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“ I won this title for the team ”

Fighters' double delight – p75

Domestic duties



LAST month's atrocity in Manchester, in which the evil of the IED was felt on home turf by

our youngest generation, elicited a massive reaction among our readers. And understandably so. Some of the most astonishing war stories I have ever heard involve British soldiers laying down their lives to save children. When that effort fails, the mental consequences can be massive. So when a friend told me she had started encouraging her kids to “look for the helpers” in every piece of TV footage from the attack, it got me thinking about what important figureheads Service personnel are for our country's youngsters. Next time you are deployed on domestic duties, lamenting the cut-and-thrust of regular overseas operations, do consider the comfort and hope that just the sight of your uniform can inspire. In a deeply uncertain world, the selflessness you represent is a shining example to us all.

Sarah Goldthorpe • Editor

Where to find *Soldier*

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...ARE distributed to every Army site at the start of each month.

> Facebook, Twitter and Instagram

ALONG with news and glimpses behind the scenes at *Soldier*, we publish a link to the magazine at www.facebook.com/soldiermagazine and @soldiermagazine on Twitter.

> Online

DIGITAL versions of current and past editions are available on the Army website at www.soldiermagazine.co.uk Just click on “read it now”.

> Purchase

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Picture: Graeme Main

Women need now apply

ALL units in the Royal Armoured Corps have opened their doors to Servicewomen who wish to transfer there from elsewhere in the British Army.

The opportunity is available to both soldiers and officers.

It follows last month's news that the first female officer had commissioned into the Royal Tank Regiment, which led the charge on welcoming female troops into the corps at the end of last year along with the King's Royal Hussars, Royal Lancers and all of its Reserve units.

"We welcome the decision to open roles," an RAC briefing note said.

The Service has been keen not to overplay the rule change, insisting that it is very much business as usual for the formations involved.

"The corps prides itself on its ability to integrate others with minimum fuss and to maximum effect," the RAC statement added.

"This is an opportunity to enhance our operational effectiveness by increasing the quantity and quality of talent available and by strengthening our teams.

"What an individual does is more important than who they are."

Any troops interested in a possible move should approach their chain of command in the first instance.

All transfers will be handled in accordance with the combat arms policy for employment and the Army transfer policy.

The Service expects the RAC to be a more popular choice for female troops than the Infantry, with a steady annual intake of around 20 personnel predicted after an initial surge.

The policy follows a government decision last summer to lift the ban on women serving in ground close combat roles.

For more information read Army briefing note 49/17 or search "women in ground close combat" on DII.

“
We welcome
the decision
to open roles
”

Call for women to get
on-board – page 13

NEED TO KNOW: WOMEN IN COMBAT

- ➔ Training standards won't be lowered
- ➔ There are no quotas to fill
- ➔ To enter the corps women must pass the same tests
- ➔ Infantry units will start to welcome females next year



SOLDIER

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ARMY

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SOLDIER is published by the Ministry of Defence
and printed by Wyndeham (Roche) Ltd.
Print contract managed by Williams Lea Tag.

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Views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily
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A taste of Army events across the world

GLOBAL SITREP

Picture: Cpl Donald Todd, RLC



1. CANADA ROUNDS COMPLETE

THE first Exercise Prairie Storm of 2017 is drawing to a close in Batus with 900 troops from the 1st Battalion, The Royal Welsh battlegroup approaching the end of 35 days in the field as this issue went to press.

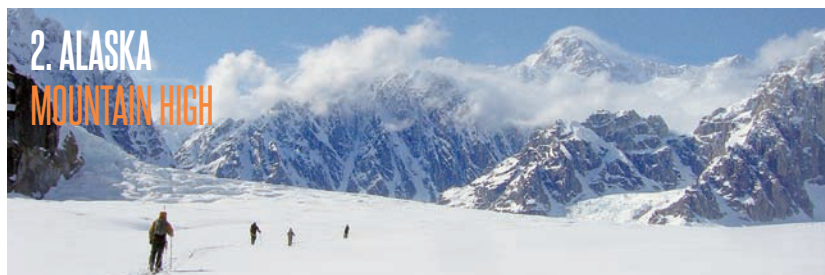
Covering complex live firing and combined arms manoeuvres,

the package is a key part of the formation's build up to its deployment on Operation Cabrit, the Nato mission in Estonia, at the end of the year.

The serial is also the first time exercising soldiers have worn the new Virtus body armour system during Prairie Storm.

Next in line is the 1st Battalion, The Yorkshire Regiment battlegroup, which will begin its stint on the plains later this month.

2. ALASKA MOUNTAIN HIGH



MEMBERS of 2nd Battalion, The Royal Gurkha Rifles are aiming to scale North America's highest peak – Mount Denali in Alaska.

Eight soldiers inserted directly onto Kahiltna Glacier via a ski-equipped aircraft and expect to complete the three-week expedition, known as Exercise Gurkha Malamute, by June 5.

Picture: Mark Yezbick



3. CALIFORNIA ROAD RACERS

WOUNDED personnel are preparing to take on one of the world's toughest cycling endurance events in aid of Help for Heroes.

The Race Across America begins in Oceanside, California and ends in Annapolis, Maryland, a distance of 3,081 miles.

The ten-strong team will attempt to complete the route in less than seven days, covering 440 miles daily and maintaining an average speed of 18.3mph. Follow their progress via www.raceacrossamerica.org



Soldiers vs volcano

Signallers make military history – page 26



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6. AUSTRALIA DRILLS DOWN UNDER

SOME 180 troops from 1st Battalion, The Royal Gurkha Rifles swapped the jungle of Brunei for the Australian outback on Exercise Pacific Kukri.

The six-week package saw B Company working alongside 6th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment in the searing heat of northern Queensland.

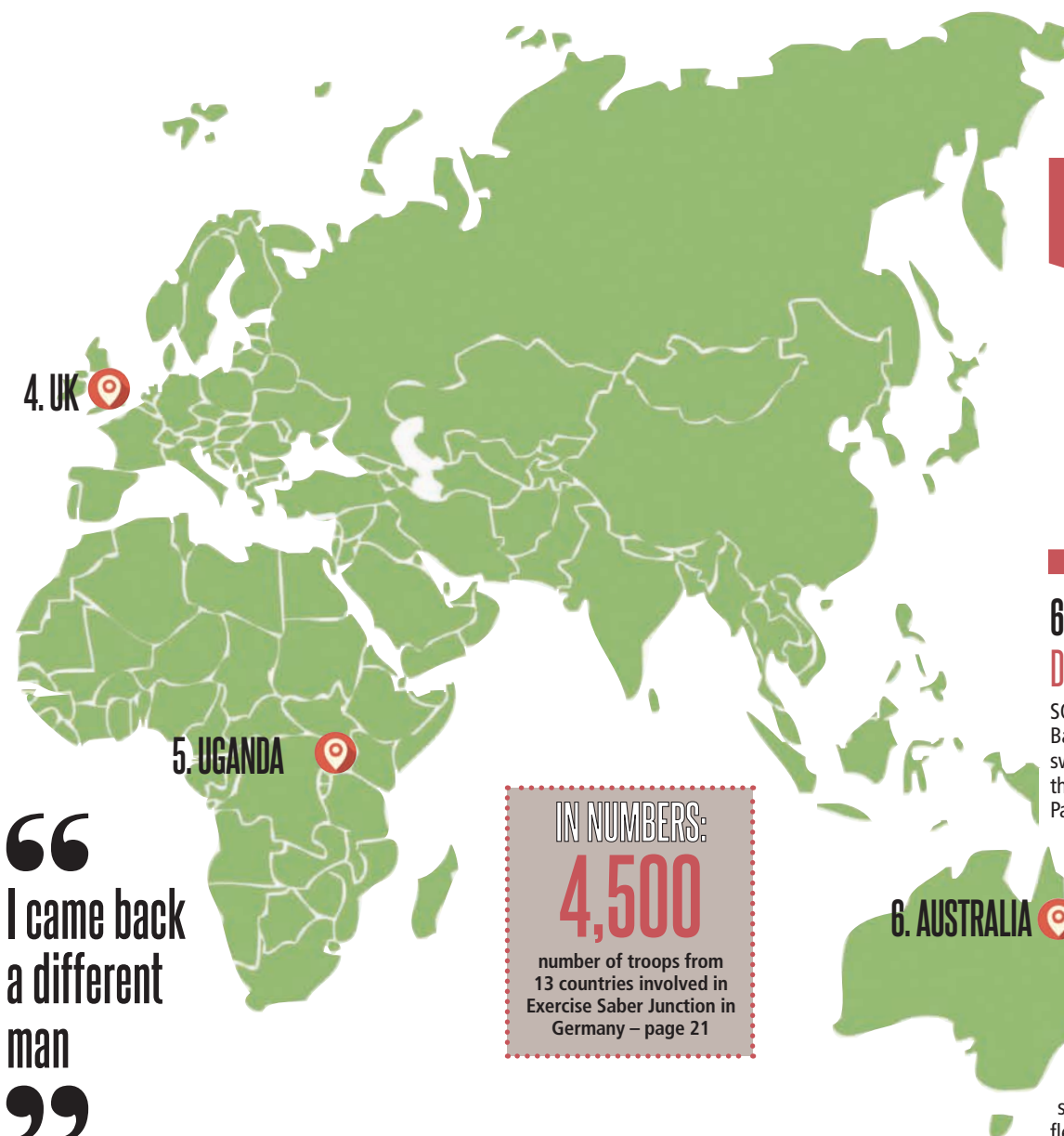
Staged annually, the exercise provides the British personnel with a completely different training environment, as well as substantially more space and flexibility for live firing.

They also took part in an Anzac Day parade in Brisbane accompanied by the 1 RGR Pipes and Drums.



Games masters

Soldiers shine in New Zealand – page 81



IN NUMBERS:

4,500

number of troops from 13 countries involved in Exercise Saber Junction in Germany – page 21

5. UGANDA ENGENDERING CHANGE

BRITISH personnel have taken the lead on the first ever United Nations military gender advisers' course in Entebbe.

The UK-funded package covered topics including countering sexual violence and child exploitation in conflict, and involved troops from 15 different nations, some serving in regions where these issues are an ongoing factor.

Maj Timothy Graham (Scots DG) from the UN HQ in the Democratic Republic of the Congo commented: "The UK, through the Army, is committed to combating this horrific problem in the world."

"The lessons we have learnt here are not only increasing our ability to fight sexual violence and child exploitation, but to optimise the Service's effectiveness on peacekeeping operations".

4. UK PARAS PREP IN WALES

THE rugged terrain of Castlemartin provided the ideal backdrop for paratroopers from 2nd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment to hone their fire and manoeuvre skills.

Personnel from the machine gun and anti-tank platoons of the unit's support company conducted a series of complex drills as part of Exercise Blue Mobility, which saw them using Jackal vehicles in the challenging environment of South West Wales.



Picture: Cpl Georgina Coupe, RLC

“
I came back
a different
man
”

Servicemen recall
Falklands War – page 30



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Gurkhas on top of the world

MEMBERS of the British Army's Gurkha community have reacted with delight to news that three of its personnel have summited the world's highest mountain for the first time.

They were among 14 members of the Gurkha Everest Expedition team to conquer Mount Everest last month, despite the mission meeting seemingly-endless setbacks.

An initial attempt in 2015 to mark 200 years of Gurkha service to the Crown was brought to a tragic halt when the Nepal earthquake struck, devastating the country and leading the troops to abandon their mission and assist in the humanitarian effort.

This year's expedition was not without heartbreak, either.

As they were acclimatising the

troops discovered the body of legendary Swiss climber, Ueli Steck, who had died en route to the peak.

And days later 85-year-old Min Bahadur Sherchan, a former Gurkha soldier, lost his life at Everest Base Camp while attempting to become the oldest person to climb the mountain.

Forecasts of high winds had also threatened the summit bid at times.

"We are ecstatic about this success," said deputy expedition leader Maj Andrew Todd (RGR).

"It is another example of how the Army strives to achieve excellence.

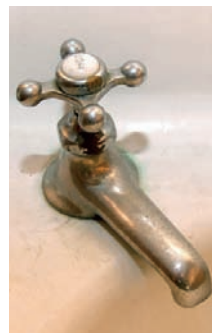
"We are delighted to have worked with the Sherpas to fix the ropes to the summit, and to be the first team to summit this year."

The group were preparing to return to the UK as this issue went to press.

“
We are ecstatic
about this
success
”

Poor housing: could you be owed compensation?

■ PERSONNEL faced with filthy carpets, no hot water and other major defects when they move into their Service family accommodation (SFA) can now be compensated with up to £100 in high street vouchers. The scheme has been set up by the MoD to recognise the inconvenience caused. It also sees the department coughing up £30 when contractors miss maintenance appointments. The payments are not automatic, however. Troops must apply within 14 days of the incident, and claims before April 1, 2017 will not be accepted. A statement from the Defence Infrastructure Organisation, which is overseeing the scheme, said vouchers would be redeemable at "a range of stores". For details of how to apply search for "SFA compensation scheme" on DII or www.gov.uk



OPERATIONAL HONOURS

BRITISH Army personnel have been honoured in the latest operational honours and awards list. The recipients were:

● Officer of the Order of the British Empire

Col Angus MacGillivray
Col James Martin
Col Geoffrey Minton

● Member of the Order of the British Empire

A/Maj Thomas Goodall, RLC
Lt Col David Lee, Para
CSgt William Thomas, Para

● Queen's Gallantry Medal

Capt Giles Moon, RL

● Mention in Despatches

Pte Dominic Hopkinson, Para
CSgt Steven Nixon, Para

● Queen's Commendation for Bravery

Sgt Paul Byrne, Para
LCpl Thomas Corrigan, REME

● Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service

Cpl Jamie Calvert, Para
Cpl Mahesh Gurung, RGR
Maj Edward Harris, RE
Col Robert Howieson
Maj Edwin Oldfield, RGR
Maj Colin Oliver, Rifles
Spr Philippa Proud, RE
SSgt Christopher Rhodes, R Signals
A/Brig James Roddis
Maj David Stead, RE



Picture: Steve Dock

SHOOTERS ON FORM

■ MORE than 700 troops honed their skills at the Force Troops Command Operational Shooting Competition.

Held in Pirbright, the ten-day contest tests participants over a range of distances and weapons and is thought to be the largest event of its kind in the country.

"The level of effort is as realistic as it gets," said senior range officer Capt Neil Whitewick (RLC). "It pushes every soldier to reach the highest standards of personal marksmanship, team spirit and leadership."

The winner of the individual event was Pte Arshu Gurung (OQGLR) and the best team were 30 Signal Regiment.

They will be among those going on to compete at the Army-level competition starting later this month.

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Members
of the Army
Servicewomen's
Network



Picture: Cpl Jonathan Lee van Zyl, RLC

Call for women to get on-board

FEMALE personnel looking for support or mentoring to help them get on in their careers are being urged to join the Army Servicewomen's Network (ASN).

Set up in 2015, the group can assist troops and the chain of command with any issues affecting women in today's military, from maternity leave to personal development or even gender discrimination.

"We allow females to find support, share experience and learn from each other," explained co-chair Lt Col Sarah Pringle-Smith (AGC (RMP)).

"It's a network that concentrates on developing talent.

"Servicewomen often still find themselves serving as the only females in an organisation so there can be issues around that."

The group is keen to develop regimental-level networks, and is encouraging anyone interested to email army-servicewomen-0mailbox@mod.uk

The next ASN conference will be held on October 12 at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, where the theme will be "100 years of women in combat".

For more details search for the Army Servicewomen's Network on the defence intranet.

“
We allow them
to learn from
each other
”



Picture: US Army

■ THIS remarkable image captured by US Army photographer Spc Hilda Clayton shows the moment she and four Afghan National Army soldiers were killed when a mortar shell blew up on a training exercise in Laghman in 2013. It has been released by America's military, and highlights the danger encountered by combat photographers. This month sees the release of *A Good Day to Die (Hoka Hey)*, a film about the life of British war photographer Jason Howe.

RESERVES JPA CHANGE

■ THE way Army Reserve commissions and engagements are recorded on JPA has been changed to bring the process in line with Regular personnel.

The alteration is for administrative purposes only and has no impact on the terms and conditions of service.

