

# SOLDIER

MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY



## THE MANY FACES OF

# ENGINEERING

Troops lift lid on Army's most varied trade

ARCHIBALD, DAWSON, RAYMOND, WRIGHT



SEPTEMBER 2018

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

# JOIN THE DISCUSSION

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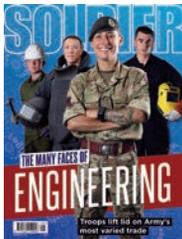
🌐 [armylgbt.org.uk](http://armylgbt.org.uk)

Photography by Pte Leon Nance, PWRR Tigers Free Fall Team



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## CONTENTS



## FEATURES

- 28 **Weapons of choice**  
Troops test new infantry toolkit
- 33 **Soldiers at sea**  
Ocean wave adventure on offer
- 36 **Earning commission**  
On the road to officer selection
- 40 **Time to shine**  
Engineering excellence celebrated
- 45 **Fighting talk**  
Sapper tales now and then

COVER STORY

## REGULARS

- 7 **The Informer**  
Top stories from across the Service
- 22 **Need to Know**  
Essential tips for today's personnel
- 49 **Talkback**  
Ruminations from the ranks
- 53 **Bullet Points**  
Troops' intelligence assets
- 61 **Reviews**  
Movies, music, books and games to fill your downtime
- 82 **Final Word**  
Troops reflect on Army engineering

## SOLDIERSPORT

- 70 **Triathlon**  
Reds defend team titles
- 72 **Motorsport**  
Racers offered grid place
- 76 **Cricket**  
Soldiers seal Services double
- 78 **Cycling**  
Gunners celebrate corps crown
- 79 **Elite sport**  
Scholars strive for athletic excellence
- 80 **Rugby league**  
REME edge cup final thriller

“Troops are being given a toolkit to use as they wish”

Weapons of choice – pages 28-31



“Everyone has come together for the good of the team”

Tries galore in cup final – page 80

# Cheers engineers



YOUNG people in the UK are shunning technical careers – that’s why the government is giving the sector a boost by

declaring 2018 the Year of Engineering.

But as we find out this month, there is no shortage of innovation across the Army’s specialist cap badges.

From scavenging vital spare parts in the wake of a hurricane to blazing a trail in the world of cyber (pages 40-43), there are some remarkably talented Servicemen and women out there.

“You can’t just wait for opportunities to come to you,” is one soldier’s advice for finding your niche.

If you think that commissioning as an officer is the right route for you, turn to page 36 to find out how to maximise your chances of passing the selection board – red cords and mustard pullovers optional.

Whatever your ambitions, a life in uniform offers the kind of adventurous training experiences the average civvy can only dream of (pages 24 and 33).

A sapper I know likens his career to a brick wall – the daily grind might knock a few bricks out here and there, but the chance to deploy on a challenging exped always puts them back.

Becky Clark • Assistant Editor

## Where to find *Soldier*

### > Printed copies

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

### > Facebook, Twitter and Instagram

ALONG with news and glimpses behind the scenes at *Soldier*, we publish a link to the latest magazine at [www.facebook.com/soldiermagazine](http://www.facebook.com/soldiermagazine) and on Twitter (@soldiermagazine).

### > Online

A DIGITAL version of the current edition is available on the Army website at [www.soldiermagazine.co.uk](http://www.soldiermagazine.co.uk) Just click on the “read it now” tab.

### > Purchase

IF you’re not in the Army you can buy *Soldier* from your high street magazine retailer or directly from us at [subs@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:subs@soldiermagazine.co.uk) (£23 for 12 issues in the UK).

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TACTICAL



Picture: Graeme Main

## Pay rise joy tempered by price hikes

**T**ROOPS will notice the difference in their wage packets from the end of the month following the largest salary rise for the Armed Forces in nearly a decade.

Army Pay Colonel Philip Bassingham-Searle predicted the 2.9 per cent award would be welcomed – providing a healthy boost to earnings despite escalating living costs.

He said soldiers will see a hike in their next wage slips, adding: “The figure compares favourably with wider UK wage growth and against the current rate of inflation.”

The pay award is being made through a combination of a two per cent rise, backdated to April 1, 2018, which personnel will receive at the end of this month.

A 0.9 per cent non-pensionable lump sum will follow – which should be worth more than £170 to most troops above the rank of corporal. But further details on the timing of the payment had not been released as this issue went to press.

It has also been confirmed that the X-factor rates and structure will remain unchanged. There is a rise of just under three per cent to compensatory allowances – including Reserve bounties – along with most recruitment and retention payments.

Although costs for single living accommodation and Service family accommodation are rising by up to 0.6 per cent, Col Bassingham-Searle said most soldiers will pay less than £20 a year extra.

But some were concerned that these rises, along with an 18p

increase in the daily food charge to £4.97 as well as a “proportionate” hike in the pay-as-you-dine core meal price, could have an impact on the pay award.

The troops, who wanted to remain anonymous, highlighted that the changes could particularly impact single soldiers living on base.

A corporal in the Royal Signals said: “Don’t get me wrong – people are happy that they are getting more money. But will we notice the difference with cost of living rises?”

A Royal Logistic Corps colleague added: “It is always good to have something extra. But I feel increases in costs could potentially hit the pay rise benefits.”

“Will we notice the difference?”

### Soldier asked Col Bassingham-Searle about the pay award's finer points...

#### How significant is the hike?

It is the largest pay rise for Armed Forces personnel since 2009.

September with the decision to backdate the pay award. For most personnel the two per cent rise will equate to more than £200 after income tax and National Insurance. The amount that will be routinely noticed will depend on rank, increment level and circumstances.

#### Will it help recruitment and retention issues?

Financial remuneration is only part of the total offer. Non-contributory pensions, subsidised accommodation and medical provision are important. Professional and personal development, challenge and job satisfaction are arguably why most join and stay in the Army.

#### Will there be another pay rise next year?

The expectation is that the Armed Forces Pay Review Body will not be constrained by a government-imposed cap. However, the affordability challenge will almost certainly mean the financial impact of any proposed increase would have to be carefully weighed up.

#### Will soldiers notice a difference in monthly pay?

All of us will enjoy an increase in

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# GLOBAL SITREP



## 1. RHODE ISLAND

### TARGET PRACTICE

SOLDIERS from 216 (Parachute) Signal Squadron led a 45-strong team from across 16 Air Assault Brigade to take part in the Leapfest international military parachuting competition in the USA.

Organised by the Rhode Island Army National Guard, the contest aimed to foster camaraderie between airborne units from nine nations.

Participants were judged on accuracy and speed while jumping onto a designated mark under a US Army MC-6 canopy from a CH-47 Chinook flying at 1,500 feet.



Picture: US Army

## 2. CARIBBEAN

### READY FOR THE STORM

TROOPS will be on standby to help during the forthcoming hurricane season, confirmed Armed Forces minister Mark Lancaster.

Speaking during a visit to Barbados, Antigua and Montserrat, he said that RFA *Mounts Bay* would provide the hub for the UK's response to any crisis.

The MP added: "We may not be able to prevent natural disasters but our world-class military have been planning to ensure lives are protected and damage is kept to a minimum."

In September last year British



Picture: L'Phot. Joel Rouse, RN

citizens were killed and homes were destroyed when two of the most powerful hurricanes for decades struck the Caribbean.

● **Mechanic recalls hurricane relief effort – page 42**

## 3. WYOMING

### EXCHANGING KNOWLEDGE

BRITISH Reservists teamed up with American colleagues from the 1-175th Maryland National Guard for a two-week exercise.

LCpl Michael Hall and 2nd Lt Michael Mubiru from the Fulham-based Royal Yeomanry headed to Guernsey, Wyoming, where they worked alongside snipers, engineers and mortar sections during the manoeuvres.

The opportunity was part of the Military Reserve Exchange Programme and LCpl Hall urged others to find out more about the tri-Service initiative via their chain of command.

He added: "The training value was immense – the US soldiers were motivated, while NCOs and officers were knowledgeable."



“Do you remember the Berlin Wall?”

Sappers compare career highs – page 45

## 4. CANADA

### PRAIRIE PUTS RESERVISTS TO TEST

A CONTINGENT of Royal Wessex Yeomanry Reservists and attached cap badges recently returned from conducting annual training at British Army Training Unit Suffield.

Exercise Warrior's Craft saw the soldiers integrated with Regular colleagues from the Royal Tank Regiment Battlegroup in a variety of roles, including Challenger 2 crewmen, medics and chefs, while others acted as a dismounted opposing force alongside the Household Cavalry Regiment.

Later this year a number of the formation's Reservists will deploy to Oman to take part in Exercise Saif Sareea.



## INTELLIGENCE FOR THE ATLAS?

Brief the team now:



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## 8. FRANCE HONOURING THE PAST

TROOPS from units whose antecedent regiments fought at the Battle of Amiens took part in a ceremony to mark its centenary.

Some 75 Army personnel were among 2,000 people to attend a service in the town's cathedral, with soldiers from 1st Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment providing a guard of honour.

The Duke of Cambridge and Prime Minister Theresa May were also in attendance.

The battle in August 1918 heralded the start of the Hundred Days Offensive, which brought the First World War to an end.

## 7. NEW ZEALAND

### 7. NEW ZEALAND PLUCKY PENSIONER

AN 83-year-old wounded veteran is taking on the world's highest assisted parachute jump in aid of limbless veterans charity Blesma.

David Bland, who lost his left eye while serving with the Wiltshire Regiment, will complete an 18,000ft tandem skydive at New Zealand's Franz Josef Glacier on September 4.

To boost his fundraising efforts visit [www.justgiving.com/fundraising/david-bland6](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/david-bland6)

Soldiers from 1st Battalion, The Royal Welsh are recuperating after a 2,900-mile bike ride from Estonia, where they were serving on Op Cabrit, back to their base in Tidworth. The group took in Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Germany, Holland, Belgium and France en route.

## 6. CHANNEL ISLANDS

### 4. BELGIUM

### 8. FRANCE

### 5. GEORGIA

## 6. CHANNEL ISLANDS ENEMIES TO ALLIES

BRITISH and German troops from the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps joined forces to restore Second World War graves in Guernsey.

The project to clean and repair headstones at Fort George cemetery marked the first time that German personnel had returned to the island in uniform since the Nazi occupation.

Bundeswehr captain Sebastian Kühne said: "I feel very touched to work on the graveyard and see the names of the British and German soldiers who died here because they are very young, most younger than me."

## 5. GEORGIA A NOBLE CAUSE

MEMBERS of 1st Battalion, The Rifles deployed to the Black Sea region for a multinational manoeuvre involving 3,000 personnel.

Exercise Noble Partner included a total of 13 nations and saw the soldiers from A Company conducting live firing and urban drills before joining up with Georgian, Ukrainian and Azerbaijani troops for the final test phase.

The Georgian personnel also benefited from anti-tank training with 1 Rifles' Javelin section during the two-week package.



Picture: Sgt Jon Bevan, RLC



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Picture: The Tank Museum

## 'Extraordinary bravery'

**P**ROUD relatives of four First World War Victoria Cross recipients converged on the Tank Museum in Dorset to see their ancestors' decorations displayed together for the first time.

Capt Richard Wain, Capt Clement Robertson, Lt Cecil Sewell and Lt Col Richard West received the highest award for bravery posthumously for their actions during the later stages of the conflict.

The Tank Corps medal quartet can now be seen in the *Victoria Cross Exhibition: Men of Extraordinary Bravery*, running at Bovington until the Armistice centenary on November 11.

During the showcase's opening ceremony, the descendants heard more about the lives of the four young officers – and their courage and sacrifice during the fighting of 1917-18.

The soldiers' citations were read out by serving personnel from the Royal Tank Regiment.

Capt Robertson, 26, received his VC after leading armour

into battle at Passchendale on foot to avoid the vehicles being bogged down. He lost his life in the action on October 4, 1917.

Capt Wain was fatally wounded as he pressed home an attack in the Battle of Cambrai later on November 20. Despite serious injuries the 20-year-old picked up a Lewis gun and engaged the enemy.

Lt Sewell – who was 23 – helped a crew escape from a burning tank disabled in a shell crater before giving his life attempting to save a wounded comrade on August 29, 1918.

Among other courageous acts, Lt Col West was recognised for inspiring his men to hold the line in the wake of an enemy attack on September 2. The 23-year-old lost his life but the assault was defeated.

Tank Museum curator David Willey said the medals reflected both courage and self-sacrifice.

"We are proud to have all four VCs here," he added. "It means a little more having them at Bovington as it is a working Army base."

### RELATIVES REFLECT

**"I'm deeply proud to wear his replica medals"**

**Ian Robertson:** Great nephew of Capt Clement Robertson

**"He could have saved himself but picked up a rifle to continue shooting at the enemy"**

**Peter Harbinson:** Great nephew of Capt Richard Wain

**"He was only 23 when he died – these men had no thought for themselves"**

**Wendy Shaw:** Great niece of Lt Cecil Sewell

**"It is very emotional and I'm very proud. He was a professional soldier"**

**Kitty Morris:** Great granddaughter of Lt Col Richard West

“  
That could  
have been me  
200 years  
ago  
”



Picture: Waterloo Uncovered

### TIME TEAM RETURNS

MILITARY personnel have returned to Belgium as part of the Waterloo Uncovered excavation project.

Now in its third year, the initiative sees serving and former soldiers working with archaeologists and academics around Hougomont farm, a key position defended by British troops during the famous battle in 1815.

Over two weeks the 80-strong team unearthed a range of artefacts and the traces of original structures.

Reflecting on the process Gdsm Sylvain Robert-Malbete (Cldm Gds, pictured) said: "That could have been me 200 years ago – in a way, the past that we are digging up here is part of a story that I and my mates still live every day at work."

### LEAGUE LEADERS



**REME triumph in Lawson Cup thriller – page 80**

### MEDAL MAKER ANNOUNCED

A COMPANY in the West Midlands has been named as the supplier for medals to the MoD.

The department confirmed that Worcestershire Medal Service will be making current and future decorations, excluding the Victoria Cross, for at least the next two years.

The firm's pedigree includes producing the Elizabeth Cross – presented to the next of kin of personnel killed on operations.



### MAPPING REMEMBRANCE

VISITORS to the National Memorial Arboretum are being invited to contribute to a giant outdoor art installation to mark the centenary of Armistice Day.

The *Flags for the Fallen* project will create a map of the UK, Ireland and Commonwealth countries out of flags decorated by members of the public.

## MEDICS MARK MILESTONE

■ A GROUP of 11 soldiers from 16 Medical Regiment cycled 100km across Essex to mark the centenary of the end of the First World War.

As well as raising awareness of the work of the Royal British Legion, the cyclists stopped along the way to lay wreaths at war memorials around the county.

Organiser LCpl Laud Afam-Adjei (RAMC) said: "It was a very hot day, but no one complained. What's a little bit of sweat compared to what soldiers suffered in the trenches?"



## COMRADES REMEMBERED

■ THE courage and sacrifice of troops from the Small Arms School Corps are being remembered with a new monument at the National Memorial Arboretum.

A service to mark the unveiling was due to be held as this issue went to press.

The SASC has its roots in the School of Musketry – which was formed in 1853 – and is responsible for maintaining troops' proficiency in small arms, support weapons and range management.

Corps Sergeant Major WO1 Alan Blair said: "This will be a place where we will be able to remember our comrades, and their service over the years."

## FURTHER TRIBUTES NEEDED

■ THE Royal British Legion has reissued a call for the public to leave online tributes to the 984,000 soldiers who died serving with the Army in the First World War.

So far 358,000 messages have been submitted to the charity's Every One Remembered website, leaving around 626,000 with no acknowledgement of their sacrifice.

Catherine Davies, the organisation's Head of Remembrance said:

"We would love to see each and every one of these men and women individually commemorated."

Visit [www.everyoneremembered.org](http://www.everyoneremembered.org) to leave your tribute.



## SERVICE LAUNCHES AMBASSADOR SEARCH



Picture: Steve Dock

■ THE Army is looking to increase its pool of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) ambassadors. Open to all ranks, the role sees troops working with secondary school children to develop their knowledge through hands-on activities, as well as broadening their understanding of the opportunities a military career could offer them. Regular and Reserve personnel are eligible to apply and training can be done via a one-hour online module or in-house instruction delivered at units. For further information email [ArmyManning-CriticalSkills-SO2@mod.gov.uk](mailto:ArmyManning-CriticalSkills-SO2@mod.gov.uk) or dial military 94393 6721.

“  
We want  
to develop  
critical soft  
skills  
”



Picture: Cpl Paul Shaw, RLC

## Signaller sign-up required

THE Royal Signals is calling on its female personnel to get involved in the second annual Inspiring Women in Technology event.

Due to take place at Shrivenham's Defence Academy on November 13, the forum aims to provide Servicewomen with opportunities to network and share ideas.

Organiser Maj Vanessa Freestone (R Signals), one of the Army's STEM leads, hopes to build on last year's event, which attracted more than a quarter of the corps' female soldiers and was

aimed at inspiring them to achieve their full potential within various technical fields.

Explaining the format of the day the officer said: "We will be putting on practical workshops to encourage technical curiosity and develop critical soft skills, as well as centralised presentations and briefings to inspire and inform."

To register your interest and for more information on the event contact Maj Freestone via email on [vanessa.freestone177@mod.gov.uk](mailto:vanessa.freestone177@mod.gov.uk)



## Tactical advantage

■ JUNIOR commanders can get up to speed with the latest tactics for different combat situations with an updated publication penned by experienced infantrymen.

The new incarnation of the Brecon Battlebook, which has just been released, provides standard operating procedures for combat in an array of environments – including woods and urban settings.

Troops can download it onto a smartphone through the Army Knowledge Exchange on Defence Gateway – a booklet version is also available.



Weapons of choice – pages 28-31



## Typhoon test ticked off

RESERVISTS have been showing their mettle on a tough exercise in Norfolk.

The personnel from 3rd Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment – known as the Steelbacks – took to the Stanford Training Area for an intensive rehearsal of core warfighting tactics.

In the weekend manoeuvres package, troops took on an enemy force made up of their peers in serials, which included a forest attack and company assault.

Maj Rob Pitt (Rifles), attached to the battalion as officer commanding Number 1 Company, was pleased with

the troops' performance.

The test – dubbed Exercise Steelback Typhoon – would be a useful starting point to a further package in Italy in the coming month, he said.

Maj Pitt added: "The weekend showed the soldiers have the same hunger as their Regular counterparts – they were operating in some difficult conditions.

"Their contribution is all the more impressive given the fact they do not do soldiering on a 24/7 basis – they have a limited time in which to prepare themselves."



“The soldiers have the same hunger as their Regular counterparts”

## FEARLESS FUNDRAISING



### Dinner delivers

NEARLY 200 guests set their sights on raising a healthy sum for a good cause as they turned out for a meal at the Royal Artillery Officers' Mess in Larkhill.

A combination of military VIPs and business leaders joined forces for the Sodexo Defence Charitable Dinner – to help serving personnel, veterans and families in need.

The event included a table raffle and auction led by ex-rugby player Matt Dawson.

Money raised:  
**£57k**  
For: SSAFA



### Kilimanjaro quest

A KENYA-based sapper refused to put his feet up during his downtime – opting instead to embark on an ascent of Mount Kilimanjaro.

LCpl Jakob Hartley-Bate (RE) decided to take up the challenge rather than travel back to the UK for leave.

"As I was so close to the mountain, I thought this was a good opportunity and it also meant that I could raise some money for charity on the way," he said.

Money raised:  
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# RIFT and the Armed Forces Covenant



RIFT's Head Armed Forces Liaison Officer Shaun Micallef-Green discusses what that the Armed Forces Covenant's Silver status means for the company.

## What does RIFT's AFC commitment mean to you personally?

As an Armed Forces Veteran, I've been impressed by how hard RIFT work to tailor their service to meet the specific needs of the military. Across the company, staff work hard to ensure they understand the military community, and go above and beyond to provide a quality and flexible service. It's also great to work in a company where they recognise the value employees with a military background offer.

