

SOLDIER

MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY

GURKHA MILESTONE

- ▶ Troops mark 200 years of service
- ▶ The truth about selection in Nepal
- ▶ 'Face-to-face with our VC hero'

WWW.SOLDIERMAGAZINE.CO.UK

BOSTOCK, GULLIVER, JENKINS, MCEWAN

FEBRUARY 2015 £3.50

DOWNHILL AND DIRTY

ARMY RIDERS ROCK
BIKING SEASON

INSIDE: ADVENTUROUS TRAINING, LOAN SERVICE, YOUR LETTERS



FEBRUARY 2015

£3.50



ADOPT WITH SSAFA

Military charity SSAFA has a registered adoption agency. We are particularly good at placing siblings in loving, military families.

To find out more: 020 7463 9326
adoption@ssafa.org.uk
www.ssafa.org.uk/adoption

Registered Charity No. 210760 and SC038056. Est. 1885.

ssafa

Lifelong support
for our Forces
and their families

SOLDIER

Ordnance Barracks, Government Road,
Aldershot, Hampshire GU11 2DU.

All enquiries: Tel: 01252 787107 / 94222 7107

Fax: 01252 787110 / 94222 7110

Email: news@soldiermagazine.co.uk

Editor

Sarah Goldthorpe 01252 787096 (7096)
sgoldthorpe@soldiermagazine.co.uk

Assistant Editor

Joe Clapson 01252 787097 (7097)
jclapson@soldiermagazine.co.uk

Assistant Editor

Becky Clark 01252 787099 (7099)
rclark@soldiermagazine.co.uk

Sports Editor

Richard Long 01252 787098 (7098)
rlong@soldiermagazine.co.uk

Art Editor

Tudor Morgan 01252 787100 (7100)
tmorgan@soldiermagazine.co.uk

Designer

Maddie Marchment 01252 787101 (7101)
mmarchment@soldiermagazine.co.uk

Photographer

Graeme Main 01252 787103 (7103)
gmain@soldiermagazine.co.uk

Photographer

Steve Dock 01252 787103 (7103)
sdock@soldiermagazine.co.uk

Managing Editor

Steven Muncey 01252 787095 (7095)
smuncey@soldiermagazine.co.uk

Business Manager

Andy Clarkson 01252 787105 (7105)
aclarkson@soldiermagazine.co.uk

Advertising

Heather Shekyls 01252 787106 (7106)
advertising@soldiermagazine.co.uk

Subscriptions

01252 787107 (7107)
subs@soldiermagazine.co.uk

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

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2015

Views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the British Army or the Ministry of Defence.



[@soldiermagazine](https://facebook.com/soldiermagazine)



ARMY

Bravest of allies

EVERY year in Nepal thousands of men put themselves through a gruelling and quite often soul-destroying selection process in a bid to join the ranks of the British Army.

So as the Brigade of Gurkhas marks 200 years of Nepalese service to the crown, *Soldier* decided to spend some much-overdue time in the country to discover what motivates these potential recruits to push themselves to their limit (pages 24-31).

What we found was humbling. A career in the UK Armed Forces may spell a significant cash boost for youngsters of the Himalayan foothills, but in reality the kind of grit and courage it takes to live up to the Gurkha name is something for which it is impossible to remunerate adequately.

One encounter that defined the reputation of these soldiers as some of the bravest allies Britain has ever had came during the Indian Mutiny of 1857.

Members of the 2nd Goorkhas, as they were then known, proved their loyalty by holding a key position in Delhi that came under continuous fire for more than three months – taking a staggering 327 casualties out of a total strength of 490.

From that century onwards, these troops would repeatedly prove themselves to be champions of the very best military values and possessors of the most astonishing battlefield tales ever heard.

Here's to another 200 years. ■

S. Goldthorpe



Sarah Goldthorpe • Editor

TRES BIEN!

Ski championship success – page 87



CONTENTS

February 2015 VOLUME 71/02



Picture: Graeme Main

FEATURES

- 24 Gurkha grit**
Tough test facing Nepalese recruits
- 33 Valiant veteran**
Gurkha riflemen meet VC hero
- 36 Warrior class**
Turret commanders' course kicks off
- 39 Overseas service**
Troops reveal perks of Kuwait posting
- 42 Adventurous escape**
Scottish centre pushes personnel
- 46 Battlefield to bank**
Ex-soldiers find new niche in the city
- 51 Giveaway gratitude**
We thank our Xmas comp donors

REGULARS

- 7 The Informer**
Top stories from across the Service
- 53 Talkback**
Ruminations from the ranks
- 59 Bullet Points**
Troops' intelligence assets
- 70 Movies**
Sniper's story hits the big screen
- 72 Music**
Stirring soundtrack
- 74 Books**
Reservist treks the Nile
- 90 Final Word**
Nepal's hopefuls talk Army ambition

SOLDIERSPORT

- 78 Cycling**
Women gear up for 2015
- 80 Boxing**
Sappers soar in professional ranks
- 82 Rugby union**
Reeves revels in front-row battle
- 84 Mountain biking**
Downhill riders seek development
- 86 Rugby league**
Horner takes top job
- 87 Skiing**
Slopes welcome Spartan stars





Marking 200 YEARS OF GURKHA SERVICE



"His actions always motivated me to look after my colleagues"

Veteran's bravery inspires today's troops p33

"I want to achieve the same things as my ancestors"

Nepalese recruits speak of life-changing goal p90



Get up to

550%



off your new car!

Whether you're in the UK or Overseas
you can save thousands off your next car!

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| ✓ New & used cars & bikes | ✓ Special low rate finance |
| ✓ All part exchanges welcome | ✓ Leasing programme |

FORCES
CarsDirect
IF YOU SERVE YOU SAVE

01522 814010 or German Free Phone: 0800 1800 119

www.forcescarsdirect.com

All makes and models available. Discounts vary between makes and models. Tax free & tax paid deals available. Finance subject to status. Images for illustration purposes.



Auf wiedersehen: British personnel take part in a freedom parade in the German town of Xanten in 2013

Picture: SSgt Mark Nesbit, RLC

Soldiers braced to march off

Army will face 'really big' logistical challenge over summer

TROOPS in Germany are preparing for a busy few months as more than 5,000 personnel pack up and return to the UK.

Most of the soldiers and their families will relocate this summer – the biggest period of moves in the Army basing programme so far.

It follows the conclusion of phase one of the plan last year – which saw a total of 15 base changes, mostly within the UK – and will result in the closure of Elmpt, Bergen-Hohne, Fallingbommel and Herford stations by the end of December.

Speaking to *Soldier*, the senior military officer overseeing the change conceded that troops may encounter issues during this period.

"Rebasing has happened relatively quickly and it was always going to be a challenge," Col Neill Page said.

"Phase one occurred successfully but there were some issues.

"For example, we had to make a couple of adjustments to the plan where it was obvious the facilities that needed to be delivered by the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) weren't going to be ready in some areas."

He continued: "The return from Germany is a really big logistical challenge in its own right and we can't guarantee there aren't going to be issues. Some of those might be contractor-related.

"For example, it would only take one or two removal vans to break down to cause problems as there is little flexibility in the schedule."

To try and address any potential setbacks a rehearsal exercise is being staged by garrisons alongside the

Army Basing Team, the DIO, Support Command, British Forces Germany HQ and contractor Agility.

This will test out timings and plans for all the moves.

With much speculation on the quality of accommodation troops can expect in the UK compared with that overseas, Col Page emphasised that there would be differences in both Service families' accommodation (SFA) and single living properties.

For example, SFA in Britain does not usually feature cellars or large attics.

However, only properties at standard one or two for condition will be handed to returning personnel.

"There are many people involved in planning quarter allocation and there is nothing to suggest we can't do this," the officer continued.

"We want to try and move the majority of personnel between June and September and the intention is to comply with the normal notification period of ten weeks.

"There's a lot of understandable personal concern, especially where families are involved.

"We realise that people want certainty and when we can give them it we will."

After Germany's stations close at the end of this year the programme will move into phase three, with an emphasis on development in and around Salisbury Plain.

● For more updates on the Germany moves search for "Army basing programme" online or visit the Army Basing Team's defence intranet page

“ We want to move the majority between June and September ”



Leading the charge: Col Neill Page is helping to oversee the Army basing programme

Q&A



OVER TO YOU

The Army Basing Team take your online questions about this year's moves from Germany to the UK...

f Where exactly are all the returning troops going to live? On aircraft carriers?

In a combination of existing, new-build, new-purchase and rental properties. Unless the right solutions are in place the Army will not move you.

f Can I keep my family in Germany until the end of school? Why move us before the academic year ends?

The intent is to move units over the school summer holidays and this will be the case for the vast majority. We have prioritised those families with school age children. In accordance with JSP 752 early mover status may also be granted should your youngster be at a critical stage in their education.

f What will the quality of single living accommodation (SLA) be like? Will we poor "singlies" be getting substandard digs again?

SLA will be a mixture of existing, new-build and, where required, temporary rented substitute accommodation. As a result quality will vary. Every effort will be made to provide the best possible, though, and charges will reflect grade and condition.

f Why have the rules on garden furniture changed? They have refused to move mine back, even though I brought it from the UK.

There has been some confusion over this but the rules are clear. You are allowed to move garden tables and chairs as part of your unaccompanied baggage but there is no entitlement for sheds because they are generally too heavy for two people to carry. Details can be found in JSP 752 or from an unaccompanied-baggage surveyor.

Twitter What happens to the empty buildings we leave?

They will be handed back to the German authorities, who donated them as part of a Nato agreement.

1 UK

MORTAR MINDSET

RESERVES from 5th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers have tested their mortar skills on the Otterburn ranges.

The soldiers spent two weeks alongside their Regular counterparts on the exercise, which saw them firing in freezing temperatures.

"This is a new experience for me," said Reservist Rfn Liam Hart.

"It has given me an opportunity to see exactly what the mortars do and learn the skills for myself. I've found communication is very important."

The trip also saw personnel working on reconnaissance patrols while others focused on pioneering tasks including building bridges and mastering a range of power tools.



"This season will prove we can do it"

– Female cycling takes off after Cyprus camp, pages 78-79



Picture: Steve Dock

2 USA

ON FIRE IN ARIZONA

PILOTS and ground crew have deployed to the US to hone their skills on the Apache attack helicopter.

As this issue went to press 656 and 664 Squadrons of 4 Regiment, Army Air Corps were set to embark on Exercise Crimson Eagle, where their serials will focus on contingency operations for the first time since Op Herrick.

The package will see a select group complete a final conversion-to-role exercise at El Centro, California in order to qualify as Apache pilots and a live-firing serial at Gila Bend in Arizona.

3 AUSTRIA

ALPINE AMBITION UNDER WAY

TROOPS have embarked upon the first military expedition to cross the entire length of the Alps.

Exercise Alpine Arc is seeing more than 70 personnel take turns to traverse the mountain range in 11 ten-day stints. The route will take the soldiers from Puchberg in Austria to Menton, France over three months, with members of host nation military units joining in for each stage.

As this issue went to press the team were expecting to have reached Matrei in East Tyrol, Austria.

BIG YEAR FOR BASE MOVES

– page 7

DELVING INTO DARTMOOR

Coldstream Guards tackle Exercise Baskerville Star – pages 22-23

British Army Training Unit Suffield

British Army Training and Support Unit Belize

The Falkland Islands

Germany

Gibraltar

Cyprus

Sierra Leone

British Army Training Unit Kenya

4 FALKLANDS

HERCULES HEROES

SUPER-FIT soldiers from Arnhem Company, 2nd Battalion, The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment pulled a Hercules aircraft 200 metres as part of the Mason Plate competition.

The challenge was conducted on the main apron of Mount Pleasant Airfield and was designed as a test of endurance and team spirit.

Troops from second platoon posted the fastest time of 1min 56sec.



SUCCESS ON THE SLOPES
Exercise Spartan Hike – page 87



OVERSEAS LOAN SERVICE

Kuwait troops talk career dilemmas
– pages 39-41

Afghanistan

7

Brunei

8

“
We
will be
working
in
difficult
terrain
”

5 UGANDA

'NO ROOKIES HERE'

UGANDAN soldiers have received expert training from the Army ahead of a dangerous mission in Somalia.

Reservists from 4th Battalion, The Mercian Regiment conducted the three-week package to drill African officers in the art of military planning.

Two infantry battalions were also put through their paces in serials ranging from a shopping centre suicide blast to a crowd demonstration.

It was the fifth time in three years that members of 4 Mercian have trained the country's troops for peacekeeping duties.

"They were very willing and eager to learn," said Sgt Alex Perryman, a veteran of three Afghan tours.

"Their kit is nowhere near what we have but they were no rookies. They are battle-hardened having completed a two-year deployment to South Sudan and the Central African Republic."



6 MALAWI

FIT TO FIGHT REBELS

TROOPS have travelled to Malawi to prepare its soldiers for a major peacekeeping deployment.

The 20-man team from 1st Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland and 2nd Battalion, The Rifles will spend two months in the country to help members of the Malawi Defence Force develop the skills needed to repel fighters in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

"We will be working in difficult terrain and to a tight schedule with a vast amount of operational expertise to pass over," said Maj Alasdair Hempenstall (1 Scots).

"The Malawian soldiers are well organised, highly trained and keen to play their role in bringing peace across the Congo."

Their efforts follow a similar deployment by personnel from 2nd Battalion, The Mercian Regiment last year (pictured).



Picture: Graeme Main

7 AFGHANISTAN

KABUL CHANGEOVER

MEMBERS of 1st Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment are on their way to Afghanistan's capital this month.

Some 280 troops from A and B Companies have started deploying to Kabul to relieve soldiers from The Rifles in carrying out force protection and enabling duties in the city and the nearby Afghan National Army Officer Academy.

Meanwhile, 40 officers and NCOs from the formation's C Company will spend six months in Mali working alongside the Irish Defence Force on the European Union training mission in the country – a role previously held by 2nd Battalion, The Royal Gurkha Rifles.



Picture: Steve Dock

8 BRUNEI

TRACKING IN TROPICS

PERSONNEL in Brunei are approaching the end of a five-week operational tracking instructors course.

The package trains selected officers and NCOs in the tactics and techniques of military tracking in a variety of environments, as well as how to operate as part of a combat tracker team.

Some 22 students are participating in the current course – one of two run every year by Training Team Brunei.

For more details check out *Soldier* later in the spring.



“IT’S HORSES FOR COURSES AND MAYBE IT’S NOT FOR SOME PEOPLE” – LOAN SERVICE LIFE, PAGES 39–41



TREAD THE BOARDS

■ **THEATRE** company Bravo 22 is set to stage a follow-up to its critically acclaimed military production *The Two Worlds of Charlie F.*

The show (pictured), which was created, produced and performed by wounded personnel as part of their recovery, achieved five-star reviews and was seen by nearly 35,000 people in the UK and Canada.

A new pilot project will be based at the Aylesbury Waterside Theatre in Buckinghamshire and is open to all injured and sick Servicemen and women, veterans, Reservists, their families or those who are moving into civilian life.

Participants will be asked to create a play based on their own stories.

Email bravo22company@britishlegion.org.uk for details.



Picture: Steve Dock

NEW TESTS HELP FIND BEST FUTURE RECRUITS

■ **TWO** new tests have been introduced to the Gurkha selection process in Nepal to ensure all future troops are in top physical condition.

For the first time, the 2014/15 intake was required to undertake so-called functional mobility screening (FMS) – various stretching and balancing exercises – to examine muscle flexibility and strength as well as an ECG to check for possible heart problems.

Maj Mike Cameron-Smith (RAMC), the military doctor based at Brigade of Gurkhas Pokhara, commented: “FMS tests were initially used by the US Delta Force, and the potential recruits in Nepal are the first Infantry unit to use them in the British Army.”

“They give us an understanding of whether men are ‘functionally fit’ when they start training.”

He added that the ECG had been introduced because one of the most common causes of soldier deaths is sudden cardiac arrest.

“IT’S A WONDERFUL WAY FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO MILK SERVICE PERSONNEL”

Ticked off in *Talkback* – pages 53-56

“They are the first Infantry unit to use them”



Reservists’ virtual world

THE Service has delved into the world of virtual reality as part of a campaign to attract greater numbers to the Army Reserve.

Oculus Rift headsets have been used at recruiting events in London and Manchester to offer potential soldiers experience of life on the front line in a Challenger 2.

The wraparound technology sees wearers assuming the role of a crewman in a live-firing exercise, where they are tasked with surrounding the enemy alongside other tanks.

Maj Gen Chris Tickell, Director-

General of the Army Recruiting and Training Division, said: “By using virtual headsets people will be able to step straight into an exciting real-world scenario of volunteering with the Reserves.”

Meanwhile, Service bosses have launched a new advertising drive to tackle misconceptions about the role played by Reservists.

The “Normal Day” campaign, which is running on TV, print and digital channels, highlights the variety of roles carried out by soldiers at home and abroad, including three documentary-style case studies of individual personnel.

It comes as new figures reveal that a quarter of 18- to 34-year-olds believe that the Army is less relevant now than ever before.

Gurkhas kick off 200 anniversary

THE Army has begun celebrating 200 years of Gurkha service with a schedule of celebratory events across the world.

The bicentenary festivities will kick off on March 26 with the launch of Expedition Arctic Gurkha – an attempt to circumnavigate Ellesmere Island in Canada.

Capt Jon Armstrong and Cpl Arjun Limbu (both RGR) are taking on the 1,500-mile challenge this spring in a bid to raise the profile of the Brigade of Gurkhas.

Other events will include a special party – known as a bhela – for ex-Servicemen at the Nepalese Army Club in Kathmandu and an

attempted summit of Mount Everest by serving troops – known as Exercise Himalayan Odyssey – in May.

Another highlight on the calendar will be the Gurkha 200 pageant on June 9, which will include performances by hundreds of Nepalese soldiers and their families in the grounds of the Royal Hospital Chelsea in London.

For more details on the events visit www.gurkha200.co.uk/events/

Gallant Gurkhas

Blood, selection and tears – p 24-31

‘We could be heroes’ – p 33-35



Picture: Graeme Main

Reason to smile: Victoria Cross winner Rambahadur Limbu visits Gurkhas in the UK ahead of this year’s 200-year anniversary celebrations – see pages 33-35

UK PARLIAMENTARY GENERAL ELECTION 2015

REGISTER NOW



To vote in the 2015 General Election you must be registered
Your vote matters – make sure you're in
Visit www.gov.uk/register-to-vote-armed-forces



YOUR VOTE MATTERS
MAKE SURE YOU'RE IN



SAVE 40%

FORCES DISCOUNT ON ALL OUR MAGAZINES!



The stories, strategies, heroes & machines of historic conflicts



The action-packed science & technology magazine



The number one magazine for sci-fi, fantasy and horror fans
 13 ISSUES £39



Inspiration, tutorials and tools for enthusiasts and professionals
 13 ISSUES £39



Discover the wonders of the universe
 13 ISSUES £31



For people who live and breathe video games
 13 ISSUES £39

SEE THE FULL RANGE AND ORDER ONLINE AT
WWW.IMAGINESUBS.CO.UK/SOLDIER15

Or call the order hotline: 0844 856 0644 UK +44 (0) 1795 592 869 OVERSEAS
 Quoting offer code **SOLDIER15**

"I HAVE RECEIVED WONDERFUL COMPLIMENTS FROM SOLDIERS"

- KAJAKI SINGER EYES FAME, PAGES 72-73



Soldiers take seat at top table

New post will see troops' views put to defence bigwigs

THE creation of a new position that will allow soldiers' views to be represented at the highest level and more variation in the length of operational tours are two changes on the cards for troops this year, the chief of the general staff has said.

Speaking at the Army Conference at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst (RMAS), Gen Sir Nicholas Carter explained that he wants to make the Army more flexible.

As a result, the six-month rotations that marked the Telic and Herrick campaigns won't be standard in future. Instead, every mission will be assessed on its own merits and tour lengths set to fit the job.

"The character of conflict is changing and we have to have a new approach," Gen Carter added.

"Tour lengths may, for example, extend to a year where troops need more time to establish relationships with indigenous populations and defence forces."

The top officer also revealed that a new mission training and mobilisation centre will be developed at Basingstoke to help troops better prepare for tasks abroad.

Other measures designed to make the Service more adaptable include the introduction of the post of Army



sergeant major.

The individual appointed in this role will become the most senior soldier in the British Army and provide the troops' perspective at the top level, advising Gen Carter himself.

They will also become a member of the executive committee of the Army Board, working with the secretary of state for defence, Armed Forces ministers, top civil servants and generals to shape Service policy.

RMAS sergeant major WO1 Glenn Haughton (Gren Gds) will be the first to take up the role from this spring.

For more details on the Army Conference read **ABN 008/15**.

Something to shout about: From spring a new sergeant major position will see troops' views represented among defence chiefs

Picture: Graeme Main

RIGBY VISITING OFFICER HONOURED

■ A RESERVIST who supported the relatives of murdered soldier Fus Lee Rigby is among the 71 Army personnel to be recognised by the Queen in this year's New Year Honours list.

Capt Tim Fleming (Para) has been awarded an MBE after repeatedly being called upon to act as casualty notifying or visiting officer to the loved ones of deceased personnel.

The former lorry driver won particular praise for the help he gave to Fus Rigby's widow in the wake of her husband's shocking death in Woolwich in May 2013.

Capt Fleming's citation stated that he had been "simply superb" in unimaginable circumstances.

The 56-year-old works on a full-time Reserve service contract as regimental operations support officer at the HQ of 4th Battalion, The Parachute Regiment in Leeds.



One of many: Capt Fleming is one of 71 Army personnel to be honoured

IN NUMBERS

6

Professional fights by Army boxer LCpl Lewis Jones (RE). Read about his upcoming title bout on page 80.



Personnel bring First World War to life

SOLDIERS have been visiting youngsters across the country to help them learn more about the First World War.

The support to schools scheme is part of the Army's ongoing efforts to commemorate the conflict's centenary, allowing teachers to invite serving personnel to give presentations in their classrooms.

Troops in the West Midlands are among those to have taken part so far.

They have staged six visits across the region, with five more scheduled for the coming months.

Describing the talks, regional coordinator Capt Ash Edwards (RY) said he had spoken to pupils about the origins of the war and why nations were prepared to send so many to fight.



Picture: Imperial War Museum

"I introduced a 'would you volunteer' exercise, which went down a treat and made the students think about the pressures faced by young men in 1914-15," added the officer. "I also try to use a little local history to make the talks more

pertinent to where I am."

Among the 21 Servicemen assisting Capt Edwards in the West Midlands is LCpl Dan Holbrough (Londons), whose task includes taking children through a comparison of kit used then and now.

"It's great to see the students gain a better understanding through equipment," he said.

"Many didn't realise the facts behind the life of the soldiers in the trenches."

One site visited by the Army team was Regency High School, a special needs institution in Worcester.

"Some of our students can find listening difficult but today you could have heard a pin drop," said teacher Mike Eglesfield after the presentation.

“Many didn't realise the facts behind the life of soldiers”

SILVERMANS

WWW.SILVERMANS.CO.UK



ALT-BERG DESERT
TAN - M.O.D BROWN
£139.99

ALT-BERG JUNGLE
BLACK - M.O.D BROWN
£149.99

ALT-BERG SNEEKER
BLACK - M.O.D BROWN
£154.99

ALT-BERG MK2 WARRIOR
BLACK - M.O.D BROWN
£159.99



ALT-BERG AQUA
SNEEKER
£169.99

ALT-BERG
VELDTHOG
£209.99

ALT-BERG
FIELD & FELL
£169.99

ALT-BERG
BERGAN
£194.99

ALT-BERG BLACK
MOUNTAIN
£194.99

ALT-BERG LADY
SNEEKER
£149.99

ALT-BERG LADY
SNEEKER BROWN
£149.99



LOWA COMBAT
GORE-TEX
£179.00

LOWA PATROL
BROWN
£159.00

LOWA ELITE
BROWN
£160.00

HAIX COMBAT
M.O.D BROWN
£189.99

HAIX DESERT
M.O.D BROWN
£179.99

MAGNUM PANTHER
SIDE-ZIP BROWN
£60.00

MAGNUM
BROWN MACH II
£90.00



• Swiss Made • Genuine Issue
• 3 year Warranty

CWC GS2000 WATCH - £155.00
British Army watch with
added feature of date function.
Luminous hands & markers.
Quartz movement.



CWC SBS DIVERS WATCH - £395.00
Day/date.
Water-resistant to 300m.

In service with Royal Marines SBS
& other specialist diving units.
Built to take the toughest use.

Black casing, Luminova luminous markings,
highly accurate quartz movement.
20mm black strap supplied as standard.

Tel: 020 77 900 900

SILVERMANS Mile End, London E1 4PS

Opening Hours: Mon - Friday 09:00 - 18:00 Saturday - CLOSED Sunday 10:00 - 13:00

Standard UK & BFPO p&p from £5.00 Prices subject to current catalogue

Phone for A FREE CATALOGUE quoting Soldier

"THIS HAS GIVEN ME INSIGHT INTO ALL THE NECESSARY TACTICS"

- ON-TRACK WITH WARRIOR, PAGES 36-37



Beware the pension sharks

Warning as personnel lose money to 'swizz' schemes

SOLDIERS are continuing to watch their hard-earned money go down the drain by cashing in their pension pots early.

According to the Forces Pension Society (FPS) so-called liberation schemes, which promise to release lump sums to troops before charging large administrative fees, are still targeting Service personnel.

"Soldiers need to know that these people are sharks," said Mary Petley, a consultant for the watchdog.

"The temptation is to get money upfront but many don't realise the hidden costs and risk of this.

"Pension liberators are mostly unscrupulous and what they often don't tell you is that they could take up to 30 per cent in fees and around 55 per cent could go in tax.

"It's a swizz and you hear all sorts of terrible stories."

The warning comes ahead of a

rule change in April, which will limit the type of schemes that military pensions can be transferred into – including those overseas or outside the public sector.

In a separate warning, the FPS says that moving cash into other pots may also be a bad idea.

"You have to ask yourself all sorts of questions when doing this," Mrs Petley continued.

"For example, an Army nurse on Armed Forces pension scheme 75 with benefits due at the age of 60 and 65 might be minded to transfer to the NHS scheme.

"However, in that one he or she would have to wait until OAP age to receive their money, which we think could soon be 70.

"It's normally a bad idea."

For more advice on Forces pensions contact the FPS on 020 7820 9988 or visit www.forcespensionsociety.org

“
The temptation is to get money upfront
”

ARMY NOT TO BLAME OVER BASSINGBOURN

■ THE British troops charged with training Libyan soldiers at Basingbourn Barracks last year did "extremely well in working with a very challenging cohort", an MoD report has concluded.

The package, designed to improve the foreign force's infantry and leadership skills, hit the headlines when a group of more than 300 cadets being trained by 3rd Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland were sent home early after five were charged with sexual offences.

However, the document said that little could have been done to prevent breakouts from the base that occurred at the time the crimes were reported.

It concluded that, should similar training occur in the UK again, more thought should be given to "group cohesion" and better communication with local authorities.

A Ministry of Defence spokesman said: "We are now carefully considering how best to implement the report's recommendations.

"We have been clear that this training will not be repeated at Basingbourn Barracks."



Billions to be spent on British Army fleet

AROUND £15.4 billion will be spent on land equipment such as tanks and armoured vehicles over the next ten years, the government has announced.

The figure was revealed in the third annual update to the defence equipment plan and the money will support a variety of platforms across the Army, with a focus on four main areas.

Investment will be made in the programme to enhance Warrior and extend its service life, a similar scheme for Challenger 2, modifications to kit purchased for Afghanistan and Scout and utility vehicles.