For more information read [ABN 45/17](#)

BATTLE COURSE REFORM

■ AMENDS have been made to the content and timings of attendance for Reserve personnel on the platoon sergeants' battle course.

Students will now be integrated into the programme during weeks two and three, as opposed to three and four, to give them more time on key serials alongside their Regular counterparts.

Included among the additional training will be an ambush orders exercise and three-mile physical assessment.

Read [ABN 44/17](#) for further details.

SPINE LINE COMPETITION

WIN



LAST month's spine line clues were inspired by our review of Kasabian's latest album, *For Crying Out Loud*.

(Chris) Edwards, (Ian) Matthews, (Tom) Meighan and (Sergio) Pizzorno are all members of the rock group.

This month *Soldier* has teamed up with outdoor training specialists Live the Adventure (www.livetheadventure.co) to offer one lucky reader a day of stand-up paddleboarding for you and three mates.

To be in with a chance of scooping this top prize – worth £300 – tell us what links the words on the side of this issue.

Answers to the usual address or comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk by June 30. Good luck!



“The Falklands was one of the reasons I stayed in”

– Serving troops relive conflict, page 30



A personal view from Sara Baade, Chief Executive of the Army Families Federation...

VOTING ISSUES

ENSURING that our families are able to use their right to vote has long been at the top of the Army Families Federation’s agenda.

An overseas survey in March 2016 showed that 74 per cent of those posted abroad would prefer to do this by post.

However, this method has been fraught with issues, mostly due to timings and the postal system, which has left many frustrated and unable to exercise their democratic right.

Families told us then, and continue to tell us now, that proxy voting – the option recommended by the Electoral Commission and the MoD for this cohort – simply isn’t a viable alternative for many.

In the time between the last election and the announcement of this month’s snap election we have worked hard, along with different government departments, to find solutions.

But sadly, the tight timings have not allowed us to do this.

Whilst we do have concerns around proxy voting, we echo the Commission’s advice that, currently, it is the safest way.

Although not ideal, this is not the end of the story, and we will continue to work towards securing a quicker, safer postal system for future elections.

The AFF election manifesto on our website also details

what the next government must consider to ensure our families are supported.



www.aff.org.uk

“Without help we cannot provide this”



Picture: Graeme Main

Green scheme faces uprooting

A PROGRAMME that uses gardening to help troops overcome complex and traumatic injuries is fighting for its future.

The charity HighGround has just completed a successful three-year pilot scheme at the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre Headley Court.

But it must now find £350,000 to finance its work for another three years – including the move to Nottinghamshire when Headley Court closes in 2018.

“Without help we cannot provide this much-needed and unique rehabilitation service to our country’s Servicemen and women,” said Anna Cresswell, the charity’s founder.

She is urging anyone who can assist with funding to contact her via anna@highground-uk.org or donate online at www.highground-uk.org

Wounded soldiers supported by HighGround (pictured above in 2011) were due to put on a display at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show as this issue went to press.

IN NUMBERS:



Treatment sessions that HighGround has provided to more than 1,000 troops with funding from plant food firm Miracle-Gro

news@soldiermagazine.co.uk
Tell Soldier what you think



Last year's exercise

FIX UP, LOOK SHARP

■ HUNDREDS of military vehicle mechanics from across the UK and Germany have been putting their skills to the test over Swynnerton Training Area in Staffordshire.

Exercise Griffin Spanner saw troops compete against each other in teams to fix and test various vehicles and weapons including Warrior, Terrier and the L118 light gun.

The tasks were carried out in a tactical scenario to add realism to the package and help the personnel prepare for future operations across the world.



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“The temperature got up to 54 degrees”

–Desert slog spurs athlete on, page 70

FEARLESS FUNDRAISING

Marathon effort

SUPER-fit soldier Cpl Mark Bishop (Rifles) was the lucky recipient of a ballot place in the London Marathon, having agreed to raise money for ABF The Soldiers' Charity. He was part of a record number of entrants to tackle the 26-mile route through the capital this year.



Raised:
£1,500

For: ABF The Soldiers' Charity



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OFFICER cadet Tobias Davis is planning to cycle the distance from Dunnet Head (the most northern part of mainland UK) to the City of Westminster. He will tackle the 753-mile challenge at the Fitness First gym in Romford in August.

Visit: www.justgiving.com/alpha-events

“
It's been
great to
learn the job
”

An airborne first

Troops embrace new instructing role



Picture: Steve Dock

THE Army wrote a new chapter in its parachuting history when the first jump instructors since the Second World War were welcomed into the ranks.

Eight soldiers (pictured) from 16 Air Assault Brigade achieved the honour during a graduation ceremony at RAF Brize Norton, marking the completion of a course that started in October.

Until now the Royal Air Force has trained all military parachutists from across defence but a requirement to grow the capability onto the C17 Globemaster and A400M Atlas airframes meant an expansion of the instructor cadre was needed.

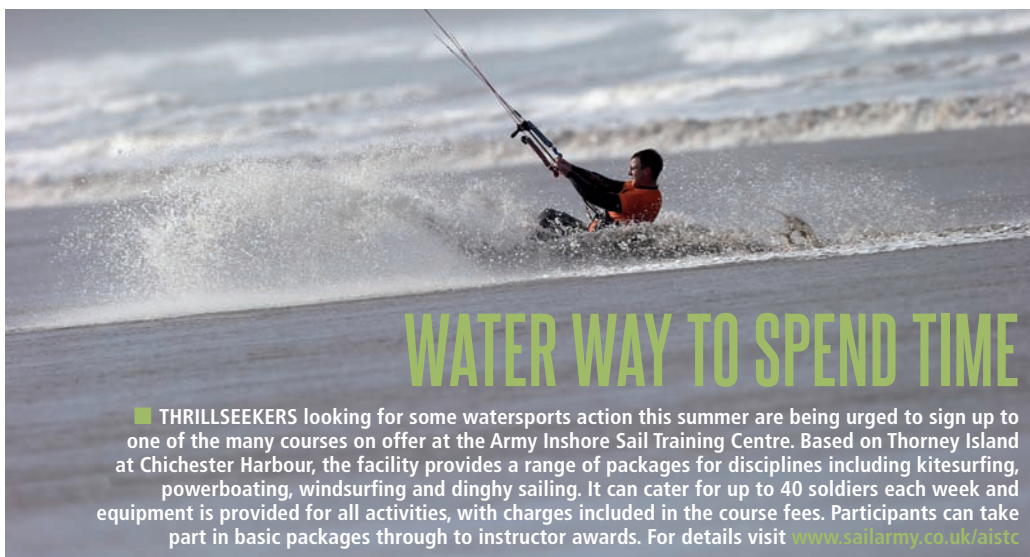
The successful candidates were selected from a shortlist of 12 and have already started training the next generation of jumpers.

“It is a great opportunity for us to



come to RAF Brize Norton and start to teach parachuting,” said Cpl Richard Kingston (2 Para), one of the graduates. “It's a new phenomenon and it's been great to learn the job.”

Wg Cdr Jamie Simmonds, OC Airborne Delivery Wing, added: “Air-land integration is always talked about but having the Army here on a day-to-day basis has provided an opportunity for learning on both sides.”



WATER WAY TO SPEND TIME

THRILLSEEKERS looking for some watersports action this summer are being urged to sign up to one of the many courses on offer at the Army Inshore Sail Training Centre. Based on Thorney Island at Chichester Harbour, the facility provides a range of packages for disciplines including kitesurfing, powerboating, windsurfing and dinghy sailing. It can cater for up to 40 soldiers each week and equipment is provided for all activities, with charges included in the course fees. Participants can take part in basic packages through to instructor awards. For details visit www.sailarmy.co.uk/aistc

Picture: Graeme Main



Best live-firing range yet

SAPPERS have completed a £250,000 upgrade to one of the British Army's most important live-firing sites.

Eighty members of The Queen's Gurkha Engineers spent three weeks at Archer's Post Training Area in Kenya to refurbish Objective Silver – a square-kilometre complex of buildings and corridors that allow light role infantry troops to practise fighting through built-up areas.

The development, which was due to be handed back to British Army Training Unit Kenya as this issue went to press, means the site can continue to be used on future training serials such as Exercise Askari Storm.

"This has been a substantial project," said Maj Rob Grant, officer commanding 70 Gurkha Field

Squadron – the unit that undertook the work.

"It will significantly enhance the experience of personnel coming through the range.

"Our guys stripped everything out and sunk the village down to a two-metre depth before rebuilding it.

"Now it has the effect that the whole thing is sub-surface."

The Gurkhas were assisted by other members of 36 Engineer Regiment and 45 Kenyan civilians.

Half the facility was updated during this tasking and the other half will be tackled next year.

IN NUMBERS
1,360 tonnes of sand removed during the upgrade



More than 6,900 pieces of timber were used in the building project

LOA ALLOWANCE CHANGE

■ **CHANGES** have been made to the local overseas allowance in Kenya.

Earlier this year the rate was upped by 20 per cent for married accompanied personnel and reduced by 60 per cent for single and unaccompanied troops.

The Army says it had to make the alteration after finding that the car running cost element of the payment was over-compensating troops for the cost of living.

It was increased back in 2012 to try and encourage overseas service at British Army Training Unit Kenya but this was changed to bring it in line with the real cost of living and hence ensure the payment can continue its status as non-taxable.

"We debated this long and hard, having visited the country back in October 2016," said Maj Arthur Dawe, SO2 allowances in the Army pay team.

However, some soldiers say the alteration, which came with just a few weeks' notice and leaves single personnel out of pocket by around £12-14 per day, has put a strain on their finances.

The LOA reduction will affect around 28 permanent and 176 temporary staff.



BATUK: THE NEXT EPISODE

■ **THE** second phase of a £49 million development programme to construct new facilities at British Army Training Unit Kenya is underway.

Led by the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO), it will see the creation of single living accommodation for permanent staff, catering and leisure facilities, a 16-bay workshop, roads and utilities such as sewerage and water.

Phase three will include gym facilities, a dental centre and offices.

The work is being carried out by DIO staff, Royal Engineers and Kenyan contractors and will eventually see all personnel stationed at one location at Laikipia Air Base East.

"I am looking forward to seeing this project come to fruition," said unit commander Col Nick Wood.

A completion date will be announced later this year.

Diverse agenda on the cards...



■ **THE** annual Diversity and Inclusion Conference will be held at the Garrison Theatre in Tidworth on July 4.

It is open to Regular and Reserve commanding officers, unit welfare officers, regimental career management officers, adjutants and command sergeant majors.

This year's themes will cover "active inclusion" and "addressing unconscious bias". For more details on the event read **ABN 52/17**.

THE BIG PICTURE

UNITED KINGDOM

SOLDIERY

THESE striking images are the result of a year-long project by professional photographer Rory Lewis to capture the diversity of the modern British Army. The artist undertook hundreds of sittings with personnel of various ranks and cap badges, capturing them in a style that he says was inspired by portraits "of a bygone age". The pictures are being previewed in Liverpool later this month to mark Armed Forces Day, with *Soldiery* expected to go on general exhibition in London towards the end of the year. A book of the same name is also out now in paperback and hardback. "The project became a labour of love; it was inspiring and I feel lucky to have had the honour to do it," Lewis told *Soldier*.

Pictures: Rory Lewis





Taking on a fired-up, well-resourced American enemy force in an environment that is alien to both your tanks and your troops. Sounds like a recipe for disaster, right? Not if you're a member of The Queen's Royal Hussars...

WOODWORK



THE US might be the world's most powerful military – and this spot in southern Germany might be very familiar to its troops – but that hasn't held the Brits back from facing-off their opponents with ferocity and class during Exercise Saber Junction.

The superpower has thrown everything at The Queen's Royal Hussars battlegroup during its time on the Hohenfels Training Area from chemical weapons and UAVs to long-range artillery and special forces.

And the aim? To take them and their prized Challenger 2 main battle tanks down once and for all.

And if proof were needed that the resulting clash has helped push the Brits on to new levels of brilliance, just ask Cpl Andrew Shaw (QRH, pictured left).

"I'd literally just come back from my crew commanders' course when I deployed here," he tells *Soldier*.

“The tanks are phenomenal in this type of environment”



"For the first time, and for real, having to manoeuvre the vehicle under contact and get out of the killing area, while at the same time controlling the driver, controlling the gunner, looking behind me and seeing crazed Americans running everywhere, and trying to move in and out of them. That literally put all my training together in one moment and it has got to be the hardest thing I've done.

"Just ask the driver," he sniggers. "He got a bit of a screaming from me."

It's all a far cry from the open prairies of Canada, where the regiment usually undertakes this sort of battlegroup exercise.

Instead, this package has seen them deploy as part of the US Army's 2nd Cavalry Regiment.

"There is a lot of freedom of manoeuvre at Batus, so

the addition of high features and woodland blocks over here has added a complexity that we're not used to," says Lt Jonathan Nice (QRH).

"Having a completely live enemy has also brought a challenge; the fighting has been pretty intense.

"I also think the boys have really enjoyed being given the opportunity to try new things and test ideas they have about camouflage, placing vehicles and how best to use the equipment.

"It's given them initiative."

Not unusually, the battlegroup's Bavarian experience has been characterised by rather a lot of waiting around followed by long periods of high-intensity fighting, something the senior members of the regiment are keen to flag up as being realistic.

"This is the most testing exercise I have done,"



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“
The fighting
has been
pretty intense
”



continues CO Lt Col Nick Cowley. “It really reflects the complexity of the modern battlefield.

“Within 24 hours we had been in consistent contact. We then had an entire Stryker brigade flow through us, six days of defence with multiple layers of attack and now we’re going into an offensive op.

“The amount they have thrown at us, the aggression of the enemy and the terrain has all been demanding.

“But when it feels so real and testy, that keeps it extremely motivating for everyone.

“Often you have an enemy that has restrictions put on them, but this one has been snatching people, taking friendly forces, they are everywhere.”

Being American, the foe is also incredibly well resourced. But according to the senior officer, that has simply spurred his personnel on.

“They definitely want to beat us, but we want to beat them more,” he explains.

“It’s a challenge and the mechanics are working extremely hard to keep us on the road.

“So far everything is holding up and I’m proud of how the battlegroup is doing.

“People have been surprised by how mobile and aggressive we are; I think being in tanks people didn’t think we could be so quick on this terrain.

“We’ve shown that they are phenomenal in this type of environment. We should be very comfortable using them here.

“I think this has reset people’s minds about what The Queen’s Royal Hussars are able to do on operations.”

The multinational exercise saw the British soldiers operating very closely with foreign troops – including Italian, Polish and American allies.

“It’s been very, very demanding but an absolutely awesome experience in terms of working with others,” comments regimental signals officer Capt Emmerson Wood (QRH).

“We all use different systems, and if it’s not a different system it’s another way of using it, so that can make it pretty difficult.

“But we have overcome quite a lot.”

Cpl Shaw agrees: “I think when you start off it’s tricky, but they seem to be linking in with us quite well.

“You take good points from what they do, and then other things you look at and think ‘what are they doing, we aren’t using that again’. And presumably vice versa.

“Since we got the comms side up and running it’s been brilliant.

“So far I appear to one of very few call signs that have not been hit by artillery fire, so I’m quite happy with that. I’ve not died yet.”

When you are taking on the most fearsome military force on the planet – not to mention personnel who are based in Hohenfels and know this training area like the back of their hands – that is no mean feat at all.

● Final Word, page 82





THE VERDICT

The exercise gave personnel a flavour of future combat operations...

“This is the first time I’ve seen a drone on exercise. It has put into perspective how coalitions would be joined together on a future operation, and all the different aspects. I have spoken to the Polish and they seem really up for the exercise. And we’ve had a few laughs with the Americans on stag positions. You see how many similarities the two nations have. There are things we do better, things they do, and it’s all a learning curve really.”

LCpl Damon McTighe (QRH)

...while impressing the US Army personnel based at the training area’s Joint Multinational Readiness Centre, who acted as the opposing force.

“Every fight is new and The Queen’s Royal Hussars have proved pretty hard to find, and have manoeuvred on us pretty well. We have had some great engagements and it’s been a tough fight. Personally, this is the best assignment I’ve had so far.”

