

SOLDIER

MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY

DECEMBER 2017

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I PREDICT A

RIOT

Public order drills put personnel to test

**LIGHTNING
STRIKES
ON THE PLAIN**

**WHAT'S THAT
FESTIVE DRINK
DOING TO
YOUR BODY?**

**ARMY SPORTS
AWARDS
RESULTS IN**



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**ARMY
MEDIATION
SERVICE**

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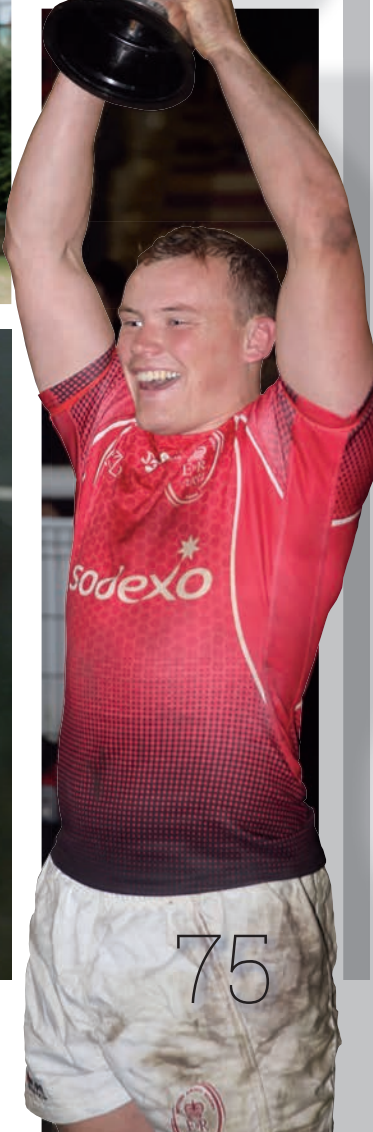
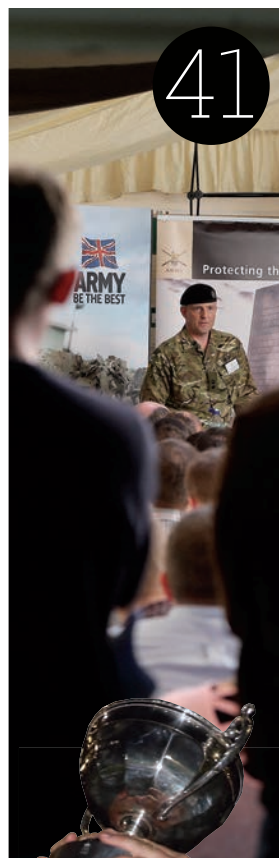
“

We'll always be **working alongside** the **French, Polish,** or **another partner,** so that's why **interoperability training** like this is so important

”

Lightning strikes – pages 28-31





Season's greetings



THE last 12 months have seen our readers face some varied and complex challenges.

But from Operation Shader to South Sudan, the Belizean jungle to Bavaria, it has also brought more than its fair share of adrenalin highs.

Taking the rough with the smooth seems to be what our inspiring readers are about.

And as ever, we have tried to reflect that fact in your final magazine of the year, where your questions and gripes (page 49) hold as much weight as the features exploring what it means to serve Queen and country.

If your latest exercise or worry is not being represented on these pages please make it your new year's resolution to put that right.

We are part of Army Media and Communications, which means that you don't need permission to contact us. Turn to page 7 for our full details.

Finally, from the whole team at *Soldier* HQ, we hope that you have a very merry Christmas – wherever in the world you may be.

Sarah Goldthorpe • Editor

Where to find *Soldier*

> Printed copies

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

> Facebook, Twitter and Instagram

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

> Online

DIGITAL versions of current and past editions are available on the Army website at www.soldiermagazine.co.uk. Just click on the "read it now" tab.

> Purchase

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



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Warrior upgrade begins

THE trials of a new Warrior incarnation are poised to begin soon as an initiative to bring a step-change to its capability reaches a crucial stage.

The integration of a new and more advanced turret to the armoured fighting vehicle's existing body will be completed shortly, ahead of forthcoming reliability testing.

The assessments are part of the Warrior Capability Sustainment Project, which is included in the Armoured Infantry 2026 Programme, and a raft of enhancements are due to be introduced to the vehicle, to be known as Warrior 2.

The turret will be armed with a stabilised CT40 cannon – allowing fire on the move – an uprated sighting

system and modular protection for quick fitting of different armour types.

One by-product of the new design is that interior space has been de-cluttered, significantly improving comfort for the crew.

Lockheed Martin, which has been carrying out the work, said the changes represented a "significant upgrade" to the vehicle and its effectiveness on the battlefield.

Graeme Myers, director of the Warrior programme at the defence contractor, added: "We have a standard series of exercises for these trials at Bovington – they are being carried out between the Army and us.

"The aim is to build evidence and drive out any defects as early as possible in the process."

“
The aim is to
drive out any
defects
”

SOLDIER

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ARMY

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

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Sapper recognised for revolutionary relief work

A MEMBER of the Royal Engineers has received a top prize for his work during disaster relief operations in Nepal.

WO2 Ram Kumar Rai was named the Institution of Engineering and Technology's Armed Forces Technician of the Year for his contribution following the earthquake in 2015.

He developed a shelter design based on the materials supplied in aid packs, which could be rapidly erected using basic trade skills.

The senior NCO also helped develop

the design for an earthquake-resistant stone and reinforced concrete home using local construction techniques.

"Winning this award means so much to me on both a personal and professional level," WO2 Rai said.

"My parents sacrificed a lot to send me to a proper school in my native Nepal, which eventually allowed me to train as a technician in the Army.

"To have my achievements recognised by such an important industry body is a huge honour."



GLOBAL SITREP

1. ICELAND

EXPERTS MAKE THEIR MARK

BRITISH personnel travelled to Iceland to lend their know-how to the world's largest gathering of bomb disposal experts.

Exercise Northern Challenge, a regular Nato package, saw a series of complex IEDs constructed on site to give realistic training to troops from 15 nations, among them 15 soldiers from the Royal Logistic Corps, Royal Engineers and Intelligence Corps.

WO1 Andy Bannister (RLC) commented: "There's lots of learning to be done and although we're all achieving the same aim, the route one team goes to get to the solution in a particular task might be completely different."



Picture: Nato

2. SOUTH SUDAN

UK COMMITS TO MORE SUPPORT

THE UK is extending its deployment of more than 300 sappers to South Sudan by a year.

Making the announcement at a UN conference in Vancouver, defence minister Lord Howe said the extension until April 2020 was a demonstration of Britain's unwavering commitment to international peace and security.

Personnel have been in the country providing infrastructure and medical support since June 2016.

They are currently cooperating closely with Vietnam's first contingent of UN troops, as they prepare to take over the running of a field hospital in Bentiu from the UK next year.



“There’s times when you’re in swamps up to your waist”

Serviceman recalls deployment to Estonia – page 33

3. BOSNIA

KEEPING THE PEACE

TROOPS from 2nd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment are standing by to provide rapid reinforcement to the Balkans.

Having been put through their paces in public order and patrolling disciplines at Lydd Ranges in Kent (below), the soldiers are ready for deployment to Bosnia on Operation Elgin – if the security situation deteriorates.

Commanding officer Lt Col Duncan Mann said his troops were well prepared to back up European Union Force peacekeepers.

"We are ready if called on, and I am confident that the skills, maturity and flexibility of our paratroopers will stand us in good stead," he added.



6. MICHIGAN

4. CALIFORNIA

ROYAL Wessex Yeomanry personnel have been on exercise at Sennelager with the 125th Infantry Regiment, Michigan National Guard. They cleared buildings, destroyed opposing forces and seized a command and control centre. The Reservists will be hosted by the American unit during Exercise Northern Strike 18 next year.

7. ANTARCTICA

4. CALIFORNIA

AWESOME ASCENT

INTREPID Intelligence Corps troops pushed themselves in a demanding mission Stateside – taking on a gruelling climb from the lowest point of the country to the highest, outside of Alaska.

Capt Daniel Murtagh, Cpl Robyn Bindloss and Cpl Richard Tassell were part of a team that cycled and hiked their way from Badwater Basin in Death Valley to the peak of Mount Whitney in the Low to High Challenge.

The trio – all based at Creech Air Force Base in Nevada – tackled the ascent of 21,500ft in just over 24 hours, with the team collectively raising \$5,000 for charities.

INTELLIGENCE FOR THE ATLAS?

Brief the team now:



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5. GIBRALTAR

ROBOT ON THE ROCK

THE Royal Gibraltar Regiment has taken delivery of its first Dragon Runner robot, the type used so successfully in Afghanistan (pictured below) to negate improvised explosive devices.

The lightweight, backpackable, multi-terrain asset has the ability to send video footage back to the operator at a safe distance and is equipped with a manipulator arm that can dig around suspicious objects as well as move them, small charges to disrupt suspect devices and even wire cutters.

With grippy twin tracks rather than wheels it was deemed particularly suitable for operations on Gibraltar's rocky terrain.



6. MICHIGAN

DRIVERLESS VEHICLE TEST

ARMY teams have conducted groundbreaking trials of robotic vehicles in Michigan as part of a new project with the US military.

An autonomous convoy was tested with a British MAN truck leading two US Army equivalents at speeds of up to 25mph using integrated sensors and systems to control speed and navigation.

A British-developed quadcopter drone that delivers more than 100kg of supplies was also tested and an off-road Polaris vehicle was driven using only game consoles.

The three-year programme is aiming to bring unmanned tactical resupply concepts to life.



7. ANTARCTICA

INTREPID SCOTT IS OFF

A ROYAL Gurkha Rifles officer is attempting to become the youngest person to reach the South Pole solo and unassisted.

At 27, Lt Scott Sears (above) will beat the existing record by two years if he achieves his goal.

The 700-mile trek across Antarctica is in aid of the Gurkha Welfare Trust.

He is using his own time and funding to stage the expedition, which he hopes will generate more than £25,000 to finance the reconstruction of schools in Nepal that were destroyed in the 2015 earthquake. To donate go to: www.justgiving.com/fundraising/scottsears

Lt Sears is looking to finish the trek by Christmas Day.

Meanwhile, six members of the Army's all-female Ice Maiden group are skiing 1,700km, coast-to-coast, across the continent via the South Pole while pulling sledges of up to 80kg.

They embarked on their mission as this issue went to press and have been posting photos and updates of their quest on Twitter @excimaiden and online at www.excimaiden.com



UP FOR A CHALLENGE?

Midlands 30:30 - Teams of 4 carrying 30lbs over 30 miles or 30kms, testing both orienteering and endurance.

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Picture: Randolph Reiljan



'This feels very real'

AROUND 400 soldiers from 1st Battalion, The Royal Welsh have started an eight-month stint leading Nato's enhanced forward presence in Estonia.

They replaced 5th Battalion, The Rifles, which had been in the country since March (page 33).

The unit forms the core of an 800-strong UK-led battlegroup that includes elements from The King's Royal Hussars, the Royal Engineers and the Royal Artillery.

Based at Tapa, just 80 miles from Russia, the formation is being supported by French and Danish troops as part of a significant reassurance effort.

Commanding officer Lt Col Owain Luke (R Welsh) told *Soldier*: "It would be easy to be lulled into a false sense of security and thinking that this is just another series of training exercises in

the strangely familiar surroundings of another European country.

"However, without doubt, this is an operational deployment and feels very real: we are combat-ready, have an important role in Estonia's national defence plan and are being held at very high readiness."

The unit's mood is upbeat despite the prospect of winter training.

"This is a new challenge for us – I've done six deployments which all felt unique and this is no different," said Cpl Stuart Williams (R Welsh).

"This is the first one when I have had kids and thankfully the facilities and WiFi here are great so I can get in touch whenever I need to.

"As a combat signaller I'll be working hard to make sure we can operate effectively together and demonstrate good interoperability with our partner allies."

“We have an important role to play”

Mental health help barrier revealed

FAILURE to recognise the symptoms of mental health problems is a greater issue preventing veterans seeking help than stigma, a new study has shown.

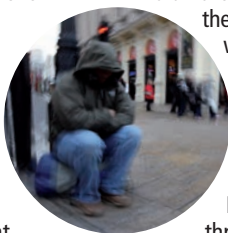
Research by the King's Centre for Military Health Research and funded by the Forces in Mind Trust found many ex-Service personnel did not realise their symptoms were signs of a disorder because they had not reached a crisis point.

Removing stigma is at the heart of many campaigns, including the Army's *Don't Bottle it Up* initiative. However,

the study found this was not a major barrier to veterans accessing help.

But in fact many of those affected didn't request treatment because they were unable to define what a mental health problem was and once they had recognised it felt unworthy of seeking care. They were also put off by NHS waiting lists.

More help is now available through a mental health and wellbeing strategy recently launched on the Veteran's Gateway (www.veteransgateway.org.uk).



TIPS FOR TROOPS

IF you suspect you need help with your mental health consult the unit welfare or medical officer. They are there to help and offer the best advice. Contact numbers for medical out-of-hours support are available through your medical centre. Combat Stress/Rethink also offer a 24-hour freephone helpline at 0800 138 1619.

APPRAISAL REVISION

■ UPDATES have been made to the appraisal reporting process in JSP 757. All personnel and those with reporting officer responsibilities should familiarise themselves with the key Army changes included in Part 2: Guidance – Volume 2. For more information read **ABN 128/17**.

WARGAMING SURVEY

■ THE MoD wants your views on wargaming as its use grows across defence. A brief survey has been set up to gather feedback to help military chiefs gauge how the capability could be developed. To participate visit www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/K3PGNJD by December 22.



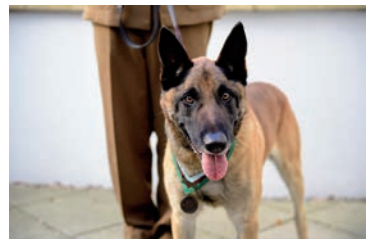
TRAWLING FOR DIVERS

■ THE Joint Service Sub Aqua Dive Centre is looking for instructors, divers and general duties staff at its base at HMNB Devonport, Plymouth. The postings last between two and 18 months. Previous experience is not crucial as training will be provided but applicants should be physically fit and interested in learning adventurous training skills. For full details read **2017DIN07-117**.



MEDAL FOR MALI

■ A MILITARY working dog who helped save British troops in Afghanistan in 2012 has received the Dickin Medal, the animal equivalent of the Victoria Cross. Mali, a Belgian Malinois, detected insurgents and sniffed out explosives while under fire, receiving injuries from three grenade blasts. Mali now helps to train new handlers at the Defence Animal Training Regiment.



BRACED FOR THE STORM



■ **SOLDIERS** of 3rd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment, together with their attached supporting units, have been honing their fighting and fieldcraft skills on the baked Kenyan savannah as part of the six-week long Exercise Askari Storm. The 1,000-strong battlegroup boasted a rich array of enabling capabilities from across 16 Air Assault Brigade, including gunners, sappers, medics, signallers, logisticians and intelligence analysts. Look out for a full report in the January issue.

CHRISTMAS CRACKER

■ THE National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire has been awarded a Guinness World Record for the most contributions to a greetings card.

The organisation's 2.1 by 4.5-metre Christmas card to the Armed Forces last year had 16,707 messages inside – comfortably beating the previous record of 13,288 held by the Dubai Police.

A spokesman for the arboretum said it would not be attempting the record this festive season.

CAMBRAI CROSS

■ THE extraordinary story of a courageous young tank crewman has been remembered with the display of his Victoria Cross a century after his death.

Capt Richard Wain was awarded the highest gallantry decoration after continuing to take the fight to the enemy at the Battle of Cambrai despite being wounded during the advance.

He was shot and mortally injured by enemy fire soon after.

Now the officer's family have loaned the medal to the Tank Museum in Dorset.

Museum Curator David Willey has also appealed for information on the whereabouts of a VC awarded to another First World War crewman, Clement Robertson.

Only four crews won VCs in the First World War and the museum already holds the medal awarded to Cecil Sewell while collector Lord Ashcroft owns Richard West's medal. But the location of the other remains a mystery.

Mr Willey said: "Our dream would be to exhibit all four of them together."



“
The lads
did a
fantastic
job
”

Infantry troops 'still the best'

THE quality of recruits in the Infantry remains as high as ever – with the next generation of personnel proving their mettle as soon as they enter the Army.

Lt Col Richard Bell (R Irish), commanding officer of the Catterick-based 1st Infantry Training Battalion, told *Soldier* that the success of newly qualified soldiers and instructors on Cambrian Patrol had demonstrated their fitness and resilience.

The eight-strong squad won a silver medal during the exercise in October.

The officer was speaking after recent media reports raised concerns over declining numbers of personnel – flagging unfilled places in Army training establishments.

But Lt Col Bell said: "The lads did a fantastic job during some really difficult conditions – it proves our newcomers are mentally and

physically robust.

"In our team of eight there were five who had recently completed the combat infantryman's course plus two section commanders and a young platoon commander.

"Before the patrol we asked the units if we could hold the five newly qualified recruits so we could prepare for the exercise. They trained for just three weeks."

The 2017 Cambrian Patrol – which is focused on core infantry skills – took place on the Black Mountains, with this year's conditions proving particularly demanding.

"Our new soldiers clearly feel the thrust to prove themselves," the officer added. "This success also shows the quality of our junior leaders."

● **Instructors resist a rest**
– page 15



Picture: Graeme Main



Army women lead the way

FEMALE soldiers made a strong impression at this year's Women in Defence UK Awards.

