



The Ramble 556 - 12/01/26

Monday 19th January	[557]
Wednesday 28th January	[558]
Monday 2nd February	[559]
Monday 9th February	[560]
Monday 16th February	Krokusvakantie Holiday
Monday 23rd February	Krokusvakantie Holiday
Monday 2nd March	[561]
Monday 9th March	[562]
Monday 16th March	[563]
Monday 23rd March	[564]
Monday 30th March	[565]
Monday 6th April	Easter Monday - No Ramble
Monday 13th April	[566]
Monday 20th April	[567]
Monday 27th April	[568]

For The Diary 2026

If you know of an event, let me know and I will put it here.

Didier sent me posters for two events in France in 2026.

Chemin De Fer De La Baie De Somme - Fête de la Vapeur - 25th and 26th April

<https://www.chemindefer-baiedesomme.fr/en/steam-festival-2026>

At the bottom of the visiting locomotives page under the heading of "Réseau Ferré National" is a photograph of BB68540. It looks like the Train à Vapeur d'Auvergne are visiting with their kettle and a diesel.

<https://chemindefer-baiedesomme.fr/en/fete-de-la-vapeur-2026/machines-et-locomotives-invitees>

There is mention on the main poster of "Voyagez à bord de trains historiques sur l'ancien "Réseau des Bains de Mer". My take was they were running loco hauled trains to Le Tréport perhaps just on Sunday 26th. Apparently 'Réseau des Bains de Mer' or 'network of sea bathers' is the historic title given to the CFBS network particularly when it took holidaymakers to Cayeux, Nothing planned for Le Tréport but AAATV are planning a trip from Les Aubrais with A1A 68540 on the Sunday. No steam planned as they would need to run tender first and back to Amiens to turn.

Chemin de Fer Touristique de la Vallée de L'Aa - Le Festivallée 4th & 5th July

Not quite sure what is going on here but it looks like an event at D'Arques Station and some passenger trains. It is one of these events that you may wish to put in your diary and see what comes of it nearer the time. They do have some diesel running days in their timetable.

D'Arques Station is about 5km or 3 miles from Saint Omer station. Catch the Number 3 & 6 bus tp Arques Centre Ville [Place] but note there are no buses on Sundays and Public Holidays.

There is 15 km of railway up the Aa valley in the heart of the Regional Natural Park of Caps and Marais d'Opal.

Shrove Tuesday is on Tuesday 17th February and there are Ski Trains on Friday 13th & 20th returning on Sunday 15th and 22nd around this half term holiday week.

Good Friday is on Friday 2nd April
Easter Monday is on Monday 6th April

Train à Vapeur d'Auvergne Railtour on Saturday 2nd May

www.trainvapeur-auvergne.com/produit/train-de-chenonceau

Tour from Clermont-Ferrand to Chenonceau with a BB67400.

May Day is on Monday 4th May

Severn Valley Diesel Gala - Thursday 14th May to Sunday 17th May

If you have not been to a UK Diesel Gala this is usually one of the best to go to. I have started to make a week's holiday of it. Got my hotel booked in Birmingham.

Spring Bank Holiday is on Monday 25th May

Stoomtrein Dendermonde-Puurs - July 4th & 5th

On Saturday 4th & Sunday 5th July the SDP usually kicks off their tourist season with Scheldeland in Steam.

Tomorrowland

First Weekend Wednesday 15th & Thursday 16th inbound
Sunday 19th and Monday 20th outbound

Second Weekend Wednesday 22nd & Thursday 23th inbound
Sunday 26th and Monday 27th outbound

Chemin de fer à vapeur des 3 vallées [CFV3V] - July 18th

On this weekend the CFV3V usually have some form of event.

Chemin du fer du Bocq - August [14th], 15th & 16th [17th]

The 2025 Festival is usually on this weekend. At the time of writing it will depend if the monumental works on the track have been finished.

Pukkelpop - Thursday 20th to Sunday 23rd August

Sometimes there are extra trains and it is always busy in the Hasselt area.

Innotrans 2026 - Tuesday 22nd to Friday 25th September

One of the biggest train events is Innotrans at Berlin Messe. [Trade Only]

Train à Vapeur d'Auvergne Railtour on Saturday 5th December

www.trainvapeur-auvergne.com/produit/train-pour-la-fete-des-lumieres

Tour from Clermont-Ferrand to Lyon-Perrache with a BB67400. Note midnight return!

