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Contact list: Page 86



"Hurry sir... the Brigadier's on his way up!"

● No smoking day – Pages 30-31

## In this issue

... of your award-winning magazine

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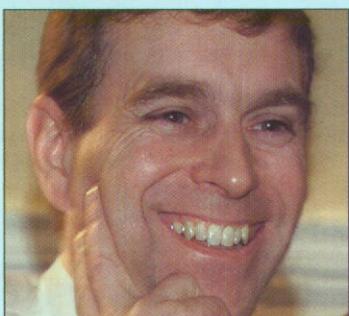
### Cover

Sgt Mike Dixon, right, warms up for his sixth Winter Olympics. He admits his single-minded commitment to biathlon has affected his military career... now this remarkable sportsman has his sights on the summer games

Picture: Graeme Main



Win a complete guitar set-up – Page 74



In an exclusive interview, the Duke of York reflects on life in the Royal Navy, his part in the Falklands War... and his pride in Britain's Armed Forces – Pages 18-19

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What others think about the Army's role in winter sports

# Not your average operation

It's cold, dirty and dangerous, but British troops are getting on with the mission in Kabul

Report: Capt Guy Gatenby  
Pictures: Cpl Mark Ballantyne

"RIGHT, Gentlemen . . . we will be over Afghanistan in 20 minutes . . . all the lights will go off . . . put your flak jackets on . . . they have been welcoming us into Kabul with tracer."

The last hour of the flight into Kabul focuses everyone's mind on the fact that this is a peace support operation like no other.

For the British troops providing part of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), the trip to Afghanistan is a long one. After more than a day of flying – staging through Cyprus and Oman – they land in Kabul before dawn. All flights with passengers arrive at night as the risk assessment suggests it is still not safe to fly by day.

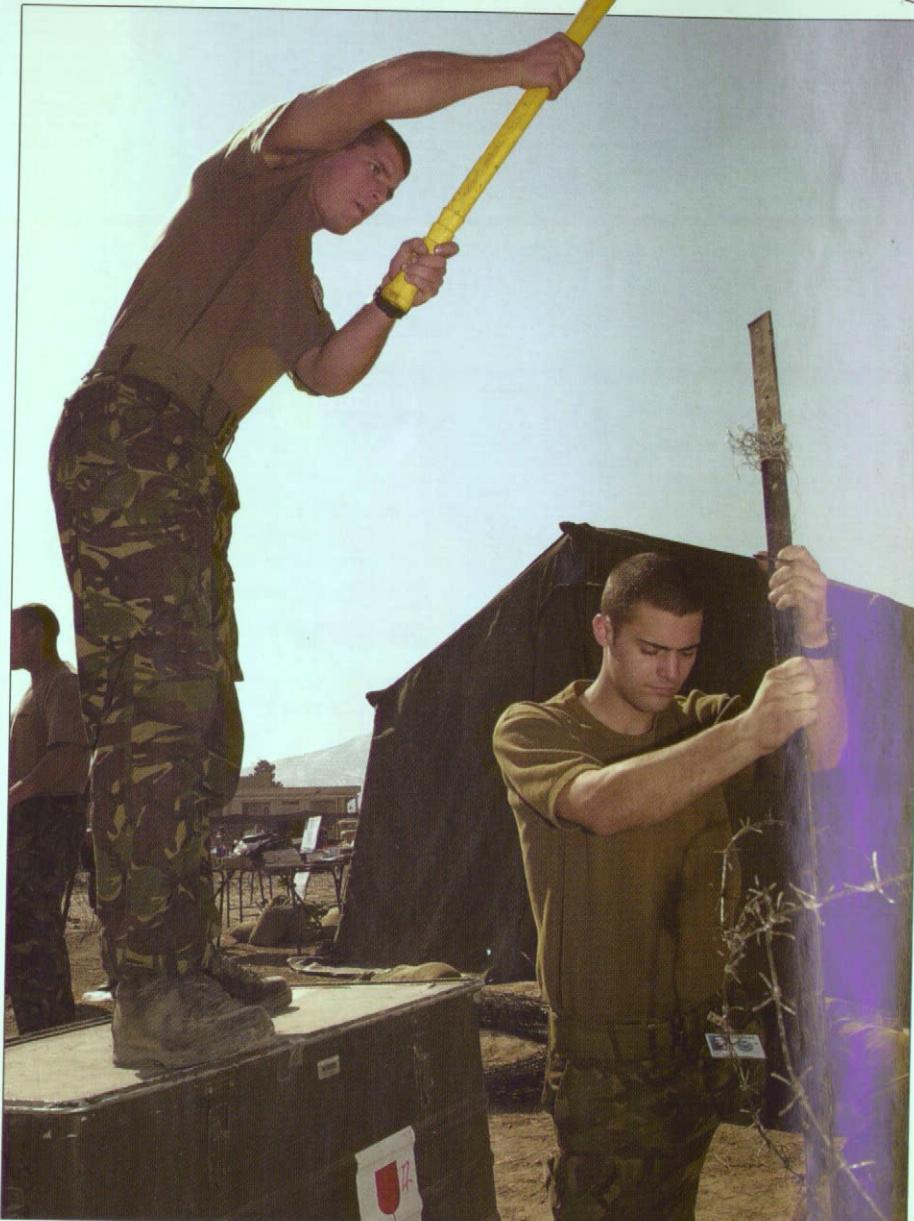
The first thing that hits you as you stumble out of the C-130 Hercules, its engines still running because it has to leave before daybreak, is the intense cold – temperatures are down to minus 17C and a biting wind makes it worse. The merciless conditions run down batteries left outside and freeze jerrycans of water, but as the sun rises it gives way to cloudless skies and relative warmth.

Now that Royal Logistic Corps support is operational, living conditions are relatively comfortable. Everyone is accommodated in heated tents and sleeping on cots or camp beds in one of the locations from which British troops are working.

Showers and washing facilities are basic. At most locations they involve a plastic bowl and body-wash and, for the male soldiers, a very, very quick shave.

A fine black dust seeps into sensitive equipment such as laptop computers and cameras and has caused problems for troops of all nationalities. It is an environmental factor which had to be considered at all stages of planning.

Sgt Craig Smith, of 30 Signal Regiment, said: "It's not like Kosovo or Bosnia, where you have nice 'Gucci' showers. Here it is shower bags from water heated in burners and hand-wash-



I've got a hammer: Troops from 30 Signal Regiment extend the headquarters complex perimeter fence. Cpl Daniel Bird swings the mallet while Cpl Rick Ards holds the stake

ing of clothes. Your admin has to be spot-on."

This is probably the most integrated multi-national operation in which British troops have been involved. Unlike other theatres where countries have been given their own areas of operations, in Kabul the nations supplying the 3,940 soldiers work together. Italian *carabinieri* secure ISAF HQ, while at brigade headquarters German soldiers do the job.

Afghans are intrigued by ISAF. Groups of them stand at the perimeter of the camp and stare. More than 150 local

people have been employed to work as interpreters or manual labourers.

British troops say it is a unique mission. As SSgt Steve Simmonds of 30 Signal Regiment put it: "This is what we call a 'dot' deployment. By that we mean we do everything from scratch because there was nothing here when we arrived.

"We had to build our own accommodation, our showers, toilets, kitchens . . . everything. The soldiers we have brought out on their first tour couldn't have had a better start to their careers."

The work-rate of the troops is impres-

• In addition to the enabling force of 250 sent to Afghanistan in the early stages of the mission, there were about 1,700 British troops in Kabul as part of ISAF as this edition went to press.

• The 26-strong Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas flew to Afghanistan to take part in a series of events in and around Kabul, including performing at

the international football match between Afghanistan and an ISAF team.

• Families of 2 Para soldiers are collecting old toys, clothes, paints and colouring books for children in Kabul. Meanwhile, soldiers from Bulford-based 3 Division Signal Regiment went on the streets of Salisbury to collect toys and clothes for the Indira Gandhi children's hospital.



Making a splash: Cpl Neil Telfer of 3 (UK) Division Signal Regiment empties his bowl after a morning wash at HQ ISAF

sive. EOD engineers are busy in a country with an estimated ten million mines which cause casualties every day. The medics hold clinics in town and are helping to improve conditions in the local hospitals. The Paras are patrolling the streets of Kabul by day and night and there is evidence that crime is falling. As always, the chefs – and other support staff – have been working round the clock to keep this 24-hour operation running smoothly.

Kabul is trying hard to shed its war-torn image, returning to the thriving market town it once was. You can buy second-hand bicycle tyres or fresh fruit in newly-opened shops. Despite Britain's past history in Afghanistan, relationships with local people are friendly. Ahmed Hiwali, a shopkeeper, said: "British soldiers are not afraid to talk to the Afghans, especially in World Cup year."

Britain's full presence in Afghanistan was due to be in place as this edition went to press. Soon troops will begin to trickle home for a well-earned rest.

## Forces radio, television go on the air

TWO radio channels and three TV stations have been made available for British forces in Afghanistan. Following a request from PJHQ Northwood, BFBS services are being provided under the MoD's operational welfare package.

Troops can listen to BFBS 1's pop music, information and hourly news bulletins, as well as BFBS 2's news relays from BBC Radio 4 and sport from BBC 5 Live.

Up to 15 TV downlinks are planned, with three BFBS channels showing UK terrestrial programmes. SSVC, the charity which runs BFBS, is providing British troops in Afghanistan with films on DVD, radios and Play Station 2 games.

• AN Afghan civilian died following an incident in which soldiers of The Parachute Regiment returned fire after reporting that their observation post on top of a grain silo in the west of Kabul had been attacked. An ISAF spokesman said a joint inquiry had been launched by Afghan police and the RMP.



Kick-off: LCpl Paul Clark, who collected the football from Premiership stars Roy Keane and Michael Owen, places it on the centre spot in Kabul's stadium at the start of the match

## Troops' team triumphs in stadium of death

A multi-national ISAF football team led by Capt Jonny Crook of HQ 16 Air Assault Brigade beat a Kabul United team 3-1 in the town's Olympic Stadium, used as a Taliban execution site until last year.

The ISAF goalscorers included Sgt Darren Mortimer (156 Provost Coy RMP) and Sgt Mark Welch. Other British soldiers in the multi-national squad were WO2 Steven Bates (7 Para RHA); Pte Jason Bowalter, LCpl Nick Pool and LCpl Matt Hearn (2 Para); Sig Craig Smith (R Signals); Cpl Andrew Dixon (49 EOD Sqn); Cpl Ricky Morpew (63 Sqn, 13 Air Asslt Sup Regt RLC); and Sig Ross Harley, Cpl Tony Richardson and Sig Andrew Hanratty (3 DSR).

The teams were assisted by former England and Spurs star Gary Mabbutt and Lawrie McMenemy, a former Coldstream Guardsman and international coach. The Football Association party which organised the match was led by executive director David Davies.



Proud look: Lawrie McMenemy, who coached and managed the football teams in Kabul, shows off his Parachute Regiment T-shirt outside the stadium



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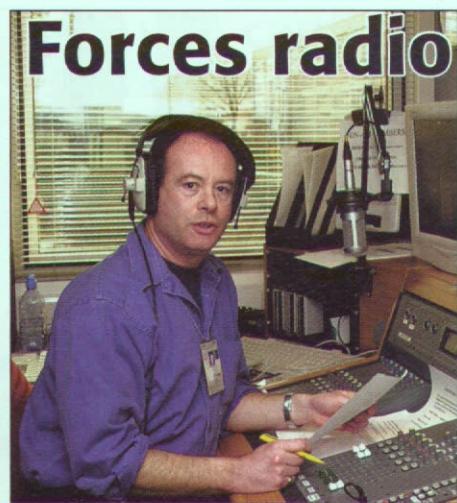
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On air: DJ Patrick Eade makes the first broadcast from the Banja Luka Metal Factory

## Forces radio goes live from Banja Luka

SOLDIERS serving all over the Balkans have been able to tune into their very own shows since BFBS Radio went live from Banja Luka last month, broadcasting to British camps in Bosnia, Croatia, Kosovo and Macedonia.

The new studio-in-a-container at Banja Luka Metal Factory, together with the one at Pristina in Kosovo, makes the two-studio operation truly pan-Balkans, providing eight hours of local shows to replace those currently broadcast from Germany and the United Kingdom.

Commander British Forces, Col Mark

Banham, said: "When you've been in the Army as long as I have you've grown up with BFBS, so it's great to see them here."

Station manager Patrick Eade and DJ Sean Ridley are broadcasting a teatime show from 1600 to 1900 and alternate lunchtimes with the studio in Pristina.

They intend to produce features on British forces in Bosnia to be broadcast to all areas covered by BFBS.

You can contact the station with comments, ideas and dedications by writing to BFBS Balkans BLMF, BFPO 553 or by e-mailing [bosnia@bfbs.com](mailto:bosnia@bfbs.com)



Box of tricks: BFBS's new Banja Luka station

# Pay award 'deserved'

Hoon praises Services for exceptional year

MOST Servicemen and women are to get a 3.7 per cent increase in pay from April 1. Lower-paid privates and lance corporals, and some junior officers, are to get slightly more.

In accepting the recommendations of the Armed Forces Pay Review Body (AFPRB) in full Defence Secretary Geoff Hoon said British forces deserved the award for "an exceptionally busy year, both at home and abroad".

"From foot-and-mouth to Macedonia, to Afghanistan, our Servicemen and women have never failed to achieve what we have asked of them. This year's pay award is nothing less than they deserve for their tireless work as a force for good."

Admiral Sir Michael Boyce, the Chief of the Defence Staff, also welcomed the news. "I am delighted that the pay recommendations have been accepted in full and without staging. Over the last 12 months, our Armed Forces have worked across the

five continents of the globe to protect Britain's interests, sometimes in very difficult and dangerous conditions.

"I would like to extend my thanks to all the members of the Armed Forces for this work."

Exceptions to the across-the-board 3.7 per cent rise are:

- Privates and lance corporals in pay range 1 (lower), who will receive 4.2 per cent;
- Captains and majors, who will receive 4.2 per cent;
- Additional pay increases of between 0.4 and 3.3 per cent for warrant officers class 1;
- Under-17s and adult new entrants, whose starting rates will increase by 12.5 per cent and 4.2 per cent respectively.

Two financial retention incentives for aircrew start from April 1, each with a five-year return of service.

The AFPRB's recommendations were accepted in full, with implementation effective from April 1, 2002.



YOUR NEW PAY RATES/WHAT THE AFPRB SAYS – Pages 53-56

## No truth in claim that Bulger killer will join Army

A SUNDAY newspaper report that Jon Venables, one of the killers of Jamie Bulger, was to join the British Army has been categorically denied by the Ministry of Defence.

It was claimed that the Home Office had persuaded the MoD to waive regulations preventing convicted killers from joining the Army in order to enable Venables, who has been released from a young offenders' institute with a new identity, to enlist.

An Army spokesman said the Home Office had not made any representations to the MoD about waiving the regulations and that under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act Venables was not eligible to join the Army.

As a convicted murderer, Venables will be under the supervision of the National Probation Service for the rest of his life.

## Two soldiers die in Freetown accident

TWO British soldiers were killed in a road traffic accident near Bengema Training Centre in Sierra Leone. Two other soldiers travelling in the same military Land Rover were injured, but not seriously.

Cpl Michael Phillips from Jarrow and Rfn James Corman from Stevenage were pronounced dead on arrival at the UN hospital in Freetown. Both were serving with the 1st Battalion, The Royal Green Jackets.

An investigation is being carried out.

The Green Jackets have been deployed in the West African country to provide training assistance to Sierra Leone Government armed forces. British battalions have been involved in peacekeeping and training there since the UK intervened in 2000.

## Moving times



Walkies: Eighteen dogs and the same number of horses paraded in Melton Mowbray to mark the relocation of the Defence Animal Centre Headquarters to a purpose-built HQ a short walk away. The new building offers dramatically improved facilities for the 80 or so military and civilian staff. Situated on 13 acres, it boasts a sports complex, single-living accommodation for up to 180 military personnel, catering facilities, a social room, library and education centre.

The old site – the last on which troops lived in huts dating from before the Second World War – will be cleared for new housing. The centre trains dogs, horses and instructors for the Armed Forces, Police, Immigration Service and Customs and Excise.

Picture: Chris Fletcher

## Tabbing in the rain



Wet, wet, wet: Maj Mike Goode, right, leads the way in torrential rain on the A414 from Hertford to Chelmsford, with field ambulance back-up vehicle in close attendance. He and a team from E (Essex and Herts Coy), The East of England Regiment braved terrible weather on the 35-mile bash to raise funds for a special care baby unit at Lister Hospital, Stevenage, and a children's hospice in Chelmsford.

Picture: Tony Margiocchi



Coming your way soon: Brig Simon Allen, centre, Commander 51st Highland Brigade, flanked by Sgt Maj Adrian O'Brien and LCpl Alex Little, both of E Company, 51st Highland Regiment (Volunteers), launches the 2002 Territorial Army recruitment campaign at Stirling Castle. The campaign will culminate with TA Open Day on April 13, when units throughout Scotland will open their doors to members of the public. Picture: Mark Owens

## New chapter to examine TA role

THE role of the Territorial Army is to be examined as part of a wide-ranging review following the attacks of September 11.

Speaking in a defence debate which coincided with the release of a public discussion document on a new chapter of the Strategic Defence Review, Defence Secretary Geoff Hoon told the House of Commons: "With the Home Office and other departments, we are looking at whether any new tasks required by the new scenarios can be encompassed within the existing role and capability of the reserves."

If it was decided changes in role were necessary, TA members and their employers would be consulted, he said. It was a tenet of British military doctrine that it is usually better to seek to engage an enemy at longer range, before they were able to mount an attack

against our interests. "Our preference will therefore be to continue to place our emphasis on deployed operations, so we must continue to be ready and willing to deploy significant forces overseas to act against terrorists and those who harbour them."

The Government is inviting views for the "new chapter" on defence from as wide an audience as possible. Discussion material has been placed in every library and been sent to every local authority. It is also available on the web at [www.mod.uk](http://www.mod.uk)

Mr Hoon said: "The Armed Forces are a vital national asset and I want to hear views on what their role and contribution should be in this new environment." He went on: "We need to see defence as a public service, something as crucial to our freedom and our quality of life as health and education."

### IN BRIEF

• Pipe Major WO2 Ewen Stuart, right, of The King's Own Scottish Borderers, shows off the new pipe banner presented by The Famous Grouse to Alpha Company, nicknamed the Grousebeaters.



• WO2 Frank Gargan and Pte Craig McKewan, who were with 1 Para in Sierra Leone in May 2000, canoeed the 146-mile length of the Thames from Lechlade Lock to Westminster Bridge to raise £1,500 to help amputee children in the West African country. Pictured handing over the cheque to the High Commissioner of Sierra Leone, both men are serving at the Infantry Training Centre Caterick. They had intended to enter the annual Devizes-to-Westminster race, but had to go it alone when foot-and-mouth caused the event to be cancelled.

## Now you can keep in touch on web

READERS will be able to take advantage of a free short text-messaging service under an arrangement between Soldier and the award-winning internet service provider, **breathe.com**. "It will mean communication between soldiers and their loved ones will be better than ever," said a spokesman.

Visitors to the *Soldier* website – [www.soldiermagazine.co.uk](http://www.soldiermagazine.co.uk) – can get free SMS by accessing **breathe** and signing-up to its service.

Key features of **breathe** include webmail e-mail, WAP functionality, news-feeds and a competitive range of internet access packages. (See Page 6.)

## Troops pull in £s for York charities

HAVING raised more than £20,000 for local charities in the past six months, soldiers of York-based 2 Signal Regiment have collected another £2,450 for good causes.

The latest fund-raising event was an open day in Imphal Barracks, the proceeds of which will help community and Armed Forces charities – including the Army Benevolent Fund, Royal Star and Garter Home and York and Strensall Community Centres for Army Welfare Services – throughout the North-East.

The cheques were handed over by 2 Signal Regiment's commanding officer Lt Col Ian Cameron-Mowat at an officers' mess presentation attended by the Lord Mayor of York, Mrs Irene



Cheque it out: Lord Mayor Irene Waudby and Lt Col Ian Cameron-Mowat with grateful recipients Picture: Chris Barker

## Art exhibition needs you

ENTRIES for the British Forces Germany charity arts festival at Wentworth Barracks, Herford, on May 11 close on April 19. Amateur works of art are wanted by the organisers, who are hoping that artists will donate a work for a special charity auction to take place on the evening of the show.

Entry forms are available from BFG Charity Arts Festival, c/o Mrs Caro Butterfield, ETS Branch HQ 1 (UK) Armoured Division, BFPO 15 or e-mail [alnbtrf@btconnect.com](mailto:alnbtrf@btconnect.com)



Centenary tribute: One hundred years after the action in which **Surgeon Captain Arthur Martin-Leake RAMC** won his first Victoria Cross, a remembrance service was held at High Cross in Hertfordshire. The trumpeter is **Sgt Martin Gardner, R** (Anglian). Martin-Leake won the VC at Vlakfontein, South Africa in 1902 and a bar – the first to be awarded – at Ypres in 1914. RAMC, QARANC and Army Cadet Force representatives were joined at his graveside by members of the family.

## Battle-honoured



Sobraon Sergeant: **Sgt Tim Eastwood**, winner of the 1st Battalion, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment best sergeant award, carries the Regimental Colour during a parade for the presentation of bravery awards, including mentions in dispatches, at Tidworth. In granting the annually-appointed Sobraon Sergeant the right to carry the Colour, usually the preserve of officers, the regiment celebrates the bravery of Sgt Bernard McCabe, who picked up the Colour of the 31st Foot (East Surrey) at Sobraon in India in 1846 and took it forward under heavy fire, turning the tide of the battle after most of the officers had been lost.

The operational honours and awards, presented by **Brig Simon Mayall**, Commander 1st Mechanized Brigade, were won during the battalion's recent tour of Kosovo.

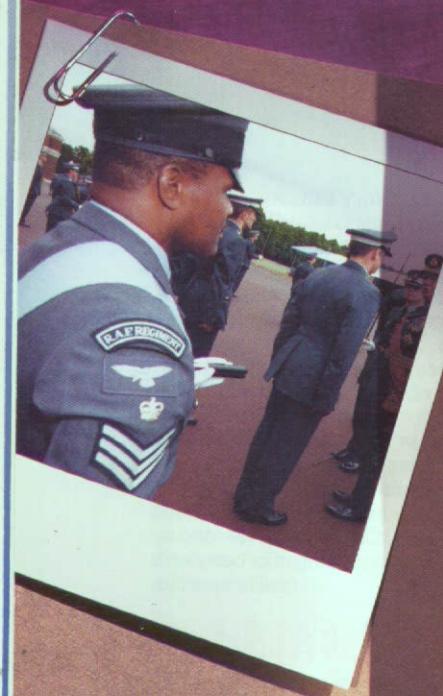
Picture: Steve Dock

## Double first



Picture: Tony Margiocchi

# ATTENTION! ALL ARMED FORCES STAFF



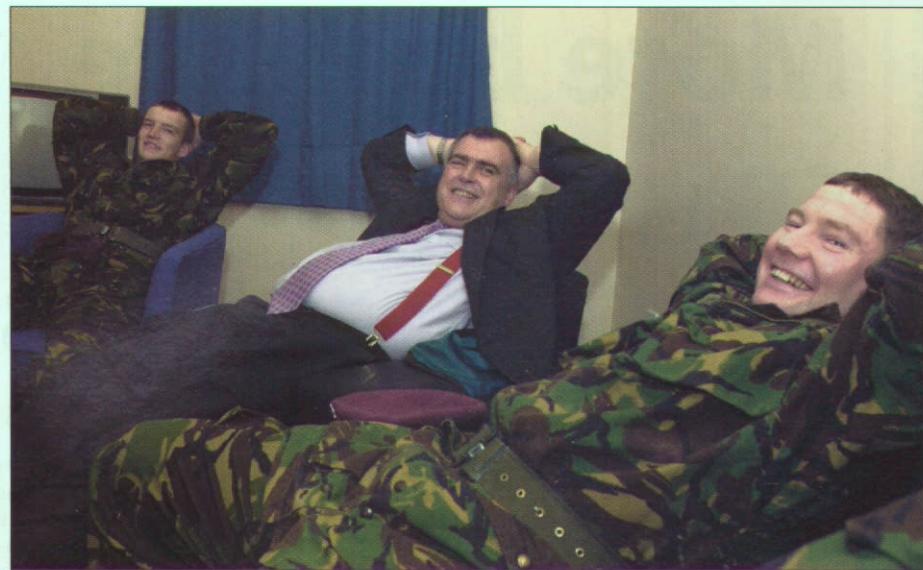
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Picture: Chris Fletcher

Easy does it: Defence Minister Dr Lewis Moonie, centre, relaxes with Pte Brett Abbott, left, and LCpl Michael Kelly of the 3rd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment in a mock-up of communal rooms to be built during a £1 billion redevelopment of Colchester Garrison. A key feature of the scheme is its modular-built, single soldier's one-man, en suite accommodation.

## New rules mean kids can stay on for exams

- Bedrooms for nannies
- *En suite* showers
- More secure locks

FAMILIES with children preparing for exams are to be allowed to remain in Army married quarters for up to two years after the officer or soldier has been posted elsewhere if the syllabus in the new area is different from the existing one.

Relaxation of the retention rules for Service Families Accommodation (SFA) is designed to prevent Army children being disadvantaged by a move when they are preparing for GCSE or A levels. But individual cases will have to be supported by an impact statement from the relevant educational authority.

In the UK, families should contact Service Children's Education at Upavon (tel 01980 618244), and elsewhere the headmaster. In Northern Ireland, where retention is not usually allowed, commanding officers should be consulted.

### Showtime at JHQ

TOPPING the bill at the JHQ International Show at Rheindahlen this summer will be Queen tribute band Mayqueen. They will be appearing at the JHQ Military Complex on June 7 and 8. Tickets (from [www.jhq-show.de](http://www.jhq-show.de) or the JHQ Hive) are £16 each if pre-booked, or £20 on the day.



Picture: Solent News

### First woman chaplain

THE Rev Juliette Hulme, left, is to become the Regular Army's first woman chaplain. After military training at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst and further training at the Armed Forces' Chaplaincy Centre at Amport House, Wiltshire, she will join 7 Signal Regiment in Javelin Barracks at Elmpt, Germany.

## Insurance tax to be refunded

SERVICEMEN and women stationed in Europe who were charged Insurance Premium Tax (IPT) on premiums are entitled to a refund for the period October 1, 1997 to September 30, 2001.

A UK tax on motor, kit, contents and travel insurance, ITP was incorrectly levied by Norwich Union on soldiers in Europe who should have been exempt.

A procedure for claims, believed to range from £15 to £150, has been established with Customs and Excise. Individuals who decide not to claim can opt for their refund to be donated to a Service benevolent fund.

A special reclaim form can be downloaded on [www.naafi-financial.com](http://www.naafi-financial.com) or obtained from Naafi IPT Refunds Unit, PO Box 565, Rouen Road, Norwich NR1 1XR. It should be returned by November 30. Help will be given for anyone who has not kept policy records.

## MoD seeks to rectify tax error

A MAJOR campaign to find people owed money as a result of the mistaken taxation of Army pensioners receiving invaliding pensions is to be launched.

After the error came to light in 1998, the MoD searched about 20,000 files and identified more than 1,000 cases, most of which have received a refund.

Anyone who was in the Army, or an Army spouse, or anyone who can show they would benefit from a refund to the estate of someone who was in the Army but is now deceased may be eligible if they received an Army invaliding or attributable pension as well as a war disablement pension.

Not affected are those receiving only a war disablement pension paid under the War Pensions Scheme.

Conscripts from the two world wars are unlikely to be eligible due to the 14-year minimum period of service for an invaliding pension at that time.

Pensions on or after 1999 have been correctly taxed. If you believe you have a case write with full details to the Army Personnel Centre, AFPPA(G), Pension Division, MP 480, Kentigern House, 65 Brown Street, Glasgow G2 8EX. For more information write to the above address or visit the veterans section on the MoD website at [www.mod.uk](http://www.mod.uk)

● See also Under Big Ben – next page



## Under Big Ben

A digest of what's being said on Army matters in Parliament

### Cold-weather kit for Kabul troops

AFTER monitoring the climatic conditions in Afghanistan the Ministry of Defence has issued a cold-weather clothing supplement to all troops deploying with the International Security Assistance Force.

This supplement to Soldier 95 includes warmer and windproof clothing as well as boots more suitable for colder weather.

In a House of Commons written answer, Armed Forces Minister Adam Ingram said the MoD would continue monitoring the climatic conditions and make necessary changes to the equipment issued.

**Special delivery:** Mail for British troops in Afghanistan is flown out via Muscat in Oman six times a week. From there it travels two hours by road before being flown by the Royal Air Force to Kabul. A total of 1,000kg per day is despatched to Muscat and 475kg per day forwarded to Kabul. A full parcel service (up to 30kg) is not available but small packets (up to 2kg) are sent at a maximum cost of £6.56.

### And I quote ...

"I suppose this is the only opportunity in my lifetime I will get to blame a previous Liberal Government for something."

— Dr Lewis Moonie, Minister for Veterans, on the Army pensions error that may date back to 1919.

card which would allow recognition, with real benefits, of the special status of those who have served in the Armed Forces.

**Recruitment:** As at January 1, 2002, there was a shortfall in the Army of 6,059 personnel. There is a requirement to recruit 230 Gurkhas during 2002 in order to maintain the current 3,500 trained strength.

**Golden Jubilee Medal:** Members of the Armed Forces who are recruited to the retired officer grades in the MoD at the end of their Service become civil servants and as such will not be eligible to receive the medal.

**Vacant housing:** At the end of January there were 10,500 empty married quarters in mainland UK. Of these, more than 3,800 are in the course of disposal; some 2,000 are awaiting families; a further 2,200 are being held for future unit deployments or are empty pending refurbishment. The remaining 550 are subject to a rolling review.

**Rough sleepers:** Numbers of rough sleepers with an Armed Forces background has decreased markedly since 1998.

# More baggage space on way for junior ranks

Allocation to double for lance corporals, privates

JUNIOR ranks and NCOs will benefit most from large increases in baggage allowances to be introduced next month.

From April 1 allocations for all single and married unaccompanied personnel posted within the UK and north-west Europe are to go up to six cubic metres – more than double the current allowance for lance corporals and below.

Moves to and from Holland, Belgium, Germany and Denmark are included.

At present brigadiers and above are entitled to 5.64 cu m, reducing to 4.14 for captains and below, while WO1s get 4.10 and WO2s 3.85, reducing to just 2.85 for lance corporals and privates.

Lack of baggage space on posting has been a constant source of complaint by soldiers forced to pay for transporting personal furniture and possessions (see Armed Forces Pay Review Body report summary, Page 56) and the additional space will be widely welcomed.

Single and married unaccompanied soldiers moving within the UK or NWE have three options for removals.

**MFO boxes** are collected by the individual, packed and returned to the quartermaster. From April 1 all soldiers will be entitled to six cubic metres.

Furniture and other bulky, non-boxed items are permitted as long as the dimensions of the items fall within the regulations and are correctly packed.

The **Private Arrangements Self-Help (PASH)** scheme, available to soldiers posted elsewhere overseas remain limited to the current rank-based entitlement for MFO. They can also use the cash option scheme.

All soldiers are strongly advised to insure their own possessions in transit.

### Photographers please note: There's a bit more time than you think

WITH the prizewinning of the Army Photographic Competition having to be rescheduled to April 25, the closing date for entries has been extended from February 8 to March 15.

Meanwhile, sponsors Publicis, Canon, AGFA, Olympus and S SVC have confirmed they will each be putting up prizes of cash and equipment worth £1,000, while Fuji has promised prizes worth £1,250. **Soldier** is sponsoring a section devoted to the best picture to appear in its own competition.

### IN BRIEF

● Pte Steven Roberts, right, of 22 Engineer Regiment, won the Junior Chef of the Year title and a gold award at the Combined Services culinary competition at Sandown Park. LCpl Matt Johnson, also of 22 Engr Regt, won a bronze award.



● Regular soldiers from five Welsh regiments joined Territorial Army units from **160 (Wales) Brigade** and cadets in putting on displays of equipment, vehicles and weaponry in a major recruiting event at Mold last month.



Digging in: Ptes Carl Bell, David Gladman and Steven Lee from Chindit Company Group, 1st Battalion, The King's Own Royal Border Regiment bed-in their 81mm mortar on Onion Range in the Falklands. Although the ground was dry – so much so that tracer from Somme Platoon's 50-cal machine guns caused widespread blazes on the range – the Cyprus-based KORBR soldiers had to dig their mortars out of the ground after they had been fired, a problem troops experienced during the war 20 years ago.

To allow safe firing, the mortar section

### Somme mortars dig themselves in on the range

had to dig firing pits by hand. Onion Range's uninhabited 150sq km of open land offered the company group virtually unrestricted training opportunities, with the three platoons rotating through a self-contained camp for a week at a time.

# Blueygrams set to bring Kabul closer

LETTERS from home to soldiers deployed in Afghanistan should reach them within 24 hours once a "blueygram" system has been put in place.

Getting e-blueys – electronic letters – to Afghanistan has proved very difficult for the British Forces Post Office, which has been hampered by the country's degraded infrastructure.

Now BFPO has invested in new equipment to offer the blueygram service, an offshoot of the e-bluey.

