AWOL

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What's happening, and might be happening, in Hua Hin

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21 November 08
FREE WEEKLY

BUDDY, CAN I SELL YOU A HOME?

Is this the future for Hua Hin's foreign Estate Agents?

■HUA HIN, THAILAND

The global financial meltdown may seem to have spared Thailand so far, but the signs are growing that the effects are starting to appear here. Rising fuel costs pushed international arrivals at Bangkok's main airport down to about 600,000 in August - a 33 per cent drop from a year earlier after a jump of 5.5 per cent in July, Ministry of Tourism figures show. In September, arrivals were down 21 per cent, and industry experts say numbers are expected to remain low as the global credit crunch prompts consumers worried about their jobs and mortgages to stay at home.

'We will probably have a very bad high season,' said Mr Oliver Martin of industry body the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA). 'You're going to have it across the board. It's going to be everyone - from the luxury resort right down to a small tour operator, a mom-and-pop shop or a restaurant,' he added.

Hua Hin had been, until the last few months, a booming Thai and foreign resort, with people from all over the world falling over themselves to holiday and buy property here. The location and the beautiful surroundings make it a wonderful place to either visit or settle, and the huge surge in home building was clearly evident in the last few years. Alongside that surge came a boom in the related services; from pool companies to gardening services to estate agencies, and this last one was the most marked.

Story continues on pg. 2

I'd Love a Bacon Sandwich
032 513 144

BUDDY, CAN I SELL YOU A HOME?

Continued from page 1

Five or six years ago you could count the number of estate agents in the town on one hand, but the numbers have exploded, and it has been an area that many foreigners have found employment, either by starting their own agency or with an existing company. Teaching used to be the mainstay of foreigners looking for work in Thailand, but that position has almost certainly been overtaken by the property sales people in this area.

However that situation is now under severe threat; several companies have either stopped trading or are at risk of going out of business, as the boom has come to a grinding halt in the face of the global credit crunch, Thailand's political turmoil and a number of other contributory factors. Hua Hin remains a desirable place with many attractions and a plethora of properties to choose from, but the money is drying up, particularly for the British who have seen the pound lose 20% of its value against the Thai baht this year; when someone is considering buying a 5 million baht property, an extra million is a definite deterrent to proceeding.

While AWOL doubts that any people employed in the property business will end up sleeping on the street as we depict, it has been a dramatic turnaround in fortunes; the bigger companies can ride out the storm but many smaller agencies are either going to be swallowed up by them or will just cease trading. Some developers too will be sweating as they will often rely on future sales to service any loans taken to fund projects; it is likely that in all instances staff will have to be laid off to help cut costs, and the expensive foreigners will probably be the first to go.

Hua Hin beach - one of the attractions and also a potential haven for homeless agents

All of this has a knock on effect for everyone and every business, and it can only be hoped that the slowdown for the area is a short one; undoubtedly Hua Hin and Thailand will always be attractive to foreigners so things will improve, but will it be in time to save the foreign agents from becoming beggars?

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Letter from a bar girl

Dear Bill

I love you and I miss you too much. my friend bar say you old man look same same monkey but I know you hansum man I have problem I write you before that buffalo me sick Now it die Fall down and dead in middle rice field. Bad fortune when it fall it fall on papa and break leg he three place Now he not work Brother me make stretcher bamboo he take from roof house Roof come down and rain in house He take papa to hospital motorcycle Have big accident when he come home hit police car Police say brother me blame Police say he pay big money. Not worry darling motorcycle OK but Police car bad broken Bad luck make Mama heart problem. Doctor say she must triple by-pass. I no understand but brother say you understand.

You know darling I only work in bar and not go with man I wait for you come back Hua Hin but if you no help me I go with many many many many many farang get pay bills money.

Old people my village say you responsible if you send money me before buy medicine sick buffalo then it no die papa no break leg house have roof brother no ride into police car Mama no have heart problem.

Please send me 500,000 baht for my bank. Papa fix 50,000 new roof 30,000, new police car 200,000, mama fix 150,000. I take off 2,000 baht for sell buffalo meat but me have to pay more hospital bill for 24 people have problem eat contaminated meat 12,000 baht. I not know money England but my brother me say me it 52.2424 mid-market rate close of trading yesterday This means you send me 10,000 your pound

I love you darling

Noi

Would you have voted for her?

Miss Great Britain Gemma Garrett and a pair of political heavyweights- surely they deserved more votes?

A by-election in the UK Parliamentary constituency of Haltemprice and Howden, which took place on 10 July 2008, was contested by no less than 26 people (the highest number ever), one of whom was the reigning Miss Great Britain, Gemma Garrett, representing the Miss Great Britain Party. The charming Miss Garrett finished a creditable 5th with 521 votes, although this was not enough to prevent her from losing her deposit. Amonst other luminaries, she beat Mad Cow-Girl of the ubiquitous Monster Raving Loony Party (7th, 412 votes), David Icke (12th, 110 votes) and possibly the best named political party ever, Church Of The Militant Elvis Party, fronted by David Bishop (17th, 44 votes).

or Pie & Mash with Mushy Peas

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Local Weather

Hua Hin weather forecast next 7 days

Day	Conditions	Temp °C Low	High
Sat	Sun through high clouds	24	31
Sun	Cloudy, showers; humid	25	29
Mon	Spotty showers in the morning	24	30
Tues	Partly sunny, showers around	24	29
Wed	Partly sunny, a shower; humid	24	29
Thur	Mostly cloudy and humid	23	29
Fri	Mostly cloudy with a shower	23	29

World Weather

Forecast for Friday 21st November 2008

City	Min °C	Max	Conditions
Amsterdam	8	11	Rain
Athens	10	19	Cloudy
Auckland	14	20	Cloudy
Beijing	-1	10	Fine
Berlin	7	11	Showers
Buenos Aires	17	29	Fine
Chicago	-3	1	Snow
Copenhagen	7	8	Showers
Dubai	19	30	Clear
Dublin	8	12	Rain
Geneva	4	8	Cloudy
Helsinki	-3	-1	Possible snow
Ho Chi Minh	23	33	Thunderstorms
Hong Kong	18	24	Scattered Clouds
Islamabad	7	22	Clear
Jakarta	24	33	Rain
Jerusalem	12	18	Rain
Johannesburg	13	24	Thunderstorms
Kuala Lumpur	24	32	Thunderstorms
London	7	12	Cloudy
Madrid	5	12	Fine
Manila	25	31	Cloudy
Mexico City	3	22	Fine
Moscow	0	2	Snow
New Delhi	14	25	Thunderstorms
New York	-3	6	Snow
Oslo	-6	-2	Overcast
Paris	8	12	Rain
Perth	13	25	Scattered Clouds
Phnom-Penh	23	30	Partly Cloudy
Rio De Janeiro	18	28	Showers
Riyadh	14	25	Clear
Rome	6	18	Rain
San Francisco	11	17	Fog
Singapore	24	29	Thunderstorms
Stockholm	-2	0	Partly Cloudy
Sydney	20	24	Cloudy
Tokyo	6	11	Fine
Vientiane	21	30	Scattered Clouds
Yangon	21	33	Scattered Clouds
Zurich	2	8	Rain

Currency Exchange Rates

At 20th November 2008 (mid-market rates)

