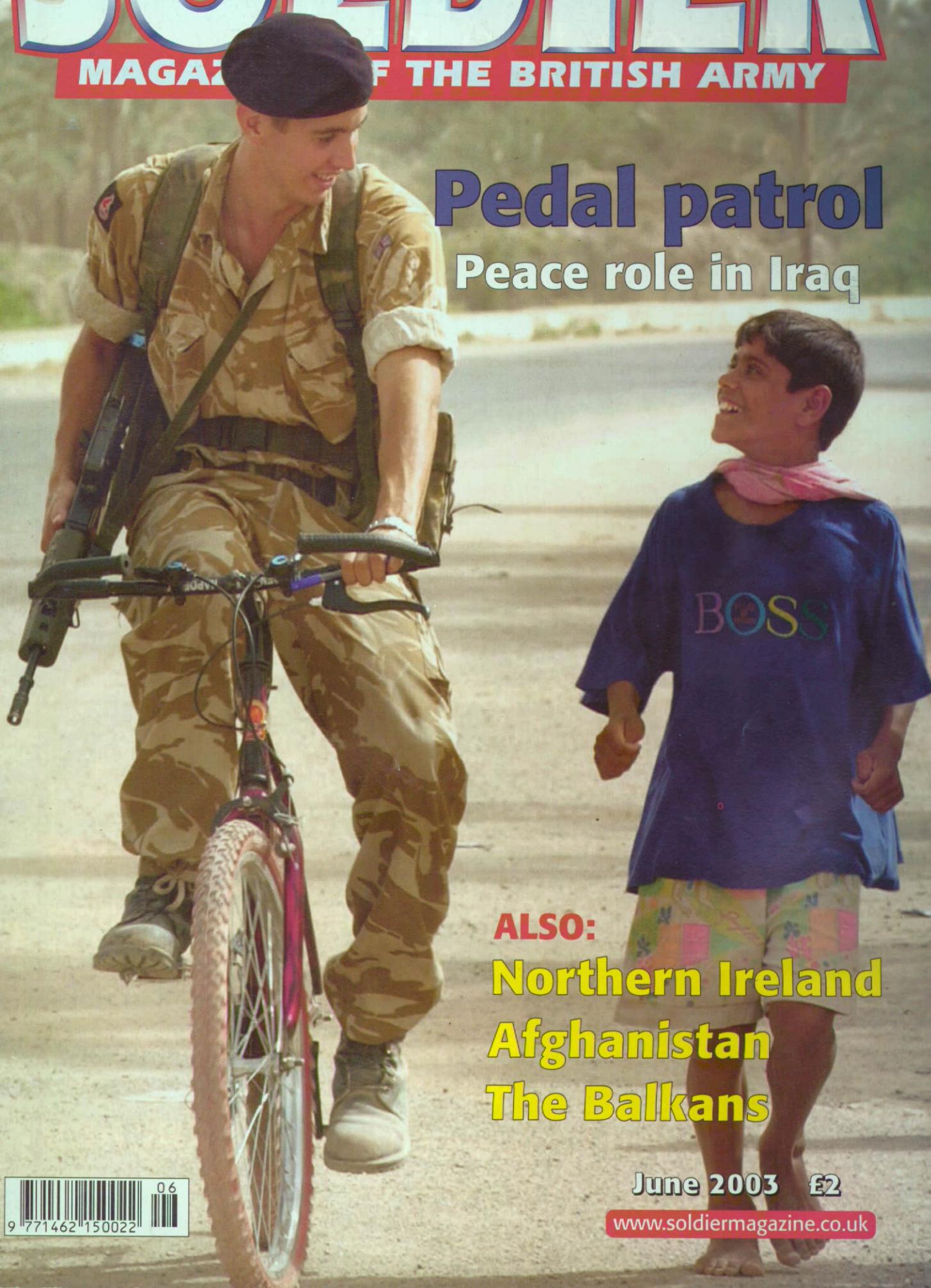


SOLDIER

MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY

Pedal patrol

Peace role in Iraq



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June 2003 £2

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Not the only thing that's on the rocks...

Penalties for Drunkenness:

Restriction of Privileges,

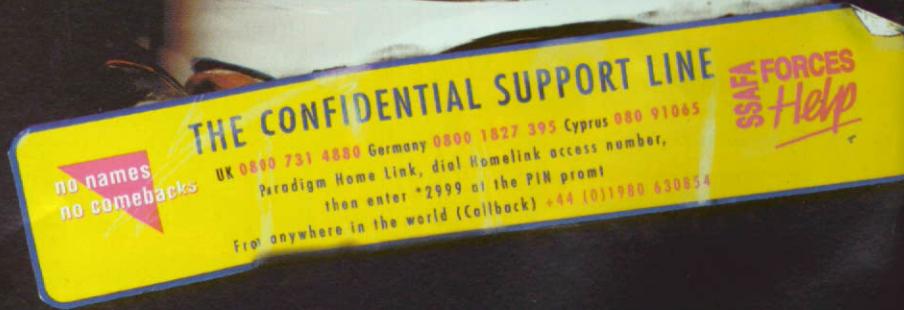
Fines,

Reduction in rank,

Detention,

Administrative discharge

Loss of Security Clearance.



Do you know when ENOUGH is **ENOUGH?**



Cover picture

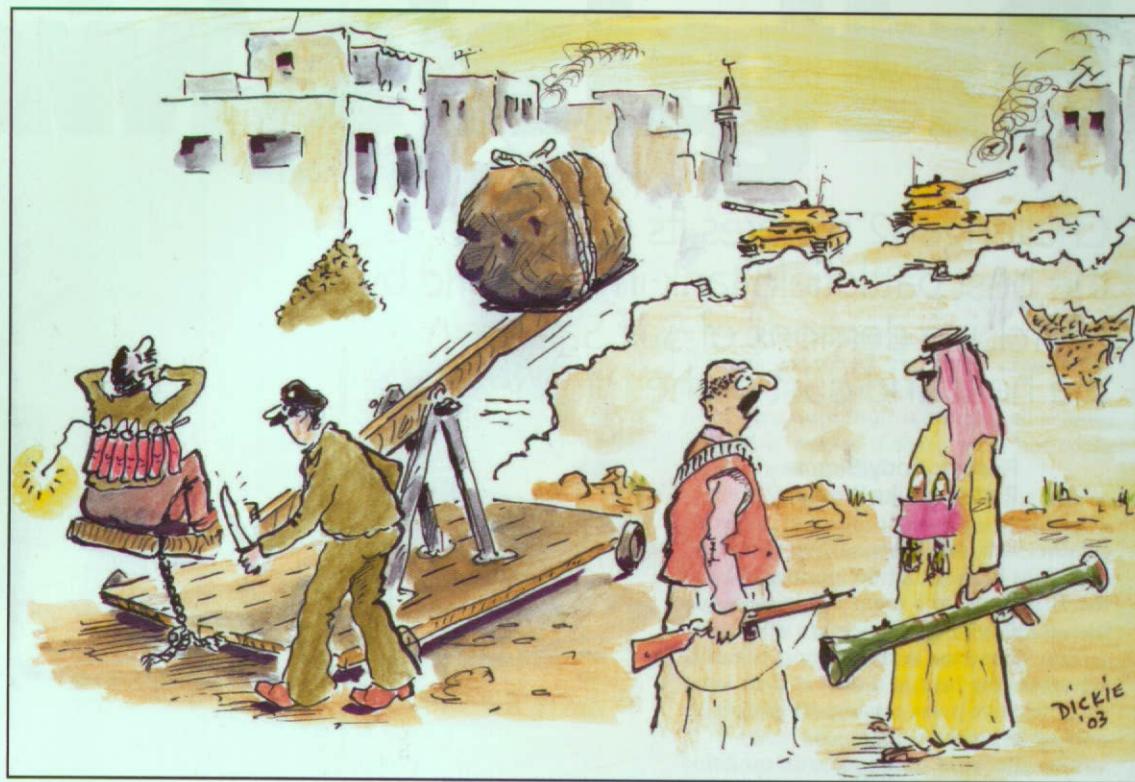
Warm work: Gnr Andrew Walsh, from J Battery, 3rd Regiment, Royal Horse Artillery, takes to the streets of Abu al Khasib on the British Army's first bicycle patrol in Iraq. The battery has been stationed in the area for several weeks and is making a strong effort to become involved with local citizens.

To make themselves more accessible, the soldiers have exchanged their Land Rovers for locally-hired bikes. Gnr Walsh, who was accompanied for much of his patrol by energetic youngsters, described the transport method as "good fun, but a bit warm".

For another picture of the bicycling gunners see Pages 8-9.

● From gunline to peace line – see Pages 16-17

Picture: Capt Angus Beaton



"OK, what have we got to lose? We've tried everything else." – Britain's war-winning wagon, Pages 4-5

In this issue

... of your award-winning magazine

Mission in Iraq

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- 15 2nd Royal Tank Regiment; 28 Engineer Regiment
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- 21 Temporary camps will provide homes from home
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Red hot: Lt Ed Smith DWR blasts a hole in the Royal Navy defence at Twickenham during the Army's stunning 52-16 victory. Full report and more pictures on Pages 46-47.

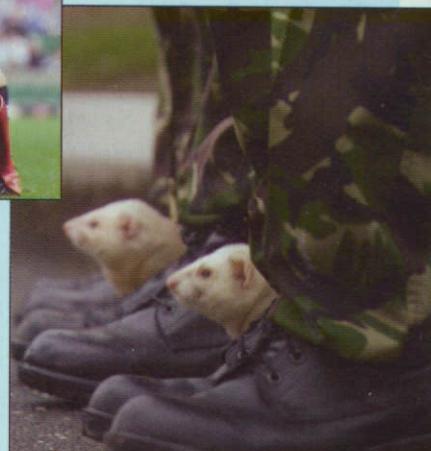
29 Around Northern Ireland

39 Regt RA; 1 PWO's mascots; Army dogs at sea

33 Tribute to Scotland's brave

Memorial garden is labour of love for ex-Para

Eyes front: Imphal and Quebec, two new recruits to the 1st Battalion, The Prince of Wales's Own Regiment of Yorkshire, go on parade at Omagh, Northern Ireland. Find out why on Page 30.



34 Terriers in Kabul's front line

Volunteers play full part in Afghanistan operation



38 My Army: John Simpson

Journalist's many encounters with military

40 Highlanders in Bosnia

Major weapons cache gets tour off to a good start

PLUS

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Britain's 'war-winning wagon'

Challenger 2 restores its reputation as the best battlefield tank in the world by exorcising demons of Saif Sareea in the heat and dust of the Iraqi desert

Report: Andy Simms
Picture: Mike Weston

IN the wake of Exercise Saif Sareea 2 headlines bemoaning the performance of the British Army's main battle tank and its suitability to desert warfare were rife.

Two years, and a resounding coalition victory in the heat and dust of Iraq later, such negative press coverage is noticeable only by its absence.

Why? Because, equipped with modified air filters and reinforced armour, Challenger 2's return to the desert could not have gone better.

Weighing in at 62 tonnes and capable of firing eight armour-piercing shells in under a minute at a range of two miles, Challenger enjoyed a problem-free campaign, silencing any lingering critics and restoring its reputation as the best battlefield tank in the world.

Throughout the Gulf crisis British soldiers repeatedly proved the five-year-old tank's effectiveness in desert terrain and demonstrated its war-fighting prowess.

Cavalrymen from C Squadron, The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards showcased Challenger 2's manoeuvrability and awesome firepower on March 27 when they were tasked with engaging a column of Soviet-built T55 tanks heading in the direction of Royal Marines guarding an oilfield on the Al Faw peninsula.

Leaving the rest of their battle-group on the outskirts of Iraq's second city, the 14-tank squadron crossed the tidal Basra canal on an M3 ferry rig constructed by sappers of 23 Amphibious Squadron, 28 Engineer Regiment (see Page 15), and charged over treacherous marshland towards the Iraqi contingent, which also numbered 14 tanks.

Despite the numerical parity of the opposing forces, the battle, which is credited as being the British Army's biggest tank engagement since the Second World War, was short-lived. Challenger's spe-

‘There were 14 of their tanks and 14 of ours. It was an away game and the final score was 14-0’

cially stabilised gun, which is able to lock on to enemy armour and engage on the move, was put to good use as the Scots Dragoon Guards obliterated the Iraqi formation with a barrage of 120mm Charr 3 shells and returned to their colleagues unscathed. Reflecting on the one-sided

nature of the battle, a senior British military spokesman said: “There were 14 of theirs and 14 of ours. It was an away game and the final score was 14-0.”

However, Challenger 2 did not just win plaudits for its offensive capabilities. Desert Rats commander Brig Graham



Winning ways: Endurance, a Challenger 2 of Egypt Squadron, 2nd Royal Tank Regiment guarding a road junction just outside Al Zubayr in southern Iraq. It was crewed by Sgt John Pope, commander; LCpl James Hamblin, operator; Tpr James Monaghan, gunner; and Tpr Carl Thomas, driver.

● 2 RTR first into Basra – see Page 15

Binns told *Soldier* how the protection offered by Challenger had given his men the confidence to push hard and take risks, a factor that had resulted in the rapid collapse of resistance in Basra.

Among the four-man crews grateful to be surrounded by the tank's armour,

which had been upgraded especially for Operation Telic, were soldiers from B Squadron, The Queen's Royal Lancers, who encountered fierce fighting on the bridges that span the Shatt al'Basra (see Page 18). “When we first arrived at bridge two we were left in no doubt that this was

a live situation and no longer just another training exercise,” explained crew commander Capt Ben Horne.

“There were rounds landing all around us and it was as if there were hot rocks falling from the sky.

“Initially we were taking out tanks at distance, but after that we were engaging groups of militia with RPGs (rocket-propelled grenades) from no more than 300 metres away.”

Despite their close proximity to the enemy, Capt Horne insists that he and his crew felt at ease inside their heavily-armoured Challenger.

“I have been amazed by the performance of the tanks out here,” he continued. “You only had to look at them once they were despatched to realise that they were going to work, and work well. They really are a war-winning wagon.”

“Most of the Challengers in theatre have taken small arms and RPG fire, but as long as the rounds hit the main body of the tank those inside have been perfectly safe.”

“Even if the Iraqis had got lucky and hit a track then it might have caused some slight damage, but the worst they could have done was immobilise us.”

The commander's supreme faith in Challenger was also shared by his operator, Cpl Barry Brookhouse.

“The first time we experienced an incoming bombardment it was fairly scary, but as soon as I took stock and realised that even if a round hit the tank it was not going to do much damage, I felt perfectly safe,” he said.

“At times it felt like David versus Goliath up on bridge two, with us being Goliath. It must have been so frustrating for the Iraqi RPG teams to hit a tank and see it cause no damage at all.”

“There have been a few incidents where rounds have hit tanks and lodged in the armour without even detonating, and shots that have done little more than just chip the paint work.”

● Dickie's view – Page 3



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Service with a smile: Sgt Edward Arnold AGC plays with children at a school in the southern port of Umm Qasr after giving them toys collected in Winchester and Grimsby. He was helped by Pte Dave Marshall, also AGC attached to 23 Pioneer Regiment RLC. The toy project was the idea of Sgt Arnold's nine-year-old daughter, Jemma Louise.

Picture: Cpl Dave Liddle RLC

Mech Brigade to relieve Iraq units

WITH coalition forces now concentrating on stabilisation operations in Iraq, several units have been withdrawn to their bases in the UK and Germany. HQ 3 (UK) Division and 19 Mechanized Brigade are to relieve on July 3 those involved in combat.

Among the units going home are the 2nd Royal Tank Regiment and the 1st Battalion, The Royal Irish Regiment and elements of 26 Regiment RA, 38 Engineer Regiment, the 1st Battalion, The Light Infantry and individuals attached to a variety of units and formations.

As this issue went to press 3,500 personnel had or were

being sent home, leaving more than 25,000 British Servicemen and women in the region.

Defence Secretary Geoff Hoon has said up to 1,200 more reservists are to be mobilised, although the number required in Iraq is set to drop significantly and those returning home will be demobilised.

The tour of the 1st Battalion, The Duke of Wellington's regiment has been extended from one to four months so it can continue its key security role in the Az Zubayr region, and about 1,500 personnel are to redeploy to Iraq as part of a roulement, including 2 RTR and elements of 26 Regt RA, 38 Engr Regt and 1 LI.

Royal Marines of 3 Commando Brigade were pulled out last month and many warships had left or were leaving the Gulf, including HM ships *Ark Royal*, *York*, *Ocean* and *Edinburgh*, and Royal Fleet Auxiliary vessels.

Many Royal Air Force aircraft had also been withdrawn.

- The HQ 3 (UK) Div-led force will comprise HQ 102 Log Bde, 2 RTR, 1 R Irish, 1 GS Regt RLC, Pathfinder Platoon, 16 Air Asslt Bde and 204 Sig Sqn.

It will include elements from 1 (UK) Armd Div and Sig Regt, 1 LI, 26 Regt RA, 36 and 38 Engr Regts, 2 CS Regt RLC, 23 Pnr Regt RLC, 17 Port and Maritime Regt RLC, 3 CS and 5 GS Med Regts, 2 and 30 Sig Regts, 1 and 2 Mil Int Battalions and tactical air controllers.

ROUTINE
patrolling by
coalition

forces in the port of Umm Qasr ceased on May 15 when authority was handed over to a municipal council by Lt Col Peter Jones, CO 23 Pioneer Regiment. His soldiers had been involved in running the town.

The Queen's Division's Normandy Band, attached to 34 Field Hospital on medical duties, played at the ceremony. The rail line

Port back in Iraqi hands

from Umm Qasr, entry point for

humanitarian aid and supplies, to Basra reopened on April 19 after sappers and 17 Port and Maritime Regiment RLC helped Iraqi engineers to repair track and locate rolling stock. British forces have also delivered fuel to Al Amarah. Although less than half the city's requirements, it is more than it was getting under Saddam's regime.

Returning troops to be monitored

TROOPS returning from Iraq are to be monitored for both physical and psychological health.

Veterans' Minister Dr Lewis Moonie announced that measures were being put in place to monitor the health of personnel returning from the Gulf and to investigate quickly any concerns they had.

The programme will include:

- A sample of up to 50 face-to-face interviews after personnel have returned from leave. These will inform a post-conflict medical questionnaire to be developed by King's College, London.

- Researchers will issue the questionnaire, seeking data on physical and psychological health, to a representative group, military and civilian. For comparison, it will also be issued to people who did not deploy.

- Once data is analysed, King's College will carry out any clinical investigations considered necessary.

- All Regulars and reservists and MoD civilians who deployed will be able to attend a specialist medical assessment programme run by MoD at St Thomas's Hospital on referral by their doctor.

- All deployed personnel entitled to urine test for depleted uranium. Those who have had exposure are positively encouraged to do so.

Landmine kills REME mechanic near Basra

LCPL James McCue, 27, a vehicle mechanic with 7 Air Assault Battalion REME, died following a landmine explosion at the Qalat Salih airbase, 70 miles north of Basra. Based with 16 Air Assault Brigade at Colchester, the former Scottish junior sprinter was buried with full military honours last month in his home town of Paisley, Renfrewshire.

- Pte Andrew Kelly, 18, of the 3rd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment, died at Basra on May 6 in a suspected shooting accident in barracks. He was the 34th British Serviceman to die during Operation Telic.

Gen Walker in top job



GEN Sir Michael Walker, left, took over the post of Chief of the Defence Staff from Admiral Sir Michael Boyce on May 2. Gen Walker was previously Chief of the General Staff, an appointment he handed to Gen Sir Mike Jackson at the end of January.

Return to Wales



Home base: Watched by RSM Adrian Davies, soldiers of the 1st Battalion, Welsh Guards raise their regimental flag for the first time at their new home at RAF St Athan in the Vale of Glamorgan. It is the first time since the formation of the regiment in 1915 that it has been based in Wales. Until recently the 1st Battalion was stationed at Bruneval Barracks in Aldershot.

The flag-raising was watched by commanding officer Lt Col Robert Talbot Rice and Wg Cdr Sam Ulhaq, commander of RAF St Athan station.

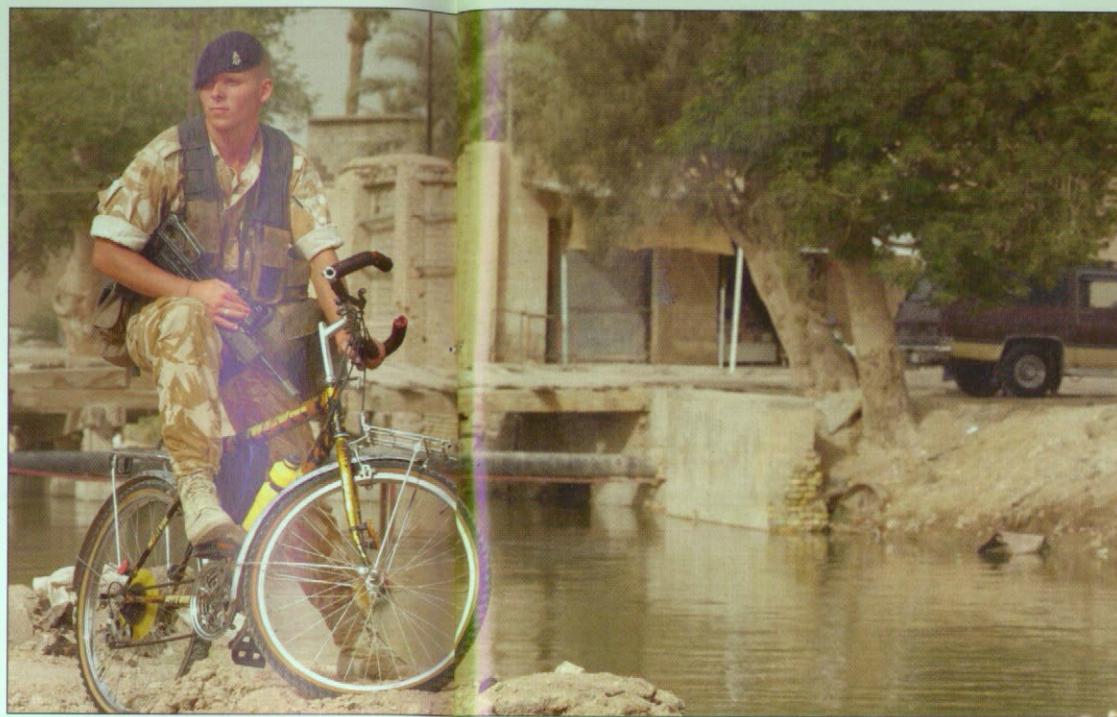
"I am delighted that after 80-plus years the Welsh Guards have come home to Wales," said Lt Col Talbot Rice. "It is terrific news for both families and soldiers and, I hope, the local community. It has already helped us to retain soldiers in the regiment and I am sure it will help our recruiting efforts over many years."

Cyprus units thanked for Iraq support

BRITISH Forces based in Cyprus have been thanked for their "amazing effort" in support of coalition operations in Iraq.

Air Marshal Brian Burridge, the UK National Contingent Commander in the Gulf, stopped off on the island on his way home to thank and congratulate the thousands of Servicemen and women for their efforts.

His two-day visit included tours of military bases in the Western and Eastern Sovereign Base Areas, and he made speeches of thanks at RAF Akrotiri and the Joint Service Signals Unit at Ayios Nikolaos, both central to Cyprus's role. "I know it meant long hours, hard work and quite a lot of disruption to family life and I am very proud of your performance," he said.



Friendly face of saddle soldiers

Bike break: Gnr Danny McCarthy, pauses during a two-wheeled patrol round Abu al Khasib in southern Iraq.

He and other members of the 3rd Regiment, Royal Horse Artillery based in the town have adopted the bikes, hired locally, as a means of making themselves more accessible and less threatening to local people.

Picture: Capt Angus Beaton

Built for the job: The first Wedgewood EOD vehicle arrives at Didcot



EOD unveils new wheels

BOMB disposal squads should have no trouble keeping up with traffic in 150 bespoke Wedgewood vehicles built for EOD teams in the UK and abroad.

LCpl Nick Burton of Didcot-based 11 EOD Regiment RLC, the first unit to receive the vehicle, said it handled

better than the van it was replacing. "With speeds of up to 70mph, compared with what previously felt like 20mph top whack, we can keep up with other traffic now," he said. "It's got better traction and better tyres. The truck has been built around the job this time."

The Wedgewood is a commercial DAF truck on an LF 45 chassis, modified for its specialist military role. To mark the hand-over at Didcot, a picture of the vehicle was presented by Combat Support Vehicles Light team leader Col Carew Wilks to Ed Hunter, of Penman Engineering Ltd, which won the £14 million contract.

High-mobility vehicles were delivered to 11 Regiment teams in Iraq just three weeks after approval had been given.

● Kitstop is on Page 73

Slam cuts in on schedule at air station

WORK on the first of the Army's Project Slam single-living accommodation sites is to start on schedule.

Brig Richard Folkes, Director of Aviation, cut the first sod on ground at Middle Wallop which will boast an 82-bedspace complex when it is completed in March next year. It is

the first of 100 at 52 sites across the country. Project Slam – an acronym for single-living accommodation modernisation – will eventually deliver 16,000 predominantly single *en suite* bedrooms over a five-year period.

Balfour Beatty has been confirm-

ed as prime contractor for major accommodation projects at Marchwood and Thorney Island. The latter will include a new workshop, battery buildings and gym for 47 Regiment RA, which is to have an additional airmobile battery.

● Horror block to be Slam-ed – Page 73

IN BRIEF

- The reappointment of Lord Naren Patel of Dunkeld to the Armed Forces Pay Review Body for a second three-year term has been confirmed. The post is unpaid. The pay body advises the Prime Minister on Service remuneration and charges.



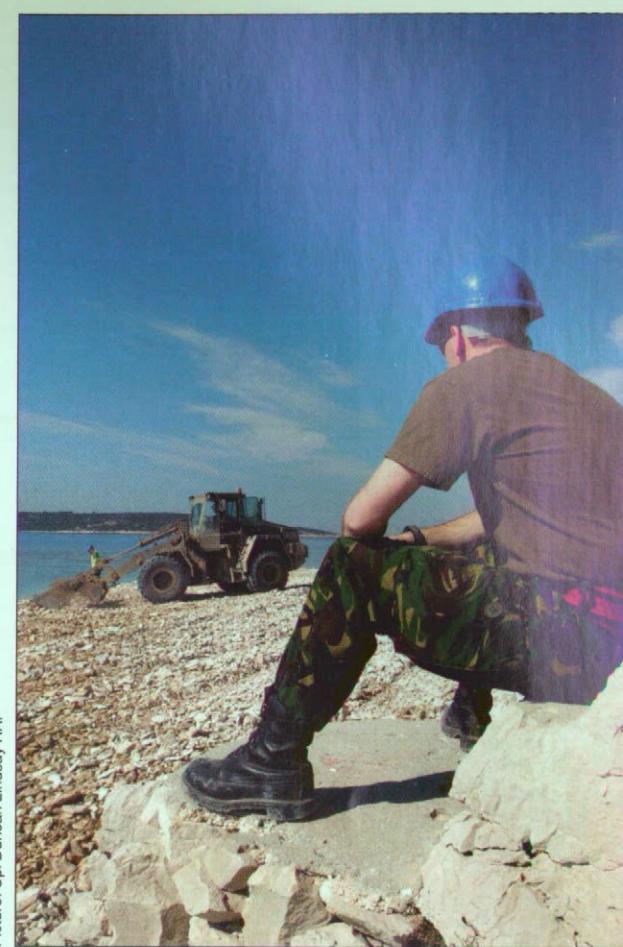
- Groovycide, the Gütersloh-based rock band formed by members of 1 Regiment AAC, pictured left, has signed to independent London-based Matchbox Recordings. Their first album is expected to be

available at the end of this month. The band was featured in *Soldier* last September. More details at www.groovycide.com

- Eight teams of gunners from 34 (Seringapatam) Battery RA, 14th Regiment RA at Larkhill, will be staging a march-and-shoot event on Salisbury Plain on June 12 to raise money for the British Limbless Ex-Servicemen's Association.

- The Army has a new postie unit – 30 Postal and Courier Squadron RLC, part of 24 Regiment RLC based at Bielefeld in Germany, was formed on April 1. It will support 102 Logistic Brigade.

I'm a beach-builder



Picture: Cpl Duncan Lindsay RAF

Sea view: Work on the Brac beach goes ahead

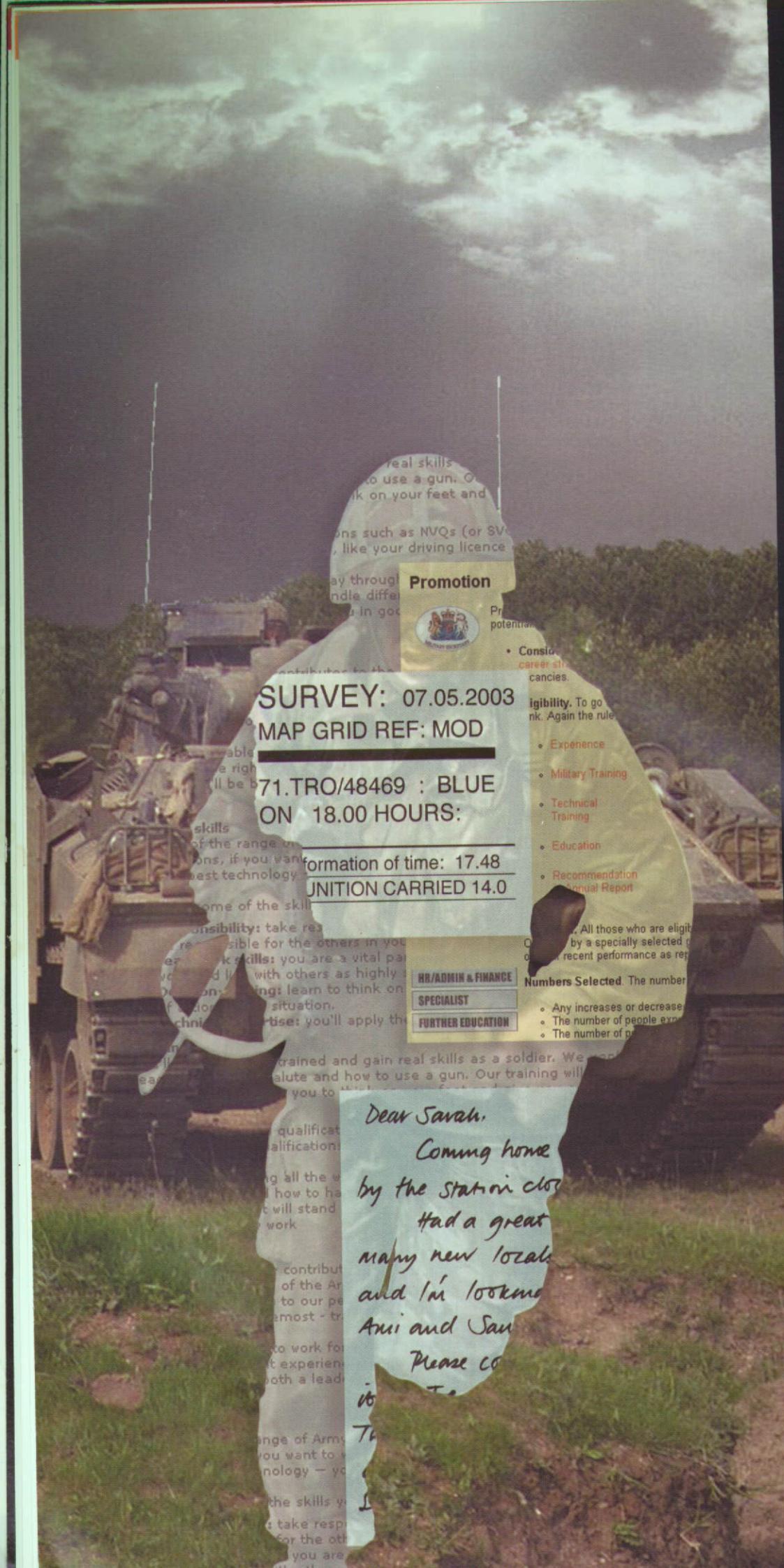
Dog troop job goes down a treat on Brac

WHEN a tough job needed doing on the Dalmatian Coast, there was only one unit to turn to – Dog Squadron, otherwise known as 3 (Support) Troop, 1st Armoured Engineer Squadron, 21 Engineer Regiment.