Software developed by Superletter.com prints out a one-page letter on a self-sealing mailer. Recipients just tear off

the edges to read the contents. Letters will be downloaded to a dedicated satellite phone supplied by Paradigm until more efficient communications can be installed in Kabul.

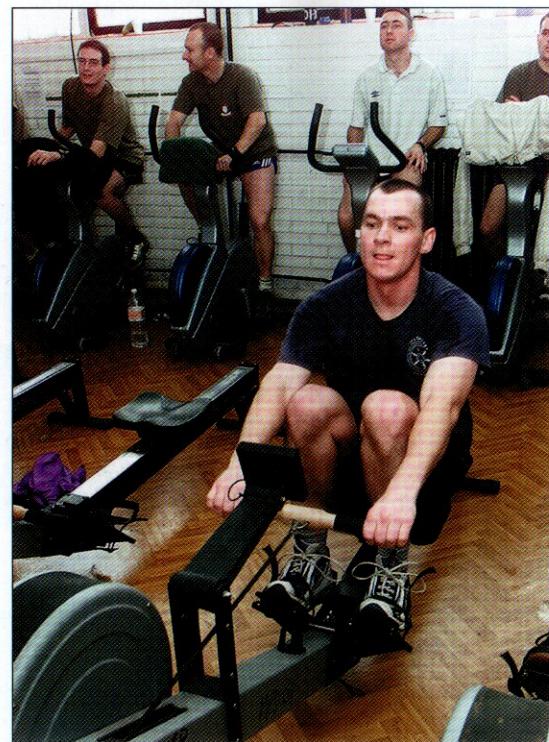
Blueygrams are one of two improvements introduced recently by BFPO for soldiers and their families and friends. The other is a facility to e-mail customised cards to anyone anywhere. For £2.50 a time, users can select the Worldwide Cards icon against an entry in their e-blue address book and design and customise a card.

More details at [www.bfpo.org.uk](http://www.bfpo.org.uk)



● A year in the life of the Household Cavalry, seen through the lens of Henry Dallal (one of whose pictures is reproduced, left), is to feature in an audio-visual event at the Royal Geographical Society, London, on April 23 in aid of SSAFA-Forces Help. Tickets, at £10, are available by calling 020 7463 9214 or e-mailing [info@ssafa.org.uk](mailto:info@ssafa.org.uk) or [www.ssafa.org.uk](http://www.ssafa.org.uk)

### Oarsome effort



Doing good: Balkans EOD team member Cpl Ian "Dixie" Dickson, front, backed by, from left, LCpl John Humphreys, SSgt Si Cullingworth, Pte Neil Horsley and LCpl Pete Sheil based in Sipovo and Banja Luka, works up a sweat in the name of charity. The UK EOD team ran (on a course near the Sipovo camp), cycled (on stationary bikes) and rowed 1,828km, the distance from Banja Luka to 33 Engineer Regiment's Wimbish base back home in Essex.

In all, 18 members of the EOD team, sappers, RAVC dog handlers and Dutch signallers completed the marathon in ten hours and raised more than £1,500 for the Anthony Nolan Leukemia Trust. Cpl Ian Dickson, serving with the EOD Troop of 21 Field Squadron, came up with the idea for the sponsored charity event after a friend back home developed leukemia.

Picture: MCpl Sylvain Bourget

### We're coming home

NINE members of the British Army Antarctic Expedition flew home last month after achieving all their scientific goals. The soldiers were the first to climb Mounts Bancke and Horgh – both around 3,000ft – and only the second to scale Mount Johnson, which they discovered was 11m higher than previously thought.

The rest of the party, who reached the Antarctic on board the 72ft yacht *John Laing*, will follow in the next few weeks.

● [www.soldiermagazine.co.uk](http://www.soldiermagazine.co.uk) was February's site of the month on The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment's [www.123pwrr.co.uk](http://www.123pwrr.co.uk) website.

● Affinitas has bought the Armed Forces Financial Advisory Service (AFFAS) from insurance broker Willis Group Holdings.



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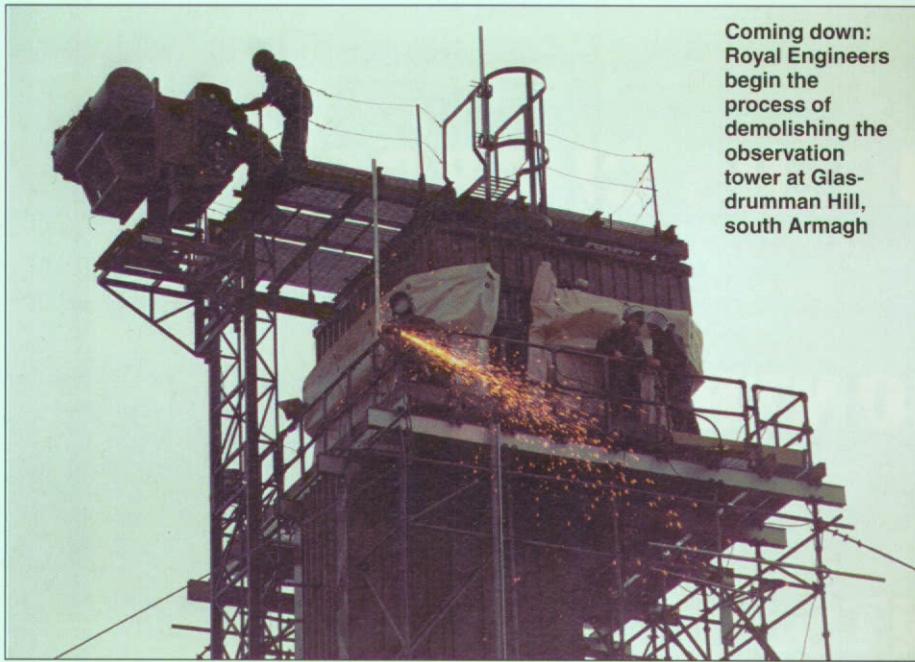
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THE LAND ROVER EXPERIENCE



Coming down: Royal Engineers begin the process of demolishing the observation tower at Glasdrumman Hill, south Armagh

# Londonderry base to close next year

EBRINGTON Barracks, home to generations of soldiers serving in Londonderry, is to close at the end of next year.

In the latest of a number of measures to return Northern Ireland to normality, the barracks will be shut next December after Headquarters 8th Infantry Brigade relocates to Shackleton Barracks in Ballykelly, where extra accommodation is to be built.

The closure of Ebrington, a naval and military base since 1841, will mean fewer troops based in Londonderry than at any time in the past 30 years.

In further normalisation moves, Royal Engineers are demolishing an observation tower on Glasdrumman Hill in south Armagh. Work to turn the base into a green-field site is expected to take months.

Lt Gen Alistair Irwin, GOC Northern Ireland, said: "The terrorist threat and our response to it are kept under constant review and such initiatives can only happen when considered safe and appropriate. There will be no let-up in our efforts to support the police in the fight against terrorism."

## Cyber-SSAFA

SSAFA-Forces Help's new website – [www.ssafa.org.uk](http://www.ssafa.org.uk) – logged 601,068 hits in its first eight weeks. As well as offering information to potential clients, the site has a separate, password-protected volunteer intranet, set up to assist the organisation's 7,500 volunteers.



Sgt Paul McNaul, of 89 Postal and Courier Squadron RLC, who is in charge of the distribution office at SHAPE HQ in Belgium, shows off the new SHAPE first-day cover issued to commemorate the Queen's succession to the throne 50 years ago.

Picture: SSgt Giles Penfound

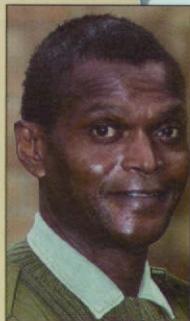
## Paper talk

### What the Press has been saying

● Eugent Clarke, a 108-year-old war veteran who fought at the Battle of the Somme more than 85 years ago, is to meet the Queen and Prince Philip in Jamaica on the first leg of the monarch's Golden Jubilee Commonwealth tour. – *Sunday Telegraph*

● It has survived for aeons in the world's oceans, evading predators with its unique ability virtually to disappear. Now the gift of camouflage bestowed on the cuttlefish could help British tanks to survive for longer on the battlefield. Scientists at Bath University have created a gel that mimics the cephalopod's ability to blend into its background to escape detection. – *Sunday Telegraph*

● A British Army officer was made tribal chief of an African village after building a school with £18,000 of his own cash. Maj Charlie Oliver, pictured, was posted to Port Loko in Sierra Leone as a UN observer. [He usually works with the Defence Logistics Organisation at Andover.] – *Sun*

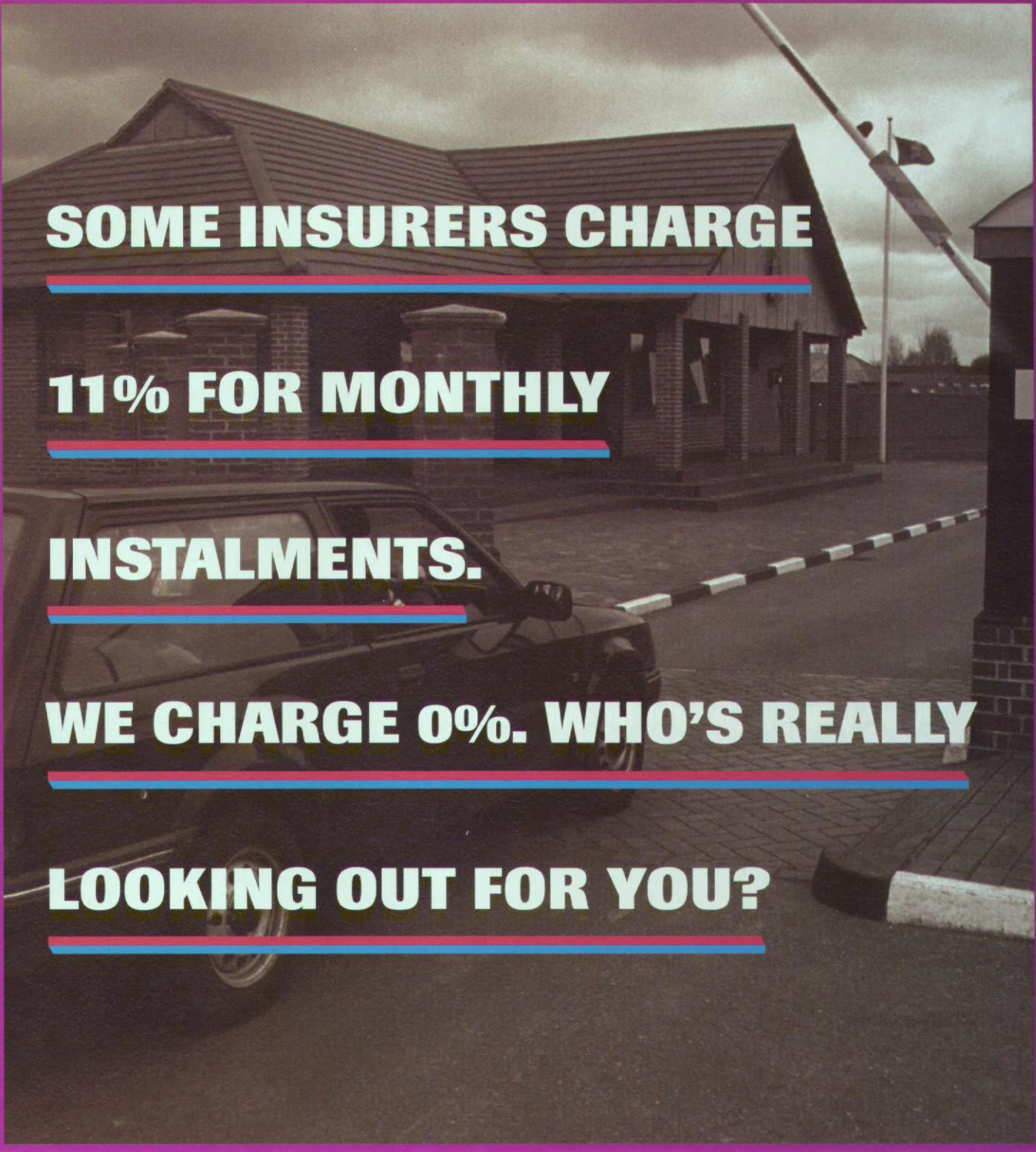


● The police are overstretched and the Territorial Army, naval and RAF reservists should patrol Britain's streets in a bid to prevent terrorist attacks, said Air Marshal Sir Timothy Garden in a speech to Liberal Democrats. – *Sunday Express*

● Although no troops have yet been deployed, senior officers have attended a series of secret meetings at Maidstone police station to discuss contingency plans to thwart forceful mass invasion of the Channel Tunnel by asylum-seekers. – *Sunday Express*

● A grave shortage of doctors and dentists is threatening the future of Armed Forces' healthcare. Defence Medical Services, already in a state of crisis, has less than half the doctors required, the British Medical Association said. – *Evening Standard*

● In the past three years, almost 8,000 married Servicemen or women have left the Armed Forces or divorced, according to figures from the MoD compiled by the Liberal Democrats. – *Sunday Telegraph*



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# Penny's lane to recovery

A year ago, a horse was found abandoned and wild. Now she's set to take on a role in the Queen's Golden Jubilee celebrations

SHE was found in a field near Blackpool, wild, diseased and frightened, biting and kicking out at anything or anyone who went near her, **writes Ray Routledge**.

Her owner, suffering from severe health problems, had left her to fend for herself. Now, less than 12 months on, Penny, a four-year-old filly, is fit, well and loved. And she could play a starring role in the Queen's Golden Jubilee celebrations this summer.

Penny's amazing rehabilitation is due to rescuers from the International Horse Protection League (IHPL) and the RSPCA, combined with a large dollop of patience, training and kindness by soldiers of The King's Troop, Royal Horse Artillery. Their professional care has brought about a phenomenal transformation in the animal.

"When we found her, she had never been handled before," explained Tony Fleming from the IHPL, himself a former sergeant with The King's Troop.

"She had infections, including worms, and had to be vaccinated because she couldn't take drugs in her feed – she had only ever eaten grass and had never been fed by hand."

Despite the sorry state of the horse, Tony could see her potential and, after a period of recovery at an IHPL farm in Lancashire, Penny joined the Army in October on Tony's recommendation.

"We were there on summer camp and came back with one extra horse," explained Capt Edward Botterill, commander of C and D Sub sections.

Penny – her Army name is Hallmark – moved briefly to the troop barracks at St John's Wood in London before joining seven other equine recruits at Larkhill to

get familiar with being ridden, with equipment such as bridles and bits and with grooming.

"When she joined she was scared and skittish but by mid-December she had come along so well that she won the most-improved remount at a parade just before Christmas," said Capt Botterill.

Much of this change was down to Gnr Guy Ridley, who has ridden and nurtured Penny almost every day. When he can't be around, others such as LBdr Paul Doye have been with gentle but firm guidance and a lot of patience.

While there is still some way to go with her training, Penny's role within a gun team has been identified.

Each of the high-profile ceremonial gun teams seen at royal celebrations consists of six horses harnessed in twos. Graded by size, the largest pair – the leaders – is at the front to act as "accelerators".

They are assisted by the second pair – the centres – while the wheelers (smaller and thicker-set horses), bring up the rear and act as brakes.

If Penny completes her training successfully, she will become a wheeler with the C sub-section, and

join the 120 horses that make up the troop. She could look forward to a military career spanning 12 to 14 years before retiring to an Army saddle club or into private hands.

"Penny is fine so far and is enjoying her new life," said Capt Botterill. "She still has the odd moment when she has been scared, but seems very much at ease with the training and exercise. We are hoping that she will be in a team for the Queen's Birthday Parade. We'll have to see."



Poor Penny: This was the state she was in before joining the Army.

Picture: IHPL



**Teamwork:**  
Penny and Gnr  
Guy Ridley

Picture: Graeme Main



# The fighting prince

The Duke of York tells us why he joined the Royal Navy, and shares his views on the British Army and his recollections of the Falklands War

Interview: Ray Routledge

*Why did you join the Royal Navy in preference to the Army or Royal Air Force?*

I had decided as a young boy that I wanted to be a pilot, and a helicopter pilot especially after seeing my father come and go from Buckingham Place. I decided to look at all three Services to see which provided me with the best option for achieving my ambition.

There was no contest. For me, the challenge of flying in the Royal Navy far outstrips that of the other two Services. The real difference is the challenge of flying from the flight deck of a moving ship. The others could not compete with that aspect of naval flying.

*Were you exhilarated, excited or apprehensive when you went to the Falklands?*

We assumed that if we were required, our training was second to none and we would win through.

I did seriously consider my predicament as we sailed south but we were training and working up to such an extent that I didn't have much time to reflect on any possible outcome.

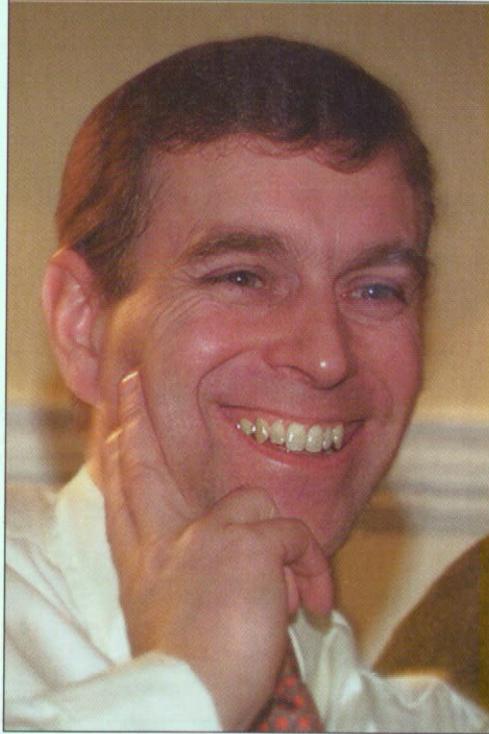
*If you had fallen into enemy hands, there would have been a propaganda coup for the enemy. Did you have special security?*

It would have been very difficult for me to fall into enemy hands. We spent most of our time flying in support of the task force at sea, and the enemy did not engage at sea. As far as special security cover, no, my personal protection cover from the Metropolitan Police does not cover acts of war, so I had no special security cover.

*Tell us about the most exciting mission you flew in the Falklands War*

There were no really outstanding missions, but I do remember a couple that were interesting.

My crew set off early one morning, on May 1, if I recall correctly, to undertake a search of an area just off the coast in the vicinity of Port Stanley. We saw large plumes of smoke coming from the area of



an occasion when a missile was fired and seduced in such circumstances.

*What does the South Atlantic Medal mean to you?*

I am extremely proud to wear it. It means a great deal to me that all those who served in that campaign are recognised, not necessarily by the public at large, but by their peers within the Armed Services. It in no way increases your credibility as a Serviceman or woman, but it is a clear indication to everyone that you were there and involved.

I am extremely proud of the fact that I was able to play a very small part in the war. It wasn't what I expected when I joined, but there was never any hesitation in my mind that it was my duty to go. I had originally joined with the understanding that if asked, I had to be prepared to go on live operations.

*You are known for your sense of humour. Was it a vital ingredient to a successful Service career?*

You have to have a sense of humour to be in the Services, because without it Service life could be deadly boring. It helps to be able to laugh at yourself and share a joke with your colleagues in any walk of life, but there are extra stresses and strains in Service life that can be alleviated with humour.

*In 1992, you completed the Army Command and Staff Course. Was that your first direct contact with the Army?*

It wasn't my first contact with the Army, as I was already Colonel-in-Chief of The Staffordshire Regiment. Throughout my career I have had a lot of contact with the Army.

I spent a very interesting few days with the Coldstream Guards on Lydd and Hythe ranges during their preparations for service in Northern Ireland in the early 1970s. And my family's connections with the Household Division have enabled me to learn a great deal over many years. My time at the ACSC in 1992 was the first and only opportunity to actually serve with the Army in my career in the Royal Navy.

**'To tremendous applause the CO retrieved the heel with spur intact and with the help of superglue I was re-shod in the mess...'**

decoy should there have been another Exocet aimed at *Invincible*. The principle is that you sit alongside the ship providing another target for the missile seeker head to lock on to.

When it arrives (and you are supposed to be able to see it from the smoke trail), you climb vertically in the hover alongside and the missile will fly harmlessly by underneath you.

All very well in principle, but it was never tested in reality as there was never



The Duke of York joined the Royal Navy in 1979 specialising as a pilot and earning his green beret the hard way... by completing the tough Royal Marines' training course at Lympstone in Devon.

After learning elementary flying techniques at RAF Leeming in Yorkshire, he did his basic flying training in Gazelle helicopters at Royal Naval Air Station Culdrose, receiving his coveted wings in 1981.

Converting to Sea Kings, Prince Andrew joined the front-line 820 Naval Air Squadron before embarking in HMS *Invincible*.

## Royal résumé

During the Falklands War he flew on anti-submarine and anti-surface search missions as well as casualty evacuation and search-and-rescue operations.

In 1983 he joined 702 Naval Air Squadron at Portland and was promoted lieutenant the following year before joining HMS *Brazen*.

In 1987 he became a staff helicopter warfare instructor before joining the Type-42 destroyer HMS *Edinburgh* for a year at sea.

Soldier prince: Proud of his Army associations, The Duke of York inspects the London Regiment at its presentation of colours ceremony

*You are Colonel-in-Chief of the Staffordshire and Royal Irish Regiments. Have you spent time with them in the field?*

I have many opportunities to visit my regiments and their battalions in the field. I recently presented Colours to The Royal Irish Regiment at a parade in Northern Ireland and we had a celebratory lunch before flying on to the next barracks for a second presentation.

As I was leaving lunch I felt a slight tug at my heel and then took a step with a marked limp. The CO of the battalion had stepped neatly on to my spur and taken off not only the spur, but also the entire heel. To tremendous applause the CO retrieved the heel with spur intact and, with the help of some superglue, I was re-shod in the mess and we continued the programme.

*How do you feel our Armed Forces, and particularly the Army, are perceived?*

I believe our Armed Services are held in very high regard throughout the world for their professionalism and dedication to duty. From personal experience, I know that we ask a great deal of our Armed Ser-

vices and they are continuously deployed all around the world, often on hazardous duty. They exemplify professional, dedicated and well-trained people.

*Would you encourage a son, or daughter, to join up?*

Would I recommend a Service career? Without question.

The Armed Services of this country are the most professional in the world. They are respected the world over. All the Services provide equal challenges to the young person.

Each has its own qualities and everyone who seeks a career in them must make a choice of which to join. I chose the Royal Navy because I wanted to fly in what I felt was the most challenging environment. Others may seek other opportunities offered by one of the other Services.

The challenges and experiences faced by youngsters today are greater than they were when I joined 22 years ago.

One thing is clear. Ultimately we may be required to put our lives on the line, and therefore all our personnel must be trained to the highest degree possible. In

order for our Services to take on these missions with the consummate skill they do, they must be trained for war-fighting, the pinnacle of training.

*Have you a message for the veterans of the Falklands War and today's soldiers?*

The Falklands War took place 20 years ago. It will not be long before the Gulf War was 20 years ago and the same goes for Afghanistan. Time is of no importance in the context of war. We are older now and should be wiser and capable of learning from the past.

There will always be a need for the Services to be trained to the pinnacle of war-fighting, ready to undertake anything that is thrown their way.

I remember those who laid down their lives for freedom and democracy and the liberation of the Falkland Islands and their dependencies.

But I look forward to a brighter future which means we can learn from our mistakes and work together with our former adversaries in making the world a safer place in which to live and share experiences.

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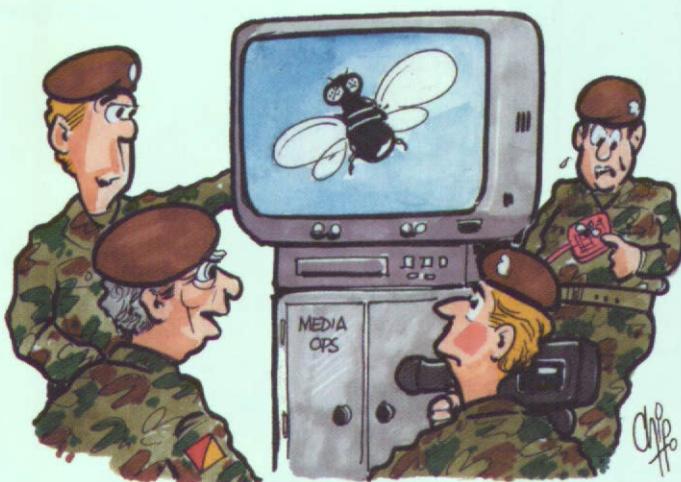
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# Chuckle with Chip



"They were all here, Brigadier, but Liz Hurley has just arrived at Heathrow and . . . well . . ."



"Look . . . when I said it should be a 'fly-on-the-wall' documentary . . ."



"Personally, Sir, I'd have watered down the description of close-quarter battle."



"I wasn't keen on being referred to as the PRO . . . but I definitely dislike being called a MOO!"

# Image is all

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# Saved by the belle

## Army boxing team show off cheerleader

Interviews: Andy Simms  
Pictures: Graeme Main

FORGET fighting for a multi-million pound purse – incentives do not come much greater in boxing than a kiss from top model and television presenter Nell McAndrew.

That was the prize awarded to Gnr Alastair Morrison (29 Commando, Royal Artillery) at the end of his light-middleweight clash with MEM Richard

Maxwell (Royal Navy) at the Inter-Services boxing championships in Portsmouth.

Morrison's preparations for the fight, and 9-2 points victory, were filmed for *Born to Fight*, a new 15-part series presented by McAndrew. Each programme in the series, which is due to be screened on UK Horizons from June, will focus on an individual fighter and attempt to explore their motivation for stepping into the boxing ring.

"I jumped at the chance of working on the show because I love boxing," explained McAndrew. "I'm no expert but have always admired boxers for their fitness, dedication and stamina, and I feel very lucky to be in a position to get so close and see what goes on behind the scenes."

Unsurprisingly, Morrison was also quick to agree to the project.

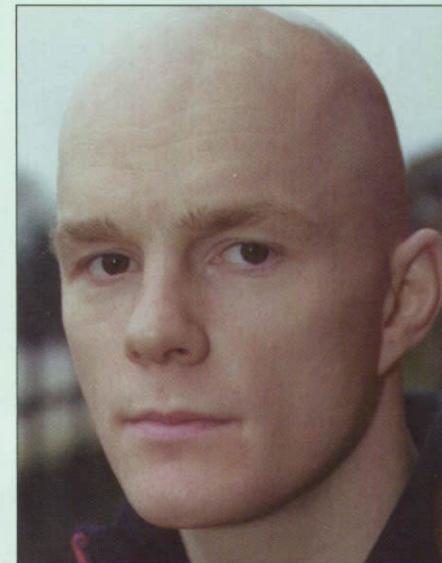
"It was something that I really enjoyed doing and working with Nell was fantastic," said the undefeated novice ABA champion. "I think the whole team enjoyed having her around and it certainly didn't do me any harm down in Portsmouth."

"I didn't really notice the film crew on the night of the championships. I get myself all psyched up before a fight and was in my own little zone."

"Having them there didn't put me off but I suppose if I'd lost it could have been a bit embarrassing."

During filming, McAndrew, who sprung to fame as the official model for cyber-babe Lara Croft, spent a day at the Army boxing team's headquarters at Aldershot.

"Meeting Morrison and the rest of the Army team was great. It is always a bit nerve-racking when you walk



Star performer: Gnr Alastair Morrison (RA)

into a male-dominated environment like a boxing gym but all the boys were really welcoming and so polite," she said. "To be honest I expected them to be a bit more rowdy and laddish than they were."

"Visiting the gym in Aldershot was my first real contact with the Army, although a few years ago I did actually consider joining the Territorial Army."

"However, my life has just taken a completely different path and I imagine that I'd probably get a lot of stick about my day job if I joined up now."

While Morrison will be keeping his fingers crossed that his television debut may catch the eye of a boxing promoter, McAndrew will be hoping that *Born to Fight* will have a similar effect on film producers.

Despite spending a year dressed as Lara Croft, McAndrew was overlooked by British-born director Simon West for the leading role in the box-office hit *Tomb Raider* and would welcome the opportunity of appearing on the silver screen.

And if the Hollywood rumour-mill is to be believed she might not have to wait long. It has been reported that McAndrew is being lined up to play an evil henchwoman called *Brit-McKnee-Spears* in the third *Austin Powers* movie, which is due to begin filming this spring.

● Full story from the Inter-Services boxing championships on pages 50-51.



Reports: John Elliott



In the running: Top, from left to right, are the Scarab armoured scout and liaison vehicle (from Alvis); MLV or Multi-role Light Vehicle (also Alvis); ACMAT (from INSYS); and the RG-32M and, right, RG-31M (both made by Vickers Defence Systems).

The winner is expected to be in service within four to five years.



THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME... AND ONE THAT'S ALREADY IN SERVICE

## Lynx for Lynx, Tempest for Mamba... and EOD gets all-terrain vehicle

WESTLAND Helicopters has won a £20 million contract to develop the latest version of its Lynx. An MoD study has shown that the Future Lynx has the best potential to meet the Army's requirement to replace its current battlefield Lynx.

Further development work is necessary before the final decision is made at the end of the year. A full order for replacement aircraft would be worth up to £1 billion for Westland.

The Army's Lynx Mark 7 and Mark 9 helicopters have played key roles in theatres as diverse as Northern Ireland, the Gulf, Bosnia and Kosovo but are now reaching the end of their scheduled Service lives.



Workhorse: The Army's Lynx helicopter, above, and the new EOD vehicle, right



• TWO high-mobility explosive ordnance vehicles have been delivered to 11 EOD Regiment RLC ahead of schedule. Modified to include specialist EOD equipment, sirens and blue flashing lights, the vehicles are based on the successful Pinzgauer 6x6 model built by Automotive Technik Ltd in Guildford, Surrey. Their VW six-cylinder

turbo-diesel engines can achieve 75mph and sustain high speeds across rough terrain. Crewed by between two and four people, including EOD personnel, the vehicles will be

## ... and EOD gets all-terrain vehicle



Urgent need: The mine-protected Tempest, based on the American Cougar vehicle, above, is required for service in the Balkans

assigned to HQ Land Command. A pressing requirement for off-road EOD vehicles was identified in Kosovo two years ago when teams found themselves called to incidents involving journeys over exceptionally harsh terrain.

The Army's current EOD vehicles are not really suitable for sustained off-road use.

• AN urgent operational requirement to replace the Army's fleet of 14 Alvis 4 Mamba mine-protected vehicles has been placed by the Defence Procurement Agency with Supacat of

Dunkeswell, Devon. A £2.5 million contract for eight vehicles - to be known as Tempest - will replace the Mambas in service in the Balkans since 1996.

A 12-tonner based on the commercially-sourced 4x4 running gear from Peterbilt and the US Cougar design, Tempest will be armoured against all known threats from anti-personnel and anti-tank mines and used on operations to prove routes and evacuate casualties.

Its occupants will be shielded from blast by a unique one-piece bent armour cradle, manufactured in South Africa, which forms a barrier between the underside of the vehicle and the road surface.

Elsewhere, the driver, crew and components are protected against armour-piercing small arms fire. The first is expected to be delivered to the Balkans in June.

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# Ice warriors

Royal Highland Fusiliers are making progress with their mountain warfare training. We followed them to the French Alps

Report: Ray Routledge

Pictures: Steve Dock

IT'S a big step, from clambering up rocks in full kit to climbing on ice, cross-country mountain-skiing and shooting at altitude while carrying a bergen, survival gear, ropes and climbing equipment.

But soldiers of the 1st Battalion, The Royal Highland Fusiliers took it all in their stride during winter training with French Army experts high in the Alps.

Based first at Flaine then Barcelonnette, just 20km from the Italian border, 125 Highland Fusiliers packed in four weeks of survival technique training which included avalanche procedures, ice-climbing using crampons and axes, skiing and snow-shoe trekking. It all took place in the unforgiving French Alps de Haute Provence.

Soldiers, under the watchful gaze of instructors from 27 Battalion, Chasseurs Alpins (27 BCA) of the French Army, made tremendous progress according to their commanding officer, Lt Col Davey Kirk. He said the mountain training could be related to the battalion's commitment to Northern Ireland.

"We are in a two-year period as the mainland battalion for Northern Ireland and have a rotating patrol company deployed at Bessbrook and a close observation platoon in Ballykinler," he told *Soldier* at the small mountain village of Barcelonnette in the Ubaye valley.

