

# SOLDIER

MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY

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# SOLDIER

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ARMY

# Sense of adventure

**A**NOTHER action-packed issue of *Soldier* awaits our readers.

And after rightly playing second fiddle to combat operations for the last decade, those delivering some of the most exciting adventurous training the Army has to offer tell us why it is getting an overhaul (page 11).

Also this month, Service personnel brave the icy crevices and sunny skies surrounding Trail's End Camp in Canada (pages 40-45).

As ever, condensing all the action across the world of Army sport into ten pages was not an easy task for our team (pages 77-89).

From the incredible buzz of the Invictus Games to the start of the new football season, it is clear that troops are throwing themselves into as many activities as they can post-Herrick.

Add a growing variety of military exercises (pages 28-30) and some cutting-edge kit (pages 32-35) to the mix, and it is clear that adrenaline highs are still top of the Army agenda.

Exciting times – and a fitting way for the military to repay those who have spent years committed to a gruelling desert mission. ■



Sarah Goldthorpe • Editor

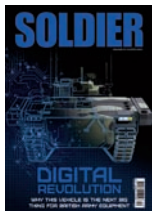
*S. Goldthorpe*





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Cover design: Tudor Morgan

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## **“The British guys’ hustle in the IED lanes was awesome”**

Light Dragoons draw praise in partnering serial p28

## **“Your heart rate rockets when you’re hanging on the wing”**

Sky diving package puts personnel to the test p44

## **“This is the biggest achievement of my athletic career”**

Medal magic for Army at Invictus Games p85







# The Duke of York's Royal Military School

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boarding academy for children aged 11 to 18.**

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*Bryony Y13*



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Picture: WO2 Will Craig, RtC



## Message from the top

New Chief of the General Staff, Gen Sir Nicholas Carter, has the following words for personnel:

“I AM passionate about the prospect of leading the British Army to deliver Army 2020.

We must turn our focus to the future and ensure that we are capable of protecting our country, preventing conflict and when required, fighting the United Kingdom's enemies.

But at the top of my agenda is getting the Army ready for the next eventuality. The Army Readiness Order or “Vanguard” was produced to do just that.

Central to this are the Regular and Reserve soldiers and officers of the Army – and having the right personnel in place is essential.

As the economy improves, the competition for talent will intensify and how we play into that is vital.

Although the Army is smaller it still needs to recruit significant numbers for the Regulars and Reserves every year. This is a quantity issue to a degree but, more importantly, it's a talent issue.

There are skills out there that, given the growing complexity of warfare, we must avail ourselves of if we're to have the best chance of succeeding in the future.

The Army has got to gain a reputation with the public for being the most inclusive employer it can be.

If it doesn't then we're going to be seriously flummoxed when it comes to maximising the talent pool we have within the Army.

It is estimated that in five years' time some 25 per cent of potential recruits will be made up of ethnic minorities so we have to be cleverer about how we draw from that pool of people.

The question of women in ground combat is currently being examined, but it is clear that we must broaden the roles we can offer women and give them a realistic career structure.

I'm not suggesting for a minute that it's not a huge challenge but diversity is something that I personally feel very strongly about – and it really matters to the future of the Army that we get this right.

So getting the people agenda for the Army right is a major focus for me but there is also a great deal to do to deliver Army 2020.

Whether the 1st Division focuses entirely on conflict prevention whilst the heavier end of war fighting is left solely to 3rd Division remains to be seen, but ensuring that the Army is flexible and adaptable is critical.

That fact is, we must evolve Army 2020 so that it remains relevant, has enduring utility and is delivering for the nation.”

**Wise words:** Gen Sir Nicholas Carter says he will make Army 2020 deliver for the nation



Pictures: Graeme Main

## INVICTUS TRIUMPH

■ SERVING personnel turned out in force to ensure the success of the inaugural Invictus Games in London.

Led by 1st Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment, hundreds of soldiers, sailors and airmen helped in a variety of roles – from stewarding to behind-the-scenes medical support.

Military musicians played throughout the event – including the pipes and drums of 2nd Battalion, The Royal Gurkha Rifles, who took to the stage ahead of acts such as the Foo Fighters and Bryan Adams at the closing concert.

See pages 26-27 and 85 for more.

## JOINT FORCE

■ THE UK is set to work even more closely with its Eastern European allies after agreeing to develop the Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) at the recent Nato summit in Wales.

The deal will create a pool of adaptable forces who can respond at pace to events across the world.

The JEF, which will also include Denmark, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands and Norway, will become fully operational by about 2018.

● Ukraine mission – pages 28-30

## RECRUITMENT ROW

■ THE defence secretary has insisted the Army will reach its recruitment targets on time despite a report from the public accounts committee claiming otherwise.

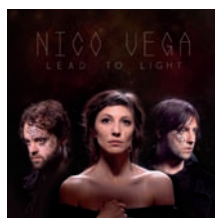
The parliamentary body said it was unconvinced the department would recruit the required number of Reserves, adding the MoD had failed to consult the head of the Army properly before making widespread reductions to the Regular force.

In response, Michael Fallon said he was confident the Service would reach its target of 30,000 trained Reservists by 2018/19.

“We have already addressed many of the points raised in this report,” he added. “Our targets are challenging but they are achievable.”



THIS MONTH  
IN MUSIC...



“The whole record is a joy to listen to”

★★★★

PAGES 70-71



## ICE FIX

Service personnel  
tackle cold reality  
of Canada  
– pages 40-43



British Army Training  
Unit Suffield

British Army Training  
and Support Unit Belize

Sierra Leone

Gibraltar

Germany

Cyprus

British Army  
Training Unit  
Kenya

3

The Falkland Islands

“  
As Nato  
partners it's  
essential  
we're able  
to work  
together  
”



Picture: Cpl Andy Reddy, RLC

### 1 ENGLAND

#### ON FIRE IN NORFOLK

AIRBORNE gunners from 7th Parachute Regiment, Royal Horse Artillery joined forces with Canadian troops while training to become the UK's rapid reaction force.

British personnel fired 105mm light guns alongside their counterparts from 1st Regiment, Royal Canadian Horse Artillery during Exercise Cypher Resolve at Stanford Training Area in Norfolk.

“As key Nato partners it is essential we are able to work together and we're training to develop that,” commented Maj Joe Craven, 2iC of 7 Para RHA.

● Canadian kicks – pages 40-45

Picture: Cpl Andy Reddy, RLC



### 2 HOLLAND

#### MARKET GARDEN REMEMBERED

BRITISH paratroopers have honoured those who fought in Operation Market Garden 70 years ago at a series of commemorative events in Arnhem.

Veterans and thousands of civilian spectators watched as more than 200 members of 16 Air Assault Brigade, together with another 300 of their international counterparts, parachuted into the same fields used in 1944.

Services were also held at the Airborne Memorial at Ginkel Heath and at Oosterbeek War Cemetery, where schoolchildren laid flowers at each of the graves of the 1,680 British and Commonwealth, three Polish and three Dutch soldiers who are buried there.



## EASTERN ALLIANCE

British troops put skills on show  
during Ukraine exercise  
– pages 28-30



## IN NUMBERS

# 12

Year-old world record that was broken by Capt Heather Stanning (RA) and Helen Glover in the women's pair at the Rowing World Championships – page 86

### 5 AFGHANISTAN

#### CUTTING IT IN KABUL

BRITISH soldiers are helping to make the integrated Army a reality on the streets of Afghanistan.

Troops from 2nd Battalion, The Rifles have taken on the role of the Kabul Support Unit, and working alongside them is a multiple from the regiment's partner Reserve formation, 7th Battalion.

"It is a fantastic experience," Reservist LCpl Luke Bashford (pictured) told *Soldier*. "On previous tours our units had only done bits and pieces together but we've slotted in very well so far and the guys from 2nd Battalion have taken us under their wing."

Members of the Kabul Support Unit are responsible for transporting personnel and equipment across the Afghan capital as well as protecting mentors and providing a quick reaction force if required.

When Op Herrick ends in December the long-term training effort Op Toral will commence, at which point the battalion will be the sole remaining Army unit in the country.

"As Bastion ceases to operate more movements will be coming via Kabul so we will be getting far busier,"

LCpl Bashford added. "But it'll be nice to see the end-product of all the years spent in Afghanistan and the relative freedom that Afghans now enjoy."



### 6 GIBRALTAR

#### CYCLING STAMINA

TWO prospective officer cadets are cycling 6,500km from Norway's Arctic circle to the tip of Gibraltar in aid of wounded Service personnel.

Robert Adelmann and Andrew Wiltshire, who plan to attend the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in the next 18 months, are aiming to raise £6,000 for Help for Heroes.

The pair were due to complete the quest as this issue went to press.

To support them visit [www.justgiving.com/nscyclechallenge](http://www.justgiving.com/nscyclechallenge)

● Fearless fundraising – page 14

## IN THE AFTERMATH

Troops get to grips with disaster relief drills in New Caledonia – page 14



### 4 LATVIA

#### VEHICLE MOVES ON

SOME 123 refurbished Combat Vehicle Reconnaissance (Tracked) armoured platforms have been sold by the UK military.

In a package worth £39.4m, the assets have been overhauled and purchased by Latvia, where they will boost its army's transport capabilities.

Having seen action in the Balkans, Iraq and Afghanistan, the vehicles were declared surplus to requirements under MoD restructuring plans.

The CVRT's replacement, the Scout specialist vehicle, is due in service from 2017.

Read pages 32-33 for more.

“We’ve slotted in very well so far”



Picture: Cpl Jamie Peters, RLC

### 3 KENYA

#### MEDICAL MARVELS

SOLDIERS from 33 Field Hospital have been providing dental and primary health care expertise to rural communities in Kenya as part of Exercise Askari Serpent.

With clinical facilities scarce in the region, many patients walked for more than two hours to be seen by the medics.

Among the 140 personnel was Reservist Maj Ann Beckwith (pictured), a midwife from Royal Preston Hospital, who helped to deliver a baby girl during the four-week package.





# Dig in & dig deep with The Soldiers' Charity Big Curry

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**BIG  
CURRY**

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Everyone loves a good curry - and the bigger the better! So a Big Curry is a great way to have fun with family and friends while also raising vital funds for ABF The Soldiers' Charity.

We've been helping to support soldiers, former soldiers and their families since 1944. This year, you can help too by raising money with your very own Big Curry.

You'll find loads more fundraising ideas and recipes on our website. But whatever you do, please do something - because our soldiers need us just as much as we need them.

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Visit your local pub or curry house with friends or family and match the price of the meal in donations.

## It's spice'n easy!

**Visit [bigcurry.org](http://bigcurry.org)  
or call 0845 504 0982**



# "IT GETS A BIT TEDIOUS, YOU END UP LIKE A MARRIED COUPLE"

- TERRIER CREWS TESTED, PAGES 34-35



The dog days are over: But Nordic skiing, horse riding and mountain biking will flourish at Trail's End Camp



Picture: Graeme Main

## All change in Canada

Dog sledding is off the AT list but Nordic skiing is on

**T**HE adventurous training programme for troops visiting Trail's End Camp in Canada is set to change.

In a major shake-up, the popular dog sledding package will disappear while Nordic skiing will be added to the curriculum for the first time.

Maj Jim Darby (RAPTC), officer commanding the centre, said the overhaul was part of Army-wide plans to reinvigorate adventurous training pursuits.

"We're trying to introduce more foundation qualification activities so after a five-day course the soldiers will leave with a certificate that they can build on," he explained.

"It's all to do with developing a pool of instructors again that the Service had lost through operational commitments.

"The decision to stop the dog sledding was made because serious flooding last year damaged the routes and it was no longer possible to give troops what we call a 'journey experience', where they go out into the wilderness for days."

While conceding that the loss of such a unique activity would come as a disappointment to some, the officer reassured personnel that other popular packages such as horse riding

would continue.

The 49-year-old said the planned introduction of Nordic skiing for the 2015-16 season would be a major boost to the centre's programme.

"It's a very technical sport but once you get it, it's fantastic – you can go out and see the landscape, build fitness and practise shooting.

"It offers many military skills."

While the multi-activity package will remain, it will be delivered at Trail's End Camp itself instead of the nearby Sundance Lodges, which have now closed.

Work has also begun on a purpose-built mountain biking circuit at the centre, which will enable instructors to teach foundation skills on site.

"There's a lot of interest in the sport so we want to deliver more mountain bike leader awards," added Maj Darby.

"Some of the routes in the outback are really technical so this way we can give the students all the skills they need before they go out.

"In the winter the track can also be used to teach cross-country skiing."

- Freezing climbs and free fall – pages 40-45

“It’s all to do with developing instructors”



Did this tent stand up to the *Soldier* treatment? Find out on pages 74-75

## BIG BREW UP IS BACK

■ KETTLES and cake tins across the world are braced for SSAFA's annual tea-drinking extravaganza this month.

The Big Brew Up – which will take place from October 6-12 – is the military charity's biggest fundraiser and last year's efforts saw more than £130,000 added to its coffers.

"This event is the perfect opportunity to take some time out and get together with family, friends or colleagues for a cuppa and a slice of cake," said Verity Maylam, the initiative's coordinator.

"All the money raised will help to provide direct practical assistance to both serving and former members of the Armed Forces and their families."

For more information about the Big Brew Up, or to register your event, visit [www.thebigbrewup.org.uk](http://www.thebigbrewup.org.uk)



## SOLDIER SEX SURVEY

■ SERVICEMEN are more likely to suffer from sexual dysfunction than their civilian counterparts, a study of American troops has found.

According to the Journal of Sexual Medicine, 30 per cent of 367 enlisted males aged 21-40 reported erectile problems – ten per cent more than among civilians older than 40.

However, among the forces personnel aged 36-40, the rate of sexual dysfunction was found to be double that of non-military men over 40.

Erectile dysfunction is a common condition which can be caused by hormonal problems, injury, anxiety, depression or relationship issues. Speak to your doctor for advice or treatment.



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# "I WORRY WE ARE SETTING WOMEN UP TO FAIL"

- FEMALES IN FRONT, PAGES 72-73



## PULL-OUT RECIPE:

### BEEF STEW & SLICED POTATO

#### INGREDIENTS

- 60g diced beef
- half onion, diced
- 1/2 tsp garlic
- 1 beef stock cube
- 1 tsp dry oregano
- 1 carrot, sliced
- 1 baking potato, sliced

#### METHOD

- 1** In a microwave bowl mix everything except the potato and cover with water.
- 2** Wrap with cling film and cook on full power for five minutes.
- 3** Remove the cling film and lay the sliced potato on top then cook for a further five minutes.
- 4** Leave to rest for one minute before eating.

MORE HEALTHY MICROWAVE RECIPES CAN BE FOUND ON THE ARMY HEALTH PROMOTION PAGE ON DII



## Call to eat healthily

Campaign will aim to improve diet of troops

**S**OLDIERS are being urged to think twice about the food they eat in a campaign being launched by the Army this month.

From October 20, military chefs will perform cookery demonstrations in single living accommodation (SLA) across the country to illustrate how to create healthy dishes using just a microwave.

The aim is to show how those with no culinary experience and limited kitchen facilities can still eat nutritionally balanced meals.

"Sometimes guys think they are eating healthily when in fact they aren't," explained Sgt Nathan Franks (RLC), an Army chef helping to run the demonstrations.

The Serviceman and his colleagues are also putting together a simple microwave cookbook that will soon be available to personnel.

"Often, you get lads in SLA who left home at 16 and have always had someone to do the cooking for them," Sgt Franks added.

"But this campaign will show that they can take control of their diets and cook nice food from scratch.

"Every recipe that we demonstrate can be done using only a microwave, kettle or toaster."

The initiative is part of a larger Army health programme called Clean,

Fit and Healthy, which will see troops educated on other lifestyle issues including drugs, alcohol, supplements and exercise.

Posters and leaflets about sensible eating will be displayed in gyms and cookhouses over the coming weeks and for more tips – or to download the free microwave cookbook – visit the Army health promotion page or the Defence Nutrition Advisory Service section of the defence intranet.

**“ Sometimes guys think they’re eating well when they aren’t ”**

● **TROOPS** at Colchester Garrison are benefiting from better quality meals after the unveiling of two new pay-as-you-dine restaurants within Merville Barracks.

The facilities, which were opened by

England rugby star and Sodexo health and wellbeing ambassador Matt Dawson, include new ranges of nutritious, made-to-order food such as salads and ethnic dishes.

"This will provide troops with better choice," said garrison commander Col Gary Wilkinson.

#### TOWER POWER

■ **SOLDIERS** on exercise in Sennybridge are training in more realistic battle conditions thanks to a new facility to simulate overhead fire.

The Defence Infrastructure Organisation has installed a purpose-built tower from which live rounds will be directed above troops conducting fire and manoeuvre drills on the shooting range.

Previously the roof of the range building was used as a firing platform.



**WIN**

## ...Gloves with grip

ANYONE who tuned into the Invictus Games would have guessed last month's spine lines competition.

(James) Blunt, Diversity, the Foo Fighters and (Ellie)

Goulding all performed at the event's star-studded closing ceremony on September 14.

This month we have teamed up with MacWet ([www.macwet.com](http://www.macwet.com)) to offer ten lucky readers a pair of sports gloves worth £30 each.

Winners can choose from a winter fleece-lined Climatec pair or breathable summer Micromesh option.

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

Answers to the usual postal address or [comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk) by October 31. Good luck!







**“I WAS BEING QUITE AGGRESSIVE  
BUT THAT IS EASY TO DISGUISE”**  
- MENTAL HEALTH DENIAL, PAGES 46-47



Pictures: Alexandre Ducloy

## Aftermath of disaster

Gurkhas get to grips with humanitarian relief skills

**P**ERSONNEL from 1st Battalion, The Royal Gurkha Rifles were put through their paces during an exercise aimed at testing their skills in the aftermath of a natural disaster.

The training was staged on the Pacific island of New Caledonia and saw soldiers from the formation's support company work alongside colleagues from ten different countries including France, New Zealand, Canada, Japan and Chile.

After receiving reports that a category four cyclone had hit the region the joint force had to combat badly damaged infrastructure and a breakdown in law and order.

The Gurkha troops underwent an intensive pre-exercise training period that featured live firing, helicopter operations and tactical air landing before carrying out an initial recce

and securing parachute drop zones during the main serial.

"This was an excellent opportunity to work in a humanitarian and disaster relief environment, which is a likely task within the South East Asia and South Pacific region," said Maj Rajeshkumar Gurung.

"The training and terrain were especially challenging."

Staff officers from Brunei Garrison also gained experience of working in a multinational headquarters, where they filled chief operations, logistics, movements and intelligence posts.

Exercise Croix du Sud 14 concluded with a parade of all the participating nations in Noumea to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the landing of the Free French Forces in the south of France during the Second World War.

## FEARLESS FUNDRAISING



### A MUDDY SHOCK

A SOLDIER from 1 (UK) Armoured Division Headquarters and Signal Regiment leopard-crawled through dirt and sprinted across a field of live wires in the name of charity.

WO1 Carl Burnett (RAPTC, pictured) took part in the Tough Mudder race with nine colleagues from the Germany-based unit.

"This is what the physical side of soldiering is about; strength, endurance, and mental challenge," said team captain Maj Bob Whitaker (RAPTC) afterwards.

### MARATHON MADNESS

SUPER-FIT soldiers took on the gruelling Swiss Alpine Ultra-Marathon in Davos to raise money for their regimental charity.

Six members of B Company, 1st Battalion, The Mercian Regiment completed the 52-mile course well inside the time limit of 14 hours.



Money raised:  
**£3,000**  
For: The Mercian  
Benevolent Charity

Money raised:  
**£300**  
For: The Stillbirth and  
Neonatal Death Charity

### GOT AN EVENT?

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It's about  
strength,  
endurance  
and mental  
challenge  
”



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# "IT WAS MIND-BLOWING AND I CAN'T WAIT TO DO IT AGAIN" - SOLO IN THE SKY, PAGES 44-45



Pictures: Graeme Main



## Support for Sikhs

A COLOURFUL display at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst has marked the start of a new era for British Sikh soldiers.

The event saw 36 civilian volunteers dressed in First World War uniform and turbans parade in front of the Old College, accompanied by the Waterloo Band of the Rifles.

It was part of a series of events marking the launch of the Armed Forces Sikh Association.

"This organisation will make things easier for serving Sikhs," said Capt Singh (RLC, pictured below), who will oversee the group.