Their mission: to extend the beach at Povlja on the Croatian island of Brac.

Following a plea from the cash-strapped local tourist board, the sappers moved in for a few days beside the seaside as their six-month tour in the Balkans was coming to an end. Permission was given because the village is home to a British Army adventurous training centre and extending the beach was very much in its interests. The centre caters for British troops serving all over the region and water sports are a speciality.

Using a self-loading dump truck, medium-wheeled tractor and a light-equipment transporter, the sappers shifted 1,000 cu m of stone from a local quarry to the shoreline, allowing the seasonal *bura* wind to distribute it evenly along the seafront.



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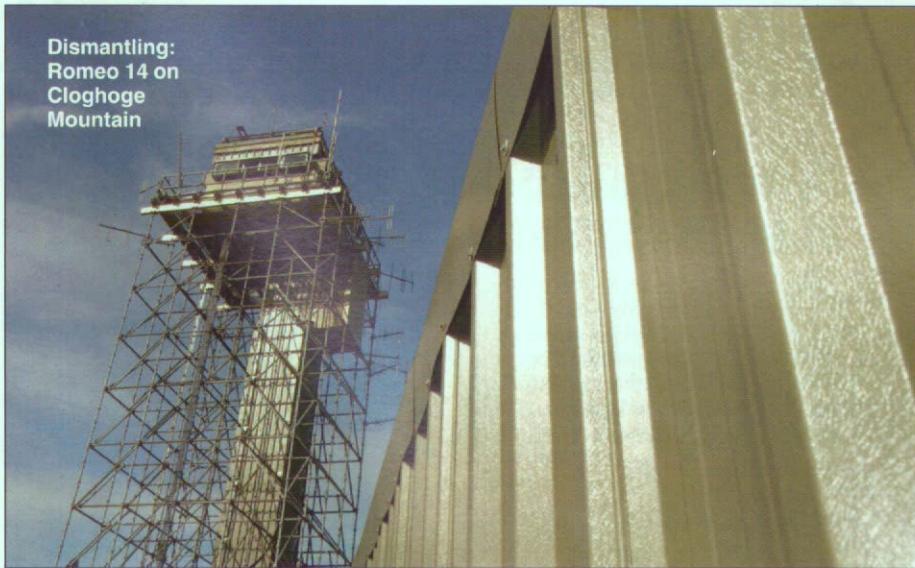
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and I'm looking
Anni and Sam
Please co
it to me
The



Glad that's over: Twelve soldiers of 12th Mechanized Brigade HQ and Signal Squadron (228) run up Hospital Hill, Aldershot at the end of an epic two-week marathon from Kosovo back to their home base. With three RAF runners, they covered 1,800 miles in relay, starting at Pristina and taking in Macedonia, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Austria, Germany, Belgium and France on the way to the ferry from Calais to Dover (they used rowing machines to "row" across the Channel). Squadron officer Capt Ian Rodger, the man behind the project, said it had been a physical but enjoyable challenge. The runners, who had been deployed in Kosovo, raised money for Mutual Support, a tri-Service charity which helps Servicemen and women suffering from Multiple Sclerosis, and the Aldershot branch of Mencap. Picture: Steve Dock



Going, going . . .

SAPPERS are demolishing two more Army hilltop bases in South Armagh as part of the Province's normalisation process.

Initial work on Romeo 14 on Cloghoge Mountain, 1.5km south of Newry, and Romeo 23 at Tievecrom, 500m east of Forkhill, will be done by 25 Engineer Regiment based in Antrim and is expected to last for six months. It will take another year for the sites to be restored to green field condition.

Maj Laurence Quinn, officer commanding 43 HQ and Support Squadron, 25

Engr Regt, said: "The operation will involve the dismantling and removal of hundreds of tonnes of equipment and material, including metal and concrete, from the two bases."

The demolition will leave eight observation posts at six hilltop locations in South Armagh. Three others have already been pulled down. Among the last soldiers to be based in the two towers will be men of the 1st Battalion, The Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment, currently on a six-month tour of Northern Ireland.

Paper talk

What the Press has been saying

● Paschal Nicolaou was among the first Greek Cypriots to cross the Green Line in Nicosia after the Turkish Cypriot authorities decided to allow movement across the island for the first time in three decades. — *Daily Telegraph*

● A non-lethal landmine that disables intruders with a 50,000-volt shock has been developed by an American company. — *Times*

● Half of the 500 members of the Armed Forces reservist field hospital are ready to quit after being told that they will have to stay in Iraq until September while Regular field hospitals come home. — *Daily Telegraph*

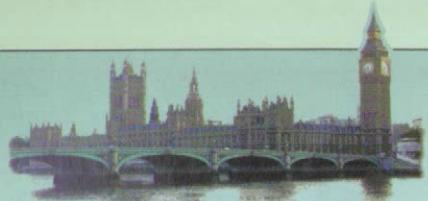
● British soldiers and their dependants who have suffered injuries through negligence by German hospitals caring for them under contracts with the Ministry of Defence have been barred from suing the MoD, a High Court test case has ruled. Their only redress is to claim compensation in the German courts against the hospital. — *Guardian*

● A British soldier has won his claim for an Army pension after a tribunal accepted that a link existed between his medical condition and Gulf War syndrome. The ruling could help hundreds of other Servicemen win compensation.

Alex Izett, 33, a former lance corporal with the Royal Engineers, described the judgement by the War Pensions Appeal Tribunal as a "watershed" in the battle to have Gulf War syndrome officially recognised. The MoD does not agree with the tribunal's finding but cannot appeal on any point of law. — *Independent*

● France, Germany, Belgium and Luxembourg have vowed to press ahead with a fully-fledged defence union, brushing aside warnings that the move would entrench the European Union's bitter divisions over Iraq and could lead to the break-up of Nato. — *Daily Telegraph*

● Jade Goody, 21, who stunned *Big Brother* viewers with her daft remarks — she believed East Anglia was a foreign country — is staying with *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?* cheat Maj Charles Ingram for a new "celebrity" series of Channel 4's *Wife Swap* reality programme. — *Daily Telegraph*



Under Big Ben

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

Rifle did 'well' according to early reports

EARLY indications are that the SA80 A2 rifle did "well overall" during the war in Iraq.

In a written answer to a question on the weapon's performance, Armed Forces Minister Adam Ingram said it would be premature to provide a detailed assessment until post-operational analysis was complete. But he added that early indications suggested the rifle had performed well overall.

Iraq medal: A decision on whether to award a campaign medal to British Armed Forces serving as members of the coalition forces in Iraq will not be made until the primary objectives have been completed, Dr Moonie said in a written answer. When the case was considered it would take into account the eligibility of those evacuated prematurely from the Gulf on medical grounds.

And I quote . . .

There are no set criteria for deciding when a homecoming or victory parade is appropriate. By the nature of the operations which they are designed to commemorate the opportunities are few and far between and each case is therefore considered carefully in the light of the prevailing circumstances. — Defence Minister Dr Lewis Moonie

International Development, responsible for providing political and development advice.

The PRT will be separate to the International Security Assistance Force (Isaf) in Kabul, to which the UK currently contributes 340 troops. Britain's commitment to Isaf is due to end later this summer, although the UK is expected "to remain a significant troop contributor" when a Nato headquarters deploys in August as part of a packet of measures to enhance its support to Isaf.

Animal fur: In a written answer, Mr Ingram said that in the past ten years two Scandinavian blue fox and 42 coney "products" had been bought by the MoD for use in busby headgear. In the same period, 60 black bear products had gone into the making of bearskins and five into saddle covers.

Recruiting: After 11 months of the financial year 2002-03 the number of new recruits to the Armed Forces had reached 24,290, representing 96 per cent of the overall target.

Cliffhanging Highlanders

TWO soldiers of the 1st Battalion, The Highlanders had a miraculous escape when an articulated lorry travelling towards them on the wrong side of the road smashed into their Land Rover on a mountainous road out of Mrkonjic Grad in Bosnia.

LCpl Samuela Natunivalu, the driver, was familiar with the stretch of road, which is flanked by towering cliffs on one side and a vertical drop to a swiftly-flowing river on the other.

"I saw him coming round the bend about 30ft away," he said. "I just had time to slam on the brakes before it seemed like the cab came straight over the front of our vehicle. Next thing I knew we were hanging over the edge of the cliff."

LCpl Natunivalu escaped the worst of the impact while his passenger, Cpl Scott Baird, suffered broken ribs and a nasty crack on the head. Soon colleagues were soon on the scene to evacuate the two men, whose vehicle had been spun round and left dangling by two wheels over the cliff-edge.

• Highlanders in Bosnia – centre pages



Lucky lads : LCpl Samuela Natunivalu, left, and Cpl Scott Baird

Sharpshooters hit the spot



Watch your front: Action in the falling plates event

Afghanistan: Up to 50 British troops will lead a UK initiative to rebuild the infrastructure of a northern Afghan province. The military-led provincial reconstruction team (PRT) will deploy, initially for two years, to the northern city of Mazar-e-Sharif. It will include civilian staff from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department for International Development, responsible for providing political and development advice.

The five-day event attracted more than 500 Regular and Territorial Army competitors.

Sappers, loggers, signallers, REME and AGC soldiers pitted their firearm skills in a combination of individual and team matches using the Service rifle, pistol and light-support weapon.

Maj Nick Moore REME, secretary of the meeting, said: "Competitors leave the event more comfortable in the use of their personal weapon and will have confidence in it when on future operations."

Regular Army rifle results

Overall rifle champion: Maj Roberts RLC; RE: Cpl Griffiths, 38 Engr Regt; R Signals: SSgt Copley, 280 Sig Sqn; RLC: Maj Roberts, ARRC Spt Bn; REME: SSgt Swan,

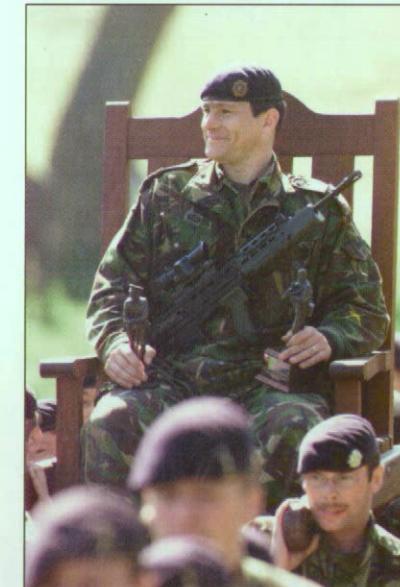
9 Supply Regt Wkps; AGC: Sgt Brown, Chilwell Station.

TA rifle results

Overall rifle champion: WO2 O'Mahoney, 118 Rec Coy REME (V); RE: SSgt Quilliam, CVHQ RE; R Signals: Sig Devlin, 39 Sig Regt (V); RLC: Sgt Howard, 151 Regt RLC (V); REME: WO2 O'Mahoney, 118 Rec Coy (V).

Inter-corps team match results

Rifle match: R Signals; falling plate: RLC; combat snap: REME. TA falling plate: RE.



Overall rifle champion: Maj Danny Roberts RLC is chaired away by his colleagues from ARRC Spt Battalion

We're celebrating



Mixed bunch: Some of the many capbadges to be seen at the 4th Battalion, ITC (C), Catterick

One-year-old battalion has birthday bash

THE ARMY's youngest battalion, the 4th Battalion, Infantry Training Centre (Catterick), has celebrated its first birthday.

The 500-strong unit, formed last May following the reorganisation of the ITC, provides administrative and supportive elements for the three infantry training battalions based at the North Yorkshire garrison.

Although its headquarters, rehabilitation and discharge companies are at Catterick, its influence extends the length and breadth of the country, incorporating the Army School of Ceremonial and the All-Arms Drill Wing at Pirbright, the Army School of Bagpipes and Highland Drumming in Edinburgh and the Adventure Training Unit at Lancaster.

As the picture above shows, the 4th Battalion boasts a cross-section of capbadges.

County tribute to Fresco sappers

LANCASHIRE Police have paid tribute to 21 Engineer Regiment's "outstanding service" in the county during the firefighters' strikes with the presentation of a rarely awarded plaque.

The Lancashire Major Incident Co-ordinating Group at Police HQ in Preston awarded its Lancashire Plaque in recognition of the Osnabrück-based regiment's six months of providing a professional and efficient life-saving service to the county during Operation Fresco. Commanding officer Lt Col Jim Bowden collected the award.

The regiment also received a Lancashire fire and rescue plaque in appreciation of its work during the dispute. The county command centre received 773 emergency calls, of which 21 Engr Regt responded to 434.

National Service tribute dedicated

A MEMORIAL to all National Servicemen and those who made the supreme sacrifice is to be dedicated on National Service Day – June 29 – at the National Arboretum at Alrewas, Staffordshire.



Designed by Ian H Stewart, the memorial, right, comprises four green granite wings rising 6ft to support a stainless steel crown. Four bronze castings of the obverse design of the commemorative National Service medal are mounted on the 5in-thick granite base. It is to be unveiled by Maj Gen (Retd) B M Bowen.

Managing the estate

THE Defence Estates Agency is to take over responsibility for the delivery of all MoD estate management services. It will plan estate maintenance and new building works for the Army, Royal Navy, Royal Air Force, Defence Logistics, Defence Procurement Agency and Permanent Joint Headquarters.

IN BRIEF

• Army families in Aldershot, Catterick, Donnington and Edinburgh garrisons will have the use of four new minibuses donated by the Army Benevolent Fund. Leased from Lex Defence, they will be used primarily for children and families requiring transport support, from regular trips to and from school to scout and wives' club outings.

• Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, The Cheshire Regiment cycled the Great Wall of China, rowed the length of the Nile and ran across the Sahara to raise £4,000 for the Army Benevolent Fund . . . and all without leaving the relative comfort of their gym. The Cheshires totted up the miles while on operations in Northern Ireland.

• Army cadets in Cambridgeshire came up trumps when the Union Flag was stolen from outside the Royal British Legion at March. The local ACF detachment promptly stepped in and replaced it. Detachment commander Lt David Barrett said: "Our links with the RBL have always been strong and this gesture has been well received."

• Jubilee House, a temporary refuge at RAF Digby, Lincoln, for separated or divorced Service personnel, has been officially opened. The tri-Service project has four bedrooms and may be used as short-term accommodation by personnel who have family and friends visiting, or during march-outs. Enquiries and bookings on 01526 323735.

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Tanks first into Basra

Role of 2 RTR in battle for second city 'ignored', says troop leader

THE leading part played by the 2nd Royal Tank Regiment in the battle for Basra was described in a letter to the *Daily Telegraph* by a troop leader concerned his men had not received due credit for their actions.

Lt David Pinkstone, 9 Troop leader, Egypt Squadron, 2 RTR, detached to the Black Watch battle-group, said the squadron's Challenger 2 tanks had led the entrance into Basra on April 6.

Responding to a report of the action in the *Telegraph* the following day, Lt Pinkstone said it was his tank "that encountered the minefield, a lorry across the road (also mined) and the two bunkers and T55 tank".

His letter went on: "Our squadron, after destroying these enemy positions, advanced into Basra, destroying the Ba'ath HQ before securing various military compounds. The remainder of the Black Watch battle-group

followed up to clear the compounds. Only then did elements of the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards and Fusiliers enter the city. They did not lead the operation, as you reported.

"I understand that the information you had access to was not perfect. However, I do feel strongly on this: the squadron was ignored a number of times in the war. It performed with such measured professionalism on April 6 that it is very disheartening to see others

● **Soldier's coverage of the war** contained no reference to 2 RTR and several other 7 Armoured Brigade elements for the simple reason that our reporting team was prevented from doing so by the mechanics of the "embedding" process. This despite two formal requests for access to the Desert

receive the praise, although I obviously do not want to take anything away from the Scots Dragoon Guards and the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, who were also involved.

"I hope I do not come across as a whinger, but having sat on the road into Basra being hit by RPGs and small arms and having experienced the emotions we did on entering the city first, I hope you understand my position. Thank you for your support."

Rats. We were unable to obtain reliable copy from any other source.

Our descriptions of the Scots DG coming under mortar fire outside Basra ("One hell of a morning", May) was gathered during a brief facility arranged by media operations staff several days before 2 RTR led the way into the city.

M3 is the way to go

Hameln sappers build first ferry crossing to be used on ops

SAPPERS from 3 Troop, 23 Amphibious Squadron, part of 28 Engineer Regiment, constructed the first-ever operational M3 ferry crossing to ensure the advance of the Scots Dragoon Guards battle-group into Iraq was not held up.

The M3 rigs were subsequently in demand all over the operational theatre.

Hameln-based sappers, led by Lt Col Callum Skeat, were involved in the ground war from the opening moments, when WO1 (RSM) Ian Drummond led a reconnaissance party through the demilitarised zone and into Iraq in the early hours of March 21.

First task at the regiment's location in Iraq was the construction of a camp, security, hygiene facilities and route upgrades, achieved quickly under the direction of Maj Kevin Johnson, OC 64 HQ Sqn.

Immediate hazards included mines, small arms, anti-tank weapons and Iraqi tanks abandoned by fleeing soldiers or destroyed by coalition air attacks.



Scud alert: From left, WO1 (RSM) Ian Drummond, intelligence officer Capt John Roberts and adjutant Capt Tim Marsden respond to 28 Engineer Regiment's first missile alert in Kuwait

Another "first" for the sappers was the construction of a mission-critical 36m general support bridge to get vital assets across an obstacle. A quick phone call to the UK confirmed the design would allow Challenger 2 tanks to cross over.

Elsewhere, 28 Engr Regt sub-units worked tirelessly to build defensive positions, maintain and upgrade vital routes, dig deep latrines and complete the thousands of other tasks necessary to support an army on the move.

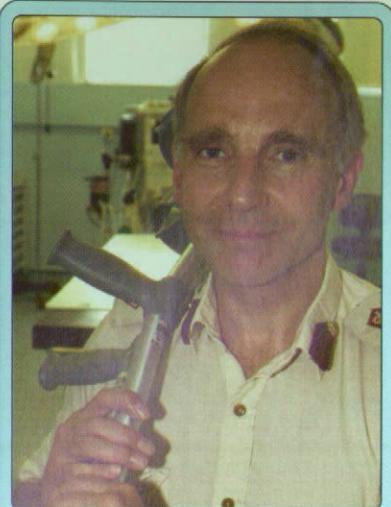
One unit, 29 Armd Engr Sqn under Maj David Casey, re-roled to a field

squadron just before the deployment and was heavily involved in equipment-denial inside Iraq. Enemy munitions, tanks, anti-aircraft guns and small arms were destroyed on the ground, with the sappers assisting bomb disposal experts from Wimbish-based 33 (EOD) Engineer Regiment to complete the assignments.

In the weeks leading up to the ground offensive, the regiment acclimatised and carried out low-level training in Kuwait. It moved into Camp Trident, which was constructed in the desert in less than two weeks by a pre-advance party of 12.

Featuring accommodation tents with floors and power, a central feeding block capable of taking 250 people at a sitting, four ablution blocks with ten showers to a block, and security bunding, the camp exceeded most newcomers' expectations.

The food was first-class, with two hot meals a day and an American MRE (meal ready to eat) for lunch. Up to 600 personnel from 28 Engr Regt and a further 150 from 33 (EOD) Engr Regt were catered for. Fresh fruit, yoghurts, bread, orange juice, salads, tea and coffee were provided every day and there was no sign of the food shortages reported at the time in newspapers in the UK.



Col Keith Galbraith Picture: Cpl Pete Mobbs

Surgeon hops into action

ARMY consultant surgeon Col Keith Galbraith was expecting to be called up for service in Iraq... until he sustained major knee ligament and cartilage damage during a family skiing trip just before Christmas, writes Lucy Halsall.

He was due to have an operation in February but put it off when a close friend and fellow medic asked him to consider flying to Cyprus to make available his surgical skills as the war began.

Col Galbraith, usually seconded to St Peter's Hospital at Chertsey and also on the strength of Frimley Park Hospital, said: "I decided to take the risk of some further damage because I felt that as there were thousands of men risking their lives, the last thing I should do was whinge about having some risk of permanent damage to my knee."

"My wife Sarah was initially quite flabbergasted by the idea that I would go on an operational tour, even to Cyprus, with such a bad and unstable injury. But she is a Gulf War veteran and so understood that there would be a lot of people taking greater risks."

Sarah, an ex-Army doctor, is head of the Medical Legal Section of the Army Medical Directorate.

Although limited by his lack of mobility, and having to rely on crutches and a brace, Col Galbraith dispensed with both while standing to perform operations at the Princess Mary's Hospital at RAF Akrotiri.

After a quiet start, the hospital began to receive a steady stream of military casualties from Iraq, involving operations seven days a week. "Some had bullet wounds," said Col Galbraith, "but most had multiple fragment wounds from mortars or grenades."

From gunline to peace line

After its mission of destruction, 3 RHA turns its attention to reconstruction

LITTLE more than nine weeks ago they were in the thick of battle, 45-tonne AS90 guns charging across the border and through the southern Iraq desert towards Basra. Today those same soldiers of the 3rd Regiment, Royal Horse Artillery are on peace-support operations.

Forward observers working with battle-groups called in artillery, air and aviation while under fire themselves. They destroyed the enemy in numbers and created the conditions for 7 Armoured Brigade to enter Basra.

The regiment logged 250km of operational movement, 17 days of continuous firing, during which 9,513 rounds were expended. Guns that could put 10,000lb

of high explosive and steel splinters onto an area the size of a football pitch in 15 seconds were in demand by everyone. The AS90s of 3 RHA fired for US forces, the commandos, the Paras and the Desert Rats.

Today the same soldiers have swapped their armoured vehicles for open Land Rovers and assault boats as they help the Iraqi people recover, not just from this conflict but from 20 years of war and tyranny.

They have adapted quickly to the infantry role and their main effort is maintaining a secure environment in a land where every house has an AK47. But they also ensure that humanitarian aid



Night action: AS90s of 3 RHA puncture the sky firing bomblet rounds from Basra international airport during the mission to take the city

gets through to those who need it and are helping re-establish the basic infrastructures of power, water, hospitals and roads.

It has required a flexible response. A month ago razor-sharp drills, aggression

and tenacity were required; now judgement, balance, understanding and compassion are needed. The soldiers have shown tremendous flexibility in switching roles seamlessly from firing AS90 to

patrolling the town's and countryside of the Al Faw peninsula.

Members of the regiment are split between Basra palace, Shirah airfield, Abualasaib and Al Faw.

Gunners' diary

This account of the part played by 17/16 Battery, 26 Regiment in the war in Iraq was compiled by Lt Helena Bevan and 2nd Lt Ben Watson. The unit arrived in theatre as the fourth battery of the 3rd Regiment, Royal Horse Artillery. All 500 members of the battery and its supporting elements have now returned to their base at Gütersloh.

THE plan was that 17/16 Battery should move north in support of 1 MAR Division (US Marines) and through the breach at H+3 hours. As with all plans it changed and on March 18 we moved east, confidence boosted by recently-issued beige kit, to join D Battery.

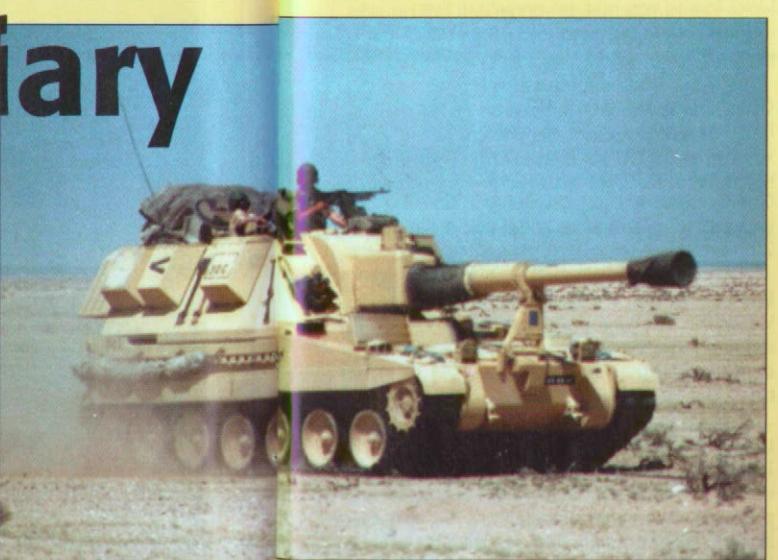
Our mission was to provide fire support for 15 MEU, an American all-arms formation, whose aim was to push into Iraq through Umm Qasr. It was an impressive sight to see our vehicle fleet on the move. Having been used to training with six guns, a command post and a few 432 armoured fighting vehicles, we were now at full war-fighting establishment.

On March 20, following Scud and Sam missile attacks, we moved toward our H-hour

firing position with eight AS90s, 12 432 AFVs, an armoured ambulance, a REME fitter section with recovery vehicle and 434, and a huge echelon consisting of 11 DROPS vehicles, two JCBs and other supporting vehicles.

H-hour – 0400 on March 21 – found us deployed a few kilometres south of the Iraq-Kuwaiti border firing HE and smoke in support of the Americans on to observation towers and police posts along the Iraqi border and into Umm Qasr.

We remained on the position that day firing sporadically and at nightfall moved through the breach. Evidence of former artillery and tank positions dotted the roadside, along with abandoned ammo and ramshackle shacks from which emerged smiling, waving locals.



Power play: An AS90 from 17/16 Battery makes tracks to a new position in Iraq

The battery move to its first position in Iraq involved a close encounter with a developing tank battle in which the recce party, led by Capt Charlie Holland, managed to get themselves embroiled. Luckily their Union flag was hoisted high and ensured their protection, and the incident yielded many good photographs. After waiting on the sidelines for the battle to end we deployed

through the remnants of the Iraqi vehicles to our next gun position just south of the town of At Tubah Al Hamra. We remained there for three days, firing in support of 7th Armoured Brigade as it engaged regular and irregular forces between Az Zubayr and Basra.

Our next location was the former military airport at Shaiyah. Reassuringly, it was surrounded by huge stone bunkers, which were used to house the brigade HQ. We also shared the airfield with Challenger tanks, armoured infantry, engineers and a battery of Phoenix from 32 Regiment RA.

From this position we fired large amounts of HE and bomblet into Basra and the surrounding area. Battle-damage assessments indicated that our use of the L20 bomblet round was highly effective, destroying dozens of tanks, mortars and enemy positions as well as aiding numerous forays and allied advances.

Great care was taken to ensure collateral damage was minimised. We also prosecuted a number of night gun raids to positions closer to Basra to take on targets that would otherwise have been out of range. The threat from rocket-propelled grenades in the area was high, which made road moves back to our base, in the early morning, unnerving.

This was compounded by evidence of former Iraqi positions, burnt-out tanks, artillery pieces, rubble and junk littering the area.

The guns rapidly won the confidence of

tank and infantry commanders. But we proved too noisy and were ordered to collocate with J Battery in a nearby factory compound to ensure HQ's slumber remained undisturbed. We made ourselves comfortable in the new surroundings and found ourselves hosting news teams from GMTV, Sky and the BBC.

Following the discovery of drums of chlorine on our position, 17/16 and J Battery rapidly relocated to an abandoned military detention centre on marshy ground 5km outside Basra. From there we fired more illuminating and bomblet missions as troops from 7th Armoured Brigade secured Basra.

Events moved swifter than anticipated and troops met with little resistance and much celebrating from civilians.

To the relief of the battery, orders were received to deploy out of our swamp to Basra international airport and from there to a position 70km north of Basra to work with 7 Para RHA in support of 16 Air Assault Brigade. But the threat melted away and we headed south again to rejoin 3 RHA and prepare for peacekeeping operations.

Our entrance into Basra was a humbling experience as people waved and cheered us and bashed at images of their former dictator with sticks and rocks. By mid-April the whole of 3 RHA was sharing the area of Basra University, where we conducted deep maintenance on the guns and awaited further orders.

backchat

Offbeat, weird, or just plain funny – we welcome your contributions

Raising hackles

MILITARY relationships with our American allies are obviously much closer than we thought.

While visiting the 1st Battalion in Iraq, Charles Moore, esteemed editor of *The Daily Telegraph*, was given an interesting explanation of why The Black Watch wear their famous red hackle.

"We patrol," he reported, "in an open vehicle with the reassuring presence of Sgt Slack, a huge Yorkshireman. He says Americans ask him about the hackles.

"We tell them the red ones mean you're homosexual and the red-and-white ones mean you're not sure."

And Backchat thought the right to wear the hackle was won in battle.

Sands run out for Times

WE mourn the passing, perhaps for ever, of *Sandy Times*, the weekly newsletter published in the Gulf for troops involved in operations against Iraq. The final issue hit camps in-theatre on May 4.

Conceived and first published during the 1990-91 war to liberate Kuwait, it ran to 25 issues before being put in suspended animation. The 2003 version – written, edited, designed and published by a small team in Qatar – ran for a further nine issues, from numbers 26 to 34.

As normality returns to Iraq, Service personnel should soon have access to more usual channels of information and entertainment. With Saddam Hussein finally deposed, there can be little chance of it making another comeback.

Any publicity is good...

WISER heads prevailed when an enthusiastic recruiter insisted his long-planned KAPE tour go ahead at the end of March.

He obviously hadn't appreciated that the wall-to-wall, in-your-face, 24-hour-a-day blanket television, radio and print coverage of the coalition advance into Iraq was doing a passably good job of keeping the Army in the Public Eye.

Sharp operator

A BOTTLE of fizzy water to the officer who went down with atropine poisoning on the first day of the war after injecting himself with his Combi-pen at the first cry of "Scud! Scud! Scud!"

His consolation prize was the £600-plus he collected from the kitty as the first member of the regiment to stab himself with the NBC antidote.

