



TOP DOG: Labradors

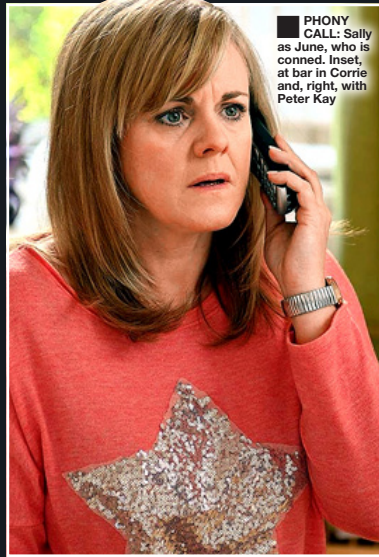
Lab is leader of pack

THE Labrador is our top dog breed again after reclaiming the crown it lost to the French bulldog. Last year's upset ended a near-30-year run for Labs - but 36,400 pups have been registered so far this year. French bulldogs notched 32,800 in second while the cocker spaniel was third and the bulldog fourth. And classic breed the Pointer had just 436 pups. The Kennel Club said: "The Pointer could risk extinction as its numbers tumble to historic lows."

LEFT PIN THE DARK

THE rise of "tap and go" payments has led to 29% of us not knowing the PIN for our bank card, a study by Sanlam UK found.

TV STAR MAKES ANOTHER GOOD CALL WITH GRITTY TALE OF SCAM ARTISTS



PHONY CALL: Sally as June, who is conned. Inset, at bar in Corrie and, right, with Peter Kay

Bitter & brutal role for Sally



THE MIKE WARD INTERVIEW



SALLY LINDSAY
OUT on a shoot in Manchester some years ago, Sally Lindsay was asked by a passer-by if she was filming for Coronation Street.

"We never miss an episode," this person assured me. I thought, "Clearly you do - I left it 10 years ago!"

It is actually several more now since Sally quit her role as Rovers' barmaid Shelley Unwin. She admits she has not watched the show in ages.

"To some people, I'll never be anyone but Shelley. And that's fine. I enjoyed it."

The part she is here to talk about today is that of care worker June in Channel 5's fine new thriller, Cold Call.

In tonight's opener (it runs until Thursday), June falls victim to a telephone scam, leaving her penniless.

Victims

The remaining episodes will show us what happens when an old pal persuades her to join his vigilante set-up - and go undercover to nail the gang responsible.

Sally's keen to stress it is based on bitter, brutal reality.

"Everyone knows someone who's been scammed," she says. "The writers could do a PhD on scamming, on what happens to victims' money and how it gets split up and sent all over the world."

"It's scary. But maybe by telling this story we can make people more aware."

Cold Call reunites Sally with Daniel Ryan, her co-star from Sky One's Mount Pleasant, who plays vigilante Des.

"We just get on so well, we're like brother and sister."

Mount Pleasant, which ran for six years from 2011, was Sally's first regular TV role since Corrie, in which she also starred with comic Peter Kay in a crazy dating storyline.

It came at the end of what sounds like a challenging time. "I hadn't wanted to take a break," she tells me. "I'd had a plan but then the financial

crash happened and the television world just imploded.

She looks puzzled. "My voice is just normal," she says. "So I remind her that she still pops up on telly every Christmas, whenever they drag out the clip of her, aged seven, singing 1980s festive chart-topper There's No One Quite Like Grandma with

St Winifred's School Choir. "Oh God yes, the choir! The gift that keeps on giving!"

"So quite an earner, I take it? "Yes, a 50p book token!" Ah,

right. Still, at least there must be decent royalties from her husband's music?"

Sally is married to Steve White, who for years played drums with Paul Weller's band The Style Council.

Steve juggles countless projects nowadays (his current outfit did Cold Call's theme music) but he has clearly lost none of his passion.

"Yes, there's definitely a lot of drums around our house!" Sally chuckles. "More than anyone could ever need."

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Sally, on the other hand, sounds less inclined to bring

her own work home. Her Corrie days taught her the need to switch off. "I had so many harrowing storylines."

So how, these days, does she imagine viewers think of her? To me, she seems every bit as grounded as I had hoped.

"I realised a long time ago that you can't please everyone. "Some might think I'm the best thing that's ever happened to acting. Others might think, 'I can't stand her!' But I'm still here, so I must be doing something right."

"This research does not support the common gender- and developmental stereotypes we tend to make about kids in sports."

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Caught me red sanded

A BURGLAR was collared after his getaway van got stuck in sand on a beach.

Darren Baldock, 50, had raided two seafront caravans, swiping cash, phones and electronic items.

He fled in a stolen Ford Transit but officers found him stranded on the Isle of Sheppey, Kent, in July.

Kent Police said: "Patrols were alerted to reports the stolen van was stuck on the beach. The driver tried to free it by attaching a rope and pulley to a fence."

At Maidstone Crown Court Baldock, of Charlton, south-east London, admitted burglary and vehicle theft. He was jailed for two years and three months.

Plastic blitz set to wrap

MOST of our supermarkets will have axed black plastic from own-label food and drink within three months.

Morrisons leads the way this week in a move that makes 4,000 extra tonnes of packaging recyclable.

Black plastic ends up in landfill or incinerated due to a carbon pigment recycling units cannot detect.

Tesco, Asda, Sainsbury's, the Co-op and Waitrose will axe it by January.

Iceland is targeting the end of January and head of recycling Stuart Lendrum said: "We have been making good progress."

Marks & Spencer and Aldi will catch up by the end of 2020, trade magazine The Grocer said.

A good sport is a winner

MOST kids reckon taking part in sport really is more important than winning.

Both sexes rated trying your best and working hard as key to having fun, with winning 40th on a list of 81 'determinants'.

The study of footballers aged eight to 19 also found stereotypes of sport's social aspects being most important for girls and boys valuing competition are false.

Dr Amanda Visek, of the US's George Washington University, said: "When it comes to organised sports, kids just want to have fun."

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I'm still here, I must be doing something right



GROUNDNED: Sally and our Mike

Picture: TIM MERRY