

# SOLDIER

## GETTING TECHNICAL

REME personnel learn the  
tricks of their trade

## AFGHAN AID

Operational honours  
reward troops' support

## EYES IN THE SKY

Uplifting developments  
from the world of UAVs

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### A 'BIRD'S' EYE VIEW OF HERRICK

In the cockpit  
with the Army's  
first female  
Apache pilot



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welcomes troops  
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# SOLDIER

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**Cover picture (left):** LCpl O'Neil Wolfe (RAMC), pictured during the mission to take the Taliban stronghold of Sayedebad during Op Herrick 12

Picture: Cpl Barry Lloyd, RLC

**Background image:** Troops practice their casevac drills during a tactical signaller training course

Picture: Mike Weston

**95**



**27**





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Picture: Steve Dock

**Soldiers from 3rd Battalion, The Rifles return to Forward Operating Base Jackson in Sangin during Op Herrick 11**  
● Op Honours – Pages 27-33

## Heroes' deeds make for good read

**A**S anyone who has worked in the wonderful world of publishing will tell you, one of the trickiest parts of the job is proofreading.

Checking and rechecking pages, poring over sentences time and time again to try and spot even the most minuscule of errors can quickly make interesting stories seem tiresome.

But while that is occasionally true for the staff here at *Soldier* HQ, there are two features each year that we clamour to read as many times as we can.

The operational honours list contains real-life stories so full of unbelievable front-line action, bravery and selflessness that they demand the utmost attention.

From bomb disposal experts to life-saving medics, the citations for today's Herrick heroes rival anything to be found on the pages of the latest best-selling books (although there is a fine selection to be found on Pages 90-91).

The deeds of the soldiers honoured in Award List 35, which takes in everyone who served on Op Herrick 11, are truly remarkable.

Tales of troops charging headlong into a hail of bullets to protect their comrades might sound unlikely outside of Rambo's latest piece of fiction, but the truth is that they are not. The action happens on a frequent basis and is carried out by unassuming men and women who are such consummate professionals that they will risk their own lives to get a job done.

Turn to Pages 27-33 to be humbled by the amazing courage shown by those rewarded with operational medals and then consider the fact that there are just as many – if not more – troops carrying out equally-brave deeds all over southern Afghanistan.

While the soldiers themselves are undoubtedly

the stars of the Herrick show, their role is made somewhat easier by the continued evolution of technology prowling along – and over – the terrain of Helmand province.

Unmanned aerial vehicles able to fly over dangerous ground gathering intelligence and providing a bird's eye view of proceedings have made themselves particularly indispensable, and we take a closer look at two of them this month.

Check out the potentially record-breaking Zephyr on Pages 34-35 and the in-service T-Hawk on Pages 36-37 to see how the military is making

increasing use of aerial assets.

Speaking of which, the conflict in Afghanistan has seen all three Services working hand-in-hand and the Royal Air Force has taken on a key role in providing commanders with helicopter and fast jet coverage.

We caught up with Air Vice Marshall Greg Bagwell to see how

the light blue side of Defence views the ever-closer relationship (Page 45).

This month marks the beginning of Op Herrick 13 and troops from the 2nd Royal Tank Regiment, who are serving with 16 Air Assault Brigade, invited us along to world-famous racing circuit Brands Hatch as they took part in a track day to give themselves a bit of pre-tour fun (Pages 58-59).

And despite operations continuing to occupy the forefront of people's minds, the British Army keeps placing a strong emphasis on sport.

Check out this month's *SoldierSport* to find out how the Service got on at events as diverse as Rugby League, wakeboarding and sailing.

In an issue packed with heroes, we salute those who have done their duty in theatre and wish everyone who has just arrived the very best for the coming months. ■



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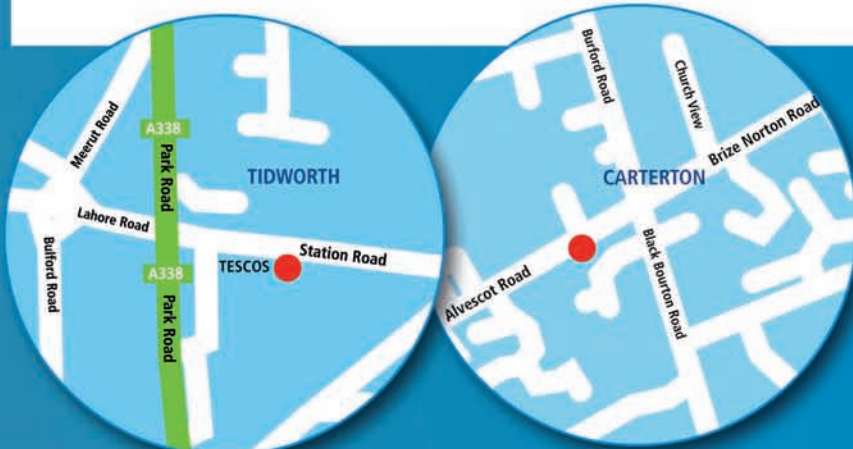
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# THE informer...

BRITISH TROOPS' GLOBAL INTELLIGENCE ASSET

news@soldiermagazine.co.uk



Picture: LA (Phot) Si Ethell, RN

**Moving on:** Lt Col Paul James, commanding officer of 40 Commando Royal Marines, leads one of the last British patrols in Sangin District

## Brits praised after Sangin handover

**U**K TROOPS have handed over a “strong, forward-looking operation” after transferring responsibility for security in Sangin to their United States counterparts.

The reconfiguration, which comes four years after soldiers first moved into the area, will allow Britain to focus on the central region of Helmand province.

Maj Gen Gordon Messenger, the Chief of the Defence Staff’s strategic communications officer, said personnel who served in Sangin allowed the Afghan Government to exert its authority in an area considered as a Taliban heartland.

He added: “Our troops operating in Sangin have been taking the fight to the Taliban and have reduced the threat of violence spreading elsewhere.

“The progress in central Helmand would not have been possible without

their endeavour and sacrifice.

“It is and will continue to be a challenging area because of its strategic importance to the Afghan Government, the International Security Assistance Force (Isaf) and the insurgency – that is why Isaf forces will remain there to build upon the progress already achieved by UK forces.”

The transfer of authority, which was first announced by Defence Secretary Dr Liam Fox in July, was carried out by 40 Commando Royal Marines, who handed over to the United States Marine Corps (USMC).

The ceremony marked the end of Britain’s involvement in the district which began in 2006 and has seen 106 soldiers killed.

Dr Fox said: “The level of sacrifice has been high and we should never forget the many brave troops who have

lost their lives in the pursuit of success in a mission rooted firmly in our own national security in the UK.

“The handover of Sangin by UK forces represents sound military rationale and reflects the increase of Isaf and Afghan forces across Helmand over the course of the past year.”

During their time in Sangin, British troops helped to develop and maintain security around the district, including in the commercial centre which now has more than 850 shops open for business in the main bazaar.

The area is also developing as a trade hub thanks to the the guidance of new governor Mohamed Sherif and the construction of roads on land secured by British troops.

Maj Gen Messenger added: “The transfer of responsibility for Sangin to the USMC is the latest in a series of practical and sensible reconfigurations.

“It allows British forces, with their Danish and Estonian allies, to focus their efforts on the critical central Helmand area, building on the strong momentum that has already been achieved there.”

**300** THE NUMBER OF PATIENTS SEEN EACH WEEK BY TRAINED AFGHAN MEDICS AT SANGIN'S HEALTH CLINIC, WHICH IS CONSIDERED TO BE THE BEST FACILITY IN THE WHOLE OF HELMAND PROVINCE





## IN A NUTSHELL

# New tests to ensure troops are fit to fight

### In brief

As of the beginning of last month, all soldiers deploying on operations will have the chance to pass new Operational Fitness Tests (OFTs). The scheme has been rolled out across the Army following successful trials with 4 Mechanized and 16 Air Assault Brigades.

### Why the change?

A lot is expected from personnel serving in Afghanistan. Whether it is embarking on an extended patrol or coping with the weight of personal kit, Servicemen and women have had to demonstrate huge reserves of strength, endurance and mobility. The new system has been designed to test for these increased levels after a study found that the current Advanced Combat Fitness Tests (ACFTs) did not reflect the challenges found in the contemporary operating environment.



### What's new?

Six OFTs have now been drafted in. Each test is a loaded march – including the current ACFT One and Two – carrying up to 35kg at varying speeds over a range of distances. Carried out in conjunction with a set of mission-specific military tasks, commanders can choose the test that best reflects the likely roles their soldiers will encounter on operations and personalise the programme for individuals or entire units.

### How realistic is it?

As well as making the structure of the tests as close to operational reality as possible, the new OFTs match life in Helmand by requiring all troops to wear combat body armour and helmets. Because of the additional thermal load placed on those taking part, risk assessments will be carried out to avoid heat-related injuries.

facebook

Just how fit do soldiers have to be? Have your say on Facebook at [www.tinyurl.com/soldiermag](http://www.tinyurl.com/soldiermag)



Expert advice: Cpl George Anderson (The London Regiment) has been helping mentor Afghan NCOs

# Brits spark Afghan rank rise

**P**ROMISING soldiers from the Afghan National Army (ANA) are climbing the career ladder thanks to courses designed by their British counterparts.

The Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) Training Team and Officer Candidate School (OCS) are run at Kabul Military Training Centre to offer Afghan troops the opportunity to progress their rank.

And although the courses were taught by British instructors just one year ago, they are now led by the increasingly-capable ANA.

WO2 Stan Nilsson (IG) explained: "We don't necessarily train the ANA, we mentor the instructors that are highly qualified.

"We mentor how they do business in regards to battle lessons and teaching classroom lessons."

The NCO Training Team is run

on the same principles used in the British Army and puts selected ANA soldiers through a rigorous 12-week programme.

ANA instructor 2nd Lt Muhibullah said: "We teach different things to the soldiers – how to control themselves, how to train their soldiers and different types of patrolling."

Potential officers enrolled in the OCS take on a 20-week commissioning course designed to develop their basic military skills as well as their leadership ability.

2nd Lt Muhibullah added: "My mentors have been British. I really appreciate them."

**150** THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ON EACH NCO COURSE



THE Band of The Welsh Guards perform a beating of the retreat in front of the Schloss Neuhaus castle in Paderborn, Germany, during a British festival in the garrison town

Picture: Cpl James Williams, RLC



WIN...

## An Xbox 360 console and three top games

EVER settled down for a Naafi break and wanted some entertainment to go with your brew?

If so, the ever-so-kind people at Naafi ([www.naafi.co.uk](http://www.naafi.co.uk)) have come up with a cunning solution by offering up an Xbox 360 console and no less than three games to play on it.

The Microsoft system comes with a wireless controller and plays a host of titles as well as DVDs and CDs.

Included in this bumper prize package is *Soldier's* favourite game of the year so far, the exciting wild west-themed *Red Dead Redemption*.

Sports fans are also catered for, with *Sega Superstar Tennis* offering up some on-court fun.

And while the memories of the real tournament are probably still too raw for England fans, the inclusion of the official game of the 2010 FIFA World Cup will at least allow the lucky winner to virtually change the outcome.

To stand a chance of winning, tell us which landmark anniversary Naafi is celebrating this year.

Answers on a postcard to the usual address or by email to [comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk) by October 29. Entrants must be 18 or over.



### NEWS IN BRIEF

#### CHARITY MARCHES ON

■ A GROUP set up to support the families of British troops has marked its first anniversary.

Afghan Heroes, which was created by Denise Lewis after her son Cpl Lee Scott was killed in 2009, has raised more than £500,000 in its opening year.

It has also sent parcels to every Serviceman and woman in Afghanistan and opened a holiday home for military personnel.



Pictures: Steve Dock

**Changing rooms:** A soldier stands guard outside the main facade of the redeveloped Woolwich Barracks

## Capital gain for London troops



Report by Joe Clapson

[jclapson@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:jclapson@soldiermagazine.co.uk)

**T**HE former headquarters of the Royal Artillery has been reopened as one of the most modern accommodation bases for soldiers in the UK.

London Woolwich Station (LWS), in the south-east of the capital, had been due to close but a decision to revamp its facilities was taken after the sale of Chelsea Barracks.

Now, with the gunners based at Larkhill, the picturesque establishment, originally built between 1776 and 1802, will serve as the home to London District Regular units, with 2nd Battalion, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment the first to occupy the renovated site.

Maj Gen William Cubitt, General Officer Commanding London District, explained: "What we have [done] is put an Infantry battalion in really good accommodation.

"Woolwich was in poor condition and we really welcomed and made good use of the money available and it's made a

fantastic barracks."

The Woolwich Development Project, established to manage the overhaul of the iconic barracks, invested £50.5 million in the new buildings, a medical centre and other improvements.

Subsequently, Firm Base London, a three-year plan to improve living and working conditions in the capital, was set up focusing on three main community sites – LWS, London Central Garrison and London Windsor Garrison. Woolwich is the first to be delivered with the other two due to be finished in 2011.

Included in the ambitious build were 422 Single Living Accommodation (SLA) bedrooms in six new blocks, which will house all resident soldiers.

Service Families Accommodation has also been refurbished to provide 260 properties and troops in transit will now take advantage of 150 renovated SLA bed spaces.

LWS will be home to three battalions from the Queen's Division, starting with 2nd Battalion, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment, followed by 2nd Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment, then 2nd Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers.



**SINGLE** Living Accommodation at London's Woolwich Barracks has been given a major overhaul during the £50.5 million development



**PTE** Peter Jayawardena (2 PWRR) told *Soldier* that the new accommodation is "the best" he has ever stayed in during his Army career



**UPGRADED** communal areas, including fully-equipped utility rooms, are now on offer to soldiers staying in Single Living Accommodation



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**Eyes on:** Lockheed Martin's Desert Hawk has been upgraded to cope with the demands of Op Herrick

# New Hawks circle over Helmand

**U**PGRADED remote-controlled spy planes are keeping a watchful eye over troops in Afghanistan after being launched into service.

The new versions of the Desert Hawk, which can fly over the battlefield during the day or night, are fitted with improved cameras and a modified wing design to cope with Helmand's hot-and-high conditions.

The hi-tech eyes in the sky are hand-launched and operated by soldiers from 47 Regiment Royal Artillery.

SSgt Dan Gardner, who has deployed the kit in theatre, said: "Desert Hawk has become indispensable to troops on the ground in Afghanistan.

"The fact that it is hand-launched and lightweight means we get a very quick and thorough appraisal of the tactical situations faced on operations.

"It is used in a variety of roles, including reconnaissance and surveillance of troops. It provides situational awareness to commanders of

troops in contact with the enemy."

The boost to the Desert Hawk capability, which is comprised of sets of eight aircraft, a portable ground control station and a remote video terminal, was made thanks to a £3 million Urgent Operational Requirement.

Weighing in at just 3.7kg, the surveillance craft measure 91cm in length, have a wingspan of 137cm and can fly for 90 minutes at a range of nine miles.

Defence Equipment, Support and Technology Minister Peter Luff said: "Continuing to support this capability demonstrates our commitment to ensuring that troops on the front line get the cutting-edge equipment to help them in the fight against the insurgents.

"The improved Desert Hawk is a remarkable piece of kit. It provides a detailed picture of what is happening on the ground for our troops, giving them an operational advantage and keeping them safer."

## NEWS IN BRIEF

INFANTRY troops from 2nd Battalion, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment have taken on responsibility for public duties in London for the first time in more than a decade.

The battalion moved from Cyprus to Woolwich Barracks in August to prepare for its new role and commanding officer Lt Col Adam Crawley took charge of the first parade last month.

A company from 2 PWRR, which recently completed a tour serving as the Theatre Reserve Battalion for Op Herrick, last performed public duties in 1997.

**EXPERIENCED Civil Servant Ursula Brennan** has been appointed as the new Permanent Secretary of the MoD.

Mrs Brennan (58), who spent most of her career in the Department for Work and Pensions, previously served as the Ministry of Defence's Second Permanent Under Secretary.

She takes over her new role from Sir Bill Jeffrey.



Picture: Cpl Rupert Fiere, RLC

## LEAGUE OF GENTLEMEN

	SWAG	FORCE FOR GOOD	QUIDS IN
1	<b>£6,212</b>	<b>CARING COOKS</b> Chefs from 25 and 39 Engineer Regiments held a black tie mess dinner and completed an Iron Man event from Rhyl in North Wales to Clacton-on-Sea in Essex – a distance of 400 miles	Help for Heroes and Starlight
2	<b>£5,083</b>	<b>212 (HELMAND ICS) SIGNAL SQUADRON</b> Soldiers from Arezzo Troop organised a Christmas Day half marathon in Lashkar Gah in memory of Lt Charlotte Pitstra, who died during her corps' skiing championships in December 2008	Help for Heroes and Cardiac Risk in the Young
3	<b>£2,195</b>	<b>KENSINGTON COUNCILLORS</b> A group of officials led by mayor Coun James Husband completed a charity walk around the London borough and collected donations en route	Help for Heroes
4	<b>£516</b>	<b>DARREN HEATON</b> The wheelchair user and father of a serving Grenadier Guard travelled from Derbyshire to Wellington Barracks in London accompanied by the Guards' mascot, Gdsm Bertie Bear	Grenadier Guards Colonel's Fund, SSAFA Forces Help, St Dunstan's and The Poppy Appeal

## Pre-tour prayers

COLCHESTER-based troops from 16 Air Assault Brigade marked the final days before heading for Op Herrick 13 with a pre-deployment church service.

Personnel from the Brigade's HQ, 216 (Parachute) Signals Squadron, 16 Medical Regiment and 156 Provost Company, Royal Military Police were present during the occasion at St Peter's Church.

Rev Andrew Totten, 16 Air Assault Brigade senior chaplain, said: "After all the training and preparation, this church service is a time to gather our thoughts and reflect.

"It is a time to pray for those loved ones we are leaving behind at home and to seek God's strength to do what is right in the months ahead."

The brigade is currently taking over control of Task Force Helmand from 4 Mechanised Brigade.

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**Familiar face:** Gen Sir Peter Wall served as Commander-in-Chief Land Forces before becoming CGS

## New CGS takes up post

**T**HE British Army has a new man at the top after Gen Sir Peter Wall started work as the Chief of the General Staff.

Gen Wall, who has stepped up from his previous position as Commander-in-Chief Land Forces, takes over from Gen Sir David Richards, who becomes the Chief of the Defence Staff.

The new CGS said the Army was “as well-manned, well-trained and as operationally hardened” as it had been

at any time during his service.

He added: “We are working extremely hard to deliver security in Afghanistan, alongside our Afghan and international partners.

“Real progress is being made thanks to the extraordinary commitment and courage of our soldiers, sailors and airmen.

“It is a great privilege to be head of the Army at such a critical time and I much look forward to the challenge.”

## NEWS IN BRIEF



Picture: Steve Dock

**STRICTLY** Come Dancing and Hollyoaks star Ali Bastion treats soldiers from The Royal Logistic Corps to a cuppa as she launches SSAFA Force's Help's Big Brew Up 2010.

The event, which takes place from October 4-10, invites people all over the country to hold tea-related events to raise money for the Services charity, which is celebrating its 125th year. Log on to [www.ssafa.org.uk](http://www.ssafa.org.uk) for more information.

**A SENIOR** officer has got on his bike to personally thank the troops under his command ahead of leaving his position.

Brig Richard Dennis, the Director of Infantry, set off from his HQ in Warminster last month on a Triumph motorbike and is visiting several of the Infantry's Regimental Headquarters.

As well as giving him a chance to say farewell, the biking brigadier's cross-country odyssey is raising money for ABF The Soldiers' Charity.

He said: “The Soldiers' Charity and the Regimental HQs are two organisations watching the Infantry's backs and I wanted to do something to highlight the critical role they play and hopefully encourage people to make a small contribution.”

To sponsor Brig Dennis, visit [www.justgiving.com/BikingBrigadier](http://www.justgiving.com/BikingBrigadier)

## MoD delivers Christmas mail message

**FANS** of the Forces are being urged to ease the strain on the postal system this Christmas by supporting an official charity.

Rather than sending their own festive gift boxes, members of the public can donate money to MoD-endorsed group uk4u Thanks! which will then use the cash to supply presents to all personnel serving overseas on December 25.

Trustee Sally Little told *Soldier* that the charity's work ensures the BFPO system is not overloaded so that packages and letters from Service families are able to reach deployed troops.

She added: “It's difficult because the MoD really does appreciate everything the general public wants to do for the Forces and they don't want to discourage that support.

“It's more about the difficulties at Christmas time when there's a heavy reliance on the BFPO system

and the families of the Forces want to send their own boxes and parcels.

“It makes sense for people to show their support through a charity such as ours where the more money we raise, the more we can put in the box.”

Since it was formed in 2004, uk4u Thanks! has used the public's donations to purchase, fill and distribute thousands of boxes to troops.

The charity works closely with the MoD and uses spaces within the existing supply chain to ship the boxes to theatre.

Mrs Little said that the working relationship between the two organisations ensures that the gifts put a smile on the faces of the troops who receive them.

She explained: “We feel that it's very important to

work with the MoD because they help us with the distribution – we don't send the boxes through the BFPO system, we use transport that's already going out anyway.

“They also give us excellent advice on what to send, what not to send and what the troops would actually like.”

In addition to supporting uk4u Thanks!, members of the public can show their gratitude over the festive period by donating to the SSAFA Operational Welfare Fund, traditional Service charities such as ABF The Soldiers' Charity or groups including Combat Stress.

For more information, visit [www.mod.uk/PublicSupportForOurServicePersonnel](http://www.mod.uk/PublicSupportForOurServicePersonnel)

To make a donation to uk4U Thanks!, visit [www.uk4u.org](http://www.uk4u.org) or call 01798 812081.







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## IN MEMORIAM



**LCPL JORDAN BANCROFT (25)**  
1ST BATTALION, THE DUKE OF  
LANCASTER'S REGIMENT  
KIA SEPTEMBER 5 – AFGHANISTAN

A BRAVE junior NCO who was helping to protect Afghan villagers died after being shot during an exchange of fire with insurgents.

LCpl Jordan Bancroft, of 1st Battalion, The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment, was part of a platoon providing security to allow a shura to take place in central Helmand province when he was fatally wounded.

The 25-year-old's family said in a statement: "We will always remember Jordan loving a challenge, in particular outdoor pursuits."

LCpl Bancroft was born in Burnley and joined the Army in 2001, carrying out his Phase One course at the Army Training Regiment Basingstoke before moving on to the Infantry Training Centre Catterick.

He had previously served in Iraq on Op Telic 2 and 11 and was remembered by commanding officer Lt Col Frazer Lawrence as "one of the biggest characters in the regiment".

The officer added: "LCpl Bancroft was a true soldier – loyal, brave, compassionate and honest. He had a natural ability to lead from the front, his men instinctively looking to him."

LCpl Alex Winterburn, who had known LCpl Bancroft for seven years, said: "He was always determined to complete any task set to the highest of standards; occasionally this would be long after others had given up."

"On this tour he did an excellent job, often stepping up to assume positions of command above that of the rank he held."



**LCPL JOSEPH POOL (26)**  
1ST BATTALION, THE ROYAL  
REGIMENT OF SCOTLAND  
KIA SEPTEMBER 5 – AFGHANISTAN

A ROCKET propelled grenade claimed the life of a tenacious member of an elite Army unit in southern Afghanistan.

LCpl Joe Pool was taking part in an operation with the Brigade Reconnaissance Force (BRF) in Nad-e Ali District when he was killed during a contact with enemy fighters.

The Glasgow Celtic fan, of 1st Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland, leaves behind fiancée Lynsey, sons Lee and Jamie, parents Stella and Roderick and brother Ryan.

A statement from his family said: "Joseph lived life to the full and was proud of everything he achieved in the Army."

After enlisting in the military in August 2003, LCpl Pool completed tours of Northern Ireland,

Iraq and Afghanistan and was often selected for specialist roles due to his enthusiasm and natural talent.

Lt Col Charlie Herbert, commanding officer of 1 Scots, said the junior NCO was "fit and tough as a butcher's dog" having recently qualified as a physical training instructor.

He added: "He died a soldier's death, bravely and tenaciously taking the fight to the insurgents. I suspect that he believed passionately in what he was doing and I know that he enjoyed it."

BRF colleague Pte Iain Collins said: "He was a cracking soldier, always up for a laugh [and] never afraid to help the lads whenever he could. He was completely dedicated to his job."



**CAPT ANDREW GRIFFITHS (25)**  
2ND BATTALION, THE DUKE OF  
LANCASTER'S REGIMENT  
DIED SEPTEMBER 5 – BIRMINGHAM

AN officer who grew up in a military family and was known as a "massive character with a huge personality" died from injuries suffered in a blast in Helmand province.

Capt Andrew Griffiths, of 2nd Battalion, The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment, was leading his soldiers in a compound clearance operation in Nahr-e Saraj District when he was caught in an explosion on August 24.

The 25-year-old was evacuated to the UK for treatment but died of his injuries at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham 12 days later.

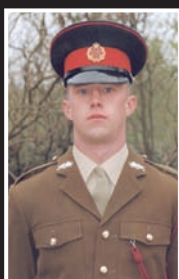
His family said: "We are immensely proud of him and all that he has achieved in his all-too-short life. He died doing a job he loved and excelled at."

Capt Griffiths studied European and international studies at Loughborough University before commissioning from the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in 2007.

He then joined 2 Lancs – his father's regiment – and took command of 5 Platoon, Blenheim Company ahead of their time as the Theatre Reserve Battalion for Op Herrick.

Commanding officer Lt Col Robbie Boyd said: "Griff" was an officer with courage, charm, values, humility and above all else a sense of fun. He played as hard as he fought."

Capt Nath Liladhar added: "Griff was fiercely loyal, selfless and unthinking when it came to defending his friends. He had a profound sense of right and wrong."



**KGN DARREN DEADY (22)**  
2ND BATTALION, THE DUKE OF  
LANCASTER'S REGIMENT  
DIED SEPTEMBER 10 – BIRMINGHAM

A SOLDIER whose beaming sense of humour shone even in the toughest situations died from wounds suffered in a gun battle with insurgents in southern Afghanistan.

Kgn Darren Deady (22), of 2nd Battalion, The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment, was shot during an operation to protect civilians in Nahr-e Saraj District on August 23.

He received outstanding first aid from comrades at the scene and was flown to the UK where he succumbed to his injuries at Birmingham's Queen Elizabeth Hospital on September 10.

His family said: "Darren was proud to do a job he loved and most of all believed in. His little brother once asked him 'why do you fight?'."

Darren simply replied 'to make a difference'."

Lancastrian Kgn Deady joined the Army in 2008 and joined up with 2nd Battalion, The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment in Cyprus in 2009 in time to serve as part of the Theatre Reserve Battalion for Op Herrick.

Commanding officer Lt Col Robbie Boyd said: "Kgn Deady was a tiny man with the heart of a lion. [He was] a team player, a man with a huge heart and with bags of humour in the face of adversity."

Kgn Christopher Norris described his fallen comrade as "one of the best lads" he had ever met while serving in the Army, while Kgn Alan Burrow remembered him as "a top lad and a true soldier".



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[www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support](http://www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support)



## IN MEMORIAM



**SGT ANDREW JONES (35)**  
**ROYAL ENGINEERS**  
**KIA SEPTEMBER 18 – AFGHANISTAN**

AN experienced soldier remembered for his tireless efficiency and boundless enthusiasm was killed in southern Afghanistan.

Sgt Andrew Jones, Royal Engineers, was serving on a vehicle-mounted ground domination patrol with Fondouk Squadron, The Queen's Royal Lancers, when he died.

The 35-year-old, who joined the Army in 1998, was a family man and leaves behind wife Joanne and children Natasha, Caitlin and Liam.

His wife said: "Andrew was a happy, funny and caring man. He was a loving husband, father and son and he will leave a gaping hole in our lives."

After passing out of the Royal Engineers Combat Engineering Course in 1998, Welshman

Sgt Jones deployed to Kosovo before being posted to the Royal Engineers Armoured Trials and Development Unit.

He then moved to D Squadron, The Queen's Royal Lancers as an engineer reconnaissance troop sergeant.

QRL commanding officer Lt Col Martin Todd said: "In Afghanistan he was always to the fore, particularly when his engineering skills and experience were called for."

WO2 Tony Gould added: "We shared many a joke and tales of his children and wife and how much he loved them."

"His turnout and bearing was first class and the support he gave me when needed was given with compassion and meaning."



**TPR ANDREW HOWARTH (20)**  
**FONDOUK SQUADRON,**  
**THE QUEEN'S ROYAL LANCERS**  
**KIA SEPTEMBER 18 – AFGHANISTAN**

AN "immensely charismatic" young soldier died during a vehicle-mounted patrol in Helmand province.

Tpr Andrew Howarth, of Fondouk Squadron, The Queen's Royal Lancers, was killed in action in the Bolan district of Lashkar Gah.

He leaves behind parents John and Sarah and brother Marcus. The family said in a statement: "He was a very loving son who loved his family and friends – he would light up any room when he walked in and would do anything for anyone."