## Is RIFT different from other companies you have worked in?

RIFT are the first company I have worked at since leaving the Forces where they readily embrace the spirit of the Corporate Covenant, and actively seek to create opportunities to demonstrate their support. Their commitment is evident throughout the company, ranging from creating dedicated job roles for military Veterans, working closely with the Soldiers' Charity (ABF) as a corporate sponsor and encouraging staff fund raising, and developing dedicated teams to support military clients.

The key difference between RIFT and some of the other companies I have worked for since leaving the Army is their approach towards cultivating their staff's interest in the military, regularly promoting awareness and encouraging participation in unit events.

## Why did RIFT pledge support to the Armed Forces Covenant?

RIFT are very well aligned with the military in terms of their values and working ethos. Making the pledge was a logical step welcomed by the board as part of confirming their unfailing commitment to the community and towards fair treatment and respect for current and potential work colleagues and clients.

## What changes did the company make internally to achieve Silver status?

Armed Forces Reservists now get additional paid holiday for training or mobilisation. We've added extra leave for military spouses before and after their partners are deployed and we offer flexible working hours Reservists and Cadet Adult Volunteers. Our team of Veterans is strengthening our military relationships, and we've established a new Service leaver role providing financial briefings to unit personnel.

## Where does the company go from here?

Our dedicated team of MOD Tax Specialists have already claimed over £56 million for our Armed Forces customers and are proud to support ABF the Soldiers' Charity. Our market research shows there are still many military personnel who do not make claims to which they are entitled, so there is still a lot of support to provide. RIFT hopes to grow our team of military Reservists and Veterans in the future, but extend it to more roles across the whole company, working with CTP where possible to recruit to the right roles.

We aim to set the bar even higher as part of our commitment to UK's Armed Forces, and have set our sights firmly on the ERS Gold Award

## Get Started Now

Claiming with RIFT means:

- ✓ **No charge to find out what you're owed.**
- ✓ **No up-front charges.**
- ✓ **No refund, no fee.**

[RIFTrefunds.co.uk/soldier](http://RIFTrefunds.co.uk/soldier)  
Call us on **01233 623004**



# 5 TOP TIPS ...ON FAST-ROPING

by CSgt Arron Harris,  
2 Para air cell senior NCO

1. Make sure every piece of kit is secured correctly so it doesn't interfere with hands.
2. There should be at least five feet of rope on the ground before you exit.
3. Step off the airframe positively before turning 180 degrees to avoid catching.
4. When descending, look down to check you are landing in a suitable area.
5. Maintain a safe and controlled rate of descent throughout, using only the taught techniques.

## NOMINATE A LEGEND

■ ENTRIES are open for the 2019 Soldiering On Awards, which recognise outstanding contributions to the military community.

This year's 12 categories include sporting excellence, lifetime achievement and family values.

Visit [www.soldieringon.org](http://www.soldieringon.org) before September 30 to put someone forward for the event in April.



Pictures: Cpl Ben Beale, RLC

# Paras perfect Wildcat descents

**F**ORWARD reconnaissance personnel have been learning to fast-rope from the latest addition to the Army's helicopter fleet.

Around 35 troops from 2nd and 3rd Battalions, The Parachute Regiment honed their skills during a specialist training package at RAF Brize Norton.

"When rural or urban terrain is complex and dense you can't always land a helicopter," said Capt Jack Maughan, officer commanding 3 Para's Patrols Platoon.

"So inserting a small reconnaissance group through fast-rope or abseil allows commanders to get more situational understanding."

Participant LCpl James Lindsay said he had enjoyed testing himself.

"You start off quite slow and steady, and then it's a big push out of the door and you're straight into it," he added.

"It's good training with plenty of



adrenalin – you always get a few shaky ones but everybody got out of the door and did their job."

Fast-roping is a method deployed by various units including the Royal Marines, who can use the technique to access ships at sea.

It was first used in combat during the Falklands War, and sees troops descend with their feet on the rope, before moving them shoulder-width apart five feet above terra firma.

“It’s a big push out of the door”

IN NUMBERS

40m

value of housing support, in pounds, provided by...

SEVENTY EIGHT

Service charities to at least **11,600** beneficiaries every year, according to recent research by the Directory of Social Change



# More call-outs on the cards

**M**ORE mobilisation tests are being planned for Regular Reserves and details will be announced soon, a senior officer has told *Soldier*.

Deputy Commander Field Army and joint head of the Reserve, Maj Gen Bill O'Leary, was unable to give precise time frames but suggested events would be held within the next 18 months.

The Regular Reserve is a body of former full-time troops who can be summoned for service at times of national need.

While the Army Reserve remains first in line to support operations, Maj Gen O'Leary (pictured right) explained it was important to make sure procedures for this cohort work.

He added: "They will be given basic checks and an examination of JPA records before being paid for attendance and



Pictures: Graeme Main

returning home.

"This will be a pilot: although we are still mobilising small numbers of ex-Regulars, we have not had a full mobilisation of this particular capability for some time."

The tests follow a similar activation exercise in October last year (pictured above), where 1,500 former

Service personnel were asked to turn up to one of five locations across England, Wales and Scotland.



“ They will be given basic checks ”

SPINE LINE COMPETITION

**WIN**  
a year of FREE coach travel!



**national express**



OUR spine line clues for August would have been familiar to watersports fans.

(Maj Ade) Clayton, (Capt Becky) Moll, (LCpl Laura) Soall and (Capt Kieran) Taheny were all winners in this year's Army Wakeboard and Waterski Championships.

This month *Soldier* has teamed up with National Express ([www.nationalexpress.com](http://www.nationalexpress.com)) to offer a year of free travel on the coach company's UK network.

With more than 900 destinations – including all major towns, cities and airports – and a 60 per cent discount available to Service personnel via the Defence Discount Service, National Express is a great value option for travelling troops.

Its state-of-the-art vehicles include leather seats, USB sockets, air conditioning and use of free entertainment app *Vuer*.

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

Answers to the usual address or [comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk) by September 28. Good luck!



Picture: Jon Nazca

**ROCKED TO THE CORE...**

■ THIS haunting silhouette of a First World War Tommy stopped Gibraltar residents in their tracks when it was projected onto the territory's Rock.

Part of the fundraising campaign *There But Not There*, the 1,000ft image is one of many figures to have sprung up across the globe to commemorate the Great War centenary.

"Gibraltarians are very aware of the sacrifices made by our forebears," said Fabian Picardo, chief minister of Gibraltar. "We live our lives surrounded by stark reminders of Britain's military history and we honour those who sacrificed themselves to secure and protect our freedom."

To hold your own installation visit [www.therebutnotthere.org.uk](http://www.therebutnotthere.org.uk)



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

## PAY REVIEW HITS MARK

I AM pleased to see the latest recommendations of the Armed Forces pay review body (AFPRB), which signal a small but welcome salary rise for troops (page 7).

Its report raises concerns over soldiers' perception of "the offer", and this chimes with findings from our 2017 survey.

We found that many families feel they are being asked to do more for less, with compensations for their mobile lifestyle, such as good pension and guaranteed housing, gradually being removed.

Workload concerns also emerge as a common finding from the two organisations, with long periods of high readiness becoming increasingly unmanageable for some.

I wrote in detail about this in my last column, and it's encouraging that so much of what we said about tempo, flexibility and the ability to plan family leave is also reflected in the AFPRB report.

One of the AFF's priorities is to ensure families' views are heard, so I am glad to see a recommendation that the MoD listens and responds to feedback from families about changes that affect them.

I also welcome a project recently launched by the Army to improve its internal communications, and the AFF will continue to press the need for families to have policy, rules and guidelines presented accessibly.



[www.aff.org.uk](http://www.aff.org.uk)

Crucial contribution: Medical Reservists perfect their drills in Poland



Picture: Graeme Main

# Shouldering the burden

## Report praises Reservists' professionalism

RESERVISTS are continuing to punch above their weight as they become an increasingly important resource for the Army, a series of studies has found.

Research funded by the MoD and led by the University of Edinburgh revealed the troops were highly committed and willing to make sacrifices for the Service.

But academics also maintained that changes would be needed in future to ensure civvy street pressures on part-time personnel were recognised and addressed.

In the findings of the Future Reserves Research Programme – carried out by four universities and backed by the Economic Social Research Council – they suggest the Armed Forces Covenant should be revisited to better reflect the demands on these troops.

They also recommend that commanders should do more to help soldiers with busy lives, better communicating Army commitments to employers and family.

Elsewhere, the academics argue

that Reservists should have greater predictability in their lives – with training schedules less tailored to Regular timeframes. And they suggest entry requirements and age limits could be relaxed for some roles.

Zoe Morrison of the University of Greenwich – a researcher on one of the projects – believes changes will be needed as greater reliance is placed on Reservists.

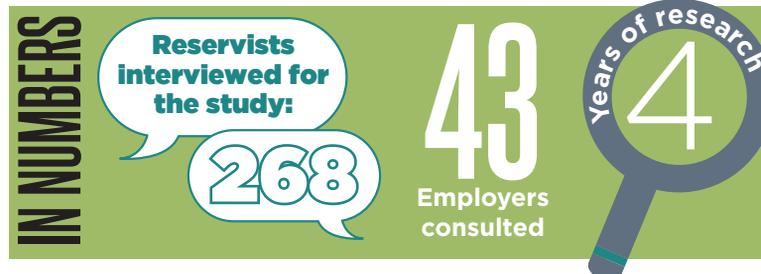
Morrison told *Soldier*: "They are making a major contribution right across defence, and that requires us to have the right support systems.

"Their level of professionalism is outstanding – our research clearly evidences this."

She went on to suggest that issues such as the pressures on Reservists' personal and professional lives, and communication with families needed careful consideration.

And with fewer demands on these personnel to deploy abroad compared to a few years ago, moves to better integrate part-time soldiers could be more easily implemented now, Morrison concluded.

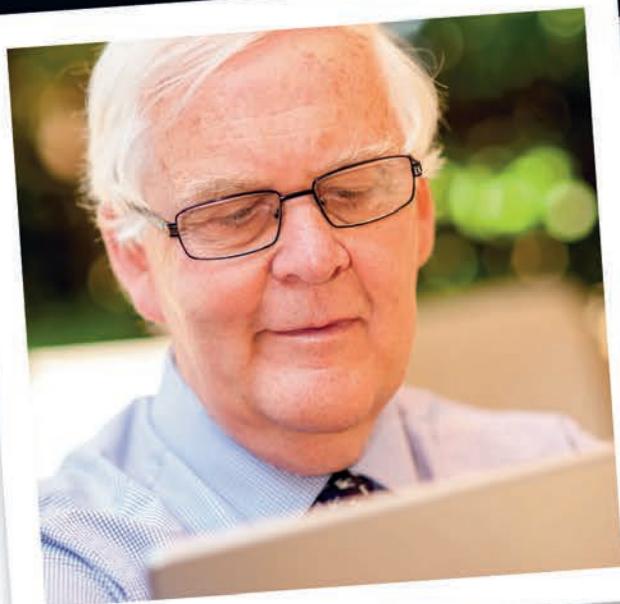
“ They are making a major contribution ”



# This FPS Member asked us about his tax-free lump sum, the process of applying for his pension and what pension and lump sum his wife would receive on his early demise.



FIGHTING FOR THE FORCES AND THEIR FAMILIES



*"How refreshing it is to receive such a comprehensive, succinct and clear answer to what I thought was quite a complex question... it has completely relaxed us in this pension minefield".*

Simon Lloyd, FPS Member

## PENSION HELP WHEN YOU NEED IT

We respond to hundreds of such pension enquiries from our Members every month, helping them through the AFPS pension maze. Our Pension team has doubled in size to respond to the growing need for independent support. Join us and see how we can help you. Or simply become a Member for the peace of mind of knowing we're here to help when you need us.

## VALUABLE MEMBERSHIP OFFERS

As a Member you will also have access to a growing number of exclusive offers from trusted Affiliates – including our hugely popular no-age-limit Travel Insurance Plan.



FPS Health



FPS Travel



FPS Motoring



FPS Legal & Financial



FPS Personal & Home

## INDEPENDENT, NOT-FOR-PROFIT

Our independence enables us to serve the interests of our growing number of Members – now more than 52,000 – as the Armed Forces Pension Watchdog. We are vigilant, holding governments to account, campaigning wherever we spot an injustice or an inaccuracy in the system. Fighting for the Forces and their Families is in our DNA.

## JOIN US NOW

Whether you have a pension enquiry or you want to keep in touch with the latest pension developments through our e-newsletters and Pennant magazine, visit [forcespensionsociety.org](http://forcespensionsociety.org) and join online today. **Annual membership for you and your Partner costs just £38.**

## FREE £150 HOLIDAY VOUCHER

When you join us online, quote **Promo Code SOR 2018** and we'll send you a free voucher worth £150 off a Rambling and Adventure holiday.



# JOIN US AND GET MORE FROM YOUR PENSION

## Forces Pension Society

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

Tel: 020 7820 9988 - email: [memsec@forpen.co.uk](mailto:memsec@forpen.co.uk) - [www.forcespensionsociety.org](http://www.forcespensionsociety.org)



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# THE BIG PICTURE

Edinburgh, Scotland

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## Out in front

THE traditional Pipes and Drums, as well as The Band of The Royal Regiment of Scotland, led the way at this year's Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, which involved around 800 musicians, 400 other performers and more than 40 instrument types. The Scots Guards, The Queen's Royal Hussars and The Royal Dragoon Guards were also on hand to provide a series of world class performances alongside fellow musicians from the Royal Air Force. In addition, the Royal Cavalry of the Sultanate of Oman's Pipers on horseback took part for the first time, along with the Central Band of the Czech Armed Forces.

Picture: Cpl Ben Maher, RLC





NEED TO

# WIND UP

FITNESS / SKILLS & DRILLS / RULES & REGS / EXPERIENCE / MENTAL HEALTH



# From sofa to *sprint king*

Athlete beats obesity and shapes up on way to sporting glory

► SIX years ago Army triathlon star Cpl Ieuan Hudson (REME) weighed in at around 100kg and was drinking between six and eight litres of cola a day.

The 24-year-old was categorised as obese and his soft drink habit fuelled a repetitive lifestyle of waking up and spending hour after hour playing online games.

But after seeing an Army recruiting advert he sought to challenge himself in a new way.

His weight issues and poor fitness levels proved a hindrance at first but after finally making the grade he has not looked back – and the demanding sport of triathlon has played a pivotal role in his remarkable turnaround.

“Basically, I was on video games all day,” Hudson explained.

“I wasn’t really eating that much but I was drinking so much Coke.

“When I saw that advert I decided to join up. Initially, they told me I was too big to be in the military but I took that as a motivation.

“I started running to lose weight and then I got nudged towards triathlon. I did my first race and loved it and then got invited onto the Army development team.”

In his first military personal fitness assessment Hudson clocked a time of 13min 17sec for the one-and-a-half mile

run. His personal best now stands at 6min 56sec.

Such form has been replicated in his new sport, a fact that was underlined with victory at the Army Sprint and Standard-Distance Championships earlier this summer.

“Being involved with the Army triathlon set-up has really helped,” he added. “I got a coach and was shown how to train and prepare properly.

“Before that I was just beasting myself every day.”

Hudson has since joined forces with ex-soldier and full-time triathlon coach Mark Livesey, and his progress has continued apace.

He finished fourth at this season’s Inter-Services and hopes to make a name for himself at the sport’s elite level.

“I get my competitive spirit from online gaming,” the soldier added. “I would like to be considered for the 2022 Commonwealth Games.

“Wales did not have an elite male athlete at the last event so I would like to think I could be put forward.

“If not, the aim is to be winning professional triathlons in two to three years’ time.” ■

Army secures team triathlon crowns – pages 70-71

## IN NUMBERS

2

Army triathlon titles won in 2018



Time clocked at this season’s Inter-Services



Triathlon consists of:



1.5km Open water swim



40km Bike stage



10km Run

# Spirit of adventure

## Mastering AT admin helps keep soldiers' morale high

► A SOLID adventurous training package is worth its weight in gold – these opportunities are one of the reasons people join, and stay, in the Army.

But the amount of paperwork involved in arranging a stint away can be off-putting.

Taking the trouble to work through the process, though, will eventually reap rewards.

Here, experienced AT instructor WO1 Terry Gorbitt (RE) provides some top tips on getting the admin squared away – and the all important business case approved...

### 1 You are not the first person to have ever planned a trip.

The chances are there are people you are serving alongside who have been on this road before – so seek them out. Find out who your unit adventurous training officer is and read **JSP 419** – covering AT – too.

### 2 Look carefully at the sort of package you offer.

Aim to deliver distributed training – meaning soldiers get a qualification out of it. This sells better on business cases too.

### 3 Start early and make sure you submit the joint Service adventurous training formal application (JSATFA) as soon as possible.

Pay attention to details such as safety arrangements. If you're going abroad, think about diplomatic clearances and ensuring troops have the right driving qualifications. You should submit the document to the AT systems page on the intranet.

### 4 Think outside of the box when seeking finances.

In most cases you will need a percentage of cash drawn from non-public funding, so think of sources such as trusts and associations. That way you will not have to ask soldiers to fork out as much either.

### 5 Be proactive in saving money when putting your business case together.

If you can show you've done your homework, you are more likely to have it signed off. Be aware that some more costly trips may need to be examined by a senior officer.

### 6 If the process seems frustrating at times, remember that AT is important.

It is a key retention tool and keeps morale high. Expeds help develop soldiers by taking them out of their comfort zones in a controlled environment, which prepares them for operations too.

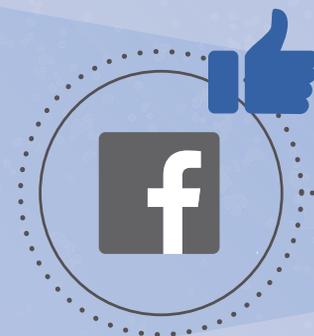
► THE likes of Facebook and Twitter provide a great way to keep regiments, families and wider communities connected. They can also be a good recruitment tool.

But there are some downsides too – running accounts takes up a lot of resources, for example – and there may be existing channels you could make use of first.

So read this guidance before setting up a new page for your unit...

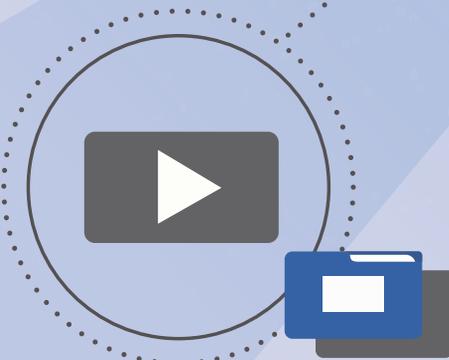
## Step one – register

All unit social media accounts need to be registered with the Army Media and Communications digital team. Contact details can be found on their intranet page.



## Stay secure

Familiarise yourself with the security settings for each social media account you are using. Change passwords regularly and be aware of what information you may inadvertently be revealing when you tag or share something, especially when it comes to location services and geo-tagging.

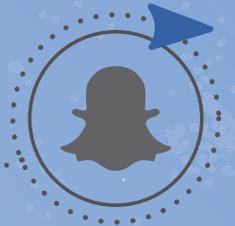


# Pause before you post

What to know when creating a regimental social media page

## Think before you share

Posting is permanent. Remember, anything you publish could be re-shared or screen-grabbed. Take a moment to check that your post falls in line with your unit's social media objectives – and never share anything that could breach operational or personal security.

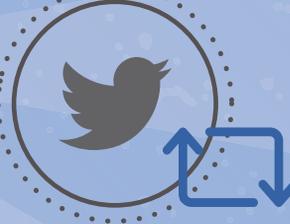


### Consider other options first

Defence Connect can be used to spread messages to internal audiences. For external communications the British Army website and the Service's other main social media channels offer effective existing platforms.

