

SOLDIER

MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY



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The robots set to change combat...

10

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ARE YOU A DUTY TRAVELLER?

The Army has issued new travel guidance and is now booking duty travel through the Army Travel Tool (ATT)

<https://isuite4.hrgworldwide.com/att>



Do you need to travel?

Can virtual ways of working be used, i.e. VTC or Skype for Business

Who actually needs to attend?

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Book early to get cheaper economy fares and **avoid changing travel plans** unless absolutely necessary

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<https://modgovuk.sharepoint.com/teams/12157/sitepages/home.aspx>

If you experience any issues with the ATT, please email the Army Travel Team on ArmyRes-ArmyTravelTeam-0mailbox@mod.gov.uk or telephone 030 6770 1154



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“
We
performed
above
expectations
and recorded
a lot of
personal
bests
”

Double delight for track and field stars
– page 70



“
We could not have done much better
”

Ruthless Reds back on top – page 75

Buddy system



FRESH-FACED recruits at Pirbright may be well prepared for the next stage of their careers this month (page 36),

but a significant part of soldiering they have yet to experience is the boost that comes from having a lifelong mate by your side on a dangerous operation.

That feeling, of course, can never be understood by people like me.

And this was brought home recently when an author got in touch to ask for some background information on “friendships in the British Army”.

What could I tell her? Well, remarkably little.

I mean, how can you put into any sort of formal feedback the fact that, in the British Army, the person who served you up the dodgiest practical joke yesterday could be willing to die for you in battle tomorrow?

If you are one of the many troops mourning the loss of a colleague this month, the *Soldier* team’s thoughts remain with you.

Death always leaves a scar on loved ones, but when those people were comrades that represents something altogether different.

The pain is the price of the bond.

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

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Women will make us better

Picture: Graeme Main



Field Army chief sets out his vision ahead of females entering ground close combat

THE Infantry must undergo a significant cultural shift if it is to integrate women into ground close combat roles, the head of the Field Army has told a select group of Infantry officers and NCOs.

Speaking in Tidworth, Lt Gen Patrick Sanders (pictured below right) said bringing junior leaders on-board with the move was crucial as the Service is due to start accepting female front-line soldiers later this year.

During the special event, which followed a similar session at Catterick and was live-streamed to Germany, Northern Ireland, Brunei and Cyprus, he added: "The Infantry exists in an environment that celebrates male behaviour as something that bonds us, and we have to change that."

"We know that cultural change is really hard and it requires leadership to get it done.

"But we need to think about where the leadership is that matters – for me it sits in the sergeants' and corporals' messes, and also with young officers.

"That's the group we need to persuade and lead if necessary.

"If you don't have those personnel with you then you won't drive change through the organisation.

"Some of the dinosaurs will need to be persuaded but if they can't be then too bad, these are orders."

Lt Gen Sanders also moved to quash rumours that set numbers of females would be recruited to front-line roles due to political correctness.

"There is no quota," he insisted.

"This decision wasn't made by politicians – it was made by an SAS

officer (Chief of the General Staff, Gen Mark Carleton-Smith), a Para (Lt Gen James Bashall) and two Riflemen (Chief of Defence Staff, Gen Sir Nicholas Carter and Lt Gen Sanders) so don't tell me we don't know what we're talking about.

"We've spent more time in the Infantry than just about anyone else serving in it and a lot of that time on operations, so there is a lot of credibility behind the decision."

He emphasised that the case for change was about enhancing the Army's performance.

"Evidence from almost every walk of professional life shows that diverse organisations are more effective and competitive than those that are narrowly represented," he said.

"All of the other reasons against having women in the Infantry cited in the past, such as lack of cohesion, pregnancy, lack of aggression – you name it – they just don't apply.

"They have been addressed by women serving in other parts of the British Army."

Lt Gen Sanders also tackled the concerns of those who believe physical standards will be dropped for females.

"We have been hypocritical about this in the Infantry," he continued.

"Each of the battalions I have visited probably have a few overweight personnel who couldn't pass the existing tests, so you can't complain when you've got male soldiers who fail the fitness criteria.

"The incoming physical employment standards, which are being refined now, are harder not easier, so we are not lowering the bar." ■

“We have
been
hypocritical”



GLOBAL SITREP

1. USA

TRANS-CONTINENTAL TREK

A JOINT group of British and US veterans are trekking 1,000 miles across America to raise money for Service personnel on both sides of the Atlantic.

The six ex-soldiers started their adventure in Los Angeles at the beginning of June.

They had just passed the halfway point en route to Ground Zero in New York as this issue went to press.

As well as raising cash, those undertaking the Walk of America trek, organised by military charity Walking with the Wounded, are hoping the initiative will encourage a wider conversation around mental health.



2. CANADA

WORK HARD, PLAY HARD

SOLDIERS from 2nd Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment swapped Cyprus for Alberta, where they completed a month-long training package alongside Canadian and American troops.

Exercise Maple Resolve was aimed at building relationships, while exposing troops to a joint working environment and unfamiliar equipment.

"Training against a peer opposition provided a valuable opportunity in terms

of understanding the armoured threat and electronic warfare," said Capt Will Pickering.

"It really forced the soldiers and commanders to think about their decisions and any impact they may have on the ground."

Five days of rest and relaxation in Banff and Calgary capped off the visit (below).



3. CZECH REPUBLIC

CHEMISTRY LESSON



TROOPS from Britain's Nato headquarters have been honing their response to a range of non-conventional threats as part of a multinational exercise.

The soldiers, from the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps, were put through their paces in reacting to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear agents – all while exercising command of the battlefield.

Held near the central city of Liberec, the weeklong package of manoeuvres saw personnel operate alongside colleagues from five partner nations.

These included decontamination teams and deployable laboratories from the Czech Army's 31st CBRN Defence Regiment.

4. MALI

UPLIFT TO AFRICAN MISSION

AROUND 40 British troops have deployed to Mali to boost the UK's support to counter-terrorism operations in the country.

The personnel from 39 Engineer Regiment arrived in West Africa alongside three Royal Air Force Chinook helicopters and will assist with logistical and troop movements.



2. CANADA

1. USA

In numbers:
£1.1m



Cost of a new Cessna 208 Caravan that has taken to the skies over Cyprus. The Combined Services Parachute Club bought the aircraft to allow more troops to get into the sport on the island

“It disgusts me how we don't show loyalty”

Deported to Nepal – page 49

INTELLIGENCE FOR THE ATLAS?

Brief the team now:



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7. FRANCE 3. CZECH REPUBLIC 6. HIMALAYAS

4. MALI

5. UGANDA

“
It was
make or
break
”

Inside the Thai cave
rescue – page 22

7. FRANCE CENTENARY STUDY

GUNNERS learned valuable lessons from comrades past as they embarked on a battlefield tour focused on the concluding four months of the First World War.

The soldiers from 1st Artillery Brigade, together with Australian and French colleagues, visited areas such as Amiens and Thiepval, where they examined how artillery, air power and other assets were integrated in battle.

Event organiser Lt Col Rob Alston – commanding officer of 4 Regiment Royal Artillery – said: “We gained a useful overview of the fighting from a combined arms perspective.”

5. UGANDA TRAINING EFFORT PRAISED

BRITISH troops serving in Uganda received personal thanks from the top when Armed Forces Minister Mark Lancaster dropped by during an official visit.

Soldiers training counterparts in the country were among those who spoke to the politician, who pledged continued British backing to peace efforts in East Africa.

Each year the UK is instructing some 6,000 personnel from the Ugandan People's Defence Force destined for deployment to the African Union mission in Somalia.

The minister singled out Reservists making up the majority of the British contingent for praise, adding: “They have bravely volunteered to make a difference to one of the most impoverished and dangerous countries on the planet.”

6. HIMALAYAS VERTICAL LIMIT

A DETERMINED Army Reservist has joined the exclusive club of climbers who have reached the summit of the world's second highest mountain.

Capt Jake Meyer (RWxY) took on K2 in the Himalayas, becoming just the tenth Briton to accomplish the feat and admitting that it had “required more than almost anything else in my life”.

It was the officer's third attempt on the 28,251ft mountain – a notoriously difficult challenge. Already a veteran of Mount Everest, he completed his endeavour in a five-day climb from base camp.

The 34-year-old said in his blog: “Everything was worth it for those 45 minutes on the summit.”



Pictures: Jake Meyer

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Infantry soldiers step up

4 battalions gear up for new global training tasks

Pictures: Graeme Main

FIRED-UP troops have told *Soldier* they are relishing the "intense" experience of preparing for global missions as part of four new Specialised Infantry Battalions.

Their work will see them pass on skills to their peers in Middle Eastern and African countries, who are focused on tackling terrorism and building stability.

Three formations – 1st Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland, 2nd Battalion, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment and 4th Battalion, The Rifles – are signed off as ready to deploy.

Members of 2nd Battalion, The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment will follow early in 2019.

Brig James Roddis, commander of the Specialised Infantry Group, said the capability was a way of giving structure to the mentoring role that British troops have excelled in for years.

He said that 2 PWRR and 1 Scots would be focusing on sub-Saharan Africa while the other two battalions would work in the Middle East.

The officer added: "Those working in the role need to be experienced, with excellent basic skills, and adaptable enough to work with a partner force in austere conditions.

"They also need to be self reliant – able to see problems and get on and

deal with them."

The new role has seen battalion numbers slimmed down significantly – by up to half, in some cases – with departing soldiers moving to other infantry outfits.

While most officers and NCOs have been retained, Brig Roddis said this didn't mean departing troops were in any way worse.

He explained: "The new role requires experience, and is simply different."

Anyone aspiring to the specialised role must complete a two-week assessment cadre, with skills such as foreign languages, essay writing and physical

robustness all tested.

Personnel from 2 PWRR admitted the process had been tough.

But they were confident the move would present a raft of new opportunities and allow them to rack up deployment time.

"The two weeks was intense but it's great to be part of something new," said LCpl Owen Clough. "I'm hoping the experience will set me up for my future career – I think Specialised Infantry will also be popular with the next generation."

Sgt Gareth Smith added: "I've been in the Army 13 years and have been to Iraq and Afghanistan – it will be good to work with people from different countries and cultures again."

IN NUMBERS:

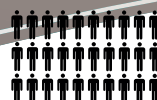
1,080

Soldiers being trained in the specialised infantry role

“It's great to be part of something new”



2017: Both battalions are ready to deploy



2016: Defence Secretary Michael Fallon confirms 1 Scots and 4 Rifles will pioneer the initiative. Brig Roddis begins leading the process

2015: Idea flagged in Strategic Defence and Security Review



Q&A

Soldier quizzed Brig Roddis on the Specialised Infantry capability...



How have troops taken to the role?

People are really enthusiastic – it's what they join the Army for. If you are in a Specialised Infantry Battalion you are definitely going to get away and build experience.

Are you looking for particular qualities in the soldiers?

The process is, to a large extent, about working with people as they are and looking at whether they are appropriate for the task. Mutual trust is important too. I need to be able to empower small teams deployed in other countries, so I personally interview each team commander and their 2iC.

How important are language skills?

We are looking for those who have the ability to learn. With the geographic divide between the battalions, 2 PWRR and 1 Scots will be focused on French while the other two will look at Arabic.

What about those leaving Specialised Infantry Battalions?

As we have downsized, they will continue their Army service elsewhere, and this is done in consultation with the individual. Soldiers can express a preference over where they go.

How do you see your role developing?

It has been fascinating to be involved at the start of something new – the journey from 2016 has been very satisfying. I see my role as giving my successor, and theirs, a project they can continue taking forward.



2019: 2 Lancs due to follow as final Specialised Infantry Battalion

2018: Troops from 2 PWRR take on their new duties



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

WORK, LIFE AND WHATSAPP...

A RECENT survey found that 81 per cent of families are considering whether to continue following the flag because of their soldier's lack of work/life balance.

This is concerning, but not surprising given the feedback we have received about work tempo, difficulties carrying out childcare duties, and feeling pressured to always be on call.

The most sought after change is better tolerance of unforeseen domestic emergencies, such as when a child is sick.

Families also want their soldiers to have time off in lieu and work less rigidly, which the flexible engagement system coming into play next year will hopefully achieve.

But with many feeling the pace of work increasing, how easy will this be?

I believe that a cultural shift is needed.

Those who took our survey said that their soldier's work/life balance had worsened in the last two years, mostly due to short-notice tasks, increased time away from family and not being able to switch off.

They told us some of this is linked to an increased use of *WhatsApp*, which has essentially made them available around the clock. This is making life even more difficult for families

who are already struggling to find quality time and take holidays.

We will continue to push for change that works for both sides.



www.aff.org.uk



Picture: Graeme Main

Virtus upgrade imminent

Input from Infantry soldiers improves latest version of the combat gear

THANKS to a wealth of user feedback the Virtus protective equipment and load carriage system has been upgraded to better meet soldiers' needs.

It will be rolled out to a limited number of units later this year.

The new kit will be fielded on a priority basis, firstly to troops on operations or to those stood at very high readiness.

Over the past two years personnel have been giving their opinions on Virtus to the Infantry Trials and Development Unit (ITDU) and the project team at Defence Equipment and Support, and this led to a number of modifications.

"Selected designs were rapidly prototyped and trialled through the ITDU and will be brought into service

via a responsive support contract," Maj David Robertson (Scots) of the Ground Manoeuvre Capability Directorate at Army HQ told *Soldier*.

"The entire process from receiving feedback, informing the developer, trialling prototypes, manufacture and then fielding takes 12 months on average, demonstrating a step change in support to front-line soldiers."

Although these modifications have now been implemented, the project team say they are determined to keep making improvements so continued user input is vital.

Service personnel are strongly encouraged to carry on reporting any issues with Virtus through MoD form 1197 or by contacting the project team directly via deslestsp-dcc-ilsmgr@mod.gov.uk

“
Selected
designs
were rapidly
prototyped
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KIT ENHANCEMENTS INCLUDE...

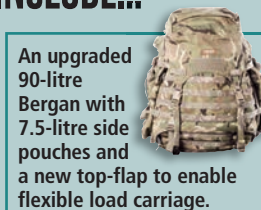


An improved webbing yoke and belt

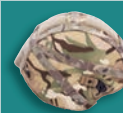
A new 17-litre lightweight assault pack that can attach to the new yoke or stand alone



Quick-release magazine pouches



An upgraded 90-litre Bergan with 7.5-litre side pouches and a new top-flap to enable flexible load carriage.



A removable helmet cover



Pictures: Graeme Main



Warriors battle it out

TROOPS battled it out in a fierce test of muscle at the British Army Warrior Fitness finals.

Staged at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, the competition showcased the latest physical training techniques and saw 20 male and female teams battle for supremacy.

Its events included presses with weights, rowing and aerobic tests.

Service personnel from 2nd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment walked away with the men's prize, while Army Training Centre Pirbright scooped the women's crown.

Many movements used in the showdown – for example, powerbag lifts – mimic the activities that soldiers face in their day job. Keeping PT focused on operational requirements in this way is what the Royal Army Physical Training Corp's new standards are all about (*Soldier*, May 2018).

Lt Col Ian Phillips (RAPTC), chair of British Army Warrior Fitness, said the overhauled system had been finding favour with entrants.

He added: "This competition is for troops that want to take their PT to another level.

"Those taking part are the fittest in the Army – and this event gives them the chance to compete against each other with exercises related to what we do on operations."

The final was the culmination of four previous legs held across the UK and overseas, with the top three teams from each gaining a place in the Sandhurst showdown.

Servicemen and women said the disciplines had been demanding.

But chef LCpl James Rocke (RLC), who was competing with 13 Air Assault Support Regiment, said it had helped to promote all-round fitness by including a combination of exercises.

"That is much better than doing single events," he added.

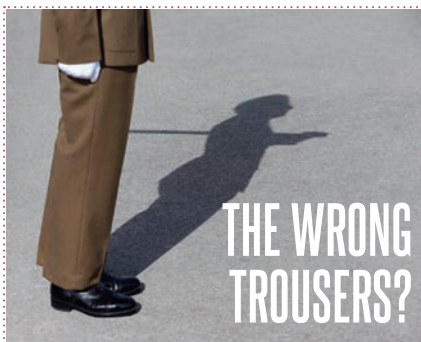
Pte Mahad Kader (AGC (SPS)) from the 4th Battalion, The Rifles women's team said: "We work hard in our PT – this way of doing fitness really helps to build you up."

“
It really
helps to
build you up
”



FITNESS FINALS IN NUMBERS:

14 Male squads in the competition
.....
six Female teams
.....
4 Legs that were staged



■ **MILITARY** chiefs are pulling the plug on barrack dress trousers and skirts. They say troops have been ditching them in favour of their combats. Calling time on the garments will save the Army money – although slacks will remain in stores for women who need them. Instead, soldiers must now wear Number 2 trousers and skirts with the issued long sleeved shirt for barrack dress order. They can get a second pair of the clothes too. Lt Col (retd) Kestrel Simson, who heads up the Service's ceremonial policy and plans desk, said the barrack dress items had been rolled out a decade ago. But he told *Soldier*: "Most personnel continue to wear their combat dress in barracks, so we have stock that is costing us a lot of money to keep."

DVD WORTH A WATCH

■ A VARIED showcase of current and future military kit will be on show at the forthcoming Defence Vehicle Dynamics show.

The two-day exhibition, which takes place every two years, will feature around 250 industry suppliers and be staged from September 19 to 20 at Millbrook Proving Ground in Bedfordshire.

Entry to the event – sponsored by Defence Equipment and Support and Army Land Equipment – is free to MoD personnel. For more details visit www.theevent.co.uk



Last hurrah
page 28

INNOVATION STATION

■ THE Royal Signals held a *Dragon's Den*-style competition to encourage innovation across the corps.