US company commander, Capt Jesse Faugstad



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Peak performance: Service personnel approach the summit of Ojos Del Salado

SOLDIER: Was your group full of experienced climbers?

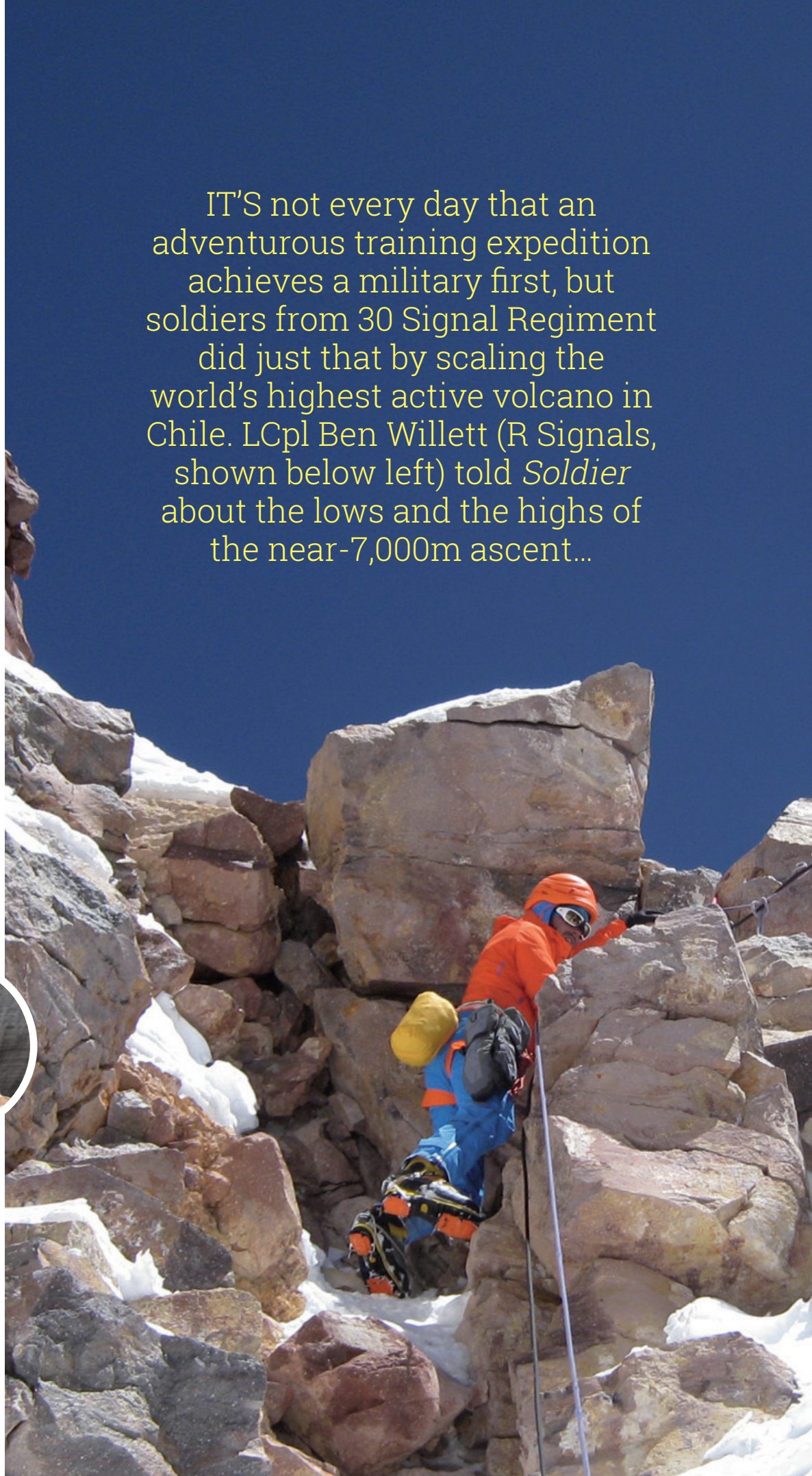
Not at all. In our party of ten only three had any experience. I wasn't a climber but as soon as I saw the advertisement for the trip I knew I wanted to be part of it; I loved the look of the challenge. I was assured the objective was within the reach of a novice so I committed.

SOLDIER: Did you appreciate what you were getting into?

Pretty much! We had a lot of briefings from our instructors and a specialist guide company. The trip was the culmination of 14 months of planning and 12 months of training. We were all aware that, at 6,893m, Ojos Del Salado is a difficult climb. Statistically, the success rate for summiting this peak is 25 per cent compared to 27 per cent for Everest, which is nearly 2,000m higher. A team from Army HQ attempted the ascent just before us but was unsuccessful due to illness so there was some concern about the difficulty. Although they weren't able to reach



IT'S not every day that an adventurous training expedition achieves a military first, but soldiers from 30 Signal Regiment did just that by scaling the world's highest active volcano in Chile. LCpl Ben Willett (R Signals, shown below left) told *Soldier* about the lows and the highs of the near-7,000m ascent...





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On his first tour
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a mortar bomb.

Stephen was just 19 when he received brain injuries which left him severely disabled. His disability means that he uses a wheelchair and communicates via a tablet.

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Above: Team members set up camp at Atacama refuge with Ojos Del Salado in the background. **Below, right:** The expedition ascends the challenging 5,085m Dona Ines peak

➔ Ojos's peak, they did become the first British military team to climb a nearby mountain called Nevado San Francisco (6,018m). Their expedition leader provided us with some valuable information about conditions in the area.

SOLDIER: Acclimatisation was a big factor, presumably?

Yes. It quickly became apparent to us that mountaineering in Chile is very different from the UK. The team had all received briefs about the effects of altitude sickness and how to recognise its signs and symptoms, and even at 3,000m some of our group began to feel the unpleasant effects of it. Before we tackled Ojos we climbed Nevado San Francisco as part of the acclimatisation process. The route was relentlessly steep and seemed to go on forever. A couple of our team had bad altitude headaches and felt sick but after an evening meal they recovered. Our instructors had prepared us extremely well, organising an impressive programme of acclimatisation climbs for us that incorporated long recovery periods.

SOLDIER: Did you encounter any other obstacles?

Unfortunately we arrived in Chile during some freakishly wet weather and that delayed our progress. On the third day of acclimatising, having just successfully reached our first summit on Mirador (4,600m), we heard an ominous rumble of thunder. The heavens opened with so much hail, lightning and rain we eventually had to seek refuge in a nearby town for the night. We encountered blocked and flood-damaged roads, swollen rivers and landslides. The place was completely battered overnight with windows shattered, power lines damaged and many trees brought down.

SOLDIER: What else did you face out there?

The variation in terrain was a surprising one. Our preparations included scaling a 5,085m peak called Dona Ines. But the ground underfoot was very difficult to cover, a mixture of scree with large loose boulders, meaning that sometimes we were climbing hard without

making any significant upwards progress. Breathing became really difficult – this was our first true taste of walking hard at high altitude. It was very testing but the descent proved to be much easier with some of the more experienced team members literally running down the expanses of scree at times.

SOLDIER: So how difficult was it to reach the summit of Ojos?

Our expedition leader, SSgt Colin Kingshott (R Signals), and the other instructors came up with a great plan to provide us with the best chance of summing.

We waited for a good weather window, set up our base camp and tents for the return journey, and trekked to an advanced base camp at 5,800m in preparation for going for the peak the following day. Most of us had a poor night's sleep, either because of altitude or nervousness. We awoke at 0300 and ate an energy-packed breakfast of boil-in-the-bag muesli and cereal bars and we all wore at least six layers, including down jackets. It then took almost 11 hours of painstakingly slow walking, zig-zagging

up endless slopes – some of which must have been at least 40 degrees steep – to reach the peak. We started off in a tight group, but ended up about 20m apart from one another. Two of the team even took to the very slow but successful technique of walking five steps, taking 30 seconds rest and repeating. One by one, we all reached the summit.

SOLDIER: How did you feel once you reached the top?

Brilliant. The views were amazing, but after such a long haul it was also very emotional. I can't

describe it any other way. We had made the first British military ascent of the world's highest active volcano and it was by far the hardest physical challenge I've ever undertaken, as well as the most mentally draining. We all felt proud. In the process we had learnt to recognise and appreciate each other's strengths, and discovered new things about ourselves and what we could achieve if we set our minds to it. In that way the value of the expedition was immense. ■



Interviews: Becky Clark Pictures: Graeme Main and Steve Dock

PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORIES

These officers are among a handful of personnel still serving today who fought in the Falklands War. Here, they reflect on how their experiences 35 years ago shaped them as soldiers...



Picture: Paul Haley

IN 1982 **Capt John Thompson** and **Maj Jack Frost (both RE)** were part of Condor Troop, 59 Independent Commando Squadron, Royal Engineers. They are shown below left with an old photo of themselves practising radio voice procedure on RFA *Sir Percivale*. Once ashore they were not only expected to fight alongside the Royal Marines, but as sappers were called on for tasks such as mine clearance, bridging and digging trenches for positions and even graves.

Maj Jack Frost (shown far left)

We were embedded with 45 Commando Group who did 'the yomp', which wasn't really a word at the time but became the term that everyone still uses to this day.

We were the only troops to have marched from one side of East Falkland to the other, each man doubled-over under the enormous weight of his kit, and I feel proud to have done that.

Condor Troop were tasked in roles such as searching for booby traps, clearing mines and unexploded ordnance, recce, demolition and bridge laying as well as the infantry piece – an intense night battle for the Two Sisters, in which 28 were killed and 67 wounded.

The conditions were very tough, very testing – we ran out of water and rations, we were surviving on fresh air – but the training we had had was incredible, so I felt very well prepared.

It set me up for my career – an experience like that strengthens you mentally and physically; it enables you to

deal with very difficult situations and I've used that to this day.

I've told very few people about the war. 59 Squadron had three killed in action; "Goosey" Gandhi, Mick Melia and Chris Jones. I can remember their young faces clearly.

Afterwards, it wasn't that I became a pacifist exactly, but before I'd loved shooting. On leave I would hunt pigeons and rabbits and I didn't want to do that sort of thing anymore.

I put my gun down. I had found a better appreciation for all living things.



Capt John Thompson (left)

I was a plant operator but as an engineer I'd been trained to deal with mines so I was the subject matter expert if we came across any minefields.

During the day I'd be out digging trenches or other

stuff and every night I took part in probing patrols because there was a fear the Argentinians could outflank us.

You just slept in what you were wearing whenever you came to a stop.

I got my sleeping bag wet once and it was so heavy tabbing with it I realised I had to get it dry, after which I put it away in the bottom of my Bergen and didn't take it out until 16 days later in Stanley.

Even after the Argentinians surrendered we were clearing minefields around the town. We were back in harm's way when we should have been safe and unfortunately more guys were injured, which was hard.

I don't bring the war up much. I was just a lad but I came back a different man – I had grown up. But it was an experience for the better with not too much in the way of mental scarring. It set me up for the rest of my career.

Jack and I kept in contact over the years. It didn't occur to me we'd still be here all this time later. It's an enduring bond and I hope we'll be a couple of old farts together at the Cenotaph in our eighties.

“It didn't occur to me we'd be here all these years later”



CC

My brother was just ahead of me. I could hear him calling my name

DD



At the outbreak of war **Lt Col Nicky Mott (WG)** was an 18-year-old in the Prince of Wales's Company, 1st Battalion, Welsh Guards and is the last Regular member of the regiment still serving. He is pictured here practising air sentry drills on the *QE2* during the voyage south. On June 8, he and his older brother, Bill, found themselves on the ill-fated RFA *Sir Galahad* when it was struck by Argentinian missiles and went up in flames. Forty-eight soldiers and crew died and many more were wounded.

I remember the anxiety amongst the lads as we were sat on the *Sir Galahad* waiting to get off.

We felt very exposed but there was nothing we could do. The call came to disembark and that's when we were hit.

I recall alarms going off and the ship rocking. Smoke was coming up from below. But there was no panic – we just went through our evacuation drills.

My brother was just ahead of me,

already in the landing craft. I could hear him calling my name.

From the jetty we could hear the ammo cooking off and unfortunately those who couldn't get out were stuck amongst it but it wasn't until a few hours later, after a second wave of Argentinian aircraft attacked the area, that we realised there were a lot of people still missing.

The battalion at the time was exceptionally strong but it was unfortunate circumstances. Wrong place, wrong time – that's the nature of conflict.

If you turn the clock back to the First and



Second World Wars, it was the same for them and it was no different in Iraq or Afghanistan.

It's your job. You have to suck it up and deal with it.

Perhaps because I stayed in the Army and moved on to other conflicts I never really had time to dwell on it that much.

But of course we'll never forget those who were killed, particularly on June 8 or on Remembrance Day, and as a regiment we continue to help those who are struggling.

It doesn't seem like 35 years at all and I never thought I would be the last one still serving.



Maj Tam Noble (Para) was an instructor at Depot Para when the conflict started but was recalled to A Company, 3rd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment, where he found himself leading into war young recruits he had taught. The then 22-year-old received a Mention in Dispatches for actions during the Battle for Mount Longdon. He left the Army in 2006 but rejoined on full-time Reserve service in 2015.



This photo is us approaching Port San Carlos on May 14.

I didn't even know it was being taken and then a few years ago I saw it on a Facebook post.

I think my face explains it all – you had 150lb on your back, with all your ammunition, you had young boys who had just joined and you had to take them forward and be confident yourself – show no fear. It was a huge responsibility.

At Mount Longdon it was our task to relieve B Company who were under fire and engaged in hand-to-hand fighting, suffering many casualties.

The approach took us through a minefield. Some of my boys were frightened and confused but luckily there was a heavy frost, so I went first and told them to follow in my footprints and that's how we got through.

There were massive amounts of fire from the Argentinian special forces, who had been there for months and knew every nook and cranny.

It's hard to get your section

going during a contact, but your training just kicks in and I kept my guys moving and confident.

Then I sat with them and made everyone a nice cup of tea to keep them calm.

That's one thing the war taught me – patience. Before that I'd been quite stern as an instructor but I learnt that approach doesn't get you anywhere.

Recently I gave a presentation about leadership at a 3 Rifles junior NCO cadre. I wanted to impress on them that it's your corporals who get their soldiers through the war, not the officers. They have

to check their morale, their bodies, their feet – all of that stuff.

Being a good junior leader is so important in the modern Army too because it shapes the efficiency of the sub-unit.

These tests are going to come back again as we return to conventional fighting.

I'm pleased to say all my guys came back and I'm very proud that I'm still here and able to pass this information on to the soldiers.

“These tests are going to come back again”



“When bullet and blast meet flesh and bone the requirements are still the same”

Lt Col Paul Mort (Para) was just 17 years old and fresh out of training in 2nd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment when war was declared. He was shot and wounded at the Battle for Goose Green, where 18 comrades died, including commanding officer Lt Col “H” Jones.



This photograph was taken on the MV *Norland* and is the only picture I have of me from the time.

Of others in that group, “Fizzier” Kenyon was wounded on Wireless Ridge and Mark Fletcher and Tony Cork were killed at Goose Green in the same contact in which I was injured.

We’d crossed the start line and came under fire as we were advancing to clear a defensive position.

I actually thought someone had thrown a grenade but the noise I had heard was the bullet passing through my shoulder.

It was pitch black, there was masses of noise, bullets flying, grenades going off, white phosphorous. It was very confusing, very noisy.

One thing they taught us in first aid was about going into shock and I remember telling myself I needed to control it.

I shouted to a friend that I had been shot and when he found

me he fell on top of me.

He began dressing my wound while acting as target practice for the Argentinians – as he lay on me the bullets were going through his pouches on his back and pinging off his kit.

Several hours later two of my platoon came to find me and I was then evacuated to the company aid post through a white phosphorous bombardment.

Eventually I was sent back to the UK via the medical chain. I arrived at Brize Norton on my 18th birthday and immediately signed on for my senior soldier service.

Conflict affects people in different ways but I was young and naive and didn’t really know what to expect.

Do I feel lucky? No, I did my job to the best of my ability.

Now when I give talks I tell people that war changes because of technology – trauma care and equipment are far superior today, for example – but when bullet and blast meet flesh and bone the requirements are still the same.

