

# BEST OF THE BETHS



# THE BEST OF JANUARY

# BEST OF THE BETHS



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# THE EFL CHAMPIONSHIP























































































































































MICHAEL SHIELDON 10W























































































































































The EFL Championship is always competitive with new twists, turns and different winners, unlike the Premier League who in the last decade has only had 5 winners opposed to the Championships' 9 with only Norwich winning it twice in the last decade. Of course, this is partly due to the fact that the winner of the championship gets promoted but it's still a nice change from the norm of the Premier League.

This year its the closest we've possibly ever seen for an English competition. For context, the difference between 13th (Cardiff City) and 6th (Coventry) is 4 points (at the time of writing), so it's all still to play for as, unlike the Premier League, they have playoff places which range from 6th place to 3rd place with 3rd place playing 6th in a two-legged semi final and the same with 4th and 5th, then into a final between the two victors to see who gets promoted along with 1st and 2nd place.

The reasons for this competitiveness could definitely be because there are 24 teams in the 2nd English division, of which all are of a similar level, other than maybe Leeds, Southampton and Leicester as you could argue they are still highly skilled Premier League quality clubs.

Finally, in the championship we've seen the glory run of the century by Ipswich, possible worthy of some kind of TV series on Apple TV. They came from League 1 after coming 2nd on 98 points to Plymouth Argyle, getting promoted to the Championship for the first time since the 2018/19 season. They are now in 2nd place in the championship behind Leicester on 58 points with 19 games left and with how they're playing currently, I wouldn't be surprised if they finish in the top 2 or in the playoffs and maybe even qualify and return in the Premier League for the first time since 2001-02.

1		Leicester City	27	21	2	4	55	21	34	65	        
2		Ipswich Town	27	17	7	3	50	34	16	58	        
3		Southampton	27	16	7	4	50	31	19	55	        
4		Leeds United	27	15	6	6	48	25	23	51	        
5		West Brom	27	13	6	8	40	25	15	45	        
6		Coventry	27	10	10	7	41	29	12	40	        
7		Sunderland	27	12	4	11	37	30	7	40	        
8		Watford	27	10	9	8	44	37	7	39	        
9		Hull City	27	11	6	10	41	38	3	39	        
10		Middlesbrough	27	12	3	12	41	40	1	39	        
11		Norwich City	27	11	5	11	44	43	1	38	        
12		Preston	27	11	5	11	33	44	-11	38	        
13		Cardiff City	27	11	4	12	34	36	-2	37	        
14		Bristol City	27	10	6	11	30	30	0	36	        
15		Swansea	27	8	9	10	37	41	-4	33	        
16		Millwall	27	8	8	11	29	34	-5	32	

8		Watford	27	10	9	8	44	37	7	39	        
9		Hull City	27	11	6	10	41	38	3	39	        
10		Middlesbrough	27	12	3	12	41	40	1	39	        
11		Norwich City	27	11	5	11	44	43	1	38	        
12		Preston	27	11	5	11	33	44	-11	38	        
13		Cardiff City	27	11	4	12	34	36	-2	37	        
14		Bristol City	27	10	6	11	30	30	0	36	        
15		Swansea	27	8	9	10	37	41	-4	33	        
16		Millwall	27	8	8	11	29	34	-5	32	        
17		Stoke City	27	8	8	11	26	32	-6	32	        
18		Blackburn Ro...	27	10	2	15	40	52	-12	32	        
19		Plymouth Argyle	27	7	9	11	44	46	-2	30	        
20		Birmingham	27	7	8	12	32	43	-11	29	        
21		Huddersfield	27	5	11	11	27	45	-18	26	        
22		Sheffield Wed...	27	6	4	17	21	44	-23	22	        
23		QPR	27	5	6	16	22	39	-17	21	
24		Rotherham	27	3	9	15	24	51	-27	18	

# HIP-HOP & THE CHRISTIAN SOCIETY

TOLU OGUNBAYO 12C3

After a certain discussion the Christian Society had in late December, one can't help but reflect on the bidding question: can rap music, and its values, coexist with the teachings of Christianity, or does it pose a challenge to the values young Christians strive to uphold?

Rap music is said to have originated first in The Bronx, New York, but it is argued that it emerged out of various cities, stretching across all states, such as New Orleans, Louisiana, to Compton, California. In the 1970s, "Hip-Hop" surfaced as the product of jazz, soul, and disco emerging together, which adopted the similar values all genres embraced: self-worth, respect and overall enjoying oneself. Although these values seem fairly positive to present in spoken language, it is argued that hip-hop goes beyond the boundaries of music; hip-hop is now recognised as a decorated, yet tainted culture, which McCall in 1997 says, "glorifies sexuality, substance abuse, and violence".

McCall's argument is the main reason why some Christians wouldn't wish to expose themselves to the world of hip-hop – the values of honouring worldly activities and honouring God's Word hardly integrate, producing opposition to both values on either side. Some Christians would believe that the deliberate action of harm against another is sinful in God's eyes, and sinful in His own direct laws against it ("do not murder", "do not steal"). In the most extreme cases, some may also think that more intense subgenres of hip-hop, like drill music, can take a toll on an individual's mindset and influence them to mirror detrimental activities, which the stereotypical lyrics of "gang" activity praise. However, some Christians may go against this view of music being the difference between one negative or positive action; they would argue that the gift of self-control, given by God, will disallow a believer to take such ideas into genuine consideration. Their argument in essence is: listening to drill music can still be valid in the eyes of God if an individual is passively listening.