After joining the Army in 2007, Tpr Howarth completed basic training at Basingstoke and Royal Armoured Corps Phase Two training at Bovington before joining the QRL in Catterick in 2007, becoming the third generation of his

family to serve with the regiment.

He was a keen sportsman and was passionate about rugby, football and skiing.

Commanding officer Lt Col Martin Todd said: "He was the perfect reconnaissance soldier; quick-witted, physically robust and as skilled dismounted as he was on vehicles of all types."

Lt Johnny Clayton added: "Never the smartest turned out soldier, Andrew was always found grinning widest when completely covered in oil, dust or whatever the practical side of the job found him working with."

Tpr Brett Armstrong recalled: "'Steptoe' was the highlight of the day for the people who knew him best, always dancing and cracking jokes. He will be missed."

## NEWS IN BRIEF

**SOLDIERS** who have deployed to Afghanistan are being invited to contribute to an MoD-endorsed BBC TV series.

The broadcaster is looking for serving or retired personnel to feature in *Your War*, a set of programmes examining the conflict in Afghanistan from 2001 to the present day from the point of view of Servicemen and women.

As well as seeking individual stories, the BBC is also searching for video footage from Helmand province, whether it is from the battlefield or films of everyday life in camp.

Normal MoD rules for contacting the media apply, so any personnel or MoD civilians wishing to take part should seek permission through their chain of command. For soldiers, this should begin with their unit press officer.

To find out more about the programme, email [yourwar@bbc.co.uk](mailto:yourwar@bbc.co.uk) or call 020 8008 3968.

The answer to last month's spine line contest was sports available through the MoD's Battle Back scheme.

To enter this month's competition, tell us what links the names on the cover. Answers to [comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk) by October 29.



THE motorcycling community put on a show of support for the Servicemen and women of 4th Mechanized Brigade by staging a massive bike rally in Yorkshire. More than 12,000 riders gathered at Marne Barracks, on the outskirts of Catterick Garrison, for the event which was held to raise money for troops who have just completed a six-month tour of Helmand province. The convoy travelled through a number of villages along a 22-mile route before dispersing from Scotch Corner one hour later. The ride was the brainchild of Mia Felton, the wife of 4th Mechanized Brigade commander Brig Richard Felton. The Black Rat Fund assists the brigade's soldiers through direct welfare and compassionate grants as well as by supporting community projects. For more information or to make a donation, log on to [www.blackratfund.org.uk](http://www.blackratfund.org.uk)





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Picture: MoD/Crown Copyright



**VIP visit:** Mayor Daoud of Lashkar Gah (centre) attends the opening of Basharan’s brand new bridge

## Partners bridging the gap

**B** RITISH sappers and Afghan workers have provided a boost to Helmand’s economy after replacing a dangerous water crossing.

Residents in the Basharan area were using an old bridge over the Char Angi wadi with a serious structural crack along the length of it and raised their concerns with International Security Assistance Force troops.

Experts from 4th Armoured Engineer Squadron swung into action and completed work on the Sobaat – or

Stabilisation – Bridge eight weeks later.

Capt Joseph Wood, the Royal Engineer in charge of the project, said: “The old Soviet-style bridge is falling apart and there was a chance it may even have collapsed with someone on it.

“This new bridge will last for up to 50 years and can take even the largest vehicles. This has been a really worthwhile project for my team.”

The new structure was officially unveiled during a ceremony led by Mayor Daoud of Lashkar Gah.

**12**  
**THE NUMBER  
OF ELDERS  
PRESENT AT  
THE OPENING**

## Win: Tickets to new First World War play

A CHART-TOPPING novel telling the tale of one man’s journey from an all-consuming love affair to the horrors of battle is coming to the London stage.

For the first time, *Birdsong* – the hit international best-selling book by Sebastian Faulks – will be brought to life at the capital’s Comedy Theatre.

Starting in pre-World War France, the play tells the story of Stephen Wraysford who embarks on an affair with Isabelle. Years later, he finds himself back in the country, only this time as a soldier at the Battle of the Somme.

As his men die around him, Stephen turns to his enduring love for the strength to continue and to save something for future generations.

Brought to the stage by Rachel Wagstaff and starring Ben Barnes, this is a show not to be missed and *Soldier* can make sure that does not happen as we have three pairs of tickets to give away.

To stand a chance of winning, tell us which battle Stephen Wraysford ends up fighting in.

Answers on a postcard to the usual address or by email ([comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk)) to reach us no later than Friday, October 29.

*Birdsong* is being staged at the Comedy Theatre and will run until January 15, 2011. To purchase tickets, contact the box office on 08448 717622.



**Terms and conditions:** Tickets are valid for all Monday-Thursday performances and must be taken before December 10. Prize subject to availability and not to be used in conjunction with any other offer. No cash alternative will be offered.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

THE Queen has approved a new rule allowing recipients of the Elizabeth Cross to wear the medal on their parade uniform.

The decoration, which is awarded to the next of kin of those who have died on operations or as a result of terrorism since 1948, must be worn on the right side of the uniform and above the breast pocket.



A DERBYSHIRE town turned out in force to honour the British Services during an inaugural military tattoo.

Buxton hosted the sell-out event, which saw 900 spectators enjoying marching bands, Armed Forces displays and gun runs at the University of Derby’s Georgian Devonshire Dome.

The spectacular show raised more than £10,000 for ABF The Soldiers’ Charity.

The 2011 Buxton Military Tattoo takes place on Saturday, July 9. Visit [www.buxtontattoo.org.uk](http://www.buxtontattoo.org.uk), email [eventmanager@buxtontattoo.org.uk](mailto:eventmanager@buxtontattoo.org.uk) or call Chris Thornton on 01298 25568 for more information.

GLOUCESTERSHIRE welcomed personnel from HQ Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) during a “freshers fayre” held to mark the troops’ arrival from Germany.

Businesses and welfare groups from the county were present at Innsworth’s Imjin Barracks to help the Nato force settle in after its move from Rheindahlen.

Capt Kevin Ladner said: “The aim was to introduce the civilian and military communities to each other. It is vital that both sides come together.”

Around 450 soldiers and officers, 60 per cent of them British, serve with HQ ARRC, with 15 nations represented in total.



Picture: Richard Watt

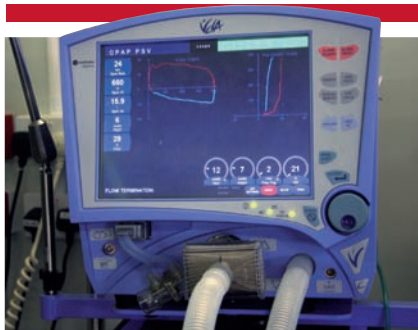
## Land open for business

HEADQUARTERS Land Forces’ new home has been unveiled.

Gen Sir Peter Wall, Commander-in-Chief Land Forces, and Armed Forces Minister Nick Harvey (pictured above) officially opened Marlborough Lines, in Andover, where more than 2,000 civilian and military personnel are based.

The cost of the move from previous bases in Wilton and Upavon is expected to be recouped within eight years thanks to a range of efficiency savings and the sale of the Wilton site.





## Medical marvels

STATE-of-the-art ventilators have been deployed to medics responsible for treating seriously-injured soldiers in southern Afghanistan.

The Vela Comprehensive Ventilators (pictured above) have been installed in the intensive care unit at Camp Bastion's Armed Forces' hospital.

Twenty four of the machines, which are flexible enough to do the work usually carried out by three separate types of unit, have been delivered to Helmand province, with a further five being used to train personnel in the UK.

Maj Maggie Hodge, officer commanding the hospital's intensive care unit, said: "It is small, simple and has everything that we need.

"It allows us to see what is happening in even more detail, meaning we're able to base our decisions about treatment on better information.

"It can also be used for non-invasive treatment, which is more comfortable for the patient, especially out here where it is dry and dusty."

**400** THE AMOUNT, IN DOLLARS, THAT CAPT MO COSHALL

(QARANG) HAS RAISED FOR THE ARMY WIDOWS ASSOCIATION BY IRONING THE CLOTHES OF COLLEAGUES AT CAMP BASTION. THE OFFICER CHARGES ONE US DOLLAR FOR EACH ITEM PRESSED

# Troop numbers on the rise

THE Armed Forces are just 0.3 per cent from being fully-manned, new figures have revealed.

The Services are currently running at 99.7 per cent of their full-time trained strength requirement, up from 97.4 per cent one year ago.

Under Secretary of State for Defence Andrew Robathan said: "It is encouraging to see that an [Armed Forces] career is a popular choice, so much so that we are almost at 100 per cent of our manning requirement.

"Our personnel are some of the best in the world and the work they are

doing in operational theatres and back in the UK demonstrates this."

In the 12 months to the end of June this year, 18,630 new recruits signed up to serve in the Regular Forces, a fall of 5,010 from the previous 12 months.

The number of people leaving the military has also dropped, with 9.8 per cent fewer heading into civvy street.

Mr Robathan added: "Although the numbers of people we need to recruit have reduced, recruitment continues and, with more people staying in the Armed Forces, we continue to strengthen all three Services."

## Reservist's perfect pictures

A TERRITORIAL Army soldier serving in one of Helmand's most-dangerous areas has found time to capture the province's natural beauty on camera.

LCpl Martin Goodright, of The London Regiment, has been taking photographs of southern Afghanistan despite being based in Nad-e Ali, which saw some of the fiercest fighting over the summer.

The junior NCO, who works in property management and freelance photography outside of the TA, said:

"Being out in Afghanistan has given me the opportunity to take photographs in unusual situations that are unlike anything in the UK.

"I first started at 17 when my father, a keen photographer, took me to a

wildlife park.

"I got my first camera when I was 22 and that was when my passion really got started."

Away from his camera, LCpl Goodright took part in Op Tor Shezada by making sure routes used by commanders were clear of IEDs.

He also participated in shuras with elders and spoke to residents while out on patrol.

He added: "At first it was a bit daunting, but after a couple of weeks of chatting to locals, I realised they aren't too different from people in the UK – they just have different problems."



Sunset over Five-mile Mountain



Sunflowers in Saidabad



Colourful sky over Helmand province



## NEWS IN BRIEF

### LOGGIES' PAINTING DELIVERED

■ A UNIT that took part in the largest logistical operation since the Second World War has received a painting to commemorate its achievements.

Troops from 13 Air Assault Support Regiment, Royal Logistic Corps accepted David Rowlands' oil picture of Op Oqab Tsuka – the mission to deliver a turbine to the Kajaki Dam.

The presentation came on the eve of the regiment's redeployment to Helmand province for Op Herrick 13.

### LANDMARK DATE FOR NAAFI

■ THE Navy, Army and Air Forces Institute (Naafi) celebrated its 90th anniversary during a ceremony at London's Victory Services Club.

Veterans and current personnel were joined at the event by serving Naafi staff as well as three former employees over the age of 90.

CEO Reg Curtis said: "It's a real honour for existing Naafi staff to be able to meet some of our oldest and longest-serving team members."

Naafi was established on December 6, 1920 on the recommendation of a committee led by Winston Churchill.

## SNEAK PREVIEW



PRESTIGIOUS motor racing circuit Brands Hatch helped personnel from the 2nd Royal Tank Regiment have some fun ahead of their deployment on Op Herrick 13 by inviting them to bring their cars to a track day.

Turn to Pages 58-59 to see how they got on.



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## NEWS IN BRIEF



**A SERVICEMAN** has urged more military personnel to get involved in a scheme that provides exciting holidays for bereaved Forces' families.

Sgt Kris Sullivan (RAF), pictured above, volunteered to help run a trip organised by the Families' Activity Breaks programme, which sets up adventurous getaways for children and their relatives.

He said: "I would strongly encourage people to consider getting involved in this worthwhile cause."

Visit [www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/AboutDefence/WhatWeDo/Personnel/Welfare/fab](http://www.mod.uk/DefenceInternet/AboutDefence/WhatWeDo/Personnel/Welfare/fab) for more information.

A SCOTTISH education charity is helping current and ex-Service personnel and their children to reach their academic potential.

The Royal Caledonian Schools Trust provides assistance with school clothing, sports equipment, books and group educational projects.

The Trust is available to children of Scots who have served, or who are serving, in the British Forces and welcomes enquiries on all aspects of education. For more information, log on to [www.rcst.org.uk](http://www.rcst.org.uk), call 01923 215350 or send an email to [sharon@rcst.org.uk](mailto:sharon@rcst.org.uk)

**STAFF** from a military car dealership raised more than £1,650 for Help for Heroes by competing in a raft race.

A team from Forces Cars Direct built their own vessel before taking on the one-and-a-half-mile course in Market Deeping, Lincolnshire.



**Green machine:** The Desert Rats' battle PT session placed a strong emphasis on operational reality

## Op focus for Desert Rats' race

**G**ERMANY-based soldiers ramped up their Op Herrick preparations by taking on a gruelling battle physical training (PT) session.

More than 1,500 members of 7th Armoured Brigade – The Desert Rats – which will deploy to Afghanistan in March next year, put their operational fitness to the test during the large-scale event on Bergen-Hohne training area.

The troops took on six stands simulating different challenges they might face while serving in Helmand province and WO1 Rick Lowe, who came up with the session, said making it realistic was a key concern.

He explained: "The aim was to demonstrate exciting, challenging PT with a focus on operations in Afghanistan and also their unit roles when deployed.

"The main effort was to inspire leadership from the front at all levels."

The stands, which were run by individual units from within 7th Armoured Brigade, ranged from pulling a broken-down truck up a hill to safely extracting casualties from a mock battlefield.

Further realism was created by the area's sandy surface and the use of smoke grenades and blank ammunition.

WO1 Lowe added: "If personnel are enthused to take fitness to a higher level and PT staff are motivated to deliver imaginative sessions, that may just make the difference in a real-life situation and save a life.

"For this reason, I strongly feel that these sorts of events can help to contribute to the safe return of our soldiers from operations."

## Helmand walkies for Herrick hounds

**COMMITTED** canines and their handlers have deployed to Afghanistan to serve alongside 16 Air Assault Brigade.

The soldiers and animals, from 104 Military Working Dog Unit, in Rutland, will be patrolling British bases, searching vehicles at checkpoints and operating on the front line to search for weapons, ammunition and explosives.

Speaking before leaving for theatre, Sgt Matthew Jones, who is serving on his second Op Herrick, said: "We have been completely focused on pre-deployment training since January.

"It has been a steady and methodical build-up and we are all now just wanting to get there and get on with the job."

All of the unit's dogs will be housed in air-conditioned kennels after arriving in Afghanistan and will sleep alongside their handlers when posted to forward operating bases.

Most of the animals, which are between one- and three-years-old, are unwanted pets and complete a 12-week course before they go out on patrol.

Maj Steve Leavis, officer commanding, added: "I am proud of every single soldier. For some of them this will be their first operational tour.

"They will do a good job – there is no doubt about it. They are first-rate professional soldiers as well as dedicated handlers."



Picture: Stuart Bingham





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## THE BIGGER PICTURE

POP sensation Robbie Williams performs alongside Take That comrade Gary Barlow for the first time in 15 years at the Help for Heroes Concert at Twickenham. The duo brought down the curtain on a star-studded night of entertainment as 60,000 fans enjoyed performances from the likes of Pixie Lott, Alesha Dixon, Alexandra Burke and Sir Tom Jones. The artists waived their performance fees to help the charity's ongoing fund-raising effort.

Picture: Cpl Steve Blake, RLC







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**KBR**  
We Deliver



**Combat courage:** Soldiers from 3rd Battalion, The Rifles conduct a joint patrol with the Afghan National Army near Sangin during Op Herrick 11

Picture: Sgt Keith Cotton, RLC

# GROUND FORCE

After their efforts helped change the Helmand landscape for the better, we examine the heroic actions of the latest recipients of Operational Honours



**T**HE remarkable courage of scores of soldiers who served on Op Herrick 11 has been rewarded in the latest round of Operational Honours.

The deployment of 11 Light Brigade brought a number of successes, including Op Moshtarak and the move away from targeting insurgents and towards protecting the Afghan people.

The mission, which lasted from October 2009 to March 2010, came at a significant cost after 60 Servicemen lost their lives and others suffered life-changing injuries.

But their sacrifices allowed the International Security Assistance Force to make great progress, including driving the Taliban out of their traditional Helmand heartlands and completing the handover of key locations such as Musa Qaleh.

Here we feature the incredible tales of battlefield bravery that have earned some of the brigade's personnel additions to their military medal haul.



● **A SENIOR officer has been awarded the OBE in recognition of the sterling efforts he has made to enhance the reputation of the British military in Afghanistan.**

After noticing that relations between the Afghan National Police and Army were strained, Lt Col Henry Fullerton (LG) set about introducing change.

A new policy of embedded partnering saw British and Afghan soldiers living alongside one another while planning and executing operations on the outskirts of Musa Qaleh.

The initiative saw proper training offered to the local police force, which was given the responsibility of taking control of the town centre.

Lt Col Fullerton recognised that further success would come from expanding the town's protected community and this operation was achieved with great skill and no casualties as the enemy was taken by surprise.

The commanding officer of The Life Guards launched another operation to drive the Taliban further away and managed to establish a new base at Habib.



● **THE commanding officer of The Royal Welsh has been awarded an OBE for the "meticulous planning and confident execution" of a series of raids deep into Taliban territory.**

Lt Col Nicholas Lock was in charge of a combined force of 2,000 British, Afghan, Estonian and French soldiers and policemen which launched the largest aviation assault in British military history.

The manoeuvre, which was carried out under the cover of darkness and took the enemy completely by surprise, uncovered huge arms caches and avoided any civilian casualties.

A series of village shuras arranged by the officer after the initial assault saw thousands of locals signing up for cash-for-work schemes that resulted in the construction of vital bases.

His citation reads: "Lt Col Lock and his men did not win the campaign – the combined efforts of those who came before and after him will do that – but he made a critical contribution towards turning the tide."

● **THE "cool, calm" leadership displayed by the commander of Task Force Helmand during Op Herrick 11 has been rewarded.**

Brig James Cowan arrived in Helmand in November 2009 and his battlegroups were immediately engaged in intense fighting with little or no respite.

Things got worse when five soldiers were murdered by a rogue Afghan National Policeman and it became clear that a new mindset was needed to swing the campaign back in the International Security Assistance Force's favour.

The resulting "population-centric" approach, which made the protection of Afghan people the priority and the defeat of the insurgents as a secondary goal, was embraced with "imagination and vision" by Brig Cowan.

Despite facing massive external pressure and the glare of the world's media and ranks of politicians, the commander acted "with a resolution that created the space for his battlegroups to manoeuvre successfully".

The citation for his Distinguished Service Order reads: "His leadership throughout a most demanding period was exemplary and the performance of his brigade and Afghan partners outstanding."



● Brig James Cowan





● A CONCERTED effort to improve living conditions for the people of Sangin was at the forefront of Lt Col Nicholas Kitson's mind on what proved to be an immensely-challenging tour.



● Lt Col Nicholas Kitson

The commanding officer of 3rd Battalion, The Rifles was determined to apply a "population-centric" approach to the counter insurgency and set about building a protected community for the local population.

His strategy established a series of bases on the outside of the town that allowed troops to patrol inwards and guarantee the safety of the locals who lived within.

The insurgents viewed this change as a considerable challenge and, during a series of hard-fought battles, the soldiers of 3 Rifles defeated enemy attempts to thwart the plan.

Lt Col Kitson demonstrated indomitable leadership throughout, setting an example of dogged determination for those beneath him even though he was caught in two explosions himself.

His plan also succeeded in removing the corrupt governor and his officials and his efforts in the region have been rewarded with the Distinguished Service Order.

● A SUCCESSFUL campaign to bring relative peace and tranquillity to one of the most hostile regions of Afghanistan has seen Lt Col Charles Walker (Gren Gds) presented with the Distinguished Service Order.

The commanding officer's battlegroup, besieged by a mix of local and foreign Taliban, was attacked relentlessly for a month with insurgent fighters approaching the perimeter of their area of operations and throwing grenades.

Faced with an under-strength Afghan Army and ineffective police force, Lt Col Walker set about analysing the social dynamics of Nad-e Ali.

He demanded restraint from his men, insisting that it showed greater courage not to use lethal force and indulge in pointless duels of fire.

He acknowledged that freedom of movement would prompt economic improvement and forced the opening of routes and the building of bridges.

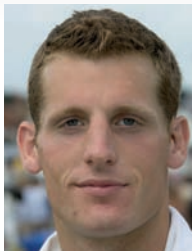
The Kharotei tribe stopped fighting and was given protection and employment and the senior officer's indomitable leadership in the dark early days saw his guardsmen achieve a striking



### DISTINGUISHED SERVICE ORDER

Awarded for highly successful command and leadership during active operations

● OLYMPIC rower Capt Robin Bourne-Taylor proved his dedication to his military career by risking his life to help his section during an action in Helmand last February.



● Capt Robin Bourne-Taylor

The Life Guards officer selflessly held his own position to provide covering fire to the section, which was caught in the open

behind him as he led an assault team into an insurgent compound.

In the face of heavy fire, he attacked the enemy and used several grenades to clear the building during a battle which lasted for 45 minutes.

The troop leader's heroic actions resulted in a number of enemy fighters being captured and a large weapons cache being uncovered.

On another occasion, Capt Bourne-Taylor gave chase for nearly two kilometres to insurgents who had attacked the Brigade Reconnaissance Force (BRF).

When the enemy attempted to turn

the tide by launching a snap ambush, he charged in to stop it and allowed his men to capture two combatants.

The citation for the officer's Conspicuous Gallantry Cross reads: "These incidents typify the gallantry, courage and determination Capt Bourne-Taylor has displayed time and again throughout the tour.

"He has relentlessly taken the fight to the enemy, personally detaining ten of them. His leadership has been inspirational [and] his professionalism and offensive spirit have resulted in success after success for the BRF."

● A SOLDIER who dived on a live grenade and threw it away from his commander and colleagues has been decorated with a Conspicuous Gallantry Cross.

Rfn James McKie (Rifles) was part of a team providing security for the construction of a new patrol base in northern Sangin District on March 3 this year when he was targeted by a heavy and sustained attack from insurgents using small arms.

The soldier immediately returned fire with his machine gun while the commander, who was kneeling, began to coordinate the battle over his radio.

The fire subsided, but out of nowhere a grenade struck the commander's back, rolled down it and



### CONSPICUOUS GALLANTRY CROSS

Awarded in recognition of acts of conspicuous gallantry during active operations against the enemy

settled at his feet.

Rfn McKie and the commander saw the grenade, but another soldier did not.

Determined to protect the other two, he dived under his commander, picked up the munition and threw it off the roof, where it detonated a split second after leaving his hand.

The commander received a deep wound to his calf and Rfn McKie suffered shrapnel wounds to his face and arm, but despite his injuries he immediately picked up his weapon and aimed it back towards the enemy firing point.

His citation reads: "Rfn McKie had, in an act of singular gallantry and utter selflessness, saved the lives of his commander and a fellow rifleman with this act of the most conspicuous valour while in the face of an enemy attack."



● AN NCO ignored his own injuries following two devastating bomb blasts to carry a double amputee to a medevac site.

Sgt Paul Baines acted without regard for his own safety following the explosions as he cared for the wounded and hauled the seriously-injured soldier over difficult ground to the waiting helicopter.

On another occasion, the platoon sergeant was caught in a blast while carrying a stretcher with his commander, resulting in multiple serious injuries.

Again ignoring his own wounds, Sgt Baines (Coldm Gds) carried out life-saving treatment and staggered across a heavily-ploughed field with the casualty in his arms to reach the extraction point.

Recognising the weakened state of the patrol, the sergeant refused to leave the battlefield himself and supported the platoon commander in controlling the troops' move back to camp.

The extent of his wounds then became clear and he was evacuated for treatment, but Sgt Baines discharged himself one week later to return to the front line.

His citation for a Military Cross reads: "This astonishing act of selfless gallantry in the face of carnage was remarkable."

● A COMBAT medic who administered life-saving first aid to a fellow soldier despite being shot through the helmet and under intense enemy fire has been awarded the Military Cross.

LCpl Daniel Fletcher (RAMC) held his ground with courage and performed his first tracheotomy with surgical precision while showing a blatant disregard for his own safety.

The junior NCO assisted with the evacuation of the wounded soldier and his actions under intense fire were typical of his absolute commitment to medical support on operations.

He also won the confidence of the Afghan people with a series of clinics and medical shuras.

● THE bravery and leadership of a young soldier during his very first patrol has been acknowledged with a Military Cross.

Cpl Ricky Fergusson (Rifles) was part of a familiarisation force which was hit by an explosion. Without hesitation, and with no regard for his own safety, the junior NCO went to help a stricken comrade.

After stabilising him and assisting in his evacuation, Cpl Fergusson was credited with saving the soldier's life.

When an explosion, which resulted in the double amputation of a soldier, hit another patrol led by the section commander his leadership skills shone once more. Cpl Fergusson treated the wounds himself, applying tourniquets to save his colleague's life before coordinating a rapid evacuation.

His citation states: "His bravery, personally ignoring the ever-present IED threat when dashing to the aid of wounded men, and his outstanding leadership, time and again rallying his soldiers in the disorientating aftermath of the strikes, displayed gallantry and exemplary conduct."

● A COMBAT medical technician showed "extreme courage" by treating casualties of a suicide bomb attack last December.

LCpl Sarah Bushbye (RAMC) was under heavy fire from insurgents as she tended to British and Afghan soldiers, crossing 500 metres of open wadi to triage and care for the wounded.

The junior NCO kept her head, reporting details to her commander and continually advising and directing the riflemen acting as her emergency assistants.

The citation for her Military Cross praised her composure and confident direction in steadying the shaken men and ensuring they gave the best treatment to each victim.

She also administered CPR to a British soldier who had stopped breathing and provided critical information to allow the medical response helicopter to be fully prepared for the casualties.

No sooner had the Chinook landed than it began to attract small arms fire, but LCpl Bushbye continued to cross between the airframe and the check point to keep the casualties alive, all the time standing in an area where she was directly exposed to enemy fire.



● A PLATOON sergeant has been awarded a Military Cross after braving improved explosive devices and enemy fire in order to save his comrades' lives.

Sgt Ashley Hill (R Anglian) acted when a vehicle struck an IED, leaving its occupants seriously wounded.

As he moved to help, two of his men were shot. Pinned down by the enemy, Hill used a ladder to climb over several walls to extract his colleagues.

Reaching the stricken logistical vehicle, the multiple commander reassured the crew and assisted the injured but found himself overstretched.

As the convoy returned, another vehicle struck an IED and left the route blocked. Under pressure to get his men out of the village, the NCO commandeered a tractor and spent two hours ferrying the supplies between the convoy and the check point.

He then led his multiple two-and-a-half kilometres back to their base.

● TAKING the lead in an operation to flush insurgents from a village littered with improvised explosive devices by using himself as bait has earned Lt Douglas Dalzell (Coldm Gds) a Military Cross.

The platoon commander led a small group of his soldiers down an alleyway in the settlement when an insurgent leapt out of cover 40 metres to his front, firing off an entire magazine.

Lt Dalzell fired back, forcing the attacker into his own expertly-placed ambush.

Days later, the officer was leading another patrol when a bomb was triggered by one of his men. Despite being caught in the blast himself, he calmly arranged the soldier's extraction, but as the party began to move on it was caught in a second explosion, killing one man and seriously injuring the stretcher carriers.

Under insurgent fire, Lt Dalzell rallied his men, controlled their movements to a safe area and sent calm, clear radio reports to bring in an emergency helicopter.

His citation praised the "unique young officer", adding: "His leadership under such extreme pressure and his indomitable courage in the face of the enemysuccessfully brought the patrol away to safety."

● THE bravery of a junior soldier less than one month after arriving in Afghanistan has been marked with a Military Cross.

Rfn Harry Lanceley (Rifles) displayed "extraordinary courage" in repelling an unexpected close quarters enemy attack on November 5 last year.

Despite facing a heavy weight of fire and being in full view of the insurgents, he conducted the life-saving first aid and evacuation of a comrade, ultimately saving his life.

His award citation recognised that the rifleman could easily have chosen to wait in cover for the incoming fire to subside. The commendation added: "He unhesitatingly went forward to treat and rescue his critically-wounded teammate, who is alive thanks to Rfn Lanceley's medical skills and brave actions."

● AN officer who disregarded his own safety to take the fight to the enemy has been awarded the Military Cross.

Lt Colin Lunn (Yorks) was attacked from close range by rockets and small arms fire while on patrol in October last year.

After being pinned down by the enemy he realised that artillery support was needed and ran across open ground to get a radio before returning to his position to find the attackers had closed to within 50 metres.

The officer led four men in a counter attack and directed mortar fire, giving the patrol a chance to withdraw safely.

Three months later, Lt Lunn was leading a patrol that was simultaneously attacked from two fortified enemy positions. Taking only two soldiers with him he stealthily approached the first stronghold before charging forward and throwing a grenade.

He entered the compound only to see those inside fleeing. Continuing his assault, he cleared the second position.



● **CONTINUOUS** gallantry and an offensive spirit in the face of fierce enemy attacks have earned LCpl Marc Reader (Coldm Gds) a Military Cross.

The junior NCO was part of a reconnaissance multiple that received constant attacks by insurgent forces.

