# 50

MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY

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### Sandy Elliott

Sandy's son, Kevin, was killed in an explosion whilst on foot patrol in Helmand, Afghanistan in August 2009.

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# **SOLDIER**

Ordnance Barracks, Government Road, Aldershot, Hampshire GU11 2DU.

All enquiries: Tel 01252 787107 / 94222 7107 Fax: 01252 787110 / 94222 7110 Fmail: news@soldiermagazine co uk

Editor-in-chief: Andrew Simms

#### **EDITORIAL**

#### Editor:

**Sarah Goldthorpe** 01252 787096 (7096) sgoldthorpe@soldiermagazine.co.uk

#### **Assistant Editor:**

Joe Clapson 01252 787097 (7097) jclapson@soldiermagazine.co.uk

#### **Assistant Editor:**

Becky Clark 01252 787099 (7099) rclark@soldiermagazine.co.uk

#### Sports Editor

Richard Long 01252 787098 (7098) rlong@soldiermagazine.co.uk

#### DESIGN

#### Art Editor:

Tudor Morgan 01252 787100 (7100) tmorgan@soldiermagazine.co.uk

#### Graphic Designer:

Chris Sell 01252 787101 (7101) csell@soldiermagazine.co.uk

#### **PHOTOGRAPHY**

#### Photographer:

Graeme Main 01252 787103 (7103) gmain@soldiermagazine.co.uk

#### Photographer:

Steve Dock 01252 787103 (7103) sdock@soldiermagazine.co.uk

#### MARKETING and ADVERTISING

#### Business Manager:

Andy Clarkson 01252 787105 (7105) aclarkson@soldiermagazine.co.uk

#### Advertising:

Heather Shekyls 01252 787106 (7106) advertising@soldiermagazine.co.uk

#### **Subscriptions:**

Stephen King 01252 787107 (7107) sking@soldiermagazine.co.uk

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# Make use of your right to reply

SLACK jawed and in utter amazement I read the lead article in your August issue," a reader commented in a letter to me last month.

Having soaked up our coverage of the Army 2020 announcement, the Serviceman had taken exception to the "near propaganda" he claimed we had used to explain the changes.

With 23 years of Regular service to his name, such comments were not to be taken lightly.

And admittedly, sitting behind desks in Aldershot can make it all too easy for the civvy staff at *Soldier* HQ to overlook the more emotive implications of the Strategic Defence and Security Review.

But thanks to our ever-vocal readers and constant updates from the ranks, we do keep our feet firmly on the ground.

The aggrieved reader clearly felt we did not go far enough with our probing questions to the Chief of the General Staff last issue.

But to his credit, Gen Sir Peter Wall seems happy to tackle all queries posed — evidenced this month by the efforts of his briefing team (pages 36-37).

So please keep voicing your opinions to the powers that be through this magazine and, in return, we will push boundaries to try and ensure they are heard.

Service personnel have no union, they cannot strike and are not allowed to express views directly critical of government in public forums. At times like this that can leave a very bitter taste in the mouth.

But nevertheless we continue our quest to serve readers a well-balanced dose of reality, with articles that allow us to reflect on the adventure, excitement and immense pride involved in being a British soldier, as well as the periodic heartache. I hope you like what you find this month.



Sarah Goldthorpe • Editor

# "It hopefully makes things a bit more fun"

Army app store opens
 for business (page 20)





#### **CONTENTS**

SEPTEMBER 2012 VOLUME 68/9



#### **FEATURES**

- 24 Coastal quest Leap of faith in Cornwall
- 29 Back in the fold Golden girl returns to Army life
- **30 Cav's commendation** Praise for troops' Olympic efforts
- **32 Games masters**Forces shine at London 2012
- **34 Celebrity backing** Famous faces salute a job well done
- **Responding to the ranks** CGS addresses soldiers' worries
- **The heat is on**Reserves tested in Cyprus
- 43 Past meets present
  Personnel revisit battlefields
- **48 Ranked: military marvels** History's greatest strategists

#### **REGULARS**

- 7 The Informer Pension proposal revealed
- 17 Reserves round-up News and views for volunteers
- 51 Talkback
- Ruminations from the ranks **Bullet points**Troops' intelligence asset
- **Home truths**The Army Families Federation speaks
- **Movies** *The Hunger Games* take hold
- 76 Music

  Bloc Party's big comeback
- Bloc Party's big comeback **78 Books**
- From banking to the battlefield **80 Top gear**
- Biking bravado

  98 Final word
- 98 Final word
  Troops reflect on Op Olympics

#### SOLDIERSPORT

- **86 Olympics**Stanning's golden Games
- **89 Cricket**Reds reign supreme
- **93 Rugby Union**Sevens shine on world stage
- 94 Rugby League Army set for battle











#### "I really want to take my hat off to what they do"

Mark Cavendish salutes troops after their starring role at London 2012 p30

#### "I can't believe policies have not changed with the times"

Letter writer highlights housing headache in Talkback

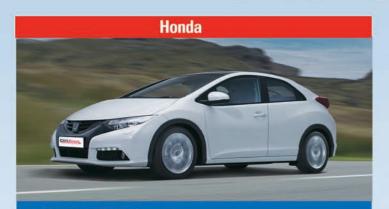
# "We played a different class of rugby; we wanted to win"

Sevens coach reflects on world glory as unbeaten season ends in superb style p93





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BRITISH TROOPS' GLOBAL INTELLIGENCE ASSET news@soldiermagazine.co.uk



Awaiting details: Service personnel have been eagerly anticipating the outline design for the future Armed Forces pension scheme

# Army pension age set to rise

HE age at which Service personnel claim their pensions is likely to increase from 55 to 60 under MoD plans, which will also see a single system introduced for both Regulars and Reservists.

The outline scheme design has been published following a government consultation with around 17,500 troops and stakeholders.

As recommended by Lord Hutton's Independent Public Service Pensions Commission, annuity will in future be based on average earnings during a soldier's career rather than final salary.

The new system will also ensure that Servicemen and women do not make any personal contributions to their pensions and receive a tax-free lump sum and monthly income if they leave the Armed Forces at 40 and have served for more than 20 years.

Accrued rights have been protected meaning there will be no change to the age at which serving soldiers can draw their accrued benefits, which are based on final rank and salary.

The Forces Pension Society said that

the news would bring "encouragement and stability" to British military personnel during a period of widespread changes.

The organisation worked closely with the government department to offer advice on the scheme.

"We have ensured that the Armed Forces stay towards the top end of pensions in the public sector," said the group's general secretary Maj Gen John Moore-Bick. "This does not mean that people will have to carry on serving until they are 60."

The fresh scheme will provide protection to all members who were within ten years of their normal pension age on April 1, 2012. There will be no change to when they can claim or the amount they receive on retirement.

Andrew Robathan, minister for defence personnel, welfare and veterans, explained: "The government has had to make some tough decisions to ensure sustainable public service pensions which provide a fair deal for both personnel and the taxpayer.

"The proposed new scheme will remain among the very best available in

the public or private sector."

In response to suggestions that long-serving troops could be worse off under the new arrangements, an MoD spokesman emphasised that only two per cent of Service personnel actually undertake a full career.

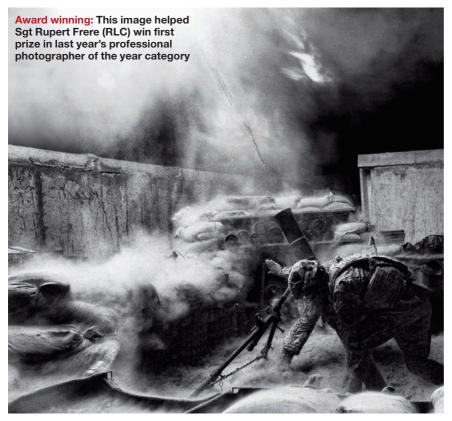
"The effect of the new scheme on junior personnel will be minimal as the average length of service is nine years," he added.

"We predict that most personnel serving for this time will be no worse off and that an average Service person who serves four years would actually be around six to seven per cent better off."

The final package will be introduced from April 2015 after a period of further consultation. Serving personnel will be automatically enrolled in the new scheme unless they qualify for transitional protection.

For more information read 2012DIN01-063 (accrued rights) or visit www.mod.uk

Anxious over pension planspage 52



# Final call for photo competition

ENTRIES are still being sought for the annual Army Photographic Competition. The closing date for submissions is September 7 and the contest is open to Regulars, Reservists and their families.

Categories include best operational and non-operational image, best sporting picture, professional photographer of the year and best overall image. Material must have been captured between October 1, 2011 and September 7 this year. For more information read ABN 48/12

## **News man roots for Rifles**

NE of British television's most famous faces has paid tribute to members of The Rifles ahead of their musical extravanganza at the Royal Albert Hall next month.

ITV newsreader Alastair Stewart said he was "honoured" to be hosting Swift and Bold – a showcase by the Massed Bands and Bugles of The Rifles on October 18.

The one-off performance will mark two centuries of regimental history and celebrate the varied achievements of the unit's troops during that time.

"In the day job I am constantly reporting events in Afghanistan and tragic cases for The Rifles," said the presenter, whose daughter works at Talavera Junior School in Aldershot.

"Ours is the best Armed Forces in the world in terms of fighting efficiency and values and it's a huge honour to be asked to be involved with this."

Stewart said he was moved to support the fund-raising event after learning more about its recipient charity Care for Casualties.

"What I like about the evening is that woven into it will be this regimental history going back over the best part of 200 years," he told *Soldier*.

Appearing at the show will be the world-famous tenor Wynne Evans, The Fijian Choir and the Pipes of the Brigade of Gurkhas.

"The night will be about telling the story of The Rifles since the Battle of Salamanca in 1812 (pages 43-47) through to its current role in Afghanistan," said Maj Lawrence Sale, the unit's director of music.

"This is a huge night for us," added LCpl Steve Duncombe, a musician in the

regiment. "I've played all over the world but never at the Albert Hall; for us this is a career highlight."

#### **BODY PARTS 'SHOCK'**

■ REMAINS of troops killed in Afghanistan have been kept without their families' permission, the Ministry of Defence has admitted.

The government is investigating reports that forensic material belonging to Service personnel were retained beyond the time required for inquests and police inquiries.

A department spokesman said: "There are occasions when it is necessary for the Royal Military Police to retain forensic material from individuals killed on operations as part of their investigation. This is standard practice."

However, it is thought this had been done without the correct process being followed in several cases.

"The MoD deeply regrets that this failure of procedure has occurred and apologises profoundly to all the families affected by this," the spokesman added.

Heather Wood, whose husband was killed in Afghanistan while serving with 23 Pioneer Regiment RLC, told the BBC: "When the body is repatriated there is enough opportunity to be told. A year-and-a-half later, to find out potentially that Charlie's tissue or parts of his body could be stored just down the road is quite disturbing. It's quite shocking not knowing they were ever there."

#### **GURKHA TRUST GONE**

■ THE Gurkha Army Dependants Assurance Trust has stopped accepting new members.

The announcement follows a six-month information campaign by the brigade to ensure its troops were given chance to sign up to the scheme before it closed.

Personnel who joined ahead of the cut-off date of August 1 will have the same cover as before and continue to have premiums deducted from their pay.

Others requiring personal insurance remain eligible to join the Army Dependant Trust, PAX or Service Life Insurance schemes.

#### AIMING HIGH FOR AXEL

■ A SOLDIER has dedicated his mission to complete eight different charity events to the memory of a friend killed in southern Afghanistan.

Cpl Mac McKay (AGC (SPS)) has already finished a half marathon in Malvern and the 10km Jubilee run in London in remembrance of LCpl Michael Foley (pictured), who

was shot outside Lashkar Gah main operating base in March this year.

"I've called the challenge 'Fallen Soldiers' and I'm aiming to raise as much money as possible for The Royal

British Legion, including hopefully completing the London Marathon next year," explained the 33-year-old. "I worked with Michael, or Axel, for two years at 9 Regiment RLC in Chippenham. He was a lovely character and I know he'd definitely approve of what I'm doing." Visit www.justgving.com/David-McKay79 for details.





Shedding light on the problem: A new Army video aims to stop soldiers disposing of their ammunition wrongly, as many do each year

# Ammo warning to Service personnel

HARD-HITTING video has been made to warn soldiers of the dangers of throwing away ammunition carelessly.

Every year, thousands of items including pyrotechnics find their way into the civilian waste stream after military training exercises.

Don't Gamble With Ammo shows the potentially deadly consequences of complacency from troops.

The five-minute film was funded by the Army's chief environment and safety officer and features clips based on reallife incidents.

Using a roulette wheel to illustrate the gamble that troops take when disposing of cartridges and other material incorrectly, it shows a Serviceman's

children being harmed by items they find in his daysack.

"We were looking for a creative way of getting a serious message across and we wanted something that soldiers would watch," explained Lt Col Ben

Children have found ammunition out walking and it turns up in the waste stream on a weekly basis

Baldwin (Para), the Service's deputy chief environment and safety officer.

"The idea is that people back from training or operations will see the clip and, if they have any ammunition when they check their kit, will hand it in to an officer or senior NCO or place it in an amnesty box.

"If they find they have accidentally taken ammo home with them, they shouldn't just throw it away."

As well as emphasising the risk that careless disposal poses to life and limb, the feature highlights how incidents can compromise the reputation of the Army.

"Children have found ammunition while out walking and items turn up in the civilian waste stream on a weekly basis," Lt Col Baldwin added. "It is important soldiers deal with it in a professional way."

The video will be available to view via Armynet and YouTube later this month.

A defence internal brief with further details will also be published.

## British troops move into new Army bases

MAJOR base changes are continuing across the Service.

Troops from 39 Engineer Regiment were being moved to RAF Kinloss, renamed Kinloss Barracks, as this issue went to press.

About 720 personnel are relocating to the base from Waterbeach in Cambridge.

Soldiers from the headquarters of 12 (Air Support) Engineer Group will go from the same site to RAF

Wittering next summer.

Elsewhere, soldiers from 2nd Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment have moved from Cyprus to Kendrew Barracks in Rutland.

And the Army training regiment at Bassingbourn Barracks staged its final passing out parade (pictured right) on August 17.

New recruits will now undertake their phase one training at either Pirbright or Winchester.



ture: Cpl Gabriel Moreno, Rl

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\*Price applies to Jaguar XF 2.2D SE 163PS including military concession. Prices shown are the OTR price including VAT. Model shown is a Jaguar XF Sport with Kyanite Blue Metallic Paint priced at £34,147.50 including military concession.

## WHEN THE STRESS RESPONSE PERSISTS FOR MONTHS, IT'S ONE OF THE MOST TOXIC MECHANISMS IN OUR BODIES

- NEW AUTHOR SHEDS LIGHT ON BIOLOGY OF RISK, PAGES 78-79





### From Army to asteroid mission

MILITARY pilot-turnedastronaut has emerged from an underwater mission to test kit for future asteroid exploration.

Tim Peake, formerly an Army Air Corps officer and now an employee of the European Space Agency (ESA), plunged beneath the ocean's surface at Florida Keys in America.

The veteran spent two weeks inside the world's only undersea laboratory conducting research and using the cramped, pressurised conditions to train for life on a space station.

"It was absolutely fantastic – a truly incredible experience," said the former Apache test pilot (pictured above left).

"As a keen diver it was wonderful to spend so much time underwater but also in a professional sense it was a real eye opener and working with Nasa experts was great."

The task saw Peake and his

colleagues practise with tools and techniques needed to anchor the rocky formations. Information they gathered will be used to inform a deployment to an asteroid in the coming years.

"We were using a climbing rope to discover how easy it would be to work from it," explained Peake – the first British citizen to be selected as an astronaut by ESA.

"We also operated with submersible vehicles in the deep water, which mimicked space exploration platforms.

"This was straight out of a sci-fi movie but something that we could be doing in space as soon as 2020."

The future trip could see astronauts travel 1.5 million kilometres – further than man has ever ventured in space.

With his most recent task deemed a success, Peake now hopes to work on the International Space Station.

#### **CREDIT FOR NEW MEDIC**

■ A QUICK-THINKING medic has been praised for helping to save the wife of a retired colonel.

Pte Jonathan Greenhouse was travelling home to Hereford when he encountered a road traffic accident in which a woman had been knocked off her bicycle, suffering head injuries and broken bones.

Despite being just weeks into his course at the Defence School of Medical Technical Training, the 24-year-old sprang into action.

"No one else who was stood around really knew what to do," the soldier (pictured below) explained.

"The ambulance was on the way so I assessed the casualty – I checked the airways, breathing, circulation and made sure she was talking to me.

"I had passed my practical exam two days before and the protocols they teach you just kicked in."

When paramedics arrived Pte Greenhouse helped to administer pain relief and a tourniquet, before the casualty was airlifted to hospital.

He was later awarded a commanding officer's commendation for his actions.

Peter Rowland, a former Royal Signals officer and husband of the 78-year-old patient, travelled to Keogh Barracks near Aldershot for the presentation ceremony and to express his thanks.

"When I got to the scene I thought I'd lost her," he recalled.

"She was in a terrible mess. Pte Greenhouse was absolutely great.

There was screaming and bleeding but he did all the right things. We cannot thank him enough."

thank him enough."
The Serviceman
added: "It's nice
to know I helped
someone but I wasn't
expecting any thanks.
All the fuss is a bit
overwhelming."



# Motorsport thrusts Service kit forward

TROOPS are cashing in on advances being made in the motorsport sector, according to defence minister Peter Luff.

In a speech, the politician said that hi-tech developments were not only delivering wins on the racetrack but supporting efforts on the front line too.

"Defence is harnessing the strides being made in your industry like never before," Luff told the Motorsport Industry Association.

The minister said that delivery of the first Foxhound patrol vehicles to Afghanistan was a prime example of such collaboration.

"This is only possible because British companies enable us to exploit state-of-

the-art technologies in areas such as machining and composites," he added.

"Foxhound is an amazingly agile piece of kit, with an engine which can be removed and replaced in just 30 minutes. It has been designed to withstand a direct IED strike and not only keep those inside safe but be able to drive away on just three wheels.

"It was Ricardo [an engineering firm] which was responsible for the original concept and has been instrumental in its design and manufacture. Indeed, it was an ex–Formula One design engineer who oversaw the vehicle pod, using materials more commonly found on the Grand Prix circuit."



Picture: Graeme Main

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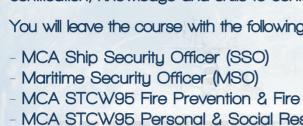


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#### 44 THERE WAS NO SENSE THAT THE TASKS THEY WERE BEING ASKED TO PERFORM WERE MENIAL OR DEMEANING

- CELEBS SALUTE TROOPS' ATTITUDE TO OP OLYMPICS, PAGE 34





Front-line feat: Members of The Light Dragoons have sniffed out a huge cache of IEDs

# perations outwit insurgents

RITISH soldiers have been continuing the fight against Taliban forces in Helmand province by staging two successful operations alongside home-grown counterparts.

Members of 1st Battalion, Grenadier Guards supported 400 warriors from the Afghan National Army's 3/215 Brigade on a mission to disrupt insurgents based in the Lower Gereshk Valley.

Having flown into the contested area at dawn, the personnel patrolled up the valley, cleared enemy fighters and searched compounds for any weapons and ammunition.

Maj Rupert King-Evans (Gren Gds) said: "The key point from this is that it was an Afghan operation supported by Isaf and not the other way round.

"They planned the mission. We offered advice and, when requested, provided support."

Personnel from A Squadron, The Light Dragoons created further difficulties for insurgents when they discovered and destroyed a huge cache of improvised explosive devices.

They made the 250kg find while on operations with their local partners in the Nahr-e Saraj district.

### ...two nights in Edinburgh

THE clues to last month's spine lines competition would not have been beyond the academic pedigree of (David) Cameron, (Bear) Grylls, (George) Orwell and (Hugh) Laurie.

All four of the famous figures, two of whom featured in our August edition, benefited from an Eton College education.

In keeping with the theme of privileged experiences, this month we are giving away a two-night stay for two at the luxurious Royal Scots Club in Edinburgh (www. royalscotsclub.com). Located in the city centre, this welcoming accommodation offers the perfect base from which to explore the city's many sights.

The prize includes a double or twin room (subject to availability) and breakfast and dinner on both days. All readers can also enjoy a ten per cent discount at the establishment by quoting "Soldier magazine" before the end of February 2013.

To be in with a chance of winning the two-night stay, tell us what links the words on the side of this issue. Answers, plus your postal address, to the usual place or comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk by September 28.





#### RECRUITMENT REFRESH

A NEW scheme has seen the Army team up with a private firm in a bid to better connect with potential soldiers and officers.

The recruiting partnering project will see the military work alongside Capita Business Services in a ten-year contract that will deliver savings of £300 million.

It is hoped the agreement will enable around 1,200 personnel to be returned to the Field Army while exploiting modern media channels to reach potential troops. The Service will retain ownership of all policy, selection standards, eligibility criteria and branding.

Even though the Regular force is reducing in size, there remains an enduring need to recruit the right number of people to meet the demand and those of the right quality to operate effectively in an increasingly technological Army deployed on complex operations," a Service spokesman said.

The existing recruitment operation will run until October 1 before the joint arrangement is implemented over the next vear.

#### ADVANCED STUDY ALERT

■ OFFICERS wishing to be considered for this year's higher defence studies programme have been asked to submit their applications by September 15.

The scheme includes courses in international relations, defence studies and short-term Army fellowships and allows troops to undertake advanced learning at university. For more information read ABN 61-12

#### CAREER COUNSEL

■ EARLY Service leavers are being offered career advice in a MoD-backed pilot scheme at Catterick Garrison.

The future horizons programme is aimed at soldiers who are discharged from the Army before completing four years of service and helps them prepare for the demands of civilian life.

It targets those who are not currently entitled to resettlement advice and offers access to training and courses.

The initiative is funded by The Royal British Legion and Forces in Mind Trust.

#### BLACK BOX BOWS OUT

■ HARD copies of the personal development record - the so-called "black box" - have been discontinued.

Troops must now use joint personnel administration to ensure their qualifications are kept up to date.

For more information read ABN 65-12.

#### RADIO REACHES DORSET

■ GARRISON FM has begun broadcasting from a 17th UK location after the launch of its latest station at Bovington Camp. Soldiers can tune into the Blandford Garrison radio service on 1287 AM or via www.garrisonfm.com





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# **GOOD DRILLS**

#### **BOX OF FIX**

A PORTABLE workshop to support front-line Army vehicle mechanics has been successfully trialled in



Helmand. The "fitter section in a box" can be used at forward operating bases. It packs into an ISO container and includes two inflatable shelters, a generator and servicing kit.

#### PLAYGROUND PUSH

WIVES and serving personnel from Wimbish Station have given their local play area an overhaul worth £180,000.

The project, which received funding from civilian companies and the MoD, was undertaken to create a safe area for the children of deployed

#### PAPERLESS PM

DAVID Cameron fell foul of security checks being undertaken by British Army personnel during the Olympics. The prime minister praised a soldier for being "on his marks" after the politician was

troops.



stopped going down Whitehall. "I didn't have my papers," he told *ITV Tonight*.

#### MORONIC MONKEY ABUSE

A VIETNAMESE soldier has been thrown out of the country's army after posting graphic photographs on Facebook of the torture and killing of rare wild monkeys, state media reported. The online images showed the 20-year-old forcing the animals to smoke. Other pictures, which have now been removed from the social networking website, showed them being skinned and killed.