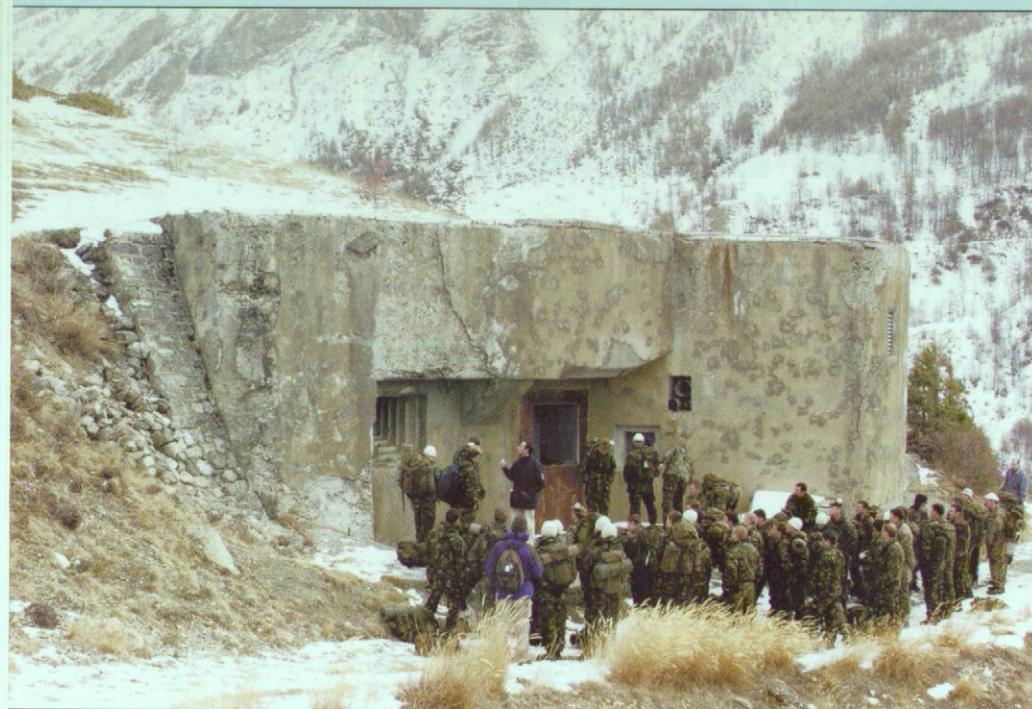
"The skills we develop in the mountains, which are all based on four-man teams, are complementary to what we are doing in Northern Ireland where work is also based around four-man teams and multiples of four-man teams."

"In the mountains it is not technical ability that counts, it is experience. Young corporals have to make judgement calls that could be life-or-death decisions. The

● Turn to next page



**“In the mountains it is not technical ability that counts, it is experience. Young corporals have to make judgement calls that could be life-or-death decisions”**



# Inside the Maginot Line

STRETCHING for hundreds of miles along the French northern and eastern borders, the Maginot Line was built 70 years ago as France became increasingly nervous of her fascist neighbours, Germany and Italy.

Named after Minister for War André Maginot, the massive fortifications included more than 500 forts, many housing between 200 and 1,000 men, behind walls 3m thick and mostly built underground.

Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, The Royal

Highland Fusiliers took a break from exercising in the French Alps to visit the Ouvrage du Haut de Saint Ours, one of the 50 forts on the Italian section. Perched several hundred feet above the floor of the Ubaye Valley, it gave the visiting soldiers an insight into what life must have been like for the 250 wartime troops posted there.

Constructed over several floors inside the mountain itself, the fort housed gun and mortar positions capable of lobbing shells and bombs over the mountains, into the upper valleys and on to the main pass several hundred feet below.

Halfway up a mountainside opposite there was a similar fort, the Roche de Croix, while a third dominated the floor of the valley itself. Men would be stationed there for three months at a time. Inside it was dank, dark and uncomfortable.

A coke-fired kitchen pumped hot air around the building and combined with the

ventilation system to keep the temperature inside the fort at a constant 14C. Men ate in the corridors using drop-down tables.

The ventilation room, perhaps the most important in the structure, expelled toxic gases from the shellfire and ensured that clean air reached the inhabitants inside.

Munitions and supplies were moved about by a man-powered railway system. Soldiers lived in cramped quarters sleeping 24 in eight rows of triple bunks. Condensation dripped off the ceiling, so sleeping on the top bunk was not popular.

In June 1940, Mussolini positioned 300,000 troops for an assault on France through the Alps. A Sicilian detachment attacked, but instead of taking the anticipated direct route, they chose a more difficult valley to the north.

A fort there was supported by the Roche de Croix fort, which fired shells 12km over Haut de Saint Ours and the mountain to help repulse the Sicilians.

Meanwhile, the Germans had made a successful thrust through the Ardennes Forest in northern France, an area not defended by Maginot forts because they believed the area to be impenetrable. The Germans, with more than 1,500 tanks and a million soldiers, simply bypassed the French defences and made for Paris.

In the Alps the fortifications were taken over by the Italians and later by the Germans.

All mod cons: Royal Highland Fusiliers at Ouvrage du Haut de Saint Ours



# Ice warriors

## From Page 27

decision-making skills required for the mountains provide junior NCO leadership development and can be applied to Northern Ireland – or anywhere for that matter."

Such is Lt Col Kirk's confidence in the progress his soldiers have made in the past 18 months that he offered his high mountain platoon for duty in Afghanistan.

Exercise European Mountaineer came about through the 1 RHF defence diplomacy initiative and their affiliation with 27 BCA, which, like their British counterparts and unlike much of the French Army, does not enlist conscript soldiers.

And, in common with the Fusiliers, the French unit recruits from large cities such as Paris (the RHF draws from Glasgow). Their new soldiers have little or no experience of mountains, climbing or skiing.

so 27 BCA has a history of training the uninitiated.

The affiliation grew as two RHF officers were attached to 27 BCA and the ties were reinforced by company exchanges.

For the exercise, the French battalion provided instructors, facilities and much of the equipment.

The soldiers became adept at downhill ski techniques, moving on to skiing off-piste. This was followed by survival skills such as making snow-holes, igloos and bivouacs. They were shown how to use a stretcher facility developed for the mountains and were introduced to avalanche rescue drills.

"It is difficult to ski off-piste so we were hoping 20 to 25 soldiers would get through the first two weeks. But the 27 BCA instructors said that 40 to 60 were of a quality to come to Barcelonnette to ski.



On top of their trade: Soldiers of 1 RHF get to grips with living, and fighting, in the French Alps near Barcelonnette

Bearing in mind that 80 per cent of the soldiers had not skied before, that is an impressive figure."

The soldiers were working at 2,500 metres and found that shooting at altitude also required adjustment. "Altitude and air pressure has an effect on ballistics which requires an adjustment of sights," 2i/c Maj Charlie Wallace pointed out.

"Survival techniques played a fundamental part in the training. It included avalanche and rescue and we learned from the French who have vast experience in this area."

Training and tactical techniques at altitude developed by the French were included.

During the exercise the Fusiliers were introduced to the Via Ferretta. "It was constructed in the Second World War when the Italians didn't have enough Alpine troops," said Lt Col Kirk. "They established a series of wire hawser routes across the Alps to bring over troops and equipment. The idea was for each soldier to clip his body harness to the hawsers, keeping him on a safe system. It enabled

the soldier to travel quickly and safely in difficult conditions without the hassle of having to put in his own fixed line.

"For us it provides a simple system of getting them used to working at altitude.

"I can't emphasise how fantastic the 27 BCA instruction has been, particularly to soldiers who knew nothing about skiing."

He is convinced the mountain warfare skills add a certain something to conventional training. "It promotes all the qualities we want in our junior leadership for our Northern Ireland commitment and has a direct impact on retention because people are enthused by it."

"The work is all within the capabilities of a light-role infantry battalion and we want to take it forward to Cyprus, where we begin a two-year deployment at Episkopi in 2003."

"We are trying to ensure that we retain the wider interpretation of the infantry mission, working in all terrains and in all weathers. But the mountain infantry work gives us an added dimension and the soldiers love it."

ARMY NO-SMOKING DAY IS WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13

# Kicking it in Kosovo

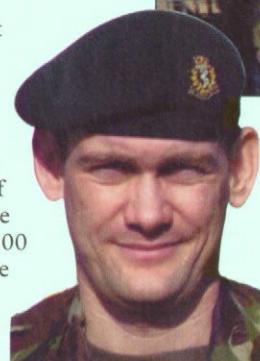
Soldiers in Kosovo have been proving that their operational duties are no barrier to kicking the habit

SOLDIERS serving in the Balkans are bucking tradition to kick the habit. The "smoke break" is so deeply embedded in military culture that it comes as something of a surprise to learn that a unit actually on an operational deployment is doing its bit for Army No Smoking Day, writes John Elliott.

According to the latest research (see story below), two-thirds of soldiers who smoke would like to give up.

Despite the fact that the Sennelager-based regiment has been stationed hundreds of miles away from home for the past four months, more than 100 soldiers and officers of The Queen's Royal Hussars – part of a UK battle-group deployed on Operation Agricola in Kosovo – have sought advice on giving up cigarettes.

Interest has ranged from the youngest trooper in the regiment to the oldest



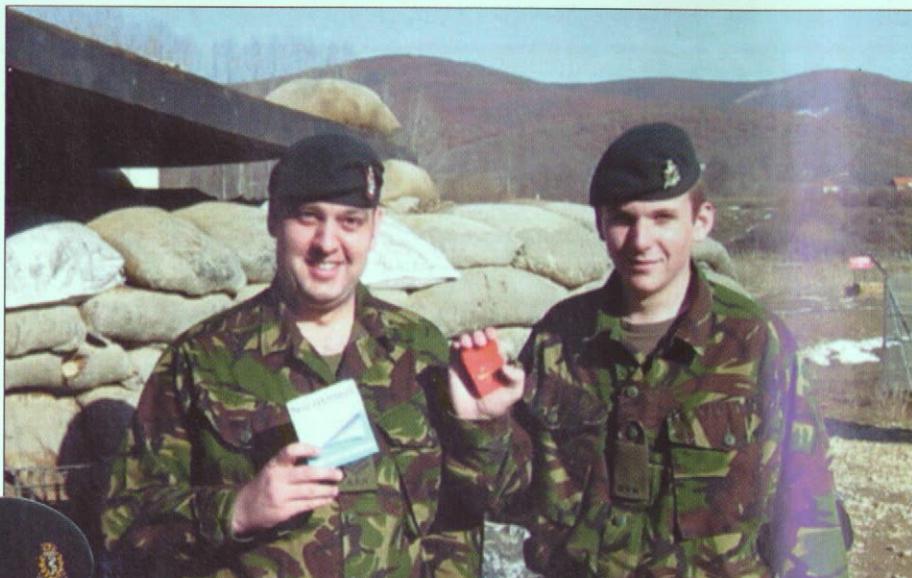
Giving up: LCpl Brad Summerhayes RAMC, above left, and Tpr Matthew Sharrat RAC; and, inset, Maj David Crichton, the QRH medical officer, who has encouraged more than 100 of his soldiers to consider quitting smoking

member of the battle-group (who, having smoked for the past 25 years, decided to give up).

A no-smoking campaign led by Maj David Crichton, the Hussars' medical officer, has been hammered home by a series of notices around camp, messages on orders and self-help information

leaflets – reinforced by a counsellor in smoking cessation. There has been a dedicated clinic run by the medical centre at the QRH's Waterloo Lines in Pristina, as well as a mobile service to remote outposts. Advice, counselling and nicotine replacement therapy in the form of patches has been available for all those interested.

Lt Col John Murray, the Commander



## Armed Forces team up to help smokers beat the habit

THE whole of the MoD is following the lead of the Army in climbing aboard the national No Smoking Day bandwagon. After two successful campaigns in which it has ploughed a lone furrow for the Services, the Army is to be joined this year by the Royal Navy, the Royal Air Force and MoD civilians.

Its aim is simple – to help officers, soldiers and dependants who want to stop smoking by providing support, a focus for their efforts... and as much tangible stop-smoking assistance as possible.

Over the years, No Smoking Day (NSD) has proved to be one of the most

cost-effective methods of helping smokers to stop, according to Lt Col Ricky Bhabutta RAMC, the driving force behind the campaign.

High levels of support for the 2001 No Smoking Day were found throughout the Army, particularly among smokers who valued the focus it offered them. A criticism levelled at NSD has been that people want to stop on more than one day a year, but Army Medical Services will help anyone who wants to give up at any time.

Material produced by the Army should be available to all Regular and Territorial Army units as well as cadets. If you want

more, ring Lt Col Bhabutta on (mil) 94261 2901 or 01276 412901.

"No Smoking Day is not a medical campaign," he told *Soldier*, "and it should be run by units themselves, using all the resources available to them. Those resources include dental staff, PTIs, SSAFA-Forces Help, WRVS, the Army Families Federation and RLC caterers in addition to unit medical assets. A handbook suggests many ideas for running events, helping smokers to give up, supportive information... and a Quit-and-Win competition worth £1,000 to someone who goes without a cigarette for 28

days starting on NSD. A non-smoking partner gets £100.

You can check out the rules, and a lot more, on [www.nosmokingday.co.uk](http://www.nosmokingday.co.uk)

The availability of nicotine replacement treatment on prescription – coupled with clear Army policy on smoking cessation – should make this year's NSD efforts even more effective.

It is estimated that two-thirds of soldiers who smoke would like to stop. By providing an Army focus to a national campaign, NSD offers everyone an excellent opportunity to take that vital first step to weaning themselves off cigarettes.



Sad face to smiley face... coded "text" message to young smokers

**Give up for month and win £1,000**

For full details check out [www.nosmokingday.co.uk](http://www.nosmokingday.co.uk)

Medical Multi-National Brigade (Central), has been developing initiatives such as the Hussars' within a wider health education framework.

Not everyone has been successful the first time around (in keeping with medical research), but a number of individuals are trying for a second time. What the efforts of the Hussars prove is that today's soldiers can give up at any time, in any place and in any theatre of operations.

A major development in this year's Army campaign, which has been strongly endorsed by the Chief of the General Staff, Gen Sir Michael Walker, has been the availability of free nicotine replacement patches or gum from military medical centres.

The new policy, which was approved by the Surgeon General in response to popular demand, means that the patches and gum are also available on prescription to dependants at medical centres.

MOST soldiers are interested in nutrition, but few know what it means in practice.

Yet nutrition is a key element in achieving fighting fitness – crucial in a profession whose members are dedicated to being ready for high-intensity warfare.

Capt Kerry Clarke, who has just completed the food service officers' course at St Omer Barracks, Aldershot, was asked by HQ Land Command to research the importance soldiers in barracks attach to nutrition. She picked nine units – three RLC, three Infantry and three training – to observe different levels of physical activity, age and experience across a geographical spread.

Her subjects ranged from Marchwood to Edinburgh. Fifty living-in soldiers completed questionnaires and she observed the amount of nutritional information provided by catering and physical training departments and medical centres.

According to Capt Clarke, 60 per cent of soldiers were interested in nutrition, although only half knew how much carbohydrates they should be taking. Of those questioned, 12 per cent were right about fat requirements and eight per cent knew the proportion of protein required in a balanced diet.

Three-quarters of those asked said that nutritional education should be provided to recruits and 67 per cent thought a yearly update would be beneficial.

QinetiQ (formally DERA) has deduced from studies that physical well-

being is related to diet. A soldier's body is subjected to high levels of training and his fitness to fight may be linked to what he eats. The learning starts with individuals wanting to know more. What more could you do to educate yourself?

Nutrition does not have to be a baffling science; it's simply down to you and your educated choice of what you eat.

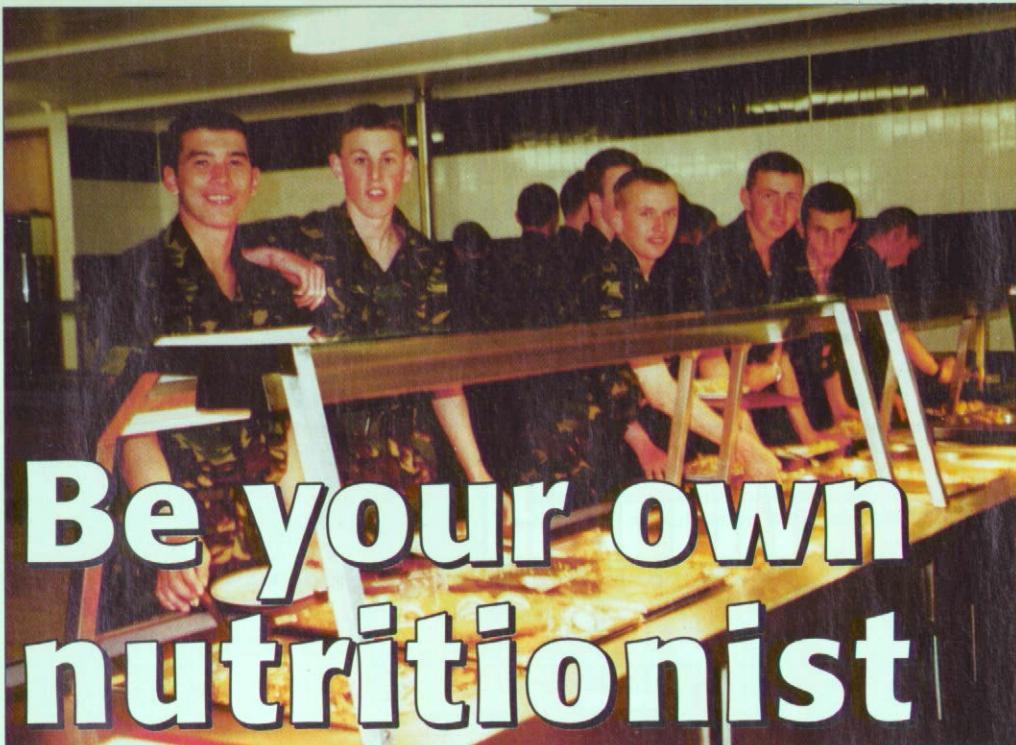
Ask yourself the following five questions and check the answers below. If you manage to get them all correct, award yourself a doughnut (or, better still, a piece of fruit).

- 1 – What should half your diet consist of: carbohydrate, fat or protein?
- 2 – What should 35 per cent of your diet consist of: carbohydrate, fat or protein?
- 3 – What should 15 per cent of your diet consist of: carbohydrate, fat or protein?
- 4 – Do you know what a mineral is?
- 5 – Do you know what a vitamin is?

You can send your comments to Capt Clarke, ALT (South) Hamilton Close, Houndsmead Ind Est, Basingstoke, Hants RG21 6YS.

For nutritional information contact the new Military Nutrition Advisory Service at QinetiQ on 01252 393922.

Answers: 1, Carbohydrates, 2, Fat, 3, Proteins, 4, Minerals are nutrients used in growth and repair and to regulate body processes (e.g. iron in haemoglobin), 5, Vitamins are nutrients (e.g. Vitamin C in oranges).



## Be your own nutritionist



Study: Capt Kerry Clarke



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Sandhurst: Princess Margaret inspects the Sovereign's Parade at the Royal Military Academy in July 1956



Princess Margaret presents new Colours to the 1st Battalion, The Highland Light Infantry (predecessors of the RHF) at Bulford in October 1955

# Colonel Princess

Highland lament as soldiers play part in private royal funeral

A BEARER party from The Royal Highland Fusiliers carried the coffin of Princess Margaret, who died last month, from St George's Chapel following a private funeral in Windsor Castle last month.

The Princess, who passed away on February 9 at the age of 71, was involved with several British Army and Commonwealth regiments and corps. She was Colonel-in-Chief of The Royal Highland Fusiliers (Princess Margaret's Own Glasgow and Ayrshire Regiment), Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps and The Light Dragoons.

She held the same appointment in The Highland Fusiliers of Canada, The Princess Louise Fusiliers (of Canada) and The Bermuda Regiment and was also Deputy Colonel-in-Chief of The Royal Anglian Regiment.

Until it was reorganised in 1964, Princess Margaret held the colonelcy of the Royal New Zealand Infantry Corps and of The Northland Regiment.

The many messages of condolence conveyed to the Queen included one from the Acting Governor of Bermuda, Tim Gurney. Flags were flown at half-mast at Warwick Camp, the regiment's headquar-



Princess Margaret's last official visit to a British Army unit was to the military ward at Frimley Park Hospital, Surrey, in October 2000. She is seen being welcomed outside the hospital by Col Iona Leith-McGregor, the Colonel Commandant of the QARANC



Final journey: Princess Margaret's coffin, borne by Royal Highland Fusiliers, is carried out of St George's Chapel in Windsor Castle. The Princess was cremated

Picture: Sgt Shaun Lewis

ters, as they were at British Army establishments in the UK, Germany and all over the world.

Capt Edward Holme, adjutant of 1 RHF, commanded the bearer party of 15. At the head of the coffin was RSM (WO1) Frank Bone, while the bearers were CSgt

Matt Melrose, Les Foreman and Brian Conway, and Sgts Gary Stewart, Tam McBride, Christopher Collins, Craig Temple and Ian Cameron. Four RHF sergeants acted as orderlies. Pipe Major Sgt Neil Hall and Piper Cpl Hugh Walker led the procession.

# Welcome to the board

What goes on behind closed doors at a promotion board? *Soldier* visited the Army Personnel Centre in Glasgow to find out

Report: Anthony Stone  
Pictures: Steve Dock

IN some quarters, the ill-informed idea persists that passing a promotion board relies more on who, rather than what you know. Stringent safeguards exist to make sure, no matter how good you are at losing at squash and washing the CO's car on your day off, the process is fair.

*Soldier* visited the Army Personnel Centre in Glasgow to have a look at the promotion process, the engine that drives Army careers.

The board for the Royal Signals and Intelligence Corps, one of the dozens of boards that take place throughout the year for different cap badges and ranks, got down to business shortly after 0900.

A stack of confidential reports was neatly piled next to each of the five board members, plus a scorecard, pen and paper. Anyone who has ever sat a public examination would be familiar with the atmosphere and surroundings.

The task before the five officers – a brigadier, a colonel, two lieutenant colonels and a major – was to grade, in order of merit, all the warrant officers class 2 who were qualified and recommended for promotion to WO1.

Over the next three days the board would work their way through files containing the military careers of the 195 hopefuls. Some of the files contained insert slips from attachments and details of regimental entries, both good and bad, but the meat of the matter was to be found in the pen pictures written by commanding officers in the confidential reports.

Comments along the lines of: "Promote this man now. He would make an outstanding WO1 in this or any other unit," left the reader in no doubt as to the candidate's ability. Flowery waffle and muddled thinking had no place. Clarity was essential because the officers spent only about three minutes reading each report.

Marks were awarded from one to ten, including half marks, with

the scoring tighter than a Taliban in a casino. Hard marking was fine, as long as it was consistent.

When a batch of reports had been read and marked, the scores for each warrant officer were recorded by civilian staff. Mostly the marks were well within the maximum two-point variation, but occasionally the board members disagreed to a greater extent. That soldier's file was then reconsidered until all the marks fell within the two-point margin.

Next, each scorer decided on a promotability score – the mark above which a candidate could, but not should, be promoted. Again, this had to be agreed within a two-point margin. The information was then plotted on a matrix that gauged ability (score) against experience in years of service.

Up to this point the board did not know the number of vacancies available as that information might have skewed their judgment. The promotion process is not an

**‘A stack of confidential reports was neatly piled next to each board member, plus a scorecard, pen and paper. Anyone who has ever sat a public examination would be familiar with the atmosphere and surroundings’**

exact science, but it's certainly close. Every decision is recorded to leave an audit trail, which can be traced and explained. The process is fair and can be seen to be so.

Five years ago the APC opened its doors in a bold move that saw the relocation of all the old manning, record and pay offices, which had been spread throughout England, under one roof in Glasgow. The pay section has since been transferred the tri-Service personnel administration agency, but is still located within Kentigern House.

The five years have seen a consolidation of best practice. As befits an organisation as dynamic and diverse as the Army, staff at Glasgow deliver a bespoke Rolls-Royce service. The aim is to put the right people, with the right training, in the right jobs, at the right time.

"We're no longer seen as just posting clerks," said Maj (Retd) Brian Campbell, who looks after the Royal Signals and Intelligence Corps support section. "We are career managers."

Ultimately, everyone from privates to four-star generals is managed from Kentigern House. Different trades require different styles of management; trickle-posted soldiers are directly overseen by Glasgow, but Regimental Career Management Officers – the APC's eyes and ears in major units – provide advice directly to soldiers. Future plans include putting the APC online through the Army website.

Promotion speeds are not the same across the Army, but the APC is working with cap-badge directors to address the distortion. Career management and promotion may be the driving force behind the work of the APC, but there is also a mountain of other tasks admin-

istered by the civilian and military staff.

The TA is now centrally managed by a TA and Reserves division. It runs promotion boards for TA officers and also manages the approximately 1,400 Full-Time, Reserve Service personnel and Mobilised Reservists who are currently serving with the Army.

Transfers also form part of the diverse jigsaw; presently the APC is dealing with about 800 applications. Transfer decisions are made in Glasgow, not at the unit.

It's an enormous juggling act and the man who helps keep all the balls in the air is Col David Clements, the Chief of Staff. He said: "We have a guiding principle at the APC. The needs of the Army come first. But those of the soldier and his or her family come a very close second. The challenge is to address those occasionally conflicting interests."

Over the past five years the APC has risen to the challenge.

SOLDIERS PROMOTION SCORE GUIDE	
Score	Definition
10	Outstanding for Promotion
9	Near outstanding for Promotion
8	Well above standard for Promotion
7	Above standard for Promotion
6	Up to standard for Promotion
5	Up to standard, with a few caveats for Promotion
4	Just up to standard, several caveats for Promotion
3	Below standard for Promotion
2	Well below standard for Promotion
1	Unfit for Promotion

*Note: Half marks may be given*  
What's the score? How the points are allocated



## FEED back

MORE of your question to the Chief of the General Staff's Briefing Team

**It's payback time ...**

**Q** Why, when we are overpaid, is it taken back in one lump sum, yet when we are underpaid it is paid back in instalments?

**A** This is a frequently-heard comment ... and a misconception. When we are overpaid we receive money to which we are not entitled and so must pay it back. It will be recovered as a lump sum, but to ensure that we never have too little to pay bills, soldiers must receive a minimum amount of pay; for married troops this is 75 per cent of net monthly pay, and for single soldiers, 25 per cent.

An individual may object to a recovery from pay and apply for it to be done in instalments. When we are underpaid, the policy is to repay the money as soon as possible in one lump sum. Further advice on both issues is available from RAO staff.

**Accumulating LSSA**

**Q** Why is Longer Separated Service Allowance (LSSA) not cumulative?

We are asked this often. LSSA compensates us for time away from normal place of duty for ten days or more. It is not paid for periods of less than ten days. For a full explanation, see the Terms & Conditions of Service (TACOS) handbook to be issued soon.

**You and your kit**

**Q** Why doesn't the Army issue us with the clothing and kit that we buy, such as the softie jacket?

**A** The Defence, Clothing and Textiles Agency (DCTA) tell us they are listening. There are reasons, not least that our kit has to meet a greater range of capabilities than much of that on the civvy market.

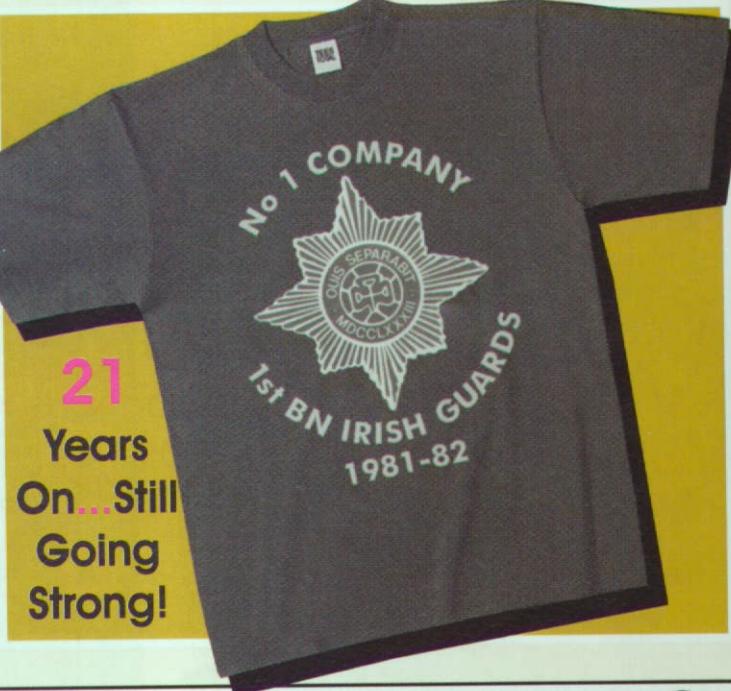
A softie jacket is being tested. Those who trialled the summer boot in the Balkans will be pleased to learn that it has been rejected in favour of a boot with better uppers and a better sole. DCTA asks that you fill in defect reports, without which they don't get a good idea of what works and what doesn't.

If your unit is not on the tour forecast, e-mail your question to CGS's team at [apt.mod@btinternet.com](mailto:apt.mod@btinternet.com) There are still some dates free on the next tour, which runs until March 22. Further details from WO2 Owen as above or on 94621 5309.

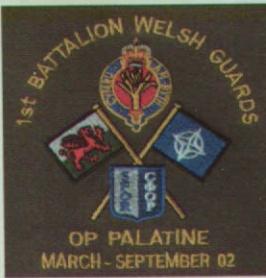
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Lest we forget: Lt Gen Alistair Irwin, GOC Northern Ireland, lays a wreath of poppies at the dedication and blessing of the Felix Memorial Garden at Thiepval Barracks, the Army's headquarters at Lisburn. The garden was created in memory of the 20 officers and soldiers of 321 EOD Squadron RLC who have lost their lives carrying out bomb disposal operations in the Province. Months in the making, the garden features a memorial stone of Rhodesian marble, individual headstones for each of the lives lost and a specially-commissioned mural depicting Belfast city centre by military artist Kelvin Hunter. Picture: Sgt Paul Brownbridge

## County Down Colours laid up



SOLDIERS of the 3rd Battalion, The Royal Irish Regiment escorted the Colours of one of their antecedent units, the 3rd (County Down) Battalion, The Ulster Defence Regiment, on a final parade to their resting place.

The Colours, pictured left, were laid up in Killinchy Presbyterian Church in a service of remembrance attended by old comrades, widows and families.

After the Colours, originally presented to 3 UDR by the Queen in 1991, had been handed over to the church for safe-keeping, a roll of honour naming the 20 soldiers of the 3rd (County Down) Battalion and one from 3 R Irish who lost their lives in the Troubles was read out.

The Colours were taken over by 3 R Irish when it was formed in July 1992. They were later replaced by a new set presented in June 2000 by the Duke of York at Ballymena.

The parade was led by the Bugles, Pipes and Drums of 3 R Irish and elements of the regimental band. Eighty officers and soldiers and 120 old comrades escorted the Colours.

## Manage Your Money



David Mapes is Assistant Director of Credit Action and will be pleased to answer specific questions addressed to the Editor. These will be treated in confidence.

### Let's give credit where it's due

MANY of us have personal loans. Some have two or three ... in fact, loans are becoming as popular as credit cards as a way to borrow money.

Last month I touched on the advantage of using overdraft or credit cards in that we're only charged if we use them to borrow money. Loans from high street banks are usually at a lower APR (interest rate) than credit cards (and store cards). That can be a plus. And it's often a reason why people consolidate their credit card and store card balances.

Another advantage of a loan is that we can budget the monthly repayment from income. We know how much we have to pay each month and we know how much the loan has cost us. Interest and charges are calculated at the start and included to calculate monthly repayments.

#### Spread over the duration

That means they are spread over the duration of the loan. Thinking back to last month, the £10,000 loan over five years at an APR of 13 per cent cost £18,348 with insurance – and £13,566 without. Sadly, many who seek help when in debt have not done that simple calculation when they took out the loan. Sometimes multiple con-

#### • Retail discrimination – Page 85

solidation loans just delay the inevitable need to review finances and write a budget.

If we're looking for a loan, it's best to shop around. When people are consolidating for the second or third time they may lose sight of the long-term cost ... even though the monthly repayment is hard to make. Often, borrowers are forced to look at loans from sources where the APR is very high – maybe 20-plus per cent.

#### Beware of home-secured loans

Many of us who have a mortgage and want to borrow money can be tempted to extend it or take out a loan secured against our home (second mortgage). The interest rate (APR) will be lower but your home is at risk if you fall behind in your repayments. They can seem attractive, but it's important to check your budget and spending. They are probably not the best if you're consolidating other debt.

#### Think ... and think again

If you're considering taking out a loan to consolidate, please stop and think. If you're contemplating a second (or third) consolidation loan, please stop and think hard. Think very hard before entering into a further loan secured against your home.

#### Hire purchase

Next month we'll look at hire purchase and at other types of borrowing.

#### If you want to talk ...

Worried about debt? Call our HelpLine (below) and talk it over with a counsellor.

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- Zambia 2002

# Comradeship is the key

As the British Army's most senior NCO, with nearly 40 years experience behind him, he has views on just about everything

Report: Ray Routledge  
Picture: Steve Dock

WHEN it comes to experience of life in the British Army, few can match the almost 40 years that WO1 (Conductor) Mike Hobbins has devoted to the Service.

His love of the Army and his wish to be of service are apparent in everything he says and does.

By virtue of the fact that he is the senior conductor in the Royal Logistic Corps, he is also the Army's most senior non-commissioned officer.

Soldier called at his Andover home to ask his views on his career and life in general.

**Did you always want to be in the Army?**

"Pretty much. I joined the Junior Leaders at 15 in Deepcut after three years with the Army cadets."

**What have you done in your long career?**

"After the Junior Leaders I went to 142 Workshops RAOC in Bielefeld, as a young 18-year-old who had never been out of the country before. I spent nine months in Sharjah in the Gulf before going to Ashchurch Vehicle Depot where I met my wife. That was followed by tours to Northern Ireland, Germany and Cyprus before finally arriving at the Logistics Executive at Andover, where I have served for the past 17 years. I am now working out of Deepcut, where it all began."

"My posting as a conductor has given me the opportunity to extend my service."