Dimanche 26 avril 2026

Fête de la vapeur en **BAIE de SOMME**

• Les Aubrais • Brétigny • Chantilly • Noyelles-sur-Mer



Voyagez à bord
de trains historiques
sur l'ancien "Réseau
des Bains de Mer"



LES AUBRAIS
AAATV-CVL
141.R.840

Ne pas jeter
sur la voie publique

© Photos non contractuelles
Jocelyne Bourneuf et Philippe Lemoisson - Adobe Stock - D.R.



Le Festivallée

4 & 5

juillet 2026

GARE D'ARQUES
Retour dans les 50's



PLUS D'INFORMATIONS DU CFTVA62.COM



**AUTORAILS ET
LOCOMOTIVES HISTORIQUES
INVITÉS**



VOYAGE EN TRAINS HISTORIQUES



VILLAGE ARTISANAL



EXPOSITION DE VOITURES DE COLLECTION



RESTAURATION RAPIDE

TARIFS (Forfait train + animations) Adulte 6€ ; Enfant (4-14 ans) 3€ ; Gratuit pour les - 4ans - Entrée au site uniquement : 2€/personne





Belgische Nachrichten Nouvelles belges Belgisch Nieuws

How A Roman Road Changed Belgium Forever

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GR8HgPQbbEg>

A bit simplistic but overall a basic grounding of how Belgium has become Belgium. Do read the comments below the video to see where he got it wrong. Liège was pronounced wrong and Leuven was a bit suspect. Why 11th November is very important to the Vlaams was missed out as well.

HLE 13

After the Revision Dates on 1313 and 1319 [# In Salzannes Works].

1319 is back in service after an Intermediate Revision.

1323 is next up for an Intermediate Revision.

1333 is at Salzannes for repair after a collision with a truck in France on 27/02/25.
Due out in the very near future.

HLE 17

I have moved the text on the HLE 17s to the end as the information has gained a life of it's own and become a stand alone article.

HLE 18/19

Interested in the Intermediate Revision dates on

1806#, 1823, 1841#, 1843#, 1847#, 1920# & 1924# [# In Salzannes Works].

1806 is at Salzannes Works for a RI2 Revision. Back in service in mid January.

I think this loco went in for ETCS works and has then been selected for Revision.

1824 is in Salzannes for ETCS works.

1839 is back in service after ETCS works.

1841 is at Salzannes Works for a RI2 Revision. Back in service early February.

1843 is at Salzannes Works for a RI2 Revision. Back in service late January..

1847 is at Salzannes Works for a RI2 Revision. Back in service for mid January.

1860 is back in service after ETCS works.

1861 is in Salzannes for ETCS works.

1887 is in Salzannes for ETCS works.

1890 is **still** in Salzannes Works for accident repairs. Due out whenever!

1892 is in Salzannes for ETCS works.

1894 is in Salzannes for ETCS works.

1896 is back in service after ETCS works.

1901 is in Salzannes for ETCS works.

1924 is at Salzannes Works for a RI2 Revision. Back in service in late January.

HLE 21 & 27

2105, 2143, 2148, 2701 and 2754 stand in a track in front of Kinkempois Depot. All are withdrawn.

2705 is performing the role of shore supply at Kinkempois.

The CERTUS locs 2707 & 2731 awaiting their fate, no longer under the wire, in the Far West Yard in Antwerpen Docks. Photo by Werner De Vos and posted to Belgische treinspotters groep



HLE 28/29/186

Interested in the Revision dates on 186 256, 186 258, 186 348, 186 350, 186 445 & 186 451. 186 211 may have also been revised.

Interested in the current whereabouts of 186 209 & 186 235.

186 454 is due at Talbot, Aachen for Revision

HLR 77/78

7701 is at Salzinnes for repairs to collision damage after a shunting accident with 7705.

7705 is under repair at Salzinnes Works after a shunting accident with 7701.

7730 is in Salzinnes Works for ETCS fitting.

7731 is in Salzinnes Works for ETCS fitting.

7739 is back in service after fitting with ETCS.

7742 is at Salzinnes Works for ETCS fitting.

7746 is at Salzinnes Works for ETCS fitting.

7749 is back in service after fitting with ETCS.

7753 is at Salzinnes Works for ETCS fitting.

7756 is at Salzinnes Works for ETCS fitting.

7788 is back in service after the fitting of ETCS and repainting into Infrabel Blue.

7790 is at Salzinnes Works for the fitting of ETCS and repainting into Infrabel Blue.

7792 is back in service after the fitting of ETCS and repainting into Infrabel Blue.

7800 is back in service after the fitting of ETCS and repainting into Infrabel Blue.

