basketball – Peacock upbeat as Pride head for Sheffield



Pride tussle for the ball at The Oriam against Manchester Mystics in their last outing in the Women's British Basketball League

Caledonia Pride would love to earn a confidence-boosting first win in the Women's British Basketball League.

However, the Scots-based side face a huge challenge when they

travel to Westfield Health Sheffield Hatters on Saturday (tip-off 3pm).

The Yorkshire combine are second in the ten-strong league having won eight of their ten fixtures so far.

Only Nottingham Wildcats, who have won nine of their ten outings, are ahead of them and the Sheffield side have netted 838 points and conceded 661.

Pride have lost all nine of their fixtures and are ninth in the standing with 447 points scored and 688 conceded.

Coach Bart Sengers remains up-beat as do the girls and they certainly cut down on turnovers in their last outing, a 59-50 home defeat to physical Manchester Mystics.

Hard-working Hannah Peacock scored nine valuable points and firmly believes that a win will come soon.

Their last trip to All Saints High School resulted in a 88-45 defeat on October 23 but Peacock argues that a lot of hard work has been done since then and Pride are a much-improved side who are on the cusp of earning their maiden win.

Ice hockey – Dobron believes as Capitals aim to extinguish Blaze



Goalmouth action as Edinburgh Capitals bid to shoot down Dundee Stars: Pic by Ian Coyle

EDINBURGH Capitals player/coach Michal Dobron should be at full-strength for the club's Elite League double-header this weekend.

The Murrayfield men visit basement rivals Coventry Blaze on Saturday (face-off 7pm) and entertain Manchester Storm on Sunday (face-off 6 pm).

Dobron's challenge is to catch Coventry who occupy the eighth and final play-off place.

It is Dobron's first visit to Coventry this season but so far Capitals have beaten the Midlands outfit 4-1 and 8-2 at Murrayfield.

Blaze are eighth in the ten-strong table with 29 points from 36 games and are boosted by Sunday's 4-0 win at second-bottom Dundee Stars.

Capitals prop up the table with 23 points from 32 games but Dobron said: "We still believe we can get a play-off place but these are two big matches for us."

Witness appeal after serious assault in Buccleuch Street



Police are appealing for witnesses following a serious assault in the Southside which took place around 12.45pm yesterday in Buccleuch Street when a 43-year-old male was punched to the face.

He was taken to the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary where he

received medical treatment for a serious injury

The suspect is described as male, white, 6ft – 6ft 2ins, thin build, greying hair wearing a high vis jacket and sandy coloured boots.

DC Stephen Herd of Gayfield CID said: “We’re still conducting enquiries in order to establish the full circumstances surrounding this incident and are eager to speak to anyone who may have witnessed the incident or recognise the suspect description”

Anyone with information can contact Police Scotland on 101 or report this anonymously to the Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Pub refurb – facelift for pub with literary and medical connections



An historic pub which has connections to famous writers, doctors and even fictional detective Sherlock Holmes re-opens to guests on 1 February after a major facelift.

The near 200-year-old Salisbury Arms on Dalkeith Road, formerly known as the Belleville, was originally built in 1820, will soon have a contemporary and relaxed feel.

New general manager Robin Jacobs, formerly of the Sheep Heid in Edinburgh’s Duddingston, said: “The Salisbury Arms is such a beautiful pub and it provides a hub for the local community.

“We have some changes planned that will allow us to retain the history of the pub whilst bringing it into the 21st century.”

Robin added: “We’re passionate about offering those who enjoy the finer things in life a place to discover and share great tasting food and drinks.”

Tom Campbell, the head chef, will also introduce a new seasonal menu featuring Buttermilk Southern Fried Chicken and Caramelised Fig and Whipped Goat’s Curd Pizza as well as daily specials and pub favourites.

Visit the [website](#) for more details.

Scott Gallacher joins Hibs on a deal until the end of the season.



Former Rangers, Hearts and St Mirren goalkeeper Scott Gallacher has joined Hibs on a deal until the end of the season.

The 27 year old has spent the first half of the current campaign at St Mirren, and will act as competition for Ofir Marciano and Ross Laidlaw following the departure of Otso Virtanen in January.