Code	Currency	Value (Baht)
USD	United States Dollar	35.0165
GBP	Pound Sterling	52.7677
EUR	Euro	44.24
JPY	Japanese Yen	0.362871
MYR	Malaysian Ringgit	9.70139
SGD	Singapore Dollar	22.9121
BND	Brunei Dollar	22.9121
CNY	Chinese Yuan	5.12744
IDR	Indonesian Rupiah	0.00292858
INR	Indian Rupee	0.704
KRW	Korean Won	0.0271263
AUD	Australian Dollar	22.5545
NZD	New Zealand Dollar	19.3222
CHF	Swiss Franc	29.0065
DKK	Danish Krone	5.93842
NOK	Norwegian Krone	4.98771
SEK	Swedish Krona	4.36758
CAD	Canadian Dollar	28.3078
AED	UAE Dirham	9.53489
BHD	Bahrain Dinar	93.1272
KWD	Kuwaiti Dinar	128.932
OMR	Omani Rial	91.0747
QAR	Qatar Riyal	9.62001

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Emergency & Useful Numbers

Emergency Calls

Police 191
Crime 195
Fire 199
Traffic Control Centre 197
Highway Police 1193
Tourist Police 1699
Tourist Service Centre 1155
Missing Persons Bureau 02 282 1815
Police Station at Hua Hin District 032 511 027
Cha-Am Police Station 032 471 321
Hua Hin Hospital 032 511 743
San Paulo Hospital 032 532 576 to 585
Hua Hin Red Cross 032 512 567

Useful numbers

Hua Hin Tessabahn : 032 511 047
Hua Hin Immigration Office 032 513 574
Hua Hin Bus Terminal (non air-con) 032 511 230
(air-con) 032 511 651, 512 543
Hua Hin Railway Station 032 511 073
Tourist Information Centre 032 512 120
Hua Hin Electricity 032 512 215
Hua Hin Water 032 511 677
TOT 032 519 000/001
TT&T 032 532 018

Porn Makes Men More Body Conscious

■ Looking at pictures of sexy women in lad's mags has a negative effect on men, scientists have found.
Researchers have known for some time that women get all self-conscious and worried about their body if they see too many images of attractive female models. But now they say looking at scantily clad women like Jessica Biel and Megan Fox has the same impact on men, a risk many will be willing to take.
They asked a group of men to spend time looking at images of women in magazines such as FHM and Maxim ... oddly they didn't have much trouble rounding up a sample of testosterone-filled volunteers.
They then monitored how "reading" the magazines altered the way they viewed their own body, and how self-conscious they were about their looks.
"We found that reading lad magazines was related to having body self-consciousness a year later," said Jennifer Aubrey, from the University of Missouri.
"Men who viewed the layouts of objectified females reported more body self-consciousness.
"We wondered why magazines that were dominated by sexual images of women were having an effect on men's feelings about their own bodies."
Aubrey speculates that the exposure to objectified females increased self-consciousness because men are reminded that in order to be sexually or romantically involved with a woman of similar attractiveness, they need to conform to strict appearance standards.

**AWOL is not liable for any psychological damage caused by looking at this Megan Fox photo.*

Disclaimer
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English corner

Have you ever wondered where a certain phrase comes from, or what it really means? Every week we will expand your knowledge of English and its etymology with a different word or saying. This week it is...

Come a cropper

The word crop derives from the Old Norse word kropp, which was the name of a hump or swelling on the body. The OED graphically describes a crop as a 'swollen protuberance or excrescence'. This later modified into meaning any swollen or rounded item, for example, a bird's gullet, the seed head of a ripe plant (the source of the word crop as applied to cereals etc.) or, spelled as croup, the rear end of a horse - also called the crupper.

'Come a cropper' is one from the list of British phrases that is associated in the popular imagination with Victorian inventors. These include the various phrases based on the name of Thomas Crapper, the sanitary engineer and 'bats in the belfry', reportedly coined after George Bateson. Henry Smith Cropper is the man supposedly the source of 'come a cropper'. Unlike Bateson, who turns out to be an invented inventor, Cropper, like Crapper, did actually exist. Indeed he was a prominent enough citizen to become Sheriff of Nottingham. He didn't occupy his time in chasing outlaws around the local forests though. H. S. Cropper and Co. began selling the Minerva platen printing press in 1866. It was a successful design and before long all platen presses were known as croppers. It is suggested that 'come a cropper' derives from the accidents that print workers had when catching their fingers between the plates of the presses.

Like the Bateson story, this is an appealing tale. There's no truth to it though - it's just another invention.

For the actual derivation we need to consider the nether quarters of a horse - the croup or crupper. In the 18th century, anyone who took a headlong fall from a horse was said to have fallen 'neck and crop'. 'Neck and crop' and 'head over heels' probably both derive from the 16th century term 'neck and heels', which had the same meaning. 'Come a cropper' is just a colloquial way of describing a 'neck and crop' fall. The phrase is first cited in Robert S. Surtees' Ask Mamma, 1858: [He] "rode at an impracticable fence, and got a cropper for his pains."

By the time John C. Hotten published his A Dictionary of Modern Slang, Cant, and Vulgar Words in 1859, the phrase has come to refer to any failure rather than just the specific failure to stay on a horse: "Cropper, 'to go a cropper', or 'to come a cropper', i.e., to fail badly."

Area 555

TEXAS COWBOY

A Texas cowboy walked into a drug store and asked to talk to a male pharmacist. The elderly woman he was talking to said that she was the pharmacist and as she and her also widowed elderly sister owned the store, there were no males employed there.
She then asked if she could help the gentleman.
The cowpoke said that it was something that he would be much more comfortable discussing with a male pharmacist.
The female pharmacist assured him that she was completely professional and whatever it was that he needed to discuss, he could be confident that she would treat him with the highest level of professionalism.
The old bronco-buster agreed and began by saying, 'This is tough for me to discuss, but I have a permanent erection. It causes me a lot of problems and severe embarrassment, and I was wondering what you could give me for it. 'The pharmacist said, 'Just a minute, I'll go talk to my sister.'
When she returned, she said, 'We discussed it at length and the absolute best we can do is, 1/3 ownership in the store, a company car, and $3,000 a month, plus living expenses.'

HARD WORKING BOB

Bob works hard at the plant and spends two nights each week bowling and plays golf every Saturday. His wife thinks he's pushing himself too hard, so for his birthday she takes him to a local strip club.
The doorman at the club greets them and says, 'Hey, Bob! How ya doin?'
His wife is puzzled and asks if he's been to this club before. 'Oh no,' says Bob. 'He's in my bowling league'.
When they are seated, a waitress asks Bob if he'd like his usual and brings over a Budweiser. His wife is becoming increasingly uncomfortable and says, 'How did she know that you drink Budweiser?'
'I recognize her; she's the waitress from the golf club. I always have a Bud at the end of the 1st nine, honey.'
A stripper then comes over to their table, throws her arms around Bob, starts to rub herself all over him and says, 'Hi Bobby. Want your usual table dance, big boy?'
Bob's wife, now furious, grabs her purse and storms out of the club. Bob follows and spots her getting into a cab. Before she can slam the door, he jumps in beside her. Bob tries desperately to explain how the stripper must have mistaken him for someone else, but his wife is having none of it. She is screaming at him at the top of her lungs, calling him every swear word in the book.
The cabby turns around and says, 'Geez Bob, you picked up a real bitch this time.'
Bob's funeral is on Friday.

WEDDING DRESSES

Son asked his mother the following question:
'Mom, why are wedding dresses white?' The mother looks at her son and replies,
'Son, this shows your friends and relatives that your bride is pure.'
The son thanks his Mom and goes off to double-check this with his father.
'Dad why are wedding dresses white?'
The father looks at his son in surprise and says,
'Son, all household appliances come in white.'