"It will complement the welfare assistance that's already available to troops and will provide a platform so that serving Sikhs can talk to like-minded people.



"We can also speak to potential recruits and explain that followers of our faith are able to pray and have their catering and dress needs met while serving."

There are currently 130 Sikhs in the British Army – around a tenth of the number that would be required to make this particular faith group proportionally represented.

The launch of the association means that all of the main faith groups are now spoken for by such a body in the Armed Forces.

“Tattoos have become more acceptable”

## Army eases tattoo taboos

Regulations relaxed to reflect society's attitudes

SERVICE rules on tattoos have been relaxed.

A change to the Queen's regulations means that body art can now be displayed on the hands and rear of the neck – two areas that were previously banned.

The old policy prohibited excessive markings but this element has since been removed.

However, if tattoos are visible on a passport photo they will still be deemed unacceptable.

What constitutes offensive or obscene has also been detailed.

If body art depicts a sexual act, violence or illegal drugs, for example, it will be in breach of Army rules.

"Tattoos have become more acceptable in society over the last decade, reducing the negative connotations that, in some quarters,

have been associated with them," an Army spokesman said.

"In recent years there has been an increasing number of personnel with tattoos on visible areas. There is no evidence that commanders have found these to have an adverse impact on operational effectiveness and as a result there has been reluctance to discharge those who breached the policy."

The amendment follows a review into tattoo regulations earlier this year (*Soldier*, July).

It is expected to be welcomed by potential recruits, many of whom have found themselves to be in breach of the old policy when applying to join the Army.

● Read 2014DIN01-155 for further information

## Troops help to tackle Ebola

BRITISH troops are helping to set up a medical treatment centre for victims of the Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone.

The country has been one of the worst affected by the spread of the deadly virus in West Africa, with hundreds of deaths recorded.

Last month the International Development Secretary, Justine Greening, said a 62-bed facility near Freetown would be built and operated by Army engineers and medical staff, with the first phase of the centre due to be complete in November.

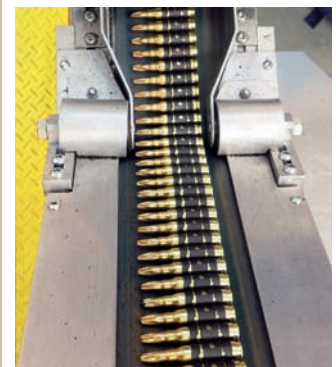
Soldiers were due to begin surveying and assessing the site as this issue went to press but the number of troops involved had not been confirmed by the MoD.



Pictures: Graeme Main

"This operation will involve a unique set of challenges but I believe that we have the ability to provide support in helping to bring the outbreak under control," said Minister for the Armed Forces, Mark Francois.

## FEARSOME FACTORY



From conveyor belt to combat, the inside story of how Army ammunition is made – pages 36-38

## NEW RULES ON MEDIA

■ UPDATED rules for Armed Forces and MoD personnel regarding contact with the media and talking in public on defence topics have come into force.

The new regulations recognise the growing use of social media and outline the responsibilities that employees have, including to protect operational and personal security.

The document also sets out the correct procedures if communications have taken place with journalists, including in social settings or through third parties.

For more details read 2014DIN02-24.

Pictures: Steve Dock







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# "IT'S THE STORY OF WAR, AND IN WAR THE RULES GET BENT" - O'CONNELL'S ARMY ROLE, PAGES 66-67



Picture: Maj Wendy Faux, RA



## CAVALRY, COINS AND COMMEMORATION

■ FIRST World War commemorations have continued across the military.

Troops from the 9th/12th Royal Lancers retraced the footsteps of their antecedent regiments on the French battlefields.

Some 150 Servicemen attended the four-day tour from Mons before being presented with their operational medals in Fretoy and marching to a memorial service to mark the last lance-on-lance cavalry exchange of the conflict (pictured).

"It is really important that we understand our heritage and history both as a regiment and a nation and learn lessons from what happened in that brutal war," said commanding officer Lt Col Richard Slack.

Meanwhile, soldiers from the same regiment marked another special occasion – the laying of one of the first commemorative paving stones in honour of Victoria Cross recipients from the Great War.

The troops travelled from their base in Germany to Guildford, Surrey, for a dedication ceremony in memory of hero Capt Francis Grenfell, who served with 9th (Queen's Royal) Lancers (*Soldier*, August). Hundreds more stones will be installed across the UK between now and 2018.

Elsewhere, the British Army's first black officer has been remembered on a special coin released by the Royal Mint.

Walter Tull, who commissioned during the war despite a ban on black officers, fought at the Battle of the Somme in 1916.

The £5 coin (pictured above) depicts the Serviceman alongside infantry soldiers going "over the top" and is one of a set of six costing £450 that marks Britain's contribution to the war effort.

The Royal Mint is going to release a different set every year until 2018.



“The fortnight was immensely successful”

## Officers learn from past

Senior ranks get their heads around First World War

**M**ORE than 60 Army officers have undertaken an intense study of France's First World War battlefields in a bid to learn lessons from the four-year conflict.

Captains, majors, lieutenant colonels and officer cadets visited historic sites including Ypres, the Somme and Cambrai for the four-day staff ride.

"The Army's approach to the centenary of the conflict is not to just commemorate it but to re-examine what happened and to take lessons from it," explained Maj Laurence Roche, spokesman for HQ 3rd (UK) Division, the formation leading the exercise.

The officers were joined by eminent historians and counterparts from France, Germany and several Commonwealth nations.

Each day of the event focused on a different year of the war, with the academics supporting lectures and seminars.



Picture: Murray Kerr

Discussing the Battle of the Somme, which saw more than 127,000 fatalities between July and November 1916, Prof Gary Sheffield said: "The idea of heavy loss for no purpose is one to be very wary of as there is lots to take from the encounter.

"Something to recognise is that the Territorial Army was under-recruited – a story that might sound familiar."

Lessons from the conflict will be explained at a Royal Military Academy Sandhurst conference on November 6. To attend email [3ukxx-g5-op-reflect@mod.uk](mailto:3ukxx-g5-op-reflect@mod.uk) or call military 94321 3289.

## Work hard, play hard in Uganda

PERSONNEL from 7 Regiment, Royal Logistic Corps passed on their military skills during a visit to Africa.

The troops worked alongside the Ugandan People's Defence Force (UPDF) as part of an ongoing commitment to help improve the formation's logistic capability.

It was the fifth time the British unit had deployed to the country in two years and the latest visit saw them provide training on stocktaking, vehicle maintenance and recovery, and fuel investigations.

They also embarked on a mission to train and play rugby in Uganda to strengthen the relationship between the British Army and the UPDF.

A strong Kyamondo Barbarians outfit downed the loggies 24-14 in



their opening match but they fought back to beat the Kampala Rhinos 30-24 before defeating their hosts 27-5.

"The fortnight was immensely successful," said Maj Lloyd Hankins.

"7 Regiment worked very hard on the vehicle park, in the stores and on the rugby pitch.

"Progress was made in developing the Ugandan's logistic capability while the rugby team was accepted into the country's sporting fraternity."

## IN NUMBERS

# 440

THE total number of riders who took part in the second annual bike ride in aid of ABF The Soldiers' Charity. The event featured routes ranging from 26 to 64 miles and raised more than £11,000 for the organisation. Entries are open for next year's trip at [www.abfcyclride.co.uk](http://www.abfcyclride.co.uk)







## “IT’S GOING TO GIVE US A LOT MORE CAPABILITIES AND BETTER FIREPOWER” – NEW ARMY VEHICLE ON ORDER, PAGES 32–33

### Troops conquer ‘terrific’ exercise in Poland

**B**RITISH soldiers have proved themselves alongside troops from 16 other nations during a military exercise in Poland.

Exercise Sabre Junction saw 80 personnel from 1st Battalion, The Duke of Lancaster’s Regiment join forces with their Nato allies on a night assault against a mock opposition.

The live-firing package included 5,000 international Servicemen, who descended onto the training area from American Chinooks and Black Hawks.

Maj Dave Jones, officer commanding the 1 Lancs contingent, said: “The helicopter-borne night

attack was the culmination of a terrific exercise in which we learnt to operate closely with US infantry and air cavalry.

“My soldiers have risen to the challenge of operating in a multinational environment and it was exciting to be involved in a package designed to improve our operating capability and reassure our Nato allies.”

Exercise Sabre Junction was organised as part of the wider plan to reassure Eastern Europe following Russia’s illegal annexation of Crimea in Ukraine. The UK has also deployed Royal Air Force Typhoon jets on a Baltic air policing mission.



Picture: SSgt Mark Nesbit, RLC



### MEDAL CHANGE

■ **THOUSANDS** more Falklands veterans are now eligible to wear the South Atlantic medal following a long-running campaign.

The official end of Operation Corporate, as the mission was code-named, has been extended to October 21, 1982 after the government accepted that the original cut-off date of July 12 was too early and had ignored the risks experienced by Service personnel for several more months.

The change means an estimated 10,000 additional ex-Forces members can now apply for the decoration with immediate effect.

Contact the medal office for details.

### PENSIONS EXPLAINED

■ **A VIDEO** setting out the details of Armed Forces pension scheme 15 has been posted online.

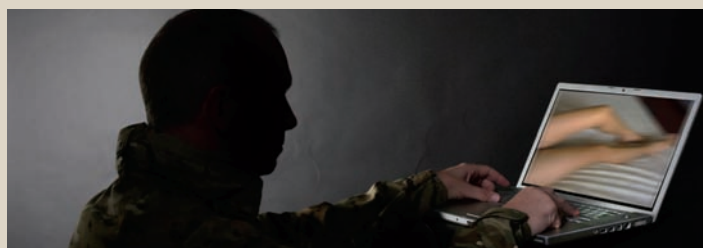
Most Regular and Reserve troops will automatically transfer to the new arrangements when they are introduced on April 1 next year.

To watch *Thinking About Your Future* visit the MoD page on [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

## HOME TRUTHS



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



### When the web gets ugly

**T**HE many ways we have of communicating can be a blessing and a curse.

There is no doubt my family is better connected during my soldier’s deployments thanks to Skype and Facetime, but we need to be aware of the risks involved in over-sharing.

Social media has long been a concern for the MoD and the department works hard to ensure troops do not compromise security by giving away too much online.

However, the military community seems less aware in regard to safeguarding personal images.

In the wake of the Leveson Inquiry, we learnt much about how tabloid journalists can exploit such details.

And more recently, celebrities have had their iCloud accounts hacked and naked pictures shared.

The papers are awash with reports of intimate images sent during flourishing relationships, which are then distributed as “revenge porn” by a disgruntled ex-partner.

In short, you can’t be too careful whom you send pictures to and I’d like to see the Army giving greater guidance to soldiers to ensure that one-to-one sharing does not lead to destructive viral circulation.

Separation can only heighten the temptation to ask for intimate digital images. But consider the headlines. Could you trust him if things went pear-shaped?

It is much more difficult for a traditional bluey to be used in haste.

I am also perturbed by the way in which some personnel and families speak to each other on social media.

All too frequently people use cruel words, which have even caused administrators to close down some community pages.

The sage advice of India’s late spiritual guru Sai Baba applies here: “Before you speak, ask yourself: is it kind, is it necessary, is it true, does it improve on the silence?”

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

“  
I’m  
perturbed  
by the  
way some  
families  
speak to  
each other  
”



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## “WE HOPE MORE PEOPLE WILL REALISE THIS SPORT EXISTS IN THE MILITARY” - HORSE RIDERS RECRUIT, PAGES 80-81



### More troops ditch smoking

‘Stoptober’ is the month to quit habit, experts say

**T**HE number of smokers in the British Army has dropped by two per cent in the last year, according to Service figures.

The trend – which was identified from health, fitness and Joint Personnel Administration data – represents the first such reduction in more than three years.

However, with roughly one-third of the Service’s 96,000 personnel still smoking, troops are being encouraged to kick the habit for good this month as part of “Stoptober”, the annual NHS smoking cessation campaign.

“The fact that the number of soldiers smoking is declining is good news all round,” commented Maj Eric Lewis (RLC) of the Army health promotions team.

“Their fitness will improve, they will be better off financially and they will also be healthier.”

The nationwide initiative is encouraging people to give up for at least 28 days as smokers are five times more likely to quit for good if they can abstain for this long.

“Apart from the known dangers of cancer, cardiovascular disease and

skin disease, those who smoke have higher instances of joint and bone injury and also slower recovery rates,” Maj Lewis added.

Troops who are interested in quitting can pick up a free support pack from their unit or a pharmacist.

For online help log on to [www.smokefree.nhs.uk/stoptober](http://www.smokefree.nhs.uk/stoptober) and download the app.



“  
HOW CAN  
THE LARGEST  
INFANTRY  
REGIMENT  
GET THIS  
SO BADLY  
WRONG?”

Talkback tittle tattle  
– pages 49-53

### 28 DAYS



If you can go fag-free for this long you are five times more likely to quit for good

### GET FIT WITH A PHONE

ROYAL Army Physical Training Corps personnel are helping potential recruits meet the Service’s fitness standards via a new mobile app.

The 100% Army Fit programme allows smartphone users to turn their handheld devices into a personal trainer, with serving troops giving audio and video instructions on different cardiovascular and muscular workouts.

By moving through the levels and tracking progress, prospective soldiers can build up their strength and stamina before going for their entry assessment or beginning phase one training.

To download the aid go to the Google Play or Apple app stores.



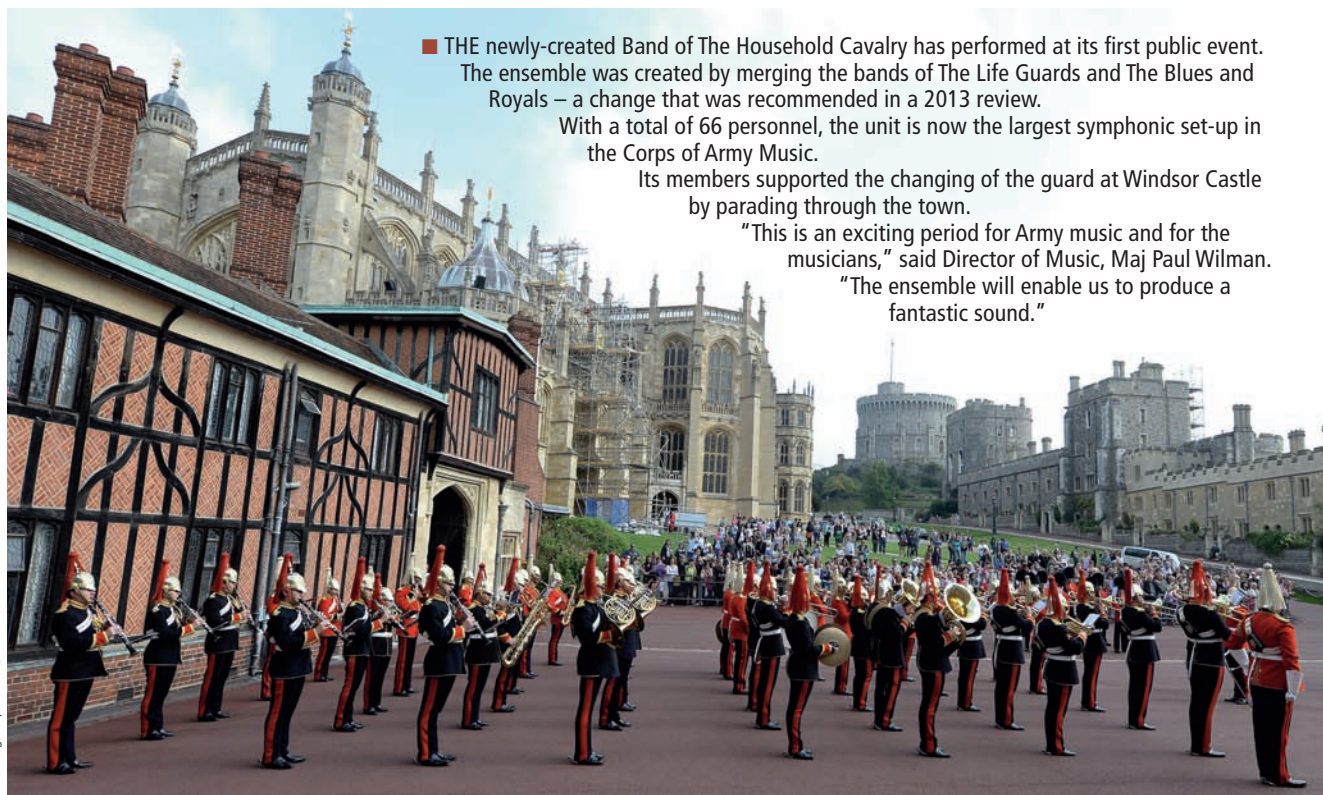
THE newly-created Band of The Household Cavalry has performed at its first public event. The ensemble was created by merging the bands of The Life Guards and The Blues and Royals – a change that was recommended in a 2013 review.

With a total of 66 personnel, the unit is now the largest symphonic set-up in the Corps of Army Music.

Its members supported the changing of the guard at Windsor Castle by parading through the town.

“This is an exciting period for Army music and for the musicians,” said Director of Music, Maj Paul Wilman.

“The ensemble will enable us to produce a fantastic sound.”



Picture: Sgt Rupert Frene, RLC





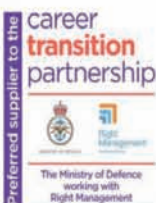
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Paderborn:	12 - 23 Jan	Southampton:	12 - 23 Jan
Tidworth:	19 - 30 Jan	Colchester:	02 - 13 Feb
Barnstable (RMBC):	02 - 13 Feb	Aldershot:	16 - 27 Feb
Wimbish:	23 Feb - 06 Mar	Nuneaton:	16 - 27 Mar
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Aldershot:	27 Apr - 01 May		

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## "A DIFFERENT COACHING TEAM WILL BRING FRESH IDEAS" - SANGER'S BACK, PAGES 78-79



Picture: Steve Dock



## Reserves turn a corner

- From this month troops can opt to take on a far wider range of missions
- New terms will align them with Regular personnel

**E**XCITING new missions could be in store for Reservists who opt in to fresh terms of service from this month, a senior officer has told *Soldier*.

From October 1 part-time personnel can sign up to the deal, which will allow them to be called out for a broader range of operations alongside their Regular colleagues.

Those who don't will continue under their existing agreements but must accept the arrangements when they re-engage, extend their service or commission.

Maj Gen John Crackett, Assistant Chief of the Defence Staff (Reserves and Cadets), explained that the overhaul would lead to even closer working between Reservists and Regulars.

"This is very positive for the Army and something soldiers have told us they welcome," said the senior officer.

"The previous legislation didn't allow us to mobilise Reserves for a number of things, including standing commitments abroad and

defence engagement tasks.

"But now, under the new terms, if we had a soldier with a skill suited to a peace support mission in Africa, for example, we could deploy them.

"If needed we could also call up Reservists to guard the Falklands or assist with homeland security such as cyber security work.

"In many cases the change will lead to exciting and interesting opportunities."

However, Maj Gen Crackett was keen to point out that Reserves would not be called away from their civilian jobs for routine training purposes.

"I think an employer would be reluctant to cooperate if they thought their Reservist was being mobilised just for that," he added.

The senior officer emphasised that the change, introduced

as part of the Defence Reform Act, would not lead to a higher call-out rate.

"This is about widening the range of tasks we use Reserves for, not increasing the frequency of their call-outs," he said.



**"It's about widening the range  
of tasks we use Reserves for"**



## THIS MONTH IN MOVIES...



"Much of the humour is for the enjoyment of adult viewers"

★★★★★

PAGES 66-67

## IN NUMBERS



Place for the Army sailing team in the Round Britain and Ireland Race  
— page 89



Picture: Guildford Borough Council

## ARMED FORCES DAY

■ THE historic town of Guildford has been named as the host for the 2015 Armed Forces Day celebrations.

An exciting line-up of activities is already in the pipeline for next year, including a "picnic and proms in the park" event and a formal parade along High Street.

"Guildford will be the focus for the whole country and this wonderful celebration will allow local people and the wider community to thank all those working within our Armed Forces," said Mayor David Elms.

## PLEA OVER HEARING

■ A CHARITY is urging the government to provide better care for those with hearing problems caused by military service.