## **BAD DRILLS**

# Aviation hub to boost battle

NEW body to speed up the development of remotely-piloted assets has been created in Boscombe Down.

Soldiers will work with the Wiltshirebased Unmanned Air Systems Capability Development Centre – due to be fully operational by next year – to ensure the UK remains a world leader in the battlefield technology.

Set up by the MoD and QinetiQ in an effort to pool knowledge from across the public and private sectors, the hub will assist new projects and offer advice.

Maj James Palmer (RA), an officer helping to establish the facility, explained the benefits it would bring to British Army troops.

"Obviously the Royal Air Force has its own programmes, we have ours and the Royal Navy is working in this area as well," he said.

"This centre will provide a focal point for those who have questions about the testing and evaluation; it will create a single point of contact when working out different ways to deliver capability. "The world of unmanned air systems is a growing area where there's lots of research going on so having somewhere that can tie all that information together will be very useful."

Subjects the establishment can advise on include access to airspace, training and complex technology issues such as data links.

Among those Service personnel expected to call on its expertise are those within Defence Equipment and Support and the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory.

Soldiers embedded with the Air Warfare Centre's Test and Evaluation Squadron in the same location as the hub will also support its work.

Last year a MoD document titled *The UK Approach to Unmanned Aircraft Systems* recommended that a "joint centre of excellence" would be the best way to coordinate test, evaluation and doctrine for the crucial battlefield assets.

The same report said that legal and ethical issues around the use of drones had still to be resolved.

40,000

NUMBER OF MEN THOUGHT TO HAVE BEEN DEFEATED IN 40 MINUTES BY WELLINGTON AT SALAMANCA (PAGES 43-47)

### Star drops in on Service cinema

HOT FUZZ star Simon Pegg met with patients and staff at Headley Court's defence medical rehabilitation unit to cast his expert eyes over their new cinema.

The actor, who sprung to movie fame in the 2004 box office hit Shaun of the Dead, has become a patron of the state-of-the-art MediCinema – the first ever fully digital, 3D system dedicated to Service personnel undergoing treatment.

The 50-seat complex, which opened in July in time for residents to enjoy coverage of the Olympic Games, was part funded by £410,00 from The Royal British Legion.

It will show Hollywood blockbusters and other films up to three times a week.

"What MediCinema has provided for the residents of Headley Court is so much more than just entertainment," Pegg said.

"It is the chance for these brave soldiers to take a break from the undoubted challenges they face on a daily basis and lose themselves in the wonderful world

of film. Not only that, they get to do it in real style. I'm so proud to be associated with the project."





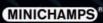




























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VALID UNTIL 30TH SEPT 2012



Wow factor: 100 members of 4 Yorks were the first Service personnel to be tested on the new Roman Star exercise in north east Italy

# Yorkshire Reserves relish Italian job

RITISH Reserves have had their first taste of a new training serial that aims to prepare them for a larger role in the future Army.

Some 100 personnel from 4th Battalion, The Yorkshire Regiment took part in Exercise Roman Star in north east Italy with support from the country's home-grown troops.

Following drills in conventional warfare, close-quarter combat and modern assault techniques, the package culminated in an "attack" on terrorist-occupied land featuring one of the partner force's "Huey" helicopters.

Maj Scott Richardson, the UK unit's training major, explained that tasks

were geared towards boosting soldiers' infantry skills.

"This was our first overseas exercise in a while and it was good for everyone to get away from the usual training areas and experience something different," he said. "It was very much 'back to basics' with high quality, arduous training. The guys worked very hard."

Despite the tough environment, feedback from troops was positive.

"They thoroughly enjoyed it – particularly the helicopter insertion," the officer added.

"It was a unique experience to take part in an airborne assault using a platform that most of them will only have seen in Vietnam films because it's not an airframe we use.

"Roman Star definitely had the wow factor, which is fantastic for recruitment and retention."

Lt Col lan Crowley, the battalion's new commanding officer, said the serial would help to pave the way for part-time soldiers becoming integrated with their full-time colleagues.

"We are moving away from specific training for the Afghan theatre of operations and looking at how we can prepare ourselves to deliver a wide range of tasks," he explained.

• The heat is on - pages 40-41

#### FOR MORE NEWS...

Log onto Armynet, visit army. mod.uk or follow the Territorial and Reserves link on the intranet

 AN INSTRUCTOR from the Army Training Unit (North East) is gearing up for an epic 100-mile trek across the Sahara Desert.

Sgt Lee Dixon (RA) will attempt the gruelling challenge next month to raise funds for the The Undentable Trust, a charity that supports wounded British Service personnel and their families.

To donate to the cause visit www. undentabletrust.co.uk or www. bmycharity.com/pepiodfc

## 'TA turned my life around'

A YOUNG volunteer has described how a tour of Afghanistan dramatically changed his work ethic in civvy street.

Pte Kyle Simpson (4 Yorks) was a self-confessed tearaway until he pursued a part-time career in the Service at 22.

But speaking after the above training exercise, the plasterer admitted that six months in Helmand province back in 2009 had altered his attitude.

"It was a culture shock. I went out there a child and came back a man," the Serviceman explained. During his tour, Pte Simpson had to return fire on the enemy after being targeted as he manned a sangar at Patrol Base Zulu.

"The adrenalin took over and my skills and drills fell into place," he recalled.

"It is only in the comedown afterwards that you think 'what if one of those rounds had hit me?'.

"Before I went out there I was a bit of a rascal character but while I was away I grew up: you have to.

"I switched on to life in general; I got my head down at work and have now made a successful business for myself."



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#### IN MEMORIAM



LT ANDREW CHESTERMAN (26) 3RD BATTALTION. THE RIFLES KIA AUGUST 9 – AFGHANISTAN

AN officer who died after being shot by insurgents was commanding a vehicle patrol in Helmand when its lead truck struck an IED.

Following the explosion in Nad-e Ali, Lt Andrew Chesterman moved forward to take control of the situation but was hit by small arms fire and could not be saved.

Born in Guildford, the Serviceman studied mechanical engineering at the University of Southampton before attending the Britannia Royal Naval College Dartmouth and the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst

After commissioning into The Rifles in December 2010, Lt Chesterman deployed to Afghanistan as a platoon commander in C Company. He had more recently been tasked with forming a police advisory team with the

battlegroup of 1st Battalion, Welsh Guards. Lt Col Charlie Maconochie, commanding officer of 3 Rifles, said: "Professional excellence, self-discipline, integrity and loyalty are characteristics that immediately spring to mind when I think about Andrew.

"His riflemen clearly adored and utterly respected him, not least as he always led from the front, was fiercely fit and set the highest possible personal example.

Lt Chesterman leaves behind his father and two sisters.

The Serviceman's dad Paul said: "Andrew gave himself fully and wholeheartedly to his career in



LCPL MATTHEW SMITH (26) **ROYAL ENGINEERS** KIA AUGUST 10 - AFGHANISTAN

MEMBERS of the Royal Engineers are mourning the loss of a colleague who was killed by small arms fire while building a new checkpoint in the Nad-e Ali district of Helmand province.

LCpl Matthew Smith, 26, enlisted in the Army in 2003 and completed a junior noncommissioned officers' cadre five years later before being promoted.

A talented footballer, the Serviceman had played numerous times for 26 Engineer Regiment and was part of the team that won the corps championship, the Blythe Cup, in 2011.

LCpl Smith deployed to Afghanistan in March as a section second-in-command, crane operator

His specialist skills were used to assist in the

drawdown of Isaf bases and the construction of a new bridge, allowing the local population to cross the Nahr-e Bughra canal.

"LCpl Smith embodied everything that is great about the Corps of Royal Engineers," said Lt Col John Ridge, commanding officer of 26 Engr Regt.

"He was incredibly hardworking, completely selfless and utterly professional.

"Tremendously proud to be a sapper, he reportedly woke his tent mates to a recording or rendition of *Hurrah for the CRE*, the corps song, most mornings.

The popular Serviceman leaves behind his father, mother, brother, fiancee and four children. In a tribute to her son, Caroline Smith said: "Our hero; rest in peace."



GDSM JAMIE SHADRAKE (20) 1ST BATTALION. **GRENADIER GUARDS** KIA AUGUST 17 – AFGHANISTAN

TRIBUTES have been paid to a bright and committed soldier who was killed in an insurgent attack on a checkpoint in Helmand province.

Gdsm Jamie Shadrake of 1st Battalion, Grenadier Guards died of gunshot wounds following the incident in the Nahr-e Saraj district.

He joined the Army in 2009 at the age of 17, following his older brother into the unit.

After completing infantry training in Catterick he was posted to Nijmegen Company in London where he participated in state ceremonial duties.

When the Serviceman moved into the battalion in April 2010, he was initially part of The Queen's Company but his excellent performance on exercise saw him selected for the formation's Reconnaissance Platoon ahead of missionspecific training for Afghanistan.

Leading tributes to the 20-year-old, Lt Col James Bowder, CO of 1 Gren Gds, called him an "extraordinary young man".

"Imbued with boundless energy, his enthusiasm and lust for life were infectious," said the officer. "He was a talented soldier with a huge amount to offer and would have gone a long way in the Army. Indeed he was determined to do so not least in order to impress his elder brother who is a platoon sergeant in the battalion.

Gdsm Shadrake leaves behind his parents, sister and three brothers.

A family statement read: "We are very proud of the fact that Jamie was prepared to do his duty in helping the people of Afghanistan."

# Brigadier lifts lid on 'black grief' for son

THE most senior serving soldier to have lost a child in Afghanistan has spoken out about his grief and how he uses his experience to assist visiting officers.

In an interview with BBC defence correspondent Caroline Wyatt, Brig Mike Griffiths said: "I don't think there is a waking hour where I don't think and feel sad. I think you learn to cope with time. But you have waves of black grief, when I think it's extremely difficult to be positive."

Two years after his son was struck by an improvised explosive device in Nahr-e Saraj during Op Herrick 12, the father of Capt Andrew Griffiths (2 Lancs) is in charge of those personnel whose job it is to break the news of deaths or injuries to Army families.

"When a soldier is injured or, tragically, has died their families need this rock around which they can cling in order to allow them to grieve - and grieve properly - and to understand," said the director of Army Personnel Operations, who commanded British troops in Helmand between 2003 and 2004.



Coping: Brig Mike Griffiths

# App store opens for business

HE British Army has launched a new facility to help smartphone users boost their military skills.

After several months of planning by the Directorate of Training, the freeto-use app store has gone live on the Forces Gateway website.

The page features games, quizzes and reference material that soldiers can download onto Android or Apple handheld devices.

Its unclassified information covers a range of topics from military annual training tests to fitness and Afghan language and culture.

Maj Graham Yare (AGC (ETS)), one of the officers responsible for creating the store, explained: "This gives troops the chance to do things outside of normal day-to-day classroom training.

"They can revise material before they go into a lesson and it hopefully makes things a bit more fun.

"There is a lot of reference material but also games.

"For example, the equality and diversity app has a robot working through different scenarios and you have to keep it as happy as possible by answering questions correctly.

"There is even a badges of rank

recognition programme to help the Service's new starters."

With fresh content due to be added in the coming months, MoD civil servants have been trained to produce more new apps in-house.

"On the whole, feedback we have received from those who have tested the store has been really positive," Maj Yare added.

"Younger guys are used to this technology and the older guys have really bought into it as well.

"Having all the Army apps in one location means that personnel won't have to search through the thousands available on the Apple store.

"It also allows us to have more control and ensure that programmes are properly endorsed.

"We wanted a few apps on there before we launched the store."

The Army is now offering assistance to the Royal Air Force and Royal Navy to help its sister services develop a similar facility for their personnel.

 To visit the app store log on to www. forcesqateway.mod.uk using your Armynet details and follow the "app store" icon on the website's home page.



#### **FAIR FOR ARMY LEAVERS**

■ A CAREERS fair for those approaching the end of their Army employment will be held at Tidworth Leisure Centre later this month.

Organised by the British Forces Resettlement Services (BFRS), the event on September 27 will help troops and their families to find new opportunities on civvy street.

Workshops will cover CV writing and networking and 80 exhibitors will attend, including employers and leading training organisations.

"The British Armed Forces are some of the best in the world and our Service leavers possess a unique combination of skills and qualities," said BFRS founder Harry Dean. "We hope our event will help Army personnel overcome any reservations.

For more visit www.bfrss.org.uk

#### **TROOPS SAVE SCHOOL**

■ MFMBFRS

of 36 Engineer Regiment have helped to save Afghan schoolchildren from an improvised explosive device planted close to their school.

The soldiers from 49 Squadron Explosive Ordnance Disposal successfully disrupted the 15-kilo, radio-controlled bomb after troops from the Afghan National Army spotted it outside the institution in Shawquat.

#### **LEAGUE OF GENTLEMEN**

#### FORCE FOR GOOD

LOTTERY LIFT

A large cash injection from the Heritage Lottery Fund will help to deliver a new vehicle conservation centre and two exhibitions between 2013 and 2015 at the museum of the Royal Tank Regiment and Royal

Armoured Corps

CAST AND BLAST

Celebrities from the world of joined Service veterans for a Fishery in Hampshire. lan Botham, David "Bumble" Lloyd and Judas Priest star Glen Tipton attended the event,

Fishing for Heroes

**QUIDS IN** 

The National Tank

Museum

television, sport and rock 'n' roll charity fly-fishing and shooting competition at the Meon Springs which included an auction

£1,500

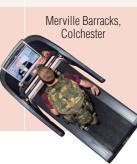
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#### SLOG FOR A STATUE

A 36-strong team from 16 Air Assault Brigade tabbed more than 300 miles on treadmills to raise cash to buy a statue for their headquarters building. The six-foot eagle was spotted in a scrapyard by WO1 Chris Oakes, who noticed that it matched the unit's emblem and launched a bid to purchase it

















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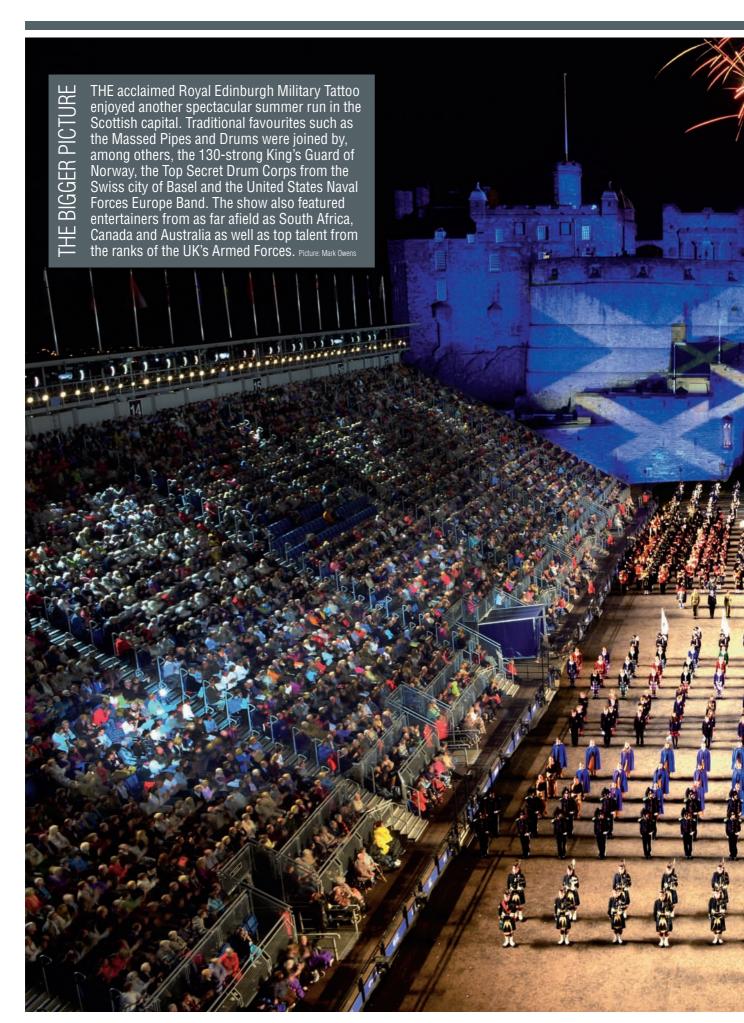
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>> But here, their only tools of the trade are a wetsuit, helmet and buoyancy vest.

As on operations, a key part of adventurous training experiences like this is camaraderie and teamwork between those taking part.

If an individual is apprehensive about tackling an unaided leap, it is the encouragement from his mates that will inspire him to succeed.

Cpl Scott Slater says the package has helped members of the group to find a new kind of confidence.

"I wasn't really sure what to expect," he adds. "I thought we were

THIS IS A WAY

FOR SOLDIERS

THAT THEY'VE

TO REALISE

ALL GOT IT

IN THEM TO

TAKE ON THE

CHALLENGE

going for a nice walk along the coast but then I found myself jumping off a cliff.

"It actually spurred us on to see some people hesitate as it has made us all want to go further and achieve more.

The thrill-seeking pursuit exposes participants to caves sluices and marine life that are normally hidden

from the average beach dweller. It is a test of mental resilience above physical prowess and gives military leaders chance to see how their troops react in

difficult and unfamiliar conditions.

Maj Mark Ackrill, officer commanding the unit's 654 Squadron, describes the battlefield context of coasteering.

'This is a way for soldiers to realise that they've all got it in them to take on the challenge," he says.

"It also provides a real test of your nerves

in a way that could not be done at the barracks or on exercise.

As individuals pass through the activity's stages by swimming and scrambling over

jagged rock faces, some are pulled into the

sea by strong waves.

The height of their drops increases steadily to add pressure but not a single soldier refuses the challenge.

'Free jumping from these heights is really exhilarating and gives you a real adrenalin rush," comments LCpl Dai Phillips. "There is always a lot of banter to get

people through tough situations and peer pressure to get it done, but it's all constructive and makes us stronger." At a time when the British Army's

operational tempo runs high amid news of

thousands of redundancies some might argue that a trip to the seaside is hardly an appropriate way for troops to spend time

But following a slippery climb to safety, Sgt Tim Field's response to the activity's critics is clear.

out of this because it really pushes the boundaries and takes them out of their

"Things like this are important for driving forward and becoming better soldiers – showing commitment to vourself as well as the rest of your team

'We've just come back from Afghanistan so to be able to get away to the beach on adventurous training makes a huge difference to the lads and will help with retention too.

Aside from the smiles that follow breathtaking vaults into the deep, personnel benefit from the encounter by learning how to handle frequent moments of nervousness

And no matter where future missions take them, there is little doubt that this will be a vital characteristic.

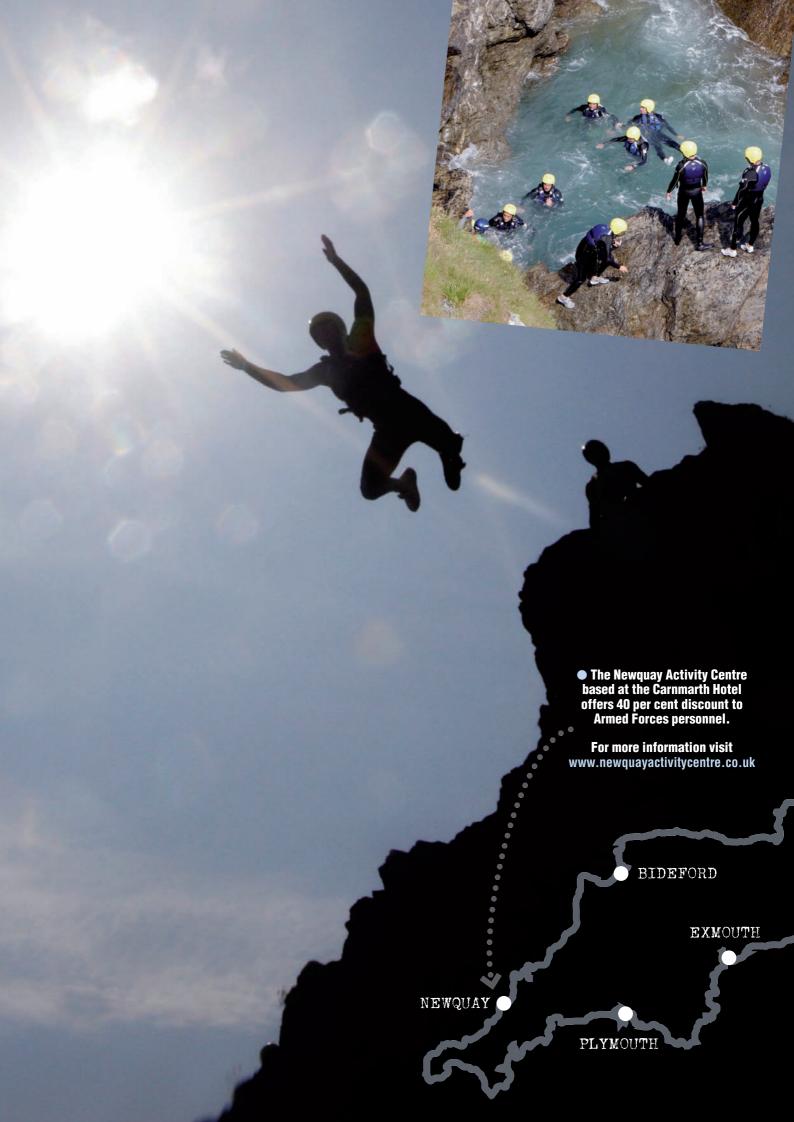
**Splashdown:** Members of 4 Regiment, Army Air Corps leap from various sections of the coastline during the nerve-wracking two-

















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# BACK IN THE RANKS

# Army's golden girl returns to Service life after starring role at London 2012

Interview: Richard Long Picture: Graeme Main

OR most Olympic gold medallists the aftermath of the Games will be spent basking in the glory of their

achievements at the greatest sporting spectacle on the planet.

And while Army rower Capt Heather Stanning has enjoyed her moment in the spotlight, she will be reporting back to 32 Regiment, Royal Artillery this month in a welcome return to Service life.

Having secured Team GB's longawaited first gold at London 2012 as part of the women's pair, the 27-year-old is about to take the next step in her military career, although the exact nature of her role has yet to be decided.

"I will have to sit down with my desk officer and talk about what job I will be doing and what they want from me," Capt Stanning told Soldier.

"I joined the military for a host of reasons and they all remain very strong. I love the guys I work with and the Army has such a fantastic group of individuals.

The public has seen a different side to the military

"We are normal people and it will be nice to fall back into that.

"I spent 18 months as a troop commander and carried out a big exercise in Canada. But I have never been on tour and there are lots of other things I haven't done vet

"Afghanistan is such a big part of my peer group's role in the Army and it is important for me to have exposure to that.

There are guys out there who have worked very hard and have come home with both good and bad experiences.

"Even though the Olympics have been in everyone's thoughts, we still have people losing lives and limbs. It is important we do not forget that.'

"The public has seen a different side to the military recently. We are normal people and it will be nice to fall back into that"

Capt Stanning was taken out of the Army fold so she could concentrate on a full-time training programme ahead of the Games. Despite being away

from her Service

colleagues, she received huge support throughout her campaign and was cheered on by members of her unit in Camp Bastion as she clinched gold.

The BBC showed the officer footage of the celebrations during her postrace interview and she was thrilled to receive such fantastic backing.