Around 40 ideas were submitted, from which the judges chose nine to present to a panel in the style of the popular TV show.

A team from Hereford Garrison bagged first prize and £300 with their winning pitch, which focused on using methanol fuel cells and hybrid solar technology to provide a more efficient method of charging batteries.

Praising the quality and range of the entries, organiser Lt Col Paul Sutcliffe said: "Every proposal in the final was worthy of further consideration and Army HQ will now look to exploit any quick wins from these novel ideas."



Picture: Edinburgh Fringe Society

FROLICKS AT THE FRINGE

■ SERVICE life is once again taking centre stage at this month's Edinburgh Fringe.

Among the venues putting on military-inspired acts is the Army Reserve Centre at Hepburn House in New Town.

It is the second time the military has held its own event as part of the festival and this year's line-up features works on female empowerment, LGBT issues, mental health and Commonwealth troops.

To book tickets visit www.summerhall.co.uk/venue/army-the-fringe



Picture: Steve Dock

Road move to remember for troops

“It will show we can deploy with allies”

HUNDREDS of Army vehicles and crews are poised for an epic journey through continental Europe – driving to Scandinavia for a huge Nato exercise.

Troops from 1st Battalion, The Royal Irish Regiment are leading the charge that will take soldiers from Catterick to Norway to join the multinational Trident Juncture this autumn.

They will tow equipment in trailers in a test of the Strike concept of rapid reinforcement – designed to avoid any sophisticated missile defences aimed at allied aircraft.

Crossing five countries, the troops will join around 40,000 allied counterparts – from Europe, America and Canada – where they will face conventional warfighting serials.

Confirmation of the road move came after Chief of the Defence Staff Gen Sir Nicholas Carter said Brits had to be able to deploy by road or rail over 2,000km distances.

German troops had used trailers on

their front-line vehicles in the Second World War, he said. And speaking shortly before his promotion the senior officer added: "These old fashioned lessons, brought forward, are improving our ability to deploy."

Some 2,000 Brits are taking part in the exercise. The Royal Irish Regiment will form the UK battlegroup supported by a Light Dragoons squadron and a Danish contingent. HQ 4th Infantry Brigade and a raft of support elements complete the line-up.

It is also hoped that around 150 members of the Army Reserve will be joining their Regular counterparts.

Maj Josh Badger (Scots), who is helping plan the UK involvement in the exercise with 1 (United Kingdom) Division, said the road move would be an impressive demonstration.

"It will show that we can move out to north-west Europe and deploy alongside our allies to meet any potential aggression," the officer explained to *Soldier*.

Blazing squad – page 25

Mercury mithers Army training missions

SOARING temperatures played havoc with the Army's summer exercise schedule after serials were cancelled due to fire risk.

The MoD confirmed there was "significant" disruption to the programme during the heatwave, with ammunition, including high explosives and tracer, banned.

All artillery firing on Salisbury

Plain Training Area was also halted as the conditions sparked more blazes than normal.

An MoD spokeswoman told *Soldier* that fires in impact areas have to be left to burn out for safety reasons so the department had been reviewing the risks every 12 hours in conjunction with the operational need for training.





Tattoos with tales

■ A LOOK at soldiers' body art through the ages is the topic of a new exhibition at the REME museum in Lyneham, Wiltshire.

Military Ink tells tales behind a selection of tattoos and the Service personnel who got them done.

Examples range from regimental crests to tributes to fallen comrades and others with personal meanings.

Curator Jennifer Allison said the showcase, which runs until December 8, had produced some "great stories".



www.rememuseum.org.uk

FEARLESS FUNDRAISING



On a mission:
the SSAFA team

Full throttle ahead

A ROAD trip in memory of troops lost on operations and to raise money for those still in need was due to head off for a ten-day continental trek as this issue was published. The 60 vehicles involved in the Rally for Heroes project will set out from London's Horse Guards Parade on August 2, cross the Channel at Dover and cover 3,000 miles in Europe – five for every fallen Serviceman or woman since the start of the Afghanistan campaign. Bringing together troops, veterans and civilians, the biennial event covers Italy, France, Switzerland, Croatia, Bosnia and Germany.

Target funds:
£100k
For: SSAFA



“It's all about getting the basics right”

Best shots in Service...

MARKSMEN from 2nd Battalion, The Royal Gurkha Rifles have been celebrating a bumper trophy haul at the Army Operational Shooting Competition.

The Brunei-based outfit won 13 matches and cups, either as a team or on an individual basis, including the Major Unit Championship and the Queen's Medal, awarded to the best shot in the Service.

Cpl Bishal Rai (pictured below right) claimed this prestigious honour, while three of the eight shooters from the squad finished in the top ten.

"It's all about getting the basics right," Cpl Rai said. "And it is important to have confidence in yourself and your weapon; that comes with experience."

"I have only been able to implement the principles of marksmanship after years of practice."

"Training and knowing the match conditions are also vital."

Winning the event was one of the unit's key goals for 2018 and competition for places on the team proved to be fierce.

"Selection was probably the most difficult part of all," said Capt Vijay Limbu, the officer in charge of 2 RGR shooting. "We had to ensure we picked the right people, not just based on past records but on their current form and performance."



Braving the rapids

THE chief of staff at HQ Royal Armoured Corps joined forces with a senior businessman to brave a Scottish waterway. Lt Col Nick Woolger (RL) and Jamie MacLeod kayaked 100 miles of the River Tweed raising cash for less fortunate Armed Forces veterans.

Money raised:
£50k
For: Veterans Aid

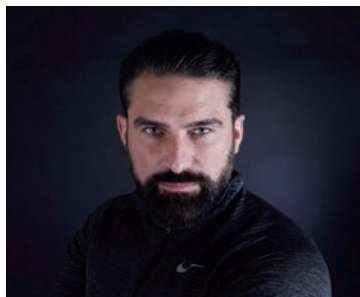
PAY AWARD ANNOUNCED

■ **SOLDIERS** will see their wages rise by two per cent under the latest Armed Forces pay award.

Personnel will also receive a 0.9 per cent non-pensionable lump sum.

The core-pay award will be backdated to April 1, 2018 and will be in pay packets on September 30.

When this issue went to press it had yet to be announced how and when the lump sum would be paid, but an Army briefing note will contain more details.



ANT LENDS A HAND

■ **FORMER** Special Forces soldier Ant Middleton, star of Channel 4's hit TV show *SAS Who Dares Wins*, has teamed up with military charity SSAFA to launch a new initiative helping veterans to get back on their feet as they return to civilian life.

Middleton turned to SSAFA for support when he struggled to adjust after leaving so he has set up the Ant Middleton Fund as a way to give back to the organisation.

The money raised will help it provide a range of support including its face-to-face mentoring service and welfare, housing and practical help for ex-Servicemen and women and their loved ones.

Donate to the Ant Middleton Fund by visiting www.ssafa.org.uk/AMF

COULD YOU SAVE A LIFE?

■ **A CALL** to action has gone out to soldiers after a Royal Navy colleague was taken ill.

Troops are being asked to register as potential stem cell donors to help Vaughan Scott (pictured right), who needs lifesaving assistance after being diagnosed with an aggressive form of leukaemia.

His family have called on troops aged between 17 and 55 to come forward and see if they can offer a match.

Scott has been treated at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham since he was diagnosed in early April.

Potential donors are being asked to contact charity DKMS for a kit to take a swab from their mouths with a view to being placed on the UK stem cell registry.

See www.dkms.org.uk/en/register-now for more information.



CHANGING TRUCKS



■ **LOGISTICS** supply will be given a boost when 382 15-tonne trucks are converted into vehicles that can quickly transport ammunition, water, food and bulk medical supplies into theatre.

The enhanced palletised load system will be fitted to the 8x6 load carriers over the next three years. The technology allows up to 15 tonnes of supplies on pallets or in ISO containers to be moved on or off the vehicle in less than 90 seconds.

The first 40 platforms are due to arrive in early 2019, with final deliveries in March 2021.

Picture: Cpl Pete Brown, RLC

How to grab some star gear

AN EXTENSIVE collection of surveillance and target acquisition kit is available for units to borrow to enhance their training and operations.

The kit includes various night vision systems, thermal imaging gear and laser range-finders.

Some of the items that can be borrowed are listed below but this is not the complete range available.

"A large loan pool was established on which all entitled units, including Royal Navy, Royal Marines and Royal Air Force, may draw," Maj Alex Cramphorn (AAC) of the Army Equipment Directorate told *Soldier*.

"The maximum benefit for defence and soldiers will only be delivered if the



kit is in the hands of the user."

Quartermasters should contact the Army HQ fleet manager by email at rosina.bellis880@mod.gov.uk for the complete inventory and to action any loan requests.

“Items are there to be used”

KIT FOR LOAN

- Maxikite weapon mounted night sight
- CWS night vision scope
- Laser light module
- Lucie helmet-mounted night vision goggles
- Pocket laser range-finder
- HWTS night vision thermal sight
- Lightweight thermal imager
- Commander's target locator
- Magnum universal night sight
- Head-mounted night vision system



Out with the old for infantry weapons

THREE significant infantry weapons are to be removed from service.

The L86A2 Light Support Weapon, L110A3 Light Machine Gun and M6-640 60mm mortar are to be phased out by April 2019 following a review by Army Headquarters.

"This is not a financially-driven cull but a review of our capability to ensure that we have a battle-winning, optimised set of systems in users' hands," commented Maj Mark Whitehouse (Rifles) of the Ground Manoeuvre Capability directorate.

The Light Support Weapon variant of the SA80 A2 rifle was found to offer few benefits over the standard model when fitted with the in-service quadrail, downgrip and bipod.

First introduced in the early 1990s, it will be removed from service this summer with the 7.62mm Sharpshooter filling the gap.

"The Sharpshooter has been proven to provide effective precision fire beyond the range of other platoon weapons – to at least 600m – thus enhancing the capability of the dismounted close combat section in all roles," commented Maj Jon Anthistle (REME) of the Equipment Directorate at Army Headquarters.

More Sharpshooters will be purchased in the near future to fulfil defence-wide needs.

The Light Machine Gun (LMG), introduced as an urgent operational requirement in 2003, is being withdrawn after studies showed that



Picture: Shay Woods, MBDA

the it did not offer any significant advantage over the SA80.

"Despite the popular view, it is far heavier but less lethal and effective," added Maj Anthistle.

"While some Joint Force Command users will retain the weapon, it is rarely employed in favour of the 7.62mm equivalent."

Meanwhile, the M6-640 60mm mortar (pictured above) that was also purchased initially as an urgent operational requirement, is to be removed after it was found that its high weight and relative inaccuracy resulted in a lack of use across the Army, despite the advantages it appeared to offer on paper.

It will be removed from service in early 2019 and various options to replace this particular piece of kit are still being evaluated.

Welcome to your kit's new hue

■ THE Infantry's weapons fleet is to change colour to blend better with the multi-terrain pattern personal clothing system.

After a review by the dismounted close combat team at Army Headquarters it was decided the weapons should be resprayed in Cerakote dark earth brown.

"The SA80 A3 was the first weapon to be painted with this – it is hard wearing and resistant to the elements," Maj John Anthistle (REME), of the Equipment Directorate said. "As a result, it will enhance durability and the user's camouflage as the black bodies stand out significantly against the PCS background."

He added: "They will be painted this year but the size of the fleet is so



vast users will see a mix of black and brown weapons for a number of years to come."

“It’s to ensure we have battle-winning systems”

SPINE LINE COMPETITION



OUR spine line clues for July fitted with one of the prominent themes of the issue.

(Edward) Jenner, (Rick) Jolly, (Joseph) Lister and (Mary) Seacole are all connected by the medical profession, their contributions benefitting troops in conflict.

This month *Soldier* has teamed up with AKU (www.aku.it/en) to offer two readers a pair of £200 Pilgrim GTX Combat FG boots – the Army's new general issue combat high liability footwear.

To be in with a chance of getting your hands on this impressive kit, simply tell us what links the words on the side of this issue.

Send your answer, plus shoe size, to the usual address or comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk by August 31.

BRIEFING TEAM BECKONS

■ UNITS are being encouraged to contact the CGS Briefing Team if they want to have their voices heard.

Chief of the General Staff, Gen Mark Carleton-Smith, recently welcomed the set-up's newest members (below) and they will be increasing the tempo of their visits in the last three months of 2018.

The sessions consist of a brief on current Army activity and existing and new policies, plus a feedback session.

These views are then delivered direct to the top brass by the team.

To arrange a visit contact WO2 Aidan O'Brien on aidan.obrien343@mod.gov.uk or military dial 94393 7732.



SHADER MEDAL EXPANDED

■ MORE troops are being made eligible for the new Op Shader campaign medal.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said the decoration would soon be presented to those making a major contribution to the deployment outside of Syria and Iraq.

Drone pilots in the UK "taking life or death decisions" would be among those to benefit. But troops who have served in theatre will be distinguished by the addition of a clasp.

TANK TRAGEDY DECISION

■ A TANK explosion that killed two soldiers was caused by a design flaw, a coroner has found.

Royal Tank Regiment corporals Matthew Hatfield, 27, and Darren Neilson, 31, died during a live-firing exercise at Castlemartin Range in Pembrokeshire in June 2017.

Two other soldiers, WO2 Stuart Lawson and Tpr Michael Warren (both RTR), were also injured but survived.

At the inquest Louise Hunt, senior coroner for Birmingham and Solihull, said the main cause was the manufacturer failing to spot that the tank's gun could fire when a key safety component, the bolt vent axial which forms an airtight seal blocking hot gases escaping into the crew turret, was missing.

She also heard personnel give evidence that charges were sometimes stored out of heatproof storage bins within the turret.

The coroner has sent a report to the MoD and the gun designers to prevent future deaths. The Army said it had already improved training, drills and procedures.



DEEPCUT APOLOGY

■ THE head of Army Personnel Services Group has apologised to the family of a young soldier who fatally shot himself at Deepcut two decades ago.

Speaking after a new inquest into the 1995 death of Pte Sean Benton, Brig Christopher Coles said the Army "deeply regretted" what had happened, adding that the Service had long moved to address significant shortcomings at the base.

Action had also been taken in how troops were trained and cared for.

A coroner in Woking concurred with the first inquest's suicide verdict, but raised several concerns, including the poor quality of the original investigation and the support given to Pte Benton.



Picture: Cpl Ben Beale, RLC

■ COMMANDERS have spoken of their satisfaction after junior soldiers turned their hand to instructing European counterparts during a support weapons cadre on Salisbury Plain. Troops from 2nd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment's machine gun platoon worked with a contingent from the French Foreign Legion during the manoeuvres, which saw the two sides exchange important information in weapons systems.

Tax reprieve north of border

SERVICE personnel hit by income tax hikes in Scotland are to receive a cash windfall.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson announced that "mitigation payments" of between £12 and £1,500 would be made to ensure soldiers were not left out of pocket as a result of the rises.

The move would see Armed Forces personnel paying the same bill wherever they were deployed – ensuring that troops were treated "fairly and equally," he added.

The cash will be made to all personnel paying into the Scottish system, wherever they are deployed in the world, for the 2018/19 tax year.

The case for the money will be reviewed annually.

As previously reported (*Soldier*, June), the rises meant troops earning more than £26,000 would pay more tax compared to colleagues serving



Picture: Mark Owens

elsewhere in the UK.

Personnel had voiced their concern that the hikes could make Scotland a less attractive posting.

In March the defence secretary asked officials to look at how the rises could be mitigated.

He told reporters: "We have taken urgent action to see that our troops are treated equally and fairly, and not left hundreds of pounds out of pocket."

“
Our troops
will not be
left out of
pocket
”



MEANWHILE, Forces families posted to Scotland can now access a dedicated website to help them make choices about their child's schooling and education.

The portal is designed to help parents understand the Scottish education system.

It enables them to search for schools by location and branch of Service, and includes guidance and teaching materials for education professionals. Visit www.forceschildrenseducation.org.uk



Picture: Sgt Donald Todd, RLC



Infantry troops in the hot zone

VERSATILE troops downed weapons to join a more conventional firefight as they helped tackle an inferno devastating parts of northern England.

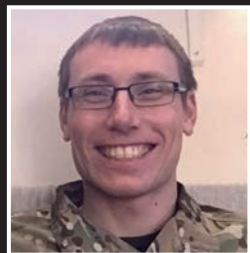
The soldiers from 4th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland deployed from Catterick and operated out of an Army training centre to deal with the blaze on Saddleworth Moor.

Working alongside a Chinook from

RAF Odiham, the personnel assisted with tasks including the management of water lines, beating flames and general support such as driving.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson paid tribute to the professionalism of the troops in backing the operation, which was led by Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service.

On a mission with a difference?
Email news@soldiermagazine.co.uk



PTE REECE MILLER (29)
1ST BATTALION,
THE YORKSHIRE REGIMENT
DIED JUNE 30 – ESTONIA

AN EXPERIENCED soldier who showed deep care for his colleagues was killed from a gunshot wound, believed to be self-inflicted, a coroner has said.

Pte Reece Miller, of 1st Battalion, The Yorkshire Regiment, died in Estonia. An inquest was opened and adjourned until December.

Oxfordshire's Coroner's Office stressed the circumstances around the death are still being investigated.

Described as a determined infantryman with a bright future, Pte Miller joined the Army nine years ago and had seen service on operations in Afghanistan.

The 29-year-old, who served in the battalion's fire support company, recently completed his drummers' course and had been aspiring to promotion and leadership.

Fronting the tributes, commanding officer Lt Col James Kennedy described the Serviceman as "the very epitome of the Yorkshire soldier and just the sort of bloke you would want in your regiment".

He added: "He was one of those unsung heroes whose maturity allowed him to mentor the men who he cared for deeply – he was one of the company's gentlemen."