The Royal British Legion's call comes after its *Lost Voices* report said that former personnel under the age of 75 are three-and-a-half times more likely to register hearing concerns than civilians.

The organisation believes that working-age veterans should get special treatment in line with the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant.

It is calling for access to higher-grade hearing aids and free replacement of MoD-issue devices.

"Hearing loss is one of the signature injuries of war and can have a profound effect on career prospects, relationships, social life and mental health," said Chris Simpkins, Director General of RBL.

"Some veterans themselves are having to pay out of their own pockets for military-issued hearing aids to be serviced and replaced. This is unacceptable."

Responding to the report, an MoD spokesman said: "The welfare of our Service personnel and veterans is our number one priority."

"Since 2009 the department, through our hearing conservation programme, has worked closely with charities Deafness Research UK and Action on Hearing Loss to introduce robust protection on operations, as well as improving diagnoses and treatment."

"As with any injury suffered as a result of service, personnel will receive the best medical care possible and, where eligible, can claim compensation."





# THE BIG PICTURE

> THE INVICTUS GAMES, LONDON

## GOING FOR GOLD

FORMER private Alex Tate (ex-R Anglian) powers towards a narrow win in the men's IT1 100 metres final at the Invictus Games. In a nail-biting finish, the Afghanistan veteran beat teammate Kushal Limbu (ex-RGR) by just seven hundredths of a second. For a full report on the tournament, which involved more than 300 wounded Service personnel from around the world, turn to page 85. Picture: Graeme Main









# UNITED IN

**Report: Joe Clapson**  
**Pictures: Graeme Main**

**A**FTER 13 years working as part of a multinational force in Iraq and Afghanistan the British Army is firmly focused on a future of partnership.

With such coalition operations in mind, UK troops are finding themselves increasingly involved in joint training alongside soldiers from other countries.

Exercise Rapid Trident, an annual two-week package in Ukraine, is just one recent example of that.

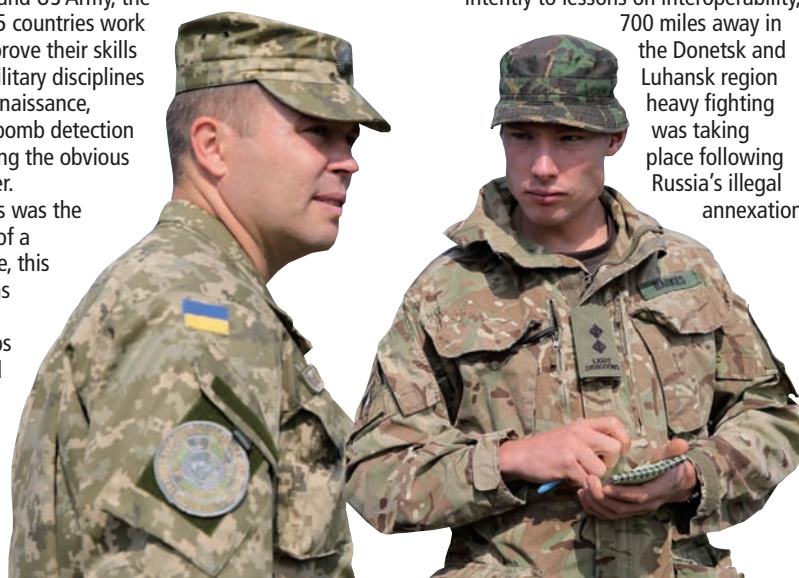
Held at the International Peacekeeping and Security Centre

in the Lviv region near the Polish border, and led by the Ukrainian Ground Forces and US Army, the scenario saw 15 countries work together to improve their skills in numerous military disciplines including reconnaissance, patrolling and bomb detection while negotiating the obvious language barrier.

Although this was the ninth iteration of a familiar exercise, this year's event was conducted as Ukrainian troops were embroiled in a bitter conflict with

pro-Russian separatists.

As Service personnel listened intently to lessons on interoperability, 700 miles away in the Donetsk and Luhansk region heavy fighting was taking place following Russia's illegal annexation







# UKRAINE

## THE LIGHT DRAGOONS SHARE CRUCIAL SKILLS DURING JOINT TRAINING EXERCISE

of the Crimea peninsula.

As such, the significance of what soldiers were learning on the mock battlefield was not lost on this year's hardworking contingent.

Addressing the international assembly of troops, the Ukrainian Ground Forces' Col Oleksandr Syvak said: "This year the motto 'partnership, security, peace' sounds more important than ever, not only for Ukraine but also for all mankind."

However, for the 44 participants from The Light Dragoons their tasking was simply about passing on expertise in reconnaissance and absorbing as much knowledge as they could in return from their military counterparts.

**“We will show Europe and the rest of the world what we can do”**

And with 1,300 personnel hailing from countries as diverse as Azerbaijan, Canada, Georgia, Germany and Moldova, the package certainly gave them plenty of different approaches to observe.

"I've really enjoyed talking to the foreign troops, learning things from how they get their kit to the different systems they use for navigation," troop commander Lt Benjy Barks (LD) told *Soldier*.

"Explaining that we use a map and compass to navigate rather than an iPad – which is what some of them thought – was also interesting.

"As well as the formal lessons we gave the Ukrainian troops, the more casual conversations we had also

proved to be brilliant for developing our relationship.

"The next time we work with them or any other nations on Rapid Trident they will already appreciate how we do things so we'll have that pre-existing bond."

Given their experience in Helmand province as the Brigade Reconnaissance Force, the British cavalrymen were tasked to instruct their international comrades on how to build effective observation posts and use concealment techniques.

It might have been part of the everyday job for UK soldiers but for the Ukrainians the military tutorial in creating bush hides and sub-surface observation posts was revelatory. »



» "It's very interesting and useful for us to learn from the experience of the British," explained Sgt Vladimir Bielov, a cadet in training with the Ukrainian Ground Forces.

"The knowledge will be of great use, especially with what is happening in the east of our country."

As well as imparting their knowhow on observing the opposition while staying out of sight, the Servicemen were put through their own paces by the Canadians on a mock battlefield littered with simulated IEDs.

For veterans of Afghanistan, the scenario served as a refresher but for the recent recruits this was their first taste of the deadly hidden threat of makeshift bombs.

"Guys out here from Britain and America might have operational experience but there are lots of young soldiers coming through who do not have that and we've got to keep their awareness up," emphasised a Canadian bomb technician, who cannot be named for security reasons.

"IEDs are not going away; they are weapons that will be used against us in the future."

Patrolling along dusty roads and through lush vegetation the troops needed to remain aware of the explosive threat as well as a mock enemy bent on killing them.

The opposition force was firing blank rounds and the IED detonations might only have caused puffs of white powder but the desired effect was achieved: soldiers were given a stark awakening to the fact that one false move on live operations could prove fatal.

"The Canadian serial was fantastic because we learned different techniques in approaching devices, ones that we know work," said Tpr Karl Dalton (LD), who had joined the regiment just four weeks previously.

"Having mock IEDs going off on your mate immediately switches you on and makes it real – it's definitely the best way to learn."

From information exchange with Ukrainian soldiers to learning lifesaving skills from Canadian engineers, there's no doubt the range of tasks conducted on this exercise have strengthened the bonds between a number of nations who will be working together more closely in the future. ■

## EXERCISE Rapid Trident was a chance for 15 partner nations to practise operating together while learning new battlefield skills. Service personnel explained what they and their colleagues gained from this year's event...



"The main intention was to achieve interoperability between all the nations for peacekeeping operations.

"Our government and armed forces see this as our strategic goal and that is why the very best and experienced instructors have come from many countries to train.

"The detail of combat actions change every year and we would like to share our experience of working with IEDs, escorting convoys and searching for and destroying militias.

"We have got a reconnaissance company and we like to learn how British soldiers conduct their operations in this area."

**Col Oleksandr Syvak,**  
Exercise co-conductor, Ukrainian Ground Forces

"There are different ways of doing things but the purpose of Rapid Trident is to get all of our nations on the same page.

"This is a learning phase for all those involved and it means that when we work together again there are no issues.

"The British guys' hustle in the IED lanes was awesome – you never know what's going to hit you in that environment and their drills were excellent."

**SFC Josh Ward,**  
US Army

"It's important that we understand each other's way of operating as a military and to work through language problems so that we can fight together in future.

"Countries such as the UK have lots of experience because they have taken part in many wars like those in Afghanistan and Iraq, so they can teach nations like ours.

"We are a very young country but we will show Europe and the rest of the world what we can do."

**Pte Andriy Makarenko,**  
Ukrainian Ground Forces officer cadet

"As far as reconnaissance goes the different nations are at different levels so it was interesting to see what we could teach others.

"It's good to know that we're held in high esteem by countries around the world."

**Sgt Chris Dyke,**  
The Light Dragoons







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Report: Steve Muncey  
Picture: Sgt Russ Nolan, RLC

**I**N 2017 the Army will start to take deliveries of a vehicle that will revolutionise the way Service personnel move around the battlefield.

The Scout boasts a raft of design innovations and new technologies that will allow troops to conduct a much wider range of tasks than with the incumbent CVR(T) platforms and will be truly multi-role thanks to several variants.

The wide track and high power-to-weight ratio endows the asset with dramatically improved all-terrain manoeuvrability compared with the Scimitar, Samaritan, Sultan and Sampson.

It has a 1.7-metre diameter turret ring to give the crew a comfortable working environment and will be able to defend itself with a deadly accurate 40-millimetre cannon.

Other important features will include an ultra-quiet auxiliary power unit to enable stealthy loitering and a thermal imager that it is hoped will have twice the range of the devices used on current vehicles.

"This is going to give us a lot more capabilities and better firepower," commented SSgt James Richardson (QRL), a member of the Armoured Trials and Development Unit (ATDU), which has been advising manufacturer General Dynamics and conducting tests at Bovington in Dorset.

Six versions of the platform that fulfil nine different roles will go into service initially (see panel right) and all versions will have blast protection levels equal to the Mastiff.

The Scout's adaptable chassis will undoubtedly lead to efficiencies in procurement, maintenance and repairs but even more important to its capabilities are the advanced electronic systems.

Scout will be the Army's first fully-digitised tracked armoured vehicle and this means it can provide ground-based intelligence, surveillance and target acquisition, including detecting and identifying helicopters, UAVs and decoy devices.

Not only that but as it collects that data it can share it in real time thanks to its internal networks, which will have the ability to plug into tactical communications systems.

This means the information can be transmitted securely to friendly forces such as the US Army, allowing it to integrate into multinational operations more effectively than any vehicle that has gone before it.

"A lot of the technology which has been put into the Scout is new and that is what makes this a revolutionary piece of equipment," commented another ATDU adviser, Sgt Matthew Smith (9/12 L).

"This is actually the first project where the comms have been fitted in the system at design level, rather than as an afterthought," he added.

Deliveries of the 589 vehicles on order under the £3.5 billion contract will be complete in early 2025, by which time all units should have received the assets and conducted conversion training.

Scout should have a 30-year operational life and the innate flexibility of its design means it will be easy to update the platform to keep pace with technology over that period – its combat weight can be increased by 25 per cent to accommodate new components and upgrades.

There may be three years to go before soldiers can get their hands on this kit but once they do, a distinct edge on the battlefields of the future will be a certainty. ■



# BE PRE

## New Scout multi-role vehicle will provide leap in capability





# PARED

## THE SCOUT TROOP

Six variants will cover nine different roles...



### **Reconnaissance**

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### **Engineer reconnaissance**

Carrying specialist engineering equipment and personnel



### **Equipment and support recovery**

Assisting damaged vehicles



### **Equipment and support repair**

Fixing and towing damaged vehicles



Report: Becky Clark  
Pictures: Steve Dock

**S**INCE coming into service a little over a year ago, the Army's combat digger has been proving itself an invaluable addition to the Royal Engineers' fleet.

Billed as the "Swiss Army knife" of the battlefield, Terrier's arsenal of tools make light work of tasks such as obstacle and mine clearance, route repair and crossing point construction.

Its biggest challenge so far, however, came this summer on the plains of Canada, where members of 30 Armoured Engineer Squadron, 26 Engineer Regiment discovered whether it would live up to its impressive reputation on a large-scale training package.

"This is its first major serial – it's the acid test," said Sgt Gareth Triggs during Exercise Prairie Storm 2.

Having been involved in the platform's trial phase, the senior NCO was keen to find out how it would perform for real.

"It's done some things well and others not so well, but you have to take into account crew inexperience and we've had difficult conditions on the ground with a lot of rain and wind so it's had a tough test," he added.

"It has been a steep learning curve for everyone involved but we now have hard facts and yardsticks that we can take forward and use to adjust our tactics, techniques and procedures.

"For example, we now know how long it will take to do a particular job and how quickly we can move from A to B.

"Before now there was a certain element of guesswork."

Lighter and more nimble than the corps' larger combat engineering assets, Titan and Trojan, the Terrier vehicle can complete simple tasks at speed. Working as a pair, two can lay a basic fascine crossing [plastic tubes used to bridge gaps] in under half an hour.

The impressive platform's remote control capability would also allow similar jobs to be carried out from a kilometre away in high-risk situations.

As well as giving troops practice at operating Terrier, at five weeks long Prairie Storm 2 was also an opportunity for its crews to experience living in close proximity for an extended period of time.

"There's not much space," conceded Spr Thomas Leavers.

"There are two of us on-board – a driver, who uses the front excavator bucket, and the commander, who controls the arm on the side.

"It does get a bit tedious. You end up like a married couple so when you get a maintenance day you tend to split up to get some time apart.

"But it has been useful. We did a couple of two-week exercises back in the UK, which were okay but they're over with quite quickly so by the time you find out all the niggles it's already finished.

"Here we've had to adapt and improvise, and a lot of the problems we've had to fix

there and then."

A major benefit of Terrier is its integrated user instruction system, which crews can access on-screen to identify and potentially rectify faults themselves without having to call on their counterparts in the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

"It's the first vehicle to have that and it's a massive plus," added Sgt Triggs.

"It takes you through the repair process step by step and tells you when you need to get the light aid detachment guys in.

"There have been a few faults on this exercise but they've all been in similar areas, which is good because if we get those fixed early on it should mean we don't encounter any others."

Before deploying to British Army Training Unit Suffield the regiment put Terrier and a medium wheeled tractor through an identical route upgrade task to compare the two.

While the tractor completed the job faster, Sgt Triggs said in an operational situation there is only one choice.

"The medium wheelie is quicker but it's very constrained because it has no protection or weapons," he explained.

"You're totally exposed, which means you can only use certain tracks, following the battlegroup at a particular distance.

"The end product might be the same but it's survivability that you want for combat engineering.

"Something else we've learnt out here is how to manoeuvre tactically.

"Plant operators as a trade usually go in, do a task and drive out again, but with Terrier we've been practising using the high and low ground, cutting around alongside the rest of the battlegroup.

"Obviously you couldn't do it with a tractor, so it's that kind of thing that sets the two vehicles apart."

Troop commander Lt Dan Porteous agreed that Terrier had impressed greatly while out on the prairie.

"It's been a massive workhorse for the squadron," said the 28-year-old.

"We've had a few failures on Titan and Trojan but Terrier has stepped up – without it we would have struggled.

"It has had a few bugs too but we've been on the go for more than 30 days and it hasn't been tested for so long and in this kind of environment before.

"We've done a lot of battle runs and the guys have upped their skill level hugely."

A second group of the regiment's soldiers, 8 Armoured Engineer Squadron, were due to complete the third phase of Prairie Storm to carry on the work begun by their colleagues as this issue went to press.

They, along with the rest of 12th Armoured Infantry Brigade and the wider Service community, will be watching with interest to see whether Terrier continues to serve its new masters faithfully. ■



IT'S BEEN  
A STEEP  
LEARNING  
CURVE

**TERRIER-  
TASTIC**





# DOGS OF WAR

SAPPERS GIVE TERRIER ITS TOUGHEST TEST  
YET ON EXERCISE PRAIRIE STORM

50

Terrier's  
top speed  
in mph,  
allowing  
it to keep  
pace with  
Challengers  
and Warriors

30



weight of Terrier in tonnes – light  
enough to be transported by air

6

the maximum lift  
capability in tonnes  
of the bucket  
mounted on the  
front of the asset







# BITE IN THE BULLET

The mind-boggling factory process behind the British Army's small-arms ammunition

**Report: Sarah Goldthorpe**

**A**T THE height of operations in Afghanistan British soldiers were getting through hundreds of millions of them per year.

But the manufacturing process behind the rounds that are often taken for granted on combat and training missions is a very complex one.

*Soldier* paid a visit to Radway Green, a state-of-the-art small arms ammunition factory run by BAE Systems, to find out what lengths its experts go to so that troops can put 100 per cent trust in their triggers.

"When personnel look at their rounds they think it's 'just ammo', but to get it to that stage is a very difficult process

for us," said Nigel MacVean, general manager of the site.

He takes us to a quiet factory floor with a surprising lack of humans around.

Instead, machinery quietly churns out up to one million rounds per day – both 5.56mm and 7.62mm varieties.

While the British Army is not this factory's only customer, it is certainly the main one.

And although demand for ammunition has undoubtedly reduced since Operation Herrick began drawing down, a hectic training schedule and the possibility of future missions mean its team can never rest on their laurels.

"We know what gives the soldiers grief because we speak to them regularly but all the testing we do means troops know they are getting the best

product," boasts the manager.

Bizarrely, he likens the delicate process of inserting bullets and propellant into cartridges to filling a Mars Bar with caramel.

But the disgruntlement that a chocoholic might feel with a substandard snack is nothing compared to the danger faced by the military if they are let down by a dodgy round.

This team busts a gut to ensure that never happens.

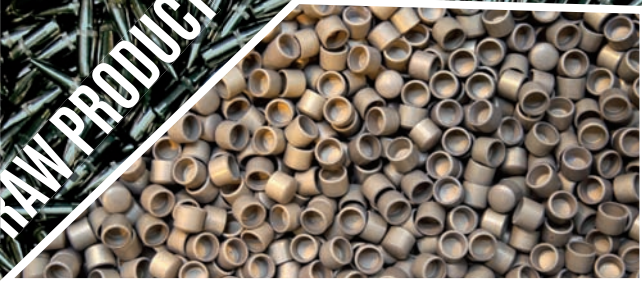
"Our staff know that what they are doing is important and we have total confidence that when a soldier pulls the trigger, the round will go off," added Mr MacVean.

"It won't jam his weapon and it won't misfire."

How can he be so sure? *Soldier* walked the factory floor to find out...



## RAW PRODUCT



Army rounds consist of a steel or lead bullet within a case made from brass, which is shipped from either South Africa or Germany.

## STRETCH AND SHAPE



Pictures: Steve Dock, BAÉ Systems

State-of-the-art machines then form the cartridge by drawing, stretching, shaping and forming the brass - which is heated up to temperatures of more than 280 degrees Celsius in the process. Each of six production lines can process these cases at a rate of 240 per minute.

## WASHING UP



Oil is cleaned off the cases using domestic washing machine technology - soap and hot water.

## CUTTING IT

The final stage in the production of the brass cartridges sees a groove cut into the head of each one - this is the part that will be gripped by the weapon.



## IN NUMBERS

Ball, tracer and blanks are all produced on the same floor and to exactly the same high standards.



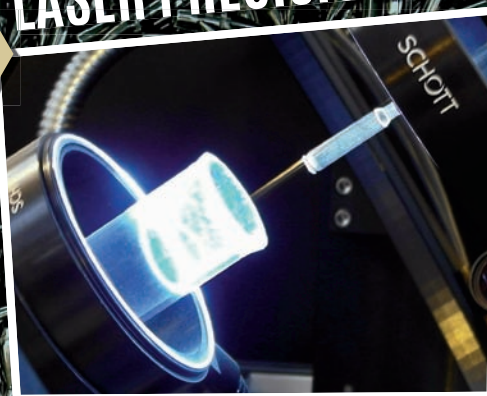


## PEOPLE POWER



A small but very skilled team oversee the factory floor. The heavy work is all done by machinery leaving staff to concentrate on checks and equipment maintenance.

## LASER PRECISION



Once cut, an inspection gauging machine plots up to 300 points on every single cartridge before using these points to take 150 different measurements. The cartridge is also checked for marks. This ensures the round meets - and exceeds - Nato requirements. If any case fails these strict tests it is rejected and sent for recycling.

