

SOLDIER

MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY

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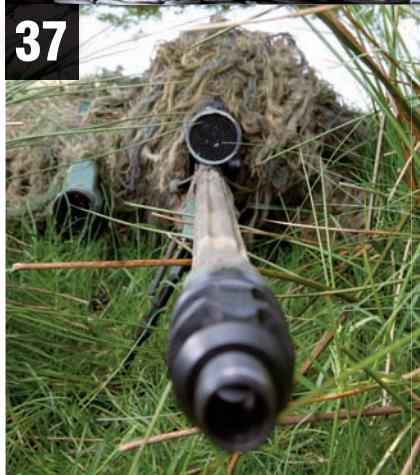
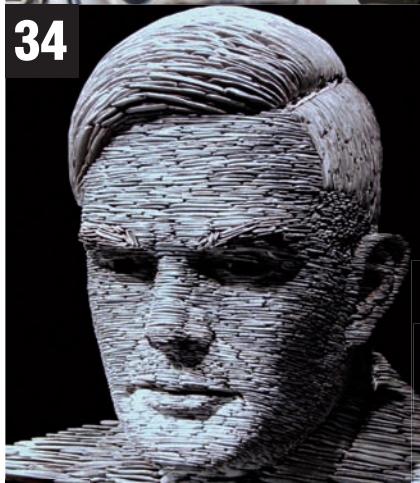
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Picture: Steve Dock

Background image: Troops from 16 Air Assault Brigade practise airborne skills at West Freugh Airfield, Wigtownshire, Scotland (pages 31-33) Picture: Steve Dock





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Soldier Magazine, Ordnance Barracks, Government Road, Aldershot, Hampshire GU11 2DU

All enquiries: Tel 01252 787107 (Ald Mil 94222 7107)
Fax: 01252 787109 (7109)
Email: mail@soldiermagazine.co.uk

www.soldiermagazine.co.uk
facebook.com/soldiermagazine
twitter.com/soldiermagazine



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

Sports Editor:

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

DESIGN

Art Editor:

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

Designer:

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

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photographers:

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

MARKETING, ADVERTISING & SUBSCRIPTIONS

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

ADVERTISING

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

SUBSCRIPTIONS

01252 787107 (7107)
subs@soldiermagazine.co.uk



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"It's the Cabinet Office... has anyone deciphered 18 down of *The Times* crossword?"

● King of code breakers – pages 34-35

Here to serve those of every rank

LAST month I received an email from a reader praising the magazine for the "good job" we do in keeping the Service community abreast of current affairs.

This gave a much needed boost to a team who, like every other area of the public sector, are being expected to do a lot more with much less.

With that in mind, I hope the scores of you who have invited the title out to cover the work of your units in recent weeks will bear with us while we work through your requests.

On reading the aforementioned message, I was pleased when my congratulatory correspondent went on to offer some constructive criticism, namely that "everything in the magazine seems to pump the party line".

In response to the reader's well-intentioned feedback, I would like to point out that *Soldier*'s staff are a far cry from the bullied minions of Malcom Tucker in *The Thick of It*.

However, if you agree with the reader's point, perhaps you can help us to address this misconception.

While articles about the Service's impressive exercises (pages 31-33), announcements (page 7) and successes (pages 8-9) will always and unapologetically form part of this publication's pages, we are clearly more limited in our ability to hunt out scoops in the same way as those whose commercial owners can afford to send them chasing endless off-diary stories.

Devoting hours to Freedom of Information requests and endless telephone interviews in order to get the inside story on our readers' lives sometimes becomes something of a pipe dream for our team – especially as the *Soldier* gang has yet to master call transfers on the handsets installed in our new home.

All of this means that, more than ever, we are relying on you to approach us with the challenges you are facing, as well as the triumphs.

Alongside *Talkback* submissions (pages 45-53) and our monthly column from the Army Families Federation (page 57), we are also keen to hear about your dilemmas and disputes directly.

If something is bugging you, call our team up and tell us. If an amazing success appears to have gone unnoticed, do the same.

As our regular letter writers will know, sitting outside the chain of command means that, if requested, your details will not leave the hands of those in the *Soldier* office.

So, acknowledging that some of the changes personnel face in coming months will be far from easy, if you disagree with the picture we paint of any aspect of your courageous work, let us know.

From internet irritations (page 13) to our *Ranked* ratings (pages 37-39), please be our eyes, ears... and mouth as well.

In this month's issue, for example, Service adventurers provide an inspiring update on their various feats (page 9), Falklands War veterans give us new insight into the devastating conflict (pages 40-43) and, as ever, our reviewers keep us up-to-date on what's hot and what's not (pages 65-73).

Do you have anything you would like your colleagues to know about or help you with?

We are here to serve troops of every rank, so please help ensure that what we are writing interests you. And thank you to the plain-speaking reader who made me realise that the commencement of Herrick 16 (page 11) was as good a moment as any at which to point this out.

Enjoy the issue. I look forward to your emails. – **Sarah Goldthorpe, Editor**



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Picture: Sgt Mark Nesbit / RLC

Focus: The deputy commander of the International Security Assistance Force says troops of all ranks know their priorities ahead of withdrawal in 2014

'We must keep pressure on enemy'

TALIBAN leaders are becoming increasingly frustrated at a lack of funding and diminishing weapons stores, the deputy commander of the International Security Assistance Force has said.

As British troops prepare for the fighting season in Afghanistan, Lt Gen Adrian Bradshaw commented: "Some of the caches that have been found have been less full than we would have expected at this time of the year.

"Certain [Taliban] members are complaining about a lack of money and there's stress showing between commanders on the ground – all of which is to our advantage."