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Scientists: Perfect Yorkshire pud formula

■ LONDON, ENGLAND

Scientists around the world are tirelessly striving to find a cure for cancer or an answer to the problem of Aids ... others are trying to improve Sunday lunch.

Experts from the Royal Society of Chemistry have used their collective brainpower to create a formula that can produce the perfect Yorkshire pud.

They say 'carbohydrate + H2O + protein + NaCl + lipids' can consistently guarantee culinary success that granny would be proud of.

Dr John Emsley (a Yorkshireman) says he began work on the vital research when a man living in Colorado contacted the RSC to find out if the high-altitudes could explain why his puddings refused to rise.

Now he has the formula sorted Dr Emsley will try to answer the all important altitude question.

"The perfect Yorkshire pudding which stands at just over four inches, with a light, fluffy texture and crisp exterior." said the Yorkshire born boffin.

The Royal Society of Chemistry Yorkshire Pudding
Ingredients
85 g polysaccharide powder, kitchen grade (flour)
1 g sodium chloride, NaCl, table grade (salt)
1 egg
Solution of 230 cm3 reduced-lipid bovine lactate (milk), 20 cm3 H2O (water)
Method
Put flour in a bowl, make a well in the middle, add the egg, stir until the two are combined then start gradually adding the milk and water combining as you go.
Add the liquid until the batter is a smooth and thin consistency.
Stir in half teaspoon of salt and leave to stand for 10 minutes
Put beef dripping into Yorkshire pudding tins or into one large tin but don't use too much fat.
Put into hot oven until the fat starts to smoke.
Give the batter a final stir and pour into the tin or tins.
Place in hot oven until well risen - should take 10 to 15 minutes.
Serve
Always serve as a separate course before the main meal and use the best gravy made from the juices of the roast joint. Yorkshire housewives served Yorkshire pudding before the meal so that they would eat less of the more expensive main course.
NB: When the batter is made it must not be placed in the fridge but be kept at room temperature.

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ON ON

Hua Hin Hash House Harriers

The H2H3 is a group of international fools who get a lot of enjoyment out of running or walking around in jungles, mountains, beaches and sometimes highways in search of the end of the run and some cold beer and camaraderie. Boys and girls, eight to eighty are welcome to join in on the fun.

To learn more about the Hash House Harriers go to **www.gthhh.com** or **www.huahin-hhh.com**. For information about the next run, e-mail Slackbladder (**partt@hotmail.com, 087-852 2565**) or Ballbanger, **donaltetley@yahoo.com or 085-088 7181**. In Cha Am, get the scoop at the Chicken Coop from Noi. Get a cold beer and the hot hash gossip from Dave at the California Mining Cantina near the Sofitel.

If you have half a mind the join the hash, that's all you need.

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Your STARS with Destiny Dan

Capricorn Dec 22 - Jan 19
Congratulations! This week you are set to win a course of 20 'How to line dance' lessons.
Bad Luck! It is essential you prepare 20 excuses for not turning up to any of these lessons as you risk an 80% chance of losing your hard won street credibility with your ill-fitting cowboy outfit and boots...
Your local newspaper will run a competition on 27th which you will also win. Your luck really is in this week, make the most of it, 2009 will not be so kind...

Aquarius Jan 20 - Feb 17
On taking a bath around the 24th a spider will land on your midriff and make its way, toyingly, to your neck using the styling of a James Bond movie.
Time Magazine will phone you on the 25th asking for your permission to be put into their draw for reader of the year. Accept this offer and then cancel your subscription.
A dwarf-like-human wearing a Star Wars Storm Trooper uniform will break two windows in your house on the 26th - Your misguided threats of Jar Jar Binks will bring mirth to a young child's eyes.

Pisces Feb 18 - Mar 19
In a freakish superheroes-in-animals type incident on the 24th, your yappy type dog will start jumping from the ground to bite your Thanksgiving decoration balloons. To avoid this, either place weights on his little feet to prevent him from getting to the required height, or fix a large hat to his head so he can't look up.
Avoid berry fruits for the first half of the week.
A trusted electronic calculator will start giving you the wrong answers from the 27th, however by the time comes to check your math after the 28th it will have corrected itself again.

Aries Mar 20 - Apr 19
You will attempt to serenade a loved one in the style of Frank Sinatra in his rat pack years this week. Ensure you learn all the words to either I get a kick out of you, The lady is a Tramp or The pig goes oink, the cow goes moo and the bell goes ding-a-ling.
Nothing can prepare you for a nasty conjunction between Pluto and Neptune this week; avoid levitation on the 24th.
An old acquaintance will mistakenly imply you are a trollop on 21st. Punch them squarely on the nose with your right fist without warning.

Taurus Apr 20 - May 19
You once saw an afternoon TV movie in which a well known actor was suddenly forgotten by everyone, including his dog.
This is basically the blue print for your coming week, although on the positive side there is little risk of international espionage.
Jupiter favours juggling in all of its forms, including small pets.
The interior decorator who cold calls your front door on the 25th is not qualified for the job: do not hire him even though his plans for marble initially impresses you.

Gemini May 20 - Jun 20
Your creative juices have never been more flowing. After last week's dabble in song writing, this week you will invent a Christmas decoration using egg cartons and hair from your pet bunny rabbit. This will, over the next twenty years, become a standard part of Christmas celebrations in the Southern United States, and particularly in homes where bunny rabbits are openly worshipped.
Whilst inflating a balloon this week you will suddenly remember something important and run from the room, forgetting that the balloon is still in your mouth. It's such a shame that car crash bags have already been invented or you could have made a fortune from your forthcoming discovery.

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Cancer Jun 21 - Jul 21
On hearing an Elton John song on the radio you will decide to buy one of his albums, but you will buy the wrong one - Saturn is fond of his early work on the Yellow Brick Road album, however Mercury and it's moons favour his Greatest Hits. Their indecision confuses you in a record store and an assistant will not be able to help, other than by offering you a seat.
Whilst attending your aerobics session on the 25th a small bird will fly into the building and decide to pick on you for no apparent reason. Even though you are a devout animal lover the only way to get this sucker to stop dive bombing you is to beat it up. You will undoubtedly pay a high price for this in the karmic scale of things at a later date, but the immediate benefits, of being able to finish your workout with all your hair on you head, well outweigh this.

Leo Jul 22 - Aug 22
You have finally decided that you are going to read a book. Whilst we would advise that you try to delay this until January, nobody can tell you anything when Jupiter conjuncts with Neptune like this... Find a book with no more than 200 pages to start with (don't even think about Dostoyevsky yet - you will only get to page 17 anyway.) If you choose to get a book from the library, ensure there is no chewing gum between pages 115-116 as this section will be crucial to the plot.
A small furry mammal will have babies in your cellar this week. Supply them with milk in saucers but refrain from giving them with cute names as you will regret this around the Easter culling season.

Virgo Aug 23 - Sept 21
You enjoy wearing boxer shorts or, even, nothing at all under your suit, for that almost 1960's level of freedom-feeling downunder. It is important to double, triple, even quadruple check your zipper throughout the week.
Avoid old dark suits as zippers are to come under the direct influence of Mercury and could explode open on the 27th all-of-a-sudden, leaving you exposed to the dreaded consequences. Take an umbrella with you at all times to cover your embarrassment.