"It was really special to know that even though they were thousands of miles away, they could still relate to the Olympics," the medallist said.

'It was nice to see their reaction to the race and I'm looking forward to seeing them when they get home.' With her job complete, Capt Stanning

> spectator's view and praised the part soldiers played in their last-minute role as security

> > They always seemed to have a smile on their faces," she said.

"It was so nice to see everybody having a good time and that was down to the great job the Army was doing. It was also great to see soldiers in the venues so they could experience the Olympics from a different side.

> "We were sat in the athletics stadium and I have never been in a place where so many people were watching the same thing. The noise was just incredible.

"I was lucky to be able to walk around in my tracksuit and I felt so proud to be associated with it all."

Stanning strikes gold – pages 86-87



# Lav commends Army

# CYCLING STAR SALUTES SERVICE PERSONNEL FOR OLYMPIC EFFORT



Interview: Sarah Goldthorpe **Picture: Steve Dock** 

FTER being crowned cycling's world road race champion in Copenhagen last September, Mark Cavendish looked well on-track to win Britain's first gold of the Games.

But, as military strategists know all too well (pages 48-49), few plans survive first contact with the enemy: the London 2012 dream was not to be.

The 27-year-old, who claimed a fourth consecutive final-stage victory in the Tour de France (pictured above), missed out on an Olympic medal after finishing 29th in the men's event.

Visiting troops at London's Tobacco Dock days after the devastating defeat, the athlete paid tribute to those military personnel whose hard work had enabled the sporting showdown to go ahead.

"I never really knew what the Forces did until I met my girlfriend [model and Help for Heroes patron Peta Todd]," the star admitted.

"But these guys are absolutely inspirational.

"It's got to have been hard not being back home on leave.
"I really want to take my hat off to what they do."
After taking a tour around the temporary accommodation used by personnel during Op Olympics, Cavendish told *Soldier* that troops had played a significant role in last month's success story.

To have set this place up in three days is incredible," he commented.

"It could have been so intimidating having Servicemen everywhere but far from it – these are the guys who meet you with a smile and a kind word.

"Athletes had been training for the Olympics for four years but the soldiers hadn't. That must have been hard. "There are no jobsworths here; they're all so professional and they make

me so proud.

The Armed Forces smashed it. They are the real heroes and I want to say thank you.

Commenting on his efforts just days before, the Team GB competitor added: "I got smashed by the guys.

However, the father-of-one believes there is potential for his sport to receive a growing following among soldiers as a result of this year's Games.

'Cycling gives you a real sense of freedom," he explained. "It's a really good thing for your head.

"There are probably soldiers out there who could beat me, the way

As troops swarmed around him for autographs and photos, the modest 2012 pin-up was reluctant to admit that he could offer any inspiration to

those who put their lives on the line for Queen and country.

"What can personnel take from me?" he said. "I just ride a bike!

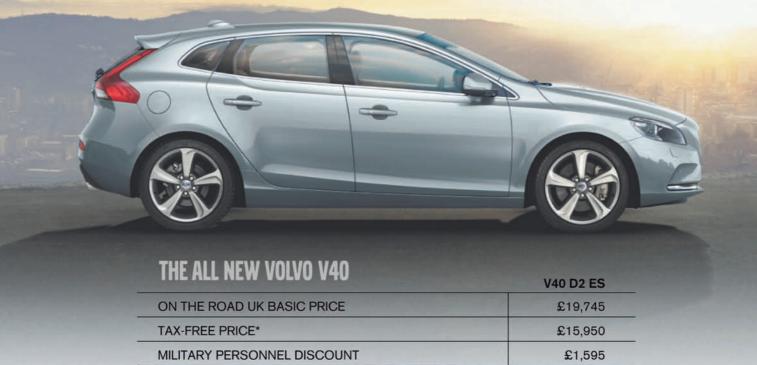
"To give a little bit of time here to people who risk their lives for their

country is a good trade off, if you ask me." ■

Biking bravado – pages 80-81







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Report: Richard Long Pictures: Graeme Main

HILE Team GB basked in the glory of their endeavours at London 2012, the Army's own heroes were also able to reflect on a job well done at the Olympic Games. Whether performing ceremonial duties or filling specialist security roles, the Service made a telling contribution to the greatest sporting spectacle on the planet.

As the Paralympics hit top speed this month this crucial work will continue and *Soldier* has been looking back at the success story so far.

Personnel from 27 Regiment, Royal Logistic Corps ensured the supply chain to troops in the capital ran smoothly in what was a challenging six-week deployment.

Based at MoD Feltham, in West London, the unit was tasked with processing around 11,000 soldiers at the start of Op Olympics, while delivering reception, staging and onward integration (RSOI) packages.

Coach drivers were responsible for transporting security staff to and from venues and fuel supplies, rations and kit were delivered to various Army locations across the capital.

"It was very hard work to start with as there were so many people going through the RSOI package," said transport coordinator Cpl Spencer Barfield.

"It was a big logistical nightmare but once everything was in full flow it all settled down.

"We had coach drivers passing courses and coming immediately to us. We took them straight out to get them used to driving in London. They had set routes to follow and adapted well.

"It was a hard slog but once we settled into a routine it was fine. I am really pleased to have been involved.

"Considering we have never attempted anything on this scale at home before, it has been exceptional. We have done ourselves proud and I think the public is in agreement."

Such efforts were well rewarded, with personnel being granted entry into a number of popular tourist attractions in the city at no cost.

They also benefitted from free travel and received tickets to a number of Olympic events.

Chef Cpl Vivianne Perry (RLC), part of the catering team at MoD Feltham, said: "It is good experience, I wanted to go on tour and this has been pretty similar to that.
"It has been refreshing to work in this environment. It

Picture: Cpl Obi Igbo

GAMES
MASTES

Service personnel rise to the challenge at London 2012









has been a challenge but one I've enjoyed.

"I went to the opening ceremony rehearsal and it was superb. There was such a lot to take in and it was absolutely amazing.

"I also went to the women's football at Wembley. It was an unexpected bonus and the atmosphere was electric.

The Army is always in the spotlight for Afghanistan but here we are not at war. We are doing something peaceful and it shows the public what we are capable of.

'When I went out to the events I could see the respect people have for us."

For clerk Cpl Lauren Swift (AGC) the deployment started in brisk fashion as thousands of troops had to be processed via the Service's joint personnel administration (JPA) system.

'At first we were working long hours but once they had all passed through it started to quieten down, we went from one extreme to the other," she said.

There were 11,000 soldiers to process. We would have 200 one day, then another

400 followed by 1,200.

"We had been warned off a couple of weeks beforehand so I knew I was coming here and I think it was a good thing to be part of.

"We had the chance to go to the marathon and then headed into London for some sightseeing afterwards.

We had free entry to the London Eye and Madame Tussauds and were treated like VIPs. Things like that make it all worthwhile."

With the logistics operation proving to be a success personnel also excelled in their role as security staff.

The Army had a firm presence at venues across the Games, with soldiers performing their tasks to an exceptionally high standard.

Pte Jackson Powell (3 Para), part of the Service team at Wimbledon for the tennis

competition, said: "I was happy to do my bit to help such a massive event as the Olympics.

'There was a really nice

atmosphere and the fans fully appreciated what we were doing to make it such a secure and enjoyable event."

Pte Shane Appleby (2 Mercian) added: "I never thought I would get to an Olympic Games. The atmosphere in the courts was really good and the work is very different to being an Infantry soldier.

"I worked on the players' gate and spoke to all the famous tennis stars coming through and they were grateful for what we were doing."

The Army has once again proved itself to be a flexible force and excelled in a role that was unlike any on the front lines of Helmand province. With public support for its work already running high, the Service's admirable performance in London has ensured that British soldiers remain top of the nation's medal table.

#### Royal Logistic Corps at the Games

- MoD Feltham was originally designed as a 600-man camp but was uplifted to 800, with a surge of 1,092 Servicemen and women
- Typical day: 381 vehicle moves, 295 of which were occupied. transporting 10,875 personnel to different venues
- Operated 180 coaches with 124 military and 125 civilian drivers
- Processed 11,603 soldiers through JPA and RSOI systems
- Delivered more than 89,000 litres of packed stock and 196,000 litres of bulk fuel





#### Bradley Wiggins - 2012 cycling gold medallist

"Sport has pressure but when I see and meet some of the Army lads, that's when I get a reality check. Those guys have just come back from Afghanistan and they're the real heroes. What I do is just sport at the end of the day and it doesn't even compare to those soldiers."



#### Kelly Holmes - double gold medallist (2004)

"Whenever there is anything afoot or we need to call upon them [British military personnel], they are there. I just hope we can give them more credibility for what they do. I'm glad Team GB agreed to give them more tickets to Olympic events because they are volunteers. This is not what they should be doing.



#### Boris Johnson - Mayor of London

"Thank you very much for all that you're doing getting our chestnuts out of the fire. One of the soldiers was telling me that he was offered a free journey in a London cab. If anything demonstrates the love that the British public has for its Armed Forces, it's a cabbie giving free rides.



# ENDORSEMEN

Famous faces from London 2012 salute British soldiers for a job well done on Op Olympics

NO sooner had the first events of the Games kicked off than the country's sporting stars, politicians and celebrities were queuing up to thank Service personnel for all their hard work during the summer.

According to these personalities, the medal winners were not the only heroes of this year's Olympics...



#### Seb Coe - chairman of the **Olympic Games Committee**

"Our heartfelt thanks go to the men and women who stepped up to work shoulder to shoulder with us to deliver an effective, seamless and well regarded security operation. I want each and every one of you to know the nation is proud of you and grateful to you."



#### Rowan Atkinson - actor

"Three times during rehearsals for the Olympic opening ceremony I and the vehicle in which I was travelling were searched by British Servicemen. I found them always extremely courteous and professional. What was most striking was that there was no sense that the tasks that they were being asked to perform were menial or demeaning. There was an important job to do and they were doing it."



#### Gary Lineker – television presenter

"We have been so appreciative of all the hard work from soldiers throughout the Olympics in keeping us all safe. I have personally met loads of them and they always had a smile on their face and a camera in their hand!"

#### David Beckham - footballer

"I'm sure you've all heard it before but you have done an amazing job. The Games have been incredible, especially being held in this special part of London where I grew up, and I feel so honoured to have been part of the team that planned the 2012 Olympics.'



The partners who grieve, The injured who suffer, The families who struggle, The veterans who remember, The aircrew who fi The children who wait, The homeless who shiver, The seamen who sai The unemployed who despair, The soldiers who fig The disabled who strive, The heroes who serv We help them a

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# RESPONDINGTO

Chief of the General Staff reacts to warriors' woes over job losses,

IN AUGUST HE TACKLED THE QUESTIONS *SOLDIER* READERS POSED ABOUT ARMY 2020. THIS MONTH, THE UK'S TOP OFFICER TAKES ON THE ISSUES HIS BRIEFING TEAM SAYS ARE ON THE MINDS OF SERVING BRITISH TROOPS

#### REDUNDANCY

The redundancy process is unclear and distorted by exemptions, which mean that high quality people are being lost at the expense of the less talented. It is also unfair that some troops being made redundant have narrowly missed their immediate pension point.

**CGS SAYS**: I understand the sensitivities of the selection of personnel for redundancy. Operations and medical factors complicate the selection process, and it is critical that we are open and fair, improve our system as



we move through the tranches, undertake the overall process as fast as possible and retain an Army with the best talent for the future. Length of service for pension purposes was not a consideration in selection for redundancy and we have worked hard to ensure that those chosen receive the best possible package. This includes reducing the qualifying period for an immediate pension from 22 years to 18 years for those selected. In some cases that point appears unfairly close but this is unavoidable, albeit very regrettable.

#### SERVICE FAMILIES ACCOMMODATION

Modern Housing Solutions' system of red cards for occupants who miss three scheduled appointments does not work. The long delays that occur if personnel turn down their first choice of housing are also unacceptable.

**CGS SAYS:** I trust that issues surrounding the register of red cards will be addressed once the data of current occupants are transferred to Modern Housing Solutions. I will pay close

### TERMS FROM THE TOP

New employment model

>n. a phrase that describes the fresh terms and conditions of service being designed for the Armed Forces. The programme is currently in the planning stage, with MoD staff working on arrangements that will meet financial demands while creating an Army fit for future operations.

attention to the trial for setting a timeline for second offers, the outcome of which will be communicated to the Army as soon as possible.

#### INCREASED CHARGES

The current pay freeze coupled with rising charges means troops are effectively suffering a pay cut, especially those who receive no increment in their salary.

**CGS SAYS:** We all look forward to the lifting of the pay freeze but we must recognise that retaining annual increments has been very important. Maintaining these and increasing pay for those



# THE RANKS





earning under £21,000 has resulted in 83 per cent of the Army receiving increases in salary this year. Pay awards for 2013 and 2014 will be announced in March next year. In light of the continuing economic situation we should expect these to be small, but at least the freeze will be over

#### SERVICE PENSIONS

The Armed Forces pension scheme is not clear and is going to be worse than what was previously offered.

**CGS SAYS:** I welcome the release of the outline scheme design (page 7) and the announcement of accrued rights for those on AFPS 75 and AFPS 05. I am confident that the future system will be the best of all the public sector schemes in recognition of the commitment of our Servicemen and women at home and abroad.

#### CONTINUITY OF EDUCATION ALLOWANCE

This is a crucial part of the Army offer and we are worried it is going to end.

**CGS SAYS:** The current system is designed to support genuine mobility and it is assured into the medium term. The delivery of the new employment model [see above left] may reduce demand for this allowance over time. Until it does we depend on it.

#### PROPERTY DEPOSITS

The long Service advance of pay is insufficient and its conditions are too restrictive.

**CGS SAYS:** The new employment model will seek to address many of the concerns surrounding housing and accommodation. A key element of this is the advance of pay for housing ownership, which certainly warrants an increase if it is to be meaningful in the future.

#### RECRUITMENT

The new recruiting partnering project (page 13) will be a bad thing for the Army.

**CGS SAYS:** This project is designed to enhance our ability to recruit the right people for the Army. It is so critical that we wouldn't be doing this project if we weren't confident it would deliver.

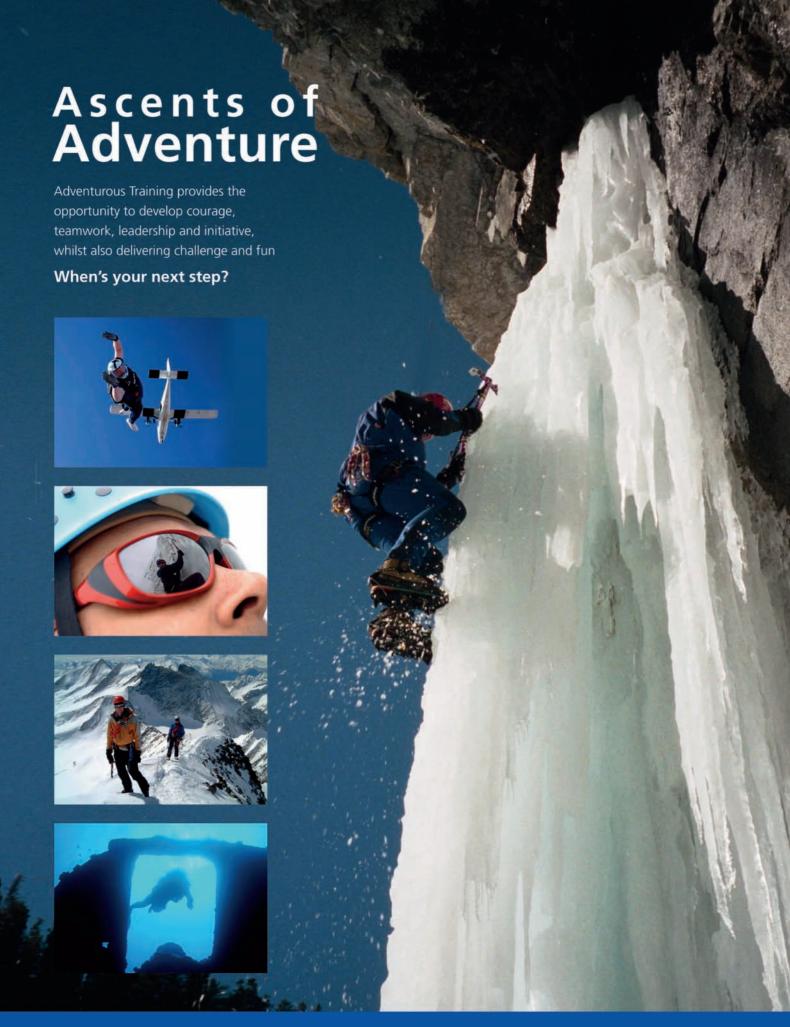
READ THE BRIEFING TEAM
REPORT IN FULL ON THE
CHIEF OF THE GENERAL
STAFF'S PAGE ON THE
ARMY INTRANET

#### SUBSTITUTE ACCOMMODATION

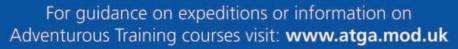
Changes to the substitute single Service accommodation regulations mean that we can no longer upgrade the size of our housing and pay the extra cost ourselves. This is inflexible and frustrating.

**CGS SAYS:** I understand the frustration caused by this removal of choice. We need to have a flexible system. The Directorate of Personal Services (Army) will report back.











# STAGE STRENGTH

## Former soldiers bring battlefield experiences to the theatre



#### Report: Joe Clapson

OUNDED Service personnel have been leaving theatre audiences - including famous screen stars - spellbound with their depiction of life as a modern-day soldier.

The Two Worlds of Charlie F is a play based on the real stories of its cast and has been performed at venues across the country to the standards of any West End production.

The tale chronicles the experience of a soldier

facing life without legs following a

tour of Afghanistan.
Written by novelist and
playwright Owen Sheers, the original plan was to use acting as

part of injured troops' recovery. Rehabilitation methods might usually be associated with physiotherapists in hospitals but this project, funded by The Royal British Legion, has changed perceptions and drawn attention.

Soldiers working with the touring group, Bravo 22 Company, have developed new skills and goals while their performances have received gleaming reviews from industry icons.

After attending the first night of the show's run, Hollywood actor Ray Winstone (pictured centre) said: "That is probably the most moving thing I've seen for a long, long time.

'The confidence which they [the cast] have gained over the last few weeks will stand them in good stead for the rest of their lives.

The critically acclaimed Michael Sheen added: "The Two Worlds of Charlie F is theatre at its most direct, vital and moving. It is inspirational stuff."

In the three months prior to their debut performance at the Theatre Royal Haymarket, Army and Royal Marines personnel talked through the difficult, sometimes life-threatening situations they had faced in their military careers.

It was during those group discussions and one-



to-one sessions with Sheers that the poignant play was created.

Gareth Crabbe, a former bombardier in the Royal Artillery, decided to try acting after his injury in 2007 left him requiring a spinal disc replacement.

"The whole process has taken my mind off things and reduced my stress," he said. "The group discussions were like a healing process as I was open about things.

"Working on this has been brilliant; we all feel like we've got a proper

purpose again."
Spr Lyndon Chatting-Walters (RE) thought treading the boards might be a useful way to work alongside fellow soldiers again while learning new skills.

'I was blown up on Herrick 8 and broke four vertebrae, then I went back out on Herrick 13 and that made me even worse," he said. "This was a good way to work in

London and keep busy. Now I've got my confidence back and had the chance to make good friends.

The play was initially scheduled for just two performances, but following standing ovations to sell-out crowds, a full UK tour was put together.

To date The Two Worlds of Charlie F has been staged in London, Birmingham, Cardiff and Edinburgh and the final show in the run is set to take place back in the capital on September 9.

'This is a way to give the public some answers," said Crabbe, a veteran of Bosnia, Kosovo and Iraq.

"After seeing a performance one Royal Marine's mum told me 'now I know why my son doesn't cry and stays in his room'."

Following careers on the front line, these soldiers have displayed a different kind of courage acting out a story borne from dire realities.

And press reviews, celebrity cap doffing and word on the street all suggest that Bravo 22 Company has accomplished its mission.





**Report: Sarah Goldthorpe Pictures: Steve Dock** 

S CYPRIOTS took a twoweek holiday to dodge the island's sweltering midsummer temperatures, a contingent of pasty Welsh visitors were probably the last individuals considered capable of slogging through the searing heat.

But for members of 3rd Battalion, The Royal Welsh on Exercise Lion Sun 7, such a challenge was a welcome one.

Not only had the unit managed to secure places for their newest recruits on the overseas training package - a rare accomplishment in itself – but the sticky weather that met them in Cyprus gave volunteers new insight into the continuing reality of the Army's desert operations.

"The heat here has been terrible," admitted Pte Matthew Smith, one of the latest to join the formation.

Along with 15 other volunteers, the Serviceman undertook four days of rigorous field training drills during the dawn and



Fun in the sun: Troops from 3rd Battalion, The Royal Welsh may have found the high temperatures during Exercise Lion Sun tough, but the training helped them adapt to conditions in desert war zones



**6** This has made

that I have to

work harder

me realise

night-time hours that avoided the island's most dangerous heat.

"This has been tougher than previous courses I have done but it has not put me off the Army," the soldier said.

"The temperature has been a shock to everyone," added unit medic SSgt Alan Jefferies (RAMC).

Troops should be drinking up to ten litres of water a day and sports drinks are no good.

'The guys think they can't be pushed but they can and we are here to make them realise they are able to work in this heat.

back at home **5** "At the moment if you asked them they would probably all tell you they hate it but they will go away and remember this serial."

With tasks including clearance patrols and fire and manoeuvre drills, the exercise provided a realistic backdrop for getting to grips with the basics of company-level tactics and procedures.

"We have been working long days, 16 or 17 hours," Pte Adam Curtis told Soldier.

"Physically it's tiring but the kind of stuff we have been doing here is exactly what I joined the Army for.

"In terms of operations, this is brilliant because it gives us an idea what it will be like to operate in these conditions.

"We knew it was hard. but now we really think fair play to the blokes who are in Afghanistan.

"You can just sense how difficult it would be to get out there in 50-degree heat with body armour and helmets."

Pte Braedan Hoy added: "In the UK it's mainly cold

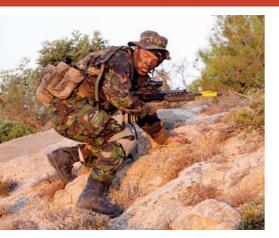
weather but you rarely come across a war zone today where it's raining; most things are in the Middle East.

"I much prefer this training package to ones before."

As well as offering him his first ever trip abroad, Pte Daniel Hill conceded that Lion



## Scorching Cyprus brings volunteers a sweaty dose of reality



Sun had helped recruits get serious.

"When I first joined the Reserves I was excited and wanted to go to Afghanistan," the soldier recalled.

"But this week has made me realise that I have to work harder back at home.

"Here you are pushed to your limits every single hour so I have noticed weaknesses that I didn't in the UK."

While Cyprus's parched terrain may mimic the conditions currently being endured by 29 of the battalion's soldiers on Op Herrick 16, officers overseeing the serial were keen to point out that this training was not about Helmand province specifically.

"The summer environment in Cyprus is pretty difficult but we are not focusing on Afghanistan training; this is about going back to conventional soldiering," explained commanding officer Lt Col Jeff Cleverly.

