



MTA Advisor:
Beth Betland

NTIA
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Go beyond with JB

JOURNEY Beyond (JB) has brought back its 'Become a Beyond' trade incentive following record success in 2025.

Advisors around the world will compete for one of 14 places on the operator's mega famil - a nine-day journey in Mar 2027 that will take in Rottnest Island, the Margaret River, and a three-day rail journey from Perth to Adelaide, crossing the Nullarbor.

There are five ways to earn a spot - get all the details [HERE](#). JM

Please protect our WHMs

THE Federal Government must urgently provide greater certainty around Working Holiday Maker (WHM) visa processing, with growing delays and pauses putting tourism businesses and future visitor demand at risk, the Tourism & Transport Forum (TTF) has claimed.

In a letter penned to Federal Home Affairs Minister Tony Burke, TTF CEO Margy Osmond said that Australia risks "losing billions" due to recent changes to WHM

visa processing arrangements, which include slowing processing times for working holiday subclass 417 visas and a pause on work and holiday subclass 462 visa applications from 24 capped partner countries.

These include countries across Europe, Asia and South America, such as Brazil, Singapore, Spain, Turkiye and Thailand.

"WHMs are not simply temporary workers, they are high-value, long-stay int'l visitors who work, travel and spend across Australia," Osmond argued.

"They stay in our hotels and hostels, eat at our restaurants and cafes, take tours, use transport, visit regional communities and spend money in local businesses.

"The government should be making it easier, not harder, for... visitors to choose Australia."

The industry body is calling on the government to provide greater visibility around what is driving the changes, as well as ensure future policy settings recognise the contribution WHMs make as visitors, consumers, workers & regional travellers. AB

Discover with credits

TRAVELLERS can receive \$50 credit every night during their stay at a Discovery Resort, when booked before 31 Oct.

See more details on [page 11](#).

A clip of the stars

AS THE GSA for Star Clippers, Entire Travel Group is committed to providing agents with the highest-quality expertise for selling the cruise line to their clients - see the [back page](#).



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See more info on [page 10](#).

Today's issue of TD

Travel Daily today features nine pages of news, including a photo page from **Walshe Group**, and our **Sustainability** feature, plus full pages from:

- Silversea
- Discovery Resorts
- Entire Travel Group

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TTC moves to ensure Trafalgar has the power

TRAFALGAR is about to enter a new era, with parent company The Travel Corporation (TTC) announcing plans to unify Insight Vacations and CostSaver under the Trafalgar brand from next year (**TD** breaking news).

The brand restructure will see an expanded Trafalgar proposition offer more than 600 itineraries through new Saver, Classic and Premium cost categories, in the process providing a wider range of trip types across tours, small-group tours, river cruises, rail journeys and group sales.

Trafalgar's new Premium offering will retain the elevated hotels, dining and experiences associated with its Insight Vacations brand, while its Saver trips will aim to deliver the same value and flexibility synonymous with CostSaver.

Meanwhile, Trafalgar's Classic tier will represent experiences that agents already associate with

the brand.

Speaking with **Travel Daily** ahead of the formal announcement this morning, SVP for TTC Tour Brands Oceania, Andrew Young (**pictured**), said the decision was designed to create a broader, simpler approach for travel agents to sell its products.

"We did a lot of research with our guests and agent partners, and that was really the biggest piece - listening to the trade around our brands and what they were finding difficult," Young said.

"There was clearly a lot of love for our brands but they were also telling us loud and clear was that it was becoming confusing to differentiate between the brands - particularly between Insight Vacations and Trafalgar."

Young also confirmed that



Insight Vacations and CostSaver tours released at the end of next month will be co-shared with its Trafalgar trips.

"It is really important for people to be clear that up until Mar 2028, Insight Vacations coaches and CostSaver

coaches will still be visible and present [overseas]."

When asked about the potential pushback from regular Insight and CostSaver clients about the change, Young said TTC was "conscious" of leakage if the company "doesn't get it right".

"We are very confident in the plan and in our team out on the road in ensuring that the right message gets through," he said.

Meanwhile on the cruise front, Young said Trafalgar's river cruises will sit in the new Premium tier.