Libra Sept 22 - Oct 22
Your general disability with electrical equipment is set to continue. Avoid using the microwave after the 26th and until further notice; we are unable to see in the charts why as we spilt coffee over the important ziggy-lined bit.
A box of chocolates you give to an elderly Italian aunt will have a nut in which will cause her to choke expressively, with a red face, for over three hours. This will be the best workout the woman has had for years, and you will be highly regarded afterwards by other sinister looking family members.

Scorpio Oct 23 - Nov 21
As a typical Scorpio you like nothing better than long periods of exhibitionism and this week will present ample opportunity.
Whilst playing Trivial Pursuit for money there will be untoward consequences after 26th as, due to a fluke conjunction, your luck at this game will turn full circle. Members of your family will accuse you of hustling as your performance will be nothing short of miraculous, especially on culture questions. Steadfastly refuse to reimburse them any money unless they are under 10 years of age, or you have an Italian family with a liking for guns.
Your grandmother will reveal she has a highly profitable marijuana supply business and she has just taken delivery of some 'premium stuff just in from Afghanistan which you really must try'. Do not pass up this offer.

Sagittarius Nov 22 - Dec 21
The weeks of training for your boy band performance at the company party will pay off handsomely this week. Whilst a talent scout will (accidentally) see your performance, he will not deem it sufficient for any recording deals, although the office assistant who videoed it will make a fortune from TV blooper shows when your boss dances like Travolta.
In an evening stroll to 'get a breath of fresh air' you will notice what you believe to be a brand new constellation - do not phone your local newspaper to tell them about it when drunk.

Top tips

PORNOGRAPHERS. When positioning your centrefolds, try to avoid putting the staples directly over the models' genitals. Not only are they what we've paid to see, it also looks somewhat uncomfortable for the young ladies concerned.

CONVINCE your nan that she's going senile by moving the bookmark in her Barbara Cartland novel 10 pages forward while she's not looking.

BANANA LOVERS. Buy your bananas in bunches of 5 on Sunday. Then arrange them in order of ripeness and write a day of the week on each banana in felt pen, Monday on the ripest, Friday on the greenest, to save time making those decisions on a hectic weekday morning.

SUBMARINE DESIGNERS. Why not put any water pipes on the outside of the sub? That way, if they burst, there is no harm done.

SLOVENLY HOUSEHOLDERS. Always keep a few 'Get Well Soon' cards on the mantlepiece. When unexpected visitors arrive you can tell them that you have not been well and that's why the house is untidy.

HUSBANDS. Tired of sleeping with the same wife? Simply lie on top of her until she goes numb, and Hey Presto! She'll feel like someone else's wife.

SAVE electricity by shortening the cables to all your household electric appliances.

RE-USABLE canvas shopping bags make an excellent receptacle to store all the bags you are left with after trips to the supermarket.

BIKERS! Remember to give two or three blips of your throttle, when stopping at the pub. This will remind patrons on the patio that you master a beast, likely to burst into life at any moment, of its own volition.

MONKS. Conduct a life of celibacy and emotional solitude without joining a monastery by simply living with my wife. It's more comfortable and you'll be able to watch TV and use the internet.

DEVOUT CATHOLICS. If the Lord has not yet made Himself visible, perhaps you are looking in the wrong place. Try paying more attention to the flaking paint on your walls, the rust on your frying pan or the mouldy stains on your carpet as these are the sort of places where He usually turns up.

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AGENTS REQUIRED

THAI BOXING

Look out for details of the regular fight nights held at the Thai Boxing Garden. These are not exhibition matches, but the real thing. Anyone interested in the art of Muay Thai should call into the Boxing Garden and talk to Khun Chop, Hua Hin's own champion. Positioned in Poolsuk Road, behind the temple, turn left beside Willi's. Tel: 032 515 269

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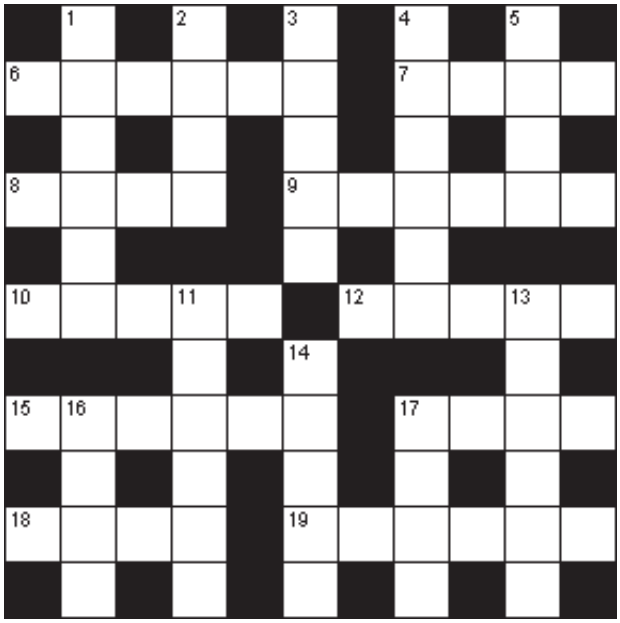
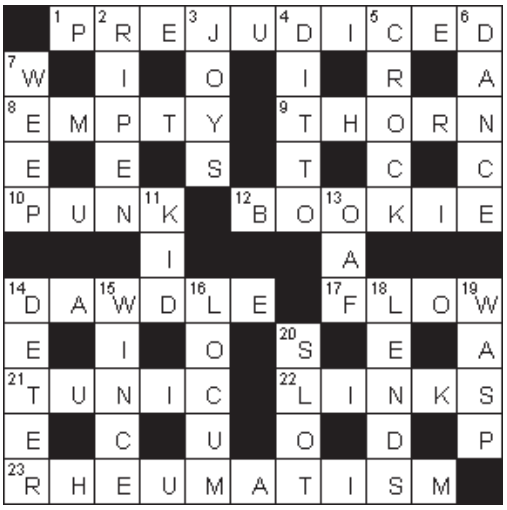
Quick XWord

