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**APPRENTICE
EXCLUSIVE!**

BRAWL OR NOTHING!

**THE FINAL FOUR
FIGHT IT OUT WITH, ER,
DIGNITY AND CLASS**

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FIGHTING TO THE DEATH!

It's crunch time for the *Apprentice* final four, but who will win the ultimate boardroom battle? **buzz** decided to settle it the old-fashioned way

WORDS PAUL SIMPER PHOTOGRAPHS NICKY JOHNSTON

THERE'S BEEN TEN WEEKS OF BACKSTABBING, bitchery and spectacular boardroom brawls as 16 *Apprentice* candidates have battled to get their hands on the cool quarter of a million quid investment, plus the chance to become Lord Sugar's business partner. We've witnessed Machiavellian mind games, questionable business strategies and even toe-curling role-playing as the wannabes have tried to dodge His Lordship's trigger finger. But now we're down to just four – Tom 'The Inventor' Pellereau, Helen 'Winning Streak' Milligan, Susan 'Meek Little Mouse' Ma, and Jedi' Jim Eastwood.

In this week's final showdown, there are no more tasks and no more teams. All that lies between them and the coveted prize is a little chat with four of the business world's most fearsome industry experts – the fantastically brutal troubleshooter Claude Littner, magazine CEO Mike Soutar, IT entrepreneur Matthew Riley and *Apprentice* legend and queen of the astonished eyebrow, Margaret Mountford (hurrah!). They'll each be giving the candidates an industrial-strength grilling – dissecting the fab four's creative CV claims before dismantling their very beings, molecule by molecule.

Actually the finalists do have one more task to complete – there's the small matter of **buzz**'s fight-to-the-death cover shoot. And wow, they really go for it.

Then, once the shirts are ripped, the hair is pulled and the staple gun's been fired, we are ready to do some serious grilling of our own.





"Sometimes you can be filled with passion in the heat of the debate" **Jim**

JIM EASTWOOD, 32
SALES AND MARKETING MANAGER,
NORTHERN IRELAND

Where were you working before you signed up to go on *The Apprentice*?
I'd been doing marketing and sales. I've always watched the show, but when the format changed this year to allow the winner to go into business with Lord Sugar, my wife Paula said: "It's about time you did it." It's all go in the Eastwood household right now because not only have we got to get through the final, but Paula is due to give birth in seven weeks to our first baby.

What was your biggest worry about doing the show?
I'm a pretty optimistic guy. I didn't really have any concerns about going on *The Apprentice*.

What has been your finest hour so far?
The biscuit task, when I landed the biggest order with Asda in *Apprentice* history. Lord Sugar might have suggested I stretched the limits [Jim gave his team an unlimited budget for the TV ad campaign and promised to rope in the stars of *Harry Potter*], but I know how big a company Asda is, so it was a case of 'go big or go home'.

What was your biggest mistake?
Hindsight is a wonderful thing. We tried to come up with some great names for our over-60s magazine, then Zoe suggested Hip Replacement. We only had ten seconds left at that point so we went with it. Would I change that now? Yeah, definitely.

Do you regret calling Susan a "meek little mouse"?
I often talk about there being participants and spectators – and I am a 'get stuck in' participant. But sometimes you can be filled with too much passion in the heat of the debate. I didn't mean to be disparaging when I called Susan that.

Have you been teased about anything that's happened on the show?
My nickname, Jedi Jim. First it was mentioned on *You're Fired!*, then it started trending on Twitter and then schoolkids were making T-shirts with it written on. But as long as they don't start making Jedi Jim voodoo dolls and sticking pins in them, I don't mind.

What's your favourite Lord Sugar put-down?
"What I've forgotten about bulls**t you haven't even learnt," was a good one he said to me. But I'll take him calling me "the biggest bulls**t in the world" as a compliment. That's as close as you come to a compliment from Lord Sugar.

Why shouldn't Lord Sugar fire you? You've exasperated him on occasions and even had Nick Hower banging his hands on the table with frustration.
There must have been a fly on the table when Nick did that! In all seriousness, I've just tried to give it my best. Lord Sugar should hire me because I've got a fantastic business idea and I bring a lot to the table. What you get from me – love it or hate it – is a guy who gets really stuck in. I didn't intend to exasperate anybody and hopefully I've given them food for thought.