"Because of the nature of the British Army's involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan over the last ten years, living in forward operating bases and suchlike, the ability to live out in the field has been a big skill fade.

"Here, troops get a feel for a deployment



by living in semi-austere conditions.

"Lion Sun lets them know what they are getting themselves into and gives them a real test," the senior officer added.

"Learning to look after yourselves and your mates in these conditions is half of the battle and they have bonded really well so that's been positive."

As new Reservists got to grips with fundamental skills and drills, 16 trained members of the unit took part in a final battle exercise.

Experienced and inexperienced troops later came together to enjoy several sessions of adventurous training including mountain biking, sailing and sea kayaking.



"It has been hard work but I have learnt a lot," concluded Fus Peter Toulmin.

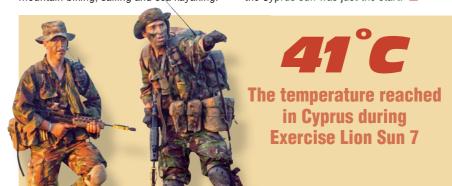
"New skills that I have developed here include taking enemy positions and night-time navigation.

"When you do section attacks you only have to run about 200 metres but here you lose so much sweat doing it.

"Your brain doesn't function properly in the warmth so you have to be far more switched on."

Having been made fully aware of their vital role in the future British Army, the heat is now on for all Reservists across the UK.

For this unit and others, a testing trip to the Cyprus sun was just the start.



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KP PML, Danish Army

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1 Sgt-Maj. S.B., Belgian Army

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CPL C.M., Irish Defense Force

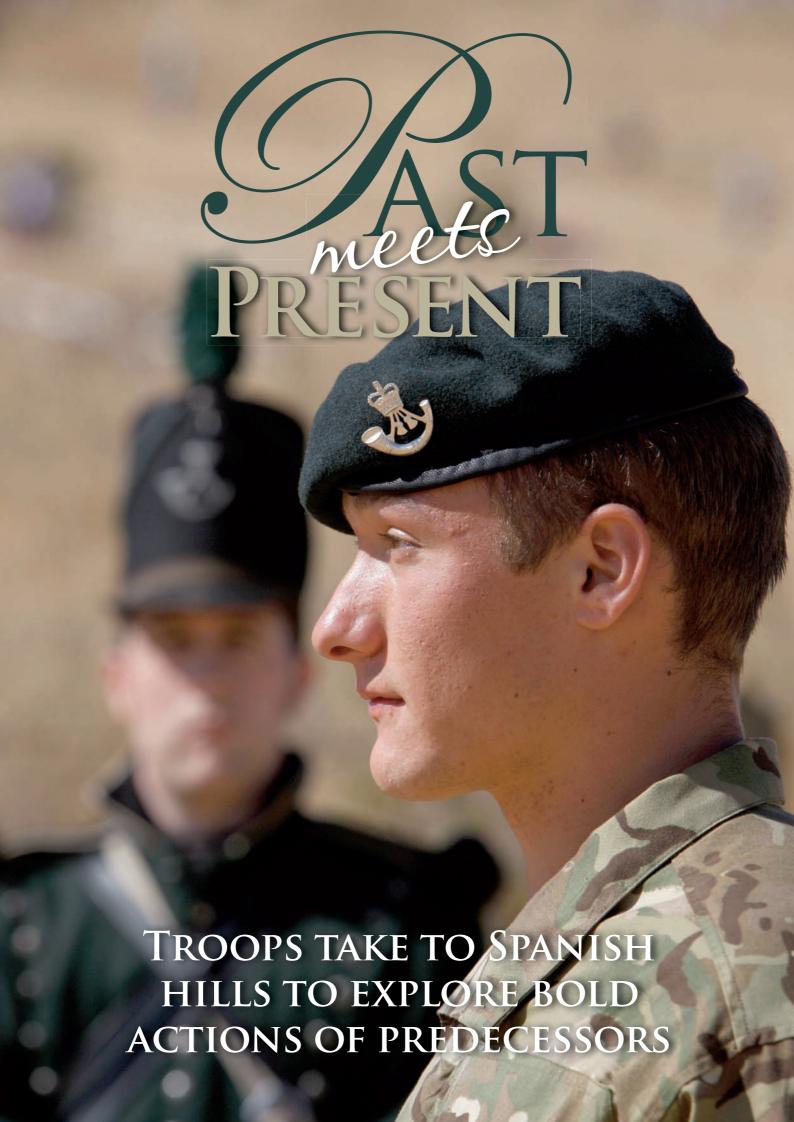
"Sawflys haven't let me down. From rainstorms to sandstorms, and everything in between, clean, and scratch free."

1LT J.B., U.S. Army

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#### Report: Becky Clark Pictures: Steve Dock

S British and French soldiers increasingly train together for joint operations, it is easy to take for granted the close cooperation enjoyed by their Nato countries.

Turn the clock back 200 years, however, and these nations were not allies but bitter enemies, engaged in a brutal six-year campaign now referred to as the Peninsular War.

Immortalised in Bernard Cornwell's Sharpe novels and the TV series starring Sean Bean, the 1808-1814 conflict is estimated to have cost the lives of at least 40,000 UK Servicemen – yet many have little idea of its significance.

Two centuries later, some 100 personnel from The Rifles, The Royal Dragoon Guards, Coldstream Guards, Scots Guards, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, The Royal Anglian Regiment and The Royal Irish Regiment travelled to Spain to follow in their

predecessors' footsteps at the site of the Battle of Salamanca. Fought in the hills

Marshal Marmont defeated by allied British, Spanish and Portuguese troops under Sir Arthur Wellesley - later titled the Duke of Wellington.

With both sides evenly matched in

**SO MANY** 

**TACTICS** 

THAT WERE

**EMPLOYED** 

**BACK THEN** 

**STILL APPLY** 

TODAY?

numbers and capabilities, the decisive point came when the usuallydefensive Wellesley spotted a gap in the enemy formation and galloped to order his troops to attack.

"Salamanca was extremely significant, not just as Wellington's greatest victory but as an extraordinary feat of arms," explained Peninsular War expert

Charles Esdaile, professor of history at the University of Liverpool.

"It showed the rest of Europe that Britain was serious about fighting Napoleon and it was the beginning of the end for the French in Spain.

"Had Wellington been seriously defeated, the [UK] government would probably have fallen and a compromise signed with Napoleon."

Among the British military personnel on the recent visit was Capt Simon

"Today, a commander has such an overall view but Wellington had to get down and dirty on the ground and casualties were sustained among high ranking officers as well as men.

"You can learn a lot of lessons: so many tactics that were employed back then still apply today.'

As well as studying the order of battle, the group got a stark insight into the harsh life of a soldier in the Napoleonic era.

Wearing thick wool uniforms and carrying around 60lbs of kit, troops as young as 16 fought in close order with flintlock

muskets and bayonets.

Water and rations were scarce and those who were injured lay where they fell for several hours or days waiting for help that often never came.

"Today, if you're injured in Afghanistan you can be in hospital in Birmingham within 24 hours," Professor Esdaile told visiting troops.

"In 1812 there would have been one doctor and one or two assistants for were done without anaesthetic and would have taken a skilled surgeon



"It is estimated that one in five soldiers fighting in the Peninsular War died. That's as bad as anything the British Army has ever had to cope with."

Reflecting on the differences between combat today and conditions 200 years ago, 22-year-old Rfn John Carr added: "We've had it tough in Helmand province but not for as long as they did in the Peninsular War, so I think they had it a lot worse.

"I can sympathise with them. It takes some guts just to stand there, waiting for people to come towards you and not being able to fire until the very last minute or get into cover like we would.

"It's a world apart from current operational deployments," agreed Cpl Peter Gillson (Rifles).

"No army has gone somewhere 'nice' to fight, with perfect weather or with all the kit they need, but The Rifles' ethos is to do the best you can with what you've got."

with what you've got."
Rfn Carr added: "Now I know exactly what it's all about when the regiment celebrates Salamanca Day.

"I would like to think that in 200 years from now there will be historians trying to make sure everyone remembers what we did in Afghanistan too." >>

## COMPARING COMBAT:

THE STARK CONTRAST BETWEEN INFANTRYMEN IN THE PENINSULA AND HELMAND PROVINCE



	1812	2012
WEAPONRY	Flintlock musket offering a maximum of four rounds per minute and an effective range of 50-70 yards. The weapon was prone to misfiring and vulnerable to damp	SA80 A2 offering a cyclic rate of fire of up to 775 rounds per minute and an effective range of 400 metres
TACTICS	Battle fought in close order in line formation. Musket volley and bayonet charge	Fire and manoeuvre, making best use of available cover
KIT	Heavy wool uniforms, up to 60lbs of kit and no tents – only blankets. Decorative rather than functional headgear	Multi-terrain pattern uniform. Osprey body armour, helmets, ballistic underwear, eye protection and more
MEDICAL CARE	One surgeon per battalion of 750 and no anaesthetic. Those too injured to continue made their own way home	Medical emergency response teams and fully-equipped hospital at Camp Bastion. Specialist care on arrival back in the UK at Birmingham's Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Headley Court and various personnel recovery centres
COMMS	Basic and slow – heavily reliant on despatch riders	Advanced and fast – from the Bowman tactical communications system to personal role radios and satellite ground terminal technology



WHEN: During the Peninsular War (also known as the Spanish War of Independence) between 1808 and 1814. Allied armies of Britain, Spain and Portugal were fighting the French under Napoleon Bonaparte for control of the Iberian Peninsula

WHO: Wellington's allied army of around 49,000 against some 51,000 French troops

WHERE: Arapiles, outside Salamanca

RESULT: Allied victory, leading to the subsequent liberation of Madrid

LOSSES: Some 19,000 casualties on both sides

TOP FACTS: Known as Wellington's greatest victory, the then Sir Arthur Wellesley was said to have defeated 40,000 men in 40 minutes during this battle, cementing his reputation for military brilliance. The wider conflict also gave rise to the term "guerrilla" war – Spanish for "little war"



The Rifles take part in the freedom ceremony at Salamanca's Plaza Mayor

Left, Mutual respect: Gen Sir Nick Parker presents a silver bugle to the city's mayor during the event

## SALUTING SALAMANCA

THE 200th anniversary of the Battle of Salamanca was commemorated in a series of official events in addition to a guided tour for serving UK troops.

A plaque dedicated to the memory of those who fell was unveiled on a hill overlooking the battlefield at Arapiles, before history came alive in a colourful re-enactment of the clash by more than 100 actors in early 19th century uniforms.

The bicentennial culminated in The Rifles being awarded the freedom of the city of Salamanca, an honour that was last bestowed in 1982 to Pope John Paul II.

Attended by Gen Sir Nick Parker, commander Land Forces and colonel commandant of The Rifles, the event saw British personnel parade alongside Spanish troops from the country's 11th Engineer Regiment.

Gen Parker presented the city with a silver bugle – the emblem of The Rifles – and described the freedom as "extraordinarily significant".

"We take Salamanca very seriously because it's such a key part of our regimental culture," the senior officer said.

Visits like this provoke thoughts about the people who preceded us and their acts of bravery and you can relate directly to that in the way that people behave on the battlefield today.

"Coming to places like this links you back into the past, to the threads of history that are so important to us."

## PW200: GET YOUR UNIT INVOLVED

CONNECTING today's soldiers with their past is one of the primary goals of Peninsular War 200 (PW200), the group that organised the Salamanca visit.

Established in 2008 to lead the UK's contribution to the bicentennial commemorations, the project has coordinated similar trips to Vimeiro in 2008, La Coruna and Talavera in 2009, Bucaco in 2010 and Barrosa and La Albuera in 2011.

Through the tours, the organisation hopes to promote a better understanding of the six-year conflict among military personnel and members of the public.

Col Nick Lipscombe (RA), chairman of PW200, explained: "This is about remembering the sacrifice made by 40,000 British and Irish soldiers, who gave their lives in the service of their country and shaped events that led to the definitive Battle of Waterloo and

peace for decades thereafter. "Wellington's campaigns also provide excellent opportunities to study and compare military processes with current procedures and doctrine.

"Consider the terrain in the peninsula and then compare that to southern Afghanistan; there are natural similarities.

'Guerrilla warfare was spawned during the conflict and we need no reminder of how pertinent that and counter-insurgency operations are to modern missions.'

PW200 is looking for regiments to take the lead for the remaining milestones of the bicentennial.

'A unit sponsors a commemoration, for example The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment and The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers for Albuera and The Rifles for Salamanca," explained Col Lipscombe.

"We are keen to establish backing formations for the three major events left to commemorate: Vitoria in June 2013, Nivelle in November 2013 and Toulouse – marking the end of the war – in April 2014."

Any personnel interested in their formation taking part should visit www. peninsularwar200.org or email pw200@ hotmail.co.uk for more details.





RANKED

History's greatest strategists



THE main strategic architect of the three successful Prussian wars between 1866 and 1871. This man was the brain behind the "German general staff", a system that solved the problem of span of command. In his writing, the officer observed that in war no plan survives first contact with the enemy. Flexibility is key, he declared.

## Maj Gen Carl von Clausewitz (Prussian)

A SENSITIVE man whose 1831 book *On War* remains the gold standard of strategic thinking on conflict. Experienced at all levels, this senior officer was perhaps the first to attempt to come to terms with battle's complexity. His insight included the notions of "fog of war", "friction" and "centres of gravity". But his greatest idea was of conflict as a political instrument.

## Fd Marshal William Slim (British)

AFTER taking over the defeated Burma Corps in Malaya and conducting a fighting retreat into Eastern India in 1942, Fd Marshal Slim assumed command of Britain's 14th Army. He turned the formation into one of the finest fighting forces of the Second World War and went on to become the only Western general to defeat a Japanese army hand-to-hand in the field.

## Gen Andre Beaufre (French)

A FRENCHMAN whose book *An Introduction to Strategy*, written in 1965, remains arguably the best modern text on the subject. Its insights are numerous, for example that "in war, the loser deserves to lose because his defeat must result from errors of thinking, made either before or during the conflict". If an operation is going badly, Gen Beaufre argues that senior personnel and politicians must be scrutinised to decide if the problem is broader than a strategy itself.

# (Prussian) ARTISTIC and intelligent, this emperor's strategic successes include the Seven Years War in 1756-1763 and the War of Bavarian Succession in 1778-1779. He was famed as a great commander and, for him, strategy-making was the preserve of a country's leader.

**Frederick the Great** 

## 6 Sir Julian Corbett (British)

ALTHOUGH he lacked any personal experience of war, this British strategist had an exceptional mind. His thinking inspired ideas such as sea control and blockade, and he was the first to set out coherently the relationship between naval tactics and higher political military strategy. Corbett's great work Some Principles of Maritime Strategy, published in 1911, remains the definitive book on the subject.

## Prof Bernard Brodie (American)

AS the Cold War began, the immediate challenge was to develop nuclear strategy and this American academic played a key role. Brodie said that political calculations before the use of force needed as much rigour as strategy on violence. Otherwise, he thought, plans were built on weak foundations.

## Adm Raoul Castex (French)

A NAVAL commentator whose major works were written in the 1920s and early 1930s. With the echoes of the First World War still loud in his ears, Adm Castex's thinking has rarely been cited in academic or military discourse. One of his key insights was that policy must direct and, on occasion, shape and adjust strategy in response to political necessities. Frustrating though this can be for military officers, and much as they may abhor such interference, Adm Castex's observation seems relevant to today's politicised wars.

#### 9 Brig Gen Antoine-Henri Jomini (Swiss)

THERE is much for modern readers in this man's book *Summary of the Art of War*, including his explanation of the successes of Napoleon – under whom he served at the Battles of Ulm and Jena and in the Spanish and Russian campaigns. Brig Gen Jomini's prime observation is that strategy is the key to success in war. For this reason, he has been cited as the father of modern strategy.

## Adm Ray Spruance (American)

THE victor at Midway in 1942 and universally recognised as the cleverest naval officer of his generation, Adm Spruance's war record was one of continuous success. He never set pen to paper but his biographer Thomas Buell catches him well in *The Quiet Warrior*, a book published in 1974.





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## TALKBACK

YOUR letters provide an insight into the issues at the top of soldiers' agendas . . . but please be brief. Emails (mail@soldiermagazine.co.uk) 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.



## Austere times herald housing headaches

HAVE spent 14 of my 15 years in the British Army based in Germany and am now looking to try and get on the property ladder following a posting back to the UK.

Keen to buy somewhere in advance of leaving the Service down the line, my wife and I applied for a mortgage within the first six months of being home and were told we would not be offered one due to our lack of credit history.

Acting on the advice of a broker, we have since raised our credit score to an acceptable level and recently found a property we were interested in buying.

However, the mortgage offer we received required a 15 per cent deposit, a figure in the region of £17,500.

Unfortunately, our savings combined with a long service advance of pay loan from the Army fell short of this sum and the sale of the property fell through.

With interest rates steadily declining and the majority of mortgage companies now requesting up to a 20 per cent deposit, most suitable houses are out of our price range.

We have also applied for council housing but because we have no immediate financial or accommdation problems my personal circumstances are considered to be good and my family is consequently low on the priority list.

Having researched this issue further, I will not be classed as a priority until I enter the last three months of my Army career.

This is not good enough as my focus at that time should be on looking for a job, not worrying about schooling and housing for my family.

I am now at a loss as to how to make our situation any better and can't believe that policies have not changed with the times and economic situation. – Sgt Robinson, RA.

Responding to the ranks – pages 36-37

## Reservations about plans for Reserves

YOU [the editor] invited us to enjoy the August issue — "Making sense of new-look Army" — and I certainly did.

I was particularly interested in the interview with Gen Sir Peter Wall, "General knowledge".

Responding to a question about Reservist personnel being reluctant to go on operations, the Chief of the General Staff answered "I think it is unfair to say that".

He argued that all we have to do is change the conditions of service to one more draconian than at present and suddenly the current shortage of Reserves will be miraculously resolved.

It is as logical as saying that it takes nine

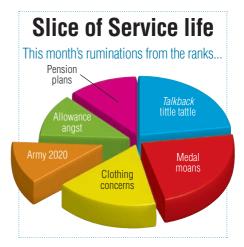
months for a woman to have a baby so if we get nine women we can have a baby in a month.

The Territorial Army has always been a topheavy structure ready for expansion and final training in the time of a major war.

To expect large numbers of Reservists to don uniform and be called up for six months' service and then retire to civilian life again is unrealistic — that is why many leave now! It won't happen.

Whoever proffered the original question has it spot on.

You clearly are a lady willing to challenge so I challenge you to publish this letter in *Soldier.* – Bill Smart, Shropshire.



#### DIGITAL DOSSIER 7

THIS MONTH'S ELITE TWEETS

#### #HEATHER STANNING

#### anuwfc

The British Army: providing the security, providing the audience and now providing the gold medals! Well done girls!

#### **atheJeremyVine**

Heather Stanning, who just won gold, will serve in Afghanistan later this year. Few high profile footballers - take note.

#### #OP OLYMPICS

#### @Xander\_Ross?

7,756 kilograms of sausages were provided for the soldiers who provided security at the Olympics #London2012

#### aCathwiggins1981

I want to say heartfelt thanks to the Army who made our day all the more special – it is they who make me proud to be British

#### #PARALYMPICS

#### **@ianderry**

Great shoot with Paralympic rower #Nick **Beighton** who lost both legs in Afghanistan. Truly inspiring man #Paralympics

#### **@C4Paralympics**

They'll be lots of coverage for the likes of @J\_Butterworth86, Derek Derenelagi, Netra Rana, Nick Beighton etc

#### #BRITISH ARMY

#### @BeattieDoug

2 thirds of the world is covered by water the rest is covered by the British Army #supportourtroops

#### #TELEVISION

#### @alexmccormick97

Just watching *Our War* – a documentary made by British troops fighting in Afghan. So proud of our troops and what they're doing

#### @KronTheMighty

Just watched Our War. Last week I tweeted about how proud I was to be British, that pales in comparison to how proud I am of our troops

#### @PoppyStVincent

Drama on BBC2 The Best of Men about the start of the Paralympics and help for wounded soldiers making me feel better about what we

#### Osoldiermagazine.

## Anxious over pension plans

IKE many Service personnel, I have been taking great interest in the forthcoming changes announced with regard to the new pension scheme as of April 2015.

From the many briefs, defence information notices and documents available, it appears that anything earned up until that point is preserved including the final salary element.

After doing a little more digging, however, I was alarmed to find out that there are going to be changes to commutation.

In such an event, a soldier who completes their 22 years on March 31, 2015 will be able to leave the Service with maximum commutation and their immediate pension. Those leaving two days later will still receive the immediate pension but what is likely to be a drastically reduced lump sum.

I know the finer details are still being reviewed and guite how the final salary payment is going to align with the contributions earned under the new system has not been laid down, but the commutation element of the pension will be a major issue for most serving personnel.

I have already started to consider my future career beyond the Army and the expected lump sum of £50,000 features very heavily in this thinking. If this is no longer going to be the case, then this needs highlighting now so that it gives people as much notice as possible to draw up alternate plans.

Soldiers have no union, we cannot strike, we cannot opt out of operational tours (although most of us wouldn't even if we had the choice).

My 22-year point is due shortly after the

new pension kicks in and I have no wish to be stabbed in the back in return for the time I have given the Service.

That said, I understand that cuts need to be made given the current financial climate. But if this turns out to be true, then slipping it under the table by tangling the facts up in a whole bunch of legal jargon is right up there alongside making soldiers redundant a few weeks before they're eligible for an immediate pension.

Whilst the financial implications of this new scheme are out of the hands of the powers that be, honesty and straight-talking feedback is not and would be highly appreciated. - Name and address supplied.

The future Armed Forces pension scheme team responds: 2012DIN01-63 outlined accrued rights to current pension benefits. The pension benefits you earn up to the end of the current scheme in 2015 are fully protected and linked to your final salary, and they will start being paid out at the point you would originally have expected.

For those on AFPS 75, the resettlement commutation is part of these benefits and will be calculated up to the end of the scheme (see 2012DIN01-175). If you stay in beyond this point and have more than 20 years' qualifying service (on either AFPS 75, 05 or the new scheme), you will also qualify for an early departure payment when you leave based on the time you served under the new package.



gobbledegook, can somebody please explain how this is justified? – Name and address supplied.

CONSIDER this scenario. A corporal who is being made redundant is due to receive a special capital payment of around £47,000 He applies for and is offered two jobs, the first

as a private in the Military Provost Guard Service, the second as a civil servant working within the Ministry of Defence.

Both posts were recruited through open competition and in each case the potential employer is the same organisation that is making the Serviceman redundant.

In accordance with the regulations surrounding the Armed Forces pension scheme, if he takes the civil service job he will not have to repay the lump sum he received. However, if he takes the MPGS position – his preferred option – he will be £47,000 worse off as the move would be classified as rejoining the military.

In layman's terms, as opposed to HQ

lan Gowers, from the deputy chief of the defence staff's personnel and training branch, responds: An individual may have to pay back a portion of their compensation payment if they join the MPGS because they are rejoining the Armed Forces.

The amount that they pay back would depend on the break in service. Repayment may also be necessary if they take on a full-time Reserve service role or undertake an additional duties commitment for the same reason.

Military support function posts are different as they are employed by the civil service, not the Armed Forces.