## PRIMED



The ammunition moves into the explosive area of the factory, where primer is put into each one and loading machines fill them with propellant. It must now be treated with care.

## BULLETPROOF



Those rounds which are going to be used as blanks have the end of the cap squashed and are sent for packing. The rest are filled with tracer or bullets.

## ON THE RANGE

BAE Systems' experts proof 2,000 rounds from every one-million batch on the factory's own outdoor firing range.



## BOXED UP



The ammunition is nearly ready to be distributed. Although some parts of the packing process are automated, the rounds are fixed into wire-bound boxes or tins and stacked onto pallets by humans. Crates of 120,000 are stored in a cool area before being delivered to the British Army.

## IN NUMBERS

The British Army is the site's biggest customer but ammunition is also sold to other Nato countries.

250 MILLION rounds can be churned out by Radway Green each year.



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# INTO THE VOID

## CLINGING ON FOR LIFE IN THE CANADIAN ROCKIES

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**Report: Becky Clark    Pictures: Steve Dock**

**F**ROM the forests of Bavaria to the turquoise seas off Cyprus, British soldiers are spoilt for choice when it comes to exciting locations for adventurous training.

But as far as unforgettable experiences go, Trail's End Camp in the foothills of the Canadian Rockies is incredibly hard to beat.

Venturing into the depths of a glacier is just one activity that troops who complete the centre's mountaineering package can tick off their bucket lists.

The five-day course, known as Exercise Wapta Dance, sees students traverse the treacherous Athabasca Glacier.

And although the ice field may be the most visited glacier in North America, away from the pisted tourist trail the dangers are very real, as support staff from the British Army Training Unit Suffield (Batus) discovered...

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"The first time was pretty horrendous to be honest," said Cpl Tim Weatherall (REME) after emerging from a frozen ravine.

"You can't see anything except ice and water plummeting beneath you.

"You're gripping hold of those axes because you know if you lose them you're properly stuffed

"The second go was better as by then I knew what I should be doing.

"A lot of the work is in the legs. You need to remember when you dig your crampons in to push your heel down – it doesn't feel natural because it seems like you should be putting the weight on your toes but if you press your heel in you get a better grip so you can climb."

As the soldiers stared into the void with only their safety equipment between them and almost certain death, a steady stream of specially adapted buses ferried tourists onto the ice.

But those who let this glacier's accessibility lull them into a false sense of security do so at their peril.

In a sobering illustration of the risks, days after the package ended, the body of a climber was recovered. He had gone missing following a hike 19 years ago.

Dave Stark from Yamnuska Mountain Adventures, the company that supplies instructors and guides for Trail's End Camp, said people should never underestimate the dangers of the landscape.

"People find it spectacular but the hazards are very real and you have to mitigate against them," explained the 56-year-old.

"The main threat is the weather – it can change very quickly. You can have snowstorms and high winds even in the summer.

"The secondary danger is crevasses, where someone could fall in.

"We look for signs such as sagging in the snow, which could indicate some sort of fracture underneath.

"We would also expect to find fissures where the glacier changes in shape as it traverses over bedrock or around corners.

"So we travel 'roped up' and that way if someone does fall in, they will hopefully only fall to knee or thigh depth before the line stops them."

With such perils in mind, the Service personnel on Exercise Wapta Dance went through numerous safety and rescue drills.

The rest of the course saw the eight-strong group camping out in the mountains and hiking up to the peaks surrounding the glacier, with one trek lasting as long as 12 hours.

Despite the arduous – and often heart-stopping – nature of this training, some 2,300 troops took advantage of the packages provided by Trail's End Camp in 2013 alone.

Among the other activities on offer at the centre are kayaking, mountain biking, white water rafting and horse riding.

And with working life at Batus notoriously demanding for exercising soldiers and support staff alike, a one-stop shop for so many outdoor pursuits is a priceless asset.

"It provides some bucket list experiences without a shadow of a doubt and we're lucky to have it," said Sgt Adam Tallett from the station's REME workshop.

"I've done the horse riding package before, which was absolutely superb.

"Riding through the Rocky Mountains is something you would never usually have the chance to do.

"I'd encourage anyone to give the courses a go and not be negative about something they haven't tried.

"This is a really beautiful place and I feel very privileged to have been posted here." ■

## IT PROVIDES BUCKET LIST EXPERIENCES



## IN NUMBERS

**6** length, in kilometres, of the Athabasca Glacier

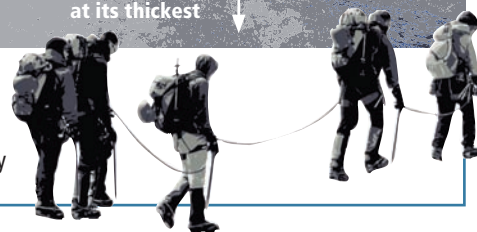
**1,500**

distance, in metres, that the glacier has shrunk in the past 125 years

**300** depth, in metres, of the landmark at its thickest

**6,000**

number of tourists that visit the ice field every day during peak season





**Report: Becky Clark**  
**Pictures: Dave Clarke**

**B**RITISH soldiers are fairly accustomed to operating outside of their comfort zones. But even the most fearless troops must feel their pulse quicken at the prospect of leaping out of an aeroplane for the first time.

Those wanting to experience the ultimate adrenaline rush can opt to take part in a skydiving package during a break from the British Army Training Unit Suffield (Batus).

The sport is one of a number of adventurous training activities run by Trail's End Camp during the summer months.

Dave Clarke, an instructor at the Alberta Skydivers Parachute Centre, explained why parachuting is such an important part of the programme.

"All of the values and standards of the British Army apply," he said.

"You need courage and commitment and you also need to be able to push yourself."

A former sergeant in The Princess of Wales' Royal Regiment, the 36-year-old was a member of the formation's free-fall display team.

But despite having almost 15 years' experience under his belt, the ex-Serviceman remembers his nerves on his first jump.

"The plane pulled up and I thought if the two girls before me don't jump, I won't either," he continued.

"But they all jumped so I took a deep breath and said to myself 'let's do it'.

"I know what it's like to be up there thinking 'I'm about to leap out of a perfectly good aeroplane' and hoping your chute will open.

"I did eight jumps on that first course and I was hooked, and that's what we want for these guys too.

"We want them to experience free fall and continue it through their corps clubs."

Whereas civilian students will perform a tandem jump before going it alone, soldiers take to the skies for their first solo jump after just a few hours of ground drills.

And if throwing yourself through the air doesn't sound unsettling enough, the method of exiting the aircraft might. Jumpers climb out of the Cessna 206 and hang from the wing strut before letting themselves fall.

"I try and encourage troops to focus on one thing at a time," said Mr Clarke.

"You layer it, step by step, so that it's not too overwhelming for them.

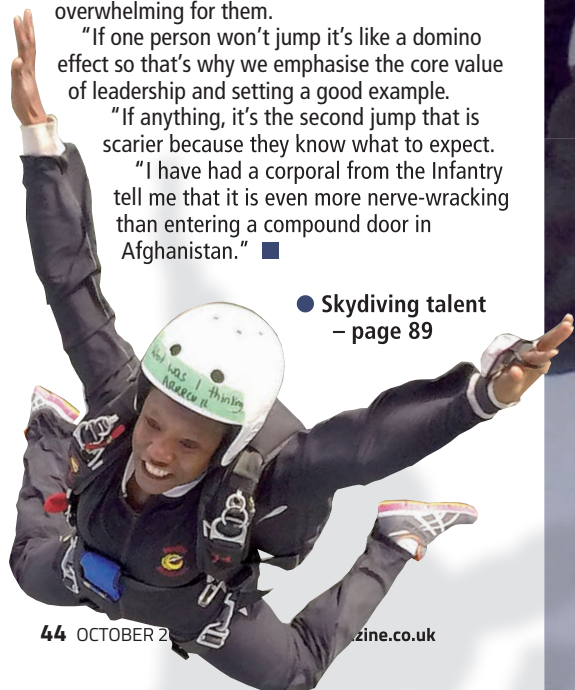
"If one person won't jump it's like a domino effect so that's why we emphasise the core value of leadership and setting a good example.

"If anything, it's the second jump that is scarier because they know what to expect.

"I have had a corporal from the Infantry tell me that it is even more nerve-wracking than entering a compound door in Afghanistan." ■

● Skydiving talent  
– page 89

**IT'S MORE NERVE-  
WRACKING THAN  
ENTERING A  
COMPOUND IN  
AFGHANISTAN**





# SKY HIGH

## PERSONNEL HANG OUT ABOVE ALBERTA

### 'ZERO TO HERO'

Troops on the skydiving package go from being complete novices to completing their first solo jump in the space of about six hours.

With their feet safely back on terra firma, personnel (pictured below left to right) explained what it was like to experience the rush.

#### Pte Jack Cotterill (RLC)

"My heart was beating a little faster than usual but I surprised myself that I wasn't that nervous when I stepped onto the plane's wing.

"It's obviously very unnatural – the power of the wind is quite overwhelming.

"The initial shock on your body is weird – it takes your breath away.

"When my parachute first deployed it was bunched up a bit and I thought 'please not me'.

"I waited another two seconds and it flared and that was a big relief. Then it's like freedom."

#### Gnr Sheryl Cooper (RA)

"It was very scary but amazing.

"In the plane I said to the instructor 'I don't know if I can do this' and he just kept me really calm and made me think I could.

"All the pressure is on you. You're simply hanging there and you feel stronger because you just don't want to let go."

#### Pte Michaela Hallett (AGC)

"It was mind-blowing and I can't wait to do it again.

"I was very nervous, to the point of nearly backing out, but the instructors were great.

"After I jumped I wondered what all the fuss was about.

"I'm not the best at heights but the Army is about conquering your fears and this is definitely one way of doing that."

#### Pte Daniel Smart (RLC)

"This is certainly one of the best adventurous training packages you can get out here.

"It's like being at a theme park on a fast ride. Your heart rate rockets when you're hanging on the wing but after that you're nice and calm.

"You can see a lot from up there and it's like you're in a bubble."





# THE BATTLE OF TRAUMA



## ‘SPEAK TO YOUR MATES’

**One soldier's advice on mental health problems**

» ROYAL Engineer Cpl Dan Campbell was diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder earlier this year.

"Whenever I went to counselling I made a point of being very vocal about it and saying to the guys 'I'm going to talk to someone, I think you should too'," he told *Soldier*. "I wanted to normalise it."

But the Serviceman admits that, at first, he didn't think he "deserved" to be suffering with a mental health

problem of any kind.

"I didn't believe my operational tour warranted needing help," said the veteran of Op Herrick 15.

"Furthermore, I thought that if there was something wrong someone would say so.

"I was being quite aggressive but that is easy to disguise when you are in the Army because aggression is a key trait for a soldier.

"In the end my medical officer



One hundred years after shell shock began to take the British Army in its grip, there has never been a better time to speak up about mental illness. Here's why...



Picture: Imperial War Museum

recommended I speak to the Departments of Community Mental Health.

"Soon after going to see someone I realised I needed to be there, and that I should have sought help a lot earlier.

"It seems that when it comes to mental health, some soldiers' attitudes haven't progressed in 100 years.

"My message would be to talk to your mates and make it normal.

"We can say that the Army needs to change but we are the Army."

#### Report: Sarah Goldthorpe

**F**ROM clothing and weaponry to training and tactics, the British Army of the First World War was vastly different to today's Service.

However, a significant number of troops still have one thing in common with their military predecessors of 1914 – and it's something that is leaving them vulnerable.

They see mental illness as a reflection on their quality or strength as a soldier.

And despite conditions like depression and post-traumatic stress disorder being treated on a par with physical problems by the medical professionals of today, the mindset seems to prevail. But why?

During the Great War, as British personnel became more traumatised by front-line encounters, they started to develop disturbing afflictions such as anxiety, facial tics, uncontrollable diarrhoea and recurring nightmares.

"People didn't understand psychological trauma back then," explained mental health expert Lt Col Richard Dorney (Gren Gds), a member of the Army recovery capability team who has studied war and psychiatry.

"Such issues were thought to be caused by physical injury to the nerves, hence the term 'shell shock'.

"But authorities didn't know why troops who had not been on the front line could also fall ill; they didn't understand the emotional element.

"As a result, some sufferers were accused of being 'malingerers' and anyone whose shell shock couldn't be related to a physical wound wouldn't be eligible for a pension."

As the conflict continued, more troops developed symptoms that we can now link to specific illnesses – from anxiety and depression to post-traumatic stress disorder.

However, sympathy was rarely forthcoming for these patients of the early 20th century.

Sufferers arriving at Netley military hospital would often be greeted with silence and could be seen hanging their heads in shame: their reputation had been dealt a blow.

And if any treatment was offered, massage, rest and electric shock therapy were among the choices.

Such experiences seem almost unthinkable compared with the efficient diagnosis and treatment in today's Army.

In addition to pre- and post-deployment briefings on mental

health, a system called trauma risk management (or Trim) has been in place for several years to identify the personnel vulnerable to such problems.

Military-run Departments of Community Mental Health (DCMH) can be found in various UK and overseas bases.

And a relatively new project called mental health first aid will eventually see thousands of Forces personnel trained up to recognise the early signs of problems among their colleagues.

Throw into the mix the support of specialist charities such as Combat Stress ([www.combatstress.org.uk](http://www.combatstress.org.uk)) and the clear message is that mental health problems are taken very seriously by today's military community.

They are nothing to be ashamed of and can be treated with great success once troops speak out.

However, just like the soldiers of the First World War, many of today's personnel struggle on alone.

But as MoD consultant adviser in psychiatry Lt Col Graham Howe (RAMC) explained, there is nothing to be lost by letting someone know that you are unwell.

"Sometimes soldiers are concerned that speaking out could affect their careers and, while we do sometimes downgrade people so they are protected from deploying while seeking treatment, the majority of troops with mental illnesses will improve and get back to work," the officer said.

"If you have a problem your performance in the workplace is likely to drop anyway, and that could also have an impact.

"But this is not just about careers. If soldiers are depressed, irritable or angry it will have an impact on friends and loved ones at home."

During the First World War a survey showed that a higher proportion of officers were being treated for shell shock than soldiers.

What the medical world was starting to understand – and what it knows for a fact today – is that everyone has a breaking point, and this is no sign at all of whether you are courageous or cowardly.

With that in mind, the 100-year anniversary of the First World War may be a good time to speak out and make the most of the support that our forefathers were unable to access.

If you feel unwell try talking to the chain of command, a welfare officer, medic, doctor or friend.

Alternatively, visit the Army health promotion page on the defence intranet for assistance. ■





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More information can be found in **2014DIN07-093** dated July 2014, by calling **01536 207496** or visit **[www.managers.org.uk/armedforces](http://www.managers.org.uk/armedforces)**



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# “TALKBACK”

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

## Is golden egg lost?

**W**HEN the new state pension starts up in 2016 it could have a detrimental effect on the finances of many current and former soldiers upon reaching official retirement age.

I discovered this after contacting the Department of Work and Pensions to find out whether I would qualify for a state pension should I not find future employment.

Thankfully I do, having served in the Army for nearly four decades, retiring in 2012 at the age of 55.

However, I was told that from 2016 the total number of years you will have to pay national insurance in order to receive a state allowance will rise from 30 to 35.

In addition, those who are not eligible to pay into the second state pension – and that applies to all Armed Forces personnel – will not receive the full payment when they come to retire.

In all my years in the Army I was never made aware that we were contracted out of this scheme – and I'm sure I'm not the only one.

Servicemen and women have had no option in this area apparently but under the new rules they are set to lose out, regardless of how long they have served, unless they take their own precautionary measures.

I believe all personnel should be

warned about this so they can plan ahead by making additional voluntary contributions, for example. – **Steve Harriman, Newcastle Upon Tyne.**

**Brig John Donnelly, DPS(A), replies:** The government has announced wide-ranging reforms in order to simplify the state pension scheme.

These will come into effect from April 6, 2016, when the current two-tier system of the basic and second state allowances will be replaced by a single one.

Currently, members of the Armed Forces pension schemes are contracted out of the state's second annuity.

Because of this, Servicemen and women pay a reduced rate of national insurance.

The schemes are broadly similar or greater – depending on the individual – to what you would have received from the second pension so you are, in fact, not any worse off for being contracted out.

Once the new system is introduced in 2016, Service personnel will qualify for the new single-tier payment.

AFPS members will no longer pay the reduced NI rate and their contributions will rise by around 1.4 per cent, although the exact increase will vary according to



their personal circumstances.

As you have indicated, entitlement to the full amount of the new single-tier pension will require 35 qualifying years of national insurance contributions – which is five more than the current system employs.

There will also be a minimum qualifying period of between seven and ten years.

Those who paid only over that minimum time span will receive a proportionally smaller amount of state allowance.

There will be another announcement from the Department of Work and Pensions on this subject at the beginning of 2015 and it will be communicated down the chain of command with comprehensive information on the transitional arrangements.

Further details can also be found on the DWP website.

“I BELIEVE ALL PERSONNEL SHOULD BE WARNED ABOUT THIS SO THEY CAN PLAN AHEAD”

## NO CLAIM ON DISCOUNTED RATE

● MY daughter, who was a serving soldier in Germany, recently asked me to find out car insurance rates for her for when she returns to the UK.

For the previous seven years she had arranged her motor cover through AXA Germany.

She is now a civil servant and is eligible for preferential rates.

I contacted one of the approved suppliers, Liverpool Victoria, and was informed that because she had been insured through a Germany-based company they could not offer her a no-claims discount.

In essence, they treat British Service personnel who have been serving abroad long-term in the same

way they would a foreigner.

Surely this discriminates against those posted overseas? – **Ray Spence, Northern Ireland.**

**Brig John Donnelly, DPS(A), responds:** It has become more apparent over the last year that soldiers may face disadvantages when arranging insurance, both in terms of access and cost.

The loss of a no-claims discount because of service overseas is one example.

These issues were highlighted in the *Armed Forces Covenant Report 13* as an area that requires further work to determine if there

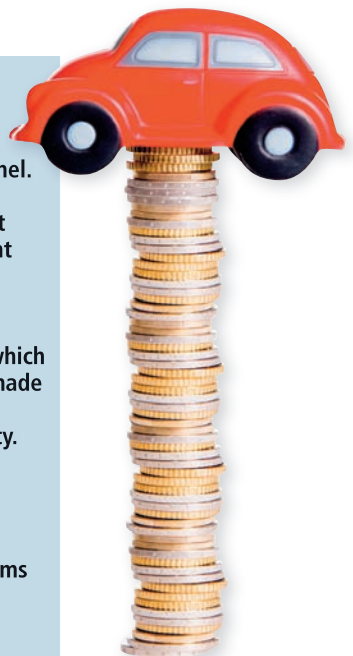
are disadvantages for personnel.

But for now you could approach one of the specialist insurers who take into account military life when providing financial products.

The Services Insurance and Investments Advisory Panel, which is recognised by the MoD, is made up of firms that specialise in serving the military community.

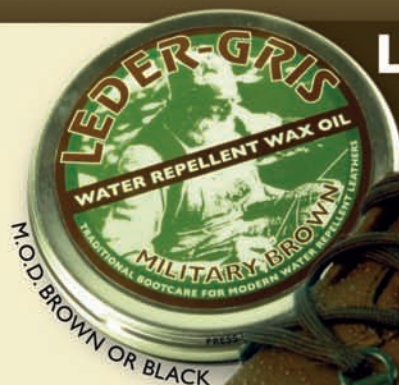
People in that group have to demonstrate specialist knowledge and experience to provide advice to troops.

A list of current member firms is available from regimental administration offices.





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## No credit for learning

“I FEEL TERRIBLY LET DOWN AND AM CONSIDERING WHAT TO DO NEXT”

**I** SERVED with the Household Cavalry between 1999 and 2008, completing operational tours of Bosnia and Iraq with an exemplary service record.

Recently I enrolled on the BA (Hons) security consultancy course at Buckinghamshire New University.

I then got in touch with the enhanced learning credits scheme to put in a claim to help with the fee but they told me I was not entitled to anything because I was not signed up to their programme.

I fail to understand this as I remember putting pen to paper and people I served with have already made claims that were accepted.

As I understand it, my service falls into a period that could allow me to claim up to £2,000 per course.