**Is the ethos of service important to you?**

"When I joined in the 1960s it was to serve. When I met my wife I told her from the start that she came third – Queen, country and family in that order – and I still believe that. We've been married for 32 years."

**Do conductors enjoy any special duties or privileges?**

"The only ceremonial duty is for a



Scroll of approval: WO1 (Conductor) Mike Hobbins RLC with his traditional parchment

Royal visit, when the conductor makes a speech. People also seek my views; for example Maj Gen Peter Chambers at HQ Land Command will seek my advice."

**Were you ever tempted to apply for a commission?**

"No, I never wanted a commission. The officer was a different beast in the old days compared with today. I was happy, I did not want to join somebody else's club. My club was a good one."

**Do you think that warrant officers' careers should be extended beyond 22-year point?**

"Their retirement opens career paths for those coming up. Nevertheless, why throw WOs on the rubbish dump at 22 years? All that skill and all that knowledge ... just gone."

**Do conductors enjoy any special duties or privileges?**

"The only ceremonial duty is for a

## Seniority comes with a royal charter

WHAT gives the senior conductor the right to call himself the most senior NCO in the British Army?

The rank dates back to 1327, when the conductor was a civilian and part of the commissariat – the quartermasters. In terms of hierarchy, it slotted in between junior ranks and officers.

Conductors were eventually "regularised" into the British Army and a royal charter of 1869 made them warrant officer class one. That charter also spelled out that conductors were to be considered senior to all NCOs but inferior to commissioned officers.

The RAOC retained conductors after 1869 and the Royal Logistic Corps kept the

rank when it was formed on April 5, 1993.

"Queen's Regulations state that Conductor RLC, Royal Artillery Sergeant Major, Academy Sergeant Major, RMAS and Garrison Sergeant Major, London District are the senior appointments," explained WO1 Hobbins.

"But the Royal Charter also says that conductors will be senior to all other warrant officers."

The conductor appointment is given to the individual and not to the job. To be considered, a person must be a substantive warrant officer for at least three years and be recommended by the reporting chain.

There may only be a maximum of 15 conductors at any one time, and selection

has nothing to do with length of service. It is more likely to recognise involvement in outside activities such as charity work.

Within the 15 there is also a pecking order based on seniority of appointment. WO1 Hobbins is the longest-serving conductor, in rank since 1987, and is therefore the senior conductor.

Despite their status, conductors are not on a higher pay band than anyone else and are paid according to their trade.

● The RLC last year reintroduced the tradition of awarding conductors their warrant on a parchment scroll, a custom dating back to the rank's earliest incarnations.

Army it means looking after them properly. That goes for young families, too.

"I was horrified when I heard there were young married soldiers on housing benefit. How can any country expect their soldiers to fight and die in those circumstances? That is not the way to treat a volunteer army."

"Close to my heart, the scrapping of Junior Leaders was a bad move. It was a system which allowed youngsters to learn about the Army, learn their trade, and get an education."

"Junior Leaders went on to make the senior NCOs of the British Army and it was a sad day when they were scrapped."

**What about changes for the good?**

"I will be glad to see Bowman come in and the Clansman radio sent to the rubbish-dump where it belongs."

"We are finally getting on the IT bandwagon. It saves an awful lot of messing about, with rapid access to information. Just 16 years ago I was, to all intents and purposes, working with a quill."

"The Army has also woken up to National Vocational Qualifications and education in general. The more we do

now, the more we will get people to stay in the Army for longer."

**What advice would give a 16-year-old contemplating an Army career?**

"I would recommend anyone to join the Army so long as their reasons are the right ones. They should join to serve, with the knowledge that they might be asked to put their life on the line. In the 1960s we understood that because we were born just after the war."

"Every individual should look at why they want to join. After that it might become a career."

**Have you enjoyed your career?**

"The Army is about comradeship and it is a great life – a life that can't be matched anywhere in the world."

where in the world. It is brilliant."

"Liz, my wife, and I remember the last 39 years as being one glorious, great time, with men and women all doing the same thing for basically the same reason. You can't do that anywhere else."

**Our final question was to Liz Hobbins. Have you enjoyed the Army?**

"We have been very well looked after, and when he comes out later this year I am going to miss being part of the family."

## Life's been such a trial

A former guardsman has enjoyed two careers, and one was guarding royalty again

FINDING yourself in court can be a daunting experience. But when WO1 (Superintendent Clerk) John Hook left the Coldstream Guards after 27 years' service, he didn't mind one bit, writes Ray Routledge.

On leaving the Army in the summer of 1972, he soon discovered a new and stimulating career – as a judge's clerk. As a result he worked on some of the most high-profile trials in recent history.

"I was appointed as a judge's clerk to Lord Justice Lawton and in 1978 joined the Hon Mr Justice Drake," he recalled at his Andover home. "While serving with Mr Justice Drake I worked on both the Carl Bridgewater murder trial, and later that of Jeremy Bamber [given five life sentences for killing five members of his family] – both notorious cases."

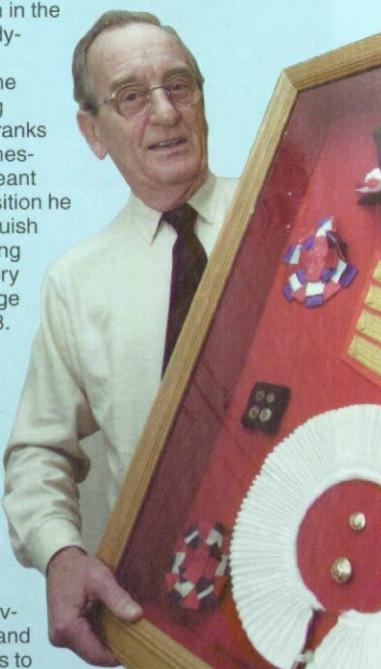
### Queen's Bodyguard

A judge's clerk for 24 years, John also held another post. In 1976 he was appointed a yeoman in the Queen's Bodyguard of the Yeomen of the Guard, rising through the ranks to become messenger sergeant major, a position he had to relinquish when reaching the mandatory retirement age of 70 in 1998.

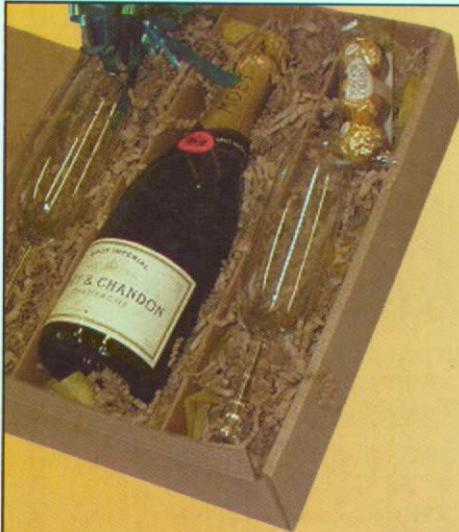
John has been secretary and treasurer of the Bath branch of the Coldstream Guards Association since 1988.

He still travels to clubs and social groups to give talks about the Queen's Bodyguard. And for a man with his experience of ceremonial duties, he was the natural choice as standard-bearer – for the local Royal Air Force Association.

● Are you ex-Army with a second career that would be inspiring to those about to leave? If so, let us know. Write or e-mail [rroutledge@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:rroutledge@soldiermagazine.co.uk)



Bodyguard: John Hook  
Picture: Steve Dock



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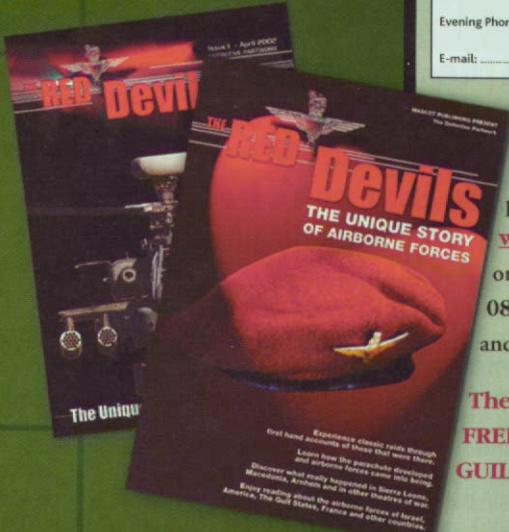
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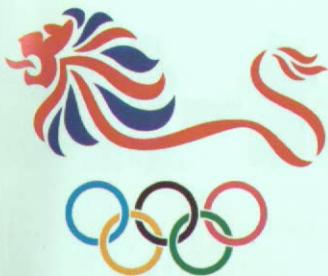
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# OLYMPIC SPECIAL



**Soldier meets Army contenders**

## Executive decision

Veteran's war-shattered dream comes true

SLIDERS competing in luge do not have the luxury of having time to think, **writes Andy Simms**.

In a sport in which time is measured to thousandths of a second, the ability to make snap decisions is vital. An error in judgement can mean the difference between a gold medal and finishing in last position.

Britain's luge team manager at Salt Lake City, Lt Col Mark Armstrong (REME), is no stranger to split-second decision-making, having made a choice in 1990 that almost certainly cost him a place at the 1992 Winter Olympic Games in Albertville, France.

However, it was not a mistake on the track that prevented the promising athlete from attending winter sports' showpiece competition.

"It was December 1990 and I had been released by my unit to compete on the World Cup circuit," explained Armstrong. "I remember phoning my commanding officer to tell him that I would be racing that weekend and being told that I had been selected to command an independent sub-unit in the Gulf War.

"I knew what going to the Gulf would mean for my luge career and literally had a few minutes to decide whether I wanted to go to the 1992 Olympics or whether I wanted to do my job."

Despite the enormity of the decision Armstrong did not keep his CO waiting and swapped the chill of the luge run for the heat of the Kuwaiti desert.

Armstrong's absence from the track meant that Army team-mate Cpl Lofty Whitehead (RMP) was selected to represent Britain in Albertville.

"When I retired from racing to go to

the Gulf I was consistently beating Lofty, but that does not mean to say I was guaranteed a place in the Olympics – things could have changed in the next two years.

"Cpl Whitehead did very well at the Games, but it will always be there in the back of my mind that I could have been an Olympian myself."

Although resisting the temptation to return to competition after the Gulf War, Armstrong found it impossible to turn his back on a sport he first became involved in while serving in Germany in 1987.

He began organising novice events and coaching soldiers in Germany, and was subsequently appointed Army luge secretary and then British secretary. Things snowballed from there and Armstrong made a belated Olympic debut at Lillehammer in 1994 as a technical officer. He would have gone to Nagano in 1998 as team manager if a British athlete had qualified.

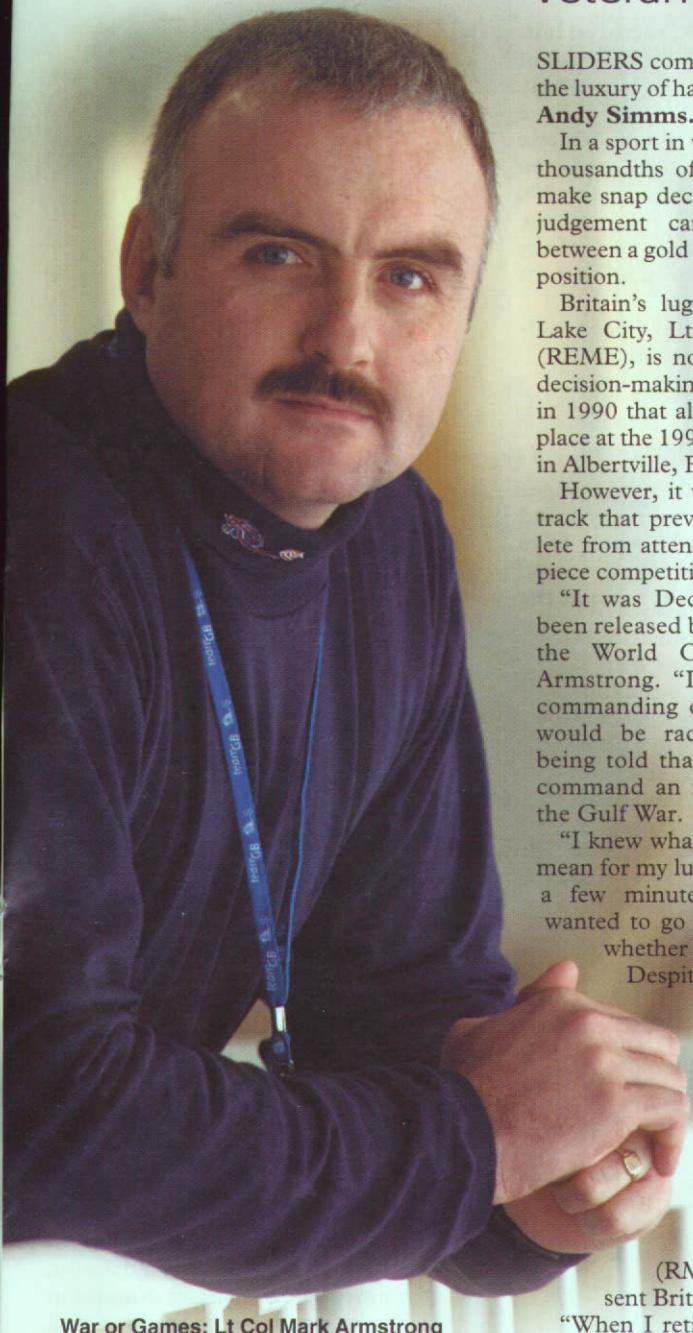
In Salt Lake City last month Armstrong watched from trackside as his protégé, Mark Hatton, finished in 25th position from a field of 50.

"Taking Mark to the Olympics has been the pinnacle of my sporting career and it goes a long way to soothing the disappointment of missing out on the Games myself."

"It would have been nice to have done it as an athlete but it is a great second best," he said. "I have achieved what I set out to do – to get a British athlete back on an Olympic stage – and the memory is only tinged by the fact that it was not with a soldier."

"Sgt Andrew Croucher was so unlucky not to have qualified – he had a lot of bad luck this season and actually achieved the qualifying result three days after the cut-off date."

"There is always 2006 and if I can get Croucher to Turin then that really would be the icing on the cake for me."



War or Games: Lt Col Mark Armstrong

# Soldiers fast-track to the Games

NAME: Pte Jackie Davies (3(UK) Div Sig Regt)

EVEN if Pte Jackie Davies fails to push Britain's number two bobsled to a medal position in the Winter Olympic Games at Salt Lake City, she will still be guaranteed a place in the sporting history books.

As *Soldier* went to press the 24-year-old brakewoman was due to take part in the two-women bobsleigh competition, a discipline making its debut on the Olympic stage.

"I know that what ever happens in Salt Lake I will become part of Olympic history," she said. "It is one thing to say that you are an Olympian but another to say that you were one of the first people to represent your country in a sport."

Davies's route to becoming one of Britain's four women bobsleigh athletes at the Games was an expeditious one.

The Army athlete was introduced to the sport just two years ago and was selected to push the GB 3

sled on the World Cup circuit within her first season.

"I am quite shocked at how quickly I have progressed," she said. "But I was given the opportunity to train full-time from April 2001 and that has been a great help and seen me improve tenfold. I just seemed to keep improving on a daily basis and spent some time last year pushing Cheryl Done in GB 1."

And although Davies, pictured left, is somewhat surprised by the rate of her own development, it is unlikely that her friends and family have been. Davies is from good athletic stock. Her younger sister Samantha represented Great Britain in the 200 metres and 100-metre relay at the Summer Olympic Games in Sydney two years ago and has been a constant voice of encouragement.

Support which will have been welcomed by Davies, whose preparations for the Games were rocked by the death of her father.

"In many ways I think my father's death has made me stronger because I have had to keep my mind focused. The last thing he would have wanted was for me to break down and not perform the best that I can at the Olympics."



NAME: Cpl Dean Ward (2 Para)

AFTER spending more than a decade doubled-over in the back of a British bobsled and having completed a hat-trick of Olympic Games in Salt Lake City, Cpl Dean Ward has decided to call time on his distinguished international career.

"I know it sounds clichéd but I have had a good run," said Ward. "Salt Lake City will definitely be my last international race. I am 38 now, which would mean that I will be 42 by the time the next Olympics come round - I think enough is enough, it is time to let one of the younger guys take my place."

Ward can hang up his running spikes content in the knowledge that, regardless of how the British team fared in the four-man bobsleigh races at the Utah Olympic Park, he has played his part in British Olympic history.

The former Army track athlete, pictured right, made his Olympic debut in Lillehammer in 1994 and at Nagano in 1998 he was a member of the four-man

bob crew which won Britain's only medal of the Games, a bronze, on the final day of competition.

"The season we won bronze was the highlight of my career," he said. "Every World Cup race we entered we started first- or second-fastest to the Americans, and rarely finished out of the top six."

"We won two bronze medals in the six races before the Games and went to Nagano high in confidence knowing that we were capable of beating the same guys that we had all season."

"And even though we half-expected to get a result at the Olympics it is a moment I will never forget," he added. "I can still picture being on that podium as if it was just ten minutes ago. Watching the Union Jack being raised and seeing all the British fans waving their flags brought a lump to my throat and a tear to my eye."



NAME: Cpl Neil Scarsbrick (1 RTR)

BRITISH bobsleigh driver Cpl Neil Scarsbrick (1 RTR) is already looking ahead to the next Olympic Games, and is hoping that Formula One technology will help steer him to victory in Turin in 2006.

Scarsbrick and his Salt Lake City team-mates have been working closely with Lola, the manufacturers of the car in which Nigel Mansell won the Indianapolis 500 in 1993, in a bid to develop a sled that will assist them in realising their medal ambitions.

"Unfortunately it has probably come a fraction to late for Salt Lake City," Scarsbrick told *Soldier* at the team's training camp in Calgary, Canada. "It is still a prototype at the moment but it looks absolutely brilliant and drives well. The bobsled we had been using was three years old and desperately needed an overhaul."

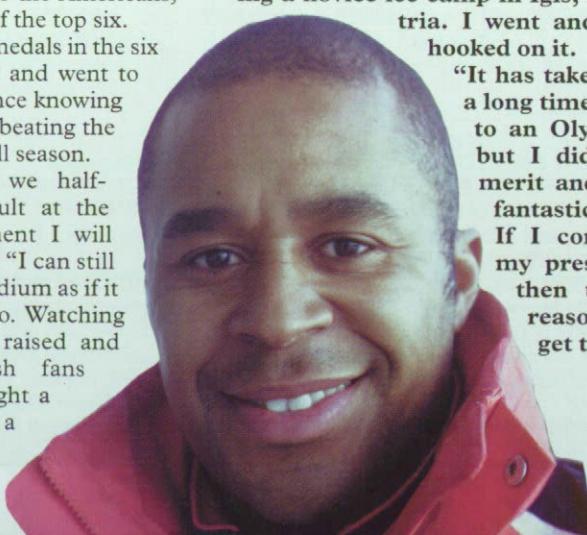
"The important thing to remember about our sport is that five- or six-tenths of a second could mean the difference between the front or back of the field."

"We have always been two steps behind the rest of the world but now hopefully these sleds will put us one step ahead of our rivals," he said. "We have got four years until the next Olympics and I think we will see a significant improvement each year."

And Scarsbrick is determined to make the 2006 Games after experiencing his first taste of Olympic action at Salt Lake City last month - seven years after being introduced to the sport by the Army.

"I was asked by one of my officers whether I was interested in attending a novice ice camp in Igls, Austria. I went and got hooked on it."

"It has taken me a long time to get to an Olympics, but I did it on merit and it is a fantastic feeling. If I continue in my present form then there is no reason why I can't get to Turin."





Pictures: Graeme Main

Change of target: Sharpshooter Sgt Mike Dixon (35 Engr Regt) aims to switch his rifle sight from the Winter Olympics to the Summer Games

### RESULTS SERVICE . . . RESULTS SERVICE . . . RESULTS SERVICE . . . RESULTS SERVICE . . .

**ATHLETICS:** RAF indoor invitation competition, men's team standings – 1, Loughborough University 247pts; 2, Brunel University 231pts; 3, Army 198pts; 4, RAF 161pts; 5, Birmingham University 92pts; 6, Leeds Met University 67pts; 7, Staffordshire University 58pts. **Women's team standings** – 1, Army 171pts; 2, Brunel University 160pts; 3, RAF 118pts; 4, Loughborough University 98pts; 5, Birmingham University 96pts; 6, Leeds Met University 34pts.

**Colenso half-marathon (Podujevo), men's winner** – Sgt Billy McIntosh (RA). **Women's winner** – Cpl Sharon Hamilton (RA).

**CANOING:** Inter-Services wild water racing championships, men's veteran kayak (K1) champion – Bdr Andy McCullough (RA). **Canadian singles (C1) champion** – Maj Paul Hepworth (RLC). **Canadian doubles (C2) champion** – Lt Alex Burt (AGC) and 2nd Lt Andy Nicoll (AAC). **Canadian team champions** – Army. **Women's team champions** – Army. **Overall champions** – Army.

**FOOTBALL:** Massey Trophy – AAC 3 RE 4; AAC 2 APTC 2; RA 3 Infantry 1; RLC 1 RE 1; RAC 0 REME 7; Int Corps 2 R Signals 0; REME 4 APTC 1; AMS 2 AGC 4; Infantry 4 AMS 2; R Signals 2 RAC 3; RLC 1 REME 0; Int Corps 4 AMS 0.

**Pricewaterhouse Cooper league** – AGC 10 AMS 1; AGC 0 R Signals 3.

**4 Div football league, premier division** – 3 RSME 2 SEAE A 3; SEME A 2 1 WG 1; 27 Regt RLC A 6 SEAS A 1; SEME A 1 SEAE 2; SEME A 2 7 Para RHA 3; 27 Regt RLC 2 3 RSME 2.

**Div one** – 3 CS Regt RLC 4 42 Engr Regt 2; 17 Port and Maritime Regt 7 ATR Pirbright 0; 3 CS Reg RLC 2 2 PWRR 2; 42 Engr Regt 4 ATR Pirbright 2; 4 GS Regt RLC 0 2 PWRR 3; 17 Port and Maritime Regt 2 2 PWRR 1; 42 Engr Regt 4 2 PWRR 2; 42 Engr Regt 1 17 Port and Maritime Regt 1; ATR Pirbright 3 2 PWRR 1.

**Div two** – SEAE C 3 SEME B 3; RMPTS 4 SEME B 0; SEAE C 2 ATR Winchester 4; ATR Winchester 5 SEME B 2; RMPTS 1 ATR Winchester 6; ATR Winchester 2 SEAE B 3; SEAE C 2 SEAE B 3; 27 Regt B 2 SEME B 1; RMPTS 4 SEAE B 8; ATR Winchester 4

SEAE C 1; ATR Winchester 7 33 Sup Sqn 2; SEAE B 3 SEME B 3; ATR Winchester 4 RLC Trg Centre 2.

**Div three** – WSDU 2 60 Tpt Sqn RLC 1; DDA 3 WSDU 4; WSDU 3 SEME C 8; SEME C 2 4 Bn REME 6; DDA 3 SEME C 2; WSDU 4 160 Pro Coy RMP 1; DDA 3 4 Bn REME 3; 60 Tpt Sqn RLC 1 42 Engr Regt 1; 4 Bn REME 3 DDA 0.

**ICE HOCKEY:** REME Stallions 5 Base maintenance (Canadian Forces, Borden) 5 (REME scorers – Cpl Ben Wedgwood (2), Maj Bob Eddy, Lt Martin Tremblay and Cfn Scott Webster. Man-of-the-match – Cpl Wedgwood).

Base maintenance and supply section 7 REME Stallions 0 (Man-of-the-match – Cfn Mark Haig).

**JUDO:** Army championships, novice team championships – 1, 1 RGBW; 2, RMCS; 3, 12 Regt RA and 19 Regt RA Wksp. Individual novice champions, under 66kg – Gnr Leon Baptiste (12 Regt RA). Under 73kg – Cpl Darren Dugan (2 PWRR). Under 81kg – OCdt Russell Moody (RMCS). Under 90kg –

# in from the cold

Six-times Olympian Mike Dixon bids farewell to biathlon

BORN arid raised in the shadow of Ben Nevis at Achtnacarry, near Fort William, six-times Olympian Sgt Mike Dixon (35 Engineer Regiment) has rarely strayed from a backdrop of snow-peaked mountains, **writes Andy Simms**.

From Sarajevo to Salt Lake City, he has been an ever-present in the British biathlon team for more than two decades and has been dubbed the Steve Redgrave of winter sports.

It is a tag that Dixon is honoured to have, but one he modestly acknowledges is not wholly accurate.

"It is brilliant to be mentioned in the same sentence as Steve," he mused. "Unfortunately I cannot sit back and say that I have got five Olympic gold medals."

However, like Redgrave, Dixon is now ready to walk away from a sport that has consumed his life, announcing his retirement from international competition at the age of 39.

"I have been away from home for at least six months of every year since I have

been married," he told *Soldier*. "I have sacrificed a lot for my sport and I believe I have achieved as much as I can. I am now happy to box it up, look on it as a great memory and get on with something else."

"Physically I do believe it would be possible for me to carry on – I have always said that as long as the mind is focused the body will follow. My mind was focused on doing my very best in Salt Lake City but now it is looking at a slightly more relaxed lifestyle."

Dixon's decision to not have one last throw of the Winter Olympic dice is understandable; a bid to reach Turin in 2006 would equate to a further four years of relentless physical and mental training.

Imagine sprinting up 25 flights of stairs, and, once at the top, trying to thread a needle five times in a row without once missing the hole, and you will begin to have some understanding of the demands and training required for biathlon.

Characteristically it was the difficulty of the challenge that first attracted the 5ft 6in Scot to the sport, which combines cross-country skiing and shooting, back in 1987.

"The first sport I actually tried my hand at when I joined the Army was boxing – I did it for a couple of months but decided it was not really for me.

"However, it opened my eyes to sport and different methods of training," he said. "I became involved in biathlon purely by chance – 35 Engineer Regiment happened to be the big ski regiment in the Army and people kept telling me how you had to be exceptionally fit to make the biathlon team, and that was like a red cloth to a bull for me."

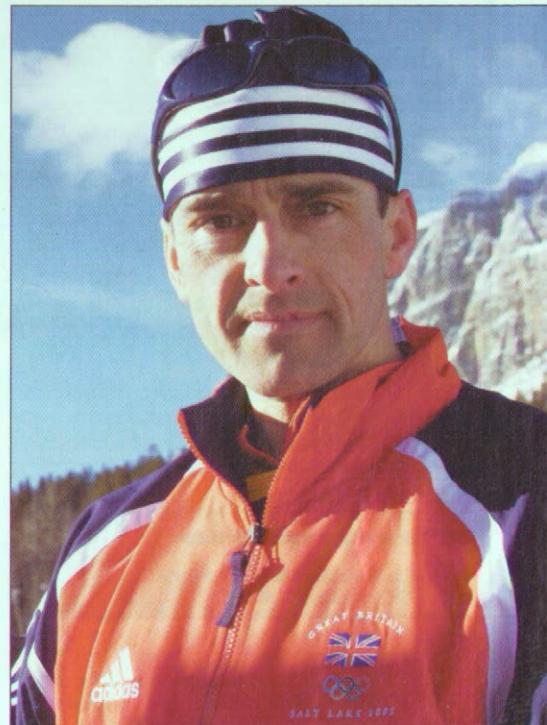
Dixon promptly took up cross-country skiing and then fatefully saw the movie *Chariots of Fire* while on an exercise in Norway.

"I was inspired by the moment in the film where they get their blazers," he said.

"I decided then that whatever else I did in my life I wanted to represent Great Britain at the Olympics."

And with his sixth Olympic blazer now stored safely in his wardrobe Dixon has few regrets about choosing biathlon as the vehicle in which to pursue that dream.

"My military career has obviously suffered but I was warned that that would happen when I first began competing. I



accept and understand that entirely," he said. "Although I have done very little soldiering since making the national team, I have received endless support from the Army and my regiment, and I am grateful for that."

Although officially retired from biathlon, Dixon, who is due to leave the Army later this year, has "unfinished business" and is not quite ready to bow out of the world of sport. He now has his rifle sight fixed firmly on a different target – the summer Olympics.

"I cannot deny that I am intrigued by the prospect of going to the Summer Games," he said. "I have been on this long journey to get a medal for Britain and I have not done that yet."

Not having a medal frustrates me – it has always been an issue for me.

"Realistically I know that age is getting the better of me but I am looking for another challenge. I have been shooting better than ever recently and I think I could switch to small-bore rifle shooting."

With this new challenge in mind, Dixon is due to meet with five-times Olympian and three-times small-bore shooting world champion Alister Allan next month. "If he believes I can do it then I'll go for it."

**I have been on this long journey to get a medal for Britain and I have not done that yet?**



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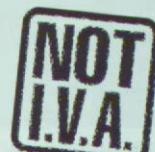


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# All-Army affair

## Soldiers monopolise British biathlon squad

ORIGINALLY biathlon was a tactic of survival rather than a sport. Northern Europeans skied to hunt for food and, later, skied with weapons to defend their borders.

The first known biathlon competition took place between two Norwegian guard companies in 1767 and true to this military tradition, Britain's four-man biathlon team at the 2002 Olympic Games were all soldiers.

The team of Sgt Mike Dixon (35 Engr Regt), LCpl Hugh Pritchard (HAC), Cpl Jason Sklenar (35 Engr Regt) and Cpl Mark Gee (2 RTR) were due to compete in the men's 4 x 7.5km relay as *Soldier* went to press, and their bid to return home from Salt Lake City with a medal was being carefully monitored by team manager Ian Woods, who served 12 years with 26 Engineer Regiment, and technical adviser Martin Glagow, a colonel in the German Army.

"The fact that we are all from military backgrounds does help," explained Woods. "We are like-minded people and consequently have a great team spirit, something that is vital in any sport."

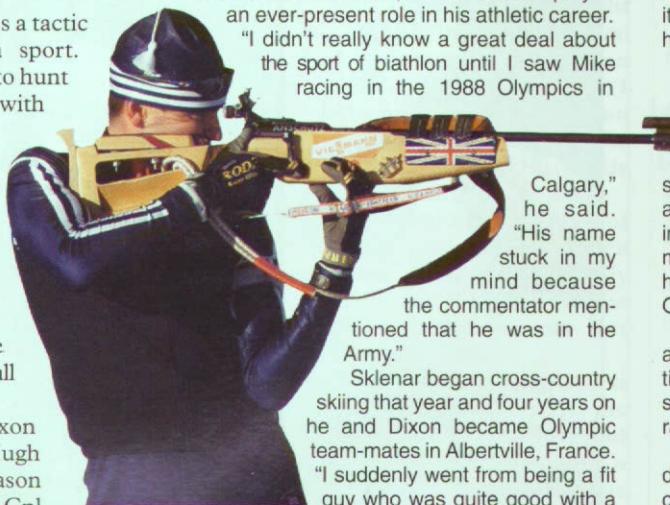
"We are used to reacting to situations when things go wrong, we are used to isolation and we are used to being under pressure for long periods of time."

Glagow, whose daughter Martina won silver for Germany in the women's 12.5km mass start at the 2001 World Championships, joined the British squad last season.

"Martin is a fantastic character," added Woods. "Not only is he a colonel in the Bundeswehr but he is also an ex-international gymnast and a lecturer on military tactics and mountain warfare. He approached us after seeing Mike Dixon compete in a World Cup event."

"He pointed out that it was not Mike's shooting ability or physique that let him down but just a case of having bad skis."

"Martin did not want to work with the German team because of his daughter, nor did he want to work for a team that posed a threat to Martina's medal prospects. There isn't much that he doesn't know about skis and his expertise has put us on a level playing field with the other nations."



**NAME: Cpl Jason Sklenar (35 Engr Regt)**

EVER since Cpl Jason Sklenar first watched a biathlon on television, Mike Dixon has played an ever-present role in his athletic career. "I didn't really know a great deal about the sport of biathlon until I saw Mike racing in the 1988 Olympics in

Calgary," he said. "His name stuck in my mind because the commentator mentioned that he was in the Army."

Sklenar began cross-country skiing that year and four years on he and Dixon became Olympic team-mates in Albertville, France. "I suddenly went from being a fit guy who was quite good with a

rifle to getting a chance to represent my country," he said. "It was a great feeling but the reality soon sank in about how long and hard you have to work to improve in the sport."

"It takes at least ten years of training before you even start knocking on the door of the world's élite."

Sklenar's career has been testament to that fact. Despite more than 12 years in the sport, Salt Lake City marked only his second appearance in the Winter Olympics. Fluctuating form cost Sklenar a place at both Lillehammer and Nagano, and he credits Dixon for helping him to regain his status as an Olympian.

"You can not play at biathlon and when you are training in the cold and wet you do sometimes think whether it is worth the effort," he said. "But Mike has been a phenomenal inspiration to me."

"When you see him at 39 still giving his all day in, day out, you think to yourself 'yeah, I can still do it'."

**NAME: Cpl Mark Gee (2 RTR)**

IF Mike Dixon is the Steve Redgrave of winter sports then Cpl Mark Gee is the equivalent of Matthew Pinsent.

Ten years Dixon's junior, Gee has now been involved in three consecutive Olympic Winter Games and unlike Dixon is not yet ready to hang up his skis. However, the 29-year-old is quick to express that his motivation for continuing to compete beyond Salt Lake City will not be with Dixon's record of six Games in mind.