## A picture is worth a thousand words

Try to use high-quality photos and videos wherever possible. For example, tweets with images are 150 per cent more likely to be retweeted. Remember, 85 per cent of people watch video without sound. Captions or subtitles should be simple, clear, jargon-free and with no acronyms.

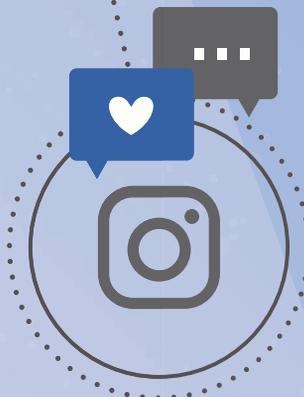


## Don't fire and forget

Check responses and comments and be prepared to answer and moderate them as quickly as possible. But be accurate – if you don't know the answer to a question, find out. Most importantly, do not get drawn into an online confrontation.

## Get permission

This is a complex topic but some of the basic rules to follow include: make sure you have the relevant permissions to share any music or imagery that is copyrighted; obtain consent from recognisable individuals included in video or photography and don't publish details about third parties (including colleagues) without their authorisation. If in doubt, consult your chain of command.



## Want to know more?

Further guidance on operating different media channels effectively is available. Go to the Army internal communications page on Defence Connect. You can also visit [www.gov.uk/publications/online-engagement-guidelines](http://www.gov.uk/publications/online-engagement-guidelines)



# “I’ve looked depression in the eye”

Former major Rob Shenton (ex-REME) on how he went to the ends of the Earth – literally – to tackle his mental health issues

I’VE suffered from depression for 18 years and in September 2016 I was medically discharged from the Army.

It came as a shock but you have to face the reality at some point that you might not be fit for military service.

I started running at a serious level when my father was dying of lung cancer in 2008, originally because I just wanted to get out of the house and have time to think.

But, for me, it’s important to have something to focus on, so I decided to run the Marathon des Sables, which I did in 2011, and that gave me the idea of completing a trio of events.

Having done a tough race, I said I would also do a high one; the Everest Marathon – and the last would be a cold one; the North Pole Marathon.

But it wasn’t until I was going through the Army Recovery Capability for wounded, injured and sick soldiers before leaving the Service that I thought



● Throughout his journey Rob was supported by Help for Heroes and is now an ambassador for the charity. He also gives presentations to troops about mental illness. To boost his fundraising efforts or invite him to speak to your unit visit [www.runningrob.com](http://www.runningrob.com)



seriously about taking on these new challenges.

You can't just rock up and do an ultra race – it takes preparation. In military terms you not only need a plan, but a contingency plan too.

When I ran the Marathon des Sables I knew there would come a point when I would want to quit, so I planned for such a moment.

Before that race I emailed all of my close friends and asked them to give me one reason why I would succeed, and I printed them all out on a piece of paper to look at if I needed a boost.

I never opened it but years later when I was at my lowest point and considering taking my own life I remembered I had that note and reading it effectively stopped me from doing something stupid.

I spent a week in a psychiatric hospital but I was alive.

For me, physical and mental health are massively interlinked.

I try to run or jog every day and I'm up to about 700 days now. You always get that release of endorphins and I believe it can stop me having to go down the route of taking medication.

During my treatment the doctors helped me to see that if I can prepare for a seemingly impossible event like the Marathon des Sables or the Everest and North Pole marathons, why can't I apply it to looking after my mental health?

I finished the North Pole race earlier this year and despite all my training it was surprisingly difficult.

The temperature went as low as -36 degrees Celsius and sometimes I was knee deep in snow.

When I crossed the finishing line I had no feeling of achievement, no elation – I just felt flat. But my thoughts turned to the journey, and why I set myself the challenges – my father dying, my battle with depression, being medically discharged and then the fight to get a semblance of a normal civilian life – and there was a sense of calm.

That chapter of my life was over.

I don't know what's next but I've won at least one battle with depression.

I feel I can look it in the eye – and maybe even beat it one day. ■



## ▶ MENTAL HEALTH

# Support act

## How to help a friend or loved one who is depressed

▶ Journalist and author Matthew Green has written extensively about mental health issues, including his own battle with depression. This is his advice for supporting someone who is suffering...

### Don't judge

**They probably already feel ashamed, like a failure, or are worrying about what you think of them.**

### Show you care

They may find it hard to communicate or describe exactly how they are feeling, especially to those closest to them. Even if you're struggling to understand, be there to listen.

### Take them seriously

**Understand that depression is as real as a broken leg or cancer. It can be linked to imbalances in brain chemistry.**

### Be patient

Depression is different to feeling a bit down. They can't just snap out of it.

### Avoid trying to fix them

It's natural to want to help someone but it can make them feel worse or believe you don't understand what they're going through.

### Spend time with them

**You don't necessarily have to talk, just do an activity together, for example going for a walk. Getting out and about in nature can be beneficial.**

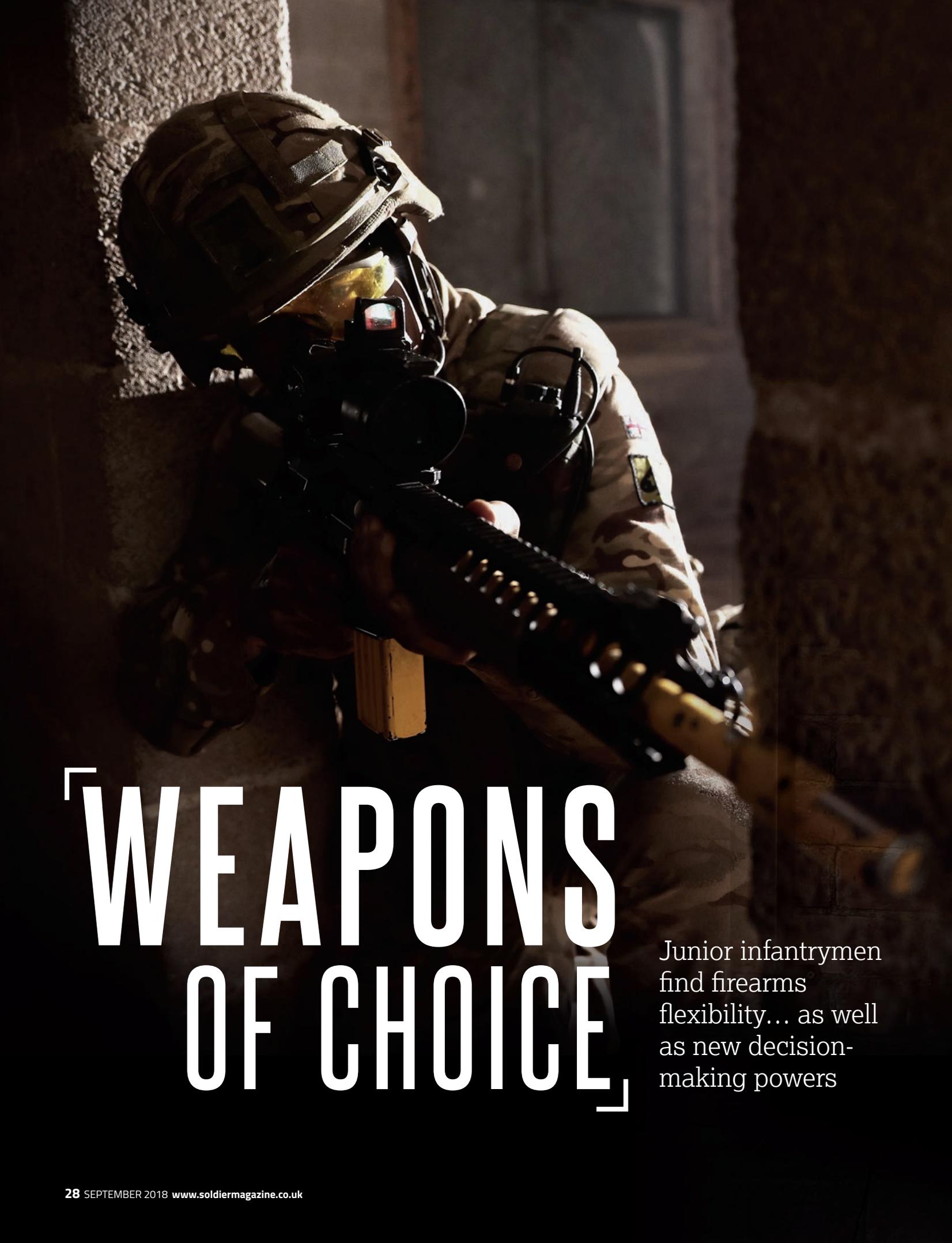
### Know when to seek help

Sufferers of depression may be thinking about harming or killing themselves. If the person you're worried about expresses suicidal feelings, you or they should contact a GP or NHS 111.

According to the World Health Organisation  
Globally more than  
**300**  
million people suffer from depression.  
It is the leading cause of disability worldwide

● Matthew Green has reported from various war zones and his book, *Aftershock*, examines the impact of PTSD on soldiers and their families. He has also produced a series of videos describing what he learnt from his experiences with depression. Visit <https://deep-work.teachable.com> to find out more.





# WEAPONS OF CHOICE

Junior infantrymen find firearms flexibility... as well as new decision-making powers

**I**N A world where video games such as *Call of Duty* and *Rainbow Six* are king, generation Z have already become skilled in planning for virtual combat.

Online multiplayer mayhem sees them making split-second decisions and selecting the best kit – as well as learning to take advantage of team members' different skills.

But now, on real world battlefields, the Army's low-level tactical leaders are being given greater freedom to direct their troops and pick the right kit for the job.

Following recent changes to the infantry weapons line-up (*Soldier*, August), those at the sharp end are being given the discretion to mix their firearms formation as they see fit.

The change in protocol was tested on the latest 16-week section commanders' battle course, where lessons were set to be incorporated into a rewrite of traditional platoon-level tactics.

Maj Dave Crimmins (R Welsh), officer commanding Junior Division at the Infantry Battle School in Brecon, believes the new thinking marks a step change.

In an effort to simplify the armoury, the light machine gun and the light support weapon have been removed from the soldiers' toolkit.

Now a general purpose machine gun (GPMG), Sharpshooter and two underslung grenade-launcher assets provide the assault punch – underpinned by a backbone of six SA80 mainstays.

But section commanders can take the machine gun out of the mix and add in another rifle if needed – they can also place the weapons in any formation they see fit.

“Previously, personnel would have been handed a set line-up with the various firearms deployed in a fixed order,” Maj Crimmins explained.

“Now they will be able to make that assessment themselves.

“Effectively they are being given a toolkit to use as they wish and the troops have taken to this positively – even to the extent that they feel more valued.”

*Soldier* joined personnel in a series of mock contacts on the Sennybridge Training Area to discover how a new generation of commanders are getting to grips with the weapons mix...

## Level 1: Down and dirty



**COMMANDER'S TIP:**  
The GPMG is useful when you break into the trench system. It can then be used to deliver fire in depth during the clearance. Underslung grenade launchers can also provide direct fire at range, but are of no use in close combat.

» **FIGHTING** through a trench system is a dangerous and deeply personal affair.

Hurting along lethal alleyways, hallmarks of the First World War, is as claustrophobic as it is intensely physically demanding.

And the PlayStation generation must now get to grips with infantry tools that were first pioneered in a bygone age.

Using periscopes to peer around corners, the soldiers push forward, taking it in turns to assume the lead and lay down fire.

Behind, the rattle of the GPMG gives assurance that the enemy are at least keeping their heads down.

The troops have reached a crossroads flanked by bunkers and a decision is needed.

Hand grenades are the weapons

of choice to clear them but in these confines they can be just as deadly to the attackers as those defending. This is proven as a misthrow hits a wall before bouncing back into the assaulting soldier's path.

Game over.

In reality, this would have been a fatal mistake, but it is an opportunity to take stock, reflect on the weapons mix and think about improving on the next run.

CSgt Andy Harris (Rifles), an instructor overseeing the serial, says the GPMG can be valuable in inspiring confidence and contacting the enemy around the 500-metre trench.

But the Sharpshooter effectively becomes another rifle when it is employed in close combat.

LOADING



## Level 2: Breaking and entering



**COMMANDER'S TIP:** Keeping the GPMG and Sharpshooter outside the woods is useful for preventing the enemy from mounting counter-attacks. Troops inside should stick with rifles – underslung grenade launchers have no value here.



**COMMANDER'S TIP:** The GPMG is a great psychological weapon here – it is most useful to the troops in the break-in force. It's best replaced with a rifle for the clearance team.

» SMOKE is building across the entrance to a set of buildings at the Cilieni fighting in built-up areas facility a few miles from the trenches – and a section uses it as cover to advance.

The threats are lethal in such a closed environment. A contact can come from any direction and soldiers can find themselves engaging at near point-blank range.

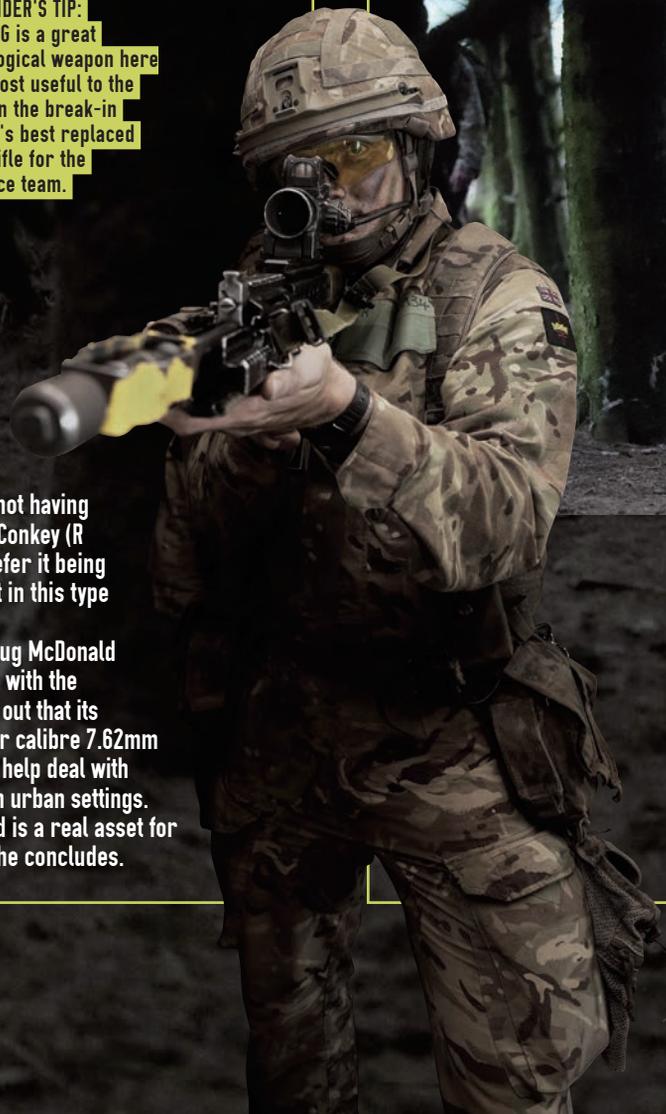
In an experiment to see whether troops can be made more agile, personnel in this serial are not equipped with the GPMG – and its absence has been noticed.

As an area weapon, the soldiers believe it inspires confidence in pressing home an attack, with its ability to lay down a volley of rounds in quick succession.

"It doesn't feel great not having it," admits LCpl Ryan McConkey (R Anglian). "I certainly prefer it being around when you need it in this type of environment."

But fellow NCO LCpl Doug McDonald (R Anglian) is impressed with the Sharpshooter – pointing out that its combination of the higher calibre 7.62mm round and accuracy can help deal with enemy troops at range in urban settings.

"It is not too heavy and is a real asset for a section commander," he concludes.





# SECTION TOOLKIT

## Level 3: Forest fires



>>AN EERIE quiet descends as the soldiers advance to the forest – even the normally vocal sheep on the exercise area are quiet, plodding away in anticipation of an incoming storm.

As they step inside the wood, the dynamic of the world changes. The early evening sunlight and the rolling landscape of Brecon are gone – it is as if night has suddenly fallen.

In the moments the troops are adjusting to the new environment, the enemy swiftly takes the initiative and contacts them.

The disorientation is serious, there are shouts of casualties and there are fleeting shadows between the trees.

An acrid smell accompanies the rattle of discharging weapons.

Outside the forest, the section commander has deployed his GPMG and Sharpshooter in a bid to engage any counter-attacking enemy troops. But only sheep are visible – a well-concealed and elusive foe is exacting some damage.

Underslung grenade launchers are useless here – this is a battle where the rifle rules. Movement, good comms and accurate fire are the key to success.

## GPMG



x1

DAMAGE: ██████████ FIRE RATE: ██████████  
RANGE: ██████████ ACCURACY: ██████████

## Sharpshooter



x1

DAMAGE: ██████████ FIRE RATE: ██████████  
RANGE: ██████████ ACCURACY: ██████████

## Underslung grenade launcher



x2

DAMAGE: ██████████ FIRE RATE: ██████████  
RANGE: ██████████ ACCURACY: ██████████

## SA80 rifle



x6

DAMAGE: ██████████ FIRE RATE: ██████████  
RANGE: ██████████ ACCURACY: ██████████



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# Soldiers AT SEA

**Troops line up for  
waterborne adventures...**

**Y**OU might not think of it as the activity of choice for those used to working on dry land, but it seems soldiers are first in the queue when it comes to sailing the world's oceans.

Every year thousands of personnel more accustomed to ops on terra firma take to the water, relishing adventurous training opportunities that push them outside their comfort zones.

Figures show more than three quarters of the 5,500 people signing up for courses at the Joint Services Adventurous Sail Training Centre are from the Army – well outnumbering the other two Armed Forces.

But the statistic comes as no surprise to the Gosport-based facility's project officer Maj Mike Barham (REME), who says sailing develops the kind of resilience and leadership skills that are key to soldiering.

It is also a great leveller – promoting cohesion between junior personnel and senior officers.

"Sailing is not rank orientated, so a private soldier could theoretically be the skipper in command of a 72ft yacht," adds the Reservist.

"It's all down to skill and ability.

"Once a novice leaves here they will be able to work effectively within a crew.

"Troops at sea in trying conditions will also learn to conquer their fears pretty quickly."

Despite the demands, Maj Barham believes those willing to apply themselves to the sport will reap the rewards.

"There is an independence in being at sea," the officer continues.

"You are out there, making decisions ranging from who is going to make the next brew to how to avoid a collision."

The variety on offer at the centre is certainly impressive.

With more than 35 yachts, seasoned instructors and numerous opportunities to crew on expeditions around the globe, troops can tailor their package to their adventurous training needs.



➔ Staff are made up of tri-Service personnel and civilians, including an experienced cohort that is responsible for maintaining the fleet vessels to the highest standards.

Among them is Cpl Damian MacManus (RLC), who is currently on a two-year posting from 17 Port and Maritime Regiment.

He said that being involved with the centre was a dream job.

“I get to do lots of varied work, including full engine rebuilds,” the NCO added.

“It is important that we get the boats back out to sea so soldiers can go sailing as quickly and safely as possible.

“I love being in the support team, giving everyone the chance to conduct quality AT.”

Capt Olivia Birch (pictured far right, RAMC), who was embarking on five days of sailing in the Solent, certainly appreciated the opportunities on offer.

“I am quite a novice to be honest,” she said. “But this is a very supportive environment and it is a great place to try sailing if you have never done it before.

“For me, this is about doing something a bit different.”

Taking to the waves is certainly proving to be the go-to adventurous training activity for soldiers, who have been proving their mettle when pitted against the elements.

With many rising through the sport’s hierarchy – and expeditions to far-flung places up for grabs – the Army’s presence on the ocean waves looks set to stay. ■

## Want to take to the high seas?

Visit the Joint Services Adventurous Sail Training Centre page on Facebook for more information.