I feel terribly let down by the Armed Forces and I'm now considering what to do next about the matter. – **Name and address supplied.**

**Maj Patricia Ridley-Jones, Director Educational Capability, responds:** The enhanced learning credits scheme requires personnel to be in service both when they apply and when they are accepted for

membership. Automatic scheme registration is not allowed and you have to enrol.

The programme helps fund eligible personnel who wish to improve their educational, academic, professional or vocational achievements by pursuing higher level learning.

It can be used during service and for up to ten years after leaving and is only available for courses resulting in a qualification at level three (i.e. A-level or equivalent) or above, so that shouldn't be the cause of you being refused.

All applicants receive a certificate of membership upon joining the scheme which they need when subsequently submitting a claim.

Although you believe you have enrolled there is no record of your application but this could be for reasons outside your control – for example, an administrative error.

Serving personnel who discover they are not registered for credits and can demonstrate this was caused by extenuating

reasons may apply to be treated as an exceptional case.

If you can remember actually signing up you should check whether your application form was held inadvertently in your personal file (which will now have been archived) rather than being forwarded for registration.

Contact the disclosures help desk at Army Personnel Centre in Glasgow on 0845 600 9663 to check. If the application is found, submit it with your claim to D Ed Cap, Army Headquarters, Ramillies Building, Marlborough Lines, Andover SP11 8HJ.

Regretfully, if you cannot prove that you applied while in service you will not be able to do so again six years after leaving the Army.



## GERMAN WELFARE PROPERTY FALLS SHORT

● **I WAS** assigned to Germany late last year and took my wife and two young children with me.

Due to the drawdown of British troops in the country I know there is plenty of empty Service family accommodation (SFA) in our street at Bielefeld and at Heepen, where many other personnel are located.

In light of this, I'm surprised that a welfare house has not been made available that can be used by visiting families for a small cost.

It would greatly benefit our loved ones who have to pay out for flights and hotel costs in order to visit us over here.

I have enquired through the appropriate channels and was told a welfare house might be provided in the future but it is unlikely that it will be made available during my two-

year assignment.

With the drawdown continuing at pace, it doesn't seem likely this facility will be provided at all. – **Name and address supplied.**

**Richard Matthews, Defence Infrastructure Organisation Area Manager, Germany, replies:** There are 12 welfare properties across the central region and their primary purpose is to provide accommodation in support of short-notice issues affecting the welfare of people in SFA.

This might include use as a safe haven from domestic abuse, housing visitors for a soldier who has been seriously injured or enabling trips for children separated from their parent due to divorce or other circumstances.

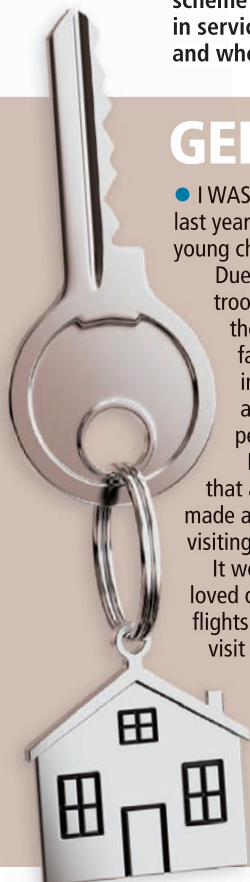
They are also used when SFA becomes uninhabitable due to fire or flood, for instance.

In the UK official surplus properties can be made available to visitors as you suggest.

But in Germany none of the properties are owned by the British government so any surplus housing is handed back to landlords or federal agencies as soon as possible in order to minimise the cost to the MoD.

We currently exceed minimum levels of provision specified by JSP 464 but we recognise that this is very much a needs-led service and if stations were to approach us with justified requests we would consider increasing this number, subject to having sufficient stock.

Properties are provided for genuine unit welfare supported needs and their use as cheap accommodation for visitors is no longer possible following abuse of the system.







## DIGITAL DOSSIER

This month's elite tweets

### #FIRST WORLD WAR

#### @StanCollymore

Walter Tull, 1st Black British Army Officer, British football pioneer. On our new £5 coin! Wonderful! About time!

#### @JessieLees

Moved by the 888,246 ceramic poppies at The Tower of London, one for each British soldier lost during WW1

### #SOLDIER SALUTE

#### @SoldierInBlue

Great 4 page feature on Soldier In Blue's work on the upcoming #FuryMovie on pg 48-51 of September's @soldiermagazine

### #INVICTUS GAMES

#### @gravesendrugby

@britisharmy @invictuslondon Carry on playing... would any British Army like to try wheelchair rugby 7s? Inclusive. Anyone can play

#### @EndeavourFund

Congratulations to all participants in the #InvictusGames – you're an #inspiration. #IAM #BeyondInjury

#### @ClarenceHouse

Thank you all for supporting @invictuslondon. Here's our @Storify with some of our favourite social media moments: <http://bit.ly/1ISPkkE>

### #ON SCREEN

#### @jadabird

Wow. You know when you can feel in your gut that you've just seen a truly exceptional film? '71... Still shaking. #TIFF14

#### @seanjward

As an actor it was a true honour to represent the men and woman in the British Army, BBC1, *Our Girl*

## GOT A GRIPE?

news@soldiermagazine.co.uk

@soldiermagazine

# Brassed off by no silver bugle

“HOW CAN THE LARGEST INFANTRY UNIT GET THIS SO BADLY WRONG?”

**A**FTER serving for 19 years in the light infantry and seven years in The Rifles, it annoys me to think that my comrades who are leaving the Army after 22 years no longer receive a silver bugle as a well-earned farewell present.

I know that funds used to be paid towards these presentations via mess bills but this changed when The Rifles was formed back in 2007.

The former regiments of this formation all used to present leaving gifts to soldiers who had completed a full term but I know lots of ex-riflemen who have not received anything, even a dine out.

and tradition, get this so badly wrong?

Surely this can be rectified or a new presentation process introduced.

I would like to think that one day I'll receive some recognition from my regiment for the time I've put in, something that would then take pride of place in my home once I have left the Service. – **WO2 Rob Chapman, Rifles.**

**Lt Col (Retd) John Poole-Warren, Regimental Secretary, The Rifles, responds:** The award of a silver bugle to those leaving The Rifles is purely a matter for the individual

messes of the regiment and is not something the headquarters have ever been involved in.

Presentation funds are contributed to by individual subscriptions via the mess bill and upon formation of The Rifles the award of a silver bugle was continued by many messes.

Senior regimental staff can offer soldiers advice on the administration of these monies

and particularly on aspects such as the control and movement of them between battalions due to postings or external regimental engagements.

The ultimate responsibility, however, lies with the mess concerned because all these farewell gifts and dine outs are self-financed.

You should contact the last Rifles battalion in which you serve to ascertain your eligibility for the above send-offs.

Regarding the question of acknowledgment, it is regimental policy that the colonel commandant writes to all individuals upon conclusion of their 22 years of service.



It's as though the regiment just doesn't care anymore and I think it's absolutely outrageous and a disgrace to the current regimental system.

Why is it that when individuals approach their headquarters and battalions to ask for a silver bugle they always get the brush off?

They don't even receive a letter from the regimental colonel commending them for their professionalism and work on behalf of the regiment.

How can the largest Infantry unit in the British Army, with all its history



# ‘Bring back our old Puffing Billy boilers!’

“WE ARE TRYING TO EMBRACE THE ‘FIGHT LIGHT’ CONCEPT AND YOU LUMBER US WITH THIS”

I WAS left feeling a little let down after returning from a recent overseas exercise.

The package, its location, the live firing and even the rations were all good but something was missing.

I couldn’t put my finger on what it was at first but then it dawned on me.

While 90 per cent of the serial was in the field, not once was I woken by the familiar sound of that traditional dawn chorus of yells – from someone attempting to light the “Puffing Billy” mobile water heater.

On a serious note, I don’t believe the procurement arm of the MoD has listened to the needs of the Army.

In order to replace these wonderful old devices it has purchased an unwieldy field water heating system that has no transit case and is certainly not very portable, weighing in at 96 kilograms.

We didn’t even take it out with us because it was so impractical.

So why was the Puffing Billy ever considered unfit for purpose?

I have been given some reasons, consisting mainly of a load of health and safety jargon, but we had been using this efficient, portable, lightweight, morale-boosting piece of kit for decades.

Come on procurement teams, while we are trying to embrace the “fight light” concept you lumber us with this clumsy field water heating system. – **Name and address supplied.**

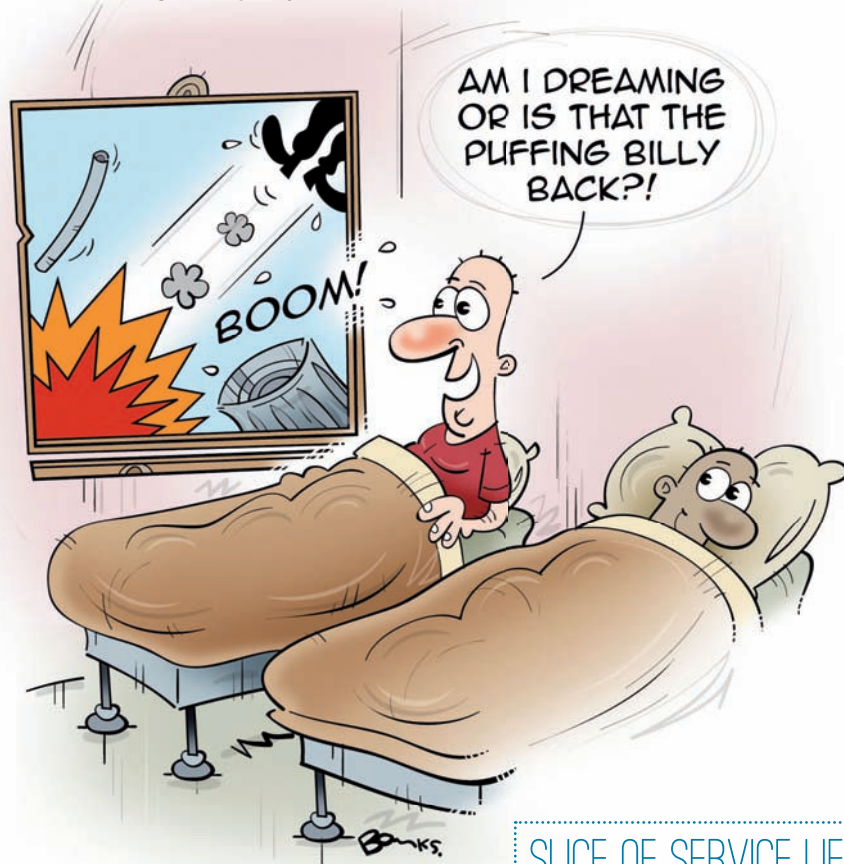
**Nick Jefferies, Senior Manager, Defence Equipment and Support, responds:** If sentiment was a contributory factor to the fulfilment of Army capability then

perhaps the M67 (Puffing Billy) might have stayed in use.

However, to be clear, it was not removed from service purely because of safety concerns, it was also down to the fact it did not conform to the British Army’s single fuel policy.

equipment met the Army’s needs.

The simple facts are, it is more efficient, safe, heats portable water, provides the safe heating of ration packs and slips into two halves to be mobile as set out in the requirement document.



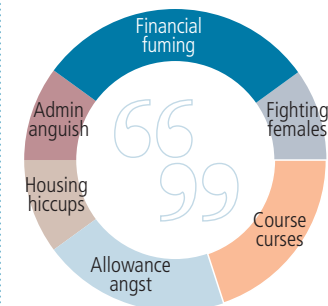
There were months of consultations with working groups, including users, prior to agreeing the specification of the field water heating system.

Subsequent steps, such as tenders, trials and demonstrations, were used to ensure the Service was receiving the best product available to meet the requirement.

Finally, a rigorous acceptance process took place in order to demonstrate that the new

## SLICE OF SERVICE LIFE

This month's ruminations from the ranks...





# FOOD!

## WHAT IS IT GOOD FOR?



### BONES!

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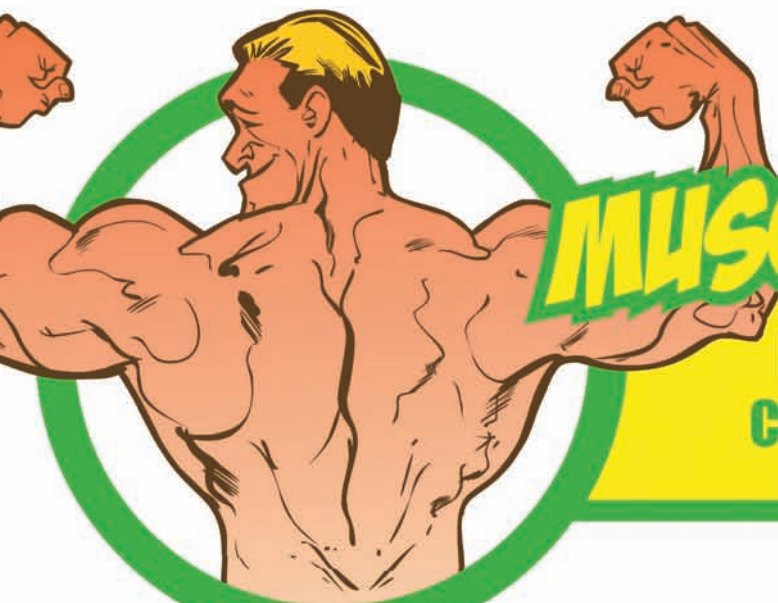
### DIGESTION!

CEREALS PULSES GRAINS  
BERRIES GREENS NUTS



### MUSCLE!

LEAN MEATS EGGS CHEESE  
COTTAGE CHEESE MILK NUTS



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## COMPETITIONS

**Spine line winners:** Maj Stephen Dwyer, Raglan Barracks, Newport.

**A Hard Day's Night DVD:** Jayne Hawkes, HQ Hereford Garrison; Mike Booth, Arnold, Nottinghamshire; Sharon Jackson, Army Reserve Centre, Kempston; Patricia Crandles, Edinburgh; Sam Newport, Oxford.

**First World War special edition titles:** Frank Johnstone, Hallow, Worcestershire; D Clarkson, Chippenham, Wiltshire; Paul Clarke, Wokingham, Berkshire.

**Forces War Records:** WO1 Norman Trigg, Regents Park Barracks, London; LCpl David Lavery, HQ ARRC, Innsworth; Mrs M Newport, Oxford; Rich Barrett, Frimley, Surrey; Roy Laycock, Burscough, Lancashire.

## DIRECTORY

**ABF The Soldiers' Charity:** 0845 241 4820

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

**Armed Forces Christian Union:** 01252 311221; [www.afcu.org.uk](http://www.afcu.org.uk)

**Armed Forces Humanist Association:** [www.armedforceshumanists.org.uk](http://www.armedforceshumanists.org.uk)

**Armed Forces Muslim Association:** Chaplain 0207 414 3252; [www.afma.org.uk](http://www.afma.org.uk)

**Army Families Federation:** 01264 382324; [mil.94391.2324](mailto: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:** 01980 615975; [www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support/welfare-support.aspx](http://www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support/welfare-support.aspx)

**Blind Veterans UK:** (formerly St Dunstan's) 0207 7235021; [www.blindveterans.org.uk](http://www.blindveterans.org.uk)

**British Limbless Ex-Service Men's Association:** 0208 590 1124; [www.blesma.org](http://www.blesma.org)

**Career Transition Partnership:** 0207 4696 661

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

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

**Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society:** 01372 841600; [www.combatstress.com](http://www.combatstress.com)

**Family Escort Service:** 0207 463 9249

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

**Forces Pension Society:** 0207 820 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)

**Joint Service Housing Advice Office:** 01722 436575

**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:** 24-hour helpline 0845 257 4853; [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.svrnline.org](http://www.svrnline.org)

**Service Personnel and Veterans Agency:** 0808 1914 218 (from the UK); 0044 1253 866043 (from overseas)



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

**Stoll:** (formerly known as the Sir Oswald Stoll Foundation) 0207 385 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.poppyfactory.org](http://www.poppyfactory.org)

**The Royal Star & 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)

**uk4u Thanks!:** 01798 812081; [www.uk4u.org](http://www.uk4u.org)



## INTELLIGENCE

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

**ABN 121/14:** Army LGBT forum

**ABN 120/14:** Newly formed Force Troops Command specialist brigades

**ABN 119/14:** Scout

**ABN 118/14:** Women in ground close combat review

**ABN 117/14:** REME aircraft technician financial retention incentive

**ABN 116/14:** Pension tax – annual allowance notification tax year 2013/14

**ABN 115/14:** Regular leavers' awareness of Reserve service and financial incentives survey

**ABN 114/14:** Invictus Games, September 10-14

**ABN 113/14:** Op Reflect exploitation conference, November 6

**ABN 112/14:** AGAI 59 changes to Army policy on appearance and dress

**ABN 111/14:** Army Reserve survey

**ABN 110/14:** Next generation estate contract – tranche two

**ABN 109/14:** Change of tattoo policy

**ABN 108/14:** Performance management

**ABN 107/14:** Families continuous attitude survey 2014

**ABN 106/14:** Data protection

**DIN 2014DIN01-178:** Ill-health awards and dependants' benefit awards following the introduction of Armed Forces pension scheme 2015

**DIN 2014DIN01-177:** The In-Service Fast Stream Competition – autumn 2014

**DIN 2014DIN01-175:** Support to Operations kit and equipment

**DIN 2014DIN01-174:** Tri-Service arrangements for the administration of Service wills

**DIN 2014DIN01-173:** Closure of CCS framework RM692 – non-permanent staff and its replacement service

**DIN 2014DIN01-172:** Amendments to the promotion process to band B

**DIN 2014DIN01-171:** Amendments to the promotion process to senior civil service pay band one

**DIN 2014DIN01-169:** Defence humanist late summer meeting

**DIN 2014DIN01-168:** Pensions tax – annual allowance notification tax year 2013/14

**DIN 2014DIN01-167:** NHS agenda for change performance management and knowledge and skills framework update

**DIN 2014DIN01-166:** Exit interview requirements for voluntary outflow leavers

**DIN 2014DIN01-165:** Governance of adaptive sport

**DIN 2014DIN01-164:** Permanent transfer overseas – schooling allowances

**DIN 2014DIN01-163:** Terms and conditions of service for specialist officers in the Army Reserve group B General Service Corps

**DIN 2014DIN01-162:** Pensions tax relief – annual allowance – lifetime allowance

**DIN 2014DIN02-015:** Volunteers for specialist human intelligence duties – Op Samson

**DIN 2014DIN02-014:** Policy for the issuing of carriage certificates for portable ICT devices

**DIN 2014DIN03-024:** Contact with the media and communicating in public

**DIN 2014DIN03-023:** The provision of temporary landing zone safety officer training

**DIN 2014DIN04-166:** Logistic commodities restructure

**DIN 2014DIN04-165:** SA80 – deletion of items no longer used

**DIN 2014DIN04-164:** Black electrical insulation tape (green line) 5970 00 9559976

**DIN 2014DIN04-163:** Physical training equipment procurement process 2014/15

**DIN 2014DIN04-161:** Declaration of obsolete/obsolescent of the following ammunition

**Continued on page 57**



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### Ranking of all Independent Schools offering day and boarding from the 2013 Daily Telegraph chart, for % A\*/A A-level and equivalent qualifications. (NR = Not ranked, • Means last year's results as this year's not available.)