In the mainstream sector of hip-hop, household names such as Kanye West and Drake have been questioned by Christians if the values in their music align with their own values linked to their faith. From one angle, Drake has made his religious standing clear to the media that he believes in Judaism; Judaism is notably the faith that rejects Jesus as the *Messiah* ("the anointed one"), who will soon come to judge all in the world. This evident divide between the faith and Christianity leaves believers in the predicament of whether they will either respect the choice of belief Drake has made, and continue to listen to his discography, or choose the radical option of avoiding his most loved songs on the hip-hop section of music apps.

From another angle, as Kanye West gained more publicity concerning the presidential election in 2020 and his wavering marriage with Kim Kardashian, so did his ideas on Christianity. He labels himself also clearly as a Christian, however, some Christians understand that not all of his songs – stretching from 'The College Dropout' in 2004 to approximately 'Ye' in 2018 – are directly linked to the faith. In over a decade since his first album, there haven't been many genuine references to honouring God and encouraging others to learn about the Word of God and His nature. Although some Christians may take the view that Kanye hasn't expressed his religious stance in past albums, some may argue that he has presented his beliefs clearly in his music from 'Jesus Is King' in 2019, to 'Donda' in 2021 (the only albums which have not been labelled as explicit by Spotify). Even in his past albums, he was keen on using gospel choirs to reflect on the Christian faith he was born into as a child (e.g. 'Through The Wire', 2004), which has now emerged over the years.

In conclusion, Christians have opposing views on whether hip-hop and its subgenres have a positive or negative effect on their relationship with God. From a personal stance, I believe that a balance of hip-hop, which mirrors the ideas of maintaining a connection with God, with different types of hip-hop that uplift your spirit in general is valid. I imagine that songs including more positive values from your faith do improve your mood throughout the day, but if a song holds the general ideas of caring for one another or putting others first, there should be no reason to not listen either!





# UK ELECTIONS

LOHEESHNAN BABURAJAH 10H

The public are outspokenly aggressive towards Rishi Sunak long overstaying his welcome at Downing Street.

Rishi Sunak has been labelled a 'squatter', holding onto the Prime Minister title, refusing to let go. Mr Sunak has postponed a prospected early 2024 election, declaring that it will commence in late 2024, around Autumn time.

Labour party leader, Sir Keir Starmer, has made multiple accusations towards Sunak. He has stated that the current PM is going to be 'squatting for months and months in Downing Street, dithering and delaying', as well as commenting that he would like the polls to open 'as soon as possible'.

The leader of the Liberal Democratic party, Ed Davey, has stated that Sunak has 'bottled it' and fears a May election. Ed Davey has also commented on Sunak's behaviour. 'Squatter Sunak is holed up in Downing Street, desperately clinging on to power rather than facing the verdict of the British people', he said.



# UK ELECTIONS

LOHEESHNAN BABURAJAH 10H

Due to these multiple accusations, Rishi Sunak has attempted to reassure the public with tax cuts, however, whether these promises are for power or for the people, we cannot know. To retort, Sunak has also attacked the Labour party's £28 billion-a-year Green Energy investment plans, stating that 'it cannot be done without putting up inflation, without putting up mortgage rates, or without putting up all your taxes'.



# GIRONA FC: SPAIN'S BEST TEAM

FAVOUR OJEBIYI 10C



At the start of the 2023/2024 season, no one expected a team without training facilities to become league leaders. Well, Girona FC have been doing that for the past couple of months.

Prior to this season, newly promoted Girona FC comfortably finished 10th in Spain's first division, only 4 points short of a European spot. Going into the 23/24 season, Miguel's side only spent £22.3m on new additions, which made fans all over the world think they would be in a relegation battle, but little did they know, the Blanquivermells had something up their sleeves.

They started their 23/24 campaign with an unconvincing win against Las Palmas, with a late winner coming from Portu. They then won their next 3 games, including a big win against Villereal. Unfortunately, they lost their next game against 35-time winners Real Madrid. This loss left fans devastated, but they still knew another surprise season was possible.

They continued to win their games, winning six straight, before they drew to Athletic Bilbao. Fast forward to today, they sit in 1st place, one point clear at the top. but, the big question is: Will they win the league?





# BOOK REVIEW: EYES OF THE VOID

HARVEY TODD 10B

‘Eyes of the Void ‘ is a book by Adrian Tchaikovsky, which is the second book in the Final Architecture trilogy. The novel is a classic example of an interesting and adventurous science fiction narrative following the characters that pilot the “Vulture God” spaceship.

The story starts in a universe where there are destructive, celestial moons, called Architects which destroy and re-shape planets using their control of gravity into “Sculptures”, though nobody knows why. Furthermore, the Architects supposedly retreated after a long and destructive war.

As readers, we spectate the terror that the presence of these Architects brings to each species.

At the centre of the book is the idea that differences between races are all forgotten when they work together, which could hint at an interesting idea for the society of today to consider.



## A Bit About the Author:

Adrian is a British author of Science Fiction and Fantasy novels.

He was born on June 14th 1972 and now lives with his wife and child in Leeds. Tchaikovsky is a British adaptation of his name that he used in his books, however his real last name is ‘Czajkowski’, a name of Polish descent. The name Tchaikovsky is most likely more popular due to the famous composer.