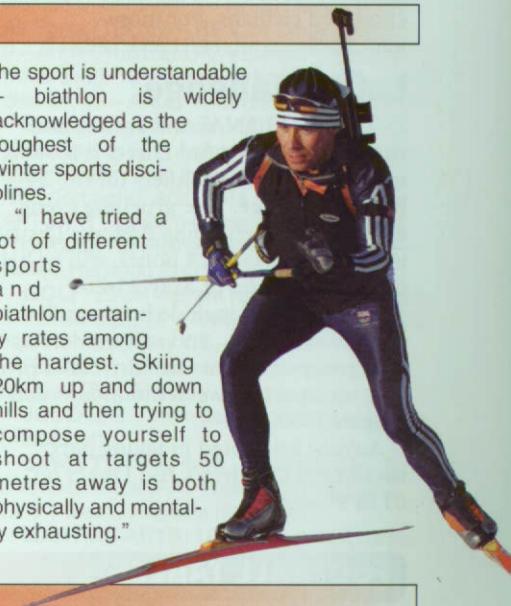
"I do not know if I will continue in the sport from one year to the next," he said. "But I cannot deny that I have got one eye on the next Olympics."

"I will continue at international level as long as my form allows me to. I will not quit while I still feel that I can continue to compete competitively within the Great Britain squad and on the World Cup circuit."

Gee's reluctance to predict his future within

the sport is understandable – biathlon is widely acknowledged as the toughest of the winter sports disciplines.

"I have tried a lot of different sports and biathlon certainly rates among the hardest. Skiing 20km up and down hills and then trying to compose yourself to shoot at targets 50 metres away is both physically and mentally exhausting."



**NAME: LCpl Hugh Pritchard (HAC)**

NO one could ever accuse LCpl Hugh Pritchard of not being fully committed to his sport. The 34-year-old took extreme measures to pursue biathlon at an international level, giving up a lucrative career as an accountant in the city so that he could train full-time.

"I qualified as a chartered accountant in London a long time ago now and gradually came to realise that I could have more fun if I gave up the money and trained seriously," he said.

"Was it a brave decision? Well, it depends on what you are afraid of. If you are afraid of poverty, then yes, but if you are afraid of hard work, no."

Pritchard's reward for giving up his city slicker lifestyle was the chance to represent his country in the Olympics, in a sport he was introduced to by the Territorial Army.

"It was the TA that kept me sane while I was training to become an accountant. I joined the HAC about the same time I moved to London and it has always been a big part of me."

"Cross-country skiing was something that had always appealed to me and when I got the opportunity to try it through the TA things just snowballed from there."

## SHORTS

**Great Scot! Sorry ...**

ATLANTIC rowers Lts Rory Shannon and Alex Wilson are both Scots Guards, and not members of the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards as stated in "Cruising the Caribbean" in February's *Soldier*.

**The great indoors**

THE inaugural Army indoor snowboarding championships will be held on March 29 at the Snozone, Milton Keynes and will feature boardercross and slopestyle events.

For more information contact Sgt Ted Land, 61 Fd Sp Sqn RE, 36 Engr Regt, Invicta Park, Maidstone or e-mail [tedwardland@hotmail.com](mailto:tedwardland@hotmail.com)

**Are you a high flyer?**

THE Army Gliding Association (AGA) is running a series of basic introductory gliding courses at the Wyvern (Army) Gliding Club at Upavon, Wiltshire, throughout 2002.

The courses, which cost £120 and cover six months' membership of the Wyvern Gliding Club, are open to military personnel of all ranks and MoD-employed civilians. For more information contact 01264 782812.

**Lofty challenge**

INTERNATIONAL aid agency and charity Children's Aid Direct is looking to recruit teams of soldiers for the 24-Peaks Challenge. The gruelling event, which involves climbing 24 Lake District mountain peaks in 24 hours, will be held over the weekend of May 25-26.

Teams should include between five and seven walkers, and will need a support group of at least two drivers to provide transport between mountains and to prepare food.

Anyone interested in taking part should call Children's Aid Direct on 0118 9584000.

## FOOTBALL TABLES

MASSEY TROPHY							
	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts	
RLC	7	5	1	1	15	16	
Infantry	8	4	2	2	1	14	
RE	4	4	0	0	13	12	
Int Corps	7	4	1	2	4	12	
AGC	6	3	1	2	-1	10	
APTC	6	3	0	3	-2	9	
REME	5	2	2	1	6	8	
R Signals	5	2	1	2	3	7	
RA	2	2	0	0	10	6	
AAC	6	1	1	4	-2	4	
RAC	8	1	0	6	-24	3	
AMS	7	0	0	7	-23	0	

\* Results up to and including February 16

# Dream debut for Powell



Picture: Graeme Main

Sweet revenge: LBdr Nick Okoth (1 RHA), left, returns to haunt OM Tony Hindley (Royal Navy)

## Inter-Services joy for Army boxing coach

THE broad smile on the face of SSgt Vinny Powell at the final bell of the Inter-Services boxing championships at HMS Nelson spoke volumes – life as Army coach seems to agree with the Welshman.

Just three months after taking over the post from SSgt Neil McCallum (APTC), Powell watched from ring-side in Portsmouth as his team recorded a comprehensive seven-bout victory over their Service rivals and collected the Army's 20th consecutive Inter-Services title.

"Winning the Inter-Services was my short-term goal as coach and I am overjoyed with the way in which the team has done it," he said. "For the first time in a number of years the Army had not already won the championships on paper. The title had to be won in the ring."

And his squad, which has already delivered two ABA novice champions in LCpl John Parkinson (IG) and Gnr

Alastair Morrison (RA), did not disappoint.

LCpl Neil Robinson (RLC) set a winning trend by beating hot-favourite and reigning lightweight champion OM Kevin Davie (Royal Navy) 8-6 on points, and Pte Steven Briggs (1 PWO), Pte Ian North (1 WFR), Morrison and LCpl Dean Frost (RLC) put the result beyond the reach of the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force with some intelligent boxing.

But the most explosive display of the evening belonged to LBdr Nick Okoth (1 RHA), who dramatically avenged his defeat at the hands of the Navy's OM Tony Hindley in last year's tournament.

After a comparatively lethargic first round, Okoth returned from the corner for the second in a flurry of punches, catching Hindley with a well-worked combination inside the first 30 seconds. The naval man survived the resulting standing count but, sensing victory, Okoth unleashed a series of telling left and right hooks that kept Hindley pinned to the ropes and prompted the referee to call an end to proceedings.

## FIXTURES

## Your sporting guide to March ...

**ATHLETICS:** 1 – Inter-Services cross-country championships (Plymouth); 10 – Army tetrahlon championships (RMAS); 17 – Fleet half-marathon: Army, TA and Inter-Services championships (Fleet).

**BADMINTON:** 16-20 – Inter-Services championships (Grantham).

**BASKETBALL:** 1-3 – Inter-Services championships (Grantham); 18 – Inter-unit finals (Grantham).

**BOWLING:** 1-3 – Army tenpin bowling championships (AMF Bowl, Leeds).

**BOXING:** 7 – Army Major and Minor Unit team finals (TBC); 16 – ABA (England) senior quarter-finals (TBC); 18-22 – RLC championships (Maida Gymnasium, Aldershot); 21 – Major Unit team semi-finals (TBC); 23 – ABA (England) senior semi-finals (TBC).

**EQUITATION:** 3 – Staff College and RMAS drag hunt (Larkhill); 8-9 – Grand Military Gold Cup (Sandown Park).

**FOOTBALL:** 1 – AGC v Infantry (Worthy Down); AMS v REME (Mytchett); 2 – Army youth v Cornwall youth (Aldershot); 5 – Cambridge University v TA (Cambridge), Somerset v Army (TBC), Army women v Prison service women (Aldershot); 6 – Royal Navy v Royal Air Force (TBC); 8 – RE v Int Corps (Minley); 9 – Army Crusaders FC v Oxford University (Aldershot); 13 – Royal Air Force v Army (Middlesex); 15 – AAC v RAC (Middle Wallop); 16 – Gloucestershire youth v Army youth (Gloucester); 20 – Army v Royal Navy (Aldershot); Infantry Cup final (TBC); 22 – Infantry v RLC (Pirbright); AGC v RA (Worthy Down); APTC v R Signals (Hermitage); RAC v AMS (Tidworth); RE Blythe Cup final (Minley); 27 – RAMC Harwood Cup final (TBC).

**GOLF:** 23-24 – Brent Knoll Bowl (Burnham & Berrow GC); 26 – Army women v Army golf club women (Army GC, Aldershot).

**HOCKEY:** 13-15 – Inter-Services championships (RAF Halton).

**JUDO:** 2-3 – Inter-Services championships (Aldershot).

**LAWN TENNIS:** 9-10 – Inter-Services B championships (RAF Halton); 16 – Bourne Club v Men's veterans (Farnham).

**MARTIAL ARTS:** 16 – Army open championships (Aldershot); 30-31 – Squad training (Aldershot).

**REAL TENNIS:** 10 – Army v Hardwick House (Pangbourne); 23 – Newmarket v Army (Newmarket).

**RUGBY UNION:** 12 – Northampton v Army (Away); 19 – Army v Bristol (Aldershot); 27 – Army v Harlequins (Aldershot).

**SHINTY:** 9 – The Highlanders v Kilmory (Home); 30 – Glasgow University v The Highlanders (Away).

**SHOOTING:** 23 – Inter-division match (Bordon); 24 – Land inter-unit final (Bordon).

**SURFING:** 10-17 – Army spring meeting (Brawdy).

**TUG OF WAR:** 1-3 – Combined Services coaching course (HMS Collingwood).

**WINTER SPORTS:** 3-9 – Army Scottish alpine championships (Ruhpolding, Germany), Land alpine ski and snowboard championships (Aviemore).

# Stallions nose in front of rivals



Picture: Graeme Main

## REME stars display champion pedigree

WHAT a difference a year, and the help of a Canadian, makes in ice hockey.

When Maj Bob Eddy – a member of the Canadian EME currently on an exchange posting at SEME Bordon – was appointed as player-coach of the REME Stallions the side had just been knocked out of the EME ice hockey tournament in Canada after failing to win a single game.

Twelve months later Eddy led his steeds into battle in the ninth annual EME championships, held at a Canadian Forces base near Toronto, and celebrated his homecoming by lifting the winners' trophy.

In stark contrast to their previous campaign, the Stallions lost just one of their qualifying games, a 6-1 defeat against London, and booked a place in the semi-finals courtesy of some excellent defending and ruthless attack play.

A hat-trick from Cpl Ben Wedgwood and two goals apiece from Lt Martin Tremblay and coach Eddy secured a 7-5 victory over 2 SVC Bn B in the semi-finals and earned the Stallions their first cup final appearance – a showdown with London.

Determined to avenge their only defeat of the tournament, the Stallions laid siege to the London goal and, despite going 1-0 down, finished the first period 3-2 in front.

Both teams stepped up a gear in the second, but London were shackled by the REME back-line and were forced to shoot at goaltender WO2 Gaz Patey from distance.

At the other end of the ice Cpl Steve Murray, Cfn Scott Webster and Cfn Rob Taylor were in rampant form and each found the back of the net to close the scoring at 6-2 and confirm the Stallions' standing as champions.

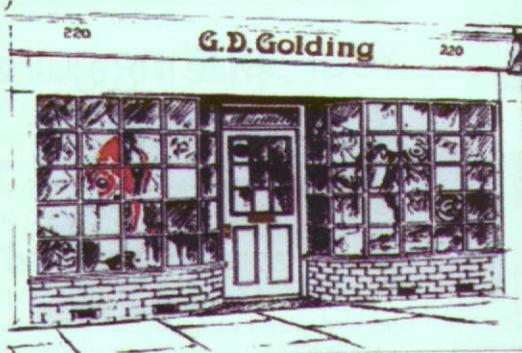
◆ Any Service personnel interested in playing ice hockey should contact WO2 Gaz Patey on mil 9214 841 ext 5470.



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## Four-page guide

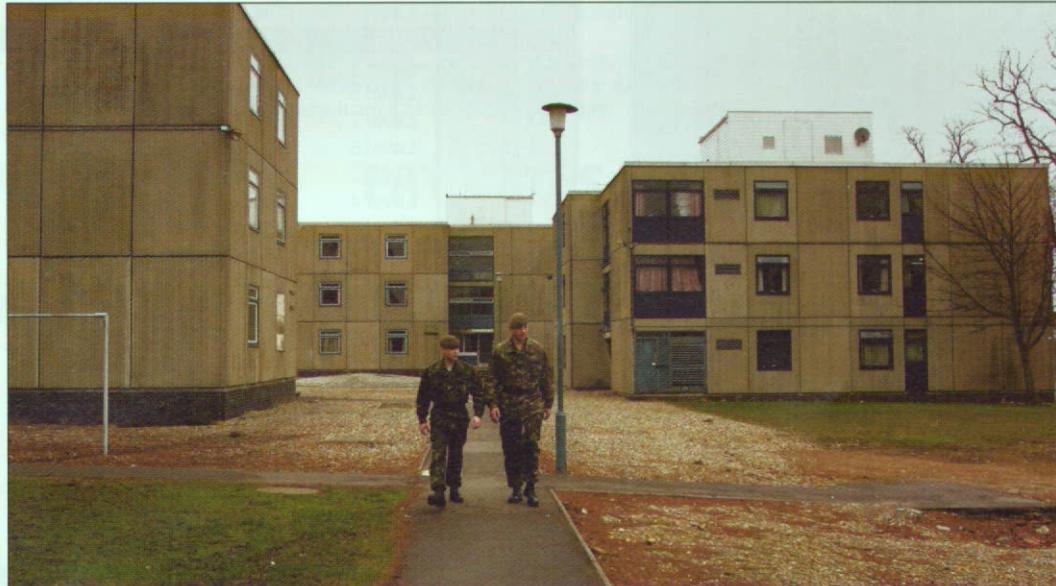
Quick look at key elements of the 2002 military award

- AFPRB recommendation accepted in full, with no staging.
- Overall basic pay increased for majority by 3.7 per cent.
- Greater increases

- for some groups.
- Longer Separated Service Allowance (LSSA) increased by five per cent.
- Introduction of new Financial Retention Incentives (FRI)

- scheme to address aircrew retention.
- Extension of R Signals FRI until April 2003.
- Other specialist (including flying pay) and non-specialist pay

- increased by 3.7 per cent.
- No change to X Factor. Rate remains at 13 per cent.
- No change to pension abatement of seven per cent.



Appalling: Single living accommodation in Bruneval Barracks, home of the 1st Battalion, Welsh Guards

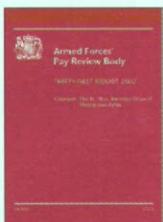
# Barracks are a major turn-off

POOR, in some cases appalling, standards of much Service accommodation was one of the most troubling issues which confronted Armed Forces Pay Review Body (AFPRB) members, writes John Elliott.

Soldiers and their spouses had told of the negative impact of living in poor accommodation and not knowing if it would be better or worse every time they moved. Accommodation for single Service personnel was particularly variable.

In its 2002 report\* to the Government, the AFPRB comments on the frustratingly slow pace of change and states: "We have expressed our concern in a practical way by refusing to recommend any increase to charges for the poorest accommodation since 1996, a step we take again this year."

The report noted that the Defence Housing Executive was on target to bring all Service Fam-



ilies Accommodation (SFA) in England, Scotland and Wales up to "standard 1 for condition" by November 2005, and that similar projects were in place in Germany, Gibraltar and Cyprus. The report expressed delight at the announcement of £1 billion new funding for the improvement of Single Living Accommodation (SLA), tinged with disappointment that

the first new bed spaces from the new funding would not come on stream until early 2004, and the project would not be completed until 2012.

The AFPRB did not consider a ten-year time horizon for SLA improvements to be satisfactory or "retention-positive". Planning blight – a reluctance to repair buildings due to be refurbished or torn down – was likely to further muddy the waters. "We have," says the report, "received assurances to the contrary but intend to monitor the position closely."

\*The AFPRB report is available from the Stationery Office, price £12.25

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\*The AFPRB report is available from the Stationery Office, price £12.25

## It's noted

More points from the AFPRB report

### Recruiting and retention:

The situation was "fragile" and unlikely to improve in the near future. In April 2001, 23,579 people joined the Forces ("a significant achievement"), but over the same period, 17,479 left.

In November, 31 per cent of the Armed Forces were committed to operations. The effect on quality of life remained a major issue for personnel.

**Quality of life:** Working and living conditions, including accommodation, separation, differing treatment of married and single personnel, hours of work, and the ability to take leave, were major themes among personnel interviewed by the AFPRB.

**Pay 2000:** A number of apparent anomalies were raised, particularly by more experienced personnel who felt the new system offered better prospects for those at the outset of their career and did not recognise years in rank. Allocation of trades to pay ranges did not always match perceptions of the relative importance of the trade.

**Leave:** Annual leave days taken, averaged over all personnel, rose from 26 to 27.3, while lost leave decreased. The proportion of people who had to change leave plans for Service reasons fell from 52 per cent to 48 per cent.

**Operations:** Evidence confirmed that the impact of high operational tempo was unevenly spread across individuals, trades and units in all Services. While recognising that deployments and detachments could also lead to overstretch for those left behind, the pay body expressed particular concern at disruption to individuals and their families caused by separation.

Turn the page for more AFPRB report details... your new daily rates of pay... allowances and charges



Another long day: The Armed Forces Pay Review Body report notes that while working hours for Service personnel have fallen slightly overall, it is business as usual for those on operations in Northern Ireland and elsewhere (see Page 56). Just after this photo was taken in Belfast's Ardoyne Road a blast bomb injured three policemen nearby

Picture: Graeme Main

## UK forces are better off than most others

... except your average Aussie or Irish private

THE pay review body commissioned its own independent research to check claims by Service people working in multinational forces that the UK lagged behind other countries in terms and conditions.

Information was collected in Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, New Zealand, Norway and the USA and analysed by a specialist international, not-for-profit company. Pay data was adjusted to take account of exchange and tax rates, and costs of living.

The company found that for base pay, accounting for taxes, all ranks in the UK were above the average for all countries surveyed, the difference varying from 33 per cent at WO to 54 per cent at colonel. The only three exceptions were Australian and Irish privates and majors in the United States.

Taking account of base pay combined with allowances for operations, pay for UK personnel still came out above the average, though the gap narrowed.

When pension arrangements, accommodation fees, leave and allowances such as education grants were factored in, UK personnel still compared favourably with the other countries surveyed.

While conceding that accurate international comparisons were "problematic", the AFPRB concluded that the research indicated none of the other countries provided a more generous package across-the-board, though there were specific circumstances in which their treatment of certain personnel was more generous.

It intends to repeat the research periodically to keep abreast of relative changes.

## Charges: Food/accommodation

- Food charges increased by 3.4 per cent.
- Married Unaccompanied Food Charge (MUFC) increased by 8p a day to £2.47.
- Single food charge increased by 11p to £3.38 a day.
- Service Families Accommodation charges increased to £1.57 a day

(15.7 per cent) for the largest, best quality accommodation down to an increase of 2p (0.6 per cent) a day for poorer quality accommodation.

- Garage rents increased by 4p to 57p a day.
- Single Living Accommodation charges increased by 12p a day for Grade 1 to no increase for Grade 4.

## PAY RATES FOR OFFICERS

£ daily

RANK	OF6	2001	2002	Increase
Brig +4	Level 5	203.11	210.63	7.52
Brig +3	Level 4	201.03	208.47	7.44
Brig +2	Level 3	198.96	206.32	7.36
Brig +1	Level 2	196.89	204.17	7.28
Brig OA	Level 1	194.81	202.02	7.21
<b>OF5</b>				
Col +8	Level 9	179.51	186.15	6.64
Col +7	Level 8	177.37	183.93	6.56
Col +6	Level 7	175.23	181.71	6.48
Col +5	Level 6	173.10	179.50	6.40
Col +4	Level 5	170.96	177.29	6.33
Col +3	Level 4	168.82	175.07	6.25
Col +2	Level 3	166.69	172.86	6.17
Col +1	Level 2	164.55	170.64	6.09
Col OA	Level 1	162.41	168.42	6.01
<b>OF4</b>				
Lt Col +8	Level 9	155.03	160.77	5.74
Lt Col +7	Level 8	153.17	158.84	5.67
Lt Col +6	Level 7	151.33	156.93	5.60
Lt Col +5	Level 6	149.48	155.01	5.53
Lt Col +4	Level 5	147.64	153.10	5.46
Lt Col +3	Level 4	145.79	151.18	5.39
Lt Col +2	Level 3	143.95	149.28	5.33
Lt Col +1	Level 2	142.10	147.36	5.26
Lt Col OA	Level 1	140.25	145.44	5.19
<b>OF3</b>				
Maj +8	Level 9	119.10	124.10	5.00
Maj +7	Level 8	116.64	121.54	4.90
Maj +6	Level 7	114.18	118.98	4.80
Maj +5	Level 6	111.73	116.42	4.69
Maj +4	Level 5	109.27	113.86	4.59
Maj +3	Level 4	106.81	111.30	4.49
Maj +2	Level 3	104.35	108.73	4.38
Maj +1	Level 2	101.90	106.18	4.28
Maj OA	Level 1	99.44	103.62	4.18
<b>OF2</b>				
Capt +8	Level 9	93.89	97.83	3.94
Capt +7	Level 8	92.82	96.72	3.90
Capt +6	Level 7	91.75	95.60	3.85
Capt +5	Level 6	89.62	93.38	3.76
Capt +4	Level 5	87.48	91.15	3.67
Capt +3	Level 4	85.35	88.93	3.58
Capt +2	Level 3	83.21	86.70	3.49
Capt +1	Level 2	81.07	84.47	3.40
Capt OA	Level 1	78.94	82.26	3.32
<b>OF1</b>				
Lt +4	Level 10	68.42	70.95	2.53
Lt +3	Level 9	66.79	69.26	2.47
Lt +2	Level 8	65.17	67.58	2.41
Lt +1	Level 7	63.54	65.89	2.35
Lt OA	Level 6	61.91	64.20	2.29
2Lt	Level 5	51.50	53.41	1.91
N/A to Army	Level 4	45.63	47.32	1.69
SSLC +1	Level 3	38.86	40.30	1.44
SSLC OA	Level 2	35.60	36.92	1.32
Off Cdt	Level 1	32.57	33.78	1.21
<b>UCE</b>				
U Cad +3	Level 4	37.45	38.84	1.39
U Cad +2	Level 3	34.30	35.57	1.27
U Cad +1	Level 2	30.55	31.68	1.13
U Cad OA	Level 1	26.62	27.60	0.98
<b>Welbexian Off Cad</b>				
Year 3		37.45	38.84	1.39
Year 2		34.30	35.57	1.27
Year 1		26.62	27.60	0.98

# Look who's different

MAIN variations from the general award are:

Privates and lance corporals on Pay Ranges 1 (lower) – increase of 4.2 per cent for reasons of civilian comparability.

**Privates on Level 1 Pay Range 1 (Higher) at the first pay point – increase from £33.07 to £34.46 a day.**

Staff sergeants on Level 1 Pay Range 4 (Lower) at the first pay point – increase from £69.31 to £72.09 a day.

**WO1s on Pay Range 5 (Higher and Lower) – increases between 4.1 per cent and 7.2 per cent.**

Captains and majors – increase of 4.2 per cent (comparability).

New entrants – Adults increase from £28.34 to £29.53 a day (comparability). Under-17s increase from £21.92 to £24.65 a day.

# More incentives

FINANCIAL Retention Incentives (FRI) were agreed for:

## Aircrew

- £30,000 at five years before the Immediate Pension Point (IPP) payable to officer and NCO pilots, with five-year return of service (ROS).

- £50,000 at the IPP (for officer pilots) and £30,000 (for NCO pilots), with five-year ROS.

## Royal Signals

- Current FRIs for Class 1 Systems Engineer Technicians and Foreman of Signals extended for a further year to April 2003.

## PAY RATES FOR OTHER RANKS

£ daily

HIGHER RANGE							LOWER RANGE			
Rank	Range 5	2001	2002	Increase	Rank	Range	2001	2002	Increase	
Warrant Officer 1	Level 7	97.04	101.43	4.39	Warrant Officer 1	Level 7	89.33	95.72	6.39	
	Level 6	95.48	99.90	4.42		Level 6	87.69	93.10	5.41	
	Level 5	93.91	98.16	4.25		Level 5	86.20	90.55	4.35	
	Level 4	92.35	96.43	4.08		Level 4	84.64	88.82	4.18	
	Level 3	90.78	94.70	3.92		Level 3	83.07	87.09	4.02	
	Level 2	89.33	93.10	3.77		Level 2	81.51	85.37	3.86	
	Level 1	87.69	91.30	3.61		Level 1	79.95	83.74	3.79	
Range 4							Range 4			
Warrant Officer 2	Level 9	90.49	93.84	3.35	Warrant Officer 2	Level 9	82.91	85.98	3.07	
	Level 8	89.23	92.53	3.30		Level 8	81.07	84.07	3.00	
	Level 7	87.97	91.22	3.25		Level 7	79.19	82.12	2.93	
	Level 6	86.71	89.92	3.21		Level 6	77.31	80.17	2.86	
	Staff Sergeant	84.84	87.98	3.14		Staff Sergeant	75.43	78.22	2.79	
	Level 4	82.95	86.02	3.07		Level 4	74.41	77.16	2.75	
	Level 3	81.07	84.07	3.00		Level 3	72.71	75.40	2.69	
Sergeant	Level 2	79.19	82.12	2.93	Sergeant	Level 2	70.42	73.03	2.61	
	Level 1	77.31	80.17	2.86		Level 1	69.31	72.09	2.78	
Range 3							Range 3			
Sergeant	Level 7	77.26	80.12	2.86	Sergeant	Level 7	70.93	73.55	2.62	
	Level 6	75.84	78.65	2.81		Level 6	69.31	71.87	2.56	
	Level 5	74.42	77.17	2.75		Level 5	67.93	70.44	2.51	
	Level 4	73.00	75.70	2.70		Level 4	66.73	69.20	2.47	
	Level 3	72.09	74.76	2.67		Level 3	66.06	68.50	2.44	
	Level 2	70.31	72.91	2.60		Level 2	64.44	66.82	2.38	
	Level 1	68.54	71.08	2.54		Level 1	62.81	65.13	2.32	
Range 2							Range 2			
Corporal	Level 7	69.43	72.00	2.57	Corporal	Level 7	62.02	64.31	2.29	
	Level 6	67.95	70.46	2.51		Level 6	61.19	63.45	2.26	
	Level 5	66.57	69.03	2.46		Level 5	60.46	62.70	2.24	
	Level 4	64.99	67.39	2.40		Level 4	59.56	61.76	2.20	
	Level 3	63.51	65.86	2.35		Level 3	57.80	59.94	2.14	
	Level 2	59.95	62.17	2.22		Level 2	56.81	58.91	2.10	
	Level 1	56.37	58.46	2.09		Level 1	54.28	56.29	2.01	
Range 1							Range 1			
Lance Corporal	Level 9	60.55	62.79	2.24	Lance Corporal	Level 9	49.88	51.97	2.09	
	Level 8	57.72	59.86	2.14		Level 8	48.13	50.15	2.02	
	Level 7	55.25	57.29	2.04		Level 7	46.03	47.96	1.93	
	Level 6	52.83	54.78	1.95		Level 6	44.13	45.98	1.85	
	Level 5	50.38	52.24	1.86		Level 5	42.36	44.14	1.78	
	Private	45.55	47.24	1.69		Private	40.20	41.89	1.69	
	Level 3	42.36	43.93	1.57		Level 3	36.96	38.51	1.55	
Private	Level 2	38.38	39.80	1.42	Private	Level 2	35.02	36.49	1.47	
	Level 1	33.07	34.46	1.39		Level 1	33.07	34.46	1.39	

## RATE OF PAY FOR NEW ENTRANTS

	2001	2002	Increase
Level 2 – Aged 17 or over	28.34	29.53	1.19
Level 1 – Aged under 17	21.92	24.65	2.73

## Working hours dip

More points from the AFPRB report

**Working hours:** The AFPRB welcomed the Services' efforts to manage working hours and noted that overall hours on duty had fallen. Longer working hours were still a problem in Northern Ireland and for units on overseas deployments. It estimated that military rates of pay for junior ranks aged 21 and above fell below the National Minimum Wage when they worked above 55 hours a week, or more than 65 hours a week for those under 21.

**Home-owners:** A third of Army, half of RAF and three-quarters of Royal Navy personnel own a home. Soldiers had expressed frustration that the Long Service Advance of Pay, designed to help them buy a house, was available to the Navy from age 23, but to them only when they turned 35. They understood the link between the age qualification and accompanied service policy but considered it to be irrelevant. The report said there were strong retention grounds for an urgent review of the policy.

**Staged awards:** With the Government accepting the AFPRB report in full, concerns that the 2002 award would be staged proved unfounded. Although it is three years since the award was deferred, personnel still raised the issue with AFPRB members, who concluded that staging had been a major blow to confidence and morale.

**Separation:** AFPRB members "looked forward" to the full implementation of separated service recording systems, which "should provide the Services with a clearer picture of the impact of overstretch and help them to manage separation better at the individual level".

**Overstretch:** Although pressure on the Services had eased from the unprecedented high levels of 1999, events following September 11 illustrated only too clearly that it was not always possible to predict or control commitments.

## AFPRB urges swift report on disparity between married and single soldiers

IN a chapter devoted to "quality of life" issues, the AFPRB report made several observations about the treatment of married and single personnel.

Here are some excerpts:

"...the differential treatment of married and single personnel and those in long-term partnerships is a major issue of contention for many personnel. This differential is raised most often in relation to accommodation and to allowances."

"We understand that MoD is examining the disparity between the entitlement of married personnel and those living in partnerships. We look forward to the outcome of this work, which we urge MoD to complete speedily."

"Single people... feel that allowances asso-

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Officer Aircrew (Trained)	Initial rate	10.88	11.28	0.40
	Middle rate	18.26	18.94	0.68
	Top rate	29.04	30.11	1.07
	Enhanced rate	34.22	35.49	1.27
Lt Col on aptt		30.07	31.18	1.11
after 6 years in rank		28.00	29.04	1.04
after 8 years in rank		25.93	26.89	0.96
Col on aptt		23.03	23.88	0.85
after 2 years in rank		21.50	22.30	0.80
after 4 years in rank		19.97	20.71	0.74
after 6 years in rank		17.68	18.33	0.65
after 8 years in rank		15.37	15.94	0.57
Brigadier		9.21	9.55	0.34
<b>Non-Commissioned Aircrew</b>				
Qualified Aircraft Comdr	Initial rate	10.88	11.28	0.40
	Middle rate	18.26	18.94	0.68
	Top rate	29.04	30.11	1.07
	Enhanced rate	34.22	35.49	1.27
Qualified as pilot	Initial rate	5.60	5.81	0.21
	Middle rate	12.35	12.81	0.46
	Top rate	14.54	15.08	0.54
Aircrew pay	Initial rate	5.38	5.58	0.20
	Middle rate	11.87	12.31	0.44
	Top rate	15.56	16.14	0.58
RLC, Air despatch pay	Lower rate	3.79	3.93	0.14
	Higher rate	6.10	6.33	0.23
<b>Diving Pay</b>				
Army Compressed Air Diver (ACAD)		6.32	6.55	0.23
Army Unit Diving Supervisor & Army Advanced Diver		9.03	9.36	0.33
Army Supervisor & Instructor		15.36	15.93	0.57
<b>Parachute Pay</b>				
Qualified Parachutists		4.13	4.28	0.15
Parachute Jump Instructor - Less than 8 years' experience		5.92	6.14	0.22
Parachute Jump Instructor - 8 or more years' experience		8.81	9.14	0.33
<b>Gurkha Language Pay</b>				
Oral & written proficiency		1.08	1.12	0.04
Oral proficiency rate		0.62	0.64	0.02
<b>Experimental Pay</b>				
Per test		2.06	2.14	0.08
<b>Pay for Work of an Objectionable Nature (PWON)</b>				
	Basic rate	4.74	4.92	0.18
	Higher rate	14.00	14.52	0.52
<b>Pay for Work in Unpleasant Conditions (PWUC)</b>				
(Soldiers only)		1.00	2.00	1.00
<b>Northern Ireland Resident Supplement (NIRS)</b>		4.95	5.13	0.18
<b>Recruiting &amp; Retention Allowance (London)</b>		3.07	3.18	0.11
<b>Longer Separate Service Allowance (LSSA)</b>				
	Basic rate	4.89	5.13	0.24
	Middle rate	7.65	8.03	0.38
	Higher rate	10.42	10.94	0.52

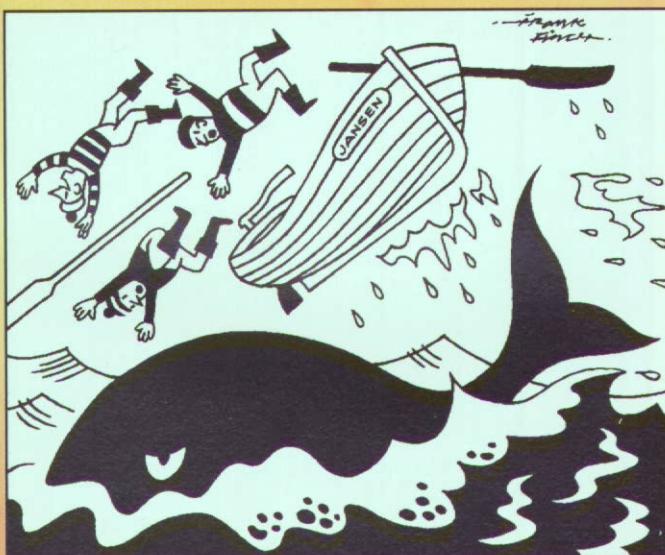
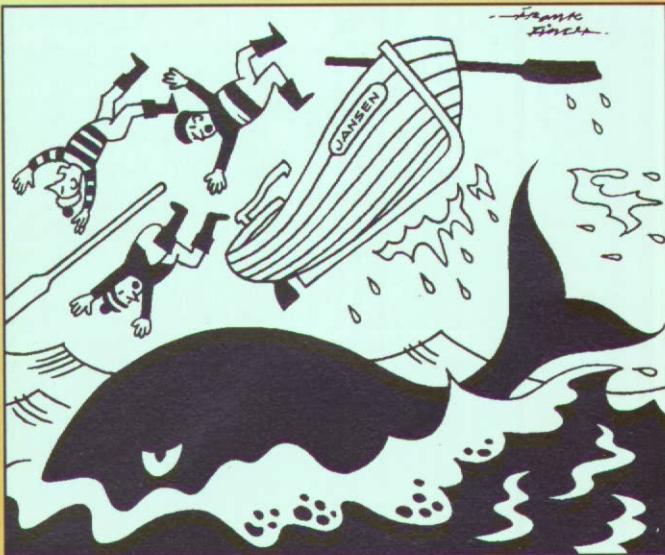
ciated with postings favour married personnel and make the point that they too have a need to keep in touch with their families."

home, we have some sympathy with their argument."