Scott trained with his new team mates on Thursday and has now put pen to paper on a short-term deal.

Gallacher told Hibs TV: “It’s absolutely fantastic to join

Hibs and it's a great opportunity for me and I'm ready to go.

"I'm very excited to come here because it is a massive club.

"The facilities are absolutely fantastic here and we had a good training session.

"Combo' (Alan Combe) is great and a hard worker so training was of a good standard. I met Ofir (Marciano) and Ross (Laidlaw) today and they seem really good guys.

"It's good competition for places here and we're all at a very good standard. It was a good standard out at training. It's just a short-term deal, so I'll keep my head down, work hard and see what becomes of it.

"The move came quite fast for me but it was good. The boss is a big character in football and he seems a good guy but someone you don't want to mess with as he has a bit of steel about him."

Andrew Shinnie says hard work on the training ground has paid dividends



Hibs midfielder Andrew Shinnie admits that dropping down to the bench was difficult to take but hard work on the training ground has paid dividends and last week he was back to his best in the 8-1 victory over Bonnyrigg Rose.

With Kris Commons returning to Celtic, Shinnie is likely to start against Queen of the South at Palmerston tomorrow and although he expects a tough game he is confident that if the players play to their ability the team are more than capable of returning with all three points.

Speaking to Hibs TV, Shinnie said: "I missed out on the last couple of games because I was not as fresh as I could be but the boys did well and got two great results against Dundee United and Dumbarton so I had to take it on the chin. I was on the bench but I trained hard and last Saturday I felt refreshed and energetic.

"We have a great squad here. We have players back fit now and we have brought in players and that's what you need, competition for places or people get a bit complacent but that's just football.

"Obviously Kris (Commons) came in and did really well, but if you are not in the team you just have to work hard which is what I did.

"We're in great spirits. Obviously we had a couple of great league wins and a good cup win, so everything is going well.

"We've got a good lead at the top of the table and we've got to keep putting the pressure on other teams to keep up with us. We're playing well, training's been great, everyone is in great spirits and we're looking forward to going down there.

"It will be astroturf which is always a bit difficult to play on and Queens area tough team. At the start of the season when we played them down there they were unbeaten at the top of the league that shows that they have quality in the team.

"If we go there and play the way we can then we will get three points."

Letter from Scotland



A cool start to the year for the Scouts

While the rest of the world was worrying about Mr Trump's wall or what the Appeal Court judges would say about Brexit, I was shivering in a tent at a Scout camp on the edge of the Pentland Hills. This crazy venture is known as the "Brass Monkey Camp", held every winter, in an attempt to offer Scouts – boys and girls – a real challenge. And it certainly was "challenging" to get up at 7am, after a fitful night's sleep, and pack your tent away in freezing cold fog, all before breakfast.

But 80 or so brave 11-14 year olds survived the adventure – and all its other challenges – and went home rejoicing. The tents took days to dry out and the leaders are still defrosting.

Those 80 youngsters looked healthy enough, but apparently Scotland is still the sick child of Europe, according to a report this week from the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health. It found that although child health is improving in Scotland, it is improving at a much slower rate than most of Western Europe.

Some 27 per cent of children are overweight or obese and 400 children die each year from avoidable diseases. The basic issue, the report says, is inequality. A fifth of all children in Scotland, 210,000, live in households below the poverty line. They do not have a good start in life. Nearly a third of mothers in deprived areas smoke during pregnancy, only 15 per cent of them breast-feed. Children living in poverty do not enjoy a good diet, nor do they take the right

amount of exercise. And despite all the government's programmes to address these issues, Scotland – indeed the whole UK – is slipping behind its European neighbours.

The answer of course is to do something about poverty, relative poverty, which brings us to the state of our public services and the Budget. MSPs this week voted down the SNP government's first attempt at drafting next year's Budget. Ministers now need to reach an agreement with one of the other parties to get their tax and spending plans through parliament. Labour, the Greens and the Liberal Democrats want to see Scotland's new power to raise income tax actually used to fund better public services. The SNP may well be forced into doing so, or face an election.