Warrior warriors

Desert Rats' armoured infantry recount the battle for the bridges of Basra

COALITION forces' control of the four bridges that span the expansive waters of the Shatt al'Basra canal to the south of Iraq's second city proved to be a key factor in the fall of Basra.

Providing the most direct routes into the southern suburbs, 7th Armoured Brigade's battle-groups regularly used the bridges to mount incursions and raids targeting pockets of resistance and during the final big push for control of Basra.

But the strategic importance of the robust concrete structures was not lost on Saddam's die-hard supporters in the city, who refused to let the British and American military take them unchallenged.

Soldiers from 1st Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers and 1st Battalion, Irish Guards were among the armoured infantry units charged with securing and holding the causeways under the threat of tank, mortar and small-arms fire.

Here are their recollections of the battle for the bridges of Basra.

Cpl Jason Thomas, Y Coy, 1 RRF

Even though it was my first fire-fight it is hard to remember any details because everything seemed to happen so quickly. It was a real buzz and to be honest fear really didn't play a big part because, like a lot of the lads, I was just relieved to actually be doing something.



LSgt Mick Welch, 1 RRF

When it was all happening I fell back on my training and automatically did what I needed to do. The main difference between war-fighting and training is that you have a fear inside you, but that is not a bad thing. Fear makes you sharper in everything you do.

Gdsm Ricky Banner, 1 IG

It was hairy time and it made us realise we were at war and that this was where the fighting was going to start. I kept asking to have a Challenger 2 by our side. Being in an APC was a bit nerve-racking and it was a case of 72 hours of wanting someone there next to us.



Fus Lee Wines, Y Coy, 1 RRF

When the mortar rounds came in I have never been so scared in my life. I'm glad we can look back and laugh about it now.



Cpl Maddar Maddar, 1 IG

I didn't fear for my own safety because I had complete faith in our equipment and the support that we had, especially from the tankies. All my skills and drills came to the fore and I just got on with the job in hand.

Fus Dan Moran, Z Coy, 1 RRF

Initially it was quite scary being in the back of the wagon, but once we were out on the ground it all came together. I found it exciting and it's certainly the sort of thing I joined up for.

Cpl Michael Farrier, Z Coy, 1 RRF

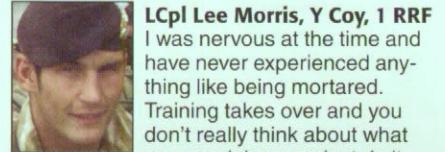
We were expecting trouble when we went up there and were prepared for it. The worst bit was not when we got out of the wagon but as



Fighting talk: From left are LSgt Michael Welch, Gdsm Ricky Banner, Gdsm Gavin Meers and LCpl Maddar Maddar, all Irish Guardsmen serving with the 1 RRF battle-group during the battle for Basra

Gdsm Gavin Meers, 1 IG

Being on the bridge was different from anything else I have experienced. The training kicks in and you just get on with it. I've enjoyed being out here and it's exactly what I joined the Army for.



LCpl Lee Morris, Y Coy, 1 RRF

I was nervous at the time and have never experienced anything like being mortared. Training takes over and you don't really think about what you are doing, you just do it instinctively. It's not till you sit back afterwards that you begin to analyse things in more detail.

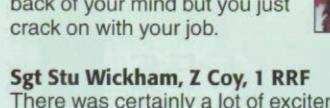
Fus Neil Watson, Z Coy, 1 RRF

It was my first experience of a fire-fight and I was quite scared when we de-bussed on the bridge, but after a short while adrenalin just took over. You can not compare it to training – nobody shoots back at you on an exercise.



Dmr Andrew Carr, Y Coy, 1 RRF

Being in a live situation is totally different from training – it is one hell of an experience and a complete adrenalin rush. Your personal safety is always at the back of your mind but you just crack on with your job.



Sgt Stu Wickham, Z Coy, 1 RRF

There was certainly a lot of excitement but it was tempered with nerves. There were a lot of young lads in my wagon and I was impressed and proud with the way they handled themselves under pressure.



Firefighters: From left, top, are Fus Dan Moran and Cpl Michael Farrier and, bottom, Fus Neil Watson and Sgt Stu Wickham, 1 RRF



Packman: LCpl Gary Blackall, above, of 11 GS Coy, 2 Bn REME, examines 432 power packs

Radio man: LCpl Robbie McRay, left, of Close Support Coy, 2 Bn REME stacks up Clansmen units awaiting repair

Mechanical masterclass

2nd Battalion REME kept British armour rolling to victory

AS commanding officer of 2nd Battalion REME, Lt Col John Henderson is a proud man, and well he should be.

Responsible for keeping the 7th Armoured Brigade moving on the road to victory in Iraq, his soldiers worked tirelessly to provide the Desert Rats with 95 per cent availability of vehicles throughout the conflict.

In the space of just six weeks the 500-strong battalion completed a remarkable 230 power pack changes, reconditioning the equivalent of a quarter of all Challenger 2s and half of all Warrior infantry fighting vehicles in-theatre.

"Our job is to deliver fit equipment to the troops and we have worked incredibly hard to do just that," said Lt Col Henderson.

"The first week of the conflict was frantic and we had every one of our close-support companies out working in the field, but at no stage did we have to tell someone 'sorry, we cannot do

this'. With the exception of that first week, the battalion has kept regeneration ahead of consumption and I am immensely proud of my soldiers for constantly being ahead of the game."

Despite the lengthy shifts endured by his troops, Lt Col Henderson insists that the battalion's heavy workload was to be expected.

"What you have to remember is that the equipment out here has been heavily used," he said. "The Challenger 2 is like a Formula One racing car, it is a complicated piece of kit, and as with any vehicle it needs to be serviced regularly.

"The up-armouring and dust mitigation measures have proved a phenomenal success, which proves that lessons were learned from Saif Sareea – and that is the way it should be. Challenger and Warrior have both held up magnificently out here and that is in part thanks to the professionalism of the crews, who have done their bit in looking after their vehicles."

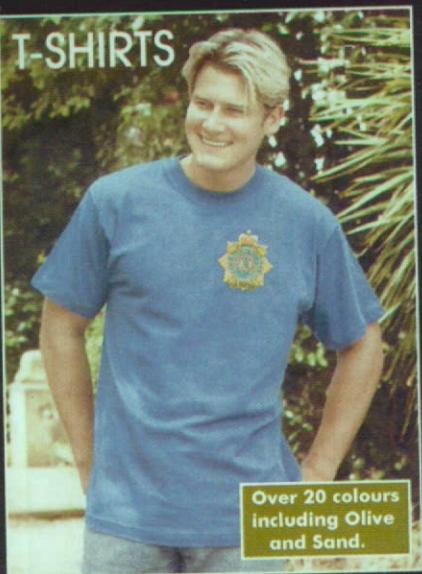
As well as keeping the British armour rolling, the battalion also kept soldiers talking out in the Gulf – repairing more than 2,000 pieces of telecommunication equipment.



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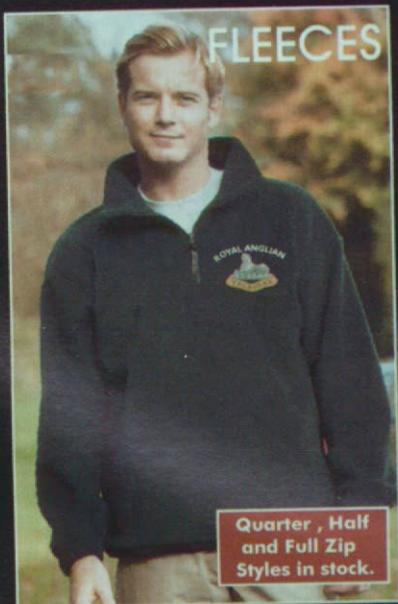


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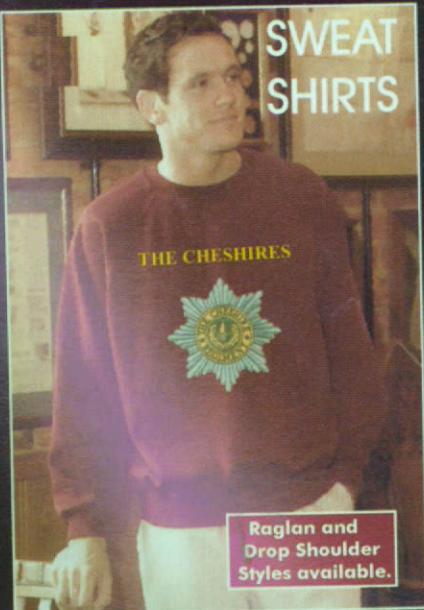
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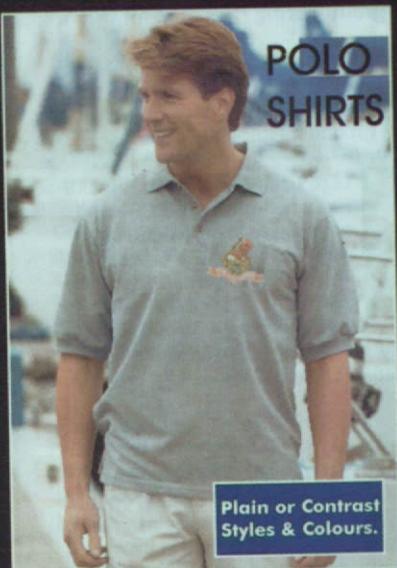
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In your space

A standard eight-man shelter, pictured, measures 6 x 8m, giving each occupant a 6 sq m space.

It is lined, has a groundsheet and flexible floor and can accommodate heating

and cooling equipment. Each comes with windows, fire alarms, emergency exits and standard-issue cots. Each bed space has a footlocker and a 240-volt power socket.

A surprisingly quiet air

conditioning unit can also be used as a heater.

The shelters are designed to be connected in rows along a series of spines with covered walkways. At the end of each spine ablutions, and

possibly even a laundry, are sited. There is more legroom inside the WC cubicles than that in Corimec lavatories in Bosnia and Kosovo, where soldiers find their knees braced against the door.

Home from home

First 500-man camp about to open in Iraq features new-style deployable shelters

Report: Ray Routledge
Pictures: Steve Dock

BRITISH troops in Iraq will soon be moving into new-style shelters in a 500-man camp near Umm Qasr.

Procurement of the temporary deployable accommodation (TDA), which has been in use with the US military for more than 25 years, was achieved in very short order as an urgent requirement for Operation Telic troops.

Soldier was given a preview of what soldiers can expect at the Defence Storage and Distribution Centre at Bicester.

Because the system, supplied by Leatherhead-based engineering company KBR, is still new to the Army, KBR engineers will construct the first four 500-man sites. The company is allowing 20 days for its people to build the first camp and train Royal Engineers, who will be ex-

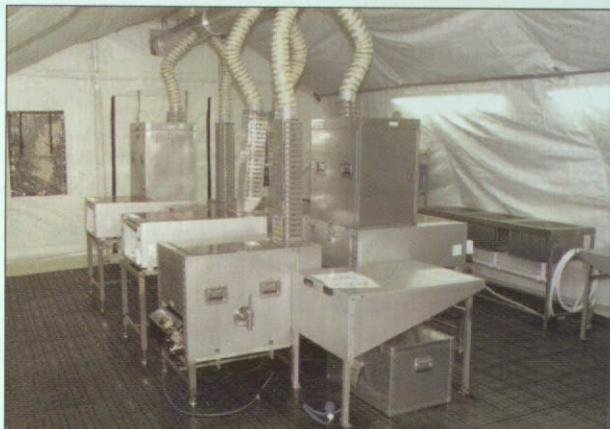
pected to complete the job in half the time when they take over.

The company will eventually supply six 500-man, seven 250-man and four 125-man camps. KBR project manager Graham Dawson said: "Working accommodation will be separated from living accommodation and the generators will be as far from the living quarters as possible to reduce noise impact."

A single roadway will give vehicle access to stores and workshops while all other areas will have pedestrian access only.

The shelters, constructed from American-made PVC, are the only fabric structures to pass every US Air Force test for wind, snow-load, heating and cooling requirements. They have been approved by the Defence Fire Service.

An entire 500-man camp can be folded into about 90 ISO containers. It is delivered complete with a fuel farm to feed generators, potable water storage with three days'



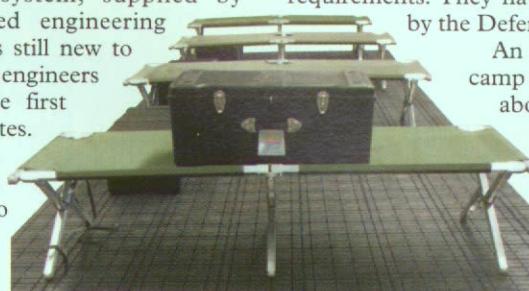
What's cooking? A shelter fitted as a fully-equipped kitchen

capacity, general stores, a gymnasium, a Naafi expeditionary store, dining shelters, welfare shelters, offices, a medical centre, a communications centre, dry waste disposal and waste water management – effectively a sewerage farm which operates on a biomass system.

There is also a guardroom, armoury, workshops and an incinerator. The 500-man camp is powered by six generators, one of which is kept in reserve.

The kitchen boasts a walk-in deep freeze and Karcher cooking units. Separate shelters are provided for food preparation and cooking areas, with hotplate and boiler units powered by diesel.

If damage is avoided during dismantling and reconstruction, the camps should have a shelf life of up to 15 years.



Mock-up: How the bedspaces and lockers will look

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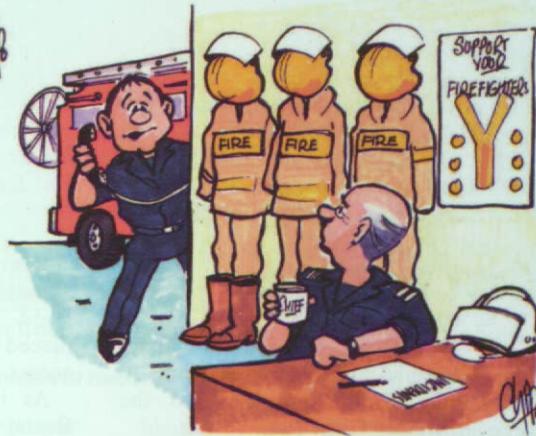
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Chuckle with Chip

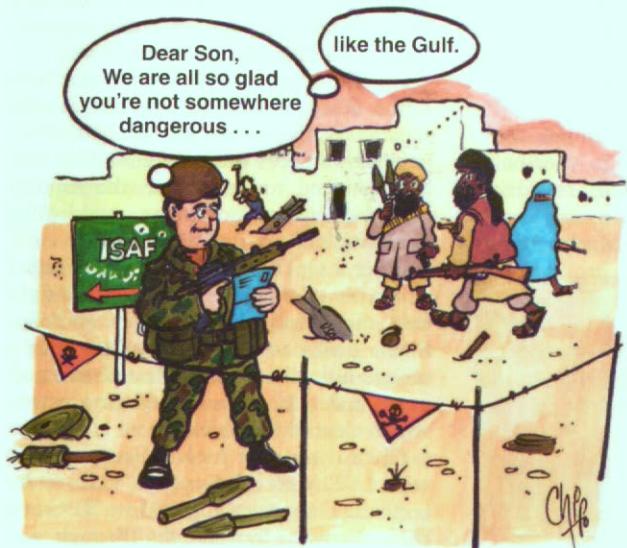


"You jest mate . . . if I ate that I'd have to do you for assault with a biological weapon."



"It's a squaddie in the Gulf, Guv . . . he wants to know if there's any point in booking an end-of-tour holiday."

Meanwhile, away from the Gulf



"Erm . . . I don't suppose you told Private Hopkins to come down out of the OP by any chance, Sergeant?"

Commando sappers in thick of it

AMONG the first units in the Gulf was 1 Troop, 59 Independent Commando Squadron RE, which sailed with the Lead Commando Group (LCG) on January 14.

In an example of authentic expeditionary warfare, air transport out-load began ten days later and the whole brigade was in theatre by February 7.

While 59 Squadron provided engineer close support to 3 Commando Brigade, and Recce Troop a large part of the brigade recce

First to Al Faw

1 Tp, 59 Indep Cdo Sqn RE

AS the Chinook touched ground its payload of heavily-burdened men from 40 Commando Group emptied into the darkness, **writes Capt Pete Young**.

Industrial oil tanks could be faintly distinguished. To the south, a mortar line opened up and to the north the rattle of small arms, suppressing enemy outside the compound, focused the mind.

The men of 40 Cdo Gp RM (including 1 Troop, 59 Indep Cdo Sqn RE) had been tasked, with US Navy Seals, to take oil installations on the Al Faw. It was our job to avoid an ecological disaster. Soldiers of 59's 1 Troop were among the first conventional coalition forces into Iraq.

For the break-in, sections were attached to fighting companies. Initial tasks included explosive entry into buildings, breaching wire obstacles with Bangalores, area and route clearance, explosive obstacle-breaching and support in the infantry role.

EOD expertise was provided by 2 Cdo Tp, 49 Sqn EOD. Enemy had been neutralised by artillery and close air support bombardment synchronised with the landings. The oil infrastructure was taken intact, with no friendly casualties and minimum loss of enemy life.

The mission moved to consolidating the area, with sappers advising on sangar

force, 131 Squadron concentrated on general support and 1 Troop, 49 Field Squadron (EOD) provided a bomb disposal capability. Collectively they were known as the Commando Engineer Group.

The brigade's mission was to capture oil infrastructure on the Al Faw peninsula, then clear and secure the peninsula and an area to the west, including Umm Qsar and southeast Basra. The following accounts are from those on the ground.

construction and the setting of claymores. A water point was set up to provide for the Field Surgical Group and obstacles placed on approaches to deny and restrict access.

As the commandos pushed towards Basra, the sappers stayed with fighting companies to provide route and building clearance. They assisted with sangars, fencing and obstacles and placed claymores and trip flares. Persistent attacks each evening were thwarted, paying testimony to the quality of their work.

Blocking the way

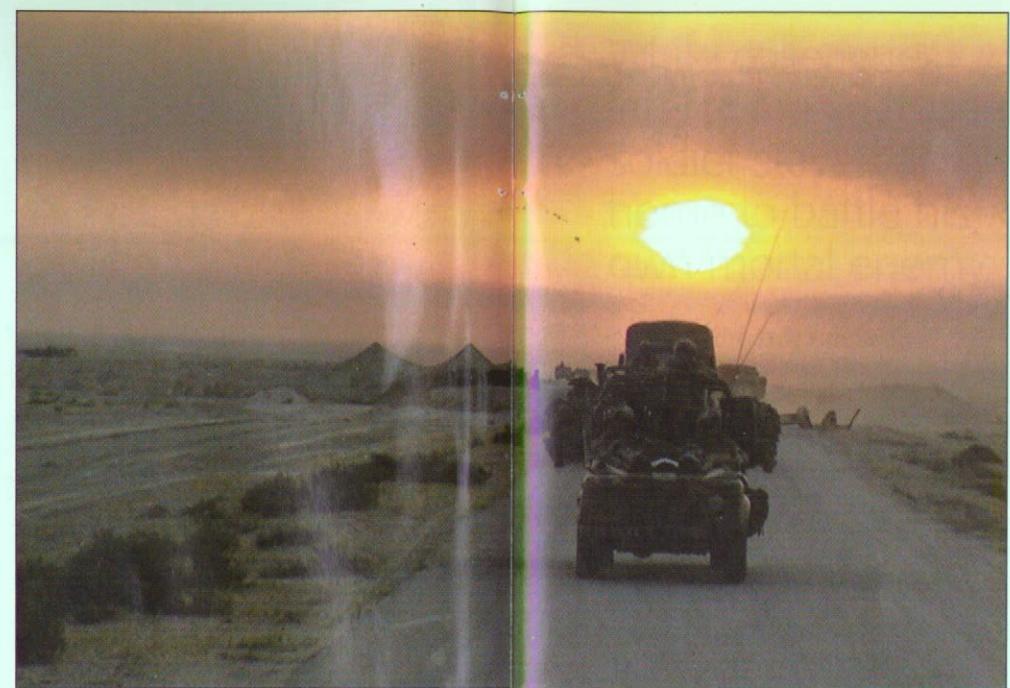
3 Tp, 59 Indep Cdo Sqn RE

SAPPERS from 3 Troop were tasked with creating blocking positions across the Al Faw peninsula, **writes Lt Iain Lamont**.

J and L Coy Groups, with 2 and 3 Sections, launched a formidable attack on a series of buildings, leaving the enemy dead or under no illusions. A series of route denials were put in place.

As the companies cleared their areas, sections destroyed artillery pieces, cordoned mined areas, commandeered Iraqi troop-carrying vehicles and destroyed ordnance, as well as engaging the enemy alongside the Marines.

After handing over to 40 Cdo, we were lifted by Chinook back to northern Kuwait to pick up our vehicles and drive to Umm Qsar. There 42 Cdo carried out a battle hand-over with 15 Marine Expe-



ditionary Unit, which had made almost no progress in the town in the face of continual sniping.

Within hours 42 Cdo established a patrol routine and dominated the ground, flooding 3 Troop with work, including explosive entry during snatches of Ba'ath party members, disposal of ordnance, demolition of an observation tower and survivability support to the commando in the bombed-out UN compound. In every patrol, there were at least two sappers, ready with first-line scales or advice.

Cpl Banham took 1 Section north to Umm Khayyal with K Coy, which, after seizing the barracks, was pinned down briefly by snipers with grenades. The situation started to turn when the sappers placed claymores under fire, establishing the first defences.

Later, LCpl Slevin's team were engaged while on patrol. After a fierce fire-fight and mortaring, LCpl Slevin and Spr Skene broke cover under fire, carrying a mouse-hole charge that blasted an enormous access hole for the Marine patrol, which cleared the objective.

Cpl Livingstone took 3 Section north with L Coy to reinforce 40 Cdo under contact. They were engaged by RPGs on their start-line but fought through and defeated all enemy in their area.

Next stop for 3 Tp was Basra, specific objectives being the water treatment works and Saddam's palace, where air-conditioning, double beds, power and

plumbing provided a welcome break. The troop's final destination was Rumaylah, where 16 Air Assault Brigade was securing the oilfields. It took over a crossing on the Hamar canal from 9 Para Sqn and enhanced the survivability of the Gas Oil Separation Plants (GOSPs).

Terriers in front line

299 Tp, 131 Indep Cdo Sqn RE(V)

AMONG the first Territorial Army soldiers mobilised were 62 members of 299 Tp, 131 Indep Cdo Sqn RE(V), embedded within the Commando Engineer Group, **writes Capt Chris Wilcock**.

With 59 not at full strength, the men and resources provided by 131 were gainfully employed.

We were rewarded by being involved in a helicopter landing on the Al Faw peninsula on D-Day to open up a landing point to enable the brigade's vehicles to catch up with troops air-lifted in. Despite a valiant effort to clear obstacles and V69 fragmentation mines, the landing point was not opened because the Americans would not let their hovercraft near mines.

The troop moved north to establish another crossing point to the Al Faw adjacent to Umm Qsar. This involved the first operational fly forward of a seven-bay DS MGB to overbridge a jetty.

The bridge allowed recce vehicles of The Queen's Dragoon Guards to gain access to the peninsula and provide a hardened recce screen. The troop also



Very close support: Sapper of 2 Cdo Troop, 49 Fd Sqn (EOD) go about their work, above

On the road to "Sennen" bridge: Vehicles of Recce Troop, 59 Indep Cdo Sqn RE, left

established a crossing point on the Khwar Az Zubayr, nearer Basra. During one of the worst electrical storms any of us had experienced, we battled against time and weather to grade the banks and lay track-way to let a squadron of Challenger 2 tanks cross the river on M3 rigs and repel a threat from T55 tanks breaking out of Basra. This was the first operational use of M3 rigs.

Among many jobs at the end of hostilities, the troop excavated the concrete foundation of a monument to prove to the people of Al Faw that their relatives were not entombed in a secret chamber.

Battle of 'Sennen' bridge

Recces Tp, 131 Indep Cdo Sqn RE

OP James involved the clearance of the town of Abu al Kassib on the outskirts of Basra, **writes Capt Pete Lederer**.

Two teams from Recce Troop, C/S 41A led by Cpl Tony Spamer and 41B led by Cpl Joe Hogan, with artillery support provided by 148 Bty RA, and two Scimitars from QDG, were to secure a key bridge on the road to Basra. The Brigade Recce Force was attached to 40 Cdo.

Our alarm call took the form of a column of Challengers driving past metres from our position and on into the night. The Recce Tp teams pushed west towards the bridge codenamed Sennen, scanning the area around it with thermal imaging sights.

Enemy movement was spotted and engaged by 7.62 from weapon-mounted Land Rovers. We advanced, deploying the 51mm mortar to fire illumination rounds.

Spr Taff Betty made night into day with extensive use of illum rounds. Cpl Spamer and LCpl Trev Michael cleared the near bank, crossed the bridge under fire and reported that there were no demolition charges.

Meanwhile, 41B was giving suppressive fire along with 30mm canon fire from the two QDG vehicles, one of which was now on the bridge.

Medic LCpl Scott (Bobby) Vessey treated a badly injured Iraqi soldier.

Using buildings for cover, Iraqi RPG gunners fired at the Scimitar on the bridge, narrowly missing, but causing the vehicle to lose a track. While the crew got out and changed the track, sappers formed a blocking position. Spr Nick Ingram put down 7.62 covering fire, while the 148 boys called in mortars. Bunkers were cleared using grenades and LAW.

Next morning's clearance operations included raiding the house of the local sheik, capturing local Ba'ath party officials and a colonel from a mechanised division. The sheik's house made a comfortable patrol base for the Recce Troop callsigns.

Clearing ordnance

2 Cdo Tp, 49 Fd Sqn (EOD)

ALTHOUGH 49 Fd Sqn (EOD) did not deploy as a squadron, two teams from the Commando Troop joined the Amphibious Task Group, **writes Capt Gareth Arnold**.

Their initial task was to support the air assault on to the Al Faw peninsula and clear the way on the oil infrastructure to enable the Specialist Team Royal Engineers' bulk petroleum people to get in and shut down the pumps. To the relief of everyone, the infrastructure was seized intact.

After the initial 48 hours, the teams began to realise the scale of the EOD threat on the Al Faw and began to recce, collect and destroy ordnance. This was the start of a month of continuous tasking that took the teams from Al Faw to Basra and back.



First to Al Faw: Soldiers of 1 Tp, 59 Indep Cdo Sqn RE with 40 Commando Royal Marines



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A personal war

While colleagues left for the Gulf, one soldier stayed at home to battle his own mortal enemy

Report: Ray Routledge
Picture: Steve Dock

LAST Christmas, WO2 (AQMS) Mick Fraser AAC was told he had pneumonia. He hadn't, it was cancer.

A fit family man in his mid-30s, serving with 3 Regiment, Army Air Corps at Wattisham, and with 17 years in the Army under his belt, Mick had spent November and December preparing with his mates for possible conflict in the Gulf.

But while those colleagues were in battle in the desert, Mick was at home fighting his own war – and winning.

"The disorder is called non-Hodgkins lymphoma – cancer of the lymphatic system," he said at the family quarter at Hadleigh near Ipswich. "Normally it can be spotted as a lump in the neck, groin or armpits, but mine was in the chest so wasn't physically visible."

He had breathing problems just before Christmas and was diagnosed with pneumonia. When his condition worsened he was sent for X-rays then referred for scans, a bronchoscopy and a biopsy.

"I was told I had a tumour the size of a small football in my chest and that it had squashed my left lung and was pushing on my heart," said Mick. Curiously, he was relieved to discover what was wrong.

"When you hear the word cancer you think it's a death sentence, but most forms, if caught early enough, are treatable and curable."

"My wife Tracy took the news badly but was comforted when she heard the doctor say I might have problems in 15 or 20 years' time. She's relieved I will be around to have a problem in the future."

Now well into months of chemotherapy, Mick is convinced his recovery is as much to do with determination as treatment.

When the chemo ends, radiotherapy should finally kill off the cancer. "It's



Soldiering on: WO2 Mick Fraser says a positive attitude is vital in fighting the disease

going to cure me . . . I have no doubt that I will get through this."

Chemotherapy has a well-deserved reputation for being unpleasant. "You feel polluted for days afterwards because you have all these toxins in your system," said Mick. "It's worse than ten lagers and a kebab on a healthy body."

Other side-effects include a lowering of the immune system, fatigue and hair loss.

Mick is grateful for the support he has received from the Army and the NHS. "The Army has been tremendous," he said, "and my unit has been very understanding. What is a surprise is that people don't know how to approach me and so stand off. A visit or a phone call does wonders for morale."

Mick is determined to spread the word that cancer is not an old man's illness – it can affect anyone at any time – and that simple precautions and self-checks can be the difference between life and death.

"Cancer is more common than we

realise. A third of the population could be affected in their lifetime. Mine is not too common; it affects men in their mid-30s to mid-50s and they don't know why."

An inspiration to him has been Lance Armstrong, the American cyclist who won the Tour de France after contracting testicular cancer, which affects younger men. "It is something to be aware of. Some cancers affect men at certain ages. Medical centres have lots of leaflets and advice about how men can check themselves out."

"The thing with a cancer is that you have to switch on to a positive attitude."

With so much time on his hands at home, he followed the war on TV with professional interest.

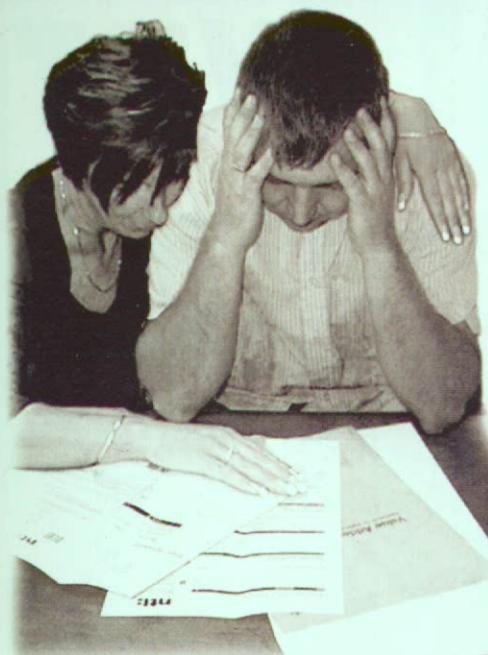
"My one big disappointment is that I was not there. I trained for 17 years for this and thought I was going to do the job for real."

"I didn't see any of my mates on TV but did see my helicopters, and I wrote blueys and e-blueys to keep in touch."

"Now I expect I'll be listening to years of bragging in the mess. I want to hear all their war stories – once."

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Gunners afoot

Royal Artillery takes on infantry role in Belfast

Report: Andrea Frazer

Pictures: Graeme Main

AN UNEASY peace hangs over north and west Belfast, the patch covered by 39th Regiment, Royal Artillery until April.

The gunners, back on the city's streets for the first time since 1997, have performed admirably in what is a secondary role for them. Since arriving at the end of a busy marching season, 39 Regt maintained a 24-hour presence on the ground.

