

News

IN BRIEF

Retrial for murder 'getaway driver'

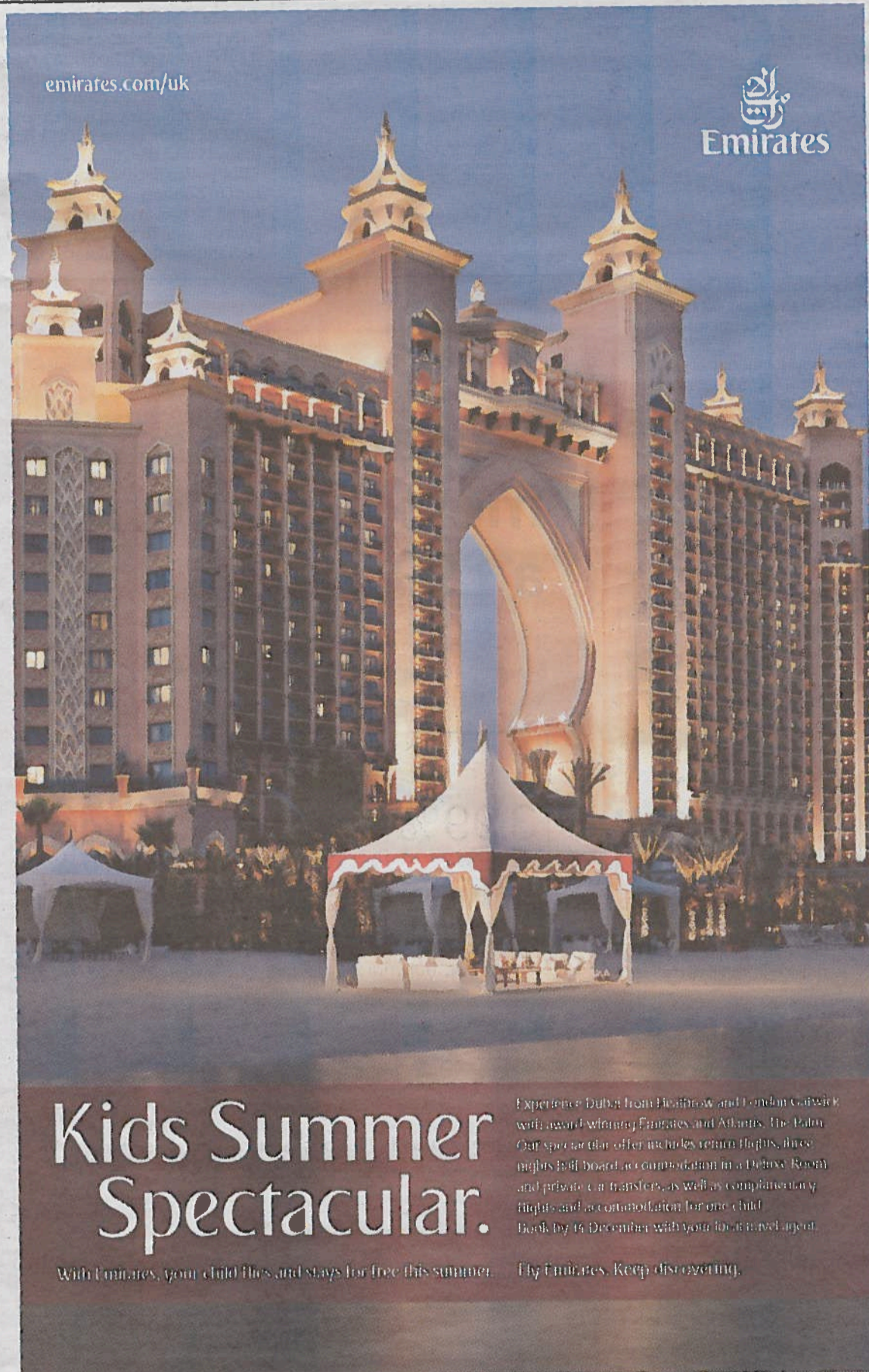
THE alleged getaway driver in the murder of Geeta Aulakh who was hacked to death on the orders of her estranged husband is to face a retrial in March next year. Harpreet Singh, 20, is said to have driven the two killers Sher Singh, 19, and Jaswant Singh Dhillon, 30, to the scene. Mrs Aulakh, 28, was attacked in Greenford as she went to collect her two children from a childminder.

Google searching for an explanation

GOOGLE has been forced to apologise to Russia after getting the country's flag wrong on a special header to mark its winning bid to host the World Cup. The red, white and blue stripes were reversed, leading to thousands of protests. Google has insisted that the slip was an accident – and not a reaction to suggestions that the result had been "fixed".