1	94%	Cardiff 6th Form Coll	75	45%	Truro School
2	86%	Wycombe Abbey	76	45%	Kent College
3	81%	St Swithun's School	77	45%	St Leonards
4	80%	<b>QE College</b>	78	45%	Harrogate Ladies'
5	79%	Concord College	NR	45%	Fyling Hall School
6	74%	Brighton College	79	44%	ACS Cobham School
7	72%	St Mary's Ascot	80	44%	Christ College
8	71%	Badminton School	81	44%	Mill Hill School
9	71%	Benenden School	82	43%	St Bees School
10	71%	St Catherine's	83	43%	Ampleforth College
11	71%	Wellington College	84	43%	Windermere School
12	68%	<b>Faculty of QE</b>	85	43%	The Leys School
13	68%	St Mary's Calne	86	42%	St Mary's Shftbury
14	68%	Canford School	87	42%	Stonyhurst College
15	67%	Hurtwood House	88	41%	King William's Coll
16	67%	Oundle School	89	41%	New Hall School
17	66%	Dulwich College	90	41%	Wellington School
18	65%	St Clare's	91	41%	Burgess Hill Girls
19	64%	Headington School	92	41%	King's School
20	64%	Malvern St James	93	41%	Royal Dungannon
21	63%	Godolphin School	94	41%	Wells Cathedral S
22	62%	Caterham School	95	40%	Queen's College
23	62%	Moreton Hall	96	40%	Glenalmond College
24	61%	Bromsgrove School	97	40%	St Margaret's Bushey
25	61%	Royal High Sch Bath	98	39%	St Edmund's College
26	60%	Ruthin School	99	38%	Purcell School of Music
27	60%	St Michael's School	100	38%	Bruton School for Girls
28	59%	King's School	101	38%	Stamford School
29	58%	Marlborough College	102	38%	Wrekin College
30	58%	d'Overbroeck's Coll	103	38%	Victoria College
31	57%	St Leonards-Mayfield	104	38%	Leighton Park School
32	57%	City of Ldn Freemans	105	37%	Welbeck College
33	56%	Talbot Heath School	106	37%	Tring Park School
34	56%	Haileybury	107	37%	St James Senior Boys'
35	56%	Queenswood	108	35%	Ratcliffe College
36	56%	St Peter's School	109	35%	Rossall School
37	55%	Warwick School	110	35%	Kirkham Grammar
38	55%	Woldingham School	111	35%	Lord Wandsworth Coll
39	55%	Queen Margaret's	112	35%	Ashville College
40	54%	Rugby School	113	34%	Plymouth College
41	54%	Roedean School	114	34%	St Edmund's Cantbury
42	54%	Bedford School	115	34%	St Joseph's College
43	54%	Uppingham School	116	34%	Pocklington School
44	54%	Bishop's Stortford	117	34%	Stamford High School
45	53%	Lancing College	118	33%	The King's School Ely
46	53%	Haberdasher Girls	119	33%	Bede's Senior School
47	53%	Oakham School	120	33%	Sutton Valence School
48	53%	Gresham's School	121	33%	Langley School
49	53%	St Francis' College	122	32%	Battle Abbey School
50	52%	St Teresa's, Eff	123	31%	Felsted School
51	52%	Brentwood School	124	31%	Kelly College
52	52%	Surbiton High School	125	31%	Ackworth School
53	51%	St Mary's Cambridge	126	30%	Millfield School
54	51%	Loughborough Gram	127	30%	The Oratory School
55	51%	Merchiston Castle	128	30%	Sedburgh School
56	50%	Bootham School	129	29%	Farringtons School
57	50%	Dauntsey's School	130	28%	Shebbear College
58	50%	Reed's School	131	28%	Clayesmore School
59	50%	Marymount School	132	28%	Box Hill School
60	50%	Kingswood School	NR	28%	Giggleswick
61	49%	Ipswich School	NR	28%	Polam
62	49%	Merchant Taylors B	133	26%	Tettenhall College
63	49%	Prior Park College	134	25%	St John's College
64	48%	Tudor Hall School	135	25%	Woodhouse Grove
65	48%	Downside School	136	24%	Sibford School
66	48%	St John's School	137	24%	Culford School
67	47%	Mount School (York)	138	24%	Friends' School
68	46%	Chigwell School	139	24%	Lincoln Minster School
69	46%	Chetham's Music	140	24%	Hampshire Collegiate
70	46%	Sidcot School	141	23%	LVS Ascot
71	46%	Kimbolton School	142	22%	Seaford College
72	46%	Bradfield College	NR•	21%	Barnard Castle
73	46%	Cheltenham College	143	20%	Trinity School
74	46%	Bury Grammar Girls	144	18%	The Royal Ballet School
			145	18%	Fulneck School
			NR•	16%	Read School Drax



**DIN 2014DIN04-160:** Management and governance of MoD aircraft storage

**DIN 2014DIN04-159:** Amendments to operational medical modules contents – inclusion of B Braun Infusomat space volumetric pump and perfusor space TCI syringe pump within medical modules

**DIN 2014DIN04-158:** Secondary surveillance radar mode S 24-bit address management

**DIN 2014DIN04-157:** Declaration of ALC obsolete equipment

**DIN 2014DIN04-156:** Declaration of cryptographic equipment BID/150, BID/310, BID/370, BID/460/31, BID/580, BID/610, BID/660, BID/700, BID/710, BID/730, BID/740, BID/800, BID/860, BID/880, BID/910, BID/920, BID/940, BID/2370, BIDC/1490 and BIDC/4000 as being obsolete by Crypto Services for Defence

**DIN 2014DIN04-155:** Declaration of cryptographic equipment KG-94 as having reached a state of obsolescence by Crypto Services for Defence

**DIN 2014DIN04-154:** Declaration of cryptographic equipment KG-66 as having reached a state of obsolescence by Crypto Services for Defence

**DIN 2014DIN04-153:** Declaration of cryptographic equipment BIDC/5000 as being obsolete by Crypto Services for Defence

**DIN 2014DIN04-152:** Declaration of cryptographic equipment BID/1550 as having reached a state of obsolescence by Crypto Services for Defence

**DIN 2014DIN04-151:** Support Chain Information Services – decommissioning of Unicom system

**DIN 2014DIN04-150:** Amendments to operational medical modules contents (July-August 2014)

**DIN 2014DIN04-148:** Army and Royal Navy demanding working at height personal protection equipment using MJDI

**DIN 2014DIN04-147:** GPMG – deletion of items no longer used

**DIN 2014DIN04-145:** Sea Survival Equipment Log block amendment 79

**DIN 2014DIN04-144:** Declaration of obsolete equipment – Type 37 and 37A TRU

**DIN 2014DIN04-142:** Declaration of obsolete – MK25 NRM portable water contamination monitor, NSN 6665-99-736-4761

**DIN 2014DIN04-141:** Amendments to operational medical modules contents – inclusion of HeartStart FR3 defibrillator within medical modules

**DIN 2014DIN05-026:** Defence Fire Risk Management Organisation post-transformation full operating capability

**DIN 2014DIN05-025:** Temporary duty visits to the Federal Republic of Germany

**DIN 2014DIN05-024:** Cross-government secure intranet service – update to process

**DIN 2014DIN05-023:** The future of defence communications – the formation of the Directorate of Defence Communications

**DIN 2014DIN06-014:** Land systems serious equipment failure/serious incident reporting procedure and stakeholder responsibilities

**DIN 2014DIN07-142:** Corporate accountancy training scheme recruitment

**DIN 2014DIN07-141:** Pre-deployment requirement for automated significant event reporting training, and account activation for all Defence Medical Services personnel and other trade groups deploying in a medical role on Permanent Joint Headquarters-led operations

**DIN 2014DIN07-140:** Adventurous training expeditions to Morocco in 2015

**DIN 2014DIN07-139:** Update of defence training support manuals

**DIN 2014DIN07-138:** Authority for Army orienteering 2014/15

**DIN 2014DIN07-137:** QARANC post-registration selection board application procedure and

professional development course list

**DIN 2014DIN07-136:** The defence logistics staff course – general outline and application process

**DIN 2014DIN07-135:** Security and administration of biathlon

**DIN 2014DIN07-134:** Regular officer military knowledge programme – revised policy

**DIN 2014DIN07-133:** Introduction of online training for ethical issues for medical personnel awareness – PMS 124A

**DIN 2014DIN07-132:** Revised postgraduate education policy

**DIN 2014DIN07-131:** The Services Offshore Sailing Centre

**DIN 2014DIN07-130:** The Sandhurst group senior non-commissioned officer instructors' cadre 2015

**DIN 2014DIN07-129:** Exercise Rucksack – medical instruction

**DIN 2014DIN07-128:** Instructor training courses for FOAP(T) staff

**DIN 2014DIN07-127:** Qualified space instructor course 3 – call for applications

**Annex A:** AWS qualified space instructor course application

**DIN 2014DIN09-014:** Attendance at royal investitures

**DIN 2014DIN10-052:** Army Squash Rackets Association sponsored championships 2014/15

**DIN 2014DIN10-051:** Army martial arts International Taekwondo Federation basic/intermediate course current

**DIN 2014DIN10-049:** Army martial arts introduction course

**DIB50/14:** PUS writes to staff on the new leadership of the Defence Infrastructure Organisation

**DIB48/14:** Review of corporate services

NO. 875

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EVENTS



# REVIEWS



## DARK ART

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# MOVIES

A full-page background image of actor Jack O'Connell in a military role. He is wearing a green combat jacket with a large backpack, looking down with a somber expression. The background is a blurred outdoor setting.

PICK OF THE MONTH: '71

## **BENDING THE RULES**

JACK O'CONNELL SHINES AS  
A SOLDIER IN BELFAST



Review: Joe Clapson

**A**HELLISH situation with streets on fire, children enlisted as militants and fresh-faced soldiers thrown into a war they're not prepared for is Yann Demange's depiction of the Troubles in Northern Ireland.

And with '71 being his directorial debut, the bar has now been set very high for future projects.

The movie sees the deployment of a platoon of newly-trained British troops to Belfast and gives a vivid and brutal account of a war that raged at the heart of the community.

With the intense fighting providing a chaotic backdrop the focus of the story is on Gary Hook, an inexperienced private soldier, played by the sublime Jack O'Connell (*Skins*, *This Is England*).

His battles against both a hate-filled enemy and his own emotions after leaving a young son at home, watching a comrade shot at point-blank range and having his superiors lie to him, make for a tense and affecting drama.

"The idea of young men sent to fight dirty wars struck me as pertinent," explained Demange.

"Often, they have more in common with the kids they're pitted against than the men they're taking orders from. It could be Iraq or Afghanistan.

"In Gary I saw the opportunity to explore the vulnerable masculinity of an anchorless boy with no family who is looking for a tribe to belong to and ultimately finds it in the British Army, only to be betrayed."

On his first day on the battlefield, which looks just like a normal street, Pte Hook is left behind by his unit following a violent riot and finds himself on the run from Provisional IRA members bent on killing him.

A shaky camera brings pulse-raising realism to the manhunt as the movie follows the soldier's attempt to survive while disorientated in an unknown and lethal landscape.

With a strong script from Gregory Burke and a pounding musical score from David Holmes the feature succeeds in painting a picture where all sides – loyalists, nationalists, police and the Army – are involved in murky negotiations, infighting and back-stabbing.

"From the reaction we've had, from people who lived through the Troubles, it feels like the film is an honest portrayal," said O'Connell.

"There's no incrimination – it's the story of a war, and in war the rules get bent."

The film certainly scores highly on shock value with graphic scenes. Its young actors also lend a credible realism to the title.

"They [the opposition] were 21-year-olds and younger, very similar ages to the lads in the British Army, just boys," added Demange.

Alongside the captivating dystopic visuals of a city transformed into a wasteland, the real triumph of '71 is the insight it provides into the human side of a young soldier's experiences.

The movie offers a genuine perspective as opposed to that of the gung-ho, gun-wielding military operator usually offered up by Hollywood.

Highlighting a desperate time in British history, '71 is a fantastic, eye-opening brutal snapshot of a devastating domestic war.

Service personnel and civvies alike are recommended to watch it. ■

**VERDICT:** An outstanding action drama title that will shock and educate ★★★★★



### CAPTAIN AMERICA: THE WINTER SOLDIER out now

THE original *Captain America* film was a surprising success and **Steve Rogers** continues to be one of the most likeable Avengers. Cameos from other A-listers are common and no expense is generally spared in special effects. It's a shame this instalment suffers from low confidence. It is unapologetic as "dead" heroes rise again and again. Viewers won't be convinced.

Cpl Paul Thomas, Int Corps

**VERDICT:** Silly yet entertaining – but don't expect depth ★★★★★



### THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN 2 out now

DISNEY'S latest offering more than lives up to the standard of the rebooted franchise. The movie has you rooting for the protagonists and builds towards a visually stunning showdown. Slick action, convincing characters and sufficient "Spidey" quips will please diehard fans. Action movie aficionados will be left eager for the next instalment.

Capt Alex Cramphorn, AAC

**VERDICT:** A job well done for Disney that will please action fans ★★★★★



### KIDNAPPED out October 13

A FAMILY move to a dream house in Madrid but three violent hooded thieves break in and take the women hostage while their family bank accounts are raided, in what quickly becomes a tragic night of terror. This subtitled film progresses from frightening to violent, bloody and graphic and, in the end, quite horrifying. I'm glad I didn't watch it with my wife as she would probably have had nightmares.

Musn Tom Greenhalf, CAMUS

**VERDICT:** Very bloody; not one for a night in with your other half ★★★★★



### TAPPED OUT out now

I HAVE honestly never seen a movie this bad before. The script is terrible, the acting is awful and even the soundtrack is bad. It is essentially about a young lad who learns karate in a couple of weeks, enters a tournament and defeats five humungous blokes on the same night. UFC and MMA features have become more frequent in recent years but *Warrior* set a benchmark and this offering falls way short of that.

Cpl Adam Jackson, Para

**VERDICT:** One to avoid unless you are an avid MMA fan ★★★★★



### THE LEGO MOVIE out now

A TITLE that at first appears to be a money-generating scheme for Lego quickly turns into a bright and cheerful adventure full of clever jokes and highly likeable characters. Hapless hero Emmet must foil an evil plan using allies such as a crazy Unikitty, a clueless Batman and of course numerous Lego bricks. Children will love this film but much of the humour is for the enjoyment of adult viewers as well.

Cpl Paul Thomas, Int Corps

**VERDICT:** Fantastic creative fun for old and young alike ★★★★★



### WIN... 300: RISE OF AN EMPIRE

HAVING proved a firm favourite with the *Soldier* gang when we reviewed it earlier in the year, the epic follow-up to blockbuster *300* makes a welcome return to our pages this month. We have teamed up with Warner Home Video to offer copies of the DVD to five lucky readers. To be in with a chance of winning one just tell us which member of our team reviewed the movie back in April and gave it a four-star rating. Send your answers to the usual postal address or alternatively by email to [comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk)

**Closing date: October 31**



# GAMES



PICK OF THE MONTH:  
GAMESCOM

## LET THE GAMES BEGIN

CONVENTION HINTS AT  
EXCITING END TO 2014



**T**HE German city of Cologne again played host to the annual Gamescom convention, where members of the console community got an early look at the latest developments and upcoming releases.

With last year's event featuring only a handful of titles for the next generation of platforms there was no shortage of excitement ahead of the 2014 extravaganza and the developers did not disappoint.

Big hitters such as Electronic Arts, Ubisoft and Activision all had new offerings on show, many of which were hotly anticipated additions to some heavyweight franchises.

For those who love fast cars and pushing the pedal to the metal Sony's *Drive Club* is definitely worth consideration when it is released on PlayStation 4 this month.

It offers an incredibly authentic and immersive motoring experience that lets you feel the exhilaration of racing in some of the most powerful vehicles in the world.

The game also connects you with your friends, creating a shared experience in which you can send and receive challenges and keep up to speed with your team's performance levels.

If all-out action is your thing then you should look no further than *Call of Duty: Advanced Warfare*, which hits stores on November 4.

The latest instalment in the award-winning series envisions the powerful battlegrounds of the future, where both technology and military tactics have evolved to usher in a new era of combat.

Players use exoskeletons to move around more vertiginous maps and this innovative addition allows characters to boost-jump and dash for manoeuvrability and use evasive actions such as dodges and slides.

The multiplayer is fast-paced and futuristic and with built-in abilities that can increase speed, deploy shields, locate enemy positions and activate an anti-explosive system there is no shortage of carnage.

At the opposite end of the spectrum is *Assassin's Creed: Unity* (due for release on October 28), which offers the usual array of stealthy missions as you are plunged into the terror of the 1789 French Revolution.

With starving inhabitants about to take up arms and fight for equality on the streets of Paris the story focuses on Arno, a young man wounded by the loss of those he loved, who embarks on a deadly path of redemption.

This pursuit throws him into the middle of a ruthless struggle for the fate of a nation and transforms him into a true master assassin.

The game boasts a stunning open-world city and you can take full control of the parkour mechanics, while a reinvented fighting system creates an improved and richer combat experience.

While these titles proved to be the highlights they did not overshadow the other offerings in the mix and EA's *Battlefield Hardline* is definitely worth keeping an eye out for.

With a number of major releases now firmly in the pipeline it promises to be an enthralling end to 2014. ■

## CLOSE COMBAT: GATEWAY TO CAEN

for PC

THIS is a game you play at the strategic, tactical command level, putting yourself in the boots of both the generals and platoon leaders of the Second World War. You will find yourself manoeuvring regiments or individual squads in close-combat situations using everything from small arms to tanks in order to triumph against the enemy. Graphically it is no masterpiece but looks are not what this is about. If you're seeking a historical, tactical brain-picker this could be for you.

**SSgt Lee Gibbs, REME**

**VERDICT:** One that requires patience and in-depth thought ★★★★★



## SACRED 3

for Xbox/PS3 and 4

EVER since the likes of *Street Fighter* and *Double Dragon*, nothing has bettered the feeling of bashing buttons and destroying wave after wave of enemies. *Sacred 3* does not disappoint in this department and it is wonderfully coloured with non-stop playability. But that is pretty much all it has to offer. The game is shallow and totally linear and nothing much changes in the 38 levels – despite various attempts to offer an alternative. The multiplayer is slightly better but even that becomes repetitive after a while.

**Sgt Craig Backhouse, Coldm Gds**

**VERDICT:** Excellent smash and slash but lacks longevity ★★★★★



## MADDEN 2015

for Xbox/PS3 and 4

ELECTRONIC Arts start their annual sporting reboot with the latest instalment in the *Madden* series. Hardened fans will be delighted with the slick graphics and quicker gameplay but the true highlight is the enhancements that have been made to the defensive side of things, where you can now take charge of a single player and steer his attempt to maul the opposing quarterback. This maybe one for the purists but there is plenty of fun for newcomers as well.

**Richard Long, Soldier**

**VERDICT:** The gridiron gang is back with a bang ★★★★★



## RISEN 3: TITAN LORDS

for Xbox 360/PS3/PC

A GOOD role-playing title will grip you from the outset thanks to the twists and turns of a unique and exciting storyline. Unfortunately, *Risen 3: Titan Lords* is a failure. The plot can only be described as "dull" and the mix of poor graphics and terrible voice acting make this a struggle to play for anything more than an hour. Younger gamers may appreciate what's on offer but be warned; there is bad language. However, for me, as an avid fan of the genre, it is a disappointment.

**Sgt Mike O'Neill, RLC**

**VERDICT:** Avoid and purchase the new *Assassin's Creed* instead ★★★★★



## DIABLO III: ULTIMATE EVIL EDITION

for Xbox One/PS4

THE *Ultimate Evil Edition* of *Diablo III: Reaper of Souls* is a slash and hack action role-player. You can assume the guise of one of six powerful heroes – Barbarian, Demon Hunter, Monk, Witch Doctor, Wizard or Crusader – and embark on a dark journey to save the world of Sanctuary from ancient and sinister forces. This game isn't really my kettle of fish; I didn't have a clue what the characters were talking about most of the time but I did enjoy slaying zombies with a massive axe.

**Sgt Rupert Frere, RLC**

**VERDICT:** A bit mythical but enjoyable all the same ★★★★★



## WIN... CLOSE COMBAT: GATEWAY TO CAEN

THE latest release in the critically-acclaimed *Close Combat* strategy series has arrived on PC. *Gateway to Caen* charts the British offensive following

the Allied landings at Normandy and the ensuing battles between Field Marshals Erwin Rommel and Bernard Montgomery. *Soldier* has teamed up with Matrix Games to give away ten copies of the release. To be in with a chance of winning one tell us the nickname by which Rommel was popularly known. Answers on a postcard to the usual address or via email to [comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk)

**Closing date: October 31**





# MUSIC

PICK OF THE MONTH:  
ROYAL BLOOD

## **BLOOD BROTHERS**

DYNAMIC DUO DELIVER ROCK  
MASTERCLASS



Review: Richard Long

**H**AVING been virtual ever-presents on the summer festival circuit Brighton duo Royal Blood have delivered another treat to their rapidly-expanding fan base with the release of their self-titled debut album.

Since forming in 2013 the two-piece have enjoyed a spectacular upward trajectory thanks to the blues-rock dynamism that stems from their pounding drums and heavily distorted guitars.

Inevitable comparisons with the likes of the White Stripes and Black Keys swiftly followed but such lofty talk has served as anything but a distraction.