Whether it’s 1882, 1982 or 2002, the Serviceman still has to step into that danger.

I’m sometimes asked whether soldiers today are better. I answer that they’re the best of their generation, just like we were the best of ours.



Brig Charles Page (late SG) is the last of the direct entry officers who fought in the Falklands. Having left Sandhurst in December 1981, he was conducting public duties when his platoon was warned off to deploy. The Scots Guards were part of the second wave, coming ashore at San Carlos and later taking part in the Battle for Tumbledown, where eight of their number were killed.



“It’s nice to be among the last – my little place in history”

Tumbledown is still very vivid – a lot of it is actually, even 35 years later.

When we were told that was our objective I remember thinking ‘I could get hurt here, this could go wrong’.

I’m sure we all thought the same. But we had a delay of 24 hours and in that time I got a grip of myself.

You couldn’t say anything in front of the soldiers.

I told myself ‘I volunteered for this, I wanted to be in the Army, I wanted to be a guardsman and I’ve got what I wanted’.

So I got myself focused and got on with it.

The day before the attack, we found a place where we could observe the enemy’s positions and we were looking at these people, the Argentinians, walking around and it struck me that within a few hours some of them would be dead.

The seriousness of what was about to happen started to hit home.

As we did our night approach it was really quite a remarkable sight.

I’ve never seen anything like it and I never will – there were tracer bullets, flares,

artillery, mortars, there was so much happening.

In a funny way it was rather spectacular.

Using cover where we could, we got onto the mountain pretty much unopposed and did our bit.

The Falklands was one of the reasons I stayed in the Service because what I saw the Army do, particularly the guardsmen, made me think ‘this is a worthwhile organisation to stay a part of’.

The experience taught me a lot of lower-level tactical lessons: trust your soldiers, don’t underestimate them, stay calm and have a plan – it might not work but if you’ve got something to start with you can adapt it. Stay fit, stay robust.

It’s nice to be among the last.

It is quite something – my little place in history.



FIGHTING TALK

Thirty-five years on from Operation Corporate, commando engineers quiz a senior airborne comrade on his experiences in the South Atlantic



Name: Cpl Thomas Matthews, RE

Age: 28

About : A soldier since 2006, the Serviceman deployed on Operation Herrick 14



Name: LCpl David Francis, RE

Age: 28

About : Having joined the Army in 2009, the junior NCO served on Operation Herrick 19



Name: Col Freddie Kemp, RE

About: During a military career dating back to 1972, the officer has completed operational tours of Northern Ireland, Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as the Falkland Islands. He now works for the chief of defence personnel's Reserves and cadets branch

In 1982 Freddie Kemp was a young captain and second in command of 9 Parachute Squadron, Royal Engineers.

Now a colonel on full-time Reserve service, he travelled to Chivenor-based 24 Commando Engineer Regiment to brief his fellow specialist sappers, among them Cpl Thomas Matthews and LCpl David Francis, about his role in the Falklands War.

Afterwards, *Soldier* listened in while the trio compared notes on operations past and present...

Kemp: I was the 2iC of 9 Parachute Squadron. I was only 27 but I'd been in post for three years so I knew every person like the back of my hand. We were well rehearsed and off we went. Although it was just another operation it was also unique in that there was a sudden change in mindset from internal security in Northern Ireland to sailing 8,000 miles to recapture something that an enemy had taken from Her Majesty's government.

Matthews: I feel like it was massively motivational for the lads to hear your talk – everyone was in awe. A lot of the guys have operational experience but to find out about a different kind of tour, where you had different problems to the ones we would probably have encountered was a reality check. It was proper soldiering – more like contemporary operations, not out of forward operating bases etc.

Francis: Yes, hearing it from people who were there definitely makes it hit home. I was fixated on every word.

Kemp: Thank you fellas, but don't belittle yourselves. You have to remember we'd been operating out of FOBs

too but they were in South Armagh, and suddenly we were back to mobility, working with everything we could carry on our backs. We'd had years of high-intensity operations in Northern Ireland, just as we've had recently in Iraq and Afghanistan. But it's making that leap in short order. You could do it too, of course you could.

Kemp: What did you guys do on Herrick?

Matthews: I was on Herrick 14 and I bounced around a few different jobs, →

“We were back to mobility, working with everything we could carry on our backs”

FIGHTING TALK



doing welding, then as part of the Barma team carrying out route clearance, as well as some construction tasks and working alongside the Danes and Americans.

Francis: I did Talisman on Herrick 19, providing assurance and route proving and clearance for all the different call signs.

Kemp: That's a recurring theme – counter mobility and mobility. It's what everyone expects us to be good at.

Matthews: Exactly. We heard in the brief how Royal Engineers got tasked with all sorts of things in the Falklands and that's still very relevant today. We do close support – the blowing up doors and all the "cool stuff", if you will – as well as the survivability, building sangers and stuff. We are a part of every plan.

Kemp: One thing I did want to bring out is the whole "red and green machine" thing. Here we are, paratroopers

and commandos, highly competitive, but as soon as we hit the drop zone or the beach or wherever, it gels seamlessly and that's why I'm proud to be associated with it. We will continue with our rivalries but there's that implicit respect for what the other bloke can do.

Matthews: Yes, put under pressure you know you can rely on that guy because you know what he's done.

Francis: I think that's the same in Afghan or wherever you are.

Matthews: Obviously the kit is very different these days to what you had at the time. You barely had any. There's been a lot of research into what a soldier needs to operate and fight and to try and get the weight down as much as possible. We're well resourced now.

Kemp: That's right. The camo is much better now; you've got Gore-Tex and so on. I remember our high

As soon as we hit the drop zone it gels seamlessly

combat infantry boot arrived in Stanley about two weeks after the war had ended. One of the biggest casualties was trench foot. The Arctic windproof smock was good and was sought after but otherwise it was pretty basic.

Francis: And body armour. That's the first thing we think about really. Even in the vehicles when I was doing Talisman we didn't have anyone out as top cover, it was a remote weapon so everyone was in this metal shell. Looking at your pictures of the Falklands all you had was a couple of rocks to hide behind!

Matthews: It does seem a long time ago. Without trying to call you old, sir, we weren't even close to being born.

Kemp: Thanks for that! But let me give you a quick comparison. I took my father-in-law out to Arnhem in 1974, 30 years after the battle. With the arrogance of youth I thought 'he's going to remember absolutely nothing'. And we got there and he talked about his experiences and recalled every single detail. That was humbling. And here I am doing the same thing. I've been back to the Falklands five or six times. If you get the chance fellas, you should try and visit.

Matthews: Yes, I'd like to go. Thanks for talking to us because I feel it's such a motivational tool. It really puts things in perspective.

Francis: You hear a lot about the two World Wars but not that many people know about the Falklands so hearing it from your point of view has been a privilege. ■

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A large, intense fire burns in a furnace, with bright yellow and orange flames rising from a bed of dark, glowing coals. In the foreground, a glowing metal ring, likely a farrier's anvil, sits on the coals. The background is dark, with some industrial equipment visible on the left.

IT'S GETTING

HOT

IN HERE

Farriers feel the
heat as ceremonial
season peaks





SHOULD you catch yourself admiring the pomp and splendour of Trooping the Colour this month, spare a thought for the Army's farriers.

With 266 horses – or 1,064 hooves – involved in the spectacle, this small band of master craftsmen will be working flat out behind the scenes to ensure every single one is parade-ready.

Soldier dropped in on the forge at Melton Mowbray's Defence Animal Training Regiment to find out more about these unsung heroes and the stats behind their slog...



1,200

Temperature to which the metal is heated for welding, in degrees Celsius.

7

Years it takes to become a fully qualified farrier from apprentice to degree-

level. Experienced farriers must not only be able to forge different types of shoes from scratch but understand the whole physiology of the horse and be able to diagnose diseases and ailments.

80



Horses that will pass through the forge every week during the busiest ceremonial periods.

45

Approximate time, in minutes, it takes for a blacksmith to shoe a horse with ready-made shoes. Fitting shoes forged from scratch takes two hours.



2

27

Total farriers in the Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment and King's Troop, Royal Horse Artillery.

Weeks before a cavalry horse's shoes can wear out during ceremonial season. Civilian horses can usually go six weeks before they need a new set but the increased time military horses spend on the roads – up to five hours a day for major occasions like Trooping the Colour – means their shoes wear out much faster.

0130 HRS

Time the farriers start work ahead of early-morning rehearsals for Trooping the Colour. They also operate so-called crash teams, which follow the escort in case of a horse going lame or throwing a shoe along the parade route.

DID YOU KNOW?

● The farriers can be spotted on parade by the ceremonial axes they hold. In the past the spikes on these tools were used to humanely kill injured horses, while the blades were used to cut off the hoof carrying its identification number. This was then taken to the quartermaster as proof that the horse had died. The heads of the axes still carried on ceremonial occasions today date back to the Boer War.

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BEST



Tails are trimmed to spirit-level accuracy, beards shaved and coats buffed until lustrous



Each trooper spends 200 hours polishing his Jack Boots. Two kilograms of beeswax is used to achieve a mirror-like shine on the leather.



Hooves are polished and white socks chalked

IN

SHOW

IMMACULATE presentation is the hallmark of any self-respecting ceremonial soldier, but those vying to be crowned the best turned out rider in the Life Guards and Blues and Royals take attention to detail to the next level.

The winner of this year's Richmond Cup is Tpr James Fisher (RHG/D) and in keeping with tradition, later this month he and seven runners-up will stand guard alongside the royal dais during Trooping the Colour.

Here's what soldier and steed go through to secure the prestigious honour...



What does it take to be the Household Cavalry's smartest Serviceman?



Petroleum jelly is applied to the horse's eyes, lips and bottom (yes, really) to ensure a gleaming finish



To prevent any speck of dust or dirt finding its way onto the horses' bodies the animals are wrapped in protective sheets which are whipped off just seconds before the inspection



The competition isn't just an individual effort, the whole troop pitch in



Tpr Fisher and his horse Falkland were among eight finalists picked by the Queen at the Royal Windsor Horse Show

Words: Becky Clark Pictures: Sgt Rupert Frere, RLC

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Talkback

‘We need to bridge reporting gaps’

WHAT’S the point of working if the Army won’t report on it?

In August 2016, I was posted from one unit to another and found out that the first half of the year was being completely unreported on.

Subsequently, I will have a six-month gap between the end of one joint appraisal report and the start of the next.

The policy states that gaps occasionally happen and I’ve had them before, after being deployed on operations.

But, as it stands, one of my appraisals will be based on three months at my current base, a month on leave and two months detached 7,000 miles from my parent regiment with no one else from that unit with me.

However, in this unreported six-month period I was an instructor at a phase two training establishment.

So this year I am competing against people with reports covering 12 months while mine will, realistically, reflect a maximum of just five.

How can it be acceptable for the Army to just ignore all this work? Surely, contact could be made between the two units to provide a report that reflects everything I have done. — **Name and address supplied**

Lt Col Nathan Teal, Chief of Staff, Army Personnel Centre, responds: The production of a timely, fair and accurate appraisal report sits at the heart of the Armed Forces career management system.

Once completed, they are the basis of evidence that enable career management decisions to be made, primarily for assignments, promotions and terms of service, and supply feedback to the subject.

Their principal purpose is not to provide a comprehensive record of every day of an individual’s service.

Frustration arising from short unreported periods is well understood and experienced by most at some point during their military careers, but the rules are designed to ensure both fairness and consistency across the Service.

Personnel are normally entitled to only one report per year with the completion dates being sequenced according to rank.

It is not possible to align assignments with the reporting timetable if the manning needs of the Army are to be met.

This inevitably means gaps will occur, but reporting dates will normally be advanced or delayed to minimise them.

The agreed reporting period should provide sufficient evidence for a proper appraisal.

JSP 757 deals with overlaps and gaps in reporting but if you require more clarity speak to your chain of command, regimental career management officer or Army Personnel Centre career manager so the matter can be explored further.

“
How can
it be
acceptable
to ignore
this work?
”

YOUR letters provide valuable insight but please be brief. Emails must include your name and location (we won’t publish them if you ask us not to).

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RANT OF THE MONTH



Get it off your chest
and on social media

The Army's record 95-0
Inter-Services women's rugby
victory got you asking questions
about equality



www.facebook.com/soldiermagazine



Simon Cunningham

Today's Armed Forces
are all about equality
in every way. However, Forces
women's rugby is clearly not
good enough to be played in
the same venue as their male
counterparts! Someone please
explain why.



Daz Sumner

Great win. But why
don't they play at
Twickenham as well?



John Walton

Most of those
attending Army
Navy day wish to watch
the main event – so for the
ladies or veterans to play in
a near empty stadium is not
that good. At Kneller Hall
both games get a very good
crowd – there was at least
2,000 this year and each
year the numbers increase.
Additionally, it is a great place
for a reunion and a beer!



Tanya Lolly Hall

Should be shown on TV.
Why do just the men
get the glory?

GOT A GRIPE?



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talk to us – get it off your chest!

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“A lot has happened to
me since your article”



“I felt
humbled
and
immensely
proud”

‘Toughest job of my career’

READ your article, “The dreaded
knock” in the May issue and as a
soldier who stood up as a visiting
officer for a double amputee and a
death in service, I just wanted to say
what a great piece of writing that was.

As I read the article, I felt all the
emotion coming back to me from the
experience of dealing with the relatives
of the Service personnel concerned.

It is true to say that no amount of
training can ever prepare you for the
complexity of that job in supporting the

families. For most it is a case of going
from mainstream soldiering to becoming
almost like a full-time carer and part of
a vital support network.

The emotional burden is huge and
also had an impact on my own life.

I felt humbled and immensely proud
knowing that in some small way my
efforts did support and help the
families in their hour of need.

It was one of the toughest jobs, if not
the toughest, that I have done during my
military career. – WO1 Paul Wilson, RE

Life changer

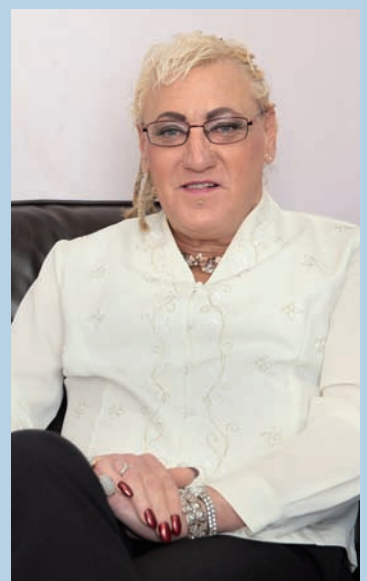
● A LOT has happened since your
article, “I decided to be me” appeared
in the May edition.

I am now president of a fledgling
organisation supporting transgender
veterans; a story was published about
me in *The Sun* and I'm also heading up
a campaign to improve the treatment
of transgender users of the NHS.

I've even been asked to talk on
the radio and to give speeches at
numerous special events.

In addition, I've become a volunteer
with the Samaritans, Age UK and
Breakout Youth which supports young
bisexual, lesbian, gay and transgender
people, so life is busy to say the least.

Thanks for everything. – Vicky-
Marie Hogan, London





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BULLET POINTS

Bite-sized data to keep you in the know



CAREERS

SSAFA has teamed up with online learning company New Skills Academy to offer serving personnel, veterans and their families free training. Among more than 160 accredited packages on offer are courses in Microsoft Office and Sage Accounting, plus digital marketing, business and horticulture. Log on to www.newskillsacademy.co.uk

Veteran Employment Transition Support programme (VETS), aimed at connecting ex-Forces personnel with employers. For details visit www.veteranemployment.co.uk

The University of West England is hosting a careers fair at its Frenchay Campus in Bristol on October 18. More than 170 exhibitors are expected on the day. For details email careers@uwe.ac.uk



COMPETITIONS

Spine line winner: Capt C Coventry, Andover; D O'Dwyer, Merville Barracks, Colchester.

Allied DVD: C Duckworth, Harleston; J Richards, Prince Phillip Barracks, Lyneham; Pte C Igbokwe, Batuk; D Woolmer, Whitehaven; R Fensome, Corsham.



DIARY

June 21: Reserves Day.

June 24: Armed Forces Day. For details of events across the country visit www.armedforcesday.org.uk or use the hashtag #SaluteOurForces on social media.