His exemplary actions saw him stepping into ambush killing areas, storming enemy positions and exposing himself to draw fire away from his comrades.

His citation reads: "LCpl Reader has consistently placed himself in grave danger to protect his fellow soldiers with scant regard for his own safety."

● **AN instinctive act of bravery that saw Cpl George Sale (R Welsh) run across open ground to save his comrades from an enemy attack has been honoured with the Military Cross.**

The section commander made the move after his platoon became pinned down by insurgent fire from a number of locations.

Cpl Sale ran towards the enemy position and posted a hand grenade before storming the building. His actions gave the platoon room to manoeuvre but he had left himself horribly exposed.

Braving small arms fire once more, he ran back to his section and moved them forward to continue the attack, forcing the insurgents to withdraw.

His citation commended his initiative and courage under fire and praised Cpl Sale for taking the fight to the enemy.

● **THE judgement and clear thinking of a platoon commander in one of the most "kinetic and dangerous" situations has been praised in his Military Cross citation.**

Lt Craig Shephard (Gren Gds) was credited for conceiving and executing a complex deception and ambush mission.

When up to 60 enemy fighters tried to overrun a patrol the officer was leading, he calmly brought mortars "danger close" to his position.

The lieutenant's award citation added: "Lt Shephard's judgement and clear thinking was of the highest order on his first operational tour."

● **A SELFLESS soldier showed exceptional gallantry in the heart of Helmand.**

A/Sgt Adam Swift (Coldm Gds) helped save a patrol that was pinned down in a fierce ambush by cunningly outflanking Taliban forces to charge their position.

With the patrol finding it impossible to extract safely, the multiple commander manoeuvred his troops to within 20 metres of the enemy and provided a commentary on their positions and movements so his company could find a safe route home.

Later in the tour he found himself ambushed in a previously un-patrolled area and decided to charge his attackers.

When his platoon sustained a casualty, A/Sgt Swift raced across open ground to organise the stretcher-bearers before leading them back to the position.

Sgt Swift's actions have been honoured with the Military Cross.

● **RUNNING** across open ground to rescue a child who had been shot was just one of several acts of bravery that have earned A/Cpl Andrew Wardle (Yorks) a Military Cross.

The leader of an Operational Mentoring Liaison Team was commended for taking a group of Afghan soldiers and holding a piece of vital but exposed ground north of Musa Qaleh despite coming under enemy fire.

On one occasion, he refused medical treatment after the back blast of an RPG left him with concussion, instead choosing to stay in the fight

Just two days later, his patrol was attacked from its flank, leaving civilians caught in the crossfire. Seeing an injured child lying in open ground, A/Cpl Wardle ran 50 metres to provide first aid to the youngster, who had been shot in the back.

In addition to those acts, the soldier personally found 17 IEDs during his tour and was responsible for treating five very seriously-injured casualties.

**Troops honoured:** Members of The Coldstream Guards who have received operational honours from their tour of Afghanistan earlier this year. Left to right, Sgt William Pates, LSgt Nathan Owen, Cpl Marc Reader, Sgt Adam Swift and Sglt Mathew Wallis

Picture: Graham Harrison

● **CHARGING** into a barrage of enemy fire to protect his section during the intense fighting of Op Moshtarak has earned Cpl David Williams a Military Cross.

The Royal Welsh NCO was second-in-command of a multiple tasked with securing a village in northern Nad-e Ali and faced daily battles with insurgents.

When his patrol moved into enemy territory and was pinned down in a well-executed ambush, Cpl Williams broke cover and ran towards the enemy.

The selfless act drew the oncoming fire towards him, removing his soldiers from immediate danger and driving the insurgents from their firing points.

He then returned to his multiple and directed their efforts in suppressing the remaining threat.

His citation praised his "complete disregard for his own safety" which undoubtedly saved his soldiers' lives.

It added: "Williams' actions were well beyond that expected of a junior NCO."

● **AN inexperienced soldier excelled** during his first operational tour by taking responsibility for clearing routes through areas laden with IEDs.

Deployed to Wishtan, a volatile area of Sangin, Pte Callum Brotherston (Scots) frequently provided safe paths through which his comrades could move.

On one occasion, the soldier volunteered to join a patrol to support an operation to ambush an IED team.

In pitch darkness, he found a bomb, preventing the premature end to a mission which resulted in an insurgent being caught laying an IED.

Following an explosion that left one soldier fatally wounded and another seriously injured, Pte Brotherston cleared a route for the evacuation over ground sewn with more IEDs before assisting with the recovery of his fallen comrade.

His Queen's Gallantry Medal citation reads: "To be the lead man searching routes for IEDs requires incredible bravery and composure.

"Pte Brotherston has consistently stood up to the mark."







● **A COURAGEOUS** soldier acted without hesitation to save the life of a comrade injured in an IED blast.

Cpl John Hardman (Yorks) ignored the risk of secondary devices and small arms fire to crawl towards his colleague, signalling for the rest of his team to stay still to avoid triggering what he believed to be a partially-detonated bomb.

After applying tourniquets to both legs of the wounded soldier and administering morphine, the NCO summoned the rest of his men to move the casualty to their nearby base for evacuation.

The danger to which Cpl Hardman exposed himself was discovered a few weeks later when 28 IEDs were discovered close to the site of the first explosion.

The act earned him a Queen's Gallantry Medal and the first aid he provided was described by staff at Bastion Hospital as among the best they had seen.

● AN Army medic ignored the imminent threat of IEDs to rush to the aid of Afghan soldiers who were injured in an explosion.

LCpl Julie May (RAMC) showed "extraordinary selflessness" to run to the location of the incident.

Undeterred by the devastation and with remarkable calmness, the junior NCO treated the most seriously wounded, moving between patients despite the risk of setting off further devices.

After stabilising the casualties, the soldier then insisted on accompanying them back up the road and continued to treat them until the medical emergency team arrived.

Her selflessness, courage, authority, endurance and technical expertise, which helped to save two colleagues' lives, were labelled as "extraordinary" in the citation for her Queen's Gallantry Medal, which added: "[LCpl May's] calmness in the face of adversity was prominent."

● **A BOMB** disposal expert who has courageously dealt with more improvised explosive devices than any other operator in history has been awarded the George Medal.

SSgt Karl Ley (RLC) has made safe and recovered 139 devices across Helmand province and has willingly accepted the great level of



● **SSgt Karl Ley**

● AN ammunition technician who disposed of an IED after his commander was caught in a blast has been awarded the Queen's Gallantry Medal.

Cpl Robert Nealey was the second-in-command to a high-threat IED disposal operator when the team leader was hit by an explosion as he dealt with the seventh device of the day on October 31 last year.

With his boss presumed dead, Cpl Nealey (RLC) assumed command and knew that he would have to dispose of more bombs before searching for his comrade.

Although he had a rudimentary knowledge of explosive hazards, Cpl Nealey had never been trained how to disarm bombs, but he made the "long lonely walk" forward and realised he would have to defuse another IED to allow the operation to continue.

The NCO requested permission to carry out a make-safe procedure and made a second trip forward to place an explosive charge within centimetres of the IED.

His citation reads: "His calm, clear and considered actions, outside the boundaries of his experience, directly contributed to the safe extraction of his team."

● **A YOUNG** soldier helped evacuate wounded comrades after an IED blast despite suffering from a fractured spine.

Rfn Ross Robinson was checking the ground with a metal detector on a resupply patrol in northern Sangin when a colleague in front of him triggered a bomb.

The man at the front suffered serious injuries, Rfn Robinson was blown off his feet and the section commander suffered a fragmentation injury to his neck.

risk his job entails.

During the course of one 72-hour operation in November last year, he defused 28 victim-operated improvised explosive devices and personally dealt with 14 bombs.

The senior NCO painstakingly defused seven IEDs so they could be recovered intact for technical intelligence purposes.

His citation states: "During his six-month deployment SSgt Ley has worked tirelessly in the most hazardous of conditions. He has endured both mental and physical fatigue and has displayed unwavering dedication."

**Although he was in severe pain, the soldier got back to his feet, retrieved his metal detector and cleared a safe route to allow others to provide first aid.**

**He then expanded the safe area, clearing a lane 100 metres back to a quad bike while carrying his injured colleague's heavy kit.**

Once both men were loaded onto the machine, Rfn Robinson (Rifles) again led the way, this time clearing a route for them to move 400 metres towards a helicopter landing site.

As the rifleman moved back to camp he could hardly walk and was eventually evacuated back to the UK for treatment.

His Queen's Gallantry Medal citation reads: "Despite his own serious and potentially life-changing injury, Rfn

Robinson took the initiative in the effective absence of his commander and with no thought but to help his stricken fellow riflemen."

● AN NCO risked his own life by administering first aid to an Afghan comrade who was seriously injured in an explosion.

Sgt John Swithenbank was serving as the second-in-command of an Operational Mentoring Liaison Team south of Sangin District Centre when he was tasked to hunt for an important enemy weapon system.

As six Afghan soldiers entered a compound, an IED exploded and one of the troops could not be found. Showing no regard for his own safety, Sgt Swithenbank (Yorks) moved into the area of the blast and spotted the sixth serviceman on the floor with two undetonated IEDs next to him.

The British Serviceman, who receives the Queen's Gallantry Medal, acted on impulse, moving to the stricken Afghan and providing first aid, applying tourniquets and carrying out complex medical procedures in close proximity to lethal bombs.

**Top, Star searcher: Spr Jonathan Horner (RE), goes through his drills; Far right: Maj Graeme Wearmouth (Scots), who receives the Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service**

Pictures: Steve Dock and Mark Owens





# OPERATIONAL HONOURS AND AWARDS

## AFGHANISTAN

### **Officer of the Order of The British Empire (OBE):**

Lt Col Henry FULLERTON, LG; Lt Col Nicholas LOCK, R Welsh.

### **Member of the Order of The British Empire (MBE):**

Maj Christopher DAVIES, R Anglian; Maj Timothy HARRIS, Rifles; Maj Patrick REEHAL, RLC; Maj Richard STREATFEILD, Rifles; Maj Toby TILL, Coldm Gds.

### **Distinguished Service Order (DSO):**

Brig James COWAN; Lt Col Nicholas KITSON, Rifles; Lt Col Charles WALKER, Gren Gds.

### **Conspicuous Gallantry Cross:**

Capt Robin BOURNE-TAYLOR, LG; Rfn James MCKIE, Rifles.

### **Military Cross:**

Sgt Paul BAINES, Coldm Gds; LCpl Sarah BUSHBYE, RAMC; Lt Douglas DALZELL, Coldm Gds; LCpl Daniel FLETCHER, RAMC; Cpl Ricky FURGUSSON, Rifles; Sgt Ashley HILL, R Anglian; Rfn Harry LANCELEY, Rifles; Lt Colin LUNN, Yorks; LCpl Marc READER, Coldm Gds; Cpl George SALE, R Welsh; Lt Craig SHEPHARD, Gren Gds; A/Sgt Adam SWIFT, Coldm Gds; A/Cpl Andrew WARDLE, Yorks; Cpl David WILLIAMS, R Welsh; SSgt Gareth WOOD, RLC.

### **George Medal:**

SSgt Karl LEY, RLC.

### **Queen's Gallantry Medal:**

Pte Callum BROTHERSTON, Scots; Cpl John HARDMAN, Yorks; LCpl Julie MAY, RAMC; Cpl Robert NEALEY, RLC; Rfn Ross ROBINSON, Rifles; Sgt John SWITHENBANK, Yorks.

### **Mention in Dispatches:**

Gdsm Emmanuel ATTUQUAYEFIO, Gren Gds; LCpl Nikotimo BOLATAGANE, Yorks; LCpl Daniel BRAMLEY, Gren Gds; Lt Simon BROOMFIELD, R Anglian; Cpl Daryl BRYANT, Rifles; Gdsm Lewis COULBERT, Gren Gds; CSgt Christopher DUNDON, R Welsh; Sgt Paul FOX, RE; LBdr Craig FROGGETT, RA; LSgt David GREENHALGH, Gren Gds; Cpl Paul GEORGE, R Welsh; Lt Stephen HEALEY, R Welsh; A/Sgt Paul HOWARD, RTR; Lt Richard HUTTON, Gren Gds; WO2 Patrick HYDE, Rifles; LCpl Alexander JONES, R Welsh; Cpl Steve MARTIN, Rifles; Sgt Brian MCINTYRE, RLC; Capt Andrew MICHAEL, Rifles; LSgt Nathan OWEN, Coldm Gds; LSgt William PATES, Coldm Gds; Sgt Gareth REID, RLC; A/Cpl Liam RILEY, Yorks; Maj Stuart SMITH, R Anglian; Cpl Daniel SPRUCE, RLC; LCpl Alan TAYLOR, R Anglian; Cpl Robert TORDOFF, RE; Rfn Mark TURNER, Rifles; A/Sgt Ryan VICKERY, R Anglian; LSgt Mathew WALLIS, Coldm Gds; LCpl Ryan WALTON, Lances; Lt Charles WINSTANLEY, Rifles.

### **Queen's Commendation for Bravery:**

WO2 Andrew GOODWIN, RLC; LCpl Jamie HASTIE, Yorks; Rfn Peter MATTHEWS, Rifles; 2nd Lt Connor MAXWELL, Rifles; Rfn Daniel NICKSON, Rifles; Capt Daniel READ, RLC; Rfn Gareth SUTHERLAND, Rifles; Rfn Aselemo VETANIBUA, Rifles; LSgt David WALKER, SG; SSgt Paul WRIGHT, RE.

### **Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service:**

Rev James AITCHISON, RACD; Lt Col Matthew BAZELEY, RE; 2nd Lt Daniel BENSTEAD, R Anglian; Maj James

BOWDER, Gren Gds; Maj Oliver BROWN, R Anglian; Sgt Frederick GOODING, RE; Cpl Pritabhadur GURUNG, QOGLR; Maj Richard HEAD, Rifles; Spr Johnathan HORNER, RE; 2nd Lt Philip LENTHALL, R Anglian; Lt Col Jeremy LEWIN, RAMC; Capt Jonathan NOLAN, QARANC; Maj Andrew ROE, Yorks; WO2 Justin SEARLE, RA; Capt James SEDDON, Gren Gds; Maj Graeme WEARMOUTH, Scots.





Report: Andrew Simms

# ON TOP OF THE WORLD

## Aviation HALEs the arrival of record-breaker

A UK-built solar-powered plane being considered for service with British Forces has smashed the endurance record for unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), flying non-stop for 14 days.

Although still awaiting official confirmation of its record-breaking status from the Federation Aeronautique Internationale, Zephyr's 336-hour and 21-minute flight over Arizona was more than 11 times longer than the previous record, which was set by the US military's UAV Global Hawk in 2001.

Designed and developed by the defence and research company QinetiQ, the high-altitude long endurance (HALE) drone completed its marathon voyage above the US Army's Yuma Proving Ground while deployed on a demonstration mission for the Ministry of Defence.

It is one of a number of persistent intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition and reconnaissance platforms being given careful consideration under Project Scavenger, which is currently in the concept phase.

Zephyr, which is launched by hand and uses paper-thin solar cells on its wings to drive its propellers during the day and top up its lithium sulphur batteries to power the aircraft by

◀ ZEPHYR PROVES IT IS POSSIBLE TO PUT PLATFORMS INTO THE STRATOSPHERE TO PROVIDE COMMUNICATIONS AND SURVEILLANCE ON A CONTINUOUS BASIS ▶



night, has now also flown for longer, non-stop and without refuelling than any other aeroplane – having significantly surpassed the Rutan Voyager milestone of nine days, three minutes and 44 seconds airborne which was set in 1986.

The product of nine years of research, testing and modifications, the “production ready” airframe’s latest trial flight demonstrates “the potential to fly forever”, according to Zephyr’s chief designer Christopher Kelleher.

“Providing you can get an aircraft above the jet stream winds and above the clouds, then the solar power is there,” he told *Soldier*. “Until now the technology – lightweight carbon fibres and power storage to stay above those winds continuously – simply hasn’t been there, but now it is, let’s do it.

“[Zephyr proves] it is possible to put platforms up into the stratosphere to provide communications and surveillance on a continuous basis.”

Programme director Jon Saltmarsh said that such a persistent asset has a host of potential military applications, adding: “The key one being as a communications relay – particularly if you’re talking about Afghanistan where you’ve got soldiers operating out of the line of

sight of other troops.

“Those personnel need either a satellite or something else to maintain communication and Zephyr could be that something else.

“Sitting at 60,000ft it has a huge footprint – 900km in diameter – and has the advantage over a satellite in that you don’t get a delay at that altitude. It can provide persistent communications over the whole country.

“Another use would be as a surveillance platform and we’ve flown camera payloads in the past which demonstrate good resolution of targets of interest on the ground.”

Being capable of remaining airborne for weeks if not months without the need to refuel gives QinetiQ’s HALE UAV a clear edge over its unmanned contemporaries.

“Airships and static balloons can’t currently operate at altitudes of 65,000ft and are subject to weather conditions,” said Kelleher. “Zephyr operates above those weather systems and has a much, much greater footprint. If you want to look over the whole of Afghanistan, the Gulf region or at pirates off the coast of Africa, these are places where airships are simply not going to be able to reach.

“There are persistent airship concepts under consideration, but they are all a fair way in the future, are enormous, will

## ZEPHYR’S BLACK BOX

WINGSPAN: 73.8FT

WEIGHT: 110LBS

POWER: LITHIUM SULPHUR BATTERY TECHNOLOGY, LIGHTWEIGHT SOLAR CELLS AND TWO DIRECT-DRIVE MOTORS

OPERATING ALTITUDE: 50,000-70,000FT

LONGEST RECORDED FLIGHT TO DATE: 336HR 21MIN

FOOTPRINT: 900KM IN DIAMETER

COST: APPROXIMATELY A TENTH OF THE PRICE OF MANNED AIRCRAFT AND ONE HUNDREDTH THE COST OF A SATELLITE



cost hundreds of millions of dollars and will not provide the soldier on the ground with his own asset.”

The team at QinetiQ are not shy about boasting about Zephyr’s “game-changing technology”, but with a service ceiling of 70,000ft and aviation records fluttering in the slipstream of their solar plane, it is no surprise they have an air of supremacy. ■





# A magnificent man and his flying machines

## *Soldier* meets engineer behind life-saving MAV

Interview: Andrew Simms

**B**EING in a position to celebrate the loss of one of his own to enemy action in Afghanistan is an oddity that fills Vaughn Fulton with great pride.

As the programme manager behind Honeywell's T-Hawk – the Micro Air Vehicle (MAV) providing British and American troops with a "God's eye view" of the war against Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) – news of a combat casualty holds no heartbreak for the aviation expert.

"The way I figure it, every time a T-Hawk goes down it means that a human didn't," Fulton told *Soldier*. "Combatants have more affinity with their robots than we do. The team often hear from soldiers or marines saying 'fix Sparky for me' and we want to patch them [the MAVs] up for them but if one is lost our job is done."

Allied troops' emotional attachment towards the "hover and stare" unmanned aircraft, now a veteran of both Iraq and Afghanistan, is understandable. Just seven years after its conception, the man-portable, vertical take-off and landing system finds itself at the spearhead of the battle to beat the roadside bomb.

Initially developed as a demonstration model in 2003 as a means of giving platoon-sized units

an invaluable asset to provide a "round-the-next-corner or over-the-next-fence or building capability", it is now a vital component of the British Army's Talisman counter-IED system.



**'The way I figure it, every time a T-Hawk goes down it means that a human didn't'**

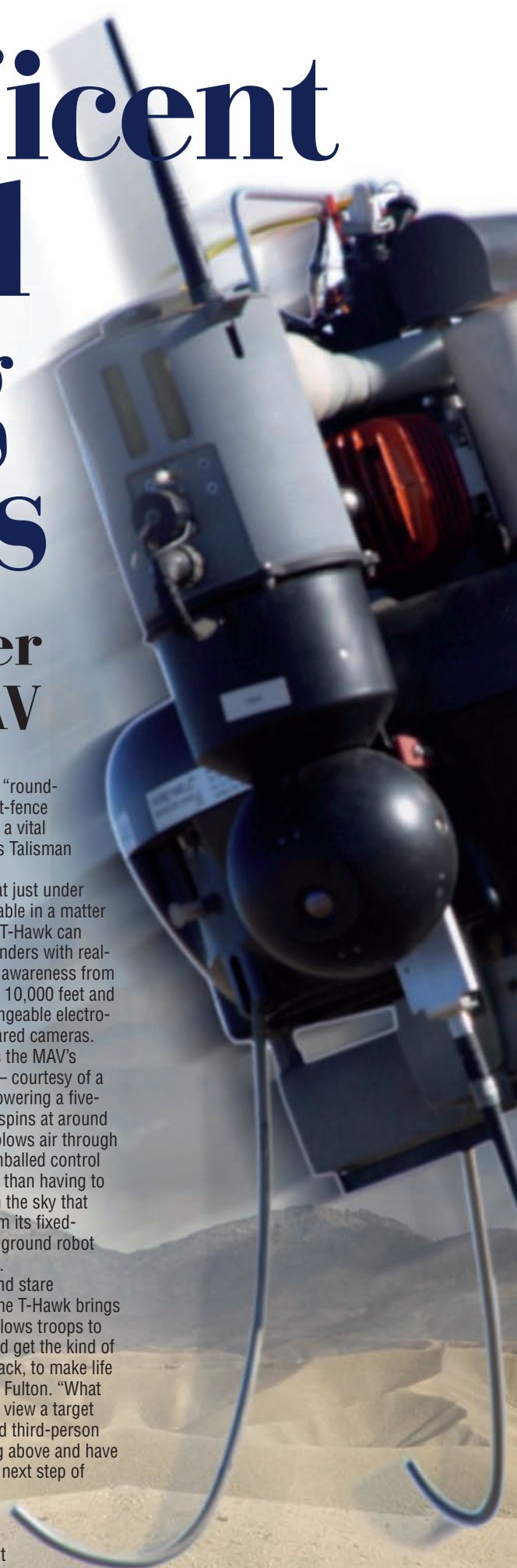
Weighing in at just under 8kg and deployable in a matter of minutes, the T-Hawk can provide commanders with real-time situational awareness from heights of up to 10,000 feet and boasts interchangeable electro-optical and infrared cameras.

However, it is the MAV's ability to hover – courtesy of a petrol engine powering a five-bladed fan that spins at around 7,000rpm and blows air through a stator and gimballed control system – rather than having to do racetracks in the sky that sets it apart from its fixed-wing peers and ground robot contemporaries.

"The hover and stare capability that the T-Hawk brings is unique and allows troops to

put a machine in harm's way and get the kind of intelligence, the real-time feedback, to make life and death decisions," explained Fulton. "What gives it the edge is the ability to view a target from a stationary standpoint and third-person perspective – to park something above and have a God's eye view is to have that next step of situational awareness that we want our folks to have."

"You can have fixed-wing systems look at a point but





they [UAVs] are always orbiting and therefore the perspective is always changing. With the T-Hawk you point it at something and even if environmental forces are pushing it around the gimbal always keeps itself centred."

Another undoubted strength of T-Hawk is its intuitive control system, which was developed by the end user – soldiers – and requires minimal training to master. Piloted from a ruggedised laptop using a stylus and "virtual mouse pad", autonomous flight controls mean that flying is as simple as "point and click".

"The big feedback we get is how user-friendly it is to fly," said Fulton.

"If you haven't given T-Hawk a flight plan it will just take-off to 50ft and wait there for you to tell it to do

something. In any given situation you just have to click on the screen and tell it to go.

"It flies exactly like a third-person shooter video game, which is what a lot of the younger generation of soldiers have grown up with."

The MAV, however, is not without its detractors and Honeywell's robotic rivals are quick to highlight perceived weaknesses, of which noise tops the list.

Usually flown at much lower altitudes than high-orbiting UAVs, T-Hawk is far from silent and hits volumes of up to 60 decibels from a distance of about 100 metres, which is comparable to a crowd of people talking.

Aware of the MAV's lack of stealth, the US military has been using this character trait to their advantage according to Honeywell.

"There are situations where you want force projection and for the enemy to know that you are there and you are watching," said Fulton. "Insurgents are not looking to go toe-to-toe, they are looking for the element of surprise and soft targets, but if you've got T-Hawk in the air, looking at them and following them, it quickly becomes a psychological deterrent.

"Those in the Forces are wonderful inventors," he added. "Others might deliver the technology but Service personnel come up with and determine the best way to deploy these kind of systems."

That British and American soldiers have deemed T-Hawk's primary role in Afghanistan to be in the counter-IED field is a shift in mission that the man behind the machine is only too happy to embrace.

Honoured to be playing a part in the fight to eradicate the threat of bombs, Fulton and his team are working to evolve T-Hawk's sensors to further enhance its capabilities as a spotter and in an effort to ensure that it is Honeywell, and not the families of soldiers, being sent letters of condolence.

Conscious of the dangers being faced daily by T-Hawk's operators, Fulton concluded: "As we are putting these things together, it is clear to my team that are building them that they've got to be right, they've got to come out of the box working first time, every time because people's lives are depending on it." ■

## T-HAWK

- Fits in a backpack and can be deployed from a vehicle
- Easy to assemble and can be airborne within ten minutes
- Able to take-off and land vertically
- Simple to fly with minimal training
- Persistent hover and stare capability
- Fully operational day and night and in most weather conditions

### Air vehicle performance (at 38C/sea level)

- 50 minutes endurance
- 25ft/sec rate of climb
- 46mph airspeed
- Take-off and landing in 17mph winds
- Fly in 23mph winds
- 10,000ft service ceiling

### Operational environment

Temperature: -7C to 49C  
Humidity: 100%  
Salt, fog, sand and dust

### Payloads

Interchangeable daylight and infrared cameras

### Video recording

Ground station stores 240 minutes of sensor imagery

### Flight modes

Autonomous flight with dynamic re-tasking and manual intervention

### Communications

3-6 mile range

### Fuel

Petrol



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# AERIAL ASSET

Infantry teams up with Royal Signals to provide new front-line capability

Report: Joe Clapson  
Pictures: Mike Weston  
and SSgt Will Craig

**T**HE introduction of communications experts operating cutting-edge technology to the front lines of Afghanistan is set to dramatically change the nature of the conflict.

Following requests directly from the Op Herrick battlefield, tactical radio teams are being trained in specialised skills to increase the speed of casualty extractions from combat zones.

In line with the new initiative, soldiers from 1st Battalion, The Rifles were trained on the pilot tactical – or tac – signaller course.

Speaking to *Soldier* at the Caerwent proving area in Wales, Sgt James Nicholl (Royal Signals Infantry Support Team, 1 Rifles) explained the thinking behind the four-week programme.

“The requirement was driven by realities on the ground in Afghanistan – it’s all about the speed of extraction from the field,” he said.

“We’ve had improvements in communications equipment and now the tac signallers will bring faster, more accurate information to the unit.” >>



The decision to draft in specialist radio operators will allow section commanders to focus on winning the firefight and planning the next move rather than dealing with communications traffic.

"The section commander has more time to plan the extraction because the tac signaller deals with the liaison with medics and setting up a landing area for the Medical Emergency Response Team (MERT)," said Sgt Nicholl.

During the intense course, soldiers were thoroughly tutored on top-of-the-range communications kit that allows them to speak directly to support units such as mortar teams and casualty evacuation helicopters.

A major enhancement to the equipment is the 117 Harris radio – previously only used for special operations – which is now with every battalion in Afghanistan.

"These radios are on VHF, UHF and satellite channel and with a tactical satellite it's not line-of-sight, you just have to hit a satellite and you're in contact," said Sgt Nicholl.

"Tac signallers can go straight to the base line without going through the whole communication chain.

"Someone in Kandahar with our channel can listen to us in deepest Helmand or wherever else we are as long as we hit a satellite".

Before deploying to Afghanistan next year, 1 Rifles hope to have trained 50 tac signallers, giving each patrol access to the skill-set.

The concept is now being evaluated across the Army and may be rolled out to other Infantry battalions via their respective Royal Signals support teams.

As well as dealing with radios, tac signallers are trained in emergency first aid, enabling them to provide full-time medical teams with crucial details on the condition of casualties.

"As trained medics they can treat a casualty, send off all the important information and direct the MERT in," said Sgt Nicholl.

"It's not just a case of being able to use a radio – they must be fit, strong, robust, intelligent and able to have a calmness in the heat of battle."

One of the soldiers selected for the course's groundbreaking first run was Rfn Steven Pike.

After dealing with a casualty and calling in a helicopter while under simulated enemy fire during an exercise serial, he said: "This has given me an insight into the radios on the ground.

"The fact that a tac signaller can call in everything for everyone will really help to speed things up and make it quicker to extract casualties."

As well as speeding up the casevac process, the soldiers' technological prowess will add to the intelligence armoury of the Infantry battalion.

Along with their multi-channel radios, they will carry ruggedised high performance wave (HPW) laptops with

the ability to send information back to base or wherever else it is required.

"You can take a picture of a bad guy out on the ground and send it wherever you want in the world via the HPW," said Sgt Nicholl.

