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Flight path

AT LEAST the proposed buyer-merger partner for **Easyjet** comes from the aviation sector. Many of the world's biggest carriers have been built on mergers although not all have been roaring successes.

Johan Lundgren, having had to put up with the slings and arrows of founder Stelios Haji-Ioannou, clearly feels confident he can see off Hungarian carrier Wizz. The London-quoted airline, with its network of Eastern European routes, has emerged stronger from Covid than **Easyjet**.

It has focused on moving passengers from temperate northern climes to the Mediterranean and recovery has been hindered by

confusing traffic light systems. The response of Lundgren to a sluggish return to the skies is to seek new capital of £1.2bn to ensure it has the financial firepower to come back stronger. Lundgren wants to use the war chest to buy up slots abandoned by other carriers in the pandemic. As Covid fades, **Easyjet** ought to have the slots, the reputation for better service than most no-frills carriers, and the fleet to bounce back.

Desire for cheap European travel looks unrequited as Ryanair's response has demonstrated. BA's talk of a return to Gatwick with stripped-down service suggests the sector is not down and out.

Wizz may have been sent packing, but if **Easyjet** doesn't get better soon, it could attract other suitors.

They will still have Stelios to deal with.