"The staff and the service on

board are at a five-star level at a four-star price," he explained.

"We have seven newbuilds that will be hitting waterways between 2028-2029, and I have seen some early renders of what those newbuilds will look like, and they will be very contemporary - it will definitely appeal to the premium Australian river cruiser."

TTC also confirmed that Trafalgar will make its biggest-ever brand investment in Q1 2027, with the brand to be marketed via a "new look and feel" in line with the ambition of appealing to a broader range of travellers from Saver through to Premium itineraries.

Speaking broadly about the company's strategy, Young said that cruising and small-group touring are its two fastest-growing categories, and concedes that historically, TTC had underinvested in these verticals. **AB**

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VA gets behind the trade

THE Australian Travel Industry Association (ATIA) has announced Virgin Australia (VA) as its new domestic airline partner, backing its advocacy and member events year-round across the country.

Virgin Australia's support will kick off at Beyond Borders on Fri 09 Oct at the Melbourne Convention Centre, where the airline will provide delegates with a dedicated space to connect and recharge via the VA Lounge.

Club Med IPO ticked

FOSUN International Limited, the parent group of Club Med, has been given the green light by the Hong Kong Stock Exchange to proceed with the proposed initial public offering (IPO) its resort-operator unit, ClubMed Lifestyle.

The share sale could raise more than US\$500 million, according to Reuters, and could take place as early as the end of 2026. *JM*



The carrier will also serve as the master of ceremonies sponsor for the NTIA gala dinner at the Palladium, Crown Melbourne, on Sat 10 Oct.

"Through our partnership with ATIA, we look forward to working even more closely with its members, supporting the important work they do and celebrating the outstanding people and businesses that make our industry so special," Virgin Australia general manager of sales Darren McDermott said.

ATIA CEO Dean Long added: "Virgin Australia is a welcome addition to the ATIA community and we are delighted to have their support." *JM*

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Flydubai is on BSP

FLYDUBAI is now available through BSP Australia and New Zealand, giving travel agents access to fares, availability and ticketing through their GDS.

The update means travel agents enjoy expanded selling opportunities across the Emirati carrier's network. *JM*

Sansom joins Hughes

FORMER Scenic - Luxury Cruises & Tours direct sales manager APAC Christian Sansom has exited the company to assume the position of head of sales - APAC at Equity Transport Group.

The business is the parent company for several transport brands including chauffeur service Hughes.

Boasting 13 offices across Australia, NZ and Singapore, Hughes currently has a fleet of 1,235 vehicles, and on its website, states that it moved 2.95 million passengers in the past year. *AB*

Sep Qantas strike

QANTASLINK Ground Services crew have voted to strike, threatening travel disruption during the Sep school break, following months of negotiations for a new enterprise agreement.

If the Transport Workers Union-aligned employees follow through, action will include stoppages of between one and 24 hours, as well as bans on training, overtime, and more.

The crew and QantasLink are scheduled to return to the Fair Work Commission in Sep. *MS*

Biz travel fast in Oz

GLOBAL business travel spending is set to hit a record \$1.71t this year, with Australia highlighted as one of the fastest-growing markets for the sector.

The number of business trips worldwide is expected to surpass 1.84 billion this year, according to a report by the Global Business Travel Association. *MS*

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LE appoints Hesson

LLOYD Hesson has joined Luxury Escapes as head of market management after wrapping up a long tenure at Expedia Group.

The new recruit was most recently a senior BDM for the OTA before joining Luxury Escapes, and will help grow hotel partnerships in his new role. *AB*

Viking incentive

VIKING is giving advisors across Australia and New Zealand the chance to win a voyage for two worth up to \$60,000 as part of its biggest trade incentive of 2026.

There are also 26 runner-up prizes up for grabs, providing advisors 40,000 Rewards by Viking points, valued at \$1,000.

To enter, travel agents must sell select Viking voyages between now and 30 Nov, and all bookings must be registered.

One booking secures one entry, with additional bookings increasing their chances. *JB*

Keep calm and carry on

EXCLUSIVE

CEO of small group tour operator Leatherback Travel Mat Newton has urged travellers and agents alike to avoid cancelling long-haul trips, despite ongoing geopolitical risks.