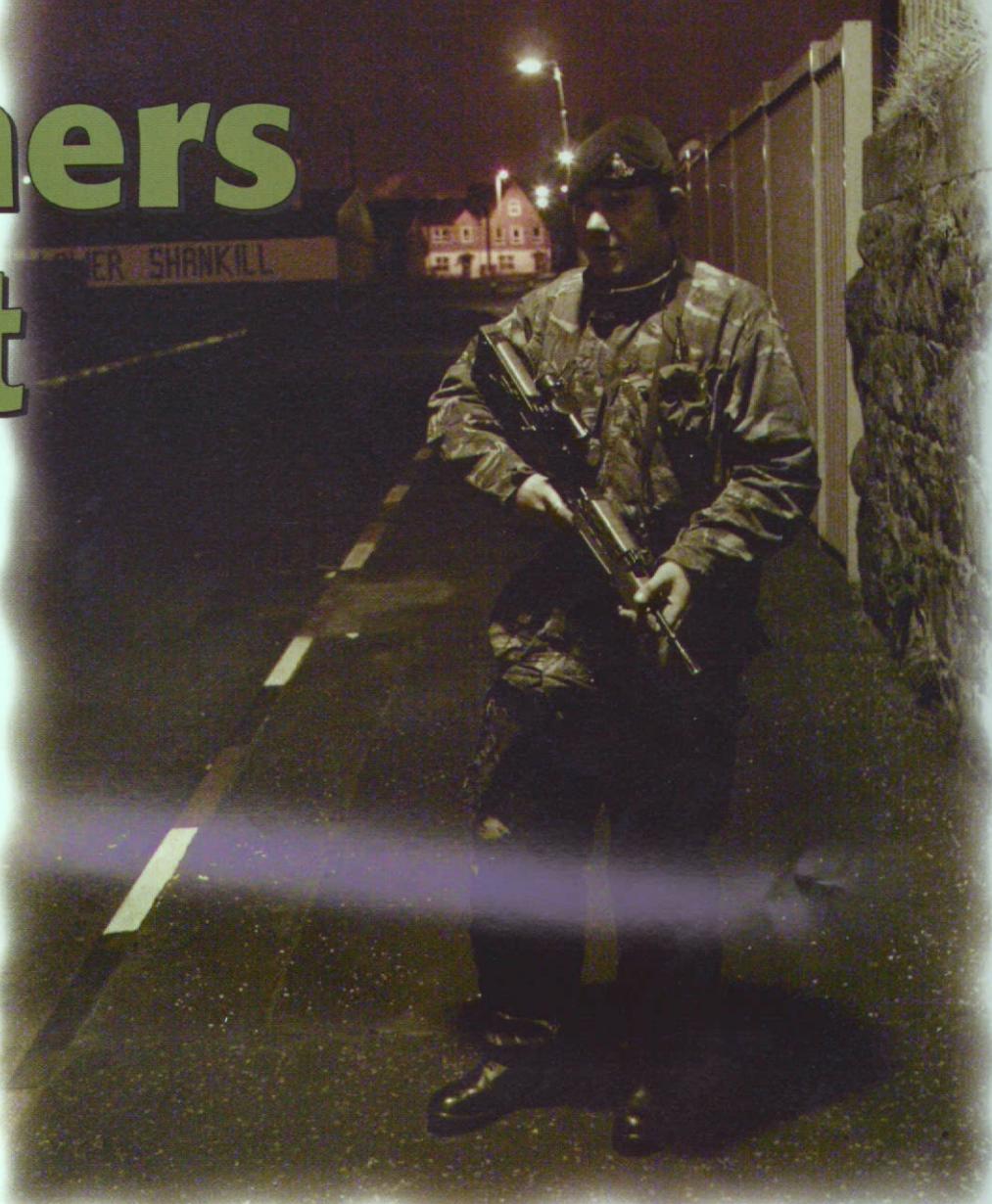
"We knew our patch well, our patrolling was very effective and the response rates we developed were fast," said Capt Craig Janes.

The unit's male and female soldiers were deployed heavily during February's loyalist paramilitary feud in the Lower Shankill, which resulted in the UDA's hasty expulsion of Johnny "Mad Dog" Adair's associates from the area and the final demise of its notorious C Company.

"The tension during the feud was palpable but the relative calm which followed was an encouraging sign. We like to think that was a direct result of the hours we put in, providing reassurance to the local community through low-profile vehicle and foot patrols," said Capt Janes. "Our aim was to enable the Police Service of Northern Ireland to return to normal policing as soon as possible."

Trained primarily to operate as a general support artillery unit, 39 Regt soldiers temporarily swapped their Multiple Launch Rocket Systems and Phoenix unmanned air vehicles for the SA80.

This was the third time in five years that elements of the regiment had deployed to



Military support: Gunners reassure Belfast's communities through low-profile patrols

Northern Ireland and at grassroots level soldiers voiced concern at the potential fade of their trade skills during such tours and expressed frustration at the differences in pay between cap-badges performing a similar role.

But as the Personnel Division at HQ Land Command explained: "Counter insurgency operations are not solely an infantry task and can be performed by all service personnel once they have completed the necessary all-arms training. This role on its own does not qualify for higher range pay and there will be occasions when lower and higher range

personnel are completing the same task."

As 39 Regt's six-month Belfast deployment neared completion, the troops' focus was firmly fixed on post-tour leave.

"With days to do, it's easy to get complacent, especially when the threat is not as obvious as it was during previous tours. But guards did not drop and the 'stay alert, stay alive' mentality remains a priority," said Capt Janes.

● This feature was held over from the May issue. The soldiers of 39 Regt RA have been relieved by the 2nd Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers and returned to their base in Northumberland.

VIEWPOINTS



Gnr Ross Elliott:
"There is job satisfaction in helping keep the peace and learning to understand both sides of a conflict situation."



Lt Sara Luxmore: "The fact that female soldiers are deployed on the streets hasn't been an issue at all. Few pass any notice."



LBdr Daniel Smith:
"A Belfast tour really lets you see the bigger picture regarding the various sides of the situation in Northern Ireland. It's been an eye-opener."



Gnr Rikky Henderson: "It's been a steep learning curve particularly from a public-order point of view, keeping your cool when under attack."

Furry funny

Mascot status sought for 1 PWO's pet ferrets

Reports: Andrea Frazer
Pictures: Graeme Main

THE HEAT is on for The Prince of Wales's Own Regiment of Yorkshire's "Operation Mascot" campaign team, tasked to put forward a case to gain the battalion's new pets, a pair of ferrets, official recognition as Army mascots.

The presence of ferrets in 1 PWO's history can be traced back to well before the First World War when they were kept by many soldiers as working pets. It has been ten years since the battalion last officially kept a pair and despite an April Fool story which appeared in the April 1990 edition of *Soldier*, the ferrets have never been granted mascot status.

The new arrivals, named Imphal and Quebec after two battle honours, were rescued from a range at Catterick Garrison and joined the battalion at its Omagh base in March.

Their overall well-being is the responsibility of the Regimental Ferret Major, an honorary position which has fallen on the very capable shoulders of WO2 (RQMS) Steffan Morton. General day-to-day care for the animals is the privilege of the Drums platoon.

WO2 Morton, a ferret fan, said: "When they arrived with us in Northern Ireland we made a few phone calls to get them officially registered but found that it is quite a complicated process."

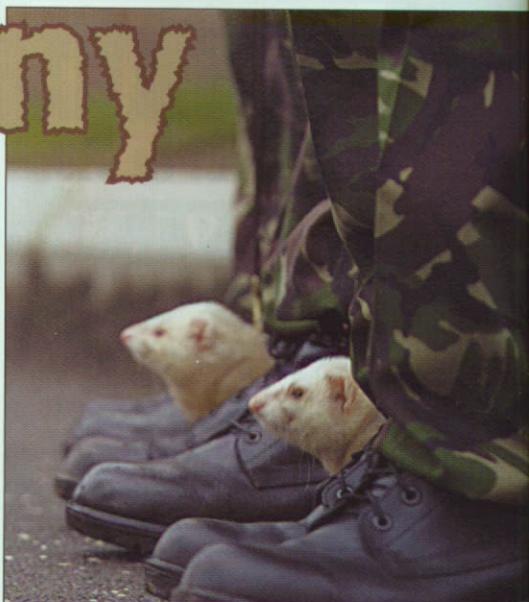
It appears that the issue of regimental mascots is a highly sensitive one and decisions on the matter are staffed as high as the Army Board.

Lt Col Adrian Drage, spokesman for the Army Honours and Distinctions committee, explained: "A formal review of mascots was conducted in 1953 and only five regiments since the war have been granted approval for their beasts to become official mascots.

"Today, just ten regiments in the British Army have mascots. It is a privilege jealously guarded by those who have it. Many people misuse the term mascot.



Foot patrol:
WO2 Steffan
Morton
exercises
his newest
charges



Smart lads: Imphal and Quebec stand to attention during drill practice in Omagh

the 1953 review, the Adjutant General directed that all requests for a regimental mascot were to be considered according to the principles that it must be appropriate, have a definite symbolic connection, and be a permanent feature in the ceremonial life of the regiment. These principles still hold good today."

WO2 Morton said: "It's a well-known fact that Yorkshiremen and ferrets go back a long way and there has always been a strong custom of the creatures in the regiment's history.

"Imphal and Quebec have created quite a bit of intrigue among the soldiers and their families since they arrived and are slowly winning people over.

"They are already beginning to play a part in regimental life and we have put a proper welfare package in place for them.

"We really would like to see them receive mascot status, assume the rank of private, get a regimental number and be added to the ration run. Promotion prospects for the pair will depend on their behaviour at parades and and performance at rabbiting when a licence has been obtained."

It remains to be seen whether Imphal and Quebec are granted mascot status but for the moment they are quite content in their role as the preferred pets of PWO.

There is a huge difference between a pet and a mascot. Pets are good for morale and anyone can have one but not every regiment can have a mascot. In initiating



Sea dogs sniff out DANGER

Unusual role for Army dog teams on Royal Navy's Operation Sealion

A ROYAL NAVY patrol vessel is the last place you'd expect to bump into an Army dog handler, never mind his canine colleague.

But for LCpl Matt Ball and his vehicle search dog Jess, life on board the Navy's Northern Ireland coastal patrol vessel is just another day at the office.

The ship's executive officer, Lt Richard McGrane RN, emphasised the uniqueness of the situation: "As far as we are aware, Op Sealion is the only Royal Navy operation at sea that uses dog teams in this manner.

"It is a key element of the Navy's contribution to patrolling in the province and represents our best chance of catching the terrorist in the application of transferring explosives, arms and ammunition through Northern Ireland's territorial waters.

"As a result we rotate the dog teams

on roughly a weekly basis to maintain a permanent presence on board." Individual teams work hard at integrating with the ship's company in what is an unusual and challenging working environment for both dog and handler.

For a start, the transfer of the dog team from its land base in the province to the Royal Navy patrol vessel normally occurs at sea and transport generally takes the form of a helicopter drop or boat journey.

LCpl Ball, a specialist dog trainer with the Royal Army Veterinary Corps, is one of five handlers used on the rotation. He said: "I've been working with the Navy and Marines for a year now and I love it. I live in the forward mess with the junior rates, it's quite a relaxed atmosphere and the banter between us is great."

Jess, a nine-year-old springer spaniel, has six years of Navy ops under her collar

Deployed:
LCpl Matt Ball
and Jess with
Royal Marine
escort head
towards
another ferry,
above

Nose for
nasties: Jess
can search a
vessel in short
space of time,
right



and is a particular favourite with the ship's company. "She virtually has a free run of the ship," said LCpl Ball.

"Jess is a complete water-baby and is totally at home on board. But some of the dogs take a while to get used to an environment without trees, lamp-posts and grass."

LCpl Ball said that when tasked he and Jess deploy from the patrol vessel with the Royal Marines in rigid inflatable boats to board and search inbound and outbound ferries.

"The rib pulls up alongside a ferry, not an easy task in high seas, and the dog is normally winched on board."

"An escort provides the dog team with the protection and assistance necessary to conduct a systematic search of the vessel."

"Jess can cover a vast area in a short space of time and I have every confidence that she will pick up anything alien."



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Scotland the brave

Celtic tribute to lives lost in Northern Ireland

A MEMORIAL stone dedicated to members of the Scottish Division who died while on operations in Northern Ireland has been unveiled at Palace Barracks Memorial Garden in Belfast, writes **Andrea Frazer**.

The tribute commemorates more than 40 soldiers from the Royal Scots, King's Own Scottish Borderers, Royal Highland Fusiliers, Black Watch, Highlanders, Queen's Own Highlanders, Gordon Highlanders and the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders who lost their lives in the Province.

Relatives of those killed were joined at the ceremony by soldiers and veterans of all ranks.

The Adjutant General, Lt Gen Sir Alastair Irwin, whose last appointment was GOC Northern Ireland, said: "Too many of Scotland's sons have been killed or have died here. But the cause for which they served was, and is, a noble one." Lt Gen Irwin is Colonel Commandant of the Scottish Division.



Honouring the fallen: Sgt Chris Muir, 1 A and SH, at the Scottish memorial stone

Labour of love

THE Palace Barracks Memorial Garden, created in 1994 by former Para Albert Owens, has become a place of pilgrimage for bereaved families of security force personnel throughout the United Kingdom and much farther afield.

Although the vast majority of the stones in the one-and-a-half acre site pay tribute to the Army's fallen during the Troubles, others have been laid to honour loved ones who lost their lives in the Falklands conflict and both world wars.

Albert, a soldier with 1 Para for 17 years, was based at Palace Barracks between 1970 and 1972. Although he left the Army in the mid-eighties and retired from civilian employment nine years ago, his voluntary role as memorial custodian has become more like a full-time job. "I'm down here almost every day," he said. "I just can't seem to stay away. It's a labour of love really and a huge part of my life.

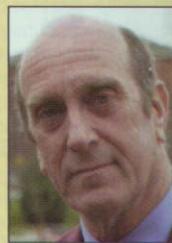
"I keep in touch with the families through a regular newsletter and a website I developed with another ex-Para. My wife and I have hosted 51 visits by families over the years. It's nice to help those left behind.

"The garden has gone from strength to strength, with new memorial stones added by regiments and families of soldiers each year.

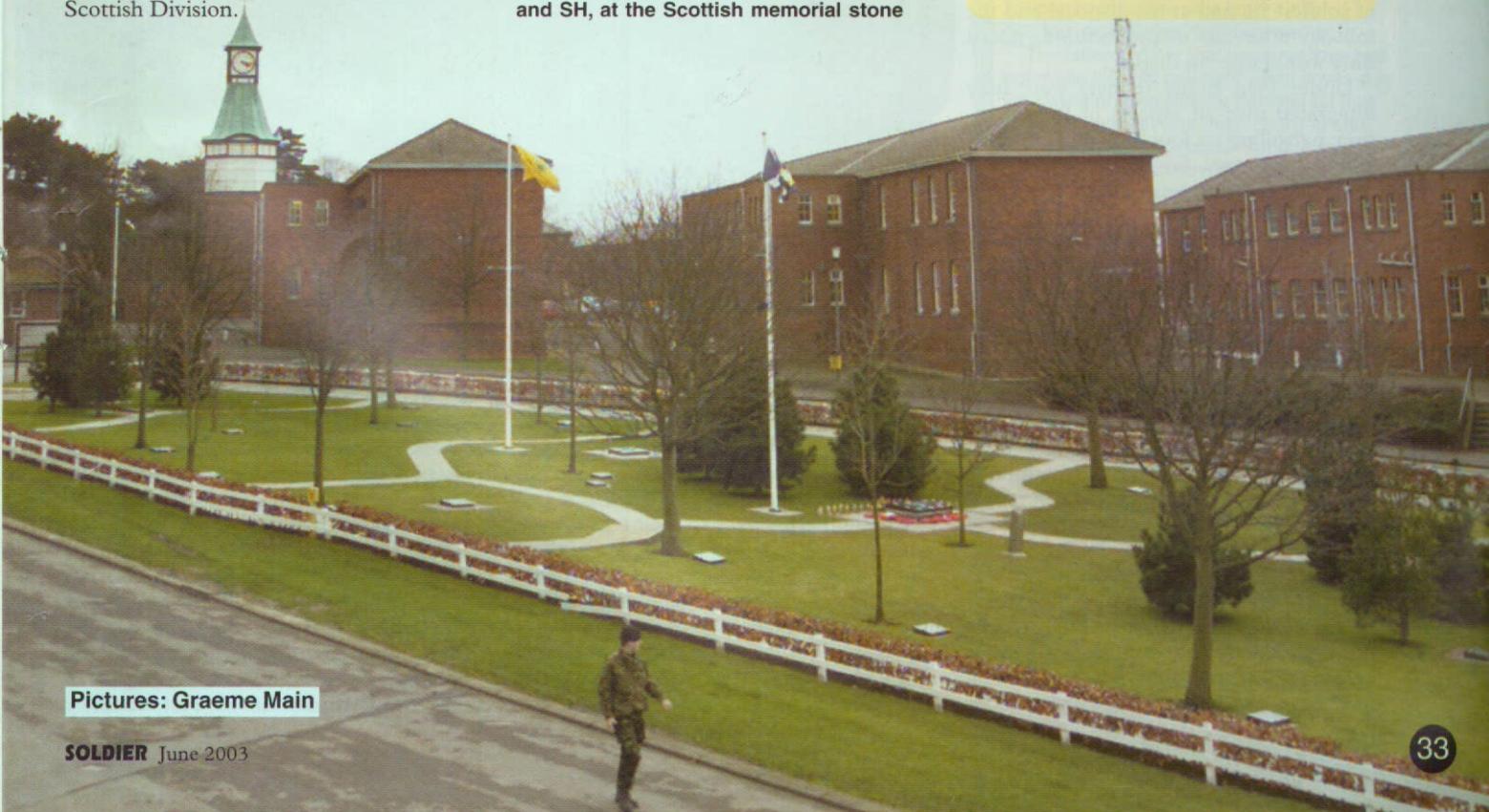
"It is important to me that future generations never forget the debt owed to those who laid down their lives for their country.

"We want them to know that when we say we will remember them we really mean it."

www.palacebarracksmemorialgarden.org



**Custodian:
Ex-Para
Albert Owens**



Pictures: Graeme Main

Terriers in front line of Kabul operation

Part-timers play part in Afghanistan's war against terrorists

Report and pictures:
Chris Fletcher

WHILE the world's eyes were focused on the war in Iraq, operations against al-Qaeda and its extremist sympathisers in Afghanistan went on unabated.

A total of 126 British troops have been in Afghanistan to support the International Security Assistance Force (Isaf) on Operation Fingal. Nearly half of them are Territorial Army soldiers from The Royal Rifle Volunteers and the East of England Regiment reinforcing A (Lincolnshire) Company of the 2nd Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment.

The TA troops were marked down for camp security duties – in other words “stag-on, boys”. But company commander Maj Simon Etherington reassessed the situation when he realised the quality of soldiers he had at his disposal and the toll day after day of monotonous guard duty would take on them.

Under Plan B the Terriers were fully integrated into all aspects of the operation: patrolling on foot in Kabul and providing personnel for escort duties and the quick-reaction force (QRF) for when things hotted up.

The largest group of TA soldiers were from the Royal Rifle Volunteers, drawn from detachments based at Oxford, Milton Keynes, Reading and Portsmouth. Platoon commander Lt Xavier Griffin, of A (Royal Green Jackets) Company, a doctor in the Accident and Emergency Department at Oxford's John Radcliffe Hospital, said: “This is a fantastic opportunity for these guys; they'll take a wealth of experience back with them which can be passed on to the rest of the battalion.”

A night they will not soon forget was April 13, when Camp Souter, the British Army HQ and “home” to all the troops, reverberated to two explosions an hour before midnight. Afghan rebels had detonated a remotely-controlled bomb as an



Here's looking at you: Rfn Alan Robertson, above, of A (RGJ) Coy, RRV, on security duty at Camp Souter, Kabul



Isaf convoy passed by on the main Kabul-Jalalabad road about a mile from the camp gates. One vehicle was bringing a Royal Air Force crew from the airport.

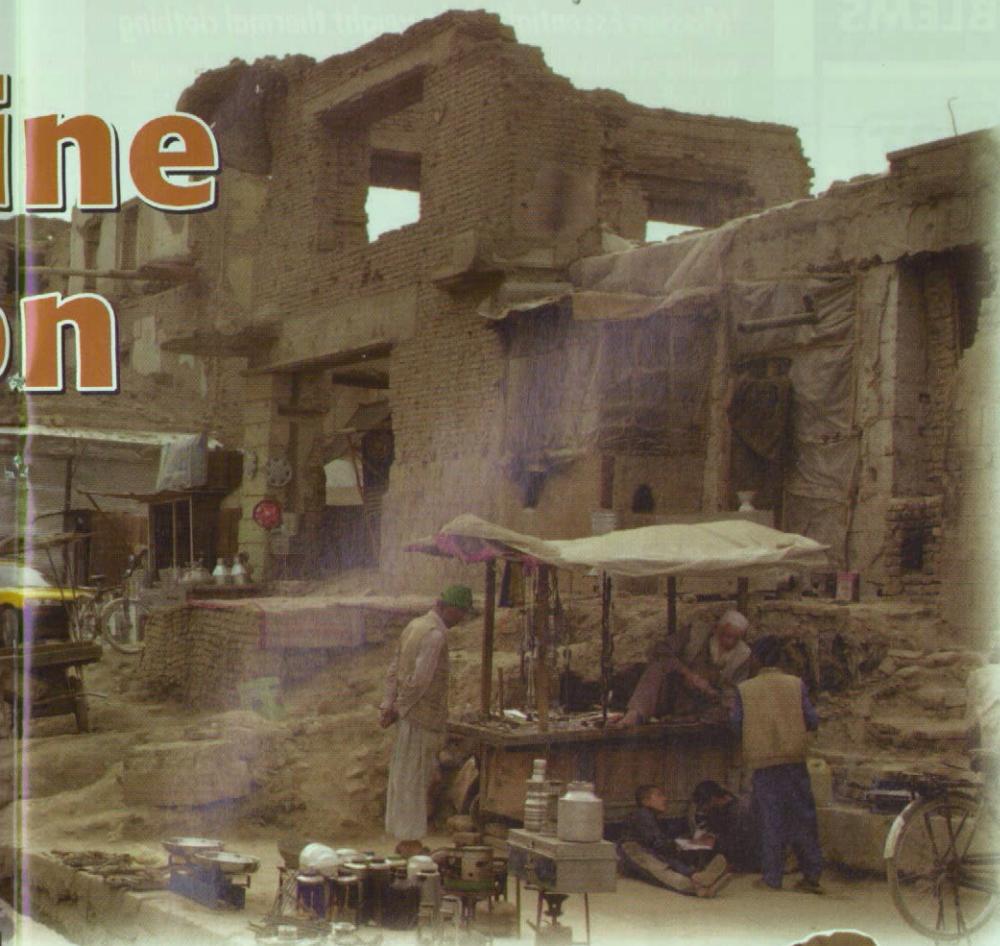
Seconds after the explosions the camp was called to action by the wailing sirens of emergency vehicles. Soldiers who had been sauntering back to their rooms from the shower block raced for their weapons, body armour and helmets. Muster points swelled and the QRF was quickly on the scene of the incident.

Miraculously no one was seriously injured, although the RAF crew who sped into the camp were shaken by the inci-

dent. Duty ops officer Capt John Leevers, of A (RGJ) Coy, said: “It goes to show the worth of having experienced British troops on the ground. Everyone knew where to go and what to do. All their training paid off.”

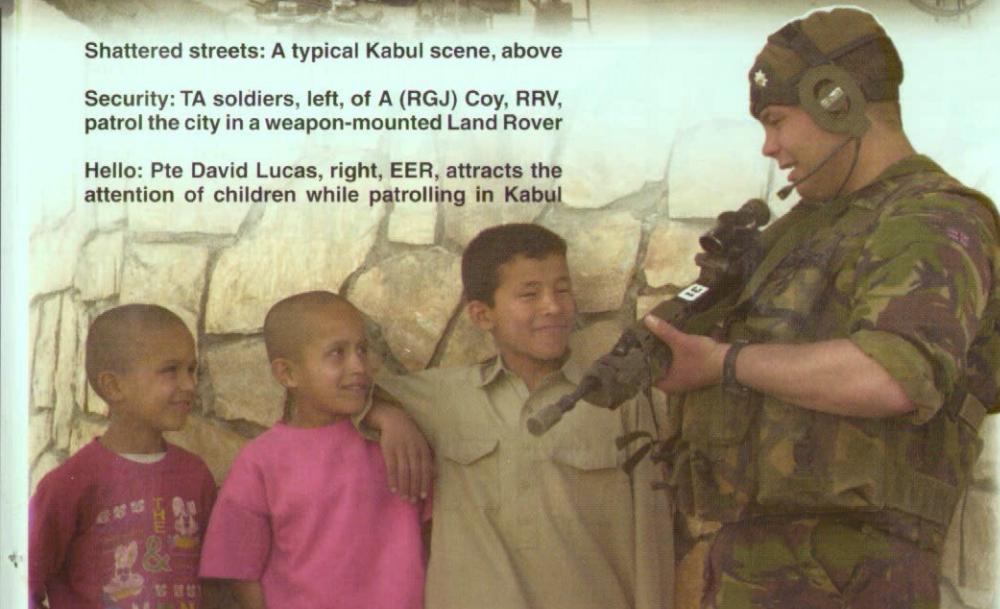
All that remains of the incident is a large crater and a lot of good bar stories.

Afghanistan's wars have left a legacy of mines and unexploded ordnance. The TA soldiers were appalled by the number of amputees on the streets of Kabul and the plight of children who, with their natural inquisitiveness, are attracted to the lethal detritus. Anti-personnel mines designed



Shattered streets: A typical Kabul scene, above

Security: TA soldiers, left, of A (RGJ) Coy, RRV, patrol the city in a weapon-mounted Land Rover



Hello: Pte David Lucas, right, EER, attracts the attention of children while patrolling in Kabul

rent British Army operational theatres.

For many the toughest decision has been what to choose on the camp's varied menu. It is probably the worst-kept secret in Kabul that the Brits dish up the best food – even the Americans based out at Bagram airfield use any excuse to get into Souter to fill up. The credit for that goes to SSgt Mark Wilson and his team of chefs from Dalton Barracks, Abingdon.

The Terriers were due to return home this month, some to their former civilian jobs, others looking to new horizons. A few have vowed to go back for another deployment.

Manage Your Money



Missed deadline could have cost Sally extra £800

CPL T thought he had remembered everything before he deployed to Kuwait. His affairs were in order and his wife was handling all the finances while he was away.

It had been hard enough saying goodbye, but he felt there was nothing practical he had forgotten and so at least he was leaving his family as prepared as they could be.

Unlike many serving alongside him he had made a will some time before and so had one less thing to worry about.

His wife missed him terribly. As well as a three-year-old she had a new baby and was always tired. She made a decision that she would look at the bills once a fortnight when her mum would come round to give her a couple of hours to catch up.

On a beautiful mid-April day her mum took the kids off to the park and Sally decided she would go through post that she had put on top of the fridge. There was little for her to deal with because her husband had managed the finances well and most bills were paid by standing order or direct debit.

NOT SO SUITE

The second letter she opened made her gasp. In October they had bought a three-piece suite. It was more than they wanted to pay but she had fallen in love with it.

However, they had bought it on the basis of “nought per cent interest and nothing to pay for six months”. They had not made a note in their diaries as to when the first payment was due as they expected a letter reminding them when it was due. [This just happened to be the next letter Sally opened, postmarked ten days earlier.]

The letter told her that because they had not made the first payment when it was due they were now eligible for the interest that would otherwise have been charged and she was asked for another £800. A tearful Sally rang the company and was told that she definitely had to pay the extra amount.

HELPLINE RESULT

Fortunately she remembered there was a number to ring for help in *Soldier* and, after contacting the CCCS/Credit Action helpline (0800 1381111) the counsellor was able to speak to the company concerned with the explanation that Cpl T was serving in Iraq. Given the circumstances the company readily agreed to drop the request for the additional interest.

If you or any member of your family has any money problems please contact the CCCS/Credit Action helpline below for free and confidential advice. If you have a number of debts it may well be possible for you to make just one payment to CCCS, which can then distribute money to your creditors. There is absolutely no charge for this service.

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Rising from the Phoenix

MoD chooses two for Watchkeeper assessment

TWO companies – Thales UK and Northrop Grumman ISS International – are in the frame to provide the Army's next-generation unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV), designed to give commanders critical battlefield information.

One of the contenders will be selected by the MoD next year to be the preferred bidder for the £800m Watchkeeper programme. At present, the Army relies on the Phoenix system to give it a real-time picture of the battlefield, and to find and identify targets.

UAVs are seen as a vital link in the Services' network-enabled capacity – longhand for linking them via sophisticated digital technology to strike systems including artillery, attack helicopters and ground-attack aircraft. The air vehicles' task is to produce high-grade images of what the enemy is doing and how he is doing it. Watchkeeper would be able to identify threats and track targets right up to the moment they are destroyed.

The competing teams have been working with the MoD for some time to define a solution that meets the UK's need for

low-risk intelligence, surveillance target-acquisition and reconnaissance.

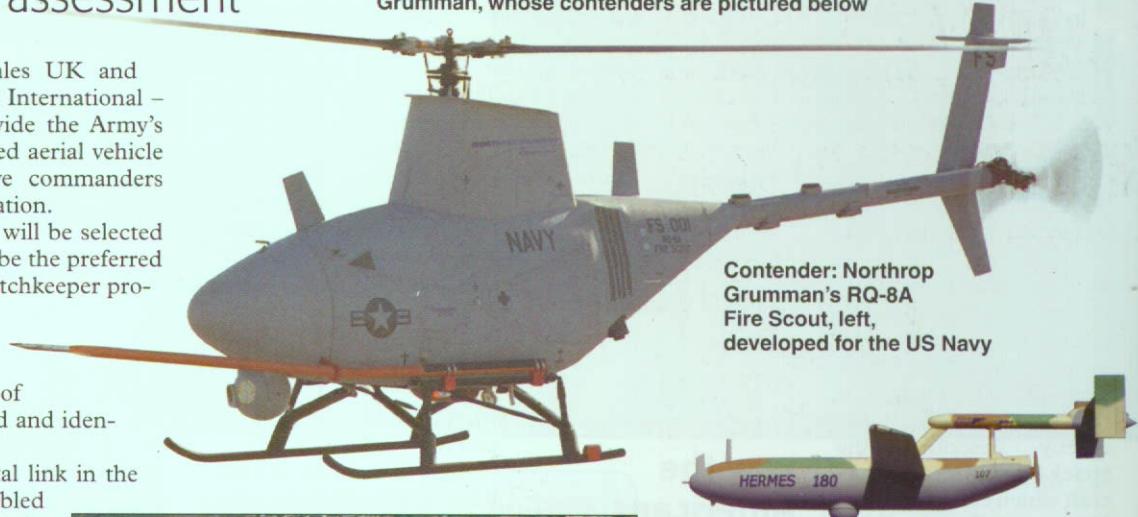
Northrop Grumman is evaluating several unmanned systems to meet the Watchkeeper bill, including the heli-

A £3.5-million facility has been opened at Broughton, North Wales for the completion of "spy-in-the-sky" planes. ASTOR – airborne stand-off radar – will provide British Armed Forces with a new capability to monitor movement of hostile ground units far behind the front line when it enters service in 2005.

