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How long will the Wimbledon Men's finals last this year? How many goals will be scored in the World Cup? How many passengers will pass through Heathrow this summer? And for how many hours will the sun shine in Scotland?

Competitions come in many shapes and forms, but the one which is announced in the March issue of Significance is slightly different from most. Entrants have to predict the future. And time will prove them right or wrong.

Data from past years is provided; so you could call it a competition in time series analysis. You could also call it forecasting or prediction – or, if you want, crystal ball gazing; but for statisticians, one of the interests is that you are also asked to estimate the faith you have in your answers. We ask you to give a standard deviation to indicate how near to the final result you think your estimate might be.

The competition might be instructive and should, we hope, be fun. It is open to all, statistical experts and non-statisticians alike. School and class entries are particularly welcome – we hope that teachers may find it useful.

See the March issue of Significance for details; or, if you cannot wait that long, [download the competition details](#) now. The full [rules can be found on the Significance website](#), the [Significance Facebook site](#) and the [Significance Twitter page](#) or [download the rules](#) in pdf format.

The final question in the competition is 'How many entries will there be to this competition?' Why not enter it, and increase that number by one?

- [Crystal Ball competition – preliminary results](#)
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