Members of 17 Port and Maritime Regiment, Royal Logistic Corps scooped the top prize in the "inclusive teamwork" category while LCpl Sheona MacMillan (RE, shown right) picked up an accolade for most collaborative, for helping to save millions of pounds on a Falkland Islands construction task.

The awards – which also marked a centenary of women in the Armed Forces – were presented at the Plaisterers' Hall in London. Nominations increased eightfold on the 2016 event.

Despite most of the trades in the outfit being traditionally male, judges said that Marchwood-based 17 Port and Maritime Regiment was the only unit to have female representation throughout the chain of command, from private to lieutenant colonel.

They called the achievement

"remarkable" given that women only make up six per cent of the regiment.

The formation was also praised for embracing policies such as flexible hours and parental leave, and helping new mothers return to work.

Meanwhile, LCpl MacMillan was nominated for her role as environmental manager on Project Anemoi – a £35 million development across three remote sites in the South Atlantic.

"Her degree in international business and environmental sustainability enabled her to change the waste management processes, which achieved

savings of £4 million," the sapper's citation reads.

Speaking after the ceremony, Angela Owen, founder of the Women in Defence group that organised the awards, commended all nominees.

She added: "The UK's defence community is determined to improve its diversity."



Pictures: Dominic King

MECHANICS SCRAMBLED IN SENNELAGER

RECOVERY mechanics have put their skills and drills to the test on Sennelager Training Area.

Exercise Samson's Pride saw 24 personnel from across Germany undertake a host of challenges over 19 days.

One serial saw the troops retrieve a stricken CVR(T) from a dense wooded area using a complex system of winch ropes, blocks and pulleys. Soft ground and thick tree cover meant that heavy recovery vehicles couldn't be used.

The package also saw the soldiers get hands-on experience in explosives and demolitions.

GOING ON EXERCISE?

01252 787096

news@soldiermagazine.co.uk

CADET BOOST

■ A FURTHER 31 Combined Cadet Force units are to be opened in state schools in deprived areas or places with sizeable ethnic minority populations in the near future.

The new troops are being established under the Ministry of Defence's and Department for Education's cadet expansion programme, which is backed by £50 million of funding from Libor fines levied on banks.

The government has set a target of increasing the number of cadet units in state schools from around 350 currently to 500 by 2020.

ARMY ADVERTISEMENTS

■ AN online directory has been set up where ex-military personnel can advertise their businesses.

Veteran Owned UK allows the public to search for goods and services as well as offering a work referral scheme to actively connect companies with potential clients.

Visit www.veteran-owned.uk

NETWORK LAUNCHED

■ THE Army's Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Network has been formally launched a year after it was first set up.

Designed to inform, support and inspire Service personnel, the organisation was formally introduced to the wider Service with a conference at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst.



TEENAGE KICKS

■ PLACES are up for grabs on a 2018 adventure programme for Army kids.

The Annington Challenge aims to build teenagers' personal, social and emotional skills through activities such as kayaking, climbing and expeditions.

There are two courses on offer over the summer holidays and applications must have the backing of a school or college. For details call 0207 960 7559.

● Army life in kids' words – page 44



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Picture: Cpl Jonathan Lee van Zyl, RLC



HOOFING IT

ARMY farriers have battled it out in a fierce test of their mettle. The annual British Army Shoeing Competition saw the personnel go up against the clock to try to hammer out winning shoes to a range of different briefs. Staged at the Service's School of Farriery in Melton Mowbray, the event also saw civilian farriers take on the military specialists from the Household Cavalry and The King's Troop, Royal Horse Artillery. "There has been great banter and it's an opportunity to learn so much from each other," commented competitor and apprentice Tpr Ben Moore (HCMR).

Instructors resist a rest

INFANTRY Training Centre instructors have been trading places with their police counterparts in a bid to improve the way they deliver lessons.

Members of 1st Infantry Training Battalion – which delivers the combat infantryman's course – are working alongside Cleveland and Durham Police's Tactical Training Centre.

The initiative sees the Service personnel observe training there before hosting the officers in Catterick where they are given a flavour of infantry drills and range packages.

"The aim of this has been to expose our instructors to police ways of working in areas such as lesson planning and training risk assessment," Maj Andy Witherell (Lancs), the battalion's 2iC said.

"Feedback from officers, instructors and our team has been very positive.

"So far 18

personnel benefitted from observing the force's armed



response refresher course, and ITC staff have also experienced police firearms training, judgemental training and field exercises."

He added that the package was helping the police to meet an increasingly complex terrorist threat.

For example, a recent spin-off saw ITC Catterick provide a military-trained enemy for a police counter-terrorism exercise (shown).

Dave Orford, Durham

Constabulary's assistant chief constable, called the venture – due to continue in 2018 – a "fantastic opportunity".



“
Feedback
from the team
has been very
positive
”

“
People are
screaming for
equality
”

Battle of the
sexes breaks out

TALKBACK
PAGE 49



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

HOPEFUL OF CHANGE

MAKING sense of the changes across Army life was the main focus at our final networking event of 2017 – as was the importance of "the family" in defence decision making.

Among our guests was Chief of the General Staff, Gen Sir Nicholas Carter, who assured us of the value he places on families' concerns, declaring that it "remains an essential factor in the development of Army policy".

I am encouraged by this as I am among many who firmly believe that investment in our people is the surest way to successful operational delivery.

Gen Carter added: "The annual Big Survey and the AFF roadshows all help to inform our decisions."

This is good to hear, given that our families often feel "over-surveyed".

It goes to show how valuable their involvement is, and I hope there will be tangible outcomes from the event.

Military life is altering, and the AFF is determined to ensure that families are properly equipped to deal with this.

I hope the summit has acted as a catalyst for change on several fronts, not least when it comes to better investment in soldiers and their families,

and timely
consultation
over policy
changes.



www.aff.org.uk

FEARLESS FUNDRAISING



Money raised:
£2,600
For: Various charities

Channel hopping

A COMBINATION of strength and endurance paid off for an NCO on a charity Channel swim. Cpl Huw Morgans (Para) completed the extreme event in 12 hours and 48 minutes – leaving from Samphire Hoe, west of Dover, and landing near Calais. As well as fulfilling a lifelong ambition, his efforts have paid off for Blesma, Cancer Research UK and the Woodvale and Ainsdale Community Association.



He's on a roll

A FORMER Royal Engineer has become the first person to roller-ski the length of the country, while raising money for charity. Ex-corporal Chris Gouldsmith spent three weeks travelling 900km from Land's End to John O'Groats – an average of 40 miles per day. He took on the challenge in aid of people affected by autism and head injuries after his twin brother died from a head injury sustained in a traffic accident.

Money raised:
£1,400
For: The National Autistic Society and Headway Cardiff

Don't be in the dark: Turn to page 24 for the rules on accessing training areas



Picture: Graeme Main

“
We can't
understand
why
”

Are you a training area trespasser?

TROOPS are being urged to think twice before stepping onto the training area in their downtime.

In the last year there have been more than 64,000 incursions or trespasses onto the MoD estate and of those more than 850 were “near-misses”, where range or danger area boundaries were breached.

Most incidents involved walkers and runners, but a number also included cyclists, horse riders and even drones.

“There’s been a huge increase in illegal incursions here over the last 18 months,” Lt Col Stewart Andrews (RA), senior training safety officer for Salisbury Plain Training Area (SPTA),

told *Soldier*. “We can’t understand why, and it’s only a matter of time before someone gets injured.

“People we stop say ‘I’m military so I thought I was allowed here,’ but that’s simply not the case.”

Rules for accessing MoD training sites vary by area, with flags, signs and notices detailing the various firing activity and by-laws.

Failure to obey the notices can lead to prosecution, and for up-to-date information on each site’s activities visit www.gov.uk/government/collections/firing-notice

To find out about activity on SPTA call 01980 674763.

Corporals come to the rescue

TWO quick-thinking corporals helped to save an Army veteran after he collapsed while walking his dogs.

Lee Cupples (REME) and Dale Hadfield (RLC) had been on exercise with recruits on the Barossa Training Area, Sandhurst, when they found Steve Isherwood unconscious.

They summoned an ambulance before putting the former Royal Army Dental Corps member into a sleeping bag and protecting him under a poncho (shown above).

The pair – both serving with 96 Squadron, 1 Army Training Regiment – then guided paramedics to the site.

“The communication between those out in the field and the staff running the incident control point back at base



was fantastic,” said squadron OC Maj Pierre Goate (RLC).

Mr Isherwood (shown left with his helpers) spent several days recovering in Frimley Park Hospital.

“I am profoundly grateful for the exemplary way the soldiers handled a difficult situation,” he said. “It was raining and very cold – I think I was suffering from the early stages of hypothermia.”



Baying mob

Troops get tough in Longmoor – page 36



Speaking up for soldiers

EMPLOYERS who overlook the skills of ex-soldiers when they recruit are missing out, a government minister has said.

Minister for Family Support Caroline Dinenage (shown) was speaking at an event to promote See Potential, a government campaign to get more businesses employing people from disadvantaged groups.

"Some employers rule out veterans because they may not always have specific industry experience, overlooking the skills they have got to offer," the MP explained to bosses at the gathering in London.



"So much so that many veterans become daunted about putting themselves out there.

"This leads to too many barriers that end up with employers missing out.

"With more than 200 trades in the Army alone, military veterans are highly trained and experienced in a range of technical roles.

"These men and women have specialist skills."

With the support of more than 100 employers and a 4,000-strong LinkedIn network, the campaign is also being backed by billionaire Richard Branson.

FACTFILE

FORCES FINDING WORK

1/3 of firms have never considered employing veterans, according to a Royal United Services Institute survey

16,000

troops leave the Armed Forces each year

DID YOU KNOW?

The ex-military community is twice as likely to be unemployed as the civilian one



Picture: Dominic King

LIGHT INFANTRY LESSONS

■ RESERVISTS from 3rd Battalion, The Royal Welsh were put through their paces on a series of manoeuvres in Germany. Exercise Dragon's Talon saw them spend the two weeks of their infantry field firing camp on Sennelager Training Area, culminating in a simulated company attack. The troops also got to work with Regular colleagues in the Queen's Royal Hussars and 1st Battalion, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment.

“

These men and women have specialist skills

”

SPINE LINE COMPETITION



WIN

a three-piece suit worth £200

If you guessed the link between last month's spine line clues consider yourself a history buff.

(Gen Julian) Byng, (Lt Gen Sir Hugh) Elles, (Lt Col John) Fuller and (Brig Gen Henry) Tudor are all senior officers who had direct involvement in the momentous Battle of Cambrai.

This month *Soldier* has teamed up with Dobell Menswear (www.dobell.co.uk) – makers of quality formal and evening attire – to offer one lucky reader a three-piece suit of their choice, plus shirt and tie, up to a value of £200.

To be in with a chance of winning this smart prize, perfect for anyone who would like to sharpen-up their or their partner's look in 2018, tell us what links the words on the side of this issue.

Answers to the usual address or comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk by December 29.

dobell

HELP WITH HOUSING

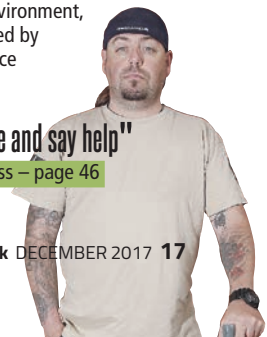
■ ONLINE training has been created to help Service personnel and their families find civilian accommodation.

Created by the Joint Service Housing Advice Office, the e-learning module covers property purchases, financial and mortgage advice, the Forces Help to Buy scheme and private rental.

It is hosted on the Defence School of Specialist Welfare section of the Defence Learning Environment, which can be accessed by anyone with a Defence Gateway account.

"Swallow your pride and say help"

Combat homelessness – page 46



IN THIS MONTH'S REVIEWS

"It's rude, crude and being PC goes right out of the window"

★ ★ ★

"This really is a breath of fresh air from start to finish"

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

"You leap around hacking Orcs to pieces"

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

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www.soldiermagazine.co.uk DECEMBER 2017 17





THE BIG PICTURE

EDINBURGH, SCOTLAND

ALL GUNS BLAZING

THE sound of a L118 105mm Light Gun firing from Edinburgh Castle echoes across the city as soldiers of 7th Parachute Regiment, Royal Horse Artillery take part in the 21-gun salute marking Prince Charles' 69th birthday.

Picture: Cpl Ben Maher, RLC

NEED TO KNOW

FITNESS / CASH CLINIC / HEALTH / RULES AND REGULATIONS / EXPERIENCE / KITBAG



1. Do your A, B, C check and make this part of your pre-ride routine

Air

Tyre pressure is one of the most important things when it comes to improving the quality of your ride. Grab yourself a track pump with a pressure gauge, check the sidewall of your tyres for the suggested levels and make sure they are at the right setting before every ride. You will need slightly more pressure in your rear tyre.

Brakes

First check that your brake pads have not worn down below the wear line. Next test the adjustment by pulling on both brakes; if your levers touch the handlebars then you need to bring your pads closer to the rim (or disc). There is normally a barrel adjuster and log on to YouTube for clips on how your specific brake calliper works.

Chain

Keeping your chain, cassette and chain rings clean and running smoothly will save you cash – fact. Cleaning it is easier than you may think. Apply some degreaser, leave it for a few minutes then wash with clean water. Next, grab a rag and dry your chain off before applying some chain lube. The more often you do this, the less time it will take.

Get into gear

Taking to the saddle this winter? Maj Tony Ireland (RLC), secretary of the Army road race set-up, shares his top tips on how to keep your bike in perfect working order...

Picture: FreePik



2. Carry spares

Inner tubes, tyre levers and a hand pump are all essential for fixing a flat, while a multi-tool enables you to tighten things along the way. Another really useful item involves recycling your toothpaste tubes. Cut a couple of patches that are approximately 2cm x 2cm in size. If you split a tyre one of these patches placed on the inside of the split between tyre and inner tube will make sure that you can pedal a few miles home. But replace that torn tyre before your next ride.

3. Learn to fix a puncture

Punctures are inevitable. Check out some of the "how to" guides on YouTube. Practise at home first so that you know what you are doing before it happens for real. Attempting this for the first time on a wet, cold, dark roadside is never going to go well.

4. Keep it clean

At the end of your ride take the time to wash the dirt and grime off your bike before you put it away. A quick wash with a hosepipe, wipe down and re-lube takes approximately five minutes and will significantly increase mechanical reliability.

5. Check nuts and bolts are tight

Vibrations from the road have a habit of loosening some of the nuts and bolts that hold your bike together. Check them regularly but beware of over tightening. Lots of modern bikes will have a maximum torque limit; this is normally written close to the bolt.

Gambling

Having a flutter can do more than hit you in the pocket; it can affect your emotional and physical wellbeing, your relationships and career. This assessment tool can help you gauge whether your betting is becoming a problem...

► Answer the following questions, selecting 0 for never, 1 for sometimes, 2 for most of the time and 3 for almost always.



In the past 12 months, have you bet more than you could really afford to lose?

0 1 2 3

Have you needed to bet larger amounts of money to get the same feeling of excitement?

0 1 2 3

When you gambled, did you go back another day to try to win back the money you lost?

0 1 2 3

Have you borrowed money or sold anything to fund your gambling?

0 1 2 3

Have you felt that you might have a problem with betting?

0 1 2 3

Has gambling caused you any health problems, including stress or anxiety?

0 1 2 3

Have people criticised your betting or told you that you had a problem, even if you didn't agree?

0 1 2 3

Has your gambling caused any financial problems for you or your household?

0 1 2 3

Have you felt guilty about the way you gamble?

0 1 2 3

Total your score.
The higher the number, the greater the risk that your gambling is a problem.

0-2: No or low-level problems, with few or no identified negative consequences.

3-7: Moderate level of problems leading to some negative consequences.