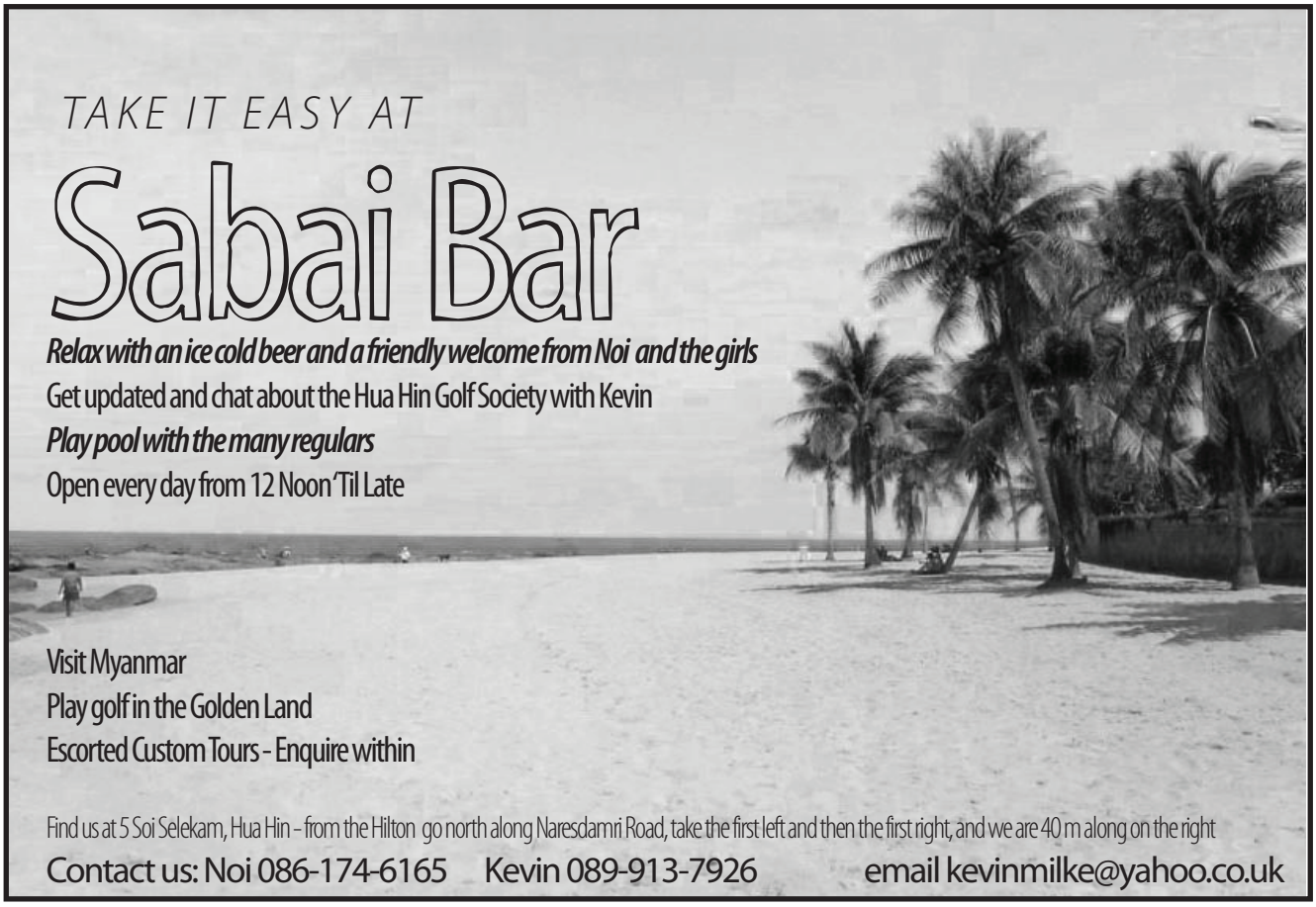
Across
6. Capable of being moved (6)
7. Sour (4)
8. Harbour (4)
9. Putrid (6)
10. Prolonged pain (5)
12. Brittle (5)
15. Elder (6)
17. Ridge over the eye (4)
18. Grape plant (4)
19. Package (6)



Down
1. Farewell (2,4)
2. Present (4)
3. Fatigued (5)
4. Priest (6)
5. Starchy food grain (4)
11. Sounds (6)
13. Person that smokes (6)
14. Snares (5)
16. Way out (4)
17. Cover with earth (4)

Solution in next week's issue.
Last week's solution below





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This restaurant is toilet!

■TAIWAN

Local entrepreneurs might want to take some inspiration from a theme restaurant in Taiwan that has been flushed with success. Marton Theme Restaurant, named after the Chinese word "Ma-tong" for toilet, has become a hit in Taiwan's second largest city since it's opening in May 2004. Though bathroom decor seems a bizarre way to whet the appetites of diners, the idea has been so successful owner Eric Wang opened a second and bigger branch just seven months later. "We not only sell food but also laughter. The food is just as good as any restaurant but we offer additional fun," says 26-year-old Wang, who gave up a career in banking to launch the business. "Most customers think the more disgusting and exaggerated, the funnier the dining experience is," he says.

The top orders are curry hot pot, curry chicken rice and chocolate ice cream because, well, "they look most like the real thing", Wang says. The price ranges from 150 to 250 Taiwan dollars (220-400 baht) for a meal set including soup and ice cream. Customers, however, flock to Marton Restaurant mainly for its quirky dining wares and interior decor. "This is such a funny and strange restaurant," says patron Chen Bi-fang, while sitting atop a colourful toilet seat - the standard chair at the restaurant. She sits by a table converted from a bathtub with a glass cover while looking at a wall decorated with neon-lit faucets and urinals turned into lamps. Chen first came to the restaurant after seeing it featured on television and has brought nine co-workers along for lunch on her second visit. "I think this is the most special restaurant I've ever been to. The menu also looks good and I'd like to try more next time," says newcomer Cheng Hung-chi, who found out the restaurant over the Internet and took her mother and brother with her.

They are exactly the kind of customers owner Wang is counting on - drawn by novelty and who return with friends in a city crowded by a wide variety of restaurants. "Our restaurant is the first and only of its kind in Kaohsiung and that gives us an advantage in the saturated market here. Our major challenge is to lure customers back after the initial fun," he says.

To make sure his investment wouldn't go down the pan, Wang first tested the water for the toilet food gimmick by peddling ice cream in toilet-shaped cones in street booths four months before opening his restaurant. It was an instant hit as he sold up to 1,000 ice-cream cones daily for $30 dollars each (40 baht) - 5 to 10 dollars higher than a regular one. His idea came from a popular Japanese comic featuring a robot doll fond of eating excrement in ice cream cones.

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PLEASE COMPLETE THE FORM IN BLOCK CAPITALS (continue on separate sheet if necessary)

NAME:		TEL. NO.		WEEKS	START DATE
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
7.	8.	9.	**10.**	11.	12.
13.	14.	15.	16.	17.	18.
19.	**20.**	21.	22.	23.	24.
25.	26.	27.	28.	29.	**30.**
31.	32.	33.	34.	35.	36.
37.	38.	39.	**40.**	AWOL code only:	

Your Problems SOLVED

Relationship hanging by a thread? Money troubles? Can't get on with your neighbours? Ask Mary Ann Cotton, AWOL's very own agony aunt.

■ DEAR MARY,
Is there anything I can do about the size of my penis? I'm 26 and my bum tickler is only six inches long when fully erect. I've tried pills in the past but they did not work. I've also tried hanging lead weights off it, but while this does provide me with an odd pleasurable sensation it has not done anything to increase the size of my beaver cleaver. I'm really embarrassed about this and it's stopped me having sex for years now, even with myself. Please help.

Long John,
Cha Am.

Mary says: Dear John,
A lot of guys these days worry about their the size of their penises at all times, and with good reason. In the old days women tended to keep pretty quiet about hugely disappointing sexual encounters with men with tiddlers, often telling only ten or 20 of their closest friends that last night's shag should be avoided as he was a premature ejaculating matchstick man. However, thanks to the internet such information can be spread much more rapidly among the sisterhood through the many love lance comparison websites that have recently sprung up, including my own favourite www.are-you-in-yet.com, which contains comprehensive size and performance listings for most men in the world. Checking your last entry, if you could call it that, it would appear your voluntary abstinence is no great loss to womankind. According to Tracey Onions back in 2001 it was closer to four-and-a-half and she had hardly unwrapped her chips before you were finished and off out the alleyway. Have you got one of those special men rulers, or do you think the penis starts just above the knee for measuring purposes, like most blokes?

DEAR MARY,
I am a 46 year-old man and have been happily married to my wife for 20 years. We have a lovely house, two beautiful kids, I have a good job, good prospects, and can expect to retire with a great pension in a few years time, at which point my wife and I will have all the time and money we need to enjoy the rest of our lives together. How do I throw it all away by having a brief fling with some stupid young girl at work?