"Probably the most frequent complaint raised by single personnel relates to the removals package, which, they feel, has not caught up with the volume of personal possessions owned by most individuals. Having seen many SLA rooms, where personal possessions make a real difference to the standard of comfort in what is effectively their

"We consider the new operational welfare package, which we have seen during our visits, a major step forward. We are aware that there have been problems in delivering items... at certain times and locations. This should not detract, however, from the overall benefit that has been delivered to personnel on many operations."

No 724



# How observant are you?

**WIN £100!**

Frank Finch has made ten changes in detail to one of his drawings taken from our archive. Circle the differences in the lower image, cut out the whole panel, add your name and address and send to HOAY 724, Soldier, Ordnance Road, Aldershot, GU11 2DU by April 2.

*A photocopy is acceptable, but only one entry per person may be submitted.*

Do not include anything else in your envelope.

First correct entry drawn

after the closing date will win £100; the second and third will receive £10 gift vouchers. No correspondence of any kind can be entered into.

The names of the winner and runners-up will be announced in the May issue.

Name : (Give initials and rank or title)

Address :

January competition (No 722): First correct entry drawn was from Cpl M Thomas, 99 Postal & Courier Sqn RLC, who wins £100. Runners-up Cpl Wilkinson, J1 Branch, HQ MNB C, BFPO 559 and Sig D Harry-Barnwell, of Blandford Camp, Dorset, each win a £10 gift voucher. The ten differences were: gift box on top shelf; apples; teapot spout; webbing; assistant's lapel; "Rock Cakes" sign; right-hand soldier's hairline; cigarette packet; table corner; cat's tail.



## Freeze frame

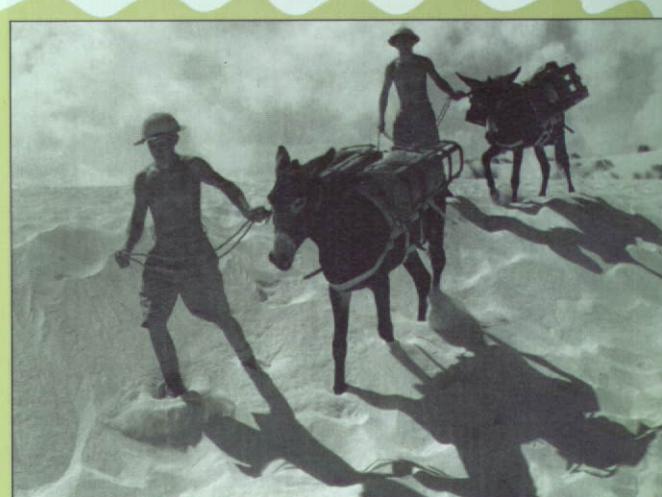
How much further to the bleeding donkey scuba championships?

Write your own funny caption for the photograph, right, first published in *Soldier* in November 1951. The best, in the Editor's opinion, will win a prize from our silver logo collection. Usual rules apply. Entries – on a postcard or the back of a sealed envelope – should reach us by April 2.



THE prize for our January competition (left) goes to Cpl J Smith, of Sennelager-based ETAT, STC, who suggested: "The sergeant suspected the new recruits lacked the character and enthusiasm of previous squads".

A big hand, but no prizes, for "Sir, we got attacked by a steam roller" from LCpl Whan, 202 Fd Hosp, Birmingham; "The



Mujahedin Pipe Band were small in size and numbers" from Sgt R Hall, AFCO Luton; "I don't care how hard a target you are . . . you still get only the Lower Rate under Pay 2000"; and "Burka-clad recruits of the

1st Afghan Pygmy Gondoliers complete dry training near Kabul. Recruits are shown in the celebrated 'shock wedge oars ready' position" from Capt O'Rourke, 721 Sqn, 11 EOD Regt, REL, Ashchurch.

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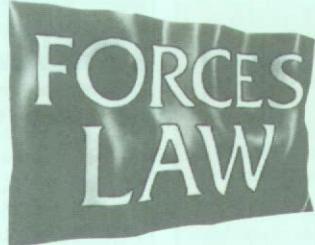
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**Alison,** (41), 5'11" with auburn hair. Enjoys driving, cooking, gardening, reading, swimming, decorating, films, F1 and quizzes. Seeking pen pals, 35-45. P035

**Natasha,** (32), 5'6" slim with strawberry blonde hair. Enjoys socialising, football and having fun. Seeking pen pals of any age group with a good sense of humour. P036

**Ruby,** (34), 5'8" with red hair. GSOH, outgoing/happy personality, caring and sincere. Singer/lyricist/composer with blues/rock band seeks to write to soldiers, 25+. P037

**Katie,** (32), 5'7" slim with blonde hair and blue eyes. Wears glasses most of the time, non-smoker, hard working, kind, caring, loyal, fun and solvent. Enjoys watching rugby, scuba diving, skiing, travelling, cookery, reading, cinema/videos and country pubs. Seeking pen pals with similar interests, 30+. P038

**Lisa,** (27), 5'5" slim with blue eyes. Enjoys country walks, socialising, laughing, reading, cooking, down to earth people and pets. Lonely lass just moved to Yorkshire seeking funny, friendly pen pals, 22-32. P039

**Kate,** (52), 5'2" with red/brown hair and blue eyes. Enjoys the country, sport, walking, gun dogs, music, poetry, watching rugby, cooking and embroidery. Seeking pen pals, 38-54, photo would be appreciated. P040

**Gemma,** (20), 5'5" with coppery brown hair and brown eyes. Wears stylish glasses, works in a private day nursery looking after children and loves it. Enjoys clubs, pubs, football and shopping. Seeking pen pals of any group. P041

**Heather,** (38), 5'4" with long brown hair and blue eyes. Enjoys music, eating out, cinema, interior design, gardening, visiting places of interest and travelling. Seeking male pen pals home and abroad, 30-45. P042

**Kathleen,** (41), 5'4" with light brown. Enjoys sewing, walking, craft working and helping others. Very outgoing, full of fun divorcee and has a good sense of humour. Seeking pen pals, 45-50. P043

**Catherine,** (52), 5'9" with short brown hair and hazel eyes. Enjoys reading and music. Seeking pen pals who like children and prefer non-smokers, 45-55. P044

**Andrea,** (25), 5'6" with brown eyes and medium build. Enjoys pubs, clubs, music, eating out, travelling and driving. Seeking pen pals, 25-30. P045

**Beverley,** (40), 5'5", slim with reddish hair and blue eyes. Enjoys horse riding, music, cinema, pubs, clubs, walking and dancing. Will reply to all letters. Seeking pen pals, 37-45. P046

**Ruth,** (34), 5'8" with long dark hair and brown eyes. Enjoys socialising with friends, going to the gym, swimming, reading, watching TV, walking and writing to friends. Looking for anyone who wants a pen pal and a lasting friend, 35-40. P047

**Florence,** (31), 5'4" Irish lady with brown hair and blue eyes. Enjoys keeping fit, travelling, listening to music, enjoying life, watching Man United, movies and clubs. Any Geordies are welcome to write, 28+. P048

**Sally,** (36), 5'4", petite blonde with blue eyes. Unfortunately due to her job no time for hobbies, but does manage to keep fit, swim and do circuit training. Seeking pen pals, 30-40. P049

**Annie, young mid-40s,** 5'2" medium build with short dark hair. Many and varied interests including music, walking and theatre. Seeking tall, kind genuine military man. Photo appreciated but not essential, 35+. P050

**Janette,** (24), 5'6" with light brown hair. Enjoys gym, aerobics, watching rugby league and socialising. Seeking pen pals, 24-30. P051

**Karen,** (27), 5'6" with black hair. Freelance costume designer and maker for theatre and film. Enjoys the theatre, outdoors, reading, films, arts in general and pubs. P052

**Tina,** (25), 5'3" petite size 8. Enjoys drinking, socialising, cycling, aerobics, chocolate, shopping and travelling to exotic places to experience foreign delights. Seeking pen pals of any age group. P053

**Sue,** (21), 5'3" petite size 8. Enjoys drinking, socialising, cycling, aerobics, chocolate, shopping and travelling to exotic places to experience foreign delights. Seeking pen pals of any age group but must be mature. P054

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19 January 2002

6-way tie for 1st Place (24 Goals, £2,233.33 each): Bdr DA Chisholm, 4 Regt RA, Osnabruck; SSGT D Graydon, Army Pers Centre, Glasgow; Sgt NJ MacLeod, 1 RGJ, Preston; WO1 SC McGuire, ATR Glencorse; LBD GJ Murphy, 1 RHA, Tidworth; Sgt JA Sullivan, 11 Signal Regt, Blandford.

14-way tie for 7th Place (23 Goals, £121.43 each): WO2 CJ Baines, 1 RRF, Celle; SSGT DR Coen, BATU Suffield; WO2 PJ England, 1 A and SH, Belfast; LCpl S Falero, 38 Engr Regt, Ripon; Col MP Gaskell, RMA Sandhurst; Cpl ME Gaston, 68 Log Bde Sp Sqn, Dulmen; Sgt AR Griffiths, RDG, Munster; Cfn CES Hamilton, 19 Regt RA, Colchester; Capt RJ Harrison, HQ DETS (A), Upavon; LCpl Hindmarsh, 7 Para RHA, Aldershot; Capt CGH O'Connor, 3 R Irish, Portadown; WO2 PG Reid, 26 Regt RA, Gutersloh; Pte JJ

Shaw, 6 Sup Regt RLC, Guttersloh; WO2 RG Woods, 2 Trg Regt AAC, Middle Wallop

### 26 January 2002

7-way tie for 1st Place (21 Goals, £2,157.14 each): SSGT DP Barton, 26 Regt RA, Guttersloh; WO2 P Hartley, Royal Sch of Signals, Blandford; Capt GS Lister, KRH, Tidworth; LCpl JL Locke, 1 Kings, Catterick; SSGT RK Owen, 251 Signal Sqn, Aldershot; Brig MR Raworth, Def Adviser Pretoria, BFPO 747; Maj AA Tilley, Army Sch of Catering, Aldershot. Only 7 prizes this week. Rule 9 applies.

### 02 February 2002

1st Place (23 Goals, £5,300): Capt N Owsnett, QRL, Osnabruck

3-way tie for 2nd Place (22 Goals, £2033.33 each): WO1 RW Fyfe, 1 IG, Munster; Cpl PR Hutchinson, 6 Sup Regt RLC, Guttersloh; Lt Z Sly, 32 Regt RA, Larkhill.

17-way tie for 5th prize (21 Goals, £217.65 each): WO1 PD Blinkhorn, 7 MI Coy, Rheindahlen; Capt GPJ Blunden, 21 Engr Regt, Osnabruck; Sgt S Brittain, 3 Regt AAC, Wattisham; LCpl K Clark, LD, Swanton Morley; LCpl AJ Field, 32 Engr Regt, Hohne; Maj R Hopton, 1 RGR, Brunei; Sgt AR Horsfall, 5 Regt AAC, Aldergrove; Bdr BJ Howarth, Army Foundation Coll, Harrogate; Capt C Hunt, 16 Regt RA, Woolwich; LCpl A Mackay, RMAS, Sandhurst; Cpl JA McCormick, 55 Trg Sqn RE, Minley; Sgt J McLean, 35 Engr Regt, Paderborn; WO2 A Murray, SEME, Bordon; Gdsm JB Rutt, 1 Gren Gds, Windsor; Cpl R Slater, 2 Regt RMP, Lisburn; CSgt RA Steele, RMAS, Sandhurst; Sig EK Watson, 14 Signal Regt (EW), Brawdy

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MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY

# SOLDIER

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## REUNIONS

**Glosters, R Berks, Wilts, DERR, RGBW Regimental Association:** Reunion Mar 23 at Council House, Bristol. Details from Regimental HQ on 01452 522682.

**C Company, 3/51 Highland and C Coy 7/8 A and SH TA:** Reunion Mar 29 at Royal British Legion in Grangemouth. More information at [argyllsta@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:argyllsta@yahoo.co.uk)

**REME commandos:** Reunion Mar 30 at 29 Commando Wksp, Plymouth. For details and database inclusion contact Capt Rae (01752 236100) or WO2 (AQMS) Firth (01752 236103).

**68 Artillery Clerks:** Reunion and association dinner, RA Sgts' Mess, Woolwich, Apr 6. Contact WO1(SSM) A M Tibble ACG (SPS) on 01276 412250 (mil 94621 2250).

**Army Apprentices School (Chepstow) Groups 42A and 42B:** 60th anniversary reunion, Apr 8 at Chepstow. Further details from Alan (Pud) Rice, 42 Newfield Road, Liss, Hants GU33 7BW or 01730 893400.

**League of Friends Royal Welch Fusiliers:** 33rd annual reunion/dinner for Sgts' Mess members past, present and attached, Apr 13 Metropole, Llandrindod Wells. Details from secretary Bob Bacon on 01704 894926.

**Huntley's Platoon, Kent ACF:** Reunion May 3 at 1700 hours, The Kelsey Arms, St John's Road, Tunbridge Wells; tel 01892 543150 Tue evenings or [trainingteam@kacf.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:trainingteam@kacf.fsnet.co.uk)

**1 RTR, 4 RTR and 7 RTR:** Reunion at The Renaissance Swallow Hotel, Solihull, Birmingham May 3-5. Ring Geoff Bourne on 01752 880527 or Roger Rathmell on 01985 846521.

**201 RCZ Workshop (V), 31 Joint Mess:** Reunion May 17-18 in Coventry area. For former officers and SNCOs and families. Details: R F Smith, 6 St John's Place, Waterloo, Liverpool L22 5NP or tel 0151 9284493.

**14 (Cole's Kop) Battery RA:** Reunion May 18-19 at Woolwich, for ex-serving and attached 4 (Cole's Kop) Fd Bty RA, 4/14 Fd Bty RA 14 (Cole's Kop) Locating Bty RA, 14 Svy and Met Bty RA or 14 (Cole's Kop) Bty RA. Contact SSgt R Bull, 14 (Cole's Kop) Bty RA, 16 Regt RA, Woolwich SE18 4BB.

**30 Signal Regiment 1982:** Reunion, for anyone who served with unit any time during 1982, on June 15 at Blandford Camp. Call 01258 482202/485651 or [IA5@dei.mod.uk](mailto:IA5@dei.mod.uk)

**R Anglian (Beds and Herts Regt Association):** Reunion, dinner and dance for all former members, June 22 at Castle Hall, Hertford. Details: John Baggaridge 01234 294853.

**Royal Engineers Rifle Association:** 1st Past and Present Dinner, Methuen Day, June 26. For all ranks who have represented the corps in any shooting event, or gained a place in the Army 100. Wives, partners welcome. Attendees asked to bring shooting photos for inclusion in corps shooting gallery. Details from Capt M C Camp on 01252 863370.

**Lancashire Fusiliers/RRF Gallipoli Parade and Reunion Ball:** Castle Armoury, Bury and Bury Town Hall Apr 27-28. Tickets from Lt Col E Davidson on 0161 705 1577.

## MUSIC/Gordon Turner

# Guards break record drought



AFTER an extremely lean period of military band recordings the market has improved considerably. A new supplier, SRC (Specialist Recording Company), has just released its first two compact discs.

SRC intends featuring one composer per disc, starting with the music of Sir Edward Elgar played by the **Band of the Grenadier Guards**. Included are three marches – *Empire, Imperial* and *Pomp and Circumstance No 4* – three Bavarian dances, the *Crown of India Suite* and several smaller works.

On the second disc the **Band of the Scots Guards** are featured playing the music of Sir Arthur Bliss. It includes the marches *The First Guards, Welcome the Queen, March in Homage to a Great Man* and *Call to Adventure*, the suites *An Age of Kings* and *Things to Come*, plus several fanfares. The playing, recording and packaging of these recordings are among the finest available today.

**Elgar** (SRC 101) and **Bliss** (SRC 102) are available from Sound and Picture, PO Box 177, Dorking, Surrey RH5 5FE, price £13 inclusive of UK p&p.

The **Band of The Life Guards** has recorded a collection of marches which includes the ubiquitous *Fehrbelliner Reitemarsch, Washington Grays, Guards Armoured Division, Father Rhine, The*

*King's Guard, Marche Militaire (Gounod)* and several other well-known classics.

There are also two very important new marches: *Unity (Torrent)* – the official march of the Combined Cavalry Old Comrades' Association – and *The Minstrel Boy (Burton)*, official march of the Corps of Army Music. **On Parade with the Band of The Life Guards** (Bandleader BNA 5171) is available from Discurio, 46 High Street, Rochester, Kent ME1 1LD, price £13 inclusive of UK p&p.

Volume Two of **Bandstand Favourites** featuring the **Band of the Corps of Royal Engineers** is now available. It includes two fine marches rarely heard today, *Heroic* (Fletcher) and *Sovereign's Escort* (Young), plus *Pique Dame Overture*, tunes from *West Side Story, Hymn to the Fallen (Saving Private Ryan), Gladiator* and the sounds of Simon and Garfunkel.

There are several special pieces, including a euphonium duet, a tuba solo and an excellent vocal and saxophone feature, *Frankie and Johnny*. **Bandstand Favourites Volume Two** (TRCD 214) is available from DROIT Music Ltd, PO Box 2638, Eastbourne BN20 7HJ, price £13 inclusive of p&p.

If you have difficulties obtaining recordings or any queries on military music please write to me c/o Soldier.

## SOLDIER COMPETITION RESULTS

### Magnum Boots Competition (December)

Winners: SSgt R Cutland, Warminster; Sgt C Temmink, Northwood; Sig T E Beasley, Blandford; Cpl Cook, Southsea; L Wilkinson, Stallingborough (Answer: Wellington).

### Full Monty book competition (December)

Winner: H J Williams, Abergavenny (Answer: 1887).

### Gorazde competition (December)

Winners: Geoff Hill, Huddersfield; N J Lock, Bushey Heath; D Mason, Waterlooville; Lt Col M A Thompson, Wellington, NZ; R Pierce, Howarth; Cpl Hyde, Catterick (Answer: 1994).

### Snowboarding competition (December)

Winner: Capt D Y Seabrook, 3 RSME Regt. Runners-up: Maj R Clayton, Op Bolton; 2 Lt H Jennings, Woolwich; A Young, BFPO 36; LCpl McLaughlin, Sp Bn HQ ARRC; Cpl White, BFPO 559 (Answer: Austria).

### Millionaire Game competition (December)

Winners: Capt L Comer, 2 RRF; R Sims,

London; N J Roberts, HQ AG Upavon; R Jessup, Catterick; LCpl D Parker, BFPO 36; A Dunning, South Cerney; A McKernon, Catterick; Sgt J Brown, Melton Mowbray; D Courtney, Glasgow; J Brown, Broadstone (Answers: ITV and Red Cap).

### Red Cap Competition (January)

Winners: Anna Legin, Hounslow; Jason Clement, Sutton Coldfield; D Clarkson, Pewsham (Answer: Special Investigation Branch).

## APPOINTMENTS

**Brigadiers:** T McG Brown to be COS AG, Jan 21; H B H E Monro to be Comdt School of Infantry, Jan 21; D H A Bleasie to be JOC Dir Balkans JFC Naples, Jan 14.

**Colonels:** R E Harrold to be Col Corporate Comms, Jan 15; R L Kirkland to RCDS, Canberra, Jan 14; D H Egan to be Col REME MCM Div, Jan 18; T J Camp to be COS HQ BF Gibraltar, Jan 25; T J Martin to be Dir Equipment Capability (Special Projects), Jan 21.

## SEARCHLINE

**WRAC Junior Leaders, Guildford, Sept 1975:** Elizabeth Kirkby, Pauline Chilton, Alexandra Whitehouse and Agnes Gray sought by Joyce Tatler (née Fitzharris) for possible reunion, [javatet@tagteacher.net](mailto:javatet@tagteacher.net) or 01384 377713.

**Cheshire Regiment 1970s-80s**, Canada, NI, Hong Kong and Whittington Bks. **Pete Tagg** is looking for old mates. Write to 27 Trefoil, Amington, Tamworth, Staffs B77 3BG.

**Coldstream Guards, Egypt 1953-56**, especially John Ferrenberick. Contact Joe (Roy) Grove, via Jacquie Grove on 07951 357 878.

**1 Bn, Scots Guards**, late 1970s, contact Phil Clark at [apex.sec@xtra.co.nz](mailto:apex.sec@xtra.co.nz)

**Royal Army Service Corps, 1954-56, Tripoli.** Former colleagues of Anthony (Scotty) Moffat are asked to contact him via his daughter [catherine.moffat@sympatico.ca](mailto:catherine.moffat@sympatico.ca) or 6 Whitley Lane, Trenton, Ontario, Canada K8V 2B3.

**Ex-5 DG Ray (Row) Roberts** seeking old mates Dick Johnson RA from Taunton, Kate Murphy WRAC from Eniscorthy and Geoff Holroyd, **ex-HQ Hamburg District, 1948-50.** Write to 45 Qualicum Street, Ottawa, Canada K2H 7H3 or [rowrob@sympatico.ca](mailto:rowrob@sympatico.ca)

**Brunei Platoon, RAOC Apprentices College, Sept 1980-Dec 1981**, reunion planned for June 2004. Contact Sgt Pete O'Rourke on 01234 543670 or 07979 817664.

**Lyndon Robinson**, Troop Commander, Y Tp, 35 Sqn RCT, possibly now Maritime. Contact Trev Hill (ex-3 ADTR RCT Duisburg 1984-86) at [thetrev@hotmail.com](mailto:thetrev@hotmail.com)

News of **Suez veteran (1948) ex-National Serviceman Bertram Thomas George Fletcher**, DOB Feb 7, 1928, to old friend Sally

**British Army Kenya Training 1960-93:** Official investigation under way into accidents resulting from live ordnance left on training areas.

If you recall where, when and which weapons you trained with, particularly in the Dol Dol area and the disposal of blinds, please phone 01722 718705 or fax 01722 718490.

Cord, Bryony Cottage, 1 Hill Park, Yorkley, Nr Lydney, Glos GL15 4TL or 01594 563452.

Summer reunion planned for **21 Fd Sqn EOD**. Pass it on and, if interested, send sae to Sgt Jimmy Heald, Recce Tp, 32 HQ Sqn RE, 38 Engineer Regiment, Ripon HG4 2RD.

Career history (1963 on) or present location of **ex-sapper Ron Brewer, a Canadian Native Indian**, required by Royal Canadian Engineers including Keith (Chief) Miller who served with him as part of Canadian Forces (Nato) attached to BAOR. Ron may have joined a Scottish regiment late 1963-early 64. Contact [kesuehope@uniserve.com](mailto:kesuehope@uniserve.com)

**Cyprus celebrations for KORBR:** Episkopi-based 1st Battalion, The King's Own Royal Border Regiment to be presented with new Colours on April 26. Weekend of celebrations to mark 300th anniversary of raising of 34th of Foot, later Border Regiment, includes parade on April 26; fete, arena events, April 27; drumhead service and military concert, April 28. Details: [www.army.mod.uk/korbr](http://www.army.mod.uk/korbr) or from Regimental HQ on 01228 521275.

**Tim and Karin Lorenti**, married Mar 19, 1965, Ripon Bks, Bielefeld. Their wedding photos, taken by a sergeant in **27 Sqn RCT**, never materialised. If you can help locate film or are an old friend contact [lorenti63@aol.com](mailto:lorenti63@aol.com)

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**National Service Veterans' Association** is looking for new members to attend informal meetings held first Wednesday of each month at Birmingham United Services Club, Gough Street, Birmingham. Details from Gerald Rose 0121 373 4668.

Any **ex-Glosters** and **Ghulavet Platoon, Lichfield 1983** please contact Adrian Dimitro at [apdimitro@hotmail.com](mailto:apdimitro@hotmail.com)

**Carterton Comprehensive** pupils 1971-73 reunion planned for Sept 2002. Contact [karentaylor@bigfoot.com](mailto:karentaylor@bigfoot.com) or 0771 8623981.

**Special Recce Sqn RAC 1962-64:** Information and contacts to Bryan (Paddy) Morrison at [bryan.ralph@bushinternet.com](mailto:bryan.ralph@bushinternet.com)

**Ex-chef Pte Darren Bateson** asked to contact E Yarnall, Dental Centre, Deepcut, PRB, Camberley GU16 6NN (tel 01252 833782).

**George Spratt Rheindahlen 1963:** Any news to [ingo\\_brietzke@home.nl](mailto:ingo_brietzke@home.nl) or I Brietzke, Eikenstraat 11, 5922 CB Venlo, Netherlands.

**Kenneth Crince, REME, Langelsheim Harz, 1946:** Information or contact required. Please write to Fred Holger-Schroder, Krahenwinkel 2, 38112 Braunschweig, Germany or [moustache1988790@aol.com](mailto:moustache1988790@aol.com)

**Russ Delany**, helicopter pilot Bosnia, 1997, contact [liana@eversoni.freemail.co.uk](mailto:liana@eversoni.freemail.co.uk)

**Phil and Gill Smith**, formerly of Soest, friends of Amanda and the late **ex-signaller Stephen Nixon**. Please contact [nixontia@cs.com](mailto:nixontia@cs.com)

**42 Regiment RA LAD REME**, Plymouth, Cyprus, Pembroke Dock and Germany: Reunion planned by Jonah Jones, replies to [bjonesxx@aol.com](mailto:bjonesxx@aol.com) or 01782 787601.

**5th Kings, No 2 T Force OCA:** Information sought of a platoon from The King's Regiment (cap badge, below) which carried out special duties under the name of "T" Force (badge and number 144 on vehicles). Could have been stationed at an airfield or any other German military building. Some also quartered in private housing (through Radhas) May to Oct/Nov 1945. Replies to Ken Moore, The Granary, Church Road, Bacton, NR12 0JP, tel 01692 651086.



## League open to gallant members

MEMBERSHIP of the Gallantry Medallists' League, second only to the VC and GC Association, is drawn from seven countries and its activities include biennial musters at the Royal Hospital Chelsea.

The league embraces all holders of the following second level gallantry awards, military and civilian, within the Commonwealth:

**UK** – Distinguished Conduct Medal; Conspicuous Gallantry Medal RAF; George Medal; Conspicuous Gallantry medal RAF (Flying); Distinguished Service Order (when

awarded for gallantry); and Conspicuous Gallantry Cross.

**Australia** – Cross of Valour; Star of Gallantry.

**Canada** – Star of Military Valour; Star of Courage.

**New Zealand** – Gallantry Star; Bravery Star.

Life membership costs £15 and application forms are available from: Secretary, Gallantry Medallists' League, Tudor Cottage, Wick Hill, Finchampstead, Wokingham, Berks RG40 3SW.

## Useful numbers

Army Benevolent Fund 020 7591 2000

Army Families Advice Bureau 01722 436569

Army Welfare Service 01722 436565

Army Families Federation 01980 615525

British Limbless Ex-Service Men's Association 020 8590 1124

**Confidential support lines:**

UK 0800 731 4880

Germany 0800 1827 395

Cyprus 080 91065

Bosnia 0800 731 4880

Others UK 1980 630854

Operations worldwide Paradigm Homelink Access Number

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Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society (Combat Stress) 01372 841617

Family Escort Service 020 7463 9249

Gulf Veterans Association 0191 230 1065

Joint Service Housing Advice Office 01722 436575

National Gulf Veterans and Families

Association Office (0900-1700) 01482 808730; 24-hour helpline on 01482 833812

Regular Forces Employment Association 0207 321 2011

RBL's Legionline 0845 7725 725

RBL Industries Vocational Assessment

Centre 01622 717202/718484

St Dunstan's Home for blind ex-Servicemen and women 020 7723 5021

Samaritans 08457 90 90 90

Service Children's Education 01980 618244

Services Cotswold Centre 01225 810358

SSAFA Forces Help 020 7403 8783

SSAFA Forces Help Housing Advisory Service 01722 436400

Veterans' Advice Unit 08456 020302

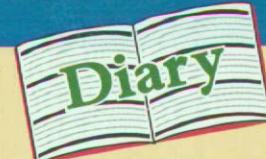
Victim Support Western Europe (SSAFA

Forces Help) in Germany 02161 47 2272;

from outside Germany 0049 2161 47 2272

War Pensions Agency 0800 169 2277 (from UK); 0044 1253 866043 (from overseas)

WRVS 01235 442940



## DATES

## MARCH

5: The Bruneval Raid, a lecture by raid veteran Tom Hill, at the Airborne Forces Museum, Aldershot, 1900. Tel 01252 349619.

## APRIL

22: Queen's Birthday gun salutes. Hyde Park, noon (41-gun); Tower of London, 1300 (62-gun).

## JUNE

1: Trooping the Colour, Major General's Review, Horse Guards. Tickets: 020 7414 2479.

4: Military tattoo at Stowe School, Buckinghamshire to mark Queen's Golden Jubilee. Organised by ABF and SSAFA-Forces Help.

8: Trooping the Colour, Colonel's Review, Horse Guards. Tickets: 020 7414 2479.

15: Queen's Birthday Parade, Horse Guards. Ticket ballot information on 020 7414 2479.

## AUGUST

2-24: Edinburgh Military Tattoo, [www.edintattoo.co.uk](http://www.edintattoo.co.uk)

**□ Flying start:** Applications for the **Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators** (GAPAN) 2002 scholarships need to be in by April 19. The no-strings-attached awards, aimed at anyone who wants to start a career in flying, are for full private pilot licence (PPL) and flying instructor (FIR) courses.

For an application form, go to [www.gapan.org](http://www.gapan.org) or send an sae, A4 size, to Scholarship Secretary, GAPAN, Cobham House, 9 Warwick Court, Gray's Inn, London WC1R 5DJ, indicating which scholarship you want to be considered for. Interviews will be held in London, starting in mid-May.

**□ Write move:** The **Society of Public and Civil Service Writers** (previously known as the Society of Civil Service Authors) has extended its membership to serving and retired members of the Armed Forces. It publishes a quarterly magazine, *Author*, full of poems, short stories and competitions. Details are available on [www.scpsw.co.uk/author](http://www.scpsw.co.uk/author)

**□ Tattoo time:** Buckinghamshire's main event to celebrate the Golden Jubilee will be a military tattoo at Stowe School (see diary). Organised by the Army Benevolent Fund and SSAFA-Forces Help, it will feature Royal Artillery freefall paratroopers, musicians from the Light Division and Royal Gurkha Rifles, and a spectacular firework display. There's more information on the web at [www.qe2tattoo.co.uk](http://www.qe2tattoo.co.uk)

## Museums cast their heritage net a bit wider

TWO field marshals were among guests at the National Army Museum in Chelsea to hear historian, TV presenter, author and Territorial Army brigadier **Prof Richard Holmes** launch a new website which links more than 100 regimental and corps museums.

**Fd Marshals Bramall and Chapple** supported a project conceived to mark the Queen's jubilee year.

To find out more about our military heritage, just log on to [www.armymuseums.org.uk](http://www.armymuseums.org.uk)

The site offers useful information (opening hours, charges, locations) on all the museums in addition to book and ancestor search facilities.

Note to curators: Our Legends column – see next page – has spotlighted 31 museums in the past 2½ years. If yours hasn't appeared yet, contact the Editor.

## We find mural man

IT didn't take us long to find one of the men who created Millbank's mystery murals (*Soldier, Jan*). With the new owners of the former Royal Army Medical College site desperate to discover the identity of the military artists, our story reached the parts that national newspapers didn't.

Former RAMC corporal George Beston, who worked in the theatre of the then Millbank Military Hospital, rang to tell us he was involved in painting the murals of Seventies' pop stars. Now working in social services in the Brighton area, George served in the Thames-side establishment from 1972 until he left the Army in 1974.

He recalls that the artwork, left, was the creation of a dispensing sergeant whose name he cannot remember. George and others painted in the faces after the NCO, a frustrated commercial artist, had drawn the outlines using magazine photographs and record cover illustrations as his inspiration. The order to "carry on painting" was given after the soldiers were told they could turn an empty accommodation block into a disco.