He studied zoology and psychology, which can be seen in the novel as a constantly recurring theme in the different species that exist in his fantasy universe and the psychological pressure placed upon one of the main characters.

Over the duration of his career, he has written a variety of different works, which all deal with relevant societal themes such as religion, friendships, trust, magic and technology.

# BOOK REVIEW: EYES OF THE VOID

HARVEY TODD 108

Within the book, a recurring theme is the relationship between a race known as “The Parthenon”, which is an artificially produced species of female warriors, and a man known as Idris Telemmier, who is part of a program where humans were changed to be able to fight the architects. Throughout the novel there is a sense of importance for all of these characters.

Adrian’s narrative explores the idea of a thing called “Unspace”, which is said to be a psychologically draining and stressful environment, which draws on the deep, intellectual ideas of thoughts and senses. It is a form of travel across the universe at unfathomable speeds.

The way that the novel is constructed is into separate parts that are significant settings or events. These are then arranged into separate passages, which focus on particular characters. This allows for an easier flow of the story when perspectives are in different locations as it allows for a better idea of the chronological order of events and a flow of the story, which is an excellent example of a space opera: a space opera is a novel set in outer space, which normally has a simplistic melodramatic nature.

## Personal Opinion:

I enjoyed this book as I found it intense, exciting and completely unpredictable.

Furthermore, it is filled with a variety of different weapons that demonstrate pure destruction and disintegration. There are also the Architects which appear to be able to change gravitational force to their will and their presence is processed in the mind as if it was a shift in reality.

However, they appear to be vulnerable to objects and cities left by a previous civilisation, known as “Originators”.

I am truly amazed at how well Adrian Tchaikovsky has been able to describe it as the personification of terror and power.



## Looking Ahead:

Adrian Tchaikovsky has recently written the last book in the trilogy, which is called the ‘Lords of Uncreation’, which is the perfect title as a conclusion to this series.

Other notable works of his include:  
Children of Time  
Elder Race

# THE EMMYS

JOE PHILP 10W

On Monday the 15th January 2024, the 75th Emmy awards which had been postponed from the year prior were presented. The Emmys are some of the most prestigious awards available for TV and after the longest delay since 2001 caused by the actors strike many people were eagerly awaiting the results.

With six awards each 'Succession' and 'The Bear' were the biggest winners of the night, with HBO's drama and TX's comedy taking the presentation by storm with 'Ted Lasso' close behind with five and several shows such as "The Last of Us" and 'Better Call Saul' also being nominated.



As for individual awards there was stiff competition as many actors and actresses had put in particularly memorable performances this year. However, the end result left Jeremy Allen White winning outstanding lead actor in a comedy series for his role in The Bear, Kieran Culkin with outstanding lead actor in a drama series for his part in Succession, Sarah Snook winning outstanding lead actress in a drama again for Succession as well as Ali Wong, Steven Yeung, Jesse Armstrong and Paul Walter Hauser all taking home awards just to name a few. And that concludes my summary of the Emmy Awards 2024.



# THE BRITISH POST OFFICE SCANDAL



WOODY PIMBLETT 10W

What is the Scandal about? In between the years of 1999 and 2015, over 900 sub-postmasters and mistresses were prosecuted for stealing money, although the real cause of the missing money was the Horizon computer system being used by the post office displaying incorrect information. In these years, 700 of these prosecutions were made by the post office themselves, which equates to one person each week being incorrectly prosecuted. Other prosecutors such as the Crown Prosecution Service equated for the other 285 cases. Those prosecuted faced financial ruin or, in some cases, even jail time.

In 2017, a large group of 555 sub-postmasters decided to take legal action against the post office, and after 2 years were awarded £58 million as compensation. However, a large quantity of that money was needed to pay legal fees. Campaigners won the right to have the victims' cases reconsidered, yet only 95 of the convictions have been overturned at the time of writing.

The Met Police have begun an investigation into the Post Office regarding potential fraud involving the prosecutions, and Sir Wyn Williams began a public inquiry into the matter in February of 2021. A statement from the Criminal Cases Review Commission labels the scandal, "the most widespread miscarriage of justice the CCRC has ever seen, and represents the biggest single series of wrongful convictions in British legal history". The scandal was highlighted by ITV in their recent drama named 'Mr Bates vs The Post Office'.

The Horizon system itself is a computer system tasked with procedures such as accounting and stocktaking, created by Japanese technology company Fujitsu, and it has been used by the British Post Office since 1999. Immediately after instating the system, sub-postmasters began making complaints of bugs in the system causing false reporting of shortfalls for as much as several thousand pounds.

The problem caused sub-postmasters to have to cover non-existent shortfalls with their own money - since the post office states any missing money is the postal worker's personal responsibility. This situation has caused broken marriages, debilitating health due to stress, addiction or even premature death, and yet only now is justice starting to come to the victims of this scandal.

# TV SERIES REVIEW: PERCY JACKSON AND THE OLYMPIANS

DEV PARMAR 10B

This newly released series, first being aired on the 19th of December 2023, has started to gain a lot of popularity throughout the world. Disney Studios decided to revive the magic of Greek mythology after the rather abrupt end to the making of the third movie and abandonment of it. By welcoming on board the writer of the series, Rick Riordan, to collaborate and be involved in the spin-off series of the books, Disney ensured a true-to-source material approach. With the first debut of the season, it gained a whopping 26.2 million views within the first three weeks of it being available on Disney+ and Hulu.

