

Backchat Insider's Market matrix

ONE STEP FORWARD



Working party

Our industry hits the silver screen with the release of *Cedar Rapids*, a film about the misdemeanours of a US insurance agent at a boozy industry conference. Nothing like the way we do things, as visitors to Biba next week will no doubt attest ...

Bringing in the runs

Hero of the week is Oval chief executive Philip Hodson. He ran the London marathon and raised thousands for good causes. Despite the heat, the determined consolidator chief drew on the fitness gained from his days as a county cricket player to complete the 26-mile slog.



Looney Troons

Endless iPad 2 giveaways are being used to lure potential suitors to booths at the upcoming Biba meet. So spare a thought for the folks at Troon Underwriting, who seem to be the only outfit not offering any. We predict their booth will only have tumbleweeds flying past.



Pat on the back

Congratulations to Aviva, who scooped the award for the greenest firm in the top 300 European companies. I hear one strategy Aviva explored was to extract harmful methane from cow dung. My source went strangely silent when asked if Aviva underwriters were expected to do the dirty work themselves.



Girls' best friend?

A vocal critic of the ECJ gender ruling has been David Cameron, who said the ban showed "no common sense". I'm sure the industry will agree, but it sounds rather less noble when you realise the man will eventually have to bankroll the car insurance for his two daughters ...

TAXI!



Not everyone's a Winner

It didn't go down well last week when David Cameron told a female MP to "calm down, dear", à la Michael Winner in those Esure adverts. Is all publicity good publicity, Peter Wood?

CHEERS!



Cat confusion

I wish the global insurance industry would make its mind up. First Marsh tells us first-quarter catastrophes will not turn the market, then international luminaries like Bill Berkley at WR Berkley say first-quarter prices were up in all areas. Aren't these super-powers supposed to know what's going on?

Dog tired

Those of us who enjoyed two long weekends in a row should spare a thought for the chief execs who never stop. R&Q's Ken Randall tackled his firm's results over Easter and then flew to the USA on business on the Monday. "I'm keeping my eyes open with matchsticks," he said.



TWO STEPS BACK