Speaking to a press briefing from Kabul via video link, he added: "What we have to do over this season is keep up the relentless pressure on the insurgents, carry on building the Afghan National Security Forces' (ANSF) capability and ensure the coalition remains united and strong."

The determined words came days before an MoD announcement revealed that the UK will provide £70 million a year to finance the ANSF after British

combat operations end in the country in 2014.

The cash will come from across government and go towards a \$4 billion fund raised by the global community.

Defence secretary Philip Hammond said: "Britain's contribution will make Afghanistan a safer, more stable country and protect our own national interests."

Adding to the positive feedback from Kabul, the outgoing ambassador to Afghanistan, Sir William Patey, explained that significant improvements in the war-torn country had been made and plans for removing British personnel were on track.

"There has been tremendous progress over the last three years and it has made a huge difference," he said.

"We are halfway through a transition process which will deliver full Afghan sovereignty and the opportunity for international combat troops to depart the country. But we will leave behind a capable national security force to take over from us."

The ANSF currently comprises 329,000 personnel and the retiring diplomat went on to dismiss any

suggestion that insurgents could strike once UK Servicemen and women pull out of Helmand province.

"If the Taliban think they can wait us out until 2014 they are delusional," he told reporters.

"We will leave a strong force capable of resisting them."

Lt Gen Bradshaw offered an encouraging message about the task ahead for those British soldiers deploying on Operation Herrick over the coming months.

"We know that between now and December 2014 we have got a certain amount to accomplish and it is a demanding timeline but perfectly achievable," he commented.

"Right down to the lowest level, folks who are fighting this campaign know what they have got to do."

"We must keep relentless pressure on the enemy, build the Afghan forces' confidence and capability to take over this campaign, keep the coalition together and stay focused on what we are trying to achieve."

● **Innovation assault – pages 28-29**



**WE KNOW THE TALENT IS OUT THERE
BUT THEY NEED TO PICK UP THE PHONE**

- CROSS-COUNTRY CLAN CALL NEWCOMERS, PAGE 88



A CONSULTATION on plans to reform the Armed Forces pension scheme has begun.

The process allows troops, along with other interested parties, to have their say on potential new formats.

Public service pensions – including those of the Forces – have been deemed unsustainable, meaning changes must be made.

In 2010, the government ordered an independent commission chaired by Lord Hutton to look into the problem and the subsequent report recommended many reforms.

As a result, military pensions will alter from April 2015.

Current schemes will close and almost all personnel will be enrolled into a new system.

A document has been published on the defence intranet which explains reasons for change, transitional arrangements and accrued rights to pension benefits earned under current plans.

The MoD is also running a series of focus groups in the UK and Germany. To register your views visit www.surveymonkey.com/s/NewArmedForcesPensionScheme

IRAQ INQUIRERS EJECTED

ROYAL Military Police personnel have been removed from an investigation into allegations of widespread abuse of Iraqi prisoners by British soldiers after the Court of Appeal ruled their involvement could compromise its independence.

Soldiers on the Iraq Historic Allegations Team have been replaced by Royal Navy counterparts.

Nick Harvey, minister of state for the Armed Forces, said: "I have absolute confidence in the ability and integrity of the Provost Marshal (Army) and Royal Military Police to conduct appropriate and effective investigations.

"At the same time, however, public confidence in the team's work is extremely important to the government, as is the Army's reputation."

Postcode problem resolved

THE world of online shopping has been made available to Service personnel – even if they are based overseas or in the middle of the ocean.

The Ministry of Defence, British Forces Post Office (BFPO) and Royal Mail have worked together to introduce "shadow" postcodes for the 100,000 soldiers and their families serving abroad, including in Germany, Cyprus and the Falkland Islands.

Previously BFPO numbers were not compatible with many online ordering systems, including credit agencies, but it is hoped the new UK-style structure will allow troops to shop remotely and ease mortgage and bank card applications.

An MoD spokesman said: "The online postcodes will help everyone serving overseas, and their families, by improving access to products and services from the internet, as proposed in the Armed Forces Covenant.

"It will also allow personnel to maintain a UK credit history that is recognised by financial service providers."

The changes represent a boost for UK businesses, who can now make their goods and services available to members of the British Forces

around the world by updating their online ordering systems.

The Covenant Interim Report, published in 2011, identified the need to improve BFPO addresses to ensure military personnel have equal access to commercial products.

Minister for defence, personnel, welfare and veterans, Andrew Robathan, said: "This is good news for our forces and their families stationed overseas, who should enjoy exactly the same access to goods as UK residents.

"One of the aims of the covenant introduced by this government was to minimise the impact of military life so this is another great step forward."

Good news: Changes will allow those serving overseas to have better access to internet products

Picture: Graeme Main



NEWS IN BRIEF

ALLOWANCE DROP SCRAPPED

FURTHER reductions to the home to duty travel allowance have been cancelled after troops raised widespread concerns about the move.

As part of terms set out in the Strategic Defence and Security Review, the personal contribution for those commuting to work from publicly-funded accommodation was due to rise from one mile to nine miles over three years.

The first change was introduced in May 2011, costing soldiers about £27 per month, but the subsequent increases to £54 per month in 2012 and £81 per month in 2013 have been scrapped.

Budget measures far from black and white – page 57

BOOST TO BOSNIA MISSION

THE minister for international security strategy has announced a significant increase in the numbers of troops to be made available to the peacekeeping mission in Bosnia.

Gerald Howarth said that a company of 120 soldiers would be based in the UK, ready to deploy at short notice to the region if required as part of the European Union Force Op Althea.