Women and the Army: A Hundred Years of Progress? A conference at the National Army Museum examining the evolution of women's service in the military. Tickets £25. Visit www.nam.ac.uk for more details.

July 7: The Royal British Legion is holding a drumhead ceremony and reception at the National Memorial Arboretum to mark 100 years since the establishment of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps.

July 14-16: The Royal International Air Tattoo at RAF Fairford, featuring a variety of flying displays, including the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight and the Red Arrows. Tickets start at £34, under-16s go free. Visit www.airtattoo.com

July 15: 16 Air Assault Brigade and Colchester Garrison Show at Abbey Field, Colchester. The free event will showcase the equipment and skills of the formation, with a Red Devils display, funfair, refreshments and dramatic combat demonstration. For more information follow the event page on Facebook.

July 19: Army LGBT Conference at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. Commanders, equality and diversity advisers, unit welfare staff, LGBT personnel and those interested in diversity are all encouraged to attend. For more details read [ABN 48/17](#).

Until November 19: For Then, For Now, Forever: 100 Years of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission tells the story of the commission through historic artefacts and archival material. The exhibition is located in Canada Building at Brookwood Military Cemetery, near Woking in Surrey. For more information see www.cwgc.org or call 01628 634221.



DIRECTORY

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Armed Forces Buddhist Society: Chaplain 020 7414 3411; www.afbs-uk.org

Armed Forces Christian Union: 01252 311221; www.afcu.org.uk

Armed Forces Muslim Association: Chaplain 020 7414 3252; www.afma.org.uk

Armed Services Advice Project: 0808 800 1007; www.adviceasap.org.uk

Army Families Federation: 01264 382324; mil 94391 2324; www.aff.org.uk

Army LGBT Forum: www.armylgbt.org.uk; chair@armylgbt.org.uk

Army Libraries: 01252 340094

Army Ornithological Society: www.armybirding.org.uk

Army Welfare Service: 01904 882053; www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support

Big White Wall: www.bigwhitewall.com

Blesma, The Limbless Veterans: 020 8590 1124; www.blesma.org

Blind Veterans UK: (formerly St Dunstan's) 020 7723 5021; www.blindveterans.org.uk

Care After Combat: www.careaftercombat.org

Career Transition Partnership: 020 7469 6661

Children's Education Advisory Service: 01980 618244; dcyp-ceas-enquiries@mod.uk

Combat Stress: 01372 841600; www.combatstress.org.uk

Defence Humanists: www.defencehumanists.org.uk

Erskine: 0141 814 4569; www.erskine.org.uk

Family Escort Service: 020 7463 9249

Felix Fund – the bomb disposal charity: 07713 752901; www.felixfund.org.uk

Forcesline: UK – 0800 731 4880; Germany – 0800 1827 395; Cyprus – 080 91065; Falklands – #6111; from operational theatres – Paradigm Services *201; from anywhere in the world (CSL operator will call back) – 0044 1980 630854

Forces Pension Society: 020 7820 9988

Help for Heroes: 0845 673 1760 or 01980 846 459; www.helpforheroes.org.uk

Heroes Welcome: www.heroeswelcome.co.uk

HighGround:

www.highground-uk.org.uk

Joint Service Housing Advice Office: 01252 787574

Medal Office: 94561 3600 or 0141 224 3600

Mutual Support (Multiple Sclerosis group): www.mutualsupport.org.uk

National Ex-Services Association: www.nesa.org.uk

National Gulf Veterans' and Families' Association Office: 24-hour helpline 0845 257 4853; www.ngvfa.org.uk

Poppyscotland: 0131 557 2782; www.poppyscotland.org.uk

Regular Forces' Employment Association: 0121 236 0058; www.rfea.org.uk

Remount: 01451 850 341; www.remount.net

Royal British Legion: 0808 802 8080; www.britishlegion.org.uk

Royal British Legion Scotland: 0131 550 1583; www.legionscotland.org.uk

RBL Industries Vocational Assessment Centre: 01622 795900; www.rbli.co.uk

Scottish Veterans' Residences: 0131 556 0091; www.svrnline.org

SPACES (Single Persons Accommodation Centre for the Ex-Services): 01748 833797; www.spaces.org.uk

SSAFA: 0845 1300 975; www.ssafa.org.uk

Stoll (formerly known as the Sir Oswald Stoll Foundation): 020 7385 2110; info@stoll.org.uk; www.stoll.org.uk

The Not Forgotten Association: 020 7730 2400; www.nfassociation.org

The Poppy Factory: 020 8940 3305; www.poppyfactory.org

Continued on page 53

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4	Westminster School	88.0
5	Queen Ethelburga's College	86.9
6	Winchester College	86.1
7	Wycombe Abbey School	86.0
8	King Edward's, Birmingham	85.6
9	Sevenoaks School	85.2
10	St Paul's School	84.7
11	Guildford High School Girls	84.3
12	Haberdashers' Aske's Girls	83.8
13	Faculty Queen Ethelburga's	83.7
14	James Allen's Girls' School	82.5
15	Eton College	81.9
16	Withington Girls' School	81.4
17	Godolphin & Latymer Sch	80.2
18	St John's College, Cardiff	80.2
19	Brighton College	79.8
20	Haberdashers' Aske's Boys'	79.6

→ £100m invested in new facilities in the last 8 years.

Why choose an independent school education if you qualify for CEA? If you made a list, the same reasons would keep appearing. We think the list might include: happy children, top ten academics a personalised approach, top quality teachers with specialised expertise, good discipline, latest technology and superb facilities, excellent pastoral care, amazing sport, first-class boarding accommodation, diverse experience, small classes, university success, excellent career prospects and first-class confidence and self assurance. If you want the best for your child, and to stand a chance of achieving most of this list, we believe you would need to pick one of the top 10 UK independent boarding schools as ranked by the Sunday Times. BUT, most importantly of all, we unashamedly also offer TLC - tender, loving care!

Other Schools' Results % A*/A A level (Sunday Times)

5	QE College	87%
13	Faculty of QE	84%
76	Kingswood School	61%
94	Bromsgrove School	56%
136	Monmouth School	51%
n/a	Gordon's School	48%
171	Cheltenham College	47%
177	Dauntsey's School	47%
209	Kingham Hill School	44%
245	Dean Close School	41%
277	King's Sch Bruton	37%
288	Monkton Combe	36%
n/a	Welbeck College	34%
317	King's Coll Taunton	31%
328	Stamford School	30%
336	Millfield School	28%
349	Warminster School	26%
375	Royal Hospital Sch	21%
376	Licensed Vict Ascot	20%
378	Barnard Castle Sch	19%

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Veterans Welfare Service:
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www.gov.uk/government/groups/
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INTELLIGENCE

The following Army Briefing Notes, Defence Internal Briefs and Defence Information Notices can be found online at www.armynet.mod.uk

ABN 55/17: Matt 2 fitness (v9.0)

ABN 54/17: Guidance on the provision of legal advice to a Service complaint decision body

ABN 53/17: Championing difference: Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion Awards 2017

ABN 52/17: Diversity and Inclusion Conference – July 4, 2017

ABN 51/17: AGAI 99 Revision of the command and care of WIS Service personnel

ABN 50/17: Service voting in the General Election June 8, 2017

ABN 49/17: Women in ground close combat – Royal Armoured Corps transfer

ABN 48/17: Army LGBT Conference 2017 – LGBT inclusion; the next step

ABN 47/17: Future booking arrangements for Army Reserve generic phase three training

ABN 46/17: The recording of Reserves Forces commissions and engagements in JPA

ABN 45/17: Changes to the Reserve platoon sergeants' battle course

ABN 44/17: Chief of the general staff's fraud policy statement

DIN 2017DIN01-094: Tax-free childcare scheme for eligible working parents

DIN 2017DIN01-093: Ramadan and Eid ul Fitr 2017

DIN 2017DIN01-092: Armed Forces childcare voucher scheme

DIN 2017DIN01-091: Voter registration for general election June 8, 2017

DIN 2017DIN01-090: NHS Agenda for Change grades – deadline extension for submission of 2016 performance appraisal and development reports

DIN 2017DIN01-089: Change to PAX personal accident premiums due to increase in insurance premium tax effective from June 1

DIN 2017DIN01-088: Notice of the upcoming tender exercise for the PAX and Service Life Insurance 365 contracts

DIN 2017DIN01-086: Instructions for assignments to British Indian Ocean Territory Diego Garcia

DIN 2017DIN01-085: Armed Forces transition fair, Cardiff, June 22

DIN 2017DIN01-084: Thy kingdom come – the church leaders' call to prayer between Ascension Day and Pentecost

DIN 2017DIN01-083: New exit policies and procedures

DIN 2017DIN01-082: Recruitment – civil service recruitment framework

DIN 2017DIN01-081: Instruction for Service and entitled personnel serving overseas who receive dental treatment from non-Service sources

DIN 2017DIN01-080: General medical practitioner associate trainer accreditation, reaccreditation and pay

DIN 2017DIN04-089: Management and governance of MoD aircraft storage

DIN 2017DIN04-088: Declaration of obsolescent TCIS/Bowman miscellaneous items from DMC Z42

DIN 2017DIN04-087: Declaration

of obsolescent TCIS/Bowman miscellaneous items from DMC Y3

DIN 2017DIN04-085: New support contract for dismounted close combat surveillance and target acquisition equipment

DIN 2017DIN04-084: Notification to update of outsize measure forms

DIN 2017DIN04-083: Codified potential alternatives for PR 1425 and PS870 sealants that are affected by Reach

DIN 2017DIN04-082: UCR – CereTom portable head and neck CT scanner

DIN 2017DIN04-081: Declaration of obsolescent – medical, dental and veterinary equipment

DIN 2017DIN04-080: Amendments to operational medical modules contents – February/March 2017

DIN 2017DIN04-079: Tempus Pro TM patient monitor

DIN 2017DIN04-078: Obsolete Rover item – receiver group NSN 5895 01 5624190

DIN 2017DIN04-077: Declaration of obsolete toolkits

DIN 2017DIN04-076: S&T commissioning, tasking and charging

DIN 2017DIN04-075: Transfer of DE&S responsibility for management of helicopter underslung load equipment to the Air Support Operating Centre

DIN 2017DIN04-074: Glock pistol modified lanyard attachment

DIN 2017DIN04-073: Environmental health monitoring equipment for medical recce

DIN 2017DIN04-072: Obsolescent aircraft power cartridges

DIN 2017DIN04-071: Equipment care competition

DIN 2017DIN04-070: Declaration of obsolete plate covers for Osprey and ECBA

DIN 2017DIN04-069: Required information for making Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) compliant import and export declarations for new procurements,

repairs, temporary admissions and other HMRC procedures (not RGR)

DIN 2017DIN05-006: MoD consent form

DIN 2017DIN06-010: Emergency Pollution Response Service

DIN 2017DIN07-067: Joint Service adventurous training sub-aqua diving 2018 expedition dates for Ascension Island, Cyprus and Gibraltar

DIN 2017DIN07-066: Defence culture/human terrain courses for training year 2017/18

DIN 2017DIN07-065: Refund of engineering professional body fees

DIN 2017DIN07-064: Employment training administrative instruction for Army Medical Services pharmacy technicians (Regular)

DIN 2017DIN07-062: Defence learning environment and introduction to learning technologies training courses August 2017-July 2018

DIN 2017DIN07-061: Battlefield advanced trauma life support course loading policy

DIN 2017DIN07-060: 77 Brigade military psychological operations course and civil affairs course

DIN 2017DIN08-004: Non-entitled cash casual meal charge for financial year 2017/18

DIN 2017DIN08-003: Non-entitled accommodation rates

DIN 2017DIN09-011: Vice chief of defence staff commendations

DIN 2017DIN09-010: New distinction awarded to The Royal Lancers

DIN 2017DIN10-032: Army Rowing Regatta 2017

DIN 2017DIN10-031: British Army Motorsports event – Archers Express

DIN 2017DIN10-029: Exercise Rothiemurchus Challenge 2017

DIN 2017DIN10-028: Army Martial Arts Association WTF tae kwon do training course

Continued on page 54

Intelligence continued

DIN 2017DIN10-027: Army Martial Arts Association winter competition

DIN 2017DIN10-026: British Army Motorsports event – Magnum Spirit 2017

DIB 13/17: General election guidance on contact with parliamentarians

DIB 12/17: General election: guidance on conduct for MoD staff



REUNIONS

Royal Green Jackets Regimental Association will hold this year's annual gathering of veterans at Sir John Moore Barracks, ATR(W) Winchester on July 8. Attendance is open to all past and present Riflemen, with partners also encouraged to attend. For details contact Maj (Retd) Roy Stanger on 01962 887916 or roy.stanger787@mod.uk

23/144 Parachute Field Ambulance Old Comrades'

Association all airborne medics reunion, October 6-8 at the Royal Court Hotel in Coventry. For details contact Roy Hatch on royhatchbem48@gmail.com or 07730 977989.

8 Regt, RASC/RCT/RLC 16th anniversary weekend, October 20-21. The event is open to any ex-member of the regiment, with their partner or guests, and any cap badges who served in the unit between October 1964 and July 2012. The venue for October 20 is the Army Reserve Centre, Wigan, with The Village on the Green Club in Aspull, Wigan, playing host the following day. For details contact Jimmy Aspinall via jimmyasp@hotmail.com

289 Para/Cdo Bty will be holding an all ranks reunion at the Royal Air Force Association Club, 18 Carlton Road, Romford, Essex, RM2 5AA on October 21. The event is open to all who have served in 289 Regt/ Bty or Troop, past and present, in any position. Contact Barry Exley via barry.exley@sky.com or 01268 293592 for more details.



SEARCHLINE

Ian Sinclair is seeking memories and information about RAF Mafrq, Jordan circa 1945/46, where his grandfather Archibald Sinclair served as a staff sergeant in the Royal Engineers. Anyone with details is asked to contact him via ian_js@hotmail.com

Military charity SSAFA is taking bookings for its short breaks – free, week-long adventure holidays for the Forces community. A break for families with a child with an additional need or disability will run in Exmoor from July 29. For more details or to apply contact Hannah Wiltshire on hannah.w@ssafa.org.uk or 0207 463 9275.

The Royal Signals Amateur Radio Society is looking for enthusiasts to join its ranks. With its HQ in Blandford, the group would welcome serving and former signals trade specialists from any cap badge. Email general secretary John West via g4lrg@yahoo.co.uk

Veterans living in Hampshire, Surrey, Dorset, Wiltshire or Sussex are invited to join the Hampshire History Hunters – an interest group that has regular digs while raising funds for Help for Heroes and Combat Stress. For more details find the Hampshire History Hunters group on Facebook.

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NO. 907 JUST HOW OBSERVANT ARE YOU?

TEN details have been changed in this picture of Warriors from the UK's Enhanced Forward Presence battlegroup bound for Estonia being loaded onto a Ro-Ro ferry at the Sea Mounting Centre in Marchwood.

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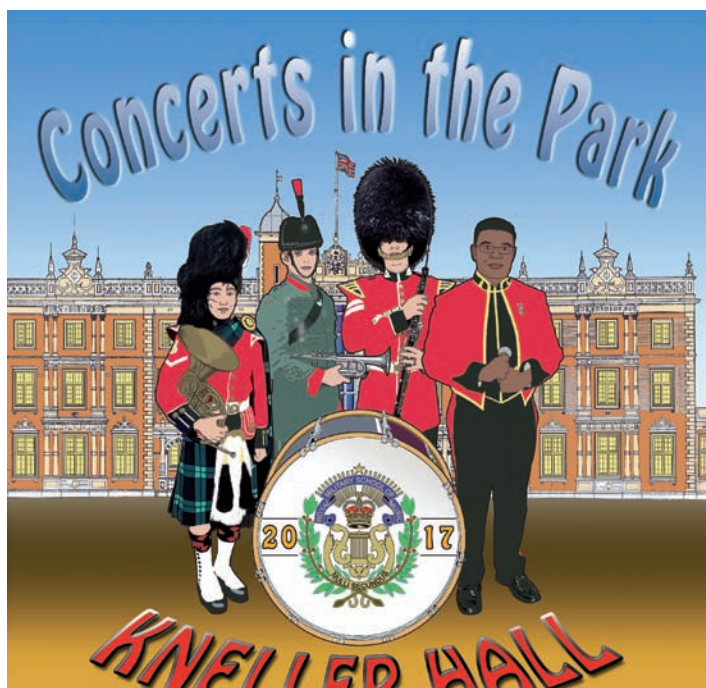
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REVIEWS

BOOKS

A HEAVY RECKONING

Academic reveals long-term impact of injury

IN 2007, following an IED blast in Afghanistan, Royal Marine Mark Ormrod became the first British triple amputee to survive his devastating injuries.