Boy, 17, surfs train for three miles

A 17-YEAR-OLD boy narrowly escaped death after falling from a train in Essex after clinging to its side for three miles in temperatures of minus 6C. The teenager, from Basildon, jumped onto the c2c train's side at Leigh-on-Sea, and a passenger saw him fall off as it pulled into Benfleet station. The boy was taken to hospital in Southend with head and back injuries but is believed to be in a stable condition.



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ROYAL ASSENT KING'S SPEECH WINS

Trophies: King's Speech stars Helena Bonham Carter and Colin Firth at the Moët Independent Film Awards. Also at the ceremony last night in Old Billingsgate were actresses Ruth Wilson, above. Right: second-time winner Carey Mulligan, with Rosamund Pike

Firth's voice is clear on need to fund British film

Louise Jury
Chief Arts Correspondent

COLIN FIRTH made a plea for funding British films as his Oscar-tipped latest, *The King's Speech*, triumphed at the first film awards of the season.

The star paid tribute to the soon-to-be-axed UK Film Council "for making this whole thing possible" by providing development funds and a Lottery grant towards the £9 million budget.

Firth said: "They really played a critical part and in so doing, reminded us that economically speaking, putting money into films in this country is actually a very good idea."

He told a star-studded audience at the Moët British Independent Film Awards at the Old Billingsgate conference centre last night: "The Government ought to think very, very carefully about their investment policy when it comes to the arts."

"One of the things that Britain does manufacture brilliantly is films."

The King's Speech took five trophies, Firth's best actor, best film, best supporting actor for Geoffrey Rush, best screenplay and best supporting actress for Helena Bonham Carter who plays the Queen.

Bonham Carter, who also took the Richard Harris Award for outstanding contribution, made a plea for work after explaining that her partner, the film director Tim Burton, was absent

having kidney stones removed. She said: "I don't just work for the boyfriend. I'm very much available for work – not just supporting but leads would be great, too."

The King's Speech is the story of how the future King George VI – Firth – was helped to overcome a stammer by a speech therapist played by Rush.

Firth said the film would now make a return on its investment, adding: "It's already punched above its weight. It

'The Government ought to think very carefully about their investment policy when it comes to the arts'

Colin Firth

already got noticed at the festivals. It's funnier than we thought, it has the capacity to make people cry."

Gareth Edwards, 35, from Pimlico, beat *The King's Speech* director Tom Hooper, as well as the veteran Mike Leigh, to best director with his £250,000 debut *Monsters* which also took two technical awards.

Other awards included Carey Mulligan who followed last year's best actress honour for *An Education* with a second win with *Never Let Me Go*. A Variety magazine award went to Liam Neeson.

FIVE AWARDS AT INDIE PRIZE NIGHT



DAVE BENETT

3-D return to sci-fi classic still relies on Bridges' human touch

REVIEW

TRON LEGACY

Cert PG, 2hr 7min

★★★★☆

CHARLOTTE O'SULLIVAN

THERE'S something surreal about watching a Disney movie which all but champions computer terrorism and presents access to free information as a semi-divine right. You find yourself wondering if there's going to be a cameo from beleaguered WikiLeaks co-ordinator Julian Assange. Has the mouse house flipped?

In many ways, of course, Joseph Kosinski's sequel to the 1982 cult sci-fi classic couldn't be more conservative. Most of its \$200 million budget has been spent on creating a new-improved "grid" – the world created by missing CEO Kevin Flynn (Jeff Bridges), which his rebellious, 27-year-old son, Sam (Garrett Hedlund) now has the chance to enter.

After being suited up by some foxy ladyeez, Sam meets villain Clu, his dad's youthful-looking avatar (a CGI version of Bridges), and gets to play frisbee and drive a very fast motorbike. Sorry, he engages in a disc battle and then a light cycle race.



London premiere: co-stars Olivia Wilde and Jeff Bridges at the Leicester Square screening last night

Daft Punk song Derezzed adds to the manic/trippy mood. Everything about this 3-D computer city is whooshy and fluorescent and designed to tantalise boys (young and old). True, because most of the evil characters are wearing helmets, their sinister commands are somewhat distorted and inspire not so much fear as confusion. Still, the boxes get ticked.

The "heart" of the movie is just as calculated. Sam meets up with a girl called Quorra (Olivia Wilde). She takes him to his Dude-like dad. The

latter suddenly realises that Family Comes First. Quorra rolls her wide eyes a lot. The scriptwriters rehash East of Eden.

What keeps the strangeness bubbling is Bridges's performance.

When Sam talks about the "poor getting poorer", Kevin nods as if this is genuinely bad news. Where characters in *The Matrix*, or even *Inception*, seem untouched by bog-standard suffering, Kevin gets it.

This reboot may not be as revolutionary as it thinks, but it's definitely worth a second glance.

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