

# Spirits high ahead of Games opening ceremony

Excitement at a peak as world's best athletes touch down

SAPA-AP  
London

**J**OURNALISTS assigned to cover London this month bring the flavour and details of the Olympic Games to you.

## FLAME MYSTERY

So where will the Olympics flame burn? Steel magnate Lakshmi Mittal says the ruby-red sculpture that towers over London's Olympic Stadium is not the cauldron that will hold the ceremonial flame. Mittal had floated the idea, but plans arrived too late for consideration.

The lighting of the cauldron is always a big moment for the Olympics, and organisers usually withhold details to ensure drama. But usually there is some structure – somewhere – that hints where the flame will burn.

Suspicion had long fallen on the ArcelorMittal Orbit Tower, but Mittal says the tower is art, not a fire vessel for the Games, which start on Friday.

**Cassandra Vinograd - Twitter**  
<http://twitter.com/cassvinograd>

## GAMES - WHAT GAMES?

Joseph White reports from Scotland: Yes, I'm at the Olympics – but I'm some 640km from centre stage.

Glasgow is hosting some of the soccer matches but the Scottish city doesn't have much of an Olympic vibe.

In London, one can hardly walk a few metres without spotting a special Olympic traffic lane or a billboard or some sort of notice; in Glasgow, there is a lonely sign at the main train station telling fans where to queue to catch the subway to historic Hampden Park, plus some Olympic-themed banners lining the streets.

The action was scheduled to start with a pair of women's matches today – two days before the opening ceremony in London – and the locals have given away thousands of



tickets to schools and other youth so the 52 000-seat stadium won't feel so empty.

The two cities can't even agree on the weather.

London had a beautiful sunny day on Monday, while Glasgow was wet and dreary.

**Joseph White - Twitter**  
<http://twitter.com/JGWhiteAP>

## OLYMPIC VARNISH

Kati Elliott has got a nail for you. The 20-year-old manicurist can print 240 designs – all versions of national flags – at the P&G Salon in the Olympic media village.

The company has similar salons in the athletes' village and in central London at the US

**ROYAL TOUCH: Britain's Princess Anne holds the Olympic torch at a ceremony in Greece.** PICTURE: AP

Olympic family home, where they cater to athletes' moms.

On a recent day, Elliott was sporting designs for Great Britain, São Tomé and

**COUNTDOWN IS ON: A woman photographs the Olympic rings positioned on Tower Bridge for the Games on Monday. London's Olympic Stadium will host the opening ceremony on Friday.**

PICTURE: LUKE MACGREGOR / REUTERS

Principe, US, Burma/Myanmar and SA, all on one hand.

**Sheila Norman-Culp - Twitter**  
<http://twitter.com/snormanculp>

## TORCH INTERLUDE

From Fergus Bell, a Londoner:

At 8.47am the Olympic Torch passed along the route near my house, and I was able to experience the torch relay as it was meant to be experienced. And what is that, precisely?

Hundreds of excited men, women and children lined the residential suburban streets.

Next came the huge police presence: I counted at least six

police motorcycles before I caught a glimpse of the procession.

One poor woman innocently reversed out of her driveway at the wrong moment and was promptly surrounded. The police were good-natured; with three days left, they've probably seen it all.

Then you see the runner. Well, not quite.

First you have at least three buses representing various Olympic sponsors adorned with toned promotional staff cheering about the runner behind. When members of the

crowd do finally catch a glimpse of the runner decked out in the official white torch relay uniform, they rush in, cameras out, as they cheer and shriek.

And then it's over. In moments, it's all gone. The cheers echo down the street as everyone disperses.

**Fergus Bell - Twitter**  
<http://twitter.com/fergb>

## RIVER GOLF

Talk about a water trap.

US PGA Tour players Sergio Garcia and Dustin Johnson previewed golf's inclusion at

the 2016 Olympics by hitting purple balls toward a floating green on London's River Thames in late evening sunshine. Golf will be included at the next Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, returning for the first time since 1904.

**Gerald Imray - Twitter**  
<http://twitter.com/GeraldImray>

● "Eyes on London" shows you the Olympics through the eyes of journalists across the Olympic city and around the world. Follow them on Twitter where available with the handles listed after each item.