Speaking with **TD**, Newton said that many of his company's clients had been deterred from travelling through the Middle East, with Smartraveller and negative media coverage swaying travel decisions.

"The [travel] industry tends to have this approach of being very jittery," Newton explained.

Part of Leatherback's approach has been to avoid simply projecting news coverage onto its guests, he added.

For Leatherback Travel, the Middle East is one of its top-selling markets, which is why travel advisories remain a top concern for its operations.

"We serve the hardcore

traveller, so we do everything we can not to cancel," Newton said.

"If we were to base all of our trips on every single status of every single country that they might go through to get to a country, then we wouldn't run many trips."

Furthermore, Newton said that Smartraveller and the mainstream media often overlook the safety of group travel.

"Incidents, even in 'the most dangerous destinations on the planet', are extraordinarily rare," he explained.

"The industry should probably start defending itself a bit better and waking up and pushing that narrative a bit harder."

Specialising in adventure-focused tours across the Middle East, Central Asia, the Balkans and more, Leatherback Travel was named as Australia's fastest growing travel company by the *AFR* in 2025. *JB*

First class at Changi

SINGAPORE Airlines has announced its new First Class Concierge service is now available at Singapore Changi Airport.

The service offers personalised assistance for eligible first class passengers, providing end-to-end support within the terminal.

Travellers will be met by a dedicated team and escorted through key airport touchpoints, including from the SilverKris Lounge to their departure gate, and from gate-to-gate for connecting passengers.

The concierge service cannot be booked and is provided automatically to eligible customers, with buggy service also available, subject to operational availability. *JM*



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APT appoints COO

MLADEN Vukic has been promoted to the role of chief operating officer, transitioning from the role of chief product and operations officer.

The APT stalwart has been with the company for close to 20 years, starting out in the reservations team in 2007. *AB*

Air Tahiti Nui tweak

FROM Jul 2027, Air Tahiti Nui will shift its departure times on its Papeete to Sydney route from 12.10pm to 10am local time.

Departure times from Sydney remain unchanged.

Air Tahiti Nui direct Sydney flights commence on 14 Dec. *AB*

Beyond'27 in travel

NEWS Australia will bring together the country's leading marketing experts for Beyond'27, a five-session intelligence series that aims to provide brands with fresh consumer insights.

The series will include a travel segment, scheduled for 09 Sep, focusing on how AI is collapsing the consumer journey and how trust, not performance marketing, offers a new competitive edge.

"Our Beyond'27 sessions are built around a single question: what do marketers in this category need to know right now to grow?" News Australia chief revenue officer Lou Barrett said.

The events will take place at the company's Sydney headquarters, followed by networking drinks and dinners. *JM*

Give Africa a green light

AFRICA'S green season offers a higher-value, lower-competition travel experience, creating a unique selling point for advisors, according to Safari Guru, an Australian-based specialist African safari company.

Most travellers wanting to take an African safari typically avoid booking during the low season between Nov and Apr due to the rains that follow the continent's long dry winter.

This is a misconception that agents can help clear up, the operator said, pointing out that the rainfall tends to arrive in short, dramatic afternoon bursts rather than settling in for the day, leaving mornings clear for game drives.

Safari Guru highlighted three selling points that agents can take advantage of: calving season game viewing, which dry season visitors miss; more privacy and space due to less vehicle density; and premium camp and suite rates that are more accessible compared to Jul and Aug.

Regions such as Tanzania's southern Serengeti and Ndutu plains, where several hundred thousand wildebeest calves are born within weeks of each other between Jan and Mar, are seeing heightened demand during green season, as are Kruger and the Sabi Sands in South Africa, where impala give birth in near-unison across the region each Nov.

The Okavango Delta and Moremi in Botswana are ideal for clients who prioritise privacy, as



they typically attract low visitor numbers, while South Luangwa in Zambia offers ideal birding conditions during low season.

"The advisors who do well with green season aren't the ones who oversell it as a bargain," Safari Guru founder Deon De Villiers said.

