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Left to right: Siobhan Weller, Les Fryatt, Kenneth Kwogyenga – Charity beneficiaries

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The NHS is fully supportive of my life as a Reservist

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A tale of two theatres – page 42



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In praise of an estate shake-up



IT IS a fact that our mood is affected by our surroundings – ask any architect or psychologist that.

So in a month where the continuous attitude survey reports the lowest level of satisfaction among troops since the study began (page 15), it is heartening to learn that Service personnel have been put in charge of maintenance across the Army estate (page 7).

Although many of our readers have learnt to be cautious, if not sceptical, about sweeping organisational changes that promise the world, it doesn't take a genius to see that something had to give with the upkeep of military barracks and buildings.

Let's hope that through more timely repairs and better prioritisation of tasks, the delegated infrastructure project will bring a much-needed boost to the well-being of soldiers.

And if it doesn't, I have no doubt our ever-honest readers will tell us (*Talkback*, page 45).

We wish the team every success as they try to effect change.

Sarah Goldthorpe • Editor

Where to find *Soldier*

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TACTICAL



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More order on the Army estate

Troops put in charge of improvements to barracks, digs, offices and hangers

TEAMS of soldiers are to oversee the maintenance and upkeep of the Army's barracks and buildings in a radical shake-up.

The delegated infrastructure project, launched in April, aims to improve the way Service property is managed following years of underinvestment and problems with various contractors.

While the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) and its industry partners will continue to deliver the actual repairs and upgrades, those in uniform will now have a direct say on how budgets are spent and what work should be a priority.

"For decades the Army, and defence as a whole, has underinvested in infrastructure due to the pressure of operations," Col Andy Szabo (pictured below), assistant chief of staff for infrastructure at HQ Regional Command, told *Soldier*.

"As a result, parts of the estate are now in a position where they do not support our personnel in what they need to do.

"What we have taken from the DIO is the process of identifying a problem and saying what needs to be done.

"In the past there hasn't been a great understanding

of what it means to the soldiers if something goes wrong and the impact that has in terms of training and preparation."

The new structure means the Army will have closer links to the DIO so it can highlight potential problems that will occur if work and upgrades are not completed.

It also allows them to be proactive instead of reactive. For example, the maintenance of heating and hot water systems can be carried out during the summer months rather than waiting for issues to arise in the winter.

A team of 69 infrastructure specialists – comprised of Regular personnel, Reservists and civil servants – will be based at DIO offices across the UK to allow the two organisations to work more closely.

"The old system relied on the DIO having the capacity to understand what we were doing, but we weren't in a position to tell them that," Col Szabo added.

"This is us holding ourselves to account.

"The new set-up allows us to decide where the money goes and how we plan ahead, and it has made a positive change to the relationship we have with the DIO."



ESTATE BRIEF:

THE SITUATION:

In some cases problems with the Army estate have impacted on how people feel about being in uniform.

WHAT IS COVERED BY THE PROJECT:

Not Service family accommodation – that budget is still controlled centrally. But everything else found in a barracks, such as single living accommodation, offices, hangers, catering facilities and shops.

REPORTING FAULTS:

Issues still go to the helpdesk. But if there is a problem at the business end the Army team will step in.

MONEY MATTERS:

The maintenance budget hasn't increased but existing funds can now be focused where they are needed. By giving control back to the Army, better investment decisions can be made.

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GLOBAL SITREP

1. CANADA

PRAIRIE SUNSET

TROOPS from Alma Company, 1st Battalion, The Yorkshire Regiment (pictured) – part of the King's Royal Hussars Battlegroup – bid farewell to the plains of Alberta as this year's Exercise Prairie Storm drew to a close.

Their departure clears the way for personnel from 1st Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers and The Royal Tank Regiment to conduct two consecutive back-to-basics packages.

The 18-day serials – known as Exercise Warrior's Craft – will see the formations certified to collective training level two at British Army Training Unit Suffield.

They will also stage a light role reconnaissance manoeuvre further north at Canadian Forces Base Wainright.

2. BELIZE

MAYAN MANOEUVRES

MORE than 70 Reservists from Northern Ireland-based 591 Squadron, 71 Engineer Regiment have been honing their skills on Exercise Mayan Star at British Army Training Support Unit Belize.

Capt Ian Baxter (RE), the unit's permanent staff administration officer, said the soldiers had gained a great deal from the month-long package, which saw them carry out building tasks around camp and on the exercise area.

"They've been filling their boots and having a great time," he commented.



3. FALKLAND ISLANDS

OP CORPORATE RECALLED

THE annual ceremony to mark the end of the Falklands War saw Armed Forces personnel parade through the capital, Port Stanley.

Grateful islanders applauded troops from all three Services during the event, which is held on June 14 – the day the Argentinians surrendered in the wake of the Battle of Tumbledown.



4. CHILE

KEEPING FRIENDS CLOSE

DEFENCE Minister Mark Lancaster met political counterparts and military top brass during a visit to three South American countries.

The MP said the UK already had a "proud and long-standing history" with Chile, Uruguay and Colombia, adding that it was "vital to keep all our international friends close".

His programme included a visit to the Military Academy in Santiago and Uruguayan National Peacekeeping School – which has trained troops for the United Nations mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo.



5. SOUTH SUDAN

PEACEKEEPING PREP

TROOPS from 36 Engineer Regiment and Inkerman Company of 1st Battalion, Grenadier Guards have been in the final stages of their ramp-up training before heading to South Sudan.

The soldiers recently conducted their mission rehearsal exercise on Stanford Training Area in Norfolk, running through serials including mass casualty drills ahead of their Op Trenton deployment, which begins this month.

Their task force – which is headed up by the Sappers – will be joining the wider United Nations-led mission and based at two locations in the north of the African country.



INTELLIGENCE
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8. BOSNIA BALKANS REVISITED

EXTRA soldiers have been earmarked for deployment to the Balkans to bolster European stabilisation efforts, the defence secretary has confirmed.

Gavin Williamson said 40 troops would be joining the Eufor mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina - Op Althea - where they would undertake a six-month tour, forming part of a specialist surveillance and intelligence task force.

The UK already has 30 soldiers in a similar role as part of Nato's Kosovo Force alongside allies from Germany, Italy, Poland, Turkey and the United States.

“Clinical timelines are tight”

Medics make it work in Poland - page 38

- 7. GERMANY
- 8. BOSNIA
- 6. IRAQ
- 5. SOUTH SUDAN

6. IRAQ

A JOB WELL DONE

PERSONNEL from 2nd and 3rd Battalions, The Royal Regiment of Scotland have completed a successful tour to Iraq on Op Shader.

Working as part of a coalition of 72 nations, the soldiers played a key role in training instructors for the Iraqi Security Forces - who continue to counter Isis threats in the region and potential attacks from the bordering nations of Iran and Syria.

The Scots troops also provided force protection at the locations where the training takes place, as well as Al Asad Airbase.

More than 500 soldiers from the two battalions were involved in the deployment, helping Iraqi personnel learn counter-IED drills, infantry skills and combat medical techniques.



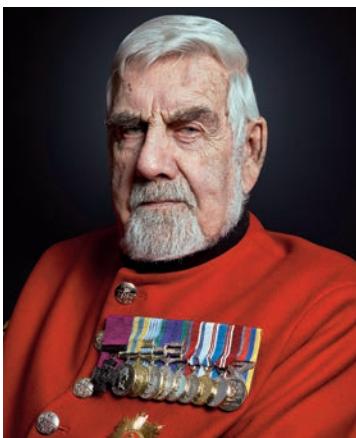
7. GERMANY CLERKS CRANK IT UP

SOLDIERS from the Adjutant General's Corps Staff and Personnel Support Branch swapped their spreadsheets for SA80s during a week-long exercise on Sennelager Training Area.

Around 40 troops from across 3rd (UK) Division focused on basic soldiering skills, testing their ability with a range of drills including establishing a harbour area, conducting recce patrols and completing a platoon attack in an urban area with armoured support.

Capt James Harrison (AGC (SPS)) said: "It is not often we have the opportunity to deploy into the field so not only does an exercise like this give us credibility, it also provides a fantastic platform for us to test our troops' leadership skills outside of their normal working environment."





TRIBUTES PAID TO VC HERO

■ WARM tributes have been paid to the first soldier to be awarded the Victoria Cross by The Queen.

Bill Speakman received the highest decoration of bravery during the Korean War after holding off waves of enemy attackers despite having been wounded during heavy fighting in 1951.

Having enlisted in The Black Watch in 1945, he had been attached to the King's Own Scottish Borderers during the conflict – subsequently transferring to the regiment.

He went on to serve on several worldwide deployments.

A staunch Royal British Legion supporter, the 89-year-old had moved to the Royal Hospital Chelsea in 2015.

A statement from the Victoria Cross and George Cross Association said: "He died peacefully on June 20 – members of his family were at his bedside."



PLAIN HOMES ON TARGET

■ A PROJECT to build more than 900 new homes for troops and families returning from Germany is now well under way in Wiltshire, it has been confirmed.

Initial work on the first houses in the £250 million initiative has been completed – with contractor Lovell claiming properties will be ready on schedule next year.

The new homes are being built around Bulford, Larkhill and Ludgershall on Salisbury Plain. Part of the Army Basing Programme, the scheme is expected to deliver 20 properties per week.



Chief of the General Staff, Gen Mark Carleton-Smith, reveals to *Soldier* his vision for the Service's future...

I AM delighted to be appointed Chief of the General Staff. To command the British Army is the highest honour and I am privileged to serve the best soldiers in the world.

We live in exceptionally unstable times and the world seems to be more unpredictable than ever.

I place a great premium on the hard-won lessons from the battlefield and feel strongly that the Army needs to be used and needs to be useful – we are both. We are deployed on operations contributing to security by reducing the risk of conflicts through tasks such as the enhanced forward presence in Estonia and Poland, the Kabul Security Force in Afghanistan and by building stability overseas with numerous short-term training teams.

My focus as CGS is the future, to ensure we are combat ready today and prepared for tomorrow; an Army persistently engaged overseas to deter and protect while remaining positively engaged and connected at home, contributing to both national security and to enhancing our national prosperity.

I want ours to be a winning Army, one that is founded on comradeship, self-respect and self-discipline, imbued with initiative and daring, with originality and self-confidence,

with professional knowledge and infectious energy in all its soldiers and commanders.

It's also important we are bound by a common set of values and standards and appreciate the irrepressible sense of humour of the British soldier who keeps things in proportion and fundamentally has a sense of humility and an honest sense of decency.

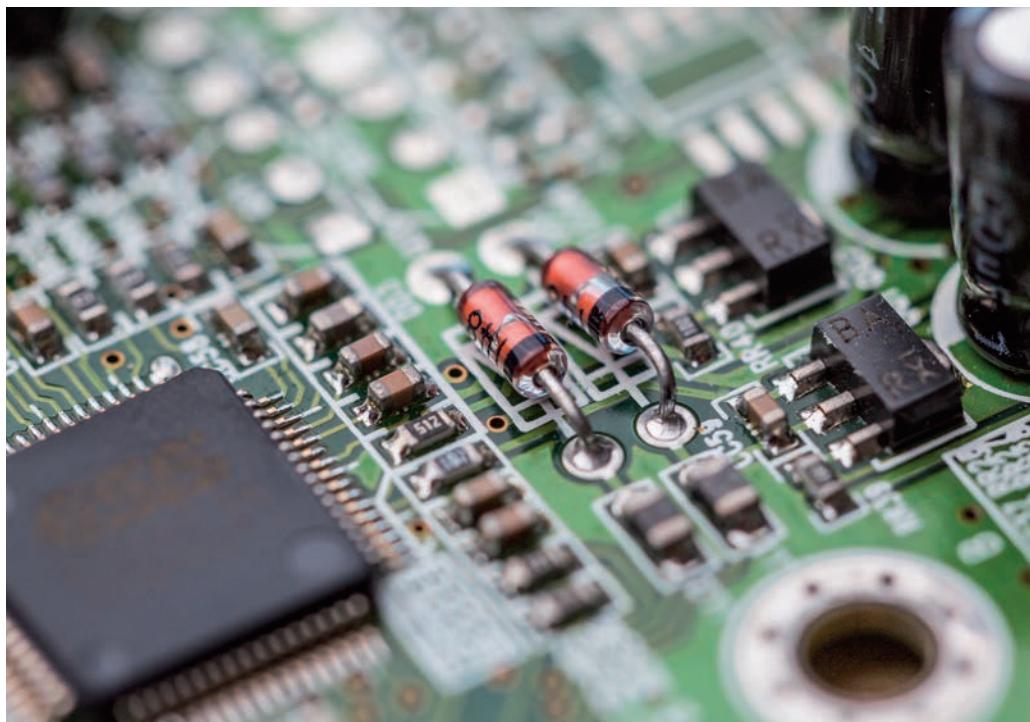
If I were to brand our Army it would be as intelligent, dynamic and adaptive warfighting professionals – recognising that we're paid to fight and to win.

This is a unique responsibility and on behalf of our nation and as your commander, my primary responsibility is the nurture and nourishment of the Army's fighting spirit. It is what sets us apart and is the true litmus test of our readiness. Keep it bright and we will remain world-beating.

As soldiers, we are custodians of something exceptionally precious, not just our Army, but our nation's Army. And it is made of flesh and blood and beating hearts. This is the family we all belong to.

I will spend the coming months taking the chance to visit as many units and troops as possible and I look forward to meeting you, and hearing your views.





Shooting for a hi-tech revolution

Army chief to encourage measures for developing talent and new technologies

THE Chief of the General Staff, Gen Mark Carleton-Smith, says he wants to ensure the Army is sufficiently well equipped to tackle new and growing threats in the virtual space as well as on the battlefield.

Speaking at the Royal United Services Institute's land warfare conference in London, he said the nature of conflict "had broadened beyond traditional physical spaces".

"Our ability to manoeuvre in the information and cyber domains is already being tested and will increasingly influence how we will modernise, train and fight in the future," he added.

The top officer said the Service is placing an increasing emphasis on attracting highly talented personnel who might otherwise be drawn to employers such as technology firms.

"You'll find in the Service I command some of the brightest and the best of all generations in those posts that will shape us," he added.

"And the further out we look, the younger I want those teams to be."

However, he admitted there will be hurdles to clear when it comes to employing those specialists.

"We need new non-traditional skills

not normally associated with people looking for careers in defence or the Army," he said.

"They will have aptitudes that are highly sought after in a global market and their instincts will be more independently minded and less hierarchical than some in uniform would feel comfortable with."

"They will make very different demands on our leadership."

Gen Carleton-Smith also noted that experimentation and utilising cutting-edge equipment and techniques should become the new norm.

He said the development of the Army's capabilities must be more proactive and include major investments in certain technologies in order to avoid being left behind.

"We need to accelerate the pipeline taking operational concepts and requirements from acquisition to fielding," he said.

"And we also need a quicker route to demonstration and rapid prototyping so that if we do fail we do it early and cheaply."

As part of this new drive, the Army is staging an experiment in November to test a range of advanced autonomous systems (page 13).

“We need new non-traditional skills”



BIDDER BAGS TASTY TREAT

■ BARS of chocolate gifted to a decorated First World War infantryman more than a century ago fetched a delicious sum when they went under the hammer.

The nine sweet treats – still in the so-called "colonies gift tin" sent to troops in 1914 – ended up being sold for just over £3,000 at the online auction run by Eddisons CJM.

The lot also featured mementoes, including a cigarette container, decorations, letters and citations, relating to Cpl Richard Bullimore of the Leicestershire Regiment.

TRAVEL TOOL GOES LIVE

■ AN online travel booking system has been launched to encourage troops to book their trains, flights and hotels early and get the best possible price.

The page, which can be accessed via the defence intranet, includes new guidance on making bookings.

It stresses that soldiers should always explore alternatives, such as video conferencing, before making journeys at public expense.

SPORTING SAPPERS

■ MORE than 1,000 soldiers took to the sports field for the annual Sapper Games in Kinloss.

The event featured a total of 16 disciplines, including a highland games contest, and was won by athletes from the Minley-based 3 Royal School of Military Engineering Regiment.



MORE FUNDS FOR FORCES

■ THE government needs to consider allocating more cash to put Armed Forces on sure footing for emerging threats and "fill financial black holes", according to an influential group of MPs.

In their *Beyond 2 Per Cent* document, defence committee members said ministers should increase spending on the sector – moving it closer to three per cent of GDP.

Chair Julian Lewis praised Secretary of State Gavin Williamson for raising concerns about cash for the MoD, adding: "We hope our report will assist in sparking debate."



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

OVERSEAS AND OVERCHARGED

IT IS now just over two years since the combined accommodation assessment scheme (CAAS) was introduced for housing charges.

And while we were initially positive towards something that promised more transparency, in reality it has not been without its challenges.

Families have raised concerns around the reasoning behind the criteria, and this has led to many challenging the category their Service family accommodation was given – a process that has not been straightforward.

Most recently, we've been hearing from those overseas who moved onto CAAS last year.

Many of their issues are site specific, but others, such as concerns over the accuracy of energy performance certificates, are being raised widely.

So why is this happening?

Currently, the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) is applying UK methodologies to overseas locations, even though policy states that an in-country standard assessment procedure should be used.

As a result, local factors are not considered to the extent they should be.

We are, however, pleased to see that the DIO has recognised this and taken on our feedback.

We will continue to push for policy change to overcome general issues and, of course, the more location-specific concerns too, to help make things better.

www.aff.org.uk



From demos to dictators:
CHACR has a wealth of
insights on world affairs

Picture: Shutterstock

Another view Give us a go, says Army think tank

“
We get the
Army thinking
”

FROM civil unrest to confusing political situations, if you want the gen on pretty much any region of the world you could do a lot worse than contact the Army's think tank.

The Centre for Historical Analysis and Conflict Research (CHACR), as it is catchily named, may sound like a dry sort of set-up aimed at officers alone.

The reality, however, is very different. Staffed by soldiers, academics and historians, it exists to provide battle-winning information to personnel of any rank – and it is keen to become as popular among junior soldiers.

"We are all about simplifying a complex world," explained Capt Josh Miers (Rifles, pictured), a staff officer at the Sandhurst-based organisation.

"The way we do that is by collecting information on global trends



and putting that into an operational context so troops are aware of what they're deploying into."

The centre, which has a wealth of information available on the Army Knowledge Exchange, runs regular lectures and workshops which are being increasingly frequented by the junior ranks.

Capt Miers said this was a positive step the centre was keen to build on.

He added: "In today's world troops are surrounded by media and other people's opinions, so they need to be well informed themselves.

"CHACR brings in a range of views and analysis on world events to get the Army thinking, whether that be on cultural or strategic issues."

For more information about the organisation and its events log on to <http://chacr.org.uk>



Enduro set-up takes
newcomers on the
road – page 80

NHS CHIEFS: KEEP SOLDIERING IN THE BLOOD

TROOPS are being called on to help bolster the nation's lifesaving blood stocks.

The NHS is running low on two vital types – B and O negative, the latter of which can be given to any patient in an emergency.

Soldiers are being targeted in particular as they are likely to know their blood type.