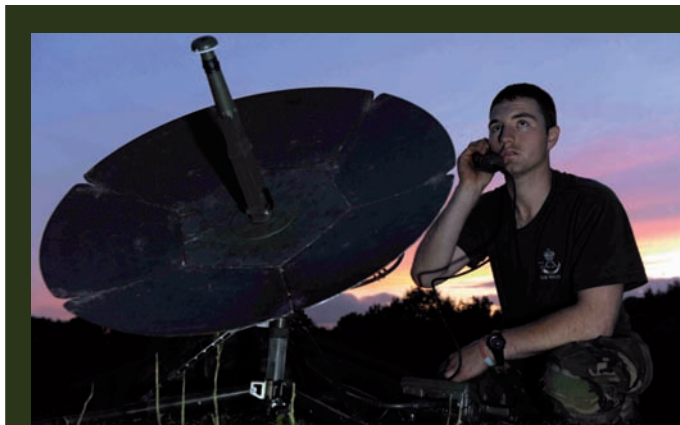
"So if you're out on patrol you can send back information and images to the FOBs or main base allowing them to build up an intelligence picture.

"This is the top standard of kit we are working with."

**‘The fact that a tac signaller can call in everything for everyone will really help to speed things up’**



**Cool kit:** State-of-the-art technology, including the latest antennae and rugged laptops, is deployed with tac signallers



**Beaming up:** The use of satellite technology to keep troops in touch with each other is a major boost for modern battlefield communications



**Back to basics:** Troops taking part in the tac signallers' course are also required to demonstrate their soldiering ability







Those chosen to become tac signallers will carry heavier loads and take on more responsibility than most of their colleagues on patrol.

But rather than see their role as a burden, these expertly-trained soldiers realise they will be saving lives and are ready and willing to make a positive difference to the Army's front-line operations. ■



**First responders:** All-important casualty evacuation serials play a major part in the new course's line up





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# AIMING HIGH

## SERVICE SNIPERS SET THEIR SIGHTS ON OP HERRICK

Report: Joe Clapson  
Pictures: Steve Dock

**B**RITISH snipers are proving invaluable in the mission to target the Taliban without risking losing the respect and understanding of the Afghan public.

By identifying and engaging the enemy with pinpoint accuracy, the highly-skilled soldiers are gaining ground in Helmand province while keeping collateral damage to a minimum.

But before the dead-eyed personnel are let in to the pressure-cooker environment of theatre, they have to prove their skills during a variety of training exercises and competitions.

*Soldier* shadowed the best of the British Armed Forces' snipers at one of the premier pieces of preparation – this year's School of Infantry Sniper Competition – to take a closer look at the sharpshooters in action.

Maj James Passmore, chief instructor at the Army's direct fire division, explained the relevance of the event.

"This was not just a case of snipers winning a competition, it was about focusing on the skills of snipers across the Army and feeding back to the respective units what could be worked on and which aspects of training are going well," he said.

"Given the continued operational importance of sniping, this was a very good chance to look at the standard of sniping right across the Armed Forces."

A total of 14 teams from across the Infantry and Royal Marines competed in a range of disciplines at the elite contest, including a competition shoot, endurance patrol, stalks and a night navigation serial.

Each team was made up of two soldiers – a "number one" who operated as the shooter and a "number two" who was in command and responsible for everything from judging wind speeds and distances to deciding when shots should be taken.

"They were pitting their wits against each other in a competition environment, to win bragging rights as the best sniper pair in the Infantry," added Maj Passmore.

In broad daylight on the Brecon Beacons, the stealthy teams attempted to move into position without being seen by spotters before firing a blank shot.

Then the pairs, heavily camouflaged in tailor-made gillie suits, were required to extract from their location undetected.

Rgr Stephen Clarke, the number one with a partnership from The Royal Irish Regiment,

explained the importance of working as a team in competitions and on operations.

"It's important to trust each other's judgment as there's definitely no time to second guess your partner's decision," he said.

"Sometimes you only have time to get down, get a shot off and get out."

To make the grade as a Service sharpshooter, a soldier must excel in seven fields: sniper knowledge; navigation; camouflage and concealment; observation; stalking; judging distance and marksmanship.

Over the course of the competition these attributes were put under the spotlight and although the consequences were not the same as on operations, errors still led to failure.

Capt Jay Smith, OC Sniper Wing, was interested to see the high level of soldiering skills on display.

"It's very intriguing to see how different units operate," he said.

"There are some who have real flair and others who have clearly worked on their skills."

"On the whole it's a good standard and it's great to see people wanting to be here and competing to be the best in the UK."

On a hill in Wales, the demanding week of events tested the pairs in all areas of their sniping expertise with some rewarded for being "best in class".

Operating among the local population in Afghanistan, these valuable soldiers are proving to be a vital asset in defeating the enemy while causing minimal disruption to civilian life. ■







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## Interview: Joe Clapson

**I**n an economic climate where budgets are being scrutinised, the role of the Royal Air Force in a land-based war has been cast under an increasingly-intense spotlight.

But the man in charge of multi-million pound fast jet assets has come out fighting in defence of his talented crews.

Air Vice Marshall Greg Bagwell, Air Officer Commanding No 1 Group at Air Command, is full of praise for the Army's work in Afghanistan but insists the RAF's role must be acknowledged.

"In Afghanistan we are engaged in a joint fight – it is a combined arms operation," said the Tornado and Hornet pilot.

"It's right and proper that the guys and girls on the ground are getting the kudos for what they do because it's impressive stuff and I cannot help but be humbled by it every day.

"But I would like to think they see what air does for them. It gets them to theatre safely; it gets them home safely; it moves them around theatre and resupplies them and when they are out on the ground, it protects them."

The straight-talking commander, who joined the RAF as a direct entry combat pilot in 1981, explained that while the "green Army" patrols the ground of Helmand province, his men and women provide support from above.

The idea that the RAF is redundant is nonsense, according to AVM Bagwell.

"We probably get a minimum of an event a day, whether that be a kinetic event or a show of presence. But to be honest some days it's five or six," he said.

"The number of incidents has been going up

recently because the increase in troop numbers has stirred the hornets' nest and the Taliban is getting squeezed and is fighting back."

With more than 60 per cent of UK deaths on Operation Herrick caused by IEDs, AVM Bagwell emphasised that airmen play a significant role in detecting the roadside bombs.

"We have caught teams in the open and we have spotted things that are out of the ordinary but what we are probably most useful at is tracking down the networks," he said.

The RAF carries out surveillance sorties high above areas of known enemy activity and information is sent back to the UK for detailed analysis, allowing for a full intelligence picture of the land to be drawn up.

AVM Bagwell (pictured right) explained that the integrated relationship of land and air power has never been better and dismissed any argument for handing over air control of aerial assets to the Army.

"The argument over an independent Royal Air Force happened in 1920 after the First World War when people said we didn't need it anymore – and some are saying it again today," he explained.

"The reason an independent Air Force was created was to resolve how to utilise assets – a more efficient way of managing things."

Moving further onto the offensive, the RAF boss

spoke out against anyone predicting future wars will be fought solely on the ground.

"How many people predicted ten or 15 years ago that Nato would be fighting in Afghanistan? How many people predicted the Falklands, Kosovo and Iraq?," he contested.

"We have never predicted with accuracy."

By the start of 2011 AVM Bagwell will be in charge of ten RAF squadrons – 17 less than was required to defend Kent in the Second World War – but he remains upbeat.

"The ten squadrons I've got are the best the Air Force has ever had; in terms of equipment, training, people and support it is world class," he said.

"If the Americans had a bunch of crews to choose from, they would go with the British."

Aside from fighting the corner of his personnel, the ongoing aim of AVM Bagwell is to continue providing the support and firepower the soldiers on the ground rely on everyday.

"I have personally never been a soldier

on patrol but I believe that if I was on the ground I'd rather have air support than not have it," he said.

"That noise, that belief, that radio call sign gives soldiers the confidence to know that if something goes wrong they can get protection.

"The aircraft will come and sort the problem out and if, heaven forbid, you get injured they will come and treat you and get you out." ■



**"In Afghanistan we are engaged in a joint fight – it is a combined arms operation"**



**Combined effort: A Tornado GR4 from XIII Squadron, 904 Expeditionary Air Wing, RAF, takes off from Kandahar Air Field**

Picture: Cpl Barry Lloyd, RLC

# HIGH PRAISE

## Air Force chief backs cross-Defence cooperation





# HEALING HANDS

## Welfare system gets grieving couple back on track

**Interview: Stephen Tyler**  
**Picture: Steve Dock**

**W**HEN Royal Signals soldier Cpl Steven Lawrie deployed on Op Herrick 8 in 2008, he had more reason than most to count down the days to the end of the tour.

Not only was the NCO due to start a new posting in Blandford Camp, he was returning to his wife Susan, who was pregnant with their first child.

But the prospect of new beginnings was ripped cruelly from the Lawrie family's grasp when baby Sophie died during labour on March 21, 2009.

"Susan went full-term so there was never any indication that anything was wrong," Cpl Lawrie told *Soldier*. "We lost Sophie during labour and it turned everything upside down – it was like the bottom fell out of our world."

"We were due for a posting from Colchester, where I was serving with 16 Air Assault Brigade, a month later and we had factored it all in based on when she was due."

Already dealing with the shock and grief of the situation, Cpl Lawrie and his wife now faced the logistical problems of delaying their new posting.

The couple had managed to secure a sought-after married quarter on Blandford Camp and began to worry that they would end up losing it while they came to terms with their loss.

But their concerns were soon soothed by the Army's welfare system. Immediately after word spread about Sophie's death, the Service took steps to ease the Lawries' burden.

"When it all happened, a mechanism kicked in and the welfare system really came into its own," explained Cpl Lawrie. "The system started without us getting involved and I had as much time as I needed."

"If I needed anything at all it was only a phone call away. They took care of everything and the help we received was of huge benefit and comfort. They even arranged for the quarter in Blandford to be held for us."

"What was very nice was that when I went in to work at 216 Signal Squadron a couple of weeks afterwards, the RSM saw me and took me into his office for a chat. The OC did the same and it was nice to have the hierarchy that's normally quite rigid expressing genuine sympathy. It was very reassuring."

With the Army's help freeing the couple up to grieve in their own time, Cpl Lawrie decided to apply his efforts to raising money for another group that had helped him and his wife.

The Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Society (Sands) provided access to counsellors, leaflets and internet forums for the couple and Cpl Lawrie decided he wanted to give something back by completing a series of runs and other fund-raising events.

His efforts have so far raised almost £3,000 and he has plans to add to that tally later this month by competing in the Great South Run.

And the Lawries, who are now based in Blandford where Steven is serving at the Royal School of Signals, last month celebrated the birth of daughter Charlotte Hope (pictured above).

"Charlotte came along on September 8 and she is perfect," he said. "Mother and baby are both doing well and that is great. As happy as we are, there will always

be that grief. It's not something you can ever get over, but you can learn to live with it."

During his time in Blandford, Cpl Lawrie bumped into a former colleague from 16 Air Assault Brigade who had lost a daughter in similar circumstances and the chance meeting convinced him to try and help others in the same situation.

"I know that there are people in the Army community who have been through the same, but it's something that they just don't talk about," he explained. "I want to bring attention to the subject to let people know there is help out there."

"I want people to know that there are others who understand – you are not alone and there is light at the end of the tunnel."

"You won't wake up one day and feel ready to talk, but when you do feel comfortable to discuss it, whether it's over the phone or with a friend, you should do it."

"I know from personal experience that just having somebody on your wavelength makes you feel that a burden has been lifted from your shoulders." ■

**Sands**   
Stillbirth & neonatal death charity

For more information about Sands and the services it provides, visit [www.uk-sands.org](http://www.uk-sands.org)

To sponsor Cpl Lawrie's fund-raising efforts, log on to [www.justgiving.com/stevenlawrie](http://www.justgiving.com/stevenlawrie)



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# Explosive read

New book charts amazing career of  
IED expert-turned-author



## Interview: Stephen Tyler

**T**HE stench of clay from Al Amarah's brick-making factories hung heavy in the air as Capt Kevin Ivison (RLC) donned his bomb disposal suit.

Getting into the oppressively-heavy protective clothing was nothing new for the ammunition technical officer (ATO). During his Op Telic tour, Capt Ivison had successfully pitted his wits against up to three improvised explosive devices (IEDs) every week.

But this time things were different. Stood on the infamous Red One highway, a baying mob blocked one end of the road and the wrecks of a pair of Snatch Land Rovers blown up by a massive bomb, killing two British soldiers, sat in eerie stillness in the other direction. Beyond that lay a second deadly IED.

Capt Ivison was left facing an impossible decision – tell the troops to head away from the bomb through the crowd and risk sparking a riot or accept a suicide mission to press forward alone and attempt to defuse it.

The immensely-courageous officer chose the latter option.

"I got my second-in-command and let him know there was no way I was getting through this alive," he told *Soldier*. "I walked forward with tears in my eyes certain that this was it."

"There were other options – we could have fought our way out, but there would have been a lot of blood spilt and an Iraqi civilian would have had to disarm the bomb."

"I could have shot at it and blown it up, but I became a bomb disposal person to save lives and doing that could have hurt one of our own guys or an Iraqi. I didn't join the Army to duck out of a challenge."

"I was left with an impossible task, but I was the best person to do it."

As Capt Ivison moved forward, he passed the body of his friend Capt Richard Holmes (Para), who was killed alongside Pte Lee Ellis (Para) when the first IED had detonated under their vehicles.

The ATO burst into tears at the thought that, in a matter of moments, he faced a similar fate. He began to scan his surroundings with increasing scrutiny as he moved to within 100 metres of the device, desperately trying to spot someone with a remote control detonator.

"At 40 metres I couldn't believe how close I was

getting," he said. "I stopped and looked through my binoculars to see what I could see, but there was nothing. I reached 20 metres where there was no chance of survival, even wearing the bomb suit."

"I started to think it was cruel that they had let me get this close. I thought they owed it to me to get it over with quickly."

"In the end I found myself 30 centimetres away from this thing, which was the size of two fuel boxes. I looked for wires or anything for me to exploit, but there wasn't a single way in."

Although the IED could have been set off at any moment, Capt Ivison remained focused on the task at hand and began placing a small device millimetres from the bomb to render it safe.

He turned to walk away in "utter disbelief" that the IED had not been triggered, but after arriving back at the incident control point he was brought down to earth with a jolt with the news that a third bomb had been found.

"I just sank down onto one knee," he recalled. "I really had no idea how to deal with it. I had run out of courage well before that day and was certainly in deficit during the task."

"I was on the verge of saying I couldn't do it when I thought of Richard and Lee's families. I got up and got my team together and was ready to go back in when the news came through that it wasn't a bomb."

Capt Ivison's bravery in the face of such deadly situations is recounted in colourful detail in *Red One*.

The book charts his journey from being the son of a senior NCO, with no intention of joining the military, to becoming one of the youngest officers in the Army carrying out one of the Service's most dangerous jobs.

"My dad left the Army when I was 13, but it wasn't until I was reintroduced to it at a familiarisation day a couple of years later that I realised it was where I wanted to be," explained Ivison, who won the George Medal for his actions in Iraq.

"I loved the people and the honesty and camaraderie you get between soldiers. I loved the feeling that you were part of a team and had to rely on one another."

"I chose the bomb disposal path because I really liked the idea that it was the challenge of one person against a bomb or bomb maker and that this is a life-saving job."

"You are pitting your wits and courage against that and it is ultimately you that is

responsible for defusing the bomb."

Ivison described his training for the role as "the best in the world", but while it prepared him to cope with the physical pressures of the job, the mental strain proved too much.

For days after his heroics on Red One, his heart raced and he struggled to sleep as he replayed the situation he had faced over and over in his head.

Frequent rocket attacks on his base ratcheted up the tension and he remembered feeling like a different person on his return from theatre. The symptoms, he later discovered, were the first signs of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

"I felt an overwhelming sadness and wondered if I could ever be happy again after going through that," he said. "I didn't want to spend the rest of my life thinking about what had happened."

"When I returned to Germany I knew I needed some help. I was having nightmares and had threatened to punch someone. I was getting angry very quickly and that was unlike me."

Although Ivison believes the MoD has made good progress in identifying and treating PTSD, the former officer said he felt "let down" when initial requests for help after his deployment were met with a lack of support.

"I returned from Iraq in mid-March 2006 and left the Army in April 2009 before beginning my treatment through the NHS in February 2010," he explained.

"That was four years of not being able to use my brain to its fullest and not being able to cope with certain tasks."

"The MoD has learnt lessons and has definitely got a lot better, but there is always further to go."

That a man who walked willingly towards his death to save the lives of others went on to suffer mental health problems is perhaps no surprise.

But the fact that Capt Ivison is now on the mend speaks volumes for the benefits of proper treatment and he has urged the current generation of Servicemen and women to seek help whenever they need it.

"I'm really positive about the future and my own mental health and that is thanks to the [help] I received," he said. "My advice for soldiers who may feel that they have a problem is to look for help because there is treatment that works." ■

**I walked forward  
with tears in my  
eyes certain  
that this was it**

Telic tale: Published by Orion Books, *Red One: A Bomb Disposal Expert on the Front Line* is out now



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# OCEANS APART

## ACTOR'S ADMIRATION FOR REAL PACIFIC VETERANS

Interview: Stephen Tyler

**W**HEN news broke of a US television company's intention to make a blockbuster series about the nation's Second World War campaign in the Pacific, the acting community sat up and took notice.

Their interest was understandable. Aside from the massive budget – reportedly in excess of £130 million – and fascinating subject material, the project was being overseen by industry heavyweights Tom Hanks and Steven Spielberg.

But for softly-spoken star Joe Mazzello, playing a part in the production, named simply *The Pacific*, held even more relevance.

Not only had the 26-year-old worked with Spielberg two decades earlier on *Jurassic Park*, but the actor had a direct family link to the conflict.

"With Steven Spielberg and Tom Hanks involved, I already knew this was going to be amazing quality because they are the best people you can work with," he told *Soldier*.

"But beyond that, I had a real connection with the story because my grandfather served in the Pacific. It was something I knew I had to find a way to get involved with because at that time he was still alive and I wanted to do it for him and to let him know we were honouring his generation."

Although he was already familiar with Mazzello's talent, Spielberg did not cut the young star any favours. Starting with a performance in front of the casting director, the actor had to impress in five separate trials, including a final performance in front of Spielberg and Hanks.

Produced on the same grand scale as 2001's *Band of Brothers*, *The Pacific* is a ten-part series following the United States 1st Marine Division's progress through bloody battles with the Japanese in Guadalcanal, Peleliu, Okinawa and Iwo Jima.

Mazzello stars as Eugene Sledge, a real-life veteran of the

conflict whose book *With the Old Breed: At Peleliu and Okinawa* was one of many used to create the screenplay.

The role required the actor to develop a familiarity not just with the daily reality of a marine serving in the Pacific, but with the wider history of world conflict.

And despite his grandfather's service, Mazzello had no personal experience of the military and had to complete a boot camp led by a Vietnam veteran.

The results of his tropical island beasting were soon apparent. The already-lightweight Mazzello lost 12 pounds by the time he passed out.

Things did not get easier once filming started in Australia. Far from the luxury of Hollywood, *The Pacific's* cast spent much of the ten-month shoot outside in the rain and mud.

But despite Mazzello admitting the experience was "intense", he kept the knowledge that the austere environment was the daily reality for a generation of marines in the back of his mind.

He said: "You couldn't escape the fact that, as hard as it was for you, at the end of the day it's fake and you go and take a shower, eat a meal and sleep in a bed. I would stop and think that guys actually did this – I know I couldn't have."

The astronomical cost of making *The Pacific* heaped significant pressure on Spielberg and Hanks to

create a memorable series and the duo have certainly succeeded.

Powerful acting, visceral battle scenes and an engaging storyline drew critical acclaim and a DVD release will attract a new set of fans.

For Mazzello, the praise of press pundits and home viewers is important, but his main concern was to do justice to the memory of Eugene Sledge.

"For me it was [Sledge's] family that I wanted the approval from. They didn't get to decide who played their father" he explained.

"That's something I thought about every day and the family were so nice – I feel they were happy, proud and thankful. I did the best I could and I think that I did it justice. Eugene's wife sent me his pipe and that made me feel like I had done the job I was sent to do." ■



● To read more from Joe Mazzello, log on to [www.soldiermagazine.co.uk](http://www.soldiermagazine.co.uk) or visit our Facebook fan page at [www.tinyurl.com/soldiermag](http://www.tinyurl.com/soldiermag)

*The Pacific* is released on DVD and Blu-Ray on November 1 by HBO Home Entertainment





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Plugging in: Cfn Robert-Lee Baldey (left) and Cfn Chris Le-Feure work on a mock-up of a Challenger 2 wiring system at REME's 11 (Training) Battalion at Hazebrook Barracks

# GETTING TECHNICAL

**TRAINING BATTALION PREPARES  
REME SOLDIERS FOR CHALLENGES  
OF SERVICE LIFE**



**Report: Richard Long**  
**Pictures: Mike Weston**

**D**EMANDS for fully-functioning kit and equipment are part and parcel of everyday Army life as the operational tempo in Afghanistan continues.

Providing the hardware for troops in the heart of Helmand is one thing but ensuring it is maintained to the impeccable standards required by the Service is another.

The Corps of Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers plays a key role in such a vital task and for young soldiers joining this skilled arm of the military the training is thorough to say the least.

Craftsmen are put through their paces at 11 Training Battalion REME in Arborfield, an institution that is barely a year old having emerged from the shadows of the School of Electrical and Aeronautical Engineering.

The site teaches various technician trades and soldiers can spend up to two years learning the skills and drills they need for their chosen career path.

A raft of changes have been introduced at Arborfield over the past year and commanding officer Lt Col Ian Gibson explained how every effort is made to ensure personnel are fully proficient in their trade and as soldiers.

"Twelve months ago our responsibility was for the welfare of the guys in the unit and we had no responsibility for the technical training," he told *Soldier*.

"But the school was reorganised to give responsibility for the troops and their training to us.

"We are now taking a different psychological approach to the training and we are trying to treat this place like a posting. We want to give them a sense of belonging.

"We have also tried to rebalance the military element of the training as before there was a greater focus on the technical aspect.

"We try and make sure that for the two years they are with us they maintain the skills from Phase One and when they leave to join their units they are fit for further military training."

Lt Col Gibson described how the courses have clear military, technical and command targets that give soldiers an opportunity to progress in their careers.

While the battalion's charges join as privates, the officer explained that the aspiration is for every soldier to leave being able to perform to the standard required of a junior NCO.

"We make the judgement as to whether they have made the grade as NCOs. That is a big change for the guys coming through here," he said.

"One of the most important things we do is look after them, it is all underpinned by supervisory care.

"The best way to look after their needs is to know them. If you understand their normal demeanour and persona you can help them much more."

New arrivals at Arborfield start their training with key skills courses to ensure they meet national standards in literacy and numeracy.

Various foundation, technical, electronics and command courses follow to give personnel the skills they need to work on the Army's fleet of ground vehicles and aircraft.

Inevitably the work involves intense classroom sessions but there is no shortage of hands-on, practical training.

*Soldier* witnessed small-scale projects to create GPS systems and remote-controlled aircraft; bench work to build part of an airframe; and electrical work on the hull of a tank.

Avionics students, who had been living in the field, were also sent to tackle a serial on a damaged Lynx helicopter.

"We get the guys used to working long hours in adverse conditions," explained SSgt Graham Lumsdon (REME).

"They are working constantly for three-and-a-half days. We run four-hour serials with minimum down time. They have to administer themselves, feed themselves, get some sleep and be prepared to move.

"This is quite realistic.

They are living in tented accommodation and working out in the field, just like they will when on ops."

Cfn Jack Waterworth (REME) explained how the lengthy training cycle has offered clear benefits to his trade and he is now looking forward to putting his new skills to the test.

"It is really good," he said. "It has been a long 22 months but it is training I never thought I would do.

"They make it as enjoyable as possible and that puts things into perspective."

But Arborfield is not just about delivering a basic education. The facility welcomes back former students who can improve their skills even further on upgrader and artificer courses, training which is conducted to degree standard.

While the site inevitably lends itself to technical-based activities, the battalion ensures personnel enjoy sporting and adventurous training opportunities.

They also maintain the military skills needed for Army life.

During *Soldier's* visit, young troops were put through their paces on the basic combat skills course, which teaches them everything from mines awareness techniques to command tasks.

"This is a two-week course at the end of the training to enhance their military skills before they are posted to their units," said training officer WO2 Grant Davidson (REME).

"It works well. They like being out of the classroom and in the field doing stuff.

"They thrive on this. We wanted to make it very realistic and up to date and my guys have done a lot of research to make sure everything we do is relevant."

The battalion has a clear focus on the work it does and Lt Col Gibson is determined to see soldiers meeting their potential and the needs of the Army.

The CO concluded: "The REME requirement is about supporting equipment capabilities on ops and we are producing soldiers to meet that requirement." ■

**‘The REME requirement is about supporting equipment capabilities on ops and we are producing soldiers to meet that requirement’**





# YOUNG SOLDIERS TEST THEIR METTLE AT ARBORFIELD



**Troubleshooters:** Cpl Ashok Gurung (left) stands guard while Cfn Philip Beddoes works inside a Lynx helicopter during a fault-finding exercise at REME's 11 (Trg) Bn



1



2



3



4

1. Cfn Rhiannon Carey develops her skills at the aircraft engineering workshop

2. Craftsmen Adam Thompson, Phil Lucas, Peter Scott and David Nicholson inspect the circuit of a model glider during their basic electronics course

3. Cfn Tam Hogarth and Cfn Nick Fairclough practice their minefield clearance drills and techniques on the training battalion's basic combat skills course

4. LCpl Simon Ratcliff works on a Challenger 2 battle tank electrical circuit trainer



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# Fully booked

## Military library goes from strength to strength in birthday year

Report: Richard Long

**I**n the age of digital technology, there is an infinite stream of information and research available at the click of a finger.

With such vast resources at hand, one could assume that the role of the library is gradually diminishing as more and more people take to their computers and surf the internet.

But in Aldershot this is far from the case as The Prince Consort's Library is about to celebrate 150 years of supplying military information to the Army.

The facility has more than 65,000 volumes in stock and the titles cover an array of subjects from military technology, theory and tactics to reference books, history chronicles and atlases.

"In the 21st century, The Prince Consort's Library continues to be the premier military library for the Army," explained Tim Ward, head of library and information services.

"To answer enquiries from Army units and personnel we use a wide range of online sources in addition to our large print collection.

"We specialise in the provision of current military topics, political subjects and international relations in support of operations, intelligence, training and education, military essays and battlefield tours.

"Information packs on countries are compiled from open sources. These are available to units on demand for

operational needs, are tailored to meet their specific requirements and are available in electronic or hard copy formats.

"Our staff are always willing to give advice on any query."

The facility's origins are linked to the establishment of Aldershot as the first permanent Army training camp in the mid-19th century.

**In the 21st century, The Prince Consort's Library continues to be the premier military library for the Army**

With the Prince Consort determined to play an active part in Army reforms, he started buying books for a potential library. Once he had collected 1,000 titles work on the building commenced.

The Prince covered the costs of the structure, books and maintenance and Queen Victoria continued to finance the project via the Privy Purse after his death in 1861.

By the latter half of the 20th century the library was brought under the control of The Royal Army Educational Corps and has

continued to flourish as part of the Army Library and Information Service.

In 2003 it launched its Big Military Read, a project aimed at encouraging Service personnel to read more, and five years later it unveiled the British Army Military Book of the Year award.

Today, 150 years after its inception, the establishment continues to serve its original purpose and forms an essential role in the professional development of soldiers in the 21st century. ■

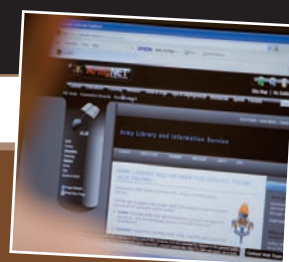
### 150th exhibition and open days

● An anniversary celebration has been planned for Tuesday, October 5, when the Adjutant General, Lt Gen Mark Mans, will unveil a restored painting of Prince Albert (left) and open a special exhibition on the library's 150-year history.

A series of open days will be held from October 6 to 8, when serving personnel can learn more about the library and how it can help them with their careers.



For more information on these events call 94222 4382 or 01252 349382

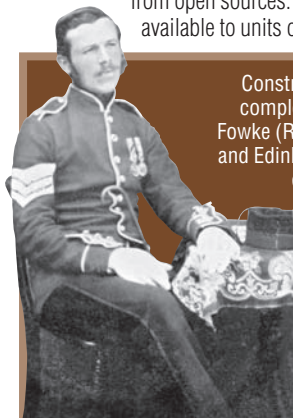


During the 1990s a series of restoration projects were carried out which saw a new floor laid in the style of the original Victorian covering

The building now houses more than 65,000 volumes and subscribes to in excess of 120 periodical titles covering military and current affairs



In 1960 the library celebrated its centenary and the Adjutant General presented three watercolours from the Royal Collection that depicted the camp at Aldershot in the 1850s



Sgt Charles Gilmore (49th Foot) was the first librarian and held the post for 30 years



1859

1960

1990

2010

**The Prince Consort's Library's century-and-a-half**





■ HONDA driver Tpr Ricky Crane (2 RTR) had the privilege of spinning his car on the Paddock Hill bend, an experience that simply added to his enjoyment of the day.