The series is very closely linked to the material of the first book in the series. starring Walker Scobell as Percy Jackson, Leah Sava Jeffries as Annabeth Chase and Aryan Simhadri as Grover Underwood, the iconic trio embark on their first quest together - to retrieve the stolen master bolt and prevent a civil god war.



## My Thoughts:

As a previous avid reader of Riordan's works and having watched both original movies, I was very excited to see how they will remake this infamous series.

Personally, I felt that Disney brought a new twist to the series overall, encapsulating the underlying theme of what the book provides yet still managing to incorporate modernised ideas along with humour and emotion.

The plot stays true to the book and it is a real pleasure to watch their story unfold again on the big screen. Noting Riordan's efforts to name each episode off of a chapter from the first book is sly yet satisfying.

## Yet To Come:

At the time of writing, the series has already released 7 episodes, with the finale being released on the 30th of January. There has been no official talk of a season two to come but there has been talk of something that may be in the process of writing and producing.



# THREE BOLD PREDICTIONS FOR THE 2024 F1 SEASON

JOSHUA SHINE 10B

Pre-season testing for the 2024 season is just around the corner, starting on the 21st of February, and with the teams getting ready to hit the track, I took it upon myself to produce three bold and controversial predictions for the upcoming season.

## 1. LANDO NORRIS FINISHES IN THE TOP 3 IN THE DRIVERS CHAMPIONSHIP:

Lando was one of only a few who genuinely challenged Red Bull's runaway champion Max Verstappen for a Grand Prix win on pure pace on more than one occasion and while he made more mistakes than usual over the year, he still comfortably beat highly-rated rookie teammate Oscar Piastri and hoovered up a huge haul of points that was critical to McLaren achieving P4. With McLaren delivering the second-quickest package for much of the second half of the year – and seemingly on the right development trajectory in the chase of world champions Red Bull, I expect them to be a force straight out of the box.

## 2. LEWIS HAMILTON RETURNING TO THE TOP SET

Mercedes has finally abandoned the concept that has made the first two years of the latest rules cycle an abject misery but Hamilton believes the team is heading in the right direction and he hopes that they can yield a return towards the form that delivered eight Constructors' Championship on the bounce from 2014. I expect Hamilton, who will start the first of a new two-year deal next season, to revel in a car that the team hopes is more driveable, predictable and – more importantly – faster. While a championship fight is almost certainly out of the question, that kind of step should end his two-year absence for a victory.

# FIVE BOLD PREDICTIONS FOR THE 2024 F1 SEASON

JOSHUA SHINE 10B

## 3. WILLIAMS WILL SCORE A PODIUM:

Williams entered the season fearing the worst, having lost their Team Principal and Technical Director in quick succession. But James Vowles steadied the ship, and Alex Albon led the team like a lion, scoring 27 of their 28 points to guide them to P7 in the Constructors' Championship. It was all the more impressive given they didn't upgrade their car after race eight in Canada – while the three teams that finished below them brought a raft of them all the way to the end of the season – as Williams focused on ploughing resources into the 2024 machine in a bid to make a more sustained step up the field.

They never had a shot at a podium in 2023 – but I expect that to change in 2024, with Albon continuing his rich vein of form and getting the most out of the car and Logan Sargeant stepping up a level to enable the team to score at least one podium.



# THE DEATH PENALTY (AMERICA)

BEN BYSOUTH 10W

Kenneth Eugene Smith was originally scheduled to be put to death with deadly drugs via lethal injection in November 2022. After prison staff inserted one intravenous line, they required two to administer the injection, but after struggling for an hour to administer the second injection, the execution was called off. But Smith, who was convicted of the murder-for-hire () of a preacher's wife in 1988, was eventually executed using nitrogen gas instead. This was done in the US state of Alabama, and it is a controversial method that has never been used by a US state before. They were supposedly representing the latest step in the search for a new way to execute convicted criminals.

However, many people from various countries and religions around the world have said that it resembles and is too similar to the execution method by the Nazis towards the end of WW2. This method used Zyklon-B gas to mass murder 100s of people simultaneously, as part of their "Final Solution", by effectively choking everyone in a room by inputting gas crystals into the airway systems and then dying in the space of 20 – 40 minutes. Smith's death took 25 minutes and onlookers said that it was like "watching a man being choked repeatedly for half an hour as he thrashed around violently on the gurney."

The UN condemned it on Friday as cruel, but Alabama said the process had been carried out humanely. In his last words, the 58-year-old said his death would mean Alabama had taken humanity "a step backward." Mike Sennett, the son of the victim, said the family wouldn't be celebrating, but Smith had paid his "debt." Adding "Nothing that happened here today is going to bring Mum back. We're glad this day is over."

According to the Death Penalty Information Center, Smith is the first person to be put to death using pure nitrogen gas anywhere in the world. The execution began at 19:53 local time and he was pronounced dead at 20:25. Alabama and two other US states have approved the use of nitrogen hypoxia as an alternative method of execution, because the drugs used in lethal injections are becoming increasingly difficult to find, contributing to a fall in the use of the death penalty nationally.