HELEN LOUISE MILLIGAN, 30
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO CEO,
NORTHUMBERLAND

What were you doing before *The Apprentice*?
I was the executive assistant to the chief exec of Greggs. I've been with them three years. Most of my time is spent in Newcastle where our head office is, but I spend my weekends at a place called Waltham on the Wolds. It's a lovely little village near Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire, where my 31-year-old partner Christopher Smith, who's a dentist, lives. [Laughs]. Hence the free teeth whitening!

What would you say are the strengths and weaknesses of the other finalists?
Jim's a really good salesperson. I know he came into some criticism for talking his way out of the boardroom, but to me that was showing his sales skills at their very best. His only weakness is that he doesn't need to promise as much as he does when he's selling – like his *Harry Potter* claims. Tom's strength is his ability to make the right call, but his weakness is that he needs to be stronger in putting that forward. Suzy's enthusiasm is her strength; her weakness is starting ten years behind us. When I was her age I was a waitress.

What's been your best moment of the series?
Probably the backpack pitch to La Redoute in the French task, because I'd never done a pitch before. I wasn't meant to do it, but just before we went in Suzy wasn't feeling very well so I took over. They didn't show it, but when I won the €214,000 contract I did ask Lord Sugar in the boardroom if I could have a cut of it. He just laughed!

What was your biggest mistake?
I come from a business world where decisions are made collectively, but what I should have done on the first task [where the teams sold meals and snacks to the public] was strongly state that I was in the food business. Thankfully we still

won, but I think I would have been more suited to project-manage that particular task.

Is there anything you wish you hadn't said?
Saying "gracias" to someone in Paris. I think the only reason that wasn't shown on air was because the cameraman laughed as soon as I said it!

Have your friends and family taken the mickey out of you for anything that's happened?
They've teased me about the fact that Jim said I was quite passive and quiet. My boss said to me the next day: "We wish you were quiet and passive!" I may seem that way to the other candidates, but my family and friends find that unbelievable.

Why shouldn't you be fired?
You've never had your own business – what makes you think you could run one now? Being in the corporate world, as I am, you learn a lot about how a really successful business is run. I've gained a lot of experience from some of the best business people in the UK. So I think the experience that I bring would be quite difficult for anyone else to match. Everything I've done has been leading towards this moment.



TOM PELLEREAU, 31
INVENTOR, LONDON

What was life like before *The Apprentice*?
I'd just had one of the worst times of my life. I'd broken up with my girlfriend and a business that I'd helped to found had a new investor who was trying to kick me out. So I was sitting in my flat

thinking: 'If I don't apply for *The Apprentice* now, when will I ever?' I was getting close to rethinking my life. I'd been to university, but while all my friends had professional jobs, I'd done more unusual things. I was starting to think I'd got it all wrong and that my risks hadn't paid off.

Who is your biggest rival in the final?
It's very hard to look beyond the juggernaut that is Helen. She had nine wins in a row and I've really enjoyed working with her.

Who were you most surprised to see fired?
I was pretty surprised that I wasn't fired. When Lord Sugar started to point the finger at me in the boardroom after the biscuit task, I was mouthing "no!"

"I was pretty surprised that I wasn't fired!" **Tom**

Have you stopped nodding your head since Lord Sugar told you off for it?
I have. I never realised I was such a big nodder until I saw it in the show. The funny thing is, Jim's started doing it as well. But if you agree with someone, isn't it nice to nod?

You and Melody did a spot of role-playing during the biscuit task. Would you do that again?
[Long pause and a look of

horror]. I can't believe we did that. Probably not. In fact, definitely not. I also wouldn't use Paper, Scissors, Stone as a way of deciding on a task. I got a lot of gyp for that, but I was just trying to be fair.

Who took the longest to get ready in the house?
Edna, by far, took the longest to get ready. It actually became an expression in the house. If you were running late, you were "doing an Edna". Edna's hair was amazing, though. She slept in her rollers, so if we had to get up in the middle of the night for a task she was all rolled up.