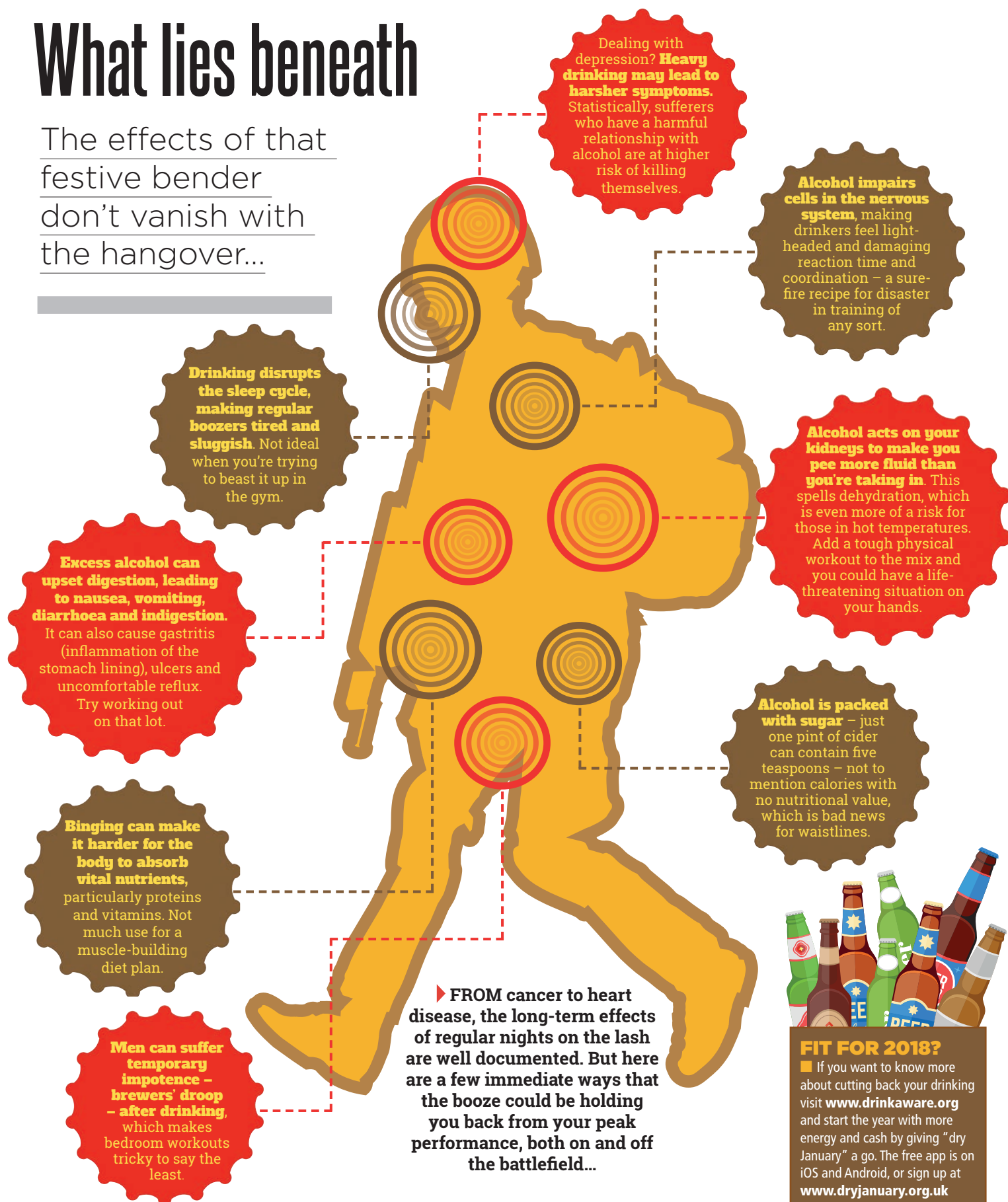
8 or more: Problem gambling with negative consequences and a possible loss of control.

HELP

■ To seek help with problem gambling visit www.gamcare.org.uk or call 0808 8020 133

What lies beneath

The effects of that festive bender don't vanish with the hangover...



Restricted access

If you think you're safe to hit the training area for a bit of phys, you might want to read this...

► MUCH of the MoD's training estate is surrounded by urban sprawl. Take Salisbury Plain, for instance, where a population of 85,000 people borders the vast, grassy expanse.

Runners, dog walkers and bikers usually navigate well around the various serials and exercises taking place there. But over the last 18 months there has been a growing problem of trespassers – including soldiers – straying beyond the public rights of way and into dangerous zones.

■ For news on the MoD estate follow the Defence Infrastructure Organisation on Twitter @mod_dio



No gunfire, no problem...

Wrong! Without the sound of gunfire personnel often think it is safe to enter an area, but dry training is also risky. Fast moving vehicles, battle simulations and pyrotechnics can injure.



HOW TO STAY SAFE

...and avoid an ear-bashing from your local training safety marshal



Always obey the flags, barriers and signs



Red flags mean an area is being used. When they're flying don't enter. Red lights at night mean the same thing



If you're driving or off-roading on public rights of way, ensure your vehicle is roadworthy, legal and driven carefully



Don't pick anything up while you're out on the training estate, even if you think you know what it is



Under fire

For an up-to-date list of range firing times visit www.gov.uk/government/collections/firing-notice

From the ground...

“ Recently we had a microlight go across the main impact area. We had to stop firing completely. First and foremost the area is for military training. We have no idea why the number of incursions is increasing. ”

Lt Col Stewart Andrews (RA), senior training safety officer, Salisbury Plain Training Area

'Little did we know it would grow to 400 classes a week'

“

I REMEMBER the moment we came up with the idea for British Military Fitness.

It was 19 years ago when I was an extra on *Saving Private Ryan*.

I had been in the Territorial Army for a few years and was speaking to one of my colleagues on the set – he was using Army techniques and acting as a personal trainer to his girlfriend.

We talked about doing the same sort of thing for the public.

The two of us and another soldier each invested £1,000.

I put up my bounty and we placed an advert in the *London Evening Standard* inviting people to our first class in Hyde Park.

We called it British Military Fitness and the rest, as they say, is history.

I have been asked why the idea caught on with people.

The training is all about getting individuals to push themselves – finding out their capabilities.

In the Army all of us at some stage reach a point where we think we cannot go on.

But we push through with the trademark camaraderie and banter.

The public seemed to really like this approach as well.

Two decades ago outdoor fitness was a completely original idea.

There was no social media and the business grew by word of mouth.

Ten people turned up to the first event but

little did we know that would eventually grow to 400 classes a week, running across 140 venues around the UK.

Nor could we have foreseen that we would become an employer in our own right, that all of our instructors would have military backgrounds and we would have our own academy to train them.

In the years since, the business model has been emulated widely by others who have seen its success.

The concept of outdoor fitness has grown massively and I'm really happy about that.

I am the only one of the original three still involved in running the business.

We now have around 35 full-time staff and although I am not wealthy enough to own a castle with a moat, I am pleased to be making a living from British Military Fitness, and that others are too.

Pretty much everything I have done in life has been as a result of being a Reservist. It's been great.

Had I not taken this path I would never have been on the *Saving Private Ryan* set and would not have been involved in setting up the company. ■



■ Troops presenting an MOD90 get a free trial class and 20 per cent discount. Visit www.britmilfit.com for more information.

Joining the Army Reserve turned into more than just a pastime for WO2 Harry Sowerby (Rifles), the brains behind British Military Fitness. He tells *Soldier* how he helped set up the outdoor classes...



Kukri kudos

Sgt Akash Tamang (QGE) offers an insight into the legendary multi-purpose knives carried by Nepalese troops...

“THE Kukri is central to our Kaida – our customs and traditions – and is synonymous with Gurkhas throughout the British Army.

No Gurkha soldier would deploy without it. Essentially it is a side arm, but since there is little need for close combat weapons in modern warfare, it mainly comes into its own for fieldcraft-related tasks, both on exercise or on operations.

For example, when I was on Op Herrick we would regularly use it to cut through scrub and undergrowth in the Green Zone.

But it also has great cultural and religious significance – not just in the Services but also the wider Nepalese community across the UK. It is used during occasions such as weddings and sacrificial rituals, and of course in the preparation of food for our famous Gurkha curries!

For all of us, carrying a Kukri during ceremonial events is to acknowledge its symbolic link to the proud history of Gurkhas in the military.



Did you know?

The Kukri is believed to have played a role in the fall of Kathmandu to Prithvi Narayan Shah, the first King of Nepal in 1767.

His enemies – armed with more conventional weapons – struggled to develop an effective parry to the curved blade.

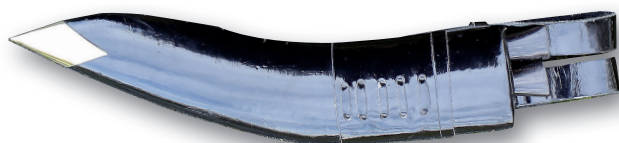


Today it is rare for the knife to be used in hand-to-hand combat but it is still a formidable weapon of last resort.

In 2013 Lt Col Tuljung Gurung (RGR, pictured above) was awarded the Military Cross for using his Kukri to fight off an insurgent who attacked his guard tower near Lashkar Gah.

The myth that blood must be shed every time a Kukri is drawn is untrue

and probably stems from the fact that if drawn in anger, it is unlikely to be replaced without being used.



Scabbard

Two small blades on the scabbard, one blunt, the other sharp, are used respectively for starting fires with a flint stone, skinning hide or for general purpose.

Blade

Fashioned out of tempered steel. Handles are usually wood or buffalo horn and scabbards are made of wood and leather.



Length

16-18 inches

Shaft

A nick in the shaft prevents blood from reaching the handle and is also symbolic of the Hindu Trinity of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva.



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The mpg figures quoted are sourced from official EU-regulated test results (EU Directive and Regulation 692/2008), are provided for comparability purposes and may not reflect your actual driving experience.

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Boxer: armoured personnel carrier



Wiesel: armoured weapons carrier



Fuchs: armoured fighting vehicle



Fennek: light armoured recce vehicle

“They can move up onto an objective and provide support at critical moments”



Report: Becky Clark Pictures: Graeme Main, Cpl Timothy Jones, RLC and Cpl Nick Johns, RE

THREE hundred vehicles, more than 1,700 soldiers from two different countries, and one month to achieve five major objectives.

That was the challenge facing personnel from 12 Armoured Infantry Brigade during Exercise Lightning Ace, the formation's showpiece training package for 2017.

"This is bigger in scale than anything we've done in Batus this year and I believe it's one of the Army's largest exercises for four years," said the lead plans officer Maj Jeff Watt (Lancs).

"There are five main aims. The primary one is trialling the new Bowman upgrade, closely followed by interoperability with the German 3rd Company, 1st Jaeger Battalion.

"Then there are a number of lower level objectives including company-level training for the British units and our brigade headquarters, and integrating with the Joint Aviation Taskforce who are flying in support of our missions."

Staged on Salisbury Plain, the serials were rooted in the now familiar fictional nations of the US Decisive Action Training Environment scenario and saw troops come up against a mixture of conventional forces, state-backed militia and insurgent groupings.

The Royal Lancers armoured cavalry battlegroup deployed in a reconnaissance role, moving forward to find the enemy for the Scots Guards battlegroup, including the German company, to close in on and kill.

The 160-strong Bundeswehr contingent had come well equipped, not least with 25 Boxer armoured fighting vehicles, which according to Capt Sam Wesley, (pictured below left), intelligence officer for the Scots Guards, made them a highly versatile asset.

"Their capability in terms of firepower and manoeuvrability means they can be in the advance, at the front as a guard or just another rifle company, or in the reserve," he said.

"They can move up onto an objective and provide support at critical moments in the battle, so we've been using them in different ways in different missions – quite similar to how we fight from Mastiff.

"They also have the Wiesel with them – a small three-man tracked vehicle mounted with a 20mm canon – the Fuchs armoured personnel carrier for their mortar and anti-tank platoons, and the Fennek recce vehicle, which has an incredibly low profile.

"It's very quiet and also has a good Istar platform to look for and find the enemy without being found itself."

After gradually integrating at company level, the serials mounted in complexity until both sides were executing joint attacks on Copehill Down village. ➔





LIGHTNING STRIKE

British and German troops take
Salisbury Plain by storm





Compatibility issues between the British and German radio systems made communications over the net challenging.

But in linguistic terms at least, little was lost in translation, thanks in part to the efforts of Dmr Ronnie Bromhead (SG).

A dual national, the 20-year-old was born and raised in Germany and found himself embedded alongside the Bundeswehr troops to help ease the passage of information.

"In the attack on the village I was tasked to go with the German element that was providing fire support and my job was to establish communications for the platoon commander," he explained.

"I was also able to translate if any issues cropped up.

"It's a big responsibility to make sure everything is correct and goes smoothly but I enjoyed doing something different to just being another bod in the rifle company and it was interesting to see how they do things.

"The Germans tend to go a lot closer to the objective with their vehicles and then dismount whereas we stop a few kilometres away and tab into position.

"They also seem to do quick battle orders more than us, which seemed to work very well. It's that German efficiency."

For their part, the Jaeger Battalion troops had also made some observations about the differences in approach.

Capt Martin Lohr said exercises in his home country were usually more condensed.

"We don't normally train in this way," explained the 35-year-old.

"We tend to do more in a shorter period and we spend less time in the field.

"The tactics are also a bit different but we've learnt a lot, which is always positive.

"There are a few areas to improve on, for example comms have been a major problem, but I think we could work well together on a real operation."

With the Scots Guards preparing for a stint on readiness next year and also slated to be part of the Army's new strike brigades from 2019, the opportunity to brush up on individual and group skills and drills was welcome.

Prior to the battlegroup missions, personnel ran through several urban and forest serials.

Gdsm Michael McCulloch said the village attacks had been both the most challenging and enjoyable elements of the package.

"We don't do much fighting in built-up areas normally so coming here and breaking into buildings and doing room clearances has been really good," he said.



“We get it done fast without giving our position away”

"The more we practise the better we get. When we go into a house we do our drills silently now, just tapping each other on the shoulder or using hand signals.

"We get it done fast without giving our position away to the enemy.

"An exercise of this size also gives us a chance to bond as a section and get to know each other's strengths and weaknesses.

"After a serial we'll have a mini after-action review and a wee laugh and a joke at the stuff that went wrong.

"That helps us to improve our skills because we work out where we messed up.

"You never want to be the first person that dies on the TES because you'll just get grief until you prove yourself again on the next attack."

LSgt David Walmsley had also noted his soldiers' enthusiasm for the task.

"The guys like kicking doors in," he commented.

"But it's good to get back into the mechanised infantry role and get a shake out in the wagons too.

"We don't know exactly where we'll be going but in the modern environment it's likely to be in an urban area, where you rely on the vehicles for protection while moving about.

"With the threat from Russia and the deployments in Estonia – they're massive mech inf exercises – and as part of Nato we'll never be entirely on our own again.

"We'll always be working alongside the French, Polish, or another partner, so that's why interoperability packages like this have become so important." ■



Comms check

Exercise Lightning Ace also put the new Bowman Communications Information Platform (BCIP) version 5.6 through its paces in field conditions.

Currently under development by General Dynamics, the software is due to be rolled out in late 2018.

Capt Stevie Johnston (R Signals), from 12 Brigade, described the main benefits the upgrade would bring: "There are quite a few elements, one of them being shared situational awareness, or the ability to dynamically regroup.

"Previously formations weren't able to interact digitally unless it was already part of the comms plan when they rolled out of the gate.



"BCIP 5.6 offers the ability to join and merge units already deployed on the ground so that they won't be constrained by lapses in planning."

Designed to be more user-friendly, the interface now resembles the Microsoft Windows suite.

According to Capt Johnston, the feedback was mixed.

"Some of the technical functionality still needs modification to make sure it works as good as it looks but it's still in development with General Dynamics so this isn't the final version that will be delivered," he said.

"Thankfully we've had a broad user community who have been able to give comment so that the product we do eventually field is more fit for purpose and meets our digital requirements."



Handy helper. Part of the BCIP 5.6 upgrade provides troops on the ground with man carried user data terminals, offering them similar comms capability to the vehicle-mounted systems



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BORDER FORCE

Riflemen spill the beans on the Baltic mission everyone is talking about...

FREEZING temperatures, dense forest and a seemingly-endless stream of visiting VIPs – it sounds like the perfect storm of training exercise scenarios but for anyone deploying to Estonia in the near future it is just the start of the challenges they will face.

After a nine-month stint leading Nato's enhanced forward presence to protect the country's border with Russia, members of 5th Battalion, The Rifles have returned to UK soil.

And as they explained to *Soldier* at their homecoming parade, being one of the most battle-hardened units of the British Army didn't mean Operation Cabrit came without its fair share of tactical demands.

Located in the small town of Tapa, the armoured infantry battalion deployed in two phases, undertaking numerous training packages under an Estonian brigade while exposing their Warrior vehicles to a very different type of terrain.

"It's been a really good experience but a steep learning curve," admitted Maj John Mabb, officer commanding Fire Support Company.

"The soldier in Estonia needs to be a Brecon tactics kind-of-bloke.

"He needs to be able to operate in close wooded country in his armoured vehicle, and deal with an Arctic environment too – we saw temperatures get down to -17 degrees Celsius.

"Fighting in woods and forests in armour is something we had to think long and hard about."

For platoon sergeant Sjt James Hopkins, it was a happy coincidence that some of his soldiers had been on a jungle warfare package shortly before deploying.

"People associate Estonia with Eastern Europe, but it is 70 per cent forest," he explained.

"I had never operated in that sort of environment before, but having served for 13 years I thought, 'I've soldiered pretty much everywhere else so I'll be fine'.

"But it's different when you're on the ground and fighting through it. We learnt a lot of incredibly valuable lessons.

"The kind of tactics you would deploy in the jungle work just as well in Estonia – there's times when you're in swamps up to your waist."

"Movement from A to B is also a lot more complex than somewhere like Salisbury Plain.

"The Estonians were very good at camouflage, which is something we don't have as much experience of. ➔



"In this environment you have to make sure you keep noise to a minimum, watch where you put your feet and go back to things like hand signals.

"We learnt from the Estonians to sit and listen, turn the radios down and make sure kit is light and water bottles are full so they don't slosh."

"Also things as simple as making sure you're not grabbing onto trees, as you can be detected from them swaying."



From the top...

"We have come back a close-knit, combat capable battlegroup ready for whatever missions may come our way"

Lt Col Andrew Ridland,
CO, 5 Rifles



For Warrior commander LCpl Jack Easton, (Rifles, pictured below right), the mission exposed the need to remain flexible as war fighters, especially with things such as quick battle orders.

"At first there were obviously teething problems with the language barrier but we did a lot of shake-out exercises to learn how each other operated," he added.

"There were only single tracks so we didn't have much freedom of movement round the battlefield, and the dense wood blocks really hindered our view of the enemy.

"That made things harder out on the ground, with much of the doctrine that's set out for us no longer applicable.

"We had to use our initiative."