Bureaucratic blip: A Reservist squadron commander argues that a protracted recruiting process is costing the Territorial Army - members of whom are pictured above on Exercise Roman Star in Italy (page 17) - new personnel at a time when numbers need to be significantly bolstered Picture: Sqt Russ Nolan, RLC

## Red tape hinders recruitment of Reserves

S a Territorial Army squadron commander tasked, under the Future Reserves 20 review, with having to recruit to full, phase one-trained manning by 2015, I have severe concerns about the time it takes to re-enlist those with prior service.

Paperwork and red tape are handicapping my ability to carry out this objective.

Despite being told by the chain of command that these issues are being addressed, down at unit level there is still a considerable problem.

The primary issue is the difficulty in getting the necessary form - stating that the applicant has no medical issues which may prevent them from rejoining - signed off by the occupational health team in Glasgow.

At present, we are looking at a minimum wait of six months for documentation relating to those over 30 and at least three months for those under 30.

Redundancy and restructuring programmes have slowed the process and many of those who expressed an interest in joining the Reserves are being put off by the delay.

As a consequence, much time, effort and money is wasted as these people find better things to do with their spare time.

It almost seems easier not to recruit ex-Regulars and those with previous service.

This does not bode well when we hear talk of up to 6,000 personnel being made redundant and encouraged to seek employment with the Reserves.

An example in my own unit saw a female soldier pass her Pulheems medical in

September of last year.

She had 14 years' service and three operational tours to her name and, as a qualified radiographer, she wanted to become a medic and deploy on ops.

Despite regular calls to Glasgow, six months later there was still no news. It was hard having to look someone in the eye every training night and apologise for the delay, and the individual eventually withdrew her paperwork. - Maj K M Francis, 56 Signal Squadron (V).

Col A P Duncan (late RLC), Colonel **Career Management Operations, replies:** Developing the Reserves is central to the success of an integrated Army 2020.

Your concerns have been recognised and remedial work has been taken since vour letter was written.

The process for enlisting into the Reserves from Regular Army service has been improved and simplified.

For soldiers the new system is outlined in 2012DIN01-018 and for officers in 2012DIN01-155.

In the example you have quoted, a former Regular who has passed a medical within the last 12 months would be categorised as medically fit to deploy.

No further medical action would be required other than to submit all necessary paperwork along with an AFB 203 to the Army Personnel Centre.

The process as a whole should take in the region of two to four months.

For serving soldiers who wish to enlist

into the Reserves the system is simpler and should take in the region of four to eight weeks.

These procedures are new and should begin to demonstrate tangible benefit very soon. We're not there just yet though and the occupational health section is experiencing an increasing workload which we need to carefully manage through prioritisation and by increasing staff.

We are not complacent and seek to improve by continually reviewing the process in order to make it more efficient.

#### COMMUTING CLARIFICATION

■ HAVING read Maj Andrew Churchill's view on business insurance - "You are covered to commute" (August) - I feel I should share information that may inform him why the official policy is in place.

I was told by my own insurance company that the definition of commuting is "regular travel to and from a single place of work". This would not cover me to go to the medical centre or any other Army unit on business as these are not my regular place of work. I understand that is laid down in the documents that you receive (no doubt somewhere in the small print).

The real risk you take is not with whether you can claim motor mileage allowance but whether your insurance would pay out if they deemed you not to be commuting. It happened to a friend of the family hence why I have business cover. - Maj Ruth Jackson.

## 'Mostly good conduct' doesn't cut the mustard

HE grand "Walt" debate aside, I have never felt strongly enough about a subject to write to Talkback until two recent editions carried pleas from personnel who felt hard done by under the current regulations for the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal.

As far as I can tell, both Servicemen admit to having committed breaches of discipline at some point in their careers. They must accept they have no one to blame but themselves for these lapses however brief, uncharacteristic or long ago they may have been and as such cannot claim to have a record of solely "good" behaviour. If there was a "15 years clean" clause

as proffered by Victor Hunt, "Divide decoration" (August), I am sure the aggrieved individuals would have been successful in their appeals.

However, while I appreciate that the medal is sometimes known as the "long service and not getting caught", these soldiers were clearly apprehended and punished and can have no real complaints.

Whatever they have subsequently gone on to achieve in their careers may well be commendable but this is surely its own reward. This talk of later service being disregarded by unfair criteria would appear moot unless the authors wish to apply for a bespoke "long service and mostly good conduct medal" to be struck in their honour.



The argument about those with civilian convictions is hardly relevant either as the decoration is a reward for exemplary behaviour during a military career.

In uniform an individual's conduct is an important part of maintaining unit morale

and serves as an example to their peers and subordinates. The medal is not an award for paragons of virtue in all walks of life.

The actions of a person before they commence service rarely reflect upon the Service itself, whereas the actions of those serving can and do.

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act is designed, in part, to allow people to move on from criminal misdemeanours after a set time and not be unfairly held back as a result of a mistake. A clean slate is all they receive and I can't recall any civilian organisation ever sending those with spent convictions a decoration to thank them for keeping on the straight and narrow.

I realise that the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal has come to be seen as something of a right by those with the time served but it should be remembered that it is an honour, not a token to be issued to those with less than exemplary histories on the basis that they have improved of late.

To do so would cheapen the medal beyond worth for those who have truly earned it (which, incidentally, does not yet include myself).

In summation, I feel it is really rather simple; military service itself is rewarded only with pride, pay and promotions. If you're well behaved while you're at it, you get a nice shiny medal for your trouble. SSgt Chris Fair, 35 Sect SIB (UK) RMP.

#### **MEDAL MARKET**

I NOTE with interest that the age-old gripe about the distribution of commemorative medals is still ongoing in Soldier.

While I agree that the modern practice whereby recipients of awards are prepared to sell them on eBay is shameful and disgraceful. "Auction anger" (August), it has always been the case that military decorations can be purchased from a number of sources.

During the Korean War I was a member of a 1,000-strong regiment which was allocated just 13 of the 1953 Coronation Medal and only those with more than five years of service were considered.

Subsequently, none of the national Servicemen within my unit received the honour and yet I have seen many such veterans wearing the decoration on parade.

These individuals have obviously bought the medal somewhere.

Recipients of awards ought to take pride in having received them but those who value their medals as nothing more than trinkets will always find a buyer and replicas are readily available to purchase for less than £30. - Jim Jacobs.



Military might: A Service show of armour during a British Army of the Rhine jubilee display in 1977

### Desire for Cold War medal has not cooled

I READ with some incredulity the claim made by Dave Wakelam in August's issue that you don't see many Cold War veterans begging for a decoration to be struck, "Count your blessings".

Well I'm sorry to disappoint the writer but a very strong case for such an award was presented to Sir John Holmes as part of the government's medal review.

When you consider that almost all of the world's leaders were issued with honours for their service during the global stand-off, it beggars belief that the MoD steadfastly refuses to endorse a decoration for those at the sharp end.

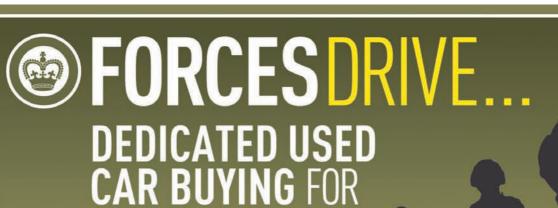
Contrary to the popular view that the Cold War never turned hot, there are numerous recorded incidents of direct attacks on Nato forces by the Soviet military, in which British Service personnel were wounded and killed.

However, diplomatic intervention managed to downgrade these hostile acts to unfortunate events or misunderstandings and so the myth of a strained peace prevails.

In Holland, the Netherlands Ministry of Defence has now given their official approval to a Cold War medal and has even presented veteran organisations with their own standard.

Here in the UK, the call for a medal is just as strong and a lack of letters from those who served during the period should not be seen as disinterest in a decoration.

The British Cold War Veterans group has been fighting a dedicated campaign and was invited to be part of the recent review process. It will continue to press the government and MoD for proper medallic recognition. - A Davies, British Cold War Veterans, Bristol.



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Soldier fires wide of the mark

WAS rather excited when the May edition of Soldier proclaimed to contain an article about "game-changing" and "iconic" rifles.

Imagine my deflation on finding that the shortlist of ten included some rather pedestrian and obscure choices, and omitted some rather notable ones.

The L85/SA80 hardly warrants inclusion in such a collection as, save for a mid-life remanufacturing exercise by Heckler and Koch, it would probably have seen the British Army in the throes of a "SA2020" procurement exercise.

Likewise, the L129A1 is basically unknown to the outside world.

However, more surprising was the lack of other genuinely significant and iconic pieces such as the Spencer Repeating Rifle, the

Winchester 73, the Mauser K98 and more recently the H&K G3.

And what about the truly ground-breaking Sturmgewehr 44, without which there would be no AK-47 et al?

I appreciate that your list was a subjective piece of work, but surely a greater level of objectivity and more global view was called for. - Robert Turner, Burton Latimer, Northamptonshire.

The editor types: The top ten in question (right) was compiled by Trev Weston and Jonathan Ferguson of the National Firearms Centre and is, as stated in your letter, subjective. One of the purposes of the Ranked feature (pages 48-49) is to promote discussion, so many thanks for your contribution.

- powerful weapon'
- 3. Kalashnikov "The definitive assault rifle with in excess of 100 million produced in more than 90 variants
- 4. M1 Garand "The first general issue, semiautomatic rifle. Famous for its 'en-bloc' clip that ejected on the first round"
- **5. Pattern 1853** "The first general-issue infantry rifle in the British Army"
- **6. Mosin Nagant** "Perhaps best known for its sniper conversion, this weapon was the standard Russian rifle from 1891
- 7. Fal "British and Argentine variants of this weapon clashed in the Falklands War
- **8. L85A2** "The A1 version showed its flaws during the Gulf War but after modifications the A2 has been very successful on combat operations
- 9. M16 "This is a favourite with soldiers and will probably be around for some years to come"
- 10. L129A1 "Does exactly what it says on the tin, proving very successful in Afghanistan"

Beg to differ? Email mail@soldiermagazine.co.uk

#### **CHANGE THE CHANNEL**

■ PETER Ashman's rant against the BBC. Talkback (August). prompted me to visit the home page of bbctoobig.co.uk and I was not surprised to find an amateurish jumble of "tabloid-think".

If the letter writer has ever served overseas he would know of the excellent coverage provided by the BBC World Service and other channels, and of the invaluable liaison between the broadcaster and BFBS - a union which provides our troops based in far-flung garrisons with a link to UK programming.

The television licence fee is around £3 per household per week, which is great value for money.

Mr Ashman's reasoning that the public would give a similar amount to the Ministry of Defence if they stopped paying this sum shows naivety of the first order.

If he doesn't want to help fund the BBC he should get rid of his television. - Alan Watts, Royal Signals Association.

## Portly portrayal of TA is unfair

I WRITE with regards the anonymous letter featured in July's Soldier, itself a response to a missive from June titled "Deny Bounty eaters their bounty".

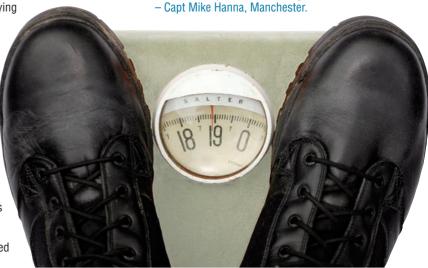
The picture painted of overweight and under-performing Reservists is a frustrating one, and no doubt all units have been affected to varying

degrees.

However, it is within the gift of all formations, Regular and Reserve, to manage the manpower under their control.

The fact that it is not being done in the anonymous author's unit should not be seen or accepted as the norm.

I take great pride in the fact that the robust solution in place for all units is being steadfastly followed within my own, with a view to managing those under-performers back to fitness as a priority or, failing that, getting them out of the Reserves if the minimum requirements are beyond them.

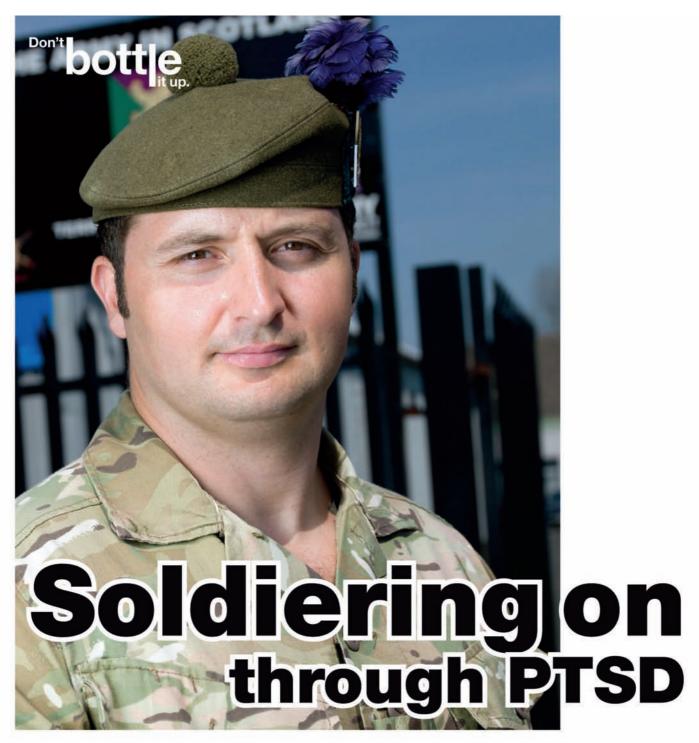








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CSgt Terry Lowe, aged 33, is living working proof that admitting to PTSD doesn't need to be the end of your career. Nor will it stop you deploying again if you want to. The only thing that will stop you, he says, is refusing to admit the problem and seeking the help required.

"PTSD and the feelings I have will always be a part of who I am, but it doesn't make me weak or mean I have horns growing out of my head."
"So what if I get upset when one of my mates is killed – call me a big fairy, I don't care. It makes me human, it means I am human, and that makes me a better soldier. I can, and have, deployed since I was diagnosed with

PTSD after Operation Panthers Claw on HERRICK 10.

My first day back in Helmand on HERRICK 12 and we came under contact. I didn't break down, I knew I was back and led my men to cover to return fire. PTSD doesn't affect my soldiering skills, and I won't back away from anything in front of me. It won't end my career or ruin my marriage - I won't let it."

Glaswegian CSgt Terry Lowe of 2 SCOTS was a sergeant during HERRICK 10 having already deployed on HERRICK 8, as well as having served in Iraq. He was awarded a Mention in Despatches for his bravery during Panthers Claw, and was promoted to CSgt on his return to the UK. Today he is an acting WO2, and has recently celebrated his first year wedding anniversary with wife Maggie.

His achievements have however been hard won. Like many soldiers on HERRICK 10 Terry's tour was a difficult one, but two incidents touched him in a way that others hadn't.

"I knew something was a wee bit wrong when we were caught in a horse shoe ambush, and after I called in fire support to smash the compound I found two dead civilians and five wounded that were being used as a shield by the Taliban. I've been involved in IEDs, and I got hit by a double suicide bomber that killed two Brits and wounded 17

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others. I knew that was soldiering though. Something about those civilians was totally different."

Shortly after this Terry stood on a pressure plate IED that exploded behind him. The blast killed two of his friends and left him so dazed that he was convinced he too had been killed.

"We were still in a dust cloud and getting shot at, and I remember looking at them thinking: where the hell am I? I thought I was dead too. I took my helmet off and slung my rifle. I was looking for myself."

It was only when Terry's friend convinced him that he could see him and therefore he was still alive that Terry clicked back in and tried to save his friends whilst sending radio messages for support.

When Terry returned to the UK he was told he had combat stress and survivor's guilt. He couldn't sleep and was drinking heavily.

"I knew something wasn't right inside me but I didn't know what it was. I just thought that if I gave it time it would settle and I would be alright again." But Terry's promotion saw him posted away from Scotland, his friends and family, to the south coast resulting in further drinking and ultimately starting a fight with the largest man he could find in a bar.

"I went a wee bit OTT. That's when I was told I needed to go for psychiatric help."

Initially the therapy didn't work as it kept taking him back to painful memories rather than helping him deal with them, but Terry's wife convinced him to try a different therapist who used breathing techniques to moderate his moods and reactions. He has also learnt to recognise his trigger points such as large crowds and alcohol.

"You definitely need to look around till you find the right therapist that works for you because getting through it is character driven. I didn't want to take medication or anti-depressants, I wanted to pick myself up from the lowest point in my life and get back to where I wanted to be. I won't let anything beat me.

"I used to have crazy road rage, but I don't any more, and that's important to me. We are trying for a family and I don't want to have a family if I am going out on benders or being aggressive. I don't want that for my family, so whatever it takes I will do. I have counselling, and we go to couples counselling because it's important that Maggie knows that PTSD is in my life now, but also so I know that what I do affects her. I don't want to hurt or upset Maggie. I still don't sleep that well. I haven't had a proper sleep in years to be honest, and even when I've slept I

don't feel properly rested. I'm always alert as if I'm sleeping back at a compound. Strangely the best sleep I get is the hour and a half before I wake when Maggie gets up and starts floating around and doing things. Maybe it's because I feel she is on stag for me, but it's the deepest sleep I get."

"To be honest though it doesn't matter if it gets better or worse - you have to learn how to deal with it because it will always be a part of you. I could go down the road of taking drugs or feeling sorry for myself, but I don't. I chose to keep myself positive, that works for me. Fair enough I sometimes have nightmares or my wee flashbacks, and sometimes I feel so low I could just weep. But I get out of bed and get myself organised. It's a mental thing, and you have to face it."

Terry's ability to face his problem, and deal with it, mean that he was able to volunteer for and return to Afghanistan on HERRICK 12 and 13. As soon as the helicopter landed at his patrol base the soldiers came under fire. Understandably, everyone looked to Terry to see if he was alright. He in return led them to cover where they could identify the firing point and return fire.

"I needed that first contact to happen because I needed to know how I would react. And I reacted just as I would have during HERRICK 8 and 10 before the PTSD. "I've always been completely honest about my symptoms and nobody has treated me differently because of it. I've kept myself in prime condition.

"You have to ask yourself if you have three of us on the ground with PTSD, and the other two aren't admitting it, when we come under fire and they hit the floor, whereas I am open about it... who is the bigger liability?

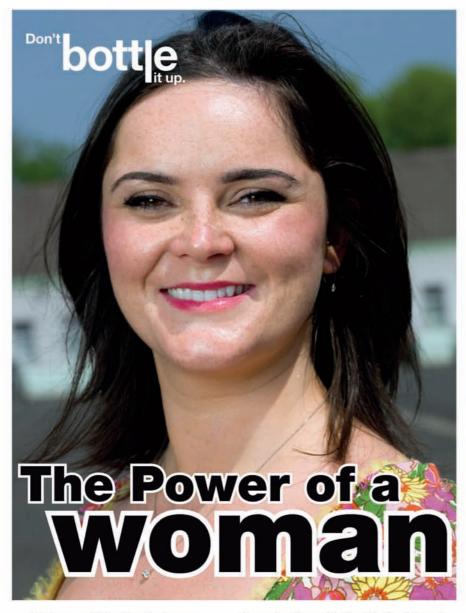
"My soldiering ability is not in question. My personality doesn't change. Yes I get a bit upset when I have had a few drinks, but up till then I can control it. It's character driven. I could get told I've got cancer tomorrow and I will fight that all the way too. It's no different. It doesn't matter what you throw at me, I'll beat it. That's what I believe.

"PTSD or indeed any Mental Health problem is not something that there should be a stigma about. If you spoke to 100 firemen, how many of them do you think would have PTSD? It's the same with soldiers. The difference is it's widely accepted in firemen, or other rescue service workers.

"Hopefully by me telling my story other soldiers will get help and realise that there is light at the end of the tunnel and it doesn't have to ruin your career. If my story can help just one person going through this, then I will be a happy man."



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It's been said that behind every strong man is a stronger woman. Behind the towering Army boxer CSgt Terry Lowe of 2 SCOTS is his petite 5'2" wife Maggie - the woman he dubs his rock, and his motivation to battle through his Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Terry stepped on an IED during operation Panthers Claw that killed two of his friends who he desperately tried to save, and was further rocked by the death of two civilians in an air-strike to clear a Taliban-held compound that had his soldiers pinned down in an ambush during HERRICK 10. For his actions during the tour he was awarded the Mention in Despatches, and was promoted on return to the UK. The mental scars from the tour, however, were already taking their toll. A month later he met Maggie.

"When I first met Terry he was probably at his worst, there was just nothing there inside him," recalls Maggie. Indeed they almost didn't meet when Terry suggested cancelling the date because he had a black eye from starting a fight with the biggest bloke he could find in a bar two nights before.

"His behaviour was very volatile.

A few weeks after our first date, in front of a group of our family and friends, Terry took an altercation with two gentlemen outside too far.

It ended up really messy and I walked away very angry. When he came to see me later, I said: 'if you ever show that behaviour in front of me again I'm walking away'.

"Probably someone else in their right mind would have run a mile at that point, but for some reason I stuck with it. I'd seen something in Terry, even though he was shattered as a person. I realised he had been through a bad experience, but I didn't know it was still so fresh until I started asking questions - which is when I told him that I thought he needed to speak with somebody."

At the time Terry was speaking to a psychiatrist close to where he was based, but the technique wasn't working for him. So Maggie convinced him to try a different therapist, and the change worked.

"His original therapist was taking him back to the events and making him relive his memories even down to what he could smell. It works for some people but it wasn't right for Terry. He wanted to move past the memories and learn how to deal with the emotions that come from them, so working on his breathing techniques helps him more as well as re-learning his social behaviours."

Maggie, who had studied counselling for three years, found herself coaching Terry and telling him that his behaviours weren't acceptable, and his actions were hurting her or others, which made him stop and think. Two years on and the progress is noticeable to everyone, but Maggie is far from naïve in thinking that the problem is now fixed. She accepts that PTSD will be a part of Terry for the rest of his life, but learning how to live with it together will determine their future happiness.

"I saw this lovely picture of an old couple where they are asked how did they make their marriage last after 65 years, and the caption reads: 'In our day when things were broken we would fix them, we wouldn't fling them away' and it's so true. Marriage is for better or for worse. If someone is behaving in a particular way that you don't like it doesn't mean to say you that you can't support them.

"We've self-referred ourselves to couples counselling," says Maggie, despite only being married for a little over a year and eager to start a family. "Couples need counselling sometimes anyway so I don't know if it's just because of Terry as sometimes his behaviour will be fine for months at a time. But I think at the moment we need to work through it together rather than him by himself. He needs to know that my support is there and we can work through it, and also understand the expectations of one another.

"As a couple I feel it is the both of us that has to deal with it. What's the point of him going to therapy and me not sorting out my head either? We are both strong headed and want our own way so we need to look at our expectations and ask is it too much for me to expect him to react in a certain way, and for him to think if it is too much to expect me to be a certain way. One thing I would never ask him to do though is leave the Army. Terry loves the job he is in and I totally support him in that because it makes him who he is. You can't change the past. It is the here and now I am more worried about."



Lt Gen Adrian Bradshaw, currently deputy commander International Security Assistance Force (Afghanistan and United Kingdom national contingent commander), to be Commander Land Forces in January 2013.



21 Jump Street winners: Michelle Bosomworth, Hebburn, Tyne & Wear; Graham Westerberg, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire; Gemma Poulding, Stourbridge, West Midlands; Mr G Baxter, Princess Royal Barracks; Melanie Wilcox, New Milton, Hampshire.