The potential surge of personnel adds to the team of six already supporting the mission.

"While the security situation in the region remains calm and stable, it is essential that we provide the force with the necessary resources to perform the mission's mandate in full," commented the minister.



Adventurers: Troops lost more than two stone in weight on the 100th Anniversary Scott Amundsen Race

Mountaineers meet their missions

BRITISH Army adventurers have been braving extreme climates and unforgiving terrain in a series of gruelling expeditions.

As this issue went to press, thrill-seekers from 2nd Battalion, The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment were on a mission to reach the summits of at least three unconquered mountains in the Arctic region.

The personnel travelled to an area known as Liverpool Land in eastern Greenland for the challenge, which was organised with the aim of raising money for the Cystic Fibrosis Trust.

Trip leader Capt Dave Latimer said: “Mountaineering is all about the challenges, both mental and physical.

“There are a lot of parallels with military experiences on operations; the bonds and trust you have with people you climb with are very similar to what you feel in your group or platoon. You have to look after each other.”

The soldiers had braced themselves for possible encounters with polar bears but chose the region as it is home to many unclimbed summits of up to 1,400 metres in height.

While the 2 Lancs mountaineers tested themselves in the Arctic, the team of WO1 Mark Morgan (21 Sig Regt) and Capt Billy Morris (22 Sig Regt) were tackling the many challenges posed

by the South Pole.

The duo competed in the 100th Anniversary Scott Amundsen Race, an event that featured an 800-kilometre trek across the Antarctic.

Using cross-country skis, they dragged all their own food and equipment, enduring temperatures as low as -45 degrees celsius.

“It took us 21 days to complete the race and we finished in second place, behind a Norwegian team,” WO1 Morgan said.

“It was extremely arduous. We both lost more than two stone in weight and suffered some minor frostbite injuries.

“But it was a very rewarding experience and it was a great feeling to finally make it to the South Pole.”

The pair raised more than £30,000 for military charities.

Completing the Service's roll-call of adventurers were climbers from 7th Battalion, The Rifles.

The six-man team helped amputees climb the world-famous Mount Kilimanjaro back in February and in the process raised valuable funds for regimental charity Care for Casualties.

The trip formed part of a wider mission being staged by Pilgrim Bandits and those undertaking the trek prepared themselves by scaling Mount Snowdon in Wales.

5 NUMBER OF BCB INTERNATIONAL DAYSACKS UP FOR GRABS IN THE TOP GEAR SECTION OF THIS MONTH'S REVIEW PAGES (PAGES 74-75)

GOOD DRILLS

ALTRUISTIC ALE

BREWING masters Tetley's have pledged to amass £100,000 for Help for Heroes by fund-raising in pubs and selling a limited-edition bottled ale called Trust Porter along with promotional packs of Smooth Flow. The beer will be available in selected UK bars and shops, with a percentage of each sale going to the military charity. Cash will be spent on maintaining Tedworth House, a personnel recovery and assessment centre.



SWIMMING STUDENT

A GCSE student is swimming one mile for each day that The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment has been deployed on Op Herrick 15. Libby Pardoe, 15, of Hampshire is raising money for the Tigers in Afghanistan appeal.

OBAMA BLUNDER

US president Barack Obama slipped up while speaking at the Summit of the Americas. Attempting to call the Falkland Islands by its Spanish name “Las Malvinas”, he instead referred to the region as the Maldives – the popular tourist destination off the coast of India. In an error that the *Daily Telegraph* likened to those of his predecessor George Bush, the leader said: “In terms of the Maldives or Falklands, whatever your preferred term, our position on this is that we are going to remain neutral.”



SOLDIER MAG SCAM

POLICE officers in Nacogdoches, Texas, are investigating a credit card scam involving magazines being purchased for soldiers overseas. According to local media, several residents lodged complaints about a door-to-door salesman offering subscriptions. The suspect tells victims he is selling the publication to send to deployed troops before using their account details to take unauthorised payments.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

JOINT COMMAND COMMENCES

■ SEVERAL defence organisations have been brought together to form the Joint Forces Command (JFC).

The group will coordinate a range of vital military capabilities and has established a headquarters at Northwood in Middlesex.

It will ensure medical services, training and education, intelligence and cyber resources are run effectively to assist operations.

Civilian and military personnel in the JFC will total around 30,000.

The organisation has already achieved initial operating capability and is set to be running fully within 12 months.

COVER STAR WITH ATTITUDE

■ A SERVING soldier has appeared on the front cover of UK gay magazine *Attitude* in a feature about marriage.

LCpl James Wharton, whose 2009 interview in *Soldier* about his sexuality attracted international media attention, stars in the award-winning publication's May edition.

In an article entitled "The time is now", the Household Cavalry member said: "It's actually ridiculous that in this day and age we're still having to have a debate about equal rights.

"And it just goes to show that it's the same old people still kicking up a fuss. The Church. In particular, the Catholic Church."

The editorial's author describes LCpl Wharton as "the poster boy for gays in the military", while drawing a contrast between the Army's "nurturing" attitude towards homosexuals and the church's opposition to same-sex union.

Discussing his civil partnership to husband Thom McCaffrey two years ago, the Iraq veteran added: "The British Army has always done a really good job of supporting us."

His partner also revealed that he has always received care and support from those he has encountered at Service functions.

The lance corporal's presence in the glossy monthly has been criticised by some. One serving gay soldier, who did not want to be named, said he was embarrassed by LCpl Wharton's appearance.