## Yacht master

We caught up with Col Neil Wilson, commander of Adventurous Training Group (Army), when he visited the training centre...

### ➔ You love this sport – why does it appeal?

You are pushed outside your comfort zone in environments you are not used to. Sailing is about living in confined spaces with everyone taking on a shared risk. I am a qualified yacht master offshore, which means I can take a 72ft vessel more or less anywhere.

### ➔ Why do troops enjoy life at sea?

Everyone can benefit from it. It is no holiday but it opens soldiers’ eyes to places they have never been. They look out for each other too – every action you take on a boat will have a consequence for someone else.

### ➔ What do soldiers generally gain from AT?

It builds on their leadership, planning and personal resilience capabilities. The activities bring out various characteristics from our troops, allowing them to develop different skill sets. It also benefits recruitment and retention.





**IN NUMBERS:**

Joint Services Adventurous  
Sail Training Centre

**35**

Total vessels

**53**

Permanent staff posts

**5,500**

Personnel trained each year

**200**

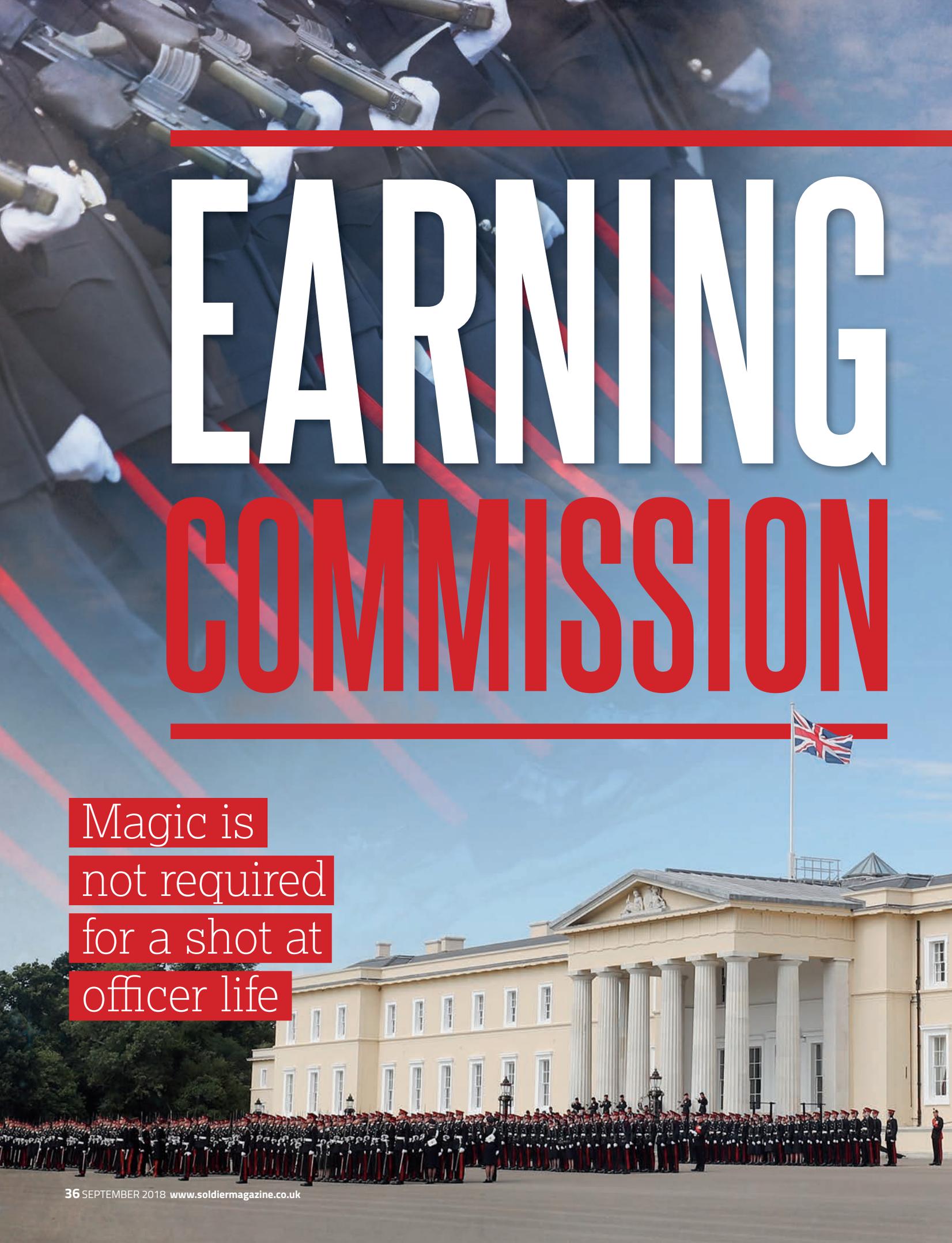
Annual events

“

It is a great place  
to try sailing if you have  
never done it before

”





# EARNING COMMISSION

Magic is  
not required  
for a shot at  
officer life

**T**HERE is a sense of the world changing in the short journey through the gates of the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst – a demarcation line between one dimension and another.

Outside the wire is a small Berkshire town bordered by the famous local concrete elephant statue and a predictable array of commuter belt houses, pubs, takeaways and burger bars.

But step across the divide and the reality is very different.

Like the fictional Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, the academy has the feel of a hidden world of history, tradition and customs – a place where horses round off passing out parades by climbing stairs, captured Napoleonic cannon guard the entrances, and paintings and statues enrich an endless treasure trove of artefacts.

It is an amazing institution but, like the education venue in Harry Potter's fantastic world, it is often perceived as privileged, exclusive and even intimidating – off limits to Muggles.

But this is far from the case. Officers are drawn from all walks of life – including the backbone of the ranks – and anyone from private soldier upwards can set their sights on Sandhurst.

It does not need formal academic qualifications; to start the

journey troops simply need to demonstrate the right attributes to their chain of command.

If recommended by a commanding officer, they will then be assisted by instructors from the Education and Training Services branch of the Adjutant General's Corps. Like boarding the Hogwarts Express, the journey begins with a 12-week package called the potential officers' development programme.

"You find there is still a misplaced view among some people about the type of person that goes to Sandhurst," Maj Dec Lynn – who heads up the Army School of Education that runs the course – tells *Soldier*.

"But the reality is that if you have the potential, willingness and determination then you can have the opportunity to go forward for selection as an officer – and we can deepen your skills and experience to give you the best chance of being selected."

Being chosen for the programme does not guarantee a place at the academy and candidates must still pass the demanding selection process at Westbury in Wiltshire. But its lessons are designed to bring troops up to the exacting standards demanded – and they can expect to have minds and bodies tested during their three-month tenure.

In a tumbling mix of soldiering, academia and cultural activities, personnel will watch plays, analyse artwork, explore places of worship and sharpen their academic writing.

Even the physical training has a bizarre educational twist. Troops dealing with obstacle courses can suddenly find themselves beasted with maths problems, logic tasks or current affairs questions.





But Capt Ollie Porter – one of the instructors on the course – says that students often adapt to this steep learning curve and prove themselves highly capable.

The soldiers share the course with candidates who have already been selected for Sandhurst but have been asked to sharpen up some skills – meaning the two groups learn from each other.

“The idea is not to teach somebody to pass selection, but to put them in the best possible position to be able to do so,” Capt Porter explains. “The experience is focused on a number of areas they will be assessed on when they go forward to Westbury.

“The idea, for example, behind giving the soldiers cultural experience is to provide them with something unfamiliar – and the skills to critically analyse a painting or a play. Likewise, being in contact with different religions is also important.



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- > You can change cap badge if commissioned
- > Speak to your adjutant for further details of how to apply
- > Keep an open mind – officer selection is tough



“In a year or so they might have commissioned, be deployed to somewhere hot and dusty and holding a shura – I would rather they have exposure to the relevant culture beforehand.”

Those approaching the end of the 12 weeks are confident the course will stand them in good stead – and help with promotion opportunities, even if they are not selected for Sandhurst.

“This has prepared me

really well for the next step in my career,” highlights LCpl Harry Millar (AGC (RMP)).

“I had initially applied to join the Army as an officer but dropped out of university, so this route was attractive – and there is nothing to lose as the worst-case scenario is going back to work.”

Spr Sam Pendlebury (RE, pictured left) is also confident that the course will help his future prospects. “It gets you into a new mindset and will make you a much better candidate for promotion,” he adds.

The future certainly promises to be challenging for these Service personnel. The selection process for the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst is tough, even for the best prepared of candidates.

But those who are unsuccessful will still have gained a valuable new perspective on life.

With critical analysis and academic skills, they will have sound prospects for their future careers. ■

# TIME TO SHINE

With 2018 marked out as the Year of Engineering, four soldiers from the technical cap badges reveal how they found their niche...

**Name:**  
WO2 Vinny Ng  
(RLC)  
**Unit:**  
621 Explosive  
Ordnance Disposal  
Squadron, RLC  
**Age:**  
34  
**Joined the Army:**  
2005





# LIFE'S A BLAST

Now the warrant officer of an improvised explosive device disposal tasking troop, one of WO2 Vinny Ng's recent roles was setting up an ammunition depot in Estonia. Working in a multinational environment was challenging, but thanks to his team, troops on Operation Cabrit are being kept well stocked with ordnance.

“ I had already completed two Herrick tours by the time Op Cabrit arrived. But the role in Estonia was very different – and demanded various skills.

As a senior technician in a team of five, my job was setting up an ammunition depot. Obviously it was far smaller than the likes of Afghanistan or Iraq. It was complex, however, given that our troops were going to be there for six to eight months at a time and the set-up was a true multinational endeavour.

There were certainly challenges. Firstly, you are dealing with millions of pounds worth of ordnance and each piece has a shelf life calculated from the climate in which you are operating. Our figures were based on the hot places we had previously been in – whereas Cabrit was far colder.

Once we had straightened these out we were saving a lot of money – our stock would later be used for training so waste was kept to a minimum.

Electrical storms are a higher risk in Estonia than the UK, so lightning protection was another must. Commercial solutions were really expensive but with the help of the Defence Ordnance Safety Group and colleagues from the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, we were able to meet the standard for just €800.

Wherever we are working, we will turn to our own stringent licensing legislation if the local standards are lower and this was the case with the Estonian camp we were on in Tapa. While we were there, Nato also started building its own depot – and we took responsibility for our enclave in it.

Op Cabrit is also live in Poland, and our set up there was even more bizarre. Our ammunition was stored at a Polish depot within a US enclave – we had a sergeant embedded there, right at the sharp end of multinational working.

All in all it was an epic five months and different to anything I had done before. You can learn this stuff on courses but you really have to think on your feet when you are doing it for real – particularly in an environment with so many nationalities.

”

# TAKING ON THE HACKERS

As the Armed Forces adapt to the growing threat from hackers, opportunities are opening up for those with a knack for IT systems. LCpl Jamie Rohman was recently selected for the Royal Signals' cyber protection team.

“ My main trade is communications systems engineer and I was happy in that role.

But I wanted a new challenge and I've always enjoyed working with computers.

The only way you can gain these skills initially is in your own time. I was quite lucky to start learning when cyber was relatively new and progressed from there.

I had a server in my room and I'd have a pretend network.

There would be a vulnerable machine and an attacking machine, as well as a monitoring tool so you could start to understand what it looks like if someone hacked in.

**Name:**  
LCpl Jamie Rohman (R Signals)

**Unit:**  
14 Signal Regiment

**Age:**  
29

**Joined the Army:**  
2014



Interviews: Cliff Caswell and Becky Clark Pictures: Peter Davies, Graeme Main, L(Phot) Joel Rouse (RN), FreePik



I put my paperwork in to be part of the cyber protection team and got told I'd passed through to the selection stage.

This involved a series of interviews and a technical assessment with both Windows and Linux operating system scenarios and what's known as a packet capture analysis – where you monitor network traffic to identify anything malicious.

It has to be a tough selection process as the team want to invest in the right people.

They want someone who has done some self-study to get up to a certain level. You need to have an understanding of networking – how all the pieces of the puzzle like routers, switches and servers fit together.

I also gathered further experience by taking part in some of the cyber exercises the Army runs.

You have to show you're putting yourself out there and not just waiting for opportunities to come to you.

Motivation and enthusiasm are important too, and you have to be able to work as part of a team.

I think there's lots of talent across the Army. People who are technically-minded but aren't necessarily aware of how to put themselves forward for cyber.

It's a growing industry – not just in the Services – so there are lots of opportunities.

And everything's constantly changing so you are always learning.

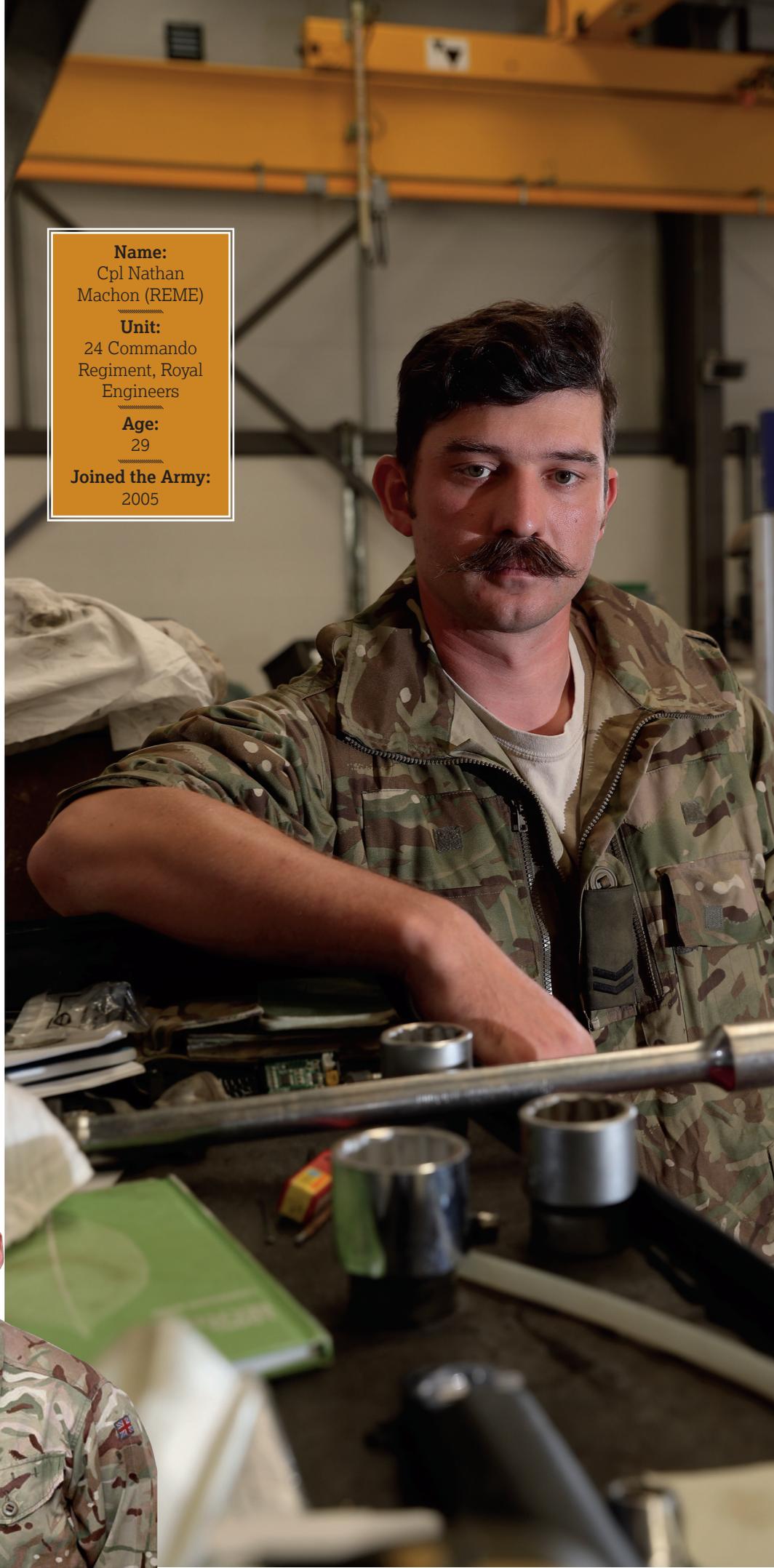


**Name:**  
Cpl Nathan  
Machon (REME)

**Unit:**  
24 Commando  
Regiment, Royal  
Engineers

**Age:**  
29

**Joined the Army:**  
2005





# HURRICANE SALVAGE HUNT

**When two massive hurricanes devastated parts of the Caribbean in September 2017, British personnel raced to the rescue – among them vehicle mechanic Cpl Nathan Machon. With little equipment at his disposal and an airport to rebuild, he had no choice but to improvise.**

“ WE were on a plane 15 hours after the call came in and landed on Tortola in the British Virgin Islands just as another hurricane was due to hit.

It actually missed the island but we spent the first night sheltering in the airport.

There was total devastation – houses written off, cars upside down, planes flipped on top of buildings – it looked like a movie scene.

Our first tasks were to make sure the runway was clear so aircraft could bring supplies in and out and to get the governor’s house functioning as a municipal building.

Because of weight limits we had to cut back on kit so when I landed I had nothing really with me apart from my Gerber. I quickly made a few contacts with the locals to allow us to borrow tools.

Most of my work was to repair generators.

One of them – the main system for the airport – was down. We had to use an aircraft jump pack as a temporary alternator. It produced a 24-volt steady output so we were able to merge it into the electronics of the generator itself and keep it running.

Another one that ran the main tower housing all the air traffic control systems wasn’t working either.

We couldn’t get any spare parts so we went down to the beach, scavenged some solar panels and batteries and wired them in so they could have comms.

We did something similar for the fuel filtration system for rotary wing aircraft.

When you have a skill set you can apply it to anything – it’s just about how good you are at thinking outside the box.

We were there for a total of three weeks. For years we joked that the Army never fights wars in nice places like the Caribbean.

Op Ruman sent us there, but obviously as a friendly force. The locals were so pleased to see us. It was great to be able to help people.



# SAPPER’S DELIGHT

**Cpl Sheona Macmillan received a Women in Defence Award after she deployed her skills and knowledge in environmental management to save millions of pounds for Project Anemoui in the Falkland Islands**

“ Project Anemoui was designed, resourced and constructed by 8 Engineer Brigade to provide modern accommodation on the Falklands. It is a £20m initiative and the most remote UK industry standard construction task undertaken by the Army in recent years.

I have a first class honours degree in international business and environmental sustainability so was employed for my niche skills on full-time Reserve service, full commitment.

The role involved setting up agreements, implementing environmental management policies and carrying out assurance audits to the remote construction sites, ensuring continual improvement.

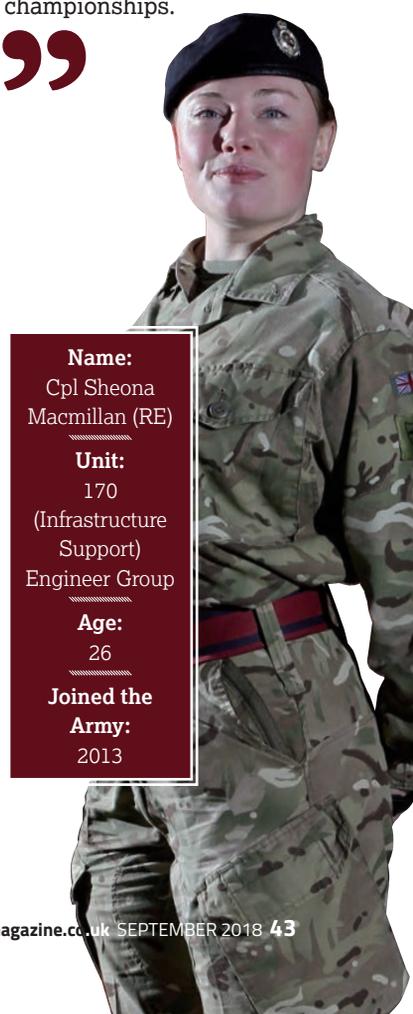
I have now been to the Falklands six times. The marine wildlife is spectacular but the weather conditions can be very unpredictable. The strong glacial winds can sometimes grind all movement to a halt, which makes fulfilling a busy schedule challenging.