Data gathered by Astor aircraft – five Bombardier Global Expresses are being fitted with the system – will help shorten the time between the detection of a target and its destruction. The £800-million contract is being delivered by Raytheon Systems.



Battlefield eye: The Army's Phoenix system, photographed above before a mission in the Balkans. It is due to be replaced by an unmanned aerial vehicle developed by either Thales or Northrop Grumman, whose contenders are pictured below



Contender: Northrop Grumman's RQ-8A Fire Scout, left, developed for the US Navy



Contenders: Two Thales UK air vehicles. They are the Watchkeeper 450, left, and the Watchkeeper 180, above

copter-like US Navy RQ-8A Fire Scout system currently in its flight test phase of development.

Thales contenders are the Hermes 450 and 180 UAVs, pictured on this page.

Watchkeeper is planned to be in service for 30 years, with an initial operating capability in early 2006. In the longer term, scientists are looking at the potential for "weaponising" unmanned aircraft, and for their operational use in tri-Service and maritime environments.



A £14.6 million contract has been awarded by the MoD to Gloucestershire-based firm Mawdsleys to supply 1,606 small portable generators to the Army. The 4.5-kilowatt sets, pictured left, will be trialled this summer.

They will run on diesel and will replace three types of generators coming to the end of their service life, two of which are petrol-driven.

A good man for trouble

Reporting from the world's hot-spots has brought veteran BBC journalist into close contact with the British Army

Report: Ray Routledge
Picture: Graeme Main

IF there is a story to tell from one of the world's trouble spots, chances are the British public will hear it first on the BBC.

And as often as not the man on the spot is John Simpson, the corporation's world affairs editor.

In a career spanning more than 30 years he has interviewed 80 presidents and prime ministers, among them Reagan, Yeltsin, Khomeini, Castro and Thatcher, reported from 100 countries and covered dozens of wars.

His nose for a story has involved great personal risk. His report into a blood-stained lens minutes after a "friendly fire" incident in northern Iraq was one of the most graphic word pictures of the recent war. His own face bloodied by the blast, and in pain from a perforated eardrum, he quietly described the attack by an American aircraft which cost the lives of US troops, Kurdish fighters and his own translator, Kamran Abdul Razak.

"I joined the BBC in 1966 as a sub-editor in the radio newsroom," he recalled from the safety of an armchair in West London. "But I wanted to be a reporter and got my way in 1969. Twelve months later I went to Northern Ireland, where I spent five years."

There John had his first encounters with the military. "It was the British Army that led the way to treating Northern Ireland like a police action rather than a war."

"The benefits from the Army's Northern Ireland experience have been considerable. I saw that experience put to really good use in Basra. British soldiers didn't treat the local people like enemies, but like citizens that needed help. It was the same in Bosnia and Kosovo."

"In Iraq you could see the stark differ-

ence between the way the Americans behaved and how the British did things. It was Northern Ireland that gave the British that experience and that edge."

John recalled an incident while he was with US Marines in Tikrit. "They lost all control, screaming, shouting, kicking people and forcing them to the ground.

"One of the marines shouted 'snipers' and put up his gun, pointing it at a man on a rooftop. I could see it was an old boy putting out a blanket to air and I said to him in a quiet voice that I would be the witness at his trial for murder if he pulled the trigger. He stopped.

"That situation would never have arisen with British soldiers. They are so much in control. We have a first-class

Army, which is excellently disciplined. The American military culture does not have the business of careful control of firing weapons. If they took a leaf or two out of the British handbook they would do themselves and everyone else a favour."

After Northern Ireland, John spent what he described as "routine time" as a foreign correspondent in places as diverse as Brussels and South Africa, and by 1979 was a fully-fledged foreign affairs specialist. Although responding to world events, he writes his own agenda while still having to sell ideas to the BBC. And, of course, he is expected to come up with the good stuff.

His CV is a catalogue of late-20th century history:

Tiananmen Square, the fall of the Berlin Wall, the siege of Sarajevo.

Of the latter he recalled: "It was terrible, horrifying and wicked. It was a war crime that went on for three years and was appalling. I didn't feel that Britain or the Americans came out of it very well, and I don't think the BBC covered itself in glory."

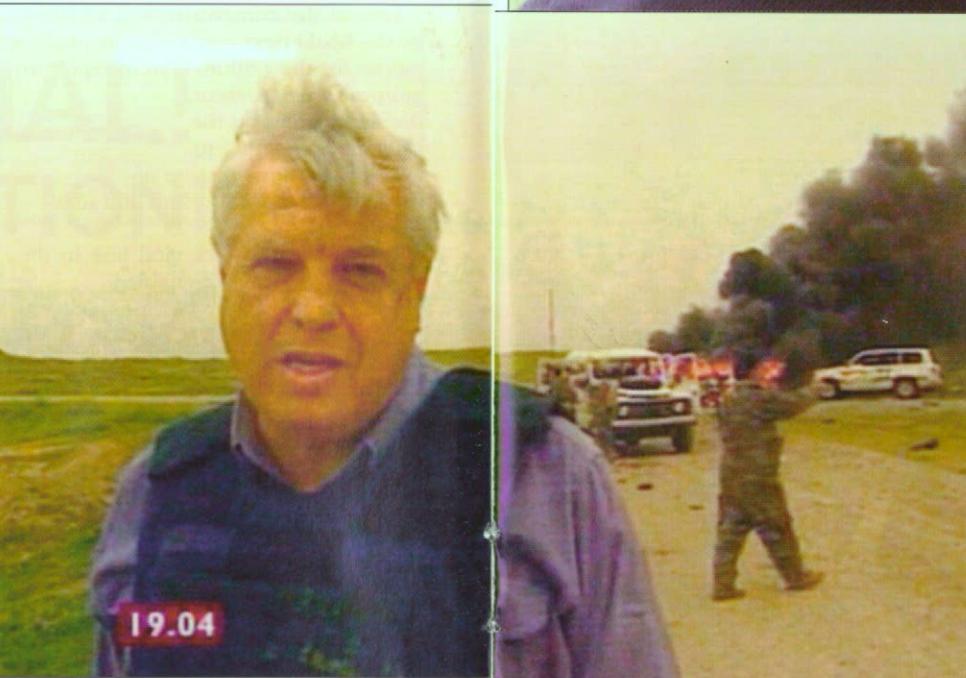
He was back in the Balkans in 1999 and spent 12 weeks reporting from Belgrade and Pristina during the Kosovo crisis.

'In Iraq you could see the stark difference between the way the Americans behaved and how the British did things. It was Northern Ireland that gave the British that experience and that edge'

Factfile

Born: August 9, 1944, Suffolk.
BBC World Affairs Editor since: 1988.
Royal Television Society (RTS) Journalist of the Year in 1990 and 2000.
RTS award for International Current Affairs, 1996.
BAFTAs: 1992, 2000.

Man of the moment: John Simpson, right, reflects on his career with the BBC and, inset below, files his dramatic report on the fatal friendly-fire bombing in northern Iraq



Favourite bits of history

TWO events which hold special significance for John Simpson are the so-called Velvet Revolution and the end of apartheid in South Africa.

The first was Czechoslovakia's peaceful rejection of the old communist order in 1989. "I don't think a window was broken and yet a rotten, corrupt, nasty old regime was overthrown, really by moral force."

"The other was in 1994 and the election of Nelson Mandela and the handover from the apartheid system to majority rule. I met my wife Adele there, so there were a lot of good memories."

to allow Kurdish representatives to attend a conference and John slipped through.

"I had been banned from Iraq since 1991 after something I'd written about Mohammad Al Sahhaf, the Information Minister, that he didn't like. I tried everything but bribery to get in, but always failed," he explained.

During the recently-ended war against Iraq, John was based in the north of the country with the Kurds and American

low and I saw the missile leave the aircraft."

It landed a few yards away, the explosion blowing up the cars, most of which were laden with ammunition.

"There was a lot of panic and unpleasant sights. People burning to death or staggering around with their insides in their hands. Our translator, Kamran, had some shrapnel through the femoral artery and I don't think he stood a chance."

"My whole team behaved superbly, nobody lost it and I was very proud of them. They behaved in the finest traditions of the BBC."

As a result of the attack John is deaf in his left ear, perhaps permanently, and bears the scars of a dozen small shrapnel wounds. "I am very lucky really," he said.

He would like to see justice done for Kamran and the other people who were killed. "We owe it to them to find out why it happened and to see if it's possible to avoid it in the future. And I'd like to see what disciplinary measures were taken. It is not a crusade but a desire to see what went wrong."

John hopes to return soon to Iraq.

• See Vox pop – Page 78



Over to you: Lt Col James Stephenson, left, commanding The Royal Scots, hands over the reins to Lt Col Tim Lai, CO of The Highlanders.

The Royal Scots are back in Drehorn Barracks in Edinburgh.

With the mountainous scenery around Banja Luka and Mrkonjic Grad reminiscent of the Highlanders' recruiting area in the north of Scotland, Lt Col Lai is keen to forge an affinity with local people.

Just like home for Highlanders

TROOPS of A Company, The Highlanders caused a stir when they arrived in Bosnia... they are all on attachment from The Royal Gurkha Rifles.

While Mrkonjic Grad has seen Sfor soldiers come and go, this was their first sight of the legendary warriors from Nepal. Working at altitude, the Gurkhas have made their presence felt across the remote and isolated farming communities that make up much of their patrol area.

One patrol took the village of Olovici, which had not seen Sfor troops for some time (it's a five-hour uphill hike to get there) by surprise and spotted two men making for the hills with weapons. The Gurkhas, led by Brunei veteran Rfn Harpratap Pun, right, gave chase and found two AK-47s, a bolt-action rifle and a large quantity of ammunition.



JUST two weeks into their tour of duty, soldiers of D Company, The Highlanders uncovered an Aladdin's cave of weapons after shots were heard north of their Sfor base at Prijedor.

Company commander Maj Jamie Campbell decided to investigate and 2nd Lt James Stewart led the men of 13 Platoon and a sniffer-dog team on a patrol. "As soon as we hit the area the dogs were on to something," said 2nd Lt Stewart.

Focus of their attention was a barn, which turned out to be anything but ordinary. It took Royal Engineers all night to dig up a cache of weaponry which included 100 large-calibre artillery shells, mortar rounds, anti-tank missiles, recoilless rifles, sniper rifles, hand grenades and small arms ammunition.

The stash - deteriorating after several years in the ground - was later destroyed in a controlled explosion.

The battalion has been keen to get out into its area of responsibility, which is about the size of Wales. "It had been a while since Sfor had been up in the hills," said Maj Campbell. "It's a difficult area to get to and the weather has been pretty poor since we got here. I was keen to get a foot on the ground and let the local people know we were a force to be trusted."



NEVENKA Stojakovic has worked the land for 70 years, scraping a living from her mountainous small-holding north of the Serb stronghold of Prijedor.

Highlanders of D Company making a sweep of the area found her curled up on a makeshift bed. She had fractured her arm eight days before while tending her animals. With no electricity, no running water and no way to pay for treatment at the nearest hospital a 15-mile walk away, she had tended her injury and waited for God to decide her fate.

Nineteen-year-old medic Hdr Gary Miller, pictured left with Nevenka, found that infection had set in around the broken joint, which threatened to burst through the skin. He called for company commander Maj James Campbell and the decision was made. After making her comfortable, the Highlanders brought in a Land Rover and took her to Prijedor hospital, where doctors in the casualty department treated the wound and put her arm in plaster. No money exchanged hands.

Until Nevenka can fend for herself again, the Highlanders, most young enough to be her grandchildren, have adopted her. There will be no shortage of firewood in her hearth.



Watchful: Hdr Grant Robertson, above, reckons the mountains around Mrkonjic Grad in the north-east of Bosnia are remarkably similar to the hills around his home town of Wick. Free internet connection means he can keep in touch with his parents, who look after the Wick railway station, and keep up to date with the shinty scores.



Keen: Maj Jamie Campbell

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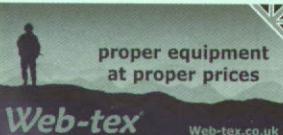
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Powerful stuff

Improved use of IT is designed to give Army 'critical advantage'

Report: Ray Routledge
Pictures: Steve Dock

INFORMATION can be used in direct support of fighting power.

Which is one very good reason why the British Army is in the process of transforming its use of information to enhance operational capability.

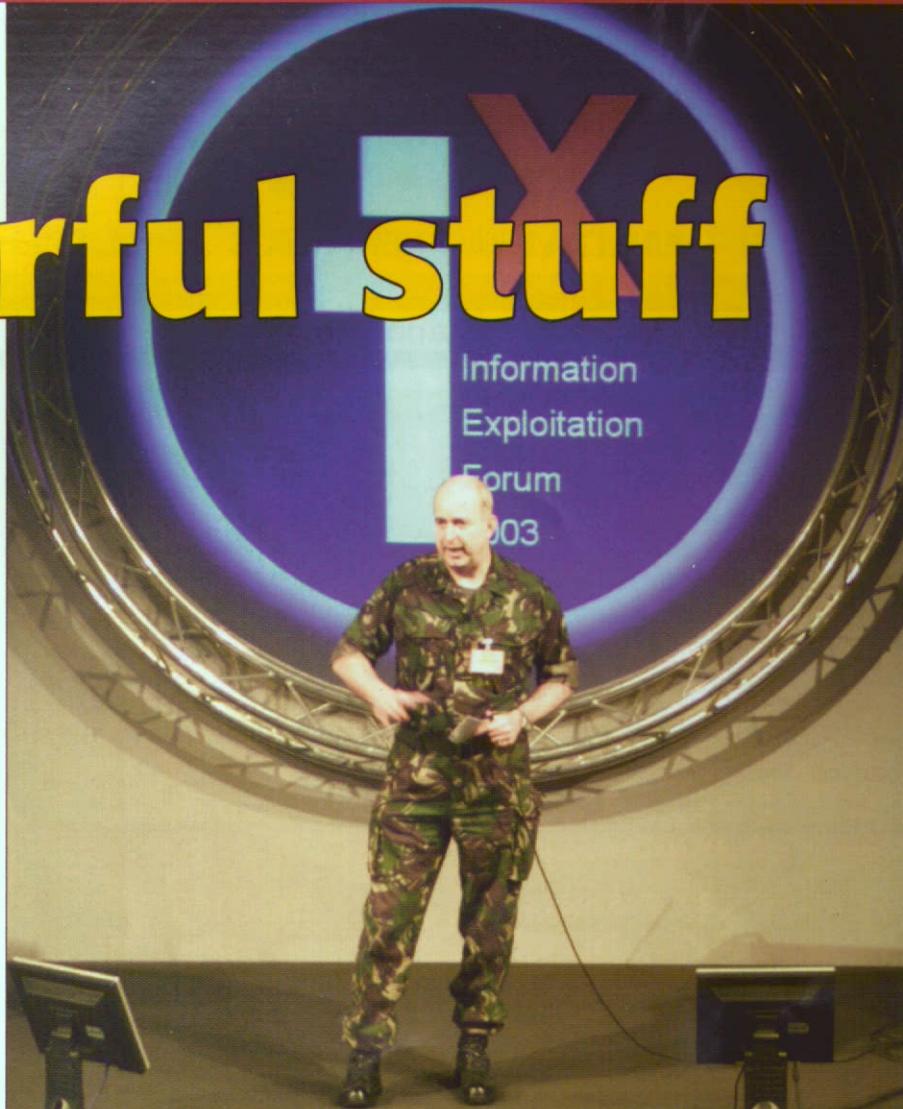
It was also one of the messages delivered loud and clear at an information exploitation forum at *HMS Collingwood* in Hampshire.

Aimed at information services managers, information management personnel and Defence sales and marketing staff, the forum was sponsored by the Director Information (Army), Brig Rick Bounssall, late RA, and his team.

Companies represented included Fox IT, Akter and Canon, which, with 20 others, contributed to open forums to learn what the Army needs and how they can deliver it. They also had the chance to showcase products.

"Operational capability comes from knowledge, experience and resources combined with the right information at the right time," said Brig Bounssall. "The Army needs to know about best practice in utilising information resources, hence the need for the forum."

"It is also an opportunity for a technical exchange of information between the Army and industry."



Information is the key: Brig Rick Bounssall takes the stage at the forum in *HMS Collingwood*

Information, he said, was an asset that could be exploited to produce strategic benefits. "This exploitation is the key to a more efficient way to making quicker and better decisions."

"We have to combine the knowledge, experience, commitment and insight of our people with the right business processes and technology. Added to that we need to develop Army personnel to take advantage of these resources."

"We are looking at lines of action,

including information management, information processes and information technology.

"We are getting the structures as right as we can within the constraints that we have. Our priority issues, not surprisingly, are applications and training, and information services."

"Ultimately, one of the aims of DInfo(A) is to harness the power of information, and use it to secure a critical advantage for the Army."



Bay watchers

TWO soldiers, Lt Neil Manchester, RE, and LCpl Paul Wright, 4 Regt AAC REME Wksp, were in the crew of the Joint Services sail training craft *Fimbria* which has returned to Gosport after several months at sea.

Since September last year the Victoria 34 yacht has played host to different crews for legs of two weeks. The final voyage, from the Canary Islands, was skippered by Lt Cdr Steve White RN.

Pictured, from left, are Sqn

Ldr Mike Harding RAF, Sub Lt Pauline Barlow RNR, MoD civil servant Dave Barlett, Lt Cdr Mike Smythe RN, LCpl Wright, Lt Manchester and Lt Cdr White.

The last leg included an exhilarating crossing of the Bay of Biscay in winds up to force nine.

When a mainsail tore in half during the storm, the Joint Services Adventurous Sail Training Centre at Gosport delivered a new one to Lorient on the Brittany coast the following morning.

SOLDIER WEB WATCH



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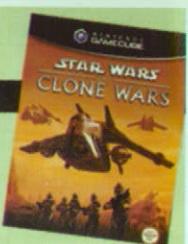
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Simply red-hot

Army turn on the style to retain Inter-Services crown at Twickenham

Army 53
Royal Navy 16

RUGBY can be a brutal, complex game and simple arithmetic seldom tells the complete story, writes Roger Thompson.

A 37-point victory rightly suggests that the Army blew the Royal Navy clean out of the water in their bid to retain the Babcock Trophy at Twickenham, but there was far more to this Inter-Services showdown than just a scorecard.

The mind games as to who was, or was not, in the Gulf were exposed as frivolous banter as soon as the teams piled off their coaches into the stadium. While the corps reunions supped every last drop of bonhomie and the Duke of York's School Band played stirring music, the team warm-ups were suitably intense and heralded the beginning of yet another high-octane Army-Navy confrontation in front of 35,000 fans.

For the Army, expectation was high. Having beaten the Royal Air Force 52-13,

‘Mal Roberts had the cheek to take the former England winger on the outside’

it was an audit point for Lt Col Andy Hickling's three-year strategy as head coach to neutralise the formidable Navy pack while maintaining an expansive, confident and entertaining three-quarters line.

The tension was tangible as red and blue forwards set for the first scrum, with the Army's front row of Scotland international Cpl Mattie Stewart (PWRR), Cpl George Kemble (RWF) and Cpl Steve Trethewey (REME) looking flint-hard and fired-up.

However, the trio soon proved they more than just looked the part – in 50 years no Royal Navy pack has been lifted and shunted around with such ignominy at Twickenham.

At the third touch, the Army put their opponents' lineout under real pressure and whatever scraps fell back the Navy's way thereafter were often slow and a clearly defined target for the defending champions' back row. Cpl Dwayne Cadwallader (Para), Pte Iosa Damudamu

(Hldrs) and Pte Apolosi Satala (RS) were in sizzling form and even at this early stage the jigsaw was nearly complete, the blueprint convincing, the outcome certain and it was simply a matter of how much Royal icing adorned the Army's cake.

Gnr Gareth Slade-Jones (RA) and Capt Dan Coen (RE) provided a well-lubricated fulcrum that directed the ball to the strike force, who each crossed the Navy line.

The tries were not from any textbook moves, more individual initiatives with a supporting phalanx to read the plot and focus the attack. The Navy heavies were sometimes able to haul down the midfielders, but had no answers when the assaults shifted smoothly to the flanks.

After an early exchange of penalties, Pte Emosi Naisaramaki (RS) latched on to a superb feed from an action-hungry Cpl Bruno Green (RE) to open the try count.

With a dazzling 25-metre jitterbug he launched himself down the left wing past a flotilla of would-be tacklers and over the line.

Shortly after, Satala bludgeoned and shrugged his way through the Blues' defence to finish off a thrilling backs' move.

After half-time the complexities of the match started to unravel. The ascendancy had been hard-won and as the Army took a breather, the matelots regrouped and enjoyed their best period of ball retention. The evergreen Sgt Bob Armstrong and Navy captain PO(R) Nick Bartlett are men of few words, but time and again they plunged fearlessly forward before being engulfed in red jerseys. With the score at 39-9 they were rewarded with a consolation try when Capt Matt Parker nipped in under the Army radar to score by the posts.

The Reds reasserted themselves when Capt Howard Graham (AGC), having his



Leading by example: Army vice-captain Cpl Andy Smith (RLC) in the thick of the action



In full flight: Winger Cpl Bruno Green (RE), above, and team captain Cpl Mal Roberts (RLC), left, add their names to the scoresheet during the Army's annual Inter-Services showdown with old rivals the Royal Navy at Twickenham

Pictures: Graeme Main

FOOTBALL TABLES

MASSEY TROPHY						
	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
RLC	12	10	2	0	29	32
Infantry	12	9	1	2	32	28
REME	9	7	1	1	30	22
R Signals	8	7	0	1	34	21
RA	9	7	0	2	27	21
RE	9	6	1	2	23	19
AAC	11	4	1	6	-5	13
APTC	12	3	4	5	-9	13
AMS	11	3	0	8	-37	9
CA Mus	12	2	1	9	-44	7
RAC	12	2	0	10	-32	6
AGC	9	1	2	6	-24	5
Int Corps	10	0	1	9	-24	1

PRICEWATERHOUSE COOPER LEAGUE						
	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
R Signals	6	5	1	0	26	16
RLC	6	4	1	1	26	13
AGC	6	4	0	2	30	12
RA	6	3	1	2	0	10
Int Corps	6	2	1	3	-12	7
REME	6	1	0	5	-32	3
AMS	6	0	0	6	-38	0

* Final league standings.

Still the best in Britain

Army star defends Four Nations crown

ENGLAND international LCpl Tony Davis (1 RRF) has secured the bragging rights to being the best light-heavyweight in the land by claiming his second successive Four Nations title.

A member of SSgt Vinny Powell's Aldershot-based Army boxing team, the 29-year-old won gold at the high-profile championships, dubbed the Battle of Britain, with points decisions over Wales's Justin Jones and Ireland's Ken Egan.

"Justin was a member of the Army team until recently, so I knew what to expect," he explained. "He looks for the heavy shots, and although he does have a big punch, I made sure that when he threw it I was not there to be caught.

"After the draw was made I said hello to Justin but he did not even acknowledge me. Speaking to an opponent before a fight doesn't bother me, I'll talk to anyone – it's only in the ring that I'll stop talking."

Indeed, Davis offered his semi-final opponent very little in the way of pleasantries during their bout and cruised to a 21-9 victory over his former Army teammate.

The final itself proved a much sterner test, with Egan keen to showcase the skills that had taken him to the quarter-finals of the World Championships last year.

"It was a tough fight," conceded Davis, who first climbed into a boxing ring as an 11-year-old schoolboy. "I knew that I was two points ahead going into the final round, but I wasn't sure which way the decision would go at the final bell."

However, a strong fourth round ensured the Englishman had little cause to worry and with an eventual five-point lead over his Irish counterpart, Davis was again crowned British champion.

Winning back-to-back championships is a tremendous feat and one made all the more remarkable by the fact that the fusilier returned to the ring only three seasons ago after a seven-year break from boxing.

"Although I never won a title as a junior I was still pretty handy, but I gave it all up at 19 when I was introduced to girls and alcohol," he confessed to *Soldier*. "I only began boxing again in 1999 because I found myself at a loose end after taking a break from the Army."

"What's happened since has been a fairy tale. I've won an ABA title, two Four Nations championships and have represented my country eight times."



Best in Britain: England's Four Nations light-heavyweight champion LCpl Tony Davis (1 RRF)

Although surprisingly modest for a boxer, Davis is acutely aware that the timing of his comeback and current rich vein of form could lead him to Athens and the 2004 Olympic Games,

I gave up boxing at 19 when I was introduced to girls and alcohol!

boxer," he said. "I am not the type to speculate and prefer to just let things happen, but I am already thinking about the qualifiers at the turn of the year. To reach the Olympics really would be a dream come true, but I know it won't be easy and am not taking anything for granted."

However, unlike his childhood hero, who went on to win five world titles in five weight divisions during the 1980s, Davis is adamant that he would

not turn his back on the Army for a second time in order to turn professional if he did return from Greece as a medal-winner.

"Age is not on my side and I'm not sure that my style would suit the professional game anyway," he said. "Besides I know from experience that civvy street is not all that it is cracked up to be."

"When the time does come to hang up my gloves, and I hope that will not be for another three or four years yet, I want to go straight into coaching."

"It would be great to one day become Army coach."

IN OFF THE POST ...

Written warning

WHILE not wanting to detract from the obvious achievements of WO2 Darren Adie in becoming a FIFA match official ("Army ref plays his cards right", April), I do take issue with the claim that he is the British Army's first FIFA-accredited match official. My reason? My father.

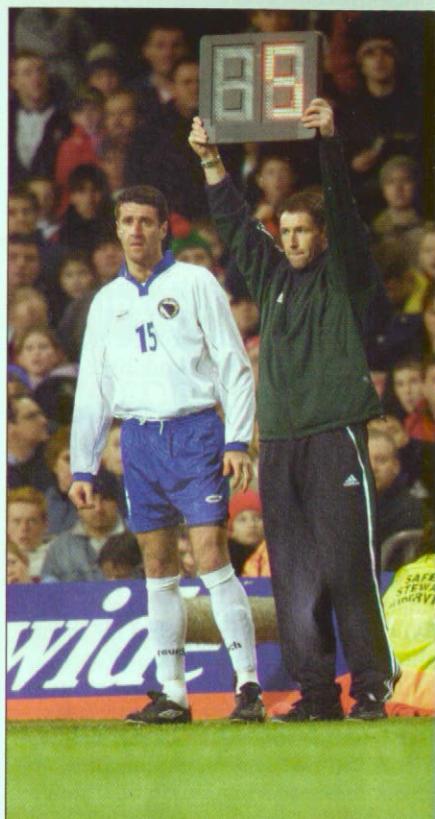
Fred Cross joined the Irish Guards in 1936, saw service in Palestine that year and subsequently served throughout the European campaign (1944-45) with the Guards Armoured Division.

He continued his service after the war and was later commissioned. A keen footballer who represented his battalion as a player, he later took up refereeing to allow him to maintain his interest in the sport.

In 1949 he was posted to Hong Kong where he was active on the soccer field with flag and whistle. The highlight of his tour was to be selected to referee the FIFA international match between Hong Kong and Sweden in 1949, and I believe he also refereed the Hong Kong v Malaya game that year.

Unfortunately I do not have his medal from the Sweden game, but do have his membership card, wire woven badge of the Hong Kong Football Referees' Association and the menu, dated November 29, 1949, for the after-match dinner in the Hong Kong Hotel's roof garden.

Fred went on to be a "starred list" Army referee, took charge of the Army Cup in 1959 and officiated in FA league matches.



An Army first? WO2 Darren Adie in action during Wales's 2-2 draw with Bosnia Herzegovina at the Millennium Stadium in Cardiff

Picture: Graeme Main

Therefore, I believe that my father beat WO2 Adie by, let me see, 53 years. – Maj (Retd) R J Cross, late RE.

◆ Yellow card. I stand corrected. – Sports Editor

Less sport? It's just not cricket

ONCE again the cricket season is here and being the AGC's vice-captain and coach, and the Army women's cricket coach, I have worked out that I will spend some 25 days out of the office during the summer.

I work in a mainly civilian environment and some of the older members of staff have begun to question the amount of time I will be away. It has been commented upon as being "unfair" and I may now miss out on representative sport, due to my place of work and the civilians I work with.

If the military are to be posted to work alongside civil servants, then it is about time civil servants understood what being in the military is all about. When we, the

military, are working weekends and late evenings, where are the civilians? At home, carrying on with their life, so why can't they let us get on with ours?

It will start here and progress to our daily routine. When we go to the gym or a mess meeting, will they then ask for the time to be made up during the evenings and weekends, which we sometimes have to work anyway?

I don't believe I'm the only soldier, or officer, in this position, but I've had enough. Many of us joined the forces for the opportunity to play sport.

The chances to play now are getting less and less. Let's not have to miss out when there is no need to. – Cpl P Legge AGC (SPS)

SHORTS

World title in sight

SHARPSHOOTER OCdt Edward Wood (Manchester and Salford Universities Officers' Training Corps) is on target to fulfil his potential as a hotshot having been selected for Great Britain's U25 squad ahead of the World Shooting Championships at Bisley in August.

No stranger to international competition, the 21-year-old has already represented his country, captaining the U19 team in South Africa and shooting in the millennium match at Bisley for the U21 side.

He also toured Canada with the U25 team last year and represented the English Universities, Territorial Army and GB U25 teams in 2001 and 2002.

Duathlon's dream debut

DESPITE fielding a squad severely depleted by Op Telic commitments, the Army won all of the team trophies on offer at the inaugural Inter-Services duathlon championships at Hullavington.

Sgt Chris Busby (RMAS) beat off the challenge of reigning Army champion WO2 Phil Marland (1D and D) to lift the men's crown and Sgt Lisa Yates (ATR Pirbright) completed a season double by winning the women's Inter-Services title just weeks after clinching victory at the Army championships.

For more information on duathlon or triathlon visit www.armytriathlon.co.uk

Calling all coaches

ARMY football coaching and development officer Steve Stone plans to launch an Army Football Association Coaches' Association (AFACA) for qualified FA coaches in the near future.

For a nominal fee of £10 members will have access to the following events and benefits: sports science, coaching and football fitness seminars; coach development and education days; theme days for team coaches at unit and corps level; discounted coaching kit and equipment complete with Army FA logo; an annual conference with guest speakers from the FA and professional game; FA courses and the opportunity to become a member of regional scouting and coaching committees.

For more details contact Steve on 01252 347962 or mil 94222 2962.

Doyle does it again

FORMER paratrooper and world fitness endurance champion Paddy Doyle completed the Special Forces 60km backpack march over the Brecon Beacons in a time of 14hr 50min – shaving 100 minutes off the previous record time.

The feat takes the habitual record-breaker's tally of stamina titles to 121.