7852 is at Salzinnes Works for Revision.

AM75

Currently in Mechelen for upgrades and fitting with LED lights and three headlights are

801 due out in February

825 due out in March

833 due out in April

This just leaves 811 and 812 to be upgraded.

M7

75003 was one of those at retro fit and has entered service on Monday 12th January. It replaced 1860 on a set and has worked on P8515.

Trainfo Help

Already some ghost entries are starting to appear on Trainfo. I had e-mailed Simon at Haltelink about the ghost entries for vehicles that were not even built.

Mr Fat Fingers doing his best.

I have offered to help Sibren by alerting him to ghosts appearing but some numbers need locking out permanently. I have supplied him with some information already but this is the full list. I am using Trainfo in anger and checking up on things on a regular basis. **Can you see any errors?**

What can happen is a mischievous member of staff inputs one of these numbers specifically to create a ghost entry. As it is not overwritten by newer entries, it just remains there causing confusion.

321 Withdrawn after accident at Liège on 14/08/00.

355 At Mechelen after accident at Ardoois on 14/11/23.

407 At Mechelen after accident at Zedelgem on 29/11/24 .

426 At Mechelen after accident at Belsele on 23/03/24.

449 Withdrawn after accident at Bracquegnies on 27/11/17 .

454 Withdrawn after accident at Mons on 04/04/97.

483 In Park after accident at Bracquegnies on 27/11/17.

Currently showing on Trainfo as working on 28/12/25. A ghost entry.

548 Withdrawn after accident at Hermalle-sous-Huy on 05/06/16.

810 Out of service in 2019. Two cars to be preserved, two scrapped.

826 Withdrawn after being set on fire at Schaarbeek on 02/09/19. Cut up.

831 Withdrawn after being set on fire at Schaarbeek on 02/09/19. Cut up.

932 Withdrawn after accident at Pércot on 27/03/01. Cut up.

935 In Park after accident at Schaarbeek on 22/09/25. Component recovery.

4102 In Park and partially stripped at Salzinnes.

4103 Is at Salzinnes for Revision. Due out in late February.

4117 Withdrawn after fire at Mol on 09/03/02. Both cars scrapped.

4131 Withdrawn

4133 Not in Service at Salzinnes. Test bed for a major overhaul. Last Worked 12/03/24.

4166 In Park from 01/10/25. Last Worked 11/02/25.

4169 Is at Salzinnes for Revision. Due out in mid January.

4171 Last ran in passenger service on 10/09/25.

4175 In Park from 01/10/25. Last Worked 01/09/25.

4182 In Park from 01/10/25. Last Worked 16/08/25.

4193 Is at Salzinnes for collision repairs.

72001 is a prototype that need retro fitting. At Alstom Brugge?
72002 is a prototype that need retro fitting. At Alstom Brugge?
72003 is a prototype that need retro fitting. At Alstom Brugge?
72004 is a prototype that need retro fitting. At Alstom Brugge?

73001 is a prototype that need retro fitting. At Alstom Brugge?
73002 is a prototype that need retro fitting. At Alstom Brugge?
73003 is a prototype that need retro fitting. At Alstom Brugge?
73004 is a prototype that need retro fitting. At Alstom Brugge?

75004 is a prototype that need retro fitting. At Alstom Brugge?

73215 I do not know if this vehicle will be built.
73216 I do not know if this vehicle will be built.
73217 I do not know if this vehicle will be built.
73218 I do not know if this vehicle will be built.
73219 I do not know if this vehicle will be built.
73220 I do not know if this vehicle will be built.
73221 I do not know if this vehicle will be built.
73222 I do not know if this vehicle will be built.
73223 I do not know if this vehicle will be built.
73224 I do not know if this vehicle will be built.
73225 I do not know if this vehicle will be built.

75056 I do not know if this vehicle will be built.
75057 I do not know if this vehicle will be built.
75058 I do not know if this vehicle will be built.
 Currently showing on Trainfo as working on 24/12/25. A ghost entry.
75059 I do not know if this vehicle will be built.
75060 I do not know if this vehicle will be built.
75061 I do not know if this vehicle will be built.
75062 I do not know if this vehicle will be built.
75063 I do not know if this vehicle will be built.
75064 I do not know if this vehicle will be built.
75065 I do not know if this vehicle will be built.
75134 I do not know if this vehicle will be built.
75135 I do not know if this vehicle will be built.
75136 I do not know if this vehicle will be built.
76017 Fell off the traverser pit at Melle before it was accepted.
 Currently a training vehicle / plukloc at Melle.
 Currently showing on Trainfo as working on 02/01/26. A ghost entry.