Thanks to huge advances in casualty care, medics were able to pull him – and others whose wounds would previously have proved fatal – back from the brink of death.

But emerging evidence suggests that the battle to recover and adapt to life with fewer limbs is just the beginning for these “unexpected survivors”.



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BOOKS

“

The human system is so challenged by the resuscitation process that it never goes back to normal

”



In her new book, *A Heavy Reckoning*, military medical historian Emily Mayhew reveals that what a soldier's body endures during casualty evacuation, especially in the so-called "golden hour", could have profound implications for his long-term health.

"What effectively happens to personnel in the back of the Chinook once they've been picked up is that the medics refuse to let them die," she explained.

"They perform an extraordinary range of resuscitation techniques – getting blood, fluids and pain medication in – all the necessary things to keep life going.

"What we are starting to understand is that that process itself, before they've had any other surgery, changes the body of the survivor, changes their physiology.

"It affects the way they heal. In particular it affects the way they age."

Drawing on large-scale studies of Vietnam veterans as well as those injured more recently, Mayhew discusses what she calls "the deal".

In other words, a life salvaged in the present comes at the expense of longevity and wellbeing years down the line.

"It's not a very medical term but it's said that double amputees in particular 'don't do very well' later on," the 54-year-old continued.

"They can struggle to control their weight, struggle to recover from infections, or can suffer from heart or kidney problems – all things that happen to you as you get older but that are happening 20 years too early.

"The reason why this should be has never really been explored and it was assumed it was something to do with the amputation or the general strain but we now think the human system is so challenged by the resuscitation process that it never goes back to normal."

Having worked in retail for 25 years, Mayhew began a second career in academia at the age of 40.

She was commissioned to write the book in 2014 by the



VERDICT:

A compelling, if sobering, examination of the long battle facing wounded personnel

★★★★★

Previous page: Pte Alex Stringer (RLC) pictured in Afghanistan in 2010, shortly before an explosion claimed both legs and his left arm **Clockwise from top:** Surgeons perform an amputation; the Critical Care Air Support Team prepare to take their patient home; author Emily Mayhew

Pictures: Sgt Rupert Frere, RLC and David Cotterrell





Wellcome Trust, a medical research foundation, and is hopeful that science can provide answers if it is given the opportunity to do so.

"It's the old story of war driving medical change, but afterwards things tend to fall away," she added.

"I'm optimistic but we need to make sure we keep medical science engaged.

"This is not just a group of soldiers from a strange little war that's over now; they are representative of the way we think about medicine in the 21st century.

"It's applicable to anyone who has lost a limb as a result of a landmine blast or people undergoing resuscitation for life-threatening conditions.

"It's not all Paralympics. People who suffer these complex injuries never go back to normal and we need to understand why they don't and make the new space they live in better."

For a text that goes into forensic detail on medical procedures and physiology *A Heavy Reckoning* is the opposite of dry.

It succeeds in capturing the urgency of the casevac process, from the team medics delivering first aid under fire, to the surgeons battling to save life and limb in the operating theatre at Camp Bastion.

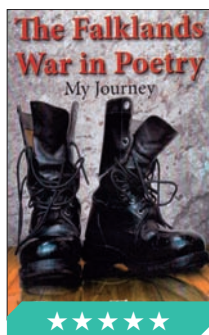
Graphic in a clinical sense, the book also lays bare the sheer vulnerability of the human body in the face of bullet and bomb.

Moving, thought provoking and informative, it is not one to be missed. ■

INTERVIEW: BECKY CLARK, SOLDIER



BOOK RELEASES

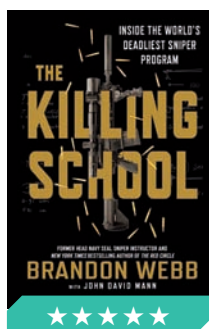


The Falklands War in Poetry: My Journey
Easton Thomas

THE author of this anthology was a Royal Marine who

served as an anti-aircraft gunner during the Falklands War. Like many veterans he wrote down his story afterwards, in his case to help with the PTSD that blighted him for the rest of his life. I like his poetry. It talks about immediate surroundings and people and is very descriptive and evocative. It is also very noticeable that the verses he writes prior to and during the war rhyme, whilst his later prose doesn't and is more about words and feelings. Easton died in 2015 but his poetry will live on.

Andy Kay, ex-RS



The Killing School
by Brandon Webb

WHAT makes a serviceman want to enter the US sniper programme, a physically

demanding course where the failure rate is over 90 per cent? This fascinating book addresses this question by going inside the mindset of four US soldiers who fought in conflicts in Mogadishu, Iraq and Afghanistan. Gathering intelligence is as important as "the shot" for these marksmen. As one put it, it's not about the number of people they kill but about the number they prevent being killed. If, like me, your interest lies in the human element of specials ops training and seeing how these individuals cope, then this book is definitely for you.

Tony David, ex-RE

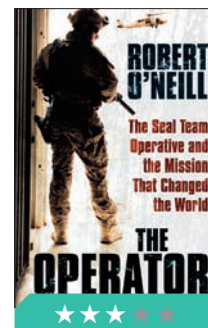


More on War
by Martin Van Creveld

CURRENTLY, whenever I scan comments in the press about world events and

the prospect of a nuclear holocaust, I am troubled by the contributors' misunderstanding of the relationship between strategy and war. This gem of a book explains the complexities clearly and looks at every aspect of conflict and the rationale for its initiation and prosecution, including recent developments in asymmetric and cyber warfare. Throughout the title the author uses historical events to underscore the points he is making. Admittedly, some of these are rather obscure but *More on War* should nevertheless be compulsory reading for all political leaders.

George Robey, ex-GH



The Operator
by Robert O'Neil

THIS fly-on-the-wall look at the world of US Navy Seals is entertaining, but doesn't

offer much in the way of new material. While the author claims to have killed Osama Bin Laden, his book isn't the first to be written about the 2011 raid in Pakistan and, although interesting in places, it replicates what you can find in plenty of other titles on the topic. Most of it is actually an account of his earlier career as an elite soldier. My advice is to wait until you can borrow a copy rather than buying it brand new.

Pte Daniel Burke, Int Corps

MOVIES

PICK OF THE MONTH:

UNTOLD STORY

Motorsport icon in spotlight

➤ *MCLAREN* is an insightful, highly detailed film that examines where it all began for the world's second most successful Formula One motor racing team in history.

The nostalgic documentary – out now in cinemas and on home entertainment – begins back in **Bruce McLaren's** native country of New Zealand.

Using an abundance of home movie clips and interviews with some of the star's closest friends and colleagues, it invites you into the mindset of one of motorsport's great innovators and a passionate competitor.

Exceptionally well produced, the title screams emotion.

And it delivers a punch in the plot that, although many will know is coming, still stings.

What is made clear is that this man was a true leader, and commanded a lot of respect from those around him.

VERDICT:

Not to be missed by F1 fans

★★★★★



Almost instantly, you feel a bond with his character.

Personally, as a motorsport enthusiast and McLaren fan, I learnt a huge amount from watching this.

For example, I hadn't realised that the team had also dominated other prestigious events and series such as Le Mans and Indianapolis 500.

They also helped to develop such iconic cars as the Ford GT40.

McLaren may show mainly vintage clips, but these scenes are nicely blended with authentic reconstructions and interviews with eye witnesses.

Having said that, anyone who isn't a motor racing fan may well struggle to engage with this film.

Although it has similarities with other titles of the genre such as *Rush*, its documentary format gives it a far rawer perspective that may not suit everyone.

But do not discount it altogether. Bruce McLaren was a man who was passionate about what he loved, and surely everyone can take something away from that.

CPL DAN TEDSTONE, R SIGNALS

DVD/DIGITAL RELEASES



Patriots Day Out June 26

APRIL 2013: the Boston Marathon. In this film we are drawn into the lives of everyday people and their misguided attackers, to one awful moment. The callous positioning of two bombs

changes many lives, kickstarting a tale that could easily be defined by the British Army's core values. Boston emergency services demonstrate courage, selfless commitment and loyalty in the aftermath and subsequent city-wide firefight. Fascinating insight into post-attack protocols, and CCTV interspersed with historical footage, adds to the drama. The touching epilogue makes for a fitting tribute to the victims and unsung heroes of these real events.

Maj Neil Johnson, AAC



T2 Trainspotting Out June 27

TWENTY years may have gone by, but Mark, Spud, Sick Boy and Begbie return to the screen with amusing familiarity in this sequel to **Danny**

Boyle's *Trainspotting* masterpiece. If the nineties nostalgia doesn't do it for you, then the stunning cinematography and **McGregor** monologue rejigged for the millennial generation will. This is everything that a sequel should be. Fresh, amusing, goose-bump inducing – just brilliant. A great reminder of why it was all so good first time round, unlike most cultural contributions of the same decade.

Sarah Goldthorpe, Soldier

MUSIC

PICK OF THE MONTH:

PACE SETTER

Weller shows no signs of slowing down

➤ IT has been four decades since a fresh-faced **Paul Weller** announced his arrival on the music scene as frontman of punk rock band **The Jam**.

The release of debut single *In The City* sparked a triumphant run of 18 Top 40 hits for the group before the artist decided to spread his wings and achieve further success with **The Style Council**.


However, it is as a solo performer that Weller has truly excelled and the release of 13th studio album *A Kind Revolution* is testament to his continuing evolution as he approaches his 60th birthday.

With such a landmark looming it would be no surprise to see "The Modfather" taking a more relaxed approach but work on the record started almost immediately after he added the finishing touches to 2015's *Saturn's Pattern*.

In the meantime, Weller has also stepped out of his comfort zone to produce his first movie soundtrack for the film *Jawbone*.

But there is a more familiar feel to the singer's latest offering, which again features the full spectrum of his influences – from rock to RnB, soul to jazz, and funk to folk.

Faithful collaborators **Andy Crofts**, **Ben Gordelie**, **Steve Cradock** and **Steve Pilgrim** head the supporting cast and there are also appearances from



A KIND REVOL UTION PAUL WELLER

MUSIC

soul legends **PP Arnold** and **Madeleine Bell**, **Soft Machine's Robert Wyatt**, **The Strypes'** guitarist **Josh McClorey** and **Boy George**.

After being a keen fan of Weller during his mid-nineties pomp – particularly the albums *Stanley Road* and *Heavy Soul* – my interest has dipped in recent times so the opportunity to reacquire myself with his music was one I was keen to embrace.

Thankfully, this record does not disappoint.

Woo Se Mama delivers the perfect opening with an energetic, RnB tempo before *Long Long Road* offers a more sombre, ballad-like approach. Both deliver equally impressive results.

The switching of styles is sustained throughout, which means interest is maintained at all times, but the true standout comes in the shape of *The Cranes Are Back*, a track brimming with hope in uncertain times.

Despite being in the latter stages of a stellar career Weller continues to produce at pace and this album draws worthy comparisons to his many highlights to date. ■

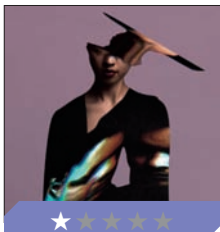
REVIEW: RICHARD LONG, *SOLDIER*

VERDICT:

"The Modfather" has delivered once again

★★★★★

MUSIC RELEASES



Constraint by Plaitum

AFTER spending more than an hour listening to this album I think it would be a struggle to find worse things to do with my time. With no difference between each song, you could be forgiven for thinking

you were in a bad dream. Keyboards, digital voices and synthesisers mean each track blends into the next with repetitive instruments and nondescript singing. The whole album felt like someone had taken all the worst bits of Euro-electropop and mixed them into this disappointment. Perfect if you want an inoffensive soundtrack to an aftershave advert; useless if you want anything else.

LCpl Scott Roberts, Rifles



Sweet Dreamer by Will Joseph Cook

THIS young British artist has been receiving excellent reviews from the music press for his light and breezy indie-pop sound and it's easy to see why. Having secured a deal with a major label (Atlantic records) Will

brought in **Bombay Bicycle Club's Jack Steadman** to produce and the result is a sugar-rush of pop. Track highlights include the impressive *Treat Me Like a Lover*, with its pulsing power pop groove, while *For Thursday* is a throwback to the noughties pop of **Vampire Weekend** and *Hands* showcases an impressive falsetto. There is enough on this album to keep you interested throughout and it's hard not to smile while listening to it.

Damian Hern, ex-AGC (SPS)



Free Your Mind... And Your Grass Will Follow by Hayseed Dixie

WHEN I received this record I thought, 'oh no, **Hayseed Dixie**'. Alas, I had jumped the gun and this actually proved to be rather good. After the initial shock

of the overly commercial *Buffalo Soldier* the album settles into a more mature affair. It is then you notice the theme – racial discrimination and harmony, although you will have to translate the track *Vom Selbern Stern* yourself. Particular highlights include a cover of **Marvin Gaye's** *What's Going On*, a version of *Oliver's Army* where the lyrics actually sound like **Elvis Costello** and a cheeky version of **Michael Jackson's** *Black and White*. With a few unknowns along the way, this proved to be a surprising hit.

Martyn Timmis, civvy

Want to join our review team?
Email reviews@soldiermagazine.co.uk

GAMES

PICK OF THE MONTH:

THE BEASTS ARE BACK

Prey for PS4, Xbox One and PC

➤ AFTER the cancellation of *Prey 2* back in 2011 I was left disappointed as the early footage of this much-anticipated sequel looked superb.

But Arkane Studios, the folk behind the *Bioshock* and *Dishonoured* games, have eased my suffering by launching a reinvention of this once-loved series.

Taking place in an alternate history where Kennedy survives his assassination attempt and increases funding to Nasa in an effort to dominate the space race, you're thrust into the shoes of Morgan Yu, a rather clever individual on-board Talos 1, a space station set in the 2030s.

The Typhon, a collective alien presence and former foe, are kept on the station for testing and research but escape captivity, killing most of the crew.

So it invariably comes down to you to try and stop them.

The real strength of *Prey* lies in two separate elements, the level design and your enemy.

Every aspect of Talos 1 is a spectacle in itself, a setting that is wonderfully designed and presented.

Crawling around this backdrop in various guises are the Typhon, who exhibit extraordinarily powers that can be adapted by our hero.

One such skill utilised by the frequently smaller beasts is the ability to mimic elements of their environment, such as a chair, coffee mug or even a shotgun.

After encountering your first few mimics you end up walking around the station pre-emptively clubbing innocent-looking items in an effort to stay alive.

Once you gain this ability yourself it can be a fairly humorous setting as you morph into a coffee cup and tumble along corridors and down stairs, coming to a halt when something unsightly appears.

Prey is a gorgeous game with an inventive foe.

Unfortunately, they never quite become the all-threatening force you imagine them to be but that doesn't stop it from being enjoyable. ■

REVIEW: DAVID MCDUGALL, EX-LI

VERDICT:

A welcome reboot for a forgotten friend

★★★★★



GAMES

GAMES RELEASES



The Surge PS4, Xbox One and PC

THIS action role-playing game is set in a dystopian future where

the central character, Warren, is looking for a better life and decides to join a conglomerate to improve his situation. But things don't quite go according to plan and he is left fighting his way through this backdrop while sporting a new exoskeleton. It feels like an alternate take on *Dark Souls*, which is not a bad thing, and the various foes encountered can be challenging. The character builds are its strong point, allowing you to target specific parts on opponents for your own use. However, it's all based in a rather drab setting; it's not unpleasant to look at but it is all a bit samey.