The historic ruling by the Appeal Court in London on Tuesday, that the Westminster parliament must approve the triggering of Brexit negotiations, has received a mixed response in Scotland. On the one hand, Remainers (62 per cent of Scottish voters) have welcomed the fact that we are stilling living in a parliamentary democracy and sovereignty lies with MPs in the House of Commons, not with the Prime Minister nor the People, even in a referendum. But on the other hand, MSPs at Holyrood are disappointed that the judges ruled against them having any legal say over negotiations with Europe. The First Minister Nicola Sturgeon says it all makes a second independence referendum even more likely.

None of this has stopped the Scottish Government pressing on with its de-carbonising agenda. This week it published a new target to generate half of all Scotland's energy requirement (heating as well as electricity) from renewable sources by 2030. It's a big ask, since only 15 per cent of our energy comes from renewables at present.

It would take our greenhouse gas reduction to 66 per cent. The current target, a 42 per cent reduction by 2020, has already been met, so there is hope. The plan includes another

attempt at carbon capture, reducing energy demand, greater energy efficiency and district heating. If Mr Trump is listening, Scotland, at least, is taking the "Chinese hoax" over climate change seriously.

A strange row is continuing to rumble over the goings-on at St Mary's Episcopal Cathedral in Glasgow. It held an interfaith service recently involving a reading from the Koran. Unfortunately the Muslim student concerned chose a passage which specifically states that Jesus is not the son of God. This has caused some Christians to raise an eyebrow and others to raise merry hell.

The head of the Episcopal church in Scotland, Bishop David Chillingworth, has been forced to apologise, and now one of the Queen's chaplains Rev Dr Gavin Ashenden has resigned his official role so that he can speak out against such readings from the Koran. So much for the Cathedral's attempt at inter-faith dialogue. Oh well, the best laid schemes.....

And while we are still in Burns season, let us sing in praise of two Glasgow lassies who look set for classical music stardom.

Sisters Sarah and Laura Ayoub have been signed up by Decca Records. They've already played violin and cello at the Royal Albert Hall and recorded at the Abbey Road studios. The Royal Scottish National Orchestra was brought in to accompany them in a medley of Scottish songs. And now, for Burns Night, they have made a recording of "My love is like a red, red rose" and other Burns classics which should keep us calm and romantic though the rest of the winter.

Here is a little snippet for you:

Our brand new single is out NOW! Our favourite Scots tunes with the [@RSNO](#). Available now on iTunes: <https://t.co/SXwHsdD46G> pic.twitter.com/483bHHD6H2

Wedding Open Day at The Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Centre

✘ There is to be a wedding open day at The Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Centre at 25 Palmerston Place EH12 5AP on Saturday 28 January 2017 from 11am till 4pm.

The Victorian Townhouse has many rooms to accommodate your ceremony and reception which you will be able to see then. There is The Helen Duncan Room and Mary Duffy Room which is a suite comprising drawing room with ante room off it both featuring ornate cornices and chandeliers. This is recommended for your wedding breakfast and reception.

There is a ceremony area in the Sanctuary where the wedding can take place and the venue can supply officiants to conduct the service unless you wish to supply your own.

On Saturday as well as the venue various catering, entertainment and floral suppliers will display what they can offer.

✘ **The Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Centre**

Address: 25 Palmerston Place, Edinburgh EH12 5AP

Telephone: 0131 625 0700

Contact: Shereen Fazeli (Venue Manager), shereen@arthurconandoylecentre.com

Email: bookings@arthurconandoylecentre.com

Website: www.arthurconandoylecentre.com

Wedding Page: www.arthurconandoylecentre.com/weddings

How to end your Dry January...

✘ by *Robin Gauldie*

With only five days to go until the end of 'Dry January', Edinburgh's independent off-licence chain VINO is offering thirst-crazed customers an opportunity to get back on the sauce at bargain prices this weekend.

Customers who sign up for VINO's loyalty programme 30% off all wines, beers and spirits at its four shops in Broughton, Stockbridge, Grange and Morningside on Friday, Saturday and Sunday (see www.vinowines.co.uk for addresses).

Discounts are available for in-store purchases only. It's first-come, first-served (no online orders or home delivery) so get there early and fill your boots. Cheers!