I do like this photograph!



Eurocity Diversions

Looks like the HLE 28s will be around a little bit longer than expected.
Photographs by Lucien Claeys and taken on 11th January





I do wonder if 2851 & 2852 will have a base of Akiem grey and yellow noses like this with a big B sticker and large numbers in vinyl for easy removal.

HLE 17 - Getting a little more interesting

I did receive from a very good source that the introduction of the HLE 17s was being pushed back into 2027. Whether that means the 2027 Timetable Year starting on 14th December 2026 or in the year 2027 remains to be seen.

Alstom may deliver the HLE 17s in 2026 but actually putting them into service with NMBS/SNCB is **not** the same. What I said was "The introduction of the HLE 17s has been delayed into 2027." I also said in Ramble 554 that 2027 includes January and December.

The HLE 18s were delivered from the factory on time and then sat at Wildenrath awaiting introduction. There were thirty five present when this photograph was taken.

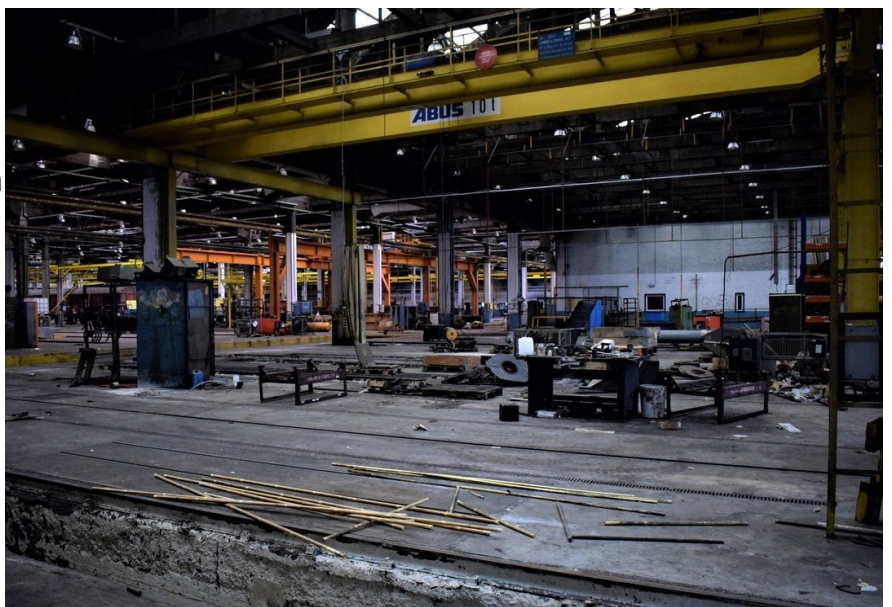


Wildenrath on 4th July 2011. Photograph by Maarten Schoubben.

<https://spoorwegnieuws.blogspot.com/2011/07/testcentrum-siemens-wegberg-wildenrath.html>

There is nothing stopping Alstom building 20 HLE 17s in 2026 and then parking them up in Germany, at Brugge Works or somewhere else secure. There will be a production slot to build the twenty locomotives and Alstom may have to use that slot to build them. They may be able to juggle things around and bring forward some other work and deliver the HLE 17s later in 2026. It is not just the locomotives either, but the HLE 17s are on go faster bogies that are manufactured at Siegen. It is not just about capacity at Kassel but other plants as well. So Alstom may **have** to build them to schedule.

The tracks still run into the old depot buildings at Kinkempois which according to Pirate Détection, Urbex & Bushcraft [an urban explorer] has recently been made secure. He has only been able to take pictures this week of the snow covered outside. This photograph of the inside is from 2021. The HLE 17s could end up in here with full 24/7 security.



Also, if the HLE 17s are coming in this year, why have NMBS/SNCB gone and hired in two TRAXX to cover for the Alpha leased ones going away? Surely the HLE 17s could cover this if their introduction to passenger service is imminent?

The Class 188s are passed for Luxembourg and Germany. Belgium & France are expected in 2026 but one notable exception is the Netherlands where the HLE 17 / Class 188s are expected to run.



Chris Westerduin was testing Class 188s in the Netherlands in August 2021. See Ramble 370 of 30.08.21

The ultimate man and machine? Maybe.....

Here is Chris looking like he is about to burn some dude off at the lights. Perhaps he might run up against Vasco and try to burn him off in one of his NSR units. He might stand a chance if Vasco had a fully loaded 10 car VIRM and Chris was in a Class 188 light engine.