David McDougall, Ex-LI



Forza Horizon 3: Hotwheels Expansion

Xbox One and PC

THE previous *Forza* expansion, *Blizzard Mountain*, came with no unusual surprises. It was additional content set in almost-Arctic conditions and was enjoyable to play and look at. Business as usual, you might say, and that's not a bad thing for Playground Games. However, when they released the *Hot Wheels* expansion, the *Forza* universe was suddenly flipped on its head, dunked in cold water and had a pair of habanero chillies shoved up its nostrils for good measure. No one could have seen this coming but I'm glad it's here. To say that driving along some of the zaniest courses ever conceived – all presented in sublime graphical finesse – is fun, would be an understatement. It's incredible. Buy it.

David McDougall, Ex-LI



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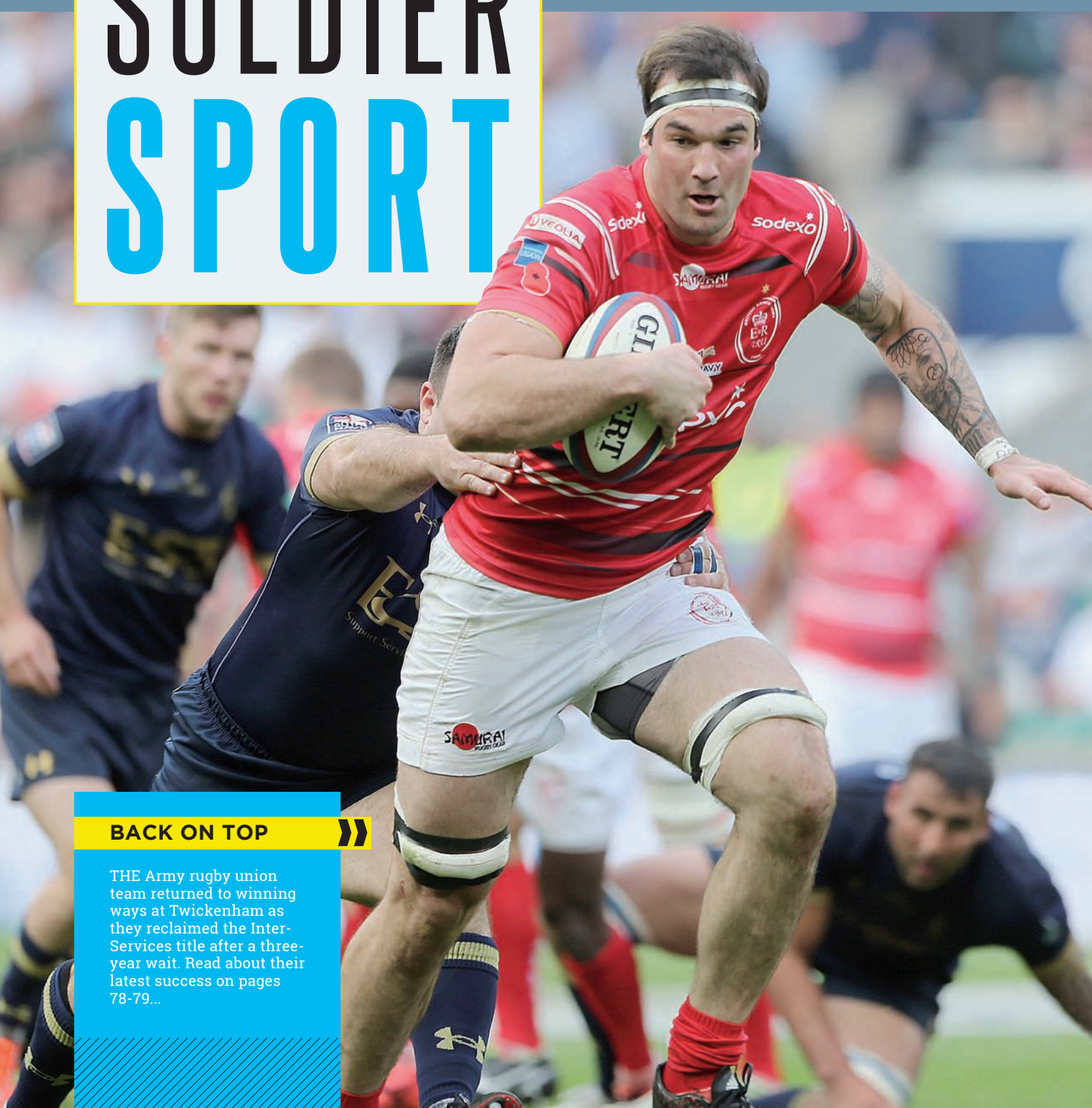


Espresso Bar

SOLDIER SPORT

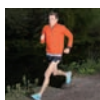
Sports Editor: Richard Long

Photographers: Graeme Main and Steve Dock



BACK ON TOP

THE Army rugby union team returned to winning ways at Twickenham as they reclaimed the Inter-Services title after a three-year wait. Read about their latest success on pages 78-79...



PEAK PERFORMER: DUNCAN SLATER, FORMERLY OF THE RAF REGIMENT, MADE HISTORY IN 2017 BY BECOMING THE FIRST DOUBLE AMPUTEE TO FINISH THE RACE

MARATHON MAN

DESERT SLOG PROVES NO OBSTACLE AS ENDURANCE STAR ANNOUNCES HIMSELF ON THE ULTRA SCENE

WHEN endurance runner Capt Tom Evans (WG) took to the start line for the Marathon des Sables producing a record-breaking podium performance was the last thing on his mind.

Billed as the world's toughest footrace, the event is staged over six days in the Sahara Desert and sees athletes battle searing temperatures and unforgiving terrain as they make their way along a 250-kilometre route.

The odds on the 25-year-old challenging the main contenders were slim as he had never completed a multi-day ultra event before and it was his first time running on sand.

But the officer upset the formbook to finish third in the overall standings and in the process became the highest-placed British entrant in the race's history.

Evans completed the course in 19hr 49min – an effort that was spread over five days – and has now been elevated to an elite athlete on the Ultra Trail World Tour.

"I signed up for the Marathon des Sables more than a year ago, thinking it would be an amazing challenge," the Serviceman told *SoldierSport*.

"My training was disrupted when we deployed on Exercise Wessex Storm but what I had done went well. I felt really good out there and that work paid off.

"The temperature got up to



**"I
WANTED
TO GO IN
UNDER
THE
RADAR"**

54 degrees Celsius at one point. There were lots of sand dunes, dried out rivers and sharp, rocky, technical terrain.

"It was very different to anything I had experienced before but this is something that really appeals to soldiers.

"You have to be self-sufficient, carry all your own food, a sleeping bag and cooking equipment – the only thing that is provided on the way is a tent and water resupply.

"The Moroccans are the best in the world in this event and to be capable of running alongside them, while being competitive, was an incredibly surreal experience for me."

Evans adjusted his running technique to meet the demands of the terrain and used salt tablets to help with hydration.

The tactics clearly paid off and after initially aiming for a top-20 finish he soon adjusted his target.

"Nobody really knew who I was," he explained.

"I wanted to go in under the radar so there was no pressure on me.

"But as the week went on that pressure started to build.

"I got a lot of support and encouragement, both out there and from back home in the UK, and to finish third was an incredible surprise."

Over the past 20 years 19 winners have stemmed from Morocco with brothers Lahcen and Mohamad Ahansal claiming 14 victories between

them. The other successful athlete hailed from Jordan, so European successes have been few and far between.

Evans' achievement means he has qualified for similar ultra challenges in Switzerland and Peru later this year and he was due to compete at the annual UK 100-Kilometre Championships in Hull as this issue went to press.

The Serviceman will also attempt to earn a place in the Welsh squad for the 2018 Commonwealth Games when he races in the Eindhoven Marathon in October.

So his future prospects are looking bright.

"I would love to run for Wales," he said. "If I can post a sub-2hr 16min time I will be in contention. My personal best is 2hr 20min but that was set more than a year ago. I have lost some weight since then and I'm in great shape.

"Depending on how that goes I will decide on whether to focus on marathons or the ultra side of things.

"My battalion has been so supportive and there are lots of opportunities with so many different races.

"This is a growing sport and if you can get a good sponsor you can travel the world to compete. It is an exciting time." ■



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Gary Jamieson, former Scots Guardsman, injured in Afghanistan in 2010, Charity Beneficiary. © Malcolm Cochrane





UP NEXT: 1 YORKS WILL FACE RESERVE CHAMPIONS 154 (SCOTTISH) REGT, RLC IN THE ARMY SUPER CUP FINAL IN OCTOBER



YORKS COMPLETE CUP DOUBLE

AN injury-time strike from LCpl Luke McLaren steered 1st Battalion, The Yorkshire Regiment to a deserved win in the Army FA Challenge Cup final.

Runners-up in 2014 and 2016, the Warminster-based unit looked set for an extra-time battle with 30 Signal Regiment before the midfielder's moment of magic sealed a 3-2 victory.

There was little sign of the drama to come as the champions-elect made a storming start to the contest, dominating the early possession and threatening the goal at will.

And their efforts were rewarded in the sixth minute as Pte Jake Sanderson raced clear of the opposition defence before calmly slotting home.

But the signallers held firm and after weathering the storm they began to show their attacking threat.

LCpl Gary Phillips tested keeper Capt Dan Sturley with a stinging shot from the edge of the area and Army forward Sig

Luke Noble grazed the crossbar with a free kick from 20 yards.

The duo combined for the equaliser in the 30th minute as Phillips converted at the near post and Noble edged his side ahead as he broke clear on the right before expertly finishing from a tight angle.

However, the setback failed to deter 1 Yorks and substitute Pte Aiden Kirby ensured parity was restored within minutes of his introduction as he forced his way into the area and fired a shot past LCpl Josh Rennie.

With further opportunities at a premium the match looked destined for a draw.

But McLaren had other ideas and with the clock ticking down his low shot from the edge of the box eluded Rennie's grasp and nestled into the bottom corner.

"As a team we keep going," said triumphant skipper LCpl Darren Clark. "Winning the Walter Tull Cup earlier in the season really helped. We are no strangers to this stadium and that result gave us a real boost." ■

ARMY FA CUP FINAL

1 YORKS

3

30 SIG REGT

2



FOOTBALL



CROWNING GLORY

A WEEK-LONG training camp in Aldershot formed the perfect preparation for the Army women's volleyball team ahead of their bid for a third successive Crown Services title.

The squad has gone from strength to strength in recent times and finished sixth in the latest national league campaign, where they faced some of the top players in the country including two England junior sides.

A number of newcomers have been welcomed to the fold and head coach WO2 Nikki Mead (AGC (SPS)) believes the group is primed for further success.

She said: "The training has been very good and the players have come on leaps and bounds."

"We are looking to defend our title. The Royal Air Force have managed to play a full season and the Police will be a tough team on home turf but we are confident."

"Army volleyball is in a strong position. Having a good management structure and a permanent head coach has really helped the cause."

The Crown Services were being staged as this issue went to press, with the Inter-Services following on June 21 in Aldershot.





Can I join?

Membership of the Army Sports Lottery (ASL) is open to all members of the Regular Army; payment is deducted at source by JPA.

All members of the Army Reserve are eligible to join; payment is made in advance by cheque or online via WorldPay.

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To apply, complete and return JS Form JPA E015, available through your local Gymnasium, Unit Admin Office or our Website.



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RING WARRIORS: JONES AND NGWENYA WENT ON TO WIN GOLD MEDALS AT THE GREAT BRITAIN CHAMPIONSHIPS IN CARDIFF. ARMY FIGHTERS ALSO CLAIMED THREE SILVER MEDALS AND ONE BRONZE

BOXING



FIGHTERS' DOUBLE DELIGHT

WELTERWEIGHT star Cpl Steph Wroe (REME) underlined her status as one of the best fighters in the business as she retained her English Amateur Boxing Association crown.

Her victory marked a spectacular return for the 2016 Army sportswoman of the year, who has spent ten months on the sidelines with a wrist injury.

Wroe (pictured above, right) was joined at the top of the podium by teammate Spr Ebonie Jones (RE, left), the winner in the contest's bantamweight ranks.

As a two-time European junior champion Jones is no stranger to the big stage and her title triumph capped a successful debut campaign at senior level.

"I've been out of the ring for a year-and-a-half," the fighter told *SoldierSport*. "My goal was to win the belt but I had my doubts as I had been away for so long."

"People say it is different at senior level but I knew I was capable of doing well."

Jones won her semi-final on a unanimous verdict and produced a repeat performance in the final against rival Emma Dolan.

"I've beaten her twice in the past," the soldier added.

"She came looking for a war but as the fight progressed I knew she was losing."

"After the result was announced I was buzzing. When you box for a civvy club you win for yourself but we are a team. I won this title for the team."

Wroe defeated Kerry Davis on a split decision to claim her belt and admitted she faced a battle inside the ring as well as out.

"Everyone was expecting me to do well and that added to the pressure," she explained. "It was very different to last year."

"In the end I just decided to enjoy it and be calm and once I got into my rhythm that was it."

"Kerry is a tall fighter who uses the jab a lot, which is something I'm not used to, but when I worked my way in she could not handle the pressure." ■

**"IN THE
END I
DECIDED
TO
ENJOY
IT AND
BE
CALM"**



MEDALS MOUNT

THE Army took 12 fighters to the English Amateur Boxing Association Championships at Rotherham's Magna Centre.

While Cpl Steph Wroe (REME) and Spr Ebonie Jones (RE, pictured below) claimed top honours the team won a further six bronze medals, along with a silver for LCpl Natty Ngwenya (Gren Gds, pictured above).

Despite losing to Cheavon Clarke on a split decision the heavyweight was pleased with his performance after being stopped by the same opponent in last year's semi-finals.

"I felt I had done enough to win," he told *SoldierSport*. "I was landing more clean shots."

"It was bitter-sweet. He put me down in the first and second rounds last season but now I've narrowly lost on a split decision."

"In that time I believe I have improved while he is still going out looking for a big right hand."

"I've been pleased with my performances this year but there is still room for improvement."

Ngwenya, a southern area champion, was due to fight for an England title belt as this issue went to press.



BOXING

BACK IN THE RING: THE BOXING SEASON DRAWS TO A CLOSE AT THE ARMY INDIVIDUAL CHAMPIONSHIPS IN ALDERSHOT FROM JUNE 4 TO 8



SEASON IN SWING

AROUND 200 riders took to the start line for the opening round of the Army Cross-Country Mountain Bike Race Series.

Staged in the rugged Wiltshire countryside near Devizes, the event saw cyclists tackle four laps of a five-kilometre course that featured a punishing climb and a twisting woodland section.

WO2 Chris Loynes (R Signals) won the opening race – held for Army riders – before Cpl Rob Craig (RE) took top spot in the final race of the day.

The second leg in the series was due to be completed as this issue went to press and with three further rounds to come over the course of the summer there is plenty of excitement ahead.

"Around 60 per cent of the people who turn up here have their own bike and know what they are doing," explained series secretary WO1 Stuart Crighton (AGC (RMP)).

"The rest are guys using unit bikes and want to take part on a sports afternoon. That is what our motto is all about – we want to inspire people to get involved.

"Hopefully they can become the next Army team members in years to come."



For more details on the cross-country series visit www.armycycling.org



LOGGIES LEAD THE WAY



**"WE
KNEW
WE
HAD A
STRONG
TEAM
THIS
YEAR"**

FIGHTERS from 13 Air Assault Support Regiment, RLC claimed the premier prize in Army boxing as they downed their rivals from 3rd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment in the Inter-Unit Championship final.

With both squads stemming from 16 Air Assault Brigade the action was switched to Colchester's Cpl Budd VC Gymnasium and a passionate home crowd saw an energy-charged contest finish 4-3 in the loggies' favour.

The champions-elect made a storming start as Pte Jason Humm scored a unanimous verdict in the bantamweight division and teammate Pte Joel Whiteman (pictured left) maintained the momentum in his lightweight clash with Pte Bibesh Limbu, landing some stinging left shots in a dominant display.

Standing counts in the second and fourth underlined

his superiority and a unanimous decision in favour of Whiteman was no surprise.

The Paras claimed a much-needed win when Pte Josh Middlemiss triumphed over Pte Elliott Sanderson but the loggies fired an immediate reply as Pte Bridgd Mpofu edged past Pte Matthew Sheridan.