"While the sentiments in *Attitude* are all well and good, the soldier would do well to remember, and the public should be aware, that he has made a lot of his 'colleagues' extremely angry," an email to *Soldier* said. "He has made the rest of the Armed Forces' lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community look untrustworthy to the hierarchy and very likely undone 12 months of hard work behind the scenes."



Picture: Cpl Paul Morrison, RLC

Down to business: Members of The Royal Anglian Regiment complete their final in-country training

Task Force Helmand handover

A SHORT ceremony has marked the handover of Task Force Helmand as its latest batch of troops gear up for operations in Afghanistan.

Passing control of the mission to members of 12th Mechanized Brigade in Lashkar Gah, 20th Armoured Brigade commander Brig Patrick Sanders said that progress made in central parts of the province had exceeded all of his team's expectations during the last six months.

"This has been made possible because of the remarkable legacy we inherited from 3 Commando Brigade and 16 Air Assault Brigade, and because of the courage, dedication, resilience and offensive spirit of the men and women of the mission," the senior officer said.

"The most important ingredient for this progress has been the Afghans themselves.

"Task Force Helmand is now working to an Afghan constructed plan in support of local priorities.

"It has delivered a high level of operational tempo over the winter – all led by the local population."

However, the brigadier added a note of caution to incoming troops.

"There will be many challenges ahead as the insurgents try to contest transition and to regain the initiative and their lost momentum, but they will increasingly struggle to gain any traction as the Afghan National Security Forces' capability has grown to the extent that they are a force to

be reckoned with and one increasingly capable of operating independently.

"I wish the men and women of 12th Mechanized Brigade a safe and successful mission.

"It is clear that their training has fully prepared them."

Incoming commander Brig Doug Chalmers said: "I have visited districts which on my previous tours of duty had been plagued by insurgent activity.

"They are now flourishing under Afghan security control."

Among the units to have undertaken reception, staging, onward movement and integration training in readiness for the latest deployment is 1st Battalion, The Royal Anglian Regiment.

Officer commanding A Company, Maj Matt Woodeson, said that the final stage of his troops' rigorous preparations had been excellent.

"I've majored on extra ground sign awareness and shooting for the boys," he explained.

"These are life-saving skills and drills that we cover before we deploy, but out here you get to train in the environment you'll be working in."

Cpl Tom Mann, who served in the region on Op Herrick 6, commented: "The package has been extended since I previously deployed.

"It has been brilliant, with key skills during the day and then time in the evening to re-sort your kit and equipment if you need to."

"It's good being able to acclimatise."

Six-and-a-half thousand personnel from the Army, Royal Navy and Royal Air Force make up Task Force Helmand and 12th Mechanized Brigade will be the lead formation in the country until October.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

TRANSFER OPPORTUNITY

■ UNIFORMED personnel thinking of leaving the Armed Forces are being encouraged to consider joining the growing ranks of the Military Provost Guard Service.

The unit recruits from all three Services, including the Reserves, and says it offers the perks associated with a military career but without operational deployments.

Applications will be considered from those still serving, those that have been made redundant and leavers who have been out of the military for a maximum of six years.

For more information contact Capt Dave Woolford in the Directorate of Manning (Army) on 01264 886135.

FORMER CHIEF JOINS CHARITY

■ FORMER Chief of the General Staff, Gen Sir Mike Jackson, has been named as the new president of ABF The Soldiers' Charity.

The organisation's outgoing leader, Gen the Lord Guthrie, is retiring after 11 years in the role.

On the appointment of Gen Jackson, which was approved by the ABF's patron, the Queen, he said: "I am delighted to be the new president of the charity which provides such vital support to our soldiers, their families and veterans."

Martin Rutledge, chief executive, added: "This is extremely good news for the charity.

"Gen Sir Mike Jackson is very well known, hugely respected and will I am sure be a powerful advocate of our cause."

LAND WARFARE CONFERENCE

■ THE PRE-EMINENT intellectual and networking gathering of the UK's ground forces community will take place from June 7 to 8.

The Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) Land Warfare Conference will include keynote addresses from international army chiefs and aims to prompt debate on key issues facing the military sector.

This year's event is open to civilians and Service personnel of all ranks and the cost of attending may be charged to the public purse.

A number of free invitations will also be made available to students at the Defence Academy, junior officers, senior NCOs and officer cadets.

Further details on the application process and costs can be found in ABN 32-12 or by visiting www.rusi.org/landwarfare

MARATHON EFFORT

■ DETERMINED soldiers from across the Armed Forces have taken part in this year's Virgin London Marathon, raising thousands of pounds for charity.

Those who undertook the 26.2-mile challenge included Sgt Jason Desmond, stationed at 39 Engineer Regiment, who conquered the course in five hours, 54 minutes carrying a 45kg load on his back.

The Serviceman, who has completed nine tours of duty, was raising money for the Newlife Foundation for disabled children.



Picture: Graeme Main

Digital disappointment: Slower broadband is down to Aldershot's local telephone exchange, BT says

Dispute over internet speed

TELECOMMUNICATIONS company BT has been forced to defend its service after soldiers accused the provider of neglecting military towns during the roll-out of high-speed internet access.

Service personnel in Aldershot claim the firm has overlooked MoD housing while upgrading civilian areas.

Capt Matthew Gaffney (RAMC), who wrote to *Talkback* about the problem last October and is currently serving on Herrick 16, said higher web speeds were crucial for Army families during tours of duty.

"The internet is a key welfare tool and good quality, fast access would certainly help those left behind," the Serviceman commented.

"If you look at the speeds available outside Aldershot they are way above anything we can get."

"BT have deployed fibre broadband all around the military garrison yet have left us out, deliberately or accidentally."