The BR188 was doing admission tests in the Netherlands for which RRF provided the staff.

Here is one of these test trains at Lelystad with Chris as the driver on 21st August 2021.

Chris was driving when "the three pantographs flew away on the Vlakkebrug nearby Kruinigen".



One of the reasons for asking for the country you live in is so I can ask country specific questions. So I asked the Ramble readers in the Netherlands. "Does anyone know when the Dutch Authorities are going to pass off the Class 188s for use in the Netherlands? Or why they are being slow about it? I did read something about a pantograph being lost but that is only minor thing."

Simon gave an interesting answer. "There is two different class 188s in the sense there are the machines with (Bombardier's) Ebicab and the machines with Alstom's Onvia (formerly known as Atlas). The test in the Netherlands were with Ebicab machines, the latest authorization BE/FR is for Onvia machines."

Steven wrote, "The only thing I know, is that eventually SNCB should be testing their HLE17 in NL sometime this year, but that there are complications. What the complications are, is a complete mystery to me. No other operator has actual plans to use 188's in NL, so nobody is willing to pay for homologation tests yet."

Iain's Comment testing with TRAXX MS3/HLE 17 will begin in the Spring of 2026.

Bert wrote, "How minor the lost pantograph may be, it was during the initial test rides and after that, they were indefinitely suspended. So, as far as I'm aware, it isn't just about some papers which won't get signed by IL&T, but the testing process needs to be finished first... Why that hasn't happened since, I do not know."

Iain's Comment - Alstom completed the acquisition of Bombardier Transportation on 29th January 2021. I suspect that somebody made a decision during 2021 as to which cab was going to be used in the Class 188 going forward. With Onvia chosen, there was no point in pursuing the Bombardier Ebicab any further in the Netherlands.

Thank you to the people who responded to my question.



Word on the streets is that the TRAXX MS3 has been facing problems in getting authorisation for the Dutch network for some time. The authorisation for running on the Dutch network is really behind schedule and that is related to tough problems fulfilling the Dutch conditions from the Dutch National Rules (i.e. RIS, a secondary legislation under the Dutch Railway Act). There is no concrete expectation on the granting of the APOM for this particular type/version of TRAXX MS3. EU Law requires for a vehicle to have an

APOM (Authorisation to Place on the Market) in which the area of use is included.

Johnny the Shoeshine Boy also said that perhaps Alstom is not giving much priority for the authorisation of the HLE 17 of NMBS/SNCB, or TRAXX MS3 in general.

If Authorisation starts in the Netherlands in Spring 2026 then an introduction into service in 2027 is probably not a bad estimate. The further we get into 2026 the more squeaky bum things will get especially if some gremlins are discovered during the authorisation process. Do not be surprised if this is a scene in NMBS/SNCB Fleet Management Offices towards the end of 2026.



News

News is a bit thin this week which is partly due to the bad snowfalls that the Netherlands experienced.

Thunderbirds Are Go!

Bert got a surprise on Wednesday 7th January when waiting for his train home at Amsterdam Centraal. He wanted a photograph of a Nightjet in the snow, but to my surprise, three yellow lights turned up under the canopy. RXP 9902 pulled NJ 403 from Amsterdam to Venlo with faulty NS Vectron 193 737 behind it.



ICNG

3107 was due out on test on Tuesday 6th January but the Netherlands got a lot of snow and an emergency timetable was implemented. You do not run test trains in such conditions and 3107 is still waiting it's first run.

Bilthoven

This is Bas Bonhoff's back yard on Wednesday 7th January.





ICR Passenger Coaches for Sale

11 December 2025

Organisation: Nederlandse Spoorwegen

Location: The Netherlands

Deadline: 16 January 2026



NS announces the public sale of more than 200 ICR passenger coaches, made available following their replacement in NS operations. The coaches will be offered in multiple lots of varying sizes.

Key technical information

- Manufacturer: Talbot, Aachen (Germany)
- Years of construction: 1980-1988
- Current homologation: All coaches are homologated for the Netherlands and some are homologated for Belgium
- Maximum speed: 160 km/h (limited to 140 km/h under ATB train protection)
- Length: 26,400 mm
- Width: 2,840 mm
- Weight: 43 t
- Electrical system: Equipped with static converter for 1500V DC, 3000V DC, 1000V AC 16,7 Hz, 1500V 50 Hz AC

- Brake system: Disk brakes (<R> O-R-A (D)) with additional wheel brakes with L-blocks
- Safety / Control: NBA Emergency Brake Override function; equipped for TBO and, when operated in fixed formations, FMZ door control
- Spare parts: Each lot will include a fixed set of spare parts determined by the seller