According to George, permission was withdrawn when the sergeant chanced his arm by suggesting a "Vietcong soldier or Che Guevara figure". This was deemed not to be a wise career move at a time of near anarchy as the three-day week bit deep in Britain. Miners were on strike, "reds" lingered under every bed and the Vietnam War was going badly for the Americans.

**STOP PRESS:** The artist was a Sgt Tony Bogulak, according to ex-RAMC soldiers Colin Gidman and Rab Aitken. Where is he now?

## Suez heroes to be honoured

SUEZ Canal Zone veterans are to see the names of fallen comrades commemorated before the end of the year. Following a request by veteran Roy Wilson, Padre James Roskelly, senior chaplain at the Royal School of Artillery, is to dedicate a plaque in St Alban's, the Larkhill Garrison church.

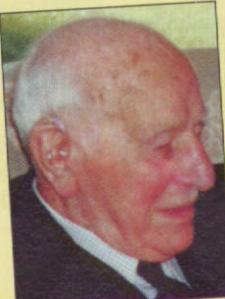
Their big moment will happen on St Barbara's Day in December when Royal Artillery Associations gather in strength to parade their standards.

The plaque, in memory of gunners killed in the canal zone between 1951 and 1954, will be complemented by a book of remembrance naming every member of the Royal Regiment of Artillery lost during an extended operation for which no medals were ever awarded. Many of those involved were National Servicemen.

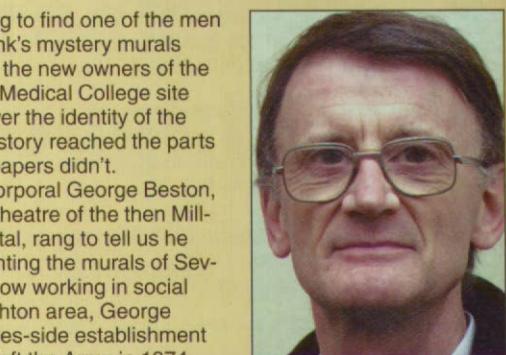
ARMY chaplains played a blinder when REME's cricket team toured Barbados last year. Tour manager **Maj James Dean**, treasurer of Bordon's St George's Church, suggested using the event to raise funds for the Barbados bit of the British Commonwealth Ex-Services League.

The resulting cheque, for a handsome £1,175, was handed over to a very appreciative **Rev Maj Max Springer**, chairman and padre of the Barbados Legion, and a former Regular in the Royal Signals.

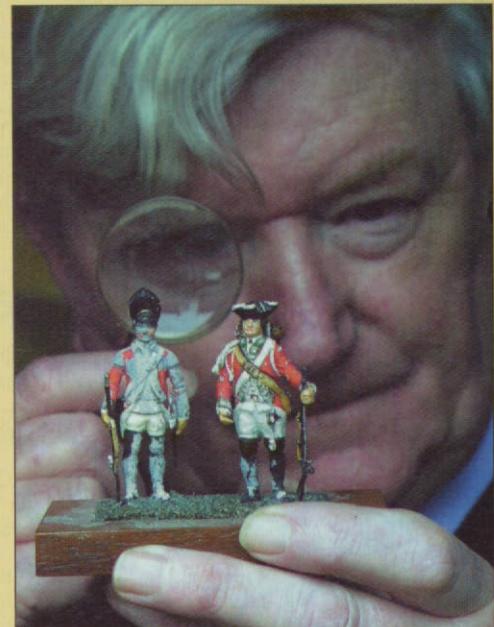
Sporting equipment for disadvantaged children was collected by military congregations and the resulting "kit for kids" was shipped to the West Indies by HMS *Coventry*.



FORMER Cameronians Bandmaster and Director of Music of The Bermuda Regiment **Maj Laurie Dunn**, left, has celebrated his 100th birthday. He was also



Picture: Steve Dack



Get your coat on: Museum guide **Tony Pearson**, with the help of his son, **Harry**, is sprucing up more than 100 model soldiers in the Green Howards Regimental Museum at Richmond after sharp-eyed visitors noticed that they were suffering from metal fatigue. The 2in-high models, painted in appropriate uniforms by the late Wg Cdr Ken Mallett, reflect the history of the regiment since 1688.

## Centurion Laurie is still playing a lively tune

Director of Music of the Royal Engineers, whose band he founded, in Aldershot from 1949 to 1958.

In all, Laurie, who lives at East Preston

near Chichester in West Sussex, served for more than 50 years, enlisting at the age of 14 in the Seaforts and retiring as the music director in Bermuda aged 67.

## Legends of the regiments and corps

32

Museum of Army Flying, Middle Wallop



Pup: The Type 9901 or Sopwith Scout

## Pick of the litter

SOPWITH's most successful aircraft designs of the First World War are fated to be remembered by their nicknames rather than their official designations.

So the Sopwith Scout or Type 9901 – as it was described by the Admiralty and Royal Flying Corps – is universally known as the Pup because pilots reckoned it had been “pupped” from the 1½-Strutter, its predecessor in aircraft design evolution.

Generally accepted to be the most pleasant to fly of all British aeroplanes of the period, it went on to notch up some impressive claims.

On August 2, 1917 a Pup flown by Sqn Cdr E H Dunning landed on the deck of HMS *Furious*, the first such landing on a ship under way.

### DECK LANDING

Subsequently, the Pup was used extensively to develop deck-landing techniques and arrester equipment.

An example of the aircraft can be seen in the Museum of Army Flying at Middle Wallop, near Stockbridge in Hampshire.

Pilots said its chief attribute in combat was first-class manoeuvrability and excellent performance at altitude.

It was fitted with a fixed synchronised front gun on top of the fuselage or a Lewis gun mounted in a centre-section cut-out. Some were fitted with Le Prieur rocket projectiles for missions against Zeppelin air ships.

The Museum of Army Flying at Middle Wallop in Hampshire is open daily 1000 to 1630 (last admission 1600) throughout the year, and closed in the week before Christmas. Entry: Adults £4.80, children (5-16) £3.20, seniors £3.80, families £13. Concessions for school, military association groups of ten or more. E-mail [enquiries@flying-museum.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@flying-museum.org.uk)

[www.armymuseums.org.uk](http://www.armymuseums.org.uk)



This is how you do it: **Sgt Ben Smith**, right, of the RLC explosive ordnance disposal unit at Aldershot, shows old sappers **Bill Patey**, 81, left, and **John Potten**, 67, how to prepare a 40mm Second World War anti-aircraft shell for destruction using golf ball-shaped plastic explosives. The former soldiers won a day out with the bomb squad in a raffle in aid of the Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal. Both men were involved in bomb disposal during the war.

Picture: Chris Fletcher

## Princess's volunteers show off their new casualty bureau role



It's mine: Delighted best new recruit **Alex Muir**, right, shows **Lt Sandra Webb** the Farriers Cup presented to her by the Princess Royal during her visit to the Princess Royal's Volunteer Corps, formerly known as the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry (FANY), at the Duke of York's HQ in Chelsea. The all-female yeomanry corps serves both military units and the City of London Police. Princess Anne, inset with **Capt Sumi Tikaram**, is its Commandant-in-Chief. She watched members demonstrate their new role – offering a casualty bureau to back up the Army's casualty cell at Upavon in Wiltshire.

Pictures: Mike Weston

## Forces' charities lose out as fund-raisers ignore tax dodge

SERVICE charities are in danger of losing money when soldiers take part in sponsored events and, unless action is taken, stand to lose thousands of pounds during this jubilee year, according to Maj Gen Mike Regan, controller of the Army Benevolent Fund.

He said that, following the Government's "Get Britain Giving" initiative two years ago, virtually any personal donation from a taxpayer can be "gift aided", allowing charities to

reclaim from the taxman 28p for every £1 received. "Soldiers are fantastic fund-raisers," he said. "The problem is that few of them are making the Inland Revenue keep their side of the bargain, so we lose thousands of pounds."

An easy-to-use sponsorship form which includes the gift aid declaration is available from ABF's Fay Ponikowski on 020 7591 2000. More details can be found on [www.armybenevolentfund.com](http://www.armybenevolentfund.com)

# Are you looking for a new challenge?



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- SPORTS BAGS ● POLAR FLEECE
- TRAINING TOPS/TROUSERS

# Blast from the past

This is the bike Buddy Holly chose – and his is now worth half a million or more

AS of last June, only one other UK publication had ever tested an Ariel Cyclone: this is the second, **writes Syd Taylor**.

They say the past has a habit of catching up. Mine did one day as I took a different route to avoid traffic and chanced on an old school friend loading a van outside his former business premises.

Prompted by nostalgia at the sight of him loading a Gold Star engine, I parked my bike and ambled over. His voice took me back 35 years to our reckless youth when we lived for nothing but bikes.

When I last saw Keith he was off to take up a teaching post at a well-known public school. Now grey-haired, he told me he had started a business in classic bike restoration, made his money and was going to live in Florida – taking with him his fine collection of British machinery.

He introduced me to Graham Horne, a quietly-disposed engineer who has spent a lifetime with motor cycles, much of it in the competition shops of the BSA group and Ariel in particular. They showed me some of the finest examples of the restorer's art you are likely to see. In front was a beautiful Egli Vincent, behind that a Norton 650SS – icon of the Sixties and the fastest production roadster of its day – but in the corner a red, black and chrome machine caught my eye.

A handsome Ariel Huntmaster, perhaps? But those bars were too high to be a standard Huntmaster – and no Huntmaster was ever that bright. It had to be something destined for the US of A – where this one should have ended up.

Graham had spent two years restoring it after finding it in Birmingham where its previous owner had made a sad attempt at restoration before putting it up for sale. This was fortunate, for we're not talking here of a relatively common Ariel Huntmaster: this was a very rare Ariel Cyclone, of which only 300 were made, all for export to the USA.

The Cyclone's most famous devotee was rock legend Buddy Holly, who chose it ahead of the Triumphs favoured by his backing group, The Crickets. Buddy's bike now belongs to country music star Waylon Jennings and is up for sale with a price tag of over half a million pounds.

Not only is Graham the leading expert on Ariel restoration, he's a keen Buddy Holly fan. One of his most prized posses-

sions is a photo of the singer and the Crickets which his father got Buddy to sign when they visited the Austin works at Longbridge all those years ago.

It reads: "To Alfred and Graham, Peggy Sue got married not long ago. Regards, Buddy Holly and the Crickets." Now Graham has a bike just like Buddy's.

We know, of course, the 650cc Ariel engine was a thinly-disguised BSA A10 unit. When installed in a Cyclone it was in a higher state of tune than the 40 bhp Huntmaster and boasted five extra bhp thanks to Spitfire cams and high-compression pistons. Back in Blighty we got second best. Cycle parts, too, were designed specifically to meet Stateside requirements – hence the higher bars and exceedingly comfy seat.

A prod on the kick-start brought the 650cc parallel twin to life. As I put the four-speed Burman box – with its right foot lever and upside-down change sequence – into first, I was off on a thundering chunk of motor-cycle history.

At first caution rode my pillion and the motor – barely awake – was testament to the high standards of the rebuild, as it mumbled away to itself. As the motor got into its rhythm and tyres warmed, my speed rose and bike and rider found harmony.

Despite its splendid tractability, you're always conscious that you're on a 1957 machine belonging to someone else and representing a great deal of time, effort and investment. On a more practical level there are no mod cons such as mirrors and indicators.

Ride too quickly on this machine and you miss the point of it. Even today this Cyclone would probably top 105mph, but I wouldn't want to hold that speed for too long in deference to its old design and use of old materials.

It's not a fast bike, you understand, but lively enough to let you enjoy the good handling as you match the demands of bike, road and rider perfectly.

Its rugged simplicity (modified by



**Ariel Cyclone**

Graham in areas that matter, like his upgrade to the lubrication system) exemplifies a golden age of motor-cycling which we know never really existed.

Nevertheless, if you're over 50 and look back through a memory ablaze with Bonnies, Goldies, Rockets and Dommies, you'll love it because it's just that little bit older. If you matured on Seventies' Japanese machinery, you'll probably dismiss it as just another Arthurian legend. You would be wrong to do so because once up to pace – a leisurely 60mph – I found sheer vitality in the rhythm of the Cyclone's power delivery, thanks to the precision of Graham's rebuild. This, of course, is a personal passion. Sometimes I just want to be stirred and feel again a living machine – the way Keith and I did when we were young on bikes which did not disguise the elementals of motor-cycling with their rumbling guts and pounding wheels.

After riding around for an hour or so, I headed back and thanked Graham. As I walked away I asked if he'd ever sell the bike. His answer was predictable: "That'll be the day."

**Graham Horne can be contacted in Redditch on 01527 517987.**

# Rock on . . .

## CALLING ALL POP IDOLS

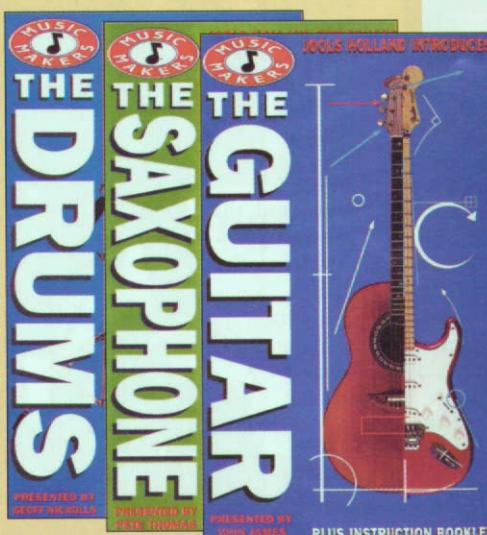
WANNABE chart-toppers and rock stars can now take their first steps on the road to stardom without having to endure tedious and expensive music lessons.

Amity's *Music Makers* video series is aimed at absolute beginners and offers users step-by-step tuition in a variety of instruments, including: the guitar; keyboards; drums; bass guitar; flute; saxophone; violin; and clarinet.

Each video is introduced by Jools Holland and presented by an expert musician/teacher.

Tight close-ups make it easy to follow finger movements; animated graphics provide on-screen notation; and each programme is clearly chaptered to enable you to learn at your own pace and convenience.

① *Soldier* readers can order



the 90-minute videos at the discounted price of £13.99 each (plus p&p) by ordering online at [www.guitarvillage.dial.pipex.com](http://www.guitarvillage.dial.pipex.com) or by sending a cheque (made payable to *Guitar Village*) to *Guitar Village*, 80 West Street, Farnham, Surrey GU9 7EN.

## DIGITAL VOICES

**TIGER** Electronics' Internet Karaoke machine uses MP3 technology to download tracks from the internet.

It has a built-in 18-watt amplifier and a digital processing system, which allows the singer to change their voice.

But before rushing out to buy the ultimate party piece make sure that your PC has the following applications: USB Port; Pentium (or equivalent) 150mhz; and Windows 98SE, Windows ME or Windows 2000.

① £180, from [www.gadgetshop.com](http://www.gadgetshop.com) (0800 7838343).



## SIZE MATTERS

THIS sleek MP3 player from MPIO features: 64mb memory; super-fast USB connection; backlight LCD display; five equaliser modes; and five repeat modes. Measuring just 29mm x 88mm, the DMK provides ten hours of playback from a single AAA battery.

① £149.95, from [www.firebox.com](http://www.firebox.com) (0870 2414289).



## WIN . . . WIN . . . WIN . . . WIN . . .

AMITY, producers of the *Music Maker* series, and *Guitar Village* are offering would-be guitarists and budding rock stars the chance to win a complete guitar starter pack.

The set, which includes an electric Gretsch guitar with gig bag; a Fender amplifier; guitar strap; stand; tuner; set of strings; plectrums; and the *Music Maker* guitar video (or DVD), is worth more than £400. For your chance to win this fantastic prize, simply answer the following question:

The steel string guitar was first developed in America in the mid-1800s by which German immigrant family that gave its name to their famous make of the instrument?

a) Gibson; b) Martin;  
c) Fender

Send your answers on a postcard to *Soldier* Competition, *Guitar Village*, 80 West Street, Farnham, Surrey GU9 7EN or register your entry via the website: [www.guitarvillage.dial.pipex.com/soldier](http://www.guitarvillage.dial.pipex.com/soldier)

The winner will be drawn at random from the correct answers received by April 2. Usual rules apply.



## PUMP UP THE VOLUME

THESE inflatable speakers can be collapsed flat for travelling and are ideal for soldiers going on operational tours.

Each set of speakers includes an amplifier and power adapter, and can be used with most CD players, personal stereos, MP3 players and Mini Discs.

① £25, from [www.gadgetshop.com](http://www.gadgetshop.com) (0800 7838343).

# Game on . . .

## TOM CLANCY'S GHOST RECON, PC

OUT NOW

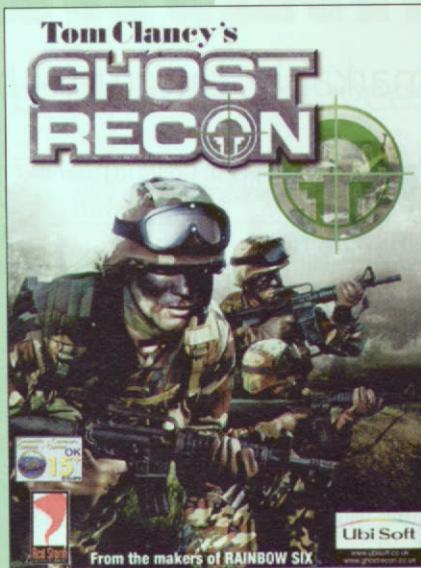
THE year is 2008 and the genuine threat of a Third World War looms as an ultra-nationalist government wrests control of the former Soviet Union. Diplomatic links are severed and the new Russian war machine is already rumbling ominously into neighbouring states.

In *Ghost Recon* players lead the Ghosts, an elite American infantry unit equipped with the most advanced technology the United States has to offer, on to the front line and into battle.

As a leader of a platoon of Ghosts in the field, it is the gamer's responsibility to select fireteam members, train them, kit them out, and command them once the shooting starts. You control them as they seek to execute their orders, which you give during the heat of battle, and complete their missions.

You and your team will conduct extensive missions on foot in this team-based tactical first-person shooter, although occasionally the Ghosts will receive assistance from UN forces and US troops in tanks, helicopters and close air support.

Be prepared to make forays deep into enemy territory, where you will undertake all manner of dangerous military operations, from covert strikes against an enemy base and blowing up bridges, to rescuing a



From the makers of RAINBOW SIX

Ubi Soft

downed pilot and stopping an all-out armoured assault.

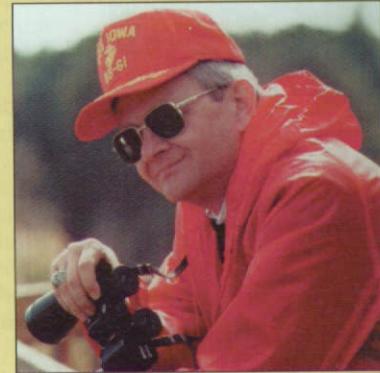
**VERDICT:** Aside from its gripping storyline, *Ghost Recon*'s best attribute is its intense realism. When facing a deadly, numerically superior and intelligent enemy, natural sounds such as breathing and twigs cracking under foot heighten the tension and make this one of the most realistic conflict simulators on the market.

9/10

## WIN . . . WIN . . . WIN

**SOLDIER** has joined forces with Ubi Soft Entertainment to offer you the opportunity to lead the Ghosts into battle against a rogue Russian government.

For your chance to win one of five copies of *Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon* for the PC, simply tell us what Mr Clancy, pictured below, does for a living.



Send your answers on a postcard to *Ghost Recon* competition, Soldier, Ordnance Road, Aldershot, Hants GU11 2DU. The winners will be drawn at random from the correct answers received by April 2. Usual rules apply.

## SOUL REAVER 2, PC & PS2

OUT NOW

IN this 3D adventure, gamers assume the role of Raziel, a blood-sucking vampire who has crashed through a time portal in a relentless pursuit of his evil nemesis, Kain.

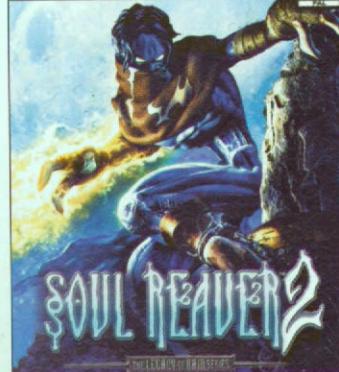
Plunged into the mystical world of Nosgoth, players must defeat then devour the souls of a variety of vile enemies, including Sarafan warrior priests and fanatical vampire hunters, before hunting down Kain himself.

A rich storyline and in-depth puzzles make for intense and addictive gameplay.

## DEVIL MAY CRY, PS2



**VERDICT:** Devilishly good.



**VERDICT:** Something well worth getting your teeth into.

8/10

OUT NOW

CAPCOM'S brilliant *Devil May Cry* puts players in control of Dante, a private investigator of the supernatural, who realises the devil is rallying to rise against mankind.

Equipped initially with just a sword and his twin pistols, Ebony and Ivory, Dante must quell the uprising, slaying legions of demonic creatures. Gamers are quickly immersed into this action-packed adventure, which deserves particular praise for its attention to detail, scale and atmosphere.

8/10

## SHADOW OF ZORRO, PC & PS2

OUT NOW

THE *Shadow of Zorro* is a 3D stealth/adventure game based on the original television series and comic book.

Pulling on the familiar black mask of Zorro, players enter into a world of duels, espionage and seduction as they attempt to bring the Saragossa Butcher to justice.

Set over seven extensive chapters, and featuring 28 different locations, gamers have full control of their own destiny with several possible options available at key moments in the game. Will you be Zorro the warrior or Zorro the elusive fugitive?



**VERDICT:** A little slow-moving for a PS2 title at times but otherwise a worthwhile buy.

7/10

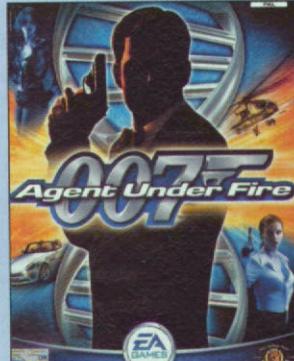
## 007 AGENT UNDER FIRE, PS2

OUT NOW

DONNING the tuxedo of the world's most famous super spy has never been so enjoyable.

James Bond makes his long-awaited debut on the PlayStation 2 in *Agent Under Fire*, a first-person action title that stays true to the 007 legacy.

As Bond, players must defeat the head of a rising terrorist organisation and can choose to blast their way through the game's missions using an arsenal of hi-tech weaponry or rely on stealth and gadgets to achieve their objectives.



**VERDICT:** Bond at his best.

9/10

## Story captures vitality of Waterloo's champion

PUSHED into the Army by his aristocratic family, Arthur Wellesley was not expected to amount to much.

Thankfully, history had other plans for the Iron Duke.

**Wellington** by Elizabeth Longford (Sutton, £9.99) is a slim volume for such a big man, but it makes for a cracking read, whipping through Wellington's 83 years like a cannonball.

There is a gripping account of the Duke's defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo and his years spent in the Palace of Westminster are conveyed with a lightness of touch which never sacrifices erudition for readability.

## Following in footsteps of the Iron Duke

LAVISHLY illustrated and beautifully produced, this history differs from many of the books on Waterloo for two reasons. First, it tells the story not only of the three days' battle from June 15 to 18, but of the whole campaign.

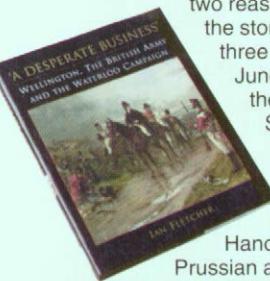
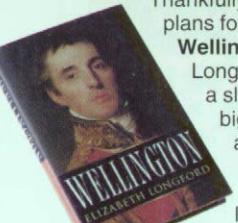
Secondly, while acknowledging the part played by the Dutch-Belgian, Hanoverian and

Prussian allies, it tells the story from the point of view of Wellington and the British Army only. Making extensive use of eye-witness accounts, **A Desperate Business: Wellington, The British Army and the Waterloo Campaign** by Ian Fletcher (Spellmount, £25) examines the only direct encounter between the two giants of the age.

## Where in the world can you find such collections?

ONE in three people in the West collects something, be it milk-bottle tops, coffins or dog collars. The museums and collections mentioned in **The Essential Guide to Collectibles: A Source Book of Public Collections in Europe and the USA** by Alistair McAlpine and Cathy Giangrande (Everyman, £25) will

spark the imagination. It is a definitive guide to where to see the best of everything, including teddy bears, beer-cans and chamber-pots. More than 2,300 entries from 1,600 museums in 36 countries should ensure the reader is never again at a loss for something to do on a Bank Holiday weekend. The section on military collections covers artillery, swords, armour, firearms and uniforms.



# Man who moved mountains

Remarkable, but true – how a gunner tried single-handed to relieve the plight of Rwandan refugees

**A Thousand Hills: A Story of Crisis in Rwanda** by Tom Mullarkey (Ballintava Books, £15.99)

**Review: Roger Thompson**

THE contents of this book will doubtlessly rub salt into the conscience of many good people.

Overcoming the ingrained military bravado, readers will ask whether they would be prepared to defy an endemic "can't do" attitude, while many thousands of ordinary tribespeople are butchered because their sole misfortune was to be born the wrong shade of black.

Maj Tom Mullarkey, RA, on the point of leaving the Army, volunteered to spend six months in Rwanda. Rising above the norm, he challenged deeply ingrained prejudice and apathy, and the damning acceptance that nothing could be done to relieve the agonies of 3.5 million tribal refugees.

Radically he planned and then argued the case for Operation Retour among his military colleagues. With their support in varying degrees, he badgered the desperately

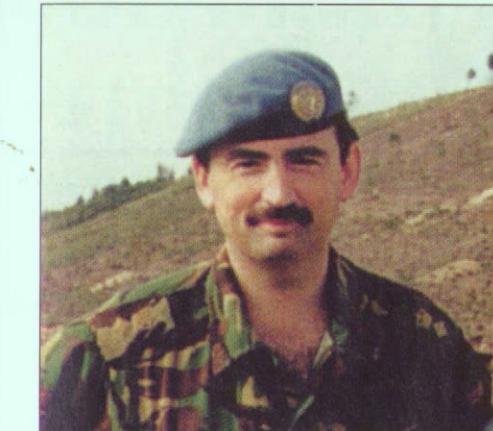
resourced civil authority in the capital, Kigali, and then "hitched" a passage to the United Nations in Geneva to brief, in person, the Secretary General.

Mounting Op Retour was, in itself, a logistics nightmare. Initial successes were small but, buttressed by Mullarkey's energies, rose until, under a diminishing awning of scepticism, more than 250,000 refugees had been transported to safer homelands within Rwanda.

Only when Maj Mullarkey had returned home to his family and civilian life in England did the dream implode and the butchering of defenceless men, women and children once more cast a blood-soaked shroud over the Rwanda that might have been.

In Tom Mullarkey's own words, "I recorded what I saw, and offered my contemporary thoughts". His style might be somewhat stop-start but it is full-throttle and from the early chapters you can either judge him as a name-dropping gunner who is "right up himself" or, as I strongly recommend, you can read on to judge this remarkable

quasi-mad Irishman who had the spher-



Maj Tom Mullarkey: He left the Army in 1995 and is now a director of the Commonwealth Games, to be held in Manchester later this year

oids to think and act way beyond his remit.

He argued that the multi-national aid organisations were neither aiding or organised, and that "United" was more a football cliché than the proper description of a world grouping responsible for humanitarian oper-

ations, with grand offices in Geneva and New York.

Such are the extraordinary circumstances described in Maj Mullarkey's book that the facts simply had to be verified – which at the lower end were accurate and the top end understated. *A Thousand Hills* is actually a deep insight into one man's efforts to move mountains.

Published at his own expense and in his own style, the book tends towards an uncomfortable experience rather than a bedtime read but I sincerely doubt whether there is anyone in the British Army, or elsewhere, who could not benefit a great deal from studying its contents.

Maybe the vital contribution made by this book is that the parlous state Rwanda experienced in the 1990s could easily be extrapolated to almost any third-world country in the 2000s.

Fledgling staff officers, and military commanders wishing to keep their career pendulum ticking in a new age, would do well to heed the lessons of Tom Mullarkey's remarkable adventure with the lives of real people.

# Dear Mum, just a line to say I'm alive

**The Curling Letters of the Zulu War: 'There was an Awful Slaughter'** edited by Adrian Greaves and Brian Best (Leo Cooper, £19.95)

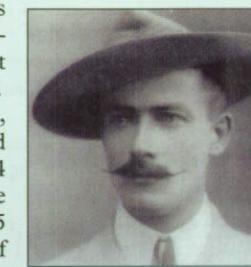
**Review: Brian Jewell**

THE shock to the British at home and in Africa was devastating. On officer fatalities alone, it was worse than Waterloo.

It was the Battle of Isandhlwana, on January 22, 1879 – when six companies of the 24th Regiment, with two guns and a small force of Natal volunteers, were massacred in just 20 minutes by a force of Zulus.

Of the regular British troops, 26 officers and 600 men had been killed, in addition to 24 officers and many men of the Colonial Volunteers. Only 55 escaped the bloody horror of the battlefield. One of just five officers to survive was Lt Henry Curling RA, commander of one of the guns.

Curling was a prolific letter-writer to his parents and, out of the blue, a bundle of them recently came to light. The editors of this book are two leading members of the



Lt Henry Curling: escape

Anglo Zulu War Historical Society. Curling's words from long ago are ably complemented with linking pieces on the campaign as well as on social and military life of the times.

The humiliating defeat at Isandhlwana followed two years of disputes over land on the Transvaal border between the Zulus and the locally-raised colonial force. Eventually one tribal uprising led to the dispatch of military reinforcements from London.

Once the uprising was subdued, the presence of an expensive British force had to be justified – inevitably by an invasion of Zululand.

The editors compare the situation to 1854, when the British and French armies were sent to Bulgaria to support the Turks against the Russians, only to find soon after arriving that they were no longer needed. Rather than go home without a fight, the British and French invaded the Crimea

– with costly and disastrous results.

Curling arrived in South Africa in 1878 and in many of his early letters home he is preoccupied with hopes for promotion and looking forward to war against the Zulus.

Any optimism ended, however, at Isandhlwana. The events of that fateful day are reported in a hurried, undated note.

"Just a line to say I am alive after a most wonderful escape . . . our camp was attacked by overwhelming numbers of Zulus," Curling wrote. "The camp was taken and out of a force of 700 white men only 30 escaped. All my men except me were killed and the guns taken . . . The whole column has retreated into Natal again and we are expecting hourly to be attacked. Of course everything has been lost, not a blanket left."

The battle had lasted only about 20 minutes but it is evident how dramatically the slaughter had altered his life. His letters reflect the aimless and utter despondency felt throughout the army in South Africa.

The bedraggled and exhausted survivors of Isandhlwana reached Helpkaar, from where Henry wrote: "We were pursued for 7 or 8 miles and didn't know whether to go to Rorke's Drift or come here. Fortunately we came here as those who went to Rorke's Drift were all caught and murdered."

Curling served a further year in South Africa and later in Afghanistan before finally returning home in early 1881, having served

abroad without leave for three years.

Apart from giving evidence (dismissed as irrelevant) to the Isandhlwana court of inquiry, he never spoke again publicly about his Zulu War experiences before his death on New Year's Day 1910. Without the efforts of Greaves and Best, nothing would have been recorded of this somewhat obscure subaltern.

Perhaps in keeping with Curling's life, there is a white marble cross in Ramsgate cemetery which has fallen over and now lies forgotten in an overgrown bed of weeds.

## IN BRIEF

**Regimental Records of the Royal Welch Fusiliers, Volume VI 1945-1969 and Volume VII 1969-2000** compiled by Brig J P Riley. Copies at £65 plus postage from the Regimental Headquarters, The Royal Welch Fusiliers, High-town Barracks, Wrexham LL13 8RD.

**Soldier ordering service** All books mentioned on these pages are available from Helion & Company, who can also supply 14,500 in-print military books and operate a free book-search; p&p is extra. All major credit/switch cards taken. Please allow up to 28 days for delivery. Helion & Company, 26 Willow Road, Solihull, West Midlands B91 1UE, England (tel 0121 705 3393; fax 0121 711 4075). E-mail: books@helion.co.uk Website: <http://www.helion.co.uk>

## America's duel in the sun casts long shadow

STARTING with the struggle for control of the China market in the 19th century, through to war with Japan and Britain's surrender of Singapore, **Empires on the Pacific: World War II and the Struggle for the Mastery of Asia** (Perseus Press, £24.99) reveals an America intent on replacing Britain as the dominant power. By

moving China to

centre stage, Robert

Smith Thompson expands

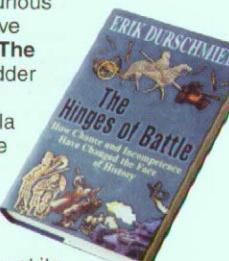
the traditional boundaries of the

Pacific theatre of the Second World War and casts the conflict in a new light. This revisionist version gives a fresh perspective, not just of the Second World War in the Pacific, but what followed in Korea and Vietnam.

## For the lack of a nail the shoe was lost

ERIK Durschmied serves up more bite-sized chunks of popular history which illuminate the curious circumstances that have changed its course in **The Hinges of Battle** (Hodder & Stoughton, £14.99).