Troops living in accommodation in the North Camp area of the Hampshire settlement say their connection speed is 1.7 megabits per second compared with an average of seven in civilian areas.

Capt Gaffney, who lives near to Lille Barracks, said he recently conducted a test in which he found Camp Bastion's web system to be twice as fast as his home access.

"That is either really good as we're in the middle of a desert, or it just shows how bad the connection speed is in Aldershot," he added.

"In the British Armed Forces we get very little choice on where to live so all we ask is that BT provides to us that same level of service that is given to civilian addresses."

However, the provider insists it is not favouring any of its customers with

regards to the improvements.

Ian Livingstone, chief executive officer of BT Group, said: "BT is trying to roll out fibre to as much of the country as it can."

"As a public company, it has an obligation to first focus on the areas where it can make an economic return and we announce new phases of this work every four months or so."

"Beyond that we will work with the government and local authorities to do areas that otherwise would not be possible and we would hope to cover more than 90 per cent of the UK."

He added: "There is absolutely no bias in those decisions."

"On the contrary, BT has recently recruited 800 ex-Forces personnel to work on this project and is a major supporter of the Services, Regular and Territorial Army."

BT spokesman Dan Thomas added that the discrepancies between speeds in broadband were as a result of the specific telephone exchange that personnel are covered by.

"Aldershot military town is served by the Aldershot telephone exchange, while North Camp is served by an exchange in Farnborough," he explained in an email.

"With a copper-based network, speed tends to degrade over distance."

Thomas added that military/civilian classification played no part in how the faster network is rolled out.

BT's Openreach division is investing £2.5 billion to bring fibre broadband to around two-thirds of homes and businesses across the United Kingdom – including Aldershot and Farnborough – before the end of 2014.

Once the fibre is switched on, customers will have a choice of providers for the super-fast service.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

TROOPS ‘DESERVE BETTER’

■ GRIEVANCES raised by Armed Forces personnel are still not being dealt with quickly enough by the Ministry of Defence, the Service complaints commissioner has warned.

In her annual report, Dr Susan Atkins says she is disappointed the department continues to take years to resolve many troops' issues.

“Delays are bad for individuals and undermine the confidence of Servicemen and women and their families in the system and eventually the chain of command,” she explained.

“They are worthy of a process that can sort out problems which arise in their Service lives quickly and fairly. They don’t have that currently. They deserve better.”

The feedback is the fourth year running that Dr Atkins has criticised the procedure for failing to be efficient, effective or fair.

Blaming the complexity of the process, she added that resources which could be used for operations are instead being taken up addressing objections from the ranks.

In an internal briefing note, the MoD said the report acknowledged some improvements and that it was conducting its own review into the complaints system this year.

CHARITY SALUTES BRAVERY

■ WOUNDED soldiers and those who help them to rebuild their lives have been commended at a London ceremony.

Among the recipients at the second ever Soldiering On Awards were the family of Ken Bellringer, a bomb disposal expert described as one of the most injured survivors of the war in Afghanistan, REME veteran and BLESMA volunteer Brendan West and Alison Grant, a former member of the Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps.

Celebrities who turned out to the event included Gloria Hunniford and Peter Stringfellow.



Willoughby wants you

FORCES favourite Holly Willoughby is urging British Army personnel to join her on a special edition of the iconic *Surprise Surprise* television show.

The *Celebrity Juice* star has been signed up to host a one-hour version of the programme, which will be broadcast on ITV later this year.

The tear-jerker will aim to astonish deserving members of the public with dramatic reunions and experiences.

Presenter Willoughby, who will be stepping into the famous shoes of Cilla Black for the role, said: “It is an incredible honour to be asked to front this *Surprise Surprise* special. I can’t wait to get out there.”

The show’s makers, who are currently scouring the country looking for

nominations, are keen for soldiers and their families to be involved.

Producer Jon Durbridge said: “If anyone serving in the land, sea or air forces wants to surprise a colleague, family member back at home or a friend – we’d love to hear from you.

“It could be as a massive thank you for their unconditional support or maybe a message they would like to give in a super-sized way.

“We are open to any suggestions.”

A spokesman added: “No surprise is considered too big or too small.”

Anyone wishing to nominate someone for the revamped programme should email surprisesurprise@itv.com

Personnel must first get clearance from Army Media & Communication via their chain of command.

Specialists set to invest in Afghan infrastructure

ROYAL Engineers who will help develop vital transport links and irrigation systems in Afghanistan are set to deploy on their latest mission this month.

A contingent of about 60 soldiers from 64 Works Group will head to Helmand province to manage infrastructure and improve the lives of the local population.

One of the projects the team will be working on is Route 611, which was once a dirt track but now allows easy access between Sangin and Gereshk.

Speaking ahead of the tour, Maj

Matthew Smith said: “The building of the roads has made a massive difference not just to the Afghans themselves but to our own soldiers.

“They are opening up areas so that those from the smaller villages have access to the bigger towns and markets, but with an asphalt surface it also makes it difficult for the Taliban to lay their bombs and explosive devices.”

Elsewhere in the formation, 527 Specialist Team will be responsible for providing infrastructure within the main operating bases during Op Herrick 16.



Picture: Sgt Brian Gamble, MoD (V)



Defence's diamond duties disclosed

THE various ceremonial roles of military personnel over the Queen's Diamond Jubilee weekend have been announced.

From The King's Troop performing the coronation day gun salute to the 1st Battalion, Irish Guards executing a "feu de joie" at Buckingham Palace, the Army will play a major part in the proceedings between June 2 and 5.