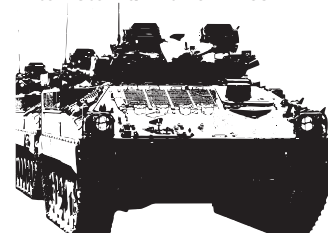
Various packages saw the Brits pitted against their Estonian comrades to test each other's skills and drills, but with the country's potential aggressor lying just 80 miles away in the form of a 770,000-strong military, the exercises have a very real basis.

Nato's Baltic mission is the biggest build-up of forces in Eastern Europe since the collapse of the Soviet Union, and with Russia's annexation of Crimea still fresh in everyone's memory, the bigger picture

"The soldier in Estonia needs to be a Brecon tactics kind-of-bloke"

+3003

Number of fighting vehicles that deployed to Estonia with 5 Rifles





Forward presence: Soldiers from the 5 Rifles battlegroup take part in a company-level attack with the Estonian Defence Force on Exercise Saber Strike



was not lost on the UK's troops.

"The Estonians are expecting the Russians to come over the border," Sjt Hopkins said.

LCpl Easton added: **"There's real threat out there and troops need to treat it as such."**

"A lot of the guys talk about it and play it over in their heads."

"We got to socialise with the Estonians and share a bond – there's a lot of common ground between the nations, especially between the respective ranks."

What this mission might have lacked in hands-on operational experience it made up for in space, time and resources for some seriously meaty training and community engagement.

Activities to reassure the Estonian public about Nato's role in Eastern Europe included the appearance of a Challenger main battle tank at the premier of the latest *Transformers* movie in Tallinn.

"The standard of soldiering has definitely improved out here," said section commander Cpl Adam Grimes.

"We have practised and practised, with a massive range package and outstanding trench warfare serials.

"Okay, something like this will never have the same effect as a Herrick, which really matures the young lads, but it makes them in to good soldiers and I have come back with much more competent men."

As with most things, the single biggest factor for individual success on Operation Cabrit is approaching it with the right attitude.

"Go there with an open mind," Sjt Hopkins said.

"Before we deployed D Company were hearing things from A Company like 'it just snows all the time' and 'we are not doing a great deal', but when I was there I got to tour Latvia, work in a Canadian battlegroup, conduct assaults from American Blackhawks, do adventurous training and visit every city in Estonia.

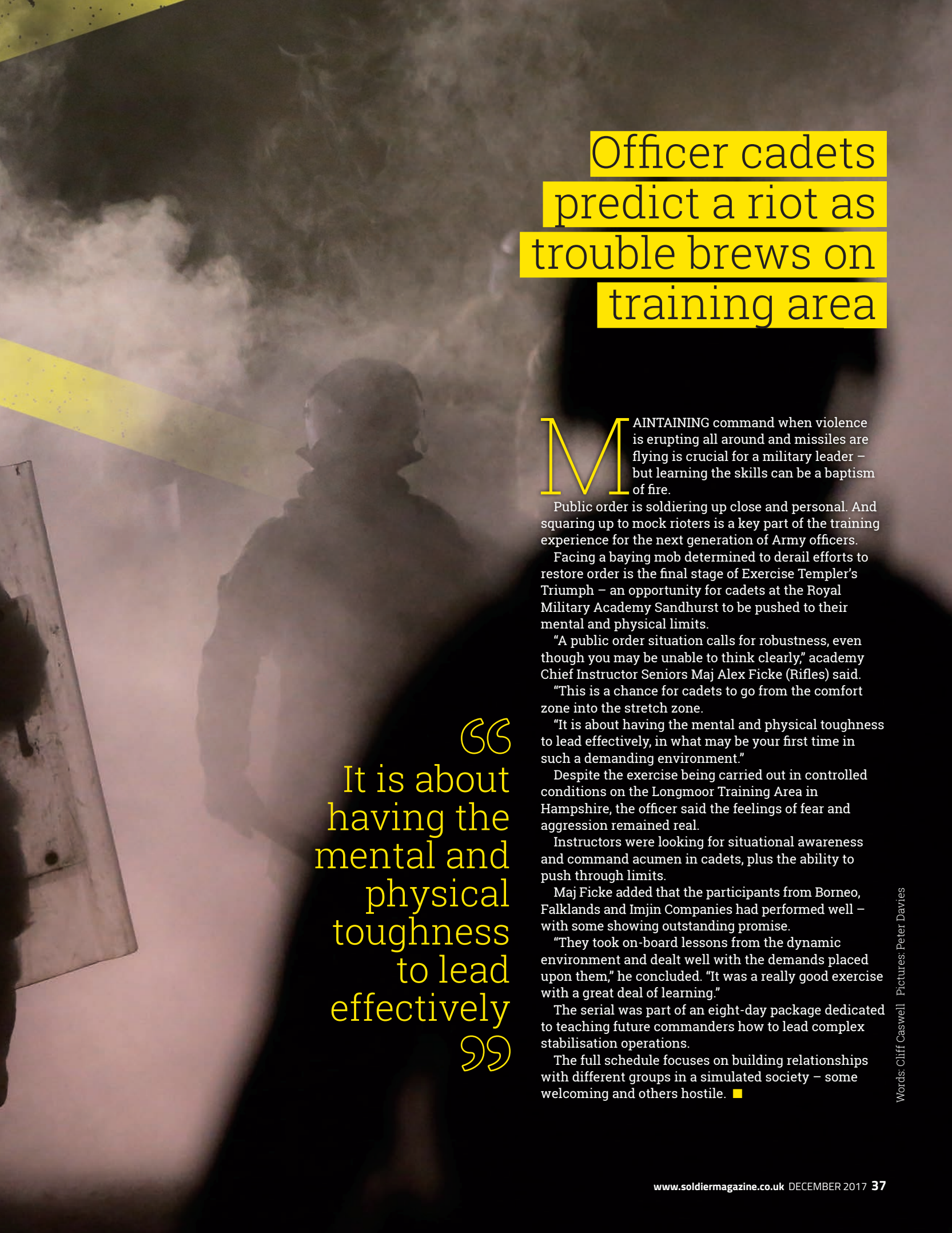
"These missions are what you make of them."

"It's up to you to make the most of it, so offer yourself up for tasks."

"If you sit there and say 'this is s**t', then it's going to be." ■

DISORDER DRAMAS





Officer cadets predict a riot as trouble brews on training area

MAINTAINING command when violence is erupting all around and missiles are flying is crucial for a military leader – but learning the skills can be a baptism of fire.

Public order is soldiering up close and personal. And squaring up to mock rioters is a key part of the training experience for the next generation of Army officers.

Facing a baying mob determined to derail efforts to restore order is the final stage of Exercise Templer's Triumph – an opportunity for cadets at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst to be pushed to their mental and physical limits.

"A public order situation calls for robustness, even though you may be unable to think clearly," academy Chief Instructor Seniors Maj Alex Ficke (Rifles) said.

"This is a chance for cadets to go from the comfort zone into the stretch zone.

"It is about having the mental and physical toughness to lead effectively, in what may be your first time in such a demanding environment."

Despite the exercise being carried out in controlled conditions on the Longmoor Training Area in Hampshire, the officer said the feelings of fear and aggression remained real.

Instructors were looking for situational awareness and command acumen in cadets, plus the ability to push through limits.

Maj Ficke added that the participants from Borneo, Falklands and Imjin Companies had performed well – with some showing outstanding promise.

"They took on-board lessons from the dynamic environment and dealt well with the demands placed upon them," he concluded. "It was a really good exercise with a great deal of learning."

The serial was part of an eight-day package dedicated to teaching future commanders how to lead complex stabilisation operations.

The full schedule focuses on building relationships with different groups in a simulated society – some welcoming and others hostile. ■

“It is about
having the
mental and
physical
toughness
to lead
effectively”



Reading the riot act

Maj Ficke imparts some useful advice for maintaining order...

Mind matters

"Whether a junior NCO or an officer, you need to be physically robust – you must have a good 'chassis'. But the head on your shoulders is the most important thing," he explained. "A leader has to be like a scrum half on the rugby pitch or a football midfielder. He or she will be looking across the field and making some key decisions.

"Your thinking needs to be collected, and you must be able to do it under physical pressure."

Physical presence

"Fortunately, we have a very good physical development programme at Sandhurst," Maj Ficke said. "But you cannot realistically expect to stand in the shield wall if you haven't prepared yourself properly.

"It is demanding and you are going to find out where your limits are.

"Make sure you eat well, get plenty of sleep and stay properly hydrated. Then you will be able to draw on reserves and push yourself."

Lifelong learning

"A leader dealing with a public order situation will be willing to learn," the officer continued.

"You must be open to doing things in a different way.

"Be prepared to deal with tough situations through training. We have the skills to impart but it is important you are ready and willing to learn.

"In short, you must have the raw materials to work with."



Keeping order: Cadets square up to mock troublemakers (above) and deal with a simulated petrol bomb attack (right)



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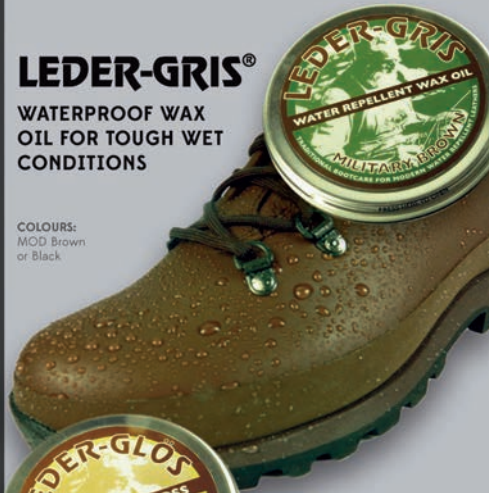
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80001b



CALL OF DUTY

Former soldiers show in hundreds during Regular Reserve test

Words: Cliff Caswell Pictures: Graeme Main

As the coaches continue to rumble through the front gate of the Army Reserve Centre – spilling waves of passengers collected from the nearby railway station onto the tarmac – former infantryman Chris Kneller is in a reflective mood.

Beneath the waning autumn sun he stands in a queue of contemporaries who have long completed the journey to civilian life.

But here, amid the earthy smell of military kit and with troops in uniform clutching clipboards intersecting the lines, it does not take long for the memories to return.

Like his comrades, Chris has received a letter asking him to voluntarily attend the Croydon centre as a member of the Regular Reserve and is waiting for his admin to be processed.

Under the Army's terms of service, he can still be mobilised to help at a time of national crisis. This exercise, organised by the Aldershot-based 101 Logistic Brigade, is essentially a trial to ensure the protocols are fit for purpose.

For the former member of 5 Rifles, however, the experience reflects a journey back into the recent – if very different – past.

"Being back here I realise that I do really miss military life," he admits.

"I was based in Germany and had some good times there. I also served in Afghanistan on Op Herrick 15."

Enshrined in legislation, the Regular Reserve is a pool of former soldiers who are liable for call up depending on the years of service they have completed.

The duration of this obligation varies in accordance with the engagement or commission type, but for soldiers it is normally six years. Those summoned are paid and again fall into the care of the military.

The option has rarely been used – the last time these Reserves were deployed in large numbers was during the Suez crisis of the 1950s, although they have seen more limited action in subsequent campaigns, including the early stages of Op Telic.

For senior officers, however, this exercise is a valuable opportunity to find out more about what the Service leavers are now doing as well as rehearsing some of the complex logistics of the event.

The results are encouraging – more than 1,600 former soldiers from across a range of roles have turned out at five centres across England, Wales and Scotland.





They are put through a series of briefings about the current make-up of the Army – which in many cases has changed significantly in the years since their departure – during the day.

“I think it is fair to say that we have not tested this muscle for some years,” Brig Johnny Blair-Tidewell, commander of 101 Logistic Brigade, told *Soldier*.

“Although there is no suggestion that there is going to be a return to large-scale mobilisation, this exercise is really useful for us.

“Firstly, this is a large action in its own right and we are really pleased with the numbers who have turned out.

“It is also an opportunity to learn more about the Regular Reservists’ aspirations.”

While those who attend are paid for their time in turning out, the talk in the registration queues is of genuine affection and a shared past. The chatter is made up of fragments of operations, exercises and experiences of years gone by.

Largely consisting of non-commissioned and junior officer ranks, they represent a cross-section of departures from the last decade.

The days of living and breathing the Army may be over, but the members of the Regular Reserve *Soldier* met still seem to carry their military ethos, values and standards with them in life.

With a willingness to respond to their country’s call, their value at a time of national crisis is not to be underestimated. ■



Form up: Reservists fill out their paperwork

CALL-UP QUESTIONS

We asked ex-soldiers in Croydon how they felt about attending this Regular Reserve engagement event

Bangalia Kargbo, ex-Rifles

It has been good to do this and see what is going on with the Army – coming back on a part-time basis could be a different experience. I was in from 2008 to 2015 and enjoyed it – I left to go to university.



Dan James, ex-RMP

I had served for more than 12 years when I left in 2015. Being in the Army gives you a lot of skills – when I go for interviews people are fascinated with the military part of my life and want to know all about it.



Rich Millbank, ex-RE

I served in the Army for 18 years and left 23 Engineer Regiment as a major fairly recently – I’m working in the City now with an insurance broker. Today has been a bit of a reunion to be honest. I’m surprised to see so many here.



Katherine Cook, ex-RAVC

I am still happy to help if I am called – you do your part. I served for four years as a dog handler – including on Op Herrick 18 in Afghanistan – before I left in 2014. These days I work as a builder with a company started by one of my former Regular Army colleagues.



Rasheed Ilesanmi, ex-RA

I am absolutely happy to go if I am called back to the Army – 100 per cent. Once you are a soldier, it is always in you. I signed up in May 2009 and left four years later. Serving has its ups and downs, but I enjoyed it.



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Gary Jamieson, former Scots Guardsman, injured in Afghanistan in 2010, Charity Beneficiary. © Malcolm Cochrane



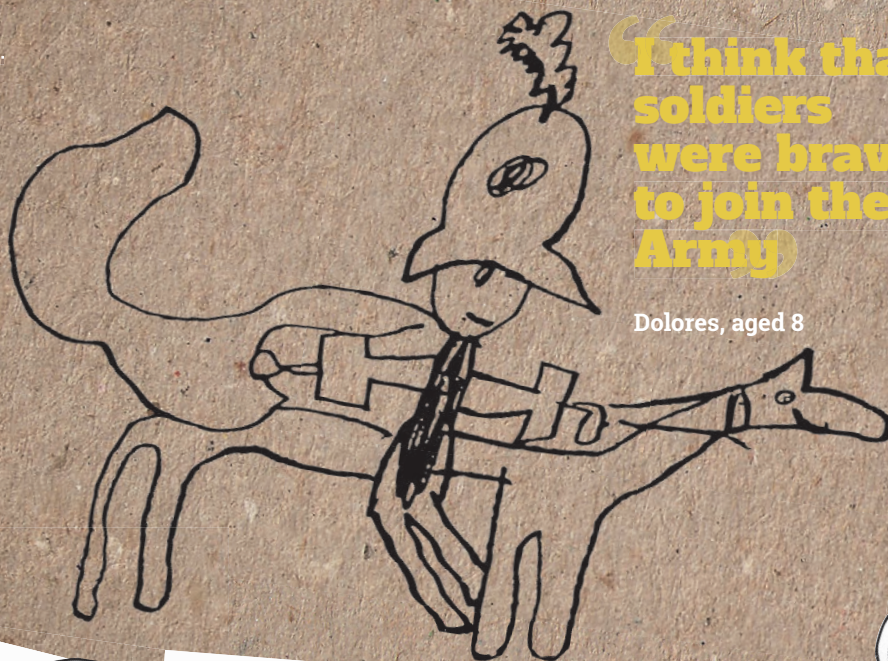
KIDS say the funniest things. So in a bid to deliver glad tidings in the build-up to Christmas, *Soldier* paid a visit to the National Army Museum to see what the country's youngest had to say about Service personnel of today.

With Op Herrick consigned to history, many of the youngsters have no living memory of war.

But the words and sketches they left behind paint a picture of gratitude as well as awe...

I think that soldiers were brave to join the Army

Dolores, aged 8



What do you think about soldiers and their service? Is there a particular story you've heard that has affected you? Leave your own message

Soldiers are awesome!

Thanks!

Nat.

Share your thoughts on Twitter or Facebook using #ReflectOnSoldier



What do you think about soldiers and their service? Is there a particular story you've heard that has affected you? Leave your own message or illustration here

I think soldiers are extremely brave to be risking their lives on knowing they could be saying goodbye to their families forever. They are serving our country, so that we know we're safe. That is a tough decision.

Christian / 11

Army Support

Share your thoughts on Twitter or Facebook using #ReflectOnSoldier



Festive cheer

Army life, through the eyes of children



What do you think about soldiers and their service? Is there a particular story you've heard that has affected you? Leave your own message or illustration here.

my father's a colonel doctor.
I'm very proud of him ♥
It makes me happy to know that he would risk
his life for the safety of thousands.