"The loss of Pte Miller has been a terrible shock to all of us in the battalion; we are truly devastated."

"Our thoughts are with his comrades in Estonia, but most of all with his family and wife who, like us, will be struggling to come to terms with his loss."

IN MEMORIAM

BACK ON
TOP



Army women regain
Services crown – page 75

4 THINGS 4 SCOTS LEARNT FROM THE MOOR FIRE MISSION



1

Terrain can make or break you

"It's tricky on the moors, with open grassland and lots of hills. Digging trenches and running hoses around was demanding; the bottoms of our boots got hot."

Hldr John O'Neill



2

It's a good feeling to help out

"As a Sikh I'm making my community, and my regiment, proud. Everybody was working hard but feeling great."

Hldr Baltaj Singh Maan

3

Operating around fire is difficult

"Some parts were quite physically challenging, but as soldiers we are fit and that helps."

LCpl Rory Wood

4

You can't expect to know who you'll work with next on a job

"You could be alongside the Army one day and police the next. This operation has shown me that."

Hldr Keith Wodzinski



THE BIG PICTURE

Royal Military School of Music, Twickenham

Lighting up the stage

A FIREWORK spectacular rounded off a notable evening at Kneller Hall as the curtain came down on the Corps of Army Music's summer concert programme. The bands of the Coldstream Guards and The Royal Irish Regiment delivered the Last Night of the Proms event, with the playlist featuring favourites such as *Pomp and Circumstance No 1* and *Jerusalem*. Youngsters from Youth Brass 2000 – an outfit renowned for producing new generations of world-class musicians – were among those joining the Army's finest on stage.

Picture: Cpl Daniel Wiepen, RLC





NEED TO

VIEW

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

“It was going to



The inside story of the
rescue mission that
gripped the world

▶ WHEN LCpl Connor Roe (REME) started cave diving in 2012, he had little idea that his skills would one day be called upon to help save a group of Thai schoolchildren trapped deep in an underground system.

This is his account of the international operation to get them out:



take a miracle to get them out”

“FOR me the appeal of cave diving is exploring places where no one has ever set foot or shone a torch before.

That raw sense of adventure – like Scott or Shackleton – is hard to find these days.

I’d obviously been following the boys’ story closely on TV. As time ticked on and they were trapped somewhere without food or clean water, the chances of a rescue were dropping.

Then, when they were found, it became clear it was going to take something close to a miracle to get them out.

The concept of leaving them in there for months was unmanageable. The oxygen levels in the cave were dropping and supplying them with enough food was going to be a big problem.

It was make or break time.

The cave diving community is small. We all know each other. I’d actually been assisting one of the other British divers involved in the rescue operation before he flew out and helping to organise equipment.

I was brought in to assist with the final extraction phase.

On the Friday afternoon I got the phone call from the British Cave Rescue Council: “Hi, yeah we need you to go to Thailand and you’re flying tomorrow.”

So I went home and packed.

I arrived on site on the Sunday at 1000 and was in the cave by 1400.

With another guy who was flown out we were put about halfway into the system in what was known as chamber five.

There were four primary carers, who would swim to the boys’ location with the

doctor, sort them out and get them ready.

Then there were two groups staged within the cave at various sections to allow for air changes, check the casualties and give the primary carers a break.

They were at maximum concentration throughout the two-hour exit, which is exhausting, so we were there to help ease that stress and help guide the kids through a large section.

I would take the child, check their air and breathing, and ensure the primary carer was okay and hadn’t accidentally neglected himself through focusing on the casualty.

Then I would surface swim the child for about 400m to the next significant section, make sure the primary carer was happy again and off they would go.

On that first day we managed to rescue four children, then another four on the Monday and five on the Tuesday.

The feelings varied day to day. On day one we thought we’d do well to rescue one, and when we rescued four it was amazing – there was lots of clapping and handshaking going on.

On day two we knew we had to stay focused and by day three the stress levels were so much higher. Everyone thought it was a done deal but the conditions were still very dangerous.

Visibility-wise you couldn’t see your hand in front of your face during the dive sections. You’d follow your guideline through, feeling your way through tight spaces – if you let go you’d be in real trouble.

The death of Thai Navy diver Saman Kunan, which happened the day I got the call, underlined just how treacherous it was.

I have so much respect for what those guys did: they are military divers but not trained cave divers.

They were told what they had to do and went and did it. That is serious bravery.

When the boys were out and it was all over there was instant relief.

I thought, ‘we’ve done it – they are going to go off and lead full lives’.

I met some of the parents and you could see the impact you’d had.

When you were in the cave you had to disconnect yourself emotionally but seeing how elated the families were brought it home that these were young children with mums, dads, brothers, sisters, aunties and uncles – we had just changed their lives forever.

Looking back it was awesome to be part of it and assist in such a great outcome.

It could easily have been very different. ■

Pictures: Graeme Main, Royal Thai Navy, Shutterstock



Relief: The Thai youngsters after their caving ordeal

Going underground

Flooding, rockfalls and injuries are just a few of the hazards facing cavers. So what can you do to reduce the risks?

► WHEN it goes wrong deep beneath the earth, the consequences can be serious – as the emergency with the trapped youngsters in Thailand showed.

We asked experienced caver WO2 Gary Chekansky (RAPTC) of the Joint Service Training Wing in Ripon for some tips on staying safe and keeping a cool head...

If in doubt, stay out

This is very simple, and really important. Make sure you are happy before you start. If you have concerns, err on the side of caution and keep away.

Know the ground

You must do an assessment before you start. Understand the cave you are going into, the type of ground you will encounter, where there is water and other details. Pay close attention to the weather and check the recent forecasts.

Work with your team

Caving tests you physically and psychologically. You'll be going through tight spaces and working in cold and demanding conditions, so look out for each other.

Provide a heads-up

Have a formal procedure for letting others know where you are going – leave your details with someone trustworthy who is contactable and tell them when you expect to start and finish. You should also give them a call out time for cave rescue to be alerted.

Stick together

Never go caving alone – ideally there should be at least three of you – and make sure your team are fully fit. Even something like a cold can cause you problems and slow you down. Make sure you all have the right qualifications and kit too.

Keep calm in a crisis

There are numerous hazards underground and injuries such as limb breaks and serious cuts are a possibility. If a team member is injured start your evacuation processes. This may mean one of you exiting to call cave rescue teams via 999.

Be prepared to wait it out

A rescue may take some time so your team should have equipment to keep you comfortable including blankets, food and a group shelter. Candles and waterproof matches are important in case you start losing light from your torches.

RULES & REGS

Blazing squad

Do your bit to
prevent training
area fires...

► THE searing summer heat might be fun if you're on the beach during leave but it has made life difficult for those on exercise. With the likes of Salisbury Plain tinder dry, defence chiefs have halted all pyrotechnics plus tracer and illumination rounds, as well as putting fire watch initiatives in place (page 14). But there are also steps individuals can take to lower the risks.



Know your enemy

Wildfires are tough to put out in hot conditions. They put the lives of those caught up in them on the line and are often devastating for the environment.



Don't be left cooking

If you're out on a training area make sure your clear-up drills are top notch. Ensure you clear the ground thoroughly when cooking so that flammable material doesn't come into contact with any open flames.



Watch your fags

If you're a smoker, make sure any cigarettes you discard are not left smouldering – the last thing you want is for your recklessness to disrupt training, or worse, cost lives.



Get on comms

If you see a blaze, don't try to fight it yourself. Contact range control and the fire service straight away.

Separation anxiety

How to get a handle on homesickness

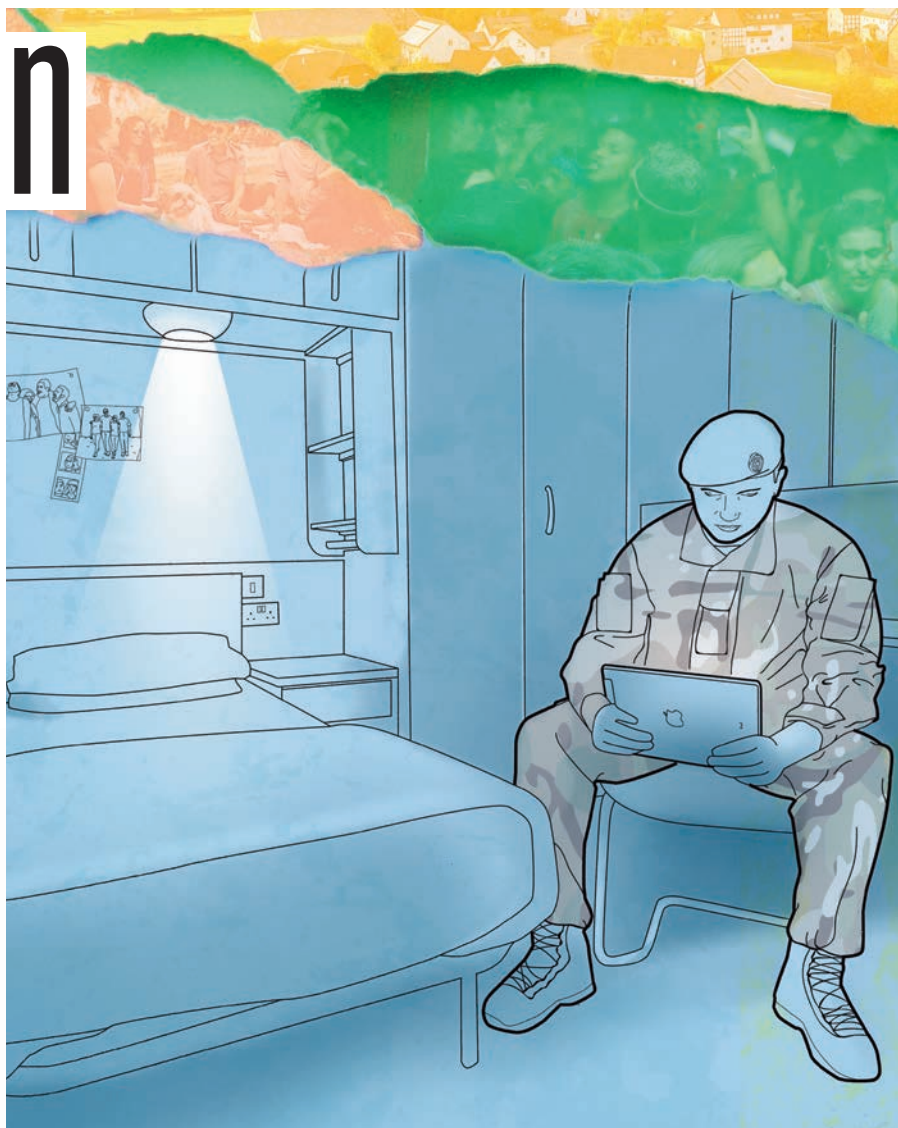
► JOINING the Army is a big step for young recruits.

Learning different skills and fitting in with a new group of friends, all while being away from home for the first time, can be overwhelming.

But help is at hand if homesickness is getting you down.

The organisation WRVS Services Welfare provides emotional and practical support to single and unaccompanied troops, and is strictly confidential.

Operations support manager Anna Ashley has this advice for those taking their first steps as soldiers...



Remember homesickness is normal

You miss your family, start questioning what you have done and wonder what the future will hold – these are perfectly natural feelings to go through. Think back to the past and ask yourself why you made the decision to join the Army. Recognise the positives, and focus on what is good.

Don't bottle it up

Make sure you reach out to somebody if you are feeling low. You can always go to WRVS Services Welfare for a chat and talk about life in general. Your unit padre is also on hand to listen.

Embrace a new life

There is a temptation to call your friends and family as often as you can, particularly when you feel like you are facing the unknown. But it is important to make new friends and integrate fully into a new way of life. Other recruits will be in the same place as you and experiencing the same feelings.

Be social

Make sure you get out and about – you can go to WRVS centres, play pool, watch TV and meet others. There are opportunities to sit and read too.

Look ahead

Try to recognise that the feelings will pass. You are at a time in life where you are experiencing new emotions for the first time – the Army will not feel so unfamiliar forever.

DID YOU KNOW?
Homesickness was first identified as a condition suffered by 17th century Swiss troops fighting in Europe.



Sugar wars

After a diabetes scare this soldier called time on his sweet tooth

▶ WHEN SSgt Matthew Johnson (RAMC) discovered that he had pre-diabetic blood sugar levels during a routine check-up, it dawned on him that lifestyle changes were needed.

Admitting the news was a wake-up call, the senior NCO – who is currently serving in Germany – sat down with a dietician for advice. And simple amendments to his routine soon paid dividends.

Now six stone lighter and no longer in the pre-diabetic bracket, he shares his five top tips for staying out of the risk zone.

1

Focus on fitness

Being active is important in all this, so step up to the challenge and try to increase your PT levels. If you have an injury, do as much as is permitted.

2

Mornings matters

I made the mistake of skipping meals in the day and eating massive portions in the evening.

Don't do this – having just a slice of wholemeal or brown bread early on will help kick-start your metabolism. Likewise, salad, soup or fresh fruit for lunch will keep you going.

3

Kick the cravings

Make sure you amend your snacking patterns to cut chocolate and fizzy drinks out of your life – in short, try to avoid as much sugar as you possibly can.

4

Fresh is best

Shun microwave meals and have a decent freshly cooked dish.

Enjoy a piece of meat with vegetables as well as a salad – just make sure you avoid the dressing. Greek yogurts in the early evening – 1900 or 2000 – will round off your menu.

5

Stay a step ahead

Remaining healthy can be fun so keep it up in your spare time by enjoying leisure activities with friends and family. Walks and bike rides are a good bet.



C ONSTANT change is a given for those who follow the flag, but that doesn't always make things easy – especially if you're talking about giving up a much-loved piece of battlefield kit.

But with hundreds of new projects buzzing around Army HQ at any one time, and the digital age reshaping combat as we know it, flexibility is the name of the game for soldiers in 2018.

For members of the Queen's Own Yeomanry, this has meant bidding a fond farewell to their beloved RWMIK Land Rovers – protected patrol vehicles that represent a million front-line memories for elder members of the unit, and some colourful recce training experiences for younger ones.

"Many of our guys love the RWMIK; it's iconic really," Capt Chris Seaton told *Soldier* as his squadron completed what is expected to be their last round of annual training with the platform.

As well as giving his troops valuable hours rehearsing their light cavalry role, Exercise Wessex Storm saw them get to grips with vehicle upkeep and maintenance tasks on Salisbury Plain.

And such expertise will be vital in the coming months when they take delivery of RWMIK's replacement vehicle, the Jackal 2, which is already being used by Regular soldiers from the QOY's partner unit, The Light Dragoons.

"It's been good for recruiting," the 2iC said of the existing workhorse, which first arrived with his troops in 2013 after they converted from the CVR(T).

"And with links to the Gulf War's 'pink panthers' there is just so much history there.

"But we are looking forward to getting our hands on the Jackal; it's bigger and more aggressive-looking.

"Our main focus is on arranging courses to retrain troops; we want to get effective with the new kit as soon as possible.

"Wessex Storm showed we are capable of that, and able to do our job really well."

It was a view echoed by others lower down the chain of command.

Tpr Harry Sharrock – a huge Land Rover enthusiast who admits he was first attracted to signing up by the RWMIK – said he learnt a "hell of a lot" from what was his first major training package.

The 20-year-old driver has some reservations about using a bigger vehicle for recce work, but is nevertheless excited about getting his hands on Jackal.

"There will be space for a lot more ➡



“
WE ARE
LOOKING
FORWARD TO
GETTING OUR
HANDS ON
THE JACKAL
”

Report: Sarah Goldthorpe Pictures: Peter Davies



LAST HURRAH

Cavalry troops tear it up for final time in the RWMIK



➔ equipment,” the soldier admitted. “And it will be good to have on-board radio systems as opposed to using manpacks.”

A civvy street student studying war and security, the Reservist is also happy to update his driver training.

“I’ve been told I will need to do a two-week changeover course, but the off-road elements of Wessex Storm will help me do that,” he added.

Capt Seaton agreed that the annual exercise had come at a good time.

“To be out there doing our core role properly was important,” the officer said.

“Many of the soldiers didn’t have any experience beyond their driving or commanding course, so to be in the field for two weeks, and having the time and space to manoeuvre and bond was important for us.

“The seniors got to do some low-key mentoring as well, which all helps us improve.”

He continued: “We know we can do the job, we just need to transfer those skills over to the new vehicle now.

“We’ve spent a lot of time getting to know the RWMIK and the way it handles as much as the technical stuff.

“So even when we get the courses done it’s going to take us some time to understand how to use the Jackal.

“But overall, this is the right thing to do.

“It will bring us a new capability that we can integrate with our paired unit; on future exercises you won’t be able to tell whether it’s Regular or Reserve soldiers you are looking at.”

Change may sometimes come with a trace of sadness. But for these troops, it will be a price worth paying if they can stand shoulder-to-shoulder with their full-time colleagues while deployed on future operations. ■



ALL CHANGE

How the
protected
mobility
vehicles differ

RWMIK

Lightly armoured, usually carrying a GPMG for the commander and an HMG for the gunner on top. This means troops have better visibility and mobility

Length: **4.55m**

Height: **2.4m**

Width: **1.79m**

Max speed: **80kph**

Crew: **3**

The vehicles are **small**, with **not much space for kit or extra people** such as interpreters or specialists

No boiling vessel for brews so it's down to jet boils

Individual **motors are now pretty old** and **need a lot of maintenance**



Eyes on: Reserves from the Queen's Own Yeomanry were put through their paces on Salisbury Plain during Exercise Wessex Storm. Bringing Jackal on-board in future will give the part-time troops the same punch as their Regular colleagues



JACKAL 2

A unique air suspension system with adjustable ride height is the main improvement with this vehicle, allowing it to take on some seriously varied terrain

Length: **5.39m**

Height: **1.97m**

Width: **2m**

Max speed: **80kph**

Crew: **2 + 1**

Armed with GPMG and HMG (or grenade machine gun) as with the older vehicles

Used by light cavalry regiments and a range of other units across the British Army



SOUND OF

Report: Cliff Caswell Pictures: Peter Davies and Steve Dock

THERE are all the ingredients of an almighty storm brewing on this sticky summer's day. The air on Salisbury Plain is motionless and heavy with expectation. Excited insects dart beneath the trees and a heat haze shimmers over a parched landscape stretching to the horizon.