He said: "I am a person for speed and I'm into my bikes. I had a lot of leave and I wanted to fill it with some exciting stuff, so here I am.

"I have not done a track day before and it has been really good.

"We got to go round a proper race track doing proper speeds, I even managed to spin my car in the gravel, which was a real bonus.

"I am definitely going to do it again, it is great to get away from it all and blow off some steam."

■ HAVING sold his car in the months before visiting Brands Hatch, Tpr Dan Roberts (2 RTR) shared driving duties with his friend Tpr Martyn Copleston.

"I could not wait to get here," he told *Soldier*. "There is a real sense of freedom and you can drive as fast as you want. I have never done a track day before and it has been so much more than I hoped, it is really exciting and you get a sweat on going round the corners at speed. It is brilliant.

"I definitely want to do it again. When I get back off tour I am going to get a car and do more track days like this.

"It has been a great way to let off steam and is an opportunity to do something different to the normal Army stuff."

■ TPR Martyn Copleston (2 RTR) brought his BMW 320 to Brands Hatch in what was his first track day experience.

"I have done off-road hill climbs but nothing on the track," he explained.

"My car handled like a fish but I got up to 80mph along the back straight, it was really good fun.

"With something like this you can do those speeds legally, there are no police. It has been a great experience ahead of my operational deployment."

**Report: Richard Long**  
**Pictures: Graeme Main**

**F**OR serving personnel about to deploy on Operation Herrick 13, the past few months have featured an intense period of training aimed at preparing them for life in the heart of Helmand province.

While perfecting the vital skills and drills for Afghanistan is of paramount importance, these soldiers also need to escape the pressure-cooker environment ahead of what will inevitably be a challenging tour.

The world-famous Brands Hatch racing circuit provided an ideal opportunity for troops from the 2nd Royal Tank Regiment to do exactly that in the

weeks before their deployment.

The race acers took to the asphalt in their own road cars in what proved to be a highly-enjoyable track day and organiser Maj Jim Cameron (2 RTR) told *Soldier* about the welcome distraction the event offered.

"We have been working really hard since January, converting to the vehicles we will be using in Afghanistan," he explained.

"We have been getting to grips with Viking and the pre-deployment training has thrashed us, it is really hard work.

**BRANDS HATCH IS EVOCATIVE AND HISTORIC**

"Soldiers are young men and women who are relatively well paid and driving offences can be a big problem for them.

"If they lose their licence they are no good in theatre as a Viking driver. Something like this gives them an opportunity to let off steam.

"There is free instruction for them and they can get the best out

of their cars without the speeding fines.

"Brands Hatch is evocative and historic. This track has played a central role in British motor sport since the 1930s.





■ CPL Gareth Harley (2 RTR) brought his Ford Focus RS to the track just four months after buying the vehicle and was determined to push it to the limits.

He said: "I have had a massive love of cars since I was little, when I used to watch Formula One with my dad.

"It is amazing, I loved the sense of speed going into the corners. I only got this car four months ago and this is the first time it has had a good legal thrash.

"It has been a good change from the normal sports. I never knew this kind of thing went on in the Army. The boss has been doing it for quite a while and it is great to try something different."

■ BRANDS Hatch gave LCpl Neil Dunn (2 RTR) an opportunity to test the modifications he has made to his car and the soldier was pleased with the results.

"I bought my Seat two years ago but it is hard to get full use of it on the roads, so this has been brilliant," he explained.

"My mate called me about it [the track day] and asked if I wanted to take part.

"We managed to get this a lot cheaper than normal and you have to take every opportunity you can.

"It has been a good distraction from the training we have been doing."

# LIFE IN THE FAST LANE

**Herrick-bound troops take to the track ahead of deployment**

"We have got a 1.6-litre Honda Civic going round, he will not set any lap records but he is having a great time out on the track."

Maj Cameron sees motor racing as the ideal way to unwind from the pressures of Service life.

The officer competes in the MSV Track Day Series and took 120 soldiers to this year's Goodwood Festival of Speed.

Personnel also attended the DTM German Touring Car event earlier this month.

Despite featuring a shortened circuit, the track day offered *Soldier* and the personnel from 2 RTR a taste of some of the most famous twists and turns in motor racing.

Starting on the Brabham Straight, the drivers soon plunged into the right-hander at Paddock

Hill, a bend that takes your breath away before you head up Hailwood Hill towards the hairpin Druids Corner.

From there the road cars tackled the Graham Hill bend before travelling along Cooper Straight to the swooping Clark Curve that leads to the finish line.

The circuit saw the drivers hitting speeds of more than 100mph in what was the first track day experience for the novice racers.

With Helmand now firmly on the horizon, Brands Hatch formed the perfect escape from the pressure and challenges that lie ahead.

Once the tour is complete, these racers have vowed to return to the track and fuel their need for speed once more. ■

● MotorSport Vision holds regular track days at Brands Hatch and other circuits, with discount prices available for group bookings. For more information visit [www.clubmsv.co.uk](http://www.clubmsv.co.uk) or call 0870 8505014





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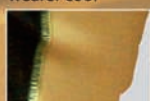
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## 'Time to follow Iron Lady's lead'

**I** HAVE noticed with interest that the Government has been touting for ideas to make savings on the public purse and it is no secret that huge cuts are on the way – even for an Army at war. There is one course of action which would not only result in savings but may even be a money-spinner in both the short and long term.

I remember some years ago, not long after Margaret Thatcher came to power, that my grandfather was given the right to buy his council house from the local authority.

He received a discount for the 50-odd years he had lived in railway-owned quarters and, like thousands of others, bought his house despite the public outcry at the time.

Now is the time to allow Service personnel the right to buy their married quarters. I can hear some of the doubters harrumphing and shuffling their newspapers, but allow me to elaborate. The Army has long since left behind the days of arms-plotting on the whole and now that we are mainly a UK- and Northern Ireland-based force, there is an ever-increasing amount of Servicemen and women living in their own homes. Conversely, there is a growing amount of civilian life encroaching on garrisons – look at Catterick.

Without having done any serious research, I believe that the Army could afford to sell-off approximately 80 per cent of its housing stock in the majority of locations. Not all would want to buy their quarter and not all could afford to (much like the rest of society), but I believe a large section would consider it.

The housing stock must be a massive drain on Defence, so think of the savings to the MoD if its landlord's obligations were drastically reduced.



**Not for sale:** Service Families Accommodation near Woolwich Barracks in south-east London has been refurbished as part of a £50.5 million development project (see Capital gain – Page 9)

Likewise, think of the benefits of being a homeowner living near to where you work; a garden you could develop, the combi-boiler you could install to replace the inefficient heating or the conservatory you could add.

Some of the less salubrious areas may even get a new lease of life, just like some of the former council estates.

Of course, some people do still need to move around. However, if the social housing model is followed then not all of the properties would be bought up.

Defence Estates (DE) could then restyle itself to handle house lettings so that

posted homeowners could rent out their properties and be given Substitute Single Service Accommodation for the two years of their tour.

Finally, to the doubters I would say that it is no time to stick to old practices. This autumn, when the AS90 and Challenger 2 are turned into ploughshares, just remember that there's a whole lot of money which could pay for body armour, bullets and field hospitals getting poured down the drain (which, coincidentally, you've been waiting for ages to be repaired).

If the MoD needs a guinea pig, then I'm your man. Never mind Chelsea Barracks, start with the quarters! – **Capt N Smiles, Royal School of Artillery.**

**Defence Estates Operations Housing, RAF Brampton, responds:** The Strategic Defence and Security Review is scrutinising all areas of Defence spending, including accommodation, so in the meantime we can only offer the following background about the current housing stock:

It would not be possible for the MoD to sell properties to military personnel as the vast majority (roughly 81 per cent) of Service Families Accommodation (SFA) is no longer owned by the MoD.

More than 57,000 properties were sold to Annington Homes Limited in 1996, with an agreement to lease them back to the MoD at 42 per cent of the open market rental. Therefore, if the MoD ceases to have a requirement for SFA, the properties are handed back to Annington Homes.

The rest of the SFA is made up of bulk lease hire, Crown Estate, private finance initiative properties or is owned by the MoD or the Headley Court Trust.

## Stink over loss of laundry costs

I AM writing to get clarification as to why the rules regarding claims for Incidental Expenses (IE) were changed on April 1.

Two different sources have told me that the changes mean that a soldier may now only claim for the first 30 days of a course, regardless of its duration. This seems wholly outrageous as I believed the purpose of IE was to cover personnel for costs relating to things like the washing of kit, newspapers and phone calls home when away from their usual place of duty.

It seems ridiculous that the Army expects troops to stop washing kit after the 30-day period has elapsed. – **Cpl Cockburn, 3 RSME.**

**Brig Mike Griffiths, DPS(A), replies:** IE provides a contribution towards actual expenditure during temporary periods away from an individual's permanent duty station.

However, it must be recognised that when away for longer periods of time it is quite appropriate to expect personnel to adjust their spending patterns at their permanent duty station, negating the need for IE.

It is also appropriate to assume that when based away from a permanent duty station, such as on a long training

course, individuals will have the opportunity to identify the most cost-efficient solutions to their needs.

It was therefore agreed that MoD Centre and the single Services would reintroduce the cap of 30 days for any one absence that had existed prior to the introduction of Joint Personnel Administration.

This also aligns IE with the 30-day cap for the other subsistence allowances.







# Standards to achieve

## Press-Ups

Sex/Age	Under 30	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54
Male	72	70	68	62	55	51
Female	46	41	37	33	31	28

## Sit-Ups

Sex/Age	Under 30	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54
Male & Female	77	72	71	67	62	61

## Run

Sex/Age	Under 30	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54
Male	8:15	8:30	9:00	9:15	9:30	10:00
Female	10:00	10:30	11:00	11:30	12:00	12:45

The 300 club .... 299 just isn't enough

For more information log on to [www.armynet.mod.uk](http://www.armynet.mod.uk)







**Playing to the crowd:** Musicians – sporting Personal Protective Equipment – from the Corps of Army Music joined an all-star line-up for last month's Help for Heroes concert at Twickenham (Pages 24-25)... Oh, and a gratuitous shot of *Soldier's* favourite folklore-related recording artist, Pixie Lott Pictures: Cpl Steve Blake, RLC

# Notes of protest over earplug ruling

**A**S all those who play an instrument will testify, it is imperative that musicians have the ability to be able to hear what it is they are playing in order to be able to bring tone to an instrument and pitch notes correctly at the volume required.

Now imagine how different things on the surface sound when you are underwater – that distortion is what all military musicians will now be subjected to whenever they play following a decision by the Corps of Army Music (CAMUS) to make the wearing of personalised ear defenders compulsory.

When using the plugs it is difficult to hear with clarity what is being said by the bandmaster or director of music; the sound of the instrument you are playing is muffled; the noise of stomping feet is accentuated when marching and when on parade for long periods they can make the wearer feel faint.

**Lt Col Bob Meldrum, Principal Director of Music (Army), responds:** As the authors of these letters correctly identify, performing music while wearing hearing protection is not without its challenges, but it can and indeed must be worn in order to comply with the Control of Noise at Work Regulations 2005 and, more importantly, to protect Service musicians from Noise Induced Hearing Loss (NIHL).

To clarify, it is these regulations which drive the wearing of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) – as the silicon in-ear plugs are known – rather than the CAMUS chain of command which, in partnership

While I can appreciate the importance of ear defence for the fighting soldier, the idea of having to play at events such as a Trooping the Colour or a public concert is frankly unbearable.

To the top brass at Kneller Hall, please find it in your hearts to reconsider your

stance on the compulsory wearing of these God-awful ear defenders.

Army music has stood the test of time and endured throughout many operations and it would be a shame to ruin it just for the sake of a few bits of moulded silicon. – **Name and address supplied.**

● AS an Army musician I am now forced to wear earplugs whenever I play. Although the defenders are tailored to the individual they are uncomfortable to wear and cause some people – including myself – to feel dizzy, nauseous and disorientated when they are taken out.

Musicians are frequently being told that they are out of tune or that they are not playing together, which is no surprise given that you often can't hear yourself play and certainly can't hear the musician – sat across the other side of the room – that you are meant to be playing with.

As a result I believe musicians are playing at a higher volume in an effort to hear themselves – which is surely self-defeating and has the potential to annoy audiences.

What is music if it is not enjoyed by the performer? I think the most insidious problem with this regulation is that it is taking away any enjoyment of the job.

Musicians are beginning not to care because they can't hear. Is this the start of the end for Army music or just health and safety gone mad? – **Name and address supplied.**

with other agencies, is responsible for compliance of the rules.

Without getting into too much technical detail, military musicians are exposed to sound levels well beyond all of the action levels detailed in the 2005 regulations – levels to which employers are legally bound to respond.

The wearing of PPE is a recognised control measure and the model being issued to all Service band members is in fact musician-specific.

Is it fit for purpose? Well prior to the roll out of PPE, some who recognised the danger took responsibility and purchased

their own hearing protection.

With perseverance and a positive attitude, they have adapted to wearing the 15 decibel flat attenuation filters so yes, overall, PPE is fit for purpose.

Finally, let me reiterate that protecting the hearing of musicians is central to the issue and compulsory wearing of PPE. Indeed, there is considerable evidence to support that musicians do suffer NIHL and in some cases this has led to litigious claims against the MoD.

Further direction on the wearing of PPE and the required training to acclimatise will follow from HQ CAMUS.



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archived photos



search



Joe Dope

[ONLINE]

CURRENT STATUS:

Unemployed, Single &amp; Bored



Joe Dope

Tom, Life has been garbage since I was booted out. No job, no reference, living with mum and dad and every one in street is talking about me. Have you heard from the other lads who got kicked out with me??? Are you on leave soon, be good to see a friendly face...

Tues 20th Aug, 12:45 pm



Tom [OFFLINE]

Tues 20th Aug, 12:45 pm



Joe Dope

He's winding us up, even if we do get tested they only test 10% of the p\*\*s, so out of the unit only some will get caught --- that's if they CDT us at all!!! Come on mate, play the numbers game. The gear is top notch loads of my mates use the same gear.

Fri 13th Jan, 7:52 pm



Tom

Joe, are you stupid????? The CO said on parade that when we get back we are going to get CDT. The last 4 lads caught all got booted out

Fri 13th Jan, 7:47 pm



Joe Dope

Tom, Found a cracking joint that sells coke & special k cheap as chips :) Going on stand down are U coming?

Fri 13th Jan, 7:45 pm

CDT test every sample, every time. Only a fool plays the numbers game and they always lose.





# 'Why the disparity in daily duty?'



I AM extremely impressed at the versatility of the everyday headdress for many of us – the beret.

When I joined the Army in 1973 I was taught that the beret should be worn with the cap badge at a certain height above the left eye and the flap of the beret folded over towards the right ear.

I now see so many variations of this, such as the badge over the left ear or over the nose and even the flap folded forward in an "Andy Cap" style.

Congratulations to all concerned for your imaginative styling of the beret.

By now I would hope that readers will realise that my comments above are very much tongue-in-cheek. I actually think that our imaginative beret wearers look ridiculous.

Just as I tell my teenage son how daft he looks with his jeans hanging off his backside and his underwear on display, I say to all those with non-conventional headdress "look at yourselves in the mirror and sort yourselves out". The Army is not the place for you to express your individual style when in uniform.

As I understand it Army Dress Regulations still state that the beret should be worn in the manner that I was taught as a recruit way back in 1973. So why, in some instances, are regimental sergeant majors and commanding officers apparently not enforcing this regulation? – Maj Tristram Carter, Land Warfare Centre, Warminster.

**A**FTER more than 20 years in the Army it still amazes me how individual units are permitted to decide their own working hours.

At my current station there are five units and all work to different times. As the Army is an equal opportunities employer, I was wondering how this is allowed to happen.

I understand and fully support that during pre-deployment training or exercise preparation it is sometimes necessary to work extended hours, but when not readying for operations or manoeuvres we should all adhere to a set working day.

With the pace of Army life and the instability it throws at us daily, a uniformed working pattern would avoid the situation where individuals feel hard done by for having to be on duty 14 hours a week more than comrades based 200 metres away and improve soldiers' morale when in camp.

We are all part of the same organisation, so where practicable we should have the same in-barracks working hours. – Name and address supplied.

**Brig Richard Smith, Chief of Staff Field Army, responds:** As you appreciate, particularly at the moment in a time of unprecedented operational tempo, there is a careful balance to be struck between preparing for very demanding operations and ensuring that, wherever possible, a sensible work-life balance is maintained.

Without knowing the specifics of the five units you refer to, one size is unlikely to fit all – even within the same garrison – as each unit may be in a different section



"Do you think it means AM or PM, or both?"

of the Formation Operational Readiness Mechanism and will certainly have its own individual training programme.

Commanding officers need to have the flexibility to fulfil their mandated tasks and the freedom of manoeuvre to achieve them without being formally constrained to defined working hours.

That said, I know that commanders at all levels are clear on the need to establish a sensible routine when in barracks and minimise the disruption caused by the "stuff in between" operations wherever possible.

If you believe that there is a specific problem which needs addressing I would recommend that you speak to your immediate chain of command.



Picture: Mike Weston

UNFORTUNATELY the peacetime order of battle of 16 Air Assault Brigade does not accurately reflect the units deploying on Op Herrick 13.

The 2nd Royal Tank Regiment, which was sadly omitted from your list of Afghan-bound elements, "Encore performance" (September), is deploying 293 tankies to provide protected mobility for Task Force Helmand in Vikings, Warthogs and Mastiffs.

They have been fully involved in the brigade's preparatory training, are proud to be in a position to help all of the soldiers deploying this winter and are looking forward to working alongside them in Helmand. – Capt Edward Hodgskin, 2 RTR.

● Life in the fast lane – Pages 58-59

**PONTIN'S**  
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● THIS month's free family holiday, courtesy of our ever-generous partners at Pontin's, goes to the sister of an injured Serviceman (see Page 67).

On hearing the news that her younger brother had been caught by an IED blast in Afghanistan this summer, Melanie Hill was a habitual visitor at his bedside for the duration of his six-week stay at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham.

Full of praise for the care afforded to her sibling by medical staff and the British Army's "faultless" welfare system, the 27-year-old teacher's only criticism concerned the food served at the NHS facility.

The team at *Soldier* HQ are supremely confident that Melanie will find the cuisine more to her liking during a three- or four-night break for four in Pontin's Self-Catering Classic accommodation at a choice of four coastal Holiday Parks: Brean Sands in Somerset; Camber Sands in East Sussex; Prestatyn Sands in North Wales and Southport in the North West.

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# 'Don't be so quick to bury bad news'

**W**HY do the lead stories on the Defence intranet home page change so frequently, resulting in deaths on operations being replaced at the top of the news within hours by items such as "HMS *Ark Royal* sails for Atlantic" and "Medical reservists deploy to Afghanistan"?

Members of the Armed Forces, rightly, are the first to voice criticism when the headline stories of television news programmes are about a football player being injured or some pop star becoming pregnant and Service deaths are the third or fourth item reported.

So why do we allow a broadly similar practice on our own web pages?

There needs to be a better way of conducting business.

Not one that wallows in bad news, but certainly one that pays a bit more respect than currently shown. – Maj J Barry, PS10(A), MoD.

**Pippa Norris, assistant head of online engagement, Directorate of Media and Communication, writes:** Whenever Defence reports a death there are usually two statements: the cap badge announcement and a eulogy the following day (post kin-forming).

These are always placed as the top story on the intranet news pages and also become the lead article on the internet home page.

Eulogies of the fallen are kept as the headline item for varying periods, but at least for several hours.

Recent in-depth external research into attitudes about the intranet news pages indicate that many feel that there has often been too much prevalence given to fatalities and that visitors to the site would prefer different news. Sadly, with high operational tempo and casualty numbers this becomes, at times, unavoidable.

As the intranet news pages are a key communications tool in delivering messages and news to staff and Service personnel within the MoD, there is considerable pressure for other items to receive visibility as the top article.

Bearing this in mind, the small, busy MoD online news team aims to strike a balance between honouring those killed on operations and giving the eulogy the pre-eminence it deserves, as well as allocating space to communicating other news and information to the diverse Defence community.

Every effort is made to strike this difficult balance but inevitably there will always be those who feel strongly on this emotive issue.

The MoD online news team welcomes all feedback on this subject and will be glad to adapt practices if attitudes appear to change.

## 'APPLE CORPS A WASTE OF CASH'

**A**S a serving Infantry soldier and regular reader of this magazine, I have found myself becoming more and more agitated by issued kit not being sent where it is needed.

Why is the Army wasting money that could be used for urgent operational requirements on new iPads to ensure a handful of soldiers don't fall asleep during lectures, "Gunners get first byte of the Apple" (August)?

If the Royal Artillery personnel in question were disciplined, they wouldn't nod off.

It's all well and good showing off new kit but 80 per cent of it never gets where it is really needed.

Every operational tour we are promised new and improved equipment and on each occasion it fails to materialise in theatre.

It's about time the British Army stopped going shopping and started to produce the kit we need. – Name and address supplied.

**The editor, pondering whether there's an "app" for answering letters, types:** The Army's Training Development Branch is working on a number of projects to ensure novice gunners are not the only benefactors of iPad technology.

Regards the issue of new kit and equipment not reaching the front line, flick back a few pages in August's issue and the contents of the holdall now issued to personnel deploying on operations, "Bag of tricks", suggests to the contrary.

Containing top-of-the-range, name-brand items worth £3,000, the Black Bag is proof that the British Army is doing far more than just window shopping.



"I was hoping treatment was going to be the soothing touch of a pretty, blonde physio."

● **HAVING** sustained a non-operational knee injury in January 2009, my regiment's medical officer referred me to our civilian physio who continually attempted to use non-invasive procedures to get me back in the game.

By September 2009 he waved his white flag and recommended an MRI [magnetic resonance imaging] scan. Days later I was lying in the scanner (bizarrely listening to Take That), which confirmed that I required surgery and within a few weeks I was in hospital for the op.

Physiotherapy recommenced as soon as I was able and on posting to my current unit in December I was assigned to a talented Remedial Instructor (RI) who got me back on track within a few months.

The purpose of my letter to *Soldier?* To say "thank you".

To 9 Regiment AAC's physiotherapist Duncan Rodger, thanks for the perseverance; to "the system" for fast-tracking my treatment, cheers; to surgeon Col Parker, thank you; and to the RI, Sgt Newman (APTC), thanks for politely telling me to "man up, wet pants" and sorting me out.

Thanks one and all. – Capt Neil Johnson (AAC), ATR(W).





# Travel scheme with borders

**J**OINT Service Publication 752, Chapter 4 details the Figleaf Travel Scheme but does not explain the purpose or rationale behind the entitlement.

My understanding is that it exists to reunite a serving parent with a serving son or daughter (in their first three years of service) at public expense.

If the principle is to facilitate a visit, why is it limited to those living and working in Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, France, Germany, Gibraltar, Holland, Italy, Luxembourg and Norway?

I am an officer based in Belize with a son serving in Germany, so surely my family is just as entitled to be reunited as those living in the aforementioned countries. Isn't this a clear case of "we are all equal, but some are more equal than others"? It appears to me that this is simply a cost issue... Convince me otherwise!

I am not the first individual to raise this issue with *Soldier*. A response given to a letter in 2008 recognised this anomaly and said it was under review.

I only have 18 months left to serve in the Army, am I likely to benefit from the scheme before leaving? – Maj D F E Roberts, OC 25 Flt AAC, BFPO 12.

**Brig Mike Griffiths, DPS(A), replies:** This subject was raised in the pages of *Soldier* in April 2008.

The scheme was reviewed but no consensus could be arrived at with the other Services, nor could money be found to extend the provision beyond the current list of countries. Therefore it was not taken forward.

Funding for any enhancement to current allowances must be sought against a shrinking pot of money, with the priority



being given, as all would expect, to fund allowances for those currently on operations. Therefore, regrettably, I see no possibility of extending this provision at this time or in the future.

The only solution to ensure the equality you seek would be to remove the entitlement altogether, which I am sure you would not wish me to do.

## 'First-class care, dreadful dinners'

I AM writing on behalf of my little brother and all other military personnel who have spent a considerable amount of time in the recently opened Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham.

The treatment and care given to the patients there is amazing and first class. The food on the other hand was of a very poor quality and sometimes inedible.

Consequently, families of injured personnel were bringing in snacks on a daily basis.

Part of a full recovery is keeping strength up and maintaining a good appetite and I am hoping that by writing to *Soldier* the food in the hospital improves for future patients. – Melanie Hill.



## Thumbs down to transit tucker

I WOULD like to express my view that the feeding plan for troops in transit from Afghanistan to Cyprus is substandard.

Having received my last meal in Camp Bastion at 1230, I moved through the painstakingly-slow check-in and boarding procedure before finally landing at Minhad (United Arab Emirates) at 2200. Approximately half-an-hour later I was presented with a small box containing a sandwich, samosa and a chocolate bar. This kind of offering – ten hours after my last meal – was just not up to the mark, especially when facing a further eight-hour flight to Cyprus.

I strongly believe that our soldiers deserve more than this. – WO2 Bicknell, 1 Coldm Gds.

**Maj Harry Lomas, S02 Food Services Capability (A), responds:** While I agree with WO2 Bicknell that the system is not perfect, every effort is made to provide for passengers in transit.

Check-in is conducted at 1400 with a second reporting time of around 2000 (plus or minus one hour respectively for all flights to Minhad and then onto Brize Norton or Teeside).

Passengers are given a brief at 1400 and informed that there is time to go for food, as there are no facilities at the Bastion departure airhead. If for some reason the



passenger has nowhere to go, they are told they can go through to the departure lounge but there are no facilities there for feeding. So it is up to the individual to go to the cookhouse after check-in but before the second reporting time.

In the event of passengers being delayed the following is in place:

- Three-hour delay on departure time – tea, coffee and biscuits provided.
- Four-hour delay – a packed meal provided or DFAC [Dining Facility Air Conditioned] cards will be issued for a hot or cold meal.





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# Army's German gladiators

HAVE followed the selection of the best players to have won Army colours at Association Football in recent issues and note that *Football Punk* picked Justin Whittle and Gary Holt, who both played for the British Army of the Rhine (BAOR) under coach SSgt Scouse Munro between 1990 and 1994.

SSgt Munro won nine or ten Army Cups while serving with 28 Engineer Regiment and 1 & 3 Training Regiments RE, and is now manager of Halstead Town FC who ply their trade in the Essex Senior League.

As nice as it may be to choose a line-up that would grace any stadium in the world, my selection is based on a team that was picked to take on the might of the Bundeswehr.

Once an annual showdown, the fixture was eventually suspended as a direct consequence of too many one-sided results in favour of the German Armed Forces who used to field professional footballers during their National Service.

The match I refer to took place on November 9, 1993 in Moenchengladbach and the German team that day boasted eight under 21 internationals of who Carsten



**Flashback:** BAOR defender Pte Justin Whittle (AGC (SPS)) meets the Bundeswehr's Gen Hoster ahead of the big match in 1993

## BRITISH ARMY OF THE RHINE 2 BUNDESWEHR 3

November 9, 1993

Goalscorers: Holt (35), Jancker (39), Trinekens (42), Brauchmann (47), McHugh (74)

Manager: Maj John Nixon (RSU)  
Coach: SSgt Scouse Munro (28 Engr Regt)

1. LCpl Nugget-Taylor (28 Engr Regt)
2. Cpl Micky Franks (28 Engr Regt)
3. LCpl Tyce Tyson (RDG)
4. Cpl Rick Harrington (3 Bn REME)
5. Pte Justin Whittle (28 Engr Regt)
6. Sgt Paul Murgatroyd (8 Regt RLC)
7. LCpl Shan Shannon (28 Engr Regt)
8. LCpl Tosh Williams (1 Cheshire)
9. SI Daz Adam (QDG)
10. Cpl Bomber Brown (28 Engr Regt)
11. Pte Gary Holt (28 Engr Regt)
12. Cpl John Service (111 Pro Coy)
14. Sgt Perky Perkins (14 Sup Regt)
15. Cpl Barney McHugh (RDG)
16. Pte Simon Yeo (1 Cheshire)

*Football Punk's* all-time Army XI... 1. Maik Taylor, 2. Billy Wright, 3. Dave Mackay, 4. Duncan Edwards, 5. Justin Whittle, 6. Gary Holt, 7. Sir Tom Finney, 8. Jim Baxter, 9. Lee Bradbury, 10. Phil Stant, 11. Guy Whittingham

Jancker, Thomas Franck and Thorsten Kornmaier went on to play for Germany's senior side.

The BAOR squad also had its share of experience and talent. "Bomber" Brown played for Lincoln City prior to joining the Army and Paul Murgatroyd regularly featured for Gutersloh in the second tier of the Bundesliga.

And months after the match Whittle and Holt left the Army for Glasgow Celtic.

Whittle made his league debut for Stoke City in 1994 before playing for Hull City and Grimsby Town, making a total of 403 appearances and scoring seven goals.