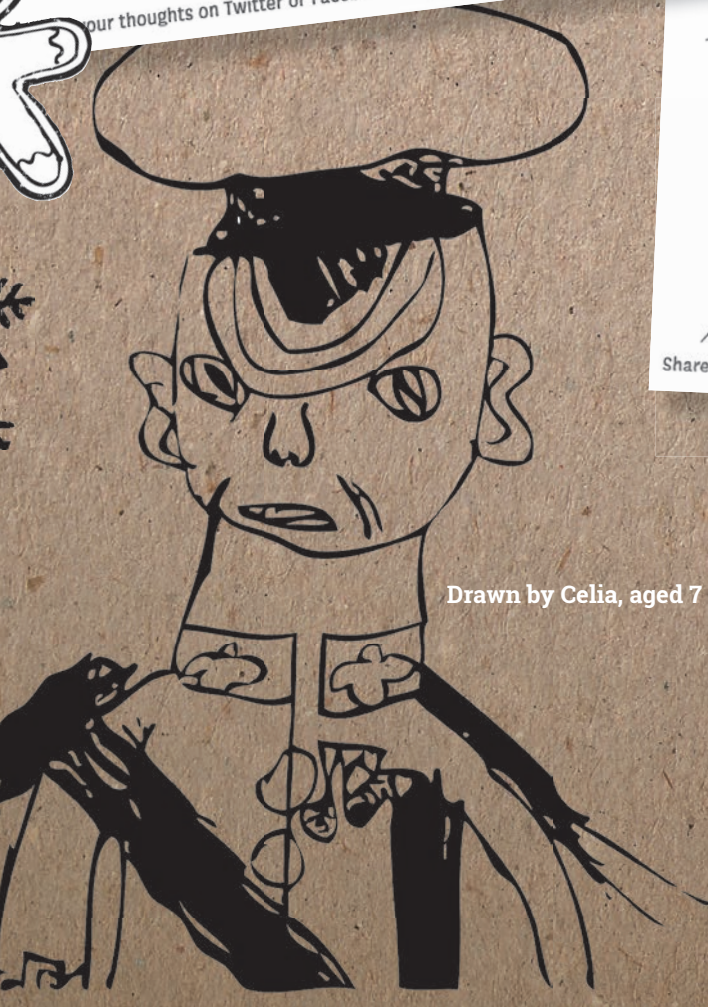
Love you w/ all my ♥

What do you think about soldiers and their service? Is there a particular story you've heard that has affected you? Leave your own message or illustration here.

Dear soldiers,

I think you are
very brave
Love Alex

Share your thoughts on Twitter or Facebook using #ReflectOnSoldier



Drawn by Celia, aged 7



The soldiers are very brave

Molly, aged 7

What do you think about soldiers and their service? Is there a particular story you've heard that has affected you? Leave your own message or illustration here.

I think that giving up your
life for the country, and others
safety is UTTERLY amazing
and brave. These people
ARE AMAZING

Share your thoughts on Twitter or Facebook using #ReflectOnSoldier

What do you think about soldiers and their service? Is there a particular story you've heard that has affected you? Leave your own message or illustration here.

My Dad is a soldier and
I want to be one too. Josh age
6

What do you think about soldiers and their service? Is there a particular story you've heard that has affected you? Leave your own message or illustration here.

Thank you to all the soldiers for your
service of keeping us all safe and
for risking your lives for others,

Logan, Age 12

Share your thoughts on Twitter or Facebook using #ReflectOnSoldier

Respond to these messages on social media using the hashtag **#reflectonsoldier**



It's DIFFERENT leaving NOW

From **serving Queen and country** with pride to becoming **homeless**, two Army veterans from London's **Sir Oswald Stoll Mansions** explain what **the flip side of a smooth transition** looks like...and how today's troops can try to avoid the same fate

● I WAS medically discharged in 2005 after injuring my knee, but right from the off I was lost.

It's different leaving now. There is so much more available, guidance and stuff.

I did my leaving course, but there was nothing else to bring you back to civilian life – especially the infantry guys who were coming out of war zones, dealing with chaos and then facing civilians who can't really cope with them.

I went back to Glasgow where I had some family.

I didn't know what I was doing, and civvy street angered me because there was no structure to it.

People were just walking round in a haze.

I bounced from house to house numerous times, living with family, then getting my own place.

I moved, moved again and changed jobs, but I just couldn't stick to anything and was getting angry.

I nearly killed a guy once because he came at me, and I just went into Army mode.

Mac McLaren

Ex-Infantryman
(Royal Highland Fusiliers)

After that I shut myself away for a bit: it scared me and I withdrew from society.

For a year or so I scraped by on my pension.

But if you don't have a place of your own there's no security.

You're living out of a bag on someone's sofa, and as much as they say you can stay there for as long as you want, you are always aware that you are taking up their space.

The turning point for me was an email that was sent to me by Help for Heroes.

I had applied for a trip to Thailand with them on a fishing expedition and I got it.

I went and spent two weeks with other guys, with camaraderie and that sense of belonging, and it was like being back in service again.

It was the greatest two weeks of my life.

That started a travelling bug inside me – I wanted to see more of the world.

So I decided to move down to London – I think they probably gave me a flat in this place just to shut me up!

Now I'm a professional photographer, and I find peace when I'm doing that.

When you are serving you have a sense of pride and Stoll gave that back to me.

They gave me a place I could make my own.

It gives you the camaraderie; you look out for each other here and it's a brotherhood.

My advice to others would be to swallow your pride and say that you need help.

I did, and that's how I found myself here.



A HOME IN CIVVY STREET

WHERE TO STAY

Sorting out a home is one of the most important parts of resettlement. The Joint Service Housing Advice Office (JSHAO) provides regular briefs to help troops get started, and attendance is treated as duty so allowances can apply. All ranks and their spouses are welcome, and to find out more search for the JSHAO's gov.uk page or call

+44 (0)1252 787574

HAVING PROBLEMS?

The London-based charity Stoll is just one organisation that provides housing support to vulnerable veterans. For details on its services email outreach@stoll.org.uk or call **+44 (0)20 7385 2110**. It can help with housing, welfare, benefits, qualifications, training, finances and addiction.



● I HAD an abusive childhood and went into care at eight years old.

When I was serving I had this routine in my life: you knew what you were going to be doing on a daily basis and had the sergeant major shouting down your earhole.

But I had spent a lot of time in uniform feeling like an outsider – especially at passing-out parades and days where families would turn up.

So leaving was massively anxiety-provoking.

When I was discharged from service I quickly found myself in trouble.

At first I was put in a bed and breakfast with £20 in my pocket, and as a result I just went into 'can't cope' mode.

I was offered a one-bed flat but it was difficult to adapt to civilian life.

My marriage broke down in 2009 and then I became homeless.

The council refused to help, so over three years I spent about £6,000 on hotel and hostel bills.

Eventually in 2013, I was put up in a house of multiple occupancy.

But over time my mental health got worse and I became a prisoner in my own room.

I contacted The Royal British Legion and they put me in touch with Stoll.

They asked if I would like a flat here in Fulham, so I came to view the property (shown below left) and it was a case of 'get me the keys'.

I didn't know anything about Stoll, but for me this place has been a lifeline.

I have a support worker, and I don't need to feel that I'm a burden to anyone.

It's about being part of a community: the neighbours will ask if I'm okay if they haven't seen me for a few days and it's that sense of camaraderie.

My advice to others would be 'don't feel negative about leaving the Army'.

There are organisations that will help so don't feel that you are going to be alone.

Don't let your background take control of your life again. And consider doing voluntary work as well.

I have been volunteering for 17 years, and it's a good way to integrate yourself into civilian society.



Hamish McGregor

Ex-Army medic
(Royal Army Medical Corps)



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Talkback

'I feel like I'm rejoining the Army'

“My biggest issue is with the medical”

I DON'T understand the current process that a soldier has to go through when applying for officer training.

I'm a senior NCO taking the direct entry route and I've had to go through the recruitment firm, Capita, and then liaise with its candidate support manager.

I've also had to submit all of my educational qualifications even though they are held on JPA, and then go through vetting despite being already cleared at security check (SC) level.

I feel like I'm rejoining the Army.

My biggest issue is with the medical. I have deployed before and am a qualified diver but I've been sent a medical declaration document and told I need to submit it through my GP, not my medical officer, at a cost of £160.

Capita will reimburse me only £65 so this will cost both me and the Army money.

Furthermore, the medical declaration form has three boxes: "First Time Applicant", "Previous Applicant" and "Re-Enlist/Rejoiner". None apply to me.

Apparently, a high number of candidates are rejected because of clerical errors so I would appreciate some advice. – **Name and address supplied**

Lt Col Tracy Wright, SO1 Policy, Directorate Manning (Army), replies: Army commissioning regulations (part four and part eight) outline the process for serving soldiers applying to become a Regular officer.

Entry to Royal Military Academy

Sandhurst (RMAS) should be before your 30th birthday and it is advised to submit your online application at least 12 months in advance.

Your commanding officer should have provided a recommendation for a commission on Army Form B227 – *Report on candidate for officer training*.

This is submitted to the National Recruiting Centre (NRC) at Upavon.

There is no requirement to re-vet a soldier who has already been cleared to at least SC level. As proof of clearance, a copy of your original security certificate should be attached to the application – another check will only be ordered if there is no evidence that this procedure has taken place.

Regarding medical fitness, you simply need to provide verification of a current PULHHEEMS assessment, which should be confirmed by a serving medical officer, recorded on an F Med 1 form and forwarded to the medical administration team at the NRC using a document transit sheet which should be sent to you.

You'll also need to verify that RMAS' academic eligibility standard has been met by providing certified true photocopies of the qualifications that are required.

If you have any further concerns you can contact the NRC direct on **0345 600 8080**.

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

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RANT OF THE MONTH



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Channel Four's *WWI Tank Restoration* marking Cambrai 100, which we previewed in the November issue, caused some rumblings on Facebook...



Paul Hilson

Great show and great to see it on the telly on the eve of the 100th anniversary. Fear Naught.



Andrew Wright

Great programme, great tank, great respect to all... except Lincoln police! Although I think Cambrai was a better place to stop for remembrance.



Tony Lewis

Great to watch, thoroughly enjoyed it. Thank you JCB and everyone else who helped.



Nicky Degarmond

What fun to drive in a tank. Amazing and wonderful how everyone remembers the fallen and big battles. So proud of you guys.



Mark Crookes

Essential viewing for this ex-Chieftain Gunner...obviously!



Martin Reggler

They did a great programme, and did the tank proud.



'Race for equality is flawed'

WE live in a world where there are many people screaming for equality in pay, standards and opportunities and even the Regular Infantry regiments will be opening their doors to women in the not-too-distant future.

So on a personal fitness assessment (PFA), why does a female of, say, 27 get more time to run 1.5 miles than a male of 45 and, not only that, is required to do fewer press-ups and sit-ups than her older male colleague who could be employed to do exactly the same job?

– Name and address supplied

Maj Emma Cameron, Individual Development Branch, Army Headquarters, replies: The PFA is a gender-fair assessment of personal fitness and general health.

The different standards take into account the physiological differences between males and

females as well as the decline in fitness that comes with age.

Its standards have no link to an individual's employment or trade group and for this reason should not be used as an entry standard for joining the Army, selection boards or courses.

It is designed to be used as a tool for gauging personal fitness, allowing individuals to focus on their own performance and seek advice from physical training instructors should they fall short of a satisfactory score.

In contrast, the annual fitness test measures basic physical capacity using a loaded march, while taking account of the different requirements between each arm and service.

It is age and gender-free – so the standards within each career employment group are the same for males and females.

“ I'd urge any soldier to contact their bank ”

PROPERTY BANK BOOST

● **HAVING** read about the Armed Forces Covenant, I recently contacted my bank about a buy-to-let mortgage for a property I own that is occupied by tenants.

I told them I was a Reservist and sent proof of my service.

They decided I could have a lower rate of interest – the same level as if I was still living there, which is one per cent less than I was paying.

They also backdated this for the length of the mortgage, giving me back several thousand pounds.



If they haven't done so already, I urge any soldier in a similar situation to me to contact his or her bank.

– Bdr Dan Burton, RA



Hot work: Not all armies have the option of rolling up their sleeves

It's time to enjoy a roll-up

WHY does the Army continue to insist on rolling up sleeves for summer and down for winter when wearing combat uniforms?

Surely, in this modern age we can trust our officers and soldiers to make their own decisions over such matters.

I know standards of dress apply for ceremonial purposes but I'm currently sitting in a small office with the heating on and my sleeves rolled down because it is winter and I have to.

The Royal Air Force and Royal Navy appear to have hit the nail on the head with a policy allowing their personnel to put a jumper on if they want to or if it's hot to wear short sleeves.

We are creating uncomfortable and an even less-uniformed working environments where people walk around in T-shirts simply because they are not allowed to wear their sleeves up and are unable to turn off the hotter-

than-the-sun radiators.

Can we please apply some common sense? – **Name and address supplied**

Army Sgt Maj Glenn Haughton replies: The Army has introduced a multi-terrain pattern shirt specifically for office environments and with the recent authority to wear the heavy wool jersey in winter order combat dress all office situations should be covered.

The traditional policy of sleeves worn down in winter and rolled up in summer provides uniformity, particularly when personnel are seen together.

The Service continues to wear combat dress as a matter of routine in offices but the other arms both wear a form of barrack dress so their policy cannot be compared with the Army's.

“We can trust soldiers to make a decision”

RESERVE RAGE

● **WITH** regard to Sgt Stuart Renton's entry in the November issue's Final Word, how did his comment make it into your magazine?

Is he suggesting that Reserves achieve in 27 days what the Regulars undertake over 365?

Personally, I've more than doubled their annual tally on exercises alone.

How many Reservists have deployed on operations this year? How many have actually shown up, compared to the figures provided by the Reserve centres?

And how many Regulars have worked extra hours to cover the shortfall in volunteers?

How dare he suggest this. Is this belonging? – **Name and address supplied**

The managing editor responds:

I believe you may have misconstrued Sgt Renton's comments. He was not suggesting that in just 27 days Reserves manage to squeeze in everything that Regulars achieve over a 12-month period.

He was indicating that because Reservists are on duty for a limited number of days over the course of a year their preparations for statutory annual training and exercises are pretty hectic and have to be accommodated in relatively small timeframes – usually over evenings and weekends – hence the learning process can feel very fast-paced.



Getting up to speed: Reservists from the Queen's Own Yeomanry hone their skills

'WHY ARE THE MPGS DENIED THE RESERVE BONUS?'

● **I** AM about to leave the Military Provost Guard Service (MPGS) and switch to the Reserve.

My colleagues believe we should receive a £10,000 bonus when we transfer but I don't agree.

My suspicions were confirmed when I made enquiries at my local careers office and the Army Personnel Centre's Reserve desk. However, they couldn't explain why we don't receive it so can you? – **Name and address supplied**

Col John Oldroyd, Army Pay Colonel, Remuneration Policy, Personnel Directorate, replies: Your colleagues are correct. The MPGS

can benefit from the Army Reserve Commitment Bonus scheme.

This allows ex-Regular Service personnel who join the Reserve (group A unit) and meet key milestones to claim up to four payments totalling £10,000.

MPGS are Regular soldiers on a specific engagement and are therefore entitled to join the scheme as long as they are of the required rank and meet the eligibility criteria.

Both are detailed in an administration instruction dated August 8, 2017 which can be found on the defence intranet.

BULLET POINTS

Bite-sized data to keep you in the know



CAREERS

Applications are open for the 2018 Barclays military internship programme. The three-month scheme is available to all Service leavers – regardless of age, rank or experience – in their final year of service. Candidates must submit a covering letter and CV via the website www.veteranemployment.co.uk by February 12.



COMPETITIONS

Spine line winners: S Prophet, HQ Hereford Garrison, Hereford.



DIARY

December 8-10: Military charity **Walking With the Wounded** is asking the British public to put their best foot forward in aid of injured veterans. Sign up at www.wwtw.org.uk/christmas to organise a group or individual walk of any length.

December 13: The South London **Military Wives Choir** will be performing carols for the Poppy Factory. Held at St Mary's Church in Twickenham from 1900-2100, the event will be hosted by radio presenter Jamie Crick. Visit www.poppyfactory.org/carols or call 020 8939 1872 for ticket details.

January 15, 2018: Deadline for the British Army's first poetry competition. See page 17 of November's *Soldier* for details.

March 23, 2018: N Battery (The Eagle Troop), Royal Horse Artillery celebrate the 175th Hyderabad Day. Open to all ex-members, the event comprises a black tie dinner in Newcastle-Upon-Tyne from 1900. For more information and to confirm attendance email hyderabad1843@gmail.com by December 11.