Funding for helicopter capabilities will remain broadly unchanged, with another £11.1 billion earmarked for upgrades to existing airframes and investment in new ones and the long-term sustainability of Chinook, Merlin, Apache and Wildcat.

● THE Army is set to reduce its vehicle maintenance costs by some £500 million. A new contract will see engineering firm Babcock International overhaul the way ground assets are serviced, repaired and stored. Money saved will be ploughed back into equipment support.

IN NUMBERS

1/3

Amount the Babcock contract will slash vehicle repair costs by – at least.





**“WE ARE HERE TO SECURE OUR FUTURE;
I’M DESPERATE TO KEEP TRYING”**
– AIMING HIGH IN NEPAL, PAGES 24–31

‘Don’t lose your vote’ troops urged

WITH three months to go until the general election, soldiers are being urged to make sure they get their say on who runs the country.

Anyone who is not on the electoral register must sign up by April 20 if they wish to vote on May 7 and a new online system makes this easier than ever.

Personnel who are based in the UK and unlikely to change address in the next year can sign up as ordinary electors at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

Others can visit www.gov.uk/register-to-vote-armed-forces to be recorded at a fixed address for five years, even if they move around.

Pte Matt Dean (Mercian) is one of those who will be heading to the polls.

“If they don’t vote troops lose an important chance to have their voices heard by politicians,” he told *Soldier*.

“These people make the decisions to deploy us to hostile places across the world and choices made in parliament affect everyone serving.”

Registration days will be held at Army units over the coming weeks and personnel can also elect to vote by post or proxy, meaning another person visits the polling station on their behalf.



Picture: Graeme Main

IN NUMBERS

46

Rank achieved by the Army in gay rights group Stonewall’s annual list of top 100 employers for gay, lesbian and bisexual staff. The Royal Navy secured 56th position and the Royal Air Force 91st.

NO APPETITE TO FIGHT

■ ONE in four British civilians would be prepared to fight for their country, a survey has revealed.

The research by polling organisation WIN/Gallup found that only 27 per cent of respondents said they would take up arms, against a global average of 60 per cent.

With 2014 marking the centenary of the start of the First World War the company decided to include the question in its annual global end of year study.

The trend among Britons was mirrored across Western Europe, with Germany scoring particularly low at 18 per cent.

These figures were in sharp contrast to those in Arab countries of the Middle East and North Africa, where 77 per cent of people would be prepared to fight for their nation.

The USA result was 44 per cent.



Of the Brits polled,

1 in 4

said they would be prepared to fight for their country.

FEARLESS FUNDRAISING



Picture: Newquay Activity Centre

Money raised:
£11,000
For:
Blesma

DOUGH AT DINNER

FORMER England defender Stuart Pearce (pictured) was the star guest at a charity dinner, raffle and silent auction for sports fans at The City Ground in Nottingham.

He was joined by Nottingham Forest legends John Robertson, Kenny Burns, John McGovern and John O’Hare, as well as world champion boxer Carl Froch.



MAKING WAVES FOR WARRIORS

THRILLSEEKERS from across the country braved cold Atlantic waters for a coasteering challenge around the Cornwall coastline.

The annual adventure, organised by Newquay Activity Centre, saw more than 20 people launch themselves from cliffs, swim through waves and float into whirlpools near Fistral beach.

Rob Barber, the centre’s director, said: “Winter coasteering gives you a real sense of achievement, as you brave the elements and step out of your comfort zone.

“It was a great way to start the new year and we are so pleased to have raised money for The Royal British Legion, which is such a good charity.”

Money raised:
£500
For:
The Royal British Legion

GOT AN EVENT?

news@soldiermagazine.co.uk
@soldiermagazine



ABOVE & BEYOND



Fighting talk from Aaron Long as he introduces Military Discounts at Westover Land Rover

Westover Land Rover in Salisbury is one of just two Land Rover showrooms in the UK approved to sell discounted Land Rover vehicles to serving military personnel. With a strong military community in place and an influx of troops about to return to Salisbury Plain, the Old Sarum-based showroom has appointed a dedicated specialist to handle its military business.

Aaron Long, the showroom's new military contact, comes with a strong pedigree. He's worked with Westover Land Rover for more than 12 years and has been chosen as one of Land Rover's top 10 showroom staff many times in recognition of his commitment and professionalism, so there's no question over his attention to detail or his knowledge of the Land Rover range.

Forces reductions of up to 13 per cent are available across the Land Rover range, on all Defender, Discovery, Discovery Sport and Range Rover models, from Westover Land Rover in Salisbury. The special military prices are available to all military personnel, not just those posted overseas.

Westover Land Rover service facilities are second to none. Our manufacturer trained technicians using only genuine Land Rover parts are your guarantee of a first class job, every time. We also offer discounted servicing rates to all military personnel and a complimentary collection and delivery service – so there's no need to worry about fitting service and MOT appointments around time spent working away from home.

"The reduced prices apply universally to all servicemen and women, including



those who are currently – or are about to be – posted overseas," says Aaron. "It's a genuine reduction that seeks to bring a cash benefit to members of the British Army, Navy and Air Force – we can help with registration, delivery and shipment paperwork, so the process is just as straightforward as any other car purchase.

"This is a simple opportunity to own one of the most iconic vehicles on the road at a big discount and we're trying to spread the word so that members of the Armed Forces can make the most of the chance we're offering.

"The vast majority of members of the Armed Forces will have come into contact with a Defender during their military career, so they know all about the robustness

and capability of our vehicles already. Many are surprised by how luxurious the civilian models are though!"

With a strong local heritage spanning many years, Westover Land Rover is ideally located just to the north of Salisbury with easy access to the A303.

The showroom supports local charity, Help for Heroes, as well as Race2Recovery, an organisation providing opportunities for servicemen and women who have experienced life changing injuries to participate in a professional off-road rallying team. You can also see Westover Land Rover supporting military point to points around the Salisbury area, as well as at Tidworth Polo Club.



Call today and find out more

Westover Land Rover Military Sales

Old Sarum Business Park, Old Sarum, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP4 6EB.

www.westover.salisbury.landrover.co.uk
militarysales@westovergroup.co.uk

01722 414400

Management & Health & Safety Training on your doorstep

"BV Associates Limited is more than a training provider and you get far more than you would expect. They understand your needs and help you every step of the way, even after the training course has long finished". A Peters

We are proud to serve members of the Armed Forces wherever they find themselves. We have course packages to suit your own future career aspirations or to support existing continuous professional development.

NEBOSH National General Certificate in Occupational Health & Safety (£1460 +VAT)

Aldershot:	16 - 27 Feb	Wimbish:	23 Feb - 06 Mar
Telford:	16 - 27 Mar	Tidworth:	16 - 27 Mar
Bovington:	30 Mar - 10 Apr	Paderborn:	13 - 24 Apr
Aldershot:	04 - 15 May	Maidstone:	11 - 22 May
Larkhill:	11 - 22 May	Tidworth:	18 - 29 May
Catterick:	01 - 12 Jun	Paderborn:	01 - 12 Jun
Kinloss:	01 - 12 Jun	Chester (NW)	15 - 26 Jun
Southampton:	22 Jun - 03 Jul	Colchester:	29 Jun - 10 Jul
Barnstaple:	13 - 24 Jul	Didcot:	13 - 24 Jul
Nuneaton:	20 - 31 Jul	Tidworth:	27 Jul - 07 Aug

NEBOSH National Certificate in Fire Safety and Risk Management (£900 +VAT)

Tidworth:	16 - 20 Feb	Paderborn:	02 - 06 Mar
Colchester:	09 - 13 Mar	Maidstone:	23 - 27 Mar
Barnstaple (RMBC):	13 - 17 Apr	Aldershot:	27 Apr - 01 May
Tidworth:	15 - 19 Jun	Paderborn:	22 - 26 Jun

NEBOSH National Certificate in Environmental Management (£900 +VAT)

Tidworth:	09 - 13 Mar	Aldershot:	22 - 26 Jun
-----------	-------------	------------	-------------

NEBOSH Certificate in Construction Health and Safety (£1460 +VAT)

Aldershot:	02 - 13 Feb	Tidworth:	20 Apr - 01 May
Tidworth:	29 Jun - 10 Jul	Tidworth:	26 Oct - 06 Nov

NEBOSH Intl. Technical Certificate in Oil and Gas Operational Safety (£900 +VAT)

Cleethorpes:	11 - 15 May	Cleethorpes:	13 - 17 Jul
--------------	-------------	--------------	-------------

So why train with us?

- Quality is at the heart of what we do. We only use quality instructors with industry experience.
- We keep things simple. Our Team will put you at ease knowing that we have everything in hand.
- We go the extra mile. We offer advice and a training platform, which supports you now and into the future.
- Training that understands you. We only use face-to-face training to embed confidence through learning.
- Whenever, Wherever and Whatever! We run our courses from 25 venues across the world.

Find out about all of our courses and future dates at www.bvassociates.co.uk, email us at info@bvassociates.co.uk or call us direct on +44 (0) 1494 864100

"IT BRINGS IN GREAT TALENT AND DELIVERS BUSINESS BENEFITS" - BANKS CASH IN ON EX-TROOPS, PAGES 46-48



IN NUMBERS:



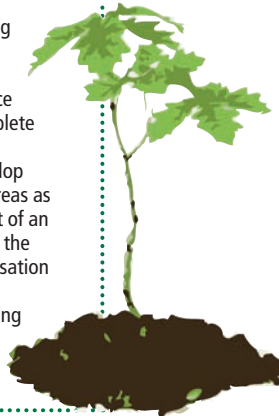
53,000

The amount of new trees being planted to help soldiers exercising in Catterick.

The programme to introduce the saplings is due to be complete by the end of this month.

It will allow troops to develop their skills in using wooded areas as cover during battle and is part of an ongoing partnership between the Defence Infrastructure Organisation and the Woodland Trust.

Together with recent planting by tenant farmers, the area will become home to some 120 hectares of new trees.



MENTAL HEALTH HELP

■ A FREE service has been set up to offer support and information to Armed Forces personnel, their friends and families who are dealing with mental health problems.

The pilot project – which is being run by Mind Wiltshire, medical firm Healios and the Army Families Federation – is open to anyone over the age of 18 from the military community. It can provide service users with up to 12 individual 40-minute sessions with a clinician.

For more information on the initiative or to access support contact Healios on 03303 350603 or email office@wiltshiremind.co.uk

CALL TO THE COAST

■ A CHARITY that provides support to children who have a parent in the Army is asking families to join them on a fundraising trek along the Jurassic Coast.

My Daddy is a Soldier Adventures is staging the 14-kilometre walk on Saturday, April 25 and participants can choose between two routes at the World Heritage Site.

For more information and to receive a challenge pack email fundraising@mydaddyisasoldieradventures.org



Picture: Shutterstock

HOME TRUTHS



A personal view from Catherine Spencer, chief executive of the Army Families Federation...



Ticked off with tag

ARMY family members have traditionally been referred to as "dependants" – a term widely used in policy documents.

But am I alone in finding this word rather derogatory?

I first proclaimed my distaste for the term at the 2009 Army Families Federation Germany conference but it has remained in use, despite growing opposition from loved ones.

So why should we change it?

To me, the word implies that spouses or partners are financially and emotionally reliant on soldiers – inferior, helpless and something of a liability, incapable of earning or contributing to the home.

It is a disempowering phrase, which seems wildly out of step with the Army's desire for equality and diversity and the recognition that partner employment is essential.

The word's continued use devalues the considerable role played by loved ones in supporting Service personnel.

And it is especially misplaced in that it is actually the military which is dependent on families to continue making compromises and sacrifices so that a soldier can remain in role.

In my house, for one Serviceman there is a line of family members (me, three children, four grandparents, nieces, nephews and siblings) giving up a great deal to enable him to serve Queen and country.

I therefore object to a phrase that seems to have come out of a Victorian census.

Perhaps "entitled family member" would be a better choice of words. This at least denotes the responsibilities of the MoD.

www.aff.org.uk

“

Am I alone in finding this word derogatory?

”

HAVE YOUR SAY IN 2015

■ SOLDIERS are being urged to voice their opinions on Service life by filling in the Armed Forces continuous attitude survey.

The annual questionnaire allows policy makers to understand troops' thoughts on issues such as morale and living conditions.

It has been distributed electronically and in hard copy and those asked to take part have until February 16 to respond.

Troops who received the Army Reserve version must return it by March 27.

“

I HAVEN'T SEEN SUCH UNBALANCED REPORTING FOR A LONG TIME

”

Talkback takes offence – pages 53-56

28 - 30 April 2015
PVA Expo, Prague

The International Forum for the Military Training, Education and Simulation Sectors



- ITEC 2015 Registration Now Open
- Military Attend Free
- Thought Provoking Conference
- Networking opportunities

REGISTER TODAY AT WWW.ITEC.CO.UK/SOLDIER

 www.itec.co.uk/linkedin  www.itec.co.uk/facebook

 @ITEC2015

Organised by:



"YOU COULD PACK LIGHT AND BIKE RIGHT ACROSS THE MOUNTAINS" - ADVENTURE UP NORTH, PAGES 42-45



WIN

...More than £300 of outdoor gear

LAST month's spine lines clues would be familiar to our army of *SoldierSport* readers.

(Sean) Fanning, (Capt Paul) Greenwood, (WO2 Mark)

Scorgie and (Charlie) Walker were all winners at the new-look Army Sports Awards last year.

This month, courtesy of the outdoor clothing supplier Tog 24 (www.tog24.com), we are offering one lucky reader a bumper pack of winter clothing. The set includes a men's winter three-in-one jacket, breathable softshell coat, high performance fleece and pair of fleece-lined winter trousers.

To be in with a chance of scooping the lot, tell us what links the words on the spine of this issue. Answers to the usual address or comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk by February 27.



Family tragedy prompts trust

Couple call on Service community to support their cause

TWO Intelligence Corps soldiers have set up a charity in memory of their son who died from a rare neurological disorder.

SSgt Paul Sagar-Gray and his wife Sgt Emma Sagar-Gray lost three-year-old Matthew to a form of spinocerebellar ataxia type 7 – a degenerative condition that gradually impairs sufferers' motor control and vision – in May 2013.

The Matthew Seren Trust will raise money to help support families with children facing complex and life-limiting illnesses.

"Matthew was probably 18 months old when we first realised something was wrong," his mother recalled.

"Paul was away in Afghanistan and my mum, a paediatric nurse, noticed he was getting unsteady on his feet.

"It took hold quite quickly. He went from talking and walking to going back to a baby but worse.

"He couldn't speak or eat. He lost his sight. Everything just shut down."

Throughout the course of Matthew's treatment his parents battled to ensure he got the right care, even funding some specialist equipment themselves.

Now they want to make life easier for families in a similar position.

Picture: Graeme Main



"We hope that we can get people the kit they need more quickly without them having to go through hoops," continued Sgt Sagar-Gray. "It takes so long to go through the system."

With hospice spaces in short supply, the trust also aims to fund home nursing care so children can be in familiar surroundings in their last days.

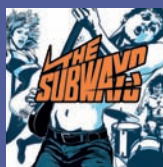
Another goal is to establish a specially adapted holiday home for families to use.

"If people in the military community are looking at raising any money for charity, especially children's causes, we would love their support," the Servicewoman added.

"We want to help other families but we also want to make sure Matthew isn't forgotten."

Visit www.matthewserentrust.com

IN MUSIC...



"Better than anything they've ever offered"
★★★★



"The songwriting and musicianship are sublime"
★★★★★

PAGES 72-73



GET BIKING FOR FREE

■ READERS of *Soldier* are being offered the chance to win one of three free spaces up for grabs on a moonlit charity bike ride through London.

The annual Nightrider event sees participants cycle a 100-kilometre route past the capital's iconic landmarks.

This year's ride has a film and music theme and begins late on the evening of June 6, finishing early the following day.

Individual entry usually costs £99 but for the chance to ride free of charge for a charity of your choice email nightrider@classictours.co.uk quoting "Soldier magazine" by February 20.

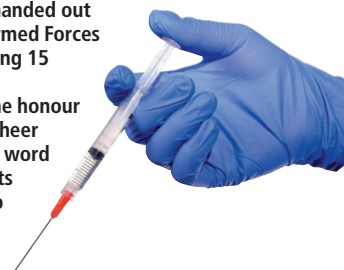
Those who are unsuccessful can find further information on how to register at www.nightrider.org.uk

MEDICAL MARVELS

■ ANAESTHETISTS from the Royal Army Medical Corps have been honoured for their distinguished service in Afghanistan since October 2001.

The Pask Award, named after the late military anaesthetist Prof Edgar Pask, was handed out to a total of 21 Armed Forces specialists including 15 Army personnel.

On receiving the honour Maj Sukumar Sudheer (RAMC) said: "My word to all anaesthetists who would like to join the military is – do!"



ROAD TO REMEMBER

■ THE family of a soldier killed in Afghanistan is calling for a major road to be renamed in honour of the 453 British personnel who lost their lives in the conflict.

As this issue went to press relatives of WO2 Sean Upton, who died in a grenade attack in 2009, were in discussion with local authorities to agree a new title for the A453 near Nottingham.

Ideas include Heroes Way, Helmand Way or Bastion Way.



THE BIG PICTURE



> DARTMOOR, DEVON

TAKING THE PLUNGE

MEMBERS of 1st Battalion, Coldstream Guards brave the chilly waters of a Dartmoor quarry during Exercise Baskerville Star, a back-to-basics package for 60 personnel. As well as river crossing drills the soldiers rehearsed day and night navigation skills and section attacks, with support from the Royal Navy's Sea King helicopters in what was one of the airframe's final military exercises before it is removed from service. Picture: Graeme Main

DOKO^{TO} DRILL SQUARE

Young men of
the Himalayan
foothills compete to
change their lives



Report: Joe Clapson
Pictures: Steve Dock

I

It is fitting that the vast Annapurna mountain range seen from Nepal's second largest city is rugged and remarkable because the military selection process that takes place in its surrounds could be described in exactly the same way.

As the Brigade of Gurkhas celebrates 200 years of Nepalese service to the British Army, *Soldier* visited its recruitment ground in Pokhara to find out what it takes to be enlisted in the formation's revered number.

"There is about a 30-to-one chance of getting through selection here and competition is extremely fierce," explained Maj James Arney (RGR), officer commanding the Brigade of Gurkhas Pokhara (BGP).

His team is responsible for hunting out the best wannabe soldiers Nepal has to offer in order to provide a constant stream of elite operators to units back in the UK.

The annual process, renowned as one of the most difficult initial military selection courses in the world, begins with the Army's team spending six weeks visiting rural communities to highlight what life in the British military is like.

The opportunity to serve – and earn roughly four times the average Nepali annual salary in just one month – is widely advertised across the districts and the latest six-week registration window saw 7,865 individuals apply for 230 places.

"Most people in Nepal know about the Service but we have to explain to their faces what selection is like and details of the criteria," the officer explained.

"We have ex-Gurkhas who travel into the villages to support us and they are vital in spreading our message."

As well as a good education, the 17- to 21-year-old men who apply must be able to demonstrate astounding levels of fitness.

After being put through a series of physical and classroom tests at two regional camps, the hopefuls are whittled down to around 500 and sent on to BGP for a gruelling two-week central selection process – many walking hundreds of miles to get there.

"All the regional tests are rigidly watched to make sure we get exactly the right people attending final selection," continued Maj Arney.

"If we get a decision wrong we are messing up someone's whole life."





Bishal Sunuwar was one of the most recent potential recruits to be put through his paces and the 19-year-old explained what the opportunity meant to him and the rest of his cohort.

"We came to secure our life and future," he said. "This only happens annually so you have to take your chance."

"I tried to pass selection two years ago but failed at the regional stage so I am desperate to keep trying."

Such perseverance is a familiar story in Pokhara, where English tests, medical examinations and – of course – plenty more physical punishment is on the cards.

Ganesh Chand travelled to the city from the hilly region of Dailekh in the west of Nepal, where there is no electricity or road access.

"Our forefathers have done so much to build the reputation and history of the Gurkhas and now it's our turn to let the world know what we can do," he commented.

"If I am chosen it will be a very proud moment."

"I love that the British Army selects people irrespective of your caste or what you have done before."

He continued: "I am the only person here from my village and the others at home have no idea about the Army or what it means because they don't have television."

"I have never been on an aeroplane so travelling to England would be a major thing."

"I know that if I am selected I will be so proud because I will be able to send money home to my family – this is my chance to make them happier."

Success in this game is hard-won, however.

One of Pokhara's most feared serials takes place in the pool, where potential recruits are asked to complete two lengths – something that may not sound intimidating to UK troops, but for many here it is their first attempt at swimming.

It is not a pass or fail test but those who can complete it are awarded an extra mark for their total selection score.

Other assessments, though, must be passed with flying colours.

"The enthusiasm and commitment to learning here is excellent and I wish there was the same attitude in the UK," said Maj Jonny Taffs (AGC (ETS)), the officer in charge of educational testing.

"We need to make sure the recruits are up to speed with the rest of the Army so we tell them to practise their English by listening to radio programmes such as the BBC World Service."

New to 2014's central selection process was something known as functional mobility screening.

Developed for US special forces operatives, this sees candidates undertake several short exercises to give assessors an understanding of how "functionally fit" they are – that is, how primed they are for the physical work expected of a soldier.



TEST FOR THE BEST

How the
selection
process
works for
Nepal's
hopefuls...

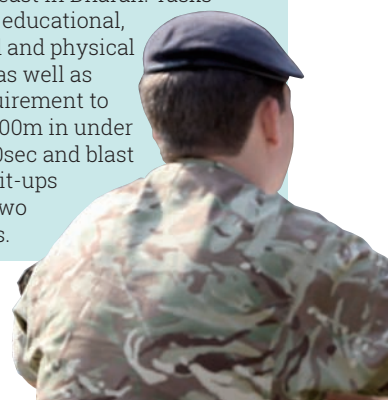
VILLAGE VISITS

Members of the Brigade of Gurkhas Pokhara visit mountain communities around the country to educate young men about the opportunities available in the British Army.



REGIONAL SELECTION CAMPS

Thousands of applicants are whittled down to 500 at two camps, one in Pokhara and one further east in Dharan. Tasks include educational, medical and physical tests – as well as the requirement to sprint 800m in under 2min 40sec and blast out 70 sit-ups in just two minutes.





“It means
so much to me
to become a
soldier
in the
British Army”

Clockwise, A mountain to climb: A potential recruit undergoes the new functional mobility screening; testing times in the swimming pool; runners press on in the 2.4-kilometre run; hopefuls prepare for the challenge ahead



CENTRAL SELECTION

Instructors tick boxes and register scores for the nervous young men as they are put through further gruelling physical challenges, medical and dental exams, and an English conversation assessment (pictured). A final interview is then held in Nepalese.



CATTERICK-BOUND

The troops travel to ITC Catterick to undergo combined phase one and two training on the combat infantryman's course.

ATTESTATION

Those who have been successful swear an oath of allegiance to the Queen – the final stage of the recruiting process.





“It’s a true measure of grit and determination”

In a further development, ECG tests check the electric activity of the recruits’ hearts to make sure they can withstand extreme tasks.

“More and more we are treating soldiers as elite athletes because they train in the same way,” said Maj Mike Cameron-Smith, regimental medical officer for 1st Battalion, The Royal Gurkha Rifles.

“The medical side is as stringent as the physical and we probably have as many fail here as in other aspects of selection.”

Another mean assessment comes in the form of a 2.4-kilometre run, which must be completed in less than 9min 40sec.

But the apex of central selection is the iconic and somewhat unbelievable Doko Race – a five-kilometre run up the daunting Bhalam Hill carrying 25 kilograms of sand in a bamboo basket known as a doko.

With the heavy load strapped to runners’ heads, the challenge is every bit as tough as it sounds (see page 31).

“It’s an absolutely fantastic test; incredibly demanding physically and a true measure of grit and determination,” explained Maj Arney.

“Most people could probably walk up the hill if they had a whole day, but these guys have to do it with a heavy weight.

“It’s very symbolic of where they come from because they would be doing this sort of carrying task every day in rural villages.”

Capt Ed Withey (RGR), operations coordination officer at BGP, added: “This is worlds apart from what the UK’s line infantry is asked to do on day one.

“As a result of their way of life, the fitness and functional mobility of the Nepalese is absolutely outstanding.”

Looking out to the sacred Mount Machhapuchhre, potential recruit Suraj Rai revealed what powered him through to complete the task successfully in the allotted time.

“The uphill parts were the toughest – especially the steps and it made my stomach and leg muscles very sore,” said the 20-year-old.

“But there was no point at all where I thought I would not make it because it just means so much to me to become a soldier in the British Army.

“I want to be in the organisation where my ancestors have served and to keep the prestige going – Gurkhas are well known and I want to become one.”

With no room for sentimentality, individuals who do not complete the Doko challenge within 48 minutes are cut out of selection.

For the 2014 intake 33 of the 450 candidates who had made it that far met with failure.

One Serviceman who understands the harsh realities of the Gurkha selection process as well as anyone is Maj Manoj Mohara (RGR), the most senior Nepalese soldier at BGP, whose job is to assist with recruitment and ensure that local cultural needs are upheld.

“I enlisted 30 years ago with 7th Gurkha Rifles and the motivation I had then was the same that the boys have now; opportunity to travel and financial incentives but most importantly a connection to ancestors,” he said.

“Even if their family didn’t join, they are influenced by friends or someone from their village.”

At the end of the fortnight the young men are lined up in civilian clothes and sent one of two ways: on the despondent journey back to their communities or to Gurkha Company Catterick for initial military training.

“The 230 who are successful swear their oath to the Queen and are marched off,” revealed Maj Arney.

“All of their families will come to see them off and within two weeks they will be at Catterick.”

Nepal is the UK’s oldest ally in Asia and its Gurkha soldiers have served Britain with distinction since 1815.

If the selection process in the country remains as arduous as it is today, there should be no doubt that the calibre of new recruit arriving for training in North Yorkshire will continue to be first-class until the next bicentenary. ■



Read more about the Doko Race on page 31

NEW DISCOVERY SPORT

ADVENTURE.
IT'S IN OUR DNA.



ABOVE & BEYOND



Start your adventure

Introducing our most versatile compact SUV to date. Intelligent technology including class-leading Terrain Response® makes the New Discovery Sport perfect for the great outdoors.

A generous storage space of 1,698 litres and clever 5+2 seating makes for a great indoors too.

It's available to armed forces personnel with some impressive and exclusive benefits:

- Up to 13% discount available on new Land Rover models
- Personalised specification designed around exact requirements, including injury
- RHD or LHD depending on your posting demands
- Dedicated experienced military sales support
- Tax Free / Tax Paid pricing options
- Military agents in both UK and Germany
- Finance packages available subject to status*

Marshall Land Rover Military Sales

Land Rover House, Mallory Road, Peterborough, PE1 5PT
+44 (0)1733 213231 salesmanager@landrover-militarysales.co.uk
landrovermilitarysales.co.uk

Westover Land Rover Salisbury

Old Sarum Park, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP4 6EB
+44 (0)1722 414400 militarysales@westovergroup.co.uk
westovergroup.co.uk/landrover

Model featured is the New Discovery Sport. Official fuel consumption figures for the New Discovery Sport in mpg (l/100km): Urban 38.2 (18.3) – 40.4 (8.5), Extra urban 49.6 (9.7) – 50.4 (7.0), Combined 44.8 (12.8) – 46.3 (7.5). Combined CO₂ emissions g/km: 166 – 162. The figures provided are as a result of official manufacturer's tests in accordance with EU legislation. A vehicle's actual fuel consumption may differ from that achieved in such tests and these figures are for comparative purposes only. *Finance is subject to status and only available to serving members of HM Forces only, aged 18 and over resident in Mainland UK and N.Ireland. Indemnities may be required.