General conditions for sale

- Deadline for pick-up is 1 July 2026. An earlier date is to be agreed upon by parties.
- Coaches must be used for railway operations only.
- Purchaser must become, or designate a Vehicle Keeper and Entity in Charge of Maintenance
- Coaches and spare parts are sold as-is-where-is



Sales process

Expression of interest

- Interested parties are requested to register their interest before January 16, 2026, to ensure timely and full access to the next phases of the process.

registered parties will receive upon request more information about the size of the lots as

of January 16, 2026

- Access to detailed information on the set-up of the sales process and the train sets and spare parts (including EVR numbers per lot, maintenance data and available documentation), as well as detailed information about the sales process, will be available as of January 16, 2026. This will be provided only upon payment of an entry fee of EUR 1,000.
- After payment of the entry free, parties are also offered a site visit for visual inspection of the coaches. Parties registering after this deadline will still receive the same information package (subject to payment of the entry fee) but may not be able to visit a site.
- The deadline for submission of bids is anticipated end of March 2026.

Bidding and award

- The indicative asking price is EUR 100,000 per coach (including spare parts).
- The contract is expected to be awarded around April 1, 2026 (exact date to be confirmed in the second phase).
- NS reserves the right to organise an additional bidding round if the internally pre-set reserve price is not met. This reserve price will be fixed in advance and will not be disclosed.

Interested or more information required?

Please contact Mr Pieter Tax at Pieter.tax@ns.nl

EVERY FRIDAY

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Blast From The Past



Here is a TEE unit at Amsterdam. I found it on Facebook and the post had originated from a poster in France.



Belgian Can Can



31 / 144

The next locomotive on the list is 2107 and is seen here at Oostende on 24th September 2010. The only line you will find like this now is the withdrawn locos awaiting their last journey to the scrap man. The Polish thing does not appear to have worked and the market for forty year old 3000v DC single voltage locomotives is limited.

Oostende Station has changed and got a lot better.

The buildings used for the ferries have gone and so has the walkway seen here. The Channel Tunnel killed off sea passenger transport from Belgium to southern England.



The photograph is by Johannes Smit and posted to Flickr.

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/johannes-j-smit/5090514389/in/dateposted/>



Other News

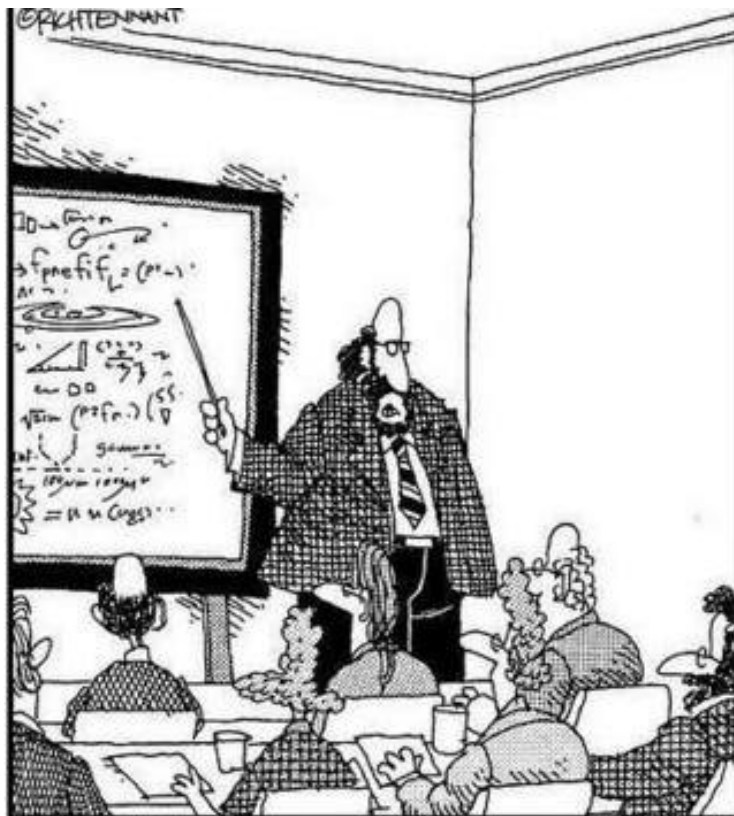
**Sam Allardyce has now
been appointed as the
President of Venezuela
until the end of the season.**