Holt made his debut for Scottish side Kilmarnock in 1995 and, during a career that also took in Stoke City, Norwich City, Nottingham Forest and Wycombe Wanderers, made a total of 459 appearances and scored 16 goals.

He was also capped ten times by Scotland and has one international goal to his name.

Simon Yeo followed Whittle and Holt into the professional ranks and made his league debut for Lincoln City in 2002 after learning his trade with non-leaguers Hyde United.

Yeo went on to have spells with Peterborough United, Bury, Macclesfield Town and Chester City, racking up 224 appearances and scoring 59 goals.

The game itself was a credit to English football with SSgt Munro being singled out by his opposite number who, having previously seen the BAOR side win a tournament featuring military teams from Poland, Belarus and Hungary, described the British boss as a superb tactician.

Indeed, SSgt Munro's only defeat during that season (1993-94) was to the all-conquering Bundeswehr. – Maj (Retd) John Nixon.

## PS...

I PUT pen to paper to seek assistance from *Soldier's* more senior readers regarding a very well-written and amusing instruction to "serving and retired officers on the correct way to achieve safe passage and entry to heaven".

The document is entitled "Dying Control Of" and has 14 sub paragraphs, two of which read: "There will be no overtaking on the way to Heaven and any Other Ranks passed on the way bound in the opposite direction will be accorded the return of the usual compliments. You are to ignore V-signs and other derisive gestures" and "For the first 12 months of service in the Royal Army Angel Corps (RAAC) you will be on probation and not permitted to book out of the Pearly Gates. After a satisfactory year on probation you will be allowed to return to Earth (on the next lowest pay band) to harass those who created the reason for your 'angelification' in the first place".

The whole instruction is framed and headed by a coat of arms and signed by H. Ghost, HBS (Heavenly Body Section), RAAC. I have no idea who wrote it and cannot believe that it is a one off. Should anyone wish to avail themselves of or re-acquaint themselves with this very important information I will happily provide copies by email. – Lt Col (Retd) Tony Lyons, Tidworth, lyons.william@sky.com

AS a former Royal Irish Ranger and long-time subscriber of *Soldier*, the feature on the kit issued to today's troops, "Bag of tricks" (August), made for welcome reading. It is good to know that even in these tough economic times those in the British Army are still getting new gear and I was particularly impressed with the hi-tech rucksack.

I joined the French Foreign Legion in

1988 and at the end of the fourth week of basic training had to complete a 100km hike carrying 80lbs. I finished the march but was left red raw by my issued backpack which had ripped the skin off my lower back.

That experience and the week in hospital which followed meant that I know how important a good rucksack is. – Anthony O'Keefe, Ottawa, Canada.





# BULLETIN BOARD

## DEFENCE DIRECTORY

**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)

**Army Benevolent Fund:** 0845 241 4820

**Army Welfare Service:** 01722 436569; [www.army.mod.uk/soldierwelfare/supportagencies/aws](http://www.army.mod.uk/soldierwelfare/supportagencies/aws)

**Army Families Federation:** 01980 615525

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

**Career Transition Partnership:** 0207 766 8020

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

**Confidential support lines:** 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. Lines open 1030-2230 (UK) every day.

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

**Family Escort Service:** 0207 463 9249

**Forces Pension Society:** 0207 820 9988

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

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

**Mutual Support (Multiple Sclerosis group):** 07962 023654; [www.mutualsupport.org.uk](http://www.mutualsupport.org.uk)

**National Gulf Veterans' and Families' Association Office:** (0900-1700); 24-hour helpline 0845 257 4853; [www.ngvfa.org.uk](http://www.ngvfa.org.uk)

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

**Royal British Legion:** 0845 7725 725

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

**St Dunstan's:** 0207 723 5021; [www.st-dunstans.org.uk](http://www.st-dunstans.org.uk)

**South Atlantic Medal Association:** 01495 227577

**Services Cotswold Centre:** 01225 810358

**Service Personnel and Veterans Agency:** 0800 169 2277 (from UK); 0044 1253 866043 (from overseas);

## DEFENCE DIARY

**Until January 2011: The Ministry of Food Exhibition.** The story of food, from farms and gardens to shops and canteens. Imperial War Museum, London. Tel: 0207 416 5000.

**October until February 2011: The Gulf War 1990-1991:** Photographs by John Keane at the Imperial War Museum North. Free entry. For information visit [www.iwm.org.uk/north](http://www.iwm.org.uk/north)

**October 9 & 10: Malta Military Tattoo.** Massed bands, precision marching, formation and gymnastic displays to be held at the Malta Fairs & Conventions Centre in Ta' Qali, Malta. Tickets range from 18-28 Euros and can be purchased online by visiting [www.ticketline.com.mt](http://www.ticketline.com.mt) or emailing [booking@maltamilitarytattoo.com](mailto:booking@maltamilitarytattoo.com)

**October 24: Cadet 150 Trafalgar Day Parade.** Venue Trafalgar Square, London. For further Information call 0207 654 7015.

**October 29: Celebration of 150 years of the Cadet Movement.** To be held at Fairfield's Hall, Croydon at 1930. Tickets £10 from the box office on 0208 688 9291.

**November 12 onwards: Extraordinary Heroes.** An exhibition of Victoria and George Crosses. An exciting gallery which uses a range of multimedia to get people thinking about brave actions which motivated the recipients championed in the exhibition. Imperial War Museum, Lambeth Road, London SE1 6HZ. General enquiries phone 0207 416 5000 or visit [www.iwm.org.uk](http://www.iwm.org.uk)

**November 27 & 28: Birmingham Military Tattoo.** Massed bands, displays, field gun competition plus much more to be held at the National Indoor Arena, Birmingham. Tickets £13.50 to £21.50, concessions available. Call the box office on 0844 338 800 or visit [www.birminghamtattoo.com](http://www.birminghamtattoo.com)

**December 4 & 5: The British Military Tournament** will be held at London's Earls Court. Presented by ABF The Soldiers' Charity, it will bring together all the best elements of the world-famous Royal Tournament. Tickets cost £29 to £65 from Earls Court on 0870 903 9033 or visit [www.britishmilitarytournament.com](http://www.britishmilitarytournament.com)

**Until January 2011: Remembering Fromelles.** Exhibition with photographs of the new Commonwealth War Graves Commission Cemetery. Imperial War Museum, Lambeth Road, London SE1 6HZ. General enquiries phone 0207 416 5000 or visit [www.iwm.org.uk](http://www.iwm.org.uk)

**Until March 2011. The Churchill Lecture Series.** Taking place within the Churchill War Rooms, including the bunker. Lectures sponsored by Military History. Venue: King Charles Street, London SW1A 2AQ.

## SEARCHLINE

Calling all ex-chefs, Army Catering Corps and Royal Logistic Corps, Regular and TA. **Leslie Croombs** would like to hear from you with a view to meeting and exchanging experiences. If enough interest is generated maybe we could start a branch in the Morecambe and Lancaster area. The venue for the first meeting is the York Hotel, Morecambe. Contact Leslie Croombs (ex-sergeant) on 07966 240954.

Gillian Milloy is trying to trace **James and Ruby Stibbles** who were stationed at Pirbright Camp in 1973-1974, Scots Guards. Last known address was Northfield, Aberdeen. Contact Gillian by phone 01753 552654 or write to 9 Elmwood Road, Upton Lea, Slough SL2 5QQ.

Due to the impending closure of **Dulmen Station**, if any person that has donated any

presentations to the WOs' & Sgts' Mess would like to receive them back, contact WO1 D Daniels by phone 94863 2215 or 0049 02594 9622215 or the WOs' & Sgts' mess manager on 94863 2249 or 0049 02594 9622249.

Did you serve with **2nd Lt Ralph Kent Green (RASC)** during the Second World War? He was part of BEF/48th Division, No 517 Petrol Coy and was rescued from Dunkirk. He later served with 73 Brigade and then 1st and 6th Airborne. His niece is writing about his experiences during the war. Contact Barbara Kent Lawrence by email at [Barbaralawrence@comcast.net](mailto:Barbaralawrence@comcast.net)

A researcher is looking for photographs, cine film or drivers' tales of the **Wickham trolleys** used on the various military railways such as the **Longmoor Military Railway Unit** and the filming of *The Great St Trinian's Train Robbery* in 1965. If you can help, contact Jonathan Flood, 39 Quantock Close, Great Ashby, Stevenage, Herts SG1 6BS.

A daughter is searching for her father **Jim (James) Green**. He may still be serving or a civilian working for the military. Jim was/is RLC and was a radio operator attached to 24 Fd Ambulance Sqn based at Gaza Barracks in the 1980s. He also served in Moscow Barracks in Northern Ireland in 1982. Last seen in Andover a couple of months ago. Contact Clare Kiepe urgently by phone 07984 866500 or email [clarekiepe@hotmail.com](mailto:clarekiepe@hotmail.com)

**Napier Trail Expedition – Ethiopia, January 2012.** Trailquest are recruiting now for an arduous motorcycle expedition to follow the route taken by Gen Robert Napier's forces sent to rescue British hostages from the fortress of Magdala. Those wishing to take part will be expected to undertake team training and raise money for Help for Heroes. Applicants who took part in the original expedition particularly welcome. Details on the expedition and how to apply at [www.trailquestadventure.com](http://www.trailquestadventure.com)

An executor of a will of someone who died a short time ago is trying to find a **Mick Tracy**. Believed to have been a career soldier with the Royal Green Jackets or The Royal Anglians and spent much of his service in Germany. On demob from the Army he became the manager of 204 Signal Sqn, 4 Armoured Brigade Garrison WO's and Sgts' mess based in York Barracks, Munster between 1983-1995. Mick is a fluent German speaker. Contact by email [sinned694budd@btinternet.com](mailto:sinned694budd@btinternet.com)

Haig Homes Housing Association have properties all over the country for ex-Forces personnel. My husband and I live in one of their properties in East Anglia but are desperate to retire north. As we are only allowed to exchange with other ex-Forces families, I wondered if any reader might be able to help. We have a large semi-detached house with gardens in a quiet close on the outskirts of Norwich. Contact by email [linda.davidson@nnuh.nhs.uk](mailto:linda.davidson@nnuh.nhs.uk)

## REUNIONS

**Royal Devon Yeomanry:** Reunion dinner in Barnstaple on October 9 for all past and present members and attached ranks of the Royal Devon Yeomanry Artillery and D (RDY) Sqn, The Royal Wessex Yeomanry. Ladies please attend. Details from the PSAO, D Sqn by phone 01271 345471 or email [rwxy-dsqn-psao@mod.uk](mailto:rwxy-dsqn-psao@mod.uk)

**Alexis Soyer Dinner** to be held on October 21 at Worthy Down Officers' Mess. Personnel who have completed the food service/food supply officer courses or are in an FS-supporting role may attend. If you have not received your



invitation, contact Capt M Peters by telephone on 94271 2287/2294 or 01962 887287/887294.

**129 Battery RA Old Comrades' Association:** Reunion for all past and present members and attached personnel of the battery. Venue is the Central Club, Blackpool on October 22-23. For details contact [williehenry885@hotmail.com](mailto:williehenry885@hotmail.com) or visit [www.129dragonsoca.co.uk](http://www.129dragonsoca.co.uk)

**3rd Bn The Queen's Regiment:** Reunion of former members of the regiment at the Sloe bar at Waterloo train station, London on October 23 at 1300. No booking required. Further information from Maj (Retd) H Felstead by email [OxfordOTC-QM@mod.uk](mailto:OxfordOTC-QM@mod.uk)

**Devon Festival of Remembrance:** To be held in The Princess Theatre, Torquay on November 11 at 1900. Festival theme is 150th anniversary of the formation of the Cadet movement. Guest speaker is WO1 M Tomlinson CGC, MC. Tickets £8 from the theatre or phone 01803 380842 or 0844 947 2315 (local call). Further information from the RBL county office on 01392 272211.

**204 (North Irish) Field Hospital's WOs' and Sgts' Mess** invites all serving, honorary and past members to a reunion dinner to be held on October 16 at Hydebank TA Centre. Details from WO1 Davie Cairns on 07775 992635 or email [davie.cairns@gmail.com](mailto:davie.cairns@gmail.com)

**South Notts Hussars:** Reunion and Remembrance dinner to take place at the TA centre, Hucknall Lane, Bulwell, Nottingham NG6 8AQ on November 13. Tickets cost £25 each and are available from the secretary at the TA centre.

**JACIG:** 20th anniversary dinner to be held at RAF Henlow Officer's Mess on November 18. All former JACIG officers and senior NCOs welcome. Full details from Sqn Ldr Ashton on 01462 857489 or email [j1j4so2@jacig.raf.mod.uk](mailto:j1j4so2@jacig.raf.mod.uk)

## COMPETITIONS

**Spine Line winner:** Ms K Bisson, 20 Transport Sqn RLC.

**Facebook winners:** Sgt S Young, BFPO 40; W Baker, Grantham; Cpl N Skivington, BFPO 31; Capt A McKenna, Blandford Camp, Dorset.

**St Enodoc break winner:** Maj S Brooks, Vimy Barracks, Catterick.

**Kandahar Break winners:** SSgt G Walker, HQ BFPO, Ruislip; Cpl A Duncan, 5 Armd Wksp, BFPO 22; WO2 J Keogh, 11 MI Coy, BFPO 15; Sgt J Taylor, IMATT (SL), BFPO 622; J Card, Beacon Barracks, Stafford.

**From Paris with Love winners:** Mrs P Crandles, Edinburgh; Mrs M Newport, Oxford; Capt D Bellringer, 21 MI Coy; M Williams, Farnborough; C Roseblade, Hazebruck Barracks, Arborfield.

## ROADSHOW DATES

The Army Presentation Team wants to hear from members of the public who would like a personal invitation to its hi-tech roadshow. The event starts with a drinks reception, is followed by a presentation and questions and culminates with a finger buffet. There will be a range of military personnel on hand to answer any of your questions. Call 01276 417000 or e-mail your name and address to [apt.mod@btinternet.com](mailto:apt.mod@btinternet.com) with the event you are interested in attending.

**October:** 19, Walsall; 20, Stoke-on-Trent; 21, Coventry. **November:** 8, Abergele; 10, Newport; 11, Swansea; 24, Bexleyheath; 25, Bromley. **December:** No presentations.

NO. 827

# HOW OBSERVANT ARE YOU?

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£100

Picture: Graeme Main



**T**EN details have been changed on this photograph of *British Soldier*, the Army Sailing Association's Class 40 yacht. Circle the differences in the upper image and send the panel to **HOAY 827, Soldier**, Ordnance Road, Aldershot, Hampshire GU11 2DU by October 29.

A photocopy is acceptable, but only one entry per person may be submitted. First correct entry drawn after the closing date will win £100; the second and third will receive £25 gift vouchers. The results will be announced in the November issue.

**August competition:** First correct entry drawn at random and winner of the £100 was **Maj (Retd) R Winter**, Shepherdswell, Kent. Runners-up **Sgt N Wallace**, AVE(H), Uniacke Barracks, Harrogate and **Mr P Newton**, ADTU, Bovington Camp, Dorset, each win a £25 gift voucher.



THE Duke of Kent's close inspection of an Army sniper's bullet in Afghanistan provided a wealth of inspiration for our growing company of captioners.

The Royal, who enjoyed a 20-year military career himself, is no stranger to weaponry and that proved to be the basis for many of this month's suggestions.

Mr Clarke from Wokingham kicked things off with "So, you're claiming this is the bullet with my name on it?", an entry repeated almost word-for-word by Dave Bellringer of Abingdon and Mr Long of Chigwell in Essex.

Wiltshire's Simon Harrison picked on a stereotype of the upper classes by penning "Your weapon is all well and good, but I prefer hunting with a shotgun myself".

But this month's winner is Graham Drew, of DEMSS Kineton in Warwickshire. We forgave him for mistaking the bullet in the



Picture: Cpl Gary Kendall, RLC

**"Don't be so quick to 'ConDem' my arrangement, you lot are quick to work with the Royal Air Force and Royal Navy when it suits you."**

**WIN A BOOK:** Write your own caption for the photo above and send it to us by October 29. The best, in our opinion, will win a copy of *Most Secret: The Hidden History of Orford Ness* by Paddy Heazell.

Duke's hand for an insect as his caption of "It must be a Tajik gnat as he seems to be wearing a pakool" made us chuckle and proved that he pays attention when reading *Soldier*. The entry wins Mr Drew a copy of Saul David's *Hart of Empire*.

Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg is this month's *Freeze Frame* star.





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# HOME TRUTHS

A PERSONAL view from Julie McCarthy, Chief Executive of the Army Families Federation. Log on to [www.aff.org.uk](http://www.aff.org.uk) for more information on the Army Families Federation



Picture: Sgt Anthony Boocock, RLC

## 'In need of a break after hubby's R&R'

**H**AVE to admit to being nervous of the changes made to the rules surrounding Rest and Recuperation (R&R) over the summer by the policy bods at the MoD, but I was glad to see that time lost due to delays will be acknowledged.

I am a firm believer in tour breaks. Not only do they give those on the front line a rest but they provide the family back home some respite and valuable time together.

The feeling of expectation that starts to build as the homecoming date is confirmed (after at least three changes; that's the law) is indescribable. You know that you shouldn't get too excited just in case, but that doesn't stop you.

You start making plans, which change at least four times. I wanted to go somewhere hot and sunny but understandably, after four months somewhere hot and sandy, my hubby didn't. He wanted "proper weather" but it was, he assured me, "my choice". Proper weather it was then – Scotland in a camper van.

As the date gets closer, there is the thrill of getting ready. I had tried not to tell the children the actual date that daddy was coming home. Some of my friends thought that I was mad (or bad) but I couldn't face their hyper-excitement on top of my own and so a vague "in a few weeks" was my reply to any of their questions.

They knew something was up at the

beginning of August as I'd had my hair done, shaved my legs and was generally like a cat on hot bricks.

The phone rang at 2230 the night before hubby was due to come home – it was him. My heart sank as I waited for him to tell me that he wasn't coming back but thankfully he was just delayed.

Heading up to Brize Norton the next morning a second phone call confirmed that he was back in the UK, but actually in Birmingham, and could I collect him from there instead.

What followed was a bit of a comedy of errors as he sat on the plane in the cargo area of Birmingham airport and I raced around the terminal trying to find out where he was. Anyway, three hours later I'd found him and we were able to start enjoying our two weeks together.

Towards the end of R&R, the spectre of him going back was always in the room. He had to confirm his flight and pack his stuff, the worry for the children and myself building again as we knew he was leaving – albeit tempered by the knowledge that we were now on the home straight.

What I hadn't really appreciated was the full impact that hubby returning to theatre would have on the children. For them, daddy was home and they couldn't

understand why he had to leave again.

Having been very organised at the beginning of the tour and arranged all sorts of activities for us all to pass the time (that's where the separation allowance goes), post-R&R was a bit of an activity desert and I needed to get my act together.

But that's the other thing us Army wives don't do very often – admit how hard it is for us when they leave. Because it is hard. There are days when I get sick of being the one coping, the one organising activities and being cheerful for everyone else.

The thought of telling anyone how I felt was impossible and in the end poor hubby got a ranting email, which made me feel much better but didn't do a great deal for him.

That's not to say I wish he hadn't come home – I would be crawling the walls by now if he hadn't. I just wish I'd listened when I told myself to keep things calm and as normal as possible.

With that in mind I'm now getting ready for the homecoming. Going from nothing to 24 hours a day together isn't going to do us any good and I'd rather ease hubby back into family life. So the kids will still be in school and I'll still be working. Besides, if he's at home all day he can start the packing ready for our move next month. ■

**'There are days I get sick of being cheerful for everyone else'**





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## SERVICES

### www.armynet.mod.uk

Access to full-text online information resources including Jane's, the ALIS catalogue to search for articles, books, CDs, DVDs and request items online, details of specialised information services and locations of all Army Library and Information Centres.

### www.recoverypnp.niceboard.com

A site where REME recovery mechanics and friends, serving and retired, meet for chat and banter.

### www.forceshomes.co.uk

Finding homes for military personnel. We organise your mortgage, search for your ideal property, manage the complete purchase, arrange the letting if required, and we pay all your professional and legal fees.

### www.army.mod.uk

The Army's public facing website with news, features and information on all aspects of Army work and life.

### www.baff.org.uk

British Armed Forces Federation, an association aimed at representing staff in the three Services.

### www.armedforces.co.uk

Over 2,000 pages of Defence information, including defence projects and equipment, technology information, military books and defence supplier's details.

### www.armywivesunited.co.uk

Free community site with message boards on a vast array of subjects that affect Army wives. Offering advice, friendship and support. Army Wives United has been online for three years and has around 1,000 active members.

### www.sftf.mod.uk

The Service Families Task Force website contains useful tri-Service information.

### www.aff.org.uk

The Army Families Federation (AFF) is the independent voice of Army families and works hard to improve the quality of life for Army families around the world - on any aspect that is affected by the Army lifestyle.

### www.bitecard.co.uk

Get a BITE card and enjoy 20 per cent off food and drink everytime you travel. Register online and save 20 per cent off Upper Crust, Burger King, Millie's Cookies and Caffè Ritazza in stations across UK.

### www.hmforces.co.uk

New unofficial online HQ for the British Army. Free - featuring active forums, benefit updates, military news and videos. Plus civilian jobs by Monster.co.uk

### www.starandgarter.org

The Royal Star and Garter Homes caring for the ex-Service community since 1916.

### www.youtube.com/britisharmy

The Army's official video channel with lots of videos ranging from training to equipment.

### www.forcesequine.co.uk

Welcome to Forces Equine.co.uk the online Equine site dedicated to Combined and Individual Services Equestrian. Here you will be able to find the information and links you need to keep you up-to-date with what's going on.

### www.nfassociation.org

The "Not Forgotten" Association for disabled ex-Service personnel aims to provide entertainment and recreation for war-wounded personnel to alleviate the tedium of their lives and give them something they can look forward to.

### www2.armynet.mod.uk/armysafety

This Chief Environment and Safety Officer (Army) website provides up-to-date advice on safety and environmental issues affecting the Army.

### www.facebook.com/britisharmy

The Army's official Facebook fan page

### www.twitter.com/britisharmy

The Army's official Twitter channel for the distribution of news and information

### www.squaddiewives.co.uk

Squaddie wives, British Army wives and girlfriends site for women only.

### www.armycadets.com

We offer fun, exciting and challenging activities on a military theme to 12-18 year olds. Pass on your skills and knowledge to the next generation. Go online to find your nearest detachment and request an information pack.

### www.facebook.com/armycadetforce

The Army Cadet Force's official Facebook fan page.

### www.honour-our-troops.org.uk

Honour our Troops is a non-profit charity, comprising a dedicated team of volunteers committed to giving knowledge, expertise, time and effort in realising our vision - Staging a National Concert in honour and support of our British Forces.



## GREAT SOUTH RUN 2010 ON OCTOBER 24

Mark Watson is running a number of races this year in aid of the in-house pensioners in Chelsea Hospital. Please donate through JustGiving, it's fast and totally secure. Once you donate, they'll send your money directly to the charity and make sure Gift Aid is reclaimed on every eligible donation by a UK taxpayer.



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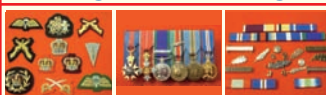
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OCTOBER'S GHOULISH PARADE

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P86 GAMES **FIENDISH FORMULA**

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**Harsh regime:** The children in *Sons of Cuba* enter a punishing system to gain honour rather than fame and fortune

# Castro's prize fighters

Director Andrew Lang follows Cuba's children on their bid for Olympic Games glory

Interview: Joe Clapson

**A** FAR cry from the bright lights of pay-per-view boxing, *Sons of Cuba* is a thought-provoking snapshot of what success in the ring means to youngsters in the country.

Director Andrew Lang was inspired by the notion that "Cubans are born to fight" and assembled a home-grown film crew to tell the story of the nation's dream.

Gaining unprecedented access to the Communist country, Lang – a former student at the Havana Film School – followed the nine- and ten-year-old proteges of the Havana Boxing Academy on their relentless effort to fight at the national championships and the Olympics.

In the UK the children on screen would be at primary school, with perhaps one PE lesson each week and some sport at the weekends.

In *Sons of Cuba* we see the recruits start training at 0400 before being drilled with intense fitness exercises and trading blows with their friends. They also study school books and pay homage to their leader, Fidel Castro.

"It's very young to be signing up for it but they

are generally pretty happy to be there even though it's very difficult and emotionally and mentally challenging," said Lang.

"They do suffer breakdowns but on the whole it's a good atmosphere.

"I don't know if they understand that they are making a decision for life."

Despite the obvious poverty in the dusty homes of Cuba's capital, the viewer acquires a sense that there is no resentment towards the dictatorial regime but rather there is a desire to make the country proud.

The young boxers follow diet plans and accept harsh training regimes not for the wealth and celebrity life of a professional boxer, but for the honour of being successful for their nation.

Former Cuban champions who have defected to the US in search of riches are seen as traitors by the young "pioneers of Communism".

But Lang explained that his intention for the raw documentary was not to provide political opinion or cast judgement on the country's boxing star conveyor belt.

"The message and the reality the film presents is an ambiguous one but I want people to engage with it and take their own viewpoints," he said.

"Some find it inspirational that kids are so

disciplined and train so hard, while others think they are brainwashed and oppressed – others don't know what to think.

"Some documentaries tell you what to think and I didn't want that – I am pleased there's difference in opinions."

Thanks to the expert filming style, the audience feels the sadness of the hungry protagonists when they yearn for their parents and threaten to quit. But at the same time the viewer will shout for the Havana boys to beat their rivals.

For Lang, the process of creating *Sons of Cuba* has hooked him on the sweet science.

"I wasn't a massive boxing fan before I started the film but became one during the process," he said. "I will be watching to see what happens to them with regards to the regime and whether or not they defect to become professionals.

"I'm sure some of them will become Olympic champions in 2012."

Regardless of political or moral opinion, everything from the boxing to the tears is real.

This is an opportunity to gain a true view of an alternative way of life and a different concept of what it is to be successful. ■

● *Sons of Cuba* is out now on DVD.

From vampire slaying to "The King of Rock and Roll", *Soldier* checks out the latest DVD releases...

## The Bleeding out now

AN ex-Army Ranger, searching for the killer of his parents, discovers his missing-in-action brother is actually the head of a family of vampires residing in a former chemical weapons factory-turned-nightclub.

Add a cast including **Vinnie Jones**, **Michael**

**Matthias** and **DMX** to the fantastical plot and you've got a recipe for some adrenalin-fuelled, vampire-slaying overacting. Not clever enough to be scary, but with just enough heavy metal, ass-kicking gore and screaming college girls – this is *Buffy* for big boys. Stick your brain in neutral, grab some hair-of-the-dog and feel your hangover slip away. This is so bad, it's actually good!

**Capt Dan Knowles, 35 Engr Regt**



## Sweet Karma out now

FROM the outset the vibe of this film is menacing, with drugs, people trafficking and vice aplenty. Karma – our lead – is beautiful, mute, inexplicably handy with all manner of weapons and out to avenge the death of her sister, a victim of brutal gangland hoods. This is a hard-hitting exposure of the exploitation of unfortunates duped into a supposed better life in the West only to end up as lap dancers or worse. Some dodgy Russian accents do not detract from the film's message. With the protagonist's targets dropping like flies and an unpredictable conclusion, *Sweet Karma* is not a film to watch with your mummy.

**Capt Neil Johnson, AAC**



## Rapt out now

THE problem with subtitled films is that their plots often tend to get lost in translation. Throw in a complicated storyline and you have French kidnap drama *Rapt*. **Yvan Attal** plays a wealthy businessman – with a wife and lover – who is kidnapped, tortured and held to ransom. As the media publicly exposes the hostage's shady pursuits, his embarrassed family and business colleagues are shocked into the dilemma of whether they should meet the captor's demands or let the industrialist die. A very complicated film which left me wondering who had been tortured more, the cheating businessman or myself.

**Rodge Tapply, ex-RE**





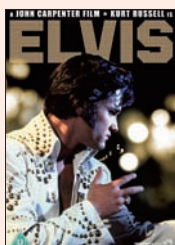


**Ring of dreams:** *Sons of Cuba* director Andrew Lang has captured the full spectrum of emotions felt by child boxers fighting to become champions

#### Elvis out now

ORIGINALLY released in 1979, two years after "The King's" death, a simply-excellent **Kurt Russell** brings **Elvis** back to life in a fantastic flashback-type tale of his rapid rise from truck driving to being one of the most popular music and film stars the world has ever seen. With an all-star supporting cast, including **Season Hubley** and **Shelley Winters**, the film charts the legend's rise, decline and reinvention up to 1969. Love him or loathe him, this film portrays the hip-swinging rock 'n' roll rebel with a real understanding of what it was that made Elvis "The King". Most definitely one for the cool wall.