Nevertheless it is fantastic to be in a management role for such a large and important international project.

I have delivered environmental pre-deployment training and reconfigured the waste management process – this is projected to save several million pounds over the project’s lifecycle.

I love the opportunities in the Army.

Sports-wise I have competed in the Sapper Games in rock climbing, triathlon, volleyball, bouldering and badminton. I became the Army ladies’ Alpine ski champion and competed in this year’s Inter-Service championships.



**Name:**  
Cpl Sheona Macmillan (RE)  
**Unit:**  
170 (Infrastructure Support) Engineer Group  
**Age:**  
26  
**Joined the Army:**  
2013



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# FIGHTING TALK

Sappers past and present talk shop in Year of Engineering celebration

**W**HEN Derek Flippance joined the Royal Engineers in 1962, the world was a very different place – and the corps was off limits to any would-be women entrants.

Serving when the prospect of Soviet tanks rolling westward was taken seriously and a decades-long brutal operation in Northern Ireland would soon be under way, there was no shortage of trouble.

Acting Cpl Lauren Toth was born exactly 20 years later during the Falklands War.

But with women an integral part of the sapper ranks by then, she was able to follow in the veteran's footsteps.

*Soldier caught up with Flippance – who is now a volunteer at the Royal Engineers Museum in Kent – and A/Cpl Toth as they compared their experiences...*





**Flippance:** How did you get involved in the Royal Engineers?

**Toth:** I had wanted to join the Army since I was a little girl – my dad had served, my uncles and cousins were in and I was born in Germany. But I did other things, including hair and beauty, for a while so didn't actually join until I was 28. All three of my choices on applying were the Royal Engineers – I really wanted to blow stuff up and build bridges.

**Flippance:** You joined at 28? It was later in life for you then. I had an apprenticeship at British Rail before I became a combat engineer. My big thing was bridging – there's no experience in the world like assembling a seven-tonne floating pontoon bridge across a German river at night, in combat conditions and bad weather.

**Toth:** In Afghanistan we had to upgrade a local bridge. We had Mastiff armoured vehicles all around for protection – I was crewing on one of them. Like your experience, it was in the middle of the night. Luckily we didn't come under contact.

**Flippance:** I'm very much a Cold War sapper, although I went to places where there was live ammunition. I did tours of Northern Ireland and Aden – we lost a couple of guys there.



**Toth:** What was Aden like? It was a volatile place, wasn't it?

**Flippance:** We had an IED issue but a vehicle called a Betty helped us to address it. The front part of this truck was filled with gravel and it also had a boiler on-board. You'd drive along, release gravel and then cover it with a black top. The beauty was that you could later easily see if the route had been disturbed. I know you also faced this type of threat in Afghanistan.

**Toth:** I was a Mastiff driver on Op Herrick, helping to clear routes for the Infantry or whoever was behind us. You would see scorch marks at the side of the road where devices had already gone off. You constantly had to be looking.

Fortunately we enjoyed the support of others.

**Flippance:** One of the things I wanted to ask you was, how did you get on with the guys? I admire any girl that joins the Army because they do a great job. But when I arrived there were no female sappers. When the idea of bringing in women was first raised a lot

“  
You definitely have to have a sense of humour in the Army – if you haven't forget it  
”

**Name:** Derek Flippance (ex-RE)

**Age:** 77

**About:** Having become a combat engineer in 1962, he went on to complete 22 years of Regular service in various outfits. His career included tours of Northern Ireland and Aden as well as postings to Germany at the height of the Cold War. A welder before joining the military, he concluded his Army tenure as a staff sergeant.



of people said we shouldn't allow it – among other things they asked where a woman would sleep and whether she would be strong enough to lift the girder of a heavy floating bridge.

**Toth:** To be honest I've come across the odd bloke who has said women shouldn't be in the Army. Before my first posting in Germany I was terrified because I knew I was going to be the only girl. I thought I was going to get a lot of stick from the men but they were absolutely brilliant.

**Flippance:** You have real determination then?

**Toth:** I have been a Combined Services champion powerlifter and I am strong enough to do what I need to do. A lot of the women I serve with have a similar sort of mindset.

**Flippance:** Do you get attached to infantry units?

**Toth:** Some of my friends have randomly been



attached. When you're on exercise in a place like Kenya a couple of us might join up with an infantry section and build the dens for them.

**Flippance:** As long as you are doing engineering tasks, that's the main thing. You don't want to be charging around a hill with a rifle.

**Toth:** I don't mind, as long as I get to blow something up at the end of it.

**Flippance:** Exercises were a major part of the Cold War – they were the bees' knees. On some you would be battling to put up a bridge when you would hear a rumbling sound and waves of Hercules aircraft would appear. The doors would open and 6,000 or more American paratroopers would fall out having flown into Germany from the USA.

**Toth:** It sounds impressive. I enjoy big exercises rather than just being with a squadron or regiment because you're working with infantry guys and other cap badges – everyone is doing what they would normally do.

**Flippance:** Some of the other things we did during the Cold War – practising in case the bloody Russians came across the border – were interesting.



You could do a tour in Berlin. I did a couple, four months at a time. And we had border patrols too, before the Berlin Wall finally came down in 1989. Do you remember The Berlin Wall?

**Toth:** Yes, although I was obviously very young at the time I remember seeing it on the telly.

**Flippance:** So how do you see your future now?

**Toth:** I didn't really think about what I wanted to do in the military after signing up but to be honest I'd like to do the full 22 years. All the places I've been to are not exactly holiday destinations but without exception I have enjoyed them all. The banter is really good too.

**Flippance:** You definitely have to have a sense of humour in the Army – if you haven't, forget it. When I was serving I think I had a similar outlook to you. I didn't mind about rank as long as I looked after my nearest and dearest, and enjoyed myself along the way. ■



**Name:** A/Cpl Lauren Toth (RE)

**Age:** 36

**About:** Born into an Army family in Germany, she became a combat engineer in 2011. She served on Op Herrick 19 soon after completing her training. A welder by trade and with several driving qualifications, she is currently part of the corps engagement team based in Minley.

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## Rocked by ‘concealed’ policy

I AM currently employed in a full-time Reserve service (home commitment) position that is due to end soon.

I applied to lengthen my time in the post via my regimental career management officer well within the guidance timelines for a five-year extension.

When my paperwork eventually came back from the Army Personnel Centre (APC) in Glasgow – with only two weeks left to serve on my commitment – the extension was granted but for only two years. I queried this but was informed it was current policy.

I have looked but can find no reference to this in either a defence instruction notice, Army briefing note or amendment to Army Reserve regulations.

Considering the impact it can have, surely it would have been common decency to communicate this policy change to the staff concerned so they know where they stand.

Strangely though, new entrants in these roles are being offered three-year commitments from the start so it only appears to affect incumbent personnel wishing to extend.

I’d like to know why this policy has been introduced and why wasn’t it made public knowledge?

Also, is it a temporary measure or something more sinister for staff in this category to worry about?

And why does the relevant desk at Glasgow leave it so late to confirm an extension when they’ve had the paperwork for several months?

If something had gone wrong with my application I could have potentially found myself unemployed with just two weeks’ notice. – **Name and address supplied**

**Lt Col Tracy Wright, Manning Directorate, Army Headquarters, responds:** Service personnel in these posts may extend for periods of up to five years up to the normal retirement age.

This policy is in Reserve Land Forces regulations, part one, chapter ten and has not changed.

Any decision to offer a shorter extension lies with the employing unit and the budget holder.

During the implementation of Army 2020 and the reduction in the size of the Service, full-time Reserve service posts were only authorised for two years to aid flexibility in adapting and changing the structure.

This was a temporary procedure rather than a policy change and the default position. Where an employer could justify a longer commitment, it was granted.

This measure is now under review.

Extensions are normally initiated when the APC FTRS desk writes to the individual and employer seven months before the engagement expiry date to allow time for the documentation to be administered and APC to update JPA.

There are many factors in the process that take time, including, for example, the document having to be signed by the individual, the employer and agreement with the top-level budget holder.

There can be delays at each stage and this reduces the time APC have to apply the JPA actions needed to confirm the extension commitment.

# TALKBACK

“ I could have found myself unemployed ”

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 obtain an answer via your own chain of command.

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## CADET COMEBACKS

● IN response to the letter called ‘Medal mistake’ on page 49 of the August edition, I want to say that as an Army Cadet Force (ACF) instructor I really prize all the decorations I have been awarded to date.

I’ve earned them for operations as a Regular soldier – I served for 24 years, mostly in Northern Ireland – and for long service in the ACF, which I’ve been part of for 16 years.

However, they’re not what’s important to me.

Donating my spare time to working with the youth of today and seeing the end results, where young people go on to become fine soldiers and adults and make better lives for themselves, is one of the most rewarding things I’ve ever done.

I even have a son who was a cadet and is now a colour sergeant in the Regular Army so the ACF did him a big favour by helping him on his career path. – **Capt Michael Pepper, 1st Northern Ireland Battalion, ACF**

● WITH regards to the letter in August’s edition, saying that adult volunteers in the cadet force should not be awarded medals, the veteran who wrote this must have little or no idea of what we do.

Many of us are ex-Service personnel who have chosen to pass on our experience and training to the youth of this country.

After serving for 25 years, I now work with the Combined Cadet Force (CCF) alongside some colleagues who have no military service but simply want to provide opportunities to young people they wouldn’t otherwise have had.

We all go away to train, pass courses and revalidate qualifications while maintaining home lives and regular jobs.

Some of us might not have been deployed for six months on operations but we all give up our time, including weekends instead of being with our families.

To award these highly motivated staff a medal for 12 years’ service is, I believe, small thanks for all their hard work, effort and diligence and I’m very proud to wear my cadet force medal alongside my campaign awards. – **SSgt Taff Watkins, Bangor Grammar School CCF**



Out of Africa: Zimbabwe is now further away for one soldier

Picture: Shutterstock

## New passport leads to less travel

I AM a Zimbabwean national serving in Germany and used to claim my three Get You Home (Overseas) (GYH(O)) journeys at once every year to contribute to my air fare back to Africa.

However, after applying for naturalisation and subsequently obtaining a British passport with my own hard-earned money and receiving no help from the Army or the government, I find I no longer qualify for this, even though Zimbabwe allows dual nationality and I have no family in the UK.

I’m not entitled to domiciled collective leave (DOMCOL) either, but surely common sense should prevail. It’s not like I’m getting more money than anyone else or special treatment, I am just asking for the rules to be reconsidered as it is clearly not fair to the many Commonwealth soldiers serving in the British Army. – **Cpl James Katsande, REME**

**Col Philip Bassingham-Searle, Army Pay Colonel, Army Remuneration Policy, responds:** Thank you for your letter and I acknowledge your frustrations with the system.

Foreign and Commonwealth soldiers and officers bring considerable value to the Army and are held in high regard.

To recognise the specific nature of their employment, conditions of service include DOMCOL.

This allows soldiers who join the Armed Forces from outside of the UK or Irish Republic to return to their home country at public expense for specified periods of leave.

Also, they are entitled to a GYH(O) payment that can be put towards the cost of a flight home in a calendar year when they’re not taking advantage of this leave entitlement.

After five years’ residency, these personnel can apply to naturalise and become British citizens.

This is a personal decision that brings added benefits to the soldiers and their families.

Individuals pursuing this route acknowledge that, once naturalised, they are considered to be British, even if they retain dual nationality with their country of origin.

That means certain conditions of service associated with being a Commonwealth soldier, such as eligibility for DOMCOL, no longer apply. The GYH(O) provision can then only be used for travelling to the UK.

In this context, it is important to remember that a basic principle underpinning JSP 752 expense and allowance policy, and the associated rates, is that the UK is regarded as the home base for the soldiers and their families.

There is currently a tri-Service review considering allowance support to personnel based overseas.

This will likely increase flexibility in how certain travel is used for all soldiers serving overseas but with particular benefit for foreign and Commonwealth troops. However, this will not come into effect until 2020, after your assignment abroad has likely come to an end.

“The cadets did him a big favour”

## Glum Gurkha

● WHEN I did my Foreman of Signals course in April 2002 there was a financial incentive of £10,000 to complete it.

While British troops received the money, two Gurkhas, including me, did not. There was no policy decision or plausible explanation given to us for this.

The All Party Parliamentary Group for Gurkha Welfare published a report into a range of historic grievances held by Gurkha veterans in 2014, and it recommended support to ex-soldiers who had been wronged on various grounds.

As a result, I submitted a claim to be paid this sum but my application was rejected by the Pay and Allowances Casework and Complaints Cell (PACCC) because, they said, it was "out of time".

Refusing my claim for this reason shows a continuing lack of empathy towards a group of soldiers who serve the crown with distinction – **Name and address supplied**

**Col Philip Bassingham-Searle, Army Pay Colonel, Army Remuneration Policy, replies:** The scheme you refer to was initiated in 1999 as a response to a booming UK telecommunications industry, when significant numbers of Royal Signals soldiers were prematurely terminating their service to seek civilian employment.

Brigade of Gurkhas troops were not entitled to this as per the criteria within the Defence Council Instruction 154/1999, which states that only UK-trained adult personnel (UKTAP) were eligible.

This is because the Gurkhas have always been well-manned and prior to the 2006 review of their terms and conditions of service, these soldiers were unable to change from their specific engagement to serve in the British Army on UKTAP terms.

When this has been subject to legal challenges, the courts have always upheld the differences that existed between the two.

Serving Gurkhas also remain Nepalese citizens, which means they cannot pursue civilian employment in the UK, although those with more than four years' service can apply for indefinite leave to enter the country following their discharge in Nepal.

It is not clear if you have exhausted the PACCC process but when you have done so, and if you still believe you've been wronged while serving, submit a Service complaint to your commanding officer in accordance with the guidelines set out in JSP 831.



## No room for housing equality

**W**ITH talk of a whole force approach to defence, why does entitlement to family accommodation differ from one Service to the next?

We have an Army warrant officer residing at a dislocated location from our Royal Air Force duty station.

While finding a local property for him, I was directed to JSP 464 which states that RAF warrant officers are entitled to type D (four-bedroom) accommodation, regardless of their family size.

Royal Navy and Army equivalents are only eligible for these if they have four or more children of any age, or three over the age of ten.

If they have smaller families they receive a three-bedroom house.

JSP 464 opens with: "People lie at the heart of operational capability; attracting and retaining... capable, motivated individuals... is critical". So how is this justifiable? – **Fred Townson, Catterick**

**Col Nathan Sempala-Ntege, Assistant Head Personal Services, replies:** Accommodation policy is tri-Service but there are a number of differences in respect of

entitlements or charges for housing.

This allows each Service to provide conditions that support the different ways their people live and operate, and fits their budgets.

Officers' entitlement to Service family accommodation (SFA) is based on rank while for non-commissioned personnel it is determined by the number of dependants.

Historically, the RAF have provided their warrant officers with a four-bedroom unit.

JSP 464 does stipulate that Navy and Army warrant officers (first class) with smaller or younger families should be given such accommodation where available.

Allocation is managed by Occupancy Services and they must assess where they are able to support the policy guidance for the Army and Navy and decide when those families who have an entitlement or need for four-bedrooms take priority.

Under the developing Future Accommodation Model, these subsidies will be based on the number of dependants and not rank.

“  
It differs  
from one  
Service to  
the next  
”

## THE DODGY POP HAS TO STOP FOR FIFTY-SOMETHING DAD

● THE Royal Army Physical Training Corps should be congratulated on its roll out of Project Thor and here at Bicester Garrison we have taken to the Service's new fitness drills with gusto under a team of great PTIs.

But, personally, I'm finding it an absolute horror – mainly because of the music I have to suffer that lurks within our soldiers' iTunes apps.

While Haddaway's *What is love* and Salt-n-Pepa's

*Pump It* are passable, the rest, quite frankly, don't deserve a mention.

I mean, where are Supertramp's *Breakfast in America* or Fleetwood Mac's *Rumours* in the extensive playlist?

For some of us, there's nothing wrong with a bit of "dad rock". – **Lt Col Lyndon "Smokey" Robinson, RLC (aged 57)**

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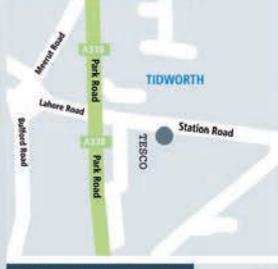


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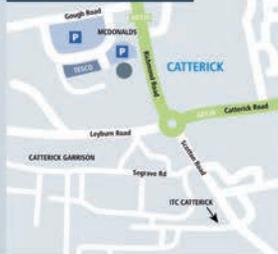
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### COMPETITIONS

**Spine line winner:** Frank Johnstone, Hallow, Worcester.

**Our Girl DVD:** Iain McCallum, MoD Abbey Wood, Bristol; William Smith, Catterick Garrison, North Yorkshire; Mike Booth, Arnold, Nottingham and John Dargavel, 116 Pro Coy, 3 RMP, Guyldford House, Cannock, Staffs.