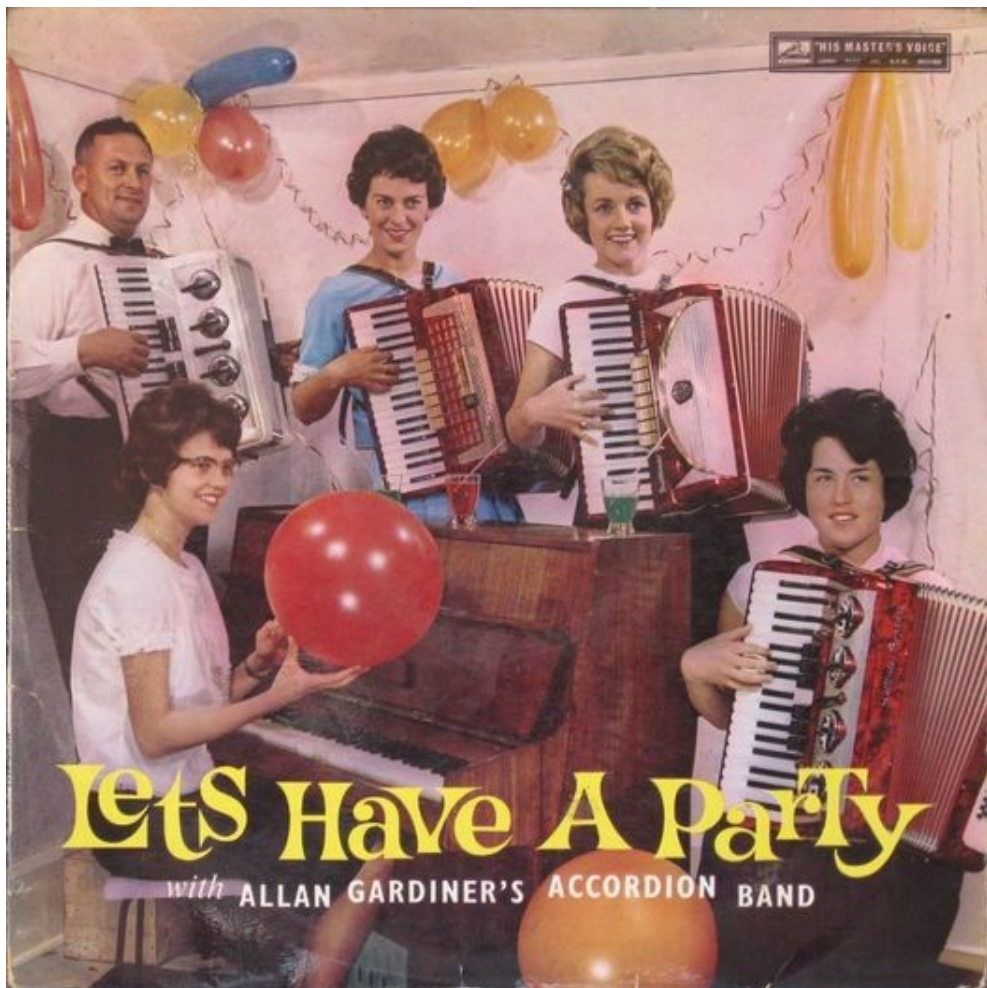
Drag racing in the 70's.



Drag racing today



"Along with 'Antimatter,' and 'Dark Matter,' we've recently discovered the existence of 'Doesn't Matter,' which appears to have no effect on the universe whatsoever."





I'm not a racist but I think Muslims should go back to Islam if they want to practice Shania law. Go back to the dessert!!



Cloyd Rivers

@CloydRivers

- Muslim isn't a race.
- Islam isn't a place.
- Shania is a country music singer.
- Dessert is what comes after dinner.

People like you are the reason ISIS wants to destroy America.