Needing three straight victories to claim a ninth title in 15 years, the Paras came storming back and Cpl Danny Turton secured a split decision over middleweight foe LCpl Michael Fryett.

But their hopes were ended in the next bout, when skipper Pte Ryan Abel (pictured above) produced one of the performances of the night to defeat Pte Danny Holmes.

"We've made it to the final a few times over the years and have come unstuck but this season we knew we had a strong team," said victorious coach Cpl Jesse Pickerill. ■

**SNOW
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CENTENARY WIN FORMS PERFECT SEND-OFF

OUTGOING head coach Capt Andy Sanger (RE) was handed a dream farewell as his Army side downed the Royal Navy at Twickenham to reclaim the Inter-Services crown.

A brace from man-of-the-match Pte Junior Bulumakau (Scots, pictured far right) helped the Reds to a 29-20 win in the 100th contest between the two sides – a result that Sanger described as being on par with the many successes achieved during his two spells in charge.

Victory over the Royal Air Force saw the soldiers start the campaign on the front foot and they arrived at the home of English rugby in confident mood.

A spell of early pressure was rewarded when LCpl James Dixon (RE) converted a penalty attempt before the Army's exciting back division came to the fore for the opening try.

A lineout deep in opposition territory formed the ideal

platform to attack and as the ball swiftly moved across the field LCpl Semesa Rokoduguni (Scots DG) delivered the perfect pass for Bulumakau to touch down.

The Navy replied with a penalty of their own midway through the half and Dixon maintained his accuracy from the tee to give his team an 11-5 lead at the break.

An expert finish in the corner from Rgr Chris Leatham (R Irish, pictured above) stretched the Reds' advantage within minutes of the restart but the Navy stayed in touch courtesy of old foe LPT Ben Priddey, who saw a desperate lunge for the line confirmed by the video referee.

With the Senior Service on the charge the soldiers struck a decisive blow in the 54th minute thanks to some slick work from their formidable Fijians.

The hard running of Rokoduguni sucked in the opposition defence and the Bath man used some basketball-like

INTER-SERVICES RUGBY UNION

ARMY

29

NAVY

20



skills to play in Bulumakau.

Two further Dixon penalties edged the champions-elect closer to victory before a late brace of tries from the Navy reduced the arrears.

"If I'm being brutally honest the result probably flattered them with the two scores in the closing stages," Sanger told *SoldierSport* afterwards.

"I thought that if we performed to our potential in both games we could win by ten to 15 points.

"On reflection this result is right up there with winning the Defence World Cup.

"There is a real sense of satisfaction this year and that is largely down to the turnaround in the squad.

"We've brought a lot of new players in and they have really bought into what it means to represent the Army."

The second-row partnership of Cpl Lewis Bean (Rifles) and Cpl Ross Parkins (RLC) drew

particular praise from the coach, with the former now being eyed by a number of clubs in the professional game.

The duo will be key performers as the team moves forward and Sanger believes they can again become the dominant force in Services rugby.

"The potential is there and these boys can really flourish over the next two or three years," he added.

"For the first time in a few seasons we had the dominance up front.

"A lot of credit has to go to forwards coach SSgt Lee Soper (RA); he has done a great job.

"Ross and Lewis, together with Capt Tom Burnham (Yorks), have been among the success stories of the season.

"However, the most pleasing aspect for me is seeing the things we have worked on throughout the campaign come to fruition.

"I'm now handing over to a quality coach in Maj Burnie Burnard (REME) and hopefully we have set the team on the right path.

"But Army rugby is in my blood and I will always have one eye on what is happening." ■

RUGBY IN NUMBERS

POINTS BY
THE ARMY
WOMEN - A
RECORD

95

TRIES FROM
CPL LOUISE
DODD

4

WINS IN
NINE GAMES
FOR THE
MEN IN 2017

6

NATIONAL
PLAYERS IN
THE REDS'
SQUAD

5

DATE, IN
MAY, OF
NEXT YEAR'S
MATCH

5



NAVY SUNK BY TRY BLITZ

HISTORY was made in the final match of this season's Inter-Services rugby union campaign as the Army women posted a record points total on their way to claiming another title.

Having already defeated their main rivals in the shape of the Royal Air Force the Reds headed into the contest as overwhelming favourites and they did not disappoint – running in 15 tries on their way to a 95-0 victory.

Cpl Louise Dodd (QARANC) crossed on four occasions and with the centre taking kicking responsibilities in the second-half she finished the day with a 26-point personal haul.

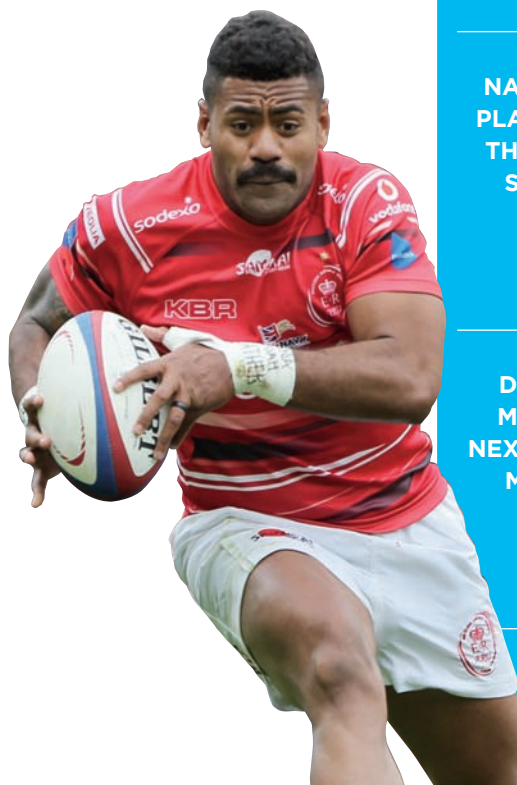
Other highlights included a hat-trick from Gnr Jess McAuley-Roberts (RA, pictured), while Lt Katie Hancock (RE) and Cpl Caz Roberts (REME) both scored braces. Skipper Capt Gemma Rowland (RA) slotted seven conversions in the first-half.

"This result is a testament to our legacy," Rowland said.

"The players who first started this squad 20 years ago have allowed us to build on the foundations and we are going from strength to strength each season.

"But we know there is always something better we can do and something more that we can build."

● THE UK Armed Forces rugby league team slipped to a 42-20 defeat against Hull FC Reserves as preparations for the Defence World Cup continued. Six Army players were involved in the squad but their professional opponents proved too strong as they raced into a 20-6 lead at the interval. The military outfit closed the gap to 26-20 after the break but a late surge saw the hosts pull clear.



SPORT SHORTS



14 Regiment outgun rivals

ATHLETES from 14 Regiment, Royal Artillery confirmed their status as the top unit in their corps as they were crowned Victor and Victrix Ludorum champions for 2016/17.

The competition sees men's and women's teams competing in a host of sports throughout the season, with points awarded for their achievements in each discipline.

The action concluded at the Royal Artillery boxing night (pictured).



Victory on Welsh waters

THE Army kayak freestyle team proved they are contenders on the GB circuit by returning from the Welsh Open with a clutch of medals.

Maj Tony Hellier (RGR) took top spot in the intermediate freestyle masters category, narrowly beating teammate WO2 Stephen Robinson (AAC).

Further success was achieved in the men's novice freestyle masters, where Sgt Gary Cue (RA) headed a Service clean-sweep on the podium.

Sgt Sulette Kloppe (RA) added further gold in the women's novice freestyle seniors.

TOUGH TIMES ON COURT

THERE were mixed fortunes on the court for the Army's basketball stars as they returned to action at the Inter-Services Championships. A comfortable 66-51 win over the Royal Air Force in the opening match of the men's competition hinted at a successful outcome for the Reds but a resurgent Royal Navy outfit stole their thunder in the tournament's deciding fixture.

A poor start from the soldiers allowed their rivals to open a 17-point lead at the break and the deficit proved too great – despite a much-improved performance in the third and fourth quarters.

Their efforts saw them close the gap to within two points but the Navy held firm to seal a 66-64 victory and claim a first title in 27 years.

While the men suffered the women hit top form and they crushed their rivals with two dominant displays as their hard training in the build-up paid off.

However, there was further disappointment for the under-23 side as they lost to both the RAF and Navy.

"Though overall these weren't the results we were looking for the players should be proud of their performances," said Capt Alex Walker (R Signals), secretary of the Army Basketball Association.



**"THE
PLAYERS
SHOULD
BE
PROUD"**



ARMY athletes were in fine form at the Inter-Services Marathon Championships – claiming team titles in the men's and women's races.

Staged as part of the London Marathon, the event saw Pte Lorna Macdonald (AMS) crowned female individual champion in a time of 2hr 59min 24sec.

Cpl Nerys Hughes (AGC) was runner-up and the duo helped the soldiers to a commanding win in the collective standings – finishing more than an hour-and-a-half ahead of the Royal Navy.

It was a closer affair in the men's event as the Army won with a ten-minute advantage. Capt Paul Molyneux (RAMC, pictured) was runner-up, while Maj Ady Whitwam (RLC) won the masters category.

MONTH IN SPORT

June's key fixtures...



WHAT: Inter-Services Ice Hockey
WHEN: June 6-9
WHERE: Ice Sheffield
NEED TO KNOW: With the Army

Championships complete the Service's best players come together to defend a Forces crown that was won with two comprehensive wins in 2016



WHAT: Inter-Services T20 Cricket Championships
WHEN: June 8
WHERE: Lord's Cricket Ground
NEED TO KNOW: The famous venue has become a happy hunting ground for the Army in recent times and following a dominant display last season the soldiers will take to the middle as favourites



WHAT: Armed Forces Day Rugby League
WHEN: June 24
WHERE: Crosfields RLFC, Warrington

NEED TO KNOW: The finest military players take to the field in three fixtures – Royal Marines v Army Academy, Parachute Regiment v RAF Academy, Crosfields Select v Army

GAMES IN NUMBERS

GOALS
IN SEVEN
FOOTBALL
GAMES

13

GOLD
MEDALS
WON IN THE
POOL

11

CAP BADGES
IN THE
HOCKEY
SQUAD

6

SPORTS
COMPETED
IN

5

YEARS
UNTIL THE
NEXT GAMES
IN JAPAN

4

MASTERS GAMES



Picture: CMG Sport

GAMES MASTERS SHINE

A RMY athletes gave a strong showing across five sports when they headed to Auckland for the 2017 World Masters Games.

A field of 28,000 competitors from more than 100 countries travelled to Auckland, New Zealand, for the sporting showcase and the soldiers secured a clutch of silverware during the ten-day contest.

The swimmers were first to enter the fray and after an intense competition the 16-strong team recorded an impressive haul of 11 gold, 12 silver and 17 bronze medals across a mix of age groups and disciplines in the individual, relay, open water and surf lifesaving events.

Competing in the men's over-30 category, the Service's footballers turned in some excellent displays in a punishing schedule of seven matches in nine days.

Highlights included an exhilarating 1-0 win over pre-tournament favourites Rangitoto United – a side with several ex-Kiwi internationals

in its ranks – and a 6-1 demolition of the New Zealand Defence Force to secure the gold medal.

The Army women's over-35 hockey team faced an equally challenging run of fixtures including a tough group-stage match against the New Zealand Grey Sticks – a squad boasting a total of almost 1,000 international caps.

The Reds were the only outfit to score against the eventual champions, which proved to be a real feather in their cap.

A battling 2-1 semi-final defeat against local side Harbour Sticks put the Servicewomen into the third/fourth play-off and a depleted side produced a disciplined, determined performance to come out 2-1 winners and secure the bronze medal.

Bronze was the prize also claimed by Rev Nicola Frail (RACHD) in the table tennis ladies' over-30 doubles, while Maj Rich Green reached the semi-finals of the men's over-35 squash competition. ■

Final Word

Interviews: David Allen
Pictures: Dominic King



Tpr Levi Coyne, QRH

It was full-on at the start, constantly getting "IDF'd". It's been quite boggy so we have been picking up a lot of dirt that is going into the Challenger's tracks and affecting the steering.



LCpl Damon McTighe, QRH

It's been very realistic training. I've deployed in a British battlegroup, but it has been completely new to work with international forces. The main challenge has been manoeuvring round the wood blocks. Once you come in, it's slow and steady so you can get your bearings.



LBdr Elliot Harris, RA

It's been pretty interesting, especially working with the Americans. It's a good opportunity to swap rations. And they certainly know what they're doing. They aren't battle shy, they go straight into it.



Lt Jonathan Nice, QRH

Getting the chance to show-off our vehicles has been great. Huge lessons have been learnt by personnel in the signals, armour and manoeuvre worlds.



Capt Emmerson Wood, QRH

The Americans like our rations and we like theirs, so there's been a lot of swaps. They are really good to work with. Just seeing what assets they've got, things we wouldn't necessarily have, and being able to use them has been a great experience. The Italians and Polish are absolute warriors.



Lt Leah Bertram, AGC (SPS)

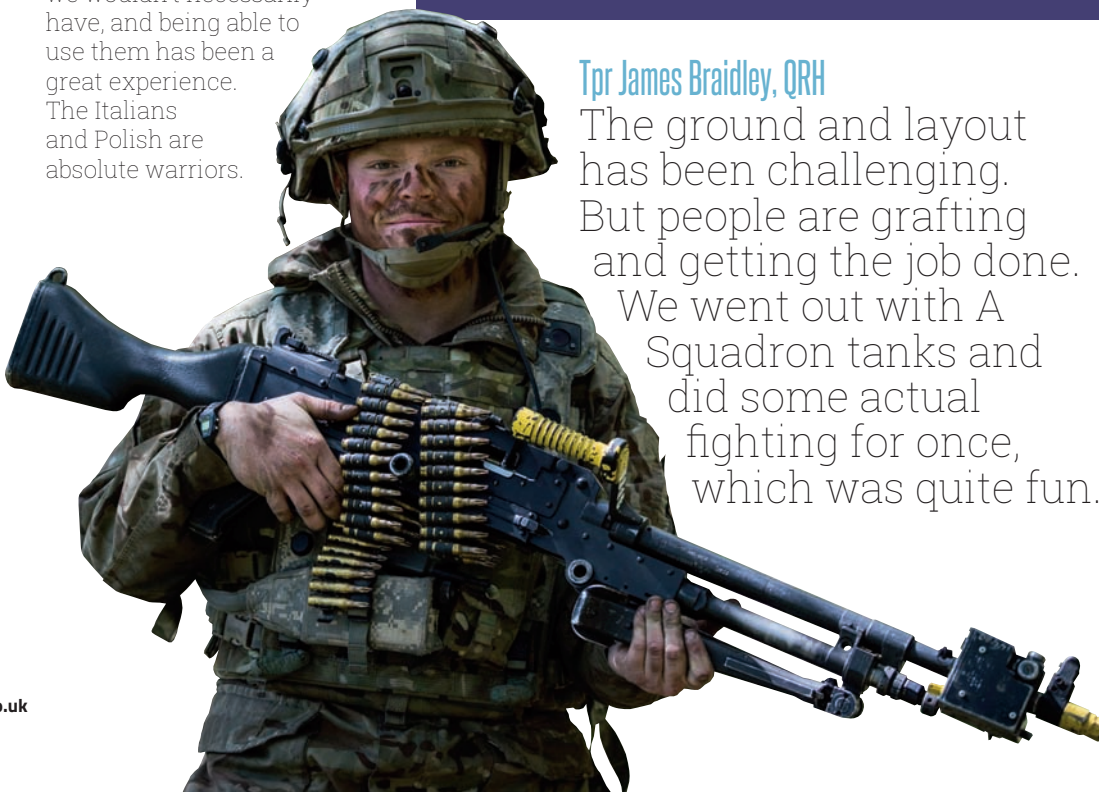
This is the first time I've been on a Nato exercise so seeing the different ways that people work has been really interesting – even simple things like how they go about their lives, do patrols and how their ranking systems work. They've put us to shame with their language skills!

How was it for you?

Soldier asked troops who deployed on Exercise Saber Junction (page 20) about the highs and lows of the multinational battlegroup training package

Tpr James Braidley, QRH

The ground and layout has been challenging. But people are grafting and getting the job done. We went out with A Squadron tanks and did some actual fighting for once, which was quite fun.





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