

LIFE style

TOP OF THE FOPS

This former public schoolboy is at No.1 in the charts – just one of a rich crop of handsome, well bred, eligible men. Here, Lifestyle presents our Top 40... what are you waiting for, girls?



SAM BRANSON, 20. Model son of tycoon Richard. Dirty dinged with Paris Hilton after launch of her new scent. Lives in family's £10m mansion in London's Holland Park. Expected to earn £10m in the next 15 years from modelling. Worth: Father's Virgin empire valued at more than £3bn.



ROBERT HANSON, 44. Runs Hanson White Capital. Ex-girlfriends include Sophie Anderson and Tara Palmer-Tomkinson. Lives in a £2m Berkshire cottage with help and swimming pool. Worth: More than £50m.



PRINCE NIKOLAOS OF GREECE, 35. Younger son of King Constantine, he is a former banker who now works for his father. He lives in Chelsea and loves shooting, sailing and skiing. He lived in a suite at Blakes hotel for three years. Worth: Suits at Blakes cost £3,000 a week — you do the maths.



OLI WHEELER, 35. Director at top PR Agency: Freud Communications. Owns a couple of Ferraris. Lives a few doors down from Hugh Grant in Chelsea, where his townhouse is renowned for its gigantic four-poster bed. Worth: £2m.

JAMES BLUNT, 28. After Harrow James served as a Household Cavalry officer in Kosovo before becoming pop star of the moment with the haunting song 'You're Beautiful'. He lives in London but often pops back to the family part in Hampshire. Find him on London's King's Road or on Top Of The Pops. He says he joined the Army for financial reasons and still flies economy class. Worth: Not a lot. Yet.



VISCOUNT DAN MACMILLAN, 30. Former model and photographer. Has dated Kate Moss and Jade Jagger. Great grandson of Harold Macmillan, he is in line for the family's publishing fortune and the title Earl of Stockton. Lives in Vauxhall. Worth: Will inherit more than £200m.

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PATRICK SCOTT, 22. Son of Sir Nicholas Scott, Thatcher's Northern Ireland minister. Co-director of gourmet

company, Leathams Foods. Loves shooting, skiing and blondes. Lives in Battersea. Worth: £2m.



JAMES ANDERSON, 28. Son of rock star Ian Anderson (Jethro Tull). Drummer in parentally inspired band Jethro, owns a flat near Tate Modern. Family mansion is in Wiltshire. Drives a Ford Ka. Worth: Five-figure salary and will inherit large slab of father's fortune.



BEN NEWTON, 22. Trendy music manager. Divides his time between a flat in Soho and a six-bedroom country estate in Gloucestershire, where he keeps his polo team, Atomic. His father managed Eros and the Pet Shop Boys. Drives a Saab 93 convertible. Worth: Over £5m.



CONRAD SHAWCROSS, 28. Handsome contemporary artist, already considered one of the UK's finest sculptors. Exhibits at the Saatchi Gallery and the National Maritime Museum. Lives in an East London warehouse. Worth: Not a lot at present. He's a penniless artist, isn't he?



NAV SIDHU, 33. Self-made millionaire who runs PR and sponsorship firm for Formula One racing. Best mates with Jenson Button.

Drives a black Jaguar XKR. Lives in two-bedroom house in Highgate and frequently jets off to holiday retreat in India. Worth: £2m.



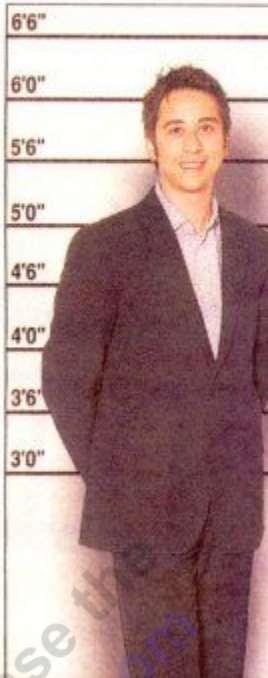
LORD FREDDIE WINDSOR, 26. Son of Prince and Princess Michael of Kent, man-about-town and aspiring film producer, was

also a music critic for Tatler. Family home is a grace-and-favour apartment in Kensington Palace. Worth: Less than you'd think.



TARQUIN SOUTHWELL, 32. Professional polo player with cute looks. Former boyfriend of Jodie Kidd. Lives in a three-bedroom house in

Sunningdale. Worth: No pots of gold — probably earns between £50,000 and £80,000 — but bags of charm.



**Millionaires,
virtually any**



JAKE MEYER, 21. At Bristol Uni studying environmental science. Holds a string of mountaineering records including youngest Briton

to climb Everest. Lives in the family's townhouse in Chelsea. Drives a VW Golf. Worth: The sky's the limit, whatever the sponsors will pay.