MILITARY INSURANCE

**Because you don't want
to waste time looking for
the best insurance deal.**

Call: **01242 533 786** | Visit: **www.towergatemilitary.co.uk**

We understand that as a member of the armed forces your lifestyle is very different to most. Our military insurance range has been specifically tailored to cover what matters most to you whether you are on or off duty.

Take out a policy with us and we'll give you a 20% discount and £30 cashback. A great deal without compromising on cover.

20% DISCOUNT
£30 CASH BACK



Offer available to new customers only. Discount is issued immediately. Cashback will be paid by bank transfer following payment of 3 months' premium and within 6 months of purchasing the policy. Offer applies to Basic Right Dress, Right Dress and Right Dress Advantage products only. Offer expires: 30/06/2015 but can be withdrawn at any time. Calls may be recorded.

Towergate Insurance is a trading name of Towergate Underwriting Group Limited. Registered Address: Towergate House, Eclipse Park, Sittingbourne Rd, Maidstone, Kent ME14 3EN. Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

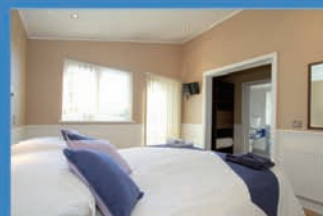
Image courtesy of defenceimagery.co.uk. Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government License V2.0

*Heroes Haven
Swanage*

heroes-haven.org.uk
To book call: 07531 342015



**Affordable
holidays on the
Jurassic Coast
for disabled,
injured and
visually
impaired
serving and
ex-serving
members of the
Armed Forces**



STRAIN OF THE STAMPEDE

Nepal's Doko challenge up close...



● THE first platoon of D Company line up. They might have trained for months for this moment but their anxiety about what lies ahead is visible.

With the sun yet to rise and a cold bite still in the air, the start commander barks out three questions to the assembled troops.

"Any injuries?"

"No sir."

"Are you happy?"

"Yes sir."

"Everyone fit?"

"Yes sir."

Seconds later the hopefuls head off in a stampede with necks straining on doko straps and legs propelling them up the first of many harsh inclines.

The Khali Khola waterway runs beneath the gravelly route, which is scattered with locals from the foothills who have stepped out of their huts to cheer encouragement to their fellow countrymen.

As muscle-fatigue kicks in and sweat pours into the competitors' eyes, cries of "shabash" (well done) from the elders serve as further motivation.

The course follows a pre-existing track, but as if by cruel design a set of steep steps marks the rough halfway point and ensures each man has a painful build-up of lactic acid surging through their muscles for the last section of the challenge.

Without ever stopping to catch a breath, the potential recruits persist onwards and upwards until the final downhill 400 metres, which remarkably sees the runners sprint to the finish.

"The last bit is just as tough because they are going at serious pace and it's difficult for their legs to hold up the weight," says Capt Ed Withey (RGR).

"Sometimes someone who has led the whole way can be sent reeling because they fall down."

Of the 450 super-fit candidates who made it to the stage of the Doko Race, 33 failed. Only the elite can succeed here.

» Final Word – page 90



LEDER-GRIS® BOOTCARE



LEDER-GRIS®

WATERPROOF
WAX OIL FOR TOUGH
WET CONDITIONS



LEDER-GLÖS®

HIGH SHINE WAX
FOR PARADE &
BARRACKS USE



STOCKISTS

J BULL Catterick | SILVERMANS London | BASE CAMP Arbroath | BECKETS Norwich
CADET DIRECT E. Sussex | ALTBERG Yorkshire | CAMOFLAGE STORE Devon
DRAGON SUPPLIES Colchester | JJ SUPPLIES Brecon | HENRY DUBORA Aldershot
MILITARY KIT Manchester | TAUNTON LEISURE Exeter, Bristol, Taunton
SOLDIER OF FORTUNE N. Wales | TOP OF THE RANGE Tadcaster
ENFORCE LOGIC Windsor | ATR BASSINGBOURN Royston
ADVENTURE ONE Glasgow | MOD SOUTHWICK PARK Fareham
RAF HALTON Aylesbury | BATTLESBURY BARRACKS Warminster
HAZELBROOK BARRACKS Arborfield | BAY STORES HMNS Clyde
ALSO AVAILABLE IN MOST SHOPS AND PRI'S IN CAMPS

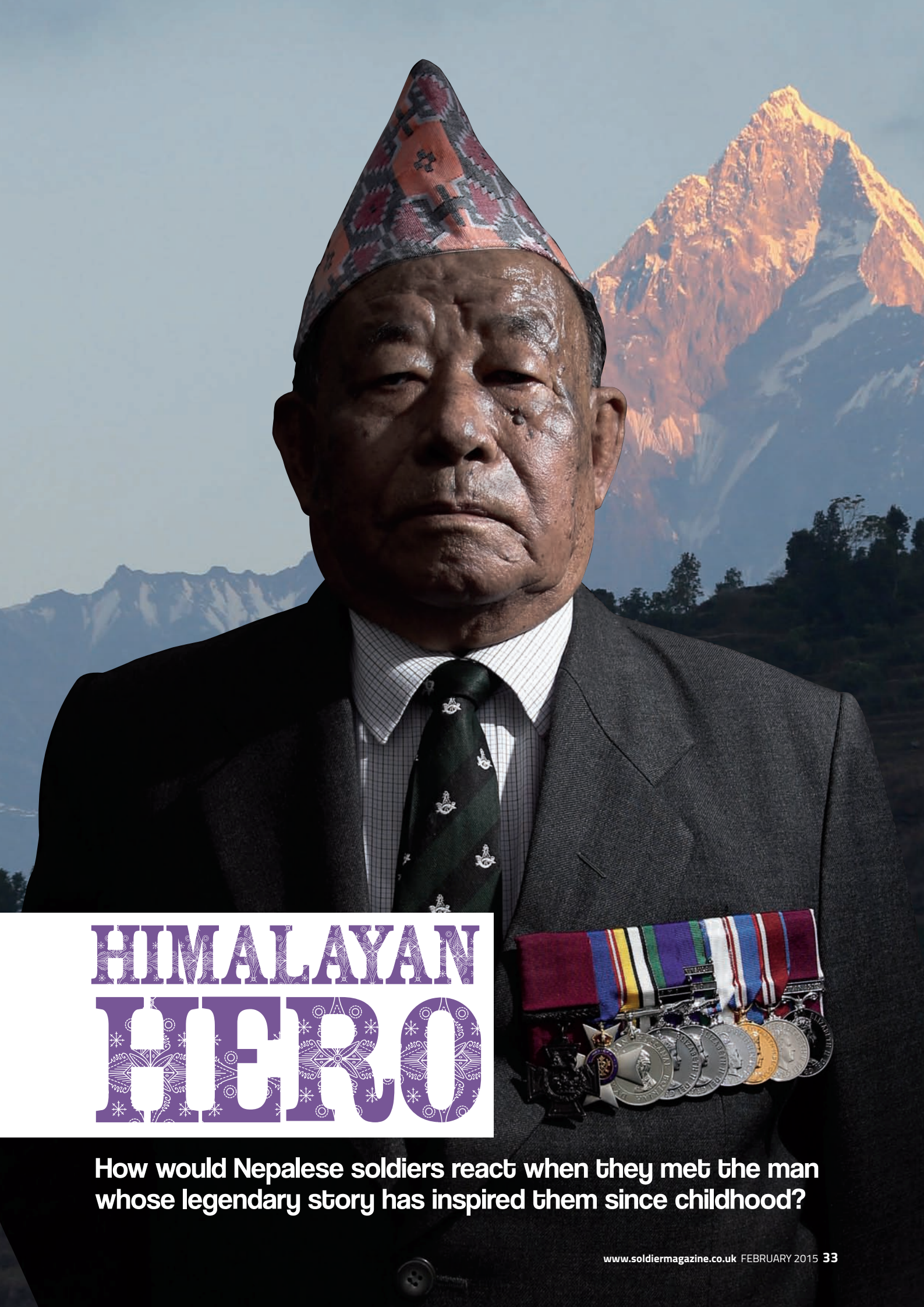


Snugpak

35 YEARS IN THE FIELD.



The latest evolution of the Softie® Jacket
SJ-6 • Comfort at -5°C • Made in Yorkshire



HIMALAYAN HERO

How would Nepalese soldiers react when they met the man whose legendary story has inspired them since childhood?

Report: Joe Clapson
Picture: Graeme Main

THEY say you should never meet your hero. For many people, their celebrated icon has achieved such impressive sporting feats or become so feted in the world of Hollywood film that they are effectively a figure of myth.

As a result, the individual underneath this intimidating persona can prove to be something of a disappointment or, at best, a reminder that you could never hope to accomplish such things yourself.

No such story, though, for members of 2nd Battalion, The Royal Gurkha Rifles when they received a famous visitor they have long put on a pedestal.

Rambahadur Limbu is the only surviving Gurkha winner of the Victoria Cross and he recently travelled back to the UK from his home near the Indian border in Nepal to speak to junior soldiers about his experiences during the Indonesia Confrontation in the 1960s.

Pristine uniforms, wide eyes and a tangible air of excitement awaited the 75-year-old as his car arrived at the gates of Sir John Moore Barracks in Folkestone.

However, rather than leave the troops feeling inadequate about their own achievements, the influence of this brave veteran seemed to inspire the young Servicemen into believing that, with the right approach to their job, they too could one day find themselves wearing the highest of all military decorations.

LCpl Rajesh Chemjong, who has served in the battalion for three years, explained how the retired captain had inspired him and his fellow personnel.

"Before I was even recruited for the Army I was taught about the Gurkhas at school," he told *Soldier*.

"As a child I knew these troops had done remarkable things but Capt Limbu stood out above them because he won a Victoria Cross.

"It was really important to me to have him here.

"I have read so many things about him and how he won his honour and to hear his experiences first-hand was one of the proudest moments for me but also for the regiment."

The story of how the veteran of 10th Princess Mary's Own Gurkha Rifles won his medal during a hillside battle in Borneo in 1965 is certainly enough to stop most personnel in their tracks.

Then a lance corporal, his company had discovered and attacked a strong enemy force near the Indonesian border. It was on top of a sheer-sided

hill that was only accessible via a knife-edge ridge.

Determined to press ahead, the Serviceman led his support group forward and inched himself up until, ten yards from the enemy, he was spotted by an opponent who opened fire with a machine gun, wounding one of his comrades.

Rushing forward to kill his attacker, Limbu gained a strong foothold for his force before once again coming under heavy fire in the trench he was occupying.

Undeterred, he left the comparative safety of the ditch and, with total disregard for the hail of bullets showering down on him, gathered his fire group and led them to a better position.

Two colleagues were seriously wounded in the attack but the soldier proceeded with three incredibly gallant attempts through open fire to rescue them.

He then returned to the fight to give his support in the final stages of the assault – a bitter and bloody hour-long battle that was eventually won by the UK troops.

"Before we joined the Army, this was the person we all looked up to," explained Cpl Pralon Kulung Rai (RGR) after listening to the respected ex-Serviceman describe the events that led to his award.

"To see this man in person actually gave me a rush to the brain; being in the same room as him was amazing.

"It's a much greater experience than meeting a famous singer or actor," he continued.

"This man was willing to sacrifice his life by putting himself in danger for his men and for the Queen.

"He has earned his respect."

After signing prints of a specially-commissioned painting depicting his gallant act for the Gurkha Museum, the modest veteran explained what it meant to him to be a source of pride and inspiration for today's junior personnel.

"I am delighted to meet the current personnel in the regiment," he said in his native tongue.

"Other VC winners, my friends, are dead now so I am pleased to be able to be in the company of the lads and tell them about my story."

Switching from a lively demeanour to a solemn and composed one, he told the assembled troops: "The good reputation we have as Gurkhas is in place because of our forefathers and the young soldiers need to learn from that.

"You must be well disciplined and loyal to the regiment and the country you serve.

"At the same time you must never forget where you have come from – loyalty to your home country is

AGAINST THE ODDS

**Rambahadur
Limbu's
Victoria Cross
citation reads:**

... His outstanding personal bravery, selfless conduct, complete contempt of the enemy and determination to save the lives of the men of his fire group set an incomparable example and inspired all who saw him...

... He displayed heroism, self sacrifice and a devotion to duty and to his men of the very highest order...

... His actions on this day reached a zenith of determined, premeditated valour which must count amongst the most notable on record...



important as well.

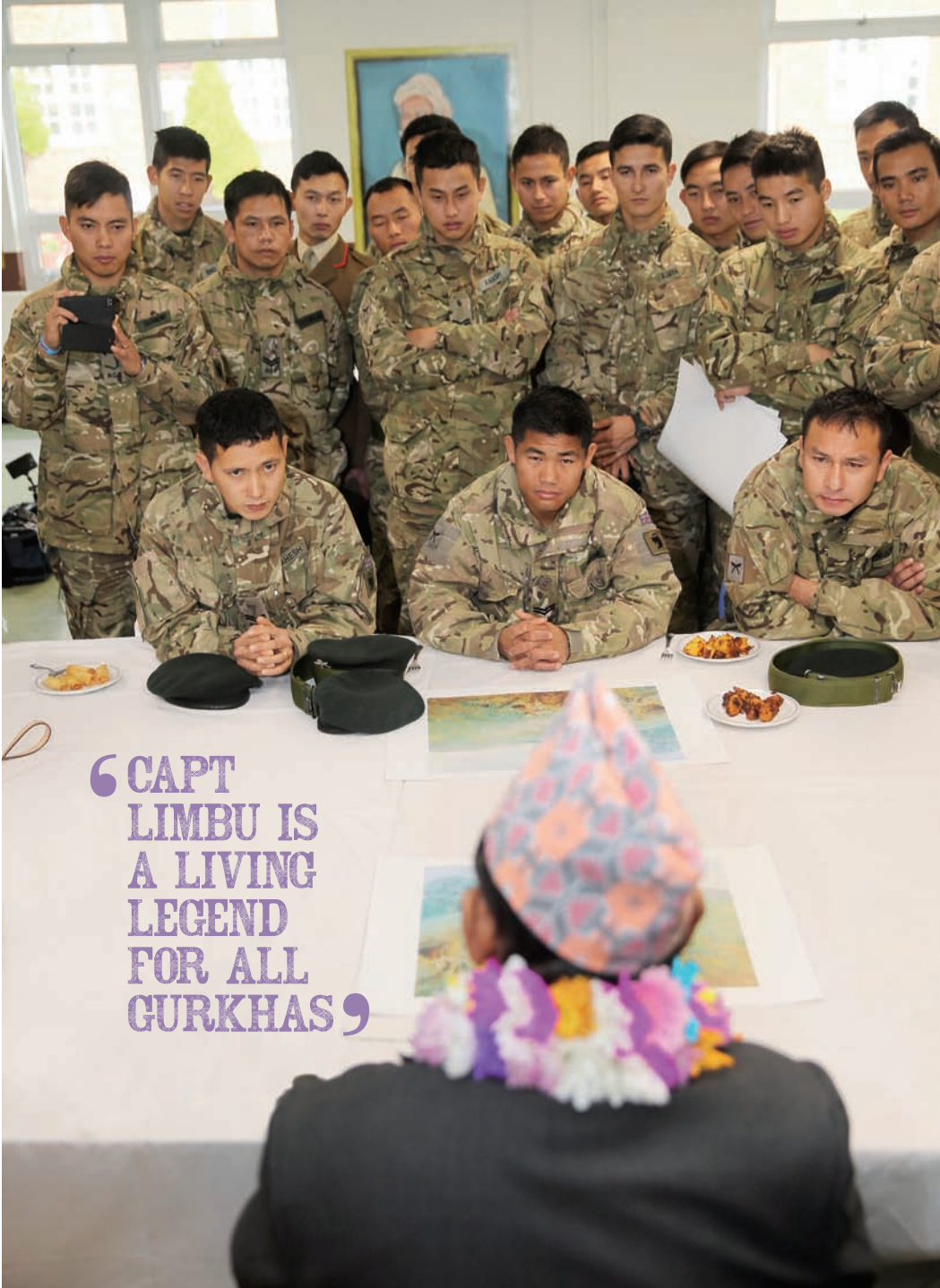
"When you compare the infrastructure of the UK with Nepal's it is not the same so try to bring something back, such as your skills, so that it too can prosper."

As the Brigade of Gurkhas marks its 200th anniversary this year, the words of its most celebrated living veteran will be engrained in these soldiers' minds for a long time to come.

Moreover, the stories he had to tell are likely to remain in their minds next time they find themselves deployed on combat operations.

"What Capt Limbu stood for then still applies now – he is a huge inspiration to us all," added Cpl Bimal Rai (RGR).

"When I arrived at my battalion for training I learnt of his story and found out that he was from near my family's village in Nepal. That made me proud and want to get closer to him.



“CAPT LIMBU IS A LIVING LEGEND FOR ALL GURKHAS”

“The story about how he protected his colleagues by putting his own life in danger has inspired me in my career.

“I have been to southern Afghanistan three times and his actions always motivated me to look after my colleagues.

“Even though the Army of today is very different to the one that fought in Malaya we can still learn from the way our ancestors conducted themselves back then.”

Although former personnel are always held in high esteem by British soldiers, it seems this particular elderly man symbolises something more for the Brigade of Gurkhas.

Finally coming face-to-face with their hero not only seems to have given a huge boost to their morale, but spurred them on to try and emulate such courage and sacrifice next time Britain requires it. ■



Cover star: Capt Limbu made *Soldier's* cover in 1966 after winning the Victoria Cross

MEDAL MOTIVATION

Troops of 2nd Battalion, The Royal Gurkha Rifles reveal what the Victoria Cross winner means to them

“ I have been in the Army for 12 years and I know that Capt Limbu is a living legend for all Gurkhas; he has inspired countless soldiers like me.

Being honest and recognising his own culture was important to him and I will carry that on in my own career. **”**



Cpl Bimal Rai

“ When I was young I used to hear my relatives talking about Gurkhas and the VC winners, and it was learning about men like Capt Limbu that encouraged me to join the British Army.

It was very important for me to meet him because I wanted to see him in real life and he was no different to how I'd imagined.

As he was talking you could see that he was picturing the moment he won his medal – it was still fresh in his mind.

Listening to a real hero speak showed me that being a soldier is about fighting for the person next to you. **”**



Cpl Pralon Rai

“ I had heard so much about all of the Gurkha VC winners but to meet one face-to-face was the best – Capt Limbu is the greatest person in our history who is still alive.

The actions that earned him the award are exactly how a Gurkha should behave and many soldiers who have served in Iraq and Afghanistan have shown similar feats.

Following in the footsteps of people like Capt Limbu makes me very proud. **”**



LCpl Rajesh Chemjong

ON TRACK

Tactical training package gives troops a head start on Warrior

Report: Joe Clapson
Pictures: Steve Dock

THE bone-shuddering rumble of tracked wheels fills the air over Salisbury Plain as a fleet of 24-tonne machines rolls across the horizon in formation.

The menacing sound of the British Army's Warrior vehicles moving onto a target, coupled with the jarring cracks of machine gun fire, is one that most civilians would probably rather not hear.

But *Soldier* is visiting the training area to find out more about the inaugural tactical turret commanders' course, launched to instruct junior NCOs in utilising the platforms to their best advantage on combat operations.

"This is the first time there has been a package to tactically equip our young commanders rather than expecting them to pick it up on the job, which is obviously a good thing," explains Capt Chris Groves (Mercian), organiser of the pilot programme.

"People have been talking about the need for this type of training for years and now we've got it – the first formalised course on Warrior."

The two-week exercise is open to soldiers of the rank of lance corporal and above once their units request a place on it. During its serials, personnel operate a fleet of 16 Warriors to fight against a mock enemy in platoon- and company-level advances.

And although members of 1st Battalion, The Mercian Regiment who make up the first intake already know how to operate the armoured asset, this experience sees them coordinating themselves as a proper fighting fleet while remaining inconspicuous to the enemy.

Such drills are especially beneficial given this unit has recently been given a new tasking.

"Under Army 2020 1 Mercian changed from having a light role to becoming armoured infantry and I am new to Warrior so this training has given me insight into all the necessary tactics," LCpl Daniel Browning comments.

His comrade, LCpl Arthur Bush, agrees.

"Our previous role was the total opposite to this – we'd never even been in these vehicles before – so it is a case of getting used to a new way of doing things and this course is definitely assisting personnel with that adjustment," he adds.

The powerful Warrior, which is loaded with a turret-mounted 30mm Rarden cannon and can destroy light armoured vehicles within a range of 1,500 metres, has a strong reputation among Servicemen and women as a multi-terrain monster, able to sweep into virtually any kind of location and situation.

On the bumpy, wet ground of Salisbury Plain the programme's students practised manoeuvring the powerhouse into different formations to deal with various types of threats.

"There could be 500-600 metres

between the vehicles as they advance forward," explains CSgt Anthony Moore (Yorks) from the Reconnaissance Armoured Training Division.

"The tactic of having wide spaces between platforms allows you to cover a lot more ground and get a wider range of vision across the area."

Troops are told that, following an assault by tanks on a combat operation, Warriors are usually the first asset sent in to clear enemy positions and put boots on the ground.

In other scenarios where wheeled vehicles are left redundant by difficult terrain, the 550bhp diesel platform could also be relied upon – as proved in Afghanistan when the likes of Ridgback and Mastiff were sometimes left stranded by the desert conditions.

To ensure it remains just as versatile on missions of the future, Service personnel are tasked with operating the machine in both gunner and commander roles so that they can get to grips with all the aspects of its capabilities.

"This course needs to be sold to all battalions because everybody working with Warriors must understand how to use them effectively," CSgt Moore continues.

"Out on operations it really shows when people are asked to jump into the commander or gunner's role without having done it before."

With scenarios also mocked up to drill the troops on communicating effectively with other vehicles and launching simultaneous attacks, there can be no doubt about its intensity.

But in the instructors' minds the tough lessons learnt here are vital, and will pay dividends on the battlefields of the future.

"I want senior officers to understand how important and useful this training is," CSgt Moore says.

"The idea is that platoon commanders won't have to be worrying about everything for everyone when it comes to Warrior because soldiers will have the ability to think for themselves."

This new programme might be located in the English countryside but the Warrior vehicle is as effective there as it is in the desert or a complex urban environment.

For that reason, it surely won't be long before the new generation of highly knowledgeable vehicle commanders graduating from this course are tasked with putting its lessons into practice for real. ■

Right, Track to the future: Soldiers practise drills learnt on the two-week package and course commander Capt Chris Groves (Mercian, right) discusses tactics and manoeuvres with CSgt Anthony Moore (Yorks) during a serial



FRONT-LINE FLEXIBILITY

LESSONS from the tactical turret commanders' course will prove to be crucial in combat, according to Maj Christopher Somers, officer commanding A Company, 1st Battalion, The Mercian Regiment.

"It is an invaluable opportunity for junior NCOs to get important experience as armoured infantry," he explained.

"When young soldiers know what they are doing it gives the platoon commander space to breathe and buys time to plan on the battlefield.

"After this training lance corporals and corporals will be able to make their own decisions using their own initiative."

PATHFINDERS

Always looking for top quality volunteers



Could you fill
this place in
Pathfinders?

For more information contact 01206 815980



UNITED KINGDOM ARMED FORCES

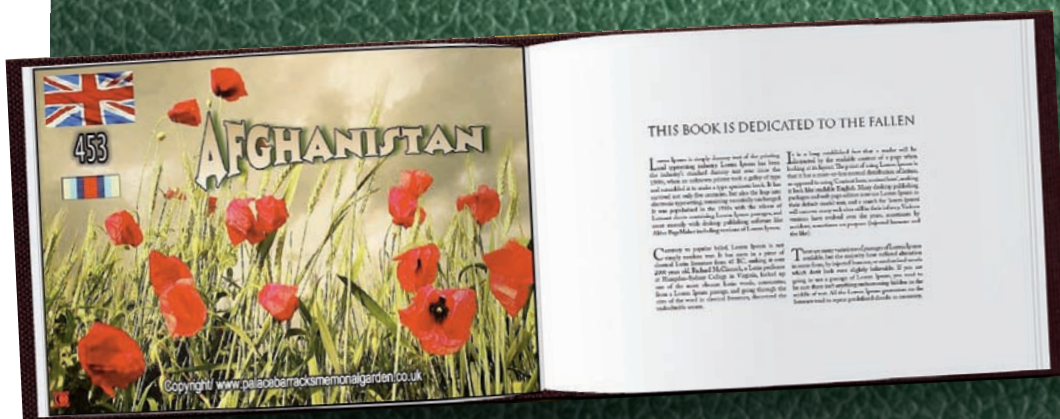
ROLL OF HONOUR

ROLL OF HONOUR AFGHANISTAN

200-page, full colour,
photographic memorial
roll of honour for
Afghanistan 2001-2015.

Don't miss out, order your
book now or buy online.
Memorial book will be
released in March 2015.

After publishing, postage and
packaging costs, a donation
per book sold will be given to
the following charities:
Army Benevolent Fund, Royal
Air Force Benevolent Fund,
Royal Marines Charity Go
Commando, SSAFA (bereaved
families), SSAFA Forces Help
(NI) and Pangeborne Trust
(Falklands).



BUY ONLINE: www.palacebarracksmemorialgarden.co.uk
FURTHER ENQUIRIES: albert.owens@btinternet.com

OVERSEAS AMBITION



Picture: Shutterstock

Why volunteering for a posting abroad could prove to be a canny career move

Report: Steven Muncey
Pictures: Steve Dock

OVERSEAS loan service seems to offer everything soldiers and officers looking to add some pizzazz to their daily routines could want; a chance to broaden horizons, tackle completely different challenges, work with foreign armies and become immersed in interesting – and probably rather exotic – cultures.

But many personnel never even consider applying for one of these positions and it is often for one reason: concern over the supposed damage it could do to their promotion prospects.

"Loan service is still considered by many to be stepping off the mainstream and that

will continue for a time," Brig Ed Brown, commander of the tri-Service British Military Mission in Kuwait, told *Soldier*.

"My boss, for example, sits in London and doesn't see me very often but my equivalents back in the UK are working in brigades or headquarters and are much more visible."

However, that situation could be starting to change thanks to the Army's increasing emphasis on cooperation with foreign defence forces.

"These types of appointments were once considered career-negative," explained Brig Brown. "That's no longer the case but if in some people's minds they still are then that's got to improve."

"What we do here is complex, important and extremely valuable to Britain's

relationships with other countries.

"As our defence engagement work grows there will be an increasing enthusiasm for these posts and we need to stock them with troops of the highest quality so they can deliver results and deal with the challenges these set-ups present."

The senior officer currently has 35 British military personnel under his wing, 23 of them drawn from the Army, and is looking to expand his team in the near future.

It's one of the largest loan service commitments in the Middle East, outstripped only by the 39 officers and soldiers attached to Oman's armed forces.

The team in Kuwait is employed to help the nation's military in three specific areas.

They help to run the Joint Command »



and Staff College, which is modelled on the Defence Academy at Shrivenham, by training senior officers who come mainly from Kuwait and other Gulf states plus a handful of nations such as Canada, South Korea, Pakistan and Australia.

They are also employed at Kuwait's Land Forces Institute, based near the country's second city, Jahra, advising on infantry training, engineering and counter-insurgency tactics.

The third strand of their work is to staff, develop and supervise English language classes for the 200 or so home-grown personnel who attend military training courses in Britain every year.

However, the country's ministry of defence also requires UK soldiers to help out in other areas as and when they are needed.

"There's a terrific appetite for the British way of doing things here, as there is in many Arabic countries," commented Brig Brown.

"Our experienced troops are highly valued by the Kuwaitis."