And then there is a sound of thunder.

Through ear defenders the roar is muffled but the shock tears through the teeth and skull; the troops around this 105mm L118 light gun are enveloped in smoke as the weapon responds to its commanders.

In the ensuing quiet, there is the receding, rocket-like hiss of the round on its journey skywards. The smell of cordite appears and hangs heavy in the village.

The fire mission has only just begun for members of 79 (Kirkee) Battery, 29 Commando Regiment, Royal Artillery.

The rain has come – and in a display of deadly choreography two other guns now erupt amid the buildings in Copehill Down.

Across the countryside where Exercise Green Cannon is taking place, the weapons of UK, American and European allies hurl high explosive ammunition onto unseen targets.

And silence returns, suddenly. Smoke is rising from somewhere in the distance...



THUNDER

Artillery rains on the plain



STATESIDE SET-UP

AT THE US Marine Corps lines in the countryside there is elation at the success of the mission.

They have fired scores of rounds from their M777 guns – a monster of a weapon that hurls 155mm of death each time it is discharged (pictured right).

“Since starting in the first week we have gradually been working up to these larger missions,” 1st Lt Zachary Liskay (USMC) tells *Soldier*.

“Now we’re putting a ton of rounds downrange, which is great.

“Working together with so many European partners has also been a good opportunity – and the Brits have been coordinating everything we do.”

...SITREP 1430...

...SITREP 1510...

...SITREP 1600...

RETURNING RAIN

PERSONNEL of 29 Commando are leading Green Cannon – a three-week package of artillery excellence involving counterparts from the USA, Sweden, France and Holland. Each brings a formidable array of guns and mortars. Troops at 8 (Alma) Battery, 29 Commando have concealed their three guns in a treeline. Soldiers adjust their weapons. Somewhere beyond the line of sight are fire support teams – three- or four-strong groups of observers who single out targets for a hammering.

“Working in a multinational environment means communications and Nato standing orders are important for these teams,” says battery captain Capt Ken Carter (RA). “We must be able to direct allies’ guns, and they need to know how to fire ours.”



PREPARE TO DEFEND

THE fire mission has paused but the troops remain on their guard. The package is a rehearsal for war fighting against a well-equipped opposition, and the allies’ guns as well as their operators are prime targets on the enemy grid. “We had our own position assaulted yesterday and we had to defend it with our rifles,” says Lt Sam Wellings (RA, pictured below), a gun position officer with 79 Battery. He is well aware of the potency of the mock troops his soldiers are fighting. “You are facing a near-peer force, meaning you are vulnerable to attacks from unmanned aerial vehicles and other threats – you have to keep the guns dispersed.”





IN NUMBERS: GREEN CANNON

Troops deployed

720

Nationalities
on the
exercise

5

Weeks
on
training
area

3

British guns
involved

6

...SITREP 1645...

AMERICAN AGGRESSION

WITH new firing orders received, the US commanders are in a huddle for their briefing. The delivery is terse and to the point and the personnel are rapidly back with their guns.

It is an impressive display of precision; the crews are well drilled. Ammunition is unpacked, the large rounds loaded and the attack begins in anger.

Nearby, the British weapons are sounding off as they play their part in the assault symphony.

"There are some differences when it comes to how we do fire missions compared to the Brits," remarks Sgt Chris Malacaso (USMC). "But there has been a lot of learning from each other, and it has been great checking out all of the different weapon systems."



...SITREP 1730...

EXERCISE HEART



SOLDIERS in the Brigade Joint Fires Cell – the allies' nerve centre at Rollestone Camp – are satisfied at the day's activity and impressed with increasingly smooth joint working.

The exercise is now approaching its conclusion with just a day left.

"We currently have several fire units from five different nationalities," Capt Alex Cann (RA, pictured below), one of those overseeing the coordination, tells *Soldier*.

"Procedures vary between us and them and there are obviously different languages, which can make life tricky.

"But we are in a better place compared to when we started.

"A lot has worked, and a lot hasn't – but this is where you learn your lessons."



SHOULDER-TO-SHOULDER

The exercise encompassed:



US Marine Corps



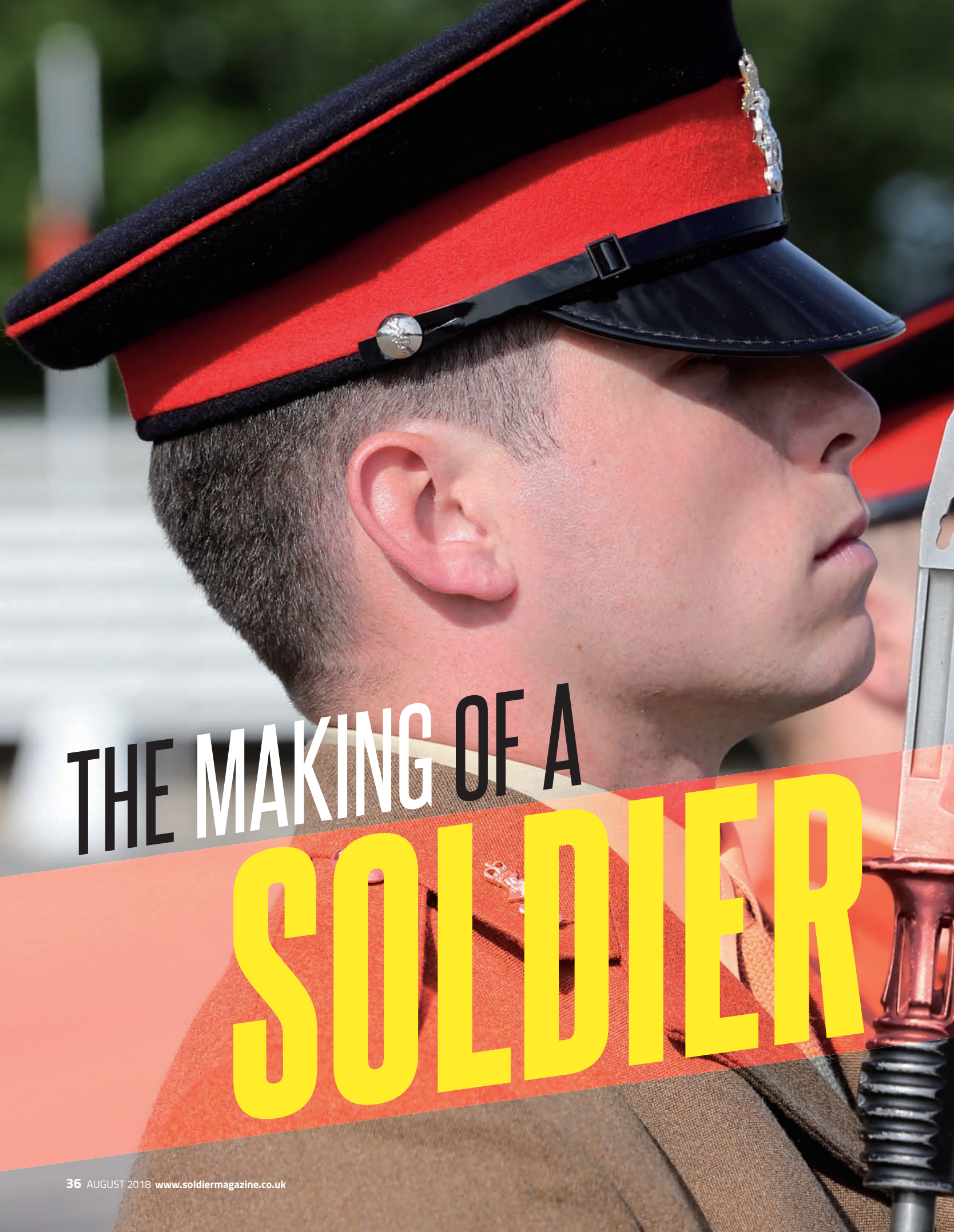
French artillery




Dutch army and marines



Swedish marines



THE MAKING OF A SOLDIER



Take one civvy, add a shot of Army **discipline**, a dash of **confidence** and **shake well...** how basic training turns out the next generation of Service personnel

Report: Becky Clark Pictures: Graeme Main

IT'S early morning on Pirbright ranges and a troop of weary recruits are readying themselves for the last serial of their phase one training.

Thirteen weeks ago they didn't know one end of an SA80 from the other.

But now the hard graft is almost over.

Once they have stormed a final enemy position and evacuated a casualty – all uphill, naturally – their transformation from civvies to soldiers will be all but complete.

I Elsewhere on camp, other youngsters are preparing to take part in their passing out parade as proud family members look on, while some are practising skill-at-arms and yet another group are getting their very first taste of life in the field.

It's all part of a well-oiled machine that last year churned out 3,871 new Regular and Reserve personnel.

But while the centre runs with conveyor belt-like efficiency, this isn't just about producing ranks of identikit soldiers who can handle a weapon, march in time and meet the Service's exacting fitness standards.

Back in the woods, 18-year-old Edward Hoskins is munching on a well-earned bacon roll after the exertions of the course's final attack and reflecting on how the past three months have changed him – mentally as well as physically.

"A lot of it is to do with self-confidence," he says.

"I was quite socially awkward when I first arrived. I was the guy sitting in the corner and letting everyone else talk and now, having been with my troop, I've seen how you can make friends with everyone and in the Army those friends are for life.

"A year ago I honestly couldn't see myself doing this.

"The last week has been one of the hardest of my life – being awake for so long and doing physical tasks that are tiring.

"But it's pushed my boundaries and been a real eye-opener in terms of what I can achieve."

Permanent staff at Pirbright call this becoming "smaller on the outside, bigger on the inside". In other words, recruits emerge from this course leaner in body, but stronger in character.

Brig Alex Potts, commander of Initial Training Group, says seeing this transformation is one of the most rewarding parts of his job.

"Basic training gives them some military skills but it's fundamentally about developing the qualities of individuals," he tells *Soldier*.

"It makes them into team players with a common set of standards and that gives them some real advantages.

"They'll be better people because of the training they've done – whether they stay for three years or 30."

The senior officer concedes that while he and his staff are passionate about the benefits of an Army career, recruiting figures show the target demographic remains unconvinced.

"It's frustrating because we all fundamentally believe in this way of life and this job," he continues.

"It is the right answer for many more young people than are currently coming forward, so we need to communicate that to them better."

Could it be that "generation snowflake" simply isn't up for the challenge?





"I don't like that term," replies Brig Potts.

"I think it's idle and unprofessional to criticise a group, and I don't think any of the people you'll see here deserve that label,"

"Do I believe they benefit from being taught mental resilience and coping strategies? Absolutely.

"That's what we're doing – giving them techniques to help them. And they're responding really well."

According to Tpr Paul Bell (pictured below left), who is heading for phase two training with the Royal Armoured Corps, there are several reasons why civilians aren't answering the call – and it isn't just down to a lack of understanding about the Army.

"I don't think many people care about what's bigger than them," he tells *Soldier* as his troop prepares to step off on their passing out parade.

“

It's something
we need to
inspire in the
youth again

”





"In my family there's always been at least one male in every generation in the Armed Forces and I wanted to carry that on.

"I consider myself a patriot so I decided to do something greater for society.

"But where I come from there is a lack of civic thought; it's something we need to inspire in the youth again."

As Tpr Bell and his colleagues scurry off to get suited and booted for the occasion, friends and families are gathering in the welfare centre, ready to cheer them on.

Among them is Beckie Simmons, who beams with pride as she describes how her son, Tpr Jacob Simmons, has completely changed his attitude since she dropped him off at the gates 14 weeks ago.

"He's a different person," she says.

"He was a bit of a loose cannon – defensive and aggressive. He didn't stop to listen or think.

"Even on his first weekend home I could see the change in him – you could have a proper conversation with him.

"If you've lost your way I think the Army will do you good. It teaches you values like self-sacrifice and it's important that teenagers learn those things."

It is clearly a proud day for everyone involved, not least the instructors who have worked hard to ensure the recruits make the grade.

The pass rate at Pirbright is currently 85 per cent – a reflection, say staff, not of lowered standards but of a greater emphasis on coaching and mentoring.

"We have to accept times are changing," says Sgt Mufaro Tagarisa (Yorks).

"Some of them arrive having had everything done for them by mum and dad and they might need more help than others.

"When they start they have no clue what the Army is all about but by the time they leave you've given them that confidence to go out and be professional soldiers.

"That's extremely satisfying.

"You may never see them again but you do wonder how far they'll go – there might be future Victoria Cross winners among them." ■



EVERY DAY'S A SCHOOL DAY

Instructors from
2 Army Training
Regiment reveal what
teaching recruits has
done for them...

**“I’ve learnt
not to judge
a book by
its cover.**

We do get
challenging recruits
from time to time, but it
just requires more work
to get them up to speed.

Even if someone drops
out, if you can hold your
head up and say you
gave it your best shot
then there’s nothing
more you can do.”

Cpl Richard Robinson, RE



“You have to take into account people’s different backgrounds. Some come from rough council estates and some from wealthier families, so the mix is quite complicated and there’s a fine balance in how you manage that.



Being Infantry **I’d also never dealt with female troops** – so that was a challenge for me.

Sgt Mufaro Tagarisa, Yorks



Interested in instructing?
Talk to your RCMO



“Being an instructor is a huge responsibility. You have to remember the recruits aren’t trained soldiers – they’ve never been in a military environment.

They won’t have handled a weapon system or been expected to get up and make their beds and polish their boots. Some of the younger ones have never even had to do their own laundry. It’s **really** important to have patience.



Sgt Joe Reardon, RLC

RECRUIT CHECKLIST

Do you know someone headed for basic training? It may be a while since you walked through the gates, so make sure they follow these tips...



☐ **Read the joining instructions.**

They contain lots of useful information, including details of the “get you in” pack, which can save you money on personal kit such as thermos flasks and torches.

☐ **Learn how to iron a shirt, polish your shoes and sew on a button** – it will make life easier if you can master these basic skills before you arrive.

☐ **Maintain your fitness** if there is a delay between passing the assessment centre and beginning training. You don’t need to be super-fit but you don’t want to turn up overweight and out of shape. Download the *100% Army Fit* app to help you stay on track.

☐ **Work on your swimming.** You will be taught this during training but if you can already swim well when you arrive it will free up time to focus on other things.

☐ **Follow your chosen cap badge on social media** to stay in touch with what’s going on.

☐ **Don’t listen to myths and rumours** about basic training – they are almost never true.

☐ **Remember, basic training is doable.** All soldiers have gone through it. The Army will make sure you pass as long as you’re committed.



Industrial revolution

How the Army is keeping pace with mind-blowing advancements in robotics

WITH cutting-edge battlefield technologies taking off at an exponential rate, the Army is now well adept at working with the commercial world to ensure it is at the forefront of the latest wizardry.

The recent fruits of this joint approach will be showcased in this year's Army Warfighting Experiment (AWE), when robotic and autonomous systems (RAS) will be the headline act during a pioneering four-week test on Salisbury Plain.

Known as Autonomous Warrior, the exercise will feature a host of products – from UAVs to unmanned resupply vehicles – that have been designed to revolutionise the way in which the UK's Armed Forces operate.

The military no longer leads research and development in this field, so by taking problems to industry it is hoped that more innovative and exciting solutions can be found.

The exercise will deliver obvious benefits as soldiers trial kit that could provide a decisive edge in future conflicts.

At the same time, partnering companies will gain a greater insight into how the Service works and the extreme wear and tear its work puts on equipment.

"The Army understood a certain amount about RAS but it did not realise the exact benefit this area could bring," Lt Col Richard Craig (R Signals), one of the Service's RAS experts, told *Soldier*.

"So we have dedicated resources to go after the capability in a rapid manner.

"As part of that we need to work more closely with industry.

"This sector didn't really understand our requirements and how we do business and they feel they can deliver better solutions if we have greater collaboration with them."

The AWE will feature participants from the US Army, Royal Marines and Royal Air Force Regiment, with international observers from a host of countries including France, Germany and Denmark.

It will see RAS tested in a number of key areas such as breaking into or defending an urban environment, surveillance and targeting and improving the effectiveness of combat service and support.

Another major focus will be on the last mile resupply and how automated systems can be used to reduce the risk to troops.

The process began last year when the Army approached

outside companies to say it was interested in all things RAS and asked if they could suggest potential products.

After an initial sift, 103 ideas went forward to a *Dragons' Den*-style event where representatives pitched to an expert panel from Army Headquarters and various trials and development units.

The Service is now running tests and demonstrations on 72 systems from 46 different industry partners ahead of the major field exercise in November, when personnel from 1 Armoured Infantry Brigade will get their hands on the equipment.

The troops will work on a series of manoeuvres with ordinary kit and then repeat the process with RAS, using different tactics and techniques.

In some cases they will complete tasks quicker or use less ammunition, for example, and in the third week they will be asked how they would potentially deploy the technology on the battlefield.

"Some of these companies have never worked with the military before," Lt Col Craig explained. "They have been developing products at breathtaking speed and by the time the exercise comes round they will be at an advanced stage.

"We are engaging with them at a point where it is not expensive to change the way they go about their business.

"In the past it has cost a fortune to modify things once they have been delivered but in this process we are able to talk to industry along the way and tell them if they have misinterpreted what we are looking for.