Para Fitness winners: Sgt J Dawson; Adrian Murphy; SSgt John Howard; Andy Riglar; Maj Kim Bailes; Andy Cross; Adam Lake; Mike Booth; Lewis Elliott; Matty Lewin; Simon Haggarty; George Duckworth; C Duckworth; Stuart Edwards; Rose O'Hara; Steven Ridley; Angela Neilson; Becky Fox; Glenn Kirkpatrick; Craig Bentley; Steve Mayfield; Maj Rachel Grey; Gary Cron; Philip Maddox; G Matthews; Mrs J Matthews; Alex Knox; Mr A Mandviwala; George Fletcher.

Spine line winner: Lt Col Andy Gladen (RE), HQ Royal Engineers, Minley, Surrey.



September 1: Braemar Games.

September 2: Vitruvian middle-distance Inter-Services championships (triathlon), Rutland Water.

September 8: The Honourable Artillery Company is holding an invitational event at Ham Polo Club in London to mark the unit's 475th anniversary and raise money for the HAC Benevolent Fund. In addition to three matches, attractions will include displays by the regiment's pikemen and musketeers. Light Cavalry and Corps of Drums and Band. Tickets - priced at £10 (adults) and £5 (children over five) - can be purchased from www.hacpolo.co.uk

September 9: Paralympics closing ceremony.

September 15: The Troop Aid annual ball will be held at the National Motorcycle Museum in Birmingham. For more information visit www. troopaid.info

September 16: The Battle of Britain service will be held in St Boniface Church, JHQ for the final time. All are welcome at 1100. For more information contact Tollesburyboy@msn.com or 02431 9743352

October 5: London Pacific Fashion Show. The Help for Heroes fund-raiser will be held at the Salvation Army Theatre, 275 Oxford Street, London W1C 2DJ from 1800 to 2100. For more information and tickets, priced £25, visit www.londonpacificfashion.org

October 10: Army Photographic Competition prize presentation, Imperial War Museum,

October 18: Swift & Bold at the Royal Albert Hall. The Massed Bands and Bugles of The Rifles and their special guests celebrate the history and achievements of riflemen past and present in a one-off night of music and



entertainment. Starting at 1930, the evening is being held in support of Care for Casualties with tickets ranging from £15 to £60. To book, call the box office on 0845 4015018.

October 19-28: Exercise Cambrian Patrol, Wales. Contact brian.pratt683@mod.uk for more details.

November 11: Remembrance Sunday.

November 15-16: A military music spectacular featuring the regimental bands of The Household Division at Central Hall, Westminster. To book tickets visit www.thequardsmuseum.com and follow the link to the box office or call 0844 8717605

**November 30-December 2:** The Regimental Slipper – a pantomime based on Cinderella but given an Army twist by a cast comprising members of Larkhill Garrison. For information on how to book tickets (priced £5 for adults and £2 for children) call Caroline on 07729 583679 or join the Larkhill panto page on Facebook.

Until further notice: Exhibition of War Correspondents - reporting under fire since **1914**. Featuring some of the people whose words, images, voices and faces bring the story from the front line to those at home, sometimes at considerable risk to themselves. Imperial War Museum North, The Quays, Trafford Wharf Road, Manchester M17 1TZ. www.iwm.org.uk

**Until further notice: The Lord Ashcroft Gallery** - Extraordinary Heroes. The world's largest collection of Victoria and George Crosses. Imperial War Museum, Lambeth Road, London SF1 6H7.

Until further notice: Faces of Battle - untold stories of suffering, heroism and hope. National Army Museum.



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

**Armed Forces' Christian Union:** 01252 311221; www.afcu.org.uk

**Armed Forces Humanist Association:** www.armedforceshumanists.org.uk

ABF The Soldiers' Charity: 0845 241 4820

Army Welfare Service: 01980 615975: www.army.mod.uk/welfare-support/welfaresupport.aspx

> **Army Families Federation: 01264** 382324; mil 94391 2324; www.aff.

Blind Veterans UK: www. blindveterans.org.uk

**British Limbless Ex-Service** Men's Association: 0208 590 1124; www.blesma.org

**Career Transition Partnership:** 0207 766 8020

Children's Education Advisory Service:

01980 618244; enquiries@ceas. detsa.co.uk

**Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society:** 01372 841600; www.combatstress.com

Family Escort Service: 0207 463 9249

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

Forces Pension Society: 0207 820 9988 Heroes Welcome: www.heroeswelcome.co.uk Help for Heroes: 0845 673 1760 or 01980

846 459; www.helpforheroes.org.uk **Joint Service Housing Advice Office:** 01722 436575

Medal Office: 94561 3600 or 0141 224 3600 Mutual Support (Multiple Sclerosis group):

www.mutualsupport.org.uk 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: www.britishlegion.org.uk

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

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

Service Personnel and Veterans Agency: 0800 169 2277 (from the UK); 0044 1253 866043 (from overseas)

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

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

uk4u Thanks!: 01798 812081; www.uk4u.org



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

ABN 62/12: Reserve non-attendance definition

ABN 63/12: The Army Plan 2012

ABN 64/12: Change to recording military annual training tests and workplace induction programmes

ABN 65/12: Personal development record future

ABN 66/12: Literacy and numeracy (functional skills) qualifications for promotion

ABN 67/12: Recruiting partnering project

ABN 68/12: A new Armed Forces pension scheme - publication of the outline scheme design

ABN 69/12: Enhanced learning credits streamlined late registration membership process for Army personnel

ABN 70/12: Continuity of education allowance - calculation and rates for academic year 2012/13

ABN 71/12: Army personnel attendance at presidential study programmes for personal development

DIN 2012DIN01-168: Continuity of education allowance rate-setting methodology

DIN 2012DIN01-166: Changes to skills for the information age - framework

DIN 2012DIN01-165: Op Olympics - untaken annual leave

DIN 2012DIN01-164: Process for joining the

Territorial Army for serving Regular officers

DIN 2012DIN01-163: Armed Forces bereavement scholarship scheme

DIN 2012DIN01-162: Ramadan and Eidul al-Fitr 2012

DIN 2012DIN01-158: Introduction of the structured mental health assessment template

DIN 2012DIN01-157: Ministry of Defence nominated officers

DIN 2012DIN01-155: Process for joining the Territorial Army for serving Regular officers or those having recently left

DIN 2012DIN03-024: A practitioner's guide for handling public interest immunity claims within

DIN 2012DIN03-023: Fleet signatures revised ranging requirements and support

DIN 2012DIN04-111: Aircrew corrective vision service - interim arrangements

DIN 2012DIN04-109: Sea survival equipment log - working at height personal protective equipment

DIN 2012DIN04-108: Utilisation of information systems and services to support safety

DIN 2012DIN04-106: Recovery of data transfer cartridge

DIN 2012DIN04-105: Equipment tables, scales and schedules

DIN 2012DIN04-104: Cold temperature restrictions on CO2-inflated lifejackets

DIN 2012DIN05-029: Air Mobility Force reaches initial operating capability

DIN 2012DIN05-028: Launch of the defence reference data architecture

DIN 2012DIN05-027: Army (publications)

electronic library

DIN 2012DIN07-116: The aircrew instructors course

DIN 2012DIN07-114: Army unit resettlement information staff training

DIN 2012DIN07-113: Army personnel attendance at residential study programmes for personal development

DIN 2012DIN07-112: Joint and single Service security, intelligence, photographic and geospatial courses for training year April 2012 to March 2013

DIN 2012DIN07-111: Higher defence studies programme - academic year 2013/2014

DIN 2012DIN07-110: Army Nordic Skiing Championships 2013 (Exercise Rucksack)

DIN 2012DIN07-109: Mandated course-trained personnel within an Army unit

DIN 2012DIN07-108: Qualified weapons instructor intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance course 4, 2013

DIN 2012DIN09-016: The Sun Military Awards 2012

DIN 2012DIN10-029: Army Snowboard Freestyle Championships and freestyle ski meet - Exercise Snow Method 2012

DIN 2012DIN10-028: Army Waterskiing and Wakeboarding Championships, September 10-14, 2012

DIB 39/12: Transforming our commodity inventory management, procurement and logistic processes

DIB 40/12: Announcement on the DE&S materiel strategy

DIB 41/12: A new Armed Forces pension scheme – publication of the outline design

Continued on page 64

TEN details have been changed on this photograph of soldiers from The Roval Gurkha Rifles ironing the Union Jack prior to the flag-raising ceremony at the Olympic women's triathlon in Hyde Park, London.

Circle the differences in the left image and send the panel to HOAY 850, Soldier, Ordnance Barracks, Government Road, Aldershot, Hampshire GU11 2DU by September 28. A photocopy is acceptable but only one entry per person may be submitted. First correct entry drawn after the closing date will win £100; the second and third will receive £25 gift vouchers. The results will be announced in the November issue. Usual rules apply.

July's winner: First correct entry drawn at random was Eleanor Holder, Bovington, Dorset. Runners-up: Cpl A Heatley, 9 Regt AAC, Thirsk, Yorkshire and Mrs L Harking, Chiseldon, Wiltshire.







The 2012 annual reunion of the Beachley Old Boys' Association will be held over the period September 21-23. For further details visit www.armyapprenticescollege.homestead. com or email the chairman, Brian Henderson, at brianhend@hotmail.com

Crewman/door gunner reunion on September 27 at the Victory Services Club in London. £40 per person. For details contact Cpl James Price at 8 Flight AAC on 94475 2731 or at aviationcrewman@yahoo.co.uk

Birgelen Veterans Association: The 12th anniversary reunion will be held at the Cavendish Hotel, Torquay from September 28 to October 1. Bookings will be restricted to the first 100 applicants. Members wishing to attend the event should apply via the association's website at www.birgelenvets.org

Royal Hampshire TA battalions: The annual reunion will be held from noon on September 29 at Newburgh House, Winchester. Dress is blazer and regimental tie. All Royal Hampshire TA and successor 1 and 2 Wessex personnel are welcome. Enquiries for those not on the existing mailing list to Maj (Retd) lan Taylor on 023 8069 4771 or via ian.p.b.taylor@ btinternet.com

David Sykes is planning a reunion for all members of 4 Sqn, 22 Signal Regiment who served between 1970 and 1975. Considers September/October as a suitable time as hotel prices should be favourable. Anybody interested in attending can contact him by email at churchill422@sky.com

Royal Horse Artillery Association: The 92nd reunion dinner will take place in Trowbridge on October 6. Attendance is open to all past and present members of any RHA unit and their partners. Those who would like to attend should contact the dinner secretary for full details: R J Whiteway, The Hideaway,

18 Immenstadt Drive, Wellington, Somerset TA21 9PT. Telephone 01823 665650 or email rhaassn@hotmail.co.uk

#### 56th Signal Squadron (V) (Eastbourne):

Reunion dinner will be held at the Cavendish Hotel on October 20. Application forms can be obtained from the UHO either by email at 39sr-56-paySNCO@mod.uk or in writing from SHO, TA Centre, Seaside, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN22 7NL. Telephone 01323 728116.

407 Troop RCT: An informal reunion for all members who served between 1980 and 1983 will be held on October 26-27. For further information please contact Colin (Thommo) Thompson on 07887 986588 or email Colin. Thompson103@mod.uk

Royal Devon Yeomanry: A reunion dinner will be held in Barnstaple on October 27 for all past and present members of the attached ranks to the Royal Devon Yeomanry Artillery, D (RDY), The Royal Wessex Yeomanry. Ladies are welcome to attend. For details please email rwxy-dsqnpsao@mod.uk

South Notts Hussars Association: The annual reunion and remembrance dinner will take place at the TA Centre, Hucknall Lane, Bulwell, Nottingham NG6 8AQ on Saturday, November 10. Tickets priced £20 are available from the association secretary at the TA Centre.



The Army Engagement Team wants to hear from members of the public who would like a personal invitation to its hi-tech roadshow. The event starts with a drinks reception, is followed by a presentation and questions and culminates with refreshments. There will be a range of military personnel on hand to answer any of your questions. Call 01276 417000 or email your name and address to apt.mod@btinternet.com with the event you are interested in attending.

September: 12. Hertford: 13. Southend-on-sea. October: Plymouth, Bristol, Salisbury, Telford,

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Redditch, Canterbury, Eastbourne (dates TBC). November: London (date TBC).



Brian Abey is writing an account of his military service in the Royal Artillery between 1957 and 1963. He is trying to map his journey from Hook of Holland to Bergen Belsen (Hohne) by rail. Anyone who can help him obtain details of the trek (thought to have taken place around April 28, 1961) is asked to email brian.abey@ talktalk.net

Clive Slade is looking for information about a troop ship arriving in the UK from India between 1945 and 1946, which carried a serving member of the Armed Forces who was suffering from polio and had been nursed through the journey in an iron lung. He believes this was a first for such a medical case, with his father being one of the nursing staff. Contact Mr Slade on candvs4649tontrav@hotmail.co.uk

The accommodation block at Kiel Training Centre (North Germany) will be closing at the end of November. Anyone who has donated or presented items to the messes can arrange to have them returned by contacting Dirk Naumann on 0049 (0)431 305258911 before December 2012.

Yulia Beardshaw is looking for someone to write up the life story of her husband, who served in the SAS. Anyone interested is asked to contact her on 01405 815275.

Myra-Ann Simpson is looking for a John Meyers who was posted to Wick in 1943. If anyone knows of his whereabouts contact myra.ann.simpson@hotmail.com

Richard Wareing is looking for information from current or former members of any Royal Horse Artillery unit. He is particularly interested in personal accounts from barracks and operations for research prior to writing an historical account. Email Richard.wareing79@ gmail.com

Dan Mills, author of Sniper One, is looking for Servicemen and women who served on Op Telic to contribute to a new book about the conflict. Personnel with interesting or emotive stories are asked to email dmillsiraqbook@ gmail.com outlining their experiences.

Brett Forman is researching the late Terrence Frank Hall, born in Fulham on July 17, 1932. The former Serviceman grew up in London and is thought to have served with the Royal Signals in Cyprus. The last four digits of his Army number were 2269. Anyone with information is asked to contact Mr Forman by email at gforman21@hotmail.co.uk

lan Martin is seeking the family of George H Tyler, who served at Westlake, Cape Town during the Second World War. He was possibly an entertainments officer involved with the Royal Air Force and Royal Navy at Simon's Town. Mr Martin has sheet music for a song Tyler, a pianist, composed for a RAF Benevolent Fund concert. Please email martin. ianb@gmail.com if you have any information.

Dominic Mabbett is looking for his brother Cpl Jon Mabbett who is believed to be serving with 47 Air Despatch Squadron. Contact Dominic on 07528 576980 or email dmabb@ hotmail.co.uk with any information.

## HOME TRUTHS

A PERSONAL view from Catherine Spencer, director of communications at the Army Families Federation. Log on to www.aff.org.uk



been better

reasons to voice

your opinion,

HEN our current chief executive, Julie McCarthy, announced that she would be placing her career on hold while she follows the flag to a far off land (Fort Sill, Oklahoma), it gave those of us who have worked with her for the past five years chance to take stock of what the Army Families Federation (AFF) has faced during her tenure.

The list is mind-boggling, from dealing with

the impact of the Service being placed on a war footing in 2008 to the Armed Forces Covenant, fallout from the Strategic Defence and Security Review, pay freezes, redundancy and restructuring.

To have the British Army confronted with any one of these

issues would have been considered a challenge.

For them all to arrive at once, like London buses, demonstrates the unprecedented level of change this organisation and its families are being subjected to.

And still, behind these headline issues and the turmoil and confusion they have created, the AFF has continued with its core business of helping and advising families to overcome (or at least understand) the unique

aspects of Service life.

Amongst such issues, the enduring problems of housing, education and employment remain.

The future Armed Forces pension scheme is another emotive subject, and one that the AFF will be examining closely.

Alternations are not over — indeed some might say they are just beginning.

Coming soon are the not insignificant issues of

the new employment model, which There have never will define how we are expected to live and work and the implementation of Army 2020 through the discarding of thousands more troops.

Rebasing, greater involvement of the Territorial Army and returning the Service to a peacetime role are also

topics yet to be fully understood.

For those of us involved with these changes in both a personal and professional role, we have come to accept that "normal jogging" feels quite a lot like sprinting. The AFF will use every opportunity, including our annual conference on September 20 in London [limited free tickets still available at www.aff.org.uk], to hold the chain of command to account for their decisions

We will ensure that, right up to ministerial level, they fully understand the implications for us all. You and your families are welcome to join us there have never been better reasons to

voice your opinion.



## Time to return the favour

**OUT** of the shambles of Olympics security, once again the Army has proved its worth.

The abundance of 2012 glory has been a temporary panacea to the gloom of austerity.

Only recognised by many for their work in Afghanistan, huge numbers of the British and international public have been exposed to what we in the Forces community have always known: our soldiers are not just incredibly efficient and capable, they work with a sense of pride and humour that others can only aspire to.

Their input to the security and smooth running of the Games has been acknowledged by the stars of track and field (page 34) and let's hope the government remembers this as they consider the new employment model and pension packages they offer.

Other workers have been given significant bonuses for simply doing their jobs during the Olympics.

Whilst the MoD has ensured its costs are being recovered from G4S, has any thought been given to a payment for those Service personnel who have, uncomplainingly, carried out somebody else's role and lost precious family time in the process?

Like buses: Issues from rebasing to the Army 2020 plan are contributing to a period of enormous upheaval for Service families

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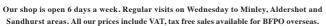


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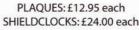








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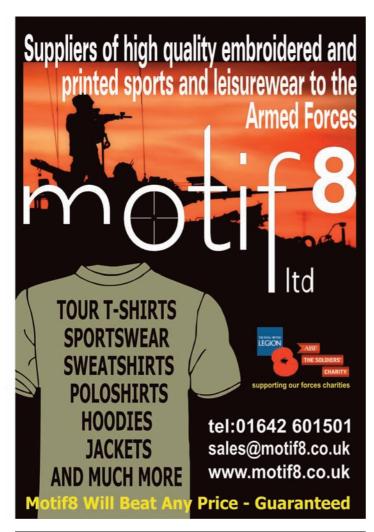
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#### **SERVICES**





The British Legionettes are a group of normal women based across the country who are producing a calendar for 2013 in memory of fallen soldier Russ Aston, an RMP who was killed in Iraq in 2003 along with five

colleagues. The calender is to honour all our fallen heroes in both past and present conflicts.

The British Legionettes were founded by Lisa Aston, who is Russ Aston's sister-in-law, and are producing this calendar with all sales proceeds to be donated to The Boyal British Legion

The photoshoot is now finished and the calendar is in production and is due to be released for sale in September.

To pre-order a copy of the calendar or to find out more information about this venture you can visit www.thebritishlegionettes.co.uk

#### Pen pals service discontinued

The pen pal column has been a feature of *Soldier* since the 90s, however, with the increase in various forms of social media and numerous dating sites this has led to a marked reduction in both the number of pen pal requests and responses.

The service is no longer available. Any pen pal advertiser who has already had a request published, or reader who has sent a reply within three months of the advert's cover date, will still have their post sent onto the pen pal box number.





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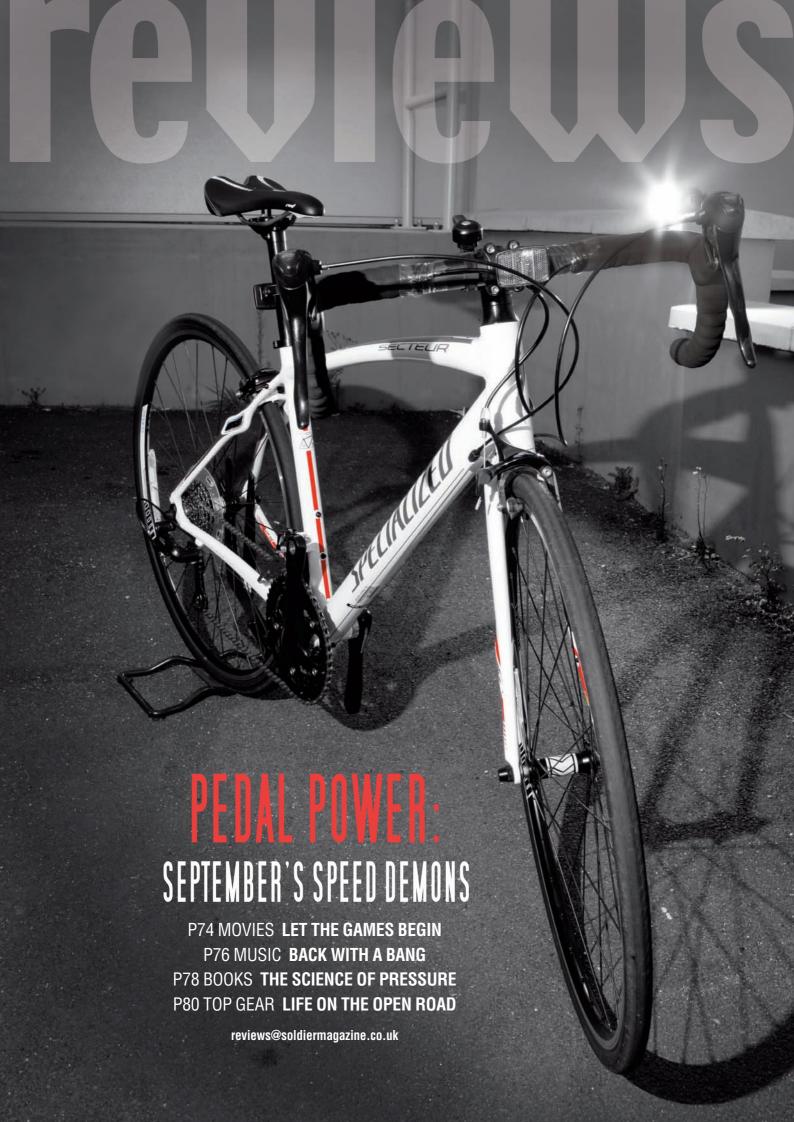






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# VIVACIOUS VIEWING



#### TRUTH OR DARE out now

IN this sinister twist on an innocent game we see five teenagers placed in a life or death situation. An ex-soldier has rounded up a group of bullies to play "truth or dare" as a response to the suicide of his younger brother. The movie's director Robert Heath has tried to tap into the edgy teen market. But despite creating suspense throughout, the overall result is a below-par British horror. Drink and drugs feature, as does an eye-catching **Jennie Jacques** as the sultry bad girl, but more excitement could have been created from the concept.

#### Siannan Watson, civvy



#### **DEAD IN FRANCE** out now

THE promoters of this British crime thriller describe it boldly as "Tarantino meets Ritchie". On the Tarantino front, it's only on the same spectrum when it comes to the swear count but it does have positive similarities with the likes of Lock Stock, with its dark humour and sharp dialogue. The crux is that Charlie, a hitman, wants to bow out of the gangster world to live in luxury, but other shady characters are out to destroy his retirement dream. Bloody violence mixed with comedy give this an identity of its own and make it an interesting watch.

#### Joe Clapson, Soldier



#### **ALL IN GOOD TIME** out September 24

THIS offering follows the pattern of warmhearted British films centring on a close-knit community. Sadness, angst and laughter all play a big part. The story revolves around an Anglo-Asian family within which the eldest son Atul Dutt (Reece Ritchie) has just married Vina (Amara Karan). The honeymoon is abruptly cancelled and the newlyweds have no choice but to set up home in the claustrophobic Dutt household. Meddling parents and gossiping neighbours get in the way of the marriage consummation in what is a toe-curling but funny film.