Gen Sir David Richards, Chief of the Defence Staff, said: "I am delighted that so many members of Her Majesty's Armed Forces have the opportunity to be part of the revelry."

"Our Service personnel have a unique relationship with the Queen, and I know that those taking part and their family members will remember these events with great pride."

"The whole of the Forces will be celebrating in their own way, wherever they are serving around the world."

Spectacles during the historic weekend will include a thanksgiving service at St Paul's Cathedral in London followed by two receptions, a lunch at Westminster Hall, a carriage procession to Buckingham Palace and



Picture: SAC Ellie Insole RAF

Pride: British soldiers will parade before the Queen later this month in honour of her 60-year reign

a military fly-past. The Royal Navy will accompany the royal barge and Royal Air Force military bands will also play a key role in the special occasion.

Military personnel involved in the event will wear their respective Service ceremonial clothing and further details will be announced at a later stage.

ROYAL ROLES FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL

Thames Diamond Jubilee Pageant

Accompanying the *Gloriana*, which will carry the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh, will be several Navy vessels including two P2000s, two picket boats, two rigid inflatables from HMS *Diamond* and four off-shore raiding crafts belonging to 539 Assault Squadron, Royal Marines. The Honourable Artillery Company will fire a gun salute as the royal barge passes the Tower of London.

Service of thanksgiving

Personnel from all three Services will line the steps of St Paul's Cathedral for Her Majesty's arrival and departure at the service. The State Trumpeters of the Household Cavalry, The Band of The Welsh Guards and the Royal Air Force Fanfare Trumpeters will all perform there.

Sovereign's escort

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment (The Life Guards and The Blues and Royals) will provide a sovereign's escort of nine

officers and 109 other ranks for the carriage procession from New Palace Yard to Buckingham Palace. The regiment's mounted band will ride along the route ahead of the procession.

Street-liners

The parade route will be lined with more than 1,000 personnel and military musicians from all three Services. These will include officers and other ranks from:

- ships, submarines, the Fleet Air Arm and land establishments of the Royal Navy
- the Grenadier, Coldstream, Scots, Irish and Welsh Guards of the Household Division and The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment
- The Queen's Colour Squadron (63 Squadron, RAF Regiment) from the Royal Air Force.

Bands in support of street-liners

Tri-Service bands will line the route alongside street-liners. These will include a band each from the Royal Marines and RAF and those of the Grenadier,

Coldstream, Scots, Irish and Welsh Guards of the Household Division.

Gun salute

Members of The King's Troop, Royal Horse Artillery will perform a gun salute from Horse Guards Parade to coincide with Her Majesty's carriage procession.

Guard of honour and feu de joie

Three officers and 101 other ranks from the 1st Battalion, Irish Guards will be on the forecourt of Buckingham Palace for the Queen's return in the carriage procession. When Her Majesty appears on the balcony a "feu de joie" will be performed. Translated as "fire of joy", this event will see a salute fired by rifles in rapid succession along a line of personnel and back again, interspersed with bars of the national anthem. The spectacle was last performed following the Queen's 80th birthday parade.

TIMELINE: DIAMOND JUBILEE

May 10-13

Military and equestrian displays from around the world will perform at Windsor Castle

May 19

Nearly 2,500 troops from the Army, Royal Navy and RAF will parade and muster through Windsor Castle before an audience of Her Majesty, the Duke of Edinburgh and 3,000 Armed Forces personnel, families and veterans

June 2

The Queen will attend the Epsom Derby and The King's Troop, Royal Horse Artillery will undertake a coronation day gun salute

June 3

Up to 1,000 boats will muster on the River Thames ahead of the Thames Diamond Jubilee Pageant. The Honourable Artillery Company will fire a gun salute as the royal barge, accompanied by Navy vessels, passes the Tower of London. Neighbourhoods across the country will stage a "Big Lunch"

June 5

Personnel from all three Services will line the steps into St Paul's Cathedral as the royal family attends a national service of thanksgiving. The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment (The Life Guards and The Blues and Royals) will provide a sovereign's escort.





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FUEL CONSUMPTION FIGURES FOR THE VOLVO C30 RANGE IN MPG (L/100KM); URBAN 20.9(13.5) – 65.7(4.3), COMBINED 31.4(9.0) – 74.3(3.8), EXTRA URBAN 43.5(6.5) – 80.7(3.5), CO₂ EMISSIONS 99-211 G/KM



“THE ARMY LADS ARE VERY POPULAR IN THE PIT LANE AND WE GET A LOT OF ATTENTION SO THERE IS MASSIVE SCOPE FOR US”
- PETROLHEADS PLOT PATH TO SPORTING SUCCESS (PAGES 78-79)

Signallers fight devastating African blaze

BRITISH troops have tackled a series of fires that consumed hundreds of acres of forest and left elephants fleeing for their lives on the slopes of Mount Kenya.

Army and Royal Air Force personnel helped to put out the blazes, which covered Africa's second highest peak in a haze of smoke, after a request from the Kenya Wildlife Service.

An RAF Puma helicopter was scrambled to carry out initial reconnaissance of the 5,199-metre World Heritage site before a joint team deployed to the national park to oversee the operation.

Soldiers from the British Army Training Unit Kenya, including members of 21 Signal Regiment (Air Support), provided command and control for the response and used UK military vehicles to transport firefighters closer to the scene.

Maj Richard Clarke said: “Both the Army and RAF responded to the Kenyan request for military assistance quickly and effectively, making a significant impact on the situation.

“All are aware, from local people to government ministers, just how much British forces contributed to the effort.”

At least three separate fires are thought to have been burning on the



Firefighting: A charter company helicopter drops water over Mount Kenya's forests

Picture (inset): Jiri Hauetjuk

picturesque mountainside.