# THE DEATH PENALTY (WORLD)

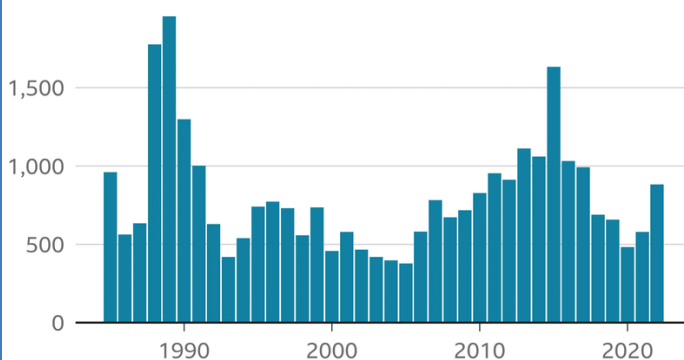
BEN BYSOUTH 10W

The death penalty, however frowned upon, is still in wide use around the world today and cases are even rising globally despite many countries abolishing the use of capital punishment. According to the latest figure from Amnesty International, 55 countries had the death penalty, 9 of which only had them for the most serious of crimes, and 23 had the death penalty but had not used it for over 10 years. The organisation believes that China is the world's leading executioner killing thousands of people every year. However, because China does not release its official figures about its use of the death penalty, it is impossible to provide reliable numbers. Apart from China, Amnesty International recorded 883 executions worldwide in 2022, the highest number since 2017.

Currently, China, Iran, and Saudi Arabia executed the most amount of people by a clear gap, with Iran even recording at least 3 public executions, and 5 more were for people who carried out offenses when they were below the age of 18. Saudi Arabia is the only country to list death by beheading. Other methods include hanging, lethal injection, and death by shooting.

## The number of executions worldwide

Minimum figures, excluding China\*, 1985 to 2022



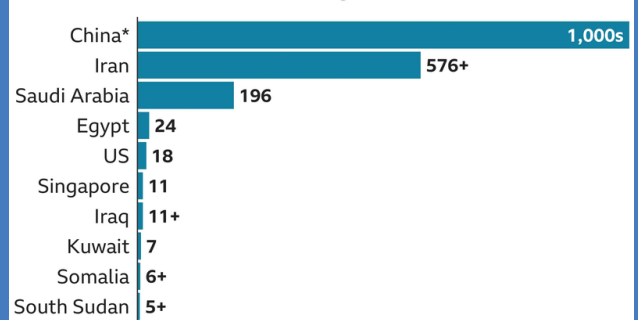
\*Official data for China is unavailable

Source: Amnesty International

BBC

## The countries with the highest number of executions in 2022

Numbers with a '+' indicate the figure calculated is a minimum



\*Data for China is unavailable but Amnesty estimates that thousands were executed

Source: Amnesty International

BBC

## Countries that persistently executed people between 2018-2022



Source: Amnesty International

BBC

# THE SAMSUNG S24: ULTRA-NEW APPLE KILLER?

EDEN JONES 10H

The Samsung Galaxy S24 Ultra is the latest Samsung flagship phone, released in January 2024. It has a 6.8-inch Dynamic LTPO AMOLED 2X display with a resolution of 1440 x 3088 pixels and a refresh rate of 120Hz. It is powered by the Qualcomm Snapdragon 8 Gen 3 chipset, which has an octa-core CPU and an Adreno 750 GPU.

It is equipped with a quad-camera setup on the back, which consists of a 200MP main camera, a 50MP periscope telephoto camera, a 10MP telephoto camera, and a 12MP ultra-wide camera. The main camera has a multi-directional PDAF, laser AF, and OIS, and can record 8K videos at 30fps. The periscope camera has a 5x optical zoom and a 10x optical quality zoom, while the other telephoto camera has a 3x optical zoom. The ultra-wide camera has a 120-degree field of view and a super steady video mode. The front-facing camera is a 12MP dual-pixel sensor that can also record 4K videos at 60fps.

The Galaxy S24 Ultra has a 5000mAh battery that supports 45W wired charging, 15W wireless charging, and 4.5W reverse wireless charging. It also has a built-in S Pen that can be used to write, draw, and navigate on the screen. The phone has a titanium frame and a glass back, both protected by Corning Gorilla Glass Victus 3.

After looking through these specs, apart from a minor downgrade from a 10x to 5x periscope lens zoom level and the glass, it appears to be just an S23 Ultra with some AI integrations which aren't really that good. The circle to search feature just replaces the need for a long press and tapping the option to search the object in the image with Google Assistant. Apart from that, it appears that everything else has been copied from Apple. Why the Titanium edges? Why the flatter display? Why the downgrade to a 5x periscope lens?





# GYPSY ROSE BLANCHARD

RONNIE PARSONS 11H

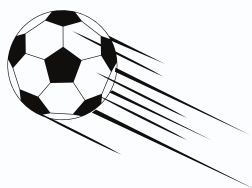
On December 28th, 2023, Gypsy Rose Blanchard was finally released from prison after serving 8 years out of her 10 year sentence. Blanchard was sent to prison all the way back in 2016 for assisting in the passing of her mother which, alone, could stand as an extremely horrible act - except for when you consider how she was a victim to her mother's, Dee Dee Blanchard, Munchausen Syndrome - a disorder in which someone feels an instinctive need to pretend that someone else, usually their child, is severely ill (when they are not) and thus have to take care of them. Gypsy was the subject of this and suffered years of psychological and physical abuse.