"That is really beneficial. They need to speak to the end users and this gives them that opportunity – there are some really imaginative ideas out there.

"The Army wants to work more collaboratively with industry and we will see that more in future." ■



STARS OF THE SHOW

Soldier shines a light on some of the kit that is set to feature in Autonomous Warrior...

Throwbot 2 Micro-Robot

Function: This system is designed to give dismounted troops better situational awareness on close-combat missions. Its small size makes it easy to carry, throw, drop or drive into place to provide video and audio reconnaissance.

Tech talk: The kit includes a colour camera and microphone and it can withstand a nine-metre vertical drop onto concrete. Batteries can be recharged via a USB point and it has a maximum range of 91 metres

Nippo-X Modular UCS

Function: This fully autonomous platform can transport additional weapons, ammunition, food, water and other supplies to the front line. It can also be used for evacuation of casualties.

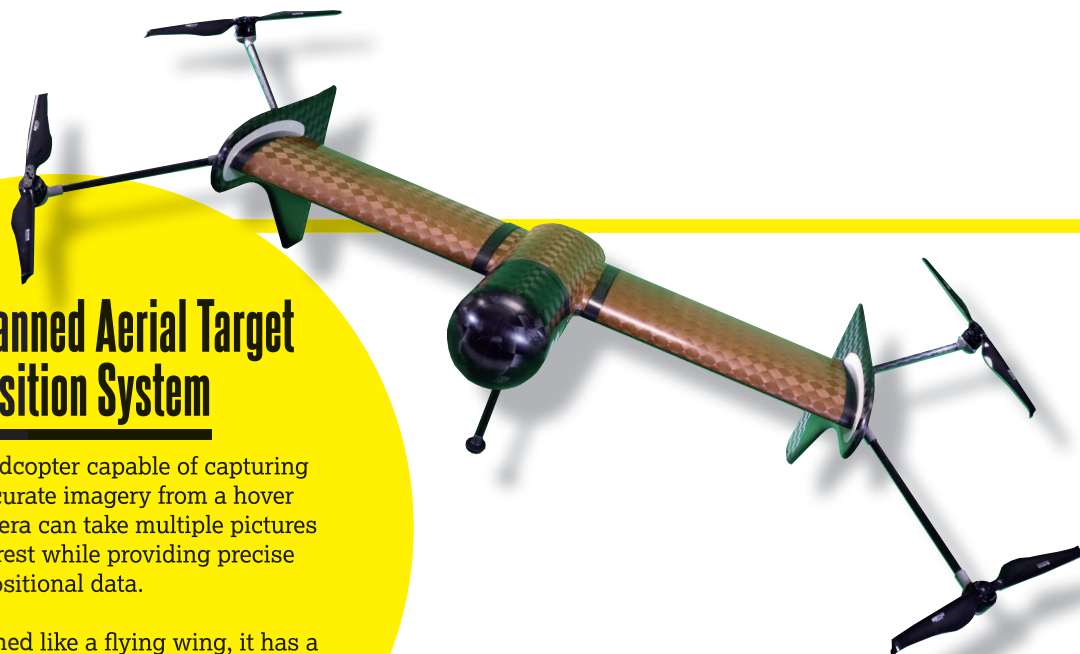
Tech talk: Using waypoint navigation it can travel off-road and has an obstacle avoidance system. Can be operated via a laptop function and X-box-style controller.



Small Unmanned Aerial Target Acquisition System

Function: A quadcopter capable of capturing detailed and accurate imagery from a hover position. The camera can take multiple pictures of points of interest while providing precise positional data.

Tech talk: Designed like a flying wing, it has a rotor in each corner. It can launch and recover like a helicopter and hover to capture imagery. But the rotors move into a position similar to an airplane when flying from A to B.



Rakka 3000 Multipurpose Platform

Function: An autonomous vehicle that can support the forward logistics effort and be used for hazardous scene assessments. Ancillary parts such as forks and an excavator arm can be added depending on the task.

Tech talk: Four-wheeled drive with a payload capability of 3,000kg, the autonomy kit includes obstacle detection and avoidance, path planning capability and follow me function.





Chilbolton UXO Drone Detection System

Function: An unmanned aerial system that uses the latest magnetic sensor technology to identify mines and IEDs.

Tech talk: Can be preprogrammed to fly at a set altitude ensuring optimum accuracy for the sensors. Unexploded ordnance (UXO) can be detected down to four metres below ground level.



“The companies we are working with are really enthusiastic. Some are only small enterprises but they are coming up with creative solutions. They may not have much experience of the military so it is down to us to be open and find compromises but they are keen to deliver.”

SSgt Matt Gardner, RE

PARTNERS IN PROGRESS

Personnel from the Army's trials and development units give their thoughts on uniting with industry...

“This is the way forward. In the past the TDUs have got a lot of equipment too far down the line, when decisions have already been made. You then look at it from a soldier's perspective and start to find problems. The sooner we get involved the better.”

WO1 Diana Kelly, RLC



“Equipment procurement tends to be behind the curve, but the AWE means we are on the cusp of things. These are the newest products on the market and the manufacturers are bringing them to us for testing.”

SSgt Mark Horsfall, REME

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Picture: Shutterstock

Boxed in by moving policy

I AM currently serving in Germany and have just gone through the Forces Help to Buy scheme to purchase a house in the UK.

My wife has had a major operation and wishes to return home early to settle into our new property and establish her ongoing medical and physiotherapy treatment schedules.

With support from our family we have agreed that I will continue my current assignment, which has 15 months remaining, unaccompanied.

I cannot apply for the over-37 package to help fund her move because when my wife decided to return I'd already been in my current post for nine months – and that was mainly down to the extended nature of her medical treatment.

I can't use the final tour of duty package either as I'm not yet on my last posting and I've looked at other options in JSP 752 but none fit the bill.

I have tried the welfare support route through the Pay and Allowances Casework and Complaints Cell (PACCC) but we will only receive help if they decide to support our case after a review.

Ironically, there would be no problem if my personal status category had changed because, for example, my wife had left me.

Surely the policy needs to change to reduce the stress on people who are in a similar predicament to me and who can easily prove that their overseas posting is not working for the family. – **WO2 Edward Wood, SASC**

Col John Oldroyd, Army Pay Colonel,

Remuneration Policy, Personnel Directorate, responds: The provision of movement and storage of personal effects (MSPE) and disturbance expenses (DE) supports personnel at public cost when moving on assignment.

Additionally, there are several conditions that allow a mid-assignment move, including when it is required because of compelling welfare, medical or compassionate reasons (JSP 752, section three, chapter seven).

To ensure fairness and impartiality, the PACCC must authorise any of the above allowances in circumstances not explicit in policy.

Currently, there is no delegated authority at a local level to sanction moves for public expense relocations from Service family accommodation mid-assignment.

I note that you have followed the policy guidance and applied to PACCC for requisite authority, which I understand has now been granted.

Please note that defence is currently conducting a relocation review where the appropriateness of current policy for MSPE and DE will be tested to ensure it meets the needs of the modern family.

Thank you for highlighting your frustrations, which we will ensure are fed into the review.

I wish you good luck in your forthcoming move.

Talkback

“There'd be no problem if my wife left me”

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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Uphill climb: The sister of a Gurkha officer is fighting deportation to Nepal

Picture: Steve Dock

‘We should show loyalty’

I READ in the newspapers that the Home Office was sending the 75-year-old sister of a retired Gurkha major who had served for 31 years with the British Army back to Nepal.

She came to Britain to live with her brother after her home was destroyed by an earthquake.

He pays for her health insurance, so she is no drain on the NHS.

I am disappointed that it appears no support was offered by the Army for a member of the most loyal nation to the UK over the past 200 years.

These people are usually among the first in when this country has a squabble with an enemy.

It disgusts me how often we don't show the same loyalty to others who help us in times of need. – **Ernie Ford, ex-REME**

Mike Roberts, Personnel Capability and lead for Gurkha Affairs at Army Headquarters, replies: Thank you for your letter regarding the possible deportation of Maj Udaibahadur Gurung's sister, Lal.

At the risk of sounding like hiding behind policy, I'm afraid we are unable to provide an answer on this occasion. Visas and residency in the UK are issues for the Home Office.

Although Maj Gurung is a veteran, Lal is not a dependant relative, therefore the MoD has no power of persuasion on his behalf.

We are unable to get an update on the case, as this is a private matter between Maj Gurung, Lal and the Home Office, and we could not comment on personal matters without the consent of the individual.

“They are hardly risking their lives”

MEDAL ‘MISTAKE’

● WHILE I appreciate the importance of the Army Cadet Force (ACF) and the effort that goes into what they do, I have to disagree with the medals they are given.

I have served for 23 years in the British Army and have completed many tours, risking my life and saving others as well.

Giving a cadet instructor a medal for working with children in uniform makes a mockery of those personnel who have put everything on the line during active service – never forgetting, of course, those who did not come home.

Our medals represent our achievements in and out of wartime.

Those who work in the ACF are hardly risking their necks or, indeed, living in arduous conditions for six months or more. – **Name and address supplied**

Lt Col (retd) Kestrel Simson, Ceremonial and Operational and Service Awards, Army Headquarters, responds:

You are to be thanked and commended for your service on many operational tours, which will have been recognised by the award of campaign medals and possibly the Accumulated Campaign Service Medal.

If you have served for 23 years, you may also have been awarded the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal or the Volunteer Reserves Service Medal.

These recognise long and efficient service of 15 and ten years respectively in the Regular Army and Reserves.

The Cadet Forces Medal acknowledges similar long and efficient service for adult volunteers and is awarded after 12 years of largely unremunerated service with any of the MoD cadet forces.

These people give up evenings and weekends throughout the year to challenge, develop and inspire our youth.

Doing this continuously over a 12-year period is deserving of recognition alongside the contribution that our Regular and Army Reserve officers and soldiers make.

THE WRONG SIGNAL

● I THOUGHT the article in June's edition of *Soldier* on the developing world of cyber warfare (Keyboard Clashes, page 44) made very interesting reading.

However, I was a little surprised there was no mention of the equally important role played by members of the Intelligence Corps who work intimately with our Royal Signals brethren. Just for clarity, the Intelligence Corps employs more than 70 personnel on a range of cyber-related tasks, spread across five separate units, in posts ranging in rank from lance corporal to major.

We also play a critical role in providing intelligence support to cyber operations and are actively recruiting individuals with the appropriate skill sets.

Anyone who is interested in opportunities such as these is encouraged to contact SO2 Selection (military 94649 2735) to discuss how they could work in this highly challenging but very rewarding environment. – **Lt Col John Dee, Intelligence Corps Chief of Staff, Chicksands**



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Tracking drop in driving ability

AS A former Army driving instructor I have to question the need for the black box tracking devices installed in Service vehicles.

I live in Catterick and see all types of military vehicles driving around with L plates fitted but can only assume that the standard of driving instruction supplied these days is relatively poor.

Is having these devices fitted anything to do with the quality of tuition that's being supplied by private contractors?

Surely, if high levels of teaching and testing were maintained there would be no requirement for these gadgets, which must be employed by the MoD at considerable cost. – **Fred Townson, Catterick**

Alison Hopkins, Transport, Logistic Support, Army Headquarters, replies: The MoD continues to train and use both defence licence acquisition

instructors (DLAIs) and defence driving instructors, including in the Catterick Garrison area.

These individuals are trained to Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) criteria, with DLAIs being required to undertake minimum training levels each year to maintain their ability to instruct.

The MoD also uses approved driving instructors, who are qualified civilian teachers, and DVSA driving examiners when necessary.

There are a number of telematics devices fitted to administrative (white) fleet and they are used to assess overall performance, including reducing emissions and fuel costs, and to improve road safety through the collection of driver behaviour data.

Basic test vehicles do not have vehicle telematics fitted.

“The quality is relatively poor”

‘I don’t want tainted food’

● I WANT to know if the food I am eating is in line with my beliefs?

How do I know if I am eating halal or non-halal meat? I am a Christian and don't want to eat food that, in my opinion, has been religiously tainted.

I do not force my religion on others and do not want to consume something that has been killed in a manner to placate a religious requirement for a minority in a multicultural society.

– **Name and address supplied**

Clive Dunlop, Catering Services Policy, Army Headquarters, replies: All food supplied to the MoD, as

well as all commercial outlets, must comply with strict European Union regulations on food labelling.

The MoD recruits its personnel from a multicultural society and so sources halal and kosher foods, labelled as such, to cater for those who follow these religions.

The resulting cooked dishes are easily identifiable on a server as they will be labelled accordingly.

We note your concern but the lead on food labelling is the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and, therefore, you may wish to redirect your question to them.

TERMINATE THIS TAX

● THE new landlord tax rules haven't been thought through.

They are unfairly penalising Servicemen and women with the result that many are not declaring their now taxable rental incomes and are therefore breaking the law.

This undermines defence's efforts to allow people to buy their own home and the intentions of the Armed Forces Covenant. This is a promise by the nation to ensure those who serve, or who have served in the Armed Forces, and their families, are treated fairly.

I have approached Army Headquarters, the minister for Armed Forces and my local member of parliament twice about this and have not received a satisfactory response.

I think the X Factor is being used as a magic wand to make the problem go away, but that still doesn't hide the fact these tax rules are not in the spirit of the Armed Forces Covenant.

– **Name and address supplied**

David Adams, Service Personnel Support Covenant Team, replies: Soldiers are subject to UK tax laws like any other citizen.

Measures under the Covenant are already in place to reduce the financial burden on Service families with regards to mobility, with some mortgage providers agreeing to waive fees as well as the requirement to change to higher rate buy-to-let loans.

We consider that these measures provide effective mitigation to any financial disadvantage that Service families face with this.

For more details please visit www.armedforcescovenant.gov.uk/businesses-helping-deliver-armed-forces-covenant



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COMPETITIONS

Spine line winner: SSgt Taff Watkins, BGS CCF, Bangor.

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Wives Choirs: David Clarkson, Chippenham, Wiltshire; William Smith, Catterick Garrison, North Yorkshire; Jayne Hawkes, Hereford Garrison, Herefordshire.

Classic war film goody bag: Wendy Husband, Aldershot, Hampshire; Iain McCallum, Rockfield, Monmouthshire; Pete Rendall, 105 Bn REME, Keynsham.



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020 7901 8900;
www.soldierscharity.org

Armed Forces Buddhist Society:
Chaplain 020 7414 3411;
www.afbs-uk.org

Armed Forces Christian Union:
01793 783123;
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

Erskine:
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www.erskine.org.uk

Family Escort Service:
020 7463 9249

Felix Fund – the bomb disposal charity:
07713 752901;
www.felixfund.org.uk

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

Forces Pension Society:
020 7820 9988

Help for Heroes:
0845 673 1760 or 01980 846 459;
www.helpforheroes.org.uk

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

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

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

Stoll:
020 7385 2110; info@stoll.org.uk;
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:
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uk4u Thanks!:
01798 812081; www.uk4u.org

Veterans Welfare Service:
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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 64/18: All arms and Services applications for conversion to a Regular commission for direct entry and late entry officers

ABN 63/18: Successfully leading through change – the Centre for Army Leadership – November 8, 2018 conference

ABN 62/18: Ex Trident Juncture 2018 – Reserves opportunity

ABN 61/18: Army marksmanship badges

ABN 60/18: Climate assessment team member application

ABN 59/18: Withdrawal of items of barrack dress uniform

ABN 58/18: Defence Vehicle Dynamics 2018

ABN 57/18: Recruiter selection event

ABN 56/18: Army Reserve findings – Reserves continuous attitude survey 2018

ABN 55/18: Army Mediation Service awareness sessions

ABN 54/18: Notification of new land doctrine – planning and execution handbook and staff officers' handbook

ABN 53/18: Changes to appraisal reporting – JSP 757 parts one and two, dated May 18

DIB 08/18: Scottish income tax

DIB 07/18: Tri-Service Reserves continuous attitude survey

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

DIN 2018DIN01-093: Reserves travelling, working and residing abroad

DIN 2018DIN01-092: Army Reserve group D specialists – special terms of service

DIN 2018DIN01-091: Tri-Service arrangements for the administration of Service wills

DIN 2018DIN01-090: Pension tax – lifetime allowance and annual allowance

DIN 2018DIN01-089: Revised arrangements for officiating chaplains to the military

DIN 2018DIN01-088: Armed Forces continuity of education allowance (CEA) – increase in rates for the guardians scheme and reduction to the CEA personal contribution for state boarding schools

DIN 2018DIN03-018: UK-Israeli and occupied Palestinian territories travel

DIN 2018DIN03-017: The Army policy for audit and inspection

DIN 2018DIN03-016: The United Kingdom Naval Support Facility in Bahrain

DIN 2018DIN04-118: Declaration of obsolescence items for Project Calculate

DIN 2018DIN04-117: Declaration of obsolescence items for Project Calculate

DIN 2018DIN04-116: Head-mounted night vision goggle helmet mount assembly

DIN 2018DIN04-115: The Estate Technical Authority's direction to utilise the definitive establishment list

DIN 2018DIN04-113: Amended supply procedure for serviceable and unserviceable cylinders

Continued on page 54

Intelligence continued

DIN 2018DIN04-111: Suspension trainer in the deployed medical modules

DIN 2018DIN04-110: Movement of foreign military partners and other government departments freight utilising UK strategic assets

DIN 2018DIN04-109: Provision of a multimodal UK and worldwide commercial surface movements service

DIN 2018DIN04-108: Extension of out-of-service date of VBTIL and all associated spares

DIN 2018DIN04-107: BATCIS declaration of obsolete: various NSNs from DMC Z99, Z99BOW, BMN, Z1, Y3, Z42 and AN117F