### DIARY

**September 30:** Steven Spielberg's *War Horse* screening at Screen Cinema Folkstone from 1700 in aid of the Shorncliffe Trust. Tickets £5 from [www.shorncliffe-trust.org.uk](http://www.shorncliffe-trust.org.uk)

**Until December 1:** *The Military Ink* exhibition at the REME museum in Lyneham, Wiltshire looks at troops' tattoos through the ages. See [www.rememuseum.org.uk/whatson](http://www.rememuseum.org.uk/whatson) for more information



### DIRECTORY

**ABF The Soldiers' Charity:**  
020 7901 8900;  
[www.soldierscharity.org](http://www.soldierscharity.org)

**Armed Forces Buddhist Society:**  
Chaplain 020 7414 3411;  
[www.afbs-uk.org](http://www.afbs-uk.org)

**Armed Forces Christian Union:**  
01793 783123;  
[www.afcu.org.uk](http://www.afcu.org.uk)

**Armed Forces Muslim Association:**  
Chaplain 020 7414 3252;  
[www.afma.org.uk](http://www.afma.org.uk)

**Armed Services Advice Project:**  
0808 800 1007;  
[www.advicesap.org.uk](http://www.advicesap.org.uk)

**Army Families Federation:**  
01264 382324; mil 94391 2324;  
[www.aff.org.uk](http://www.aff.org.uk)

**Army LGBT Forum:**  
[www.armylgbt.org.uk](http://www.armylgbt.org.uk);  
[chair@armylgbt.org.uk](mailto:chair@armylgbt.org.uk)

**Army Libraries:** 01252 340094

**Army Ornithological Society:**  
[www.armybirding.org.uk](http://www.armybirding.org.uk)

**Army Welfare Service:**  
01904 882053;  
[www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support](http://www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support)

**Big White Wall:**  
[www.bigwhitewall.com](http://www.bigwhitewall.com)

**Blesma, The Limbless Veterans:**  
020 8590 1124; [www.blesma.org](http://www.blesma.org)

**Blind Veterans UK:**  
(formerly St Dunstan's)

020 7723 5021;  
[www.blindveterans.org.uk](http://www.blindveterans.org.uk)

**Care After Combat:**  
[www.careaftercombat.org](http://www.careaftercombat.org)

**Career Transition Partnership:**  
020 7469 6661

**Children's Education Advisory Service:**  
01980 618244;  
[dcyp-ceas-enquiries@mod.uk](mailto:dcyp-ceas-enquiries@mod.uk)

**Combat Stress:**  
01372 841600;  
[www.combatstress.org.uk](http://www.combatstress.org.uk)

**Defence Humanists:**  
[www.defencehumanists.org.uk](http://www.defencehumanists.org.uk)

**Erskine:**  
0141 814 4569;  
[www.erskine.org.uk](http://www.erskine.org.uk)

**Family Escort Service:**  
020 7463 9249

**Felix Fund – the bomb disposal charity:**  
07713 752901;  
[www.felixfund.org.uk](http://www.felixfund.org.uk)

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

**Forces Pension Society:**  
020 7820 9988

**Help for Heroes:**  
0845 673 1760 or 01980 846 459;  
[www.helpforheroes.org.uk](http://www.helpforheroes.org.uk)

**Heroes Welcome:**  
[www.heroeswelcome.co.uk](http://www.heroeswelcome.co.uk)

**HighGround:**  
[www.highground-uk.org.uk](http://www.highground-uk.org.uk)

**Joint Service Housing Advice Office:** 01252 787574

**Medal Office:**  
94561 3600 or 0141 224 3600

**Mutual Support (multiple sclerosis group):**  
[www.mutualsupport.org.uk](http://www.mutualsupport.org.uk)

**National Ex-Services Association:**  
[www.nesa.org.uk](http://www.nesa.org.uk)

**National Gulf Veterans' and Families' Association Office:**  
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[www.ngvfa.org.uk](http://www.ngvfa.org.uk)

**Poppyscotland:**  
0131 557 2782;  
[www.poppyscotland.org.uk](http://www.poppyscotland.org.uk)

**Regular Forces' Employment Association:**  
0121 236 0058;  
[www.rfea.org.uk](http://www.rfea.org.uk)

**Remount:** 01451 850 341;  
[www.remount.net](http://www.remount.net)

**Royal British Legion:**  
0808 802 8080;  
[www.britishlegion.org.uk](http://www.britishlegion.org.uk)

**Royal British Legion Scotland:**  
0131 550 1583;  
[www.legionscotland.org.uk](http://www.legionscotland.org.uk)

**RBL Industries Vocational Assessment Centre:**  
01622 795900; [www.rbli.co.uk](http://www.rbli.co.uk)

**Scottish Veterans' Residences:**  
0131 556 0091;  
[www.svronline.org](http://www.svronline.org)

**Single Persons Accommodation Centre for the Ex-Services:**  
01748 833797;  
[www.spaces.org.uk](http://www.spaces.org.uk)

**SSAFA:**  
0845 1300 975;  
[www.ssafa.org.uk](http://www.ssafa.org.uk)

**Stoll:**  
020 7385 2110; [info@stoll.org.uk](mailto:info@stoll.org.uk);  
[www.stoll.org.uk](http://www.stoll.org.uk)

**The Not Forgotten Association:**  
020 7730 2400;  
[www.nfassociation.org](http://www.nfassociation.org)

**The Poppy Factory:**  
020 8940 3305;  
[www.poppysfactory.org](http://www.poppysfactory.org)

**The Royal Star and Garter Homes:**  
020 8481 7676;  
[www.starandgarter.org](http://www.starandgarter.org)

**The Veterans Charity:**  
01753 653772;  
[info@veteranscharity.org.uk](mailto:info@veteranscharity.org.uk)

**Troop Aid:**  
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**uk4u Thanks!:**  
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**Veterans Welfare Service:**  
0808 1914 218 (from the UK);  
0044 1253 866043 (from overseas);  
[www.gov.uk/government/groups/veterans-welfare-service](http://www.gov.uk/government/groups/veterans-welfare-service)



### INTELLIGENCE

The following Army Briefing Notes, Defence Internal Briefs and Defence Information Notices can be found online at [www.armynet.mod.uk](http://www.armynet.mod.uk)

**ABN 73/18:** Notification of new land doctrine – *Army Field Manual Warfighting Tactics*

**ABN 72/18:** Equality and inclusion advisers' seminar: A Toolkit for Inclusion – September 19, 2018

**ABN 71/18:** Continuity of education allowance update and rates for academic year 2018/19

**ABN 70/18:** Compendium of mandated course trained personnel within an Army unit

**ABN 69/18:** Army families findings – families continuous attitude survey 2018

**ABN 68/18:** Army STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) ambassadors – JPA competency

**ABN 67/18:** 2018 Armed Forces' pay review body pay award

**ABN 66/18:** Addressing the legacy of Northern Ireland's past

**ABN 65/18:** Scottish income tax mitigation for tax year 2018/19

**DIB 11/18:** Update on ministerial appointments and private office contacts

**DIB 10/18:** FamCAS 2018 results

**DIB 09/18:** Armed Forces pay award 2018

**DIN 2018DIN04-129:** Change of General Service Respirator standard testing method from advanced respirator test system to respirator test system

**DIN 2018DIN04-128:** Declaration of obsolete – Vaisala metrological system

**DIN 2018DIN04-127:** Declaration of obsolete – Battlefield metrological system

**DIN 2018DIN04-126:** Declaration of obsolete – Osprey hip belt and yoke ensemble

**DIN 2018DIN04-125:** Requesting HQWE deployable rapid assembly shelter, James accounting, spares, repair and training

**DIN 2018DIN04-124:** Onboarding of a selection of manual direct supply contracts under the LCS(T) contract onto Team Leidos systems

**DIN 2018DIN04-122:** Removal from service of the 5.56mm L110A2 lightweight machine gun

**DIN 2018DIN04-121:** Removal from service of the L86A2 light support weapon

**DIN 2018DIN04-120:** Notification of obsolescence – aircraft ground power units

**DIN 2018DIN04-119:** BATCIS asset visibility register and impact tool

**DIN 2018DIN05-022:** Joint Medical Group senior leadership structure

**DIN 2018DIN06-025:** Sea King helicopter (all marks) MoD form 960 asbestos personal record annotation

Continued on page 54

## Intelligence continued

**DIN 2018DIN06-024:** Amendments to the dangerous goods manual version 1.1

**DIN 2018DIN06-023:** Health, safety and environmental protection in defence policy statement by the secretary of state for defence

**DIN 2018DIN06-022:** Publication of dangerous goods manual version 1.1

**DIN 2018DIN06-021:** Release of JSP 317, vol 6.2 – *Defence Fuels Policy, Organisation and Safety Regulations*

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

**DIN 2018DIN06-019:** Claims and insurance provisions for the use of MoD vehicles in the UK and overseas and confirmation of motor liability cover

**DIN 2018DIN07-095:** The General Service Medal 2008 with Gulf of Aden clasp

**DIN 2018DIN07-094:** Army Mountaineering Association expedition to Rjukan 2019

**DIN 2018DIN07-093:** Calling notice: Military gender and protection advisers course November 12-23, 2018

**DIN 2018DIN07-091:** The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst senior non-commissioned officer instructor selection cadre

**DIN 2018DIN07-090:** Joint Service Adventurous Training sub-aqua diving 2019 expedition dates for Cyprus and Gibraltar

**DIN 2018DIN07-089:** Training in management accountancy

**DIN 2018DIN08-006:** Non-entitled cash casual meal charge for financial year 2018/19

**DIN 2018DIN09-014:** HRH The Prince of Wales's award for services to defence engineering 2018 – calling notice for nominations

**DIN 2018DIN09-013:** The General Service Medal 2008 with Gulf of Aden clasp

**DIN 2018DIN10-031:** Exercise Telemark Titan 2019 – the British and single Services Telemark championships

**DIN 2018DIN10-030:** British Army Motorsports Association event – Mudmaster 2018

**DIN 2018DIN10-029:** British Army Motorsports Association event – Army Motorsports Day, incorporating training, annual meeting and dinner

**DIN 2018DIN10-028:** British Army Motorsports event – Autumn Leaves 2018

**DIN 2018DIN10-026:** Exercise Rothiemurchus Challenge 2018



## REUNIONS

**Annual reunion of Association of Harrogate Apprentices**, October 5-6 at the Army Foundation College, Harrogate. Further details from Len Morland on 01892 523987.

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

**116 Coy and 18 Coy (Amph), Royal Army Service Corps and 18 (Amph) Sqn, Royal Corps of Transport ex-Fremington 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 more details contact [don.turner1@talktalk.net](mailto:don.turner1@talktalk.net)

**8 Regiment RASC/RCT/RLC 17th anniversary reunion** weekend and dinner, October 19-20. Friday at the Army Reserve Centre, Wigan and Saturday at The Village on the Green Club, Aspull, Wigan. Events are open to any ex-member of 8 Regiment who

served between October 1962 and July 2012, along with their partner or guest. For further details on the event email [jimmyasp@hotmail.com](mailto:jimmyasp@hotmail.com)

**Glasgow and Strathclyde UOTC alumni reunion** dinner, October 13 in the drill hall at 95 University Place, Glasgow, G12 8SU. Application forms available from Gail Scobie via [gail.scobie101@mod.gov.uk](mailto:gail.scobie101@mod.gov.uk) before September 17.



## SEARCHLINE

**Scott Irvine joined 243 Provost Company, Royal Military Police** in July 1989 after completing basic training at Browdown, Gosport. The former Reservist has lost his passing out photograph and is trying to track down a new copy. Anyone who can help with this matter is asked to call Mr Irvine on 07593 576463.



## ROADSHOWS

**The Army Engagement Group** wants to hear from members of the public who would like an invitation to one of its roadshows. For more information call 01276 412880 or visit [www.army.mod.uk/engagement](http://www.army.mod.uk/engagement)

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TEN details have been changed in this picture of musicians from the Band of The Royal Logistic Corps outside Buckingham Palace.

Circle all the differences in the left image and send the panel to **HOAY 922, Soldier**, Ordnance Barracks, Government Road, Aldershot,

Hampshire GU11 2DU with your full contact details, including email address, no later than September 28.

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

The first correct entry drawn after the closing

date wins a Jetboil MicroMo Stove for outdoor cooking.

The winner's name will be published in the November 2018 issue. Usual rules apply.

**July's winner:** Sgt Nowaraj Gurung, Provost Barracks, Aldershot.



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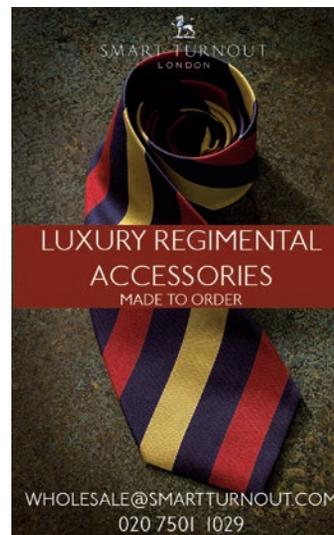


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WO2 S Peake, 1 MI Bn, Catterick Garrison. Consolation prizes (£100): SSgt L Welsh, Sp Sqn, 22 Signal Regt, Beaconside; Sgt L Martin, 617 Sqn, 7 Regt RLC, Cottesmore; Sgt A Harris-Hooton, DSPA, Winchester; Capt L Stoddart, H Bty, 1 RHA, Tidworth; Capt C Hoggard, 346 Bty, 2 Regt RA, Salisbury; Capt H Matuska, MoD AMD HQ, Camberley; LCpl B Dyson, BFPO 10, Batuk; Capt S Jefferies, 1 ITB, Catterick Garrison; LCpl J Fishwick, DPHC, North PRU, Preston; Pte J Brown, 1 PWRR, BFPO 22.

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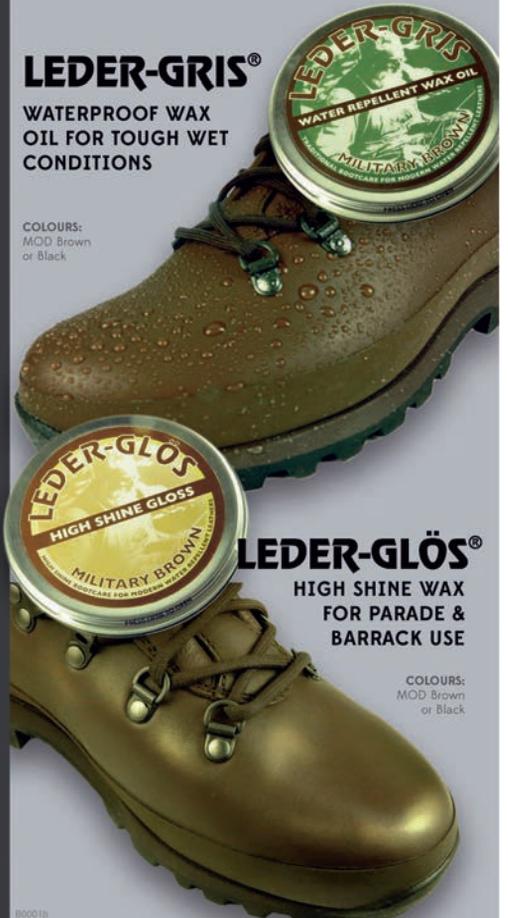
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# REVIEWS



MOVIES

## HURRICANE

War epic puts Polish fighters front and centre

THE Battle of Britain is one of history's "what if" moments. Had the Royal Air Force lost the fight for air supremacy in 1940 there would have been little standing in the way of Hitler's planned land invasion.

Instead, the desperate defence mounted by some 3,000 British and allied fighter pilots – "The Few" as Churchill later referred to them – dealt the Luftwaffe a blow from which it would never fully recover. 

P63

GAMES

P64

BOOKS

P65

MUSIC

## MOVIES



**Hurricane is in cinemas and on digital platforms on September 7**



Now a new film is paying tribute to the 145-strong Polish contingent whose invaluable contribution may have tipped the balance.

Out in cinemas this month, *Hurricane* tells the story of 303 Squadron, which became Fighter Command's top-scoring formation, with at least 126 enemy aircraft shot down.

**Iwan Rheon** (*Game of Thrones*, *Our Girl*) takes the lead as Polish-Swiss flying ace Jan Zumbach, whom the movie depicts stealing a plane in France to come to Britain.

As the top brass would discover, military discipline was not high on his list of priorities.

"He's a bit of a maverick character," Rheon told *Soldier*.

"He kind of imagines himself as being the very best pilot in the squadron.

"These guys were quite wild. They weren't interested in following protocol they just wanted to go out and shoot enemy planes down and if they got shot doing it they didn't care.

"That's the mentality they had. And I guess that came from having seen so many horrible things happening in their home country – they came for revenge and that's why they were such a successful squadron, because they had less to lose."

The Poles arrived on English soil itching to take the fight to the Germans but the chain of command were initially sceptical of their flying ability.

However, the rate of attrition among British pilots was such that they soon got the chance to prove themselves.

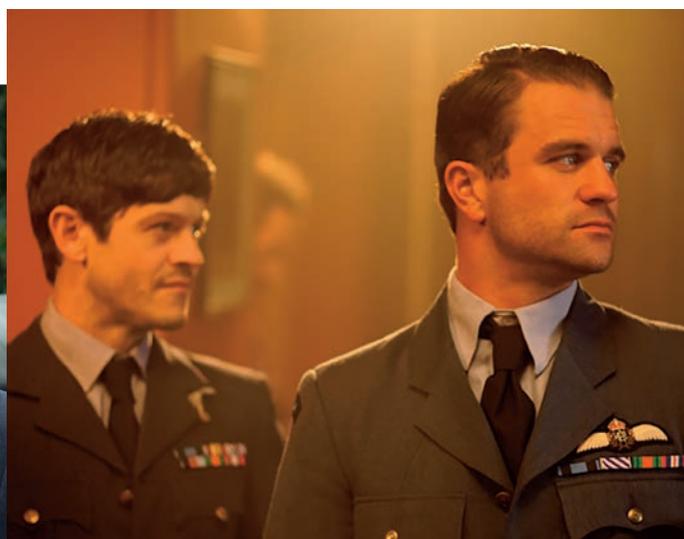
The film's breathtaking action sequences give a visceral sense of what it must have been like to fly a Hawker Hurricane in a dogfight – and see your comrades shot down in flames.

Back at base, the Servicemen cope with the pressure and exhaustion with alcohol and amphetamines.

Best known for his five-season run as Ramsay Bolton on HBO's *Game of Thrones*, Rheon channels a similar steely-eyed intensity in his portrayal of Zumbach – albeit with less of the deranged psychopath vibe.

The Welshman said he is grateful for the opportunities that his stint as TV's arch villain opened up for him.

"I don't think I'd have been offered the job if it wasn't for



*Game of Thrones*," he conceded.

"As an actor you want to do different things and I thought this was such a great story and fascinating character, as well as a huge challenge – learning Polish

and acting in a language I don't speak.

"There were times I didn't think I'd be able to do it and it was scary but I didn't have the option of failing."

The tale of the Polish fighter pilots ends on a sad note. Despite being hailed as celebrities during the Battle of Britain, the post-war government was keen to see them return to their homeland, now part of the communist bloc.

They were excluded from victory parades, unions complained about them taking "British jobs" and an opinion poll of the time found that a majority of the public were in favour of their deportation.

It is impossible to watch the film, nearly 80 years later, without a sense of resignation.

"With what's going on politically in Britain at the moment we can't forget that in the hour of our greatest need these people came and helped us out," Rheon added.

"People from all over the world – not just Poland – baled us out, essentially, because we were really up against it.

"I think it's a real shame that all of a sudden now we've just forgotten about that.

"Hopefully we won't need them to come and help us again.

"It's important to learn lessons from history and not forget what happened."

Whatever the current political challenges, *Hurricane* rightly shines a light on a brief but critical period in Europe's shared past and the bravery of all those who flew – and died – in the fight against fascism. ■

### VERDICT:

Puts you right in the cockpit for the Battle of Britain

★★★★★

INTERVIEW: BECKY CLARK, *SOLDIER*

## WIN

Released during the summer, the *First World War* is billed as the definitive documentary about the conflict that shaped the 20th Century. Based on the

book by Hew Strachan, it dispels some myths and clichés around the four-year clash of nations while offering new insights into events. We have five copies to give away – to stand a chance of winning, tell us in which year the fighting started.

Answers to the usual address or [comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk) by September 28.



## DVD/DIGITAL RELEASES



### The Negotiator

Out Sept 24

*The Negotiator* – or *Beirut* depending on which country you see it in – is a political thriller

underpinned by a strong creative pedigree. Starring **John Hamm** as a world-weary ex-diplomat with a shadowy past, the plot revolves around him being called back into action by the CIA to negotiate the release of an agent held hostage. The film is solidly scripted while giving Hamm an opportunity to demonstrate his leading-man potential with an interesting and nuanced character study.

**Maj Alex Janaway, RAMC**



### The Last Warrior

Out now

If *Game of Thrones* was crossed with *Braveheart* with a dash of *Conan the Barbarian* added,

for good measure, the result would resemble this violent clash of clans romp. As a new era dawns in Eastern Europe, a warrior tribe called the Scythians have almost been wiped out with the remaining descendants now ruthless mercenary assassins. Against this backdrop, the story focuses on one man's quest to save his family amid a feud with another tribe. This epic fight for survival is well worth a watch.

**Rodge Tapply, ex-RE**



### The Senator

Out now

BASED on true events, this film tells the story of how Massachusetts senator Ted Kennedy –

brother of John and Bobby – manages to kill one of his secretaries in a car accident in 1969. Facing prison, he causes a scandal by using his family name to influence the public while attempting to cover up what has happened, costing him any chance of becoming president in the process. This is an interesting insight into one of America's most famous families and its dark past.

**Cpl Scott Roberts, Rifles**



### PICK OF THE MONTH:

## STARS OF THE SHOW

### Developers unleash new gems at gaming get-together

► THE annual Electronic Entertainment Expo, E3, showcases forthcoming titles that gamers can feast their eyes upon for the very first time.

And judging by the host of releases unveiled at this year's event there is a lot to look forward to.

Microsoft were up first with an impressive array of offerings for both the Xbox and PC.

Surprisingly, *Halo: Infinite* was the initial revelation and it features gorgeous visuals along with what appears to be open-world exploring. Of course, the Master Chief is back and takes centre stage in this new saga. But if you're expecting to resume battle any time soon you'll be disappointed as the game is still some way off, most likely coming out either next year or in 2020.