"They're the ones who can explain, region by region, exactly what a client will see that they wouldn't in Aug - and match that to what the client actually wants from the trip." *JM*

Rails in real time

A NEW interactive train map is now available to travellers, allowing tourists to track rail journeys across France, Belgium and Spain in real time.

TrainTracker24 shows how many trains are running, average delay times, and the percentage of on-time services and cancellations.

Users can also filter specific rail operators such as Eurostar and France's SNCF, isolating their schedules and performance.

Paid features include a personalised journey map, live data on delayed services, as well as a more detailed map. *JB*

Kiwi campervan surge

CAMPERVAN bookings in New Zealand have seen a 31% YoY surge since Sep 2025, according to data from Webjet's Motorhome Republic brand.

The data revealed that trips around the South Island are the most popular, with bookings to Queenstown up 63% YoY.

Data also showed the South Island is appealing to younger travellers, with 42% of Christchurch bookings coming from under-35s, compared to 30% in Auckland.

In contrast, older travellers are drawn to the North Island, with 49% of Auckland bookings come from those aged 45 and over. *JB*

Globus' Shaw bet

JADE Shaw has been appointed product marketing manager APAC at Globus family of brands for Asia Pacific, joining from Luxury Escapes, where she was formerly the partnerships and contracting manager - cruise.

The senior travel executive brings plenty of cruise trade experience to the table, having also held product roles with Helloworld, Cruise Express and Creative Cruising. *AB*





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'Bula' to both worlds



INDUSTRY-LED sales mission Bula Queensland recently held eight dedicated agent events across the United States and Canada, capitalising on the connectivity between Cairns and North America via Fiji Airways (*TD* 14 Apr 2026).

Backed by Tourism and Events Queensland, Tourism Tropical North Queensland, Cairns Airport and Fiji Airways, the events were designed to showcase all that Tropical North Queensland has to offer.

Attendees were able to connect with some of the region's most notable tourism operators, including Crystalbrook Collection, Cairns Adventure Group and ABC Reef Safaris.

"This mission demonstrated just how strongly the Tropical North Queensland industry is getting behind the Fiji Airways opportunity," Michael Nelson, managing director of Pinnacle

Tourism Marketing, said.

"We went into the market with a very clear message: the connectivity is here, the product is here and Cairns can now be a genuine gateway into the Australian experience.

"For the North American and Canadian traveller, that changes the way we can sell Australia.

"Tropical North Queensland is now a genuine gateway for what is the most significant international market into our region," Nelson added. *JB*

Pictured: Stroebel Bekker, Fiji Airways; Melanie Brown, About Australia; James Baker, Cairns Adventure Group; Jay Wink, ABC Reef Safaris; Nelson; Tineke Clark, CaPTA Group; Mike Webley, Pinnacle Tourism Marketing; Karen Sloane, Crystalbrook Collection; James Munro, Downunder Cruise and Dive/Billy Tea Safaris; and Alex Iglesias, Fiji Airways.

ATIA UPDATE

from Jenny Le, National Manager Events & Corporate Partnerships



NTIA judging is underway, and the calibre of this year's finalists is incredible. Our judges

have been commenting on how well-prepared everyone has been, and - equally as impressive - how well they think on their feet.

Once judging wraps up, we'll be collating the scores ready for the winner announcement at the NTIA gala dinner on Sat 10 Oct.

Speaking of the gala dinner, we're down to fewer than 100 tickets, and it's on track to be another sellout.

If you haven't locked yours in, now's the time.

And if you're joining us for NTIA, don't just stop at the gala dinner.

We've also got the Beyond Borders Travel Summit and the NTIA finalist celebration on 09 Oct, plus the Wellness 5K on 10 Oct.

Stay tuned for the Beyond Borders agenda, which drops later this week.

ATIA has also launched the details of this year's People's Choice Competition (*TD* 25 Aug 2026), run in partnership with News Travel Network, inviting Aussie travellers to nominate, in 50 words or less, what their favourite travel brand is and why.

This is personally my favourite award on the night.

Every year, we get the most compelling stories of members going above and beyond for their clients - the kind of stories that remind you why this industry does what it does.

It's a genuine win-win: the client goes into the draw for one of eight travel prizes, and the business gets recognised as an NTIA finalist.