From the defeat of Attila the Hun, through to the overbearing French artillery colonel at Dien Bien Phu and the Rorke's Drift defences, this is history at its most accessible. In **Whisper of the Blade**, now published in paperback (Hodder & Stoughton, £7.99), the author explores the life and times of the giants of revolution who wrought brutal and sweeping changes on their countries and people.



## Helping to heal when the worst happens

TOUGH advice for tough people. "Never move an unstable, dying patient when no destination is known. Have the moral courage to hold such people and care for them until they die." An invaluable reference tool for those concerned with providing care in war zones or at disaster sites, **Conflict and Catastrophe Medicine: A Practical Guide** by James Ryan, Peter F. Mahoney, Ian Greaves and Gavin Bowyer (Springer, £30, 10% discount, excluding p&p, when ordered on 01483 418822) is aimed at medical, nursing and paramedical staff working in a hostile

environment. This work should educate and inform those who now, or in the future, volunteer to deploy into an environment of conflict and austerity.

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# Olympic spirits

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As our report on the Army's impressive contribution to Britain's Winter Olympics team suggests, you need some rather special qualities to involve yourself in either sport... and soldiers, it appears, have those qualities in abundance.



Bravery, mental toughness, camaraderie, a touch of the daredevil, a love of physical challenges and the willingness to adapt mean the hairier winter sports are ideally suited to your average soldier. (We should add that an understanding employer and plenty of time off from the day job to train and compete is also a useful asset.)

No surprise then that the entire British biathlon team at Salt Lake City was composed of Army skiers, led by the estimable Sgt Mike Dixon. Nor that their coaches and managers were all ex-soldiers.

"We are like-minded people and consequently have a great team spirit", one member of the team told our reporter.

A great advert for the Army... and for the quality of its personnel.



### To all of you

PS: Just so you know you are appreciated, a young lady in Luton sent us the following verse (on a home-made Valentine's Day card):

*The Army is green,  
The Navy is blue,  
Our cross is red,  
But this purple heart  
is for all of you.*

It was dedicated to "all male soldiers out there, who deserve our hearts". Bless...

### Home truths

**Sue Bonney**

# New chapter on quality of life?

SOME interesting angles on Service life have been published in the past month, among them the Armed Forces Pay Review Body report on pay and allowances and recent statistics showing a drop in the number of married personnel in the Army – but even more in the Navy and RAF.

On top of that a New Chapter for the Strategic Defence Review was announced.

The first two have implications for the success of the latter. Deciding how to adapt the Armed Forces to a new strategic role is pretty pointless without making sure you have enough money to resource that role and enough people to man it and, crucially, that you have enough money invested to retain those people.

The AFPRB was convinced that quality of life issues "are crucial to retention", devoting a chapter of its report to them, including accommodation, overstretch, separation, Service life versus family life and equality of marrieds, singles and partners. The report noted that "every effort must be made to accelerate the pace of change. In our view, this is unlikely to happen without the additional and early investment of resources."

In other words, to retain the right people, more money is needed to invest in accommodation and welfare now.

The statistics on marriage and divorce in the Services showed a 22 per cent fall in the number of married personnel and were much quoted in the press and the House of Commons. One MP said: "Given

the severe recruitment problems... we cannot afford to lose those highly-trained, experienced, mature and stable married members of our Armed Forces." He concluded: "Sensitivity to the concerns of families and partners is imperative for recruitment and retention."

The Defence Secretary made clear references recently to the need for an increase in the Defence budget. So did the chairman of the Defence Committee, who said: "If the Prime Minister wants British forces to play as significant a role in future as they do now, there is no way in which our Armed Forces can respond without a considerable increase in spend-

ing." But that increase is needed for more than equipment. When President Bush announced a substantial increase in US defence spending, a large part of it was devoted to pay, accommodation and retention.

We know from experience that there is never enough money for welfare. No welfare project can be funded without compromise. Just talk to unit welfare officers about the availability of welfare transport in isolated areas and the constant search for funds. As one told the *AFJ*: "I am constantly scrounging and misappropriating resources."

Talk to single soldiers about their accommodation, improvements to which will take until 2012. Talk to families about housing, the upgrade of which has already taken two years longer than originally predicted because of shortfalls in funding.

If we are to become a New Model Army, there must be more to the New Chapter than a reassessment of our role. There must be provision to resource all those promises in the Old Chapter about "a policy for people" and "placing personnel and their families at the centre of our plans, investing in them and giving them confidence in their future". Note the word "investing".

As another MP observed: "It is not possible for the Government to repeat endlessly how much they value the Armed Forces while simultaneously starving them of financial resources."

I once wrote in this column that we were a people for whom there is a policy but no purse. I think there might now be a purse, but there's not enough in it and there are a few holes in the bottom. Money has to be set aside in a padlocked wallet to be invested in all aspects of the quality of life for Service personnel. If they feel valued, if their families feel valued, then the New Chapter might retain the people it needs to give it substance.

**'In other words, to retain the right people, more money is needed to invest in their accommodation and welfare now ,'**

The March 2002 issue of the *AFF Families Journal*, right, should be with all units and families. Make sure you get your copy.





# Can we have e-blueys on exercise?

GIVEN the world we live in, what a great idea the e-bluey is. Perfect for family, friends and loved ones to keep in touch with Forces personnel all over the world.

But no, all isn't as great as it seems. Having used the system in Kosovo in 1999 (where mail from home was delivered within a day or two), I found myself in Turkey late last year, and am currently in Norway on an AMF(L) exercise. So I briefed my girlfriend that the e-bluey was the way forward.

I was perplexed when she had to revert to pen and paper because she was unable to locate my BFPO

## Prize letter

number on the website. I discovered that the e-bluey service is available on all operations, but not exercises under 60 days or unless the service has been specifically requested.

I was in Turkey for only 25 days and will be in Norway for 67, but surely BFPO detachments deployed too? Why can't all overseas exercises have this facility as standard, given that most households now have a PC? Or should I just brief my girlfriend to stock up on stamps before my next deployment. – **Cpl Cain Thomas, B Sqn, QDG.**

## ▲ HQ Land responds:

The e-bluey concept is a valuable addition to the range of communication means available to soldiers overseas. Initially trialled in the Balkans, its use has been extended to include other op and exercises that qualify for the Operational Welfare Package (OWP).

The AMF(L) exercises mentioned in Cpl Thomas's letter, because of location and duration, qualify for LOA and not the OWP. As his letter shows, appreciation of the benefits of the OWP is increasing.

In principle, soldiers will be entitled to one set of allowances, either LOA or OWP. There is, however, scope to extend the availability of e-bluey machines. A facility has been installed at BATUS and funding has been identified to extend the capability even further. G1 Staffs at HQ Land and HQ Fleet are discussing the possibility of deploying an e-bluey facility to Norway.

# Hungry for change to meal rules

I'M a single soldier in the UK and the accommodation at my unit is in married quarters. I work shifts in this unit and pay for meals I don't eat.

The food has to be booked in advance and the menus are repetitive. It is my choice not to eat in the cookhouse, but I still have to pay for it. If my line manager does the ration return correctly I get my food money back for working the night shift, but not for days off between shifts, when I am out of barracks.

My argument is, why pay for food if you do not eat it? I am not the only one with this dilemma. I buy my own food and cook it using facilities provided in the quarter. Is it possible to claim food money back for days we are not on shift? All staff go home on days off. – **Name supplied.**

## PS10(A) responds:

▲ There are two issues here. First, when he is on shift and unable to take meals, he is eligible for missed meal payments and should be reimbursed accordingly, which we hope is happening. Secondly, the issue of paying for meals not taken is a known issue for living-in personnel.

The current system charges for food for each day but only refunds periods on authorised leave or field conditions, regardless of whether the meal is taken. This issue affects all livers-in and not just the writer. As reported in *Soldier*, MoD is to trial Pay As You Dine (PAYD), which will allow individuals to pay only for the meals they eat. It will also look to change the ways in which living-in personnel take their meals. Success will to some degree depend on the feedback from trial personnel, particularly on whether they believe they get better value for money than under the current system.

# Why should I bear cost of ensuring family's stability?

AS a 35-year-old, married WO1 with three children I decided to move my family into the family home although I am currently mid-way through a 24-month posting.

Due to the fact that I am a corps soldier, I have moved frequently (every 18 to 30 months) and my eldest son has attended five junior schools. We felt the move was necessary to offer them the best chance of a stable education.

I was horrified to learn that I am not entitled to disturbance allowance or Residence to Place of Duty (RESPOD) payments. I travel an 80-mile round trip each day to my place of work and pay the costs myself. Come on, surely this is not correct.

There has been a push recently to encourage personnel to purchase their own property, so what is the difference in receiving disturbance allowance on posting or mid-tour. – **WO1 (ASM) G Connolly, LASS IPT DLO Andover.**

## PS10(A) responds:

▲ We have some sympathy with WO1 Connolly, who is clearly trying to balance Service needs with the stability of his family. We are, however, tied to fundamental principles regarding relocation (eg disturbance allowance, furniture and removal expenses, home to place of duty) payments. The general principle behind publicly-funded moves is that the move is a direct result of an order to move to a new place of duty.

Mid-tour moves for personal reasons do not therefore confer an entitlement. There are, however, two important concessions to this principle: the Over-37 Provision, which funds a family relocation away from the Serviceman's duty station at public expense at or within six months of reaching the age of 37; and the Final Tour Of Duty Provision which funds a mid-tour move where the Serviceman is serving accompanied at a location other than when he expressed a preference for his final tour prior to his discharge.

Having established himself in his own residence through personal choice, WO1 Connolly will become eligible to Recompense In Lieu of Relocation (RILOR) on posting, provided he is able to commute daily, or Get You Home Posted (GYH(P)) if he chooses to serve unaccompanied.

# Divisional system gives naval ratings easy access to the man at the top

YOUR correspondent Pte Le Lacheur ("If unions are a no-no for Army . . . how about drip sessions", Feb), highlights a weakness in the regimental system compared with the Royal Navy's divisional system.

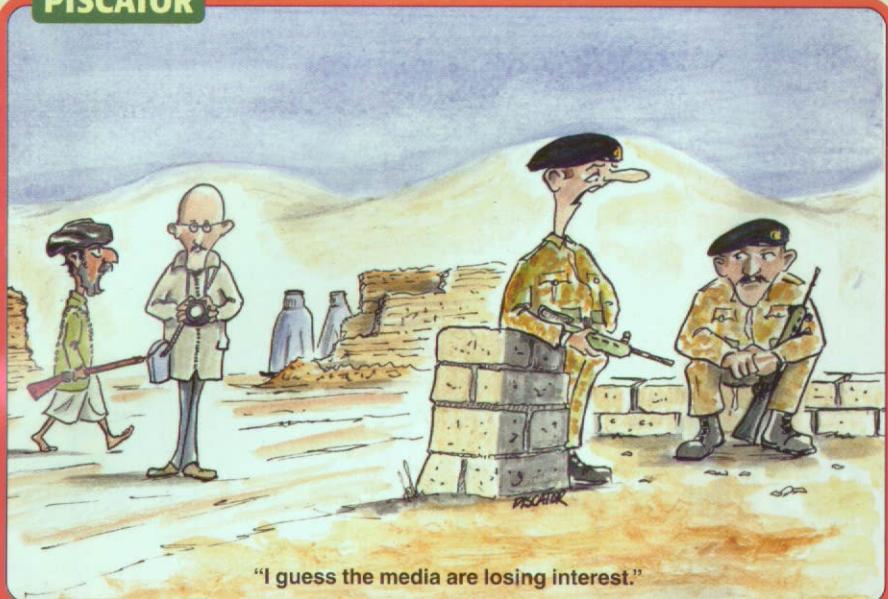
All ratings have easy access to their divisional officer and regular meetings are held to discuss problems and to pass on information on current policy. The Navy's personnel head (the Second Sea Lord (2SL)) has a team consisting of a

commander (Lt Col) and a WO1 who visit all RN units worldwide to pass on current Navy Board policy and conduct question-and-answer sessions. All questions are noted and concerns are passed directly to 2SL. The RAF also has a team.

I am informed that the Army is trying something similar but the cap badge tends to get in the way. – **A J Hodges, ex-WO (RN), Hill Head, Hants.**

▲ CGS's Briefing Team listens to units worldwide. See Feedback, Page 35. – **Editor**

## PISCATOR



"I guess the media are losing interest."

Win a framed copy of this Piscator cartoon. Two Victoria Crosses were awarded posthumously for valour during the Falklands conflict of 1982. To whom were they awarded? Answers on a postcard to ABF Piscator Competition, 41 Queen's Gate, London SW7 5HR. The first correct card picked out of the hat will win the prize. The next ten will win a Piscator Tommy Atkins pin badge. Entries should be in by April 8.



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# Allowance falls short of getting me home

COULD someone tell me why the Get You Home (Posting) (GYH(P)) allowance has a mileage ceiling of 530 miles? I'm a married unaccompanied sergeant serving at Ternhill, Shropshire, while my family lives in Inverness, 434 miles away. I receive £8.09 a day GYH(P). Recently I attended a course at Worthy Down, 584 miles from my family, but found myself eligible to claim only 530 miles GGYH (Duty) (GYH(D)) allowance.

My battalion is due to move to Aldershot, 595 miles from home, but I will be able to claim only for 530 miles. I find it unfair considering a soldier in similar circumstances in Aldershot, with a family in Newcastle, 313 miles away, would get GYH(P) based on actual mileage, while mine is cut short by 65 miles. – **Sgt G N Stewart, 1 RWF, Ternhill.**

#### PS10(A) responds:

▲ GYH(P) was introduced in 1997 as part of the Independent Review of Allowances (IR) to provide financial assistance towards the travelling costs of reuniting a married unaccompanied Serviceman with his family at weekends. It is linked to the overall costs of relocating a Serviceman, for which the Inland Revenue sets a ceiling – currently £8,500 – before a tax liability becomes payable. To avoid such a tax liability, and to

provide an appropriate level of financial assistance, an incremental structure of rates was developed, based on the actual mileage travelled. Inevitably, there was a point at which the tax threshold was reached and this was determined to be 530 miles. As Sgt Stewart and others may appreciate, it would be financially beneficial to retain the allowance's tax-free status, and utilise additional funds on other allowances, rather than have to hand over a chunk to the Inland Revenue.

OFFICER or other rank; serving or civvy... Soldier welcomes your letters. Please keep them brief and to the point. If not e-mailed, we'd prefer them to be typed but if they are handwritten, put names, addresses and in block capitals (not necessarily for publication). A prize from our gift collection will be awarded each month if we judge that a letter merits it. Acceptance or rejection of letters is the decision of the Editor, who reserves the right to amend for length, clarity or style. Anonymous letters will not be considered.

Mail us!

PS...

## Short-changed...

ON posting to the UK from Germany in October, I asked my regimental admin office for a ferry ticket, only to discover they had no obligation to issue one. I was told to buy one and assured I would be reimbursed at my new unit.

I spent nearly £200, which included my £83.48 ferry ticket and about £90 for three tanks of petrol to complete the journey from Hameln to Plymouth.

Yet my reimbursement was based on a calculation of Motor Mileage Allowance from Stansted Airport to Plymouth. How does this compare with a journey by car of about 700 miles from Hameln to Plymouth? It would be sensible to let soldiers travelling by car seek the best deal and reimburse them for this. Hopefully somebody in a position to change things might take this suggestion on board. – Name and address supplied, Plymouth.

## Unequal partners

I'D like to comment on the Army's equal opportunities policy. It seems any married couple can get a quarter, which is fair enough. However, if you have a relationship with a person and have two children, as I do, you qualify for nothing. If a solicitor was to draw up a legal binding contract between my partner and I, and I was still refused a quarter, surely this can only mean that equal opportunities is not equal. – Pte N J Mullins, BFPO 22.

The MoD is reviewing the issue of unmarried couples in long-term relationships. – *Editor*

## Police show way

ON the subject of trade unions, an organisation based on the Police Federation seems to me to be the most sensible compromise. The police, like the Army, do not have the right to industrial action and are not allowed to join trade unions.

The Federation represents every police officer in England and Wales, without membership fees.

It provides a means of bringing the officers' views on welfare and efficiency to the notice of the government and the police authorities. Such an organisation for military personnel would provide a much-needed independent and professional support network. – Cpl D Fox, R Signals, Hants.

## Upside down under

PAGE 40 of the January issue of *Soldier* shows Sgt Mark Bailey and Lt Russell Newmarch proudly holding up the Union Flag. Perhaps because they were in Australia the flag had to be held upside-down as well? Other than that I am sure they were doing a good job.

In my day we were taught at school and in the Army which way up it should be. – J Bellinger, Oxford.



## Jubilee medal numbers not dictated by cost factor

I WOULD like to take this opportunity to explain briefly the background to the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal and give some general information on the criteria. In this way I hope to clear up some misconceptions.

The Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal is a tri-Service medal and, as such, the Chiefs of all three Services and their staffs gave much thought to the criteria for the medal and consulted widely. Initially the Cabinet Office suggested that five, ten or 15 years' qualifying service should be a criterion. A period of five years however, was eventually agreed and thus many more Servicemen and women are now eligible than might have been.



The decision on how many medals to award was not made on financial grounds. The Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal is a commemorative medal; it is not an operational medal, nor is it a long-service medal. It is designed to commemorate, for those who were serving in HM Forces on February 7, 2002, the 50th anniversary of Her Majesty's Accession to the Throne.

We all recognise that we have very many soldiers serving on operations, some of whom will be too newly joined to qualify for this medal. Operational service medals are intended to reward such service.

Some 181,000 Golden Jubilee Medals will be awarded to the Armed Services, of which approximately 100,000 will go to the Army. This is a huge number when compared with earlier coronation or silver jubilee commemorative medals.

The Army is fortunate indeed to receive such an unprecedented amount of medals for a commemorative event and it is even better news that it is not just confined to the Regular Army; the considerable commitments of the Territorial Army, Royal Irish (HSPT), Full-Time Reserve Service, Non-Regular Permanent Staff, Military Provost Guard Service and Cadets are also recognised.

The task of drawing up a set of rules for a commemorative medal can never result in a perfect solution. Every effort has been made to be fair and to include as many categories as possible. I believe the medal and the occasion which it commemorates should now be acknowledged with gratitude and dignity. – **Brig N J Cottam, Director of Personal Services (Army), Upavon, Wilts.**

## This is no incentive to give my all

I AGREE with Sgt Scott (Jan) about personnel being ineligible for promotion once they reach the 20-year point. I am due to leave the Army on May 22, 2007. The Careers, Manning and Records Office has informed me that my final opportunity for promotion will be 2004. Does this mean I can take a step back and start my gardening leave that year? In 2004 I will still have 2½ years to serve.

The fact there are no prospects of further promotion is hardly an incentive to give 100 per cent. Soldiers with ability, regardless of time served, deserve reward for their efforts up until the day they leave. – **Sgt A G Winnett, RLC, Cyprus.**

## You can be promoted with two years to go

SGT Scott raised the issue of promotion during the last two years of service ("When did 22-year career turn into a 20-year job?", Jan). By way of some background, until recently each Arm and Service had different requirements for residual service (RS) for promotion.

By RS I mean a certain period of service remaining before the end of a 22-year engagement in order to be eligible for further promotion. It is needed to ensure an individual has sufficient time left for a meaningful posting in the new rank. This period varied between cap badges from zero to 24 months.

Where circumstances dictated, a special case could be made for an individual to be promoted even if they did not have the requisite period of service remaining. As a consequence of perceived inequity between cap badges, it was decided in 2000 to develop a pan-Army policy for soldiers on the requirement for RS and, after considerable consulta-

tion, the 24 months' requirement was accepted.

The policy, which came into effect in April 2001, was promulgated in October 2000 and "requires a soldier normally to have 24 months to be eligible for substantive promotion. If, in the interests of the Service, it is considered that an individual should be promoted with less than 24 months RS, a case is made by Colonels MCM to DMS, who may approve on a case-by-case basis".

Thus where there is a need for a special case, it is possible still for an individual to be promoted in the last 24 months of their service.

Readers might be interested to note that for officers, the rules on RS for promotion are changing. Once the new policy is implemented, an officer will require three years' residual service to remain eligible for promotion. – **Brig A S Craig, Director of Manning (Army).**

## No tax is a real bonus

IN the Feed Back column (Jan), CGS's Briefing Team explains the reason why Longer Separated Service Allowance (LSSA) – and presumably also the LSSA Bonus payment – has to be taxed. I appreciate that there is a limited pot of gold but as TA bounties, which are tax-free, and LSSA bonuses, which are taxed, are paid for similar reasons, the Army seems to have adopted an unequal and unfair reward system. – **Mobilised Regular Reservist (name and unit supplied).**

▲ Due to pressure of space we've had to hold over several letters. Please keep 'em short. – **Editor**

## Is S Type still going strong?

HAS the S Type Engagement been discontinued and, if so, how do I get back on to colour service? If the S Type Engagement is still alive and well and I do my final ten years' service on an S Type engagement, how does this affect my pension? – **Cpl (name supplied), Bulford.**

### D/DM (A) responds:

▲ The S Type Engagement is a fixed period of colour service of six months or any complete period of years from six months to 12 years. A person should be enlisted on this engagement only if ineligible for enlisted on the Open Engagement by reasons of age, length of previous service or any other cause.

The S Type Engagement has not been discontinued and individuals wishing to serve beyond their initial S Type commitment should apply to their respective MCM Division at APC Glasgow through the chain of command. All service on an S Type Engagement reckons for pension purposes and all personnel who complete 22 years' reckonable service for pension purposes, from age 18 or date of attestation, whichever is the later, will qualify for an immediate pension.

## THEN AND THEN



### 25 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, March 1977: A new support unit has been formed in Cyprus, wearing the light blue beret of the United Nations. The new unit, UNFICYP Support Regiment, will help to improve the administration and efficiency of the small British units based in Nicosia in support of the UN force. In command is Lt Col D L Seddon, RCT.

### 50 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, March 1952: Today, after 51 years, the Armed Forces of the Crown again owe their allegiance to a Queen. As *Soldier* goes to press it is not known what Army titles and honours will be assumed by Queen Elizabeth II. Above: The future Queen shares a classroom table with a sergeant of the Auxiliary Territorial Service, which the Princess joined in 1945.

# Open-and-shut case of non-entitlement

I HAVE been one of the lucky few who transferred from the Territorial Army into the Army full-time. I signed on in March 1995 at the age of 30.

I started on an S Type Engagement for one year, during which I decided to change my S Type, which enables me to sign on for 12 years under the condition that it could be extended beyond that point. Will I be entitled to claim the re-

engagement bounty at the five-year point and any further bounties if I stayed on longer, seeing that I was paid the bounty at the two-year point?

My pay office informs me that because I signed up after my 28th birthday, I am not entitled to claim the bounty. I find this quite strange as I received the two-year bounty. **Name and address supplied.**

*ders who serve on S Type Engagements are committed to serve for a specific amount of time, but as part of their terms of service, have the option to apply for PVR on repayment.*

*Due to your correspondent's age on enlistment (30) he was ineligible to enlist on Open Engagement and so was offered an S Type Engagement. This precludes him from receiving both REBs and FRIs. DM (A) cannot comment on why he received an REB except to reiterate the point that REBs and FRIs are payable only to individuals serving on an Open Engagement.*

**D/DM (A) responds:**  
▲ To clarify the difference between the Re-Engagement Bounty (REB) and Financial Retention Initiatives (FRIs), a REB is a taxable bounty of £1,400, payable, generally speaking, at the two-year point. FRIs are taxable bonuses of £3,000 and £2,500 payable at the five- and eight-year points. Both REBs and FRIs are payable only to soldiers serving on the Open Engagement.

*Soldiers who serve on the Open Engagement are initially committed for four years, from age 18, and do not have the option to PVR (premature voluntary retirement). Sol-*

## PS . . .

### Jubilee emblem

IRRESPECTIVE of the continuing debate about entitlement to the Golden Jubilee Medal, its impending issue could provide an opportunity partially to redress the unsatisfactory situation that resulted from the flawed arrangements for the distribution of the 1977 Silver Jubilee Medal.

Perhaps for those Servicemen and women who were also serving in the 1977 Silver Jubilee year (on or after February 7, 1977) their Golden Jubilee Medal ribbon could bear a suitable emblem to indicate this. The most appropriate would probably be a small silver crown, about the same size as the Falklands or Gulf War rosette.

Where an individual already has the Silver Jubilee Medal, he or she would not receive this additional emblem, in order not to breach the two awards for one event principle. The device would also be borne on the ribbon when the Golden Jubilee Medal is not being worn. — Lt Col D J A Stone RGBW, Trenchard Lines, Upavon, Wilts.

### Tailor-made cover

I WAS very interested in the letter (Jan) on the subject of an insurance company refusing a claim for a family holiday cancelled for Service reasons.

This problem really highlights again the need to have adequate insurance cover, as mentioned in the response — although most insurance companies will not accept this as a reason to cancel.

The good news is that Naafi Financial Travel Insurance is geared to the special needs of the Armed Forces and automatically includes, in addition to other unique benefits, full cover for cancellation or the cutting short of holidays due to Service reasons.

If anyone wishes to take out cover to make sure this situation does not affect them, they can call 01603 205209 or free-phone 0800 76767777 — we'll be pleased to help. — Al Voice, Naafi Financial.

### Supporting gong

THERE is one omission from the catalogue of available awards — a medal which differentiates between support staff, usually miles from the action and often in a different country. The Australian and New Zealand governments have, I understand, already addressed this.

The Nato Medal is a case in point. Support personnel in Italy receive the same medal as personnel deployed in Bosnia and Kosovo. If the individual is actually in theatre then they certainly qualify for the medal. It's an entirely different matter if they're in another country.

I propose an Operational Support Medal — with appropriate clasp for the theatre concerned. I would welcome views on this subject. — Tony Farrell, ex-RAF and R Sigs, (piperuk@excite.com).

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We asked you to tell us about examples of retail discrimination. Here's what you told us:

## Mobile phone contract didn't extend to second

I WANTED to extend my mobile contract from one to two phones (for my wife). Having bought a second phone, I was informed by customer services that as a member of HM Forces I was entitled to have only one on contract and so the second purchase was withdrawn.

I had never defaulted on my contract and the company held a £200 deposit for my first phone. Despite protests from sales staff to customer services that I had good credentials and was prepared to pay an additional £200 to open a second contract, all was to no avail.

Two things irritated me – I was living in the UK (Glasgow APC) at the time and therefore had a UK address, and if I could not get the required credit as an officer, how much more difficult might this process be for soldiers on a lesser wage?

A year ago I tried to buy a camera from a major chain store. In order to e-purchase, I had to register; in order to register, I had to give a UK post code. A UK post code is either my house (occupied by others) or my parents' home. Why should either have to forward my mail? – **H H Blackman, HQ ARRC, Rheindahlen.**

## Other ways to find a good deal

THE situation faced by LCpl Collins (Jan) with regard to re-homing a pet from an animal shelter is another way in which our lives are affected from the moment we sign on. While not retail discrimination, it is discrimination.

The shelter knew they could call on his CO to vouch for the condition in which an animal would be kept. This is a luxury they are denied with civilian customers, but I'm sure they only had the animals' best interests at heart.

I have managed to survive without flashing my ID card to get the best deal. There are plenty of companies more than willing to offer you one – look no further than the Forces' Discount Brochure.

This should reduce the need for LCpl Collins to produce his MoD 90 at the drop of a hat (in Northern Ireland of all places – how things change). – **WO2 B Simm, PSI (Veh), 50 Recovery Coy REME (V), Surrey.**

## I'm a non-person to UK companies

HERE are a few problems I have encountered over the years.

Most UK firms use software that won't accept, or finds too difficult, BFPO addresses. A UK residential address (usually a relative) is acceptable, although having my mother receive my mail (I'm a 33-year-old WO) is rather demeaning.

Checks to confirm your credit rating are difficult if you are serving outside the UK. The firm may ask for a letter from

your CO confirming who you are and your address. Having given a UK address, my bank account and passed my credit check, why should my CO have to confirm my identity?

What annoys me most is that I have become a non-person to most UK firms. Yet I can walk into a shop in the UK, buy what I like using my mother's address and leave the country the next day. – **WO2 D J Wallace, 24 Regt RLC, Bielefeld.**

## No proof of discrimination

THE Service Families Task Force looked into discrimination against Service personnel in obtaining credit. Discussions were held with the British Banking Association, the Finance and Leasing Association and the Council of Mortgage Lenders.

The conclusion reached was that there was no discrimination, per se, against Service people. However, different companies had different lending rules, which can cause difficulties in some cases. For instance, the refusal of a credit card if you had an overseas address; difficulty in proving creditworthiness if you had been overseas and not maintained a UK bank account; difficulty in obtaining instant credit if you had a BFPO address in the last five years.

There are other methods of proving credit-

worthiness (a manual check can be asked for) and there are sufficient companies to enable credit to be obtained in most cases.

As the decision to advance credit is a commercial one, and as there is no proof of discrimination, the decision was taken that no further action by the Service Families Task Force was appropriate. The situation will be monitored to see whether this issue needs to be addressed in the future.

On a separate issue, British Forces Post Office is looking at making changes to the BFPO numbering system so that it appears in the form of a postcode. Although this will not affect granting of credit, it may help in the ordering of items over the internet. – **Lt Col B R N Davidson, AD SP Pol Families.**

## Don't let it go unchallenged

HAVING your financial integrity challenged because you choose to serve your country is frustrating and insulting. It should not go unchallenged and can usually be addressed with perseverance and an understanding of the workings of the credit/finance industry.

The bottom line is that none of us have a right to credit and that providers are able to set their own criteria (within the law) to decide who will get credit.

Two methods are commonly used to determine creditworthiness: credit scoring and the taking of a reference from a credit-rating agency, or a combination of both. Scoring requires the applicant to answer questions such as how long you have lived at your current address, whether you are listed on the local electoral register and if you own your own home. The provider "scores" an applicant according to his responses.

Members of the Armed Forces are disproportionately more likely to fail credit scoring because of the nature of Service life, so it is worth providing a covering note explaining why you have only been at your current address for a year (having moved due to postings) and, for example, that you are not registered to vote locally because you vote via proxy elsewhere.

If a credit/finance provider uses a credit reference agency (it is obliged to tell you) then it will merely be given data regarding your past credit history. The system is not fail-safe, so if credit or finance is refused and there is no history of late or failed repayments or county court judgements, it may pay the individual to ask for a copy of his credit reference from the agency. This will incur a small fee but there is a process for dealing with inaccuracies.

When asked for a letter from the CO, remember that while your money may not be wanted by some retailers, you can vote with your feet. A letter to the company can be worth any amount of impassioned pleas to ill-informed sales staff. – **C J Tovey, RAF Akrotiri, Cyprus.**

## Risky business

RETAIL discrimination against the Army has been around a long time. I joined in 1974 and tried to buy my own car in 1976. The car was no problem, but once I told the insurance company I was a member of HM Forces the price went up. They said that Forces personnel were a bad risk. – **M G King, MoD, Folkestone, Kent.**

# Vox pop

Special

## Hazel Irvine, BBC Sport

The fact that the Army has bases all over northern Europe plays a huge part in their dominance. Soldiers get to work in winter climates so it is only natural that they want to get involved and be part of winter sports. Another key point is that all three Services seem to actively encourage most winter sport disciplines and give their personnel the time and opportunity to pursue them.



## Cpl Michelle Coy (RAF), British Olympic bobsleigh driver

Winter sports are very expensive and require a lot of dedication, and because of that very few people can actually pursue them at a serious level. Most civilians are forced to choose between their sport or their jobs and many rely on lottery funding. Service athletes are given time off and still get to pick up a wage.



## Ian Woods, British biathlon coach

I think it boils down to the fact that the Army is probably the best company in the world to work for if you are a sportsman. Generally they have the strength in numbers to release their élite athletes from their duties, and we live in a world today where you don't find that very often.



# Forces sharpen ice-cutting edge

A quarter of the athletes who represented Great Britain at the 2002 Winter Olympic Games in Salt Lake City are members of the Armed Forces. We asked some of the biggest names in winter sports why they thought the Army played such a dominant role

## Mark Hatton, British Olympic luger

I think the Army supports its athletes to a degree that other employers cannot match and consequently Great Britain gets a lot of its sportsmen and women from the Services. Another factor is that sports like luge are all about pushing your personal limits and you find that a lot of soldiers have that mindset.



## Kristan Bromley, British Olympic skeleton

I do not believe that the mentality of soldiers is the reason why so many of them are involved in winter sports. Ice sports do take dedication and drive, but you also need to move away from a soldier's mentality and really start to think for yourself. The great athletes from the forces are those who can adapt to different environments.



## Flt Lt Alex Coomber (RAF), British Olympic skeleton

The Services are very good at encouraging new people into winter sports. All three Services run very good novice ice camps and this year have introduced around 50 personnel into the sport of



skeleton. Around 20 of them will then compete in the Inter-Service championships and will then stand a chance of being selected for the British squad.

## Stephen Mallieau, British bobsleigh psychologist

The Services have traditionally supported winter sports and there is consequently a stream of athletes from the Armed Forces coming into the national team. I also think that to compete in a sport like bobsleigh you have to be a mentally tough character and the Army is full of people like that.



## Richard Caborn, Sports Minister

Winter sports demand a physical presence and the Army has that in plentiful supply. They make a massive contribution to the British team both individually and collectively.



Interviews: Andy Simms Pictures: Graeme Main



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