Recently, a group of officers and senior NCOs who had originally been appointed to advise at the Land Forces Institute were transferred to the country's Sandhurst equivalent, the Ali Al Sabah Military College, to boost British involvement in the training and development of its cadets.

At the behest of the facility's commander they took complete charge of one platoon for a few weeks to run comparison tests against those who were under the command of the Kuwaiti tutors.

"The challenge for us was to make the students better than they were before," explained one of the instructors, WO2 Carl Camlin (Rifles).

"The standard of recruit here is different to ours back home so we observed their training methods and made some recommendations.

"For example, I suggested they improve the pupil/tutor ratio and that they should create a more competitive environment between the platoons to raise standards and breed a strong team ethic; stuff that's tried and tested in the UK."

This tasking, undertaken at short notice, is an example of the degree of flexibility that's required of personnel on overseas loan service.

"There's no strict programme here and the great thing is that every morning you wake up and don't really know what the day will hold," explained Brig Brown.

"It's tremendous fun but at the same time challenging and our people have to use their initiative every day.

"Very often we're dealing with issues which, if we get it wrong, aren't just a problem for us but can become one for the embassy too.

"There's potential for them to escalate so you need to have your wits about you."

Altogether, there are more than 170 British soldiers on loan service around the world in locations as diverse as South Africa, Brunei, Czech Republic, Jordan, Nigeria and Saudi Arabia, but the one constant among them all is the need to be adaptable.

"These outfits have to evolve to meet the requirements of the host nation, so being flexible is absolutely key," said Maj Rupert Lewis (RHG/D), a member of the MoD's loan service department in London.

"The Kuwait team is a pretty typical combination of advisers and mentors, some now operating at very senior levels within the country's military structure and others conducting low-level tactical training.

"It's a pattern that's repeated around the globe and there's a huge mixture of abilities and trades called for overall – we even have a detachment of dentists within Brunei's sizeable loan service set-up."

With defence engagement now high on the Army's agenda, Maj Lewis believes many more soldiers – even those with high ambitions for promotion – are seriously considering a spell overseas.

"These teams have become a key element of the Armed Forces, offering personnel the opportunity to serve abroad in more than 15 countries," he said.

"Not only that, the roles are interesting and demanding, are located in very different environments but at the same time provide Service families with some stability." ■



View from Kuwait:

‘It’s a big commitment’

Troops in the Middle East reveal their opinions on overseas loan service...

W02 Carl Camlin (Rifles)

If you spend too long on one of these postings then your peers could climb over you because they are back in the UK in higher profile jobs.

If I stay for more than two years it's a risk but if I do just that term and then filter back into the regiment I have plenty of time to make up for it.

When you get on the plane you must fully understand the implications on your career, and if you don't you're a mug. Make sure you do your research.

I discussed the effect this posting would have on my career progression with my commanding officer before I applied.



Lt Col Ian Hunter (R Signals)

I'd already completed two spells in Saudi Arabia before coming here so Kuwait didn't hold many surprises for me.

It's horses for courses and maybe it's not for some people – those with very young kids perhaps – but there are financial perks and the weather is great.

I'm really happy living in the Middle East and I think our work does a lot for Britain's standing in this region.

W02 Gary Collins (R Signals)

There are lots of benefits for family life here. My kids are attending a private school and they have had to adjust to that but it's been good for them to experience a new culture.

After all, how many young children can say they've spent two years living in the Middle East and learnt Arabic?

It's a great lifestyle and we have access to a beach club.

We also have good accommodation. All the warrant officers live in the same complex and there's a real community feel.

If you do more than one stint in a role like this I believe you'll be marked down, albeit unfairly, as someone who wants an easy life.

But the truth is anything but. These roles provide challenges of their own.



CLIMBING HIGH

A dramatic low-angle shot of a steep, layered rock face. The rock is composed of large, reddish-brown and greyish-brown blocks, showing significant fracturing and texture. A white climbing rope runs diagonally down the right side of the frame. The sky is visible in the upper right, filled with white clouds against a blue background. Some sparse vegetation is visible on the right edge of the rock face.

FLEDGLING CENTRE BREATHES FRESH LIFE
INTO ADVENTUROUS TRAINING IN THE UK



Report: Joe Clapson
Pictures: Graeme Main

A NEW dawn has begun in the world of outdoor pursuits north of Hadrian's Wall. With state-of-the-art kit and a breathtaking Highland setting, the Adventurous Training Centre Scotland in Inverness will no doubt be shooting to the top of many soldiers' travel wish lists in 2015.

The hub might have only been up and running for ten months but its nine-day courses in mountaineering, rock climbing, kayaking, canoeing and mountain biking are already making a big impact and are set to put the country on the map for the Service's many adrenalin junkies.

With the aim of producing a fresh generation of leaders who are not afraid to take risks, the big advantage of attending a course in this part of the world is that few places are off-limits.

Scotland has a longstanding tradition of access to the open countryside and, as such, everyone has a right to roam free across its rivers and mountains.

In response, adventures here put a focus on getting troops to oversee their own excursions.



THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Members of the Coldstream Guards give their verdict on a recent rock climbing course they attended at the newly-created Adventurous Training Centre Scotland:



LCpl Oliver Thompson

“It was the first time I’d attempted rock climbing and it was tough.

I’m not used to it so I had some fear but I was able to trust that my mate would hold the rope.

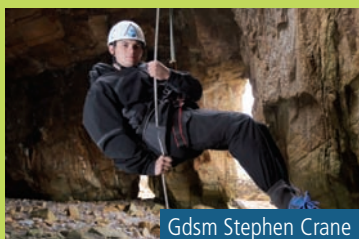
I’ve been in the Army for four years and AT is absolutely brilliant – it’s definitely not R and R, though, because we’re being worked hard and taken right out of our comfort zone.”



Gdsm David Cramman

“The specific skills of rock climbing may not be needed as a soldier but the leadership and discipline that are used certainly are.

Techniques in self-control and being mindful of the terrain are also vital for our jobs and completely transferable.”



Gdsm Stephen Crane

“Being in the Army you don’t often see the type of landscapes you get in the Highlands so it’s brilliant to come up here – I just love the outdoors.

On AT you build up your confidence and get to work with colleagues, which means relationships get stronger.

Having to trust your mate with your life, like when he’s taking the strain on the rope, is something very powerful.”

“
FOR A REAL
ADVENTURE YOU
COULD PACK LIGHT
AND BIKE ACROSS
THE MOUNTAINS
”





"Personal growth in the legendary Highlands is what we want to give people," explained Maj Rab Black (RAPTC), officer commanding ATC Scotland.

"We are trying to empower soldiers to plan their own journey through expert guidance. Students are given knowledge and skills before being offered free rein to organise a challenging excursion.

"For example, for a real adventure you could pack light and bike right across the mountains."

The creation of the centre at Cameron Barracks followed a Service directive in March 2013 that one third of the troops in every unit should participate in a minimum of five days' adventurous training each year.

And activities like cycling to the west coast, rock climbing in Fort William and kayaking down the River Ness are seen as invaluable for developing leadership, teamwork, physical fitness and courage in military visitors to the region.

"At this new facility it's not about tying a knot or getting the right paddle stroke – it's more about decision-making, values and standards, and team cohesion," continued Maj Black.

"We've got something special here and it's a place where I really think troops will be developed.

"The key thing is that it's less about the activity itself and more about the soldier and his or her personal improvement."

Every package delivered at Inverness is foundation-level, with the aim being to encourage future instructors to pass their experiences on rather than becoming experts in a particular field.

Martyn Stott, an adventurous training development adviser at the centre, was drafted in to increase the "emotional control" in those who visit – a skill that can then be applied in any setting, operational or non-operational.

The civilian has developed the mantra of "get a grip" (see panel on right) to help soldiers conquer their fears in all sorts of situations.

The basic ethos of the motto is to make a plan, stay calm, visualise your success and remain positive.

"We don't approach things in a wishy-washy style and as soon as troops realise that these process skills can be related to soldiering they are on-board," commented Mr Stott.

"It's not about sitting in a room and talking about feelings, it's all very relevant to the sharp end.

"Whether you are stomping up a hill, hanging off a crag or in a firefight on combat operations, it works."

Given the varied deployments and training exercises facing soldiers in 2015, the coping methods and courage developed on a short but energetic trip to Inverness could prove infinitely useful.

The kind of activity they use to develop such skills is purely a matter of choice. ■



WE'VE GOT
SOMETHING
SPECIAL HERE

Maj Rab Black



INNOVATION IN INVERNESS

Found yourself in a tight spot up a mountain or on the water? ATC Scotland's "get a grip" mantra may offer a solution...

GOAL SETTING

Create a proactive plan about how to deal with the challenge you face.

RELAXATION

Focus on something useful, such as slowing your breathing, in order to calm yourself physically and psychologically.

IMAGERY

Visualise conquering a situation – it allows you to prepare to take it on.

POSITIVE SELF-TALK

Fill your brain with positive rather than negative thoughts.



VETS

Report: Sarah Goldthorpe
Pictures: Graeme Main

WHEN British taxpayers were forced to bail out some of the country's banks to the tune of billions of pounds in 2008, the wealthy employees populating the industry could not have been plunged into worse regard.

Against a backdrop of redundancies, public sector cuts and financial gloom, a City culture of greed, bad behaviour and undeserved bonuses was exposed.

After attempting to manipulate the Libor rate between 2005 and 2009, Barclays certainly had its part to play in the crisis.

The bank was fined £290 million for distorting the data used to set interest rates on transactions, meaning that homeowners and businesses could have paid over the odds for loans.

So how would the organisation recover its reputation among customers and bring some much-needed integrity back to its business?

Part of the answer, it seemed, lay with the troops returning from Afghanistan.

In 2010 – as the UK started to sit up and take notice of the various health and welfare difficulties faced by ex-soldiers after combat operations –

“
**People
are
curious
about
what I do**
”



Barclays launched its Armed Forces Transition Employment and Resettlement (AFTER) programme.

The idea was to get more former military personnel onto the bank's office floor while benefiting from the values and considerable leadership skills instilled in them.

Respect, integrity, service, excellence and stewardship are words that have become central to the working ethic at Barclays since the banking crisis – ones that have a clear overlap with the British Army's own principles.

And following a 13-year war, there was certainly no shortage of potential candidates through which to learn more about such standards.

But how these individuals would move across from a world of self-sacrifice and courage to one revolving solely around money was anyone's guess.

Never to be daunted by a challenge, though, the 68 ex-soldiers who have since found full-time work with the bank via the scheme are playing a significant role in changing its culture.

James Cumming (pictured left), an ex-captain in The Royal Regiment of Scotland, is one of them. He works as a project manager, having previously served in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

Despite admitting that his opinion of banks was “fairly standard with the general public” at the time he took up the position, the ex-Serviceman relocated from Edinburgh to London, where he has since carved out an interesting and rewarding



in the CITY

career in a very different working environment.

"The opportunity came along and I thought I would be a fool not to take it," said the 33-year-old, who was medically discharged after being injured.

"The city can be very lonely and I miss the fresh air and being outside, but I am enjoying it."

Having competed as a cyclist at the Invictus Games last year, Cumming soon found a way to balance his love of the great outdoors with his life as a city slicker.

Previous applications to other banks had been rejected during online CV screening because of his perceived lack of experience. But after a nine-month placement with Barclays through the AFTER programme, he went full-time.

"It is a very interesting place to work at the moment as banking is going through a number of changes," the former Serviceman continued.

"A lot of people are curious about what I do, and have said that they didn't see me as a banker. And many colleagues here ask about what life is like serving on operations.

"I have had some very interesting discussions with civilian colleagues about our different approaches to leadership.

"Trying to change the culture of banking and instil some new values in people is rewarding."

But as Cumming soon discovered, not all of the military ethos can be mirrored in the world of money-making.

"The idea of camaraderie and watching each other's backs cannot be replicated, and my message to the Forces community is not to be naive about that fact," he added.

"You can't approach this sort of working environment with the same degree of loyalty as you would in service; it is not recognised and doesn't get rewarded. »

COMBAT TO CANARY WHARF...

The world of civilian work can seem like an alien place for ex-soldiers. Like entering a forest for the first time, it can be daunting and lacking in clear paths.

Here are some tips from the Barclays Army veterans on how to navigate the job-hunting jungle:

1 Do lots of networking with employers. It is one of the best ways to learn about what roles are available and can help to open doors.

2 Complete short work placements. Even a little industry experience reflects well and will help you to decide exactly what you want to do. Start learning corporate language and drop the military acronyms.

3 Use what you learnt on work experience to match your military skills with civilian job requirements and reflect this on your CV and at interviews.

4 Remember that "time spent in reconnaissance is seldom wasted". The harder you work at finding a job, the better your chances of finding a role that suits you.



» "But I find it interesting that Barclays is trying to bring in more individuals who come with a very strong value set.

"People think you have to be good at maths to work in the financial sector, but there are a great deal of roles here that don't revolve around that.

"The Army is about supporting the Infantry to get into the right position and banking is about helping to make money whether you work on the trade floor, in a branch or in security or leadership."

As well as creating job opportunities, the Barclays initiative has seen hundreds of work placements, CV writing workshops and interview lessons held for wounded personnel. In total, some 2,861 veterans have been assisted by the scheme since it launched in 2010.

Stuart Tootal (pictured right), who commanded 3rd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment during its ferocious encounters in Helmand province back in 2006, heads up the programme.

He became Barclays' global head of security in 2008 and so knows first-hand the odd experience troops face when they move into the world of office work.

"The military is very structured and is set up in such a way that when you come into the civilian world it can seem very strange," the former officer admitted.

"When an Army recruit goes into the jungle for the first time they get a jungle warfare instructor. But outside of the military you don't get that kind of support. The AFTER programme fills those gaps."

Difficulties facing those entering civvy street are the same for personnel of any rank.

"When you join the military you do so with a cohort of your peers and you get very clear instructions," Tootal continued. "But you usually join a firm alone and those folk might not have an understanding of where you're coming from.

"Whether you are an officer or a very junior soldier, everyone needs a degree of encouragement.

"I bet the vast majority of those working here never considered a career with Barclays."

Thanks to the scheme, Forces personnel looking to work with the bank can access extra support and civilians across the organisation are encouraged to attend military network meetings to learn more about their colleagues' battlefield experiences.

Unsurprisingly, Barclays is not the only financial institution to have realised the benefits of employing former Servicemen and women.

Nationwide is another company that, as well as signing the Corporate Covenant to offer more support to military customers, works with the Career Transition Partnership to highlight the opportunities available to ex-soldiers.

Nevertheless, those who remain angry about the behaviour of British banks in recent years may maintain that such schemes are simply PR stunts.

"Does this programme enhance Barclays' reputation? Yes," Tootal conceded.

"But we set it up because it was the right thing to do given what has happened with the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan in recent times.

"It brings great talent into the bank and delivers great business benefits too.

"The military is regarded very highly but even so, most commercial organisations do not understand what ex-soldiers can bring."

Thanks to schemes like the AFTER programme at Barclays, however, it seems that the civilian world is slowly starting to learn.

And at a time when there is no such thing as a career for life, the financial industry seems as good a place as any for a Service leaver to start.

If that job move helps to bring some of the British Army's fine values and standards to a sector badly in need of an image change, all the better. ■



LEADERSHIP LESSONS

Former Army officer Stuart Tootal offers his five top tips for making your military leadership skills work in a civilian role:

- 1** Have a vision of what you want your team to achieve and make sure they are clear on it and buy into it.
- 2** Empower your colleagues to fulfil your intent – mission command can work in the commercial world.
- 3** Know your people and look after them.
- 4** Lead by example.
- 5** Have the moral courage to do the right thing.



● Read about Stuart Tootal's experiences in Afghanistan in *Danger Close*



GRIFFIN
Military & Diplomatic

UK PHONE
01273 574000
GERMAN FREEPHONE 08001 800 560



- Satellite Navigation
- 18" Alloy Wheels
- RenaultSport Bodykit
- Privacy Glass
- Cup Chassis Pack
- R-Link Pack
- Leather Pack
- **FREE METALLIC PAINT**
- Limited Slip Diff
- Heated Front Seats

Megane RenaultSport 265 R-Link

£16,495

TAX FREE ON THE ROAD

BUYBACK £18,000



- 18" Alloys Wheels
- Panoramic Glass Roof
- Reversing Camera
- Satellite Navigation
- Colour Heads Up Display
- Rear Privacy Glass
- Climate Control
- **FREE METALLIC PAINT**
- Auto Lights & Wipers

Peugeot 5008 HDi Allure 7 seat

£14,495

TAX FREE ON THE ROAD

BUYBACK £15,500



- Front & Rear Skid Plates
- Side Running Bars
- Satellite Navigation
- Full Leather
- Dark Tinted Glass
- Heated Front & Rear Seats
- 18" Alloy Wheels
- Switchable Xenons
- Keyless Entry & Start
- **FREE METALLIC PAINT**

ix35 1.7CRDi 2WD Premium Plus

£15,795

TAX FREE ON THE ROAD

BUYBACK £16,000



- eMyWay Satellite Navigation
- 17" 'Boa' Alloy Wheels
- Reversing Camera
- Keyless Entry & Go
- 2 Zone Climate Control
- Rear Parking Sensors
- 12" HD Display
- DAB Radio & CD
- Cornering Front Fogs
- **FREE METALLIC PAINT**

Grand C4 Picasso E-HDi Exclusive

£14,995

TAX FREE ON THE ROAD

BUYBACK £15,500



- 18" Alloy Wheels
- Part Leather Interior
- vRS Bodykit
- LED Driving Lamps
- Switchable Xenons
- vRS Sport Suspension
- Climate Control
- DAB Radio & Bluetooth
- 2.0TDi 184ps Engine
- In White For Feb & March Reg.

Octavia 2.0TDi vRS 184ps Hatch

£15,995

TAX FREE ON THE ROAD

BUYBACK £17,000

NO HIDDEN 'SALES ADMIN FEES' NO BROKEN PROMISES, & NO MIDDLEMEN!
JUST CONSISTENTLY THE BEST DEALS IN BFG YEAR AFTER YEAR SINCE 2002

WWW.GRIFFINTAXFREE.COM

Save up to **50%**
off your brand new car

Offers available
across
all makes
& models



**MOTOR
SOURCE
MILITARY**

CALL NOW 0845 388 0438
or visit motorsourcegroup.com

Are you a landlord?

If you want a guaranteed rental income, without all the stresses normally involved in letting out a property we have the letting service for you:

- * You get paid even if the property is empty
- * You get paid even if the rent is late or isn't paid at all
- * No fees or commissions
- * We deal with the tenants
- * A guaranteed contract start date
- * Regular property inspections and maintenance management

Northwood has over 80 high street offices nationally providing over 15,000 landlords guaranteed rent each and every month.

Get in touch to find out how
Guaranteed Rent can help you
go to www.northwooduk.com

LET with
Guaranteed Rent

 northwood

 **northwood**
Proper**Property**People

MISSION COMPLETE

Prize donors help *Soldier* readers to start 2015 in style



Snapped:
Winners react to their *Soldier* success with a quick selfie

MEMORIES of the festive period may have been reduced to the scars on our bank statements, but a handful of *Soldier* readers continue to enjoy the season of goodwill.

Operation Reindeer's Hoof, as our annual Christmas giveaway used to be called, may be no more but efforts to bring some December cheer to our readers continued with a bumper giveaway in 2014.

After entering the competition at the end of last year, winners have now been notified and are enjoying a selection of prizes worth almost £5,000.

Among the gifts distributed were a week's stay at a French ski resort, a three-day luxury mountain getaway and a glitzy weekend for two people in London.

Jewellery, the latest outdoor kit and footwear were also up for grabs.

If you know a company that is interested in donating a prize towards next year's competition – or any other *Soldier* promotion – contact Editor Sarah Goldthorpe via editor@soldiermagazine.co.uk

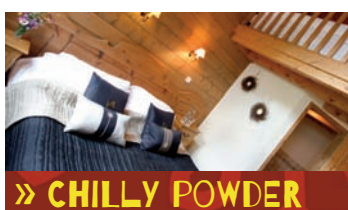
In the meantime, our sincere thanks to the following organisations for their generous donations to the 2014 giveaway, which allowed us to spread some cheer to Service personnel, their families and friends across the world:



» SNOW NATION

Catered ski holidays in La Rosiere, south-eastern France.

www.snownation.co.uk



» CHILLY POWDER

Luxury catered ski chalet provider.

www.chillypowder.com



» NEWQUAY ACTIVITY CENTRE

Coast-based activities, including adventurous training packages, in and around Newquay.

www.newquayactivitycentre.co.uk and www.carnmarth.com



» HEINNIE HAYNES

Hard-wearing pocket tools, knives and accessories.

www.heinnie.com



» D3O

Smart orange shock-absorbing material.

www.d3o.com



» MAGNUM

High-performance footwear.

www.magnumboots.com/uk



» POWER TRAVELLER

Portable power and solar charges for electronic devices.

www.powertraveller.com



» WARREN JAMES

High street jeweller.

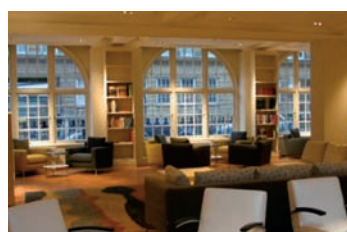
www.warrenjames.co.uk



» SNUGPAK

British outdoor clothing and kit manufacturer.

www.snugpak.com

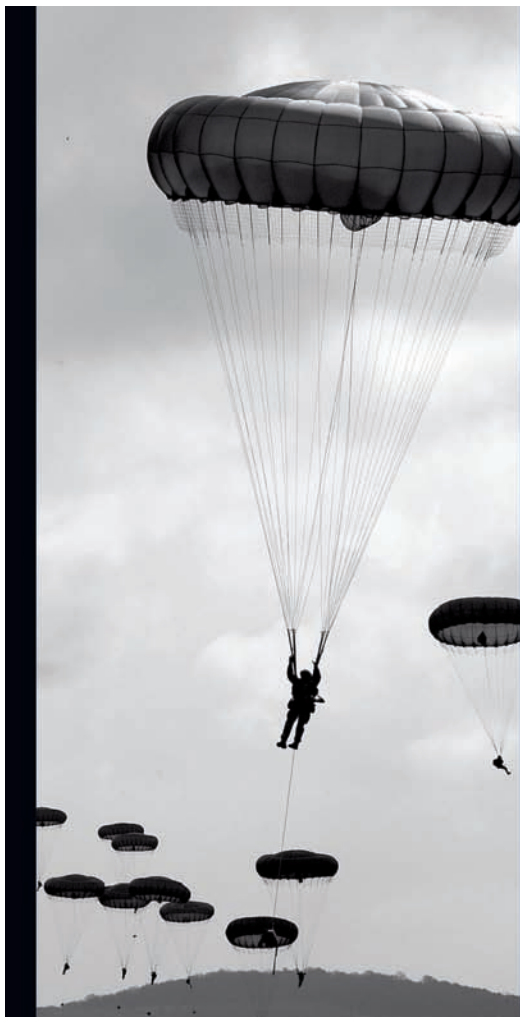


» VICTORY SERVICES CLUB

Military membership club and accommodation in London.

www.vsc.co.uk

» TURN TO PAGE 59 FOR A LIST OF THE COMPETITION WINNERS.



TAKE A LOOK AT THE VIEW FROM THE TOP.

Reach new heights with Chartered Manager status.

The Chartered Management Institute (CMI) has extensive experience in providing accreditation for the Armed Forces training and development programmes, and has long been the first choice for many military personnel.

Chartered Manager (CMgr) status, awarded only by CMI is the highest accolade in the management profession. The award takes into account the vast range of skills and experience gained by those in the Armed Forces and validates it against benchmarks recognised by those working and recruiting in the civilian sector.

With Chartered Manager, not only are you ensuring your skills and experience match those in the civilian sector. But you will also be joining an exclusive group of professionals who add value to their organisations, maintain best practice in the workplace and get results.

Find out today about the routes to Chartered Manager and developing your career prospects. Speak to our dedicated Chartered Manager team on 01536 207429 or visit our website www.managers.org.uk/cmgr.



HOTEL LA ROZ,
LA ROSIERE 1850, FRANCE



www.snownation.co.uk

SNOWSPORTS ADVENTURE TRAINING FACILITY FOR THE BRITISH MILITARY

FULL BOARD

TRAVEL ARRANGED

EXCLUSIVE USE 40 - 70

RUN BY EX BRITISH MILITARY

HIGH ALTITUDE & SNOW SURE

DISCOUNTED LIFT PASS & SKI HIRE

BRITISH MILITARY WARM WELCOME GUARANTEED

CONTACT mike@snownation.co.uk 0845 230 1754



SOLDIER

Subscription rates

United Kingdom

12 Issues£23

24 Issues£40

Overseas

12 Issues£47

British Forces Post Office

12 Issues£13.80



Enjoy 12 issues
for only

£23

+ receive a
free binder and
choice of gift

Simply complete and post the form below or

☎ 01252 787107

🖱 subs@soldiermagazine.co.uk

Your details

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____ Telephone _____

Start my subscription with the _____ issue

I would like to subscribe for ☐ One year ☐ Two years

My chosen free gift is a: pocket torch ☐ calculator ☐

business card holder ☐ manicure set ☐

Return to: **SOLDIER**, Ordnance Barracks, Government Road,
Aldershot, Hampshire, GU11 2DU

www.soldiermagazine.co.uk

TALKBACK

YOUR letters provide an insight into the issues at the top of soldiers' agendas... but please be brief. Emails (mail@soldiermagazine.co.uk) must include your name and location (although we won't publish them if you ask us not to). We reserve the right to accept or reject letters, and to edit for length, clarity or style. Before you write to us with a problem, you should first have tried to get an answer via your own chain of command.



“IT LOOKS AS IF I’LL HAVE TO PAY FOR NEW ONES MYSELF”

‘Are we being hoodwinked?’

● CAN you tell me why the multi-terrain pattern waterproof jacket doesn’t have a hood?
It is designed to be worn with a helmet on operations but we spend most of our time in the UK.

So does that mean our only option when it rains is to wear this garment with a helmet on?

If the camouflage pattern itself is designed to be multi-purpose then why can’t the jacket’s actual design be as versatile and function well in various situations?

It would seem lessons from the past and, in particular, what was good about the old Combat 95 clothing system have been forgotten. – **Cpl Tristan Munro, REME.**

Lt Col Simon Blake, SO1 Availability Management, Logistical Support, responds: Your observations on the current lightweight waterproof jacket and, in particular, the lack of a hood are understood.

However, the garment was brought into service originally as an urgent operational requirement for Operation Herrick.

It has since been rolled out as standard issue.

The item was designed for the most exacting dismounted close-quarter combat role, where a hood was deemed inappropriate because it restricts hearing and situational awareness.

A waterproof cold wet weather hat, subject to final funding approval, is scheduled to become standard issue for field wear.

In addition, the use of the jacket and its overall design will be the subject of further research and development work.

Putting the boot in

I AM sure I’m not the first, and nor will I be the last, to complain about the lack of issued boots.

I am still waiting for a pair ordered in August 2014. I was told they would arrive by November.

I simply can’t see why it is so hard for these relatively low-tech items to be supplied to us.

To make matters worse, I have just received instructions for a winter course I wish to attend and it requires me to have two suitable pairs of issued footwear.

However, I am still wearing hot climate theatre boots that are virtually worn out.

It looks as if I will have to pay for new ones myself if I’m going to be able to attend the course. – **Name and address supplied.**

Lt Col Simon Blake, SO1 Availability Management, Logistical Support, replies: I understand your frustration and there is no denying the introduction of the brown combat boots since 2012 has not been without its challenges.

The sheer weight of demand in the earlier months put undue pressure on supply, with a disproportionate number of people ordering the Altberg style.