DIN 2018DIN04-106: Management of security monitoring device

DIN 2018DIN06-018: Patient data and the national data opt-out programme

DIN 2018DIN07-088: British Services mountaineering expedition to Pakistan 2020

DIN 2018DIN07-086: Troop insertion and extraction systems instructor training

DIN 2018DIN07-085: Declaration of obsolescence items for Project Calculate

DIN 2018DIN07-084: Qualified helicopter tactics instructor course

DIN 2018DIN07-083: Adventurous training in Canada – planning expeditions to Trail's End Camp in 2019

DIN 2018DIN07-082: 77 Brigade military psychological operations course and civil affairs course

DIN 2018DIN07-081: Army Alpine and Nordic exercises 2019

DIN 2018DIN07-079: The defence logistics management course – general outline and application process

DIN 2018DIN07-078: Intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance foundation course

DIN 2018DIN07-077: Army European winter activity instruction 2018/19

DIN 2018DIN07-076: Exercise Caribbean Express 2018/19

DIN 2018DIN07-075: Exercise Canary Express 2018/19

DIN 2018DIN07-074: Adventurous Training Group (Army) ski courses

DIN 2018DIN07-073: The defence logistics staff course – general outline and application process

DIN 2018DIN08-005: Budgetary and accounting responsibilities for property

matters on the defence estate

DIN 2018DIN08-004: Advice and guidance for top level budget holders on the delegation of infrastructure funding – effective from April 2018

DIN 2018DIN08-003: Food expenditure and income – changes to use of local project codes

DIN 2018DIN08-002: Insurance arrangements for unit-organised community engagement events, open days, families days and other functions

DIN 2018DIN08-001: Claims for loss of, or damage to, personal property (regulation claims)

DIN 2018DIN09-011: Minister (DP) Acquisition Awards 2018 – calling notice for nominations

DIN 2018DIN09-009: The Ruth Carter Prize for nurses and the Eliza Mackenzie Prize for student nurses

DIN 2018DIN09-007: The Oliver Sword 2018

DIN 2018DIN09-005: The Alan Hirst Memorial Prize

DIN 2018DIN09-004: The George Beeching Prize for Compassion

DIN 2018DIN09-003: The Professional Engineering Institution Churchill Medal Award 2017/18

DIN 2018DIN09-002: Armed Forces Day

DIN 2018DIN10-025: Army Ski and Snowboard Individual Slopestyle Championship 2018 – Ex Snow Method 2018

DIN 2018DIN10-024: Armed Forces Parachute Championship 2018



REUNIONS

Annual reunion of the Association of Harrogate Apprentices, October 5-6 at the Army Foundation College, Harrogate. Details from Len Morland on 01892 523987 or secretary@aoha.org.uk

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

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

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date wins a Jetboil MicroMo Stove for outdoor cooking.

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

June's winner: C Story, Broughton, Chester.



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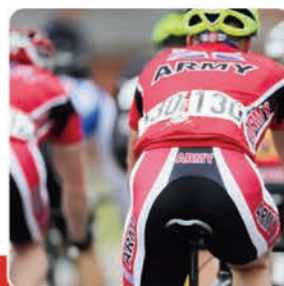
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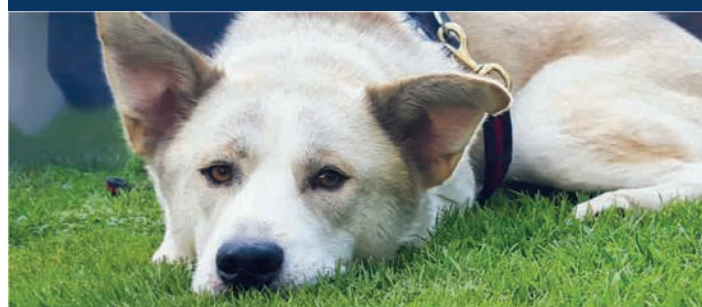
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ARMY SPORTS LOTTERY

19 May 2018

1st Prize (£10,000): Pte W Tutchings, 51 Sqn, 17 P&M Regt, Marchwood. 2nd Prize (£5,000): LCpl J Smith, Sp Coy, 1 Mercian, Catterick. 3rd Prize (£4,000): LCpl M Alexander, Den Ctr, Shape, BFPO 26. 4th Prize (£3,000): Name withheld, Hereford Garrison. 5th Prize (£2,000): Pte P Cocker, 9 Sqn, 7 TLR RLC, Cottesmore. 6th Prize (£1,000): SSgt S Rafemoyo, MAS(A), D Res, Andover. Consolation prizes (£500): Sgt K Deacon, HQ Fd Army, Andover; LCpl H Devey, Sp Sqn, 21 Signal Regt, Chippenham. Consolation prizes (£200): WO1 A Howell, SPCB, Fareham; WO2 R Lawson, 7 Regt RLC, Cottesmore; Cpl R Wightman, LAD REME, 3 Rifles, Edinburgh; Maj A Brannigan, ICSC(L), Shrivenham; Cpl V Kandi, DPHC RRU, RAF St Athan; Spr R Evenden, 16 Sqn, 42 Engr Regt, RAF Wyton; LCpl J Boyce, LAD, 2 Rifles, BFPO 801; LBdr D Smith, 21 Bty, 32 Regt RA; Tpr F Charles, B Sqn, LD, Catterick Garrison; Rfn R Pearce. C Coy, 5 Rifles, Salisbury; Pte G Baylis, A Coy, SPSTS, Winchester; Lt Col J Howard, Defence Academy Shrivenham; SSgt L Buist, 3 Scots, Ardersier; Sgt S Saving, ATC(P), Woking; Lt J Hain, LAD, 7 Sqn, 5 Med Regt. Consolation prizes

(£100): LCpl Y Kirantee, Cdo Log Regt, RM, Barnstaple; WO2 L Pearce, 2 R Anglian, Cottesmore; Sgt A Heppell, 8 Bn REME, DSEME, Chippenham; Sgt A Mortley, LAD, 77 AES, 35 Engr Regt, BFPO 22; LCpl T Aylett, 17 Coy, 4 Bn REME, Tidworth; Gnr N Greathead, T Bty, 12 Regt RA, Emsworth; Pte L Milne, 22 Fd Hosp, Aldershot; Pte A Marles, 4 Sqn, 4 Regt RLC, Abingdon; LCpl M Reveley, 228 Sqn, 3 Signal Regt, Bulford Camp; Pte L Lindsey, Sp Coy, 2 Para, Colchester.

26 May 2018

1st Prize (£10,000): Cpl K Collins, Sp Bn, ITC, Catterick Garrison. 2nd Prize (£5,000): WO2 R Kimsey, ATFC (W), Winchester. 3rd Prize (£4,000): Pte A Bull, 13 Fd Coy, 6 Bn REME, Tidworth. 4th Prize (£3,000): LBdr C Stevens, F Bty, 7 Para RHA, Colchester. 5th Prize (£2,000): Cpl S Saizi, Batuk, BFPO 680. 6th Prize (£1,000): LBdr K Davies, 13 Bty, 19 Regt RA, Tidworth. Consolation prizes (£500): Capt C Peaple, DES CoM JE Hels Apache, Yeovil; Cpl I Bobo, A Sqn, QRH, BFPO 16. Consolation prizes (£200): Maj B Subba, HQ ARRC, Gloucester; WO2 R Muir, HQ Coy, 1 Mercian, Bulford; Cpl R O'Brien, JADTEU, AWC, Carterton; Pte A McConnachie, 31 Sqn, 3 Regt RLC, Abingdon; Sgt G Venables, 11 Signal Regt, RSS, Blandford Forum; LCpl A Kilawekana, 68 Sqn, 7 Regt RLC,

Cottesmore; Pte J Parsons, 47 Sqn, 13 AASp Regt RLC, Carterton; Cpl G Walker, Sp Coy, 3 Para, Colchester; LCpl M Hearne, 8 Bn REME, DSEME, Chippenham; LCpl P Farley, ARRC Sp Bn, Gloucester; Pte J Williams, 47 Sqn, 13 AASp Regt RLC, Carterton; Pte O Langdale-Standcliffe, 9 Sqn, 7 Regt RLC, Cottesmore; Gdsm I Grant, F Coy, SG, London; Gnr J Gilbert-Buften, 7 Para RHA, Colchester; Maj L Jones, SPA (UK), Ruislip; Consolation prizes (£100): SSgt D Norbury, 42 Bty, 12 Regt RA, Emsworth; SSgt M Bird, 11 Signal Regt, RSS, Blandford Forum; Cpl D Sullivan, Falcon Sqn, 22 Engr Regt, Warminster; Maj M Maguire, JFC, Northwood; LCpl D Hope, 2 Coy, 5 Bn REME, BFPO 39; LCpl G Beattie-Nash, 1 SG, Aldershot; Cpl K Asare-Attrams, 1 PWRR, BFPO 22; LCpl D Morgan, 60 Sqn, 4 Regt RLC, Abingdon; Lt Col N Calvert, DSA MAA, Bristol; Lt Col M Bosworth, DEFAC, Swindon.

2 June 2018

1st Prize (£10,000): Cpl H McQueen, LAD REME, 3 Scots, Ardersier. 2nd Prize (£5,000): Cfn L Hughes, LAD, 255 Sqn, 16 Signal Regt, Stafford. 3rd Prize (£4,000): Cpl D Kennedy, HQ Coy, SDG, St Andrews. 4th Prize (£3,000): Sgt C Wynn, HQ 29 EOD & S GSU Wksp, Saffron Walden. 5th Prize (£2,000): Pte C Adams, Sp Coy, 2 Mercian, Chester. 6th Prize (£1,000): Sgt P

Boyhan, 212 MI Section, Abingdon. Consolation prizes (£500): Cfn S Reader, 8 Bn REME, DSEME, Chippenham; 2nd Lt J Wilkinson, Inf Battle School, Powys. Consolation prizes (£200): WO2 R Brown, 272 Bty, 105 Regt RA, Livingston; SSgt A Biggin, 4 RMP, Aldershot; WO2 D Gallagher, 46 Bty, 32 Regt RA, Salisbury; SSgt G Scott, 201 (Northern) Fd Hosp, Newcastle-upon-Tyne; SSgt J Canning, 11 EOD Regt RLC, Didcot; Sgt J Keen, 5 Bn REME, BFPO 39; Sgt A Scott, SDG, St Andrews; Maj S Pearson-Burton, 65 Log Sp Sqn RLC, Colchester; Pte J Eggby, 63 Sqn, 13 AASp Regt RLC, Colchester; LCpl F Slimene, C Coy, 2 Yorks, Catterick; Lt K Chadwick, BSU, RCDM, Edgbaston; LCpl S Dillon, 162 MI Sect, Colchester; Gnr C Macleod, 57 Bty, 32 Regt RA, Salisbury; Pte L Sheriki, RG, BFPO 52; Maj S Burn, 23 Sqn, 16 Med Regt, Colchester. Consolation prizes (£100): WO2 A Bonner, 103 Bn REME, Northampton; WO2 P Lindsay, HQ DSPA, Winchester; Sgt B Morris, Nato CIS Gp, S1 SA, BFPO 105; Cpl A Paley, RLC Band, Deepcut; SSgt A Anderton, D Sqn, QRH, BFPO 16; Pte C Tucker, 23 Sqn, 1 Regt RLC, Bicester; LSgt S Galvin, 1 Gren Gds, Aldershot; LCpl T Gurung, LAD, Fuel & GT Sqn, 10 QOGLR, Aldershot; Pte G Stevens, 105 Sqn, 1 MWD Regt, Oakham; Col D Madden, DCDS Pers TESRR, London.

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REVIEWS

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MOVIES

BAD SAMARITAN

Psycho plays cat-and-mouse with thief

AN OPPORTUNIST burglar believes he has hit the jackpot when he breaks into a luxurious home, but soon discovers it is not what he was expecting.

Inside, he finds a severely beaten and distressed woman being held captive: robbing this property will be the worst decision he ever made.



MOVIES



Directed by **Dean Devlin** (*Independence Day*), thriller *Bad Samaritan* tells the tale of Sean Falco (**Robert Sheehan**), a photographer struggling to make ends meet.

He lives a double life, turning to home burglary while working a night job as a valet.

A world away from *Doctor Who*, **David Tennant** gives a dark and convincing performance as a wealthy man hiding terrible secrets – his cunning character managing to evade any suspicions from the police.

Falco, however, will stop at nothing to get to the truth of what he has found. And his likeable character has you rooting for him from the start, as a bad guy trying to do good.

Be prepared to jump out of your seat during some heart-stopping moments in this film.

They are perfectly timed to a brilliantly atmospheric accompanying soundtrack composed by **Joseph LoDuca**, who is best known for his work on the *Evil Dead* titles and *Xena* television series.

It isn't all horror: the audience does get to enjoy a couple of light-hearted moments as well.

In an early scene Falco's partner in crime, Derek (**Carlito Olivero**), creates a memorable moment when he breaks into a family home and finds himself under attack by the pet dog. Touches like this add some humour to proceedings.

Overall *Bad Samaritan* is a good watch, showing a different side to the life of a serial killer.

Tennant is a class act, who keeps the audience engaged with the terrifying and chilling way that he pursues his victims. Throughout the 110 minutes my nerves were constantly on edge, waiting for the next cold and calculated move.

However, there are some definite misses with the title.

The backstory of Tennant's character is hardly believable, and an abrupt ending leaves viewers with several unanswered questions that are crying out for some sort of explanation at the close of the credits.

But perhaps this leaves just enough potential for a sequel.

Overall, *Bad Samaritan* is an enjoyable watch.

Okay, it isn't a *Silence of the Lambs* spectacular, but it's still worth your time – especially on the big screen where you can fully appreciate the great visual and audio effects.

Catch it in cinemas later this month. ■

REVIEW: BDR JULIAN PERREIRA, RA

VERDICT:

Unspectacular, but worth a watch nevertheless

★★★★★



WIN»

LCPL GEORGIE Lane has returned to screens in season three of the BBC One drama *Our Girl*.

The show follows the medic as she serves in various countries including Nigeria, and is out now on DVD. To mark its release, *Soldier* has three box sets of the latest series to give away. For a chance to scoop one of them, tell us the name of the actress who followed in **Lacey Turner's** footsteps to take the starring role.

Answers to the usual address or comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk by August 31.



DVD/DIGITAL RELEASES



Genesis Out now

THIS British-made movie mixes a classic apocalyptic survivors-in-a-bunker scenario with an awakening-AI-who-doesn't-like-humans plot. Sadly, it suffers from a lack of budget, an unengaging and often incoherent storyline, and is populated by mostly paper-thin and unlikeable characters. The only standout element is **John Hannah**, but he cannot carry this movie alone. This is not a terrible effort but, ultimately, it feels like a pilot for a television show – one that will never get to see the light of day.

Maj Alex Janaway, RAMC



Traffik Out now

THIS title sees investigative journalist heroine Brea and her boyfriend go away for a weekend and before you know it, she's up to her eyeballs with a violent people-trafficking biker gang led by 1980s musical heart-throb **Luke Goss** (ask your mum). The pace of the storytelling ramps up as events escalate inconceivably, and the predictable plot twist is resolved far too conveniently. To call this offering a B movie would be overrating it.

Cpl Scott Roberts, Rifles



211 Out now

IF you want a film with **Nicholas Cage** as the hero and lots of automatic gunfire to boot, this is without doubt the title for you. But when it comes basic tactics, techniques and procedures, if you watch this with even a slightly critical eye you are likely to be disappointed. The ex-special forces baddies are trying to get a million dollars from a US bank, but it all goes very wrong. Allegedly based on the 1997 Hollywood robbery – if you stretch imagination and credibility to extremes – this is an unconvincing story with a predictably saccharine ending.

CSgt Colin Tester, PWRR



PICK OF THE MONTH:

PROGRESS REPORT

Reservist plans studio return after debut track drops

➤ WITH debut single *Then You're Listening* garnering positive reaction from the music press, rock outfit

Everlasting Glowworms are looking to build on their growing momentum.

Spearheaded by Reservist **Pte Stacie Smith (AGC (SPS))**, the three-piece return to the studio this month to start recording follow-up EP *Less Than I Was Before* and tentative plans are in place for a full album next year.

But this progress hasn't happened overnight. Vocalist and guitarist Smith started writing with bandmate **Dan Severs** in 2013 and their first offering was produced independently, without the added pressure of a record deal.

"It has been an interesting experience," the Serviceman told *Soldier*. "Once the song was officially released we had messages from BBC Introducing, as well as *Kerrang* and Absolute Radio.

"There has been interest in the past but, like anything, it takes time to grow.

"We are now in the position where we have so much material that we can get back in the studio and start work on the EP.

"We have the passion and love for it so we really want to make this work."

The band was able to call upon an impressive supporting cast for their debut project.

Nick Brine, who has worked with the likes of **Oasis** and **The Darkness**, assumed producing responsibilities and the track was mastered by **Pete**

Visit www.everlastingglowworms.co.uk for links to the band's debut single

Maher, whose previous clients include **U2**, **Jack White** and **The Killers**.

"It is unbelievable really," Smith added. "I've been playing since I was 15 and when you go to different studios you bump into people in the industry, and they of course know other people.

"So that's how it came about. It has been slow progress but we are definitely heading in the right direction.

"We've drawn a lot of influences from jazz, blues and classic rock 'n' roll. We have a commercial sound that is similar to the likes of **Feeder** and the **Manic Street Preachers**.

"Nick was working on the Manics' album at the same time so that's where the comparisons may come from."

Smith joined the Reserves in 2009 and combines his military commitments with 94 Signal Squadron with his music ambitions and day job as a shop owner in Windsor.

"I'll go to the barracks in the morning, open the shop at around 1100 and then head to rehearsals in the evening," the 28-year-old explained.