**W02 Ritchie Downing, 3 AAC**



#### Win... The Real Band of Brothers

THIS awe-inspiring documentary, released on October 4, retraces the history of the 101st Airborne Division. Relive the do-or-die missions of a force that played a key role from the Second World War through to Vietnam. It is an action-packed salute to the men who took to the skies in the name of freedom. *Soldier* has teamed up with Revolver Entertainment to offer five readers the opportunity to win a copy of the DVD. To have a chance of getting your hands on a disc, tell us which division is the focus of the film. Answers on a postcard to the usual address or by email to [comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk)

**Closing date: October 29**



#### Win... This is War

*THIS Is War*, released on October 5, thrusts its audience into the heart of battle like never before. In July 2002, 1st Lt Mike Scotti volunteered to extend his service with the American Marine Corps and was propelled to the front line of Iraq. Scotti records the soldiers' progress to Baghdad on his personal mini DV-camera and the viewer watches the early days of the war against terror unfold. Momentum Pictures are kindly offering five lucky readers the chance to win a copy of the DVD. To enter, tell us which country Scotti was fighting in. Answers on a postcard to the usual address or send an email to [comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk)

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**Top of the podium: F1 2010** provides a realistic glimpse into the fast-paced life of a racing driver both in and out of the car

# Winning formula

Grand Prix guru adds insider knowledge to hi-octane motor racing extravaganza

**Interview: Stephen Tyler**

**W**HEN Codemasters won the rights to develop a new Formula One game, it was no surprise that they immediately began the hunt for a technical adviser.

Knowing that recreating the intricate inner workings of F1 cars was a job only achievable with the input of an expert, the developers turned to the ranks of the sport's former drivers.

And, as luck would have it, they soon uncovered the perfect candidate in Anthony Davidson. Not only had the race ace driven on the Grand Prix circuit, but he was also a massive fan of computer games.

"Codemasters got in contact a year-and-a-half ago because they wanted a driver that had driven the real cars and, having been a heavy gamer since I was a kid, I jumped at the chance to work with them," he told *Soldier*.

"I remember *Super Monaco Grand Prix*, *Virtua Racer*, *Ferrari 355 Challenge* and the *TOCA Touring Car* game. I loved playing them."

Davidson, who raced competitively in Formula One for Minardi, BAR Honda and Super Aguri,

was tasked with helping the development team move *F1 2010* to the front of the gaming grid by making it as realistic as possible.

His in-depth experience of hammering around the world's motor racing circuits put him at a distinct advantage, but the 31-year-old admitted that converting his knowledge into a lifelike piece of software was a tall order.

"It's very hard to analyse and replicate what an F1 car does," he explained. "Even the teams struggle with their simulators. To calculate what a tyre does in certain situations in ones and zeroes is a massive challenge and is actually verging on the impossible."

"Codemasters have done a very good job in recreating the whole atmosphere, the battles between teammates and the life outside of the car. You can still see chinks in the armour and areas where I think we can improve, but for a first go this is easily the best F1 game on a console."

Although *F1 2010* provides a massive challenge to armchair drivers on its most realistic settings, the game features a raft of customisable options to make the on-track experience a bit more forgiving.

From braking assistance to a racing line indicator, the hi-tech help ensures that players of

all abilities will be able to challenge for a place on the podium.

"Although this is more towards the simulation end of the market, it's still a very accessible game because of the driver aids," said Davidson.

"We didn't want to make the game so hard to play that it put people off, so although it rewards a very good driver it's also there for everyone."

With the title proving to be a hi-octane hit (read our review below), Davidson is pleased that Formula One has regained its place in the public's affections after a spell in the doldrums.

With this year's drivers' and constructors' championships looking like they will go right to the wire, the current Mercedes simulator and Peugeot Le Mans driver said F1 was going through an exciting period and predicted success for former *Soldier* interviewee Mark Webber.

"It's a good year for the sport," he added. "You had the days of Michael Schumacher winning every single race for Ferrari which didn't make for a very entertaining global event. Today you have a much closer fight between the drivers and manufacturers and that's what sport is all about."

"The best man should win and this year it will come down to which driver is mentally strong enough. Lately that's been Mark Webber." ■

**From ice-bound punch-ups to invading alien forces, we load up the latest computer game releases...**

## Global Agenda for PC

IT is 2155 and from the ashes of the devastating Third World War has risen an oppressive government determined to control the globe. Cue the few remaining independent factions, each with their own motive, to smash the place up with hi-tech weaponry. *Global Agenda* is a very slick and impressive MMO (massively multiplayer online) game with plenty of action and no shortage of content. If you're planning on starting your own faction and taking this game seriously then I advise the procurement of some equally sad friends and a flux capacitor. Bottom line, this is great stuff, but life's too short.



**Capt Fraser Dowling, AGC(ETS)**

## NHL 11 for all formats

VETERAN gamers will recall the original series of NHL titles on the Sega Megadrive and will be pleased to know that the latest version follows in their pick-up-and-play footsteps. The action is suitably fast-paced and a control system that allows players to determine the type, power and direction of their shots using the analogue sticks works well. Although it features a frightening amount of detail, *NHL 11* is easy to understand even for those with no knowledge of the sport and the Be A Pro mode adds further fun. Best of all, the fight mechanism has been upgraded to make knocking seven bells out of opponents easier than ever.



**Out now**

## Mafia II for all formats

EVER wanted to sample life as a mobster without the risk of finding a horse's head in your bed? If so, *Mafia II* is probably your best bet. Featuring the cinematic storyline of Second World War veteran Vito Scaletta's rise through the Mafia ranks in the 1940s' (and a bit of the 1950s') setting of Empire City, this is a stylish and gritty release. As with the original, a lot of time is spent driving vintage vehicles around the huge game map as Vito completes tasks for his mob bosses. The slow pace might put some people off, but the engrossing plot and sometimes tense missions make this a thinking man's *Grand Theft Auto*.



**Out now**





**Beauty contest:** Codemasters' *F1 2010* features intricately-modelled cars and Grand Prix circuits to make sure the game looks every bit as realistic as it plays

## F1 2010 for all formats

AS our interview with Anthony Davidson suggests, *F1 2010* is a massive undertaking by Codemasters. But thankfully for petrolheads it is one the company has met square on. Featuring all of the cars, circuits and drivers of the current season, the game looks fantastic and would probably distract racers from their duties were it not for the fiendishly-delicate control system. Even on easy settings, *F1 2010* punishes sloppy steering and rash braking, but this is no bad thing – you should expect no less from a Formula One simulation. A hard nut to crack, but definitely worth the effort to do so.

**Out now**



## ARMA II: British Armed Forces

ALREADY regarded among gamers as one of the most authentic military simulations on the market, *ARMA II: Operation Arrowhead* gains further real-world kudos with its British Armed Forces expansion pack. Set after the events in the original conflict in the fictional nation of Takistan, this release tasks British troops with controlling a growing insurgency and adds artillery and mortar strikes into the mix. Fully-modelled real-life weapons, vehicles including the Jackal 2 and helicopters such as the Chinook and Apache provide visual gloss to a simulation that requires serious tactical nous to conquer.

**Out now**



## Halo Reach for Xbox 360

ONE of the most-eagerly anticipated titles of all time more than lives up to its star billing. Following the efforts of the elite Noble team of super soldiers to thwart the invasion of planet Reach by alien forces, the game builds on the strengths of previous *Halo* releases to provide one of the best all-round first-person shooters ever made. Controls feel intuitive, the difficulty levels are pitched just right and *Reach* looks amazing. The battles with murderous enemies wielding outlandish weapons are frantic and intense but eminently good fun, while the obligatory multiplayer mode is more detailed than ever. A game that matches the hype.

**Out now**







**Voyage of discovery:** UK grime star Tinie Tempah has set his sights on the top of the tree with the release of new album *Disc-Overy*

# Man on a mission

Urban sensation targets fame and industry success with breakthrough record

**Review: Richard Long**

**W**ITH the UK grime and garage scene boasting an ever-increasing roster of urban talent, it is somewhat difficult for aspiring artists to stand out from the crowd.

Acts like Dizzee Rascal, N-Dubz and Tinchy Stryder have enjoyed tremendous commercial success in recent years, but any sense of superiority they have is now under threat from a newcomer who has set his sights on the very top.

Tinie Tempah was catapulted into the mainstream courtesy of hit single *Pass Out* and his assault on the big time is about to continue with the release of his album *Disc-Overy*.

Recorded over the past 11 months, it features wide-ranging production that encompasses grime, drum and bass and a tinge of pop.

He has also collaborated with an array of guest artists, including Ellie Goulding and Kelly Rowland, to create a record that he hopes will build on the early recognition he has achieved.

"I wanted this album to be really raw, not only with the production but the guests too," he said.

"I was only interested in working with people

I really respect and who I'm a fan of. I met Ellie very early on, we swapped numbers and after that we started living in very parallel worlds, the same festivals, interviews and so on. It made total sense to have her on the album.

"On every single song you'll get a line that reveals what life was like for me. I recorded a lot of it after *Pass Out* went to number one, so that gave me a chance to reflect on life before and after achieving success."

Tempah fell in love with the idea of a career in music as a 12-year-old, when he camped out to watch the 30-strong So Solid Crew shoot their new video near his home in Plumstead.

"I wanted to be in So Solid so badly," he recalled. "That day, watching them make the video, I realised that this is where it was at for me, I didn't want to do anything else."

This fascination didn't falter and his music progressed as he started to mix in the same circles as some of the biggest names in the genre.

Despite this gradual rise Tempah has remained true to where he is from and he hopes *Disc-Overy* reflects his unique point of view.

"I've never tried to be anything than what I am," he said. "I was well brought up, I liked school, I liked learning, I'm well educated and well spoken."

"I want my album to show that you can always do more; there's always more to achieve, wherever you're from and whoever you are."

And with success now coming his way he has also been quick to distance himself from the trappings that fame can bring.

He said: "As I made the album I realised there's a lot more to music than being whisked about in cabs and having the latest phone."

"It's a lot of hard work that goes into it. My goal is to be a superstar, but not in a cheesy way."

Tempah certainly talks a good game and *Disc-Overy* delivers an album that seems destined for the mainstream.

*Pass Out* offers everything you would expect from a number one single while the Rowland collaboration *Invincible* edges more towards the pop market than his grime background.

*Miami 2 Ibiza* has a definite Calvin Harris feel and Goulding delivers some uplifting lyrics to *Wonderman*, a track that will surely be considered as a future single.

On the whole this album has a clear goal – to push Tinie Tempah to the top of the tree – and it is safe to assume he will be gatecrashing the N-Dubz and Dizzee Rascal party as he continues his quest to become a true star. ■

**From instantly forgettable Irish soft rock to the perfect *X Factor* antidote, we check out the new releases...**

## **Foundling** by David Gray

LESS than 12 months since his last major release, singer-songwriter **David Gray** presents his ninth studio album *Foundling*. From opening track, *Only the Wine*, it would appear that the spirit of its multi-million selling ancestor had been invoked. Gray's jagged voice suggested this latest work could be another *White Ladder* but, unfortunately, it is fair to say he is unlikely to repeat such phenomenal success. This album is nothing new and it becomes slightly tedious, even boring, after a while and is just what his fans have come to expect. "It's the record I've been wanting to make for a long time," says Gray. Maybe someone should tell him that he's made it eight times already.



**Ray Kalaker, ex-RE**

## **Surfing The Void** by Klaxons

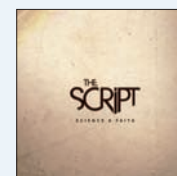
THREE years after bursting onto the scene as the pioneers of new rave, **Klaxons** return to the spotlight with *Surfing the Void*. Produced in Los Angeles by rock legend Ross Robinson (**Sepultura**, **Slipknot**, **At the Drive In**) fans could be forgiven for expecting a harder edge to the music. And while screeching riffs are to be found, there is still an underbelly of the harmonies and electro sound that yielded a Mercury prize first time round. Lead single *Echoes* offers an engaging opening while title track *Surfing the Void* showcases their scrawling guitar work. At times this is a somewhat confusing release and you can't help but feel it falls slightly short of their stunning debut.



**Richard Long, Soldier**

## **Science and Faith** by The Script

RETURNING two years after their debut smash, Dubliners **The Script** will hope new offering *Science and Faith* covets the same acclaim. The recent single *For The First Time*, which was released early in September, has gone pretty much unnoticed by many and it's fairly easy to see why. The Script are without doubt a competent band, what they do lack however is the nous to grab the listener by the proverbials and demand that they listen. Overall this is a pedestrian offering at best and, while I am sure hardened fans will doubtless buy a copy, I would urge those who have money to spend to do so elsewhere. I know I would rather be washing my hair than listening to this.



**W02 Mo Morris, RLC**



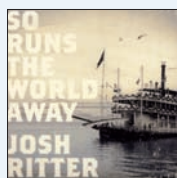


**A life of grime:** Tinie Tempah has called on an impressive list of collaborators to produce an album that he hopes will propel him to super stardom

### So Runs The World Away by Josh Ritter

IDAHO'S favourite son **Josh Ritter** returns with his fifth full-length album which is described as one of his most intense and soul-searching releases to date and is certainly as thought provoking as it is tuneful. This is definitely one of Ritter's darker albums, but don't let that put you off as each track is a clever balance of intensely-creative but inspired lyrics. From the emotionally sombre *Folk Bloodbath* to the more upbeat, **Paul Simon**-inspired vocals of *Lark and Lantern*; there is something for all new and hardcore Ritter fans. The tracks seamlessly roll into one another and almost compel you to sit back, relax and unwind after a hard day's graft. Overall, an album which is very hard not to like.

**Rodge Tapply, ex-RE**



### Release Me by The Like

FOUR rich kids from Los Angeles, with record industry parents, plus some big label production, was bound to result in a pretty palatable record; and it did, kind of. This is a catchy album full of likeable tracks; but I can't help thinking that this four-piece should hail from Manchester or Detroit, not tinsel town. There is no struggle here, no aspiration. I can't decide if I'm hearing the character of the artists or a well-planned strategy to make it sound like the artists have character. Most of the tracks are written by the band which, I have to admit, is to their credit. But **Mark Ronson** is their producer, and he doesn't do flops. I like their music but I'm not sure I like them.

**Capt Dan Knowles, 35 Engr Regt**



### We All Bleed by Crossfade

HARMONICALLY heavy one minute (*Dead Memories*), melodically melancholy the next (*Dear Cocaine*), *We All Bleed*, the latest album from US rock band **Crossfade**, won me over rapidly with its driving riffs and penetrating tunes. This, the third album from the South Carolina foursome, demonstrates an evolution in the sound which has become deeper and heavier as it has matured; maintaining a raw and energetic tonality that has also been augmented by the recent introduction of a keyboard. Well thought out, melodic and heavy; this album is the perfect antidote to **Simon Cowell's** mass-produced and mainstream Saturday night circus.

**Capt Fraser Dowling, AGC(ETS)**







Girl power: *Dressed to Kill*, published by Headline and now available in paperback, is the latest Apache account to storm the literary charts

# A 'bird's' eye view

Army's first female Apache pilot presents fairer sex's take on life in gunship's cockpit

**Review: Maj Mike Peters AAC**

**D**RESSED to Kill's introduction reads like the voice-over to an American "chick flick" trailer... Charlotte Madison is a typical 26-year-old woman, she looks forward to her weekly ration of gossip mags, worries she's developing "bingo wings" and is planning her fairy-tale wedding. She also flies helicopter gunships for a living.

It is hardly the type of teaser we have all come to expect when scanning the dust jackets of any of the recent torrent of personal accounts of operations in Afghanistan.

However, remembering the old adage about never judging a book by its cover I pressed on... and was glad that I did.

Madison (a nom de plume) was the first woman to qualify as an Apache pilot in the British Army and *Dressed to Kill* documents her career from her days in the Combined Cadet Force and officer training at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst to the complexities of learning to fly and fight in the attack helicopter.

Throughout, the author makes it quite clear

that she felt under pressure as a female in a male-dominated world and her accounts of cross-gender friction and perceived resentment at her presence on the Apache course make for unsettling reading.

Thankfully, the picture she paints of her arrival and integration with an attack helicopter squadron is much more encouraging in the equality stakes.

Do not, however, make the assumption that because this book is penned by a self-professed "girly girl" that it will only appeal to women.

The narrative style is engaging and forces male readers to look at the Army and Afghanistan from a very different perspective.

Any prejudices and preconceived ideas men may have of female soldiers are routinely challenged by Madison, who does so in a provocative, refreshing and in many cases amusing manner. The fairer sex's take on Portaloo hygiene is painfully graphic and extremely funny – we've all been there!

The operational chapters are perhaps the most illuminating in terms of gender characteristics with the descriptions of the ways in which male and female pilots use their respective downtime away from the cockpit confirming the view that men are from Mars and women from Venus.

This contrast between sexes is further underlined by the fact that Madison flew in the same squadron and on the same operational tours as Ed Macy.

*Dressed to Kill* takes in the hustle and bustle of three eventful and demanding deployments to Helmand and documents the author's participation in the well-publicised Jug Room Fort sortie.

If you've read Macy's *Apache* you will have been presented with a very different view of the same events.

Compared with her literary forebears Macy and Royal Marine Mark Hammond (*Immediate Response*), Madison does not get bogged down in too much technical detail and instead gives a greater insight into what goes on behind the visor of her flying helmet.

The emotional impact of viewing the effect of Apache's firepower on the enemy through the helicopter's optics and analysing the gun tape of every engagement in grim detail is dealt with in a frank, jargon-free and sensitive manner.

It is difficult to imagine a male author being quite so open about their feelings in print.

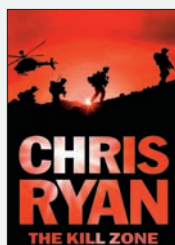
Consequently, Madison has delivered a book that complements and completes the picture painted by previous Apache titles. ■

## From firefight fiction to forgotten far-flung frontiers, a flick through this month's literary releases...

### The Kill Zone by Chris Ryan

IT may sound like a bit of a cliché, but I just couldn't put this book down. From the very first page its relentless pace and gritty, brutal realism had me hooked. Switching from Afghanistan to Ireland to Africa and finishing in London, it has a mix of believable characters and accurate descriptions of modern warfare and its roots tap deeply into current concerns about global terrorism. This is a book that could only have been written by someone who has "been there, done that and got the T-shirt" and I would not hesitate to recommend it to anyone with a taste for a good old-fashioned thriller. Well done Mr Ryan.

**Simon Nowell, ex-RAF Regt**



### Bloody Belfast by Ken Wharton

ARDOYNE, New Lodge, Ballymurphy. These names won't mean much to the current generation of young soldiers, who will be more familiar with the Shi'ia Flats, Green Zone and Sangin District Centre. But for a previous generation, the very mention of these equally-dangerous places in Belfast will trigger some vivid and poignant memories. Which is exactly what this book consists of – a collection of soldiers' first-hand accounts of the sort of incidents that didn't make the news headlines, but have had a profound and tragic effect on their witnesses and their victims. Put simply, this book is a must-read.

**Capt Tony Wilkes, 1 RMP**



### Tigers at Dunkirk by Matthew Richardson

THIS final offering in **Matthew Richardson's** *Fighting Tigers* trilogy focuses on the exploits of the 2nd/5th Leicesters and the role they played in the disastrous 1940 campaign. The battalion, initially sent to France as a labour force, was thrown against the German Blitzkrieg and, woefully ill-equipped and under-trained, many of its men fell in combat or were captured. The plight of the Tigers is presented in vivid detail thanks to the author's use of supporting first-hand accounts and personal testimonies, which graphically illustrate the total chaos and confusion surrounding the Dunkirk evacuation and life for many as prisoners of war.

**Rodge Tapply, ex-RE**







**Belle of the battlefield:** *Dressed to Kill* charts the career of female Apache pilot Charlotte Madison from life as a cadet to the skies of Helmand province

### War Torn by Andy McNab & Kym Jordan

IN a departure from his hugely-successful Nick Stone series, **Andy McNab** teams up with **Kym Jordan** to give, for him, a new, yet equally-powerful, perspective of combat operations. Focusing as much on the psychological aftermath as the razor-sharp actions, *War Torn* describes how a newly-formed platoon is thrown right into the most fierce fighting in Afghanistan and what that means to them and those they have left behind. This book will ring true to soldiers who have served in Helmand province and, uniquely, their families. Something new for McNab but excellent none the less.

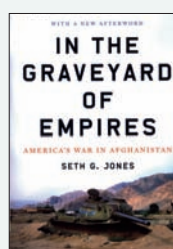
**Capt Dan Knowles, 35 Engr Regt**



### In the Graveyard of Empires by S Jones

**SETH Jones** clearly spent considerable time researching this book and has delivered detailed accounts on most of the major operations carried out by the US Army in Afghanistan. He attempts critical analysis of the conflict but spends too much time on in-depth explanations of events which are relatively trivial. The author lacks an understanding of the historical background to Afghanistan when he suggests a strategy for success in a country where no one has succeeded in more than 2,000 years. If you want to know why US forces are in Afghanistan, Jones does not provide any answers.

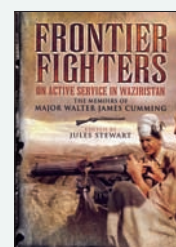
**Lt Col (Retd) Dawson Pratt, R Signals**



### Frontier Fighters edited by Jules Stewart

MAJ WALTER Cumming fought on India's North-West Frontier from 1915 until the Second World War. He recorded his experiences later, although whether from a journal kept at the time is not stated. He describes fighting in Waziristan with a combatant's eye for detail and immediacy of experience, although his writing lacks the interest of **John Masters'** *Bugles and a Tiger*. Unfortunately, Cumming's vision seldom extends beyond the immediate hilltops and he gives little idea of wider context. Perhaps with the mutilation and beheading of captives by bloodthirsty tribesmen, one cannot blame him.

**Dr Rodney Atwood, military historian**







**Shaking things up:** The Whey Protein Iso Complex is the ideal product for the repair and growth of muscle tissue during training programmes

# Power to the people

## Sports nutrition giant aims to boost training regimes with new protein product

**Review: Richard Long**

**W**ITH protein replenishment playing an increasingly-important role in fitness programmes, the sports food market has become littered with supplements vowing to give athletes an extra edge.

Leading brand Multipower has spent more than 30 years developing a plethora of formulations aimed at doing exactly that and has just released what it describes as its "finest product yet".

The Whey Protein Iso Complex comes in four flavours – French vanilla cream, double rich chocolate, caramel toffee fudge and strawberry cream – and offers the highest biological value of all comparable protein sources.

The company claims that the high concentration of whey ensures the powder is soluble and rapidly absorbed, and the mix also includes glutamine to help regulate the protein synthesis process and support the consumer's immune system.

And when combined with Multipower's range of drinks and energy bars, it becomes the ideal tool for the repair and growth of muscle tissue.

The creators certainly talk a fine scientific game but the company put its money where its mouth is by sending a batch of its latest concoction to *Soldier* HQ for testing.

Lt Rob Taylor (3 Yorks) happily accepted the Iso Complex challenge and has been using the supplement in his regular training programme over the past month.

"I think it is a very good product," the officer declared. "I was using it twice a day, for recovery after fitness training in the morning and after weights in the afternoon. I have found it to be really beneficial.

"It mixes together very well, you don't need to add loads of water so it doesn't leave you feeling bloated afterwards.

"I primarily used it for weight training as I play rugby, but it also goes well with the fitness work I have to do. I have never used this before. I had the French vanilla flavour, which normally I'm not very keen on, but this tasted great.

"I will definitely try it again. I have been using it twice a day and it has lasted a long time so it gives great value for money."

And value for money it certainly does offer. The 2.25kg tub costs £40, meaning each of the 75 servings costs just 53p.

With *Soldier*'s willing volunteer singing its praises, Multipower appears to have found a winning formula.

But it's not just serving personnel who are seeing the advantages.

The company is the official sports food and drink supplier to many elite athletes and teams, including Yorkshire County Cricket Club, Castleford Tigers and Cardiff Devils, while Premiership football team Wolverhampton Wanderers also endorses the range.

David Hannah, managing director of Multipower UK, said: "Not long ago, protein shakes were seen as the exclusive preserve of the bodybuilding community; but that has definitely all changed now.

"Anyone who plays sport to a decent level and trains in order to play that sport stands to enhance their performance by incorporating sports nutrition into their regime.

"Protein is a staple for any training programme and with Whey Protein Iso Complex we've got a first-class product which will meet any performance athlete's requirements."

● The full range of Multipower energy bars, drinks, powders, gels and tablets are available online at [www.multipoweruk.com](http://www.multipoweruk.com) ■

**From long-distance runners to magnetic marvels, we check out the latest health and fitness gear...**

### Win... Optimum Nutrition pack

FOUNDED in 1987 with a mission to provide award-winning sports energy products, Optimum Nutrition (ON) has become one of the heavy hitters of the industry. Its Gold Standard 100 per cent Whey and Casein have won particular acclaim for their ability to help the body grow and recover before, during and after workouts. We have teamed up with the company to offer one reader an ON T-shirt, gym bag, drinks bottle and protein pack. To enter, tell us when ON was formed. Answers on a postcard or to [comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk) by October 29.

[www.optimumnutrition.com/uk](http://www.optimumnutrition.com/uk)



### Science in Sport Energy Pack

WHILE there are plenty of products on the market for anyone looking to bulk up, there are fewer options available tailored specifically for endurance athletes. Science in Sport spotted the gap in the market and has done a great job in filling it with its range of energy products. From gels to prepare sportsmen and women for action to recovery shakes and protein drinks, the selection tested by *Soldier* provided a noticeable boost during long runs. In addition, the variety of flavours for each product were perfectly palatable and easy to digest.

[www.top-of-the-range.co.uk](http://www.top-of-the-range.co.uk)



### Trion:Z band

THE use of magnetic therapy to improve blood flow and oxygen to areas of injury is nothing new, but the availability of products such as the Trion:Z band has brought it firmly into the mainstream.

Using 1,000 Gauss magnets, the band is configured to optimise the magnetic flow and release negative ions which, the makers claim, can improve the wearer's energy and mood. Available in a range of colours, including desert camouflage, the Trion:Z is also available with a Help for Heroes logo, with a percentage of all sales going to the Services charity.

[www.trionz.co.uk](http://www.trionz.co.uk)







**Ahead of the game:** Multipower's Whey Iso Protein Complex has been designed to help people juggle training needs with the pressures of everyday life

### Win... Multipower Sportsfood

THE Whey Protein Iso Complex has been billed as Multipower's best-ever supplement. The formula is designed to complement increasingly hectic lifestyles and training programmes and comes in four delicious flavours. Multipower has teamed up with *Soldier* to offer three lucky readers a chance to win a 2.25kg tub of its latest product. To be in with a chance of winning one, answer this question: How many flavours of Whey Protein Iso Complex are there? Answers on a postcard to the usual address or by email to [comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk](mailto:comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk) by October 29.

[www.multipoweruk.com](http://www.multipoweruk.com)



### UK Gear PT-1000

HAILED as the first running shoe capable of covering 1,000 miles of hard graft, the PT-1000 is definitely built to last. Developed in conjunction with the Army Physical Training Corps, these trainers offer supreme comfort and support for the most arduous of runs. As with any new shoes they take some breaking in, but once that initial hurdle is overcome they prove their worth as reliable allies on both the treadmill and tarmac. The £95 price tag may raise a few eyebrows, but when you consider the longevity of the product it must surely be money well spent.

[www.ukgear.com](http://www.ukgear.com)



### UnderArmour Coldgear

WITH the temperature in the UK rapidly dropping after another hit-and-miss summer, those who like to spend time outdoors are again looking for ways to keep warm. UnderArmour has long been a favoured solution for sportsmen and women in the winter months and their latest leggings and crew top look set to continue that trend. Made from anti-microbial, double-knit fabric, the garments serve as a next-to-the-skin layer to keep wearers warm, dry and comfortable. The top, which is available in Army-friendly olive and tan colours, also does a first-class job in keeping out the wind.

[www.top-of-the-range.co.uk](http://www.top-of-the-range.co.uk)







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*Life is out there...*



# SOLDIERSPORT

Picture: Graeme Main

**TOP OF THE LEAGUE:** RUGBY STARS CELEBRATE QUADRUPLE SUCCESS IN INTER-SERVICES GRAND SLAM

ALSO IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE...



P98 **SAILING**  
YACHTSMEN IN  
ROUND BRITAIN RACE



P101 **WAKEBOARDING**  
SERVICE RIDERS TAKE  
TOP SPOT



P103 **RUGBY**  
ARMY STAR AIMS FOR  
GAMES GLORY



P105 **FOOTBALL**  
YOUNG LIONS MEET  
FORCES HEROES





# HISTORY MAKERS

Service Rugby League players put their Armed Forces rivals firmly to the sword by claiming the tournament's first ever clean sweep

**Report: Richard Long**  
**Pictures: Graeme Main**

**A**RM Y Rugby League players have celebrated an unprecedented season of success that culminated in total domination of the 2010 Inter-Services competitions.

The men's, women's, academy and veterans' teams all emerged unbeaten from their clashes with the Royal Air Force and Royal Navy to complete a grand slam of titles for the Reds.

Victory for the men's side ended a barren seven-year spell without silverware and their campaign was characterised by dynamic attacking play that was too strong for their rivals.