Porsche Driver
Pranburi

Petula says: Dear Porsche Driver,
I really do not understand your question. It seems to me that an awful lot of men like you think that young impressionable girls in the office are interested in supposedly sophisticated and well-off older men like yourself and so sexually available. That's because they generally are, the little home-wrecking tarts. So what's the problem? I would have thought there were hundreds of the little floozies flouncing around your desk in their short skirts with their pert young breasts pointing up at the ceiling who were perfectly prepared to put out for you, if only once, and for a laugh, then ruin your life and that of your wife and your family – there certainly were in the last place my ex-husband worked. Slags.

The Hash Report

Cha Am Hash Saturday 15th November 2008

To say that the Hash foregathered on this hot and humid day is to place some semblance of respectable order upon what is the most statistically random phenomenon known to the planet, namely the start of a Cha Am Hash. We dribbled and dithered reluctantly into the pre-hash Circle, utterly underwhelmed by the sight before us, a heterogeneous gaggle of suffering humanity in many shapes and sizes and clad ingloriously, seeking the dubious weekly redemption of another hash. The scene was then embellished, but only a tad, by our Hares - Ballbanger and Space Cowboy (Mingster, the other hare, remaining anonymous), regaling us with the usual references to signs and checks, hazards and snares that awaited on the trail, which we took with that equanimity verging on foolhardiness, now synonymous with hashers who have nothing to lose and only amber nectar to gain at the last.

Off we trundled, walkers one way and runners the other, a beginning which showed startling originality most unusual in hares. The terrain had the look of a would-be golf course going rapidly back to its natural state and this was confirmed by those knowledgeable about these parts – the course had gone into bankruptcy, only partially built. So on we went with never a swing nor a divot, nonetheless already dreaming of the 19th hole as we came upon the gloomy shell of the half-completed clubhouse, which we stumbled through to reach open bush country on the other side. The wide open terrain made the trail a paradise for the hardened SCB's and lured more honest hashers into that most perverse of activities, the short cut. The trail became untraceable briefly and hashers wandered hither and thither, some in ever increasing, others in ever decreasing circles and then there was a curious symbiotic coming together of lost souls and we marched in more or less together in a most unsaint-like manner towards the ever receding ON IN where amber nectar flowed but not in its usual profusion.

The GM's unmistakable tones called the circle which he graced with imperious aplomb and a wild snake, the dreaded dropping variety, which caught out the unwary with its antics as it slithered down vicious and untamed from its perch on his shoulders. The hares were honourably downed, returners welcomed back and Butt Out with his lady, given the hashers send off by Cathusalem – they return to Oz for 2 years and will be much missed. Cannonballs and Cathusalem led off on 'Swing Low Sweet Chariot' and, after night fell, all piled into a fulsome repast provided as the ON ON by Noi and the Chicken Coop with further quaffing.

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AWOL

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27/3 Poolsuk Road, Hua Hin

Hua Hin Pool Leagues

Hua Hin Pool Billiard League
Results Matchday 9 14th November 2008

Home	Racks	Pts	Away	Racks	Pts
QUE	18	6	LSA	11	2
JWR	7	2	EAG	15	6
CAP	8	1	JWB	19	7
TW	11	3	SIL	14	5
SUG	20	8	DIA	6	0
DA	8	2	OCT	16	6
LSB	15	5	DB	8	3
LSS	14	4	LSL	13	4

Next Weeks Fixtures
Matchday 10 21/11/2008
Eagle v LSA
JW Black v Queens Flower
Silverrock v JW Red
Diamond v Captain's Inn
Octopussy v Thaiwaii
Dick's Office B v Sugar Cane
LSL v Dick's Office A
LSB v LSS

League Table

Team	P	W	D	L	Diff	Racks	Pts
Lucky Shot B	10	7	3	0	26	39	17
Johnie Walker Black	10	8	1	1	22	57	17
Lucky Shot Student's	10	7	2	1	24	39	16
Eagle Bar	10	6	3	1	30	46	15
Queens Flower Bar	10	6	2	2	24	52	14
Octopussy Bar	10	6	1	3	10	17	13
Silverrock Bar	10	5	3	2	4	1	13
Lucky Shot A	10	4	3	3	6	20	11
Sugar Cane Bar	10	5	0	5	8	22	10
Lucky Shot Ladies	10	3	3	4	-2	-5	9
Dick's Office B	10	2	2	6	-22	-40	6
Diamond Bar	10	1	3	6	-20	-43	5
Johnie Walker Red	10	1	2	7	-20	-38	4
Thaiwaii	10	1	2	7	-22	-40	4
Dick's Office A	10	1	2	7	-30	-55	4
Captain's Inn	10	0	2	8	-38	-72	2

Hua Hin 8-Ball League
League Table

Team	P	W	D	L	Diff	Pts
SilverRock	14	11	1	2	52	23
Harley	13	9	2	2	30	20
MrDanA	13	8	2	3	24	18
BenTho	13	8	1	4	32	17
Komhom	14	7	2	5	24	16
SportCtre	14	6	4	4	18	16
Dolphin	14	5	3	6	-8	13
B'fly Rock	11	6	0	5	12	12
DicksA	13	4	4	5	2	12
Phoenix	13	5	2	6	-8	12
MrDanB	14	3	3	8	-36	9
DicksB	12	2	2	8	-32	6
BambooGr	10	1	2	7	-38	4
LilleMan	14	1	2	11	-72	4

Results Week 14
12th November 2008
LilleMan 3 - 9 Harley
MrDanB 3 - 9 Komhom
Phoenix 10 - 2 SportCentre
SilverRock 10 - 2 Dolphin
3 matches not played

Week 15 results will be in next week's AWOL

Next Weeks Fixtures
Week 16 26th November 2008
BenTho v Harley
DicksB v Butterfly Rock
Komhom v DicksA
LilleMan v MrDanA
MrDanB v SportCentre
Phoenix v Dolphin
SilverRock v BambooGrove

Hua Hin 9-Ball League
League Table

Team	P	W	D	L	Diff	Pts
MrDanA	6	4	0	2	11	8
PlasPlace	6	4	0	2	9	8
LilleMan	6	4	0	2	-7	8
ButterflyR	5	3	1	1	7	7
Dolphin	6	3	0	3	14	6
RedBar	5	3	0	2	8	6
DicksB	6	3	0	3	3	6
MrDanB	6	2	1	3	-5	5
DicksA	6	1	0	5	-9	2
BenTho	6	1	0	5	-31	2

Results Week 6
17th November 2008
Butterfly Rock 9 - 15 LilleMan
Dicks A 11 - 15 Mr Dan B
Mr Dan A 8 - 16 Dicks B
Plas Place 13 - 12 BenTho
Dolphin 13 - 14 Red Bar

Next Weeks Fixtures
Week 7 24th November 2008
Butterfly Rock v Dolphin
Dicks B v Plas Place
LilleMan v BenTho
Mr Dan A v Dicks A
Red Bar v Mr Dan B

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Hua Hin Pool Leagues

Hua Hin and Khao Takiab Pool League

League Table

Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	+-	PTS
Free Time Bar	1	1	0	0	13	5	8	2
Bob and Noks	1	1	0	0	12	6	6	2
Deja Vu	1	1	0	0	11	7	4	2
Oasis Bar	1	1	0	0	11	7	4	2
Sunset Boulevard	1	1	0	0	11	7	4	2
Eagle Bar	1	1	0	0	10	8	2	2
Harleys Bar	1	0	0	1	8	10	-2	0
Dara Bar	1	0	0	1	7	11	-4	0
Dizzy Dolphin	1	0	0	1	7	11	-4	0
Railway Tavern	1	0	0	1	7	11	-4	0
Bobbys Good Friends	1	0	0	1	6	12	-6	0
Thaiwaii	1	0	0	1	5	13	-8	0