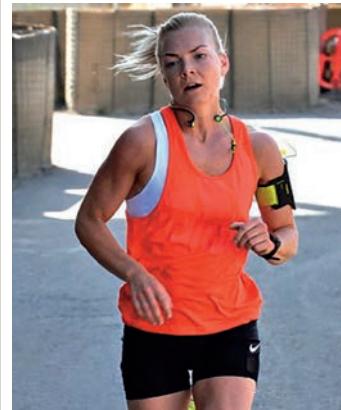
For details on how to donate visit www.blood.co.uk



Picture: Wikimedia Commons



FEARLESS FUNDRAISING



Qargha conquered

TROOPS based at Camp Qargha in Kabul braved the sweltering Afghan heat to complete a five-kilometre run round the base. Personnel from the UK, New Zealand, Denmark, Australia, the US and Turkey took part in the race, which was won by Capt Ali Robinson (RA) in a time of 19min 31sec.



One in a million

MILITARY charity the Felix Fund has reached the £1 million mark for grants paid to individuals and groups from the EOD community. Among those to benefit are former Sapper Clive Smith (pictured), who received funding for pioneering surgery to enable him to walk with prosthetics. The Invictus Games silver medallist was also presented with a bespoke rugby wheelchair.



Picture: Michael Sugue

Annual exercise gets robotic treatment

THE Service has announced details of a pioneering four-week exercise that will see soldiers testing the effectiveness of robotic and autonomous systems on the battlefield.

Autonomous Warrior, the 2018 Army Warfighting Experiment, will allow personnel to get hands-on with a range of cutting-edge kit from surveillance and precision-targeting devices to vehicles offering enhanced mobility and better resupply of ground forces.

Troops from 1 Armoured Infantry Brigade will be given the honour of conducting the trials, which get under way on November 12, as commanders look to assess the capabilities of military technology.

The exercise is the result of a collaboration between the Armed Forces, MoD, US Army and 50 industry

partners, with more than 70 pieces of kit being evaluated in the trials.

"Our Armed Forces continue to push the limits of innovative warfare to ensure that we stay ahead of any adversaries or threats faced on the battlefield," said Defence Minister Mark Lancaster.

"Autonomous Warrior sets an ambitious vision for Army operations in the 21st century as we integrate drones, unmanned vehicles and personnel into a world-class force for decades to come."

One of the key areas of the study will be last-mile resupply, with driverless convoys, unmanned lorries and aerial vehicles all being controlled autonomously.

Read more about the 2018 Army Warfighting Experiment in future issues of *Soldier*.

“Our Forces continue to push the limits”

FINAL OPPORTUNITY

■ IF you missed the chance to see the stunning display of handmade ceramic poppies at the Tower of London in 2014 you can catch it – or half of it anyway – at locations around the UK over the coming months.

Wave (shown right) was on display in Portsmouth last month and will now move to a permanent home at the Imperial War Museum North in Manchester.

Meanwhile, Weeping Window can be viewed at Carlisle Castle until July 8 and at Middleport Pottery in Stoke-on-Trent from August 2 until September 16. It will then go to the Imperial War Museum in London.



Picture: Peter Davies

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Picture: Cpl Tom Evans, RLC

New kit trialled in Eastern Europe

TECH-SAVVY troops have given the thumbs-up to a new piece of kit that allows them to exchange battle-winning information with their US allies.

Soldiers from 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards put the dismounted situational awareness gear through its paces on Exercise Saber Strike in north-east Poland.

The two-week package of manoeuvres – which saw 18,000 troops operating across Poland, Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia – rehearsed tactics for peer-on-peer war fighting.

It also served to reassure Eastern European allies in the face of the growing threat from Russia.

The system (shown), which works on a ruggedised Samsung tablet worn on the chest, is based on a similar device used by the Americans. It enables battlefield data, including photos of targets, to be shared in real time.

Maj Ben Parkyn (QDG), officer commanding C Squadron, tested the kit with his troops on the exercise, having deployed to Poland in April as part of Op Cabrit.

He said that the system – part of the wider Project Morpheus replacement for the Bowman comms suite – had proved a huge asset.

"It allowed us to work with a



Picture: Capt Chris Wade, HAC

common operating picture," he added.

"The technology allows you to mark and put an exclusion zone around identified threats such as minefields or anti-tank screens.

"Our soldiers also gave feedback on where the kit needs refining."

Another notable moment on Saber Strike came when paratroopers completed a transatlantic crossing before jumping into Latvia alongside their US counterparts (shown above).

Personnel from 3rd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment flew in directly from Fort Bragg, North Carolina and landed in the drop zone with a range of heavy equipment including vehicles and stores.

"This gives us a lot of confidence," said Lt Max Ramsden (Para). "We've done a number of jumps and they've all been successful."

"There have been very few injuries and that proves our airborne skills are second to none."

“It allows you to mark identified threats”

Medical front line
– page 38



ATTITUDE PROBLEM

■ TROOPS are less satisfied with Army life than at any point in the last decade, according to the results of the 2018 Armed Forces continuous attitude survey.

More than half of officers (55 per cent) reported being happy with military life in general, while among other ranks the figure was 40 per cent.

Although around 50 per cent of officers and two thirds of soldiers reported their own morale as high, 53 per cent of those who responded thought unit morale was poor.

Responding to the statistics on satisfaction, which are the worst since the survey was introduced in 2007, Director Personnel Lt Gen Ivan Jones said he was keen to improve on the negative trend in unit morale.

"I understand we are experiencing a degree of uncertainty, efficiencies and significant change and we continue to try and optimise how these are managed and implemented for the Army as a whole," he explained.

The officer also said he recognised the need to offer "engaging, realistic and exciting" training opportunities for those troops concerned about the frequency of deployments.

PAY DAY CALL

■ AN announcement on future pay for Service personnel remains delayed – but Army chiefs have stressed that any rise will be backdated to the beginning of April 2018.

The government is still considering recommendations from the Armed Forces pay review body.

Any hikes to housing charges will be confirmed at the same time, and will also be payable from April.

CHILDCARE WARNING

■ SOLDIERS and their families returning from overseas postings are being reminded to visit www.childcarechoices.gov.uk to apply for 30 hours of free childcare before they arrive home. Parents with three- and four-year-old youngsters who are entitled to the scheme will be issued with a code.

ALL IN A GOOD GAUZE

■ ARMY medics are taking delivery of the latest range of haemostatic gauzes which stem bleeding from life-threatening injuries.

The MoD has ordered the Celox Rapid product to treat gunshot and stab wounds, having previously used the items on combat operations.

The latest product can stop arterial bleeding more rapidly

– within a minute of being applied, according to the manufacturer.



TRANSATLANTIC TUITION

■ A GROUP of US Army and National Guard officers have been developing their understanding of the British Army at the Defence Academy in Shrivenham.

Around 30 American troops spent six weeks at the Joint Services Command and Staff College honing strategic planning skills alongside their UK counterparts as well as visiting lecturers and academics from Cranfield University and King's College London.



Picture: Mark Owens

BIRTHDAY BLAST

■ MEMBERS of 105 Regiment, Royal Artillery helped Edinburgh's University Officer Training Corps fire a 21 royal gun salute to mark the Duke of Edinburgh's 97th birthday.

It is one of 11 royal gun salutes to take place in Scotland each year, seven of them at Edinburgh Castle (pictured).

TROOPS CONTINUE WITH CHEMICAL CLEAN-UP



Picture: Cpl Pete Brown, RLC

■ ARMY specialists have been continuing to pinpoint sites requiring decontamination in Salisbury in the wake of the March nerve agent attack. Troops and Royal Air Force colleagues are supporting the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs in making locations safe. While the risk to public health is low, samples are being taken in potentially affected areas and contaminated items cleaned. Soldiers from the Royal Tank Regiment's Falcon Squadron have been working alongside colleagues from the Royal Engineers, Royal Signals, Royal Logistic Corps and specialist instructors. Nearly 200 Forces personnel were deployed following the attack, which left Sergei Skripal and daughter Yulia fighting for their lives.

'Fantastic' facility a step closer

THE Defence and National Rehabilitation Centre – the new home for staff and patients of Headley Court – was due to be formally handed over as this issue went to press.

The Duke of Cambridge was set to preside over the ceremony, during which the facility (pictured below) was to be formally gifted to the nation on behalf of the seventh Duke of Westminster, Hugh Grosvenor.

Prime Minister Theresa May was expected to receive the complex, on the Stanford Hall Estate near Loughborough, as the drawdown at the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre in Surrey continues.

Staff will move between summer and the end of the year.

And Headley Court is due to close its doors to patients in early autumn.

The new centre was the brainchild of the previous Duke of Westminster,



Gerald Grosvenor, who served as a Reservist for 40 years.

He led fundraising efforts with a £70 million personal donation before his death in 2016.

Surgeon General Lt Gen Martin Bricknell said: "The facility is a fantastic endeavour and I'm grateful to the Duke of Westminster and charitable donors.

"The potential it offers is unparalleled, enabling the UK to stay at the forefront of trauma rehabilitation."





Missile system moves on up

Picture: Shay Woods, MBDA



A POWERFUL missile system that will become the lynchpin of Army air defence has successfully completed its first firing trial, the MoD has confirmed.

Land Ceptor was put through its paces on a Swedish test range near the Baltic Sea – where the weapon successfully engaged and destroyed an aerial target.

Military chiefs said the kit – the centrepiece of the new Sky Sabre system that will replace Rapier – performed well. It remains on course for delivery to the Hampshire-based 16 Regiment, Royal Artillery in 2020.

"This is an important stepping stone towards bringing Land Ceptor into service," said Richard Smart, Director Weapons at Defence Equipment and Support. "Our project team will continue to work with suppliers to ensure it provides an effective shield for troops protecting the UK's security and interests."

Sky Sabre is set to be a game changer for Army air defence gunners – using the Saab Giraffe multi-beam radar and a sophisticated electronic brain it will be able to detect threats

miles beyond visual range and engage them in short order.

Built by contractor MBDA in a £250 million contract, Land Ceptor is formed around the common anti-air modular missile, a launcher truck and two fire support vehicles.

The system can be deployed in less than 20 minutes.

It is part of the same weapons family as Sea Ceptor, which is being brought into action to defend Royal Navy Type 23 and 26 frigates.

IN NUMBERS: LAND CEPTOR

8 Targets that can be attacked at once

twenty-five

Range of the missiles, in kilometres

20

Minutes it takes to set up

A century of sterling support

■ A 103-YEAR-OLD Royal British Legion supporter who has collected for the Poppy Appeal for nearly a century is to hang up her tin later this year.

Rosemary Powell began her long association with the charity as a child in 1921 and has been a regular fundraiser ever since.

The retired nurse even continued to help after moving to a care home in 2015, encouraging fellow residents to donate.

She said: "We lost a lot of family during the First and Second World Wars: it has always been a very important cause for me."



FILL ROSEMARY'S BOOTS

COULD you be The Royal British Legion's next fundraising stalwart? Some 2,000 troops already are. And this is what their efforts helped to provide for the Service community last year

85,118

visits to high street pop-in centres, which offer a warm welcome and advice to soldiers

TENS OF THOUSANDS

phonecalls to the Legion's helpline

grants totalling

f3.4m

Get involved:
volunteersupport@britishlegion.org.uk



SPINE LINE COMPETITION

WIN
£200-worth of
stylish undies



READERS were put to the test in last month's spine line clues.

Inspired by our feature on Service referees, (Kevin) Friend, (Jonathan) Moss, (Michael) Oliver and (Craig) Pawson all adjudicated over Premier League matches in the 2017/18 football season.

This month *Soldier* has teamed up with unisex underewear brand FOCX (<https://focx.co.uk>) to offer one lucky reader £200-worth of pants.

British made with high quality material, these garments stop wearers getting a bum deal in the comfort department, with a design that prevents the clothing from "riding up".

To be in with a chance of winning this handy prize, tell us what links the words on the side of this issue.

Answer to the usual address or comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk by July 31. Readers can enjoy a 15 per cent discount on FOCX items by entering promo code "SOLDIER" at the checkout on its website.



D-DAY MEDIC DISCOVERY

■ THE courage of a Second World War soldier listed as missing during the D-Day invasion of France was remembered after his resting place was finally identified.

The unveiling of a new headstone for Pte Lacey Tingle (shown), who died after parachuting into Normandy with the 6th Airborne Division, was held on the 74th anniversary of the landings in a service attended by his 96-year-old sister.

Researchers identified the medic's grave at Ranville War Cemetery.



Queen Ethelburga's



“To be the best that I can with the gifts that I have”

Queen Ethelburga's has a long-standing relationship with the British Forces, welcoming students from military families for over 100 years. We currently have over 300 such students living as part of the QE family.

We welcome day students from 3 months to 19 years and boarders from 6 years to 19 years. We are CEA accredited and in recognition of our commitment to Forces families, we offer a significant reduction in fees. In 2017/18 this meant that our Forces families paid just 10% of fees, around £925 per term. Fees for 2018/19 are to be confirmed.

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Tel: 01423 33 33 30 Email: admissions@qe.org

Thorpe Underwood Hall, Ouseburn, York, YO26 9SS | www.qe.org



Picture: Graeme Main

Army aviation reaches new heights

A LETHAL combination of heavily armed attack helicopters and sophisticated reconnaissance aircraft are set to prove a battlefield game changer, a senior Army Air Corps officer has said.

Brig Mike Keating told *Soldier* the pairing of Wildcat to designate targets with its Apache stablemate to engage them would hit adversaries hard.

And now a shift in aviation rules will see the two airframes operate in teams, giving commanders on the ground a huge array of firepower.

Brig Keating, who is deputy commander and operations director at the Joint Helicopter Command, was speaking as Wildcat and Apache were paired for manoeuvres over Wales, where they showed impressive potential (page 28).

"We launched two Hellfire missiles and both hit the targets with pinpoint accuracy," he continued. "We could not have wished for a better outcome."

"The success represents a significant

development for us and we will now be writing Army aviation doctrine based on using teams of aircraft."

Although Apache can designate targets, using it as a reconnaissance platform means the airframe cannot be loaded with as much ordnance, Brig Keating explained.

Adding Wildcat into the mix and allowing it to scout out objectives, means the full 16 Hellfire missiles can be carried on each attack helicopter.

The senior officer predicted that each team could range from three to nine airframes, meaning huge destructive power could be unleashed if required.

"We have a phenomenal capability to offer on the battlefield," he said.

"Our crews will now be taught how to operate in this way from the word go – they will unlock Apache's full capability and provide us with a real force multiplier."

"It's important we examine how we can use it in the future, particularly alongside assets such as armed UAVs."

“We could not have wished for a better outcome”

■ AROUND 1,000 soldiers marched on London's Horse Guards Parade to mark the Queen's official birthday. Members of the Coldstream Guards trooped their colour in front of the royal family and spectators. All the royal colonels accompanied Her Majesty at the colourful event, which dates back more than 250 years.



IN NUMBERS:
7,500
spectators
that turned out
on London's
iconic Horse
Guards Parade



Pictures: Sgt Paul Randall, RLC



Soldier spoke to Brig Mike Keating about the air pairing...

Why this new way of working now?

Put simply, it is that Wildcat is now in service. Matching this aircraft with Apache means we can optimise both capabilities and best respond to current threats.

How much extra firepower will you have?

We could put out a squadron of eight Apaches with a combined payload of 128 Hellfire missiles – meaning a lot of tanks destroyed. Wildcat can also connect to the joint fires network to bring in other air and artillery strikes.

How has Wildcat changed the game?

It means we will be able to find targets earlier, better understand the tactical situation and strike deep into the enemy echelons.

What does this mean for Apache?

With the latest model of the helicopter we have greater firepower and a more reliable aircraft. The introduction of Wildcat optimises Apache for its primary anti-armour role.



THE BIG PICTURE

Exercise Saber Strike, Poland

AT THE CUTTING EDGE

THOUSANDS of troops from more than a dozen countries honed their conventional war fighting skills and drills during manoeuvres across Eastern Europe. Exercise Saber Strike saw British soldiers take on crucial roles and trial the latest technologies in the field. Maj Gen Bill O'Leary, deputy commander Field Army, told *Soldier* he had been impressed when he saw the serials for himself in Poland. "This is about getting back to basics," he added. See pages 15 and 38.

Picture: Cpl Tom Evans, RLC





WEED TO WIN

MENTAL HEALTH / NUTRITION / NEXT STEPS / EXPERIENCE / SKILLS & DRILLS

Brain training

How mindfulness could take the stress out of soldiering...

► IT'S easy to rush through the day preoccupied with to-do lists or other worries, but being constantly distracted not only makes it hard to focus, it can also leave you feeling on edge.

If that sounds familiar it could be time to give mindfulness a try.

Stephen Jack (ex-RAPTC), an exercise rehab instructor at the regional rehabilitation unit at RAF Cranwell, has seen the approach yield results in his work with injured personnel and believes all Servicemen and women can benefit from mastering some basic techniques.

"Mindfulness is simply the practice of training our attention to be in the here and now," explained the former sergeant.

"The brain is like a muscle – overthinking is the same as overtraining in the gym.

"Without the correct balance between stimulation and recovery you can pick up injuries both physically and mentally."

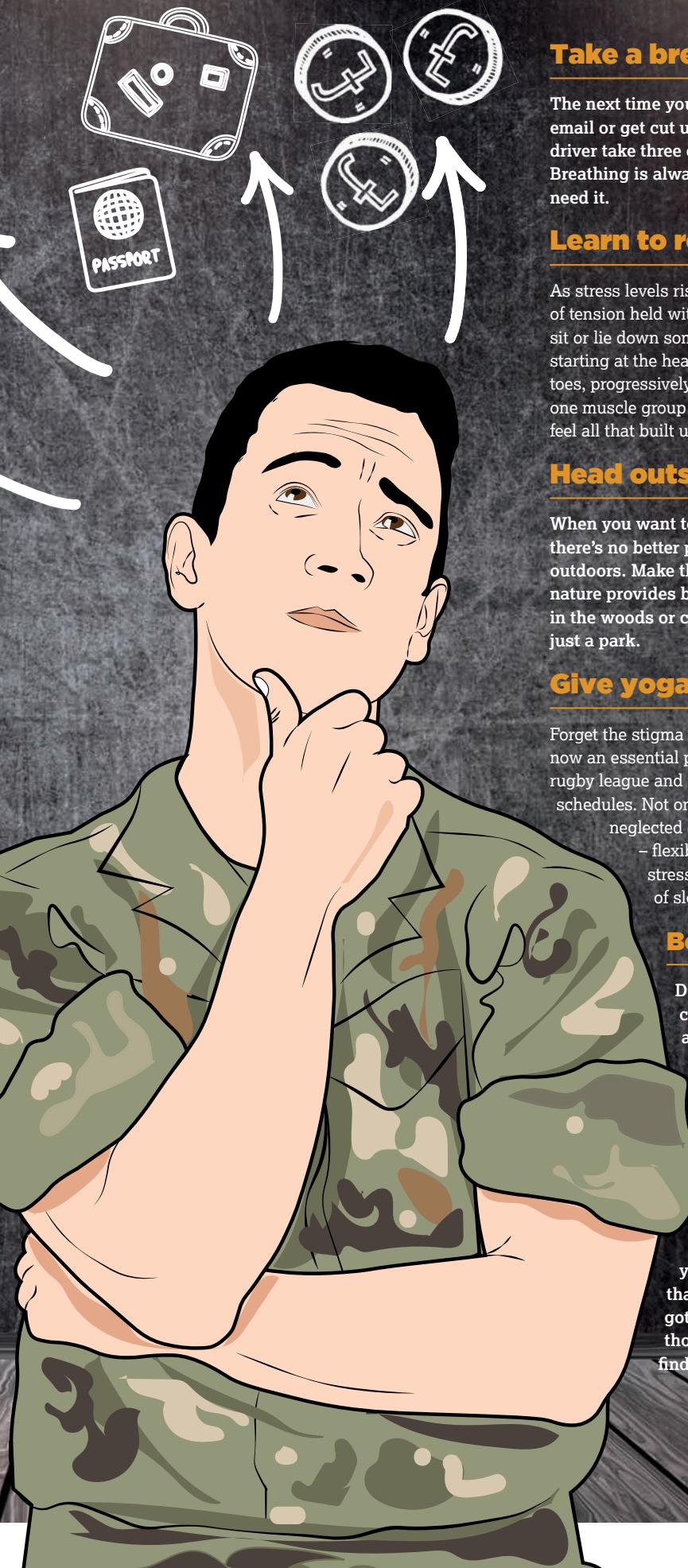
And Jack said those thinking mindfulness is too "pink and fluffy" for the Army shouldn't dismiss it too quickly.