Air personnel from the Tactical Supply Wing were sent out to refuel the civilian helicopters engaged in water bombardment and 30 local firefighters also lent a hand.

Joint Helicopter Force (Kenya) commanding officer, Wg Cdr Polly Perkins, explained: “Recent dry weather conditions have resulted in extreme forest fires which are threatening local wildlife. They were burning at varying degrees of intensity.”

Susie Weeks, executive officer of the Mount Kenya Trust, told the *Daily Mirror* that military personnel had coordinated “beautifully” with her organisation during the mission.

Iain Douglas-Hamilton, founder of Save the Elephants, added that flames were likely to have deprived local animals of food. “There are fires all over the place,” he said at the time. “It’s because of the dryness but I bet people are setting them... accidental but human-generated.”

WIN

■ BAFFLED by April's spine lines competition?

Those who read the issue's article about the icy escapades of injured Service personnel will have spotted that (Roger) Mercer, (Troy) Connor, (Ally) McKinney and (Rob) Maxwell were all interviewed about their trip to La Plagne.

This month we have teamed up with performance clothing maker EDZ (www.edzlayering.com) to give away five pairs of merino wool boxer shorts.

Weighing just 200 grams with a finish that is soft against the skin, these climate-controlled pants mean you will never hit a bum note in the underwear department again.

To be in with a chance of winning, tell us what links the words on the side of this issue. Answers, plus your size (XS to XXXL), to our new address or comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk by May 31. Winners will be drawn at random and the usual rules apply.



LEAGUE OF GENTLEMEN

	SWAG	FORCE FOR GOOD	QUIDS IN
1	£139,000	RIDER RESULT The Royal British Legion's riders branch has amassed an impressive sum for its organisation with various fund-raising activities. Falklands veteran Simon Weston accepted a cheque on behalf of the charity	Poppy Appeal
2	£22,582	PHYSICAL FEATS Members of the Royal Military Police's Close Protection Unit completed a 24-hour run, the Welsh 3,000s Challenge, the Classic Quarter Ultra Marathon, a Land's End-to-John O'Groats cycle ride, a relay up Mount Snowdon and the Fan Dance Challenge	Royal Military Police Benevolent Fund
3	£3,000	LAP FOR A LIFE Bdr Andrew Tough of 105 Regiment, Royal Artillery (Volunteers) organised a run in North Inch, Perth, doing two laps of the park in memory of each soldier killed in Afghanistan	Holidays4Heroes and HorseBack UK
4	£1,000	EXERCISE GOODWILL Troops from the Military Provost Guard Service at RAF Valley carried out a collection, morale-boosting bed visits and a magic show for hospitalised children	Alder Hey Children's Hospital, Liverpool

NEWS IN BRIEF

RESERVES TO GUARD GAMES

■ THE first tranche of Army Reservists to be deployed in support of this year's Olympics have received their call-up notices.

An initial group of around 200 will be tasked with venue security duties and will attend mobilisation and training in Grantham in June.

The second and largest team of around 1,000 part-timers will be rallied the following month.

Some will provide specialist capabilities but most will assist with safety.

It follows a parliament order allowing Reserves to be called up for service as part of the MoD's contribution to the sporting event.

Defence secretary Philip Hammond said: "Both the Reservist and overall defence contribution is on a similar scale to that deployed by other nations at recent Olympic Games and it will contribute to ensuring a safe, secure and enjoyable 2012."

DUKE'S TOUR CONTINUES

■ THE deputy commander of Land Forces is continuing a series of visits to Reservist units across the UK and Germany.

Maj Gen the Duke of Westminster aims to meet troops from every part-time formation to explain ongoing changes within the British Army and gather feedback from Service personnel on the ground.

Among those he has already spoken to are members of 106 (Yeomanry) Regiment, Royal Artillery in south London where the senior officer was given a tour of the unit's weapons systems.



MOTHERWELL TESTS MEDICS

■ PART-time members of 6th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland have been put to the test during a battle casualty drills and team medic training course.

Over the weekend serial at Motherwell, near Glasgow, Reservists were shown how to perform basic life support, use a defibrillator and apply different kinds of tourniquets.

LCpl Stoker (6 Scots) said: "It was great to get lessons from the subject experts, including a trauma surgeon. From the exercise phase it was apparent just how much medical tuition we need to undertake in our job as infantry soldiers."

FOR MORE TA NEWS...

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



TV ad campaign to return

AN advertising drive aimed at increasing membership in the Territorial Army will return to television screens later this year, it has been revealed.

Commercials carrying the strapline "do more, be more" that appeared on ITV, satellite and radio channels between January and March will be rerun in a bid to fill vacancies in the force.

Col Jonathan Calder-Smith, Army recruiting group, said the drive had so far resulted in a 60 per cent increase in telephone enquiries about joining up and a record numbers of texts.

"As with any advertising campaign there are always people who like it and people who don't," he told *Soldier*.

"The Army hasn't carried out any specific national marketing for the Reserves for about four years and we know that only about one in five young people feel they understand its role.

"We need to change this if we're going to attract the talent we need to keep being successful because come what may, the TA will grow."

Radio and digital adverts will be run until June ahead of the

television packages restarting in June and July.

The scenes feature serving Reservists and have been supported by posters which are displayed in various locations including bus stops and schools.

"It's vital that we keep up the momentum created by this initial campaign and get the message out both nationally and on a local level where there are specific recruiting challenges in particular units," added Col Calder-Smith.