Quartermasters, with the assistance of their logistic support staff, have the ability to seek out stock of both black and brown combat boots – the former still being an acceptable form of footwear.

Furthermore, they will soon be told to review all brown combat boot demand and not to be constrained by specific makes such as Altberg and Haix.

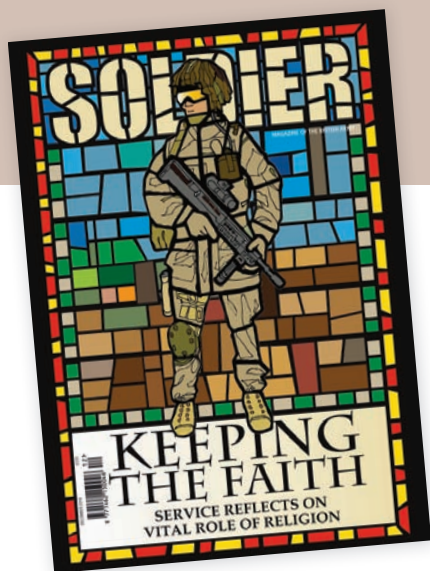
As a last resort – where a local purchase of a boot is the only option – this should only be done in conjunction with the unit quartermaster in accordance with JSP 886.

No soldier should ever be expected to buy and self-fund entitled footwear and uniform.



Picture: Graeme Main

Were we living on a prayer?



Our look at the role of religion in the Army in the December 2014 issue caused quite a stir...

'INCLUSIVITY IS KEY'

I WAS so pleased to read your debate about the dominance of the Christian faith in spiritual events in the Army, and agree wholeheartedly with Lt Col Laurence Quinn's concerns.

If we believe what we preach – that the Service welcomes people from all backgrounds – then we have to start making sure our core spiritual events are inclusive for people of all religions and none, and not directed to any one faith.

If the chaplain general's view is correct – that he hears no evidence that soldiers' faith needs are any less – then just think how much more successful he could be if faith-focused occasions such as Remembrance Day were constructed to allow all of our personnel to feel involved, not just the Christians. – **Maj Michael Collie, Mercian.**

No room for debate

I READ the December issue of *Soldier* with incredulity and don't think I have seen such unbalanced reporting for a long time.

The line on the front cover set the pace – "Service reflects on the vital role of religion".

So no room for debate there.

You have missed out all those people who have beliefs but don't follow a religion.

Why not lead with, "Service reflects on the vital role of belief"?

Also, you have not looked very hard for any views that counter the religious perspective.

You found only one – Lt Col Quinn – and even then he was someone who admitted to praying!

Next time, I suggest you find proper atheists to provide an alternative view.

The Army has many of them among its ranks, as well as rationalists, secularists and humanists.

The article reached a low for me when the Bible was quoted as an authority for doing good by Cpl Afriyie Frank (RE).

I suggest he reads 1 Timothy 2:12: "I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over a man", or Psalm 137:9: "Happy shall they be who take your little ones and dash them against the rocks".

It might give him a new perspective on his faith. – **Maj Tarquin Shipley, R Signals.**

Humanists ignored

YOUR lack of balance in the recent article on religion is concerning.

It struck me as a thinly disguised marketing exercise on behalf of the chaplains to justify the continued privilege they have over those, including a substantial proportion of serving soldiers, who have no faith.

The cover of the magazine even included a line referring to the "vital" role of religion.

Could you not have referred to the crucial role of humanists and atheists too, or do we not have such a vital role in your opinion?

The graphics and imagery used within the main article were all, without exception, supportive of Christian beliefs.

You took time to interview a number of Army padres for the feature.

I'm sure they are all honourable in their views, but why did you not ask for an interview with a representative of the UK Armed Forces Humanist Association as well?

Your own editorial referred to "trusted padres".

But why did you not acknowledge in your editorial that secularists could also be on hand to help and maintain the morale of personnel?

The answer to which is, of course, that chaplains are fighting tooth and nail to prevent humanists from being appointed to serve our soldiers in that way. – **Michael Kinney, Hartlip, Kent.**



“YOU HAVE MISSED OUT ALL THOSE PEOPLE WHO HAVE BELIEFS BUT DON'T FOLLOW A RELIGION”



GOT A GRIPE?

✉ mail@soldiermagazine.co.uk

🐦 @soldiermagazine

Jewish perspective

■ AS chairman of the Jewish Committee for the Armed Forces, I would like to add the voice of Jewish personnel to the debate on religion.

We have had more than 80 commissioned Jewish chaplains since 1892 and the important role played by them cannot be overstated.

Their presence and availability has been welcomed in war and peace by troops of all shades of Judaism.

We have just returned to uniformed chaplaincy after a gap of some 20 years and the difference has proved to be noticeably positive.

Our tri-Service chaplain, Padre (Rabbi) Reuben Livingstone, has also found that he is approached by personnel of all faiths.

The fact that his cap and collar badges depict a star rather than a cross is not a barrier to the soldier who wants to unburden his problems on a friendly and independent party.

A Christian-based ethos for our chaplaincy does not present members of the Jewish faith with any problems whatsoever as we recognise this as having Judeo-Christian roots in any case.

Similarly, I believe members of other non-Christian faiths wouldn't have a problem with this either as they too are represented within chaplaincy, albeit by civilian chaplains at the moment. — **Martin Newman, Manchester.**



Picture: Sgt Alison Baskerville, RLC

“REPLACING PADRES WITH MORAL COUNSELLORS WOULD BE MISGUIDED”

Moral guidance required

■ THE debate about the possible future need and role of padres in the Armed Forces will be long and difficult and there are no straightforward answers.

The Dalai Lama once wrote, "I am a man of religion but religion alone cannot answer all of our problems" but replacing padres with moral counsellors, as Lt Col Quinn suggested in your article, would be misguided in my opinion.

They would have to tread a very difficult path full of potential ethical hurdles.

Perhaps, regardless of any decision to remove or keep padres, the Army should formalise its own ethical values and beliefs to inform and guide personnel rather than even consider having "morality minders". — **Paul Doughty, ex-RLC.**

The editor, taking to the lectern, replies: Thanks for all your letters on this emotive subject.

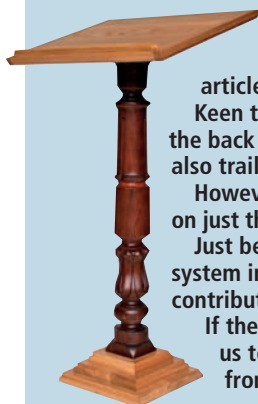
When compiling material on what we knew would be a hotly-debated topic we asked some tough questions of the chaplain general and, as such, I think it is a tad unfair to call the resulting article a "marketing exercise".

Keen to represent the other side of the debate, we dedicated *Final Word* at the back of the magazine to showcasing troops' views on this matter and we also trailed the piece on Facebook, where a fascinating debate took place.

However, I make no apology for a feature about the role of religion focusing on just that.

Just because we did not go into detail about the role of any other belief system in particular on this occasion isn't to say that they do not have a valid contribution to make to the diversity of Army life.

If the Armed Forces Humanist Association or any other group would like us to feature their work or ideas in a future issue we would love to hear from them using the details at the top of this page.



DIGITAL DOSSIER

Your views from the web...



@soldiermagazine

#GURKHAS (P 24-35)

@MahatoDilip

If a man says he is not afraid of dying, he is either lying or is a #Gurkha

#MUSIC (P 72-73)

@Richmond161095

Can't stop listening to *All Of My Life* at the moment, that song really is something else :)

#BOOKS (P 74-75)

@macca_united

#WalkingtheNile was superb again. Immersed in culture. Proving also that there are many good Muslims in the world.

#MASTERS RUGBY (P 88)

@armyrugbyunion

Well fought contest in dreadful wet and cold conditions well played to both teams.



www.facebook.com/soldiermagazine

HERRICK LESSONS

Nic Anderson

Wash your hands thoroughly and carry your own bog roll. Also, diarrhoea and vomiting can help you lose weight as part of an uncontrolled diet.

DIARY ROOMS BOOK

Hugh McNeill

Your words mean more than you can imagine, your hopes more than you can believe, because they are from your heart.

SAPPER BOXING (P 80)

Lewis Jones

Full weekend of training done. I WILL be bringing that title home on February 21!

Call for more help to buy

THE government is supposedly assisting us with the Forces Help to Buy scheme, but I'm not sure it's working.

For a start, what a wonderful way for the government to milk Service personnel thanks to every loan exceeding £10,000 being liable for income tax.

Then, my understanding of JSP 464 is that if I were to borrow £25,000 I would pay the Treasury around £6,000 in the first year alone in income tax (40 per cent on £15,000).

Also, what if I'm posted away and want my family by my side?

If I decide to rent out my new house I have to pay interest on the full amount of any outstanding scheme advance.

And finally, there is the issue of house prices.

The average semi-detached three-bedroom property in Surrey, the area in which I am currently posted, costs well over £250,000 so even the full loan is not sufficient for a 90 per cent mortgage. — **A/Maj John Roberts, RE.**

Brig Donnelly, DPS(A), replies: Help to Buy means eligible personnel can apply for an interest-free loan of up to 50 per cent of their salary, capped at £25,000.

This limit has been set to ensure individuals do not borrow what they cannot repay.

The scheme can be used in conjunction with other affordable home purchase initiatives including Help to Buy equity loans and shared ownership.

Under Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs regulations if you borrow more than £10,000 you are

liable for taxation on the benefit of not paying any interest.

This is known as the "cash equivalent" and is calculated by multiplying the average loan amount by the HMRC official interest rate, which is currently 3.25 per cent.

For example, a Help to Buy loan of £20,000 over the previous tax year attracts a cash equivalent of £650 (3.25 per cent of £20,000).

The tax payable is determined by your tax code.

A higher rate taxpayer would pay 40 per cent of £650 in income tax, amounting to £260.

Once the outstanding loan balance falls below an average of £10,000, you are no longer liable for tax on the cash equivalent.

However, you are correct about letting out the property you used the loan to purchase.

If you are given permission to do this you will be charged interest on the loan amount at the HMRC official rate.

You will also have to inform both your mortgage provider and the taxman.

Full rules of the Forces Help to Buy scheme are detailed in JSP 464, part one, chapter 12.

You can also read more in **ABN 23/14** and **DIB 07/14**, which includes a comprehensive question and answer section.



“WHAT A WAY FOR THE GOVERNMENT TO MILK SERVICE PERSONNEL”



Where are the women?

● **BROWSING** through a rack of *Soldier* magazines today, something struck me: going back over three years of issues I could find just three editions that clearly featured a woman on the cover.

The last – a group of competitive boxers – was in February 2013 and the others were from 2012. One showed Capt Heather Stanning (RA) and another Her Majesty the Queen.

I suppose this demonstrates that females can get on your front page if they can manage to (a) cover themselves in sporting glory or (b) be the reigning monarch.

There is, I believe, a serious point here. Many of your readers are women; they wear the uniform and they serve, fight and die for their country.

Soldier features some excellent articles but I just think you could do a better job of representing your readership overtly on the cover. — **WO1 Carl Wick (AGC (SPS)).**

The editor replies: Your letter comes as debate over *The Sun's* topless page three photos rages on.

If you had gone several decades further back in your research, however, you may have been shocked to learn that this publication has also printed images of questionable taste in the form of “*Soldier* bird”.

Thankfully, most of society has moved on to judge women on their abilities rather than cup size.

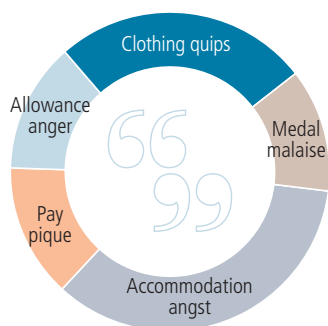
Therefore, placing a female on our cover simply because she is that, or enforcing a 50/50 gender balance that does not exist, seems counterproductive and crass.

We will of course welcome more female cover stars when the artistic and editorial reasons merit it.

Crowns are not a prerequisite.

SLICE OF SERVICE LIFE

This month's ruminations from the ranks...



CORPORAL 'CRATED'

● **THANK** you for publishing a photo of one of our Royal Tank Regiment corporals in January's magazine ("Corporals up in arms", *Talkback*).

The image had obviously been taken from file and may have misled your readers into thinking the disgruntled soldier in question was from our formation.

You may rest assured that an enjoyable evening was had by our corporals' club at the expense of the photo's subject. Despite not being a requirement under Queen's Regulations, our new club is thriving with one successful function under our belts and another on the way.

The majority of the regiment's corporals are members despite this being entirely voluntary, and all at an affordable and worthwhile price. — **Cpl Lance Rugg, Royal Tank Regiment.**

We've helped secure pension rights for all Armed Forces widows

Join us and see how we can help you



FIGHTING FOR THE FORCES
AND THEIR FAMILIES



After seven years of careful and thoughtful campaigning we have finally **succeeded in persuading the government to change the rules** so that all Armed Forces widows can now retain their pension on remarriage or cohabitation from April 2015. This will affect the lives of an estimated 400,000 women over the next 40 years.

As the pension watchdog for the Armed Forces community, **we exist to protect your interests and help you get the most from your pension.**

HOW WE CAN HELP YOU

Armed Forces Pensions are complex and we can **help you by advising** when to leave (and when not to), commutation, how to deal with pension troughs, the impact of AFPS2015 from April, the implications of redundancy, divorce, how you might be able to top up your pension; and if you are a reservist, **what the new pension rules mean for you.** Help is available from our acknowledged Pension Advisory Service experts.



VALUABLE MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

Our Members also have access to **valuable through-life services** with significant discounts from trusted affiliates in Travel, Legal & Financial, Healthcare and Motoring.



Major General
John Moore-Bick CBE DL
General Secretary of the Forces Pension Society

NOW IS THE TIME TO JOIN

April 2015 sees the introduction of the new Armed Forces Pension Scheme and you need to know how it affects you and your family. And if you join us online now (membership for you and your partner costs just £35 p.a.), **we'll send you a City Break voucher worth £100** (T's & C's apply); just visit our website at www.forcespensionsociety.org quoting Promo Code **SLD2015**.



JOIN US AND GET THE MOST FROM **YOUR** PENSION

Forces Pension Society

68 South Lambeth Road, Vauxhall, London, SW8 1RL

Tel: 020 7820 9988 - email: memsec@forpen.co.uk - www.forcespensionsociety.org



Independent Education

Boarding School - Girls & Boys, 5 to 19 years

Ranked by the Daily Telegraph for A level and equivalent qualifications 2013:

Queen Ethelburga's College

- Top northern day and boarding school
- UK's 4th day and boarding school

The Faculty of Queen Ethelburga's

- 2nd northern day and boarding school
- UK's 5th day and boarding school

For the fourth year running we have pegged your contribution per child, per term, at £795. Childcare Vouchers also accepted. This now means we rank as one of the most competitively priced schools for Forces in the UK.

Over £80m invested in new facilities in the last eight years. Our boarding facilities are the best in Europe. Every bedroom has its own private shower and toilet plus telephone, voice mail, large plasma TV/DVD player with gaming port (on timer), a Sony PS3, fridge, microwave, trouser press and hot drinks facilities. House staff are friendly and caring.



We understand the needs of service families with staff who are married to serving members of the Forces. With years of experience in ensuring our 200+ Forces children settle well, are confident and highly successful.

Easy to get to by road, rail and air. We work hard, we play hard. Top of the line academic facilities and resources with an amazing range of out of hours activities.

Dedicated, professional, friendly and helpful staff go the "extra mile" to ensure your child is happy and doing well. We have Forces families from all over the UK, not just the North. One new pupil described our Estate as 'imagine Hogwarts meets American Campus'.

Successful CCF unit. Huge range of sports plus £6m new Sports Centre, new 100 station £1m gymnasium health club + music and drama. Wide range of abilities accepted. A full range of A-Level & BTEC courses.

Over 98% of our Year 13 students went on to University with majority to Oxford, Cambridge, Ivy League or Russell Group universities.

See how we are into Sport: www.SportsVillageQE.org

"Our son read your prospectus. Wonders will never cease. He soon found the piece about all the things you put in a boarding bedroom including a mega plasma TV and PS3, plus all your sports facilities, now he is all smiles!"

Queen Ethelburga's

Thorpe Underwood, Yorkshire. www.QE.org
Tel: 01423 333 330 Email: info@QE.org

UK's Top 140 Independent Boarding Schools - 2014 Daily Telegraph % A*/A A-Levels and equivalent qualifications

	= Ranking of Boarding Schools
	= % A*/A A-Levels & equivalent qualifications
	= Overall National League Table Ranking

1	95%	Cardiff Sixth Form College	1
2	91%	Wycombe Abbey School	2
3	81%	Concord College	9
4	80%	Queen Ethelburga's College	10
5	76%	Faculty Queen Ethelburga's	18
6	75%	Brighton College	24
7	74%	St. Swithun's School	27
8	74%	St. Mary's School, Ascot	28
9	70%	Wellington College	33
10	70%	d'Overbroeck's College	34
11	69%	Ruthin School	35
12	69%	City of London Freeman's	38
13	68%	Headington School	43
14	66%	Queen Margaret's York	47
15	65%	St. Mary's Calne	49
16	65%	Caterham School	50
17	65%	Badminton School	51
18	65%	St. Catherine's, Bramley	52
19	64%	Oundle School	54
20	64%	Marlborough College	55
21	64%	Hurtwood House	57
22	62%	Dulwich College	60
23	60%	Benenden School	64
24	59%	St. Leonards-Mayfield	72
25	59%	Warwick School	74
26	59%	Rugby School	75
27	58%	Bromsgrove School	82
28	57%	Malvern St. James	84
29	57%	Canford School	87
30	57%	Bishop's Stortford College	88
31	57%	Loughborough Grammar	91
32	57%	Royal School, Haslemere	93
33	56%	King's School, Canterbury	94
34	56%	Kingswood School	97
35	55%	Marymount International	98
36	55%	Ockbrook School	99
37	55%	Chigwell School	101
38	55%	Queenswood	102
39	55%	Uppingham School	103
40	55%	Woldingham School	105

41	54%	Royal High Sch Bath	108
42	54%	St. Peter's School	110
43	54%	Sherborne Girls	116
44	53%	Mount School York	119
45	53%	Haberdasher Mon. G	120
46	52%	Merchiston Castle	121
47	52%	Dauntsey's School	123
48	52%	Christ's Hospital	124
49	52%	Bury Grammar Girls	126
50	52%	Leweston School	127
51	52%	Bedford School	129
52	51%	Prior Park College	131
53	51%	Christ College	134
54	51%	Clifton College	141
55	50%	Ashford School	142
56	50%	Burgess Hill Girls	146
57	49%	The Leys School	147
58	49%	Bootham School	148
59	49%	ACS Cobham Int.	149
60	49%	Merchant Taylors' B	151
61	49%	Wells Cathedral Sch	152
62	49%	Surbiton High School	156
63	48%	Kent College	158
64	48%	Bellerbys Brighton	160
65	48%	St John's School	164
66	48%	Cheltenham College	165
67	47%	Roddean School	169
68	47%	Haileybury	172
69	47%	St. Teresa's, Effingham	173
70	47%	St. Leonards	174
71	47%	New Hall School	175
72	46%	Oakham School	176
73	46%	Brentwood School	177
74	46%	St. Mary's, Shaftbury	180
75	46%	St. Mary's, Cambridge	181
76	46%	Bellerbys Cambridge	182
77	46%	Ampleforth College	183
78	46%	Moreton Hall	184
79	45%	The Godolphin Sch	185
80	45%	Gresham's School	186
81	45%	Reed's School	187
82	45%	Mill Hill School	189
83	45%	Welbeck College	190
84	44%	King William's College	192
85	44%	St. Francis' College	193
86	44%	Kelly College	198
87	44%	Lord Wandsworth Col	200
88	43%	Monmouth School	201
89	43%	St. Michael's School	202
90	43%	Sidcot School	203

91	43%	Talbot Heath School	206
92	43%	St. George's Edinburgh	208
93	43%	Downside School	209
94	43%	King's Ely	210
95	42%	Ipswich School	213
96	42%	Queen's College	214
97	41%	Bradfield College	218
98	41%	Chetham's Sch. Music	220
99	41%	Harrogate Ladies' Coll.	223
100	41%	Stamford High School	226
101	41%	Kimbolton School	227
102	40%	St Margaret's Bushey	228
103	40%	Lincoln Minster School	230
104	39%	Kirkham Grammar	231
105	39%	Royal Russell School	232
106	39%	Wellington School	236
107	39%	Loretto School	237
108	38%	The Oratory School	239
109	38%	Leighton Park School	240
110	38%	Royal Sch. Dungannon	242
111	38%	Ashville College	244
112	37%	Stamford School	248
113	37%	Trent College	249
114	36%	Battle Abbey School	250
115	36%	St. Edmunds Cantbury	251
116	35%	Bede's Senior School	254
117	35%	Langley School	255
118	35%	Ratcliffe College	257
119	35%	Sutton Valence Sch	258
120	35%	Worksop College	259
121	34%	Box Hill School	263
122	34%	Hampshire Collegiate	265
123	34%	Glenalmond College	266
124	34%	Wrekin College	267
125	33%	Woodhouse Grove	269
126	33%	St. George's Ascot	270
127	32%	St. Edmund's College	274
128	32%	Barnard Castle Sch	276
129	32%	St. John's College	277
130	31%	Pocklington School	279
131	31%	The Purcell School	280
132	31%	Saint Felix School	281
133	30%	Stonyhurst College	283
134	30%	Culford School	285
135	30%	St. Bees School	287
136	29%	St. James Senior B	290
137	29%	CATS College London	292
138	29%	Tring Park Perf. Arts	293
139	28%	Dover College	294
140	28%	Oswestry School	295

BULLET POINTS

BITE-SIZED DATA TO KEEP YOU IN THE KNOW

APPOINTMENTS

Maj Gen Richard Cripwell to be appointed **Head of British Defence Staff United States** in succession to Maj Gen Buster Howes in March 2015.

Maj Gen Richard Nugee to be appointed **Military Secretary** in succession to Maj Gen Shaun Burley in March 2015.

Brig Ian Cave, currently Director Training (Army), to be appointed **Deputy Chief of Staff Plans Joint Force Command (Naples)** in the rank of major general in succession to Maj Gen Robert Weighill in July 2015.

CAREERS

Employment portal TipTopJob has created **www.exmilitaryjob.com** to help former Service personnel find work in the civilian sector. Visit the website for more details.

Ex-Military Careers is a free-to-use job board listing more than 10,000 vacancies for ex-Service personnel. For more information visit **www.ex-militarycareers.com**

COMPETITIONS

Spine line winner: Malcolm Atkinson-Evans, Buckley Barracks, Chippingham.

Top Titles: Adam Blackburn, Shefford, Bedfordshire; Robert Smith, Uckfield, East Sussex; Gordon Crandles, Edinburgh, East Lothian.

Let's Be Cops DVD: John Southward, Amble, Northumberland; Capt Christopher Lucas, Rusholme, Manchester; Mr L Matthews, Basildon, Essex; LCpl Steven Wood, Marchwood, Hampshire.

War in the West: SSI Christopher Charity, Swindon, Wiltshire; LCpl Ryan Bywater, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire; WO2 Rolf Mason, Shrivenham, Wiltshire; WO2 Dean Crighton, Oman BFPO 767; Mark Sullivan, York, North Yorkshire.

Christmas competition winners:

Snow Nation: WO2 Gary Smektala, Prestonpans, East Lothian.

Chilly Powder: Cpl Barry Maclean RAF, Northallerton, North Yorkshire.

Newquay Activity Centre: Victoria Haggerty, Hull, East Riding of Yorkshire.

Victory Services Club: Sharon Jackson, Army Reserve Centre, Kempston, Bedfordshire.

Warren James: WO1 Craig Geddes, HQ Brunei Garrison, BFPO 11; Capt Simon Hawken, Paderborn, BFPO 22.

Powermonkey: Lt Col Jon Duckworth, Chicksands, Bedfordshire; Maj John Nicholl, Castlemartin, Pembrokeshire; WO2 Tobias Woolfit, Shefford, Bedfordshire.

Heinnie: LCpl Anthony Wilsher; Didcot, Oxfordshire; WO2 Paul Thornhill, Kinloss, Forres; Cpl Paul Cary, BFPO 801.

Magnum: WO2 Stewart Hamilton, BFPO 825; Cpl Neville Robinson, Lichfield, Staffordshire; Capt Joanna Vann, Chicksands, Bedfordshire; Capt Simon Hawken, Paderborn, BFPO 22; WO2 Daniel Mitchell, Army Reserve Centre, Wakefield.

d3o: Capt Dale Luttig, London; LCpl Angus Hendry, Strensall, York; Name withheld, Braintree, Essex.

Snuggpak: SSgt Paul Morey, Paderborn, BFPO 22; Sgt Steven Ware, Gosport, Hampshire.