Butch's feminine side

AFTER three years of unrivalled success, Maj Butch Maycock's tenure as head coach of the Army women's football team has come to an end.

A UEFA coach, Maycock is leaving a job he describes "as the most rewarding" of his 25 years in football and will be an extremely tough act to follow.

During his reign as boss at Aldershot's Military Stadium, the former Stockport County schoolboy has transformed a squad of raw, inexperienced players into a highly professional and motivated side which has won five successive Inter-Services titles and this season reached the final of the South-West Counties Cup for the first time.

"When I was asked to take on the job by the Army Football Association I have to concede that I was fairly reluctant to do so," explained the 48-year-old, who cited work commitments as the driving force behind his decision to stand down.

"Although the women's team had won the Inter-Services championship their results against civilian opposition were not the best and they had a bit of a poor reputation.

"But having worked with a women's team in Germany, I knew how rewarding and challenging an experience women's football could be and decided to give it a go. And I do

not regret that decision for a single moment.

"Unlike the men's game, there are no egos to massage in women's football and, although the players know their capabilities and are eager to capitalise on them, they also know their limits."

With the help of assistant coach Sgt Jim Lannie, Maycock's tracksuit style of management has rejuvenated the fortunes of women's football in the Army and ensured that the team inherited by his predecessor will be far healthier than the struggling one he adopted back in 2000.

"The girls' football really has developed beyond all recognition," he said. "In terms of talent Alex Cottier used to stand out a mile, but the rest of the players have improved so much it is now hard to pick out which one of them has England caps to her name.

"I am very proud that I have helped produce a team that can take on and, on their day, beat any women's team in the country," he added. "This season we beat every team in our league. To reach the cup final, and only miss out on the silverware after a penalty shoot-out against Hampshire, who fielded two England internationals, was a major achievement.

"The spirit in the dressing room is phenomenal and, with the average age of the current squad standing at



Standing down: Army women's football team coach Maj Butch Maycock Picture: Graeme Main

only 23, there is most definitely a bright future ahead."

Passionate about all things football, it remains to be seen whether Maycock, an avid Manchester United supporter, can resist emulating the

actions of his mentor Sir Alex Ferguson and go back on his decision to walk away from the dugout...

◆ Anyone interested in the vacant post should contact Lt Col Val Hall on 94271 2520.

RESULTS SERVICE . . .

ATHLETICS: Inter-Services marathon, senior men's team – 1, RAF; 2, Army; 3, RN. Individual men – 1, Wayne Dashper (RN); 2, Maj David Warner (Army); 3, Flight Officer Tim Artus (RAF). **Veteran men** – 1, Maj Warner; 2, Flight Sgt Robert Payne (RAF); 3, Capt Mark Gamble-Thomson (Army). **Women** – 1, Wendy Scott (RN); 2, Heidi Martin (RN); 3, Cpl Amanda Meechan (RAF).

BASKETBALL: Inter-Services championships, senior men – Army 73 Royal Navy 61; Army 74 Royal Air Force 71.

U23 – Army 102 RAF 28; Army 92 RN 59.

Women – Army 32 RAF 49.

CRICKET: Exercise Springbok Finn (8 Infantry Brigade tour to South Africa) – Lost by ten wickets to Wynberg School; lost by six wickets to SACS Old Boys; lost by 140 runs to Western Province Development squad; lost by 135 runs to Simon's Town Military Cricket Club.

RESULTS SERVICE . . . RESULTS SERVICE . . . RESULTS SERVICE . . . RESULTS SERVICE . . .

FOOTBALL: Massey Trophy – CA Mus 2 RAC 4; APTC 0 AMS 1; RAC 0 AAC 1; AMS 3 Int Corps 2; R Signals 3 APTC 0; Int Corps 0 REME 1; RLC 1 Infantry 1; APTC 3 Int Corps 2; Infantry 4 RE 0; AGC 2 RAC 1; CA Mus 1 RLC 7; AAC 1 REME 2; RA 6 APTC 3; R Signals 4 Infantry 2; Int Corps 1 RAC 4; RE 3 AAC 0; AMS 0 R Signals 15; CA Mus* 0 APTC 2; REME 2 AMS 0*; Int Corps 0* RE 2; AAC 0* R Signals 2; AMS 3 RAC 2; R Signals 2 Int Corps 0*; RA 9 AGC 0. * match conceded.

MARTIAL ARTS: Super Games in Christchurch, New Zealand (Army karate team results). Women's black belt, kumite – Gold, LCpl Leanne Gabbitas (RLC). Kata – Bronze, LCpl Gabbitas. **Women's junior grade, kumite** – Gold, Gnr Donna Kelly (RA). Kata – Gold, Gnr Kelly.

Men's black belt, kata – Silver, Spr David Fisk (RE); Bronze, Maj Rob Howells (AGC). **Kumite** – Silver (veterans), Maj Howells; Bronze, Spr Fisk. **Men's junior grade, kata** – Gold, LCpl Jitendra Shakya (RGR); Silver,

match – 1, Cpl Doak 569pts; 2, Sgt Alan Kerr (4 R Irish) 559pts; 3, Pte John McKeown (3 R Irish). **Centre fire match** – 1, Pte McClure 528pts; 2, Cpl Doak 511pts; 3, LCpl Willy Kennedy (3 R Irish) 510pts.

Team events, kata – Gold, British Army A team (LCpl Gabbitas, Spr Fisk, Gnr Kelly); Silver, British Army B team (LCpl Shakya, LCpl De Paul, Pte Richard Lort).

Male kumite – Silver, British Army A team (Maj Howells, LCpl Shakya, LCpl De Paul, Pte Lort, Spr Fisk). **Women's kumite** – Silver, UK/Australia (LCpl Gabbitas, Gnr Kelly, Julie Stavilia (Australian police force)).

RUGBY UNION: Army U20s results – RMCS (won 14-7); Sussex (won 16-15); Kent (won 24-17); Surrey (won 34-5); West-point, USA (won 17-11); Oxfordshire (lost 20-27); Natal Sharks (lost 0-59).

SHOOTING: Army target pistol championships, final standings – 1, Cpl Robert Doak (3 R Irish) 1080pts; 2, Pte Paul McClure (4 R Irish) 1071pts; 3, WO2 Nigel Hodgson (QLR) 1053pts. **ISSF air pistol**

match – 1, Cpl Doak 569pts; 2, Sgt Alan Kerr (4 R Irish) 559pts; 3, Pte John McKeown (3 R Irish). **Centre fire match** – 1, Pte McClure 528pts; 2, Cpl Doak 511pts; 3, LCpl Willy Kennedy (3 R Irish) 510pts.

Inter-Services small-bore rifle short range match – 1, RAF; 2, Army; 3, TA.

Combined Services v Great Britain target pistol match – 1, Great Britain 9988pts; 2, Combined Services 9920pts. **Overall highest individual** – Cpl Doak 1710pts.

SQUASH: Army inter-unit championships, major units – 1, 35 Engr Regt (96pts); 2, 11 Signal Regt (79pts); 3, 3 CS Regt (73pts); 4, HQ NI and 15 Signal Regt (45pts); 5, 3 RSME (24pts); 6, ITC Catterick (withdrawn). **Minor units** – 1, Upavon Support Unit (97pts); 2, HQ 4 Div (78pts); 3, DST Leconfield (60pts); 4, MWF Chilwell (49pts); 5, JSG NI (21pts).

4 Div knockout cup competition – 1, 25 Trg Sp Regt; 2, 3 CS Regt; 3, Middle Wallop Station; 4, 251 Signal Sqn.

SHORTS

Courting newcomers

ARMY personnel interested in taking up squash, honing their court skills or considering coaching are invited to attend a series of courses being held at the Aldershot Garrison Sports Centre.

Course dates include: Basic skills – August 26-29 and September 9-12. Intermediate/advanced – September 22-26 and October 6-10. Level 2 coaching – June 7-8 and September 13-14.

For further information contact Maj Roger Peters on 01264 383273.

FIXTURES

Your sporting guide to June . . .

ANGLING: 14-15 – AAF Group 8 match (Willow Park, Ash Vale); 21-28 – British Army carp classic (France).

ATHLETICS: 4 – HQ NI championships (Lisburn); 11 – Army individual championships (Tidworth); 25 – BF(G) championships (Sennelager).

CANOEING: 12-13 – Land Command slalom championships (Llandysul); 14-15 – Army slalom championships (Llandysul).

CRICKET: 1 – Army v Free Foresters (Aldershot); 3 – Isle of Wight v Army U25 (IOW); 4 – Beverley CC v Army women (Beverley), AGC v RMAS (TBC); 5 – Army v Hampshire 2nd XI (Aldershot), Driffield v Army women (Driffield); 8 – The Duke of Norfolk's XI v Combined Services (Arundel); 9 – Army v Middlesex 2nd XI (Aldershot), Oxford University Authentics CC v Army U25 (Marston Sports Ground, Oxford); 11-13 – Oxford University CC v Combined Services (The Parks); 15 – Royal Navy women v Army women (Portsmouth); 17 – Cambridge University Crusaders v Army U25 (Pembroke Ground, Cambridge); 18 – AGC v RA (TBC); 18-20 – Cambridge University CC v Combined Services (Fengers); 23 – Army U25 v Stragglers of Asia (Aldershot); 24 – British Police v Army (Imber Court), AGC v RE (TBC); 25 – Army v Fire Service (Aldershot); 26 – AGC v R Signals (TBC); 27 – Women's inter-corps championships (Dummer).

GOLF: 2-3 – 2 Div (Scotland) summer meeting and annual championships (Muckhart GC); 4 – British Army Cyprus summer meeting (Tsada GC); 13 – Army v Civil Service (Army GC, Aldershot); 14 – Army v Army GC (Army GC, Aldershot); 15 – AGA v TA (Tidworth GC); 18 – AGA v AOGS (Army GC, Aldershot); 23 – Army women's championship (Army GC, Aldershot); 26 – 4 Div (London District) summer meeting (Pinner Hill GC); 27 – 4 Div (east) summer meeting (Stoke By Nayland GC).

RUGBY LEAGUE: 11 – Lawson Cup third round ties (various).

TENNIS: 26-27 – 4 Div championships (Aldershot).

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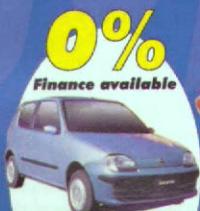
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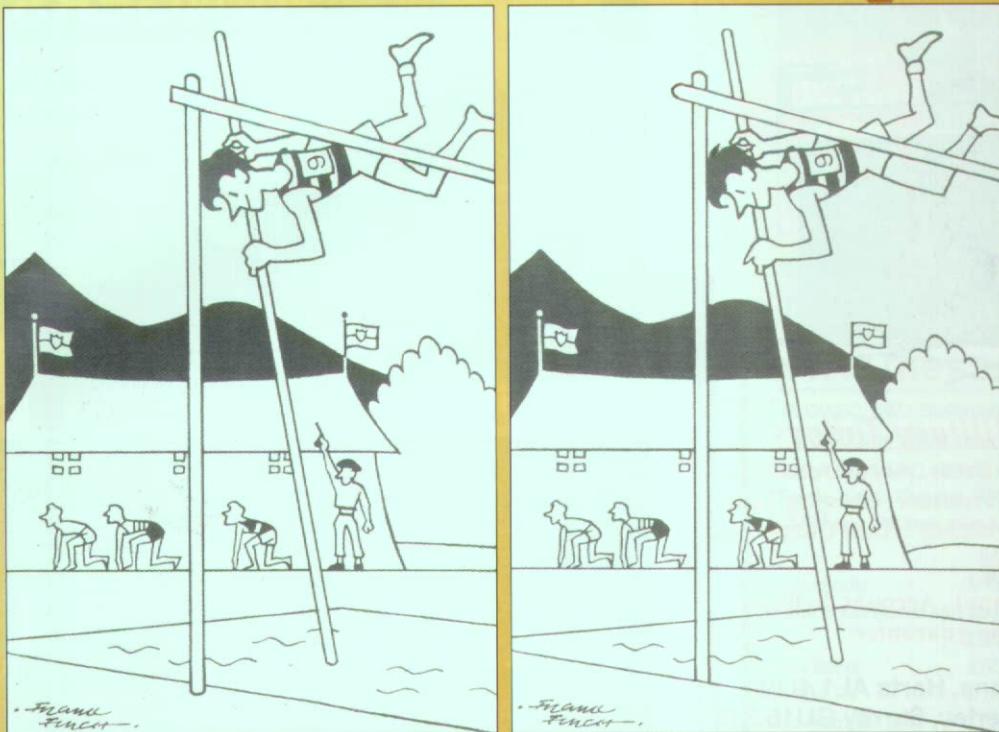
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No 739

How observant are you?

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Frank Finch has made ten changes in detail to one of his drawings taken from our archive. Circle the differences in the right-hand image, cut out the whole panel, add your name and address and send to HOAY 739, Soldier, Ordnance Road, Aldershot, GU11 2DU by June 30.

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

Do not include anything else in your envelope.

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

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

April competition (No 737): First correct entry drawn at random was from Cpl Jai Gurung, GDC, RMA Sandhurst, who wins £100. Runners-up Mr W Maidment, of Gosport, Hants, and Mr J Palmer, of Blandford, Dorset, each receive a £10 gift voucher. The ten differences were: ship's mast (upper and lower); waves; bottle label; soldier's tattoo scroll, exhibit number and watch; horizon, gun-barrel and epaulette in picture on right.



Freeze frame

"Pte Blenkinsop was a worry to his colleagues, although they couldn't say why"

Write a caption for the photograph, right, first published in *Soldier* in October 1950. The best, in the Editor's opinion, will win a prize from our silver logo collection. Usual rules apply, entries to reach us by June 30.



OUR prize for the April competition, left, goes to Mrs K Harvey, of Whetstone, London, for her suggested caption:

"Pte Brown volunteers to be the village idiot for the newly-formed Corps of Army Morris Dancers".

We also liked **"I can see the pub from here"**, from Cpl Baker, RIB LAD, REME, Cyprus.

On a similar theme were **"The new sniper rifle doubled as a telescope"** from Sgt Phil Bird RRF, ACIO Strand, London; **"Sir,**



it's not a telescope and you can't see stars during the day" from L/Cpl Wedge, 12 (NS) HQ Sqn, 23 Engr Regt Air Asst, Op Telic; and **"I see no ships"** from R A G Rickard of Torquay.

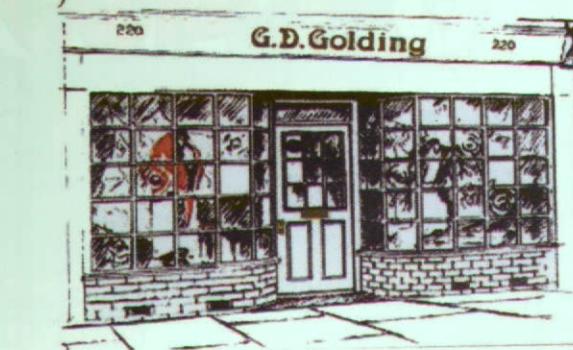
There was a different take on it from B Gaze of Cowes, Isle of Wight, who offered: **"Name and number, laddie – there's either a round left up there or your fingernails are a disgrace".**



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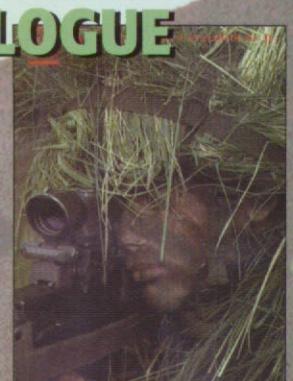
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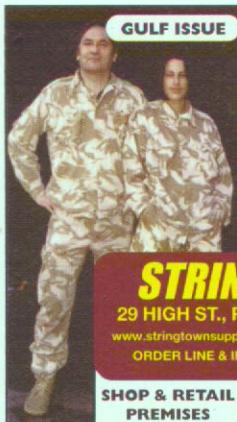
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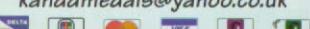
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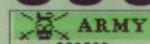
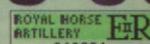
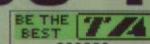
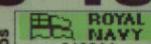
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SOLDIER June 2003

59

PEN PALS

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Please send for details enclosing a stamped, SAE to:

Soldier Magazine,
Ordnance Road, Aldershot,
Hants GU11 2DU

Or visit **Soldier Magazine** online at:

www.soldiermagazine.co.uk
Email: hshekyls@soldiermagazine.co.uk
All pen pal adverts must be prepaid

Claire, (23), 5'11" with brown hair. Ex-rugby player, ex model and has a son coming up to three. Anyone bored or feeling lonely please write, will reply to all letters, any age group. P 340

Teresa, (46), 5'4", brunette, slim build with blue eyes. A widow who enjoys walking, cycling, cosy pubs, laughter and good conversation. Would like to initially correspond with interesting single 6ft pen pals aged 40. P342

Michelle, (34), 5'4", brown hair and blue eyes. Enjoys music, horse racing, reading, going out and socialising. Friendly lady who would like to write to soldiers abroad or at home, 29-40. P343

Female! Aged 39, living with partner, no children and a pet cat. Enjoys motorcycles, rock music, classic and sports cars, reading, films, rock concerts and motorcycle rallies. Seeking servicemen/women who do not currently receive mail from friends/family, especially those in the Gulf, any age group. P344

Rebecca, (34), 5'5" bored mum of one with shoulder length brown hair and brown eyes. Enjoys going to the gym, pubs, cinema and going out with friends. Would love some letters other than junk mail and bills. Seeking single soldiers out there of a similar age to write to, photos appreciated. P345

Jo, 5'6", strawberry blonde hair and blue eyes. Enjoys swimming, walking, the gym, going out with friends and music. Seeking single pen pals, 34. P346

Liz, (35), bubbly brunette, leggy, sexy, slim, 5'4". Divorced secretary, Northants area who enjoys good conversation/laugh, walks, aerobics, reading and meeting people. Seeks pen pals, any age group. P348

Pen Pal Replies

To reply to a pen pal, write a letter and send it to this address:
Soldier Magazine, Ordnance Road, Aldershot, Hants GU11 2DU

* The box number must be clearly written in the top left corner of all your replies.
* Replies should consist only of letter and photograph if requested.
* Replies received more than three months after the cover date, large, heavy or poorly addressed envelopes will not be forwarded.

Beverly, (35), 5'9", fair hair and blue eyes. Bubbly, friendly with a son. Enjoys walking, reading, music, nights in/out, socialising and meeting new people. Seeking pen pals, any age group. P349

Karen, (34), 5'4", attractive, slim with short hair and green eyes. Artistic, enjoys pubs, clubs, cinema, walking, pets and travelling. Animal lover, seeking honest, reliable pen pals to write to, 28-38. P351

Samantha, (26), 5'4", blonde with blue eyes. Enjoys rugby and music. Seeking pen pals, any age group. P352

Tracey, (40), 5'4", brown hair and blue eyes. Enjoys swimming, meeting people, holidays, cinema and night-clubs. Seeking 5'8" - 5'10" pen pals with GSOH and same interests, 37-45. P353

Linda, (43), 5'1" with dyed red hair. Enjoys reading, keep fit, socialising and plays darts for a local darts team. Seeking officers/soldiers with GSOH, separated/divorced, 35+. P354

Lisa, 5'6", medium build, long blonde hair and hazel eyes. Enjoys going out, living life to the full, cinema and music. Looking to write to lads for friendship and you never know what the future will hold, any age group. P355

Happy, nutty 31-year-old woman thinks you all do a fantastic job and would like to be in contact with any of you so I can annoy you with my sad sense of humour, any takers? Single and will soon wear a different type of uniform to yours. Seeking pen pals of any age group. P356

Neil, (37), 5'10", fair hair and brown eyes. One for the girls, any female wishing to write to an ex soldier. Enjoys cinema, parties, clubs, football, action sports, reading, travelling and meeting new people. Corporal in the TA. P357

Susannah, (21), 5'6", slim build, blonde shoulder-length hair and blue eyes. Enjoys going out with friends, clubs, eating out, cinema, swimming and taking holidays. Favourite food lasagne, and drinks Tia Maria with Coke no ice. Seeking pen pals, any age group. P358

Happy, hard working, intelligent, IT manager. In her 40s, looking to expand her circle of friends now the family are growing up. Enjoys travelling, swimming, walking, quizzes, good conversation, good food and good company. Seeking pen pals, any age group. P359

Lisa, (30), 5'6", long blonde hair and blue eyes. Enjoys socialising, music, nights in, meeting interesting and outgoing people and having fun. Seeking genuine male pen pals who are in the Army, any age group. P360

Karen, (36), 5'6", long red/blonde hair. Enjoys keep fit, motorsports, animals, clubs and pubs. Works in a health & fitness club with a GSOH and a great smile. Seeking pen pals, 29-45. P361

Simone, (38), 5'7" single and attractive with green eyes. Adventurous, understanding, caring, loves music, nights in or out. Attractive, looking for friendship and more. GSOH essential, 36-45. P362

Miranda, (36), 5'8", blonde hair and blue eyes. Enjoys skiing, experimenting with food, films, travel, shopping, conversation, clubs, writing and the outdoors. Looking for soldiers/officers with GSOH, honest and tall to write to, 30+. P363

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.soldiermagazine.co.uk

Sheila, (40), 5'4", medium build. Enjoys DIY, walking, the countryside, animals, the seaside, health, women's issues and swimming. Seeking pen pals, 30+. P365

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08/03



REUNIONS

25 Regt RA 1947-84: 12th reunion at Larkhill, Salisbury, July 5-6. Details from Len Haddow, 4 The Rise, Hempstead, Gillingham, Kent, ME7 3SF. Tel/fax 01634 388156.

QRIH, QRH Regimental Band: Reunion to be held June 14. Contact Bill and Andrea Hurley for full details on 01777 703923 or e-mail williamhurley@music83.fsnet.co.uk

3 R Anglian (Eagle and Garter) Dinner Club: 11th annual dinner for serving and retired officers and SNCOs of the former Pompadours, July 19, ATR Bassingbourn Sgts' Mess. Contact Maj Bob Potter on 01206 573498/782165 or bobandkathleen@hotmail.com

127 (Dragon) Bty: Reunion weekend, Mansergh Barracks, Gütersloh, July 18-20 to mark the relocation of the battery from 26 Regt RA to 19 Regt RA at Larkhill. Contact Capt Tom Luker on 0049 5241 84 2256 or e-mail dragons127battery@hotmail.com

Queen's Own Buffs: Remembrance Service and grand reunion, Canterbury Aug 3. Parade 1200, cathedral service 1300, then reunion at Howe Barracks. Details from H Delo on 01227 765867 or henry.lyn@freeserve.co.uk

Royal Anglian Regt Assn: Regimental day to be held at the Imperial War Museum, Duxford on Sept 14. Details from RHQ 01284 752394 or e-mail rhq_ranglian@keme.co.uk

36 Regiment RA: Reunion on Sept 26-27 at Marlborough Hotel, Felixstowe. Open to ex-36 RA members of all arms. Contact Keith Holderness 36@keithraa.freeserve.co.uk or visit <http://members.tripod.com/krh30/36reg/>

SEARCHLINE

Herr Jan Lühr, from Erfde near Rendsburg in Northern Germany, seeks members of British Forces based there from **May 1945 to December 1946**. Zur Borse, a restaurant used as HQ 11 Armd Div with Maj Gen G B P Roberts commanding, then by HQ 29 Armd Bde, and from April 1946 by HQ 4 Armd Bde, is now owned by Herr Lühr. A field hospital was located in the Hotel Eckmann opposite the restaurant. Any information or archive material welcomed and family members of or personnel who were there asked to contact Herr Lühr, Lühr's Gasthof, Norderende 3, 24803 Erfde, Germany Tel 0049 (0)4333 220, Fax 0049 (0) 4333 999892.

Mates of **24182925 Cpl John Peter Remon** whose service from 1969-77 included the UK, BAOR, NL, Canada and Denmark are sought by his brother and sister. Contact Mark Remon at grobbledonk@msn.com

Wall chart of capbadges from 1946-48 sought for presentation to the Association of Danes who served during this period (2,300 of them with 42 British regiments). Offers of assistance to K V G Moore, The Granary, Church Road, Bacton, Norwich NR12 0JP.

14 Coy RASC reunion planned by **Edmund Forte**, former National Serviceman and driver/batman to Army Padre Morton. Any

Beverley Boys 1950-55 6 (B) TR Royal Signals: Reunion Oct 3-4. Details from Tony Hull 01202 770261 or Mick Teague 01670 3666.

67 and 5 Battery (19 Regt RA) Old Comrades' Assn: Reunion for those who served in the 1950s, 60s or 70s is to be held Oct 10-12 in Derby. Telephone 01332 605093 or visit <http://67battery.members.easyspace.com>

Inf Boys/JLdrs Bn 1950s-70s: Ninth reunion for boys/J Ldrs Harrogate, Tuxford, Plymouth, Oswestry, Shorncliffe, Oct 11, Royal Rifle Volunteers Training Centre, Milton Keynes. Contact C McGrogan, 15 Lambie Street, Whitburn, W Lothian EH47 0HH; 01501 744555/741215.

12 Regt RA: Reunion for all officers past and present on Oct 18 at Woolwich. Details from 2nd Lt Matt Ives, 12 Regt RA, Dempsey Bks, BFPO 16. e-mail mives17180@hotmail.com

68 Sqn RCT: Reunion to be held on Oct 18 at Blackpool. Access the website for details at 68sqRCT@groups.msn.comgroupshome

7 Armd Wksp Coy, Grapple 1: Reunion dinner for those deployed in Bosnia Nov 1992-May 1993 at Arborfield, Nov 1-2. Ring SSgt Griffiths/SSgt Jobes on 01420 485610.

RAMC/RADC WOs' and Sgts' Mess Past and Present Dinner Club: Dinner planned for May 31 at 34 Fd Hosp, Queen Elizabeth Barracks, York was postponed to Nov 3. Further details to be finalised.

49 (Inkerman) HQ Battery: Reunion Nov 7-9 at Allenbrooke Barracks, Topcliffe, N Yorks. For details e-mail Terryjwalton@aol.com

Yorks and Lancs Regiment members who travelled to Port Said with him in 1956, met him in Cyprus in 1957 or knew him on his return to **Hobbs Barracks, Lingfield**, are asked to telephone 01626 772911 or e-mail basforte@aol.com

Sid Noble seeks **ex-Junior Leaders Battalion RASC 1961-63** Norton Manor Camp, Taunton. Write to Bernard S Noble, 9 St Johns Road, Stamford Bridge, York, YO41 1PH, telephone 01759 372573 or e-mail him at bernard.noble@tesco.net

Geoff Holmes RN was at **Simban, Pertang, Negri Sembilan, Malaya (1955)** and seeks contact with members of **2 Bn Royal Welch Fusiliers** (C Coy?) he and his shipmates met there. E-mail g.r.holmes@ntlworld.com or tel 0161 9628417.

Suzanne Connors, wife of Dan, **A Coy, RGJ Germany 2002**. Old friend Trudi asks you to contact her at stevenp.barrett@virgin.net

Kenneth Crisp seeks news of Army training pal **William Doy (Britannia Barracks, Norwich 1945)**, last known to be in New Costessy, Norwich in 1949 working with his stonemason father. Please write to K L Crisp, No 2 Armshouse, Chapel Road, Paston, North Walsham, Norfolk NR28 9TD.

APPOINTMENTS

Brigadiers: J G Askew to be Defence Attaché Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, May 3; C C Brown to be Dir Military Operations, Apr 15; A P Farquhar to be COS Regional Forces, Apr 22; A Hawley to be Dir BFG Health Service, Apr 28; J M Wells to be Dir Army General Practice, Apr 7.

Colonels: D A Barley to be Chief Exercise and Plans Joint HQ (SE), Mar 17; E B Carmichael to be Comd Med 3 (UK) Div, Mar 17; D F Davies to be COS Mil Secretary (APC), Mar 17.

C M Deverell to be Dep ACOS Ops/Commitments HQ Land, Apr 14; A D Duncan to be Asst Dir Safety and Environment DLO, Apr 8; A H Johnstone to be Dir Defence Commitments/Plans Sierra Leone, Mar 24; S R Levey to be Comd BATUS, May 1.

G McGarr to be Dep Chairman/COS Joint Military Commission Sudan, Apr 28; I A Ogden to be Col Engineer Service, HQ Theatre Troops, Apr 7; R W H Purdy to be Comd 1 Artillery Bde, Mar 17; T J P Watts to be Dep Dir Equipment CapabilityCommand Control Information Infrastructure, Apr 22.

SOLDIER COMPETITIONS

Churchill (Apr) winners: Cpl I Parrott, Bassingbourn; A J Cross, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex; J Jack, Airdrie. Answer: Clement Attlee.

Matthew Hervey (Apr) winners: T Bell, Birmingham; P Smith, Theydon Bois, Essex; S T Kester, Mundford, Norfolk; D Barton, Edinburgh. Answer: The 6th Light Dragoons.

George Baker (Apr) winner: G Heesom, Seabridge, Staffs. Answer: Tiberius.

Command and Conquer Generals (Apr) winners: M Britton, BFPO 38; Cpl Dorritt, BFPO 660; LCpl S Higgins, BFPO 649; Sgt D S Jack, BFPO 662; LCpl Docherty, BFPO 59; O Balash, Englefield Green, Surrey; H Cheeseman, Chatham; S Poulton, Ballykinler; J Jones, Weymouth; C Goodfellow, Claybrooke Magna, Leics. Answer: Duke of Wellington.

Royal Windsor Horse Show (Apr) winners: H Sheridan, Kingsbury, London; M Stanley, Havant, Hants; L Rolfe, Hounslow, Middx; L Cameron-Ross, Camberley. Answer: 1943.

Praetorians (Apr) winners: M F Ward, Stoke nr Coventry; WO1 Moodie, BFPO 660; WO2 Cartledge, BFPO 662. Answer: Charlton Heston.

RE Bomb Disposal Officers Club for officers and WOs who have served in RE bomb disposal/EOD units in the Regular Army, National Service, AER, TAVR, Z Reserve or TA. Contact the Hon Secretary, Lt Col (Retd) Eric Wakeling ERD, Tre Pol Pen, 6 Wendover Road, Well End, Bourne End, Bucks SL8 5NT or visit www.bombdisposalclub.org.uk

Aaron McClaughlin (Mac) RE, former SNCO during Desert Storm and penpal to Sara Hawkins, from Harlow, please contact her at girlsienz@yahoo.co.uk

Mark Anderson (RTR?) is sought by former 1970s Clongowes Wood College friends for a reunion. Contact Billycrosbie@hotmail.com or 00353 21 4772073.

Operational honours and awards

(April 1 to September 30, 2002)

Northern Ireland

CBE: Brig P R Newton, late PWRR.

OBE: Col D S C Gamble, late RAMC.

MBE: Maj A J Eason, A and SH; Maj A E Evans, Int Corps; WO2 K F Ryan QGM BEM, Para; WO2 J D Talbot, Int Corps; WO2 D G Watson, R Signals.

GM: Maj M J Davis RLC.

QGM: WO2 S A Rolls RLC.