WILL HERBERT, 27. An extreme sports enthusiast, Will (18th Earl of Pembroke) lives at Wilton House, near Salisbury. An accomplished cook, he gave

up his job as a product designer for Conran in 2003 to take over the estate after his father's death. Worth: £125m.



GUS PRENTICE, 32. Well-connected property developer who divides his time between Fulham and his Cotswolds

farmhouse which has its own polo ground. When in town, he likes to drink at 151, King's Road. Drives a black sports Mercedes. Worth: £2m.



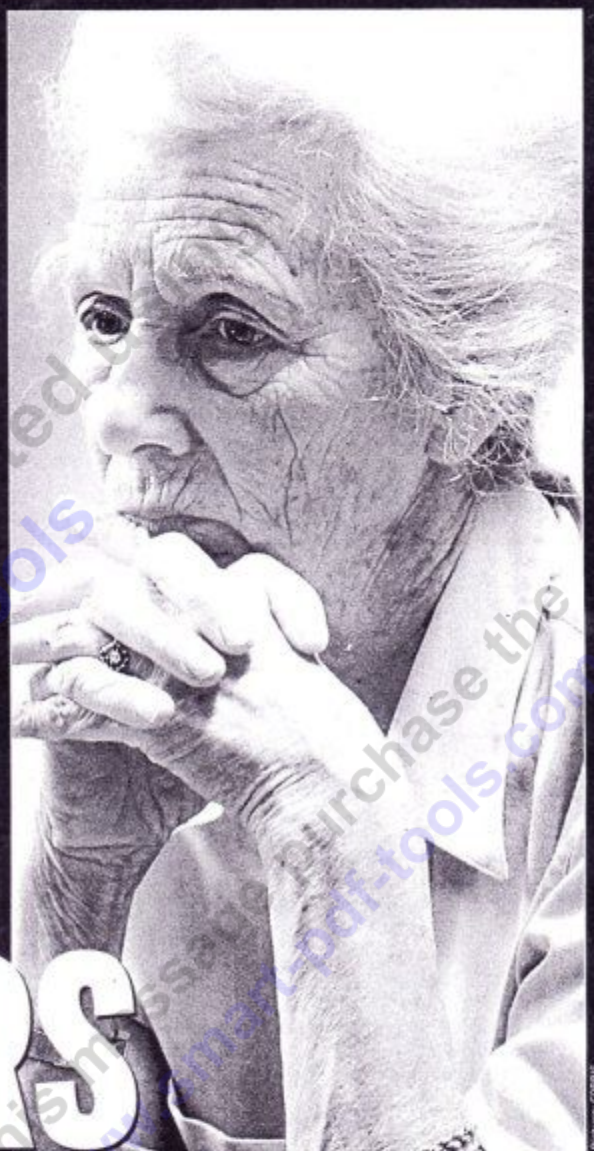
OLLY TAYLOR, 36. Wealthy professional polo player with Adonis looks and a body to match. Lives in large townhouse in South

Kensington; but owns houses in Palm Beach and Barbados. Loves surfing. Worth: An estimated £1.5m.

A conman befriends a 101-year-old widow and tries to marry her in order to inherit her £1.5m fortune.

A sickening example of a thankfully rare fraud? Sadly not. This investigation reveals the disturbing rise of the...

GRANNY GROOMERS



Vulnerable: Our ageing society is fertile ground for criminals

POSED BY MODEL

that his parents should be able to remain in the cottage that had been their home for more than 50 years and, through a reputable caring agency, agreed to pay £600 a week for a live-in carer.

In exchange for her salary, room and board, Mavis, who was in her 30s and from southern Africa, was to care for them both. At first, the arrangement seemed to be working perfectly. 'Whenever we visited them she seemed extremely concerned about my parents and made a point about how well she was looking after them,' says John. 'She really seemed so nice.'

Mavis threw herself into village life too, going to church and making friends. 'She soon ended up knowing more people in the village than my parents, as things had moved on and their friends had died,' explained John. 'Not many people went to visit them or check in on them, which is why Mavis got away with so much.'

Exactly what she had got away with became apparent only after Mr Frank's death. In a single year she had taken more than £80,000 of the couple's money (practically all their life savings) by stealing new cheque books and suppressing the bank statements.

'We spoke to the banks and found there was cheque after cheque with

my parents' forged signatures made payable to Mavis and her family for large sums of money,' says John.

'There was a cheque made out to her for £3,000 and another three that amounted to £12,000. They would be written one after the other and then there would be a break before the account was raided again.'