Why shouldn't Lord Sugar fire you? You were back in the boardroom so many times early on he thought you were stalking him.
I offer something pretty unique. I have the experience and skills of developing products which, when working with someone like Lord Sugar, could go global very quickly. I've got about 20 inventions in beauty and health that are ready to go.

Finally, did you ever get back together with the ex?
No. But I recently got engaged to a wonderful structural engineer called Sarah. We met at a party three weeks before I started on *The Apprentice*. She used to send me letters to the house and I was allowed to phone her once a week, but it was tough. I really missed her. I proposed to her in Cornwall on top of the dunes. We're getting married next year.

Photographer: Nicky Johnston. Stylist: Janis Morrison. Hair & make-up: Sara Clark.



SUSAN MA, 22
NATURAL-SKINCARE ENTREPRENEUR,
CROYDON, LONDON

Who did you think was your greatest rival at the start of the process? And has that changed? I think my biggest rival in the beginning was Jim. He has this very calm way of speaking in one set tone – he never raises or lowers his voice much. It's that demeanour that makes you do whatever he's telling you to do. His Jedi powers work well. But when you get to the final four it's no longer about teamwork or leadership – it's all about how you answer the questions that are thrown at you in the final interrogation. Whoever can speak most articulately will have an advantage – so that's Jim and Helen.

What are the strengths and weaknesses of the other finalists?

Helen is calm, organised and is very good at thinking on her feet. I haven't seen much from her in terms of creativity, but then we haven't been on many of the same tasks. I've never worked with Tom on a task, but he is Mr Hindsight in the boardroom so he could do with putting his ideas over more strongly. Jim's strengths are of course his sales skills, but he can appear manipulative.



What was your worst task? You had a 'mare in Birmingham selling beauty products. That was a difficult one. In one sense I did well because I secured the best products – the tanning products and the foot massagers. But I did overestimate the number of bottles of tanning products we could sell. When Zoe had a go at me in front of everyone it was very humiliating.

Do you regret your ingenious excuse for not selling – that the people of Birmingham were too poor to buy your products? I really can't apologise enough for saying that. I was talking to myself. Being a student I knew that paying £20 for a tanning product was very expensive. I'd just tried to sell to some students so I was just remarking that they were poor. I really didn't mean for Karren Brady to hear it. I say a lot of things without thinking and I really wish I hadn't said that.

Did you also regret wondering out loud whether the French like their children? That's another thing I said when I didn't think before opening my mouth. At the time I was brainstorming and was saying anything that came into my head. But though I regret saying it, that brainstorming session led to us choosing the two products that went on to break the record [beams]. I can assure you that I do know that the French love their kids!

Why shouldn't Lord Sugar fire you? I'm a very adaptable person who is quick to take criticisms on board and improve myself. Lord Sugar shouldn't fire me because I am young, I'll listen to his ideas and I also have a fresh perspective – which means we could bounce ideas off each other.

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The slippery slope of success

It's all champagne and caviar for this year's winner, but what happened to some of the most memorable former *Apprentice* stars? **buzz** charts who've triumphed and those who, well, haven't...



Michelle Dewberry (Series Two)
Michelle was already earning £100k before she joined (and won) the show. Since then she has launched websites like bees.com, chiconomise.com and thedailychic.com – and mentors young entrepreneurs.



Ruth Badger (Series Two)
She may have lost out to Michelle, but the straight-talking saleswoman has gone on to launch her own consultancy firm – and has even starred in her own TV business show, *Badger Or Bust*.



Liz Locke (Series Six)
Liz got the boot when Lord Sugar was swayed by Stuart Baggs' infamous "field of ponies" speech. Now, she's living the life of a WAG since becoming engaged to Republic of Ireland goalie Wayne Henderson.

Kate Walsh (Series Five)
Kate lost out to Yasmina Siadatan in a shock result in 2009, but has gone on to become a TV presenter. She was brought in as a last-minute replacement for Denise Van Outen on *OK! TV*.

Stuart Baggs (Series Six)
The man who's still calling himself The Brand was the first to be booted off C4's *Celebrity Five Go To* which, considering what a nightmare model Paula Hamilton was, is some pretty embarrassing stuff.