However, for the majority - and fortunately - a large amount of the unnecessary surgeries and medications she had to undergo did not massively affect her development, as she is now a grown and happy woman of 32. Whilst in prison, she married a man named Ryan Anderson, and since her release has spent a significant amount of time with him, his family, and her family alike.

Although, more unexpectedly, something abnormal happened. Leading up to Gypsy's release and upon her release, she became an 'internet celebrity', gaining millions of followers across various platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, et cetera. She received much love from tens of millions of people across all of the aforementioned platforms and, initially, everything seemed to be going well; people of all backgrounds respected her endurance and encourage.

Though recently, this has taken a new direction. People no longer are sending her love - rather, they're sending her hate. A few individuals have begun to spread misinformation on her name, branding her a master manipulator that carefully crafted the events with her mother and manipulated the man who assisted her in the act, Nicholas Godejohn, into doing exactly what she asked; essentially implying that she is an evil person. However, this is not true in the slightest, but people on the internet rarely research about situations themselves and tend to take the words of others at face value. Gypsy Rose Blanchard is a very strong woman who has a long way to go, and nobody truly knows what the future holds from now on.

# UEFA: 'THE BEST AWARDS' WINNERS



ALASTAIR MCTEER 10H



Lionel Messi has been crowned The Best FIFA Men's Player 2023, retaining the title he won in 2022. Messi topped an incredibly close poll, which was voted for by national team coaches and captains, as well as expert journalists and supporters across the globe.

With the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022™ winner and Manchester City and Norway striker Erling Haaland locked together on 48 points, they were separated by the number of first-choice nominations received in votes from national team captains.

Aitana Bonmati has been named The Best FIFA Women's Player for the first time. The coveted award is richly deserved for this magnificent midfielder, who in 2023 inspired Spain to their maiden world title, and Barcelona to a domestic and European treble.

Mary Earps has been voted The Best FIFA Women's Goalkeeper for a second successive year, becoming the first two-time winner in the award's history.

Ederson has been named as The Best FIFA Men's Goalkeeper of 2023. The Brazilian shot-stopper was awarded the honour following a stellar year in which the 30-year-old backstopped Manchester City's historic treble-winning campaign.

Sarina Wiegman has been named The Best FIFA Women's Coach for 2023. The England boss enjoyed a record-breaking year in which she led the Lionesses to the final of the FIFA Women's World Cup™, and the Arnold Clark Cup and Women's Finalissima titles.

Pep Guardiola has been named The Best FIFA Men's Coach 2023 after overseeing an incredible period of success at Manchester City. The Spaniard led the club to a historic Premier League, UEFA Champions League, and FA Cup treble in 2022/23.

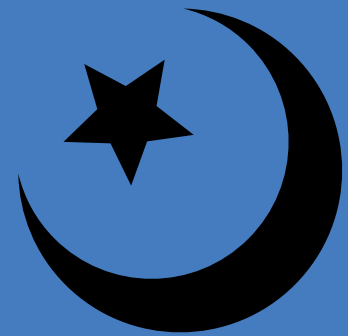


# ISLAM

MUSTAFA AYUB 11H

## WHAT IS ISLAM?

Fundamentally, Islam is the understanding that there is a sole almighty God and that prophets were sent by him to spread this belief. Muslims are those who submit their will to Allah (the Arabic word for God); the word Muslim is pronounced with a s sound rather than a z. The literal meaning of Islam is "submission [to the will of God]," but it also refers to "peace" and "safety." The Qur'an, the sacred book of Islam and is composed of 114 chapters, each of which illustrate a distinct theme or parable. Muslims base most of their teachings on the contents of this book as well as the way the prophet Muhammad PBUH (peace be upon him) lived.



## RAMADAN

This year (2024), Ramadan will commence on the 10th of March, and Muslims worldwide will begin fasting on the 11th. Ramadan is the name of a sacred month in the "Hijri" calendar which is based on a lunar counting system – for many Muslim countries, the religious year is 1445. The Hijri calendar is counted from when the prophet Muhammad PBUH migrated from his birthplace of Mecca to Medinah, it consists of 12 months and 354 (or 355 days). Muslims fast from sunrise till sunset to teach themselves self-restraint, and to be grateful for what Allah has given them. During this period, they abstain from eating, drinking and avoid things which are considered as sinful or place oneself into a state of impurity i.e. swearing, intimacy etc. At the end of the month, there is a day called "Eid al-Fitr" which lasts for 3 days. Muslims give to charity and celebrate the end of the month where they exchange presents with each other. There are 2 Eids in the year, Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha, and they each have their significance religiously and historically for the Muslim population worldwide.

Fasting is highly encouraged, however there are people exempt from doing so – pregnant women, sick people, elderly, travellers, people who haven't reached the age of adulthood (puberty), menstruating women and those who are "overtaken" by intense thirst or hunger. If an individual broke their fast or did not fast (and they are able to fast), they are required to make it up some other time throughout the year – however for those terminally ill and frail, they are allowed to feed a poor person to make up for the missed days of fasting.



# ISLAM

MUSTAFA AYUB 11H

## "ISLAM OPPRESSES WOMEN"

No, it doesn't. Muslim societies were among the first to recognise women's equality before God, give them rights, and accept that they are a crucial component of the wider community.

Surah an-Nahl (chapter of the bee) 16:97 - "Whoever does good, whether male or female, and is a believer, We will surely bless them with a good life, and We will certainly reward them according to the best of their deeds."