Tom Jackson, civvy





#### **HOT POTATO** out September 10

THIS much-anticipated film from **Tim Lewston** in his directorial debut centres on the working-class London East End of the 1960s, where two lucky lads, Kenny (Ray Winstone) and Danny (Jack Huston), find a lump of pure uranium. The pair visit the local crime bosses. The Twins, to get help in selling the "hot potato" and we are thrust into a mad dash across Europe as potential buyers are sought. As expected, Winstone steals the show in the lead role in what is a humorous story based on true events. It's no classic, though.

#### Richard Long, Soldier



#### **REVENGE OF THE ELECTRIC CAR** out now

AS a sequel to **Chris Paine's** documentary Who Killed the Electric Car, this highlights the renewed interest in electric and hybrid vehicles that offer greener alternatives to their gasguzzling counterparts. It may sound like dry material but the film is actually very engaging and shows some big-hitting car manufacturers such as Bob Lutz of General Motors in a surprisingly positive light. The first feature suggested that capitalist industry wanted to suppress environmentally-friendly cars, but this offering shows that if there is a market then business tycoons would be happy to sell them.

#### David Holmes, civvy



#### WIN... THE LUCKY ONE

BASED on the best-selling book of the same name, the movie follows a war veteran who, in the aftermath of a gunfight, finds a photo of a beautiful woman inscribed with the words "stay safe". On returning home the US Marine (Zac Efron) sets out to find her – against hefty odds. *Soldier* has teamed up with Warner Home Video to offer a copy of the DVD to five lucky readers. To have a chance of winning, tell us who plays the movie's lead role. Answers on a postcard to the usual address or by email to comps@ soldiermagazine.co.uk

Closing date: September 28

#### **Review: Joe Clapson**

N this movie presenters wearing hideous make-up urge reluctant teenagers to compete for survival on live television while audiences decide who is their favourite.

It sounds like a Simon Cowell concoction for Saturday night consumption, but *The Hunger* Games focuses on a fictional dystopian future where to lose means to die.

The film is an adaptation of the first part of a trilogy of books that has become a literary phenomenon with more than 36.5 million copies in circulation and it won't disappoint these followers.

Set in the impoverished post-apocalyptic nation of Panem, the powerful totalitarian government rules its surrounding 12 districts and keeps order by holding an annual competition, billed as the ultimate reality TV show.

A male and a female from each region are chosen by a lottery known as "the reaping" held in an outdoor arena. Those selected are forced to fight in a battle to the death and it all serves as entertainment for the rich viewers who display their wealth with grotesque costumes and painted faces.

The movie's protagonist, 16-year-old Katniss Everdeen (Jennifer Lawrence), volunteers to enter the games in her younger sister's place and, faced with strong, highly-trained male opponents she is forced to rely on her sharp instincts and skill with a bow and arrow to survive.

Lawrence excels as the brave female warrior and remains true to the novel's Katniss.

Woody Harrelson also revels in the drunken shoes of former games victor, Haymitch Abernathy, who is charged with mentoring all contestants.

As with modern day reality shows, from I'm A Celebrity to Come Dine With Me, allegiances are formed and obvious threats are recognised. However, the tense build up leaves us aware that any slip-up will lead to a bloody death - slightly worse than receiving a low score for a soggy pavlova.

Viewers are also engaged by the potential romance between Katniss and Peeta, a fellow competitor, who

confesses his feelings in a live interview.

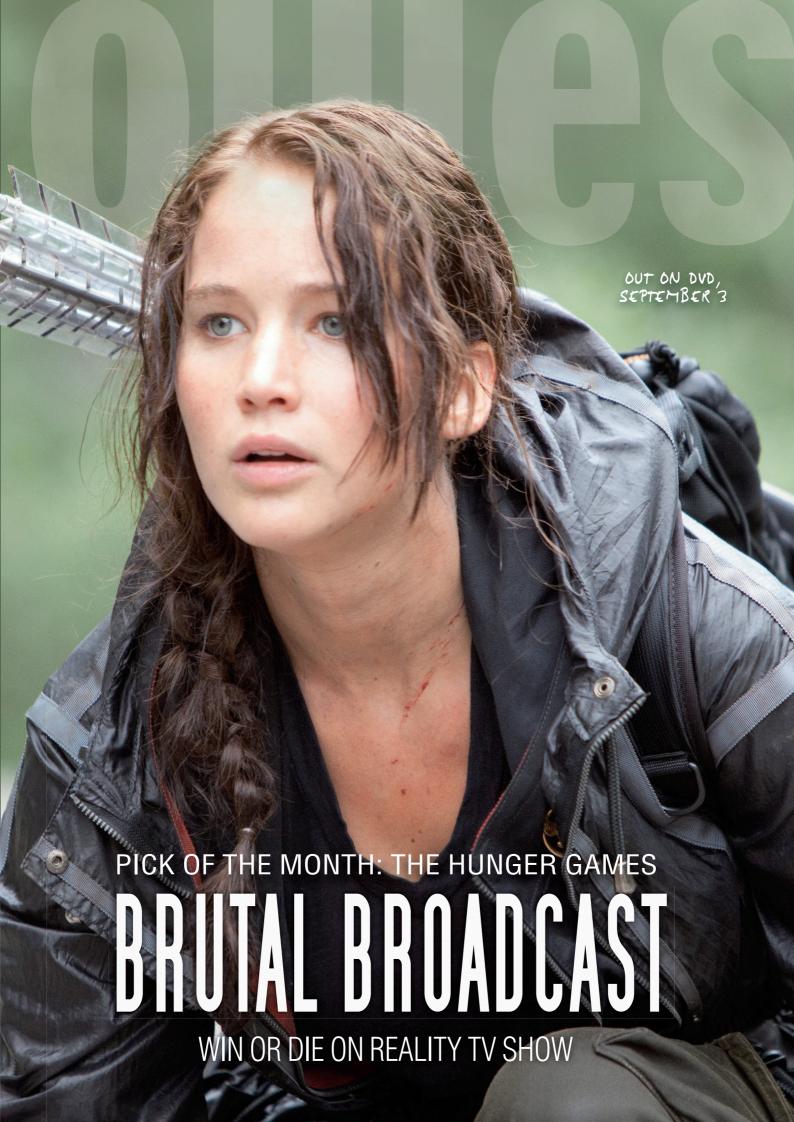
Believers in Hobbesian philosophy might argue that the baker's son reveals his emotions to gain support, while others will trust that true love can exist.

Either way the lure of two lovers forced into a death match prompts calls for a rule change.

But it is the ruthless rule of the nation's president, Coriolanus Snow (Donald Sutherland), that will dictate how the games are to be run.

Whether you have read the book or not this is an exciting, thought-provoking adventure story.

And worryingly, the grotesque ideas shown in the aesthetic-obsessed satire are easily comparable with current reality TV concepts, although live slayings haven't arrived just yet.





**Review: Richard Long** 

FTER achieving widespread critical acclaim with their debut album *Silent Alarm*, Bloc Party were rightly heralded as leading lights in the next generation of British rock acts.

The successful formula endured to a certain degree on follow-up A Weekend in the City, but as the band continued to evolve the screaming guitar hooks were gradually replaced by a more dance-orientated and electronic approach.

With some fans growing disillusioned and singer Kele Okereke embarking on a solo record, it seemed as though the death of Bloc Party was becoming a distinct reality.

But the group has mounted a comeback with Four – their first full-length album release since 2008's Intimacy – and their return has been gladly received by their legion of loyal followers.

A string of European, US and festival appearances were announced after a two-year absence from the stage and the band's initial UK dates instantly sold out.

Such interest inevitably stems from a desire to hear the new material and *Four* offers a return to the guitar-driven music that served Bloc Party so well in the early years.

Produced by Alex Newport (*Death Cab for Cutie*, *The Mars Volta*, *At The Drive-In*), the album was recorded and mixed in New York and avoids the confusion and complications of more recent efforts, where there was simply too much going on.

Opener So He Begins to Lie fires out of the speakers to confirm the band's re-emergence, while Newport's influence is felt on 3x3 via the gothic sound that has become the trademark of other acts he has worked with.

The exuberance and raw energy continues on *We Are Not Good People* but Okereke and company prove yet again that they are more diverse than a fully-charged and one-dimensional rock machine.

Truth and The Healing offer a softer side to the album as the pace slackens and V.A.L.I.S combines brilliant melodies with lapping guitar work to create one of this offering's standout tracks.

As far as comebacks go this is an impressive effort, and by reverting to the simple approach that served them so well in the past Bloc Party have made a welcome return to form.

Don't expect another *Silent Alarm*, but *Four* has put the band back on track and points at even greater things to come.

# TUNES FOR THE TROOPS

#### **Ei8ht** by Nik Kershaw

FOLLOWING a break of six years, **Nik Kershaw** is back with the release of *Ei8ht*, a collection of 12 songs that combine irresistible



melodies with sharp, intelligent lyrics. Although he is better known for his electro sound, this latest offering strays into a more pop/rock style that he manages with ease. Kershaw knows what works best for him and he sticks to that formula throughout. From start to finish this is very well put together and rarely disappoints thanks to the vocals and catchy tunes only this artist can produce. It is good to see him compete in today's scene with such ease and style.

#### Rodge Tapply, ex-RE

#### The Secrets to Life by At The Skylines

ALTHOUGH I am by no means a purist, metal and techno should never go together. However the kids say otherwise and more bands are



emerging with **Justin Bieber** haircuts and full body tattoos combining all sorts of musical genres. **At The Skylines** are exactly that. Fronted by dual screamers, the band deliver seismic death-metal vocals before launching into clean melodic choruses. Opener *Hush* is nothing short of a face-melter with *Princess* and *It's Cherried* maintaining the momentum. Metal-heads may struggle with the youthful new-breed but this group has got the balance right.

#### Capt Matt Walpole, PWRR

#### Hot Cakes by The Darkness

HAVING catapulted into the mainstream overnight with debut album *Permission to Land*, the demise of **The Darkness** was



almost as spectacular as their rise. Drink and drugs, along with in-band feuding, saw the rockers go their separate ways, but with time proving to be a healer they have now reunited to release a third album, *Hot Cakes*. The record delivers exactly what fans have come to expect of the group and is packed with rock anthems. Singer **Justin Hawkins**' screeching falsetto also returns but it is hard to escape the feeling that we've heard it all before and greater reinvention may well be needed if this band is to survive.

Joe Clapson, Soldier

#### **III Manors** by Plan B

AFTER sweeping all before him with his soulful masterpiece The Defamation of Strickland Banks, Plan B returns to



his rap routes for follow-up *III Manors*. The album is linked to a film of the same name and explores themes of social injustice and sympathy for the struggling underclass. The title track is one of many outstanding efforts thanks to its combination of haunting strings, rock hooks and in-your-face lyrics. This is a noticeably different record to its predecessor and anyone expecting more of the same will be disappointed, but the versatility shown here merely confirms the artist's undoubted talent.

#### Richard Long, Soldier

#### **Last of a Dying Breed**

AS a band, **Lynard Skynard** are true
survivors who have
risen off the canvas
more than once to
fight on. The tragic
loss of three members



in a plane crash in 1977 only seemed to galvanise their spirit. Now they are back with an album that has their southern rock footprint all over it. The title track sets the benchmark for things to come with a distinctive acoustic rhythm that rolls along nicely and there seems to be a softer element to their sound. Faithful followers will be pleased to know that after all this time the band can still deliver and I for one would urge that you lend an ear.

#### Steve King, Soldier

#### Antennas to Hell by Slipknot

YOU know a milestone has been reached when **Slipknot** release a greatest hits album. The infamous band incinerated the



rulebook when they emerged fully masked with single Wait and Bleed over a decade ago. Continuously evolving they have maintained a raucous image and despite being a household name have never fallen under the commercial umbrella. Antennas to Hell is a chronological journey through the life of this living beast. Tracks like Sic and People—S\*\*t are not for the faint-hearted but this really is a best bits all in one package and has been on repeat in my car ever since it arrived.

Capt Matt Walpole, PWRR

# RECONNOITRING READING

#### **Company Commander**

by Mai Russell Lewis

WHEN historians cast a critical eye over the Army's experience of the conflict in Afghanistan, they may well quote liberally from Maj Russell Lewis' account of his



deployment on Op Herrick in 2008. They will definitely explore the themes the author identifies as key factors in the success or failure of the British interpretation of counter-insurgency operations. Company Commander is not, however, mere dry history; it is a riveting personal account of courage and leadership of men in battle, at turns motivational, tragic and humorous.

#### SSgt Paul Barnes, AGC (SPS)

#### If Britain Had Fallen

by Norman Longmate

THE author uses an insightful mixture of fact - based on historical accounts from the occupation of countries such as France, Norway, Denmark and the Channel Islands -

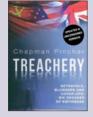


and fiction to create this compelling account of a scenario Britain fought so vehemently to avoid during the Second World War. The book should challenge your thinking on the subject throughout and whether Britons would have resisted or collaborated with the Germans in the event of an occupation is an open-ended question that is ultimately left for the reader to decide.

#### Maj Jim Vincent, RLC

#### **Treachery**

by Chapman Pincher HAVING compiled masses of information regarding the accusation that the former head of MI5 was in fact a KGB agent, **Chapman Pincher** 



presents the case in a

chronological and well thought out manner. Where the author's own opinions are voiced they are backed up with substantial evidence, which often makes you sit back and wonder "what if?". This veritable tome of a book cannot, by any stretch of the imagination, be described as an easy read and should probably only be tackled by aficionados of the espionage world.

#### W02 Ian Barraclough, REME

#### **Dangerous Frontiers**

by Bryan Ray

THE author enjoyed two postings to foreign armies during his military career; as a second lieutenant in Somalia and as a lieutenant colonel in Oman. Subsequently,



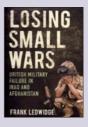
this book is an interesting window into the end of the British Empire. Reflections of operating in Oman are of relevance today, being concerned with the fight against the Communist terrorists attempting to overthrow the Sultan. Time may have moved on but the tactics are recognisable. An engaging account of the British working with Muslim soldiers to defeat a common foe.

#### Capt Douglas Searle, RLC

#### **Losing Small Wars**

by Frank Ledwidge

OF the many books written about the UK's recent forays into Iraq and Afghanistan, Losing Small Wars is probably one of the more controversial. In essence, Frank



**Ledwidge** argues – quite persuasively – that political misadventure coupled with diplomatic misguidedness led to military failure. This provocative title illustrates the highly-complex nature of strategic planning and generalship in modern warfare, along with the Armed Forces' equally complex and often strained – relationship with its Whitehall masters.

#### Tpr Dominic Kirby, R Wx Y

#### A Very Strange Way To Go To War

by Andrew Vine

A PREDICTABLE yet interesting read on how a prominent vessel such as the SS Canberra came to be requisitioned, adapted and sent to the front line amongst political,



commercial and operational sensitivities during the Falklands conflict. The ship was overloaded with men and materiel and the book examines the close relationship between the military passengers and civilian crew. This cruise turned very serious once Belgrano and Sheffield were sunk yet Canberra unbelievably escaped unscathed. A useful reminder of the war's timelines.

#### Lt Col Andy Gladen, RE

Interview: Becky Clark

VER had that gut feeling while out on patrol that something wasn't quite right or questioned why certain colleagues act the

way they do when under pressure?

The explanation may lie in a new book by neuroscientist and former Wall Street trader John Coates. The Hour Between Dog and Wolf is a fascinating examination of how humans think not just with the brain but also the body during periods of acute stress.

Centred on fictional characters within

an investment bank, the title describes the biological turmoil brokers face when making or losing money and draws parallels between that and the physical hazards faced by soldiers.

"It is said that war consists of long periods of boredom punctuated by brief periods of terror and the same is true of trading," the author told Soldier. "You could take traders out and put in soldiers, athletes or politicians and get the same results. The biology for risk-taking is the same,

whatever field you're in."
Drawing on descriptions of artillery
bombardments in the First World War, the book outlines how the body's "fight or flight" mechanism works.

Our physical reactions occur faster than consciousness can keep up with and some of the most potent examples come from soldiers," Coates explained. "In All Quiet on the Western Front, Erich Maria Remarque describes how recruits would focus on the giant booms but miss the mosquito-like whine of the so-called daisy cutters. He talks about throwing himself to the ground without even knowing why.

But when something unexpected happens, the locus coeruleus [alarm centre of the brain] brings your whole world into focus, almost like in a movie when the lens zooms in. You hear the faintest sounds, see the slightest motion; you have the ability to focus microscopically on what vou need to know.

However, long-term exposure to uncertainty can wreak havoc on an individual's health, Coates warns.

"When the stress response persists for months, it's one of the most toxic mechanisms harboured within our bodies," the author added. "It can kill us. The cells that produce noradrenaline and dopamine become depleted. You become unmotivated, helpless and depressed."

So how do soldiers cope in circumstances the average civilian can't even imagine?

'There is evidence that you can train your cells, in much the same way you can toughen a muscle," he said. "They've found that if you are exposed to thermal stress such as swimming in cold water, later on you will cope with chronic emotional stress much better. So maybe experienced soldiers have gone through something comparable to that toughening process so they don't succumb to helplessness and depression in the same way.'

Far from being a dry text on biology or trading practices, *The Hour Between Dog and Wolf* is an engaging exploration of what makes us tick. It is a must-read for anyone seeking to decode not only their own behaviour, but that of others in the chain of command. And the disturbing conclusion is that troops might have more in common with those disgraced bankers than anyone ever thought possible. ■



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**Review: Rob Whiddett** 

NYONE lured into the world of road cycling by the recent triumph of Great Britain's most famous sideburns could do a lot worse than Specialized's Secteur Sport Triple.

The bike may not be capable of standing up to Bradley Wiggins' own weapon of choice in the individual time trial, but it is ideal for beginners looking to purchase their first ride.

This particular model takes its design from the cycling giant's much more expensive

Roubaix range.
But the lightweight, premium aluminium frame is built for comfort over pure speed, with a long front head tube that gives users a

more upright riding position.

Whether craving a stint away from the garrison or a more unforgiving fitness challenge, this feature lends itself well to long weekend trips.

Zertz inserts on the forks help to soften vibrations and bumps from even the most pothole-riddled British roads.

And the inclusion of a triple chain set is a very welcome addition once the rider starts hitting some of the bigger hills.

Upgrading the factory-issue pedals to a set of clip-ins is highly recommended.

You can get a reasonable set with shoes

for around £100.

And as the cycling obsession starts to take hold, improving the tyres and brake pads will repay the owner with a much smoother riding experience.

The mechanical components on the Secteur are not the greatest that Specialized offer but for a rider who is new to the sport, that is unlikely to be too much of a worry at

such an early stage. In my opinion, this model is a great piece of kit for what is a reasonable £600-£850 price range.

It is comfortable, light and responsive and with a couple of additions and adjustments,

it runs very smoothly indeed.

A few more weeks of extended trips away on it and I may even have the facial hair to match the ambition. ■

• For more information on the Secteur Sport Triple and other models in the range, visit www.specialized.com

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As sponsors of the Royal Artillery Gold Cup Day at Sandown Park on Friday 17th February 2012, we were able to invite the two couples as our guests on the day. It was a fantastic day where they were able to choose the best turned out horse and given the opportunity to go up into the Royal Box and watch our race. The day was a huge success and is a superb event organised by Major General Andrew Ritchie, Chairman of the Royal Artillery Steeplechase Committee, and we hope to continue our support for the event again next year.

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Reclaims UK has visited several UK and German based regiments in the last 12 months and our campaign to raise awareness of mis-sold PPI and claim back money for soldiers has been an ever growing success. If you feel that you or someone you may know may have paid PPI please get in touch today. You can call our freephone number, e-mail or fill out a contact form online. It's a hassle free process that can only benefit you. This is the biggest financial scandal in history and we are here to help.

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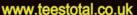
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GOLDEN GUN: ARMY ROWER LEADS GB MEDAL RUSH AT LONDON 2012



Dynamic duo: Capt Heather Stanning (RA, centre right) celebrates with partner Helen Glover after dominating the field in the women's pair at London 2012

# Stanning strikes gold

#### Servicewoman meets nation's expectation with Olympic masterclass

Interview: Richard Long

OWING star Capt Heather Stanning (32 Regt, RA) delivered the performance of a lifetime at last month's Games to spark a spectacular medal rush at London 2012.

The officer stormed the field alongside Helen Glover in the final of the women's pair to end Team GB's five-day wait for gold and become the first British female rowers to secure an Olympic title.

The duo were in fine form heading into the regatta after winning all three World Cup events this season and they delivered on the grandest stage of all in a time of 7min 27.13sec.

SoldierSport spoke to Stanning at the end of her medal-winning campaign to get the inside story on her Games quest and the pressures of performing to an expectant home crowd.

"We were confident that we had done everything we needed to ahead of the Olympics," she said.

"The training programme had gone really well and neither of us had missed a day since January.

"With each World Cup race we got better and better and we were confident in our ability.

"We realised that any of the other crews could go away and progress ahead of the Games.

"However, we went in knowing that we had also improved. But it was London

#### **\*\*EVERYONE WAS THERE SCREAMING FOR US. THE BRITISH FANS WERE SO** LOUD. IT WAS SUPERB"

2012 and we knew we could take nothing for granted."

Stanning and Glover set an impressive early pace with an Olympic-best time in their opening heat, meaning they progressed straight to the final and avoided the pressure of having to qualify via the repechage.

"It gave us a huge confidence boost," the 27-year-old said. "It was nice to set an Olympic-best time but it was something we hadn't really considered.

"That race was ideal in some ways. Our performance was not perfect but it was a strong field and by winning we had five days to prepare for the final.

We were able to think about how we could make further improvements and peak for the medal race while staying fresh and not tiring."

The extra preparation time clearly paid dividends as the British pair made an electrifying start and dominated the field from the outset.

At the end of the 2,000-metre course they finished more than two seconds ahead of the Australian crew in second place, with world champions New Zealand claiming the bronze medal.

Stanning explained: "We have been fast starters all season. We have gone out quickly and we decided to do that again.

"We wanted to get the best start we could to establish an early lead and then keep pressing so the other crews could not come back.

"Last year we showed signs of fatigue but this time round we got a length in front and then we wanted to get another length clear.

"Helen kept calling for me to push and we knew the further ahead we got the more we could relax. That's when you do your best rowing."

With the Games reaching the fifth day without a British gold, the rowers focused exclusively on their event and tried to ignore the growing weight of pressure from the media and public.

"We turned the television off on the afternoon before our final," the Army athlete recalled.

"We made it all about our race and not the Olympics as a whole.

"Our coach told us to do what we always do and not worry about everything else that was going on.

"If we were on the start line thinking about the expectations of the country we may have cracked.

"But we were up against people we have raced against all season and we knew we could beat them as long as we didn't do anything silly.

"The noise from the crowd was







unbelievable. We have rowed at Eton Dorney so many times with just one man and his dog watching but there was a wall of sound over the last 500 metres.

"Everyone was there screaming for us and the British fans were so loud, it was superb. There were so many flags and banners in the stands.

"It was such a fantastic atmosphere and it lifted us a lot. Helen said that with every stroke we took it felt as though the crowd were picking us up and pulling us towards the finish line."