JOHNSON continues: 'Some of the cheques bore half-hearted attempts at my mother's signature, others were just scribbles. A couple were made out to Mavis's credit card companies, there were large cash withdrawals, and sums paid to clothing catalogues.'

'My parents hadn't got a clue what was going on right under their noses. My father had done his accounts all his life and because he didn't know about the stolen cheque books continued to pay Mavis as normal. He would give her money for groceries and such like.'

Even more galling was the realisation that Mavis had not even cared for John's parents very well.

'Although we can never prove it, we think she was unkind to them. We visited them regularly, but my parents were of the war generation

who'd never complain because they wouldn't want to be a nuisance.

'But when my mother was admitted to hospital after a fall, the doctors discovered that she was very malnourished. The hospital indicated that she had not been particularly well looked after and possibly neglected.'

Having informed the police of the missing money, John was determined to bring Mavis, who had vanished after the funeral, to justice.

'She'd always gone on and on about how she wanted to buy my father's car — it was in good nick and had low mileage,' says John. 'I decided to use it as bait and phoned her up and said I wanted to sell it at a reasonable price.'

'I also hinted that I knew of another "carting" job nearby.'

Sure enough, Mavis turned up — and was promptly arrested by the police on suspicion of fraud. Her case will shortly be dealt with by the courts, an unfortunately all-too-rare outcome.

But many elderly victims of financial abuse are unable physically or emotionally to underpin a stressful prosecution.

It's something the relatives of 105-year-old Jessica Greig, who was swindled out of all her possessions,

savings and benefits by two 'Good Samaritans', know only too well.

Her niece, Alice Russell, explains: 'The two women, Mary and Ena, befriended Jessica just before her 100th birthday. They met my aunt at church — she was a devout Roman Catholic — and started to visit her every day at her flat in sheltered accommodation in West London.'

'Her husband had died 40 years previously and she enjoyed the company. They would drop in two or three times a day — offering to post a letter, get some shopping, help out a little.'

THE only problem was that Mary and Ena were far from Christian. In 2002, following a fall, Jessica was taken to hospital. She asked her niece to pick up a jewelled rosary and a few other bits and bobs from her flat.

'When I got there I discovered most of Jessica's things had disappeared, including all of her jewellery and her precious rosary,' says Alice.

Alice tracked down Ena and spoke to her about the missing items, but she claimed she had taken them and £1,000 in pension money for 'safe keeping'.

Unsure what to do, Alice contacted

the priest at Ena's church and persuaded him to speak to her about returning Jessica's property. Within days some of the jewellery and some rosaries were returned, along with some of the money.

'I told Jessica what had happened and she became very upset,' explains Alice. 'I wanted to go to the police, but she begged me not to get them involved.'

'My aunt and I forbade Ena to visit again,' says Alice. 'It was an upsetting time for Jessica; she thought Ena was her friend. I wasn't sure about Mary either, but decided I was being too cynical and I hoped that Ena's removal was a sufficient "shot across the bows" to warn Mary off if she had any ill intentions toward Jessica. Ultimately, I was wrong.'

Just how wrong emerged late last year when Jessica was again taken into hospital.

'I went to her flat and discovered that all of Jessica's bank, building society and insurance papers were missing,' says Alice. 'I also discovered that Jessica's pension had been drawn since 2002 and that Mary had volunteered to look after my aunt's affairs and had taken everything.'

'It was a real shock as I had asked

TURN TO NEXT PAGE

AS older women challenge the wisdom of hormone replacement therapy, one young woman argues that the combined contraceptive pill may be just as dangerous. Five days after starting to take the pill, **CHARLOTTE REATHER**, 24, a writer from the Cotswolds, developed a deep vein thrombosis in her leg. Here, Charlotte describes her shocking illness.

Why I think the pill caused my life threatening blood clot

LAST month I was told I have a large blood clot in my leg. I am a healthy young woman who plays polo, squash and enjoys a very active country lifestyle. Apart from the usual winter colds and viruses, I have not experienced any serious illnesses.

I have also not taken a long-haul flight recently, and there is no history of blood or venous disorders in my family.

I have, however, just been prescribed the combined contraceptive pill.

Hundreds of thousands of women are on the combined pill. This is the oestrogen and progestogen combination tablet that is most widely prescribed and appears to carry the most health risks.

One only needs to read the list of potential complications to a woman's health cited on the pill leaflet itself to realise it's far from good for you.

The combined pill works by stopping ovulation, which means the woman does not release an egg for fertilisation. It also thickens the mucus around the cervix, making it difficult for sperm to get into the womb.

This tiny wonder tablet should be the answer to the prayers of any young woman who wants utterly reliable contraception. When taken as directed, it offers nearly 100 per cent protection against pregnancy.