They were championed on the BBC's Sound of 2014 list and received further high-profile backing from the Arctic Monkeys' Matt Helders, who wore their T-shirt as his band performed a triumphant headline set at Glastonbury last summer.

Singles *Out of the Black* and *Little Monster* were released to critical acclaim and when they returned to the studio to complete work on their first album the drive to succeed was greater than ever.

"We just wanted to go in and write the best songs we could and then pick our top ten to make a really strong record," said singer/guitarist Mike Kerr.

"I feel like we have done that.

"My favourite is one of the last ones we wrote, called *Better Strangers*. We took it to the studio in pieces and spent a whole day recording it. That effort has paid off as it is a great track. For me, it really sums up the band's sound.

"There is another song on there which is the very first one we ever wrote. We performed it during a demo session that cost just £300 and three tracks from those demos have now made the final album."

Given the fact Royal Blood are comprised of just two members the wall of sound they produce is an impressive tribute to the chemistry that has been struck between Kerr and drummer Ben Thatcher.

Their pulsating rock edge is evident throughout the record, which offered a distinctly entertaining challenge to co-producer Tom Dalgety.

"It was great fun for me to try and make these two instruments sound as huge as possible," he said.

"The riffs are as heavy as anything but there is also a really cool groove. It is enormous in every aspect."

Enormous is a word that does this offering justice as sweeping, guitar-laden anthems attack the eardrums from the outset.

The aforementioned singles revel in the limelight and *Figure it Out* delivers an outstanding rock riff that starts life as something akin to the White Stripes before descending into an energy-driven jam session.

But these highlights should not overshadow the remaining tracks which sit perfectly together on what is a highly impressive debut from a powerhouse duo. ■

**VERDICT:** Hard guitars and deafening drum work make this a real winner ★★★★★

## Concrete Love by The Courteeners

HAD *Concrete Love* not been the follow-up to last year's bestselling album *Anna* it would be termed a good effort. Unfortunately

it is, and it isn't half as good. The problem seems to be that this is a rushed affair that was thrown out quickly to capitalise on the success of their previous work. While *Summer* is the obvious lead due to its bouncy guitar style, *International* is a poor offering thanks to its throwaway lyrics. And this is the story of the record; good song followed by bad.



Capt Damian Hern, AGC (SPS)

**VERDICT:** A patchy affair that fails to make the big league ★★★★★

## Leave a Scar by Blackberry Smoke

AS with cliches, I try to avoid live albums like the plague.

However, *Leave A Scar*, from Atlanta's **Blackberry Smoke**,

has a rough charm which suits its blues-rock roots, giving it an air of authenticity and a welcoming rich sound. The vocals might not be to everyone's taste but the quality of the tracks was high enough for the listening to be an enjoyable experience – despite the fact I hadn't heard the studio versions. If you like your rock southern and your blues live and a bit raw then you could do far worse.



Maj Fraser Dowling, AGC (ETS)

**VERDICT:** Pour a Jack Daniels, sit back and enjoy each track ★★★★★

## Silent Assassins by Mike LePond

THIS is the first solo effort by **Symphony X** bass virtuoso **Mike LePond**. The songs

are all anthemic works designed to be experienced as opposed to simply heard. The title track best encapsulates this and features stratospheric vocals, galloping riffs with furious shredding, keyboard interludes and sublime bass solos. Beating with a classic and earthy pulse, it's the heart of this album that gives it the power-metal tag. Definitely one for fans of the likes of **Iron Maiden**, **Dio**, **Dream Theatre** or **Judas Priest**.



Matt Walpole, ex-PWRR

**VERDICT:** A nine-track voyage through a power-metal landscape ★★★★★

## Lead to Light by Nico Vega

WITH a singing style last heard on albums from **Blondie** and **Jefferson Airplane**, **Nico Vega** burst into

my eardrums with something that packs far more punch than most current pop/rock offerings. *Bang Bang* will have you thinking "where have I heard this before?", while *Dance* will see you moving round the house with a big smile on your face. The standout song is *I Believe* which mixes the very best of pop, dance and indie. The whole record is a joy to listen to and well worth your time.



LCpl Scott Roberts, Rifles

**VERDICT:** An album that has the potential to be a modern classic ★★★★★

## Introducing Morrissey by Morrissey

IF you love **Morrissey** then

he needs no introduction. If you don't then you have either scrubbed him from your memory or been disappointed at the reappearance of a musical dinosaur. This release is simply an opportunity for his extensive fan base to enjoy his 1995 British concert tour on DVD but there appears to be no reason for anyone else to want to own this. I am sure Morrissey is not looking for new followers and that means he can continue to rein in the world of past-it rockers.



Maj Euan Mathieson, Yorks

**VERDICT:** A relic of the 1980s and 90s – one to avoid ★★★★★

## Creation by The Pierces

**SISTERS Allison and Catherine Pierce**

relocated to Southern California and experimented with the psychedelic brew ayahuasca before starting work on their fifth studio album – *Creation*. Given their immersion in such a freethinking environment it was somewhat surprising to discover that this record is slightly darker compared to what has gone before. However, their trademark harmonies are as strong as ever and tracks such as *The Devil is a Lonely Night* and *I Can Feel* help make this an above-average offering.



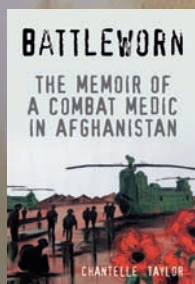
Richard Long, *Soldier*

**VERDICT:** A decent enough record that fails to fully sparkle ★★★★★



# BOOKS

PICK OF THE MONTH:  
BATTLEWORN



Chantelle Taylor's  
*Battleworn* is out now,  
priced £11.50

## FIERCE FEMALES

FORMER MEDIC SPEAKS OUT ON ISSUE  
OF WOMEN ON THE FRONT LINE



Interview: Becky Clark

**W**ITH the British Army currently reviewing its ban on women serving in combat roles, 2014 could become a significant milestone in the battle of the sexes.

Whether they are eventually permitted to join fighting units or not, females have already been serving with distinction in a variety of dangerous posts for a long time.

One woman with a clearer insight than most into life on the front line is former medic Chantelle Taylor, whose memoir, *Battleworn*, recounts her two-month stint in Nad-e Ali attached to B Company, 5th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland in 2008.

The story was previously released under the title *Bad Company*, but after parting ways with her original publisher and rewriting the text, the ex-Servicewoman told *Soldier* she feels that the book now does justice to the work of combat medics.

"I hope it gives a rare glimpse into the physical and psychological struggles of troops at war," Taylor said.

"I don't want it to be just about me, though – what all of us achieved in that place as a group was remarkable."

During the defence of their isolated patrol base, B Coy had 66 men wounded and four killed.

Forced to take up arms herself when her vehicle came under attack, Taylor became the first woman confirmed to have killed an enemy fighter in close combat, but the 38-year-old was quick to play down the attention she got after the incident as "headline-grabbing rubbish".

"I was just there and there wasn't a great deal I could have done differently," she added.

While Taylor is clearly able to hold her own against her male counterparts – she now works in Baghdad in diplomatic security – she remains cautious about the idea of women being allowed to serve in combat formations.

"I think we need to be progressive, not just tick boxes or be politically correct," she commented.

"We should ask 'what is the operational need?' and make sure we use people effectively, whether that's males or females."

"By forcing things to happen too quickly I worry we're setting women up to fail and that would undo all the amazing achievements of the medics and Apache pilots and so on."

In her second career Taylor has to attain exactly the same fitness standards as her male colleagues – she said it took her a year to reach the required amount of pull-ups – so she is adamant that the criteria should not be lowered for women joining the Infantry.

"Absolutely not!" she said.

"I don't want to put women off but it's important to be realistic about what life is like in the Infantry – it's physically exhausting and definitely not for the fainthearted."

"You have to earn the guys' respect and trust and that means being willing for them to know you inside out, including seeing all your bad points because they let each other see that."

"Can you imagine a 17-year-old girl going into an Infantry environment? I couldn't have done it."

"I actually think we have the balance right now but if the policy changes anyone who does put their head above the parapet will have thousands of women waiting for them to lead the way."

"If you are going to be that woman then make sure you're on top of your game." ■

## Well Past Trouble

by Rob Lofthouse

BASED upon the memoirs of the author's grandfather, this first-person narrative revolves around the 6th Airborne Division's assault on Pegasus Bridge. Rob Lofthouse succeeds in creating a likeable character and bringing the horrors of battle to life. Easy to understand and free from statistics and strategy, this book would be well-suited for use in schools when teaching the Second World War. The only fault lies with the publisher for the unenticing, out-of-focus cover.



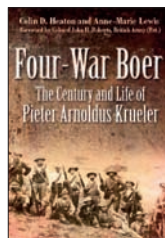
### SSgt Wallace Stephenson, Int Corps

**VERDICT:** A pleasure to read – don't let the front cover put you off ★★★★★

## Four-War Boer

by Colin Heaton and Anne-Marie Lewis

PETER Krueger was a survivor – he died in 1986 aged 100. Yet he chose the wrong side in several conflicts, from Rhodesia to the First World War. Even his own people, the Boers, ruled on borrowed time. Nonetheless, this unusual man's reminiscences would have been interesting if left to tell their own story with good introductory comments. Instead, they are interwoven with a less valuable narrative. The South African War chapters are especially inaccurate.



### Dr Rodney Atwood, military historian

**VERDICT:** A remarkable story but lacks an informed commentary ★★★★★

## The Somme Battlefield

by R Adams-Cairns

THE First World War centenary is upon us and the Army has rediscovered the joys of battlefield studies and staff rides. Those *Soldier* readers who have got the bug are currently spoilt for choice when it comes to guidebooks. This text is a very good starting point for a first look at the Somme. It provides a well-balanced blend of narrative, maps and photographs. It is by no means a comprehensive guide but it is an excellent stand-alone tour.



### Mike Peters, ex-AAC

**VERDICT:** This battlefield companion offers something for everyone ★★★★★

## Helmand to the Himalayas

by David Wiseman

IT'S been some time since I read a book within 48 hours but this title had me so transfixed that I forgot my iPhone even existed. The fast-paced account of a Serviceman's devastating experiences on Operation Herrick 11, and the resulting gunshot wound that changed his life, will no doubt have very wide appeal. David Wiseman's story is one of triumph – and a great example of how much military personnel can go on to achieve after a career in the British Army.



### Sarah Goldthorpe, Soldier

**VERDICT:** As thoughtful as it is shocking; an inspiring read ★★★★★

## An Unplanned Encounter

by Jonathan Husband

INSPIRED by true events, this novel gives an insight into a rarely-acknowledged consequence of war. It recounts the story of the author's mother, who was raped by a respected engineer and then defied her disapproving parents by keeping the resulting baby. The book follows the lives of those involved as they struggle to cope with the fallout from the assault. A poignant tale that emphasises the sacrifices the mother made in tough circumstances.



### Capt Damian Hern, AGC (SPS)

**VERDICT:** A good, if difficult, read about a different side of war ★★★★★

## Hal Moore

by Mike Guardia

THIS biography of Lt Gen Hal Moore charts an esteemed career in the US Army that spanned 37 years. He served around the world from Oslo to Korea but his stint as the commanding officer of 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment is perhaps his most well-known appointment – one later immortalized by Mel Gibson in the film *We Were Soldiers*. The book is a must-read for any commander, junior and senior alike. Many valuable lessons can be drawn from Moore's outlook on leadership.



### SSgt Mike Owens, RE

**VERDICT:** I enjoyed this so much I read it in record time ★★★★★



# TOP GEAR

PICK OF THE MONTH: SPINDRIFT 300

## A TENT WITH TEETH

SERVICEWOMAN PUTS NEW MODEL TO TEST WITH  
PLEASING RESULT





Review: Lt Col Melissa Bowerman, RAVC

If you're on the lookout for a good base-camp tent, you could do a lot worse than Force 10's Spindrift 300.

Having undertaken various climbing expeditions, including Everest, I would happily rely on this piece of kit.

Although it is not exactly lightweight at nearly six kilograms, the extra effort required to carry it is certainly repaid.

I put the tent to the test and quickly came to the conclusion that this equipment is very durable, not least because of its ripstop material – a special woven fabric that is resistant to tearing.

It has lots of handy features, just as you would expect from an expedition tent. These include snow valances, ski-compatible peg points and even a repair kit.

The three-man dome can be pitched as one or flysheet-first. In reality, I think you can forget the second option as the inner section has multiple hanging points, making it quite fiddly and time-consuming – exactly what you don't want when a front is approaching and the wind is picking up.

One short pole creates the porch and four more of equal length feed through tough sleeves and cross easily at reinforced points. Simple.

As expected, some robust handling is required to bring the Spindrift 300 into shape but once the remainder of the flysheet has been secured with its glove-friendly clips, the sturdy structure is a very quick pitch.

This is ideal for when your body is at the limit of its endurance and you just want to gain shelter, rest and get a brew on.

Unfortunately, the tent poles bend rather easily. This threw the shape of it somewhat on second pitching. But with a bit of manipulation they can be put back into place.

Another important feature is the fact that this tent feels safe and secure – ideal for sitting out a storm.

Its low profile enhances its ability to cope with high winds and the whole thing feels solid, even without pitching the guy lines.

Inside, the dome feels spacey with near-vertical sides, which helps with headroom when sleeping to one edge. There are plenty of storage nets and a fairly small gear loft enables easy kit drying.

The rear porch is a good size for storage and the front porch is big for an expedition tent, with plenty of room for cooking.

Despite keeping an eye out for problems with the groundsheet, condensation, half-mesh doors and the tent's ability to ventilate, I could find none.

And while it may not be the most common name currently adorning base camps across the world, the Spindrift 300 certainly seems to be a strong option.

Although I didn't get to test this tent in the very harshest of conditions, I rate it highly.

The only real downside to the product is its £540 price tag. ■

**VERDICT:** Sturdy and secure – this new-kid-on-the-block is ideal for base camp ★★★★★

# GREAT FOR OUTDOORS

Our favourite new additions to the camping world...

## KIWI THERMIC JACKET

THIS insulator is a good choice for cold and wet weather conditions. Designed by Craghoppers using the manufacturer's special waterproof technology, the jacket has a warm synthetic lining and features a brushed inner collar, chin guard, zip-off hood and eight different pockets – one of which is large enough to take an OS map. Adjustable waist, hem and cuff fastenings make it a snug fit and size options range from S to XXL.

[www.craghoppers.com](http://www.craghoppers.com)

£110



## ARAVIS TENT

A COMPACT two-man tent, the Aravis is perfect for those who don't want to carry much weight but still need decent protection. Aimed at weekend campers and festival-goers more than hardcore adventurers, it is one of several decent options in Coleman's 2014 range.

The tent is quick to pitch, with multiple doors and adjustable ventilation. Two separate porches make it easy to organise your gear, and there is a three-person model available too.

[www.coleman.eu](http://www.coleman.eu)

£129.99



## ETA SPIDER STOVE

SWEDISH stove specialist Primus has introduced a new lightweight model to its collection. Designed for use by two people, the set contains a burner, windshield, one-litre pot with non-stick coating and lid with integrated colander. The whole system weighs 599 grams and easily fits into its bag along with a 100-gram LPG cartridge. Decent fuel efficiency and a quick warm-up time make this an attractive option for the great outdoors.

[www.primus.eu](http://www.primus.eu)

£60



## CPX 6 QUAD LANTERN

IF you have ever been frustrated by needing light in more than one place at a time when camping, this lantern might be for you. With four detachable panels, it is a good option for social group trips. Each separate section is easy to clip on and off and lasts for up to 170 hours on one charge, making it usable for the even the longest of bedtime reads. The system can be powered with batteries or a cartridge which can be purchased separately.

[www.coleman.eu](http://www.coleman.eu)

£89.99



WIN


## A PRIMUS STOVE

SOLDIER has teamed up with outdoor cooking specialist Primus ([www.primus.eu](http://www.primus.eu)) to offer two lucky readers the ETA Spider Stove, as reviewed above. To be in with a chance of winning this handy piece of kit, tell us which mountain Lt Col Bowerman recently climbed. Answers to the usual address or [comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk) by October 31.







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# SOLDIERSPORT

Sports Editor: Richard Long

Photographers: Graeme Main and Steve Dock

**Hot shot:** LCpl Derek Derenalagi (Mercian) throws for gold at the inaugural Invictus Games. Read more about the achievements of the Service's wounded sports stars on page 85...





# Sanger returns to duty

## 2014/15 fixtures

### Senior XV

**January 28:** Cambridge University (Aldershot)

**February 11:** Oxford University (Aldershot)

**February 25:** Crawshays Welsh (away)

**March 11:** London Welsh (Aldershot)

**April 1:** Bedford Blues (Bedford)

**April 29:** Royal Air Force (Aldershot)

**May 9:** Royal Navy (Twickenham)

### Under-23s

**October 18:** Cambridge (away)

**October 19:** Shelford (away)

**October 25:** Army Reserves (Aldershot)

**October 29:** Met Police (Aldershot)

**November 1:** Richmond (away)

**November 21:** Royal Navy (Aldershot)

**November 28:** Royal Air Force (RAF Halton)

**A** FAMILIAR face has returned to rugby union's top job as the all-conquering Army team prepares for yet another busy season on the pitch.

Capt Andy Sanger (RE), who steered the Reds to glory in the inaugural Defence World Cup in 2011, has resumed the role of head coach following a successful two years for the team under the guidance of SSgt Axel Rees (REME).

As well as securing international honours during his first spell in charge the officer masterminded two resounding victories over the Royal Navy at Twickenham and is hoping for more of the same second time round.

"My last tenure was relatively short compared to other personnel who have held the position," Sanger, who stepped down from the role in 2012, told *SoldierSport*.

"I was only there for 18 months but I managed to cram a lot in with two Inter-Services campaigns and the Defence World Cup.

"However, I felt that if I had another season I could have got a lot more out of the team.

"I was deploying to Afghanistan so that was not possible but when the chance to coach the guys again came up I jumped at it."

The coach's immediate



**“When the chance to coach the guys again came up I jumped at it. I am really excited”**

**Capt Andy Sanger (RE)**

priority is to mould a squad capable of winning next year's Forces showdown but with a second World Cup looming on the horizon there is a lot to think about.

"The first hurdle is the Inter-Services and it's important we don't look too far ahead," he explained. "That is our immediate goal.

"I want us to gain more of an ascendancy. The Royal Air Force and Navy put us under real pressure last season and we could have easily lost both fixtures so we need to be in a position to go out and dominate those games."

Sanger has started casting his eye over potential new recruits and was a keen onlooker at last month's Inter-Corps competition at the Army Rugby Stadium in Aldershot.

A number of key personnel have already committed themselves to the cause and with the likes of LCpl Sameasa Rokoduguni (Scots DG), LSgt Matt Dwyer (WG) and LCpl Ricky Reeves (RE, pictured left) training full-time with professional clubs there is no shortage of talent available.

"I have spoken to a fair few of the senior players and a lot of them are planning to push on to the World Cup next year," the former dual-code star said.

"We have got a strong base

## Sanger's timeline

**February:** Sanger makes a winning start with victories against Cambridge and Oxford Universities

**May:** A 41st Inter-Services title is secured as the soldiers defeat the Royal Navy 44-10 at Twickenham

**October:** The team lift the inaugural Defence World Cup following a 62-17 rout of their Australian rivals in the competition's final

**December:** The Reds are named team of the year at the annual Army Sports Awards

2011







to work with and we now need to build on that.

"We are hoping we don't see a lot of Roko in Army colours as he could be away representing England; that would be great for us.

"I know that Stuart Lancaster and Bath rate him very highly and if he had not

got injured at the wrong time last season he may well have been included in the squad for the New Zealand tests.

"Ricky Reeves will be looking to establish himself in the Premiership with London Welsh and Matty Dwyer is going strong at Ospreys.

"It is my job to make sure

they fully integrate with the squad when they are available to us but I don't see that being a problem.

"I'm really excited. I have a slightly different coaching team this time round and they will bring fresh ideas.

"We are all looking forward to the challenge." ■

## HEAVY hitters



### LCpl Samesa Rokoduguni

HAVING signed a contract extension at Bath the winger will be lighting up the Premiership once again but with England taking a keen interest his Army appearances may be limited.



### LCpl Ricky Reeves

A SUMMER move to newly-promoted London Welsh should give the front-row forward more opportunities at Premiership level following previous spells at Bedford Blues and Wasps.