MID: WO2 N C Agnew, R Irish; Pte J M Crowie RLC; Sgt R Sutherley, A and SH; Pte A Woodside, R Irish.

QCB: Cpl K J Chappelle, Cheshire; SSgt E Davies RLC; CSgt R Johnson, Para; Cpl N Marshman RWF.

QCVS: Maj R G Arundell LI; Maj J H Bowron LI; WO2 D J Braithwaite, Int Corps; Maj J C Convery RLC; Maj J E Cunningham GH; CSgt M Goodchild, Gren Gds; SSgt M L Hill, Int Corps; Col D St J Homer MBE, late RGJ; Maj C

Kemp, Para; Maj R S Lawther MBE, R Irish; Capt S A Lyle RLC; WO2 N L McGregor KOSB; Maj I P Metcalf, Kings; Cpl S R Munday RLC; Col M P J O'Hanlon, late R Irish; Rev A B Paris RACD; CSgt R E Smith, Para; Lt Col S F M Telfer MBE, R Scots; Capt D C R Troulan QGM, Para; WO2 J V F Voss REME.

Sierra Leone

ARRC: Maj M L Holman, QARANC.

QCVS: Maj H R D J Joynson, KRH; Lt Col S C Newton MBE, DWR.

Former Yugoslavia

MBE: WO2 W Duff RLC TA; Maj L M Scott PWRR.

QCB: LCpl G P Kendall RLC.

QCVS: Maj O J Adams RA; WO1 D R H Buglass RLC; Lt Col R R Davis MBE, RE; Lt Col C D S Ince MBE, RE; Col P J King OBE, late R Irish; Maj G A J Macintosh WG; Brig S V

Mayall, late QDG; WO2 D E Norman PWRR; Capt H J Scott, R Signals; Lt Col R H Talbot Rice WG.

Afghanistan

CBE: Col R L Barrons OBE, late RA; Col N P Carter OBE, late RGJ.

MBE: Maj S J R Browne, R Anglian; SSgt S J Clewley RE; SSgt C M Lewis RLC.

ARRC: Maj J M Pilgrim QARANC.

MID: Sgt K G McHenry, R Anglian.

QCVS: Capt G J Arnold RE; Cpl C A Brown RAMC; Lt Col P D Jones MBE, R Anglian; Spr B S Laidlaw RE; Col I A Ogden, late RE.

Congo

QCVS: Lt Col A J S Storrie OBE, D&D.

Non-operational awards

GM: SSgt M A Doyle RLC.

QGM: Capt N G Joynes RLC.

Vets' group aims for special week

THE National Ex-Services Association, which is looking for new members from all three Armed Forces and nursing and women's services, intends to petition the Government for an annual week dedicated to the ex-Forces community.

Its proposed National Ex-Service Alliance week would draw veterans and their families together at reunions and services of remembrance all over the country.

The non-profit, non-political self-help group produces 10,000 copies of a 12 or 16-



page newspaper every six weeks, paid for out of the £10-a-year subscription fee. It contains items of interest to the ex-Service community and allows members an opportunity to express opinions and grievances.

To find out more about the organisation, visit its website at www.nesa.org.uk or contact chairman Arthur Lane direct at 61 Charles Street, Stockport SK1 3JR, tel 0161 480 0114, fax 0161 477 2681, or e-mail him at arthurlane.nesane@ntlworld.com

ASSISTANCE TO AUTHORS

Last train from Bari

TV PRODUCER looking to be put on the right track. Freelance Andra Heritage is researching the so-called "Forgotten Army" supposedly left stranded in Bari, Italy at the end of the Second World War.

Information required, particularly regarding a train soldiers were reputed to have built from scratch to transport themselves home. Any information would be welcomed. Please e-mail andraheritage@hotmail.com or telephone 07815 772670.

Nato gunnery trophy

THE Canadian Army Trophy (CAT) for inter-Nato gunnery is the subject of a book being researched by David J Eason. If you were or still are involved with this competition, please write to D J Eason (GCM), The Mews Cottage, 1 Acacia Road, Royal Leamington Spa, Warwickshire CV32 6EF.

Useful numbers

Army Benevolent Fund 020 7591 2000; www.armybenfund.org

Army Families Advice Bureau 01722 436569

Army Welfare Service 01722 430456

Army Families Federation 01980 615525; www.aff.org.uk

British Limbless Ex-Service Men's Association 020 8590 1124; www.blesma.org.uk

Confidential support lines:

UK 0800 731 4880

Germany 0800 1827 395

Cyprus 080 91065

Bosnia 0800 731 4880

Others UK 1980 630854

Operations worldwide Paradigm Homelink Access Number *2999@thePINprompt

Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society (Combat Stress) 01372 841600; www.combatstress.com

Consumer Credit Counselling Service Free

Confidential Helpline 0800 1381111 0800-2000 hours Mon-Fri

Family Escort Service 020 7463 9249

Gulf Veterans Association 0191 230 1065

www.gulfveteransassociation.co.uk

Joint Service Housing Advice Office 01722 436357

Mutual Support (Forces Multiple Sclerosis support group) 01666 824709

National Gulf Veterans and Families Association Office (0900-1700) 01482

808730; 24-hour helpline on 01482 833812; www.ngvfa.com

Regular Forces Employment Association 0207 321 2011; www.rfea.org.uk

Royal British Legion's Legionline 0845 7725 725; www.britishlegion.org.uk

RBL Industries Vocational Assessment Centre 01622 717202/718484; www.rbli.co.uk

ESHRA Ex-Service Homes Referral Agency 020 7839 4466 www.eshra.com or eshra@britishlegion.org.uk

St Dunstan's Home for blind ex-Servicemen and women 020 7723 5021; www.st-dunstans.org.uk

SAMA 82 (South Atlantic Medal Association) for Falklands conflict veterans 01495 227577 e-mail: densama@aol.com

Samaritans 08457 90 90 90

Service Children's Education 01980 618244

Services Cotswold Centre 01225 810358

SSAFA Forces Help 020 7403 8783; www.ssafa.org.uk

SSAFA Forces Help Housing Advisory Service 01722 436400

Veterans' Agency (includes War Pensions Agency) 0800 169 2277 (from UK); 0044 1253 866043 (from overseas); www.veteransagency.mod.uk

Victim Support Western Europe (SSAFA Forces Help) in Germany 02161 47 2272; from outside Germany 0049 2161 47 2272

WRVS General enquiries 02920 739906; www.wrvs.org.uk

DATES

JUNE

11: Army Families Federation Northern Ireland conference. Tickets 028 9226 6875.
 19: Evening lecture on service with the Gurkha Independent Parachute Company, by Brig David Morgan. Airborne Forces Museum, Aldershot (tel 01252 349619).
 28: Manchester Military Tattoo, Manchester Evening News Arena. Tickets on 0870 169 6888.
 28-29: Merseyside Military Show, Walton Hall Park, Liverpool.

JULY

18-20: International air tattoo, RAF Fairford (www.airtattoo.com)

AUGUST

1-23: Edinburgh Tattoo (tattoo office 0130 225 4783).

Military victims of Troubles sought

* THE Tim Parry Johnathan Ball Trust, set up by the parents of Tim Parry, who was killed by a bomb in Warrington in 1993, is appealing to Great Britain-based Northern Ireland veterans to help with a unique research project.

The Legacy Project, which works with GB-based victims and survivors of the Troubles, aims to identify the needs of former soldiers and families of those killed and injured who may be suffering from trauma or have other needs many years after the event.

Funded by the Northern Ireland Office's Victims' Liaison Unit, the project has been working with former soldiers, emergency workers and other victims of GB bombings since last year, but now wants to contact those affected by service in the Province in particular.

Anyone wanting to take part in the research should contact the Peace Centre by phoning 01925 581229, writing to The Legacy Project, Peace Centre, Peace Drive, Warrington WA5 1HQ or e-mailing info@childrenforpeace.org. All information given will be treated as confidential.

* THERE were joint winners of this year's Fairclough public relations award, presented by the Reserve Forces and Cadets Association (RFCA) for the North of England.

Best units in PR and recruiting were 102 Battalion REME (V), for the second time in three years, and 101 Regiment RA (V).

Capt Sherri Took, for 101 Regiment, and Maj Eric Ingram, received the award from Air Vice Marshal Sandy Hunter, chairman of the RFCA.



We're ten . . .

SSGT Janet Jenkins, left, and Pte Elaine Parker, volunteers with 234 (Birkenhead) Squadron, 156 (North-West) Regiment RLC (V) show off the cake baked for the unit's celebration to mark the tenth anniversary of the Royal Logistic Corps.

The four squadrons of 156 Regiment – based at Liverpool, Bootle, Birkenhead and Manchester – marked the birthday with evening receptions to which veterans of the predecessor corps, the Royal Army Service Corps and Royal Corps of Transport, were invited.

Picture: Maj Roy Bevan

Kalamata's warm welcome

SECOND World War Greek campaign veteran **Edwin Horlington** tells us he and a party of colleagues enjoyed great hospitality at their annual reunion and remembrance service at Kalamata. They were accorded a guard of honour by the Greek Army and entertained royally by the city council.

Edwin, now 84, is the founder and president of the Brotherhood of Veterans of the Greek Campaign 1940-41. He returned to Kalamata last month.

One member who won't forget the trip is former gunner **Bill Manly**, who was overcome by the heat and fell – at the attention, of course – during the service. He was whisked off to a new hospital nearby, and given VIP treatment. The thorough going-over he received gave him the all-clear, although it did discover kidney stones which he didn't know he had.

These suits were made for walking . . . not



Walkathon: These soldiers, above, from the Army School of Ammunition at Kineton, walked 70 one-mile laps around the station in 24 hours to raise money for the British Limbless Ex-Service Men's Association and the Kineton welfare fund. The tricky bit was that they did it in the full explosive ordnance disposal rig – an outfit not noted for its contribution to athletic freedom.

From left in the picture are instructors **Capt Alex Blake**, **Maj Seamus O'Brien**, **Chief Tech Neil Abbott** RAF and **Maj Gareth Powell** with some of the £7,500 they collected. Neil, inset right, finds the going uncomfortable as he completes his first lap.





Very Important visitor: Gen Sir Mike Jackson, left, presented a Long Service and Good Conduct Medal to Cpl Michael Barge AGC (SPS) while making his first visit as Chief of the General Staff to the Directorate of Military Operations in the MoD. Cpl Barge, who has seven operational tours under his belt after 15 years with field force units, is now dealing with home base security issues.

Thin Lizzy sums up the mood

THIN Lizzy's "The Boys Are Back In Town" and "We've Got to Get Out of This Place" by the Animals were two of the most requested songs on BFBS's Kuwait-based radio station, according to the *Sandy Times*.

Up there with them – and reflecting the military's traditionally robust sense of humour in times of war, was "Rock the Casbah" by the Clash. Sentimental listeners opted for "Half the World Away" by Oasis, "Writing to Reach You" by Travis and Sophie Ellis Bextor's "Take Me Home".

Messages from families said, typically, "stay safe" and "we love you", while those from military colleagues were more likely to be tongue-in-cheek threats such as "we're drinking all your beers, mate".

At one point during the conflict BFBS Middle East, which has been broadcasting around the clock, was receiving more than 2,000 requests a day. Head of Music Joanne Bell told the *Sandy Times*: "The troops want upbeat, uplifting music, which helps reduce feelings of homesickness."

The soldier's gift

AT the risk of encouraging other poets to submit patriotic pieces (please note, we haven't got room for them), we thought we would share these sentiments, penned by a 13-year-old Australian schoolgirl and forwarded to us by reader Mac Thompson (ex-148 Commando Battery RA), of St David's, Pembrokeshire:

"It is the soldier, not the reporter, who has given us freedom of the press; It is the soldier, not the poet, who has given us freedom of speech; It is the soldier, not the campus organiser, who has given us the freedom to demonstrate; It is the soldier who salutes the flag, who dies under the flag and whose coffin is draped by the flag; It is the soldier who allows the protestor to burn the flag."

The words were copied or composed by Trent Dolphin from Lock, South Australia, in response to an anti-war, anti-military letter published in her local newspaper.



Grace nails colours to the mast

AMONG the many messages of support for our Gulf troops directed to *Soldier* was one from Grace Hughes of Benholm by Montrose in Scotland.

She was so keen to show her feelings that she designed a flag, pictured above, incorporating the Union, Saltire, Spanish and US flags and had it run up by a Glasgow company. She tells us it will fly from her flagpole until all our brave men and women are safe.

A FLAME-coloured hybrid astroemeria lily launched at the Chelsea Flower Show by Falklands veteran Simon Weston was donated by breeder Peter Smith of Chanctonbury Nurseries of Ashington, West Sussex

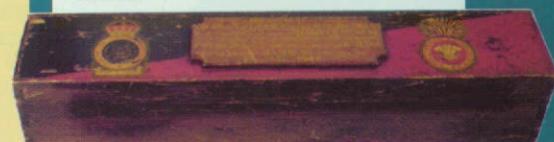
to raise funds for the Royal Star and Garter Home.

The Heroes Lily is available at £5.99 (£2 off the normal price) from the home. To order, ring 020 8940 1351 or e-mail patsy.willis@starandgarter.org

Legends of the regiments and corps

47

Kent and Sharpshooters Yeomanry Museum



Treasure: Engraved oak case

Link forged in Bazooka Alley

A TREASURED item in the Museum of the Kent and Sharpshooters Yeomanry at Hever Castle is a German Second World War *panzerfaust* enclosed in a handsome oak case.

On top of the case are the badges of the 3rd/4th County of London Yeomanry (Sharpshooters) and the 4th Battalion, The Royal Welch Fusiliers.

An inscription says it was given to the Sharpshooters by 4 RWF in memory of Bazooka Alley, Bocholt and as a reminder of the links between the two regiments from the crossing of the Rhine until they entered Hamburg together on May 4, 1945.

SHERMAN TANKS

The Sharpshooters were equipped with Sherman tanks as part of 4th Armoured Brigade, while 4 RWF, part of 53rd (Welsh) Division, were in Kangaroos (Shermans adapted as personnel carriers with the turret removed).

After crossing the Rhine the two units found themselves in wooded, boggy country east of Bocholt. The woods were full of determined German soldiers armed with rifles and *panzerfaust* (or "tank fist"), a cheap and light but powerful anti-tank rocket capable of penetrating armour up to 8in thick.

Given the nature of the terrain, which made it difficult for the tanks to bring effective fire to bear, one Sharpshooter said it was a moot point whether to stay in one's tank and be hit by a bazooka or get out and be sniped.

Kent and Sharpshooters Yeomanry Museum is in Hever Castle, Edenbridge, Kent. Castle entry £7.80; seniors £6.60; children £4.20. Open March 1-Nov 30 daily, 1200 to 1800. Tel 01732 865224 or e-mail ksymuseum@aol.com

www.armymuseums.org.uk



Retail reconnaissance

Switched on . . .



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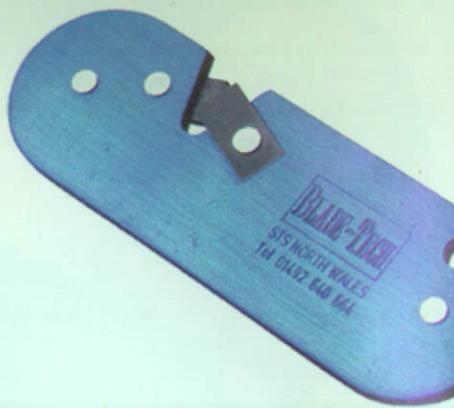
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① £12, from www.gadgetshop.com (0800 7838343).



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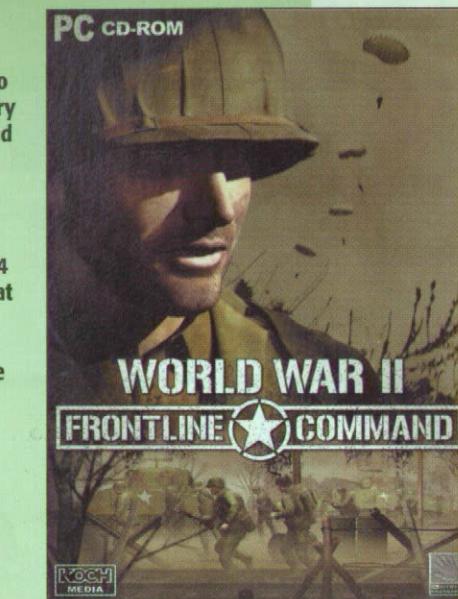
THIS knife sharpener from STS North Wales is the perfect accompaniment to every soldier's favourite friend – the Leatherman.

The Blade Tech's lightweight aluminium body holds two tungsten carbide blocks set at the optimum angle to quickly and effectively sharpen a wide range of hand tools, knives and scissors.

① £9.95, from STS North Wales (01492 640664).

WORLD WAR II: FRONTLINE COMMAND, PC

OUT NOW



FOCUSING on the climax of the Second World War, *Frontline Command* allows aspiring generals to make the strategic decisions necessary to turn the tide of Axis aggression and liberate occupied Europe.

An in-depth action/strategy title, the game features 25 single-player missions that will transport gamers from the west coast of Europe in 1944 right through to Hitler's Eagles Nest at Berchtesgaden high within the Bavarian Alps in 1945.

Using an intuitive context-sensitive interface that allows for simple or complex strategies to be easily employed, players must command authentic infantry, airborne and artillery units, vehicles and air force fighter bombers, as they battle to repel a wily and adaptive enemy.

Frontline Command's advanced AI system reacts to the gamer's strategy as they play, counter-attacking, finding and firing from cover, utilising captured artillery guns and deploying infantry within buildings where possible. The computer-controlled forces will also retreat when necessary to rearm and reform their lines.

This high calibre of opponent,

combined with a fully realised 3D game engine that allows for seasonal lighting and landscape scarring, means that unlike so many of the current crop of conflict simulators, *Frontline Command* will prove a challenge to gamers of all skill levels.

VERDICT: Tactically taxing.

8/10

WIN . . . WIN . . . WIN

SOLDIER has teamed up with Koch Media and The Bitmap Brothers to offer you the opportunity to conquer German occupied Europe.

For your chance to win one of ten copies of *World War II: Frontline Command* for the PC, simply answer the following question:

How many single-player missions are featured in *Frontline Command*?



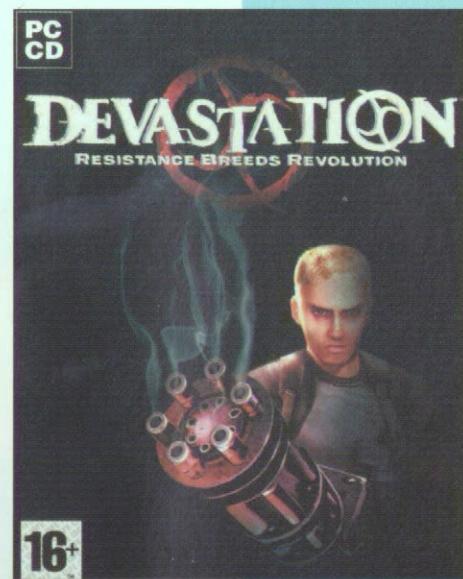
Send your answers on a postcard to *Frontline Command* competition, *Soldier*, Ordnance Road, Aldershot, Hants GU11 2DU.

The winners will be drawn at random from the correct answers received by June 30. Usual rules apply.

Game on . . .

DEVASTATION, PC

OUT NOW



WIN . . . WIN . . . WIN . . .

SET on post-apocalyptic Earth where survival and ultimate dominance are all that matters, *Devastation* is a fast-moving, high action, team play orientated first-person shooter.

Powered by a heavily modified, next generation game engine, it pits teams of rebelling street fighters, gang leaders, mercenaries and ex-military fighters against overwhelming armies of high-tech corporate troopers.

The latest offering from NovaLogic, *Devastation* boasts 32 massive photorealistic levels based on real-world textures, including 20 single-player and 12 multi-player maps in four environments, and features some incredible Hollywood-style explosions and special effects.

Players can select to attack their foe with more than 30 different weapons, including machine guns, swords, hand guns and sniper weapons, and can even use the numerous items that litter the game's fully interactive environments. In the absence of a more substantial weapon, you can set traps with garbage or use broken bottles to slash your way to victory.

Arcade and simulation settings also allow the gamer to either go head-to-head with the enemy or mix things up with co-operative gameplay.

VERDICT: Guerilla-style warfare.

8/10

BYTE-SIZE NEWS

IN a direct response to press accusations that it was attempting to capitalise on the recent war in Iraq, Sony Computer Entertainment has withdrawn its trademark application for the term "shock and awe".

The original application was aimed at securing the name for a PS2 online title that the software developer had planned to create and market in the USA.

However, a recent statement issued by the Sony Corporation described the decision to bid for exclusive rights of the trademark as "an exercise of regrettable bad judgement".

GAME publisher Activision has announced plans to launch a *Call of Duty* series, a new brand that will allow players to "experience the dramatic intensity of war through the eyes of common soldiers".

Starting with the Second World War, *Call of Duty* aims to map elements of the 20th century's most devastating conflicts from the perspective of various unsung heroes.

SONY has fired the first shot in the next generation console war by investing £1.5 billion into the cell chip that will power the PS3.

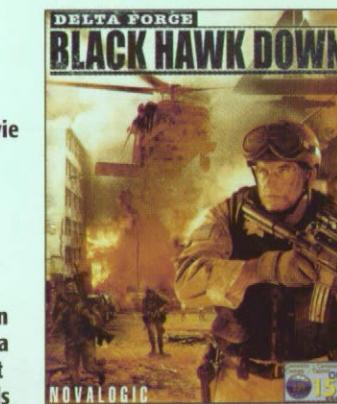
COURTESY of NovaLogic, *Soldier* has three prize bundles containing a copy of *Devastation* for the PC and a skateboard, up for grabs.

For your chance to win, simply tell us how many levels are featured in *Devastation*.

Winners will be drawn at random from the correct answers received by June 30. Usual rules apply.

BLACK HAWK DOWN, PC

OUT NOW



THE fifth instalment of the award-winning *Delta Force* franchise, NovaLogic's *Black Hawk Down* is every bit as dramatic as the plot of its movie namesake.

Set in Somalia in 1993 and based upon and around Operation Restore Hope, the game follows members of the élite Delta Force, US Army Rangers and the 10th Mountain Division as they participate in a number of daring raids against the oppressive Somali warlords in and around Mogadishu.

VERDICT: High intensity action.

8/10

BLITZKRIEG, PC

OUT NOW



BASED on the theatres of the Second World War, including Russia, Africa and Europe, this latest real-time strategy game from CDV has been designed on an epic scale.

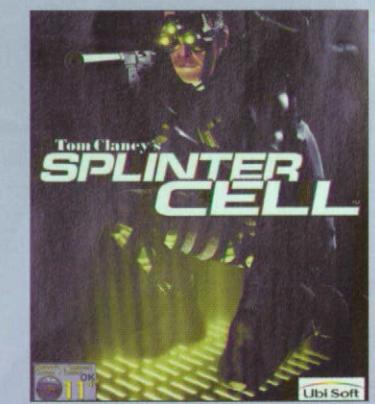
Blitzkrieg boasts three exciting campaigns with more than 80 challenging missions, 200 types of vehicles and machinery, 40 kinds of infantry, hundreds of Russian, German and Allied units, and the ability to extend and improve your army through promotions and special missions.

VERDICT: Plenty of bangs for your bucks.

7/10

SPLINTER CELL, PS2 & PC

OUT NOW

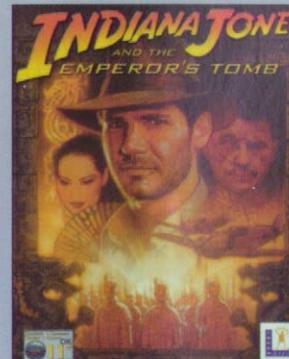


VERDICT: Unrivalled.

10/10

INDIANA JONES, XBOX & PC

OUT NOW



THE man with the hat is back in this heart-stopping third-person action adventure from LucasArts.

Indiana Jones and the Emperor's Tomb follows the world's most famous archaeologist as he travels to 1935 China to prevent a powerful artefact from falling into the wrong hands.

Just like Indy, players must leap, swim, climb, punch and, of course, crack their whip through ten adrenaline-fuelled levels as they attempt to recover a mystical black pearl rumoured to control men's minds; the Heart of the Dragon.

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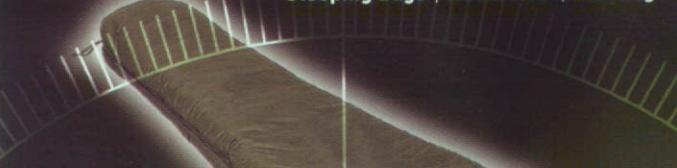
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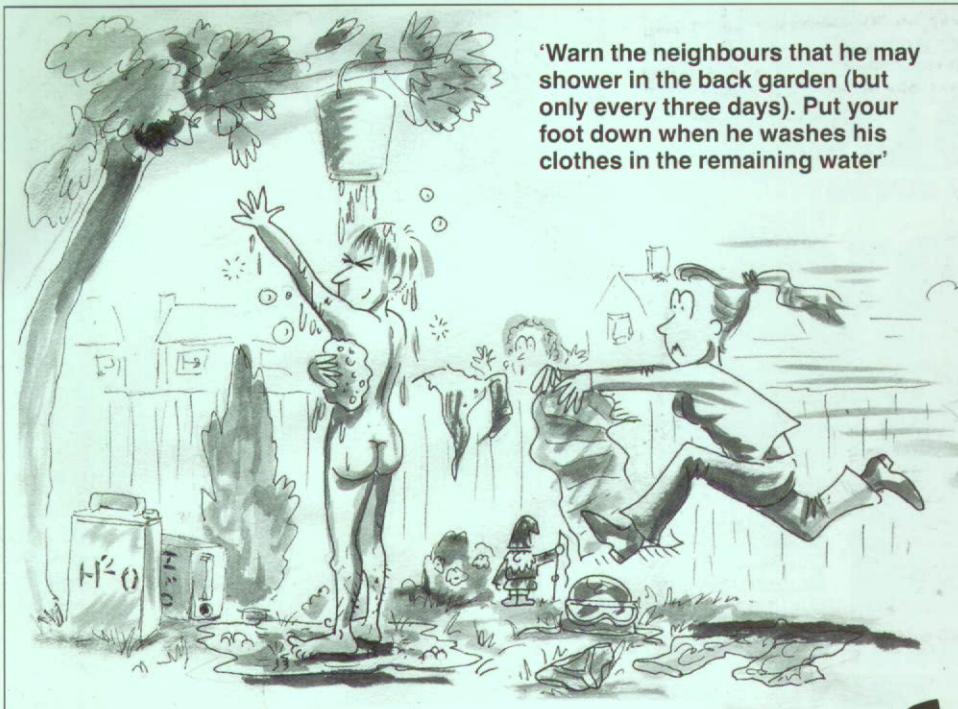
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'Warn the neighbours that he may shower in the back garden (but only every three days). Put your foot down when he washes his clothes in the remaining water'

Comical relief

Sales of topical cartoon book will benefit the ABF

Instructions for Re-Use: How to rehabilitate a returning soldier illustrated by Sign-AI (Stacey International, paperback, £3.99 (RRP £4.99*).

EVERY Service spouse or partner will know the challenges of rehabilitation to home life after combat, writes **Chris Horrocks**.

Most soldiers serving on Op Telic, for example, will have spent months adjusting to the hardships of desert and field conditions – lack of running water, sometimes unsavoury sanitary conditions, sandstorms, and so on.

Their return to home comforts and the old routine involves a mental and physical about-turn – a process given a sharply observant slant by the creators of this amusing little A5 cartoon book.

Here you will find the returning soldier who drives at night without headlights or indicators, who runs for cover when the car alarm goes off, who feels the need to tear down statues even in garden centres, and who sets fire to the dustbin to get hot water for a shave.

Soldier ordering service

All books mentioned on these pages are available from Helion & Company, who can also supply 14,500 in-print military books and operate a free booksearch; p&p is extra. All major credit/switch cards taken. Please allow up to 28 days for delivery. Helion & Company, 26 Willow Road, Solihull, West Midlands B91 1UE, England (tel 0121 705 3393; fax 0121 711 4075). E-mail: books@helion.co.uk Website: <http://www.helion.co.uk>

Behind this original bit of fun is retired major Jonathan Edwards – who served with the Royal Corps of Transport in the 1991 Gulf War – and his wife Alyson Newis-Edwards, who has provided the illustrations.

Publishers Stacey International are adamant the book should be in the homes of all Service personnel, their partners, families, friends, even psychiatrists – "in fact, anyone with a sense of humour".

Readers who buy it direct from the publishers will get £1 off the cover price – and will be supporting the Army Benevolent Fund at the same time. The ABF is committed to the welfare of soldiers, ex-soldiers and their families in times of real need.

Stacey International is offering the book to *Soldier* readers at the special price of £3.99 (RRP £4.99), with £1 for each copy sold sent direct to the ABF.

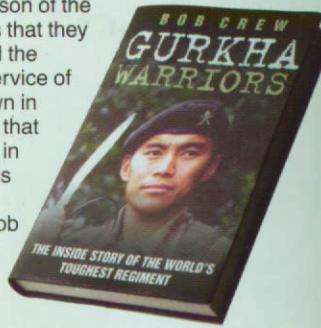
Postage, which is not included and must be added to the payment when ordering, is 48p for first-class mail UK and 39p for second-class UK. For Europe it is 76p first-class and 65p second-class.

Soldier readers can order the book by telephoning 0207 221 7166 or by e-mailing marketing@stacey-international.co.uk quoting "Soldier Magazine Reader Offer". You should state full contact and payment details, the number of copies you wish to order and whether you go for the first- or second-class postage option.

Prince Charles pays tribute to Gurkhas

IN the Falklands and other conflicts their reputation went before them, striking fear into the enemy. But Maj Gen Peter Pearson of the Gurkhas recalls that they last decapitated the enemy in the service of the British Crown in Borneo, adding that severing heads in armed combat is "not a ritual".

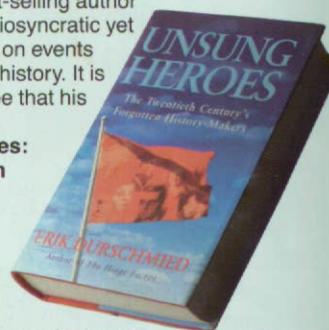
Elsewhere in Bob Crew's *Gurkha Warriors: The Inside Story of the World's Toughest Regiment* (Metro, £17.99), Prince Charles comments on their "remarkable" inner faith and considers himself "privileged" to have served Gurkha soldiers as their Colonel-in-Chief.