Results Wed 19th November 2008

Bobbys Good Friends 6 - 12 Bob and Noks
Dara Bar 7 - 11 Sunset Boulevard
Deja Vu 11 - 7 Railway Tavern
Dizzy Dolphin 7 - 11 Oasis Bar
Eagle Bar 10 - 8 Harleys Bar
Free Time Bar 13 - 5 Thaiwaii

Next Week's Fixtures
Wed 26th November 2008

Bob and Noks v Dara Bar
Harleys Bar v Free Time Bar
Oasis Bar v Eagle Bar
Railway Tavern v Dizzy Dolphin
Sunset Boulevard v Deja Vu
Thaiwaii v Bobbys Good Friends

Hua Hin Social Pool league Results
Week 13 – 19th November 2008

Sabai v Butterfly Rock – n/a
JW Red v Red Bar 6-13
Billys Babes v PP 9-10
Jungle Juice B v Lazy Daze – n/a
U Turn v Jungle Juice A – n/a
Limelight v Billys 9-10
Headrock v JW Black 8-11

Next Weeks Fixtures:
Week 14 – 26th November 2008

Butterfly Rock v JW Black
Headrock v Billys
Limelight v Jungle Juice A
U Turn v Lazy Daze
Jungle Juice B v PP
Billys Babes v Red Bar
JW Red v Sabai

League Table

Team	P	W	L	F-A	Pts
PP	12	11	1	132-96	22
Bs Babes	12	9	3	129-99	18
J J A	11	9	2	113-96	18
JW Blk	13	8	5	133-114	16
J J B	12	8	4	131-95	16
Lazy D	11	7	4	117-90	14
Sabai	10	6	4	95-95	12
Red Bar	10	5	5	99-86	10
Billys	12	5	7	108-122	10
H'drock	12	3	9	95-133	6
U Turn	10	3	7	88-101	6
L'light	12	2	10	89-120	4
B'fly Rk	9	1	8	72-100	2
JW Red	10	1	9	67-110	2

Hua Hin Darts Leagues

Next Weeks Fixtures:
Week 14 - 25/11/2008
Division 1

No Game v Pink Flamingo
J.W. Black v CAT
Scandic Bar v Lazy Daze
Paradise Bar v Oasis
Dicks Office B v J.W. Red

Division 2

CAT B v Dicks Office A
Good Friends v Butterfly Rock
No Game v Bamboo Grove
Lucky Shot v Love Bar
Jaew v Mojo

Top 16 standings:

Top 10 -Div 1

Name	Bar	Pts
Stuart	P	148
Tao	JWB	111
Mark	O	106
Golf	SB	98
Peter	JWB	97
Noi	CAT	92
Rune	SB	89
Bon	DOB	89
Martin	LD	86
Martin	CAT	85

Top 6 - Div 2

Name	Bar	Pts
Eero	BR	124
Don	CAT	120
Muay	JB	108
Mojo	M	94
Howard	M	78
Mojo	M	50

Results Week 13
Division 1

J.W. Red v No Game
Oasis v Dicks Office B 10-0
Lazy Daze v Paradise – n/a
CAT v Scandic Bar 5-5
Pink Flamingo v J.W. Black 2-8

Division 2

Mojo v CAT B 2-8
Love Bar v Jaew 2-8
Bamboo Grove v Lucky Shot 2-8
Butterfly Rock v No Game
Dicks Office A v Good Friends 6-4

Division 1

Team	P	W	D	L	PF-PA	Pts
JW Blk	9	7	1	1	62-28	15
CAT	10	6	3	1	61-39	15
P'dise	9	7	0	2	57-33	14
Scandic	9	4	2	3	54-36	10
Dicks B	10	2	3	5	40-60	7
Lazy D	9	2	3	4	38-52	7
Oasis	8	3	0	5	35-45	6
JW Red	8	1	2	5	30-50	4
Pink Fl	8	0	2	6	23-57	2

Division 2

Team	P	W	D	L	PF-PA	Pts
CAT B	10	10	0	0	87-13	20
Jaew	10	7	0	3	58-42	14
Ly Shot	10	6	0	4	52-48	12
Mojo	9	5	1	3	53-37	11
B'fly Rk	8	5	1	2	48-42	11
Dicks A	9	4	1	4	44-46	9
BGrove	10	2	1	7	35-65	5
Good F	10	2	0	8	32-68	4
Love	10	0	0	10	21-79	0

Balloon Chasers Guide

Welcome to the most vital guide around! All the parties, celebrations and balloons you could want (along with some booze and food of course!) Tell AWOL about your event by the Thursday before and we will include it here...send us some photos afterwards and we will do our utmost to publish them; email anything to awol@observergroup.net or contact our representative Noi at Sabai Bar (Tel: 086-174+6165).

Thursday 27th November - Thanksgiving Day Dinner at California Steak House and Cantina (opposite Sofitel) - only 315 baht Book Now 032-533599 (for details see ad on page 19)

Regular Events

Tuesdays - Darts League (various venues, free food for players)

Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays - Pool Leagues (various venues, see previous page, free food for players)

Fridays - Bar-B-Q party every week at Le Velo Rouge, Khao Takiab - Green Lotus Bar & Restaurant, Soi 88 (Bonkai) 169 baht BBQ every fortnight from 24th October

Saturdays - Bobby's Good Friends Restaurant and Bar Khao Takiab 7.30.pm till late. Live Filipino Band, come and dance the night away and also enjoy free Bobby shots on the hour

Hua Hin Golf Society

This week's results:

18th November - Banyan Golf Club 68 entrants - 2 Groups

Group 'A' - 0-15 hcp - Stableford - 34 Entrants

1st Mike Humphrey 36 pts 13 hcp, 2nd Usko 33 pts 6 hcp, 3rd Callum McDonald 32 pts 11 hcp, 4th Pailin Humphrey 32 pts 14 hcp, 5th Fiona Zimmerman 31 pts 5 hcp, 6th Kari Matti 31 pts 6 hcp.

Group 'B' - 16-36 hcp - Stableford - 34 Entrants

1st Barbara Anstee 35 pts 26 hcp, 2nd Michael Sherlock (g) 34 pts 16 hcp, 3rd MartnokThongmee 33 pts 24 hcp, 4th Eric Taylor 31 pts 17 hcp, 5th Steve Aristodemou 31 pts 16 hcp. 6th Riika (g) 30 pts 29 hcp.

Nearest the Pin No. 2 Jaap Lockhoist - HOLE IN ONE, No. 4 Kiki, No. 15 Marjorie Sherlock (g), No. 17 Riika (g)

14th November- Kaeng Krachan Stableford 24 Entrants

1st Usko 37 pts 7 hcp, 2nd Hans Roupe 32 pts 28 hcp, 3rd Jan Skogstrom (g) 31 pts 15 hcp, 4th Chris (g) 31 pts 12 hcp, 5th Alan Rawson 31 pts 16 hcp, 6th Fred Kroll 28 pts 19 hcp.

Nearest the Pin No. 25 Jan Skogstrom (g) (Mountain), No. 12 Simon Rouse (Valley)

Next week's fixtures:

Tuesday 25th Royal Ratchaburi Transport 7.45 at the Bazaar

Friday 28th Black Mountain - 1st Rd Strokeplay Annual Competition

Butterfly Rock Golf

This week's results:

Nov 14th - Palm Hills Stableford - 19 players

Front 9 - 20 pts, Barbara Anstee. Back 9 - 18 pts, Alan Mercer, Deborah Rawlings. Overall - 33 pts, Deborah Rawlings.