"You probably haven't realised but it's an essential part of the marksmanship principles," he added.

"As you draw your mind to the breath, you watch the inhale, then the exhale and – boom – you've fired yourself into the present moment."

So if you find your brain buzzing with random thoughts, try following these tips to restore your inner Zen...





Take a breath

The next time you receive a sarky email or get cut up by a mindless driver take three deep breaths. Breathing is always there when you need it.

Learn to relax

As stress levels rise so does the amount of tension held within the body. Either sit or lie down somewhere quiet, then starting at the head and finishing at the toes, progressively contract and relax one muscle group at a time. Gradually feel all that built up stress melt away.

Head outside

When you want to clear your head there's no better place than the great outdoors. Make the most of what nature provides by going for a walk in the woods or countryside – or even just a park.

Give yoga a go

Forget the stigma attached to yoga, it's now an essential part of the England rugby league and union teams' training schedules. Not only does it hit a neglected component of fitness – flexibility – it can reduce stress and improve quality of sleep.

Be thankful

Do you find yourself complaining a lot about people, work or life in general? As you lie in bed at night think of all the things you've been grateful for that day. Shift your perspective by focusing on what you have got rather than what you haven't got and challenge your thoughts next time you find yourself whining.

Read a book

If life gets on top of you pick up a book and escape into a different world. When your mind wanders just accept it's happened, reread the part you missed and carry on. Over time you will train your brain to stay focused.

Put down your phone

Far from taking your mind off things, mindlessly scrolling through social media has been shown to be distracting and depressing. If you can't keep away from your smartphone the meditation app *Headspace* could help you break the habit of constantly refreshing your newsfeed.

Shower your stress away

The shower can be a good place to wash away some of that mental noise, especially if you have kids and don't have much time to yourself. Focus on the sound and feel of the water hitting your head, ears and shoulders. It's as easy as that.

Online advice

YouTube is a great resource if you would prefer to listen to someone talk you through a five- or ten-minute practice. Type "guided mindfulness exercises" into the search engine. You might be pleasantly surprised.



Stephen Jack is the head coach at Lone Wolf Fitness

www.lonewolfitness.com

Lone Wolf Fitness – Online Personal Fitness

@lonewolfit

Going green

Tempted to join the meat-free set? Here's how to ensure your battlefield performance doesn't suffer...

► YOU can't spend more than five minutes online these days without some smug Instagrammer shoving their #plantbased diet in your face.

From bog-standard veggies to raw vegans who don't touch anything heated above 45 degrees Celsius, there are plenty of ways to overhaul your diet.

But if you're considering going down the meat-free road – and more of us are – there are some important things to note...



On a meat-free mission?

Follow these tips to stay on top of your nutrition

Continue to eat a variety of foods to make sure your body gets a healthy diet. Most cookhouses offer meat-free options – if you're unsure just ask. Plan your meals so they're balanced.

Base your diet on potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbs. Choose wholegrain options where possible and ensure you get your five portions of fruit and vegetables per day.

Think protein. Non-meat sources of this food group usually have a low biological value so try to combine different types in each meal, such as beans on toast or cereal with milk.

Try to eat vitamin C-rich foods at the same time as iron to help the body absorb it. For example, orange juice with cereal.

Don't forget your calcium if going dairy-free. It is vital for keeping bones strong and can be found in dark green leafy veg, fortified cereals, tofu, dried fruit, seeds, tahini and nuts.

Watch your fat, salt and sugar intake. Just because something is meat-free doesn't mean it's healthy.

Try the **Vegetarian Society Recipes** app for some nutritious meal ideas.

Expert view

Is it safe for soldiers to shun meat?

“ As long as they continue to fuel themselves appropriately so they can perform their duties. It's all about being knowledgeable and planning ahead as to what you are going to eat. Troops should also bear in mind that in some operational situations there might not be the availability of vegetarian and vegan options that there are at home. ”

Dr Trish Davey,
Defence Nutrition
Advisory Service

Protein power

Good veggie sources include:

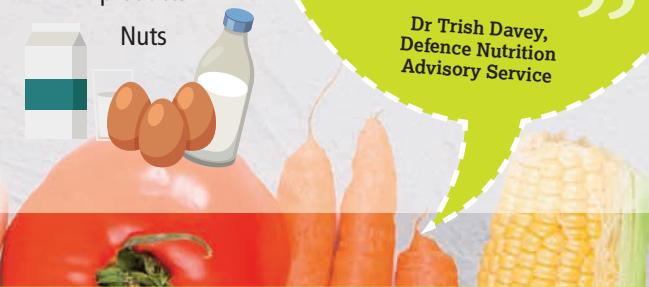
Lentils and beans

Quorn

Eggs, milk and dairy products

Soya and soya products

Nuts





Inside story

Your military experience could prove invaluable in a Prison Service career, according to this former soldier...

► FINDING a sense of vocation when you've served Queen and country as a member of the Armed Forces is always going to be a tough ask.

But Barry Tucker – who became a prison officer after five years in The Queen's Lancashire Regiment – believes veterans can put their skills to good use in the security and policing sectors, all while making a real difference.

And while these areas have been a traditional post-Service destination, he reckons military experience is increasingly prized in these high-pressure environments.

► NEXT STEPS

"As a former soldier, coming here was a natural fit for me," Tucker – who is currently working at HMP Woodhill high security prison in Milton Keynes – explained.

"Although it can be a stressful job I expected nothing more when I signed up.

"You also have your mates to rely on and they will be with you if there is trouble."

The Ministry of Justice, like many sectors, has seen significant restructuring over the past decade, brought about to cut the public spending deficit.

But a more recent recruitment drive by HM Prisons and Probation Service has been drawing new officers to the fold.

Tucker, who served in Northern Ireland during his five-year stint in the Army, had this message for ex-personnel considering applying: "You always hear the negative rather than the positive about working here.

"If you have coped with the military then you will cope in this setting.

"Just like in the Services, you never know what is going to happen day-to-day – if you are running to an alarm you really feel the adrenalin pumping.

"You need to have the skill sets to deal with different incidents – discipline, the ability to work in a team and individual resilience are also important qualities.

"Ex-soldiers bring a strong work ethic with them too."

For Tucker, one of the most rewarding aspects of his civilian career has been the chance to help offenders begin rehabilitation.

"It doesn't take you long to find out that some people have simply taken the wrong path in life, and we are trying to change their outlook," he continued.

"Obviously, you have to be diplomatic in this role, but it is satisfying if you can assist prisoners and help them to realise that their future can be different."

A career in the Prison Service undoubtedly has its stresses and strains, but many veterans have the skills that are well suited and sought after in this line of work.

Tucker is certainly convinced that the benefits outweigh the pressures of his job.

"This is a disciplined service, the people are professional and the camaraderie fantastic," he concluded. "If that is what you are looking for, this is a good life." ■



'You're never too old to try something new'

Powerlifter Maj Mark Aslett (AAC) only started in the sport two years ago but the 49-year-old says age is no barrier to sporting success



Living the life aquatic

Make sure your first dive goes swimmingly with these top tips

► DONNING scuba kit and submerging into the depths for the first time is an exciting prospect for virgin underwater adventurers, but it can also be something of a daunting experience.

Whether you are taking part in a military exped or going on holiday, amputee diver and former sapper Josh Boggi has this advice for newbies...

Start while dry

Try to relax before you get into the water. Listen carefully to what your instructor has to say and do what you are told. If you don't understand something, it's important that you ask.

Trust your friends

You must have confidence in those diving with you and they must have confidence in you. We depend on each other in the military, so get to know your mates and trust them. Work through your skills and drills and you will be fine. Good relationships will make your dive much more enjoyable.

Breathe easy

You need to sort out your breathing. You are likely to be nervous at first, which means it's possible to go through a cylinder in 25 minutes or so. You can extend that by ten minutes by controlling your breathing – it will also help you manage your buoyancy.

Stay stable

They say buoyancy is the Holy Grail of diving. You immediately become more comfortable in the water from the moment that you learn how to stay naturally buoyant, so focus on this discipline.

Relish the occasion

Above all, enjoy yourself. Diving is fun.

Interested in diving?
Visit www.jssadc.org

MY motivation for starting was WO1 Dave Heath (AAC). He has won world titles and one day in the gym he asked if I was interested in powerlifting – it began there.

I've always lifted weights and, having previously served in the Infantry, felt I had to be strong to climb over walls and carry equipment.

When I joined the Army 33 years ago the emphasis was on getting your kit on and going for a long run, but attitudes have changed now.

It is important to look after your body and health – we play hard, fight hard and train hard.

I'm not getting any younger and you're only as good as your last cock-up. It is my duty to be fit and I hope to inspire the younger generations behind me.

I've since opened two powerlifting gyms in the Army Air Corps and they support around 20 amateur athletes. It is something that has gained more popularity over the past decade and the Service has a fantastic team.

I've only been competing for two years but have set two British records in the masters two category.

I lifted 152.5kg to win the British Bench Press Championships early this year and my aim is to go to the World Championships in Malta and lift 160kg.

The great thing about this sport is that you do not have to do full power – you can specifically focus on the bench press, squat or deadlift.

But you have to work at it and it can be quite painful at times – if you go too hard, too quickly your body does not always adapt.

You're never too old to try something new. When I go to different competitions I don't see any other late entry officers so I'm probably the oldest one doing this.

Hopefully, a few more will be inspired to take part. ■





Army
helicopters
join forces off
Welsh coast to
rewrite rules of
the air

AS WILDCAT'S blades thump through the oppressive morning mist at RNAS Yeovilton, its ground crew dart around the tarmac with an even greater sense of purpose than usual. Lingering summer storm clouds may be threatening to call off today's outing, but if this reconnaissance helicopter and its crew get their way they will be playing with Hellfire missiles off the coast of Wales by lunchtime. To call this a good day out would be an understatement. Alongside its Apache cousin, the airframe is heading for the Aberporth Ranges where it will test a capability called attack reconnaissance teaming that could revolutionise the way the Army does business in the air.

“
We'll be looking to
integrate further
and further
”

POTENT

“Today is a really significant day for aviation,” explains Maj Si Pope (AAC, pictured right), officer commanding 1 Regiment's 659 Squadron, which operates the state-of-the-art platform.

The officer is upbeat, but with an air of solemnity.

And who can blame him. Today, for the very first time, the Army Air Corp's relative new kid on the block will pinpoint a target, onto which the Apache will unleash its own unique version of hell.

But the “proof of concept” exercise, as it is known, must go without a hitch if this way of pairing up aircraft is to become a feature of British missions.

Watching an old barge getting blown to pieces off Aberporth Ranges is all well and good, but if the two platforms fail to bring this £90,000 weapon to bear seamlessly, the consequences don't bear thinking about.



PARTNERS

Report: Sarah Goldthorpe | Pictures: Graeme Main

Maj Pope explains the backstory to *Soldier*. "Our main focus this year has been integrating these helicopters as part of an attack reconnaissance team – it is one of the key things we have been doing within the wider Army war fighting division.

"In future we will be looking to integrate further and further."

Definitely no pressure, then.

An hour or so into the flight, and with a couple of thunderstorms circumnavigated, Wildcat arrives at its destination along with a pair of Apaches.

Maj Pope, who occupies the impressive glass cockpit of the accompanying airframe, is in confident mood as his crew observe the start of the

serial from around 18 kilometres away.

"This is one of those things we have been training to do for a long time," he adds. "And to actually do it live, with a real Hellfire missile and using Wildcat in the designation role will really prove to us something we have known for a long time: how effective the team concept will be in defeating armour."

Wales' Cardigan Bay is in full view now, and the test begins.

The target is identified and the airframes exchange information before a missile is swiftly deployed from each of the attack helicopters.



→ Maj Pope explains: "What you see here is Wildcat using its laser target designator.

"It moves into position and passes the fire mission, either via data networks or voice, to the Apache.

"The AH then confirms what we told it, tracks our coded laser and designates, using the Hellfire missile seeker head, to destroy the target."

Beyond today's excitement, though, Maj Pope is also keen to talk about future training.

"My squadron is going out to France shortly where we will be operating with French Tiger attack helicopters," he reveals.

"Of course, we will now additionally be able to designate for close air support."

Wildcat might not be the slickest looking military aircraft, but today's test has confirmed – as if any of these airmen needed convincing otherwise – what battle-winning potential is contained within its guts.

With a state-of-the-art digital cockpit, awesome sensors and powerful CTS800 engines, this multi-role chopper can now add "assisting Apache" to its list of career highs.

The revered attack helicopter, which found its teeth for the UK on operations in Afghanistan (see panel), cannot carry as much ordnance when used for reconnaissance.

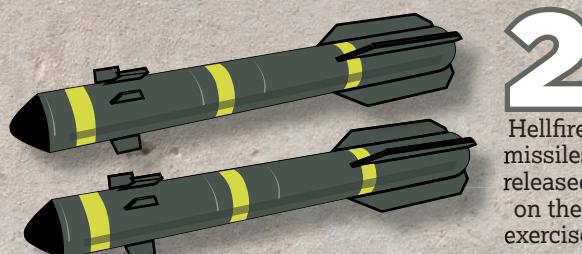
But when Wildcat enters the fray to scout out targets, Apache can revert to carrying a full load of 16 Hellfire missiles.

"These new fantastic digital cockpits are really taking Army aviation a big step forward and as the Apache force looks to move onto digital cockpits too, with better mapping and better cameras, this can only be a step forward," Maj Pope concludes at the end of what will be a day to remember for all involved. ■



Lightening the load

Wildcat's air pairing in numbers



2

Hellfire missiles released on the exercise



2,000

litres of fuel required to fill both Wildcats for the day's mission



distance, in miles, of the target off the Welsh coast

00:20

seconds it took for the fire mission to be passed to Apache



Back to basics for Apache

AS THE Apache attack helicopter was being drawn up in the wake of the Vietnam War, its American designers had a prime prey in mind – Soviet armour.

Heavily protected and with the firepower to match, its intended destination was the Western European plains – where the potent combination of a chain gun, rockets and missiles would eat enemy tanks for breakfast.

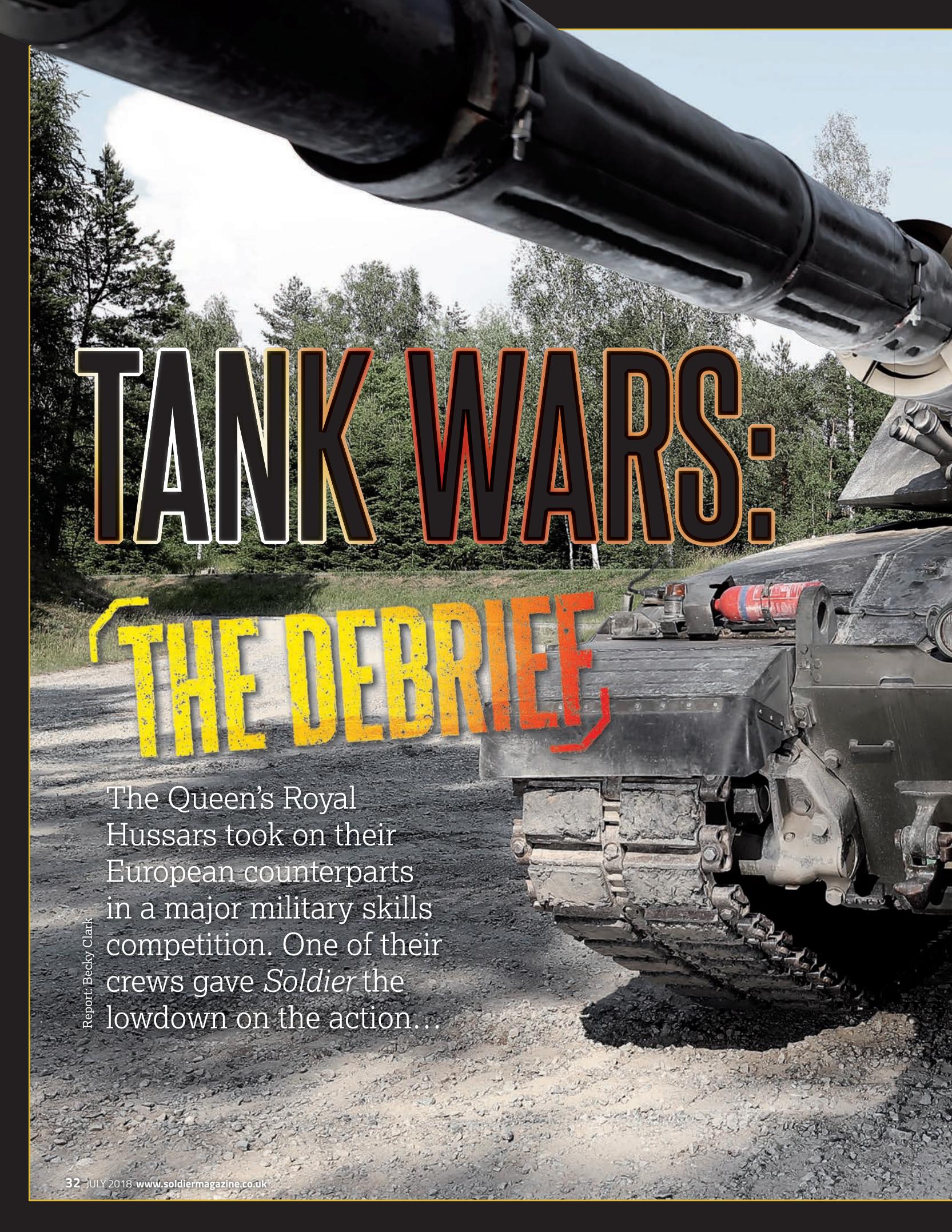
When the British Army took delivery of the airframe in the early 2000s, however, its first action was outside this originally intended remit – Afghanistan.