There's a reason why 09 and 10 Oct in Melbourne will be the only place to be.

It's shaping up to be one of the best NTIAs yet and I can't wait to celebrate it with you.

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The Walshe Group marks 50 years with team celebration

THE Walshe Group recently brought together over 60 employees in Fremantle, Western Australia for a team-wide celebration marking the organisation's 50th anniversary.

Founded in 1976 by Rodney Walshe, The Walshe Group has grown into Australia and New Zealand's largest specialist aviation and destination representation company.

'Shared Success' was the weekend's theme, reflecting on the people, partners, and relationships that have shaped The Walshe Group over five decades.

The weekend brought together team members from across the company's international network in Australia, New Zealand, Japan and the Philippines, including the team from sister company Southern Travelnet.

For more, see **page nine**.



THE Walshe Group team from Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines and Japan.

THE Walshe Group leadership team and special guest Michael Hall, South African Airways.



THE Southern Travelnet team from Australia, New Zealand and Japan.



CHEERS to the next 50 years.



THE Walshe Group destination team.



JACQUI Walshe marks 50 years of The Walshe Group.



NIGEL Bale, Lufthansa Group's GM and board member Dave Simmons enjoy the panel.



MANOMI Vithanage, Oman Air and Zonja Kriel, South African Airways ready to celebrate in style.



DISCUSSING the similarities and differences between airline and destination representation.



EXPLORING Rottnest Island by bike.



ANOTHER photo challenge at the famous public art installation Absorbed by Light.



TOURIST REWARDS FOR DOING GOOD

SEVERAL destinations around the world are offering rewards for responsible travel, including Berlin, Copenhagen & England.

Exmoor National Park in Devon recently launched a pilot program for its 'Pay with Care' scheme, offering discounts for sustainable activities such as travelling to the park by bike or public transport, picking up litter, recording wildlife sightings, and sharing a social media post encouraging others to care for the environment.

Guests are offered a 20% discount at three Exmoor visitor centres if they complete one of the four activities between now and the end of summer.

Meanwhile in May this year, the month-long 'BerlinPay' campaign launched, aimed at getting everyone active on or around the city's waterways.

Both tourists and locals were



rewarded for helping with planting, watering trees, riding bikes or picking up rubbish.

Benefits included discounts on cultural experiences and leisure activities on the water.

Berlin also launched this year its first digital Water Atlas, an online map that supports sustainable visitor management on and around the water.

It features more than 215 bathing areas and waterside restaurants, and eventually extra information will be added on marinas, boat rentals, passenger shipping services and ecologically-sensitive areas such as protected zones.

Both Berlin's and Exmoor's initiatives were inspired by Copenhagen's 'CopenPay' project.

Young Explorers

HAPAG-LLOYD Cruises is offering a Young Explorers program for those keen to learn more about the natural world while on board.

Available on selected sailings to Iceland, Svalbard and Greenland, the program is open to kids and teens aged 10 to 17, who are invited to take part in Zodiac rides, shore excursions and wildlife encounters while guided by expedition experts.

Guests may examine plankton in the Ocean Academy, head ashore with experts, go behind the scenes of the ship or learn about protecting sensitive habitats and environments.

"The core of every expedition is curiosity: the willingness to ask questions and see the world through different eyes," Isolde Susset, Hapag-Lloyd Cruises managing director, said.

"Anyone who experiences just how fascinating and worthy of protection our natural world is at an early age will carry this awareness with them." JHM



WLG on track

WELLINGTON Airport's latest annual sustainability report has revealed it is on track to meet net zero and waste targets.

Since 2017, gross emissions have fallen 29%, while direct emissions are down 77% when renewable energy is included.

WLG has also cut waste to landfill by 21%, moving closer to its 30% 2030 target. JHM

BCEC 'checks' boxes for certification

THE Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre (BCEC) has received EarthCheck Master Certification, recognising its commitment to environmental & social responsibility over the course of 15 years.

The certification also highlights the efforts of BCEC's team, which has played a part in shaping its current approach to sustainability.

BCEC underwent a third-

party examination of its operational systems, resource management, waste reduction, energy efficiency, cultural inclusion and staff training.