Glorious Glosters not forgotten – or unsung

ALREADY a gifted reporter and war correspondent, Erik Durschmid became a best-selling author by taking an idiosyncratic yet readable slant on events which shaped history. It is gratifying to see that his latest offering, *Unsung Heroes: The Twentieth Century's Forgotten History-Makers* (Hodder & Stoughton, £16.99) contains a chapter on

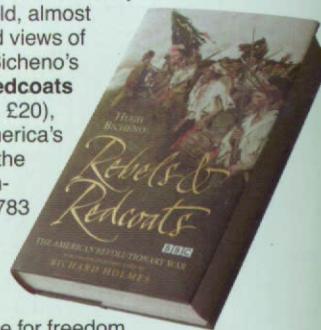
The 1st Battalion, Gloucestershire Regiment (The Glorious Glosters), who held out against a mighty Chinese army at the Imjin River in Korea in 1951. "Of the many feats of individual heroism, it would be hard to single one out," he concludes.



Shedding new light on America's first rebels

RE-WRITING history from a modern standpoint is a fashionable pastime but sometimes it is necessary to correct long-held, almost institutionalised views of events. Hugh Bicheno's *Rebels and Redcoats* (HarperCollins, £20), argues that America's first civil war – the War of Independence, 1775-1783 – was born of opportunism and greed rather than a

popular struggle for freedom against the British. The book was written to accompany a BBC television series presented by Prof Richard Holmes and is heralded as "a much-needed historical corrective".



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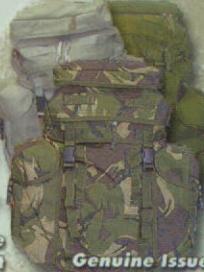
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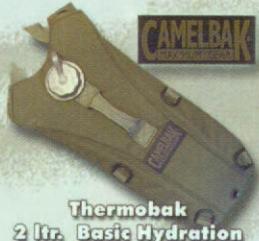
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SOLDIER to soldier

Army's world role comes back in focus

ALTHOUGH large chunks of this issue feature units deployed in Iraq, we have attempted to balance it with coverage of troops committed to operations in other parts of the world.

While the last two editions of *Soldier* have quite properly focused almost exclusively on reporting Op Telic events, British troops stationed in Northern Ireland, the Balkans, Afghanistan and elsewhere have continued to uphold the peace and support humanitarian missions.

Bomb blasts in Kabul (see Pages 34-45) underline the dangers ever-present for those posted to Afghanistan, while a large weapons-finder by the Highlanders in Bosnia (Pages 40-41) is ample evidence of the fragility of that country's hard-won peace.



Nevertheless, with so many soldiers still serving in very difficult circumstances in Iraq, it will remain high on our agenda for a few more months. Reporting the peace, however, may prove more difficult than reporting the war, not least because the attention of the world's media has moved on.

If your unit is in the Gulf, you can help *Soldier* keep you in the public eye by telling us what you are doing, how you are doing it and where you're doing it. Stories and pictures can be e-mailed direct to us at telic@soldiermagazine.co.uk



Incidentally, we couldn't help noticing on Ebay, the internet auction site, that one switched-on soldier had involved himself in a little entrepreneurial activity from inside Saddam Hussein's Basra palace.

Advertised for sale among the Saddam dinars and the many sets of Iraq's "55 most-wanted" playing cards was a gold-plated wall socket. When we first looked there was a bid for \$10 against it, but when we looked again it had gone – apparently snapped up by a souvenir hunter.

Home truths

Sue Bonney

Upgrade delay matters to us

ONE of the things about having been around for some time is that you tend to remember stuff most of you youngsters weren't here for, or not paying attention to at the time.

Take 1996, for instance, and the absolutely brill idea dreamed up by El Porteeeyo of selling off the MoD married quarter estate in GB. The general idea was to flog the lot, make a quick killing for the Treasury, and get rid of the expensive maintenance bill. No amount of protest could change the Government's mind, despite the best efforts of the Army Families Federation.

So 57,000 houses were sold off, and then 54,600 of 'em rented back, which the MoD would have to maintain for the new owner. The saving grace of the sale for families was the MoD's promise to spend some of the loot on upgrading the re-rented quarters.

Service families were promised showers, and modern kitchens. The only problem was that the real cost of the upgrade was seriously underestimated and, although the MoD kept some back, most of the money from the sale went straight into the Treasury's coffers.

Since then, the problem for DHE has been the lack of adequate funds for the upgrade, which began to fall behind the planned five to seven years almost immediately.

At AFF's conference in 2000, it was announced that the end date had slipped to 2005. At our next conference in 2002, Minister for the Armed Forces Adam Ingram admitted that "many of the assumptions made at the time of the promise of 2005 are now wrong" and declared the idea of any end date as "unrealistic".

After that, we waited to hear if any of the extra money allocated by those Treasury coffers to the MoD might find its way into the DHE's upgrade fund and speed things up a bit.

The good news is that DHE has now been funded to upgrade a further 1,200 quarters to "Standard 1 for condition" this financial year, and given an extra sum of money to spend on specific improvements such as showers and car parking, which will help other houses and

estates on the way to Standard 1.

However, despite assurances from Defence Minister Dr Lewis Moonie in the June edition of the *AFF Families Journal* that the MoD "will give the upgrade as much priority as we can," he says the rate of progress "may not be as fast as you would wish".

I think he might be right there. We have calculated that it will still take 16 years at the current rate to upgrade the 20,000 houses left to do.



A personal view from Sue Bonney, Editor of the *AFF Families Journal*

Does it matter? Well, judging by the number of calls and letters we get at AFF and the *AFJ* throughout the year on housing, I'd say it does. Quarters may be quarters, but to most of you patch folk out there they are also your homes, and many fall short of your expectations.

The June *AFJ* (at a unit near you NOW!) publishes more letters on "unmodernised rabbit hutches" which are driving some of you to consider leaving the Army. True, 21,000 quarters are now at Standard 1 – which means a modern home – and some lucky families are living in *crème de la crème* new builds, with (sigh) storage space.

But many aren't – and to them, it matters. And if the provision of good quality housing matters to both families and the MoD, then the DHE needs adequate and consistent funding to provide and maintain it, sooner rather than later.

As AFF Chairman Lizzie Iron says in the June *Journal*, it's possible that another generation of senior ranks may still be moving into homes which have hardly improved since they were young soldiers.

From their comments to us, some senior ranks already in this position don't seem to find that an encouragement to stay.

Out now

The June issue of the *AFF Families Journal*, right, is out now. Make sure you get your free copy from your unit.





There were critical shortages at front

YOUR article "What shortages" (April) is simplistic with respect to critical equipment on Op Telic.

Items such as small arms, AS90 and Challenger 2 ammunition, desert combats for front-line soldiers (not for those in HQs in Kuwait and Qatar), critical spares for aircraft and vehicles, NBC consumables, malaria tablets and anthrax vaccinations were well short of requirements.

Maj Joe Carnegie, 1 R Anglian, is correct in his statement about soldiers expecting the bare minimum, and those in the battle-groups alongside their vehicles received the bare minimum.

Factually incorrect articles conceal the problems associated with the deployment of 26,000 soldiers. As an Army we need to identify all of our problems for the benefit of politicians and commanders alike. — **Capt Dean Blackman, 663 Sqn AAC.**

● Other letters received on Op Telic topics have been held over for official responses. — **Editor**

I WISH soldiers would stop complaining about lack of equipment for Op Telic. Although this is my first operational tour I have experienced shortages at first hand.

I believe people are ignoring one important factor. The deployment of troops was a fast ball and there wasn't time to get enough equipment prepared.

Also, I don't believe the MoD was ready for such a rapid deployment of so many troops. — **Pte Stu Canavan RAVC, Op Telic.**

WITH regard to the 1.8 million cans of Red Bull the Army allegedly bought to prevent battle fatigue (*Daily Star* story in Paper Talk column, March), my question is simple: where are they? As I am a driver and not a front-line soldier, I am unlikely to suffer from battle fatigue, but I am sure the AS90 crews did. — **Sgt Campbell, 3 RHA, Op Telic.**



Military chic: 'The multiple-layer system concept has been adapted by most modern armies'

Combat gear isn't a fashion accessory

IN 20 years I have seen many changes to the style and pattern of equipment issued to soldiers and none has been more contentious than the current No 8 Dress or Combat Soldier 95 (CS 95).

Designed to allow soldiers to operate in tropical, temperate or sub-Arctic climates, the concept of a multiple-layer system that can be added to or removed as necessary has been adopted by most modern armies. When used properly, our kit ranks as among the best.

Each item of clothing comes with a label describing its function, which has been agreed by the Army Dress Committee and laid down in its directives. So why do so few regiments follow these rules?

The design of British Army boots remained relatively unchanged after the First World War and no one saw fit to introduce a modern high-leg boot until the Falklands conflict of 1982.

Inertia — and the fact that the high-leg boot looked "un-British" — left UK soldiers with obsolete and archaic footwear, which is why the new combat clothing was welcomed.

However, this "inertia" thinking prevails with the new uniform, worn in barracks as fatigue wear with stable belts and the lightweight jacket tucked in as a shirt.

We no longer wear scarlet tunics in battle so why are we wearing colourful belts with combat clothing?

What price on security for our 'patches'?

WHILE the Defence Housing Executive (DHE) is constantly improving quarters, I feel it is neglecting one key area — security.

We've had several breaches, which at a time of heightened terrorism alerts has left us feeling on edge. It seems no one is prepared to help when we phone to complain and no solution to our ongoing problem is addressed.

I feel security systems should be installed as standard in all quarters and effective external security fitted so we are not sitting targets for anyone trying to make a point. Please, DHE, spare us the routine response about budgets and housing criteria. What price do you put on Service families' safety and security? — **S T Jones, London SW19.**



DHE replies: We give high priority to household security and ask occupants to bring to our attention their concerns. We provide standard security facilities (approved locks and other devices throughout and double glazing to exterior doors and ground-floor windows) to all family housing; and install exterior lighting appropriate to layout and location.

Intruder alarms are not provided but occupants may install certain types of alarm at their own expense.

We are guided by the MoD Police Crime Reduction Office, which recently carried out a survey of properties in SW19. Overall, it was impressed with the security features. Recommendations are being made, however, for modifying access to the plot of land around the accommodation, where problems have been reported and local DHE staff are keen to make enhancements to set minds at rest.

All DHE occupants are urged to report suspect activities to the civilian police immediately and to their local DHE estate office or customer care centre.

A part of the CS 95 system is the shirt commonly referred to as a Norwegian. Many soldiers are told they cannot wear this item in barracks and commanders make troops wear green jumpers over the CS 95 jacket (jacket DPM combat light). The issued fleece liner, described as a garment worn under the field jacket for warmth, is not allowed to be worn over the jacket as it has no infra-red reflective treatment, so why allow jumpers?

Traditions are important but we are a modern Army and our kit should be used as designed to exploit its full potential and not treated as a fashion accessory or with unnecessary sentimentality. — **Sgt R Milne, Op Telic.**

PISCATOR



"OK, Boss... What's next?"

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Horror block to be Slam-ed next year

I WOULD like to complain about single soldiers' accommodation, in particular Marne Barracks in Catterick. I have been in the Army for more than 12 years and would not let a tramp stay in the block I am currently living in.

It has been condemned, it regularly floods, it has poor heating, rotten shower cubicles and toilets and mouldy walls – to name just a few of its horrors.

When we put the faults to the QM the

Prize letter

answer is that there is no funding. Yet two years ago we were promised new accommodation on the airfield. Now we are told the £64 million budget for our blocks has been cancelled to fund housing for asylum seekers.

I am embarrassed when new lads come into the block and I have to make excuses for it. So much for the modern Army. – **S Harkin, 5 Regiment RA Workshops, Catterick Garrison.**

ensure it is modernised in the quickest and most efficient manner, it has been assessed that Project Slam is likely to provide the most appropriate procurement route.

Current planning assumes that work should begin during the financial year 2004-5. The February issue of *Soldier* featured an article on Project Slam should you wish to see the style of the future SLA at Marne Barracks.



Army Estate Organisation

responds: We wish to assure the occupants at Marne Barracks that the project to redevelop the barracks has not been cancelled and neither has the funding been allocated elsewhere.

The poor condition of the single living accommodation (SLA) is fully appreciated. Following investigation of the best way to

PS...

'Ambridge' medics

REGARDING the Operational Welfare Package for Op Telic personnel, apart from the Sat phones, which we very much appreciate, there doesn't seem to be much else in evidence. Now that things have settled down somewhat, and having been here since February, we'd like to see more of whatever is available, please.

Oh yes, we do have BFBS, but could you ask them to kill off *The Archers* as the officers in our regiment down tools, ie laptops and notebooks, for 15 minutes every day to listen in. At this rate our confidential reports will never get to Glasgow. – Cpl G Robson, 1 Close Support Medical Regiment, Evacuation Squadron, Op Telic.

We're on Telic...

PLEASE include the Defence Fire Service (Army) in your list of units deployed on Op Telic. We have a total of 28 men stationed with three units at various locations in Kuwait and Iraq. – Firefighter Little, DFS, c/o 202 Field Hospital, Kuwait.

... and so are we

AN AGC(MPS) team from the Military Corrective Training Centre is in theatre, advising the QDG prisoner-of-war handling organisation and other units. Incidentally, deployed colleagues received copies of the March issue before I did in Colchester. – Maj M P Biegel GH, MCTC.

Subsidising the NHS

IN response to the earlier letter on car parking at Frimley Park Hospital, we feel Flt Lt (Retd) Carr (April) missed the point. While the charge at MDHUPF is only £20 a year, it is felt by staff here that there is a principle at stake.

Some get the money back through Recompense in Lieu of Relocation (RILOR) but many do not. Some staff use private cars for personal reasons and unless they have paid for a permit they will not get a parking space.

Some choose not to pay and park on nearby roads. The local police have targeted these individuals with letters implying that they are inconsiderate to local householders. Does anyone else pay to park at work in the Army? We already subsidise the NHS by working here. – Sergeant and corporal, full name and address supplied, Frimley Park.

Barrier card cost £10

WHEN I was posted to this MDHUF it was a one-off charge of £10 for the barrier card. This was then refunded when I handed the card back when I was posted. As far as I am aware the doctors were charged a higher price as they had their own private car park. – Sgt SL Bainbridge QARANC, MDHUF Peterborough.



Compo doesn't cut mustard

HAS anyone else noticed how the quality of our 24-hour compo rations has declined while the US MRE (Meals Ready to Eat) rations have improved?

As a veteran of the last Gulf conflict I can remember how good our rations were in comparison with the Americans'. The improvement in MREs in the past 12 years has been profound and they can now teach us a few lessons.

Here are a few suggestions after talking to many soldiers on Op Telic:

Mix 24-hour ration packs so there are ten different menus in each box. The US Army manages it and yet we still spend weeks on one or two menus because the logistic chain cannot provide a mix.

In theory we now have halal, kosher and vegetarian packs, yet the vegetarians I spoke to had been unable to find suitable

packs. The complexity of new menus appears to have proved too much for the logistic chain, with menus A to F appearing erratically and little else.

The menus stated on the boxes for specialist rations in many cases appear perfectly acceptable to most palates, so why not rationalise them down to a sensible number of menus present in a single box and greatly simplify the packing system?

The treacle pudding is disgusting and I have found only one soldier who eats it. A third hot



"Not certain of his source, but it sells like hot cakes"

meal in place of the pudding would make 24-packs more versatile.

And why not put in at least one of the excellent MRE heaters (modified to fit our larger packets). It would allow soldiers to get a hot meal on the move, or after dark when Hexamine burners cannot be used for tactical reasons.

The new 24-hour packs were a significant improvement when introduced, but we seem to have been resting on our laurels recently. — **Maj Andy Reeds, ASTS Upavon.**

Time for a gluten-free food pack

MY wife, a serving soldier, has been downgraded because of her coeliac condition. As far as the medical board is concerned she cannot be deployed abroad.

You can imagine her heartache as she watched comrades go off on operations while she was left behind.

The only thing she would require is a



Defence Catering Group replies:

ORPs are designed to sustain the individual soldier in an operational theatre where the provision of fresh rations is not a feasible option.

Delivery from third-line to first-line operations will be affected by the exigencies of the

gluten-free 24-hour operational ration pack (ORP).

The company which makes the ORP told me a gluten-free ration pack was possible, but to justify its cost we would need to know how many other serving personnel suffer with the condition. A case could then be put to DCG Bath. I am an

operation and there is no guarantee of a 100 per cent reliable connection. Consequently, if the forward delivery of rations from third to first line is interrupted or diverted, an individual with medical needs may not receive appropriate feeding.

Defence Catering Group actively pursues a

instructor with the Army Cadet Force and it saddens me to have to turn down teenage hopefuls with coeliac. The Coeliac Society says it is getting calls from potential recruits to the Services who are being turned down because of their diet, and all for the sake of a ration pack. — **Brian Yardley, York.**

policy of accommodating the dietary needs of all personnel. The provision of a gluten-free ORP is technically feasible, albeit difficult. It is the tenuous supply line which prevents an absolute guarantee that a coeliac, or anyone with a range of other food sensitivities, could be catered for under operational conditions.

We'll still have to raid the ration store

WITH the seemingly increasing number of soldiers with food allergies and intolerance, I am keen to know if the new ten-man ORP (see *Soldier*, Mar) will contain information sheets listing foods that are

unsuitable for people such as coeliacs, those with lactose intolerance and others. I have experience, both in barracks and in the field, of people who go hungry or end up buying their own specialist food.

As a caterer, I appreciate that a lot of good ideas such as revamped menus, box practicality and non-food inclusions have been incorporated and that new menus will be a breath of fresh air after so long.

I feel the research and development for ORPs has attempted to opt for a please-all

type of ration that can be utilised not only by trained chefs but also by smaller detachments without experienced food-handlers. This is not a bad idea, giving the ration pack a much greater flexibility.

However, the inclusion of so many grazing foods will make it difficult for the chef to produce hotplate meals in the field without having to raid the ration store before he deploys. — **WO2 M Alder, 557 Squadron, Scottish Transport Regiment (V).**

Providing this has been considered, but as the list of foods, ingredients and additives that cause allergic or intolerant reactions is not finite, this has proved impractical. DCG has responded positively, gathering information and responding to direct enquiries. Given the scale of the problem this is seen as the best means of addressing the issue at present.

Briefly does it

YOUR letters provide a real insight into the issues at the top of your agenda... but please keep them as short as possible. The more space you take up, the less room there is for others, and we are anxious to use as many as we can.

E-mails should include name and location at the bottom (not necessarily for publication). Anonymous contributions will be binned. The Editor reserves the right to accept or reject letters, and to amend for length, clarity or style.



Defence Catering Group replies:

DCG recognises that allergic reactions, particularly to nuts and their derivatives, can pose a significant problem to some consumers. There has been a gradual increase in the number of people requesting information about the ingredients of operational ration pack components.

THEN AND THEN



25 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, June 1978: For two centuries an Army town, Taunton is losing its military association. Latest to leave are the Royal Corps of Transport's junior leaders, who have been so much a part of the local community. They are quitting their hatted camp at Norton Manor, just outside Taunton, for a former Royal Air Force station at Colerne, Wilts.

50 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, June 1953: When he wakes in his dug-out in Korea, Pte Jim McGee, above, will reach for the bullet-proof vest in the foreground. Hardened by war and winter, the men of the 1st Bn, The Durham Light Infantry have been in hand-to-hand combat with the enemy, engaged him with grenades and small arms, and survived winter without a case of frostbite.

Stark choice when wife and I deployed abroad

MY wife and I are deployed in Kosovo for six months and had to decide whether to keep or vacate our married quarter.

The agencies concerned, although sympathetic, told me there was nothing in place to meet this eventuality. The Defence Housing Executive said I had two options: hand the quarter back and pay for storage for six months or keep the quarter and pay the bills incurred.

Although option one was marginally better from a financial point of view, it would involve packing, the stress of a

move, loss of leave and the obvious fact that we would have no home to return to in the UK.

We chose option two because, if we handed the quarter back and put our furniture into storage, when we complete the tour and apply for another quarter, we would be refused because we have only five months left at our unit (DHE allocations are for a minimum of six months).

This is an issue that needs addressing before it becomes a wider problem. – Sgt N P King, RMP Aldershot.

PS4(A) responds: We accept that Sgt King and his wife are in an unusual, though not unique, situation. This has led to difficulties over two distinct but related issues, housing and storage, and we would like to thank him for raising the issues.

DHE is correct to state that if he gave up the quarter, Sgt King would have no entitlement to accommodation at Aldershot on his return, as he would have less than six months of his posting to serve.

On return from his tour, however, he would

have had the option of applying to DHE for Service families accommodation (SFA) in the area of his next posting, and while DHE is not bound to house the family, it would make every effort to do so. Alternatively, he could apply for surplus SFA elsewhere.

With regard to storage, there is no automatic entitlement. In such circumstances PS4(A) would exceptionally authorise removals under the Service Contract System into storage, at MoD expense, for the duration of the deployment. This option would have made the Kings' dilemma easier to resolve.

PS . . .

Married advantage

AS a member of the AGC(SPS) I found PS10(A) SO2b's comments on disturbance allowance ("This allowance covers extra costs, not turmoil", April) misleading. PS10(A) should explain that costs such as the changing of school uniform is paid from the child element of disturbance allowance (DA), which is only paid to Service personnel with eligible children and not included in the main element of DA.

If soldiers would like guidance on what DA should cover, PS4(A) produces a very useful booklet called "A Guide for Army Families", which can be found via HQ AG's excellent intranet website. At the back of it is a list of costs covered by DA.

Of 30 items listed, nearly half apply equally to single personnel as well as marrieds. Of these only two (insurance and hire car) are covered by other allowances for singles, while four (hotel expenses, meals out, loss of family holiday deposits and hire cars) are covered for marrieds by other allowances.

In short, married personnel are being significantly advantaged over single personnel, which I believe is in breach of the Army's equal opportunities policy. Perhaps it is time the MoD completed and published the results of its review of DA, which began in 2000. I work on a day-to-day basis with PS10 (A) and this letter reflects my personal view. – Name and address supplied.

Costly bonus delay

I WAS due my five-year bonus on February 15, but it took four weeks for the paperwork to get through and another month for the money to be paid, which meant National Insurance (NI) had gone up. And my April pay packet was down by £300. If the bonus had been paid before March 31 I wouldn't have lost money to the increase in NI and I wouldn't have been taxed any extra, although over the next three months I will get the tax back. – Name and address supplied.

Misleading symbol

THE crossed swords you used to illustrate a letter about the PTI crossed swords symbol (April) is misleading. What you showed was the cap badge of the APTC (which requires an extreme amount of hard work to attain). The JNCO PTI is permitted to wear only the symbol of crossed swords. – WO2 (QMSI) B Stoddart APTC, Op Telic.

Doors for doggies

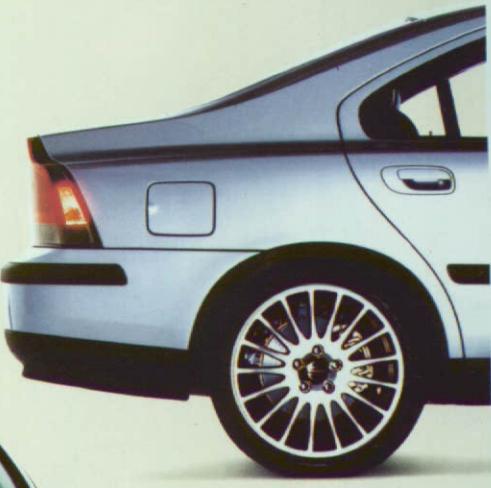
HAVING caused a flap with your article "Cat laws will create flap for families in Germany" (April), may I suggest for the larger dog a stable-type door, so that the bottom can remain open and the top shut. A remote device could be fitted to repel strange dogs. – Maj Ron Goodwin, Paignton, Devon.



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Veterans plead for war graves in Malaysia to be looked after

MEMBERS of the National Malaya and Borneo Veterans Association wish to express concern over the poor upkeep of the graves of comrades – British, Gurkha and Commonwealth Servicemen and women – who made the supreme sacrifice.

The picture most people envisage when remembering the fallen is of immaculate cemeteries cared for by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC).

While the CWGC is responsible for the upkeep of the graves of personnel killed during the two world wars, the graves of those killed in Malaya and Borneo are the responsibility of the MoD, which, via the High Commission, uses local contractors.

These graves are scattered in civilian cemeteries throughout Malaysia and are subject to bi-annual inspection. If the authorities are aware of veterans or rela-



A patrol in Malaya crosses a swamp on a log "path"

PS4(A)Cas/Comp responds: As the branch within the MoD with responsibility for the maintenance of such graves, PS4(A)Cas/Comp, is trying to address many of these problems.

The MoD has agreed that the graves of former Royal Malaysia Police officers will be maintained by the department's contractor in cemeteries in which the department already has Service graves to maintain.

It has already sanctioned and paid for the move of police officers' graves from Bidadari

tives visiting, a special effort is made to ensure those graves are made presentable.

Conditions vary considerably. Those of British personnel buried at Cheras Road Cemetery, Kuala Lumpur, at God's Little Acre, Batu Gajah, and of Gurkhas at Tambun Road, Ipoh, are well cared for.

At Taiping, the CWGC cemetery is in immaculate condition, while just two miles away in a civilian cemetery, the graves of British soldiers who fell during

Cemetery to Kranji Military Cemetery, Singapore. Additional money, over and above the £35,000 spent each year on the maintenance of Service graves in Malaysia, is available for remedial work, such as the replacement of worn headstones and improving the soil in Batu Gajah Christian Cemetery.

The MoD takes seriously its responsibility for Service graves and is directly responsible for the maintenance of more than 15,000 in 17 countries. It pays also the CWGC to maintain many other graves.

the Emergency are in a very poor state.

Through the humanity of Supt (Retd) Thambipillay of the Malaysian Police, supported by the Perak Planters Association, the graves of 64 Servicemen in God's Little Acre are now well cared for by the MoD and remembered, alongside those killed during the Emergency, at the annual remembrance service at the Church of the Holy Trinity, Batu Gajah. Until Supt Thambipillay came on the scene the graves at God's Little Acre were neglected and many had been desecrated.

But there remain in Malaysia graves of Servicemen and women and of the Colonial Police Force in a deplorable condition. We ask the Government of the day to live-up to its responsibilities to our dead comrades and rectify the neglect of others. – **Fred Burden, national membership secretary, NMBVA.**

Allowances should be made for the climatic conditions of different countries. Also, while the graves of those killed in the two World Wars, which are maintained by CWGC, are generally located in large, exclusive cemeteries, the graves for which the department is responsible are often in otherwise untended civil cemeteries.

It is unreasonable to expect the MoD to assume responsibility for a cemetery in which it has only a few Service graves, even if the civil authorities allowed it.

Bonuses that cause resentment

I TAKE issue with the PS10 (A) response to a letter about retention bonuses (Nov), as it does not appear to give all the facts.

I joined the Army on April 13, 1989 and was informed I would be entitled to a bonus at my five- and eight-year points. Shortly before my first bonus was due, I was informed they would not be paid to anyone who joined after April 1, 1989, with no reason given.

A colleague who joined on February 14

that year, and who signed an identical six-year contract, got his five-year bonus. We were on the same terms of service and joined the Army in the same year, two months apart. It seems odd that the date of disqualification is also the start of the financial year. I would like to know why bonuses were stopped on this date and why a colleague who joined on the same contract was eligible.

Finally, if your terms of service have

been changed to open engagement (OE), theoretically you are no different to someone enlisting on day one. So why can't retention bonuses be reintroduced for any soldier who changes their terms of service from the day their OE starts?

Either give everyone the bonus they

deserve or stop bonuses altogether to prevent further resentment within the ranks.

– **Sgt A Byrne, SEAE, Arborfield, Reading.**

retention of trained personnel. This case highlights the problem with any bonus initiative. Some individuals will always fall either side of that date, resulting in perceived winners and losers. Bonuses and retention incentives are short-term measures used by the MoD to tackle recruiting and retention problems for key groups.

The MoD has the right to make recommendations to the Armed Forces Pay Review Body to remove or change rates of bonuses at any time to reflect manning requirements.

PS10(A) replies: Sgt Byrne is correct in that he was not entitled to a commitment bonus at his five-year point, whereas his colleague, who joined the Army two months earlier, was entitled.

Commitment bonuses were stopped for personnel serving on Notice Engagements (NOTENG) with effect from April 1, 1994. Those who joined after that date, as Sgt Byrne did, were not entitled.

It is regretted that he was not given an explanation at the time. The rationale then

Vox pop

The regular feature in which we ask soldiers for their views on an issue

Bill Tidy
(cartoonist,
Korean War
veteran and
former
transport Sgt)

At the start of Iraq 2, I was deeply concerned with so much talk of hi-tech weaponry, but when, two minutes in, the Brits began to complain about their kit, I knew that everything would be fine. Brilliant show as ever. Carry on whingeing.



Kate Allenby
(Olympic bronze
medallist)

For the rest of us back home in the UK your courage and bravery is something that we can only aspire to. It puts into perspective those moments in our lives that we term as 'pressure'. There is no finish line on the battlefield.



Bernard Cribbins
(actor, writer,
formerly 3
Para and
veteran of
Palestine)

Well done boys and girls. I think you have done a terrific job in an unenviable situation. Keep your heads down and Godspeed for a safe return.



We asked some well-known personalities for their messages and views on soldiers serving in the Gulf



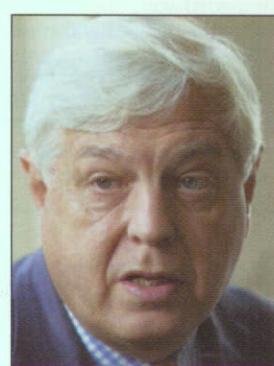
George Baker
(actor and former
officer in
3 RTR)

I have been reading in the newspapers and watching on the television the way in which our soldiers in Iraq have been conducting

themselves under exceptional and what at times must be terrifying conditions. Not only have they again proved themselves to be first-class soldiers but now they have added to their accomplishments in their humanitarian, diplomatic and human handling of the Iraqi people. Keep up the wonderful work.

John Simpson
(BBC World
Affairs
Editor)

I think the British Army is the most professional and impressive Army that I have come across, and there have been many in my time. I think the British are the best and that is a universal opinion. It is certainly the view in the American Army. The Brits are understated, they don't go over the top, a modest Army in the best possible way. I like the British Army and admire them.



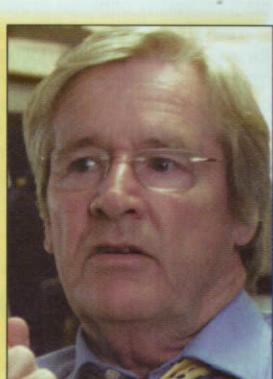
Alan Bennett
(dramatist, actor,
National Service with the Joint
Services School for Linguists)

It's of course not the fault of the Armed Services but the war seems to me in every way mistaken. That we should have been drawn into it by a right-wing, ideologically motivated American government seems to me deplorable and that our Prime Minister should have helped to engineer this is shaming. Being in Iraq, if being there at all, should be only as peacekeepers not as agents of a pre-emptive strike.



William Roache
(actor and former
captain in the RWF and
Trucial Oman
Scouts)

We are always saying how proud we are of our Army. Yet again in an extremely dangerous situation our soldiers have not only shown how brave and professional they are, but also how caring and compassionate they can be with Iraq's civilian population. You have our love and respect.



Interviews: Ray Routledge and Andy Simms



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