Other titles include the more immediate *Forza Horizon 4*, due for release next month. The action switches to the UK in this latest instalment and visually it looks stunning, while the cars are amazing. The package also promises a far superior online experience.

Another offering to look out for is the next chapter in the *Tomb Raider* revival, *Shadow of the Tomb Raider*, which sees Lara Croft in Latin America.

It's a direct sequel to the previous game and is out later this month. Since her reboot in 2013, the franchise has definitely scratched that Indiana Jones itch and this one looks like it'll deliver plenty of action.

Ubisoft's follow-



up to *The Division* was also debuted during the Microsoft conference, sporting the usual list of criteria the developers are known for: rich graphics, tactical situations and plenty to explore as the series moves on from New York to Washington DC.

As with any E3 reveal, we had the usual raft of big hitters such as *FIFA 19*, *Battlefield V*, *Gears of War 5* and the next NFL and NBA titles.

Other highlights were *Cyberpunk 2077*, *Fallout 76*, and *Ori and the Will of the Wisps*.

The first of these has been in development under Polish studio and *Witcher* series developer CD Projekt Red since 2016 and is a role-playing game set in a dystopian environment that looks like it'll give its rivals a run for their money.

That being said, Bethesda also revealed *Doom Eternal* and recently unveiled gameplay footage at QuakeCon. And it looks amazing. Unfortunately it will not appear in its full form until next year.

All in all, it promises to be an interesting and exciting 12 months. ■

REPORT: DAVID MCDUGALL, CIVVY



PICK OF THE MONTH:

## DESERT SNIPER

Brit quits homeland to take up arms against Daesh

▶ THE opening of Ed Nash's adventure through foreign conflicts sees him leading an ordinary life in the UK before heading east to join the Free Burma Rangers, an organisation providing medical support and assistance.

However it is here, in the world's longest civil war, that the author discovers his true meaning in life – to take on the greater evil of Daesh in Iraq and Syria.

Without any military experience, the do-gooder makes his way to join the Kurdish Peshmerga only to find he is no more than a foreign celebrity soldier, wheeled out for the media when they need a propaganda boost.

Boredom soon sets in and before long he joins another fighter to abscond from the Kurds' foreign legion and join a unit on the front line.

This is where the story should fully kick in. But far from an extraordinary tale of one man pitting himself against an evil empire, the remainder of the book is altogether a far more mundane affair.

It is refreshing that the narrative lacks the bombastic rhetoric often associated with these stories. The consideration given by the Peshmerga to the Kurdish civilians and the esprit de corps between the fighters gives the story a lift.

### VERDICT:

A modern *Bravo Two Zero* it is not – but at a push is worth a look during the daily commute

★★★★★

With little in terms of first-hand close-combat action involved, however, the entire tale seems to follow other people's fights or Nash's arrival just after – or departure before – the big contacts.

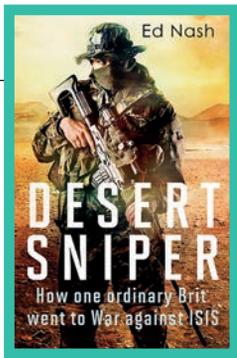
When we do find ourselves in battle the whole thing feels inflamed with hyperbole, disguised with *nommes de guerres* and with far too much time spent detailing well-known weapons that the most casual *Call of Duty* player would be fully aware of.

Surely the differences between an American M16 and a Soviet AK47 rifle would be well known to the target readership – so why spend pages detailing them?

The point of it all is somewhat lost as the story reaches its conclusion. Nash returns home to be arrested for fighting abroad but argues that any sane person could and should confront the evil of organisations such as Daesh.

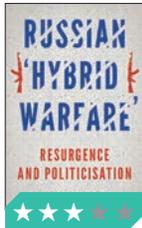
Perhaps he is right. But either way the book should have gone down the line of telling the larger story of the Peshmerga rather than one man's experience within the fractured militia units. ■

REVIEW: CPL SCOTT ROBERTS, RIFLES



*Desert Sniper* by Ed Nash is out now, priced £20.00

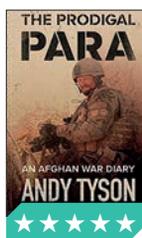
## BOOK RELEASES



### Russian Hybrid Warfare by Ofer Fridman

WRITTEN predominantly with an academic audience in mind, this book takes an interesting look at how Nato, American and Russian thinkers have conceptualised hybrid threats and warfare. The text is hard-going at points so a general reader may struggle. Nevertheless, it offers a timely and useful overview of Russia's approach to modern conflict and, as such, makes a valuable contribution to the genre. The title may make relevant pre-deployment reading for Servicemen and women who find themselves heading for Operation Cabrit, but would otherwise most likely be appreciated by personnel working mainly at the strategic, rather than tactical, level.

**Capt Daniel Burke, Int Corps**



### The Prodigal Para by Andy Tyson

THIS book is based on the daily diary of a private soldier during his tour of Helmand Province in 2010. Nothing exceptional I hear you say, except this Para was a 47-year-old Reservist, who had rejoined the Army almost three decades after he last served as a Regular. His story is a punchy account of the boredom that front-line troops face, interspersed with life and death situations that appear in the blink of an eye, as well as the aftermath of trying to get to grips with PTSD. Funny, entertaining and thought provoking, it is a must-read for anyone thinking of joining the Paras.

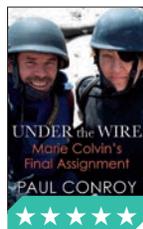
**Tony David, ex-RE**



### This Dark Business by Tim Clayton

CHRISTMAS Eve in the year 1800 and a bomb goes off in Paris – an attempt has been made on Napoleon Bonaparte's life. Through in-depth research, this book reveals the lengths the British government went to in order to subvert the French military leader. Propaganda, fake news, spying and assassination – nothing was off limits. With a huge cast of characters, the account weaves a story of deceit, betrayal and death. Newspaper editors were coerced into writing false articles about Napoleon to keep the idea of revolution from spreading to Britain. This is a fascinating, well-written account of a political period that was probably not Britain's finest.

**Andy Kay, ex-RS**



### Under the Wire by Paul Conroy

REPUBLICATED to coincide with the release of a film of the same name this month, this book tells the story of journalist Marie Colvin and photographer Paul Conroy's fatal assignment in Syria. The pair smuggled themselves into the blood-soaked city of Homs in 2012, but only the latter would come out alive. His heart-stopping account of the mission and his narrow escape reveals the sheer courage of those who put themselves in danger to report the facts. In an age where the mainstream media is under attack from the corridors of power this poignant tale highlights the vital role of war correspondents in bringing the truth to light.

**Becky Clark, Soldier**

## MUSIC



### PICK OF THE MONTH:

## FEARLESS FORAY

**Artist uses recollections of Army upbringing to inspire musical career**

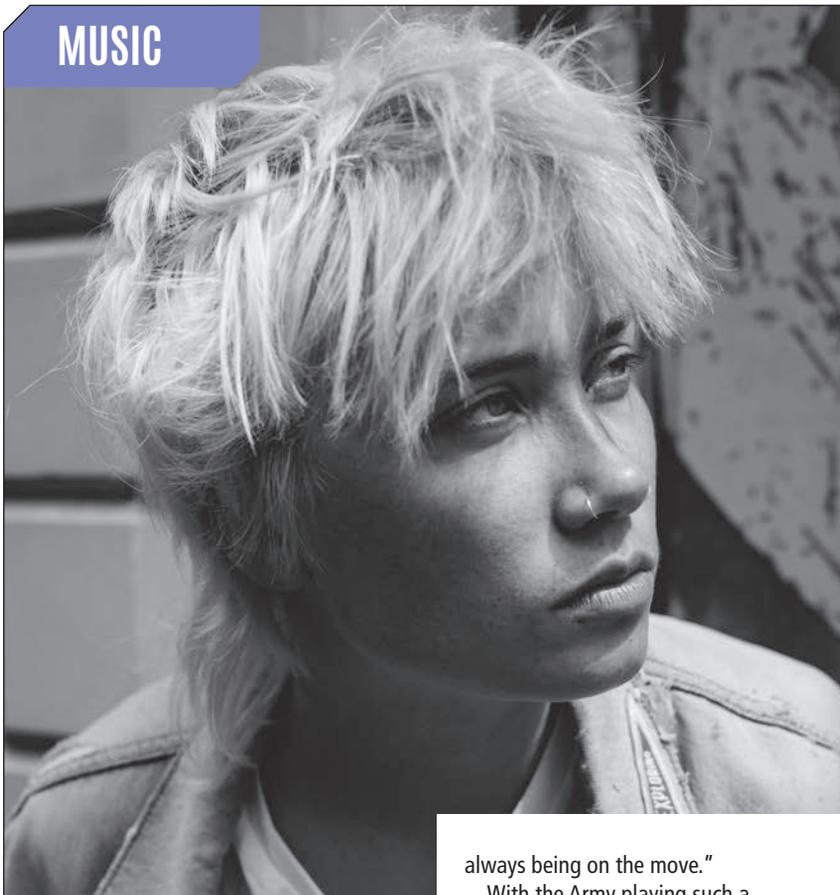
► "IT definitely spurred me on to be creative," singer-songwriter **Annabel Allum** tells *Soldier* as she fondly reflects on her experiences of growing up in an Army family.

The 22-year-old may have moved on from the youngster who, alongside her brother, found great excitement in the wonders of the military estate but her memories of this "magical" time live strong and have inspired her latest foray into the indie scene.

On the back of critically acclaimed EPs *All That For What* and *Sorry I'm Not Perceptible*, her new single *Fear Naught* details her childhood and the immense freedom she found at such a young age.



Picture: Lieven Bulkens



For tour details and to listen to her music visit [www.aannabel.co.uk](http://www.aannabel.co.uk)

» "Being an Army child forces you to be full of adventure," Allum explains. "We would be out in the woods playing, learning new skills and a sense of survival, as well as making short-term friendships."

"That was such an important part of my life."

"Now I find myself getting itchy feet and I crave the need to be constantly on the go. My experience as a child was so magical."

The Guildford-based artist's father, Cliff Allum, concluded his career as a major in the Royal Tank Regiment and, after spending her early years in Germany, she lived on two UK camps.

"Luckily enough we managed to stay put for a lot of our schooling but other children had to move around much more," she adds.

"*Fear Naught* is almost an ode to my father. It was something he used to say to us as kids and it has always stuck in my mind."

"His work ethic and the way he brought us up taught us to be fearless, I really admired that."

"The song is very fast moving and it kind of represents our lifestyle of

always being on the move."

With the Army playing such a prominent role in her life Allum concedes that following in her father's footsteps was a possibility. But she is happy with the path she has taken.

"It was definitely something I thought about," the singer says. "My brother is moving in that direction and is part of the University Officers' Training Corps."

"But I'm focusing on my music career, I really enjoy the fact I'm able to be creative."

And the decision is paying off. *Fear Naught* premiered on **Huw Stephens'** Radio 1 show and was accompanied by a live session at the esteemed Maida Vale studios.

Allum was due to play the Reading Festival as this issue went to press and a three-week UK tour gets under way in Newcastle on October 9.

"It is pretty crazy really," she reflects. "To do a Radio 1 session at Maida Vale off the back of a single is just amazing."

"Now it's a case of 'keep going'. I'll be working on more releases and bigger and better shows and we'll see what happens from there." ■

INTERVIEW: RICHARD LONG, SOLDIER

MUSIC RELEASES



**Live At Hammersmith**  
by The Darkness

★★★★★ THIS is by far the best live album I've heard in well over a decade. If you can't decide whether you're a fan of glam rockers **The Darkness** I can guarantee that after one listen of this impressive collection you'll be scouring the internet for tickets to a gig near you. The crowd interaction is a fantastic addition to the superb music and those who are fans will be pleased to hear the group's seminal album, *Permission To Land*, appears in almost its entirety. The highlights from more recent releases are also present and the combination of old and new material gives an energy-charged overview of their 15-year career. I couldn't recommend this album any higher – buy it now.

**Sgt Adam Jackson, Para**



**Coup De Grace**  
by Miles Kane

★★★★★ INSPIRED by his love of WWE wrestling, **Miles Kane** returns with his first solo release since 2013. The title is the name of the signature move performed by grappler **Finn Balor** and while this offering has some enjoyable peaks it ultimately lacks a killer blow. The highlight is *Cry On My Guitar*, a track that could easily be mistaken as being from the **T Rex** back catalogue given its trademark riffs and **Marc Bolan**-esque vocals. The glam feel is repeated on the likes of *Silverscreen* and *Too Little Too Late*, which work well, but the remainder of the album proves to be a hit and miss affair – despite the best efforts of collaborators **Jamie T** and **Lana Del Rey**.

**Richard Long, Soldier**



**Move Through The Dawn**  
by The Coral

★★★★★ IT has been 16 years since **The Coral** announced their arrival with a self-titled debut album and, after some highs and lows along the way, the Wirral natives are still going strong. *Move Through The Dawn* is the band's ninth studio release and, after some psychedelic diversions last time out, sees them reverting to the minimalist, ballad-like style that has become their trademark. Opener *Eyes Like Pearls* ticks all the boxes of a typical Coral song but there is greater variety to be found on the likes of *Reaching Out for a Friend* and *Eyes of the Moon*. There is nothing groundbreaking to be found here but, instead, we have another solid offering from a group who know what they're good at.

**Richard Long, Soldier**

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# SOLDIER SPORT



## ◀◀ TITLE HUNT

IT was a day to remember at the Inter-Services Triathlon Championships as a new-look Army women's squad topped the individual and collective standings. There were also wins for the men's and masters teams. Read more on pages 70-71...



# TEAMS REIGN SUPREME IN COTSWOLDS QUEST

**T**HE Army's triathlon stars reigned supreme in the punishing summer heat as they mounted an impressive defence of their team titles at the Inter-Services Championships.

It was the Reds' strength in depth that proved decisive once again as the loss of leading personnel was countered by the emergence of some exciting fresh talent, particularly in the women's competition.

Capt Katrina Rye (RAMC) and Sgt Becky Hoare (REME) figured prominently in the 2017 standings but with both soldiers missing this year's Cotswolds battle the team turned to its new breed of athletes.

However, it was far from plain sailing in the early stages as Royal Air Force star Flt Lt Hannah Rose dominated the swimming stage to open a lead of more than two minutes on her nearest Army rival, Cpl Hannah Lyons (AGC (SPS)).

Capt Emma Wardall and Lt Rosie Wild (both RA) followed three minutes later, meaning there was work to do on the bike.

Wild set a blistering pace on two wheels and clocked the fastest time in the field but it was Lyons who headed into the final stage with the overall advantage after she hunted down Rose on the road.

The ten-kilometre run proved to be a shootout between teammates Wild and Lyons and there was just two seconds separating the duo as they headed into the last lap.

But it was Wild who made the crucial break to cross the finish line in a winning time of 2hr 14.59sec – a lead of 39 seconds over Lyons in second.

Wardall claimed fourth place behind Rose and with the Army taking two other positions in the top ten the collective honours were secured.

"It all went wrong in the

INTER-SERVICES  
TRIATHLON

MEN

ARMY

WOMEN

ARMY



swim," Wild (pictured right) told *SoldierSport*. "I've been on exercise for the past few weeks so couldn't really train for it.

"So it all came down to the bike and run. It was a good road to cycle on, there were enough hills to make it challenging and there was some good speed on the flat sections.

"I was looking ahead for people to pick off and once I'd done that I was banking on my performance in the run. I managed to get ahead on the last lap and take the win."

The Inter-Services was only Wild's second standard-distance triathlon race and Lyons' third, meaning the team – which also included Olympic rowing gold medallist Maj Heather Stanning (RA) – had a distinct novice feel this season.

"To be honest, I've surprised myself," Lyons (pictured left) said. "I didn't really know what to expect.



"The swim went well and I ate my way through the field on the bike. I was leading on the last lap of the run but that is my weakest event. Rosie is an Army runner and she was able to come through and get the win.

"This is my first year with the triathlon team and so far I'm enjoying it, they are such a supportive group.

"There are a few people missing this year; if they come back we can really push on."

It was business as usual in the men's race as RAF sensation SAC Luke Pollard stormed his way to another dominant victory – finishing almost six minutes clear of rival Lt Henry Eaton (RLC) in second.

But with Cpl Ieuan Hudson (REME) taking fourth place, and the Army clinching seven spots in the top ten, the team title was emphatically retained.

"Second place was a realistic target before the race," Eaton told *SoldierSport*. "Luke Pollard is a full-time athlete so he is in a different league. We are right there if he has a puncture or mechanical problem, but that did not happen today.

"We've got some really good guys in the Army team. Our strength is in the bike and run but we've made some massive gains in the swim and that can only make us better.

"We now have more than 300 members and that is down to the growing popularity of the sport. People join the military to get fit and challenge themselves; triathlon lets them do that." ■



## TRIATHLON IN NUMBERS

ATHLETES IN ACTION AT THE EVENT

118

SUCCESSIVE INDIVIDUAL TITLES WON BY SAC LUKE POLLARD

4

COMBINED TRIATHLON CONTESTS COMPLETED BY WOMEN'S CHAMPION LT ROSIE WILD AND RUNNER-UP CPL HANNAH LYONS

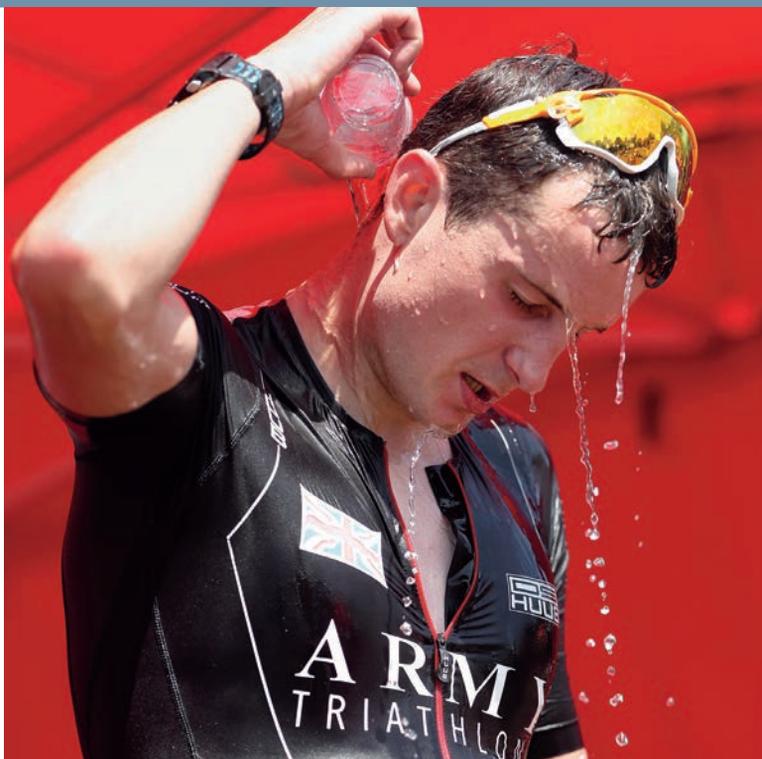
5

SOLDIERS FINISHING IN THE TOP TEN PLACES OF THE MEN'S STANDINGS

7

YEARS OF INTER-SERVICES TRIATHLON MARKED IN 2018

30



Pictures: Julian Perreira

## HUDSON VOWS TO PUSH ON

**A** FOURTH place finish at the Inter-Services represented the first real setback of the season for Cpl Ieuan Hudson (REME).

The rising star was victorious in the Army Sprint and Standard-Distance Championships earlier this year and had high hopes of pushing Royal Air Force star SAC Luke Pollard all the way in the military showdown.

But his aspirations were dashed as he struggled on the bike and eventually finished more than seven minutes behind his rival.

"I wanted to compete for the win," the 24-year-old told *SoldierSport*. "I was well placed in the swim and the plan was to stay with Luke.