March 17, 2018: Opening of the National Army Museum's *Special Forces – Out of the Shadows* exhibition. Visit www.nam.ac.uk for details



DIRECTORY

ABF The Soldiers' Charity:
0845 241 4820

Armed Forces Buddhist Society:

Chaplain 020 7414 3411

www.afbs-uk.org
Armed Forces Christian Union:
01252 311221; www.afcu.org.uk

Armed Forces Muslim Association:
Chaplain 020 7414 3252;
www.afma.org.uk

Armed Services Advice Project:
0808 800 1007; www.adviceasap.org.uk

Army Families Federation:
01264 382324; mil 94391 2324;
www.aff.org.uk

Army LGBT Forum:
www.armylgbt.org.uk;
chair@armylgbt.org.uk

Army Libraries: 01252 340094

Army Ornithological Society:
www.armybirding.org.uk

Army Welfare Service:
01904 882053;
www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support

Big White Wall:
www.bigwhitewall.com

Blesma, The Limbless Veterans:
020 8590 1124; www.blesma.org

Blind Veterans UK:
(formerly St Dunstan's)
020 7723 5021;
www.blindveterans.org.uk

Care After Combat:
www.careaftercombat.org

Career Transition Partnership:
020 7469 6661

Children's Education Advisory Service:
01980 618244;
dcyp-ceas-enquiries@mod.uk

Combat Stress:
01372 841600;
www.combatstress.org.uk

Defence Humanists:
www.defencehumanists.org.uk

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Forces Pension Society:

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Help for Heroes:
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www.helpforheroes.org.uk

Heroes Welcome:
www.heroeswelcome.co.uk

HighGround:
www.highground-uk.org.uk

Joint Service Housing Advice Office: 01252 787574

Medal Office:
94561 3600 or 0141 224 3600

Mutual Support (multiple sclerosis group):
www.mutualsupport.org.uk

National Ex-Services Association:
www.nesa.org.uk

National Gulf Veterans' and Families' Association Office:
24-hour helpline 0845 257 4853;
www.ngvfa.org.uk

Poppyscotland: 0131 557 2782;
www.poppyscotland.org.uk

Regular Forces' Employment Association:
0121 236 0058; www.rfea.org.uk

Remount:
01451 850 341; www.remount.net

Royal British Legion:
0808 802 8080;
www.britishlegion.org.uk

Royal British Legion Scotland:
0131 550 1583;
www.legionscotland.org.uk

RBL Industries Vocational Assessment Centre:
01622 795900; www.rbli.co.uk

Scottish Veterans' Residences:
0131 556 0091; www.svrnline.org

SPACES (Single Persons Accommodation Centre for the Ex-Services):
01748 833797; www.spaces.org.uk

SSAFA:
0845 1300 975; www.ssafa.org.uk

Stoll (formerly known as the Sir Oswald Stoll Foundation):
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www.stoll.org.uk

The Not Forgotten Association:
020 7730 2400
www.nfassociation.org

The Poppy Factory:
020 8940 3305;
www.poppyfactory.org

The Royal Star & Garter Homes:
020 8481 7676;
www.starandgarter.org

The Veterans Charity:
01753 653772;
info@veteranscharity.org.uk

Troop Aid:
0121 711 7215 or 07734 384260
uk4u Thanks!:
01798 812081; www.uk4u.org

Veterans Welfare Service:
0808 1914 218 (from the UK);
0044 1253 866043 (from overseas)
www.gov.uk/government/groups/veterans-welfare-service



INTELLIGENCE

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

ABN 131/17: Command leadership and management part three – interim additional priority four

ABN 130/17: General Service Medal 2008 and Long Service and Good Conduct Medals for officers

ABN 129/17: Change in terminology of "man training day" to "Reserve service day"

ABN 128/17: Changes to appraisal reporting JSP 757, v2.1, July 2017

ABN 127/17: National Anti-Bullying Week 2017

ABN 126/17: Ojar 16 functional knowledge skills and experience recommendations

ABN 125/17: Sexual harassment survey

ABN 124/17: Policy for the governance of Pay 16 trade supplement placement changes and job evaluation

ABN 123/17: Army Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Network launch, November 14

ABN 122/17: Operationalising persistent engagement 1st (UK) Division mission exploitation symposium, November 30

ABN 121/17: The Army Mediation Service

ABN 120/17: Army trainer capability accreditation temporary suspension

DIN 2017DIN01-179: Armed Forces weight management policy

DIN 2017DIN01-178: Term-time absence guidance

DIN 2017DIN01-177: Joining instruction for official visits to British Defence Singapore Support Unit

DIN 2017DIN01-175: Terms and conditions of service for specialist

officers in the Army Reserve Group B General Service Corps, the Engineer and Logistic Staff Corps and the JFCyG Cyber Advisory Team

DIN 2017DIN01-174: Exercise Britanic Star – battlefield education tour to Israel

DIN 2017DIN01-173: Opportunities for Defence Medical Services personnel to serve with the United Kingdom Special Forces Medical Group

DIN 2017DIN01-171: British Armed Forces Sikh Association AGM

DIN 2017DIN01-170: Armed Forces pension scheme 1975 – revised representative rate

DIN 2017DIN01-167: Regulations governing the payment of overseas nursery allowance

DIN 2017DIN02-008: Investigatory Powers Act 2016 – initial implementation and compliance general awareness

DIN 2017DIN02-007: Risk balance case process uplift to the defence assurance risk tool

DIN 2017DIN03-018: Electromagnetic activities in defence – definition

DIN 2017DIN03-017: The provision of temporary landing zone safety officer training

DIN 2017DIN04-182: 2018 Aircraft display season aircrew coveralls

DIN 2017DIN04-181: Notification of new contract for civilian safety footwear

DIN 2017DIN04-180: Declaration of obsolete – exchange units NSN 5805-99-965-5676 and (ULS 3 line) NSN 5805-99-620-8946

DIN 2017DIN04-179: Declaration of obsolete – power 156 cable NSN 5995-99-617-2915

DIN 2017DIN04-178: Phased replacement of Wedge Bellows spirometer NSN 6515-99-513-1961 with Vitalograph Alpha NSN 6515-99-667-8773

DIN 2017DIN04-177: Declaration of obsolete – BCIP/Bowman baseline 5.4

DIN 2017DIN04-176: Allstar fuel agency cards – enforced decline of card if incorrectly used at a discount diesel fuel station

DIN 2017DIN04-175: Allstar fuel agency cards – removal of the ability to purchase premium fuel types

DIN 2017DIN04-174: Management of Mercury radio system (into service)

DIN 2017DIN04-173: Morphine auto-injector – disposal of expired devices following introduction of self-administered oral trans-mucosal Fentanyl Citrate

DIN 2017DIN04-172: Planned withdrawal of support and disposal of obsolete Items from artillery system project team

DIN 2017DIN04-171: Annual calibration and repair of Tritec fusion splicer NSN 6080 99 3495332 and Fujikura S60 fusion splicers 6060 99 3021209

DIN 2017DIN04-170: United Kingdom Accreditation Service EMC test report MoD repository

DIN 2017DIN04-169: Morphine auto-injectors for military working dogs

DIN 2017DIN04-168: Declaration of obsolescence AN/PRC152 battery 4.8AH NSN 6140-01-548-7566

DIN 2017DIN04-166: Physical training equipment procurement process 2017-2019

DIN 2017DIN05-015: Copyright

DIN 2017DIN05-014: Updated acquisition system operating model

DIN 2017DIN06-021: Publication of DSA01.2, chapters one and 10

DIN 2017DIN07-122: Rejoiners and inter-Service transfers into the Army Reserve

DIN 2017DIN07-121: QARANC Regular military nurse practitioner education, training and management

DIN 2017DIN07-120: Training – Institute of Naval Medicine – courses to be held April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019

DIN 2017DIN07-117: Incremental staff required for Joint Service Sub Aqua Dive Centre

DIN 2017DIN07-116: Expedition slots at the Joint Service Sub Aqua Diving Centre in 2018

DIN 2017DIN07-115: Joint Service Sub Aqua Diving Conference, RAF Brize Norton, March 7, 2018

DIN 2017DIN07-114: Ski mountaineering in Canada: AMA Baffin expedition 2019

Continued on page 54



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During the First World War, Private Stephen Palmer was sent an OXO tin filled with treats from his brother. This act of brotherly love saved Stephen's life when this very tin stopped an enemy bullet.



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Continued from page 53

DIN 2017DIN07-113: Nijmegen Marches 2018

DIN 2017DIN07-111: Air Warfare School courses 2018/19

DIN 2017DIN07-110: Nuclear Department course dates March 2018 to March 2019

DIN 2017DIN07-109: Tri-Service university short course programme – academic year 2017/18

DIN 2017DIN07-108: Training afloat regulations and safety 2017

DIN 2017DIN09-019: Nige Prouse Award

DIN 2017DIN09-018: Battle honours for Operation Deference and Operation Ellamy

DIN 2017DIN09-017: Battle honours for the post-war reconstruction phase of Operation Telic

DIN 2017DIN09-016: Royal Garden Parties 2018 – civilian staff

DIN 2017DIN10-050: Army Sport Control Board Charitable Fund

DIN 2017DIN10-049: Army golf skills courses

DIB 25/17: Update ministerial appointments and private office contacts



REUNION

Royal Army Medical Corps Reunited is having its biennial reunion at the Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool on February 2-4, 2018. For details contact Mick McCran on 07748643552



SEARCHLINE

Bob Lamb is searching for information on his half-brother, Robert Lamb, who was killed in action in Burma in the Second World War. He was from Manchester or Salford, Lancashire. His father – also Robert Lamb – was born in Salford on July 30, 1892. Contact Mr Lamb via lamb.rr@gmail.com

John Winstanley, a former corporal in MMG Platoon, 1st Battalion, The Parachute Regiment, is looking for ex-sergeant Mingie Campbell, believed to have been in C Company in the 1960s. Anyone with information is asked to call 0151 384 2533 or email tillyanddinky32@gmail.com

Melvyn Crooks is keen to speak to any former colleagues of his late wife, June Elizabeth Richardson. The ex-Servicewoman is known to have married a soldier from the Royal Signals called Ian Jackson, and served in both Penang and Singapore. Anyone with details about her service history is asked to contact him on 01670 817902.

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NO. 913 JUST HOW OBSERVANT ARE YOU?

TEN details have been changed in this picture of Reservists from the Royal Wessex Yeomanry training on the Challenger 2 main battle tank during Exercise Wessex Warrior on Salisbury Plain.

Circle all the differences in the left image and send the panel to **HOAY 913, Soldier, Ordnance**

Barracks, Government Road, Aldershot, Hampshire GU11 2DU with your contact details, including email address, no later than December 29.

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REVIEWS



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BOOKS

MOVIES

ATOMIC BLONDE

**Novelists who inspired
Cold War thriller talk shop**

ANYONE old enough to remember the fall of the Berlin Wall will probably recall news footage of euphoric people wielding sledgehammers, exploding fireworks and streams of East German residents heading west.

But *Atomic Blonde* tells a far darker story around these real events – where amid the crumbling apparatus of the communist empire, the twilight world of espionage is still very much alive.



MOVIES

Atomic Blonde is out on Blu-Ray and DVD on December 4, courtesy of Universal Pictures (UK)



Based on the graphic novel *The Coldest City*, this offering from director **David Leitch** puts **Charlize Theron** – as MI6 agent Lorraine Broughton – at the centre of this ultimate dog-eat-dog world.

But be warned: this is nothing like a *James Bond* outing.

Broughton displays a level of violence that would make 007's eyes water, with her ability to carry out horrific martial arts moves in killer heels as impressive as her dexterity in wielding all manner of firearms.

It is fast, complicated and outrageously over the top at times.

But it is also compelling and the story, stylish sets and relentless action of *Atomic Blonde* deliver the spirit of its literary counterpart.

Both *The Coldest City* author **Antony Johnston** and artist **Sam Hart** said they were delighted with the way their tale was brought to the screen.

"In many ways the film is very close to the book," Johnston – who also acted as a co-producer on the movie – told *Soldier*.

"Both the stories and characters have been kept the same and there are even some lines of dialogue that have been taken wholesale.



"But the mood of *The Coldest City* is very different – it is a noir spy thriller whereas the film is vibrant and has a stunning 1980s soundtrack.

"I'm very happy with how it appears and it was a thrill to have a star as huge as Charlize Theron interested."

Johnston was also pleased to be involved with the film's production.

"It is very difficult to stipulate such a role unless you are **JK Rowling** or **Stephen King**," he said with a smile.

"But the people making the movie wanted me involved and I am really grateful they did – they kept me up-to-date with everything and I visited the sets."

Hart was equally pleased with the novel's transfer from page to screen – highlighting that the mood of Berlin at the climax of the Cold War had been captured well.

"The story is all there – it has been completely respected, even to the



MOVIES



VERDICT:

A Cold War thriller on steroids, this is one for the Christmas list.

★★★★★

DVD RELEASES



Shock Wave Tunnel

Out now

STARRING **Andy Lau** (*House of Flying Daggers*), this is from the Hong Kong stable of police action movies. The formula is recognisable as a slighted gangster boss seeks revenge against Lau's EOD specialist by threatening to blow up a tunnel along with the commuters held hostage inside. This is a classic old-school movie that reeks of **Sylvester**

Stallone's Daylight. But as an example of its type, it is a fun – if predictable – romp with all the gunplay and explosions you could ask for.

Maj Alex Janaway, RAMC



Transformers: The Last Knight

Out now

MARK Wahlberg and **Josh Duhamel** are joined by **Anthony Hopkins** for the latest instalment of the *Transformers* franchise. This newest edition turns everything you know on its head, merging interplanetary action with the legends of Merlin, Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. A proven mix of CGI, slow-mo and massive set pieces make this an action-filled outing. Strongly recommended to anyone who has seen the previous movies, and a guaranteed good night's entertainment for anybody who hasn't.

Cpl Adam Jackson, Para

extent that it is told through a series of flashbacks as Lorraine is being debriefed," he said.

"I also thought the soundtrack was brilliant, capturing the music being played at the time.

"The filmmakers, however, went in a different direction in terms of the visuals – for example, my direction on Lorraine was to make her pretty but not beautiful, whereas Charlize Theron is a strong blonde.

"However, I was very pleased with the end result."

Atomic Blonde's origins as a graphic novel are certainly clear.

The action happens at a rapid clip, with the whole experience feeling akin to a video game such as *Max Payne*.

Although the pace can make the plot bewildering, it does not detract from the film's overall style.

An actioner underpinned with a decent storyline makes this is well worth a watch. ■

INTERVIEWS: CLIFF CASWELL AND RICHARD LONG





Alone in Berlin

Out now

PERFECTLY capturing the fear and paranoia of Berlin at the outset of the Second World War, this powerful film from **Vincent Perez** revolves around a couple who risk their lives to carry out a small act of resistance against their Nazi government. Anna and Otto Quangel are left grief-stricken after their soldier son is killed in the battle for France, driving them to leave postcards criticising Hitler in public places. Polished performances from **Emma Thompson** and **Brendan Gleeson** in the lead roles set the tone for this tale, based on **Hans Fallada's** acclaimed 1947 novel *Every Man Dies Alone*. Films focusing on German resistance to the Nazis are a rarity and this pulls no punches in presenting side-by-side the story of those who are swept along by the hysteria, and others who make a stand against injustice.

Cliff Caswell, Soldier



Bad Santa 2

Out now

BILLY Bob Thornton returns as anti-festive season hero Willie Soke to put the XXX into Xmas. Depending on your sense of humour, this film will have you laughing out loud – it's rude, crude and being PC goes right out the window throughout. However, as a sequel it misses the

mark and is quite predictable. It could have been worse, though, and is still worth a watch if you find yourself at a loose end one evening.

Rodge Tapply, ex-RE



Office Christmas Party

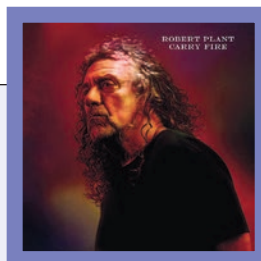
Out now

YOU don't really have to think too hard about what's going to happen in this festive title, starring **Jennifer Aniston**, **Jason**

Bateman and **TJ Miller**. *The Office Christmas Party* was always going to go wrong from the second the plan was hatched – but sadly, this statement applies on all levels, from the plot to the acting. A multitude of one-liners make the movie sort of float along, but the whole thing is just far too predictable.

Rodge Tapply, ex-RE





PICK OF THE MONTH:

READY TO FIRE

Zeppelin star continues creative streak

► SINCE his **Led Zeppelin** days **Robert Plant** has always been relied upon to release an album that has allowed him to explore his musical influences and *Carry Fire* is no exception.

This is the eleventh solo release since his heady days as the frontman of one of the UK's most celebrated rock acts and his first effort since 2014's acclaimed *Lullaby and...The Ceaseless Roar*.

The singer spent two years on the road with his band **The Sensational Space Shifters** in support of the record and during that time their sound and vision pushed the creative boundaries.

And that evolution continues here as the tracks combine unusual rhythms with naturalism and smouldering power.

"It's about intention, I respect and relish my past works but each time I feel the lure and incentive to create new work," Plant explained.

"I must mix old with new. Consequently, the whole impetus of the band has moved on its axis somewhat, the new sound and different space giving way to exciting and dramatic landscapes of mood, melody and instrumentation."

Plant has packed a number of guest players into this album, from **Seth Lakeman's** fiddle to his own backing band who between them can play around 30 instruments.

It's no surprise that each track has its own distinctive flavour.

But there's also room for the more

VERDICT:
An
impressive
musical
exploration
★★★★★

traditional rock 'n' roll, pushing against chugging electric guitars and rolling drums on *New World* and declarations of love on *Season's Song*, which wouldn't be out of place on Zeppelin's acoustic third offering.

The best songs on show here contain a little of both worlds: the forward-charging *The May Queen*, the stabbing guitars of *Bones of Saints* and the yearning *Bluebirds Over the Mountain*, which includes a turn from **Chrissie Hynde**.

An album that will sit nicely in anyone's collection, especially those who are still eagerly waiting for that Zeppelin reunion. ■

REVIEW: DAMIAN HERN, EX-AGC (SPS)

MUSIC RELEASES



Folk, Hop n Roll Deluxe

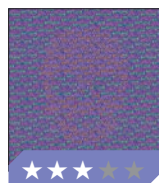
by Judah and the Lion



FOLK, hip hop

and rock 'n' roll are hardly the first combination you'd put together but like a musical stir fry it seems to work. Think **James Bay** meets **Eminem**, with a bit of **Mumford and Sons**. But if you have a pair of ill-fitting jeans, a chequered shirt and beard then you'll probably love them immediately. This new genre is perfectly summed up on *Reputation*, which throws tongue-twisting rap over folk guitars. *We Own The Night* and *Uh Huh, Yeah!* are out-and-out dance tracks but it's on *Take It All Back* where the band really show their versatility.