With Stanning and Glover taking gold, a flood of medals soon followed on the water and Great Britain emerged as the premier rowing nation at the Games.

Having arrived at London 2012 as relative unknowns, the duo enjoyed a meteoric rise and have been very much in demand following their golden endeavours at the Olympics.

Stanning appeared on The One Show and Alan Carr's Summer Specstacular in the week immediately after the

Games and has fulfilled a host of other commitments and engagements.

"It is really nice for female sport and rowing in particular, but we didn't expect any of this," she said.

. We were very much ready to win our event and we didn't realise what would come with that.

"There has been lots of interest in us and that has been lovely.

"We are trying to get round and see as many people as we can because if it had not been for the public support the Olympics could have been so different.

"It is also important for us to get out to the schools.

"We had a lot of cards and support from youngsters and we want to go back and show them what we have got.

"Sport was a huge part of our lives while we were at school and we want to share that with other people as part of the legacy of these Games."

Back in the ranks - page 29





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# Reds shine in Services showpiece

a welcome return to form be claiming a dominant victory in the Inter-Services 50-over

Spin kings Spr Jacques Prinsloo (RE, pictured right) and Lt James Hudson (RA) were the team's star men as they tormented the

opposition batsmen to record outstanding figures in both matches. After taking to the field in their opening clash with the Royal Navy,

pressure from the first ball.

The Senior Service struggled to make any impact during their innings and with Prinsloo taking 4-22 and skipper Hudson posting a return of 3-25 they stuttered to a meagre 134

Dan Webb (HQ DIC) 43 not out.

With the Navy beating defending champions – the Royal Air Force – in

challengers posted 209 all out, with Pte Brannon Varley (DMSTG) top scoring

With an average total to defend, the Reds' spin department of Hudson and man of-the-match Prinsloo took four

to 178 all out.

Speaking at the end of a challenging three days, Hudson

cricket in this format it was a faultless performance against the Navy. We bowled beautifully and got them to

"I got out early against the RAF but we had a couple of really

start but I knew that if we took wickets we would have a chance and

contest at RAF Vine Lane.

#### HODGE'S WORLD BOW

ARMY tae kwon do champion SSqt Angus Hodge (AGC (SPS)) has been included in the Northern Ireland squad for the sport's world championships in Tallinn.

The tournament was being staged as this issue went to press but SoldierSport spoke to the 39-year-old on the eve of the event to learn more about his expectations on the global stage in Estonia.

"I've been involved in international competitions before but not at this level," he explained.

"I am slightly nervous but in the right way; the adrenalin will allow me to push myself beyond my limits and I'm looking forward to the challenge.

"To come away with a medal would be a fantastic achievement."

Hodge, who is competing in the -73kg category, started his tae kwon do career at a relatively young age but on joining the Army and being posted to Germany his sporting ambitions were put on hold.

He said: "I didn't give it up as such but it is very difficult to learn a martial art in a different language.

"I spent so much time serving in Germany but I could not find a club or instructor that was fully competent in English, which was a real blow.

"Since coming to Northern Ireland I have risen up the ranks and become a black belt within two years.

"My success has surprised me. Sometimes I look at the belt and think 'how did that get there?'.

"At the Army championships I was fighting guys two degrees above me and it has been the same in the Northern Ireland set-up."



Fighting hard: Scottish star Mark McKeown sharpens his skills during a sparring session in Aldershot

## Boxers tested at Army camp

EMBERS of the Scottish youth boxing team took advantage of the Army's state-of-the-art gym facilities last month to prepare for their Brandenburg Cup campaign.

A total of nine fighters travelled to Aldershot for the week-long camp ahead of the German tournament, which attracted some of the best amateur talent in Europe.

The team was joined by six representatives from the Welsh squad along with athletes from local clubs.

"This was a key part of our preparations for the Brandenburg Cup, which is an A-class tournament featuring the likes of Russia, Bulgaria and Hungary," coach Mike Keane told SoldierSport.

"We came here to sharpen our skills and faced some quality opponents in the sparring sessions.

"We worked on the equipment in the gym and were also out on the running track, the facilities were excellent.

"I was really pleased and the Army boxing coach, Sqt Martin Anthony (RLC), was absolutely brilliant."

SSgt Craig McEvoy (REME), part of the Scottish coaching team, recommended the Service facility having spent time working at the centre with the Army set-up.

"It was a fantastic experience for our lads, everything from the dining halls and accommodation to the gym and track was ideal," he said.

"Sparring was the main focus for the camp and we trained really well. The Brandenburg Cup is a top tournament and this was perfect preparation for that."

#### TRIUMPH AND DESPAIR



THE Army endured mixed fortunes on the court at the Inter-Services tennis championships in Roehampton.

With Wimbledon hosting the sport's Olympic competition, the Forces players relocated to the National Tennis Centre for the two-day spectacle.

And the Reds' men's team found the new surroundings to their liking as they won their first title since 2006.

Having dominated last year's event, the Royal Air Force failed to take a single rubber and the doubles pairing of Capt Steve Clarke and WO2 Jamie Friend (RLC) secured the win with victory over their Royal Navy rivals on the last afternoon.

"It was a tough couple of days," Friend said. "I am proud that we got the final result but it was a team effort."

After struggling in the men's draw, the RAF enjoyed success in the women's competition as they mounted a comfortable defence of their crown.



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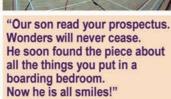
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HORSE Guards Parade earned rave reviews from players and spectators after its successful transformation into the beach volleyball arena for London 2012. The military venue attracted huge crowds last month, making the sport one of the must-see events at the Games. German duo Julius Brink and Jonas Reckermann won the men's competition, while Misty May-Treanor and Kerri Walsh triumphed in the women's event for the USA. "We felt very at home with all the cheering," said three-time gold medallist Walsh. "I don't have enough good words to say about the venue. It's so much more beautiful than any other."

# Sevens join world elite

N emphatic 68-12 thrashing of the French Armed Forces saw the Army's Rugby Union stars lift the inaugural International Defence Sevens title in the USA.

The Servicemen swept aside a string of challengers to win all eight games in the tournament and finish the season with an unbeaten record.

Having celebrated victories in Bournemouth, Richmond, Bristol, Newquay and Edinburgh earlier in the campaign, the Reds secured yet another title at the Cwmtawe Sevens in Swansea before jetting out to Denver, Colorado, for

their global debut. The tournament started in fine style with a 31-5 win over the Australian Army and the soldiers cruised through

the group stages.

Triumphs over the US Air Force and Marine Corps followed as the Servicemen marched into the final, where they ruthlessly downed their French rivals for the third time in the competition.

"We had some big scores and that was because the opposition couldn't handle our gas out wide," team manager Capt John Voss (REME) told SoldierSport.

"There were some pretty hard teams but we just played a different class of rugby, we seriously wanted to win it.

Even if we were up against a side we knew we could beat we wanted to go out and put them away."

Voss has been staggered by the consistency of his side this term and said the possibility of an

unbeaten campaign was not considered at the start of the year.

'It was something we hadn't even thought about," he admitted. "We have beaten some pretty stiff opposition along the way and as we went through the season the pressure was on us to keep the run going."

The manager also praised the efforts of head coach Cpl Alfred Vakacokovanua (SG) over the past few months. "He has

> been a cool, calm head for the team and we are lucky to have him involved,"

> > Voss

#### SPORT SHORTS



■ SERVICE snowboarders return to action this month at Ex Snow Summer.

The indoor competition will be held at The Snow Centre in Hemel Hempstead on September 14 and is open to all members of the Army Winter Sports Association, including freestyle skiers.

Registration begins at 1030 but competitors are encouraged to book their place in advance. Entry costs £35.

For more information on the competition and other fixtures visit www.awsa.org.uk/discipline/snowboard

■ INJURED soldier Hldr Craig Paterson (4 Scots) will embark on a five-day cycle ride from Edinburgh to London this month to raise funds for SSAFA Forces Help.

He suffered a gunshot wound to the head in Afghanistan and will be among a 40-strong team that will attempt the challenge on September 12.

Paterson will be using an adapted recumbent bike and has already raised more than £5,000 for the cause.

Donations can be made at www. justgiving.com/Hldr-Craig-Paterson1

#### **SPORT SHORTS**

■ CAPT Alex Hardy (3 RSME) has set herself the challenge of swimming the English Channel in a punishing fundraising quest in aid of Walking With The Wounded.

The officer will attempt the solo crossing between September 7 and 14, depending on the weather, and is targeting £5,000 in sponsorship.

She hopes to complete the 35-kilometre course in 12 hours.

Donations to the cause can be made at www.justgiving.com/AlexsBigSwim

■ THE Army cricket season has been given an extended run to counter the fixture chaos caused by the summer's miserable weather.

With a host of matches washed away in the rain, a new-look schedule has been compiled to determine the Service's top teams for 2012.

The Inter-Corps Twenty20 competition will be held from September 5-7 in Aldershot. Deepcut and Arborfield.

The Royal Artillery will lock horns with the Royal Electrical and Mechanical

Engineers in the final of the Power Cup in Aldershot on September 12. The women's Inter-Services Twenty20 competition will be held at the same venue a day later.

■ ENDURANCE athlete Maj Ben Harris (HCR) is hoping to raise more than £20,000 for charity by completing the Tri Challenge GB.

The energy-sapping event will see the officer follow the three disciplines of triathlon and starts with a 22-mile swim along Loch Ness.

The second leg will see Harris and his partner Camilla Lennon attempt an 867-mile tandem ride from John O'Groats to Land's End before completing his quest with a 90-mile run from Avebury to Ivinghoe Beacon.

A ten-day timeframe has been set for the challenge and Harris was due to reach the finish line as this issue went to press.

Proceeds from the event will go to the Household Cavalry Operational Casualties Fund.

Donations can be made online at www.justgiving.com/TriChallengeGB

■ THE Royal British Legion is hoping to boost its coffers with the release of a limited edition Rugby Union shirt.

Created to commemorate this year's Inter-Services clash between the Army and Royal Navy at Twickenham, the garment features a poppy design to signify the charity and the important work it does.

The shirts are now available from www.poppyshop.org and cost £40.



Ready to rumble: The Army Rugby League side is aiming for further Inter-Services glory this month

## leaders set for battle

RMY Rugby League players have warmed up for this month's Inter-Services campaign at a training camp with Warrington Wolves.

The Super League outfit hosted the Service squad at their base at the University of Chester, where they worked on defensive sets and team shape.

And Wolves captain Adrian Morley was impressed with the talent shown by the military players during the session.

"They were very good and had a competent skill level with a great mix of people in the side, which was superb to see," he said.

"It was something different for us so everyone had a spring in their step. Mixing with individuals from other places, backgrounds and walks of life is always

good for the players.

"Whatever we can do for these boys is a pleasure as we have so much respect and gratitude towards members of the Armed Forces."

Winger Chris Riley added: "They were a good, professional outfit with a great camaraderie in the team which I'm sure will help them go a long way."

The Army are scheduled to play the Royal Air Force at Cranfield on September 21 and host the Royal Navy a week later on September 28.

Fans will be treated to three fixtures at the Army Rugby Stadium in Aldershot, with the academy team playing at 1500, the women at 1700 and the men's senior side at 1930.

Admission to the event is free.

### Ice hockey soars to full sporting status

THE Army Ice Hockey Association is on a mission to recruit newcomers to the rink having recently been granted full sporting status within the Service.

More than 30 soldiers attended a development camp in Swindon in July and further sessions are now being planned to build on this initial success.

"It takes players right back to the basics, teaching them about tactics, fitness, awareness and the different roles in attack and defence," said WO1

Tony Higgins (RE), manager of

the Sappers. "The Royal Logistic Corps and Royal Electrical and

Mechanical Engineers are very strong, but now we are a recognised sport there are opportunities for other teams to grow.

"The development camps are a chance for people to get out on the ice to see if they like it, regardless of cap badge, rank or gender.'

The next training session will be held at The Link, in Swindon, on a date to be confirmed in October or November.

For more information and final details contact WO1 Higgins on 01252 862105.



Down and out: Tpr Emmanuel Nartey (1 RTR) was eliminated in the Games' last 32 by Dex Elmont

## premature exit

UDO star Tpr Emmanuel Nartey's time as an Olympian proved to be short-lived as he slipped to an agonising defeat against world number three Dex Elmont at London 2012.

The Ghanaian fighter crashed out in the last 32 of the under 73kg competition as his Dutch opponent forced an ippon to secure a place in the next round.

"I tried to control the fight in the first two minutes but I was given a couple of penalties I felt I didn't deserve," Nartey [1 RTR) told SoldierSport.

"I then had to open up and he beat me from there. I'm really disappointed; he was a guy I could have defeated and I fought well below my standards."

Despite failing to strike gold, the 29-year-old was thrilled to be involved at the Olympics and is already planning his next major tournament in 2014.

"It was an amazing experience for me and I was proud to be part of a great occasion - the team spirit and togetherness was fantastic," he said.

"It was a great sense of achievement to just be there. I'm obviously disappointed with my performance but hopefully the Games will be an inspiration for children and future generations.

"I'm now going to take some time off training but I feel London 2012 has made me a stronger person. It has taught me not to underestimate anyone and to fight hard from the beginning to the end.

"The next target is the Commonwealth Games in 2014. I will have a few weeks off before starting again."

#### **ADIDAS AID**

A LIMITED edition T-shirt and baseball cap has been launched by Adidas to support the Front Line to Start Line campaign.

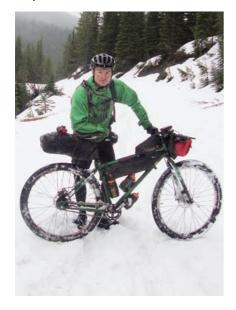
The initiative is aimed at helping injured soldiers progress in competitive sport and all profits from sales of the kit will be donated to The British Paralympic Association, which set up the scheme with Help for Heroes.

Sporting stars such as Gareth Bale (pictured), David Beckham, Jessica Ennis, Tom Daley and Paralympic athletes LCpl Netra Rana (1 RGR) and Pte Derek Derenalagi (2 Mercian) are behind the campaign.

The money raised will help increase the number of wounded personnel becoming Paralympians of the future.

The merchandise can be bought at Adidas stores, John Lewis, Harrods, Debenhams, all Olympic venues and from the LOCOG websites until October 3. For more information go to www.adidas.com





## Cox bridges the divide in off-road quest

MOUNTAIN bike rider Maj Jon Cox (2 Para) battled searing heat and record snowfalls to complete the Tour Divide race in North America.

The gruelling challenge saw the officer cycle from Banff, in Canada, to the US/ Mexican border at Antelope Wells following the Continental Divide Trail along the Rocky Mountains.

Cox carried all his own equipment and there were no support vehicles involved. Entrants had to bivouac trailside along the route and climbed more than 200,000 feet.

"This is regarded by many as the hardest mountain bike race in the world," Cox told SoldierSport.

"Rogue weather made this year's race particularly difficult, with record snowfalls in Canada, record high temperatures in Colorado and severe storms in New Mexico causing flash floods and impassable sections."

The final results have yet to be released but Cox finished around 30th in a field of 110 competitors, which included professional mountain bike riders from around the world.

He completed the course in 26 days and collected more than £5,500 for The Parachute Regiment Charity.

"This was probably the toughest thing I have done in my life but it has been immensely rewarding," the officer added. "I am extremely pleased to have completed the race and very happy to have raised so much money." To donate visit www.justgiving.com/joncox1981



From front row to front line: Star players from London Irish prepare for life in the field during their week-long pre-season training camp in Winchester

# Exiles taste life in Army ra

Report: Richard Long Pictures: Graeme Main

UGBY Union heavyweights London Irish have been preparing for the challenges of the new season at a demanding week-long Army training camp in Winchester.

Personnel were on hand to put the Exiles' players through their paces at Sir John Moore Barracks, where they had an introduction to weapons handling, lessons in fieldcraft, were tested on the shooting range and tackled the assault course.

The sessions were divided between rugby and conditioning work in the mornings and military exercises in the afternoons and the value of the camp was not lost on winger Topsy Ojo.

"I've spent quite a lot of time with the Army boys learning about what they have done since they entered the Service,

from training to going out on the front line in combat, which has been really interesting," he said.

Second row forward Matt Garvey added: "It has been a good insight into what goes on in the Army and working with the soldiers has been great.

"It has also given us the opportunity to get to know the new members of the first-team squad."

Director of rugby Brian Smith was keen to challenge his players in a new environment in the hope they could learn the importance of keeping their discipline on the field.

He said: "A lot of other teams go to places like Lanzarote in pre-season, push weights twice a day, sit on the beach and all that stuff.

"This was an opportunity for our guys to see what soldiering is about and to realise how lucky they are to play rugby

professionally and make a good living out

"People in sport draw comparisons with the military.

"This was a chance for us to put that into perspective for our boys.

"They stayed in the barracks where other soldiers stay and ate the same food.

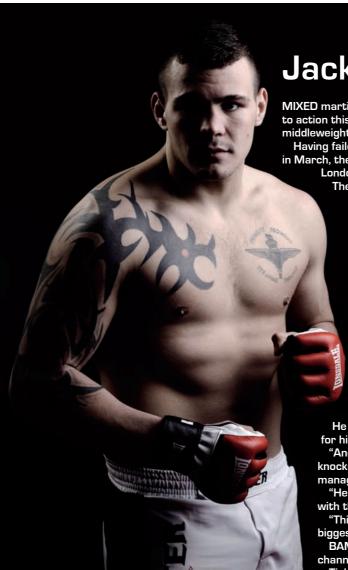
"The players were broken into four groups and were assigned an officer who got them up in the mornings for breakfast and then delivered them to the team's training sessions.

"In the afternoons they were instructed in fieldcraft and Army exercises in their respective platoons.

"They had to think and work as a team." As part of the visit, Smith and London Irish's newly-appointed forwards coach Glenn Delaney gave presentations to 300 Service recruits about their experiences in the game.







Jack eyes title defence

MIXED martial arts sensation Pte Jack Marshman (3 Para) returns to action this month on a mission to defend his Lonsdale British middleweight crown.

Having failed in his bid to defeat world champion Tom Watson in March, the Welshman will lock horns with Andrew Punshon at London's Wembley Arena on Saturday, September 15.

The bout forms part of the British Association of Mixed Martial Arts (BAMMA) 10 show and Marshman will be looking to avenge the sole loss of his career to date.

"Andrew's got some knockout power behind him and a strong ground game but I still think I'll be too much for him to handle in all areas," the soldier said.

"It's been a while since my last fight so it's good to be back. I've been concentrating on my boxing recently and I've maintained a good level of fitness but I'm looking forward to a hard camp for this bout."

Marshman showed his mettle at BAMMA 7, where he survived a sustained ground and pound assault to win the British title.

He then successfully defended his belt against Leeroy Barnes at BAMMA 8.

Opponent Punshon has an impressive track record with only two of his 17 bouts progressing beyond the first round.

He is among the UK's top middleweights and is renowned for his fast and furious style and technical prowess.

"Andrew is well rounded in all areas with some great knockouts and submissions to his name," the challenger's manager Dale Percival said.

"He is very confident that come fight night he will be leaving with the belt and as the new middleweight champion.

This will be the biggest fight of his career and on one of the biggest shows in Europe."

BAMMA 10 will be broadcast live on the Five Star digital channel, with highlights shown on Channel Five.

Tickets for the show cost £25 and are available online at www.bamma.com

#### SPORT SHORTS



■ THE Royal Armoured Corps endured a frustrating time on the water in the RORC Channel Race last month.

Setting sail from Cowes, the crew followed a course to Cherbourg but a combination of light winds and a broken spinnaker meant progress was slow.

After falling further off the pace they were forced to retire from the competition and there were only two finishers in the team's class. The crew were in action in their final race of the season as this issue went to press.



RACING driver Lt Col Simon Etherington (R Anglian) has been rolling back the years by competing on the track in a 1935 MG P-Type Special.

The officer is part of the Vintage Sports Car Club series which stages events at a number of top circuits including Silverstone, Cadwell Park, Mallory Park and Snetterton.

Etherinaton won the spirit of the sprint award for his efforts in the historic section at the Goodwood Spring Sprint meeting earlier this season.



■ VOLLEYBALL referee SSgt John Postance was given a starring role at London 2012 as he helped officiate matches being played at Earls Court.

The soldier, who serves with Headquarters 43 (Wessex) Brigade in Tidworth, volunteered for Olympic duty more than a year ago and was selected from almost 400 applicants.

Postance said: "You can't imagine how exciting it is and your nerves really kick in, but once you start work it is 100 per cent concentration."

# final



We asked personnel who deployed on Op Olympics how they felt the large-scale security mission went

INTERVIEWS: SARAH GOLDTHORPE PICTURES: STEVE DOCK



#### **Bdr J Thornton-Bowen (RHA)**

I think it went well and have no complaints. This is the British Army; security is what we are here to do and if troops don't like it they know what they can do. At Tobacco Dock we got a bed, pool table and Wi-Fi plus free admission to the Tower of London. Laser Quest and Thorpe Park. Guys who wanted to see their families could do that and soldiers were given Games tickets too.



#### Sqt Alan Bowe (Scots)

Just before this operation, my unit (5 Scots) were told that we are going to be reduced in number. But my soldiers just got on with things and enjoyed being in London and getting out. Conditions were not as bad as in Afghanistan, Iraq or even during exercises. As long as the guys have somewhere to charge their iPhones they are happy. Once that goes, so does morale!



#### **Pte James Biggs (RLC)**

Everything ran extremely smoothly and no one I spoke to was really complaining about Op Olympics. As a chef I work unsociable hours so I didn't get as much of a chance as others to enjoy it - but this is the Army and you just get used to that. The wife wasn't overly happy about my deployment but I think the majority of people were okay. It was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.



#### **LCpl Hansen Frederick (RLC)**

I had just come back from the Falklands when I was called up but when I heard it was Op Olympics I thought "that is something I might never do again". It felt like soldiers were part of the event and it made our work easier knowing the public were behind us. I even got chatted up in the street, which was nice! The accommodation was basic but we kept busy so time flew by.



#### **LCpl Chris Bell (R Signals)**

Being put on Op Olympics was a kick in the teeth for our families but we got on with it. The way our accommodation was portrayed in the newspapers, I thought it would be horrible but it was actually nice. The sleeping arrangements were a bit tight but if you got over that everything else was alright. I lost money on a mate's stag night and don't know if I will get it back.



#### **LCpl Damian Macmanus (RLC)**

I was one of the first to arrive at Tobacco Dock with the advance party. We took 1,000 tonnes of stock in four days; it's pretty amazing what was put in place at short notice. We felt part of it all because we knew we were doing something to help the community. The mission put the Army in a prominent light with the public and people were thanking us which was awesome.



#### **Cpl Mark Cheesman (RMP)**

The operation has been good especially working alongside the Met and seeing how they do things. Initially everyone thought it would be bad but as things got going and G4S started turning up for work it improved. I got to see David Beckham going down the Thames during the opening ceremony. I don't think we will ever get an experience like that in London again.



#### Lt C Broumley Young (Scots)

It's been memorable to be part of the Games and we are probably never going to get anything like this in our lifetime again. Some guys would have liked their leave but, looking back, I think I would have preferred to be on Op Olympics. I am sure a lot of others would too - as long as the refunds they have been promised for booked holidays actually happen.

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