DIRECTORY

ABF The Soldiers' Charity: 0845 241 4820

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

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

Armed Forces Humanist Association: www.armedforceshumanists.org.uk

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

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

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

Army Libraries: 01252 340094

Army Ornithological Society: www.armybirding.org.uk

Army Welfare Service: 01980 615975; www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support

Big White Wall: www.bigwhitewall.com

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

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

Career Transition Partnership: 020 7469 6661

Children's Education Advisory Service: 01980 618244; enquiries@ceas.detsa.co.uk

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

Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society: 01372 841600; www.combatstress.com

Family Escort Service: 020 7463 9249

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

Forces Pension Society: 020 7820 9988

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

Heroes Welcome: www.heroeswelcome.co.uk

Joint Service Housing Advice Office: 01722 436575

Medal Office: 94561 3600 or 0141 224 3600

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

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

National Gulf Veterans' and Families' Association Office: 24-hour helpline 0845 257 4853;

www.ngvfa.org.uk

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

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

Remount: 01451 850 341; www.remount.net

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

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

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

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

Service Personnel and Veterans Agency: 0808 1914 218 (from the UK); 0044 1253 866043 (from overseas)

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

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

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

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

The Royal Star & Garter Homes: 020 8481 7676; www.starandgarter.org

The Veterans Charity: 01753 653772; info@veteranscharity.org.uk

uk4u Thanks!: 01798 812081; www.uk4u.org

INTELLIGENCE

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

ABN 008/15: Army Conference 2015 key points

CONTINUED ON PAGE 60

INTELLIGENCE CONTINUED

ABN 007/15: Army communication activity

ABN 006/15: Army Employer Engagement Directive

ABN 005/15: Sale of Defence Support Group – update

ABN 004/15: Army orienteering in 2015

ABN 003/15: Issued hearing protection compliance

ABN 002/15: Nano UAS briefing note

ABN 001/15: Single living accommodation infrastructure management system

ABN 179/14: *Career Management Handbook* part 4

ABN 178/14: Chief of the General Staff Christmas message 2014

ABN 177/14: Scottish drink drive regulations

ABN 176/14: Jewish leadership conference 2015

ABN 175/14: Reserves continuous attitude survey 2015

ABN 174/14: Launch of training exploitation

ABN 173/14: All-arms tactical aide memoire R2 slates

ABN 172/14: Game of Truce 2014

ABN 171/14: Armed Forces continuous attitude survey 2015

DIN 2015DIN01-022: The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport in the UK – membership for military personnel

DIN 2015DIN01-021: Performance appraisal and development report for all NHS Agenda for Change grades

DIN 2015DIN01-020: Performance management and pay reform – civilian dental practitioners

DIN 2015DIN01-019: Employment of full-time Reserve service (full commitment) personnel within the Army and other top-level budget holders

DIN 2015DIN01-018: Changes to the professional engineering institutions on HRMS

DIN 2015DIN01-017: Army officer terms of service – offer to extend intermediate regular commissions and medium commissions

DIN 2015DIN01-014: The All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club Championships – Wimbledon 2015

DIN 2015DIN01-013: Full-time

Reserve service (home commitment) for Army Reserve unit command

DIN 2015DIN01-011: Late-entry commissions in the Adjutant General's Corps

DIN 2015DIN01-010: JSP 342 *Education of Service Children and Young People* (version 3.0, December 2014)

DIN 2015DIN01-009: Late-entry commissions in the Corps of Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

DIN 2015DIN01-008: JSP 770 *Tri-Service Operational and Non-Operational Welfare Policy*

DIN 2015DIN01-007: Overseas conversion of civil partnerships to a marriage of a same-sex couple, within the UK Armed Forces

DIN 2015DIN01-006: Queen Victoria School admissions process for academic year 2015/16

DIN 2015DIN01-005: Tax relief for home-to-duty and business travel

DIN 2015DIN01-004: Reserves financial incentives

DIN 2015DIN01-003: Notification of changes to Armed Forces pension scheme 2005 and early departure payment (EDP) 2005 legislation including breaks in service, resettlement grants, EDP award reassessment

DIN 2015DIN01-002: Policy on the care of Service personnel under the age of 18

DIN 2015DIN01-001: Clarification of policy for medical and dental officers applying for the first primary healthcare bonus under Armed Forces pension scheme 2005

DIN 2014DIN01-231: SSAFA transitional mentoring scheme

DIN 2014DIN01-230: Outside appointments – Reservists

DIN 2014DIN01-229: MoD civilian dental practitioners and specialist dental officers pay award 2014

DIN 2014DIN01-228: MoD civilian medical practitioners pay award 2014

DIN 2014DIN01-226: 2015 pilgrimages by the Armed Forces region of HCPT The Pilgrimage Trust

DIN 2014DIN01-225: Data management of Reserve trained strength for professionally qualified officers and soldiers within the Army Medical Services

DIN 2014DIN01-224: Service pupil premium details for 2014/15

DIN 2015DIN04-003: Amendments to operational medical modules contents (Oct-Dec 2014)

DIN 2015DIN04-002: Declaration

of obsolescence – PSC 503

DIN 2015DIN04-001: Declaration of obsolescence – PSC 506 OS

DIN 2014DIN04-248: Trade receipts deliveries, booking-in procedure for the LS Donnington, Bicester and St Athan sites

DIN 2014DIN04-247: Declaration of obsolete – Pike

DIN 2014DIN04-246: Declaration of obsolete – Announcer

DIN 2014DIN04-245: Declaration of obsolete – Cormorant

DIN 2014DIN04-244: Amendments to operational medical modules contents (Oct-Dec 14)

DIN 2014DIN04-243: Declaration of obsolete – ECM systems Tx1bM and Tx2EY

DIN 2014DIN04-242: Amendments to operational medical modules contents – inclusion of B Braun infusomat space volumetric pump and perfusor space TCI syringe pump within medical modules

DIN 2014DIN04-241: *Sea Survival Equipment Log*, block amendment 80

DIN 2014DIN04-240: The Inventory Management Operating Centre requirements change process and requirements change form

DIN 2014DIN04-239: Removal from service of cartridge ignition 0.410 inch

DIN 2014DIN04-238: Surface ship configuration reports and index of abstracts issued by Master Record Data Centre (Ships)

DIN 2014DIN04-237: Declaration of obsolete – Accent and Accrid systems

DIN 2014DIN04-236: Marine fuel supply arrangements for ports in the UK and overseas

DIN 2014DIN04-235: Intended out-of-service date – declaration of obsolescence of low value consumable non-powered hand tools and tool sets

DIN 2015DIN05-002: Defence airspace and air traffic management – the defence approach to a changing domestic and international regulatory environment

DIN 2015DIN05-001: Defence Medical Services senior structure

DIN 2014DIN05-039: Relocation of 71 Inspection and Repair Squadron HQ from MoD St Athan to A4 FE, RAF Wittering

DIN 2014DIN05-038: The Joint Electronic Warfare Operational

Support Centre and the provision of Electronic Warfare Operational Support to operations

DIN 2014DIN05-037: The Dartford-Thurrock river crossing – exemption for MoD vehicles

DIN 2015DIN06-003: Release of JSP 317, edition 5, AL 3, *Joint Service Safety Regulations for the Storage and Handling of Fuels and Lubricants*

DIN 2015DIN06-001: Reissue of JSP 375 *Management of Health and Safety in Defence* and JSP 418 *Management of Environmental Protection in Defence*

DIN 2014DIN06-019: Managing civilian employees' health surveillance/assessment requirements on HRMS

DIN 2015DIN07-003: Update – information management courses for September 2014 to July 2015 at the Defence Academy, Shrivenham

DIN 2015DIN07-002: Doctrine Note 14/07 – tactical air landing operations

DIN 2015DIN07-001: Exercise Westerly Whisk

DIN 2014DIN07-205: University Service unit sail training week and regatta

DIN 2014DIN07-204: Army survival, evasion, resistance and extraction policy

DIN 2014DIN07-203: Regular Army officer language requirements for sub-unit command

DIN 2014DIN07-201: Instructor training courses for Fleet outsourced activities project training staff

DIN 2014DIN07-200: Defence Centre of Training Support course schedule April 2015 to March 2016

DIN 2014DIN07-199: Instructions for the all-arms commando course

DIN 2014DIN07-198: Unit welfare personnel training courses 2015

DIN 2014DIN07-197: Captains' warfare course

DIN 2014DIN07-196: Training by manufacturer or civilian provider – submissions for financial year 2016/17

DIN 2014DIN07-195: Joining instructions for personnel attending the Engineering Training School, RNAS Culdrose, Helston, Cornwall

DIN 2014DIN07-194: Maritime Warfare School – aviation warfare – 2015 course dates

DIN 2014DIN07-190: 2014/15 Cyber operational awareness courses

DIN 2014DIN07-188: Joint full spectrum targeting training courses

DIN 2014DIN07-186: The A4 intermediate management course – general outline and application process

DIN 2014DIN07-185: The defence logistics management course – general outline and application process

DIN 2014DIN07-184: The engineering and logistics forward commanders pre-employment training course – general outline and application process

DIN 2014DIN07-183: Corporate accountancy training scheme recruitment

DIN 2015DIN08-001: Insurance arrangements for unit-organised community engagement events, open days and other functions

DIN 2014DIN09-023: Changes to the regulations on wearing level four emblems

DIN 2014DIN09-020: The Firmin Sword of Peace Awards 2013 – results

DIN 2014DIN09-019: The Firmin Sword of Peace Awards 2014

DIN 2014DIN09-018: Award of European Security and Defence Policy Service Medal with Eufor RCA clasp

DIN 2014DIN10-060: British Army motorsports event – Rickshaw Ramble 2015

DIB60/14: The Armed Forces Covenant annual report 2014



REUNION

Operating theatre technician reunion, March 6-8, 2015. All serving or retired Royal Army Medical Corps operating theatre technicians, operating department practitioners and operating department assistants are invited to attend the next event at the North Stafford Hotel, Stoke on Trent. Guests welcome. For further details and booking form contact Ken Hannah at ottreunited1@gmail.com or visit <http://ottreunited.com>

Martinique Battery reunion 2015 on April 18, 2015 at the Copthorne Hotel, Merry Hill, Dudley. For details email k.brooksusher@hotmail.co.uk

The final School of Electronic and Aeronautical Engineering RFC annual dinner and President's XV on May 8, 2015 at Arborfield. All serving and former members are invited to attend. Please register your interest by contacting SSgt Kennedy via mark.kennedy@seae.mod.uk or

Lesley Lallament on 01189 763663.

Roebuck Company Royal Rifle Volunteers/3rd Battalion, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment Op Telic 6 2005 reunion on June 13 at F Coy, 7 Rifles, Davies Street, London. For details please contact mike.scott-hyde@bt.com

Mansergh Troop 75/76 Joint Leaders Regiment Royal Artillery reunion on September 12-13, 2015. Open to all ex-Mansergh Troop 75/76 and their partners. Exact venue and timings to be confirmed later. To attend please contact Mike Cave on 07516 633675 or email mikebabes15@yahoo.co.uk

23/144 Parachute Field Ambulance Old Comrades Association dinner, combined with the Midlands Region Parachute Regiment Association gala dinner, will take place at the Royal Court Hotel, Coventry on October 10. Open to all personnel who have served in an airborne medical unit. For more information contact Roy Hatch on 01926 812363 or email royhatchbem@fsmail.net



SEARCHLINE

The combined mess for Hohne Station, 1 Medical Regiment and 2 Medical Regiment is to close in the summer of 2015. Personnel

who have made presentations are asked to reclaim items by contacting WO1 Richard Mason at 2 Medical Regiment, Haig Barracks, BFPO 30 or 2med-rhq-rsm@mod.uk. Items that have not been claimed by March 31 may be sold or auctioned off, with the proceeds supporting ABF The Soldiers' Charity.

Andrew Copping is looking for information on **Hubert Harding, Royal Artillery, gunner number 1741365, who served with the 232 Searchlight Regiment between December 1940 and March 1946 near Exeter**. Anyone who can help is asked to contact him on 01252 721025.

A new glossy guide to The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment has been produced, covering the formation's heritage and recent operations. To purchase a copy (£6.50 including postage) write to Regimental Headquarters, PWRR, Tower of London, Tower Hill, London, EC3 4AB.

Surrey University student Rose Stratton is looking for **male members of the Armed Forces over the age of 18** to complete a short, anonymous online survey about body image. Anyone who can take part is asked to visit <http://goo.gl/uKqg3l>

NO. 879

JUST HOW OBSERVANT ARE YOU?

WIN
£100

TEN details have been changed in this picture of the British Army football team playing their German counterparts to commemorate the Christmas truce of 1914.

Circle the differences in the left image and send the panel to **HOAY 879, Soldier**, Ordnance Barracks, Government Road,

Aldershot, Hampshire GU11 2DU by February 27, 2015.

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

First correct entry drawn after the closing date will win £100; the second and third will receive £25 gift vouchers. The results

will be announced in the April issue. Usual rules apply.

December's winner: Sarah Bates, Venning Barracks, Donnington.

Runners up: Diana Turford, Bewdley, Worcestershire and LCpl Adelle Tudor, Fulwood Barracks, Preston.



Military Marketing International

Suppliers of commemorative plaques and presentation pieces



Let us design your Regiment and Operational plaques (minimum quantity 25)

PLAQUES: £12.95 each
SHIELD CLOCKS: £24.00 each



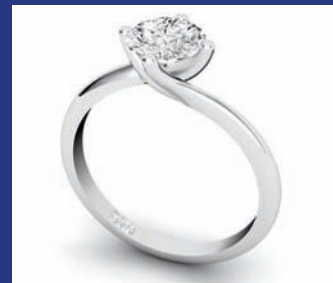
for a full colour brochure contact:

82-84 Steward Street, Ladywood, Birmingham. B18 7AF

Telephone / fax: 0121 454 5393

Email: mmisales@militarymarketing.co.uk

Website: www.militarymarketing.co.uk



NOW YOU CAN BUY DIAMONDS & JEWELLERY AT WHOLESALE PRICES DIRECT FROM THE MANUFACTURERS

We supply retail shops with a vast range of beautiful diamond engagement rings, wedding rings and jewellery. We can offer the same prices to the Armed Forces on production of their MoD passes.

Examples

18ct White Gold Diamond Solitaire Ring
0.50ct Size
Retail Price £2,900
Wholesale Price £1,300

Examples

Platinum Diamond Solitaire Ring
0.75ct Size
Retail Price £4,850
Wholesale Price £2,150

CALL US FIRST – FOR A PRIVATE APPOINTMENT ALAN BICK JEWELLERY

Suite 207, 100 Hatton Garden, London, EC1N 8NX

Tel: 020 7242 5831

www.alanbick.co.uk

sales@alanbick.co.uk

WE SHIP
GOODS
WORLDWIDE

VAT Refund available to personnel stationed abroad



Printed or Embroidered Leisurewear to your Own Design

For a Free Colour Brochure contact :

TEES TOTAL, 153 High Street, Royal Wootton Bassett, Swindon SN4 7AB

Tel : +44 (0)1793 849888

Email : sales@teestotalclothing.co.uk

Website : www.teestotalclothing.co.uk



**MICHAEL JAY
TAILORING**

*Your Tailored Suit
Made to Measure
Especially for you*

- ✓ Made in the UK
- ✓ 14 day Make or
- ✓ 48hr EXPRESS
- ✓ Lowest prices
- ✓ Best Fit
- ✓ Highest quality
- ✓ Best payment terms

Local agent to measure
in most areas

01449 614602
www.suitUK.com

*As our customers say
The service is simply unbeatable*

5 Tomo Business Park STOWMARKET Suffolk IP14 5EP

Lancashire Embroidery

ESTABLISHED SINCE 1929
Largest manufacturer of
multi-cam products in the UK

ZAP BADGES,
NAME TAPES,
RANK SLIDES,
TRFs, etc. Tour T-shirts, polos,
sweats and hoodies.

You want it, we supply it! We will not be
beaten on service, price or turnaround!
Suppliers to most of UK distributors!

Units 9 & 10 Sutton Oak Drive, St
Helens, Merseyside WA9 3PH

Email: sales@lancashireembroidery.co.uk

Tel: 0151 546 5161 Fax: 0151 549 1128

www.lancashireembroidery.co.uk

Always on your mind?

Do you want to try and trace
your birth family?

We can also help you:

- find out more about searching
- meet other people in similar circumstances
- have the chance to talk about what it means to be adopted and what it could mean to search

Call our ActionLine free on:

0800 0 568 578

www.afteradoption.org.uk/reunite

Navigation Training

Intensive 2 day courses in Map &
Compass work. Theory & Practical
Small Groups (4/5) or Individuals
Ex-Mil Instructor. Accom incl.

Contact Andy 01974 821680
brynderwen@tiscali.co.uk

TO ADVERTISE IN SOLDIER TELEPHONE 01252 787106

Notice to readers

The publishers of *Soldier* cannot accept responsibility for the accuracy of any advertisement or for any losses suffered as a result. Readers are strongly recommended to make their own enquiries and seek appropriate commercial, legal and financial advice before sending any money or entering into any legally-binding agreement.

Your Design **Embroidered** or **Printed**
on your choice of clothing





For your **Free Colour Brochure**
Contact us on:

Tel: 0845 129 1990 Email: Sales@europclothing.co.uk

EUROPCLOTHING.CO.UK

f g+ t YouTube in



Vista Ties
Since 1971

Free
Artwork &
Delivery Service

Regimental Ties Made To Order
Choose your finish from Silk to Polyester
Types of Ties from Skinny Tie, Clip-on, Bow Tie,
Standard Tie or Cummerbunds
All ties are woven with your regimental logo and colours

It's Easy as ABC ordering with us:
A. Send us your Specification and Colours.
B. Quotes & Visuals sent to you for your approval
C. Once approved, sit back and wait for delivery

We will beat any genuine
written quotation

Come Visit/Contact Us At:
www.vista-ties.co.uk Tel: 01903 266883 info@vista-ties.co.uk

Email us your specification today
and let us take care of the rest.
For further information contact us now.



Attention

Due to family within the Army, we have supplied diamond engagement and wedding rings to Service personnel on a word-of-mouth and recommendation basis for several years. We are a manufacturing/wholesale jewellery company based in Hatton Garden, London.

If you are getting engaged or married and would like to buy direct at **trade prices** (not available to the general public), then contact Philip on 0207 404 0912 or email philip@rajaveer.com with your requirements.

Testimonials are available on request.

Tel: **0207 404 0912** email: philip@rajaveer.com www.rajaveer.co.uk

Ties

from O. H. Hewett Ltd

Ties made to order in
silk or polyester.

For information regarding
prices and minimum quantities
please contact:

O. H. Hewett Ltd
21 Farncombe Street
Godalming, Surrey GU7 3AY
Telephone: 01483 426917
Fax: 01483 424810
Website: www.ohhewett.com
Email: enquiries@ohhewett.com

MICHAEL JAY
CIVIL AND MILITARY
TAILORS

**Made to Measure
MESS DRESS
Especially for you**



- ✓ Made in the UK
- ✓ 14 day Make or
- ✓ 48hr EXPRESS
- ✓ Lowest prices
- ✓ Best Fit
- ✓ Highest quality
- ✓ Best payment terms

Local agent to measure in most areas

01449 614602
www.suitUK.com

*As our customers say
The service is simply unbeatable*



5 Tomo Business Park STOWMARKET Suffolk IP14 5EP

**FORCES
LAW**

**Legal Advice
and Guidance
You Can Trust...**


Forces Law Network Solicitor members offer legal services to serving and retired personnel throughout the world (including Reservists, the Civil Service and their families).

Initial advice and guidance is FREE with 10% discount thereafter. Our reputation is well supported with over **60 years'** experience in legal assistance to the Armed Forces.

Business Start Up
Wills and Probate
Lasting Power of Attorney
House Sale or Purchase [FHTB]

Courts Martial
Police Interview
Family Law
Any Legal problems



0845 6011260
Quote: S
www.forceslaw.com

Photos © Crown copyright 2013

GET YOUR **MESSKIT** ONLINE AT
GOODALLSTAILORS.CO.UK

Best price top quality made to measure uniforms and mess dress accessories.
Fully guaranteed.



- ✓ Mess Dress
- ✓ Priority Service
- ✓ Dress Accessories
- ✓ Badges & Buttons
- ✓ Miniature Medals
- ✓ Mounting Services

**0% FINANCE
AVAILABLE**
ON ALL MESS UNIFORMS

Fine military tailoring from Goodalls Tailors
WWW.GOODALLSTAILORS.CO.UK
0113 2889944 sales@goodallstailors.co.uk

EMBROIDERED • WOVEN • ENAMELLED BADGES

TOLLEY Badges
INSIST ON THE BEST

BADGES we don't do anything else because this is what we do BEST!

- ✓ Best quality
- ✓ Best prices
- ✓ Best delivery times
- ✓ No artwork set up charges
- ✓ Specialists with over 50 years' experience

MINIMUM ORDER QUANTITY 50 BADGES

Check out our website to place your order
www.tolleybadges.co.uk

51-55 Enville Road, Kinver,
Stourbridge DY7 6BX
TELEPHONE : 01384 878550
email : info@tolleybadges.co.uk



The Regimental Shop
Specialists in genuine regimental clothing and accessories

regimentalshop.com

0845 459 1964 • sales@regimentalshop.com





branded notebooks

www.bureaubusiness.co.uk/army
branding@bureaudirect.co.uk
020 8834 4700


BY APPOINTMENT TO
HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN
MEDALISTS
WORCESTERSHIRE MEDAL SERVICE
BROMSGROVE

Worcestershire Medal Service Ltd
Specialists in Orders Decorations and Medals

Full Size and Miniature Medals supplied and mounted for wear or display to the highest standards.

MoD Licensed Medals
(License No. D/IIPR/IX/E/0019/02)
Available from stock including

- Telic
- Afghanistan
- Golden Jubilee
- NATO, EU and UN
- Long Service awards
- Complete range of gallantry awards

We offer a complete engraving service and supply fine handmade storage cases, display cases and wallets for your awards.

Whatever your requirements our helpful staff will be pleased to help with your enquiry by telephone, email or fax.

Visit our secure online shop
www.worcmedals.com

Unit bulk enquiries welcome

56 Broad Street, Sidemore, Bromsgrove, B61 8LL Tel: 01527 835375
Fax: 01527 576798 eMail: wms@worcmedals.com

**32 SIGNAL REGIMENT
RECRUITING NOW**

With a range of rewarding opportunities in the Royal Signals Army Reserve

- Royal Signals Officer
- Communication System Operator
- HR Specialist
- Military Chef

We have Royal Signals Army Reserve Centres in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee, Aberdeen, East Kilbride, Belfast and York.

Find out more:
Captain Tony Manktelow on 0131 4557512
Search: '32 Signal Regiment' Online



LEAVING THE ARMY?

TAKE OWNERSHIP OF YOUR TRANSITION. **SUCCESS IS IN YOUR OWN HANDS**



For support: www.army.mod.uk/transition



career transition partnership
The Ministry of Defence working with Right Management



DWP Department for Work and Pensions



Logistics, Construction, Utilities & Built Environment Sector Event

**Manchester Metropolitan
University**

11.30am-4pm 26 March 2015

To make a booking, please contact
Steve Strefford at CTP on:
Civ 01748 872905 or
sstrefford@ctp.org.uk

Find out about opportunities & information in Logistics, Construction/Engineering, Energy and related roles including:

- ☐ Driving, Road Haulage, Storage & Warehousing
- ☐ Fleet Management
- ☐ Construction & 'trade' opportunities
- ☐ Energy & Utilities
- ☐ Plant operation & supervision
- ☐ Health & Safety, Project & Facilities Management
- ☐ Engineering & Maintenance careers

This event will provide you with the opportunity
to talk directly to business & industry specialists
in the North West & create your own networks

MULTI-SPORT UK
EVENT MANAGEMENT

Presents The Catterick Leisure Centre

TRIATHLON

2015

NORTH YORKSHIRE'S FIRST ROAD CLOSED POOL TRIATHLON, WITH A VIEW



SWIM 400m **BIKE** 20km **RUN** 5km

Sunday 21st June 2015

Individual and team entries NOW OPEN
BTF Members £35 | Non BTF Members £40
Enter online at www.pbmultisportuk.com

f www.facebook.com/pbmultisportuk @PBmultisport



MAIN SPONSORS



Suppliers of high quality embroidered and
printed sports and leisurewear to the
Armed Forces

motif8

ltd



TOUR T-SHIRTS
SPORTSWEAR
SWEATSHIRTS
POLOSHIRTS
HOODIES
JACKETS
AND MUCH MORE

tel:01642 601501
sales@motif8.co.uk
www.motif8.co.uk

Motif8 Will Beat Any Price - Guaranteed

THE ROYAL BRITISH LEGION
AHP THE SOLDIERS' CHARITY
supporting our forces charities

» Finding homes for military personnel. We organise your mortgage, search for your ideal property, manage the complete purchase, arrange the letting if required and pay all your professional and legal fees.

Tel: 01748 821118
www.forceshomes.co.uk

FORCES  HOMES

FOR SALE


Cap badges, regimental ties, blazer badges, medals, insignia. Send £2 for list to: Cairncross (Dept S), 31 Belle Vue Street, Filey, North Yorkshire YO14 9HU. Tel: 01723 513287.

www.cairncrossmilitaria.co.uk

GET YOUR MESSKIT ONLINE
VISIT US NOW AT



WWW.GOODALLTAILORS.CO.UK


regimentalbrooches.com
ONLINE SHOP
with large selection of genuine RFC and RAF sweetheart brooches from WW1, WW2 and through to the current reign.
RN, FAA and many regiments also available.
All guaranteed original.

The Bespoke Tie Company®

The Regimental Tie Specialist - Current Ties and New Designs to order. Bulk & PRI discounts.
0845 2575710 sales@bespoketies.com

SMART TURNOUT LONDON
HIGH QUALITY
REGIMENTAL MERCHANDISE
~ MADE TO ORDER ~

08451 29 29 00
SALES@SMARTTURNOUT.COM

50 Reasons
Why I love You

Show someone that you really love them
The perfect original personalised gift for Valentines Day
For the Ultimate Romantic Gift :
www.50reasonslove.com

COSTELLO
Civil & Military Bespoke Tailors
Ladies and Gents Uniform
Specialists Since 1970
www.costello-tailors.co.uk



Tel: 0208 478 2780
E-mail: sales@costello.co.uk
Interest Free Credit

SERVICES

Finding homes for military personnel. We organise your mortgage, search for your ideal property, manage the complete purchase, arrange the letting if required and pay all your professional and legal fees.
www.forceshomes.co.uk

HOLIDAYS

Orlando, Florida. Three-bedroom villa with own private pool, sleeps six. 15 minutes to Disney and Universal, £350 per week. Call 07977 464187, visit www.thefloridapad.com or email mail@thefloridapad.com

Kyrenia, North Cyprus. Three-bed apartment, sleeps six, stunning views, swimming pool and Wi-Fi. £295-£395 per week. Email: blueseavista@hotmail.co.uk

BOOKS

Military history books. Specialists in new and used military books. Visit our website or for a printed catalogue call 01303 246500.
www.militaryhistorybooks.com

**TO ADVERTISE IN
SOLDIER TELEPHONE
01252 787106**

ARMY sports LOTTERY

RESULTS

SEXUAL ORIENTATION MONITORING 'STAND UP & BE COUNTED'



All serving personnel have a right to be treated fairly, with dignity and respect.

Diversity Declaration

Currently JPA records the protected characteristics of:

- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Belief or Non-belief
- Marriage or Civil partnership

From **December 2014** you will be able to declare your sexual orientation on JPA.

Why should I declare?

Including sexual orientation with the characteristics already monitored will provide the Army with the opportunity to better understand the true diversity of our team. Understanding team diversity will enable Army HQ to make better personnel, health, welfare and diversity policy decisions that affect you. It will help the Army continue to be an inclusive employer.

Confidentiality

- There is a 'do not wish to declare' option.
- Your declaration is strictly confidential.
- Unit staff will *not* be able to view this information.
- Data will only be used for statistical purposes by Army HQ staff.

Further Information

If you need further information you can:

- Speak to your Unit EDA.
- Visit the Stonewall website at www.stonewall.org.uk/publications



ARMY

Be proud of who you are!



CHECK POINT!

TOP UP WELCOME ACCOUNTS ONLINE

WelComE Customer Contact Centre
Opening hours: (UK) Mon - Fri 06:00 - 22:00
Dial *0 from any WelComE provided phone for more information
www.mywelcome.co.uk

You can now manage your WelComE account online with the new **WelComE Account Manager**

Simply visit www.account.mywelcome.co.uk and logon using your account number and PIN

WelComE
Welfare Communications Everywhere



THIS IS WHERE

I prepare for my future with an ELCAS approved learning provider

This is distance learning at Leicester, with over 25 years' experience delivering quality courses

Our expertise, wherever you are

If you're looking to retrain, upskill or start a new career, choose from over 50 varied and practical distance learning courses at the University of Leicester.

Start your journey
e: dladvisers@le.ac.uk
www.le.ac.uk/thisiselcas/




**Mackrell
Turner
Garrett**

LEGAL SPECIALISTS FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL

Mackrell Turner Garrett is a full service law firm, providing an excellent service to military personnel and families in the British Armed Forces.

Considerable expertise in:

- Criminal defence
- Civilian criminal matters
- Court martial proceedings
- Summary appeals
- Administrative Proceedings (eg. AGAI 67)
- Joint Service Police interviews (JSP/PACE)
- Divorce/family
- Post-service business planning
- Residential conveyancing
- Pension matters
- UK & Abroad
- Wills/probate and inheritance tax planning
- Immigration and visa issues

Member of the Association of Military Court Advocates.

For more information please contact **John Hartley** on 00 44 (0) 20 7240 0521 or email john.hartley@mackrell.com

Offices in London and Surrey

Discounted fees for service personnel and family

www.mackrell.com






4600 Lawyers
90 Firms
60 Countries

MACKRELL INTERNATIONAL
www.mackrell.net

REVIEWS



CHAMPION CHOICES

FEBRUARY'S FAVOURITES

P70 MOVIES **SNIPER SENSATION**

P72 MUSIC **KAJAKI COMPOSITION**

P74 BOOKS **PACING PARATROOPER**

reviews@soldiermagazine.co.uk

MOVIES



PICK OF THE MONTH:
AMERICAN SNIPER

SINGLE-MINDED SHOOTER

A VIEW OF IRAQ FROM A CRACK SHOT

Review: Joe Clapson

In a movie that is a far cry from *The Hangover* franchise Bradley Cooper puts in a brilliant performance as Chris Kyle – a highly decorated US sniper on a self-appointed mission to rid Iraq of anti-Western terrorists.