Cpl Scott Roberts, Rifles



Cult Psychotica

by Battleme



EVEN with its aggressive guitar

playing and punchy percussion this album didn't do enough to fully keep my attention. That said, it would make a great accompaniment to a high-intensity workout. The catchy *Wanna Go Home* and *Misfit Honey Bear* are the highlights and well worth a listen. The four-piece band, lead by **Matt Drenik**, recorded this offering over one week and it forms their answer to the uncertain American political climate so it packs a powerful message. The lyrics are decent enough and thought-provoking but there is not enough musical variety on offer.

Janet Dornan, ex-R Signals



Wanderer

by Cara Dillon



THIS is the seventh album from award-

winning folk singer **Cara Dillon** and once again she collaborates with **Sam Lakeman** to offer a collection of intimate tracks that capture some of her most moving vocal performances to date. The underlying theme here is the movement of people, of emigration and the pursuit of love and is an offering that speaks to her fascination with songs of departure and the powerful desire to belong. This really is a breath of fresh air from start to finish, beautifully produced and you'll be hooked from the very first song.

Rodge Tapply, ex-RE



Common Problem

by The Lafontaines



WHEN you read

the lyric sheet for these tracks it is not always obvious what the band are talking about, but one thing is for sure – they are "angsty" about it. Initially, I was not sure what to make of this rock/electronic foursome and after the first play I would have given this effort just one star as a rating. But having had the album on loop in the car I have become rather fond of it and *Torture* is a single that could definitely be played on Radio One. If you're not already a fan of the group you should check them out.

Martyn Timmis, civvy

GAMES



Shadow of War is out now for PS4, Xbox One and PC



PICK OF THE MONTH:

FIGHTING IN THE SHADOWS

All-out action continues in latest *Lord of the Rings* spin-off

► PICKING up where the *Shadow of Mordor* left off, this latest **Tolkien**-inspired offering heads to Mount Doom to forge a new ring free of Sauron's power but things don't quite work out.

Like the first release, the gameplay is action-packed and largely reminiscent of the *Batman Arkham* series. And that's a good thing as you leap around hacking Orcs to pieces.

The Nemesis system is also back in a more refined form, which allows you to not only research and then defeat the enemy commanders in Sauron's vast army but bring them round to your way of thinking and build a legion of your own.

It's a superb feature and I'm glad it hasn't been completely overhauled.

While the gameplay

VERDICT:
Slight tweaks pay off in Middle Earth
★★★★★

is fast and frenetic at times it largely focuses around simplistic tasks that you are to complete. How you go about this is entirely up to you.

You can go charging in utilising every weapon and ability in your arsenal or you can opt for stealth and get a relatively trouble-free kill. It's all down to you.

But therein lies the only real issue with *Shadow of War*. It pretty much replicates the first game: combat, movement, stealth – almost every element is copied or reused.

And while they were and still are great features, a fresh approach or even just some additional tweaks beyond graphical fidelity would have further enhanced the experience.

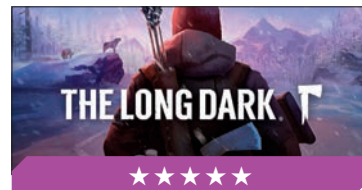
Nemesis is a good example of making a few improvements without losing the appeal and purpose of a previous feature.

Graphically, it's a slight step up but there's nothing revolutionary here and the camera has a nasty habit of giving you awkward angles.

All in all, though, it's a thoroughly enjoyable single-player offering that you'll gladly spend hours or even days with. ■

REVIEW: DAVID MCDUGALL, CIVVY

GAMES RELEASES



The Long Dark
PS4, Xbox One and PC

IT'S not often that you get games that are surprising and entertaining. But *The Long Dark* is definitely one of those. This is an immersive and challenging survival title that pits you against the Alaskan wilderness. After your plane crashes in a ravine it's down to you – cold, hungry and injured – to survive the first night, gathering what supplies you can while enduring the freezing conditions. If you make it through until morning you'll be able to venture further afield, all while ensuring you don't run out of food or freeze to death. If you want a challenging but enjoyable offering, this is definitely it.

David McDougall, civvy



Deadbeat Heroes
Xbox One

INDIE games are on the rise, and when you find little gems like this it's clear to see why more and more are appearing on the market. *Deadbeat Heroes* is a simplistic, yet colourful and entertaining title that can best be described as a 3D brawler set in London. As the protagonist with a unique ability for dealing out pain, you'll encounter various thugs and villains as you battle to take down an overbearing criminal organisation. Some succumb to a flurry of punches to the face, while others require a more tactical approach, all before trying to take down successive bosses. It is great fun.

David McDougall, civvy

SOLDIER SELECTS ★★★★★

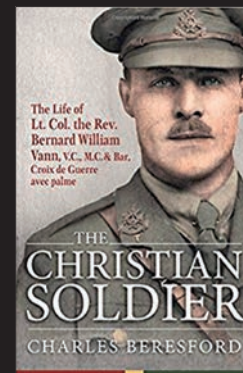
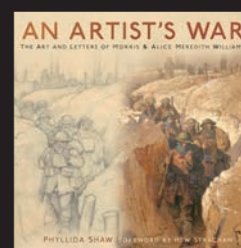
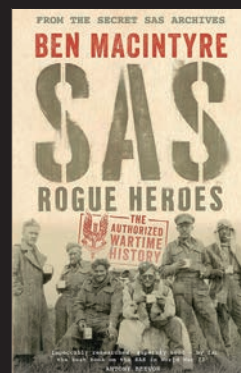
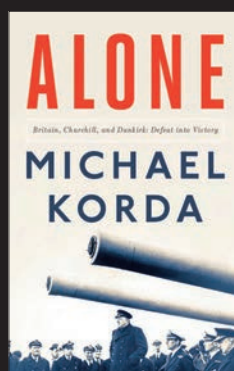
► Need some Christmas gift inspiration? Check out our review team's nominations for the best books of 2017...

A Heavy Reckoning

by Emily Mayhew

THIS outstanding title about the long-term impact of serious injury was *Soldier's* book of the month in June and is my pick for the best offering of 2017. Science is coming to understand that for gravely wounded troops, survival comes at a cost. In the years following their recovery this cohort prematurely experiences problems such as impaired metabolism and organ function – basically issues normally associated with ageing. Emily Mayhew explores why this should be the case in often graphic clinical detail. But this is not really a text about the minutiae of physiology; at its heart it is a study of the human cost of war. Disturbing and moving in equal measure, it raises some profound questions about the trade-off between survival and lasting wellbeing and the limits of modern medicine. A highly recommended, if sobering read.

Becky Clark, *Soldier*



SAS Rogue Heroes

by Ben MacIntyre

FOR me, the best read of the year was this book revealing the untold true story behind the men that made the legendary Special Air Service. It is an easy-to-read and highly detailed account of the birth of the famous regiment. Comprehensive maps and newly released photographs bring the account to life and, with the last of the original desert warriors now gone, this is an absolute must for any military bookshelf.

Cpl Scott Roberts, *Rifles*

Christian Soldier

by Charles Beresford

OF all the titles I have reviewed for *Soldier* this year, I would put Charles Beresford's biography of First World War chaplain Bernard Vann ahead of the rest. Clearly written and the product of excellent research, it puts paid – in my view – to Siegfried Sassoon's and Robert Graves's denigrations of military clergymen. Vann was not strictly a padre, having joined as an enlisted man – although he did take services – but he gave his life for a cause he believed in. You could add his Victoria Cross to three others awarded to chaplains and his death to that of 180 chaplains. His is a remarkable and inspiring story.

Dr Rodney Atwood, *military historian*

Alone

by Michael Korda

THIS account of the events surrounding Dunkirk is a no-brainer for my top read of 2017. There's a mountain of stuff out there about both the world wars but not much focusing on the non-military side of life. Michael Korda was just a boy in 1940 but the ever-present threat comes through as if it were written by an eyewitness to the retreat. Incredibly, the government of the day managed to convince the public that Dunkirk was somehow a huge victory, a fine example of how people's thinking can be shaped through non-lethal means – something specialist formations such as 77 Brigade still do today.

WO1 Dave Henley, *Int Corps*

An Artist's War

by Phyllida Shaw

ARTIST Morris Meredith Williams was on the Western Front from 1916-18 and this superb book captures the vitality and authenticity of his works from those years. It is skilfully edited by Phyllida Shaw who was given his sketchbook by her aunt, Meredith Williams' second wife. Wonderfully displayed and laid out by graphic designer David Grey, it also includes a foreword by renowned historian Hew Strachan. This striking and informative title is well worth having on your shelf if you are interested in war artists.

Andy Kay, *ex-RS*

The War in the West: The Allies Fight Back 1941-1943

by James Holland

THERE have been some outstanding new books this year, but I have no hesitation in choosing the second volume of James Holland's history of the Second World War as my favourite. It really does challenge much of the accepted wisdom on the war, most notably the intertwined myths of German supremacy and British ineptitude. The narrative is refreshing and engaging and makes the reader reconsider many of the ingrained perceptions of the conflict. Well worth adding to your Christmas list.

Mike Peters, *ex-AAC*

A full-page background image showing two snowboarders from behind, walking away on a snowy mountain slope. The person on the left wears an orange and brown jacket and camouflage pants, carrying a green snowboard. The person on the right wears a camouflage jacket and black pants, carrying a red snowboard. The landscape is covered in snow with some evergreen trees in the distance.

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SOLDIER SPORT



BACK ON TRACK

THE Army Road Race Team has had a year of mixed fortunes on the grid but is looking for new riders to join the fold in 2018. Read about their plans on pages 70-71...

Picture: Camilla Temple-Court



TRACK TALENT SOUGHT AS NEW SEASON LOOMS

WITH an injury-ravaged campaign behind them the stars of the Army Endurance Road Race Team are looking to recapture their form as they prepare to return to the track in 2018.

A double crash in the second round of the ACU Endurance Championships saw the set-up lose two of its most experienced riders for the remainder of the year – meaning end-of-season honours were in short supply.

The standout performance came from the pairing of WO2 Carl Goodchild (RAPTC) – who started 2017 as a rookie – and WO2 Wayne Morgan (PWRR) as they achieved two podium places in the National 1,000 class, with the Service finishing fifth in the collective standings.

"It has been a hard season," outgoing team manager Sgt Richard Spencer-Fleet (REME) – one of those to succumb to injury – told *SoldierSport*.

"This is a dangerous, fast-paced sport which is largely done at our own expense. So when you crash it can cost a lot of money.

"We had hopes of being up there in contention at the end of the year but that didn't quite happen this time round.

"Carl and Wayne did very well but the big push now is to get more people on the track for the new campaign."

WO2 Andy Day (REME) is taking over at the helm with Spencer-Fleet hoping to move to British Superbikes in 2018, although he will compete in the endurance series when his calendar allows.

A total of 18 riders – including veterans and guests – represented the set-up over nine rounds this year but road race secretary Capt Peter Brown (REME) is keen to attract newcomers to the fold so the talent pool continues to rise.



"I REALLY WANT TO DEVELOP THE TEAM"

"We consistently recruit rookies and that gives us a five-year cycle where they go on to become national-standard riders," he explained.

"But there are a lot more out there and we are getting out to events like the British Army Track Day to raise our profile.

"They can come along to our test days outside the championship and have a go and we can go from there.

"We never turn down those who want to act as support or pit crew and that is often where we find our next generation of riders, so there are a lot of opportunities available.

"I really want to develop the team. We have six rookies in contention for next season. It will not necessarily be about scoring points but they can come in, gain experience and understand what it is all about for the following year."

Brown's remit covers both the

endurance and sprint teams, as well as those competing in various TT events.

The former features races that last between three and six hours with two or three riders operating in a relay system, while the sprint discipline consists of just 12 laps.

The set-up has streamlined its sponsorship efforts to cover both teams and, while this offsets some of the costs involved, the vast majority of the outlay comes from the soldiers themselves.

"Sponsorship covers less than five per cent," Brown added.

"In reality we are encouraging people to come along and do this with us.

"In return they will get good governance, time off work and help with transport to events.

"We have also got four guys on instructors' courses which means we will be able to offer coaching during winter training and test days.

"As an organisation we are able to apply a small amount of pressure on the chain of command so soldiers can have the chance to come and do this. We are getting good support from commanding officers, which really helps."

Anyone interested in getting involved with the set-up should email andrew.day703@mod.uk or sprint team manager CSgt Danny Williams (Mercian) via danny.williams114@mod.uk ■



RACING IN NUMBERS

RIDERS WHO RACED FOR THE ENDURANCE TEAM IN 2017

18

THE RANKING ACHIEVED BY CFN RYAN REDMAN IN THE SPRINT INDIVIDUAL STANDINGS

3

ROUNDS IN THE SERVICES SPRINT SERIES

6

MAXIMUM LENGTH, IN HOURS, OF AN ENDURANCE RACE

7



Pictures: Garry Fox

TITLE GOES TO THE WIRE

THE Army Sprint Road Race Team found themselves trailing their rivals from the Royal Air Force as they headed into the final round of this season's Inter-Services Championship.

However, a series of excellent performances on the Donington track saw the soldiers overhaul the deficit and surge ahead to claim the overall title.

Some inspired selections boosted the team's hopes as Cpl Stephen Thomas (AGC (RMP)) and WO2 Andy Day (REME) finished first and second respectively. Army riders also claimed four of the top ten spots to confirm their status as the military's premier outfit.

"Our goal for this season was to just get more guys out on the track," manager CSgt Danny Williams (Mercian) told *SoldierSport*. "We were not expecting to win.

"Some good tactical decisions not only got us the victory but showed the dominance of the Army.

"Our aim for next season is to retain that title but I'm not sure how realistic that will be.

"A few of our riders have now retired and the Royal Navy have really invested in their development so they will come back fighting.

"We will have a lot of newcomers; our intention is to battle for the championship but it might be a case of developing for 2019." ■





CREAM OF THE CROP

ATHLETE Gdsm Peter Moreno (Coldm Gds) spoke of his immense pride at being named Army sportsman of the year.

The decathlon ace said: "This is by far the biggest award I've ever received. It means the world to me and I want to push on and make the Service proud."

Having battled serious illness, cyclist Capt Ejay Harris (RAMC, pictured above) went on to achieve vast success in 2017, earning her the title of sportswoman of the year.

"My recovery made me a stronger athlete," she explained. "Winning this is a real honour."

Army boxing coach SSgt Jason Browning (RAPTC, pictured below), who took the sports official prize, praised the efforts of his fighters but insisted there is more to come from the team.

"It doesn't finish here," he said. "We keep going and we now feel we can compete with anyone."

On receiving her accolade, rising star Spr Ebonie Jones (RE) confirmed her Olympic intent and said she hopes to claim further honours at future ceremonies.

She added: "Hopefully I can come back and get sportswoman of the year."



BEST IN THE BUSINESS



"I WANT TO PUSH ON AND MAKE THE SERVICE PROUD"

A STUNNING year of team successes and individual triumphs were celebrated at the annual Army Sports Awards.

The Service's boxing squad were the big winners – scooping two of the six prizes on offer – while those pushing for international recognition were rewarded following a gruelling schedule of training camps and competitions.

Multi-eventer Gdsm Peter Moreno (Coldm Gds, pictured left) was named sportsman of the year after he rose to the ranking of sixth in the UK decathlon standings and secured five gold medals at this season's Inter-Services Athletics Championships.

He holds the Nigerian and Army pole vault records and is now eyeing a place at next year's Commonwealth Games.

Sportswoman of the year Capt Ejay Harris (RAMC) was part of the Storey Racing cycling team that won the National Women's Road Race Series and an impressive run of performances

saw her named in the Team GB squad for the UCI RideLondon event in August.

Having joined the Army boxing squad last year rising star recipient Spr Ebonie Jones (RE, pictured above) has enjoyed a sensational run of form that saw her win the England and British Elite National Championships. She is now part of the Team GB set-up and is hoping to compete at the 2020 Olympics in Tokyo.

Her coach, SSgt Jason Browning (RAPTC), claimed the sports official accolade after the fighters secured another Inter-Services crown, seven national titles and four national title belts.

The Army's female swimmers were named team of the year as they defeated their Forces rivals for a 20th successive season and scooped 28 medals at the World Masters Games.

And Maj (Retd) Jim Mackenzie was honoured with the lifetime achievement award for his long-standing dedication to judo. ■

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SOLDIERS TAKE CENTRE STAGE IN FORCES ROUT

A STRONG Army contingent helped propel the UK Armed Forces to a long overdue victory in rugby union's annual remembrance fixture.

The soldiers contributed four tries to an emphatic 42-26 routing of Bristol United as the military outfit posted their first win since 2013.

However, it was far from plain sailing in the opening stages as a vibrant and youthful Bristol outfit signalled their intent.

Kickable penalties were turned down in favour of field position from the lineout and their attacking mind set reaped dividends in the 14th minute as wing Iwan Hughes rounded off a flowing passing move to touch down in the corner.

Fullback George Perkins sprinted through a yawning gap in the Forces' defence to double the lead moments later and the barrage continued until the visitors finally established

a foothold in the game midway through the half.

A series of probing attacks created a platform in the opposition 22 and when the forwards safely gathered the ball at the lineout LSgt Mattie Dwyer (WG) was on hand to reach for the line.