Islam gave women rights long before contemporary cultures, which take great pride in being frameworks of equality, did. These rights include the ability to inherit wealth, work, own land and property, keep their last names after marriage, choose their own spouse, file for divorce, have an abortion if necessary, and receive a dowry—a sum of money or goods of their choosing—when they get married. Islam acknowledges natural differences in human capacity and assigns obligations accordingly, hence suggesting gender roles in relationships. Outside of the responsibilities for men and women in a relationship, people are allowed to function together as desired.

Unfortunately, in many cultures associated with Islam, they take a different approach - overruling the guidance from Allah and imposing a cultural influence which goes against said guidance. A prime example of this is where the hijab is being enforced and there is a punishment for not observing it; while the hijab is a mandatory piece of clothing on Muslim women, it is not meant to be forced - rather encouraged. The hijab is a sign of a believing woman, and it has many purposes – to stop society from pressuring her into changing herself to fit in, to prevent people from focusing on her outwardly appearance and instead on her character... and much more.

## SHARI'AH

Shari'ah is frequently referred to as "Islamic Law," and a large Western opinion appears to be absolutely against it. However, we must realise that it is a means of achieving a closer relationship with God for Muslims, and that Shari'ah is not necessarily a "draconian" practice. Shari'ah is only a further version of the laws that were revealed by prophets such as Jesus, Abraham, Moses, and many more. Even within Muslims, there is disagreement over whether Shari'ah should totally regulate society. The compromise is to have some laws, including those pertaining to personal affairs, follow Islamic jurisprudence and other laws be set by the state. Another overlooked point with Shari'ah is that it only fully applies to Muslim individuals, and that other religious groups have the right to being judged by their own laws. Some countries that govern by Shari'ah are Qatar, KSA, Bahrain and Iraq.

## PREJUDICE

Unfortunately, many prejudices about Muslims and Islam are created by certain extremist individuals or groups and end up causing Muslims worldwide a lot of trouble with discrimination. Media coverage, political differences and monetary gain are at the heart of why misinformation is spread about Islam – if one is truly interested in learning about the way over 2 billion people worldwide live the way they live, they should first read the Qur'an with the tafsir of a scholar (to guide interpretation as the book is written poetically and therefore needs context to understand certain aspects), and then research Islam on a Muslim website or community.

# MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY

NATHANIEL ODJEDE 11A

Martin Luther King Jr was an African American Baptist Minister and activist, who was born in January 1929. Martin Luther King Jr was one of the most prominent leaders in the US Civil Rights Movement from the mid-1950s till his assassination in 1968 and he advocated for the equal rights for Black Americans. His life is honoured each year in the US as a public holiday, during which US schools are closed and speeches are given by civil rights leaders and politicians.

Up until the 1960s, people of colour, specifically black people, were segregated from white people and were treated as though they were 'lesser' than white people. For example, there were separate public services for people of colour and white people, such as transport, parks and toilets, black people were denied the right to vote in many US states and black children were forced to go to poorly funded and equipped schools, separate to their white peers. People of colour were usually in badly paid work and Black Americans were often killed, beaten up or wrongfully placed in prison.

In December 1955, Rosa Parks, an African American woman, was arrested after she refused to give up her seat on a crowded bus for a white man. This influenced Martin Luther King Jr to set up a non-violent protest, where black people didn't travel on the buses in that city. Eventually, this led to the US Supreme Court ruling that segregation on public buses would no longer be allowed. Following this, King organized other non-violent demonstrations against the unfair treatment of Black Americans. After the authorities used force to end these protests, despite the fact they weren't violent, King gained even more support. In 1963, he led a huge march on Washington D.C., where he made his famous 'I have a Dream' speech in front of over 200,000 people. This speech would play an important role in helping pass the 1965 Civil Rights Act and another march King led in 1965 provided momentum for the Voting Rights Act later that year. Also, King received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 for his non-violent campaigns against racism.

In April 1968, King was assassinated by James Earl Ray, a convicted armed robber who had escaped the Missouri State Penitentiary the year before. King was shot while standing on a balcony outside his second-floor room at a Motel in Memphis, Tennessee. Martin Luther King Jr's assassination led to an outpouring of anger among black Americans, as well as a period of national mourning. In November 1983, President Ronald Reagan signed the King Holiday Bill into law, which designated the third Monday in January to be a federal holiday in commemoration of his life. Martin Luther King Jr Day is still honoured till this day, with the holiday falling on the 16th of January this year.





# CONSUMERISM

DAMILOLA DAWODU 11H

An important part of life is giving. In a world riddled with uncertainty and doubt, brimmed with tragedy and trauma, it is very easy to forget about the needs of other people and simply focus on the negativity that surrounds us when we should be focusing on things we can control. For fixating on things you cannot control is effectively the giving up of control of ones happiness. The things we can control are our perspectives and actions. Instead of reflecting the negativity imbued in our world through the way we treat others , it is vital that we "Let our light shine before others - Matthew 5:16" so the world can see some hope again. This can come in simple forms such as switching your frown to a smile or by complimenting somebody. Or by putting that much extra work in and fulfilling the potential others see in you to make them, as well as yourself, proud.

Time is something that seems to slip away from our grasp every single day as we embark the pursuit of meaning and purpose in order to fulfil something great. However, in this daily and seemingly endless journey, we must take time to stop, experience and enjoy the passage of time. Simply exist. And take in everything around you. From the leaf floating in the air to the gentle morning breeze on a Monday morning.