Directed by Clint Eastwood, *American Sniper* is based on Kyle's autobiography of the same name and is pretty black and white – Americans good, Iraqis bad – although it does give a realistic look at what the Fallujah front line was like.

The movie doesn't pay a huge amount of attention to the Serviceman's backstory, other than that he was injured in a rodeo accident, so there is no focus on his politics, which allows Eastwood to stick to a clear and simple story of a crack shot taking on evil.

It charts the protagonist's rise from a wannabe Texas cowboy through harsh Navy Seal training to becoming the most deadly rifle ace in America's military history.

In the marksman's boots a bulked-up Cooper shows his acting range, depicting the mood swings of a real-life die-hard individual who struggles to decompress once home from war.

We watch through Kyle's telescopic sight as he takes a view of a bullet-ravaged Iraq and fires on his objectives to notch up 161 confirmed kills, including high-value targets who are hell-bent on murdering his compatriots.

And as he repeatedly returns to the firestorm to fight for America we see his anxiety levels rise on the same upward trajectory as his star status.

For his undoubtedly heroic efforts Kyle gains the moniker of "legend" but his single-minded outlook doesn't make for an easy relationship at home and his embattled wife Taya, played sensitively by Sienna Miller, feels the brunt of it.

Thanks to the chemistry between the on-screen couple the movie shows the toll that military operations can take on troops, even when they are heralded as the best of the best.

Given the complex nature of the conflict, in a heavily built-up area against a hate-filled enemy, the neverending plaudits handed to Kyle by his comrades can be understood and respected.

And although outside commentators have suggested that the sniper was politically motivated to add more numbers to his kill tally, Eastwood pays no attention to that speculation.

Nor does he dwell on the whys and wherefores of the US invasion of Iraq; he is purely concerned with painting a picture of the military action and he does an impressive job.

It is also testament to Cooper's performance that Kyle doesn't stand out as an undisputed hero despite his chest full of medals.

The feature's ending is one of its most powerful aspects with real footage of a funeral procession rolling alongside the credits. These striking images are not to be disregarded as filler – a point missed by the bad-mannered viewers at my screening who were rushing to the car park rather than reflecting on sacrifice.

Award nominations abound for the picture but it also triumphs in highlighting the mental strain of military combat on soldiers and their families.

At a time when post-traumatic stress disorder is a major concern that can only be a good thing. ■

VERDICT: The combination of Eastwood and Cooper makes for a compelling modern war film ★★★★★



FURY out February 23

DIRECTOR David Ayer spoke to *Soldier* about his quest for realism during the filming of this Second World War epic. The end result boasts incredible attention to detail as the horrors of combat are played out when a Sherman tank crew goes on a mission behind enemy lines in Nazi Germany. The movie also succeeds in capturing the strong sense of brotherhood that existed between such small units.

Richard Long, *Soldier*

VERDICT: Gripping – expertly captures the realities of war ★★★★★



WALK AMONG THE TOMBSTONES out now

LIAM Neeson stars as Matt Scudder, an ex-New York policeman who now operates as an unlicensed private investigator. Scudder helps a drug trafficker hunt down the men who killed his wife and uncovers a murderous gang of deviants. It's an old-style detective thriller and a welcome break from the usual fast action and gunfights that are now expected in this genre.

Joe Clapson, *Soldier*

VERDICT: A good old-fashioned detective chase with a proper plot ★★★★★



A MOST WANTED MAN out now

THIS has all the makings of a classic spy thriller; **Philip Seymour Hoffman** as the dishevelled head of a Hamburg intelligence unit; a plot that requires no small amount of concentration and some impressive German accents from cast members. But somehow the film manages to be less than the sum of its parts. The suspense builds but it never really gets going and when the end does come you are left thinking "was that it?".

SSgt Mike Owens, RE

VERDICT: Hoffman stands out but otherwise it's forgettable ★★★★★



WHERE THE DEVIL HIDES out now

THE film opens on the sixth night of the sixth month of 1994 as six different women of the New Bethlehem Community give birth to girls. The religious cult they have been born into prophesied that one of them would be the devil and as they approach their 18th birthdays, killings and suicides begin to mount up. There isn't much in the way of horror but the movie changes pace right at the end so it's worth staying tuned in.

Phil Tiffany, ex-RAOC/RLC

VERDICT: A really good watch with a few jumpy moments ★★★★★



WHAT WE DID ON OUR HOLIDAY out now

BILLY Connolly takes centre-stage as 75-year-old Gordie McLeod. He is visited by his son Doug (**David Tennant**) and his wife Abi (**Rosamund Pike**) – who are going through a secret divorce – and their three kids. With the other self-obsessed son and his manic wife thrown in the film is about dysfunctional family amid a media circus which has hilarious consequences.

Rodge Tapply, ex-RE

VERDICT: Excellent feel-good film that will have you laughing ★★★★★



WIN... FURY

DON "Wardaddy" Collier (**Brad Pitt**) commands a Sherman tank and its crew on a deadly mission behind enemy lines. Against a larger, stronger opposition the odds are stacked against him as his men take on the Nazis. *Soldier* has teamed up with Sony Pictures Home Entertainment to offer copies of the DVD to five lucky readers. To be in with a chance of winning tell us the name of Pitt's character in *Fight Club*. Send your answers to the usual postal address or alternatively by email to comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk

Closing date: February 27

MUSIC



PICK OF THE MONTH:
ALL OF MY LIFE

CALLED TO KAJAKI

ASPIRING ARTIST HANDED
MOVIE MUSICAL HONOUR

Interview: Richard Long

WHILE the cinematic release of *Kajaki* drew critical acclaim for its portrayal of the heroism shown by British soldiers trapped in an Afghan minefield it also formed the big break for aspiring artist Phoebe Katis.

The singer-songwriter was handed the honour of providing the sole musical theme for the film and her song *All of My Life* provided a poignant soundtrack to the closing sequences, when the audience is invited to read about the real personnel based at the Kajaki Dam in 2006.

Involvement in the project proved to be a family affair as Katis' father Paul assumed the roles of producer and director, which made her choice as collaborator almost inevitable.

"He wanted to capture the sentiment and emotion at the end of the film," the up-and-coming star told *Soldier*.

"He had heard the track at various gigs and at home and felt it would work well. He knew about my musical ambitions and I am so honoured that he wanted to use my song on something so special to him and so many other people."

After graduating in music from the University of Leeds last summer Katis landed a job at Pukka Films, the company behind the movie's recent release.

She worked on various post-production tasks – from organising merchandise to arranging the seating plan for the West End premiere – but the chance to showcase a song that was originally penned at the start of her studies was the true highlight.

"When thinking about his project my father asked me to rewrite the lyrics from the perspective of different groups of people all thinking of someone they've lost," she added.

"I think the main reason it resonates with the film is that it allows a certain cathartic release for the audience after the experience they have just sat through."

"It connects them to the men and to the reason the movie was made – as a tribute to our Armed Forces and all of those who have served and continue to serve."

The track has been well received on iTunes and proceeds from its sale are being donated to Help for Heroes, Walking with the Wounded and The Royal British Legion.

Katis said: "I wanted to continue giving to the charities that were supported by the film, so it was an obvious choice to go with those already involved."

"I also sent physical copies of the single to all of the real soldiers' homes and have received wonderful compliments from them and their families."

With the single proving to be a successful venture for the newcomer the stage is now set for a busy year in 2015 and numerous plans are already in the pipeline.

"I have a lot of ambitions including gigging, perhaps a tour, festival appearances and an album," she said.

"I am currently in planning mode with some exciting producers and hopefully I can reveal more very soon." ■

● *All of My Life* is available now on iTunes

The Lightning Dream by Fury

ENTIRELY self-funded and produced this work from unsigned Worcester metallers

Fury shows a band that are already thoroughly in their stride. A modern take on the classic British heavy metal sound, the songwriting and musicianship are sublime with some killer riffs and indulgent shredding by guitar pair **JJ** and **Jake Beesley**. Standout tracks are *Out Beyond the Stars* and *Warriors Prayer*, while *Britannia* will move you to the core with its power and poignancy. Buy the album now at www.furyofficial.bigcartel.com



Matt Walpole, ex-PWRR

VERDICT: Absolutely faultless – a must-have album ★★★★★

American Beauty/American Psycho

JUST when you thought pop-punk outfit **Fall Out Boy** had slipped off the radar they come crashing back into the mainstream with their sixth album *American Beauty/American Psycho*. While single *Centuries* grows increasingly irksome with every listen it should not detract from what is a surprisingly decent offering. *Fourth of July* tackles the adult theme of a broken relationship but there is still plenty of fun to be had on *Novocaine* and *Uma Thurman* – which fuses the *Pulp Fiction* star with *The Munsters* theme tune.



Richard Long, Soldier

VERDICT: One of the better offerings in the band's back catalogue ★★★★★

Title by Meghan Trainor

WITH the upbeat *All About That Bass* landing a monster breakthrough hit for aspiring American star **Meghan Trainor** it was safe to assume it would be more of the same on her follow-up album. So it will be no surprise to hear there are doo-wops aplenty and harmonies galore in the constant flow of head-nodding pop anthems that fill this record. The lyrics offer little in terms of insight or meaning but the tunes are infectious at times and will prove memorable enough for fans of this genre.



Joe Clapson, Soldier

VERDICT: Sugary and sweet from pop's new pretender ★★★★★

The Subways by The Subways

ROCK three-piece **The Subways** are back with a cracking self-titled album full of slick riffs not seen since the early naughties. *I'm in*



Love and it's Burning in My Soul is a great example of thumping drums and aggressive guitars that will have you turning the volume up to 11. The band even show their lighter side in the entirely acoustic *Because of You*. *We Get Around* and *Black Letter* are simply outstanding and have hints of **The Ting Tings**, except both are far better than anything they've ever offered.

LCpl Scott Roberts, Rifles

VERDICT: The best thing in British rock music for some time ★★★★★

By Absence of the Sun by Triggerfinger

SUITED and booted quirky Belgian rockers **Triggerfinger** return with their latest offering *By Absence of the Sun*. The album opens with *Game*, which starts out



sounding like you've just walked into a jam session. But then the main riff kicks in and the slow stomp of the song grinds away as the lead vocals cut over the almost grunge-like backing track. With a sound much like **Led Zeppelin** it will be a definite hit among the rockers out there, piecing a void long missed since the likes of **Slipknot** – which is why they are on the same label.

Sgt Craig Backhouse, Coldm Gds

VERDICT: A well-crafted rock moshers' noisy paradise ★★★★★

Uptown Special by Mark Ronson

SUPER-PRODUCER **Mark Ronson** is renowned for calling in an array of A-list collaborators when it comes to recording a new album and that



is no different here. Pop superstar **Bruno Mars** leads the charge on the incredibly catchy single *Uptown Funk* – the true highlight of this offering – and it appears Ronson has hit the right note once again. Novelist **Michael Chabon** has been given the lyric-writing duties while **Stevie Wonder** lends a hand on *Crack in the Pearl, Pt II*. This is another sure-fire hit.

Richard Long, Soldier

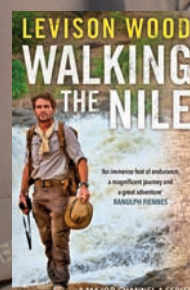
VERDICT: Ronson and friends are back with a bang ★★★★★

BOOKS

PICK OF THE MONTH:
WALKING THE NILE

EPIC EXPEDITION

RESERVIST'S 4,000-MILE MISSION TO TREK
THE WORLD'S LONGEST RIVER



Walking the Nile by
Levison Wood is out
now, priced £18.99

Picture: Secret Compass / Capt Tom McShane

Interview: Becky Clark

PARATROOPER Capt Levison Wood knows a thing or two about endurance.

Last year the Reservist launched a bid to become the first person to walk the length of the River Nile – some 4,250 miles.

Making his way from its source in Rwanda to its delta in the Mediterranean, the officer battled temperatures of up to 56 degrees Celsius and some of the most hostile terrain on earth.

His new book, *Walking the Nile*, relates the full story of the epic nine-month trek.

And last month a Channel 4 documentary of the same name attracted an average audience of two million – more than US cult series *Homeland*.

"People really seem to have got behind it," he said, reflecting on the project's popularity.

"It's a different angle on the adventure genre; it's not the Bear Grylls survival-type stuff but more about interaction with people and trying to change perceptions about what Africa is like."

Recalling the extreme demands of the feat, Capt Wood continued: "Your body adapts to walking but coping with the monotony and the mental strain of getting up every day and doing it all over again was the hardest thing.

"You have to try and keep yourself from going mad by just focusing on the daily routine – the next break, the next water stop."

The physical dangers were highlighted just weeks into the walk when Matt Power, an American travel writer who was accompanying Capt Wood in Uganda, died of heat stroke despite the team's best efforts to save him.

Following the tragedy the explorer wrestled with the decision about whether to continue but after speaking to Power's family he pressed on.

Further perils awaited in war-torn South Sudan, where the 32-year-old's experiences as a Regular with 3rd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment enabled him to keep a cool head.

"We arrived in Bor on the day when one of the tribal groups decided to storm the UN base and 62 people were killed," he commented.

"That evening we were stuck in a compound and there was a gun battle in the streets and tracer fire going overhead – it wasn't dissimilar to what I'd seen in Afghanistan.

"We had to go out to find food and one soldier, who was drunk, ran out and threatened to shoot me but my guide managed to talk him round.

"We thought we might have to swim across the Nile and hide in the bushes until it calmed down and take our chances with the crocodiles."

Now serving with the Military Stabilisation and Support Group (MSSG), Capt Wood said his new role had also assisted him on his mission.

"A lot of the work we are doing now is Africa-focused," he explained. "For example, before the expd I went to Burundi to help train its forces.

"Military diplomacy was a useful skill during the walk and vice versa – some of the things I learnt on the trek will be applicable to stuff I do in future with MSSG."

Commenting on how he hopes his Nile adventure would, above all, reveal a different side of Africa, he added: "There's a tainted view of places like Sudan but aside from getting shot at, people really looked after us.

"Every day we would have these amazing encounters with tribesmen or villagers who would come out and offer us tea or food and it's that humanity that will stay with me most." ■

Arc of the Gurkha

by Alex Schlacher

COINCIDING with the 200th anniversary of Gurkha service in the British Army, this volume documents the famous Royal Gurkha Rifles. Austrian photographer Alex Schlacher spent time with the formation in Afghanistan in 2011 and later met with recruits and veterans to gain an insight into their experiences. The book features some very interesting interviews, combined with stunning, intimate portraits and behind-the-scenes photography, making it a great addition to any coffee table.



Sgt Rupert Frere, RLC

VERDICT: A well-written book with some striking images ★★★★★

Buster

by Will Barrow

THE heart-warming true story of a Royal Air Force police search dog and his handler, this book follows the pair from the day they first met, through training and on to operations in Afghanistan. It opens up the private relationship that exists between man and dog and on each page you can feel their love, fear and concern for each other, which makes this a very enjoyable read. The only negative is that the text lacks some detail in places.



Sofia Byerley, civvy

VERDICT: A must-read for dog lovers and would-be handlers ★★★★★

High Command

by Christopher Elliott

THIS brutally honest appraisal of the UK Forces' high command by retired general Christopher Elliott takes a fascinating look at the decisions made by Service leaders in recent years. It examines how the MoD works, including the constant battles between the military and the purse holders and argues that bureaucracy has ground down the powers of successive defence chiefs. This book is long overdue and is recommended reading for all those slated to work in Main Building.



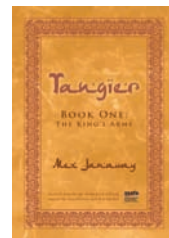
Andy Kay, ex-RS

VERDICT: I would give this more than five stars if I could ★★★★★

Tangier

by Alex Janaway

SET in 1662 as King Charles II's Army struggles to fortify the new garrison at Tangier, this novel has all the ingredients of a good old-fashioned historical yarn. Hero James Fitzwilliam, swashes and buckles his way around town, fighting enemies within the ranks as well as the tribesmen outside the gates – all while wooing a love interest. Page-turning action and the author's detailed knowledge about military life in the era bring a little-known campaign to life. I hope a sequel follows soon.



Becky Clark, Soldier

VERDICT: Highly recommended to fans of historical fiction ★★★★★

Extreme Food

by Bear Grylls

BEAR Grylls is one of my favourite people to watch on TV and I've read his previous books. His latest offering about how to survive on what nature can provide has lots of information, good illustrations and is very descriptive. Unfortunately, it's not the kind of title I really enjoy – it would probably appeal more to keen adventurers. However, it does make you look at food in a different way; it's only fuel to keep you running and who knows, it could save your life one day.



Bridget Salvage, civvy

VERDICT: A stomach-churning but informative read ★★★★★

Me and Thirteen Tanks

by P McD

DESPITE the subtitle of this memoir promising "tales of a freelance spy" you quickly realise that it isn't a story of derring-do in Cold War Europe. However, that doesn't detract from what is a very enjoyable and engrossing account of life as a BFBS DJ. Written in a very straightforward style, it highlights how life can easily be changed by being in the right place at the right time. It also reminds us that nine times out of ten, we – and Tutankhamun – are to blame for our problems. Read the book to find out why.



Chris Evans, civvy

VERDICT: A solid four but was missing some pictures ★★★★★



HEROES

WEAR®

HAIX



COMBAT BOOT COLD WET WEATHER



- > Waterproof and breathable with GORE-TEX®
- > Improved damping with HAIX® MSL System
- > Slip resistant Rubber/PU sole
- > HAIX® Climate System

Quality shoes for firefighters, rescue services, security, hunting, work wear and leisure time

HAIX® Group
84048 Mainburg, Germany
T. +49 (0) 87 51/86 25-0,
info@haix.de

www.haix.com



**Personalise your Mother's day Cards & Gifts
at HelloTurtle.com**

**Send your Cards to your Loved Ones
anywhere in the world!**

**Use code ARMY to receive 25% OFF all Cards
And we'll donate 50p to Help For Heroes
for every card ordered!**



LOOKING FOR MILITARY LEGAL ADVICE?

OUR SPECIALIST LAWYERS CAN
PROVIDE LEGAL ADVICE ON:

- Police interview
- Family & children matters
- Wills, Lasting Powers of Attorney
- Courts martial
- House purchase
- All general legal problems



Contact Alex Rynn and Tean Butcher:

Tel: 01522 512345

Between 9am and 5.15pm. After 5.15pm for Military Discipline Matters only,
contact Alex Rynn on 07775 022268

www.wilkinchapman.co.uk

**wilkin chapman llp
inc. gilbert blades
solicitors**



SOLDIERSPORT

Sports Editor: Richard Long

Photographers: Graeme Main and Steve Dock

Fighting fit: Boxers Spr Luke Brassfield (left) and LCpl Lewis Jones (right, both RE) are hoping to hit the title trail after joining the sport's professional ranks. Read the full story on page 80...





Wheels in motion

HAVING seen their male counterparts make significant strides in recent years the Army's growing legion of female cyclists is looking to follow suit during the 2015 season.

A winter camp in Cyprus forged a strong team spirit among the group and with regular training weekends planned throughout the coming months the stage is set for a significant push.

Inter-Services success in 2013 and 2014 laid the foundations for an expansion and with a steady flow of fresh talent joining the fold the future seems bright.

The new-look outfit recently took to the saddle for a two-day track session at the Newport Velodrome and will return to

Cyprus next month for further preparations ahead of the opening round of the women's National Road Race Series.

Speaking to *SoldierSport* during a break in training Maj Vickie Long (AGC (RMP)) said the squad's professional approach will be a huge benefit as the Servicewomen look to make their mark.

"The team has been going for a few years now but we

have not had the backing the guys get," the rider explained.

"In the past we have competed in road races but we were pretty much doing our own thing. But now we have a group of girls who have bonded well and they want to be involved.

"It is all about learning

people's strengths. Some are good at time trials, others are sprinters and there are those who are just workhorses.

"We now have to work on the dynamics of the team. This season will prove we can do it, we have a lot of potential and it is not just about the individuals."

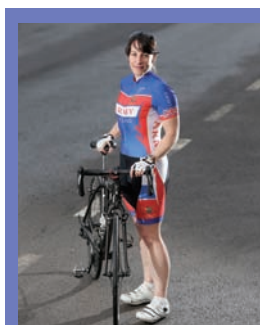
Widening the talent pool was the major focus during the close season and the set-up attracted two new novice riders ahead of the first trip to Cyprus.

The duo

will face a stern test in the national series – which welcomes competitors ranging from elite-level athletes to newcomers – but captain SSgt Donna Short (RLC) is unconcerned.

"It tends to be hard for our women as we are racing against top girls all the time and that can be quite daunting if it is your first race," she said.

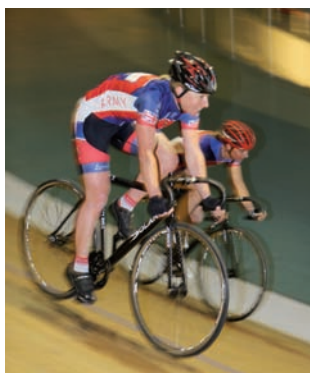
"However, our main aim is



"We have a group of girls who have bonded well and want to be involved"

Maj Vickie Long (AGC)





to get more people cycling. The more females we get the better and that will allow us to hold our own in races.

"Anyone can come along and jump on a bike; in two or three years they could be on the Army team.

"A lot of people may think they are not good enough to compete at that level but they have to start somewhere."

Short conceded that challenging in the upper echelons of the sport is an unrealistic target this season but said short-term goals have already been set for the upcoming campaign.

"We are going to choose a regional race series and try to win that; it will probably be based somewhere in the south of England," explained the senior NCO.

"We will also be competing in the women's National Road Race Series.

"We are not going to win against any of the top teams but we want to raise our profile and hopefully attract more sponsors.

"There is a great ethos within the team and we want to share that with as many people as possible." ■



For more details on how to get involved with the

women's team email

donna.short392@mod.uk

ARMY'S NEW BREED



» NOVICE riders Pte Charmaine Porter (RLC) and Pte Alex Farquhar (RAVC) will hit the road this season having only joined the ranks late last year.

The duo hail from strong sporting backgrounds and after committing themselves to a new pursuit they are relishing the challenge.

"The Army held a training weekend in Abingdon last November," Farquhar (pictured right) said. "I gave it a try and it went really well.

"I didn't think I would get to the level where I was able to compete but I have done better than expected.

"I now want to get involved as often as I can. We have never had as much momentum as we have now so it should be a good season.

"It all comes down to experience. I



haven't even had a race yet so I just want to go out and give it a go."

Porter's first taste of competitive cycling came at the Army Championships and after finishing in fourth place she was named in the team for the Inter-Services.

"That was a real surprise," the soldier (pictured left) recalled. "I wanted to progress so I bought my own bike and started training.

"This year will be my first proper season and hopefully I can get more experience.

"It is quite difficult to pick up and when I went to the Inter-Services I didn't really know what was going on. I had a quick chat with one of the girls at the start line and that meant I wasn't totally clueless but there is a lot to learn.

"I see myself staying with the team and it is now about setting some long-term goals."



QUEEN OF THE TRACK

» WHILE road racing remains the key focus for the women's team they will also have a representative on the track in the shape of Capt Sophie Faldo (RY).

The ex-Regular left full-time Service in 2012 to row on the Olympic development programme but after injury ended her hopes in the boat her attention turned to cycling.

Within eight months she had won a gold medal in the masters category at the national track championships and she is striving for further glory in 2015.

"Hopefully I can defend my title and push for a place in the elite competition," she said.

"I'm part of the London Dynamo club and we use the Olympic Velodrome, which is pretty amazing.

"I have only been training with the Army girls for two days but you get a real sense of the team ethic.

"They are working hard on their training and they want to make a name for the Service team. I'm excited to be part of it."

Punching with the pros

BOXING starlet LCpl Lewis Jones (RE) is hoping to create a springboard for success when he steps onto the canvas for a British Masters title fight this month.

The super featherweight will square off against undefeated rival Des Bowater at the home of Walsall Football Club on February 21 and with fellow soldier Spr Luke Brassfield (RE) in action a week later the Army will be dreaming of back-to-back wins for the young contenders.

Jones is challenging for the belt after just six bouts in the professional ranks and he is already targeting further honours as his ring renaissance gathers pace.

The 25-year-old spent two years on the Army boxing team before growing disillusioned with the sport but a chance sparring session with former European champion Rendall Munroe reignited his passion and the soldier is ready to rumble once again.

"I was doing some coaching with 26 Engineer Regiment and we organised a training camp at a pro gym for a change of

scenery," the sapper said.

"Rendall needed some sparring partners as he was training for a title fight. I did two or three days with him and I came away with fire in my belly.

"I didn't want to go back to amateur boxing as I wasn't suited to it but I enjoy the style of the professional game.

"Bowater is local to the Walsall area and has a 6-0 record. He's been up against journeymen and has not had a proper test; he's going to get a shock when he faces me.

"Hopefully this will lead to bigger things. It is a low-end belt but is a step in the right direction. I want to push for an English title and if something like Prizefighter came up I would jump at the opportunity."

Despite turning his back on the amateur sport Jones was quick to praise the Army set-up and the opportunities it offered.

"It is brilliant," he said. "The training and coaching is second to none – you could not ask for anything more. But I needed a break, I was just going through the motions towards the end and I lost heart." ■



“
He’s going
to get
a shock
when he
faces me
”

BOXING CLEVER



» BRASSFIELD takes on undefeated boxer Darren Tetley at the Doncaster Dome on February 28 in only his fourth contest at professional level.

Like Jones, the welterweight prospect enjoyed a spell with the Service squad but after leaving the group to focus on trade courses he is relishing his return to competitive action.

"To be successful you need to spend a lot of time in the gym," the veteran of Op Herrick 13 explained. "You are taking on fully grown men who are trying to earn money.

"I have had to learn a new way to box. I need to be more aggressive and look to get forward.

"I won every round in my first fight and that gave me a lot of confidence. I felt really good going into my second bout but I switched off for a moment and that resulted in a defeat."

While career progression with 51 Para Squadron, 23 Engineer Regiment remains the immediate focus the soldier is hoping to combine work commitments with success in the ring.

"I want to make improvements and get a title shot like Lewis," he added. "The British Masters and Midlands belts are my immediate targets, I need a few more fights first but once I get that experience I will hopefully get my chance."

Your Battle Station

FORCES TV

The only 24-hour TV channel dedicated to Britain's armed forces brings you the latest news about the world of defence.

Forces TV is broadcast on Sky Channel 264, Virgin 244, Freesat 652 and is also available online at **www.forces.tv**

SSVC Chief Executive, Nick Pollard, said: "Forces TV is an important addition to our mission of telling the public and the services community what's going on in the forces world, at a crucial time of change and challenge."

Forces TV video journalists report from operations, military exercises and live events to provide news and features from the UK and overseas.

The channel works with charities and organisations that support the serving and veteran communities to cover areas such as welfare and policy changes.

