

# WORLD'S GONE MAD AND I LOVE IT, SAYS DAYTIME TV'S NEW STAR JEREMY

# Oh yes, we're in a Vine old mess

**WE don't have long to chat, Jeremy Vine and I, so I'll get straight to the point.**

Jeremy, has the world gone mad?  
I must say his answer comes as a relief. I thought it was just me.  
"Yes, Mike," he assures me, without hesitation. "The world's gone mad."

Great. Except Jeremy seems quite pleased about it. I guess he would. As the new permanent host of Channel 5's daily current affairs show - previously called 'The Wright Stuff', under founding host Matthew Wright, now called just Jeremy Vine - he'll naturally want loads to sink his teeth into.

"It's gone mad in a way that's fascinating," he insists.

OK, we'll get down to why in a moment. But first, an equally important follow-up question: Has Jeremy Vine himself gone stark raving bonkers?

### Voting

I only ask because as well as this new role, on a show going out, mostly live, for two hours every weekday morning, he's also carrying on with his daily lunchtime programme on Radio 2, for which he'll have to dash across London.

But it turns out I needn't have worried. Jeremy, a super-keen cyclist, has it all worked out. To the second.

"I've got an electric folding bike over there," he points out, indicating the collapsible contraption in the corner of the room. "I think it's going to take me 11 1/2 minutes."

"It's so unpredictable now," he explains. "Politicians can't afford to be complacent any more."

"Elections now are like voting on Strictly or Celebrity Big Brother,



### THE MIKE WARD INTERVIEW

## Jeremy Vine

CURRENT AFFAIRS PRESENTER

where people only make their decision as they're walking into the voting booth.

"It's not tribal any more. It's hot-button politics. Mess up the day before a general election and you'll lose."  
"The first person caught out by that was Theresa May. Calling that snap election was a disaster."

Jeremy insists there won't be radical overnight changes to the Channel 5 show he's inherited. "If you give people a new presenter, that's a massive change in itself. So a lot of care must be taken. It's like moving a precious vase."

And with all these hot topics to talk about, politically and beyond, how hard will it be, as host, to stay neutral?

"Well, there's one subject I just can't be neutral on, which is cycling. That's a no-hoper!"

"But generally, I think impartiality is good for a journalist."

"I don't really want to say what I think of Brexit or Trump, because once I do that I become part of the panel. Besides, I don't think my opinions really matter."

"And to be honest, Mike, they change every morning when I wake up. So I'd rather hear what others think."

For that, Jeremy regularly turns to social media. But for a high-profile chap such as him, that can require a thick skin.

"The classic is when two people are talking about you on Twitter and they unaccountably tag you in."

"One person says: 'Jeremy Vine's show is s---t,' then the other says, 'It's not that bad, he had a good day

a couple of weeks ago,' or whatever. So sometimes I'll chip in and go: 'How can I help, guys?'"

"It's as if they've been talking in the pub and I'm suddenly over their shoulder! 'Oh sorry,' they go, 'we didn't know you could hear us'."

The Channel 5 programme's panelists are always an entertaining, outspoken bunch.

You may have seen Daily Star columnist Dawn Neeson on there. But if Jeremy could have his dream line-up of names from days gone by, even some no longer with us, who would he choose?

Away from politics, the late Mark E. Smith from legendary Manchester band The Fall, would be one. Jeremy adores The Fall. "Bowie, too, of course, God rest his soul."

### Rawness

And past politicians? Tory veteran Michael Heseltine, now 85, would be a pick, he says.

"I've a lot of time for Neil Kinnock, too. There's a great rawness to him. And obviously Thatcher. Incredible."

Current politicians he sounds less excited about. "I feel sorry for them, because I feel we've made them button up."

"If they step out of line these days by even a centimetre, we all cry: 'Oh, that was a gaffe!'"

"Most play it so tight now. It's really tricky."

"Admittedly, Corbyn isn't like that. Nor is Boris. Some are still three-dimensional. But they're few and far between."

● **Jeremy Vine, Monday to Friday, 9.15am, Channel 5.**



**SAFE PAIR OF HANDS:** Jeremy, Right, Theresa May and Jeremy Corbyn, and dream line-up Michael Heseltine, Neil Kinnock and Mark E. Smith