But does such peace of mind come at too high a price to women's health? I believe the combined pill, like hormone replacement therapy, is secretly wreaking havoc on the health of women.

I had been taking the pill for only five days when I first noticed the sharp pain in the back of my right calf. At first I thought I had strained it. But the pain gradually got worse, and was accompanied by obvious swelling, so it was clearly not a pulled muscle.

I phoned NHS Direct, and described my symptoms. I also mentioned that I had just started to take the pill.

THEY advised me to go to my nearest hospital immediately. It was 9pm and I didn't want to hang around in casualty late at night, so I told them to go in the morning, but they said: "No — go now!"

At the A&E department, a doctor examined me and said there was the distinct possibility of a DVT (deep vein thrombosis). I felt faint and shook my head. "It's just a pulled muscle," I said, weakly. "No, it is not," the doctor said.

Over the next few days I was subjected to ultrasound scans of my right leg and finger-prick tests to measure the clotting of my blood.

I kept thinking back to the tiny writing on that leaflet and, in particular, a small but stark warning about blood clots or venous thrombosis. I had all the symptoms: a very swollen calf and burning deep pain at the back of the calf below the knee.

I knew what the consequences were if that clot moved or got any bigger. Left untreated, fragments of an arterial clot can move to the lungs and cause a potentially fatal pulmonary embolism.

Every day, I asked one medical person or another: "Should I stop taking the pill?" Every time, I was told to keep taking the tablets.

It was only when I was admitted to Cheltenham General Hospital that I was told to stop taking the pill immediately. The registrar said that once I'd stopped taking the pill, the clot would disappear.

He worked out that the blood clot was most probably in a main vein rather than an artery, and said I was young enough, and that we had caught it early enough, to let my body deal with it.

He said I was in no immediate danger once I stopped taking the

pill, and only an arterial blockage could cause a pulmonary embolism. He said the pill — and the pill alone — was responsible for my condition.

Because of my swift action and a speedy diagnosis, I was thankfully spared the six months of blood-thinning drugs and being wrapped up in cotton wool I would have needed to get rid of a more persistent clot.

"You were lucky," said the registrar. "Another few weeks on the pill and it could have been a different story."

He then told my ashen-faced mother and I that he had seen more and more healthy young women, sometimes aged only 18, admitted for DVTs caused by the oral contraceptive.

HE SAID he would not recommend oral contraceptives to anyone, and that condoms were a much better option.

This is something that was known some years ago but was paid little attention. In autumn 1995, there was a 'pill alert' in the UK after scientists linked an increased risk of blood clots to users of the combined pill.

This concern was backed up by a report in the *Lancet* (July 1999) which said the 'third-generation' oral contraceptives — the ones on the market now — are associated with a four-fold increased risk of venous

thrombo-embolism compared with users of the second-generation pill.

"Instead of liberating women, the pill is killing them," the registrar told us. "And not just with DVTs."

I couldn't believe the hell that five days on those tablets could cause. I also couldn't believe my ears. Until recently, I had always used condoms. But now I had found a steady and loving relationship. I wanted to show my commitment and trust for my partner by using a more subtle form of contraception.

I went to my GP who put me straight on the combined pill even though I smoke between 15 and 20 cigarettes a day.

If you are a smoker, you are at a higher risk of developing a DVT while taking the pill. The oestrogen in the tablet thickens your blood, as do the chemicals in a cigarette, making one possibly more prone to clotting.

After a chat with the GP I collected my month's supply of the pill from the dispenser and opened my purse to pay. The woman told me it was free.

At its inception, the pill was supposed to liberate women, freeing

them from the constraints of unwanted pregnancy, regulating their periods and allowing them to become expressive sexual beings in their own rights.

But the pill may be more of a curse than a blessing for some women.

It isn't just associated with increased risk of DVTs. Taking it may also make women vulnerable to breast cancer, cervical cancer and strokes.

Less serious side-effects are weight gain, nausea, headaches, depression and decreased enjoyment of sex.

However, possible health benefits are also apparent. The combined pill is supposed to protect against cancer of the ovary and womb, and a woman's menstrual bleed may be lighter and pre-menstrual tension less likely.

But these latter benefits are cold comfort. Breast cancer is the most common cancer of all cancers in the UK and has the third highest mortality rate after lung and bowel cancer.

Today, I feel very angry with myself for compromising my health — both now and in the future — by choosing this form of contraception.

But I feel more angry with the doctors and health experts who are down-playing the dangers of this very common drug.

Angry: Charlotte Reather

Research has found that sugar-rich foods such as chocolate could be addictive because they affect the same part of the brain as drugs like heroin.