While the crews, aircraft and its payload proved extremely versatile – with Hellfires effective against Taliban strongpoints – the pairing with Wildcat marks a return to home territory.

Brig Mike Keating, deputy commander and operations director at Joint Helicopter Command, said: "It is important to realise that there are still hugely significant lessons from our time in Afghanistan that we can apply to a warfighting role.

"But we also have to think about how we move forward and adapt."





TANK WARS: THE DEBRIEF

The Queen's Royal Hussars took on their European counterparts in a major military skills competition. One of their crews gave *Soldier* the lowdown on the action...

Report: Becky Clark

**CAPT BARNABY SPINK****Age: 26****Role: COMMANDER****Match report:**

"We picked our very best team. We have some fantastic soldiers here and a real breadth of experience, right from the sergeant majors to some of the newest troopers who have only recently joined the regiment. It was a great opportunity to work on the basics and get back to our roots as armoured troops."

LCPL RICHARD ROBINSON**Age: 29****Role: OPERATOR/LOADER****Match report:**

"The simulated IED casualty evacuation went really well. We had to remove a track, put it back on and get moving again. The average time was 30 minutes but we did it in just over ten. We had rehearsed a lot, everyone knew what they were doing and that round went flawlessly."

LCPL JOSH BRUTON**Age: 22****Role: GUNNER****Match report:**

"The defence and offensive shoots were definitely the most challenging. When the tank fires, a massive ball of dust comes straight in front of the sights and you can't tell for 20 seconds whether you've hit the target, so that was quite difficult. This competition has brought us closer together as a crew."

TPR ROBERT DYSON**Age: 23****Role: DRIVER****Match report:**

"We did a driver obstacle course which involved some slaloms, reversing and driving over cars, but the sight was taped over so you had to rely on the commander to guide you. It was good fun and a real test of teamwork. I don't think I'll ever get to crush another vehicle again in my life."



WORKING alongside partner nations has become bread and butter to British troops in recent years but opportunities to directly test trade skills against allied colleagues are still rare.

That looks set to change – in the armoured world at least – with The Queen's Royal Hussars becoming the very first UK team to take part in this year's Strong Europe Tank Challenge.

Staged in Grafenwoehr, Bavaria, the American- and German-led event saw crews from eight nations battle it out in a series of armour-related tasks.

Organiser Sgt Patrick Flanagan, from the US military's 7th Army Training Command, said the competition had been designed to create a level playing field despite the different capabilities of each army's vehicles.

"Live firing had to be a component so there are two rounds – one for offensive operations and one for defensive," he explained.

"Then we thought of all the other critical skills that a tank platoon needs to be successful in combat, so we test CBRN drills, vehicle recovery, medevac procedures and pistol shooting.

"Communication is essential – we incorporated a reporting stand and then added a driving event, which has become really successful because people love being able to run over cars."

For the QRH crews, mounted in their mighty Challenger 2 main battle tanks, some serials proved trickier than others.

"The variety of stands really played to the different countries' strengths," said Capt Barnaby Spink, leader of the UK contingent.

"Because most of our training is conducted on exercise and through field work I felt we capitalised on the casevac and battle damage assessment element, as well as the communication of sitreps up to a higher formation – we were well drilled for that."

"I think the areas where we struggled most was anything to do with agility or the weight of our tank."

"Challenger 2 is one of the heaviest out there and less nimble than some of the others."

"It's much more designed with protection and firepower in mind, and because of that our mobility suffers."

At close of play the standings saw the German team clinch the top spot, with the Swedish and Austrians in second and third positions and the UK in fourth.

Capt Spink said he was pleased with his crews' performance.

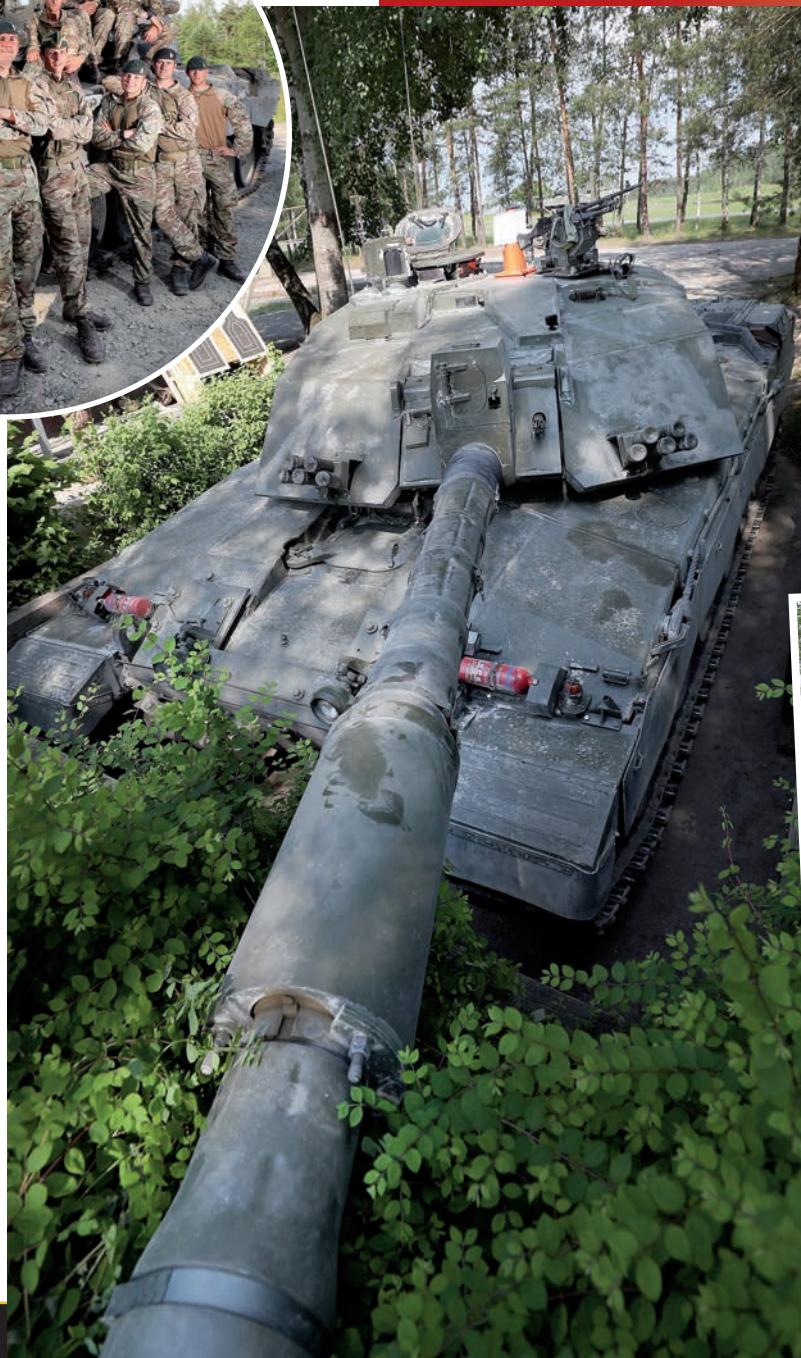
"We came first in the casevac serial and managed podium finishes in some of the others, including defensive live firing, the pistol shoot and the obstacle course," he continued.

"So given it is our first year and we were going in without any prior knowledge, we're happy."

Next year the baton to represent the Royal Armoured Corps at the contest will pass to the Royal Tank Regiment, and with the QRH having laid the groundwork the Germans should be looking over their shoulders ■

Squad goals: The QRH entered four Challenger 2 crews – 16 Service personnel in total (below) – into the competition

Pictures: Peter Davies, Spc Rolyn Kropf, Gertrud Zach, Lacey Justinger and Matthias Fruth





▲ **EVENT: OFFENSIVE LIVE FIRE**



▼ **EVENT: PISTOL SHOOTING**



▲ **EVENT: 'TANKER OLYMPICS' RELAY**



▲ **EVENT: OBSTACLE COURSE**

“
I don't think
I'll ever get to
crush another
vehicle
”

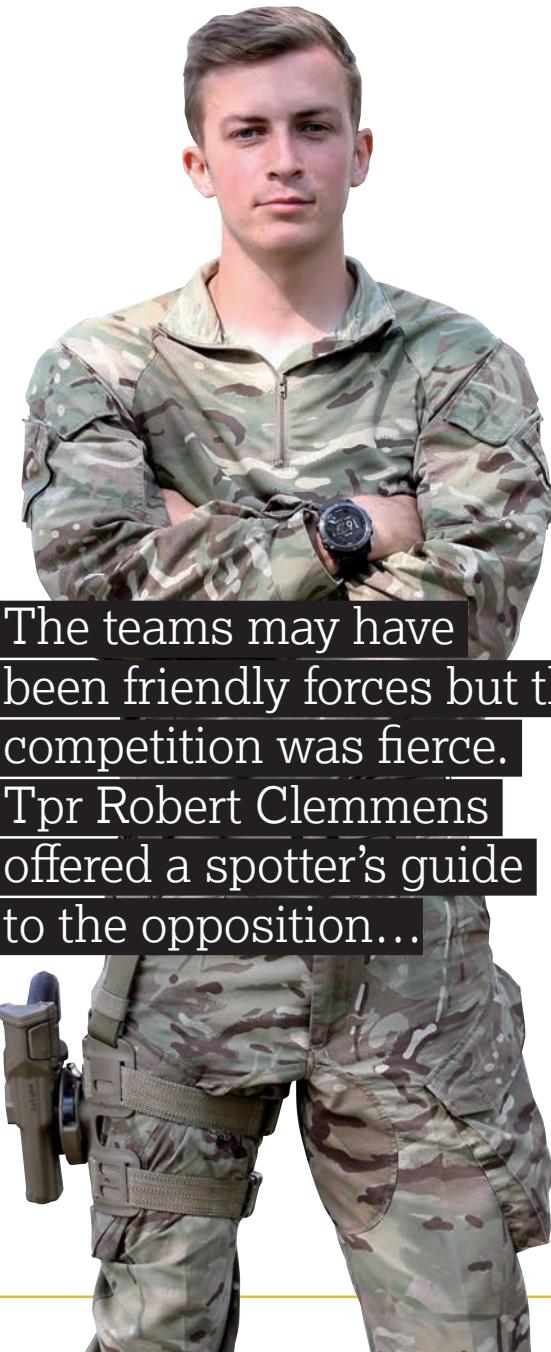


▲ **EVENT: PRECISION DRIVING COURSE
(GERMANY'S LEOPARD A6)**





Know your 'enemy'



The teams may have been friendly forces but the competition was fierce. Tpr Robert Clemmens offered a spotter's guide to the opposition...



LEOPARD 2 A4, A5 AND A6

Operated by: Austria, Poland and Germany
Crew: 4

Length: The longest model is the A6 at 10.97m
Weight: The heaviest model is the A5 at 62.5t

Main armament: 120mm smooth-bore

Top speed: 72km/h for the A4 and A5 (road)

"Each country has a slight variation of the Leopard – the Austrians have the A4, the Polish the A5 and the Germans the new A6 [pictured]. It has a powerful engine so it has the edge in mobility but Challenger's gun is more accurate and we can load our three-piece ammunition far quicker. Their single-piece ammo is a lot more cumbersome. Our fire control computer is also better for hitting targets on the move. The Leopards are very strong in this competition but in battle I'd rather have the Chally because it has more protection."



STRIDSVAGN 122

Operated by: Sweden
Crew: 4

Length: 9.97m

Weight: 62t

Main armament: 120mm smooth-bore

Top speed: 68km/h (road)

"I've spoken to the Swedish team about the Stridsvagn and it's basically an up-armoured A5. It has the same gun, which is smooth-bore and quite accurate but they've added further protection. It's a very good, strong tank."



M1A2 SEP

Operated by: United States

Crew: 4

Length: 9.77m

Weight: 62t

Main armament: 120mm smooth-bore

Top speed: 67km/h (road)

"The M1 Abrams has the Rhinemetal L44 smooth-bore gun, same as the Leopard A5, but inside it's got a lot more space. It has single piece ammunition weighing 20kg, which could tire the loader out. A gas turbine engine makes it very powerful and it has good mobility, but its armour isn't quite as good as Challenger's."

LECLERC

Operated by: France

Crew: 3

Length: 9.87m

Weight: 55t

Main armament: 120mm smooth-bore

Top speed: 71km/h (road)

"From what I've seen the gun on the Leclerc is good. It has an auto-loader, so it doesn't rely on a person to load it, which they say is good for consistency but a good loader can work a lot faster – ours can do a three-second reload."



T-84

Operated by: Ukraine

Crew: 3

Length: 9.72m

Weight: 46t

Main armament: 125mm smooth-bore

Top speed: 65km/h (road)

"The T84 is quite cramped inside – crew comfort isn't its strong point. The pros are that the gun is bigger so you'd expect it to have a faster round but again, it has an auto-loader. While it's significantly lighter than any other tank here it has the same engine power as Challenger so it will be quick when manoeuvring."



...HOW THE CHALLENGER 2 COMPARES

Crew: 4

Length: 11.55m

Weight: 62.5t

Main armament: 120mm rifled

Top speed: 59km/h (road)

IN NUMBERS

283

SOLDIERS

EIGHT

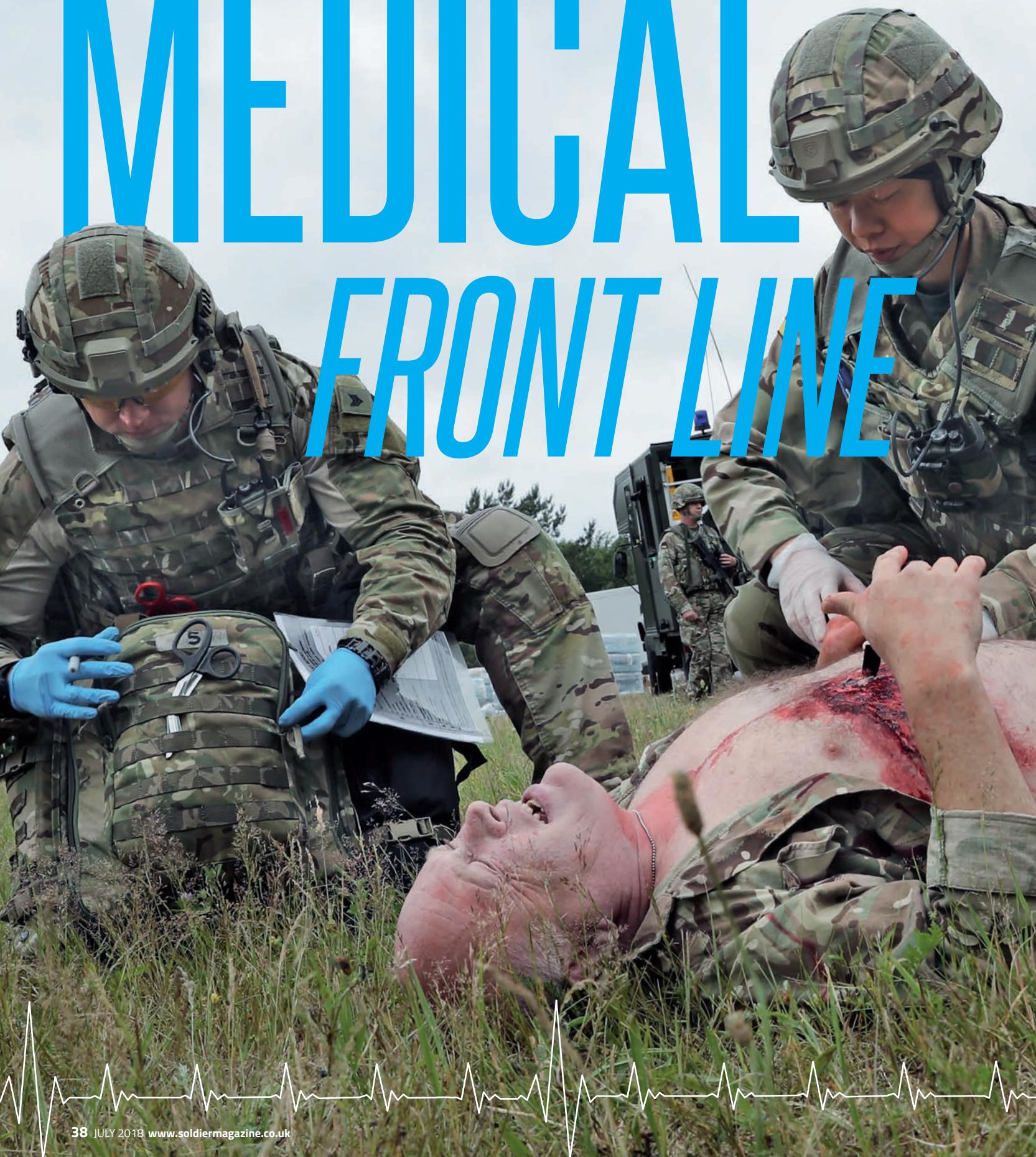
NATIONS

46

TANKS

competed in the **Strong Europe Tank Challenge**

MEDICAL FRONT LINE





Behind the flash and bang of Army operations, trauma care is evolving in a brand new environment



WHEN the sound of sirens reverberates in the near distance, the mood among Service personnel at the makeshift hospital changes from one of calm normality to quiet apprehension.

Grimly aware that they will – in all likelihood – be called into action soon, there are some cautious exchanges between professionals in the medical teams.

The possibilities are considered and likely scenarios mentally rehearsed.

Then the call comes confirming the worst news: there has been an ambush with multiple casualties, a number of ambulances are inbound.

Beneath a tented canopy full of lifesaving machinery, with the smells of damp canvas, soil and antiseptic prevailing in the air, the front line is about to arrive.

“We were far less organised for this when we had our first casualties on this exercise,” Maj Martin Moody (RAMC) – a consultant urologist – tells *Soldier* as we wait for the injured to arrive.

“But it didn’t take very long for this to change – best practice soon started to evolve and multinational personnel are now working efficiently together.”

Report: Cliff Caswell | Pictures: Graeme Main





→ By all accounts these US-led medical manoeuvres in Swidwin in northern Poland – part of the European-wide Exercise Saber Strike (page 15) – are providing a steep learning curve for everyone involved.

Among those taking part are a number of Reservists from the Yorkshire-based 306 Hospital Support and 335 Medical Evacuation Regiments – many of them NHS employees in civilian life.

And while a significant number have seen the likes of Iraq and Afghanistan on operations, these rehearsals are for a different scenario completely.

In the simulated conflict, working alongside their Polish and American allies, the Brits are preparing to fight a well-matched enemy force.

This means they must be up to speed with both soldiering and clinical skills to deal with threats such as chemical, nuclear, radiological and biological agents as well as cutting-edge conventional weapons.

It also demands a rethink of how things are done.

Lacking air supremacy, the Op Herrick drills of evacuating casualties by helicopter could prove suicidal on this mission.

Bringing in wounded troops by Land Rover is less risky but it has its challenges – not least that medical crews must be closer to the front line and for longer, often in the testing conditions of improvised hospitals which are a far cry from well-established bases like Camp Bastion.