"When I got on the bike I realised I had nothing in the tank – maybe it was the heat.

"But if you had told me this time last year I would finish fourth I would have taken it."

Hudson admitted he may have pushed himself a little

too hard in the build-up to the race and is already targeting an improved showing in 2019.

"Given my form this year, finishing fourth is a bit of a kick in the teeth," he added.

"I wanted second place as a minimum so I've got to eat some humble pie.

"I've won every race this season but got destroyed today; I think you need that every now and then.

"I'll go away and work on my biking and running in the heat. I'll train hard and come back next year."

Hudson's campaign will continue at the national relays and Inter-Services Half-Ironman Championships ahead of a busy period of winter training.

And if his impressive form continues he hopes to push for international honours.

"Representing Wales at the next Commonwealth Games is in sight," he said. "There's a gap in elite triathlon so why not go in at the top." ■





# START YOUR ENGINES

## PETROLHEADS INVITED TO THE GRID AS SERVICE HOSTS ITS ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF MOTORSPORT

**T**HE many disciplines that comprise the British Army Motorsport Association (BAMA) will take to the track at MoD Lyneham later this month for a celebration of life on two wheels and four.

From karting and sports car racing to trial bikes, enduro and sprint motorcycles the set-up has got it covered and the powers-that-be are now looking for more troops to experience life in the fast lane.

Each sport will be represented at the showcase on September 12, when soldiers will have the opportunity to learn more about the organisation and how they can get involved.

Sports car racing will attract significant interest given the fact it is the fastest growing discipline within BAMA.

It started with just five cars in 2012 and now boasts a field of more than 30 vehicles.

The main focus is the Armed Forces Race Championship before the season culminates with an Inter-Services showdown at Silverstone.

While the cars are privately owned and maintained the unique nature of the sport – lap time consistency is key – ensures drivers do not need a vast budget to be competitive.

In contrast, being quick round the track is a prerequisite for the Army karting team, who compete against their Forces rivals in six hard-fought rounds throughout the year.

The soldiers hold two championship titles and are racing three endurance and three sprint karts this season.

“We want to make motorsport open to all,” said team manager Sgt Ben Lockyer (REME). “We are always looking for new

drivers and pit crew, whether they have a background in karting or not.

“We will hold trials for the next championship year in November and potential recruits will then be invited to a track day, where we can assess their driving style to see if they have the potential to be quick.

“A select few will then be welcomed to a second round, when they will be pitted against current team members.”

Those with an interest in rallying have two options.

The Armed Forces Rally Team is a tri-Service organisation based at Deepcut Barracks that competes in a variety of national and international special-stage events.

Racing in six Land Rover Wolf vehicles, entrants are tested on a variety of surfaces for the right to be crowned Armed Forces champions.

Alternatively, aspiring drivers can push their own vehicles in the Army Rally Championship.

The event features five point-scoring rounds and culminates with a final stage in which all competitors race each other at the same location.

The expression “any vehicle can be rallied” holds true as anything can compete, provided it is fitted with relevant safety equipment such as a roll cage, fire extinguisher and harness.

When it comes to motorcycling pursuits, enduro is proving the most popular within Army circles.

Riders can compete in events ranging from local level to the European Championships and the Service’s top riders test themselves at the International Six Days of Enduro each year.

While the sport caters



Picture: Garry Fox

**“WE WANT TO MAKE THE SPORT OPEN TO ALL”**

for experienced athletes it welcomes newcomers during an annual training camp.

Developing riders at grass-roots level has also been a key focus of the Army trials team.

This ethos has allowed the set-up to compete at the highest level, with personnel entering the International Scottish Six Day Trial every year since 1936.

It is billed as a true test of man and machine as entrants cover more than 100 miles a day, riding through 30 sections including obstacles such as steep gullies, slippery rocks, streams and gorges.

Those seeking action on the track are catered for by the Army Motorcycle Road Race Team, which takes part in sprint and endurance events.

The former sees soldiers compete against their military rivals at some of the country’s top venues.

Many of the sprint riders use the experience gained in the series to take on notorious road races such as the Isle of Man TT and the Manx Grand Prix.

Sgt Jason Makham (RA) highlighted the success of this route when he finished third in his class, and tenth overall, at last season’s Junior TT.

And if an off-road escape is something that appeals the Service offers opportunities in motorised adventure.

The most recent quest saw personnel complete an epic 24,000-kilometre journey from the southern tip of South America to the shores of the Arctic Ocean in Alaska. ■



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**EYES ON THE PRIZE:** THE ARMY RETURN TO ACTION AT THE INTER-SERVICES CHAMPIONSHIPS IN BEDFORD FROM SEPTEMBER 10 TO 14

## SPORT SHORTS



### Ironmen set the pace

SENIOR officers Maj Gen Ivan Jones and Brig John Mead went head-to-head with athletes from across the world at the inaugural Estonia Ironman competition.

Comprised of a two-and-a-half mile swim in the Baltic Sea, a 112-mile cycle leg and a full marathon, the event attracted more 1,400 entrants from around 50 countries.

Jones posted a time of 10hr 6min to finish ninth in his age group, while Mead (pictured above) completed the course in 9hr 39min to take fourth spot in his category.



### Forces fixtures finalised

THE UK Armed Forces rugby union set-up has confirmed the details of this season's remembrance matches.

Bristol's Ashton Gate Stadium will host the men's fixture against Bristol Bears on Thursday, November 15.

And the women will play the South African national team at Rosslyn Park on Friday, November 2.

For more details follow @ukafrugby on Twitter.



## BOARDERS PASS EUROPEAN TEST

ARMY riders Capt Charlie Hay (AAC) and SSgt Dale Crossley (RE) gave a superb showing on the elite stage when they represented Great Britain at the European Wakeboard Championships.

Staged at Wake Paradise in Milan, the contest saw both soldiers perform strongly in the qualifying rounds as they progressed to their respective finals in style.

Hay (pictured) took second spot in her heat and went on to finish fourth overall in the masters' ladies event, where British teammate Steph Caller took silver.

"I'm happy to take fourth place at what

was my first European Championships," the officer said.

"I've had a solid three weeks on the water and had a great time with Team GB. I have to say a massive thank you to the Army and my corps for the support this season, which has enabled me to train, travel and compete."

After negotiating the qualifiers and semi-finals, Crossley made it through to a six-strong line-up that contested the men's masters final.

And his efforts were rewarded as he claimed a bronze medal. ■

"I'VE HAD A GREAT TIME WITH TEAM GB"



» THERE was a familiar feel to this year's Inter-Services Tennis Championships as Army players dominated the court to secure the men's and women's collective titles.

Back-to-back wins for top seed Capt Ben Rogers (RA) helped the men's team – which included the returning Lt Scott Sears (RGR, pictured) – to a slender 5-4 lead at the end of the singles draw. The soldiers then hit top form in the doubles to eventually triumph 11-7 over the Royal Navy in second.

It was business as usual in the women's contest as the Army won all six matches in the singles before dropping just one match in the doubles to finish with 11 points.

The Royal Air Force claimed second spot ahead of the Navy in third.

Picture: Steve Dock

Picture: Steve Dock



## GAME BRIEF

**DATE:** July 26, 2018

**COMPETITION:** Inter-Services Women's Twenty20 Championship  
**VENUE:** Burnaby Road, Portsmouth

**NAVY 61-6:** Extras 19, Raynes 13, Tatnell 12, Gavillet 2-5, Potgieter 1-10, Clark 1-12

**ARMY 64-0:** Potgieter 38 not out, Vaggers 20 not out

**SUCCESS** in the Twenty20 format underlined the Army's dominance of Forces cricket in the 2018 season.

The Reds' bowlers conceded just 114 runs in their two matches – a total that would be considered well below par in a standard single match – and raced to their victory targets with ease.

"We had two really good performances," skipper Capt Lauren Harden (RE) told *SoldierSport*. "We were on it from the first ball and everyone wanted to take a catch or claim a wicket."

"Our openers were on top form which meant I had to sit for 40 overs with my pads on, but I have no complaints with that."

"Some new players have come in to bolster the team from last year so we felt confident coming into the tournament."



# REDS HIT CRUISE CONTROL

### INTER-SERVICES WOMEN'S T20

NAVY

61-6

ARMY

64-0



**T**WO thumping victories over their Forces rivals saw the Army women complete an emphatic Inter-Services double as they lifted the silverware in this season's Twenty20 showpiece.

Having already secured the honours in the longer format the Reds maintained their impressive form in Portsmouth as they recorded ten-wicket triumphs against the Royal Air Force and Royal Navy.

It was the team's efforts with the ball that laid the platform for success as tight bowling, coupled with superb fielding, restricted their opponents.

The RAF posted a lowly total of 53-7 as the Army won the toss and asked their rivals to bat first in the opening match.

All-rounder Sgt Amanda Potgieter (REME, pictured above) was the pick of the bowlers with figures of 2-13 and there was a ruthless edge to the run chase as the soldiers finished the job in style.

Maj Mel Vaggers (AGC (SPS)) blasted a rapid-fire 51 not out to help her side race to their target inside seven overs, with

opening partner Potgieter a virtual spectator as she finished unbeaten on three.

With the Navy enjoying similar success against the RAF it was winner-takes-all in the final game of the day.

Again, the Army fielded first and after a promising start from the hosts they seized control.

LS Lou Worsfold was the first to perish when she was superbly caught by Vaggers off the bowling of LCpl Gabie Clark (Int Corps) before Potgieter executed two run outs to reduce the score to 27-3.

Spinner SSgt Kirsty Gavillet (RLC, pictured left) claimed the prize scalp of Lt Cdr Hazelle Garton and her departure in the tenth over ended any hopes of a challenging total.

The second half of the innings saw just 21 runs added as the Army's stranglehold continued. Gavillet claimed a second wicket to finish with figures of 2-5 from a spell that included two maidens.

The run chase proved to be a formality as Vaggers and Potgieter cruised to their target with little danger. ■



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## UMPIRES NEEDED

THE UK Armed Forces cricket set-up is looking for new umpires and scorers to join the fold.

Training and courses in both facets of the game are available to any interested personnel who, once qualified, can eventually go on to officiate in matches at regimental level through to the Inter-Services Twenty20 at Lord's.

"We want to push the message out there so we can get aspiring umpires and scorers involved," said WO2 Alex Rennie (Rifles), secretary of the UK Armed Forces Association of Cricket Officials.

"It is really easy to do. We run courses in Aldershot and there is also online training through the England and Wales Cricket Board.

"Individuals will start at a basic level but there is scope to go all the way to the international stage.

"We've got lots of football and rugby referees but we are starting to struggle in cricket as quite a few people have left the military without being replaced."

For more information email [alexrennie1@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:alexrennie1@hotmail.co.uk) or visit [www.ukaf-aco.com](http://www.ukaf-aco.com)



# GUNNERS TOAST TRIPLE CROWN

ROAD RACE SERIES

MEN

RA

WOMEN

AMS



THERE was a familiar feel to the climax of this season's Army Cycling Road Race Series as the Royal Artillery claimed the overall honours for a third successive year.

Fought over 11 gruelling rounds, the competition was decided during the final stage at the Brownlee Cycling Centre in Leeds, where the Gunners secured enough points to triumph over the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

Their rivals claimed the individual glory on the day, courtesy of Sgt James Bevan, but it was the team's strength in depth that ultimately proved decisive as three riders finished inside the top ten to seal the win.

Victory came on the back of the Gunners' success at the

Army Reserve Championships, where Dmr George Aldridge (HAC) and Sgt James Green (RA) secured a one-two for the corps.

The Army Medical Services dominated the women's event thanks to consistent showings from Reserve champion Capt Bexy Dew and Sgt Dani Gloyn, who claimed second and third in the overall individual standings.

The team finished more than 200 points clear of the Royal Logistic Corps in second.

Bevan took the men's individual title, a feat matched by LCpl Fran Derbyshire (AAC) in the women's field.

A further sign of the sport's strength was witnessed in the fact that both Reserve champions also finished on the podium in the main Army series. ■

● GLOUCESTER Rugby's Kingsholm Stadium has been named as the venue for this season's Inter-Services clash between the Army and Royal Air Force.

The match will be played on Saturday, April 27 and will see the Reds face the defending champions ahead of their traditional Twickenham showdown with the Royal Navy.

Ticketing details, including hospitality packages, will be posted on [www.gloucesterrugby.co.uk](http://www.gloucesterrugby.co.uk)



# MONTH IN SPORT

## September's key fixtures...

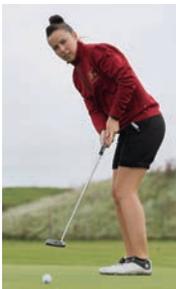


**WHAT:** Army Road Race Championships  
**WHEN:** September 5  
**WHERE:** Sandhurst  
**NEED TO KNOW:** With the Inter-Corps series

complete attention now switches to the key race in the Army season. A number of riders will be hoping to hit top form ahead of the Inter-Services



**WHAT:** Army v Royal Navy, Inter-Services Rugby League  
**WHEN:** September 7  
**WHERE:** Army Rugby Stadium, Aldershot  
**NEED TO KNOW:** The 2018 campaign starts with the men's, women's and academy sides all in action. The senior team missed out last year and will be hoping for more this time round



**WHAT:** Inter-Services Golf Championships  
**WHEN:** September 9 to 13  
**WHERE:** Frilford Heath Golf Club  
**NEED TO KNOW:** There was double delight for the Army last

season as the men and women secured their respective team titles. But who will reign supreme on the greens and fairways this year?

## TASS IN NUMBERS

NAMES CONSIDERED FOR THE 2018/19 INTAKE

57

ARMY SPORTS PUTTING ATHLETES FORWARD FOR POSSIBLE INCLUSION

19

NATIONAL TITLES WON BY FIGHTERS FROM THE ARMY BOXING SQUAD DURING THE COURSE OF LAST SEASON

9

ATHLETES ALSO NAMED IN THE BAE SYSTEMS SPORTS SCHOLARS SCHEME - AN INITIATIVE AIMED AT THOSE WHO HOPE TO JOIN TASS IN THE FUTURE

53



## SERVICE SCHOLARS STEP UP

A TOTAL of 48 sportsmen and women have been selected for the 2018/19 talented athlete scholarship scheme (TASS).

Run by the Army's elite sport programme in conjunction with Sport England, the initiative is aimed at helping personnel fulfill their potential on the pitch, court or in the ring while maintaining their progress in the day job.

Paralympic skiing champion Capt Jen Kehoe (RE) and Commonwealth Games bronze medallist Sgt Sam Gowin (RA) have been named in the latest intake, along with triathlon ace Cpl Ieuan Hudson (REME) and distance runner Cpl Dani Hodgkinson (QARANC).

The success of the Army's boxing squad has been reflected, with 12 fighters from the set-up receiving the call - including national champions Cpl Steph Wroe (REME), Gnr Karris Artingstall and Gnr Tori-Ellis Willetts (both RA).

Martial arts is represented by the likes of karate ace Pte Chris Rowan (Para, pictured) and judo player Capt Alex Paske (RE). Cyclists Capt Ejay Harris (RAMC), WO2 Chanel Mason (RAPTC) and Pte Charmaine Porter (RLC) have also seen their efforts rewarded.

The winter sports fraternity boasts a healthy contingent, with skiers Spr Euan Kick and Spr Duncan Kuwall (both RE) featuring alongside luge star Sgt Dani Scott (QARANC) and biathlete Sgt Amanda Lightfoot (AGC (SPS)), who competed at the 2018 Winter Olympics.

The scheme is aimed at those who are currently unfunded by UK Sport but are close to achieving the standard required for inclusion on podium and world-class development programmes with various governing bodies.

It offers support in crucial areas of performance such as strength and conditioning, psychology and nutrition. ■



## GAME BRIEF

**DATE:** July 25, 2018  
**COMPETITION:** REME v RE  
 Lawson Cup final  
**VENUE:** Army Rugby Stadium, Aldershot  
**REME TRIES:** Laing, Naulusala, Ram, Holmes, Vakalalabure (2)  
**RE TRIES:** Lloyd (2), Petueli (3), Capper

**SPEAKING** at the end of an absorbing final, Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers' skipper Cfn Jamie Laing said the result was the highlight of a tough campaign.

"This means everything to us," he told *SoldierSport*. "There has been a lot of blood, sweat and tears both on the pitch and off.

"But everyone has come together for the good of the team.

"We have focused on our defence throughout the year and have built from there; we did that again today.

"We have got so many good players and it is a pleasure to captain this side.

"The Royal Engineers are a championship-winning outfit and we respect them but it is an amazing feeling to win this cup."



# TRIES GALORE IN CUP FINAL

### LAWSON CUP FINAL

REME

32

RE

30



**T**HE Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers triumphed in a 12-try thriller to claim the honours in this season's Lawson Cup final.

With attacking play at the fore there was little to separate the champions-elect from their rivals the Royal Engineers as the lead switched between the two sides throughout.

But it was a penalty from skipper Cfn Jamie Laing (pictured left) that ultimately proved decisive as the REME eventually triumphed 32-30.

Laing opened the scoring in the fifth minute when he rounded off a flowing cross-field move to complete a concerted spell of early pressure.

The Sappers then eased their way into the match and had a try disallowed before their efforts were rewarded in the 17th minute as Spr Tom Lloyd used his blistering pace to run clear and touch down.

The winger crossed again moments later to extend the lead but their rivals hit back with a double of their own.

LCpl Peter Holmes smashed through the opposition lines to create the platform for Cfn Uraia

Naulusala to score in the corner before Cfn Nashville Ram barged through the defence to find the line.

However, the Sappers fired a response on the stroke of half-time as Spr Ernest Petueli gave his side a 16-14 lead.

The ebbs and flows continued after the break as Holmes handed off a tackler to run home and the REME opened an eight-point advantage through Cfn Jefeti Vakalalabure.

Petueli added his second to reduce the arrears but Vakalalabure struck an instant blow as he collected a Laing pass and stretched to the line.

Laing expertly dispatched a penalty from distance to put his side 12 points clear with nine minutes remaining but the final stages proved to be anything but plain sailing.

The outstanding Petueli completed his hat-trick moments later and the pressure continued as Cpl Marc Capper crashed over.

But with the conversion floating wide the challengers remained two points adrift and as the clock ticked down they fell short of a comeback. ■



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# LEVEL PEAKS

ASSOCIATES



Most recently we had a demonstration of explosive method of entry, which was carried out by the Queen's Gurkha Engineers. It was professional and good to see something different.

**LCpl Brian McGuire (PWRR)**



The Royal Engineers were an inspiration before I joined the Army. I was encouraged to look at other trades but didn't want to know. I was keen to do what the lads were doing – when I became a sapper I was lucky enough to go straight into pre-deployment training and out to Afghanistan.

**A/Cpl Lauren Toth (RE)**



In places like Afghanistan, you need military engineering professionals to clear IEDs. Everyone really appreciates their skill and courage.

**LCpl Ryan McConkey (R Anglian)**



**From my own experience, I remember my first job as an EOD operator. A suspicious object had been spotted on the A52 at Nottingham – all five lanes of the road had been closed and it was absolutely deserted. I was in my bomb suit, completely enclosed in my own bubble. It was really surreal.**

**WO2 Vinny Ng (RLC)**



We need the engineers as much as they need us. You know they are out there doing important tasks, such as building compounds and blowing up IEDs.

**LCpl Steven Winder (Lancs)**

As a recce soldier I worked alongside the Royal Engineers in Batus. It was our job to go ahead, look for good options for their bridging kit and then offer protection. It was the first time I had seen that and it was impressive.

**Cpl Lewis McGovern (QRH)**



## Force fixers

Troops recall experiences of seeing Army engineering in action

I remember the Royal Engineers teaching us how to build a bridge on Exercise Askari Storm in Kenya. It was hard work with a lot of heavy kit, but I enjoyed working with them. They were good tutors too.

**LCpl Jemal Anthony (Scots)**





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