By learning to appreciate the simple things in life, it can allow us to be more at peace and in times of uncertainty, give us something to be grateful for.







# AFCON GROUP STAGES

BY NNAMDI EKE 10B

The Africa Cup of Nations group stages have drawn to a close, and this year, we saw a few shock results and surprising standings in these group stages.

## Group A





### Group A

Club	MP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts	Last 5
1  Equatorial Gui...	3	2	1	0	9	3	6	7	✓✓-○○
2  Nigeria	3	2	1	0	3	1	2	7	✓✓-○○
3  Ivory Coast	3	1	0	2	2	5	-3	3	××✓○○
4  Guinea-Bissau	3	0	0	3	2	7	-5	0	×××○○

This group had Equatorial Guinea, one of the best performing countries at the moment, finish top of Group A, with Nigeria, one of the favourites to win it, coming in 2nd. Equatorial Guinea have been a massive underdog in this tournament, with the most prolific striker in the tournament so far, Emilio Nsue. Although Ivory Coast suffered defeat to Nigeria and Equatorial Guinea, they will make it through to the round of 16, as they are one of the top 4 countries in 3rd place.

## Group B

### Group B

























Club	MP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts	Last 5
1  Cape Verde	3	2	1	0	7	3	4	7	-✓✓○○
2  Egypt	3	0	3	0	6	6	0	3	- - -○○
3  Ghana	3	0	2	1	5	6	-1	2	- - ×○○
4  Mozambique	3	0	2	1	4	7	-3	2	- × -○○

# AFCN GROUP STAGES

BY NNAMDI EKE 10B

This group was surprising to many, because Cape Verde topped this group, with 7 points, and Egypt came 2nd without winning a single game. But Ghana, with the likes of Mohammed Kudus, Inaki Williams and Tariq Lamptey, got knocked out with only 2 points.





## Group C

Group C													
Club	MP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts	Last 5				
1  Senegal	3	3	0	0	8	1	7	9					
2  Cameroon	3	1	1	1	5	6	-1	4					
3  Guinea	3	1	1	1	2	3	-1	4					
4  Gambia	3	0	0	3	2	7	-5	0					

To nobody's surprise, Senegal, with the likes of Sadio Mane, Kalidou Koulibaly and Edouard Mendy, top their group, with Cameroon edging out 2nd place on goals scored. It will not matter though, as Guinea will still go through as one of the top four 3rd place countries.

## Group D

Group D

Club	MP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts	Last 5
1  Angola	3	2	1	0	6	3	3	7	<div><div>✓</div><div>✓</div><div>—</div><div>○</div><div>○</div></div>
2  Burkina Faso	3	1	1	1	3	4	-1	4	<div><div>✗</div><div>—</div><div>✓</div><div>○</div><div>○</div></div>
3  Mauritania	3	1	0	2	3	4	-1	3	<div><div>✓</div><div>✗</div><div>✗</div><div>○</div><div>○</div></div>
4  Algeria	3	0	2	1	3	4	-1	2	<div><div>✗</div><div>—</div><div>—</div><div>○</div><div>○</div></div>





Algeria came into this tournament as one of the favourites to win it, but yet another upset includes them coming in dead last, with only 2 points. Angola finish top of the group, and Burkina Faso, sporting Edmond Tapsoba, came

# AFCON GROUP STAGES

BY NNAMDI EKE 10B





2nd. Mauritania pulled off one of the biggest wins in their history against Algeria to clinch a place in the knockout stages as one of the top four 3rd place countries.

## Group E

Group E										
Club	MP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts	Last 5	
1  Mali	3	1	2	0	3	1	2	5	⚪	⚪
2  South Africa	3	1	1	1	4	2	2	4	⚪	⚪
3  Namibia	3	1	1	1	1	4	-3	4	⚪	⚪
4  Tunisia	3	0	2	1	1	2	-1	2	⚪	⚪

Just like Algeria, Tunisia were another country favoured to win this tournament. But just like Algeria, they came bottom of their group with 2 points. Mali, with Yves Bissouma, Abdoulaye Doucoure and Alassane Plea, topped the group, with South Africa coming 2nd, and Namibia going through as the fourth and final 3rd place country.

## Group F

Group F										
Club	MP	W	D	L	GF	GA	GD	Pts	Last 5	
1  Morocco	3	2	1	0	5	1	4	7	⚪	⚪
2  DR Congo	3	0	3	0	2	2	0	3	⚪	⚪
3  Zambia	3	0	2	1	2	3	-1	2	⚪	⚪
4  Tanzania	3	0	2	1	1	4	-3	2	⚪	⚪

To the shock of absolutely nobody, Morocco tops the group with DR Congo coming in 2nd. Unfortunately, Zambia did not make it through as a top 3rd place country.

# BEST OF THE BETHS



## A Note of Thanks



Thank you for reading this edition of the newsletter!

And we're glad to be ending off the first month of 2024 with a lengthy newsletter. We had over a dozen articles, written by a new, fully formed cohort of passionate Year 10s, and some of us Year 11 stragglers. We're pleased to share with you some sporting events, details of religion, and our latest TV show / book / social media drama-true crime obsessions with you. We can't wait to see you for the February Edition, with more stories to tell!

-Regards from the Best of the Beths Newsletter team.