“The clinical timelines we are working to are tight,” says Lt Col Catherine Bramwell-Walsh (RAMC, pictured right), officer commanding Bravo Squadron at 306 HSR.

“Although an ambulance provides the same care as a Chinook, it’s a more austere environment so it raises force protection issues.

“You also have to make decisions about managing a casualty over longer distances – some clinical procedures mean the vehicle must stop.”

Fortunately, the right expertise is available to meet this challenge – both 335 MER and 306 HSR have the likes of top-level consultants, paramedics and a range of specialist nurses in their ranks.

But ensuring they can work seamlessly alongside allies is key.

Col Helen Singh – commanding officer of 306 HSR – emphasises that ensuring their work combines well with the other nations’ ways of doing things is a critical part of the exercise package.

“For example, it’s important to check whether our kit fits together,” she says. “We need to know that a US oxygen cylinder



can fit a UK vent. These are small details but important in a multinational force.

“It’s crucial that we are all on the same page when it comes to ways of working.”

This has been a priority for American officers leading the drills, although they are satisfied with the way that differences in kit and protocols have been addressed.

“We have learnt a great deal from each other,” remarks Lt Col Jennifer Saenz (US Army), the assistant chief nurse on the exercise. “The UK, for example, does a phenomenal job with casualty simulation so we can take this on-board.

“It’s also been great to have new nurses and soldiers here, who are learning all the time.”

Back in the hospital, three casualties are being brought in. Missing limbs, chest injuries and gunshot wounds present challenges in a claustrophobic environment.

Wheeled stretchers battle uneven floors, runners dodge colleagues to bring kit back and forth, and there are instructions from all directions. Yet the troops from three nations remain disciplined and hold the line between life and death.

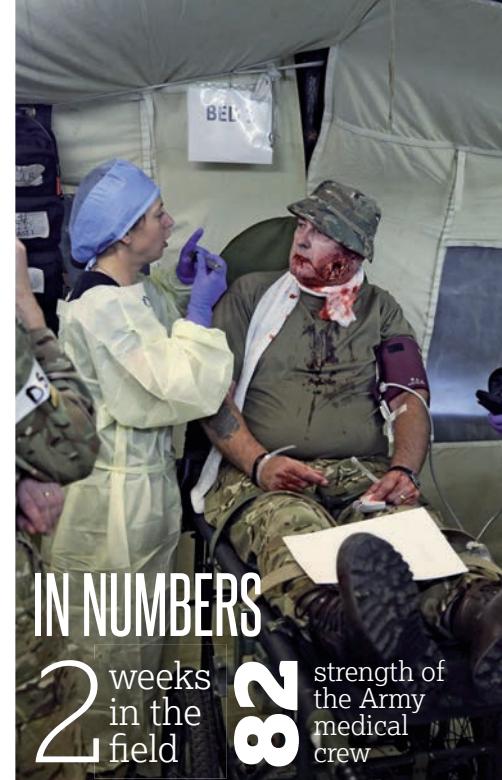
One by one, the injured are moved to the glare of operating theatre lights, enabling Maj Isobel Sommerville (RAMC) to stand down from her duties.

The ear, nose and throat specialist – who has some three decades of service as a Reservist under her belt – has seen the Army change. She is convinced, however, that it remains adept at evolving.

“We have learnt a great deal from the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan,” she adds. “In particular, advances in trauma care continue to serve us well – and we are still picking things up through this type of training.”

This is certainly true. The current operating environment is different and harsh, but those who save lives are undaunted.

With a strong soldiering ethos matched with extraordinary professional acumen, they are proving themselves up to the challenge. ■



IN NUMBERS

2 weeks
in the field

82 strength of
the Army medical crew

“
You have to
make decisions
about managing
a casualty
over longer
distances
”





A TALE OF TWO THEATRES



As the NHS turns 70, its relationship with the Army grows stronger by the day...

IT IS a glimpse into a world NHS bosses have never seen – a place where well-rehearsed protocols serve not only to keep patients alive, but medical professionals as well.

A year ago the scenario behind this exercise would have been unthinkable back on UK soil.

But as senior health care trust staff watch on, perhaps with the recent nerve agent attack in Salisbury in mind, the first responders move forward – their identities masked by respirators.

As they reach the casualty it doesn't take long to confirm a chemical attack: a blister agent has been used.

Troops start securing the area, and the medical teams set to work to ensure their injured comrade is protected from any residual agent.

Then there are muffled shouts as their minds turn to decontaminating and evacuating him – all

while staying safe themselves.

Although the health service managers have no military experience, they have employees involved in this serial in northern Poland as part of Exercise Saber Strike. Released as Reservists, they are testing their skills in a demanding front-line environment.

“The military has always been something that has felt distant from me,” David Cox, specialist lead for trauma and orthopaedic surgery at University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust, admits. “But seeing this exercise has brought it closer – and it’s exciting.

“It is impressive that the medical teams in the field can replicate what we do in civilian hospitals – methods and time frames are the same, as is the operating theatre preparation.

“I will definitely now be expanding my



“
You have access to a fantastic cocktail of ideas
”



knowledge on how the Armed Forces work.”

Medicine is an area in which there has long been close collaboration between the military and civilian worlds. Individuals from the NHS – which is marking its 70th anniversary this year – have often seen service as Reservists.

Part-time Army medical personnel, who have served in high-intensity theatres such as Iraq and Afghanistan, have then imported their front-line lessons directly into the civilian system.

As a result, higher standards of trauma care are being used to treat those who have been seriously injured on home soil.

Further afield, their expertise has been instrumental in humanitarian missions, from Ebola outbreaks in Sierra Leone to exercises promoting health care in rural areas of Kenya.

There have also been key personal benefits for those who give their spare time to serve with the military – namely that training they undertake on Army time can count towards their continuous professional development.

“The NHS is fully supportive of my life as a Reservist,” says WO2 Sally Taylor (RAMC), who works for South Central

Ambulance Service and is the chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) instructor for the serial.

“Our employer gives us two weeks of full paid leave for military activities.

“If you can deal with anything on a battlefield, you’ll cope in civvy street.

“With a CBRN environment, for example, you are operating in kit that is claustrophobic even before you start dealing with a casualty.”

Sharing the sentiment, SSgt Ian Skryme (RAMC) is convinced that bringing Army learning back into the civilian world has made a difference – as well as helping his own knowledge base.

“I work as a paramedic in the West Midlands and I’m convinced the NHS gains a great deal from the military,” he adds. “Being a Reservist is a great opportunity to get to know and interact with other professionals.

“You have access to a fantastic cocktail of ideas that you can take back to your workplace.”

With the troops from 335 Medical Evacuation Regiment successfully extracting their wounded colleague, Rachel Diamond – assistant director of nursing at Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust – is visibly impressed by the training.

Although one of her employees serves as a Reservist, the health boss admits she had little concept of the demands being placed on medical teams in operational conditions.

“I’ve met Col Helen Singh (commanding officer of 306 Hospital Support Regiment) to discuss what we can offer the Army, and what it can offer us,” she continues. “My employee has learnt so much here.”

By all accounts, the relationship between the NHS and Service is standing the test of time. With the cutting edge of medicine being forged at the sharp end of military operations, there are clear benefits for bringing that lifesaving training into the British health care system.

And Reservists are a crucial element of that story. ■



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Opportunities

Picture: Graeme Main



Looking for motivation?
British troops teach night
navigation skills on Op
Orbital in Ukraine

'Safe' ops need rewarding

WHAT is the justification for deployed British personnel not being granted tax breaks while Servicemen and women from most Nato nations are?

Also, why has the operational allowance been removed?

I realise the theatres we currently serve in are not as deadly as Iraq or Afghanistan but they still involve inherent risk and time away from our families.

And I'd like to know why those who have deployed on Operation Cabrit receive a medal but cannot wear it while those who have served in Ukraine are not even given one.

Many soldiers want to go on operations and gain recognition and if they can't they might well leave the Service.

If we don't change this soon the Army will be in a much worse place than it is already when it comes to manning.

— Name and address supplied

“
The Army
will be in a
much worse
place
”

Col John Oldroyd, Army Pay Colonel, Personnel Directorate, responds:
Thanks for your letter, which touches on a very emotive topic.

Operational allowance is designed to recognise increased danger above and beyond that compensated for by the X-factor.

The payment is set at an amount that would roughly equate to the tax and national insurance contributions paid by a private soldier deployed on tour with five

years' service and receiving longer separation allowance.

It is awarded as a tax-free lump sum at the end of the tour.

The qualifying criteria is geographic, not mission specific, and is applied to certain locations which are set by the operational review board at Permanent Joint Headquarters in Northwood.

This was recently reassessed, and the decision was taken not to change the allowance's policy or the qualifying locations. However, the list is re-evaluated every six months.

Also, you correctly highlight the importance of medallic recognition to our soldiers.

Campaign medals are only awarded when there is sufficient risk from enemy action, and when troops are required to live and work in a rigorous and austere environment for a prolonged period.

To award campaign medals to those who do not meet that criteria would devalue the prestige and integrity of past awards.

However, there is a lot of work currently in progress to identify how individuals who deploy on operations that do not involve facing an armed enemy, including Operations Cabrit and Orbital, might be properly recognised.

● Shader medal miss – page 51

YOUR letters provide an insight into the issues at the top of soldiers' agendas... but please be brief. Emails 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.

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HALAL HOO-HA

● I HAVE served for 28 years in the military and today I was shocked to learn from a recently retired chef in the Royal Navy and also my wife, a civilian who works in retail at Southwick Park, that every piece of meat that troops eat is halal.

This is disgusting, and why is this not advertised?

What would happen if someone asked for non-halal meat? – **Name and address supplied**

Richard McKinney, Director of Service Delivery, Defence Infrastructure Organisation, replies: Food provision on MoD sites takes place under different regional contracts with various providers, and their policies regarding halal differ.

To that end, any individual with questions about whether the meat they are eating is halal or not should address them to the catering team on site who are best placed to provide an answer.

However, in the case of Southwick Park the food provider does not serve this kind of meat, either there or at any defence site it supplies without first applying a label stating this on their point of sale information.

All food procured for MoD personnel is fully compliant with current UK legislation and government guidelines.

Nominated suppliers must adhere to strict quality and safety standards. This includes the Animal Welfare Act 2006, which covers halal slaughter.

There is currently no legal requirement within the UK to label halal meat in mainstream products and menus so Service and civilian personnel with special dietary requirements should speak to their catering staff about which dishes are suitable for them to eat.



Feeling the heat: Will the new structure prove to be a manning burden?

Picture: Graeme Main

‘Specialised infantry will drain us’

DO THE higher echelons of the Army realise that specialised infantry manning is unsustainable in the long run?

My battalion is not earmarked for this role but we have to provide around 30 to 40 soldiers and officers from across the ranks for these units in addition to instructors for phase one establishments such as the Infantry Training Centre Catterick and the Army Foundation College at Harrogate.

Due to most of the personnel concerned being junior NCOs or above this is proving to be a considerable drain on our command structure and has the potential to leave our battalion short of numbers for its own taskings.

Why not increase the specialised infantry's private soldier liability so they can at least develop some of their own NCOs? – **Name and address supplied**

Lt Col Lee Pearce, SO1 Organisational Plans, responds: The specialised infantry battalion structure is rank-heavy due to its role.

When taken in isolation this could be considered unsustainable but they are designed to be manned by their infantry division, with troops moving

back and forth between these and other battalions and training centres at different stages in their careers.

This approach enables those who have demonstrated an aptitude for such a job to be selected and then bring their experiences and skills back to their units.

The methodology has been modelled and proved sustainable.

As a third of the specialised infantry teams will be made up of privates and lance corporals, these battalions will, over time, be able to grow their capability from the bottom up and reduce the demand on the rest of the division.

The group is in a transition phase and won't be fully operational until 2020. Until then, and while the units focus on building capacity, the divisions may need to move manpower from other battalions.

This may create the illusion they are unsustainable but it's important not to make false assumptions at this early stage.

- Look out for a Specialised Infantry update in the August issue

TOP RECOGNITION FOR REFEREE

● THANKS for the first-rate article on Army football referees in the June edition.

You mention WO2 Andy Halliday (RAPTC) and list his many achievements and I think it's worth noting that he was appointed a Member of the Order of the British Empire in the Queen's birthday honours list.

I look forward to seeing more coverage of my colleague in the future – and thanks too for a great publication.

– **Col Philip Harrison, Commander HQ North West**



Picture: Ssgt Paul Morrison, RLC



Picture: Mike Weston

Gurkhas ahead on the fitness trail

AFTER reading the special section on physical training in the May edition of *Soldier*, I wondered if comparative data exists on the fitness and injury levels of Gurkhas compared to British-born recruits?

I know that Gurkhas are unusual for achieving above average marksmanship standards and I believe they once had the highest deployable levels in the British Army.

I assume they still do and, if so, have the reasons for this achievement ever been properly examined?

Would there be value – and possibly lessons learnt – from studying their

attitudes, fitness and injury levels?
– Maj Sergio Miller, Int Corps

Maj Mohammed Fertout, Senior Health Advisor, SO2 Health and Wellbeing Policy, replies: You make a good observation and a recent check of Field Army health data confirms that 93 per cent of Gurkha personnel are currently fully deployable. There are several factors to consider in this, however.

Like the rest of the Army, Gurkhas can be medically discharged and downgraded for a wide range of reasons, and musculoskeletal

“ There may be genetic factors ”

Is a break-in allowed?

● **MY STAFF sergeant broke into my locked desk drawer that contained personal belongings.**

When I questioned his actions I was told he had every right to do this because the drawer wasn't my property, it was the MoD's.

If that's the case, what's to stop him breaking into my Service accommodation? – **Name and address supplied**

Col Richard Allen, Assistant Head of Discipline and Administrative Law, replies: Powers of entry, search and seizure are governed by part three, chapter three of the Armed Forces Act 2006.

The law places strict conditions on the circumstances in which such actions can take place and defines which persons are authorised to carry them out lawfully.

Without knowing the full situation of your case, it would appear that it may have been an unlawful search.

If property was damaged or stolen, you may report the matter to the military police. If you consider yourself to have been wronged you may make a Service complaint.



disorders and injuries are the most common, as they are with the rest of the Armed Forces.

The physical standards used for Gurkha selection are the same as those employed for British-based recruits but as a result of the exceptionally high demand for places only the very fittest are chosen – the tests are performed as a best effort rather than having to meet a minimum standard.

Cultural attitudes towards healthy lifestyle choices may also play a part in the Gurkhas' low susceptibility to these injuries as well as their approach to prevention.

In addition, there may be some genetic factors that protect or enhance Gurkha performance, but they have not been assessed.

There are currently no plans to examine this population in isolation as part of research into musculoskeletal injuries, but it may be undertaken once the health behaviours associated with these problems are better understood.

The Service's policy for injury prevention aims to capture best practice and ensure that commanders have an accessible aid for improving their troops' availability and deployability.

This is due to be revised to include advice linked to the new Army physical training system, which has already been developed to incorporate the most up-to-date training principles and components designed to minimise injury while progressively improving fitness levels. Details are in ABN 36/18.



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Regular perk: Shouldn't all Reservists enjoy concessionary travel?

Picture: Sgt Neil Bryden, RAF

Reservists grounded by inequality

AM in the Reserve and unable to access so-called "indulgence flights" unless I am on operations.

Only full-time soldiers and civil servants can take advantage of this fabulous concession at any time.

We are all meant to be serving in one Army so why do these restrictions exist?

– Name and address supplied

Lt Col Grant Renton, Defence Logistics Policy, replies:

Concessionary travel on applicable routes is potentially available to Regulars and Reserves, their families – where eligible – and certain other categories of personnel to travel in spare seats on Royal Air Force and other MoD chartered aircraft.

However, this is a privilege and not a right.

A charge is levied against each individual in order to recoup the costs incurred to defence, including administration, meals, extra fuel required and any taxes due.

The risk for the traveller is that no seat is guaranteed because of the requirement to maximise use of this air transport for duty passengers and freight, or to help facilitate last-minute evacuations and other operational demands.

This also means passengers can be offloaded at any point in their journey if the circumstances dictate.

There are a number of categories listed in JSP 800, volume 2, part 2, that define which Reserve personnel are entitled to apply for concessionary travel.

These are full-time Reserve service troops, including non-Regular permanent staff but excluding

additional duties commitment, and volunteer Reserves (VR) excluding sponsored Reservists.

Please note that VRs become eligible during a period of mobilised service that exceeds three months. Eligibility stops once the period of mobilisation ceases.

There are other eligible categories and these should be investigated by potential applicants.

Having presented you with the stock answer, quoting the JSP, I acknowledge the policy is fairly restrictive and in light of the "one Army" concept could be seen as anything but inclusive.

We intend to look at broadening eligibility for Reserve personnel to ensure we chime with expectations.

These changes will need to be staffed correctly before any amendment to the policy can be released but, rest assured, it is work in progress.

“
We are all meant to be one Army
”

FITNESS FEEDBACK

AS A former member of the Royal Army Physical Training Corps I was pleased to read about changes to the way Servicemen and women approach fitness (*Soldier*, May).

The new methods will, I am sure, help eliminate the setbacks some people experience later on in life as a result of military training.

I know from talking to fellow veterans how many of us are now suffering because of injuries that might have been avoided.

At 70 I am waiting for a total knee and hip replacement brought on, I believe, by many of the punishing exercises we did.

This new initiative is a significant step forward.

– Ken Carter, Vancouver



On the move: One of the Army's new foundation exercises, the rotation

Picture: Sgt Jonathan Lee van Zyl, RLC

THE WARTIME MIRACLE THAT SHOULD BE REMEMBERED

THE two blockbuster films *Dunkirk* and *Darkest Hour* have created great interest in wartime events, but one major fact is not mentioned in either of them.

In 1940 the situation was so bleak, with defeat to the Germans seemingly inevitable, that King George VI made a broadcast calling for a national day of prayer on May 26.

Thousands of services were held across the country and millions of people poured into churches.

Two significant events immediately followed. A violent storm hit Dunkirk, grounding the Luftwaffe which had been killing thousands on the beaches. Then a great calm descended on the English Channel, the like of which hadn't occurred for a generation, enabling hundreds of tiny boats to rescue 338,000 soldiers in all.

The timing of these events led people to speak of "the miracle of Dunkirk" and Sunday, June 9 was made a day of national thanksgiving. After the tide of the war turned in 1942, Churchill was moved to say: "I sometimes have a feeling... that some guiding hand has interfered."

In the light of these two films, a leaflet about various wartime miracles is being posted to thousands of churches across the UK. – Rev Jonathan Willans, Reigate

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Medal worthy: Riflemen teach weapons handling to Iraqi border guards

Picture: Cpl Timothy Jones, RLC

Decision needed on Shader medals

IN SEPTEMBER 2017 the then defence secretary, Michael Fallon, announced the decision to award Iraq and Syria operational service medals.

He also stated his intention to reward those who directly supported Op Shader but were based in locations deemed outside the risk and rigour zones that had been used to establish eligibility for similar awards in the past.

However, we also need to examine how to provide medallic recognition for those based outside the battlespace who are making a vital contribution to this operation, from Reaper pilots taking life-and-death decisions to those ensuring our planes can strike Daesh targets.