Nov 17th - Lakeview AB Stableford - 21 players

1st - Mike Ford - 38pts, 2nd - David Rawlings - 35pts, 3rd - Paul Williams - 35pts, 4th - Brent O'Bell - 34pts

Nov 19th - Majestic Creek Stableford 15 players

1st - Muhammed Ali (Shadju) - 37, 2nd - Doug East - 36, 3rd - Paul Williams - 34, 4th - Geoff Yarrow - 33.

Forthcoming Fixtures

Monday 24th Lakeview

Wednesday 26th information not available

Friday 28th Palm Hills

Scoreboard

(EPL unless stated)

Saturday, 15 November 2008

Arsenal 0-2 Aston Villa
Blackburn 1-2 Sunderland
Bolton 0-2 Liverpool
Fulham 2-1 Tottenham
Man Utd 5-0 Stoke
Newcastle 2-2 Wigan
West Brom 0-3 Chelsea
West Ham 0-0 Portsmouth

Sunday, 16 November 2008

Everton 1-1 Middlesbrough
Hull 2-2 Man City

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Ask Billy and his staff for more details at BILLY'S BAR in the Night Bazaar.

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

EPL Fixtures Preview

(All times Thailand)

Saturday, 22 November 2008

Chelsea v Newcastle, 22:00

The form book says Chelsea will win, but this season has been so unpredictable that we are not sure; Newcastle have become much tougher to beat so we are plumping for the draw.

Liverpool v Fulham, 22:00

Fulham have been fantastic at home, and awful away. No prizes then for the prediction - home win.

Man City v Arsenal, 22:00

Arsenal were once again stunned at home and are fast losing their way. On their day City can beat anyone but are struggling a bit. A draw is on the cards.

Middlesbrough v Bolton, 22:00

Bolton will be hoping to get something from this game, but 'Boro have had a good season so far. We doubt there will be many goals in this one - so few we predict 0-0.

Portsmouth v Hull, 22:00

Draws for both of these last week that could have been more, and this will be interesting;can hull cope with the physical size of the home side? We think not and a narrow win for Pompey.

Stoke v West Brom, 22:00

Both teams were unsurprisingly hammered last week by title contenders and it will be interesting to see how they bounce back. We think Stoke will bounce higher and win.

Barclays Premier League Table

			Home					Away						
	Team	P	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	GD	PTS
1	Chelsea	13	3	2	1	13	3	7	0	0	19	1	28	32
2	Liverpool	13	5	1	0	11	4	5	1	1	10	4	13	32
3	Man Utd	12	5	1	0	18	4	2	2	2	7	6	15	24
4	Arsenal	13	4	1	2	14	10	3	1	2	11	5	10	23
5	Aston Villa	13	3	2	1	10	7	4	0	3	12	9	6	23
6	Hull	13	2	2	3	7	14	4	1	1	12	7	-2	21
7	Everton	13	1	3	3	7	12	4	1	1	12	9	-2	19
8	M'brough	13	3	1	2	7	9	2	2	3	7	9	-4	18
9	Portsmouth	13	3	1	2	8	6	2	2	3	5	12	-5	18
10	Fulham	12	5	1	1	10	5	0	1	4	2	6	1	17
11	Sunderland	13	2	1	3	6	8	2	2	3	6	11	-7	15
12	Man City	13	3	0	3	16	8	1	2	4	10	14	4	14
13	Bolton	13	2	2	3	6	7	2	0	4	5	8	-4	14
14	West Ham	13	3	1	3	11	11	1	1	4	5	11	-6	14
15	Stoke	13	4	0	2	10	9	0	2	5	3	15	-11	14
16	Wigan	13	1	2	3	3	8	2	2	3	12	10	-3	13
17	Newcastle	13	3	2	2	11	9	0	2	4	6	13	-5	13
18	Blackburn	13	1	2	4	4	12	2	2	2	10	12	-10	13
19	Tottenham	13	2	1	3	6	6	1	2	4	10	14	-4	12
20	West Brom	13	2	1	4	8	14	1	1	4	2	10	-14	11

Sunday, 23 November 2008

Aston Villa v Man Utd, 00:30

Villa would have been looking at last week and this as 2 points at best beforehand but will now feel they can get 6; United's away form has been patchy and we think O'Neill will display his credentials as a futiure Reds boss by grabbing a win.

Sunderland v West Ham, 23:00

West Ham have been poor on the road and goals are becoming hard to come by; however Sunderland have not exactly been prolific. This could go any way but we think the Hammers will sneak a win.

Tottenham v Blackburn, 20:30

Another tough one to call, with both sides losing last week. Its an early season relegation battle but really we can't see either team going down. Home win though.

Tuesday, 25 November 2008

Wigan v Everton, 03:00

Everton are relying on their away form at present but they have also been riding their luck. Wigan are finding it hard to score at home and we think this will be another draw.

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New US sport is 'pants'

Lingerie League enlivens American Football

■ USA

What began as a Super Bowl half-time stunt - scantily-clad women playing American football - has proved so popular (among men, at least) it is getting its very own national "Lingerie League".

Billed as "true fantasy football", league will feature teams of women across the US playing American football in co-ordinated underwear, including garters, along with helmets and some token protective padding.

Members of America's existing professional women's football leagues are unlikely to be either worried or impressed by the newcomers, however, as sporting ability appears far less of a concern than looks when it comes to recruiting players.

The new league is a spin-off from the annual Lingerie Bowl, which was started five years ago as a racier alternative to the official Super Bowl half-time show.

Lingerie Bowl organisers said after the controversial Super Bowl half-time show in which Janet Jackson bared a breast, the official programme became "extraordinarily conservative with ageing rockers such as Tom Petty, Paul McCartney and the Rolling Stones" that failed to wow fans or critics.

So an alternative "championship" was born, a 35-minute game featuring underwear-clad models and celebrities as well as current and former National Football League stars. Aired it on a pay-per-view television, it has become a Super Bowl staple attracting millions of viewers, organisers say.

People will apparently pay good money to watch girls running around in their underwear...

The Lingerie League will feature 10 teams with names that sound more like deodorant brands than sports clubs: Chicago Bliss, New England Euphoria, Tampa Breeze, Dallas Desire, Los Angeles Temptation, San Diego Seduction and Seattle Mist to name a few.

The league will be split into an eastern and western conference, or division, and its eight-game season will mirror that of the real NFL, ending with the Lingerie Bowl. The schedule will be announced next Spring with the first games due to start in September to give recruits time to learn how to play. The games will be shown on cable television.

Try-outs, or auditions, have so far drawn young women including models and dancers. Those attending a session in Seattle interviewed by CNN were blunt about the game's appeal - "probably half-naked women playing football would be my guess," said one - but denied they felt exploited.

"Obviously first and foremost it's a visually driven brand, so you have to have the beauty," league spokesman Kyle Bolin told Florida's St Petersburg Times.

"But you have to be athletic. It's a whole different breed when you're asking models to play tackle. So you have to (have) a little bit upstairs."

He also denied the league was sexist. "This is not fluff. They take it very seriously. They're not out there worrying about fingernails being broken, but they're worried about their necks being broken."

It is not clear how the league will be funded - the website contains links to "sponsor contact" and "investor relations" - but season tickets are already on sale.

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