Both Sky and the BBC are supporting Forces TV with content, and programmes from specialist documentary-makers are also on the schedule.

www.forces.tv

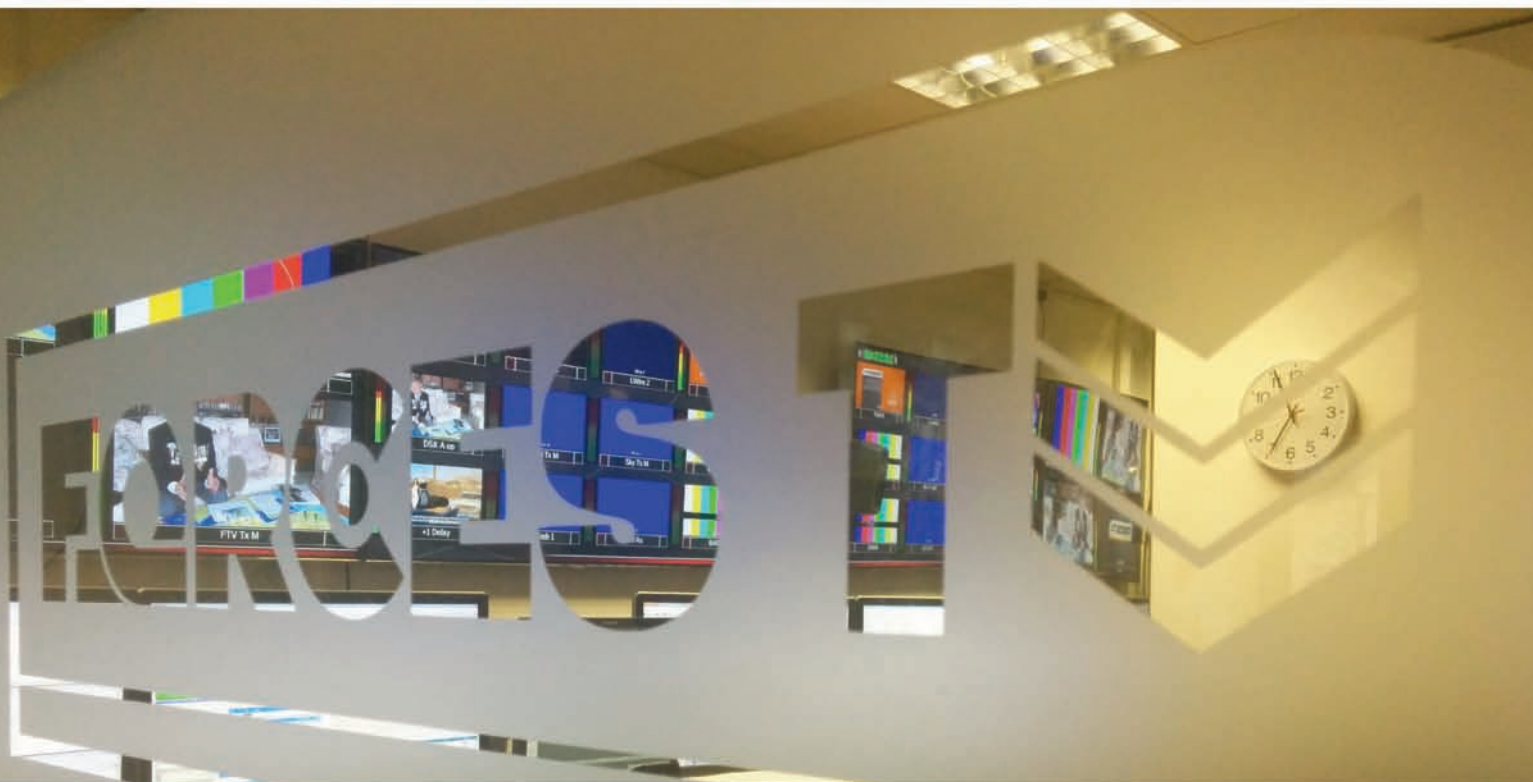


@Forces_TV

Forces TV



+ForcesTV



SKY 264

VIRGIN 244

FREESAT 652

WHILE London Welsh continue to struggle at the foot of the Aviva Premiership the club's top-flight campaign is proving to be a challenging adventure for Army star LCpl Ricky Reeves (RE).

The front-row forward was one of 25 new players to join the Exiles following their promotion last summer and after enduring a frustrating spell at Wasps he is relishing the opportunity of competing with some of the game's biggest names.

Reeves has been in the thick of the action this season and even though his new side have yet to win a league match he believes it is only a matter of time before that disappointing trend is reversed.

"Results haven't been great and I think that is down to the fact it has taken the guys a little longer to gel," the Serviceman told *SoldierSport* in an exclusive interview at the club's training ground.

"There are a lot of new players but individual errors have been costing us. We have a fantastic team with some great coaches and are not a million miles away.

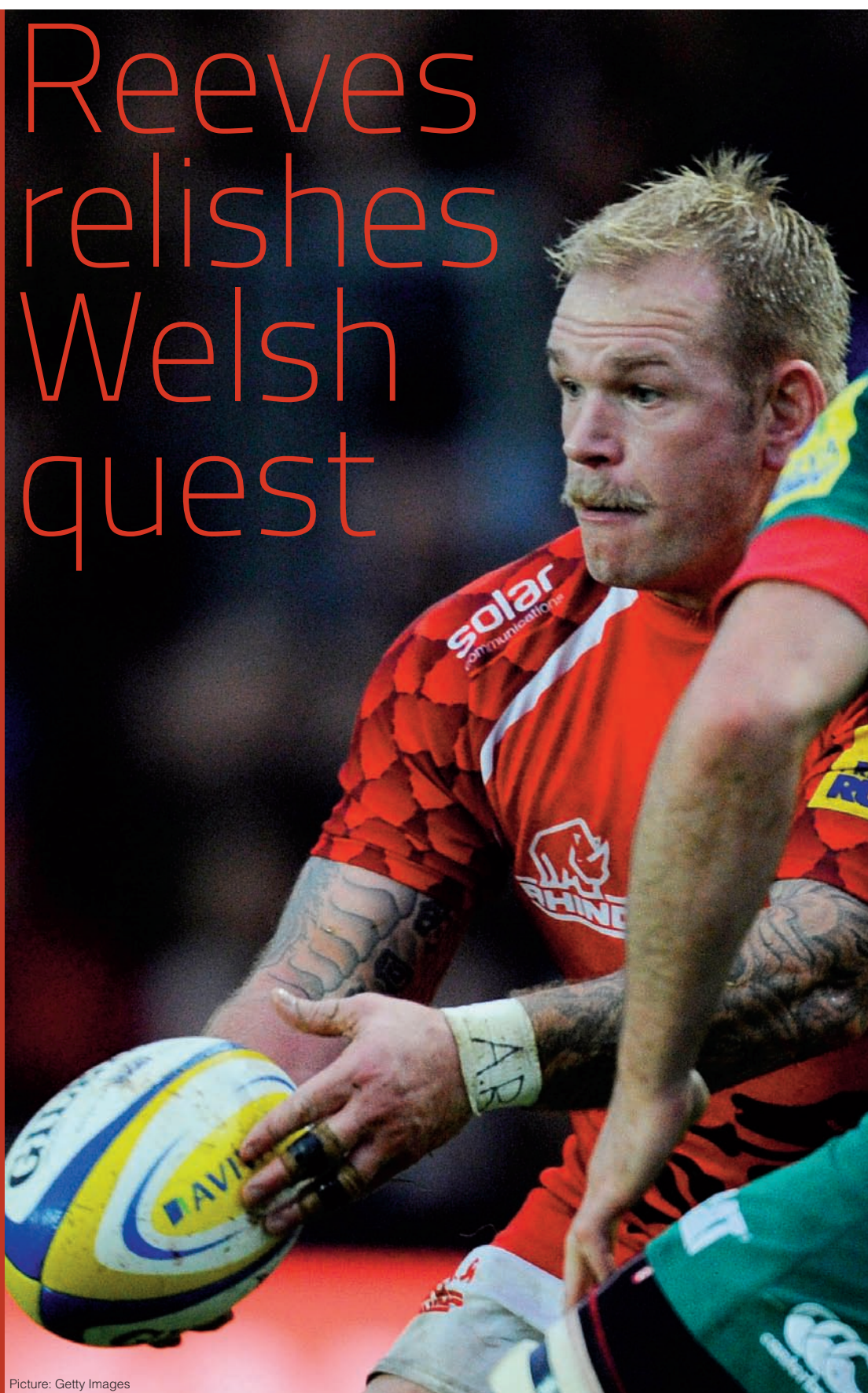
"But as soon as you make a mistake at this level it is punished. We have to cut that out.

"We have attacked well, defended well and have had some great passages of play; we just need to produce that for the full 80 minutes of a game."

The team's collective troubles have failed to detract from Reeves' personal progress and Army coach Capt Andy Sanger (RE) has been a key observer of his development this term.

With another Inter-Services campaign looming and a Defence World Cup to follow the 32-year-old's Premiership experience will be a key asset to the Reds.

Reeves relishes Welsh quest



Picture: Getty Images



"I feel I have progressed massively," he explained. "I'm now up against the great players I have watched lining up for England on television.

"But it's important I take a step back and tell myself 'they're just human'.

"They are not superheroes but normal, run-of-the-mill people just like me.

"You have to go in to compete and give it everything. Every day is a learning curve.

"I'm in the gym a lot more and can feel myself getting stronger and faster. As a professional you also have more time to work on little aspects of your game.

"There are no outside factors to worry about, your sole focus is rugby and that makes you a better player."

Reeves signed a two-year deal with London Welsh and his immediate aim is to help the club retain its Premiership status.

But he is also firmly committed to the Reds' cause and is plotting a return to life in uniform once his contract expires.

He said: "I'm thinking of going back to my regiment when it's up. I've had four or five years out playing rugby so I want to focus on my Army career.

"I'm part of 33 EOD Regiment so would like to get involved in UK operations as a trained searcher. I want to do my bombs courses and get back to playing regimental and corps rugby.

"London Welsh have been pretty good. I have it written in my contract that I can be released for three Army games so that will cover the Inter-Services matches and the training camp held in the build-up to the competition.

"I speak to Andy Sanger on a regular basis.

"He is happy that I'm getting more game time and

he knows I'm training hard.

"I have massive respect for him and he is one of the best coaches I have ever played for.

"At the end of the day the Army is my first priority. I get some banter from the lads when I join up with the squad but I like it, it is important to be involved.

"The Army-Navy match is an opportunity to get seen by people, it is a great game and a fantastic stage."

Reeves is not the only Service player to be making a name for himself in the Premiership and he was thrilled to see Reds teammate LCpl Semesa Rokoduguni (Scots DG) earn his first England cap following some sublime displays for Bath.

"His call-up was fully deserved; he is the best wing in the league," the soldier said.

"He has come up through the Army sevens and then the full 15 and I'm delighted for him.

"We went to The Rec to play Bath and I was giving him some stick on Facebook. He was in the England frame at the time so I didn't want to break him. I hit him but he bounced off me; I got some grief in return for that." ■

"I can feel myself getting stronger and faster"

"



Front-row fact file

Position: Prop
Weight: 18st 8lb
Height: 6ft 1in
Previous clubs:
Cambridge, Bedford,
Saracens, Wasps
Total London Welsh
appearances: 16

Blazing a trail



Development team launches search for new talent as riders push for seats at the top table

WITH downhill mountain biking among the many boom sports in the Service every effort is being made to capitalise on the pursuit's success to ensure it continues long term.

The Army's senior set-up is starting to make a name for itself in the British Downhill Series and with a rapidly emerging development squad offering a proving ground for emerging talent the future is looking bright.

Competition for places is the driving force behind the two-tiered structure and potential riders for either outfit are fully aware that they must earn their spot.

Preparations for the 2015 campaign are already

well under way and with development team manager Sgt Chris Mount (RE) looking to raise the profile of the group and attract greater numbers race seats will be more coveted than ever.

Mount's men will be competing in the Pearce Cycles Downhill Series and the Forest of Dean Mini Downhill and the NCD is planning for a successful season.

"The development team is all about finding people who are dedicated to the sport and have the skill to ride," he told *SoldierSport* during a break in training at Rogate Downhill.

"They may need a season or two at this level but once they are deemed as being Army standard they can think about stepping up to the main team.



“
Downhill riders are the rock stars of the mountain biking world
”

Sgt Chris Mount (RE)

"We have got ten guys who race regularly but there are more and more people wanting to get involved. We put events on so they can ride together and stage training sessions to work on jumps and other technical elements."

As well as organising the team Mount is a fierce competitor and has set a number of personal goals for the year ahead.

"I have raced against people from the senior squad in different events and I have beaten a few of them," he explained. "There is a really good team spirit within the group and everyone wants one of those top places."

"My target is to beat the other development riders so I can make the step up next



season. As manager, I want more people to know what we're about and show them how they can get involved.

"Downhill riders are the rock stars of the mountain biking world. It is an absolute adrenalin rush. It challenges you and pushes the envelope; that is why it appeals."

Newcomer LCpl Jonathan Gray (RE) only joined the fold last year and is aiming to push for a place on the team after some encouraging displays.

And having previously participated on a recreational level he is relishing the environment he now finds himself in.

"I had never really raced before but when I found out about the Army development team I wanted to get involved,"

the sapper explained.

"They are a great bunch of lads. There are no cliques but there is a lot of competitive banter when it comes to the races; that is good though as it makes you go faster.

"I'm hoping to get quicker and quicker and do as many events as possible; the senior squad is my long-term goal.

"It is a brilliant sport. Not everyone is into football or rugby. Downhill has been around for a while and it's only going to get bigger." ■



For more details on how to get involved visit the British Army Downhill Development Team page on Facebook.

SOLDIERSPORT SITREP

25-35

mph average speed on a downhill run

TOP SPEED

of up to 50mph



20-70

degree slopes faced by riders

1.5

the minimum length, in kilometres, of courses in the national series



798

likes on the British Army Downhill Development Team Facebook page

Reserve rider



» RESERVIST Pte Mark Buckingham (RLC) sampled downhill mountain biking on an adventurous training package and immediately fell in love with the sport.

"It makes you feel alive," said the ex-Regular, who served for 22 years in the Royal Artillery. "When you finish a really good run the buzz can last for days.

"This is a brilliant set-up. I'm aiming for some good finishes this season with a few podiums as well. I need to make some technical improvements then I can push for the senior team; that would be a massive achievement."

MONTH in sport

February's key fixtures...



WHAT: Army Cross Country Championships

WHEN: Wednesday, February 4

WHERE: Royal Military Academy Sandhurst

COMMENTS: More than 500 runners took to the start line for last year's individual and team finals, which proved to be an ideal proving ground for the Service's emerging talent



WHAT: Army women v England Under-20s rugby union

WHEN: Tuesday, February 17 (1900 kick-off)

WHERE: Army Rugby Stadium, Aldershot

COMMENTS: The Reds are in fine form this season but face a tough test as their Inter-Services preparations continue



WHAT: Army v Royal Navy, Under-23 Inter-Services football

WHEN: Wednesday, February 18 (1400 kick-off)

WHERE: Army Military Stadium, Aldershot

COMMENTS: An admin error ended the team's title hopes in 2014 and they will be going all-out to regain their crown

Horner's high hopes

HAVING seen the Reds relinquish their Inter-Services title in 2014 there is one key objective for the new man in charge of the Army rugby league set-up.

Sgt Jack Horner (RLC) already has one eye on the Forces showdown later this year but his immediate focus is the Ladbroke's Challenge Cup and the squad's first-round clash with the Wath Brow Hornets.

The soldiers were in action against the Cumbrian outfit as this issue went to press and the new head coach was bracing himself for a stern test on the pitch.

"They are ranked as the third-best amateur club in the country," Horner told *SoldierSport* on the eve of the fixture.

"From speaking to a few

people up there I've heard we're not held in the greatest esteem. But we have a good group of players and some of those are on semi-professional contracts.

"We have real strength in depth and are confident in our abilities."

A provisional squad of 38 was named for the match and being a former academy coach Horner is fully aware of the talent available.

Up-and-coming stars such as Pte Dan Coombs and LCpl Sam Montague (both RLC) have been added to the mix following the departure of some key individuals and the team has high hopes for a strong cup campaign and the challenges that follow.

"I am chuffed to bits to have this job," Horner said.

"It is the pinnacle of coaching

within the Army game.

"My mission statement for this year is to win back the Inter-Services title.

"Last season we had a really close match with the Royal Navy but we let our lead slip when we thought the game was won.

"There will be less pressure on us this time round as we're no longer the defending champions but I want to take that title and retain it in 2016.

"In the Challenge Cup our aim is to progress to the fourth round, which is something the Army has never achieved before.

"We have got faith in ourselves. This squad has been around for a few years now and is not a group of players that has just been thrown together." ■

“
We have real strength in depth and are confident in our abilities
”





Pictures: Sgt Russ Nolan, RLC

Spartan's success story

A FIELD of almost 500 athletes descended on the slopes of Serre Chevalier in France for Exercise Spartan Hike – the semi-final of the Army Alpine and Nordic Ski Championships.

Varying conditions on the piste failed to dent the competitive edge and 27 Regiment, Royal Logistic Corps – spearheaded by Captain Thomas – proved to be the outfit to beat.

The officer tasted individual glory in the Alpine combination and his unit finished first in the super-G and giant slalom.

With numbers proving to be particularly high this year the organisers opened a second hill, which saw victories for 26 Regiment, Royal Artillery in the super-G, 23 Engineer Regiment (Air Assault) in the slalom and 26 Engineer Regiment in the giant slalom.

Soldiers from 17 Port and Maritime Regiment, Royal Logistic Corps dominated the men's Nordic events and the unit took team prizes in the biathlon, cross-country and 4x5km cross-country relay.

Gnr Martin Shaw (26 Regt RA) was crowned individual

biathlon champion, while Cpl Benjamin Woolley (17 P&M Regt RLC) took top spot in the cross-country.

In the women's races, 16 Regiment, Royal Artillery celebrated team success in the biathlon and cross-country – with squad member Lt Jennifer Price taking individual gold in both – and they also secured the 4x5km cross-country relay title.

"These units take this competition very seriously," exercise controller Maj Rick Young (RAPTC) told *SoldierSport*. "They want to compete and get to the full Army finals.

"Some will go on to race at the Inter-Services so it is a big deal.

"On the whole, the event has gone really well and skiing is no longer an officers' sport.

"It has fantastic appeal for young soldiers. It gets the legs trembling when you head out

of the gate for a particularly icy slalom run.

"We also have the 'phys monsters' who love the Nordic side of things."

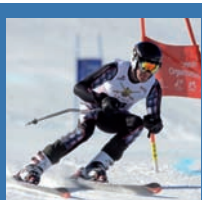
The other semi-final –

Exercise Pipedown – saw 1 Logistic Support Regiment reign supreme in the slalom and giant slalom with team stalwart SSgt Dougie Macpherson the individual winner in both disciplines.

Service women from 4 Armoured Medical Regiment dominated the ladies biathlon team events – with Cpl Lydia Hilson and Cpl Jo Brownlow proving to be particularly strong – and 1 Close Support

Battalion, Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers completed a clean-sweep in the men's disciplines.

The Army Championships were being held as this issue went to press. ■



“Skiing has fantastic appeal for young soldiers”

Maj Rick Young (RAPTC)

Piste report

Date: January 11-21, 2015

Competition: Ex Spartan Hike

Venue: Serre Chevalier, France

Spartan results

Slalom

1. 5 Battalion, REME
2. 27 Regiment, RLC
3. 22 Signal Regiment

Super-G

1. 27 Regiment, RLC
2. 5 Battalion, REME
3. 9 Regiment, RLC

Giant slalom

1. 27 Regiment, RLC
2. 5 Battalion, REME
3. 9 Regiment, RLC

Biathlon – men

1. 17 Port and Maritime Regt
2. 16 Regiment, RA
3. 27 Regiment, RLC

Biathlon – women

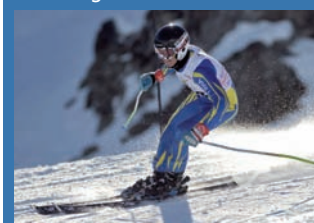
1. 16 Regiment, RA
2. 9 Regiment, RLC
3. 26 Regiment, RA

Cross-country – men

1. 17 Port and Maritime Regt
2. 16 Regiment, RA
3. 27 Regiment, RLC

Cross-country – women

1. 16 Regiment, RA
2. 9 Regiment, RLC
3. 12 Regiment, RA



SPORT
SHORTS

Jiu-jitsu joy

FOUR gold medals were captured by the Army's Brazilian jiu-jitsu squad when they took to the mat at the sport's London International Open.

Sgt Graeme Finneran (2 Para) tasted double delight with teammates Sgt Andy Little (4 Regt, AAC) and Sgt Paul Lomas (R Signals) also securing top honours.

Maj Don MacIntyre (Int Corps), the discipline's officer in charge, said: "It was an excellent result and shows we can hold our own at a high-profile civilian level."



Call to Sandown

SERVICE jockeys will return to Sandown Park on Friday, March 6 for the annual Grand Military Gold Cup meeting.

Two of the card's six races will be dedicated to Service riders, with Maj Alex Michael (KRH) and Gnr Grace Gostelow (RHA, pictured) in contention to represent the Army.

For more information about the event including discounts on admission fees for serving personnel visit www.sandown.co.uk

→ Team of the month

Army Masters Rugby Union Team



THE Army Masters started their competitive campaign in style by demolishing the Prison Service on a windswept night in Aldershot.

A seven-try burst in the challenging wintry conditions steered the Reds to a 44-17 win and with a number of new players catching the eye competition for places in this season's Inter-Services' line-up looks set to be fierce.

Winger SSgt Karl Hinton (4 Med Regt) gave the soldiers the perfect start with a brace in the early exchanges and a superb score from Maj Dave Glendenning (RA, pictured right) secured a slender 18-17 lead at the interval.

But the hosts were a different side after the break and further tries from Capt Sly Silvester (RAMC), Capt Dave Boocock (RAPTC), Maj

Ollie Ormiston (R Anglian) and WO2 Brad Sutherland (Coldm Gds) saw them romp to victory.

The match followed a highly competitive trials period before Christmas in which more than 60 players put themselves forward for selection.

A tour of Bermuda – that included fixtures against the Atlanta Renegades and Bermuda Barbarians – forged a strong team spirit within the group and a squad of 26 has now been named for the business end of the season.

"A lot of our guys are sergeants and warrant officers who are approaching the 22-year mark so there is constant change," team director and player Col Simon Orr told *SoldierSport* at full-time.

"We are generating strong competition for places; this is not gin-and-tonic-rugby and we

are trying to play to a professional standard."

As well as chasing success on the pitch head coach WO2 Mark Reed (RE) has been keen to implement an entertaining approach to the game.

"It is one thing to go out and beat our Forces rivals but we get a much better feeling if we do it in style," he explained. ■



Army Masters 44
Prison Service 17
Tries: Hinton (2),
Glendenning, Silvester,
Boocock, Ormiston,
Sutherland.



Supplying the world's finest combat equipment.

As a company populated by ex-soldiers, Level Peaks instinctively know good kit. We trawl the Globe in order to respond to Customer requirements with the most appropriate solutions, and we pride ourselves in our ability to deliver the 'best' to the best.

Level Peaks supply equipment to UK MoD, Police and other government departments via a variety of contracts. We also distribute selected products to a small group of UK resellers to enable individual purchases. See our website for more details.

Level Peaks
ASSOCIATES 

www.levelpeaks.com

Note that the British Army personnel can only wear non-standard equipment when specifically authorised by the chain of command*

Final word

On the ground in Nepal we asked potential recruits for the Brigade of Gurkhas why they think the British Army is so special...



John Gurung

The British Army is one of the oldest militaries in the world and is very technical and renowned for its bravery. The Service is known for having the latest armour, vehicles and advanced fighting equipment and its soldiers have a fine reputation on operations.



Rupesh Limbu

As one of the oldest military systems in the world the British Army is still very strong. Even though operations in Afghanistan have been difficult its personnel were successful. I admire the troops that have gone before me and I want to learn how to be a true soldier like them.



Bishwas Ghale

Gurkhas have served with the British for many years and I know the Force has been on operations in many regions. Its soldiers have worked in war zones and as peacekeepers and they have done an excellent job – especially in Afghanistan. The aim of every army is to keep people safe and the UK excels in doing that.



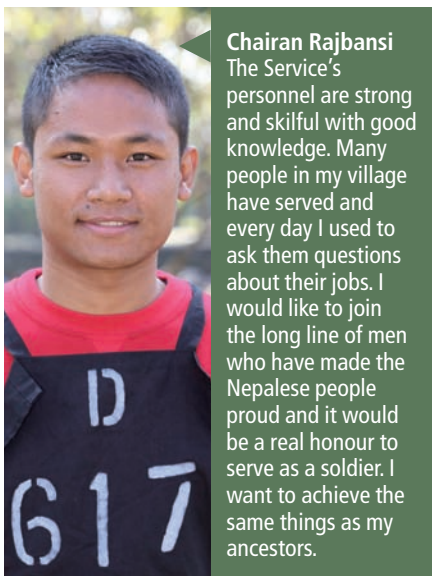
David Rai

The UK is one of the toughest military forces and for a long time it has provided brilliant facilities for Gurkhas to train in. I am very proud that the British Army recruits Nepalese personnel and that my grandfather served with the Force. He told me all about the adventures in a soldier's life.



Kiran Rai

British soldiers are esteemed – they have the best weapons and kit and they are excellent at protecting their own country as well as others. The Army is special because it has earned respect and I look forward to a time when I can go on a mission as a Gurkha.



Chairan Rajbansi

The Service's personnel are strong and skilful with good knowledge. Many people in my village have served and every day I used to ask them questions about their jobs. I would like to join the long line of men who have made the Nepalese people proud and it would be a real honour to serve as a soldier. I want to achieve the same things as my ancestors.



Dilbahadur Gurung

I think what makes the British Army special compared to others is that it defends not only its own country but those across the world. Recently its troops have been in Afghanistan and the UK is now looking at places like Syria. Its soldiers are the most disciplined and have shown courage in battle and I would like to be part of that.



Sanjan Khapung

British troops flourish wherever they are deployed and are part of a great military power. I have learnt from the internet, books and relatives who have served in Afghanistan that soldiering can be fierce and involve tough conditions but they do a good job.

BFPO
TAX FREE
SHOPPING



Altberg Ledergris
MOD Brown 40g
£4.95



Disciple SPARTA
Plate Carrier
CT or DMTP
£79.95



Camotech
Cam Cream
£5.95



Disciple M1M
Patrol Pack
£54.95



Small Crown
Officers Berets
£14.00



Disciple Airborne
Webbing from
£129.95



Camelbak
Motherlode Lite
£139.95



Disciple MOLLE
Tactical Harness
£24.95



Disciple PLCE
MOLLE Utility
£22.95



Disciple PLCE
Molle Ammo Pouch
£24.95



Disciple APCU Level V Soft Shell
WHILE STOCKS LAST!!!
NOW ONLY £39.95



Badges
from £2.00



Keela Special Forces
Waterproof Jacket
£159.95



ATP Multicamo
SAS Smock
£64.95



58 Pattern
Helmet Hooks
£2.95

08456 44 50 60
www.army-surplus.co.uk



OUR STORES

We have 3 retail stores in the UK.
If you're in the area, why not drop by?



CARTERTON OX18 3YJ



TIDWORTH SP9 7PS



CATTERICK DL9 3EN

100s of cars in stock

IMMEDIATE COLLECTION AVAILABLE!

FINANCE AVAILABLE - HIGH ACCEPTANCE RATE!

Ford Fiesta 1.6T ST 3dr

Tax Free from £11,345

Tax Paid from £13,495



**Vauxhall Corsa 1.4 90ps
Limited Edition 3dr**

Tax Free from £9,720

Tax Paid from £12,495



Suzuki S-Cross 1.6 SZ3

Tax Free from £10,628

Tax Paid from £12,495



OVER 200 USED CARS IN STOCK TOO!

emcforces
cars

UK Phone 01323 739675

Cavendish Bridge, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN21 3SE

German Freephone 08001 827633 or 08001 860183

www.emcforcescars.com



Follow us on Twitter



Like us on Facebook