The DIN detailing the release of this medal (2017DIN09-15) made no reference to personnel based outside Iraq and Syria.

Has a decision been made on how such individuals are to be acknowledged?

Those who do not qualify not only miss out on a decoration but in many cases operational allowance and days towards their Accumulated Campaign Service Medal (ACSM) as well, despite contributing significantly to missions for six to nine months.

During Op Herrick those who supported tours, such as ground crews and decompression staff based in secure locations, received the Afghanistan Operational Service Medal less a rosette and days towards their ACSM. Surely Op Shader warrants similar treatment.

There are also disparities in how the operational allowance is awarded, with personnel in headquarters in Kuwait and Qatar deemed eligible while others in Turkey and Jordan are not, even though they are at significantly higher risk from green-on-blue incidents while providing training to Syrian militias. — **Name and address supplied**

“
Those
who don't
qualify
miss out
”

Lt Col (retd) Kestrel Simson, Ceremonial, Operational and Service Awards, replies:

The Operational Service Medal is awarded when the majority of individuals are at sufficient risk from enemy action and are in a rigorous and austere environment for prolonged periods.

While it has been deemed that those serving in Iraq and Syria meet these criteria, those outside these boundaries and air space do not.

It has, however, been recognised that the nature of warfare is changing and there are more individuals outside the theatre of operations making significant contributions to the success of Op Shader than inside it.

There is work in progress to look at how we can reward those who fall into that category – not only for this deployment but for other current and future operations – without being divisive or devaluing the prestige and integrity of existing medals.

There are many elements to be considered and it is too early to prejudge the outcome of this work.

With regard to the operational allowance, for Op Shader this is paid to those Service personnel serving within the geographical boundaries of Iraq and Syria.

It is financial recognition of the increased and enduring nature of the danger over and above that compensated for within the X-factor.

The perils can include non-combat situations such as disease, kidnapping or road traffic accidents, and therefore while most who qualify for a campaign medal will receive the extra cash, there are others in particularly dangerous areas who do not qualify for an award but do receive the money.

LACK OF FUNDS BECOMES HOT POINT OF CONTENTION

ILIVE in a mess and pay the full accommodation charge, which totals £195 per month.

I have paid these fees since joining the Army 25 years ago.

I'm aware of the financial strains on Service life, but why is it so difficult to get white goods replaced when the guarantee has run out, particularly washing machines?

There is, supposedly, a contract in place, yet I've been told our device can't be swapped for a new one because there is no funding available. — **Name and address supplied**

Maj Gen Duncan Capps, General Officer Commanding, Regional Command, replies: Thank you for highlighting a really important issue.

Last year the Army had planned to support the replacement of white goods but the funding was removed during budget cuts.

This year we have found alternative funding for an ongoing replacement programme, the performance of which will be closely monitored by the SO1 soft facilities management in Headquarters Regional Command.





COMPETITIONS

Spine line winners: Trudy Pask, Keighley, West Yorkshire

National Watersports Festival tickets: Sgt Joseph Subba, Robertson Barracks, Swanton Morley

Journey's End DVD: Andy Williams, Cumbria; David Clarkson, Wiltshire; Glyn Coney, Shaftesbury; John Card, Beacon Barracks, Beaconside, Stafford; David Woolmer, Whitehaven



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INTELLIGENCE

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

ABN 52/18: Army travel tool

ABN 51/18: Land environment fleet optimisation plan

ABN 50/18: Resilience margin policy

ABN 49/18: Armed Forces continuous attitude survey 2018, results

ABN 48/18: The data protection laws are changing

ABN 47/18: Notification of new land doctrine – *Army Field Manual Warfighting Tactics*

ABN 46/18: Army external placements – academic and leadership development courses and fellowships

DIB 06/18: Functional knowledge, skills and experience career management tools

DIB 05/18: Armed Forces continuous attitude survey 2018, results

DIN 2018DIN01-086: Information and Digital Excellence Awards 2018

DIN 2018DIN01-085: Civil service senior leaders scheme, future leaders scheme, which incorporates Meta and the MoD high potential development programme

DIN 2018DIN01-084: MoD police annual pay award

DIN 2018DIN01-083: Women in Defence Awards 2018

DIN 2018DIN01-082: Army officer terms of service – late entry officer conversion to direct entry officer seniority

DIN 2018DIN01-080: MoD firefighters 2017 pay award

DIN 2018DIN01-079: Defence Fire and Rescue Service fire officers and brigade managers 2017 pay award

DIN 2018DIN01-077: The formalisation of the Army Medical Services command and staff cadre

DIN 2018DIN01-076: Operational welfare communications – Welcome

DIN 2018DIN01-075: Promotion rules for Regular Royal Army Medical Corps allied health professionals

DIN 2018DIN01-073: Armed Forces Act 2006 – higher authorities for joint units and organisations and Service personnel in non-operational posts overseas

DIN 2018DIN02-006: Guidance to MoD project staff on the cyber security model – enforcing Defcon 658 (cyber)

DIN 2018DIN03-015: Updated JSP 800, Vol 5, Pt 2, Leaflet 45, *Managing Driver Behaviour*

DIN 2018DIN04-105: Batsis declaration of obsolescence – various NSNs from DMC Z99, Z99BOW, BMN, Z1, Z42, Y3 and Y1

DIN 2018DIN04-101: Batsis declaration of obsolete: power 156 cable NSN 5995-99-617-2915

DIN 2018DIN04-100: Package labelling – requirement to use PDF 417 format bar codes

DIN 2018DIN04-099: Initial issue of AP216B-0900-123 – emergency personal locator beacon

DIN 2018DIN04-098: Batsis declaration of obsolete: TCIS/Bowman miscellaneous items from DMC Y3

DIN 2018DIN04-097: Notice of general purpose test and measurement equipment (W115, W116, 3V7 and Z4) items made obsolete

DIN 2018DIN04-096: Notification of the removal of Virtus helmet minirail

Continued on page 54

A Staff Sergeant with a Pension Sharing Order in place asked us to check the accuracy of his pension forecast



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Intelligence continued

DIN 2018DIN04-095: Declaration of obsolete – Falcon analogue basic phone pack 5 user

DIN 2018DIN04-094: Batsis declaration of obsolete: various types of tape from DMC Z42

DIN 2018DIN04-093: Declaration of obsolete – Falcon analogue terminal adaptor

DIN 2018DIN04-092: Batsis declaration of obsolete: various types of tape from DMC Z42

DIN 2018DIN04-091: Revised procedure for demanding timber products

DIN 2018DIN04-090: Cessation of Miscellaneous Connectivity Service's low bandwidth circuits

DIN 2018DIN04-089: Tactical masts antenna

DIN 2018DIN05-020: Cessation of high grade messaging via restricted email

DIN 2018DIN05-019: Corrective lens ordering process for general service respirator

DIN 2018DIN05-018: Data protection rights – how to recognise and process data subject rights including the right to erasure

DIN 2018DIN05-017: Declaration of initial operating capability for Joint Force Cyber Group cyber vulnerability investigations operations cell

DIN 2018DIN05-016: Data protection rights – how to recognise and process subject access requests

DIN 2018DIN05-015: The process and priorities for the provision of A4 Air Combat Service Support Unit assistance

DIN 2018DIN05-014: Data protection impact assessment requirement for screening

DIN 2018DIN06-020: Amendment to JSP 800 vol 4a *Dangerous Goods by Air Regulations* version 4 and associated dangerous goods forms

DIN 2018DIN07-070: Notice of cancellation for continued provision of contractor delivered GOLDesp training within DE&S Hels

DIN 2018DIN07-069: Tactical Medical Wing course schedule training year 2018/19

DIN 2018DIN07-068: Qualified weapons instructor intelligence surveillance reconnaissance course

DIN 2018DIN07-066: Rodet training policy

DIN 2018DIN07-065: The provision of simulated media support

DIN 2018DIN10-022: Army Martial Arts Association WT taekwondo

training course

DIN 2018DIN10-021: Travel at public expense for Army sport

DIN 2018DIN10-020: Combined Services Chess Championship 2018



REUNIONS

Royal Green Jackets Regimental Association annual Veterans' Day reunion at Sir John Moore Barracks, Winchester on July 14. Attendance is open to all past and present Riflemen and their partners. Contact Maj (Retd) Roy Stanger on 01962 887916 or roy.stanger787@mod.uk

16 Regiment RA Old Comrades Association reunion – including two-course meal and entertainment – at the Wortley House Hotel, Rowland Road, Scunthorpe on July 28 from 1900. Cost £25 per head. Payment must be made in advance, either directly to the HSBC 16 Regt OCA bank account or by sending a cheque to association treasurer Guss Goodall at 18 Dunstan Hill, Kirton in Lindsey, DN22 4DU.

Patrol Base 5, Nahr-e Saraj South reunion (Herrick 13, the winter of 2010/11) at the Holiday Inn Express, Leeds from August 3 to 5. For more details call 0113 3804400 or email danburton@ekit.com

Annual reunion of Association of Harrogate Apprentices, October

5-6 at the Army Foundation College, Harrogate. Further details from Len Morland on 01892 523987 or secretary@aoha.org.uk

23/144 Parachute Field Ambulance and Parachute Regimental Association reunion, October 5-7, at the Royal Court Hotel, Coventry. For details contact Roy Hatch at royhatchbem48@gmail.com or via 07730 977 989.

116 Coy, RASC; 18 Coy (Amphibious), RASC and 18 (AMPH) Sqn, RCT ex-Freemington Camp reunion at the Barnstaple Hotel, Barnstaple, Devon on October 13. All former members of these units, including attached arms and widows, are welcome. For details contact don.turner1@talktalk.net

8 Regiment RASC/RCT/RLC 17th anniversary reunion weekend and dinner, October 19-20. For details email jimmyasp@hotmail.com



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28 April 2018

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Consolation prizes (£500): Sgt J Joel, 31 Sqn, 1 Med Regt, BFPO 16; Pte M Spragg, 9 Sqn, 7 Regt RLC, Cottesmore. Consolation prizes (£200): Cpl M Magar, JFLU HQ Falklands, BFPO 655; CSgt T Heale, HQ Lon Central Garrison; Capt S Humphries, 529 STRE, 20 Wks Gp RE, Peterborough; SSgt A Gurung, 4 (Mil Trg) Sqn, RSS, Blandford Forum; Sgt B Felix, HQ 170 (Infra Sp) Engr Gp, Nottingham; WO2 D Baikie, CSES, HQ RSA, Salisbury; Cpl C McLaren, 48 Sqn, 39 Eng Regt Wksp, Moray; Capt D Morizet, Batt, Kenya, BFPO 10; LCpl M Malaney, 8 Bn REME, DSEME, Chippenham; Capt J Ash, PEW, 1 RSME Regt, Chatham; LCpl A Mendez, Sp Sqn, 1 Signal Regt, Stafford; Sig N Wright, 22 Signal Regt, Beaconsfield; Lt Col

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A Fryatt, HQ HC, Aldershot; Sgt P Chapman, 125 Sqn, 159 Regt RLC, Stoke-on-Trent; SSgt M Atherton, JFD, Swindon; Cpl S Rai, 248 Sqn, 22 Signal Regt, Beaconsfield; WO2 K Mitchell, PRU Londist, London; Cpl T Winter, HQ Coy, 2 PWRR, Cottesmore; Bdr C Higgins, 1 Bty, 7 Para RHA, Colchester; LCpl D Palmer, A Sqn, QDG, Dereham; Pte D McCartney, 1 Scots, BFPO 806; LCpl M Wilson-Bent, 23 Bty, 29 Cdo Regt RA, Plymouth; Gnr E Jones, 159 Bty, 26 Regt RA, BFPO 113; Spr A Train, 24 Trg Sqn, Chatham; Pte K Byrne, 2 Sqn, RSS, Blandford Forum.

5 May 2018

1st Prize (£10,000): Pte S Thapa, HQ BFSAI, BFPO 655. 2nd Prize (£5,000): LCpl M Sherpa, 2 RGR, BFPO 11. 3rd Prize (£4,000): Cpl R Ferguson-Giles, MTM, Glasgow. 4th Prize (£3,000): Lt Col A Field, HQ CJTF, BFPO 747. 5th Prize (£2,000): WO2 R Martin, 50 Sqn, 29 Regt RLC, South Cerney. 6th Prize (£1,000): Maj S Hickey, MoD, London. Consolation prizes (£500): Gnr J Jones, 19 Regt RA, Tidworth; Rfn J Ferry, A Coy, 3 Rifles, Edinburgh. Consolation prizes (£200): Capt J Wright, HQ 1 MI Bde, Andover; Capt M Fairweather, 3 Scots, Inverness; SSgt S Delaney, 3 Regt RLC, Abingdon; Name withheld, Hereford Garrison; Sgt I Pun, 1 ITB, ITC, Catterick Garrison; LCpl L Zalaiskalns, 400 Tp RLC, Catterick

Garrison; Cpl J Lomax, LIFC Fwd, RAF Wyton; Cpl D Benn, D Sqn, RDG, Catterick Garrison; Cpl D Jones, ATC (P), Woking; LCpl C Bowman, 16 MI Coy, Colchester; 2nd Lt M Francis, 1 AAC, Yeovilton; Sig D Tuckey, 11 (RSS) Signal Regt, Blandford Forum; Air Tpr C Franklin, 2 (Trg) Regt AAC, Stockbridge; WO2 C Scott-Baillie, 219 Sqn, 150 Regt RLC, Balby; SSgt A Delailomaloma, RSMS, Thatcham. Consolation prizes (£100): WO2 A Lear, 11 Bty, 16 Regt RA, Emsworth; Sgt T Barnaby, 11 (RSS) Signal Regt, DSCIS, Blandford Forum; Capt H Owens, 23 (Para) Eng Regt, Ipswich; Sgt R Kasozi, DSHE, Lichfield; Capt J Harris, 5 Bn REME, Tidworth; LCpl J Hayes, 21 Sqn, 33 Engr Regt (EOD); Nr Saffron Walden; Lt H Doyle, 202 Sqn, 3(UK) Div, Salisbury; OCdt A Wiggins, Tauras Sqn, DA, Birmingham; Capt G Markham, 64 Sqn, 37 Signal Regt, Redditch, Cpl M Biscombe, 8 Sqn, 27 Regt RLC, Aldershot.

12 May 2018

1st Prize (£10,000): LCpl J Poulter, 226 Sqn, 14 Signal Regt (EW), Haverfordwest. 2nd Prize (£5,000): Sgt B Davies, 3 RHA, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. 3rd Prize (£4,000): Gnr L McCauley, 32 Regt RA, Salisbury. 4th Prize (£3,000): Pte Z Mosley, Sp Sqn, 1 Signal Regt, Stafford. 5th Prize (£2,000): Pte S Legge, B Coy, 3 Scots, Ardersier. 6th Prize (£1,000): Sgt H Thomas, 170 Bty, 12 Regt RA, Emsworth. Consolation prizes (£500): LSgt L Fitzpatrick, Sp Coy, 1 Coldm Gds, Windsor; Pte C Wonnacott, 12 Sqn, 3 Med Regt, Preston. Consolation prizes (£200): Sgt C Stewart, 40 Cdo RM MPGS, Taunton; Capt L Rudd, IBS, Brecon; Capt R Smith, 8 Bn REME, DSEME, Chippenham; Sgt J Dingley, F Bty, 7 Para RHA, Colchester; WO2 T Earl, 22 Signal Regt, Beaconsfield; Sgt A Mortley, 77 AES, 35 Engr Regt LAD, BFPO 22; LCpl A Kororua, 3 Rifles, Edinburgh; SSgt R Kitson, 215 MI Sect, 2 MI Bn, Shefford; Sgt G Selby, 521 STRE (WD), 62 Wks Gp RE, Chilwell; LCpl J Ager, 434 MI Sect, Salisbury; LCpl M Matthews, HQ Coy, 4 Scots, Catterick Garrison; Cpl L Dodd, 4 Med Regt, Aldershot; Pte H Love, HQ BFSAI, BFPO 655; Lt G Pawson, RAC Trg Regt, Armour Ctr, Wareham; Lt W Dalton Hall, F Coy, SG, London. Consolation prizes (£100): SSgt S Durdle, 33 Fd Hosp, Gosport; Name withheld, Hereford Garrison; WO2 G Sheppard, 30 Sqn, 1 Med Regt, BFPO 16; WO2 W Mupesa, 13 Regt RLC, Colchester; Cpl J Rowe, Comms Sqn, 30 Cdo IX Gp RM, Plymouth; LCpl D Stephen, 29 EOD and Search Gp, Saffron Walden; Pte P Sheard, 53 Sqn, 17 P & M Regt RLC, Marchwood; Pte R Hills, 8 Bn REME, DSEME, Chippenham; Lt Col P Jackson, Fd Army HQ, Andover; Cpl A Miller, DMRC, Epsom.

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REVIEWS

MOVIES

IDEAL HOME

More on-screen class from Steve Coogan

AFTER a quarter of a century of Alan Partridge, it's probably a good thing that today's column inches are more focused on Steve Coogan's film appearances than his most famous comedy creation. Too much of a good thing, and all that.



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MUSIC

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BOOKS

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GAMES

MOVIES

But would I define *Ideal Home* – directed by **Andrew Fleming** and out this month in cinemas – as a good thing?

The honest answer is, I'm not 100 per cent sure.

I think I loved it – the touching storyline of an excessively materialistic gay couple who are forced to reassess life when a long-lost grandson turns up; **Paul Rudd's** class in the leading role alongside his British co-star; and Coogan's all-too-easy assimilation into the part of extravagant show-off.

But another part of me felt that the plot – a story of unorthodox parenting come good, love conquering all – was just a little bit, well, tired.

As the success of Partridge himself bears out, though, what is wrong with repeating a successful formula.

And I am not saying this film doesn't contain flashes of brilliance and originality. From score to cinematography, it does.

It just didn't really introduce anything by way of new twists or ideas.

Answering a question from chat show host **Alan Carr** about the process of "gaying-up", Coogan – whose serious acting skills were flagged to many in the 2013 hit *Philomena* – revealed how **Bruno Tonioli** from *Strictly* taught him to mince.

And despite being heavily cliché-driven, the result is an endearing and often hilarious character called Erasmus Brumble who is masterfully guided from frivolous and self-indulgent to selfless and – ultimately – heroic.

"Try to remember that everything in life is temporary," comes the movie's most powerful line at a particularly poignant moment in the plot.

It's the sort of soundbite that completely knocks you off your feet. And one that has continued to echo around my head ever since.

This movie might not be pushing too many boundaries, but it is well made and certainly worth cracking out when you want to be entertained.