Speaking at the end of a terrific season, a thrilled Army Rugby League secretary Capt Dave Groce (RLC) told *SoldierSport*: "To see all our sides win in such an enigmatic way, to totally dominate the other Services, has been awe-inspiring.

"We have waited seven years to regain the title and our strength in depth bodes well for the future.

"The RAF and Navy may now find themselves waiting a long time to get their hands on these crowns."

The men's campaign started with a 16-10 win over the Navy in what proved to be a hard-fought match at Aldershot's Army Rugby Stadium.

Defensive play dominated the first half and an exchange of penalties saw the score tied at 2-2 at the interval.

The electrifying Kgn Seb Yabia

(2 Lincs) broke the shackles within minutes of the restart as the flying winger collected a pass from Tpr Isaia Bobo (QDG) to charge to the line.

The Navy hit back just moments later, but instead of building on the momentum they inexplicably handed the advantage to the home team.

A knock-on near the try line was ruthlessly pounced upon by replacement 2nd Lt Tom Howley (22 Sig Regt), who had the simple task of powering home from a matter of yards.

Centre LCpl Mojee Matau (25 Engr Regt) extended the lead with a try in the left corner before the visitors reduced the arrears with a fine score following a clever chip over the Army's defensive line.

With the Navy defeating the RAF a week later, the Reds travelled to Cranwell knowing a point would be enough to secure the Services crown.

However, the champions elect had no intention of playing for a draw as they coasted to a superb 36-8 win.

Yabia proved to be the star of the show with two tries, the second of which saw him sprint the length of the pitch to cap a sensational individual showing in this year's tournament.

Dual code stars LCpl Joe Kava (RLC) and Spr Gus Qasevakatini (RE) were also among the points as the Army simply overpowered their hosts.

Reflecting on his team's achievement, head coach Capt Andy Sanger (RE) said: "I've done some amazing things throughout my rugby career, both as a

## INTER-SERVICES RUGBY LEAGUE 2010

### Army vs Royal Navy (Aldershot)

Army Veterans 40 – 16 Navy Veterans  
Army Academy 36 – 12 Navy Academy  
Army Women 72 – 8 Navy Women  
Army Men 16 – 10 Navy Men

### Royal Navy vs Royal Air Force (Portsmouth)

Navy Veterans 12 – 32 RAF Veterans  
Navy Academy 16 – 12 RAF Academy

Navy Women 14 – 10 RAF Women  
Navy Men 8 – 4 RAF Men

### Royal Air Force vs Army (Cranwell)

RAF Veterans 6 – 58 Army Veterans  
RAF Academy 16 – 40 Army Academy  
RAF Women – Army Women (RAF forfeited match)  
RAF Men 8 – 36 Army Men

Army win all four Inter-Services titles







player and coach, but this is probably the most special.

"To have worked with a group of lads who have been so dedicated, selfless and courageous purely because of their love of the game and their immense team spirit is truly humbling."

Team manager Maj Mick Scholes (RE) added: "I have waited seven years for this moment and it is sweeter than I ever imagined, who could predict we would win so convincingly?"

"To win by total domination, and not lose a match, is the only way to win in this competition."

"We set out to destroy the opposition and win comfortably. That is exactly what we have done."

The women ran in 13 tries on the way to a thumping 72-8 win over the Navy in their opening match.

Powerful forward play laid the foundations for victory as the Reds ruthlessly converted chance after chance to pile on the points.

With confidence clearly high they were hoping for a repeat performance against the RAF. However, the hosts forfeited the match after the loss of some key forwards meant they were unable to field a side.

The academy squad followed their 36-12 win over the Navy with a 40-16 thrashing of the RAF, while the veterans won 40-16 and 58-6 in their respective matches. ■

**Clockwise from left, Hard hitter:** LCpl Joe Kava (RLC) smashes his way through the Royal Navy defence in the Army's 16-10 win at Aldershot; **Hand off:** The Army women ran in 13 tries in a one-sided encounter with the Navy; **On the attack:** Superb offensive play from the Reds helped end a seven-year wait for silverware





On the crest of a wave: The *British Soldier* crew get ready for action in the Sevenstar Round Britain and Ireland Race, the final event of a hectic season

# Yachtsmen in race to podium

Report: Richard Long  
Pictures: Graeme Main

**A**RMY sailors have capped a tremendous season at sea by finishing second in the 2010 Royal Ocean Racing Club (RORC) championship rankings.

The *British Soldier* crew excelled in a field of 287 yachts and only trailed the Dutch vessel *Tonnerre de Breskens 3* in the overall standings.

A gruelling campaign saw personnel testing their skills in a series of events, the latest of which had them battling high winds and daunting seas in the Sevenstar Round Britain and Ireland Race.

Setting sail from Cowes, the crew completed its course in 12 days, 14 hours and 19 minutes, an effort that saw them finish first in their class, almost three hours ahead of their nearest rivals.

Once the handicap rating was applied the sailors were named in second place, a result that also guaranteed runners-up spot in the IRC one class, a competition that boasted 52 entries.

*SoldierSport* visited the team in the

build-up to the final race and skipper Lt Col Tim Hill (Scots) explained how his crew had achieved some fantastic results in what had been a difficult campaign at sea.

"They have performed really well," he said. "With the pressure of ops and work commitments we have not had a dedicated crew for the whole series.

"We have had a lot of different guys racing, up to 50 soldiers over the season, and that has been great in terms of developing their skills.

"We have been aiming for a podium finish overall. The best we have managed in class one is third so to potentially finish second is a wonderful achievement."

The RORC season is among the world's most competitive yacht racing series and is a truly international event in terms of the crews it attracts.

The Sevenstar Round Britain and Ireland Race proved to be one of the most thrilling competitions on the calendar and there was no shortage of drama, even before the event started.

Weather forecasts revealed that a

potentially boat-breaking low depression would hit the Irish coast as the vast fleet sailed through, conditions that would leave the vessels with nowhere to run.

**'It is a tough and long race but this is what I think it is all about for the Army crew'**





# A season of nautical success



ARMY sailors onboard the Fujitsu-sponsored *British Soldier* finished second in the overall standings of the 2010 Royal Ocean Racing Club (RORC) Main Series.

The crew amassed 662.6 points during their campaign and were beaten by the Dutch yacht *Tonnerre de Breskens 3*, which finished with an impressive haul of 820 points.

The Service stars competed in nine race events, scoring the following points in each:

**Cervantes Trophy Race** – 62 points

**North Sea Race** – 88.8 points

**Myth of Malham Race** – 10 points

**East Coast Race** – 92 points

**Morgan Cup Race** – 66 points

**Round Ireland Race** – 120.4 points

**Cowes-Dinard-St Marlo Race** – 45 points

**Channel Race** – 72 points

**Round Britain and Ireland Race** – 106.4 points



To avoid the extreme weather organisers decided to reverse the route and race anti-clockwise around Britain and Ireland.

Such races are designed to push sailors to the very limit and Hill explained how the campaign finale provided one of the sternest tests so far.

"The Round Britain and Ireland Race is 1,800 miles," he said. "It is smaller in distance to the Atlantic crossing but it is a much more challenging and demanding course."

"You are inshore at night, you have to negotiate the Dover and Harwich shipping lanes and then there is the Channel itself. You also follow a 60 degree course north, which is further north than Cape Horn is south."

"It is a tough and long race but this is what I think it is all about for the Army crew. We are at sea for 11 or 12 days and it is a fantastic challenge."

OCdt Lyndall Lohman (pictured above right) started sailing when she joined the Service seven years ago and is thrilled to be part of a successful crew.

She said: "I got on the team last year. It [sailing] is something I always wanted to do. I did a little bit when I was in the cadets and my first posting was in Gosport so it went from there."

"Unfortunately this season I have only done one race. I have just finished my first term at Sandhurst but I was part of the crew last year and they have done really well."

"To be involved in this event is fantastic. It is one of the most

challenging races I have done so far, especially when you consider the weather we face."

Fellow sailor OCdt Tom Barker (pictured above left) told *SoldierSport* the crew built on some early setbacks to mount its challenge and was pleased to see such efforts paying off.

He added: "We were hoping for a top three finish based on our results last year so we are very happy."

"I have been involved in three or four offshore races on this boat. It has been a good season with some great results."

"This is the longest RORC race I have taken part in and I have been looking forward to it with a great deal of anticipation."

"It is very hard. Racing is very similar to what we do in the Army, we are onboard for long periods of time and there is massive sleep deprivation."

The fact the Army has managed to challenge in the upper echelons of the championship reflects the sport's strength in depth and Hill believes there is a bright future ahead.

"It is in a healthy position but we are always on the look out for new talent," he said.

"With the challenges of ops and work it is difficult. In the old days we had a crew that could push the boat hard and take up different challenges. We do not have that luxury any more."

"For this race one of our crew could not get back from Afghanistan, he was required to remain in theatre. That reflects the nature of where we are." ■

## SOLDIERS AT SEA



**Rough seas:** The Round Britain and Ireland Race proved to be one of the most thrilling sailing events of recent years. A potentially boat-breaking low depression was predicted to hit the west coast of Ireland when the majority of the fleet would be passing by so organisers reversed the 1,802-mile course



**Wave rider:** The Army took delivery of *British Soldier* for the start of the 2008 season and it is one of the first A40RCs to be seen on the UK circuit. She is 11.95m long and is constructed of resin-injected fibreglass. Fitted with twin wheels, she is equally capable of upwind and downwind sailing





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# Dynamic duo hit top form

Report: Richard Long  
Picture: Graeme Main

**S**ENASATIONAL performances from big guns 2nd Lt Kieran Taheny (AAC) and Cpl Dale Crossley (RE) steered the Army to glory at the Inter-Services wakeboarding championships.

The skilled duo topped the rankings at Box End Park in Bedford as the six-man Service team triumphed over the Royal Air Force in the two-day competition.

Former national champion Taheny was in inspired form, winning the boat stage and finishing second in the cable to take the overall title, while Crossley gave a superb showing in what was only his second Inter-Services.

The sapper won the cable discipline after pushing himself to the limit in two challenging rides, much to the delight of team captain SSgt Mark Tillett (REME).

"Dale has been posted back to the UK and he has been down at Thorpe Park every day smashing himself about. He has made fantastic progress," he told *SoldierSport*.

"Kieran is way out in front of everyone. He got commissioned last year and was going through Sandhurst when the Inter-Services competition took place.

"He is now on his pilots' course and we managed to pull a few favours to get him here.

"We put him straight into the team and it has made a big difference to the way we have performed.

"On the whole it was a convincing Army win."

As a former Great Britain rider there was a certain weight of expectation on Taheny (pictured below).

But the officer suffered a major setback in the opening cable ride, when he inexplicably lost control and crashed.

"I made a pretty big mistake on my first run which piled the pressure on," he said. "I had to put a safe second run together to make sure I scored points for the team.

"Coming second in the cable was a shock to the system considering the level I ride at, but it can happen and you are judged on your performance on the water.

"Thankfully the second run went okay and it feels pretty good to be Inter-Services champion."

With established riders Capt Kerry Gospel (RLC) and Sgt Gav Groves (RA) both missing this year, Tillett was pleased to see some new faces joining the sport's growing ranks.

LCpl Adam Miklewski (REME) only started wakeboarding in June and an encouraging debut performance yielded welcome points for his team.

Newcomer Cpl Johnny Walker (RE) finished fifth overall while Sgt Simon Tomkinson (RA) gave a strong showing in the cable to help him secure sixth place.

Tillett said: "A lot of our regulars were not available due to courses and other commitments so it was down to the newer guys, as well as the likes of Kieran and Dale.

"The riders who came in did really well, they stepped up to the mark and they didn't disappoint.

"The RAF are not lying down, each year they get better and better so we have to push ourselves further if we want to stay on top.

"We have got a few guys coming through and the future looks really bright for Army wakeboarding." ■







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# On the medal trail

## SPORT SHORTS

Picture and interviews: Roger Thompson

**S**EVENS powerhouse Pte Isoa Damudamu (RLC) is hoping for a golden return to action after being named in the England squad for this month's Commonwealth Games.

The Fijian-born forward has suffered his fair share of injury setbacks in recent times, but with his fitness now firmly back on track he is determined to make up for lost time.

National coach Ben Ryan has described the Service star as "England's architect" and believes Damudamu can inspire his team to the gold medal in Delhi.

He said: "He sees the big picture, much more than other international Sevens players and he can react quicker."

"He makes the right decisions, alongside skipper Ben Gollings, and with those two in tandem England climb from a good team with hope, to

a very good team with a definite chance of a gold medal."

Damudamu has followed the modern trend of many specialist Sevens players and is not part of the senior England Rugby Union scene.

The squad has been training at Bisham Abbey ahead of the Games and the intense sessions have been a welcome bonus for the Army man following his long lay off.

"Recovery and rehab at Headley Court was brilliant," he said. "All the parts work and the training confirmed that I have never been fitter."

"Being selected for the Commonwealth Games is great.

It is the best sign that I am fit again. I have so many people to thank for that and I hope I can show my gratitude by bringing the gold medal back to England.

"My only regret is that we will not be playing against Fiji, who are no longer members of the Commonwealth club. Going up against the players I knew from school is always exciting and they will be missed."



## Endurance ace hits record books

**C**APT Barry Stoddart (APTC) has been officially confirmed as a Guinness world record holder following his outstanding achievement in this year's Fleet Half Marathon.

The long-distance athlete ran the race in full military clothing while carrying a 40lb Bergen, completing the course in 1hr 44min 52sec.

His time smashed the existing record for such a feat by 14 minutes and the officer recently received an authenticated certificate to confirm his entry in the *Guinness Book of World Records*.

Stoddart was running in memory of his friend Sgt Jonno Johnson (2 Yorks), who was killed in Afghanistan in 2007, and his record attempt also raised £8,000 for ABF The Soldiers' Charity.

He said: "I chose to raise money for the ABF because of the support Sgt Johnson's family received at the time of his death."



NEWBURY Racecourse will be offering free admission to military personnel as part of its annual Armed Forces Day on October 23.

The event will be raising money for The Royal British Legion (RBL) and will also mark the launch of the Berkshire Poppy Appeal.

Soldiers will receive free entry to the Premier Enclosure and discounted rates will be available at the course's two panoramic restaurants and private boxes.

Bomb disposal expert WO2 James Avent (RLC), who conducted in excess of 100 tasks and rendered more than 40 IEDs safe on his last tour of Afghanistan, will be guest of honour for the day.

Joint managing director of Newbury Racecourse Stephen Higgins said: "In 2009 we welcomed nearly 1,500 military personnel and RBL members for free to this fixture and this year we hope even more will take up this offer and come and enjoy a great day of sport."

"The RBL is a vital cause providing welfare to Armed Forces personnel and their families and we are very proud to be lending our support to them."

To reserve your free tickets, and to take advantage of the various discount rates, call 01635 40015 quoting your military ID number or Royal British Legion membership number.

**INFANTRY polo players triumphed in the first-ever Honourable Artillery Company (HAC) 105 Cup match at Surrey's Ham House.**

The HAC side was drawn entirely from the ranks and gave a strong showing against a scratch team that had never played together before.

A final score of 6-4 to the Infantry was testament to both squads as the players performed well above their level to help raise money for the HAC Benevolent Fund.

ARMY fighters will lock horns with their rivals from the London Amateur Boxing Association next month in a contest being billed as "The Battle of Stamford Bridge".

The evening is being staged in the Great Hall at Chelsea Football Club to raise money for The Royal British Legion and sporting opportunities within the Army.

Musicians from the Band of the Grenadier Guards and 19 Regiment Royal Artillery will also be providing entertainment at the black tie event, which is being held on November 11.

To book a table call 0845 9011447.

**SKILLED scuba-divers Chris Sirett and Mark Bruce will be plunging into the water this month in a unique fund-raising event in support of Commando 999 and Help for Heroes.**

The daring duo will be attempting an eight-hour, non-stop static underwater cycle ride at the Wraybury Dive Centre in Middlesex.

The challenge takes place on October 9 and donations can be made at [www.bmycharity.com/tourdescuba](http://www.bmycharity.com/tourdescuba) and [www.bmycharity.com/chriss](http://www.bmycharity.com/chriss)



## SPORT SHORTS

**ATHLETE** SSgt Stanley Boyle (2 RTR) will battle temperatures as low as -45 degrees when he competes in next year's Yukon Arctic Ultra event.

The Canadian race is billed as one of the toughest challenges in the world and entrants complete 26-, 100-, 300- and 430-mile disciplines on foot, mountain bike or skis.

Boyle will take part in the 100-mile event on foot and hopes to raise £4,500 for Help for Heroes.

The race starts on February 6 and donations can be made at [www.justgiving.com/stan-boyle-YAU](http://www.justgiving.com/stan-boyle-YAU)

A TEAM of serving and former military personnel will embark on a 3,000km cycle ride from London to Gibraltar this month to raise money for Help for Heroes.

Ex-soldier Gareth Goffin will lead the cyclists, who leave Trafalgar Square on October 13 with the intention of arriving at the island's Trafalgar Sports Bar eight days later.

To support the team in their challenge visit [www.justgiving.com/TT-Challenge](http://www.justgiving.com/TT-Challenge)

**ENDURANCE** athlete Capt Wes Hughes (2 RGR) will travel to Hawaii this month to compete in the gruelling Ironman World Championships.

The officer qualified following a superb performance at the Ironman Malaysia event earlier this year.

Capt Thomas Rose and Capt Kit Kyte (both 2 RGR) competed alongside Hughes in the race in Asia, raising more than £50,000 for Help for Heroes and The Gurkha Welfare Trust.

**TA SOLDIER** Cpl David Holdsworth (RLC) will be racing through the Amazon rainforest this month as he competes in the 2010 Jungle Marathon in Brazil.

The ultra-fit member of 152 Transport Regiment will follow a 220km route that is expected to take six days to complete.

Holdsworth is raising money for Help for Heroes and donations can be made at [www.justgiving.com/Davesjunglerun](http://www.justgiving.com/Davesjunglerun)

Capt Brett Bader (RA) is also taking part in the Jungle Marathon challenge.

The event is the wettest ultra marathon on the planet and the officer is raising money for Help for Heroes.

Donations can be made at [www.justgiving.com/Brett-Bader](http://www.justgiving.com/Brett-Bader)

**DARTS** player Sgt Darryl Hoey (4 RA) tasted success in the inaugural Rileys Camp Bastion Challenge.

The cue sports operator sent darts, flights and trophies to theatre for the competition and all entrants will receive a free pint and free membership at a Rileys club when they return home.

Hoey said: "The Rileys Challenge has been a great morale-booster for the lads out here. The competition has been top fun."



Picture: Mike Weston

THE Defence School of Transport (DST) suffered a heavy defeat in their first-ever major units cricket final at Aldershot. After winning the toss and bowling first, the soldiers from Leconfield were put to the sword by a merciless Pilgrims batting line-up that smashed a daunting 288-4 from 40 overs. Cpl Stew Jackson led the charge for last year's beaten finalists, scoring a sublime 115no as the Hereford-based team took firm control of the match. The DST batsmen struggled in response as the Pilgrims bowlers wreaked havoc with a succession of devastating deliveries. Openers WO2 Al Wilde and Pte Sunny Sunuwar (pictured above) fell early on and their dismissals set the tone for a disappointing innings that crumbled to a meagre 46 all out from just 19 overs.

## Gliding star flies high

**A**IRBORNE ace Maj Allan Tribe (REME) has celebrated success at the Club Class National Gliding Championships.

The aircraft engineer triumphed over 45 other entrants in five days of competitive flying in the skies above south Leicestershire.

Tribe secured the title following a tense final task in which the officer had to better the second place pilot by 25 minutes to guarantee his victory.

After completing a solid flight he heard confirmation that his nearest rival had landed in a field, a result that meant he was champion.

"I am thrilled to have won this competition," the Army gliding team captain (pictured) said.

"The standard of opposition was very high this year and I was competing against previous British team members.

"I am extremely grateful to the Army Gliding Association for their

support over many years, they have really helped me develop as a competition pilot.

"I am now looking forward to representing Britain in the European Championships in Slovakia next year."

Pilots tackled courses of between 120km and 300km with the points from each race being aggregated over the week to decide the overall champion.

The competitor who used the weather to get round the course in the fastest time got the most points and those who did not finish, normally landing in a field, scored less on the distance flown.

The sport is a test of navigation, endurance, concentration, stamina and the pilot's ability to extract the most energy from the atmosphere.

Tribe has been gliding since the age of 16 and he flies at the Army Wyvern Gliding Club at Upavon, where he is also an instructor.





# Army inspire young guns

**S**TUART Pearce and players from the England Under 21 squad were given a taste of life at Colchester Garrison ahead of their clash with Lithuania last month.

The footballers were guests of 16 Air Assault Brigade, who showed them an array of weapons and vehicles as well as the Army Challenge Cup, which was won this year by 2 Para.

In return, the England team gave the troops autographed footballs to keep up their skills and morale when they deploy to Afghanistan on Op Herrick 13.

Head coach Pearce said: "I am a great personal supporter of our Armed Forces and the brave work they do for their country, as is The Football

Association as a whole.

"I think it is really important that our young players get to see life from different viewpoints.

"Some of the soldiers at the garrison were as young as these players and if we can show them our appreciation, then it's an opportunity we should definitely take."

The troops also had the chance to see the young footballers in action at Colchester United's Weston Homes Community Stadium.

England cruised to a comfortable 3-0 win with Sunderland FC sharpshooter Danny Welbeck (pictured right) scoring twice.



Picture: Cpl Rupert Frere, RLC

# Reds shine in narrow loss

**F**INE goal-scoring performances from the Army's hockey stars failed to inspire the Combined Services to victory over National Conference side Guildford.

The military men made a frenetic start to the match as they carried the attack to their opponents with a concerted spell of early pressure.

Their efforts were rewarded when 2nd Lt Josh Tester forced a short corner that was converted by Royal Air Force teammate Cpl Scott Beach, who had the simple task of flicking the ball into the left corner to open the scoring.

A second goal followed courtesy of LCpl Shane Vincent and when Army ace Tester slotted a third the Combined Services looked to be in firm control.

But the home side rallied and three quick strikes saw them draw level before SAC James Havlin restored the lead.

The forward capitalised on a rebound from the Guildford goalkeeper to calmly slip the ball past the hapless defender on the line to establish a narrow 4-3 advantage at the interval.

However, the hosts took control early in the second period courtesy of two goals without reply

and when Maj Craig Pope picked up a yellow card and a five-minute suspension for some tough tackling, the Forces' team was struggling badly.

Guildford scored again from a quick break to open a 6-4 lead but some

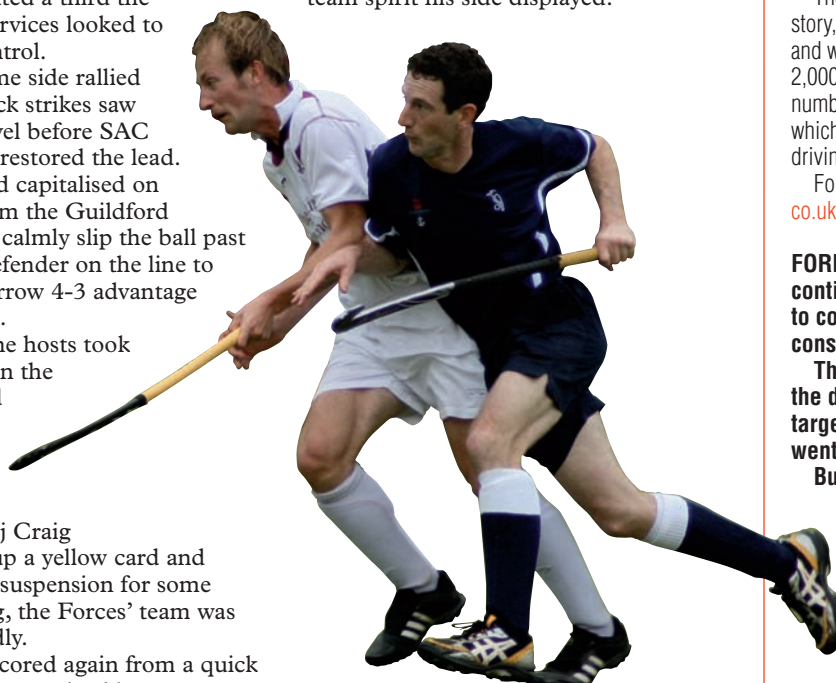
impressive play from Maj Guy Fordham (pictured below in blue) brought the visitors back into contention.

The former Great Britain international chipped the ball over the diving keeper and into the net.

With momentum on their side, the Services continued on the front foot and they were unlucky not to be awarded a short corner at the death.

But with time ticking down the Conference side managed to hold out for the win.

Combined Services matches have become a rare occurrence due to operational commitments but skipper Havlin was delighted with the excellent team spirit his side displayed.



## SPORT SHORTS

**THE** London District TA and Army Boxing Club has honoured former world welterweight champion Lloyd Honeyghan for his amazing support over the past year.

A special award was presented to the 50-year-old fighter during an evening of celebration at Grove Park for soldiers from 106 (Yeomanry) Regiment, Royal Artillery.

Honeyghan has attended numerous fund-raising events throughout the past year and was overwhelmed at receiving the award.

THE Help for Heroes European 4x4 Rally will return in 2011 following a hugely successful first year which raised a staggering £121,000 for the charity.

The event follows the path, and tells the story, of the Allied invasion through Europe and will start in Wiltshire on June 18. The 2,000-mile expedition passes through a number of countries over a period of 11 days, which includes a military history tour, off-road driving and other activities.

For more information visit [www.h4hrally.co.uk](http://www.h4hrally.co.uk) or email [info@h4hrally.co.uk](mailto:info@h4hrally.co.uk)

**FORMER** soldier Mike Buss has continued his record-breaking quest to complete 100 marathons in 100 consecutive days.

The runner, who has been covering the distances on a treadmill, was on target to reach his goal as this issue went to press.

Buss smashed his way into the record books for the 12th time this year when he completed his 51st consecutive marathon and he is hoping to raise £100,000 for Help for Heroes.

Donations can be made online at [www.justgiving.com/mikes-worldrecords](http://www.justgiving.com/mikes-worldrecords)



# final word



**We asked personnel from 16 Air Assault Brigade about their Herrick training and their thoughts on operating in Helmand ahead of this month's deployment**

INTERVIEWS: RICHARD LONG  
PICTURES: STEVE DOCK



**LCpl Ryan Libby (2 Para)**

We have done a lot of driver training on Husky, Mastiff and Jackal as well as getting people ready for the tour. We have done low-level preparation through to the final training exercise (FTX) and tactical engagement simulation exercise phase. It is preparing us well. I deployed on the brigade's last Herrick tour and some parts of the training are new.



**Cpl Donald Todd (5 Scots)**

The vehicle training was kind of last minute but the guys have been on a lot of courses, including commander and top gunner training as well as day and night drives. I am quite excited about the tour as I will be the CO's bodyguard. I've not worked with the Afghans before and I'm looking forward to seeing how they operate and how things are run from above.



**Pte Keith Dalton (5 Scots)**

I'm in the Pipes and Drums machine gun platoon. We have done lots of live firing and I've come back for more vehicles and weapons training. It has been really interesting and beneficial to what we will be doing out there. I was on Herrick 8 and this time I think we have got a better chance of getting on with the job and the people as we know how to use the kit better.



**Sgt Mark Blaney (QARANC)**

We have been working on a variety of exercises and have been practising fieldwork and medical skills. All our medical people have been through advanced trauma and life support courses. We have studied every aspect of medical care including environmental health issues and tropical medical courses. We have good access to lots of great lecturers and surgeons.



**Rgr Mathew Monaghan (R Irish)**

We have done live firing with the .50 calibre machine guns and the GPMG as well as driver training with Mastiff, Ridgback and Springer. The training has been good and the boys are ready to go. This will be my first time in Afghanistan and I am looking forward to getting out on the ground. I hope to step up at some time as a 2iC and when I get back I want to do my junior NCO cadre.



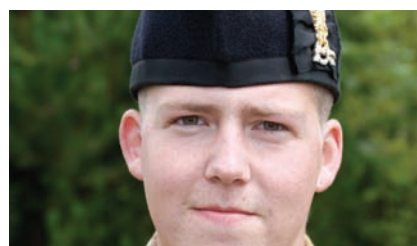
**LCpl Robin McDowell (R Irish)**

The training has been good. We have done a lot of vehicle work in the lead up to the tour and on the FTX at Salisbury Plain there was lots of sleep deprivation for the boys on patrol, which is something they have to get used to. We have got the live firing package to come and I have heard that it is very good. This will be my third deployment to Afghanistan.



**Fus Mark White (2 Scots)**

We have done six months training and it has been going really well. The lads are well trained and they seem ready to go. The kit is amazing, we cannot argue with it. This is my first deployment and I am looking forward to getting some operational experience behind me. I want to get out there, do my job and put the training we have done into practice.



**Pte Kristofer McGurk (5 Scots)**

I only came out of the training establishment in December so this is all new to me. I have done a full exercise in Salisbury and I deployed to Kenya for six weeks. I have been practising my role as a heavy machine gunner and learning my job to the full. We are going to Afghanistan and I thought the heat and ground in Kenya was very realistic to conditions on Herrick.





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