CREATING A PASSWORD

cabbage

- Sorry the password must be more than 8 characters

boiled cabbage

- Sorry the password must contain 1 numerical character

1 boiled cabbage

- Sorry the password cannot have blank spaces

50fuckingboiledcabbages

- Sorry the password must contain at least one upper case character

50FUCKINGboiledcabbages

- Sorry the password cannot use more than one upper case character consecutively

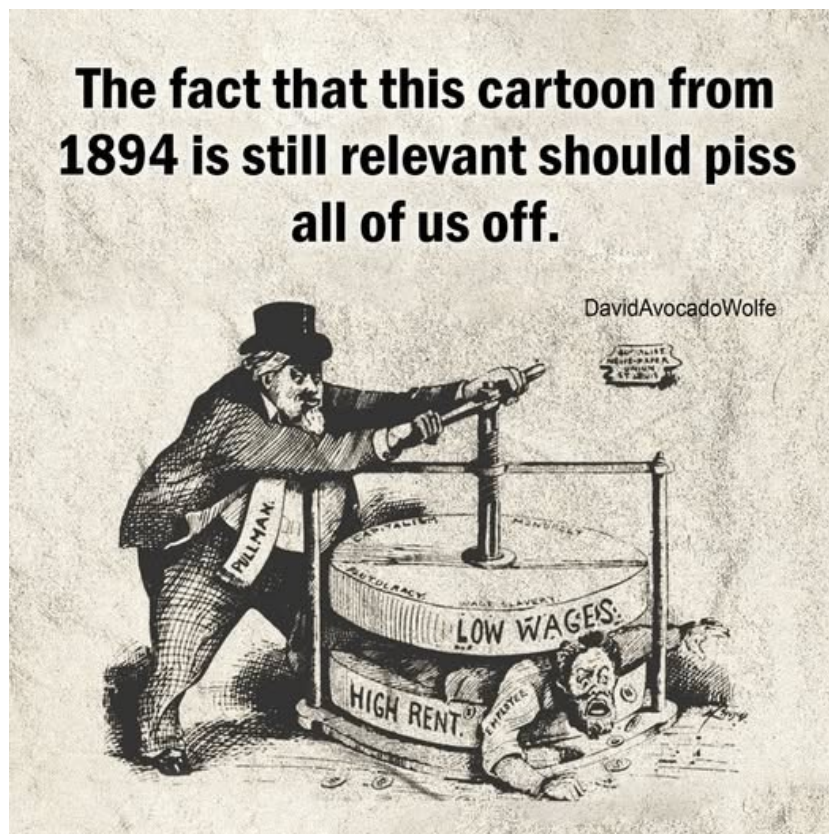
50FuckingBoiledCabbagesShovedUpyourArselfYouDon't GiveMeAccessImmediately

- Sorry the password cannot contain punctuation

NowIamGettingReallyPissedOff50FuckingBoiledCabbagesShovedUpYourArselfYouDontGiveMeAccessImmediately

- Sorry that password is already in use.....

The fact that this cartoon from 1894 is still relevant should piss all of us off.



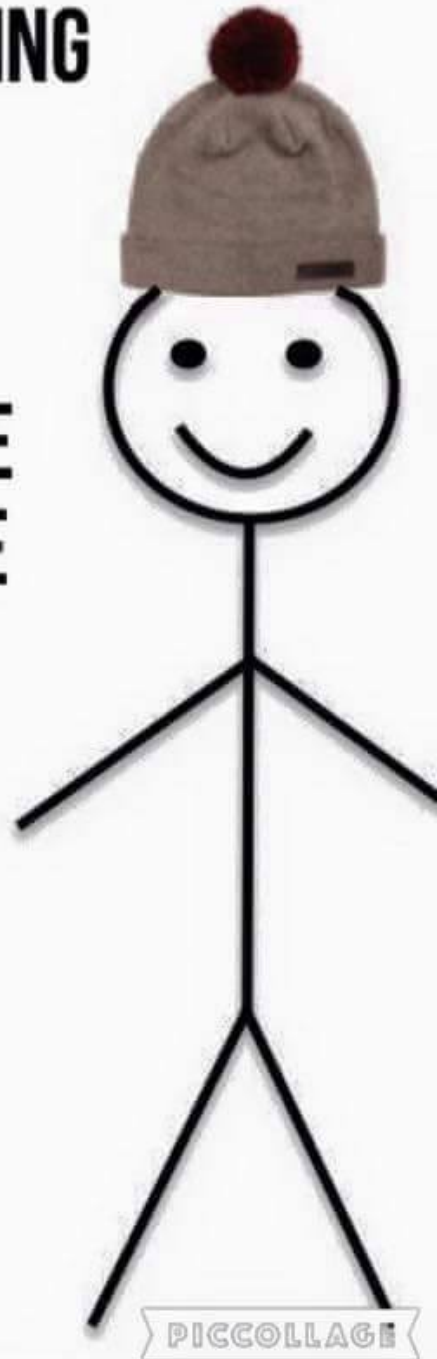
THIS IS BOB

BOB SEES ITS SNOWING

**BOB DOESN'T GO
AROUND TELLING
EVERYONE BECAUSE
BOB KNOWS PEOPLE
HAVE WINDOWS**

BOB IS SMART

BE LIKE BOB



Have a nice week

Tain