

A photograph of a sailboat with white sails on a blue sea at sunset. The boat is in the foreground, and the background shows a coastline with hills under a clear sky.

All at sea

An intrepid sailor's bid to navigate his way around the UK coast ended after he was discovered circling a small island off the Kent coast, according to *The Sun*.

The unnamed novice, who told the coastguard rescue team he'd owned the boat for less than a day, was attempting to travel from Gillingham to Southampton by keeping the coastline to his right. As he was travelling around the island in circles, the journey had taken him a day and a half to reach where he was eventually rescued— only a few miles away from where he'd set off — after he ran out of fuel.

With no navigational equipment, the sailor also thought that because he could drive to Southampton on a single tank of petrol, he could also do it in a boat. Lifeboat volunteer Tom Ware said: "Because he had no chart and he didn't even know what navigational charts were, his general principle was to keep the land on his right, except he didn't realise Sheppey was an Island."

Coastguard Ian Goodwin said: "We passed on relevant safety advice and advised him that the best way to Southampton would be by train. However, he said he would get some fuel and get underway, but asked us if he went left or right when he came out of the Swale." It's understood the man attempted to continue his journey but unknown whether he made it to Southampton.

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Justin Case you're about to name a newborn baby, read on...

Those of us living in Hong Kong have probably chuckled at the curiosity of English names taken by local residents. Cinderella Wongs or Ballerina Chans are plentiful, but it seems that Brits too have a fondness for the unusual when it comes to choosing children's names.

A recent survey by TheBabywebsite.com revealed a multitude of bizarre and unfortunate names that parents have given their children. Some to make the list of "Most unfortunate names in Britain" include Hazel Nutt, Terry Bull, Paige Turner, Chris Cross, Barry Cade and Stan Still.

Retired airman Stan Still, 76, from Cirencester, Glocs, said his name had been "a blooming millstone around my neck my entire life".

"When I was in the RAF my commanding officer used to shout, 'Stan Still, get a move on' and roll about laughing," he told the BBC. "It got hugely boring after a while."

But 51-year-old Rose Bush, from Coventry, West Midlands, added to the broadcaster: "I always get comments about it but they are always very positive."

A spokesman for TheBabyWebsite.com told reporters, "When the parents of some of those people mentioned named their

children, many probably didn't even realise the implications at the time. There must be tremendous embarrassment every time they have to introduce themselves to anyone, especially to a crowd. Even their teachers must have had to hold back their smiles sometimes."

He added: "Their name will be with them for life and what may be quirky and fun for a toddler might be regretted terribly when that person becomes older or even a grandparent perhaps."

Britain's most bizarre names – Barb Dwyer, Pearl Button, Hazel Nutt, Ray Gunn, Helen Back, Stan Still, Jo King, Lee King, Terry Bull, Mary Christmas, Max Power, Paige Turner, Sonny Day, Tim Burr, Teresa Green, Will Power, Anna Sasin, Chris Cross, Doug Hole, Justin Case, Barry Cade.

Chinese whispers

From the *Daily Mirror* was the bizarre story of Sarah Colwill of Devon. Upon recovering from a particularly nasty migraine attack the hapless housewife found her West Country drawl had been transformed into a Chinese accent.

Mrs Colwill told the *Mirror*: "I moved to Plymouth aged 18 months so I have always spoken like a local. But when I had my attack last month an ambulance crew told me that I sounded Chinese.

"Since then I've had friends hang up on me as they think I'm a hoax caller. I speak in a much higher tone, my voice is all squeaky. I'm having speech therapy but don't know if the Chinese accent will ever go away.

"It was funny at first but to think I'm stuck with this gets me down. My voice has begun to annoy me."

Meanwhile a Croatian girl went one better. She recently woke from a coma speaking fluent German, which she had only just started learning.

A field of angst will forever be a part of England

As the World Cup approaches and England fans prepare themselves for a month of nail-biting agony there will be the perennial temptation to damn the players and manager if the team fails yet gain to come away with the goods.

But it seems it takes an outsider to realize just what England is up against both psychologically and historically. It took a story in the *International Herald Tribune* to enlighten us.

According to the IHT, even before the team kicks a ball it will be agonizing over the fact that "On the one hand is the belief that as inventor of the game, England has a manifest destiny to win. On the other there is the fear that things will end achingly and prematurely in the quarterfinals, as they always seem to, more than likely against its historic rivals in war and soccer, Germany and Argentina."

The article cites English novelist Nick Hornby, to explain why the obsession with old rivals: "We'd still prefer to be bombing the Germans, but after 60 years, there's a slowly dawning suspicion that those days aren't coming back any time soon."

The England team is further burdened by the English sense of unfulfilled expectation that currently "plays out against an evolving postimperial, postindustrial national identity." So says David Goldblatt author of *The Ball is Round*. Mr Goldblatt is clearly a man to listen to if one wants to discover why an England win is so vitally important to the fans: "As Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have gained more autonomy in Britain the sense of what it means to be English becomes more urgently tied to the national soccer team."

But there is hope. *Soccernomics*, another book cited by the IHT arrives at a solution to English fears of another defeat by pointing out the shortcomings: "Given England's relatively small population, economic decline, and a shallow talent pool from an over-reliance on players from lower socioeconomic classes... the national team performs as well as can be expected." If only this year the World Cup could be played out on the fields of Eton, England would be surefire winners then.

A god to some

A less ambiguous foreign view of the British came to light in the *Daily Telegraph*. Whatever the British may think of the master of the politically incorrect faux pas, a tribe on a remote island in the South Pacific called the Yaohnanen know the true worth of HRH the Duke of Edinburgh. They believe he is a god and they are waiting daily for his return to their island paradise.

The *Daily Telegraph* notes: They claim he promised them more than 30 years ago that he would return on June 10, his 89th birthday, to Tanna, which is part of the nation of Vanuatu.

Siko Nathuan, the chief of Yaohnanen, said: "He made a promise that in 2010, on his birthday, he will arrive in Tanna. We know he is a very old man, but when he comes here he is going to be young again, and so will everyone else on the island."

The *Telegraph* continues: The villagers' belief seems to centre on a trip that the Queen and Prince Philip made in 1974 to Vanuatu aboard *Britannia*. Tannese legend has it that during a reception at the consulate in the capital Port Vila, the Duke shook only the hands of men from Tanna. This news reached the residents of Yaohnanen, who were waiting for a gift in return for a pig they had given to a British officer some years before. The tribe sent a letter to Port Vila, asking where their gift was and inquiring about the Duke. In response the British delivered a framed portrait of the Duke, and the worship began... Children are taught about a god who lives in England and will one day return.

A glimpse at HRH's itinerary suggests he won't be taking his rightful place anytime soon but it seems he continues to brandish the war club the tribe sent him against all comers at Balmoral.