Yet another fine example of Coogan's aptitude for comedy in all its diverse forms. ■

REVIEW: SARAH GOLDSMITH, SOLDIER

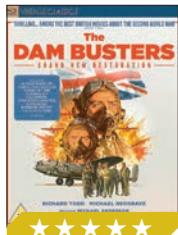


VERDICT:
A genuinely nice thing.
Watch it.
★★★★★





DVD/DIGITAL RELEASES

**The Dam Busters**

Out now

A FILM and subject matter that needs little introduction, this 4k restoration of the black and white 1955 classic uses modern digital techniques to provide an incredibly clean and crisp image. The sounds of the engines are as pounding and powerful as you might hope for. If you want a copy of the film for your collection, this release gives you the gold standard – with a

host of extras. Highly recommended.
Maj Alex Janaway, RAMC

**Fred: The Godfather of British Crime**

Out now

AS the last remaining British gangsters are dying off, this documentary follows the life of Freddie Foreman from his early years in London during the Blitz to petty crime in the 1950s, rubbing shoulders with the Krays in the 1960s and eventual arrest and long-term incarceration in the 1980s. Freddie describes in detail the glamour and money, but disappointingly evades his part in the disposal of Jack McVitie. All of this has left the family man a lonely soul with nothing more than memories of what could have been. If anything can be learnt from this, it's simply that crime doesn't pay.

Cpl Scott Roberts, Rifles

**Pacific Rim: Uprising**

Out now

THE sequel to Guillermo del Toro's original 2013 action adventure sees the same dimension-hopping alien race return to try and destroy all human life on Earth. This time it's down to a motley crew of ne'er-do-wells to risk it all and save the planet. Unable to boast an A-list cast or cogent storyline, the title does deliver on excitement and action. For sci-fi fans who want to see giant robots fighting enormous alien lizards against the backdrop of some world-famous cities strap yourselves in – for everyone else, there are much better franchises out there.

Maj Neil Johnson, AAC

WIN

● FREDDIE Foreman is the last living legend of the Krays' London underworld. A heavyweight villain with an unbelievably bloody past, this documentary tells his true story through interviews at his retirement home. *Soldier* has teamed up with Lionsgate to offer five lucky readers a copy of the title on DVD. To be in with a chance of winning, tell us how old Foreman is. Answers to the usual address or **comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk** by July 31.

**Den of Thieves**

Out now

THIS title is more of a hard-hitting, explosive cops-and-robbers effort than your average title in this genre. The gritty Los Angeles saga follows the intersecting lives of an elite unit of the LA County Sheriff's Department and the state's most successful bank robbery crew, all of whom are ex-military. A seemingly impossible heist on the Federal Reserve Bank is planned and what follows is an action-packed, electrifying cat-and-mouse thriller which will have you riveted on the edge of your seat. A brilliant film from start to finish.

Rodge Tapply, ex-RE

PICK OF THE MONTH:

REMEMBER

Choirs come together to mark centenary milestone

AS 2018 marks the centenary of the end of the First World War, **The Military Wives Choirs** unite for their fourth album.

Featuring themes of remembrance, commemoration, patriotism and military life, it is showcased by the telling of a story from 1918 to now.

The female voices have created an offering inspired by fierce heroism, as women raised children alone, nursed the wounded and worked tirelessly despite the loss of husbands, sons, fathers, brothers and friends.

In collaboration with **The Band of the Household Cavalry** and the **Royal Marines Corps of Drums**, the collection was released on Armed Forces Day and perfectly sets the tone for the many poignant moments to come later in the year.

Opening track *The Poppy Red* is inspired by the 1918 poem *We Shall Keep The Faith* and is a tender expression and excellent composition produced by the award-winning composer **Owain Park**.

"There is a lot of very powerful music on the record and I'm thrilled that my song was released first," Park told *Soldier*.

"I think the strong theme of remembrance in this track is important, as well as the repetition of these words in the chorus: 'We caught the torch you threw and holding high, we keep the faith with those who died'.

"Pride, gratitude and respect were concepts that The Military Wives Choirs wanted to get across to their audience with this new album."

Five original songs by prestigious composers from the worlds of classical, pop and film music underpin the record and Park was one of the lucky few to

VERDICT:

A rousing and powerful record



be involved.

"I wanted to bring together the best aspects of rousing hymn tunes and orchestrations while being respectful to the overall theme and content of the album," he explained.

"Ultimately, I was inspired by a response to the question, 'When you think of Remembrance Day, what single visual image springs to mind?'

"The answer was 'the poppy'. It grew on the battlefields covering over the devastation caused by man. It is the symbol used for the remembrance of conflict.

"I was a very small cog in an absolutely huge operation and it was a pleasure to be involved. I can't wait to hear live performances in the coming months and years." ■

INTERVIEW: ELLA SMITH, CIVVY

MUSIC RELEASES

Bad Contestant
by Matt Maltese

APPARENTLY Matt Maltese is a big thing in the South London

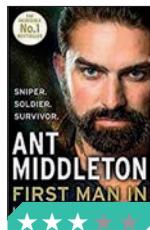
music scene. In response to that I can only be thankful to the River Thames for preventing its overspill north of the water. With a less than unique version of mum rock fused with inoffensive lift music, this album will pass you by without even coming onto your radar...so much so I can't remember a single song that made any impression more than a "meh". Opening track *Greatest Comedian* is supposed to be Maltese's most surreal single. But the only enjoyable thing would be watching someone's face when listening to it, having parted with their hard-earned pennies. Instantly forgettable and not worth listening to.

Cpl Scott Roberts, Rifles



BOOKS

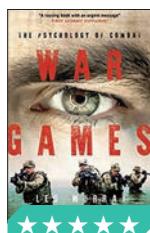
BOOK RELEASES



First Man In by Ant Middleton

OVERALL, this effort from soldier-turned-TV personality Ant Middleton is rather disappointing. Although certain parts of the narrative are interesting – especially his time with the Royal Engineers and Royal Marines – this is not what you would call a comprehensive autobiography. Rather, it comprises his musings and reflections on leadership based on his life experiences, including his stint in prison. The author mostly glosses over the years he spent as an elite soldier, beyond a little bit about the selection process, which is unfortunate given that it was probably a major selling point for people buying this title.

Capt Daniel Burke, Int Corps



War Games by Leo Murray

HOW do you compel soldiers to do completely unnatural and unpleasant things in conflict? Generations of military leaders have grappled with the question. This book attempts to answer it through personal first-hand accounts of combat and the science of psychology. Filled with dark humour and fascinating facts from 300 years of history, the narrative is highly insightful and entertaining. However, what is worrying is the apparent lack of research and funding into proactive military psychology. Essentially, the author tries – and to a certain amount succeeds – to show what makes troops do the business under fire. This is an absolute must read for any aspiring leaders.

Cpl Scott Roberts, Rifles



Freefall by Robert Radcliffe

THIS is the second novel in a semi-fictional trilogy charting the formation of The Parachute Regiment through the eyes of a soldier in its 2nd Battalion, Theo Trickey. The book recounts his experiences in Tunisia and Sicily, largely in the first person. He is severely wounded at Arnhem but rescued by medical officer Capt Garland, who also takes up the narration. Fast-paced and well written, it is a good story about the early paratroopers, whose fighting qualities earned them the nickname "die Roten Teufel" (the Red Devils) from the Germans. I look forward to reading the final instalment.

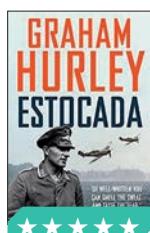
Andy Kay, ex-RS



Noonday Dream by Ben Howard

ACCLAIMED singer-songwriter Ben Howard burst onto the scene with Mercury Prize nominated debut *Every Kingdom* in 2011. Further signs of his potential were witnessed on the follow-up, *Forget Where We Were*, but his long-awaited third offering sees the musician take a disappointing backwards step. This selection is littered with slow-burning tracks that fail to ignite, while the prolonged instrumentals grow tiresome after a while. That said, there are some highlights, such as the upbeat *There's Your Man*, but these are few and far between. On listening to the record it is hard to escape a sense of disappointment given Howard's previous efforts and we can only hope for a return to form next time round.

Richard Long, Soldier



Estocada by Graham Hurley

THE author of this title is prolific and I find all of his books entertaining and absorbing. *Estocada* – referring to the final thrust of a matador's sword – is no different. This adventure begins in 1937 during the Spanish Civil War and moves through to Germany's mobilisation for conflict and the subsequent annexation of Czechoslovakia. An ace German pilot and a Royal Marine-turned-spy are the heroes on an inevitable collision course. Graham Hurley weaves fact and fiction seamlessly together in another excellent work of suspense and intrigue that kept me enthralled until the last page and shows why he is among the best thriller writers.

Tony David, ex-RE



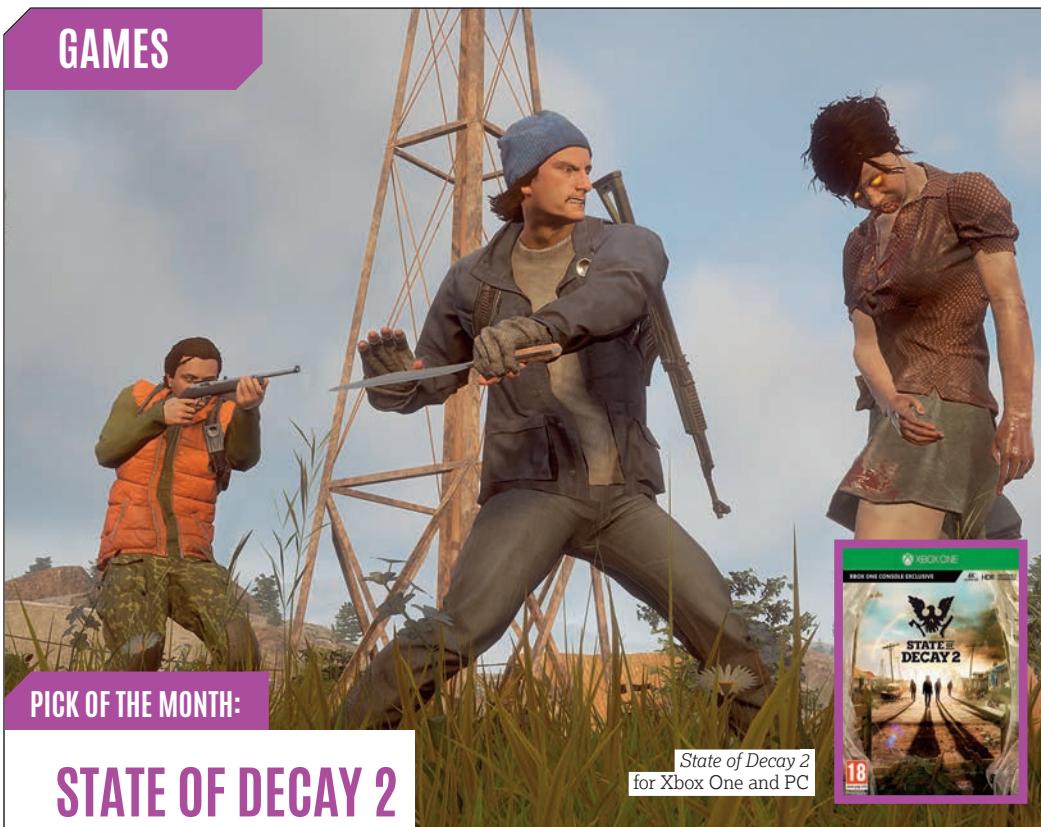
Atlas of the European Campaign 1944-45 by Steven J Zaloga

THE publication of this comprehensive and glossy atlas was timely for me because I am preparing for a battlefield tour to Normandy. It features 127 full colour maps depicting the Allies' advance through France and Europe in 1944-45, along with commentary on the major actions, including the D-Day landings, Operation Market Garden and the Battle of the Bulge. Heavy on detail and beautifully presented, this volume will be of interest to anyone planning on visiting the battlefields or indeed any military history enthusiast. At £40, it's on the pricey side but it's well worth the investment if the Second World War is your bag.

WO2 Mike Owens, RE

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

GAMES



PICK OF THE MONTH:

STATE OF DECAY 2

Hunt for supplies flaws zombie sequel

► THE previous chapter in this series was an interesting jaunt through the wilds of a post-apocalyptic zombie-fest.

The sequel, however, is somewhat less impactful and seems to forget its true purpose.

When *State of Decay 2* was initially launched it came with a series of disruptive bugs and glitches that often impeded gameplay and spoiled the immersion and experience. Luckily, the vast majority of these have been fixed via post-release updates.

As with the original, this instalment sees you in a zombie-filled environment where you have to gather supplies, weapons and find survivors – all of which is fairly straightforward.

Visually, it could do with some polish. It's not horrible to look at but there are definitely a few areas where it would have benefited from some additional attention.

I even get the feeling that it was rushed out somewhat, with fixes and updates intended as a means of dealing with issues.

That said, there are plenty of enjoyable and tense moments ranging from the highs of locating a bounty

VERDICT:

Greater attention to detail needed



State of Decay 2
for Xbox One and PC



of supplies to the lows of finding yourself cornered in a store as zombies stumble through the door like an odd assortment of angry shoppers.

As a game it's got plenty of promise – a wide-open environment you can explore and search, all while avoiding the undead.

But this backdrop also proves to be an unlikely obstacle by turning what is otherwise a decent release into a never-ending loot-fest.

Invariably, this means you'll spend most of your time driving around in cars with next to no fuel or raiding supermarkets and cafes with the hope of obtaining something useful. Unlike other loot-essential games such as *The Long Dark*, where items literally equate to survival, *State of Decay 2* makes the task somewhat monotonous.

Here, it becomes obvious that you're more interested in hunting treasure than you are with finding people, even though both have their uses.

In summary, this is a game with plenty of challenges and a large map to explore.

The downside is what you'll end up doing most of the time in that sprawling environment. ■

REVIEW: DAVID McDougall, CIVVY

GAMES RELEASES



Forgotten Anne

Xbox One, PS4 and PC

THERE are some rare gems in the gaming world and on the face of it *Forgotten Anne* seems to be one of them. The animation is distinct and subtle, while beautiful to look at. The story has weight and meaning and the gameplay is entertaining. You're Anne, an enforcer in a parallel universe where seemingly inanimate objects such as socks and shoes have a life of their own. It might sound ridiculous and fantastic but your choices in this setting really matter, even the seemingly mundane ones. Most of the gameplay is in the platform style, with puzzles and encounters throughout. But despite that, it's a wonderfully unique experience where your first decision while encountering a scarf has a mighty impact.

David McDougall, civvy



Injustice League 2: Legendary Edition

Xbox One, PS4 and PC

THIS is one of the few genuinely entertaining fighting titles out there. *The Legendary Edition*, released nine months after the original, features all downloadable content, an improved tutorial system and some additional in-game currency. Other than that you have the great gameplay of the initial release, with stunning visuals, a decent storyline, a strong cast of characters and relatively simplistic controls. This isn't like *Street Fighter* of old, where a wealth of knowledge is required to pull off decent combinations. It's easier than that but still presents a challenge when facing tough opponents and varying combat styles. Choosing Superman won't guarantee victory as each hero has different strengths and, of course, weaknesses. Ultimately it's a lot of fun and well worth it.

David McDougall, civvy



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SOLDIER SPORT



WHEELS IN MOTION »

THE Army enduro set-up welcomed its latest raft of new talent to the track during a comprehensive week-long training camp that focused on physical fitness as well as bike skills. Read about the sport's growing success on page 80...



BLADES TOO SHARP FOR FORCES RIVALS

THE Army Blades continued their dominance of the Inter-Services Ice Hockey Championships as back-to-back victories over their military challengers sealed a sixth successive title in Sheffield.

An early goal blitz saw the soldiers establish a 5-1 lead over the Royal Air Force in the first period of their opening fixture, but instead of building on an impressive start they were made to sweat after the break.

Ill discipline and a succession of penalties proved costly as the airmen reduced the deficit to 6-5 at the end of the second period.

However, three quick strikes shortly after play resumed settled the nerves and the defending champions held firm to win a difficult contest.

They then completed the job with a 4-2 triumph against the Royal Navy in the tournament's final match.

"We came here on a mission to

win that sixth title," Army player and UK Armed Forces secretary Capt Ross Walker (R Welsh) told *SoldierSport* afterwards.

"We now have a solid core to our team but have also welcomed a lot of newcomers who have played the game at a semi-professional level.

"That has been a massive help. It has also benefited our development programmes as these guys are spread among the corps, which means novices are getting credible instruction from players who have competed at a high standard."

The week-long competition welcomed a record number of players to the ice but was not simply restricted to the action at Forces level.

Corps, station and representative teams from all three Services competed in two leagues, with the top sides then going head to head in plate and cup finals.

INTER-SERVICES ICE HOCKEY

ARMY

4

NAVY

2



The growing popularity of the sport has been credited to Army ice hockey's increased presence on social media, which has directed a host of novices to training camps with various corps outfits.

And in a first for the competition, the Blades' match with the RAF was streamed live on Facebook and attracted more than 5,000 viewers.

"We've had everyone from total beginners to ex-professionals involved," Walker added.

"The gulf is huge and that means there has been some disparity in the results, but the newcomers will only get better by playing in these matches."

"Postings to Canada gives us a constant flow of new players but we have put a real emphasis on our social media platforms."

"People are accessing our Twitter, Facebook and YouTube pages and are getting pushed out to the corps set-ups from there;



the word of mouth is growing."

Army goaltender and chairman of UK Armed Forces Ice Hockey Maj Robert Warrington (RE) believes the sport is a huge draw for Service personnel and said the standard of play is rapidly improving year on year.

The officer added: "The level is definitely going up and you can really notice the difference compared to what we saw four or five years ago.

"Now, the Inter-Services games are at the same standard as the national league and the corps teams are not far behind.

"This sport is something the military should really look at. It boasts speed, fitness, controlled aggression – all the things we look for in our soldiers, seamen and airmen."

The competition came on the back of a successful UK Armed Forces tour to Latvia, where the squad competed at the Riga Classic Cup.

"We finished eleventh out of 20 teams, which is a great achievement," Warrington added.

"It is one of the most competitive amateur tournaments in the world and features guys who have played in the Russian professional league.

"We were fifteenth last year so that is a big improvement.

"The key thing now is to get more people involved.

"The RAF Pumas ladies team, which featured players from the Army and Navy, have just had a match against a local Sheffield side and bringing that to this competition is great.

"There is some real talent there and we want to see that across the sport." ■



Pictures: Graeme Main and Bdr Murray Kerr, RA

HOCKEY IN NUMBERS

PLAYERS
ON THE
ICE AT THE
ANNUAL
EVENT

250

TEAMS IN
ACTION –
A JOINT
COMPETITION
RECORD

14

SUCCESSIVE
INTER-
SERVICES
TITLES
WON BY
THE ARMY
BLADES
– THE
LONGEST
WINNING
STREAK
IN THE
CONTEST'S
HISTORY

6

CHARITIES
SUPPORTED
DURING
THE WEEK
– HELP FOR
HEROES
AND A
LOCAL
CHILDREN'S
HOSPITAL

2



SHOOTER TURNS TENDER

IN MARCH 2015 the goal-shooting prowess of Maj Laura White (REME) helped fire the Army netball team to the Inter-Services title.

But a two-year posting to Canada saw the officer swap court battles for rink action as she took on a new role as an ice hockey goaltender.

White played a starring role as the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers' A side won five out of six matches to top their group at this year's Forces championship.

She said her conversion was inevitable given the location of her career move.

"As soon as I got to Batus I knew I would play," she told *SoldierSport*. "In the winter it's the only thing you can do."

"The workshop team needed a goaltender so I thought I'd give it a go – I loved it.