"It can be a bit much but it's enjoyable. Finally getting our music out there proved to be quite tedious at times; playing live and writing is what we do best." ■

INTERVIEW: RICHARD LONG, *SOLDIER*



MUSIC

MUSIC RELEASES CONTINUED



Our Country Americana Act II by Ray Davies

THIS is the second part of former **Kinks** frontman **Ray Davies'** *Americana* project, which documents his lifelong relationship with the USA. The album is a mixture of spoken word, country, rock and blues tracks. While this may be too much for the casual listener, there's plenty to explore for the more adventurous. *Back in the Day* is a bouncy boogie song with an infectious vocal line, *A Street Called Hope* is stroked with French swing influence and *March of the Zombies* is a meaty, heavy blues number that ends in a crescendo of brass and weirdness. There's no doubt that Davies is one of the best songwriters this country has produced and this second instalment, as well as news that a Kinks album is also on the way, just reaffirms that.

Damian Hern, ex-AGC (SPS)



The Now Now by Gorillaz

IN A break from the norm, virtual act **Gorillaz** called on surprisingly few collaborators during the recording of their latest album, *The Now Now*. Jazz guitarist **George Benson** supplies the slick riffs on single *Humility*, while **Snoop Dogg** and **Jamie Principle** offer guest vocals elsewhere. But that's it. Frontman **Damon Albarn** performs the bulk of the singing duties and the result is an offering that is more streamlined than its predecessor, *Humanz*. *Idaho* and *One Per Cent* embody the stripped-back feel, while *Kansas* and *Fireflies* provide more reflective moments. By condensing the track list to just 11 songs the band have delivered a spritely pop offering that is full of verve and energy and serves as an almost polar opposite to the bloated nature of their efforts last time out.

Richard Long, Soldier



Beautiful Life by Rick Astley

WELL it certainly seems as if **Rick Astley** isn't going to give us up, let us down and certainly is nowhere near finished pumping out albums. This is the follow-up to his surprise comeback *50* and, given its success, the star has kept to the same formula of writing, producing, singing and playing all the songs himself, while having a bit of fun along the way. And it works. The record is a bit here-and-there in terms of styles but there is a definite soul undertone throughout. That is where Astley seems to be aiming these days and he's certainly got it nailed. *Beautiful Life* is easy listening and while it is nothing to get over excited about, you'll easily find yourself humming along. He may be a bit like Marmite, but if you love him you will love this album.

Rodge Tapply, ex-RE

Want to join our review team?

Email reviews@soldiermagazine.co.uk

BOOKS

PICK OF THE MONTH:

PUNCTUATION WITHOUT TEARS



Reservist pens guide to stress-free writing

► GRAMMAR may not be the sexiest of subjects but it is an important skill to master for those wanting to climb the promotion ladder.

If your written work comes back from the boss covered in red pen, this handy little guide could become your new best friend.

Punctuation Without Tears by journalist and Reservist Capt Dominic Selwood (GSC, pictured above) approaches the topic in a humorous, easy-to-digest way.

A columnist for the *Daily Telegraph* in his day job, the 47-year-old joined 77 Brigade's Information Operations branch in 2015.

As a professional wordsmith, he knows a thing or two about grammar,



but he told *Soldier* everyone can – and should – get to grips with the basics.

"Most people get stressed by punctuation," he said.

"But if you can strip and reassemble an SA80 in the dark, you can totally master a few simple rules, and do it well.

"If your writing was a band, punctuation would be your rhythm section. It's not glamorous, but without it everything else falls apart.

"It is there to make your words clearer. Messing it up not only does a disservice to the reader, it confuses the message you're trying to give."

For those who tend to roll their eyes at grammar pedantry, consider the recent case of an American dairy producer in Maine, who lost a £3.8m lawsuit due to a misplaced comma in the state's legislation on overtime.

It's conceivable that ambiguity in military writing could have similarly dire consequences.

But as long as you're not responsible for drafting employment law or Nato's rules of engagement, Capt Selwood believes it is possible to have fun with punctuation and use it creatively.

Accordingly, each grammar point is illustrated with colourful examples that take readers into a world of Ewoks wearing manikins and Cinderella arranging fragmentation grenades.

It sounds unlikely, but there is method to the madness.

As the author explained, he was keen to avoid the standard format of grammar textbooks.

"They are usually dull and technical and put you to sleep in the first ten minutes," he said.

"No one – including me – wants to read that kind of thing so I decided to keep the tone jokey."

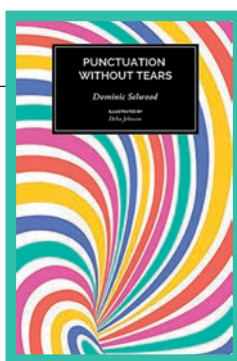
The officer also thinks that as language has evolved, punctuation too has become less prescribed – all the more reason not to get hung up on syntax when putting pen to paper.

"Writing has become much less formal," he said.

"My one tip would be: learn the handful of really basic rules, forget the rest, and have fun with punctuation simply, confidently and well." ■

INTERVIEW: BECKY CLARK, *SOLDIER*

VERDICT:
Takes the angst out of apostrophes and the horror out of hyphens
★★★★★



Punctuation Without Tears by Dominic Selwood is out now, priced £7.99

BOOKS

BOOK RELEASES



Big Week
by James Holland

CHARTING the early fighting between the US Eighth Air Force and Luftwaffe through to a pulverising series of

Allied raids in preparation for D-Day, this examination of the Second World War air conflict over Europe makes for compelling reading. In a mix of historical analysis and human stories from both sides, it paints the picture of an increasingly capable American force squaring up to an opponent ground down by inept political masters and mounting losses. Yet it was potent until the last through the courage and sacrifice of its fighter pilots. As well as a solid piece of research, the book is a tribute to all who fought in history's most brutal airborne confrontation.

Cliff Caswell, *Soldier*



The Revised Art of War
by Keiran Proffer

SUN Tzu's famous collection of warfare advice has been revised and reproduced in this

fine pocket-sized edition. The main sayings have been collated and matched with contemporary explanations – resulting in a book appropriate for aspiring commanders at all levels. While many of the phrases are well known, the interpretation of their meaning and how the guidance can be implemented are an excellent combination. The preface and introduction are also insightful, which makes this offering much more readable and useful. All in all this is a good reference work that is well worth keeping to hand.

Andy Kay, ex-RS



War Stories
by Peter Snow and Ann MacMillan

DRAWING together the tales of 34 ordinary people thrust into situations most of us will

only ever read about, this collection of true stories leaves a lasting impression. Spanning a time period of three centuries, the collection includes the notable stories of Edward Seager, who survived the Charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava as well as American Civil War turncoat Benedict Arnold. But all are compelling. Snow and MacMillan have done their research well. The format is also particularly suited to the retelling of these acts of courage as you can pick up and put down the book whenever you like.

Tony David, ex-RE



Capture or Kill
by Tom Marcus

AGAINST the ever-increasing threat of terrorism, main character, MI5 operative Matt Logan, has to

track down and stop two of the biggest criminal masterminds the UK has ever seen. However, he is given an offer to work outside of the rules and, having received some disastrous news about his family, Logan becomes a man possessed. Although this plot may seem exciting and gripping, it isn't. It's predictable from the start and by the end of the third chapter anyone with half a brain cell would be able to work out what comes next and when. Overall, this had the potential to be the *Da Vinci Code* for the espionage genre, but it falls far short.

Cpl Scott Roberts, Rifles

GAMES



PICK OF THE MONTH:

THE CREW 2

Ubisoft put the pedal to the metal in racing sequel

► THERE are quite a few driving-related games on the market and they all relish in the opportunity to throw powerful cars into big open spaces.

But *The Crew 2* goes about things somewhat differently.

On the face of it, this release comes across as an alternative to the successful *Forza Horizon* series.

Both place the emphasis on being popular, getting support and tearing up the tarmac with a roaring V8.

However, what really separates the *Crew* titles from their main rival is the means of exploration.

While *Horizon* boasts a plethora of cars to choose from, this offers exactly the same but also caters for fans of boats and aircraft.

It allows you to screech through the countryside, reach a winding river and change to a powerboat, aerobatic prop aircraft or even a Spitfire.

The aim is very simple: drive fast, become popular and get more things that make you even faster. Your fans don't really care, and neither should you. Just floor it and enjoy.

If there is one slight disappointment it is in the visuals.

VERDICT:

Rough round the edges but still finds top gear
★★★★★

The Crew 2
for PS4, Xbox One and PC



Ubisoft are notorious for creating stunning-looking titles and *The Crew 2* is nowhere near as pretty.

I suspect the reason for that is the sheer size of the map and the fact you're expected to be driving past everything in a speed-induced blur, but it's still noticeable.

That's not to say this is an ugly game and it's way ahead of many others. It just could be so much better.

Thankfully, the gameplay is easy to master and enjoyable.

Whether you prefer to do things at your own speed or rush through challenges as quickly as possible, it's all catered for here.

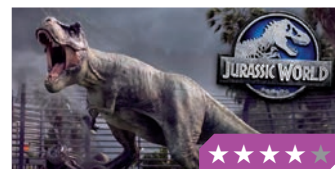
And there's plenty to do.

The only other downside is the lack of fellow players online, which could be attributed to the release being more popular in the US.

To summarise, *The Crew 2* is a fun game that would benefit from additional polish and maybe some unexpected surprises. After all, it's got to keep you hooked until *Forza Horizon 4* arrives in October. ■

REVIEW: DAVID MCDUGALL, CIVVY

GAMES RELEASES

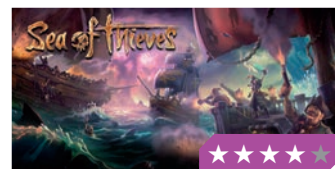


Jurassic World Evolution

Xbox One, PS4 and PC

IT'S been a while since we've seen a decent *Tycoon*-style title come along. And *Jurassic World Evolution* is more than welcome to stick around. For those unfamiliar with the business of simulator-type games, this release puts you in charge of a *Jurassic Park* where you are responsible for everything from refreshment stands to the number of dinosaurs your eager visitors can gawk at. It's ideal for those who like to control everything, or who love unleashing chaos upon their customers. Research is key here, as it gives you new types of dinosaurs to add to your attraction, and the game also features voiceovers from the films' casts. Despite the business theme there is a lot of fun to be had, it is great to look at and will captivate you in the long-term.

David McDougall, civvy



Sea of Thieves

Xbox One and PC

FIRST off, *Sea of Thieves* is a release for those of a teamwork disposition. And it's a lot of fun. From mastering sailing and battling other pirates to finding treasure and fighting skeletons, there is plenty to do. The title looks great, sounds great and allows you to customise your preferred ship or boat. The downside is the endgame, as there isn't one. There's no campaign as such, no end boss, no finish. But then it's an evolving and constantly-online experience. Thankfully there isn't an ever-present arms race like in *Destiny* and anything you earn only provides aesthetic changes. The other problem is the squad limit and even the galleons only allow for four players. So if you have more than that you're stuffed, at least for now.

David McDougall, civvy



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SOLDIER SPORT



« HIGH FLIERS

STARS of wakeboarding and waterskiing enjoyed a week of adrenalin-fuelled action at the Army Championships. The sports have used social media to boost their numbers and are now riding the crest of a wave. Read about their success on pages 72-73...



DOUBLE DELIGHT FOR TRACK AND FIELD STARS

A CHAMPIONSHIP record for Cpl Dani Hodgkinson (QARANC) in the women's 5,000 metres was the headline act of another Army double at the Inter-Services athletics showdown.

The distance runner, who finished tenth in the same event at this year's British Championships, clocked a personal best time of 16min 14sec to take gold and break the previous record set in 2016.

Her efforts helped the women's team to a dominant victory over their rivals as they claimed a fourth successive title but it was a tense day for the men, who overcame a stern examination from a resurgent Royal Air Force outfit to take the honours.

"My aim was to come here and set a record as I knew I had been running quite well," Hodgkinson (pictured right) told *SoldierSport*.

"I was going to set off quite slowly but I started at a good

pace and kept that going.

"This season I have set personal bests in the 1,500, 3,000 and 5,000 metres. I trained hard over the winter and feel relaxed, and that has allowed me to be more consistent."

While Hodgkinson proved to be the only record-breaker on the day there were a number of standout performers for the women's squad, who finished 30 points clear of the RAF in second.

Newcomer Gnr Alice Miell (RA) proved to be a welcome addition as she won the shot put, long jump and javelin and took bronze in the 200 metres. She was also part of the victorious 4x100-metre relay team.

The Army emerged as the dominant force in the field disciplines – dropping just one point in six events.

Cpl Clare Jones (RAMC) and Capt Laura Simpson (QARANC) secured a one-two in the discus, a feat repeated by Pte Kewe King

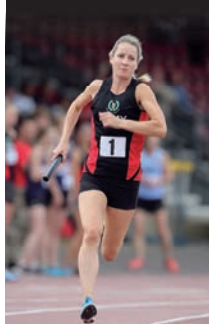
**INTER-SERVICES
ATHLETICS**

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(QARANC) and LCpl Maralyn Messam (RAMC) in the triple jump and Cpl Lydia Morley (AGC (SPS)) and King in the high jump.

There were also silver medals for Cpl Nansai Ravai (AGC (SPS)) in the shot put and LCpl Peta-Gaye Irving (RADC) in the long jump.

Elsewhere, the team celebrated gold and silver in the 100-metre hurdles courtesy of LCpl Fern Davies (RLC) and Capt Lauren Barr (REME).

"I'm very pleased," said team manager Maj Lucy Rann (AGC (ETS)). "We've got a real mix of the old guard and fresh faces and it has been a good balance."

"There were some fantastic performances and Alice Miell proved to be a great find. She competed in four events, as well as the relay, and having someone like her brings an extra bit of reassurance as she can fill any gaps on the day."

"We performed above



expectations and recorded a lot of personal bests."

The men's squad made hard work of their title defence in the early stages as the RAF found their form in the field.

But victories for Cpl Ben Jones (RE) and LCpl Cyprian Onderi (AGC (SPS), pictured left) in the hammer and javelin added welcome points and there was further success for SSgt Myro Rush (RAPTC) in the triple jump.

However, there were no such struggles on the track as Sig Kyle Wilkinson (R Signals) defended his 100 metres crown in 11.52sec and Pte Alhagie Drammeh (RLC) took gold in the 400 metres.

Cpl Michael Major (Para) won the 800 metres and Pte David Westbury and Maj Ady Whitwam (both RLC) delivered another one-two in the steeplechase.

As in previous years, the Reds were indebted to the efforts of decathlon star Gdsm Peter Moreno (Coldm Gds) who won the 110-metre hurdles, 200 metres and long jump, as well as silver in pole vault and bronze in the high jump. He added further points in the shot put.

The competition came at a busy time for the athlete, who is due to represent Nigeria at this month's African Championships.

"It was quite tight early on, which was a surprise as we are normally strong in the field," said men's manager Capt Steve Chappell (RAPTC).

"But our depth eventually came to the fore and we finished with a comfortable victory.

"Peter Moreno had a tremendous day and having that multi-eventer in the team helped us cement the win." ■



Pictures: Graeme Main and Alligin Photography

ATHLETICS IN NUMBERS

POINT
WINNING
MARGIN FOR
THE MEN'S
TEAM

15

SUCCESSIVE
TITLES FOR
THE WOMEN

4

SECONDS
TAKEN
OFF THE
PREVIOUS
WOMEN'S
5,000
METRES
RECORD BY
CPL DANI
HODGKINSON

52

POINTS
WON BY
NEWCOMER
GNR ALICE
MIELL
FROM FOUR
EVENTS

22

NEW CAPS
IN THE
MEN'S
SQUAD THIS
SEASON

6



HALL PLOTS CAREER PATH

VICTORY in the women's 1,500 metres represented a welcome return to Inter-Services action for Capt Lauren Hall (REME) after an absence of 18 months.

The distance runner clocked a time of 4min 44.38sec to win the race and is now eagerly awaiting news on her bid to join Sport England's talented athlete scholarship scheme.

A verdict on her application was expected as this issue went to press and the officer was obviously hoping for a positive outcome to boost her progress in the sport.

"In the past I've perhaps thought that I didn't have the potential but since coming back from a posting to Canada earlier this year I have felt fitter than ever before," Capt Hall told *SoldierSport*.

"I'm so nervous about the results but if it's good news and I'm included it will be a huge benefit in areas such as strength and conditioning, nutrition and psychology.

"That would have been a help today. I've not done an Inter-Services race in so long and if I'd had that support over the past few weeks it would have been a real boost."

Hall's upcoming commitments range from 800-metre races on the track to the ten-kilometre Great Scottish Run, which will be broadcast live on the BBC.

She sees her future as a three-kilometre steeplechase runner but will also focus on cross country during the winter months.

"You have to push yourself outside of the comfort zone," the athlete added. "That's what I did today."

"It was a difficult build-up and I was slightly apprehensive coming into the race. As soon as the gun was fired I just went for it, so I was really happy with the result."

"I will take the same approach with the 800 metres. It is hard right now but it will help me in the future." ■





SOCIAL MEDIA MOGULS

FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM PROFILES DRIVE NEW STARS TO THE ARMY WAKEBOARDING SCENE

THE power of social media has played a key role in boosting numbers within the Army's wakeboard and waterski fraternity.

An increased presence on platforms such as Instagram – where the sports have more than 2,000 followers – and Facebook has attracted a host of newcomers to the fold and that effort paid off at the recent Service championships, when 50 soldiers took to the water.

The event, at Bedford's Box End Park, featured three days of training ahead of cable and boat competitions, with athletes ranging from novice to advanced standard.

Maj Ade Clayton (Lancs) claimed the men's overall wakeboard title, with Capt Becky Moll (QARANC) sealing the women's equivalent.