"BCEC has demonstrated that sustainability is embedded into how the organisation operates, how its people make decisions and how it continues to invest in better outcomes for the future," Earthcheck founder and CEO Stewart Moore said. JB

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MONEY

WELCOME to Money, *TD's* Tue feature on what the Australian dollar is doing.

AU\$1 = US\$0.717

THE Australian dollar has climbed above US\$0.71 cents, as well as strengthening against other currencies, including the Japanese yen, the euro and Chinese yuan.

"The simplest way to think about it is that one Australian dollar now buys more overseas than it did a year ago," Compare the Market's Chris Ford told *The Senior*.

"That's good news for Australians spending money internationally," he added.

Compared to this time last year, Aussies can get around 10.3% more bang for their buck in the US, and approximately 8.8% more in Europe.

The AUD has also gained significant value against the Japanese yen, which is up 19.6% versus last year, as well as the Indian rupee (up 20.1%), the New Zealand dollar (up 9.1%), and the British pound (up 6.9%).

Wholesale rates this morning.

US	\$0.717
UK	£0.529
NZ	\$1.211
Euro	€0.617
Japan	¥114.5
Thailand	฿23.77
China	¥4.819
South Africa	R1.55
Canada	\$0.993
Crude oil	US\$86.41
Jet fuel	\$156.85/bbl
Bitcoin	฿0.0000091

Walshe reaches half-ton



THE Walshe Group has marked its 50-year anniversary by bringing together 60 employees for a weekend in Fremantle.

Anchored by the theme 'Shared Success', the itinerary for the weekend included a scavenger hunt through the city, and a full day of presentations and two panel discussions exploring the role representation plays in an evolving travel industry.

The two guest speakers joining the event were Tourism WA's senior markets manager, domestic, NZ & USA Mel Johnson, and South African Airways' country manager, Australia & NZ Michael Hall.

"Reaching 50 years is an extraordinary milestone, but what makes it particularly meaningful is being able to celebrate it with our people, who, past and present, have always been at the heart of our success," Jacqui Walshe, CEO and MD of The Walshe Group, said.

"This weekend was an opportunity to look back and recognise how far we have come, celebrate where we are today and, most importantly, think about where we want to go next.

"Bringing together our team members was a powerful reminder that while our business has evolved significantly over the last 50 years, our success continues to be built on the people and the relationships we share," she added.

The weekend in Fremantle forms one part of the Walshe Group's 50th anniversary celebrations, which also include internal team activities, industry engagement and celebrations with clients and partners. *JB*

Pictured: Manomi Vithanage, Oman Air; Yuji Akuzawa, ANA; Javad Azizi, Oman Air; and Gustjenni Soedarso, ANA.

AA's silver screen

AMERICAN Airlines (AA) is set to install seatback screens on its entire narrow-body fleet, starting in 2028 for a 2030 completion.

Each screen will include 4K display, Bluetooth audio and USB-C ports.

The announcement is part of AA's modernisation strategy, which also includes the installation of Starlink wi-fi (*TD* 27 May 2026). *JB*



Window Seat

NASHVILLE International Airport may soon be known as Dolly Parton International Airport, with a proposal moving forward to change the name of the gateway in honour of the late American icon.

If the change goes ahead, it would become the first US int'l airport named after a woman, and the second to be named after a musician.

Ironically, though, Parton hated flying and avoided it as much as possible.

Unlike many other stars of her calibre, she never owned a private jet, and instead preferred to use her tour bus.

"I'll tell everyone, I don't care," Parton revealed in an interview in 2018.

"I'm not ashamed of it, I don't like to fly.

"I'm like my daddy - I don't want to go no higher up than pulling corn and no lower down than pickin' taters."

The proposal to rename the airport has gathered support from Tennessee Governor Bill Lee and the Metro Nashville Airport Authority, as well as Nashville Mayor Freddie O'Connell, with a planning meeting scheduled for 17 Sep.

In 2025, Parton was aware of a petition for the hub to be named in her honour, and, when asked about it in an interview, commented that she was "very flattered, [but] I think it's just a joke".

"I don't think anybody's all that serious about it."

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Roger Condon (Star Clippers)
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