But their good work was undone on the stroke of half-time as some slack defensive play gifted James Newey a simple try that stretched the hosts' lead to 21-7.

The Servicemen came roaring back after the interval and a stunning break from LCpl Chris Leatham (R Irish, pictured) was the catalyst for a scintillating score from Royal Air Force wing Cpl Toby Mann.

Skipper Fg Off Rob Bell drew the sides level as the forwards flexed their muscles once again before front-row powerhouse Sgt Nathaneal Titchard-Jones (REME, pictured right) continued

**REMEMBRANCE
RUGBY UNION**

BRISTOL

26

UKAF

42



the comeback with a searing sprint to the line.

Leatham crossed for a deserved try as he intercepted a loose pass to ghost home under the posts before Bristol wing Tom Hargan collected a clever kick through the lines to pounce in the corner.

The imposing Cpl Lewis Bean (Rifles) added a final try at the death and Cpl James Dixon (RE) kicked the extras to seal a comfortable victory.

"It is a great feeling to score on such a special occasion but the most important thing is that the UK Armed Forces won," Leatham told *SoldierSport* afterwards.

"In the last few games we have probably played within ourselves but here we wanted to be a bit more open and it paid off.

"This is my fourth game for the team and we had not had a win until tonight; it was really important to get that in what was a great game of rugby." ■



WALES IN CONTROL

WHILE the UK Armed Forces men celebrated victory in their remembrance fixture there was disappointment for the women's side as they crashed to a 39-17 defeat to a Welsh Development XV.

Staged at Cardiff Arms Park, the match proved to be an enthralling affair and it was the hosts who seized the early advantage as three quick tries saw them open a 17-0 lead.

But the Servicewomen hit back courtesy of Army star Cpl Jade Mullen (AGC (SPS)), who carved a sublime line through the opposition defence to score under the posts, with Capt Gemma Rowland (RA) kicking the extras.

The Welsh bossed proceedings after the break and two further tries stretched their lead to 29-7 before prop forward LCpl Sarah Batley (AGC (RMP)) gave the visitors hope as she crashed over from short range.

However, their optimism was soon crushed as efforts from Rhian Noakes and Jessica Kavanagh-Williams effectively ended the contest. Cpl Amy Cokayne, of the Royal Air Force, completed the scoring late on.



YOUNG GUNS START IN STYLE



**"IT
WAS A
BATTLE
TO THE
END"**

HAVING missed out on silverware last season the Army's next generation of rugby union stars made a winning start in their latest bid for Inter-Services glory.

While their 19-13 victory over the Royal Air Force represented a positive outcome it was far from comfortable for the soldiers, who found themselves trailing for long periods before finally hitting their straps late on.

An early penalty from Fg Off James West gave the visitors an ideal start but the Reds hit back with a prolonged spell of possession as the forwards and backs attacked in unison.

However, they failed to convert their pressure into points as a lack of composure and some last-gasp RAF defending saw a host of try-scoring opportunities go begging.

Their wastefulness was punished as West converted from the tee to give his side a 6-0 lead at the break and they showed little threat in the initial stages of the second half.

But replacement Spr Tom

O'Rourke (RE) brought the game to life on the hour mark as he jinked through the lines to touch down and with Fus Aaron James (Inf) kicking the extras the hosts established a slender advantage.

A second try soon followed as skipper Spr Marcus Mercer (RE, pictured) offered quick ball to James and the fullback made a searing run down the left to create the platform for Pte Adrea Vasuitoga (RLC) to score.

O'Rourke stretched the lead as he drove to the line in the 74th minute and the Army survived a late scare from their rivals to seal a precious win.

"It was a battle to the end," a relieved Mercer told *SoldierSport* afterwards. "The first half was tough. We came out fighting and wanted to play safe rugby but it went the other way.

"We knew consistency was the key. We executed really well after the break and were solid in defence throughout."

The Army were in action against the Royal Navy in the tournament decider as this issue went to press. ■

SPORT SHORTS



Loggies at the double

THE Royal Logistic Corps celebrated double success at the Inter-Corps indoor hockey competition as their men's and women's teams were both crowned champions.

Four unanswered second-half goals helped the men to a convincing 7-3 win over the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers in their final.

But the women's showpiece was a tougher test as the loggies edged past the same opposition with a 3-2 victory to seal a fourth successive title.

"We're very pleased to win again this year," said women's skipper Capt Gemma Darrington.



Wright reigns supreme

JUDO ace Pte Jayne Wright (RAMC) is setting her sights on international honours following a gold medal-winning performance at the Welsh British Masters event in Cardiff.

Competing in the under-57kg dan grade category, the Reservist won four fights during a gruelling day of action to claim the overall title and earn a place in the Team GB set-up.

"The day started with real nerves as I knew I was competing with fighters who have worked just as hard as me and were eager to win," said Wright.

"I had some challenging matches against strong athletes but came away with that all-important win."

REDS HIT THE GOAL TRAIL



It was business as usual for the Army women as another goal rush sparked a 21st successive Inter-Services indoor hockey title.

The Reds demolished the Royal Air Force 8-1 in the tournament's opening fixture and their dominance continued as they locked horns with the Royal Navy.

An early double from skipper Sgt Amanda Potgieter (REME) set the soldiers on their way before Capt Cheryl Valentine (AMS) converted from close range.

Capt Emma Lee-Smith (AAC, pictured) opened her personal account with two first-half goals and the defending champions stretched their lead to 6-0 at the interval.

It was a similar story after the break as Lee-Smith added five further goals as the Army ran out 13-0 winners.

"We were trying a few things ahead of the civilian competitions that follow and it was working well," Potgieter told *SoldierSport* afterwards. "But we are never complacent when it comes to this tournament."

"We love taking on the other Services and wearing the Army badge."

"We were missing a few players but hopefully they'll be available soon. As a team we are looking really good."

There was no such joy for the men's side as a 5-2 loss to the RAF was followed by a 5-4 defeat against the Navy but the under-25s recorded back-to-back wins to claim another title. ■

**"WE
LOVE
WEARING
THE
ARMY
BADGE"**



THE Royal Army Physical Training Corps rowing team capped a successful season on the water with a strong showing at the Joint Services Regatta.

Competing in the eight for the first time in the formation's history, the crew battled strong opposition from the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force to claim top spot in the novice contest.

The rowers also claimed silver medals in the coxed four and masters two-man events, as well as a bronze in the open-class two-man race.

MONTH IN SPORT

December's key fixtures...



WHAT: Western Counties v Army boxing
WHEN: December 4
WHERE: Bristol
NEED TO KNOW: Having fought against

international opposition in Catterick at the end of November the Reds continue their hectic run in Bristol before facing the Royal Navy in London a day later



WHAT: Inter-Corps Swimming, Diving and Water Polo Championships
WHEN: December 6-7
WHERE: Aldershot Garrison Sports Centre

NEED TO KNOW: Records tumbled in the pool last season as the Infantry claimed the men's team prize, while the AMS dominated the women's contest. Who will be making waves in 2017?



WHAT: Germany v Army rugby union
WHEN: December 9
WHERE: Heidelberg
NEED TO KNOW: Having lost to South Africa in October

the women's team will be looking for a positive result on German soil as they embark on their second international fixture of the season

NETBALL IN NUMBERS

TEAMS
TAKING
TO THE
ALDERSHOT
COURTS

18

POINT
WINNING
MARGIN
FOR AGC
1 AS THEY
SECURED
TOP
HONOURS

5

TEAMS
FIELDIED
BY THE
AGC, RLC,
R SIGNALS
AND AMS

3

DATE, IN
MARCH,
OF THE
OPENING
MATCH
IN THIS
SEASON'S
INTER-
SERVICES

7

NETBALL



CORPS SCENE ON THE UP

THE Adjutant General's Corps cemented their status as Army netball's premier outfit as they topped the standings at this season's Inter-Corps showdown.

An emphatic 40-point haul saw the squad clinch the division one title ahead of an impressive Royal Signals outfit, while last year's champions, the Army Medical Services, finished third.

The Royal Artillery secured the division two honours, beating the signals' second team by six points. WO2 Jodie Oliver (RLC) was named player of the tournament.

A total of 18 sides took to the court for the two-day competition, emphasising the current strength of the sport, with the AGC, R Signals, AMS and Royal Logistic Corps each fielding three squads.

"This is the most teams we have had for a long time," Lt Col Andrea Zanchi (RLC), chairwoman of the Army

Netball Association, told *SoldierSport*.

"The quality was outstanding and the competition fierce. The Royal Signals looked in great shape early on but the Adjutant General's Corps had strength across the court; that made the difference.

"We are now seeing the benefit of the time the girls have spent training with the Army squad. It is spreading to the corps set-up, which is getting stronger."

Further success was recently achieved on the international stage, with Pte Fern Davies (RLC) representing Wales at the Netball Europe tournament. LCpl Dee Bolakoro (RE) and Cpl Elle Naweile (AGC) played for Fiji at the same event.

"Hopefully we are showing people on civvy street that they can join the Army and play netball at a decent standard," Zanchi added. ■



TOURING FOR TALENT

ON the back of England's World Cup success in the summer the Army set-up is hoping to attract a greater flow of newcomers to the fold as the women's game goes from strength to strength.

With no corps-level structure in place the powers that be have to adopt a different approach when it comes to searching for talent and the Service's major garrisons are now in their sights.

"It is important we ride the momentum in the women's game," Army skipper Cpl Katie Fryer (Int Corps) said. "If we don't do that we will be missing out on players for the future."

"We will be going to places like Catterick as there must be players there we don't know about. It doesn't matter what level they are at; if they have an interest in the sport they are welcome to come on down."

The squad has also been boosted by a growing number of emerging coaches crossing over from the men's game.

Fryer added: "They can get a lot of experience as we have everything from beginners to county-level players."



COUNTY CALL PAYS OFF



"WE HAVE BEEN RELYING ON OUR OLDER PLAYERS FOR SO LONG"

THE cricket season may be well and truly over but the Army women's team are leaving no stone unturned when it comes to preparing for the new campaign.

A strong contingent joined the UK Armed Forces squad for their recent tour of Kenya and a blossoming partnership with Northamptonshire has seen the players making the most of the indoor facilities at the club's County Ground.

The soldiers joined the set-up's senior and development sides for a day of training under the watchful eye of coach Rob Mahony that saw their batting and bowling skills tested either side of pilates and strength and conditioning sessions.

"This shows the many different aspects of the sport," skipper Cpl Katie Fryer (Int Corps), who plays her civilian cricket with Northamptonshire, told *SoldierSport*.

"It is not just about going in the nets and working on our skills; there are other parts of

our game that can be improved.

"Over the course of the winter we are hoping to have monthly sessions so we can keep on top of things."

"We could be working with a total beginner throughout the summer but all that effort could be lost if she doesn't pick up a bat for six months."

"If we meet up once a month we can keep ticking over."

The latest session also gave Fryer an opportunity to assess the credentials of the squad's emerging talent, with Reservist LCpl Gabie Clark (Int Corps, pictured) and OCdts Georgie and Connie Cant looking particularly impressive.

"We have almost shot ourselves in the foot by relying on our older players for so long," the skipper added.

"At the start of last season we sat down and looked at our aims and decided we needed to bring new girls through."

"Next season will be more of the same; it is about investing in our future." ■

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Living as a member of a Forces family is an unusual experience and not normally one understood by those unfamiliar with service life. Civilians



Steven Jandrell - Principal

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With our investment now standing at £100m, 2016/17 has seen more facilities come online including 8 new grassed sports pitches with over 100 floodlights, state-of-the-art gym and

Activity Centre with further developments underway for 2018. Please see our dedicated sports village website (www.sportsvillageqe.org) for further information, including Elite Rugby (supported by Yorkshire Carnegie) and Netball (with Yorkshire Jets). With the number of young people we have living on campus it is important that there is always a range of things to do in their spare time. This is the idea behind our new Activity Centre, packed full of all the favourite things young people like. It combines outdoor energetic activities and challenges such as a huge climbing tower, assault course, trampolines, roller booting, go-karts, Segways and a professionally built BMX track with indoor activities like electronic games, musical activities plus much more. Don't just take our word for it, pay us a visit and see for yourself.

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→ Queen Ethelburga's College is league table ranked as the 5th best UK independent school for academic results and our Faculty is 17th.

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UK's 2017 Top 20 Independent Schools

based on Telegraph rankings for % A*/A grade A levels

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2	The Perse School	87
3	Westminster School, London	86
4	King's College School (KCS)	86
5	Queen Ethelburga's College	85
6	Guildford High School for Girls	85
7	Concord College, Shrewsbury	84
8	City of London School For Girls	84
9	Haberdashers' Aske's Boys	84
10	St John's College, Cardiff	83
11	King Edward's Sch Birmingham	82
12	Magdalen College Sch, Oxford	80
13	North London Collegiate School	79
14	Royal Grammar, Guildford	78
15	Alleyn's School, Dulwich	77
16	Haberdashers' Aske's Girls	77
17	Faculty of Queen Ethelburga's	77
18	Brighton College, Brighton	76
19	St Mary's School, Ascot	75
20	Hampton School, Hampton	73





RING WALK: 4 PARA ARE HOPING TO MAINTAIN THE MOMENTUM WITH MATCHES AGAINST REGULAR AND RESERVE UNITS IN THE FUTURE

BOXING



ENDURO ON THE UP

ONE of the strongest fields in recent history assembled on the start line for the annual Army Enduro Championships.

A total of 98 riders – including a host of professionals – were involved in the competition and the skill levels on the bikes proved particularly impressive.

SSgt Kalem Hicks (RLC) claimed the overall title, beating close friend and rival LCpl Tom Ellwood (RE) by just one second.

The champion then teamed up with LCpl Liam Philips to win the collective honours for 9 Regiment, Royal Logistic Corps.

Spr Nathan Baggott (RE) was crowned Army novice champion, with LCpl Abi Childs (RLC) claiming the female prize.

"The funding and support for enduro is getting better," Capt Jon Ottaway, manager of the 9 Regiment and Royal Logistic Corps teams, told *SoldierSport*.

"Kalem Hicks and Tom Ellwood are part of the Army set-up and when Abi Childs first came to the RLC team all she had to do was turn up and she'd win. But this year we had five or six really good women taking part. The results are getting better and the quality of riding is also improving."



Pictures: Sgt Jamie Peters, RLC

RESERVISTS PACKING A PUNCH



**"SOME
HAD
NEVER
LACED A
PAIR OF
GLOVES
IN THEIR
LIFE"**

FIGHTERS from 4th Battalion, The Parachute Regiment became the latest Reservists to form an Army boxing team when they staged an inter-company competition in Catterick.

The event featured seven bouts and was complemented by athletes from The Royal Dragoon Guards and Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

4 Para boxers won two of the four fights staged against the rival formations, with the three remaining contests featuring personnel from across the unit's various companies.

Sgt Dave Walker set about forming the team after he gained his coaching qualifications late last year and the performances on the night were a testament to the hard work and training that was carried out in the build-up to the competition.

"They did much better than was expected and I think they surprised the guest boxers with their determination and fitness," he said.

Fellow coach LCpl Nick Twine

explained how the soldiers were training three times a day as they prepared for the showdown, with sessions starting at a basic level before moving to more technical skills.

"When the lads first turned up some had never laced a pair of gloves in their life," he explained.

"We had a two-week training camp that would normally take six to eight weeks. It had to be condensed and restructured to suit the time frame.

"It was a challenge to say the least but the guys embraced it from the start."

Pte Edward Askham-Spencer, a former Regular in 3rd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment, was one of those to sign up as he embarked on a new sport having been crowned Army swimming champion earlier in his career.

"Having the opportunity to fulfil a personal ambition of stepping into the ring was not just an honour, but a privilege," he said. "Everyone gave it their all, which is what you would expect from members of The Parachute Regiment." ■



SSgt Adrian Cubbin, AGC (SPS)

I ran a successful tour to South Africa for the Adjutant General's Corps' women's rugby team in June. It was a brilliant trip and we played at some amazing venues.



LCpl Alistair McCoist Hutton, SG

Every soldier gets to set themselves short, medium and long-term goals. My short-term aim was to promote to lance corporal this year. A few things happened that stalled that but I'm back on track and have picked up locally. Next year I want to become a physical training instructor and get on the section commanders' battle course in Brecon.



LCpl James Denman, RMP

I transferred into to the Royal Military Police after seven years in the REME and I passed out of training in June, which I was really happy about. I wanted to change because the work in the RMP is quite varied, there are good opportunities for the future and some good courses too.



Sgt Craig Cherrie, RLC

I set myself the goal of getting involved in a Service sport. I took up archery, which I was passionate about, and finished third at the Army Championships. I'm now on the Army team.



Pte Larry Wong, Londons

In the summer I smashed out my phase one and two training in two months, which is quite quick for a Reservist. The Army is fun, I love it and I'm even considering going into the Regulars. But I'm in the final year of my law degree so I need to refocus on that for a bit first.

LCpl Ashley Williams, R Welsh

My main aim for this year was to win the Welsh Boxing Championships in the 52kg division. I did that and went on to qualify for the Commonwealth Games. My regiment is really supportive; when I'm boxing they let me train full-time with the Army team and that allows me to pursue my dreams.



Life goals

Soldier asked personnel whether they had achieved their aims for 2017

WO1 Simon Hopkins, R Signals

I achieved my goal by becoming regimental sergeant major for 30 Signal Regiment. It is the senior soldier position in any unit and means I have to be mindful and respectful that personnel are adults and employees and without them you cannot succeed.



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