And in the waterskiing, there were wins for Capt Kieran Taheny (AAC) and LCpl Laura Soall (CAMUS).

Another crucial factor in the expansion has been the introduction of taster days for personnel who are keen to try the disciplines.

Once they register an interest, the Army Wakeboard and Waterski Association will run a subsidised session with all the necessary kit.

"We have really invested in our grass roots training and social media," chairman Clayton told *SoldierSport*.

"If anyone is interested they should get in touch as we can organise that opportunity.

"This is a new focus for us and we are keen to introduce more soldiers year on year.

"There are water parks all around the UK and we have Army riders based across the

country, so it is easy to do.

"The good thing about this sport is that it can be done all year round and that gives us an advantage over similar events such as snowboarding."

And the set-up has some inspirational figures for others to follow.

SSgt Dale Crossley (RE) is the current world masters champion, while Capt Charlie Hay (AAC) and Capt Sam Blackshaw (R Signals) have both been involved with the Great Britain squad.

Achieving similar success is a realistic aim for those starting out as skills can be quickly mastered and then built upon.

"Those guys are an example of where you can get to," Clayton added. "Anyone can come and have a go.

"I took up wakeboarding through the Army. I did my first version of this competition and a year later I was representing the Service team. It is something you can soon get very good at.

"Wakeboarding is a progressive sport and there is always something else to learn.

"You might arrive at a lake with the aim of standing on a board. Then it will be to get round a corner, ride switch, perform an Ollie or hit a kicker.

"You always want to get to the next level."

With numbers on the rise and a greater focus on training it was no surprise to see a series of highly competitive championship rounds on the Bedfordshire waters.

The pick of the talent will go on to represent the Army at next month's Inter-Services showdown, when the team will look to break the dominance of



**"IT IS A
SPORT
THAT
YOU CAN
SOON
GET
VERY
GOOD
AT"**

the Royal Air Force.

"This is the biggest championship we have ever run," Clayton added. "Now we are getting bigger the standard is on the rise.

"We've also had people coming across from other sports and there are a lot of transferable skills from disciplines such as snowboarding and kitesurfing.

"For the Inter-Services it all comes down to who we can get out there on the day.

"Last year we were missing Dale Crossley, who is a world champion, but we only lost by a few points. I think we have a good chance this season."

The recruitment drive has delivered benefits to both the men's and women's teams.

Of the 50 soldiers taking part, 15 were female – a figure that represents a significant rise compared to recent times.

And the association has delivered further appeal by reigniting its overseas tours. The squad travelled to Turkey earlier this year and plans are in place for another European adventure in the future.

"The number of women taking part is a real success story," Clayton said. "They have been excellent and are now looking to run some female-only training camps to really push things along.

"The tours are important. They give us the chance to get together for a week of concentrated training at a totally different park. They deliver huge benefits." ■



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AT THE DOUBLE: THE WOMEN'S TEAM WERE PUSHING FOR FURTHER HONOURS AT THE INTER-SERVICES T20 AS THIS ISSUE WENT TO PRESS

CRICKET



A STAR IS BORN

NEWCOMER Pte Kim Healey (RAMC, pictured above) proved to be one of the Army's star performers as she scored 134 runs across both Forces fixtures – finishing unbeaten in each.

The opener made her competitive debut in the match with the Royal Air Force – when she also claimed 2-17 with the ball – and her display points at an encouraging future.

The team has been keen to recruit fresh talent and welcomed several new faces to the fold during a period of winter training.

Skipper Capt Lauren Harden (RE) was delighted to see Healey make the most of her opportunity and is looking for more players to follow suit.

"She has been great for us and it was nice to have a secret weapon," the officer said.

"We've had new players come in this season and they have definitely improved the side.

"As a squad it is something we have always done. They are introduced to the group and after three or four years they really start to make their mark."



RUTHLESS REDS BACK ON TOP

INTER-SERVICES
WOMEN'S
CRICKET

NAVY

201-4

ARMY

202-1



THE Army women enjoyed an emphatic return to form as two comprehensive victories over their Forces rivals saw them reclaim the Inter-Services 40-over title.

A disappointing loss to the Royal Navy saw the Reds miss out in last year's final but there were no such struggles this season as a combination of tight bowling and explosive batting steered the side to glory.

The soldiers signalled their intent with a ruthless display in their opening clash with the Royal Air Force, who batted first and posted a lowly total of 101-9 in the blazing Uxbridge heat.

Economical spells from the bowlers kept the scoring in check and Maj Mel Vaggers (AGC (SPS)), Pte Kim Healey (RAMC) and Sgt Amanda Potgieter (REME) all claimed two wickets apiece as the Army seized control.

The run chase proved to be a formality as the champions-elect reached their target inside ten overs without losing a wicket. Healey blasted eight fours and a six to top score with 55, while Vaggers finished 35 not out.

With the Navy also triumphing

against the RAF it was winner takes all in the final fixture and when the Reds fielded first it was the bowlers who were able to exert pressure early on.

While wickets were in short supply it was the economy rate that proved decisive as the Senior Service posted 201-4, with skipper Lt Cdr Hazelle Garton anchoring the innings with an unbeaten 85.

The Army made a brisk start in reply as Vaggers struck three boundaries in the first two overs before eventually being bowled by Worsfold for 13.

But further success failed to materialise as Potgieter (83 not out, pictured above) and Healey (79 not out) enjoyed a 171-run stand as the soldiers reached their target in the 29th over.

"We could not have done much better," victorious skipper Capt Lauren Harden (RE) told *SoldierSport*. "We knew 202 was well within our grasp; it was about being patient and seeing the job through.

"The weather played a part last season and it is never nice to lose, so we really wanted to come here and win." ■

SPORT SHORTS



Loggies face cup test

UNIT teams from across the Royal Logistic Corps took to the hockey pitch for the formation's annual Bari Cup.

The event is the biggest Army competition outside of the Inter-Corps showdown and attracted 14 sides and more than 150 players.

The overall honours were claimed by 20 Transport Squadron, with 9 Regiment winning the Kirby Bowl and 3 Regiment the Festival Shield.

"We use the Bari Cup to select our corps team for the new season," said RLC hockey secretary Capt Lily Thompson. "We had two training regiments in action so there was plenty of new talent on show."



Forces look to the future

THE UK Armed Forces women's hockey team claimed a fourth-place finish in a tough invitational tournament featuring international opposition and rivals from the British Police and Civil Service.

Back-to-back defeats at the hands of age group sides from England and Wales ensured the military outfit made a difficult start but they bounced back with two victories – the second of which saw them thrash the civil servants 5-0.

"UK Armed Forces hockey is in a good place after this tournament and should continue to develop over the coming years," skipper Sgt Annabel Lamb (CAMUS) said afterwards.



Pictures: Cpl Mark Larnier, RLC

TITLE GOES TO THE WIRE



**"WE
WANT
TO
INSPIRE
PEOPLE
TO
RACE"**

MOUNTAIN bike ace Maj Simon Richards (RAMC) recorded a dramatic victory at the Army Cross Country Championships as he finished two seconds clear of his nearest rival to seal the title.

The officer raced wheel to wheel with Cpl Daniel Preece (RE) across the Tidworth course before a decisive burst in the final sprint section saw him claim a narrow win.

The event proved to be another successful chapter in the discipline's season as more than 100 soldiers took to the start line for the race.

Pte Charlie Troman (RAVC) edged past OCdt Dan Sharpland to take the men's junior title, while Maj Angela Laycock (RE, pictured left) and WO2 Stacey Welden (AGC (RMP)) finished first and second in the women's race.

The day also included successes for WO1 Jason Marriott (Rifles, pictured above) in the masters' category and Capt Simon Hale (R Anglian) in the grand masters.

"The course was set over an eight-kilometre loop and had a great combination of twisting tracks, open fire roads and downhill sections," race secretary WO1 James Cooper (REME) told *SoldierSport*.

"Simon Richards and Danny Preece were involved in a real battle and were within seconds of each other all the way round.

"We want to inspire people to race. Riders from different units and cap badges will find those who are posting similar times and they become the competition from one event to the next."

The championships followed on from the Army Cross Country Mountain Bike Series, which was staged over five rounds, and both competitions have proved to be a hunting ground for talent ahead of next month's Inter-Services.

Cooper added: "The team manager will use the results as a starting point for selection. The series has been a springboard for those looking to progress in the sport." ■



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SPORT SHORTS



Gowin gets GB call

SHARPSHOOTER Sgt Sam Gowin (RA) has been named in the Great Britain pistol and shotgun squad that will compete at next month's World Championships in South Korea.

The soldier has enjoyed a meteoric rise in the sport and fired his way to a bronze medal while representing England at the Commonwealth Games in April.

He will compete in the 25-metre rapid-fire pistol event and is part of a 34-strong squad that will travel to Changwon for the contest, which gets under way on August 31.

Gowin's selection comes on the back of his nomination in the "star of the year" category for the 2018 Sport England Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme Stars Awards.



Infantry's court date

SQUASH players are being invited to the court for the annual Infantry Championships in Aldershot.

The tournament features individual, major and minor unit competitions and will be held at the Garrison Sports Centre from October 2 to 4.

For more details on the event email michael.hay208@mod.gov.uk or 5rifles-mt-mtwo@mod.uk



CREWS SET FOR COWES QUEST



"THERE WAS SOME REALLY GOOD SAILING"

A RMY sailors will take to the water for one of the biggest tests in their sporting calendar this month – Cowes Week.

The competition features up to 40 daily events for around 1,000 boats and the soldiers' participation follows recent entries in the Round Ireland and Round the Island Races.

Preparations for this hectic schedule began at the Army Sailing Association Offshore Regatta, when a number of corps crews were tested during a week-long exercise on The Solent.

The Royal Engineers played the overall title but Phil Brown, the Service's chief instructor, said the contest offered valuable experience for all involved.

"There was some really good

sailing," the former captain, who served in the Army Air Corps and Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, told *SoldierSport* afterwards.

"We started with short passage races and then went for a longer, late-night sail.

"We also had some windward/leeward legs so there was really good variety.

"It is all about giving people different opportunities.

"If we just did short-course competitions the skippers could control everything but in a longer race they have to get their head down at some point, which provides a test for the mate and other crew members."

For more information on the opportunities available visit

www.sailarmy.co.uk

● ARMY boxer Gnr Karriss Artingstall (RA) has been officially named in Team GB's podium potential squad.

The call caps a fantastic season for the 57kg fighter, who won an English elite title in April and went on to compete at the European Championships earlier this summer.

She joins teammate Spr Ebonie Jones (RE), who has been promoted to the full podium squad, in the national set-up.



Picture: Georgie Kerr

MONTH IN SPORT

August's key fixtures...



WHAT: UK Armed Forces women v Wales
WHEN: August 4
WHERE: Aldershot
NEED TO KNOW: The focus of the

women's cricket season switches to the UK Armed Forces. This is the third of five matches to be played by the side during a busy month of action



WHAT: Army v Leuchars Station
WHEN: August 9
WHERE: St Andrews Golf Club
NEED TO KNOW: The men's team take to one of the country's most prestigious courses as preparations for this season's Inter-Services competition continue. The women's side test themselves in a match with Tynley Park Golf Club on the same day



WHAT: Inter-Services Cricket
WHEN: August 28 to 31
WHERE: Vine Lane, Uxbridge
NEED TO KNOW: Having suffered defeat in this season's

Twenty20 competition at Lord's the Reds will be looking to retain their 50-over trophy as they focus on success in the longer form of the game

LEAGUE IN NUMBERS

ARMY PLAYERS IN THE UK ARMED FORCES SQUAD THAT FACED THE STUDENTS

7

POINTS SCORED BY THE ROYAL ENGINEERS IN THEIR LAWSON CUP SEMI-FINAL WIN OVER THE ROYAL SIGNALS

54

TRAFALGAR CUP WINS, IN 16 MATCHES, FOR THE ROYAL MARINES

10

DATE, IN SEPTEMBER, OF THE ARMY'S OPENING INTER-SERVICES CLASH WITH THE NAVY

7



Picture: SBS Photography

STUDENTS ACE FORCES TEST

THE UK Armed Forces rugby league side completed their 2018 campaign with a disappointing defeat to England Universities in the President's Cup.

After three early tries from the opposition the Servicemen found themselves trailing 18-0 but they restored parity early in the second half.

Army star Pte Micky Hoyle (RLC) reduced the arrears when he finished a well-worked team try, with Cfn Jamie Laing (REME) kicking the extras.

Two further scores brought UKAF back into contention but a series of mistakes and mounting pressure from the students saw the game slip from their grasp as they suffered a 40-22 defeat.

Elsewhere in the sport, the Army women's team bowed out of the Challenge Cup at the hands of a well-drilled Leeds Rhinos outfit.

The soldiers offered a stern test for their table-topping rivals but eventually slipped to

a 46-10 defeat in a contest the opposition coach described as "the hardest game of the year".

There was also disappointment for the Army academy team as they suffered a 40-12 loss at the hands of the the Royal Marines.

The victors celebrated further success against the Service when they defeated The Parachute Regiment in the teams' annual Trafalgar Cup fixture in Taunton.

There were just two points between the sides at the interval as the Paras trailed 20-18 but a second-half try blitz saw their rivals retain the trophy in style as the match ended 54-18.

The final of the Lawson Cup, featuring last year's beaten finalists the Royal Engineers and the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, was being staged as this issue went to press. Once complete thoughts will turn to this season's Inter-Services campaign, which gets under way in September. ■



GAME BRIEF

DATE: July 11, 2018

COMPETITION: REME v RE
Power Cup final

VENUE: Army Cricket Ground, Aldershot

REME 163-9: Fletcher 49, Boynton 34, Beal 2-26, Dearden 2-29, Johnson 2-34

RE 163 ALL OUT: Parton 31, Reed 26, Lester 3-24, Nash 2-10, Fletcher 2-24

VICTORY for the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers in the Power Cup made up for a disappointing defeat in this season's Inter-Corps Twenty20 final – when they were cruelly beaten on the last delivery of the day.

A total of 163-9 from 50 overs looked to be below par but skipper LCpl Tom Lester (pictured below) had full faith in his side's bowling attack.

"On that track it was definitely defendable," he told *SoldierSport*. "Batting was difficult for both teams and we took to the field with a good score on the board.

"I've never played in a game as close as that and the fact we lost less wickets got us over the line.

"This is my first year as captain. We lost on the last ball in the Twenty20 final so to come here and win is a great feeling."



SAPPERS MADE TO SUFFER

POWER CUP
FINAL

REME

163-9

RE

163



THERE was high drama in cricket's Power Cup final as the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers snatched victory from the jaws of defeat.

Chasing 164 to win, the Royal Engineers looked destined to lift the silverware as they matched their rivals' total with a wicket in hand.

But with just one run needed to seal the title the REME struck a decisive blow as SSgt Stan Pugh dismissed last man Spr Ned McClelland to complete a stunning turnaround.

Such tension seemed a remote possibility as the champions-elect made hard work of batting first.

The Sappers struck an early blow as opener Cpl Tommy Jones fell from the second ball of the day and they were two down when Cpl Craig Watts was caught off the bowling of Spr Jack Richards.

Army duo Cfn Liam Fletcher and Cpl Jay Boynton (pictured) anchored the innings with a partnership of 81 but the slow nature of the scoring meant an imposing total was unlikely.

Spinner Spr Leo Beal halted the duo's progress as he dismissed Boynton for 34 and the challengers appeared to take control when Sgt Ross Dearden bowled Fletcher for 49.

Skipper LCpl Tom Lester added 20 to the score but a lack of meaningful contributions down the order saw the REME finish on 163-9.

In reply, the Engineers made steady progress with the bat and an opening stand of 43 set a solid platform.

However, the loss of Spr Connor Reed represented a change in fortunes and the pressure mounted.

Maj Mike Parton top scored with 31 but runs were at a premium elsewhere as the REME bowlers found their form.

Two wickets in two balls from Sgt Gary Nash put them on the brink of glory, although McClelland had other ideas.

The right-hander found the boundary to bring the scores level but when he was caught off the next delivery the REME celebrated a remarkable win courtesy of the fact they lost fewer wickets on the day. ■

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Maj Hannah Hawkins, RE



I'd been in the TA in the 1980s but in terms of my training as a chaplain I remember it because I was 40 and doing fitness tests I thought only 18-year-olds should do.

Fr Stephen Sharkey, RACHd



You always remember your instructors. My colour sergeant at officer training was a big scary figure but he was firm, fair and professional. You knew you could trust him implicitly. That's something I tell my staff now – think how you would want to be remembered.

Lt Col Justin Barry, Scots



I didn't enjoy it. You always remember the way you were treated by staff and for me it was an example of how not to be a leader. I try to be more personable and build a rapport with recruits.

Capt Luke Edwards, RLC



Long, cold, wet nights on Catterick Training Area and lots of snow. Some memories are good, some are bad. But that's the same throughout your career.

LSgt Dale Wilshire, Cldm Gds



Forming new friendships – you're thrown in together with a bunch of people you've never met before and you have to gel with them and learn how to work together.

Sgt Joe Reardon, RLC

Memory lane

What do initial training staff recall from their own days as raw recruits?

You learn to derive entertainment from the most demanding of situations and develop that black humour soldiers have.

Brig Alex Potts





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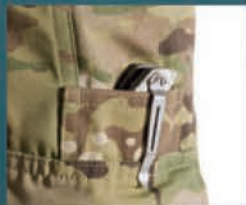
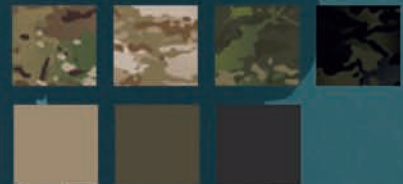
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