### LSgt Matt Dwyer

CAPTAIN of the Army side last season, the hooker remains in full-time training with Welsh outfit Ospreys and made eight appearances for the side during the 2013/14 campaign.

**March:** The Army push Premiership giants Northampton Saints all the way before suffering an agonising 27-25 defeat in the rejuvenated Mobbs Memorial Match



**April:** LCpl Samesa Rokoduguni (Scots DG) crosses for four tries as the RAF are thrashed 59-0



**May:** Rokoduguni notches another hat-trick as the Navy are dismantled 48-9 at Twickenham



**December:** Sanger is shortlisted in the sports official category at the Army Sports Awards

2012



**T**HE Royal Military Academy Sandhurst may be celebrated as the training ground for the next generation of officers but the famous institution has also been helping to boost one of the Service's minority sports.

Last month the Army Equitation Association (AEA) welcomed Swedish showjumper Fred Bergendorff to the site's Brunei Stables as the host of a two-day coaching clinic for members of its development squad.

The sessions were aimed at preparing riders for the Royal Air Force Championships but also served to highlight the efforts being made to promote the discipline and attract new talent.

This is the first year the organisation has run a development team and ten soldiers have been selected for the programme, although greater numbers are still needed.

"It is all about getting professional riders in to help with our coaching," team member Maj Nicola Rush (RAMC) told *SoldierSport*.

"The King's Troop have been very supportive and having someone like Fred working with us will really improve our standard.

"He has immense experience and knowledge and that is essential if we are to be competitive against the RAF and Royal Navy, who both have strong and successful teams.

"We are still very much in our infancy but getting new people involved is proving to be difficult.

"Unfortunately, it is seen as an elitist sport that is very expensive and for those in dismounted regiments it takes a lot of time, commitment and money.

"But we do have junior ranks in the squad and that is great to see."



# Service riders





# saddle up

To help newcomers the AEA is trying to utilise clubs that loan horses to potential riders instead of burdening them with an initial expensive outlay.

They have also been quick to point out that personnel can use learning credits to get involved with the various courses on offer.

As well as representing the Service Rush runs the Army Medical Services set-up, where every effort is made to provide opportunities for those who have never taken to the saddle before.

"Anyone can approach the AEA for a point of contact within their unit or cap badge," she added.

"We will point them in the right direction and hopefully get them on a course.

"The Army is all about pushing individuals outside of their comfort zone and offering a challenge.

"Some soldiers have never seen a horse before in their life so by just getting them on the animal we have achieved something.

"There are so many ways of getting involved and it is just a case of people getting in touch. We need to let them know we are here and can help."

With events scheduled throughout the season there is no shortage of competitive action but the AEA is not just restricted to those with an interest in showjumping.

A dressage clinic has been planned for later this month and there are also opportunities in fields such as cross country riding and hunter trials.

Speaking about her passion for showjumping, the officer said: "It is an adrenaline rush.

"Some people jump out

of planes while others run towards a fence on a 600kg animal without knowing whether they'll land the other side.

"Having that power and unpredictability is a great thrill and horses are fantastic creatures.

"You can jump big fences or go for a hack on a Sunday afternoon; there are so many different things you can do.

"The Afghan campaign is closing down, there is a push for minority sports and we are here to help."

The increase in tempo is aimed at making the team more competitive at Inter-Services level, where their Forces rivals have excelled in recent times.

Rush added:

"We have a whole spectrum of abilities

and we are here because there is room to develop.

"By pushing the AEA we hope a wider audience will realise that equitation exists within the military.

"It gives people a sense of purpose and ambition. The Army team is something people can work towards.

"It is not just for officers. We have lance corporals involved and on the beginners courses we welcome everyone from privates upwards.

"We have got fantastic facilities such as Sandhurst and with trainers like Fred on-board we are moving in the right direction." ■

“It gives people a sense of purpose and ambition”



For more details visit the Army Equitation

Association page on Facebook, log on to [www.armyequestrian.org](http://www.armyequestrian.org) or email [georgiebell758@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:georgiebell758@hotmail.co.uk)



# Spilsbury's woodland win

**T**HE challenging terrain of Minley Wood proved to be anything but an obstacle for Capt Bruce Spilsbury (RLC) as he took top spot at the Army cross-country mountain bike championships.

Having starred for the Service at national level during a superb 2014 campaign the officer showcased his immense talent by completing the course in a blistering time of 1hr 15min 14sec.

A field of 50 riders assembled for the event, which served as a warm-up for the Inter-Services competition that was being staged as this issue went to press.

"It was a good course," Spilsbury (pictured) told *SoldierSport* after reaching the finish line. "It was slightly longer than usual but it was a nice route with some challenging obstacles.

"I represented the Army at the national championships and won that and have also been battling it out with Capt Ryan Perry (REME) in the national series.

"Cross-country is looking quite healthy at the moment and we have a number of strong riders."

The event saw athletes tested in three laps of a five-mile woodland course and Capt Peter "Tiny" Simmonds (RE), secretary of Army cross-country mountain biking, was delighted with the display.

"The sport has been around for a while but 2014 was the first time we have competed in the national series," he said.

"Ryan and Bruce are our two best riders but behind them we have a very good group. These guys are now realising their strengths and weaknesses and with the training camps we have planned they can go away and work on those over the winter." ■



# Cup bid falters after Navy comeback

## Inter-Services Rugby League Cup

Army 26  
Royal Navy 28

**T**HE Army's grip on the rugby league Inter-Services cup has slipped after a narrow defeat to the Navy in the first game of this year's competition at the A J Bell Stadium in Salford.

The defending champions dominated possession for most of the first half, at one point leading 12-6 thanks to nippy wingman LCpl Zach Yabia (Lancs) crossing the line twice.

But the Navy managed to strike back

against the run of play after intercepting a pass in their own half and enjoying a clear run down the pitch to the line.

After the interval, Sig Scott Watkins (R Signals) used a brilliant burst of speed to cut through the Navy defence and regain the lead for the Reds.

They added a penalty to increase the margin to eight points and from the ensuing kick-off Sgt Jordan Kerman (RAPTC) broke through a gap in the opposition ranks to touch down and give the Army a very healthy 26-12 lead.

The Senior Service reacted quickly, however, moving the ball across the pitch at pace to create an overlap for a try that was converted to reduce the deficit back to eight points.

This gave the sailors a clear boost and

shortly afterwards they forced the ball over the line again and converted to set up an edgy final few minutes at 26-22.

The Army had a fair amount of possession but it was the Navy who broke through and scored again just before the final whistle to claim a narrow victory. ■







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# Guards grab glory

## Army Major Units Cricket final

1st Battalion, Grenadier Guards 185-8

22 Engineer Regiment 158 all out

A THREE-wicket burst from pace bowler LSgt Matthew Bent steered 1st Battalion, Grenadier Guards to a 27-run win in cricket's major units cup final.

The right-hander, operating in partnership with Capt Alex Budge, ripped through 22 Engineer Regiment's top order as the Aldershot-based soldiers mounted an unlikely defence of a below-par total of 185.

After winning the toss and electing to bat the Guards made a slow start against an accurate and determined Sappers attack.

Lt Chris Wright was trapped leg before for

14 and when his opening partner Capt Chris Stevenson followed soon after they were struggling on 21-2.

But Maj Richard Green set about repairing the damage alongside skipper Capt Fred Moynan (pictured).

Left-hander Green struck a flurry of boundaries – along with three huge sixes – to bring up an impressive half century but perished chasing another maximum and at 124-3 the Guards were still short of a decent score.

Budge upped the ante with a rapid 23 before being caught and bowled and Moynan followed soon after for 54.

With the lower order failing to fire the innings closed on 185-8, leaving the Engineers in pole position.

However, the Bent and Budge double act wreaked havoc with the new ball and having restricted their opponents to 43-5 the momentum was tipped firmly in their favour.

An entertaining partnership

between LCpl Eion Brown and Spr Alex Claytor stopped the rot and the former launched an impressive counterattack that featured a succession of booming boundaries.

The fireworks came to an end when he was bowled by Sgt Graeme Hopkins for 32, leaving the challengers stuttering at 89-6.

But Claytor found a willing partner in lower-order star Maj Matt Haslett and the duo batted superbly in tandem, with the former finding the rope at regular intervals.

Their 65-run stand took them to within touching distance of victory but Green made the key breakthrough before the Sappers crumbled to 158 all out.

"I thought we were at least 20 runs short with the bat," a relieved man-of-the-match Green told *SoldierSport*.

"Our opening bowlers were fantastic and put them under huge pressure but Claytor played a superb innings and almost took the game away from us." ■

## SPORT SHORTS



Picture: Roger Thompson

» FLY half Pte Jack Prasad helped 1st Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland lift the first silverware of the new rugby union season following victory at the Army Tens in Newbury.

The Service star opened the scoring in the final and his side went on to secure a 29-12 win over 2014 Premiership Cup champions 12 Regiment, Royal Artillery.

Both outfits gave a strong showing throughout the 22-team tournament with Gnr George Main (pictured), of the beaten finalists, particularly catching the eye.



» THE Army football team returned to action last month with the annual trials week ahead of the regular season.

A host of players were put through their paces under the watchful eye of head coach Capt Joe Collins (R Signals) before taking to the pitch for a 4-1 win over Guildford that was followed by a 2-2 draw with Camberley Town (pictured).





**Winning runner:** Ex-Serviceman Kushal Limbu surges to the finishing line to scoop gold in the IT1 200 metres

## Games masters

A FIELD of more than 400 athletes from 13 different nations descended on London's Olympic Park last month to compete at the inaugural Invictus Games for wounded Servicemen and women.

The showcase featured nine disciplines ranging from archery to wheelchair rugby and the British Armed Forces excelled in the sporting spotlight by securing a raft of medals across the board.

Ex-soldier Alex Tate, who served with 1st Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment, delivered the perfect start in the Games' very first athletics event as he powered home in a time of 12.17sec to take gold in the men's IT1 100 metres final.

The 24-year-old had to dive to the line to hold off the challenge of teammate Kushal Limbu, a former rifleman in 2nd Battalion, The Royal Gurkha Rifles, and the effort paid off as he won by just seven hundredths of a second.

Paralympian LCpl Derek

Derenalagi (Mercian) began a busy day of action by claiming silver in the IT2 100 metres and then gold in the IF4 and IF5 shot putt thanks to a throw of 10.09 metres.

A second gold followed in the discus final, where an effort of 35.23 metres saw him finish well clear of Australian Ramsay Dennis.

Army veteran Maurillia Simpson was another to excel in the field as she took silver in the women's discus behind Royal Navy teammate Emma Burns and then finished fourth in the shot.

Limbu made up for his narrow loss in the day's opening race as he won gold in the IT1 200 metres before Capt Dave Henson (RE) made it a Service double with a superb run in the IT2 class.

Maj Bruce Ekman (RLC) added to the British medal count with silver in the IT1 400 metres and bronze in the 1,500 metres.

But it was not just Army athletes who excelled on the track. Royal Marine Joe

Thompson swept the board to win four gold medals in the wheelchair races, while Andrew Grant, formerly of 45 Commando, took titles in the 400 and 1,500 metres.

Speaking during a busy day of action, team manager Martin Colclough told *SoldierSport* he was delighted to see so many personnel winning medals and setting new personal best times.

"It was a great opening race from Alex and what a brilliant way to start the tournament," he added.

"When these guys realise they have set new records you can see their faces change completely. The athletes looking on can take a lot of energy from that and use it in their events.

"I am delighted with the way the Games have gone. The Rio Paralympics are coming up in 2016 and some of these guys have improved spectacularly.

"Hopefully they can carry that forward but in six years' time I expect to see them pushing for selection." ■

## Athletes' corner

**Date:** Thursday, September 11, 2014

**Competition:** Invictus Games

**Venue:** Lee Valley Athletics Centre

“

It is fantastic to be able to compete here and this is the biggest achievement of my athletic career.

I took part in the Warrior Games last year, which is a big event in the USA, but here there are so many nations coming together.

When I approached the start line for my first race I was really excited and nervous at the same time.

I was so close in the 100 metres and was desperate to win but I'm delighted for my teammate Alex.

The 200 metres is my favourite event and I was determined to take gold in that. The crowd was amazing and that made it even better. ”

**Kushal Limbu – ex-Royal Gurkha Rifles**

“

It was an incredible feeling to have my name called out in the stadium and to have so many people cheering and getting behind me.

I opened up a substantial lead at the start of the race but I did too much too soon and could feel my hamstring going towards the end so I literally threw myself over the line.

It was amazing. To have my friends, family and the lads I served with in Afghanistan here was brilliant. ”

**Alex Tate – ex-Royal Anglian Regiment**





## SPORT SHORTS



» JUDO star Tpr Emmanuel Nartey (RTR) saw his bid for glory at the World Championships end with a second-round defeat to Lasha Shavdatuashvili.

The Georgian, who won a gold medal at London 2012, took the contest via a penalty decision.

"It was a very close head-to-head fight," Nartey said. "But I now feel I am back to where I used to be, which is great considering the downtime I've had."

"I felt strong and my fitness and execution of techniques are back to the standard required."

» THE Battle Back Centre has delivered its first football coaching course to injured personnel.

Organised with help from Shropshire County Football Association and the game's national governing body the initiative saw 11 students complete a level-one programme.

Head of Battle Back Lt Col Ian Thomas said: "Football is a very popular sport among personnel and a coaching qualification will give those who can no longer play the game the option to still take part."

## → Team of the month

Capt Heather Stanning (RA) and Helen Glover



OLYMPIC gold medallist Capt Heather Stanning (RA) underlined her return to form by taking top spot at the Rowing World Championships in a new record time.

Competing alongside London 2012 partner Helen Glover, the officer surged to the line in 6min 50.61sec as the duo edged out their American rivals to add another title to their growing haul.

Success in Amsterdam capped a remarkable turnaround for the 29-year-old who was forced to withdraw from the European Championships earlier in the season on medical grounds.

Having returned to the boat following a year of active duty with the Army, Stanning initially performed well and won the senior team trials in April.

But when she showed

signs of fatigue her coaches decided to remove her from the squad and reduce her training load.

After a spell on the sidelines Stanning made a victorious return to action on the World Cup circuit and with the double act proving to be the dominant force in Holland her reintegration was complete.

"I have not had the most consistent of seasons nor been the most consistent training partner," the newly-crowned champion said.

"I am really relieved that Helen kept believing in me. The last few weeks have been brilliant. I wanted to make the medal mine today and not be the weak link after Helen and Polly Swain won the title last year."

The pair made a storming start to the final and held a three-quarters-of-a-length lead just 300 metres into the race. By halfway they had opened a

clear water advantage and they went on to break a world record that had stood for 12 years.

"It hasn't sunk in yet," Glover said. "When we crossed the line Heather noticed the time. I think our coach will be more pleased with that than the win."



**World Championship final – Amsterdam, August 30**

1. Glover/Stanning (GB) – 6min 50.61sec
2. Kalmoe/Simmonds (USA) – 6min 52.87sec
3. Trappitt/Scown (NZ) – 6min 54.79sec

Pictures: Peter Spurrier/Intasport Images





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SPORT  
SHORTS

Picture: Andy Godwin

» SKYDIVER Cpl Alex Dand (R Signals) showcased her elite-level talent as she claimed top honours at the Armed Forces Parachuting Championships.

The soldier has excelled in the freestyle discipline alongside Andy Godwin, formerly of 202 Field Hospital, and the duo followed up their victory by representing Great Britain at the sport's World Championships in the Czech Republic.

Dand has only been competing for four years and her first taste of the adrenalin-fuelled pursuit came at the end of an operational tour.

The freestyle event sees athletes perform alongside a cameraman, who captures footage of the routine for judging.

"Alex is so talented," said Godwin, the man charged with filming each jump. "She's also physically strong. You have to be graceful but you need to have strength as well."

Force five  
hits top ten

Picture: Roger Thompson

Round Britain and  
Ireland Race

*British Soldier* – eighth place  
finish overall and second in  
IRC Two class

THE Army's sailing team battled the high seas, as well as unlikely odds, to finish eighth in the Round Britain and Ireland Race.

Having expected to take to the start line with a seven-man crew the military outfit was hit by a last-minute withdrawal and then suffered a further setback when Fus Andy Barlow (RRF) dislocated his shoulder and had to leave the boat and head to hospital.

But the sailors maintained a steady course and soon found themselves locked in a battle with the larger vessel *Relentless on Jellyfish* for top

honours in the IRC Two class.

The rival boat managed to repel the challenge of *British Soldier* but the Servicemen finished second in class while claiming a top-ten spot overall.

"We are really pleased," first mate Maj Will Naylor (REME) told *SoldierSport*. "This is the second time the Army has competed in this race and we beat the record set in 2010 by just under two days.

"There was quite a big storm in the Outer Hebrides that caused a lot of dramas for different crews.

"We had a rip to the main sail and a rudder that wasn't working properly so we had some interesting issues.

"But the run back from Ireland was fantastic. We had a real duel with *Relentless on Jellyfish* and pushed them all the way in the last 36 hours."

The loss of crew members saw the remaining sailors adopt a different watch

system but the change in circumstances failed to halt their progress.

"The military ethos of digging in and getting on with it really helped," Naylor added.

"I think that is why we did so well. When we hit the storm a lot of crews ran for cover but we decided to go through it and that is the attitude we showed throughout.

"The average age of our team was just 26 years old, which was the youngest by far in the field, and that points to a promising future."

And after reaching the finish line in a time of just over 11 days and eight hours, skipper Capt Phil Caswell (REME) said: "That was very tough.

"The British Army took it on and I am proud to say we held our nerve against everything that was thrown at us.

"It was true grit, determination and teamwork the whole way round." ■

**“The British Army took it on and I am proud to say we held our nerve against everything that was thrown at us”**



# Final word

With the new Scout vehicle revealed, we asked troops from The Light Dragoons about their favourite piece of Army-issue kit...



## Sgt Chris Dyke

Osprey body armour has got better over the years through experience in Afghanistan and it is now spot-on. It fits the body perfectly and is modular so you can carry a few magazines or have belt kit on. When you're patrolling it lets air flow through so that you're comfortable.

## Tpr Tom Crowther

I like the new brown Altberg boots. They are the best personal equipment that I've had in the Army to date. The old footwear became hard after a while and the platform was not as sturdy as the replacements. Being in a job where I am on my feet for hours at a time, that counts for a lot.



## Tpr Nathan Smith-Dolan

The Viper thermal imaging devices are awesome. They can be used with our weapons or as handheld kit and once we are established in an observation post they help us to get a really good picture of the area, which allows us to understand what the enemy is up to.



## Cpl Craig Dunleavy

The "bouncing bomb" sleeping bag is first class. It's also known as the time machine because once you get in it you fast-forward to the next day. Within reason, no matter how cold you are, once you get in it all your troubles seem to go away. It's been around for years but it does the job and I would be very upset if they changed it.



## Tpr Callum Hall

The infrared goggles are the best because they have such a good range. The Army has definitely invested in the top specification in the field. We use them for close-target reconnaissance to identify where the enemy is, so they're very important. They top off our ability to pick things up easily and work out what threats are lurking out there.



## Tpr Adam McDonnell

The light machine gun is the one for me because when you are in a section attack it lets you get a rapid rate of fire down. It's easy to carry and we can get the same results as a general-purpose machine gun when up against an enemy. If I had the pick of all the weapons available, the LMG is the one I would choose.



## LCpl Stephen Crossman

Warm clothing has come on leaps and bounds and we've now got the right items for the jobs we're expected to do. We no longer need to spend hundreds of pounds on our own stuff. Keeping warm out in the field can be tricky but the Army has got it right with the Softie trousers and jacket and the fleece-type top.



## LCpl Matthew Keen

I would say my Softie thermal jacket is my favourite Army item, especially when I'm at observation posts at night. We might tab in during a hot day and build up a sweat but then we become cold when the temperature drops and we're static at the location. It's like a wearable sleeping bag and it's absolutely vital.



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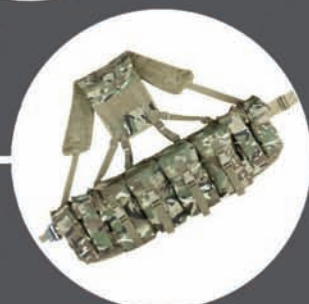


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