"The Army set-up is really good. Each corps organises development camps where the Service's coaches come down to work with the players.

"The REME is also very strong. We are the only corps to bring two teams and we train every Wednesday. We'll have 25 to 30 players on the ice in each session and that has allowed us to build a strong squad.

"This is my first time here and having so much match time has helped me develop."

Another debutant at the Sheffield showdown was LCpl George Muir (R Signals).

He joined the newly formed Royal Signals outfit at a training camp in the build-up to the contest – when he took to the ice for the first time.

"I could hardly skate," he said. "I saw a post on Facebook and wanted to get into it.

"Most of my teammates are novices. The biggest test for us has been the standard of the opposition, so it has been a steep learning curve.

"This is something I thought I'd never do but when the corps formed a team it meant I got a chance to have a go." ■



DEVASTATED AT LORD'S

REDS SEE WINNING RUN COME TO AN END AS BATTING LINE-UP FAILS TO IGNITE IN TOURNAMENT FINALE

THE Army's winning run at Lord's came crashing to a halt in this year's Inter-Services Twenty20 Championships as a stuttering batting display in the tournament-decider saw the trophy slip from their grasp.

Chasing 148 to beat the Royal Air Force and seal the silverware for a sixth successive season, the Reds quickly fell from contention as poor strike rotation and a failure to clear the boundary brought about their downfall.

After winning the toss and electing to field first, the soldiers restricted their rivals to a par total as some tight bowling in the middle overs kept the scoreboard in check.

Openers Cpl Ross Diver and SAC Tom Shorthouse made a lively start and they raced to 40 inside four overs before Cpl Denson Narayan (RLC) had the latter caught behind for 20.

The spinner struck again in the ninth over when he bowled Diver for 35 and the right-hander's dismissal coincided with the Army seemingly taking control of the game.

RAF skipper Flt Lt Adam Fisher was superbly run out as the score reached 74-3 and Pte Tade Carmichael (RLC) saw a miserly spell with the ball rewarded when he claimed the scalp of all-rounder Cpl Ash Watson for nine.

The pressure continued in the next over as Cpl Jay Boynton (REME) ran out SAC Scott Burdekin but the airmen staged a well executed counter-attack through the sixth-wicket pairing of Cpl Andy McGeorge and Cpl Sean McCabe.

The former showed particular intent and a brutal assault

on the bowling of Sgt Ross Dearden (RE) at the death, which included a huge leg-side six and two further boundaries, fired his side to 147-6 at the end of the innings.

In reply, the Army made a promising start as a four from Cpl Jordan Relph (R Signals) helped them to eight from the first over.

But accurate bowling from paceman Sgt Ian Sinclair and spinner Watson ensured further progress was difficult.

Watson struck a triple blow as he trapped Relph leg before for 12 and then ended a torturous knock from Bdr Graham Wiseman (RA) as the opener was bowled for just four runs from 20 deliveries.

Cpl Liam Fletcher (REME) suffered the same fate as Relph from the next delivery and the Reds found themselves in deep trouble as they reached 25-3 from seven overs.

The repair job fell to the senior pairing of Boynton and Carmichael and, although the duo posted a partnership of 58, it was the slow nature of the scoring that proved fatal.

By the seventeenth over the required rate had reached 17.5 and when Carmichael (pictured left) was bowled by the returning Sinclair for 35 the Army's faint hopes were ended.

Boynton followed soon after and player-of-the-tournament Watson then had Narayan stumped to claim his second four-wicket haul of the day as the RAF won by 41 runs.

"We backed ourselves to chase 148," skipper Boynton told *SoldierSport* afterwards.

"But we failed to get that flying start and in the middle overs we just didn't rotate

**INTER-SERVICES
TWENTY20**

RAF

147-6

ARMY

106-6



the strike enough or find the boundary when we needed to.

"In hindsight it may have been better to bat first and post a total.

"This is my first year as captain and we will learn from the result.

"We've got the 50-over competition to come, which is great, but we want to come to Lord's and win in front of crowds like this.

"I never thought we would lose and I'm devastated for the lads, coaching staff and management team."

Boynton cut a much happier figure as the Army eased past the Royal Navy in the opening match of the day.

A top score of 45 from Wiseman underpinned the innings and 38 brisk runs from Boynton, as well as an unbeaten 28 from Carmichael, saw the soldiers reach 145-4.

The Senior Service looked threatening in the early stages of the reply and four boundaries from ETME Ben Kohler-Cadmore off the first over gave them an ideal start.

But Maj Steve Booth (RA) caught the hard-hitter off the bowling of Sgt Uri Hill (RLC) for 17 and when the spinner snared fellow opener ETME Jack Harris in his next over the Reds ruthlessly took control.

Boynton ripped through the middle order to post impressive figures of 4-24 – including a first Inter-Services Twenty20 hat-trick – and with Carmichael claiming two further wickets the Navy finished on 103-9. ■



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» FOOTBALL



WINDSOR WINNERS

THE Royal Artillery equestrian team claimed a famous win at the Royal Windsor Horse Show as they beat a host of military rivals to lift the Queen's Plate.

A total of 18 outfits from the Armed Forces, police and cadet force took part in the showjumping contest, which saw teams of three riders jump a course of 12 fences with penalties applied for mistakes along the way.

Capt Amelia Parkinson, SSgt Peter Pagan-Skelley and LBdr Ceilidh Bramble led the Gunners' charge and, after progressing from the first round in style, they went on to beat the Royal Logistic Corps by less than a second to secure the victory.

"This was a significant result as the team beat the Army, Royal Air Force, Royal Navy and police – all of whom compete at tri-Service level," said secretary Capt Fran Sykes. "The other unique factor about our set-up is the fact that two of the three riders were mounted on saddle club horses, rather than their own.

"This is a cracking example of the opportunities that the Army can offer soldiers interested in equestrian sport."



Picture: Amanda-Jane Smith



MEDICS CLAIM EARLY HONOURS

DEFENCE
MEDICAL
SERVICES
FOOTBALL
ARMY

1

NAVY

0



THE Army secured further bragging rights on the football field as they took the honours in the inaugural Defence Medical Inter-Services Championship.

Goals from Cpl Anthony Wood, Pte Jacob Halls and Pte Craig Conn fired the soldiers to a comfortable 3-0 win over their Royal Air Force counterparts in the tournament's opening fixture in Lichfield.

A solitary strike from Pte Ethan Zimmerman was enough to defeat the Royal Navy in the tournament final, making the Army Medical Services the first team to have their name added to the Colonel Boreham Cup.

"We were always in control against the RAF," coach Capt Matt Spruce told *SoldierSport*.

"They had some technical players who were good on the ball but we could have scored more goals."

"Our clash with the Navy was much closer. We hit the bar and post and they had a shot cleared off the line."

"If the match was a draw they would have won the cup on goal difference but we managed to go

out and get the job done."

Pte Aaron Clarke, Cpl Ryan Booth and Cpl Lee Cook all caught the eye for the AMS, who have gone from strength to strength in recent times and showed some impressive form in last season's Massey Cup.

"We are now as strong as we've been in almost 20 years," Spruce added.

"This tournament was an opportunity for us to showcase what we can do as a team and recruit new players from the Regulars and Reserves.

"It was also a chance to lift some silverware."

"When we face bigger corps like the Royal Engineers and Royal Logistic Corps that can be unlikely, so this was an opportunity to really compete."

Fixtures between the AMS and their Navy rivals have become commonplace in recent times and when the RAF formed a team at the start of last season the competition was born.

It is hoped the tournament will now become a regular fixture and organisers plan to launch a similar event for the Services' women's teams next season.



STARS OF THE RING

ARMY boxers completed a busy month of action at tournaments on home soil and abroad.

Spr Ebonge Jones (RE, pictured above) was part of the Team GB squad that travelled to Bulgaria to take part in the European Women's Boxing Championships.

The bantamweight star, who won the European under-22 title earlier in the season, progressed to the quarter finals but was defeated by eventual gold medalist Stoyka Petrova.

Gnr Karriss Artingstall (RA) represented England at the same tournament but lost in the first round of the featherweight draw.

Elsewhere, LCpl John Marvin (PWRR) continued his progress with the Philippines national squad by fighting at the President's Cup in Kazakhstan.

And there were wins for Cpl Steph Wroe (REME, pictured below) and Gnr Tori-Ellis Willetts (RA) at the GB Elite Three Nations Championships, where Cfn Shanice James (REME) claimed silver and LCpl Natty Ngwenya (Gren Gds) bronze.

Willetts attended a Team GB assessment camp as this issue went to press.



HUDSON SELLS SPRINT TITLE



RISING star LCpl Ieuan Hudson (REME) showcased his growing potential in the sport of triathlon by topping the podium at the Army Sprint Championships.

Victory capped a phenomenal turnaround for the soldier, who six years earlier was categorised as obese after weighing in at more than 100kg.

The 24-year-old clocked a time of 55min 30sec to claim gold in the discipline's shorter event and was eyeing further glory at the Army Standard Distance Championships as this issue went to press.

A sterner test looms later this month when he faces the might of Royal Air Force sensation and full-time athlete Luke Pollard at the annual Inter-Services showdown.

"I'm quite shocked by it all," Hudson told *SoldierSport*. "When I was at my heaviest if someone said I would go to the sprint championships and win I'd never have believed them."

"If the races go well this year I will be looking to get my elite licence, which means I can go to high-level competitions and test myself against professional athletes."

"That will be completely different. These guys are posting times in the forties and low fifties over the sprint distances but given the amount I've improved in the past three to four months, anything is possible."

"My next goal is the Inter-Services and I'm quietly confident I can give the champion, Luke Pollard, a real run for his money."

Hudson's success has been aided by expert tuition from ex-soldier and triathlon coach Mark Livesey, who started working with the newcomer earlier this year.

"He just needed some tweaking and a steer in the right direction," the former Royal Army Physical Training Corps warrant officer explained.

"He is good at all three disciplines and has the appetite to do well."

"Having served in the Forces I understand some of the challenges he faces. He had to miss the duathlon championships due to a career course but he just gets on with it."

"If the Army gives him a couple of years to develop what he has got he can go a long way in the sport." ■



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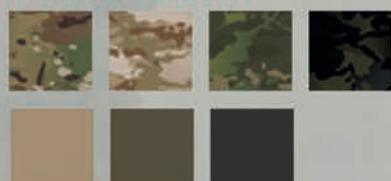


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SPORT SHORTS



Individuals claim honours

■ A TOTAL of 17 titles were up for grabs at the annual Army Individual Boxing Championships in Aldershot.

The competition saw a host of development and elite-level fighters enter the ring, with many looking to catch the eye of the Service's coaches ahead of the new season.

And there were some familiar names among the winners during the three-day competition, with Reds squad members LCpl Kyle Morrison (RLC) and LCpl Ben Rees-Davies (R Welsh) claiming the 56kg and 64kg elite titles respectively.



Start your engines

■ THE 2018 British Army track day will be held at Donington Park on Tuesday, August 28.

Staged for riders of all levels, the event is aimed at improving road skills and confidence on the bike and the Army race teams will be in attendance to offer tuition and support.

Personnel and veterans can enjoy a reduced price of £165 by quoting the code "Army 2808" while booking through No Limits Track Days on 01525 877087. For more details email armytrackday@outlook.com



Pictures: Cpl Tom Evans, RLC

RACERS RENEW TRACK BATTLE



"WE ARE PUSHING FOR TITLES ON THE TRACK"

THE Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers karting team have taken to the grid for the 2018 Inter-Services Championships.

After narrowly missing out on silverware last year the soldiers have already completed three rounds in their latest campaign, the highlight of which was a third-place finish in the second race of the season.

However, they endured a frustrating weekend last time out as reliability issues thwarted their hopes in Fulbeck, Lincolnshire – where twelfth proved to be the highest position among their four karts.

A total of 55 teams from across the three Services are involved this year, with the Army Air Corps and Royal Signals joining the REME in the paddock, alongside a full Service outfit.

Racers from RAF Marham proved difficult to beat in the most recent meeting as they claimed all three podium positions and the soldiers will be hoping for better luck as the competition progresses.

The sport is particularly relevant to those serving in the REME as the mechanical element develops their ability to work under pressure in a fun, but testing, environment.

"Last season we finished second in the championship, one point behind the eventual winners," said LCpl Ben White.

"We started back in 2013 with a box and a kart and had no idea of what we were doing.

"Now we are running a four-strong team with ten to 12 members – including mechanics and drivers – and are pushing for titles on the track." ■

● THE newly formed Tidworth and Bulford Athletics Club has opened its doors to aspiring track and field stars within the Army.

The venture is the brainchild of six serving soldiers, including Cpl Ben Jones (RE), and is aimed at personnel and their dependants who are based in the local garrisons.

"We want to develop our sport and bring in fresh new talent," Jones said. "The way to do that is to look at the grass-roots level."



MONTH IN SPORT

July's key fixtures...



WHAT: Inter-Services Athletics Championships
WHEN: July 18
WHERE: Aldershot
NEED TO KNOW: A

dominant display on the track and in the field saw the Army win the men's and women's competitions last season. How will they fare in 2018?



WHAT: Rugby League Inter-Corps Lawson Cup final
WHEN: July 25
WHERE: Aldershot
NEED TO KNOW: The pinnacle of the corps season will be played out at the Army Rugby Stadium. The Royal Signals broke the Royal Engineers' stranglehold on the competition last season but who will lift the silverware this year?



in 2017. With the longer format being played as this issue went to press it is too early to say who will be favourites for this year's T20 showdown

WHAT: Inter-Services Women's T20 Cricket
WHEN: July 26
WHERE: Portsmouth
NEED TO KNOW: Heavy rain scuppered the Army's chances

RIDGE RUN IN NUMBERS

TOTAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE TAKING PART IN THE TWO-DAY EVENT

213

SOLDIERS INVOLVED IN COACHING SESSIONS AHEAD OF THE CONTEST

48

TROOPS SAMPLING THE DISCIPLINE, AND THE INTRICACIES OF ITS MAPS, FOR THE FIRST TIME

12

DATE, IN NOVEMBER, FOR THE FINAL BAOC FIXTURE OF THE 2018 CAMPAIGN

25



Picture: Shane Wilkinson

» ORIENTEERING

UNITS RELISH RIDGE TEST

THE Army orienteering fraternity were out in force at the annual Inter-Unit Championships on Salisbury Plain.

More than 150 soldiers, as well as 60 civilians, took to the various courses on Bulford Ridge for the two-day competition, which also featured a morning of expert tuition and guidance for the discipline's novice athletes.

The team from Army Headquarters were victorious in the long class, while 14 Signal Regiment claimed the female prize.

MoD Abbey Wood won the short class and Headquarters Regional Command and Bristol UOTC took the respective masters and under-25 prizes.

"We were particularly pleased with the performance of the 14 Signal Regiment ladies team," Lt Col Chris Huthwaite (RA), chairman of the Army Orienteering Association, told *SoldierSport*. "They could have competed

strongly in the short class had they entered.

"This is the one fixture where the focus is on the teams and we are already encouraging people to come and take part next year."

The competition was staged as part of World Orienteering Day and featured both Spanish score and Harris events.

The former was introduced to attract units with limited experience as participants run together in teams of four.

Orienteering is seen as a key Service activity as it develops many of the qualities that are essential in good soldiers, such as the ability to navigate over complex and rough terrain, cardiovascular fitness and making positive decisions under pressure.

The British Army Orienteering Club (BAOC) holds events throughout the season and personnel are encouraged to take part.

For more information on how to get involved in the discipline visit www.baoc.info



Pictures: SBS Photography



UKAF MARCH ON

A STRONG Army footballing contingent helped the UK Armed Forces to back-to-back wins from their summer programme.

Victories over the Irish Defence Force and the German Bundeswehr formed the ideal preparation for next season's Kentish Cup campaign, when the British personnel will be looking to lift the trophy for a fourth successive year.

SSgt Keith Emmerson (RAPTC) was among the scorers in a 3-0 win against the Irish and the match proved to be the perfect warm-up for a challenging second fixture on away soil.

A crowd of 4,500 attended the game in Rostock and the visitors were indebted to some inspired saves from goalkeeper LCpl Luke Cairney (RE).

Royal Navy star Mne Mark Drysdale opened the scoring when he fired home from distance and a superb lob from Spr Dan Stoneman (RE, pictured below) completed a hard-fought 2-0 win.

"We knew they were going to have massive spells of possession but it was about what we did when we had the ball and we hurt them," said skipper Cpl Rob Farkins (R Signals).



TALENT QUEST PAYS OFF



**"IT IS A
CHANCE
TO
LEARN
ABOUT
RIDING
IN THE
ARMY"**

THE Army enduro set-up capitalised on the growing momentum within the sport by hosting a week-long training camp for novice riders.

More than 50 soldiers took part in the event at Pirbright, which featured a mixture of fitness and technical sessions before culminating in a three-hour race challenge.

A further test came at the impressive Rogers Hill Raceway in Dorset, where personnel were able to hone their skills at one of the premier facilities in South East England.

Organised by Army team manager WO2 Dean Hughes (WG), the initiative is now in its second year and aims to provide a conveyor belt of talent for the various corps outfits within the Service.

"This is for guys who already have an interest in the sport and is a chance for them to learn more about how they can go about riding in the Army," he told *SoldierSport*.

"We've got new corps teams

in the Royal Artillery and Royal Signals and that can only help the growth of enduro.

"The event was a massive success last season so we were keen to do it again this year.

"We will have guys who are not confident enough to compete at a British Championship race yet but they can come and offer their support in the pits to get an idea of the atmosphere and develop their skills; it is a great introduction to the sport."

Hughes was also keen to stress the importance of the fitness drills undertaken by riders, who were pushed in a series of cross-fit and gym-based challenges.

"It is a unique form of fitness and nothing else can really prepare you for it," the senior NCO added.

"People assume it is easy but it is only when they have ridden for a few hours that they realise the demands."

"For a lot of these guys the three-hour race was the hardest thing they have done." ■

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Final Word

Think carefully about your kit – some people bring all sorts but you should only take what you can realistically carry.

Cpl Sarah Langholz, RAMC



I like to have photographs of my family with me. Other than that, it's important for any team to have a kettle and teabags between them.

Maj Jo Horn, RAMC



Listen, take in the information and, if you're not sure of something, ask. Then you'll know for next time, and one day you'll be the person passing on your experience.

LCpl Levi Coyne, QRH



Bring caffeine to keep you going and some sweets for morale. When you're feeling a bit down you can crack open the Haribo and cheer your crew up.

Tpr Robert Clemmens, QRH



It's not about making life easier on yourself – you have to operate as a team. On a tank crew we have to work together to get everything done, whether it's putting a bivvy up or sorting any issues on the tank. You can't do it on your own.

Tpr Robert Dyson, QRH



Don't overestimate how comfortable conditions are going to be and just carry the essentials.

On my last exercise we found out we had decent bunks and mattresses in our accommodation when we arrived, but I still had my rollmat with me – it is a crucial piece of equipment.

WO2 Tina Dunn, RAMC

Fieldcraft

Troops give their top tips for making life more comfortable on exercise

I always take home comforts with me, like a bed sheet, pillow and a proper blanket.

LCpl Richard Robinson, QRH





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