"There are always legitimate questions about why the Army is recruiting at a time when there are well-publicised tranches of redundancies taking place, but we have been clear that we are always going to need new talent to fill our junior ranks and that advertising is necessary in order to obtain people of the highest quality."

"It was an ambitious campaign, but all those involved did a great job and pulled it off brilliantly."

The adverts follow recommendations made by the Future Reserves 2020 Commission last year which stated that the UK's part-time force should grow to reach 30,000 personnel.



Recruitment push: Scenes from the TA television commercial have helped to boost public enquiries



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Reclaims UK is working closely with the Armed Forces to help give back to our British soldiers. Reclaims UK recently sponsored The Royal Artillery Gold Cup Day at Sandown Park and we are working closely with Help For Heroes to help raise awareness.



Mr & Mrs Allen (39 Regt RA) presenting the Winners Trophy at the Royal Artillery Gold Cup. The Military Secretary Major General Andrew Gregory can also be seen on this picture and fully supports our cause to raise awareness for soldiers in the UK.

“Reclaims UK North West Ltd helped me claim back successfully. Bringing my PPI Claim to just over £16,000 with a first class service throughout, I would recommend them to anyone wanting to make a claim”

Armed Forces hugely Mis-Sold Payment Protection Insurance (PPI)

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How are we helping the Armed Forces?

Since July 2011 Reclaims UK North West Ltd has endeavoured to tailor a personal service to the Armed Forces. Working tirelessly to claim back monies that have been wrongfully and completely mis-sold throughout the tri-services on a massive scale, it has been our pleasure to help so many families claim back life changing sums including £16,383.12 for Mr & Mrs Broadist (22 FD Hosp) whom this money has helped through a relocation starting their new life in Canada. The money has also helped Mr & Mrs Allen (39 REGT) pay off all their debts, enjoy a wonderful family holiday and buy a lovely new Audi A3 with the £13,445.41 we were able to claim back for them. It is definitely worth noting that both Mr & Mrs Allen and Mr & Mrs Broadist were previously declined by their respective banks when they tried to claim the money back themselves. It was no easy task to reclaim the money but we did not take no for an answer and if you feel you have a claim we will do the same for you.

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.

Why use Reclaims UK?

Reclaims UK is a small family run business that can guarantee you will only ever speak to one person throughout your claim. There is no waiting around listening to annoying hold music and being passed from pillar to post. You will also be given a direct mobile number so that you can contact your personal claims handler at any time. As we appreciate the busy lifestyle of servicemen we offer a 24 hour service for anyone who is currently on tour.

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.

Reclaims UK has helped claim back over £150,000 for British Armed Forces. There are still thousands of personnel out there that do not know they have PPI and could be entitled to thousands of pounds in repayments and compensation. Call Reclaims UK today to see if you have a claim.

**To make your claim contact us on:
Tel: 0800 008 7241 Email: info@reclaimsuk.co.uk**

30 years on, Veterans are still fighting for peace

On the 14th of June this year it will have been 30 years since the Falklands War ended. But for many Falklands Veterans, the battle still rages in their minds.

Combat Stress is the leading UK charity specialising in the care of Veterans' mental ill health. We are supporting over 200 Veterans who served in the Falklands War and who, 30 years on, are still suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, anxiety, paranoia or depression from what they endured in battle.

We know there are hundreds more out there who need our help.



Darren's story

Darren Horsnell joined the 4th Field Regt, Royal Artillery at sixteen and was nineteen in 1982 when they were deployed to the Falklands. Here he bravely shares some of his experiences to explain why treatment is so vital.

'I saw the Argentinean jets coming down bomb alley and opening fire on our ships, dropping their bombs. A feeling of uselessness came over me. Our men were sitting targets. We were firing small arms at the airplanes and I remember screaming at them, "Leave them alone!" I still wake up screaming.'

Later I was injured and evacuated to the field hospital. While they were operating on my right calf, I could see the body of a guy in the next bed who had had his back blown out. I used to dream about this guy and in the dream he'd turn around and start talking.

When I came home I didn't tell anybody that I was having nightmares, or flashbacks. But all that was sinking deeper and deeper into me, and obviously it was getting harder to

hide. But I was in denial. It was everyone around me who had the problem, not me.

It was nearly 14 years before I got any help. My [then] wife forced me to go and see my GP, who told me about Combat Stress. They assessed me and diagnosed me with PTSD.

One day, the Activities Centre Manager said to me, "Why don't you try some art therapy?" When I was painting it took all the bad memories away. I am now teaching other Veterans to paint. It is a great form of therapy.

I also do Cognitive Behavioural Therapy at Combat Stress, once a month. And I am on a health management course too. I can honestly say Combat Stress saved my life. Without them I don't think I would be here today.

There's nothing wrong about going to ask for help. Go and see somebody.'

HAVE YOU SERVED?

Whenever you served, whatever your age, it's never too late to get the help you need. Don't put it off.

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IN MEMORIAM



CAPT RUPERT BOWERS (24)
2ND BATTALION,
THE MERCIAN REGIMENT
KIA MARCH 21 – AFGHANISTAN

SOLDIERS from 2nd Battalion, The Mercian Regiment are mourning the loss of a gifted and fiercely loyal officer who excelled at leading his men in the field.

Capt Rupert Bowers was killed by an improvised explosive device as he helped to clear an area of Helmand province from the threat of insurgents.

The 24-year-old was attached to 2nd Battalion, The Rifles and was commanding a small team responsible for the training and development of the Afghan National Army in the Mirmandab region of Nahr-e Saraj.

Capt Bowers commissioned into his regiment in 2007 and deployed on his first tour of Afghanistan the same year.

The Serviceman's actions during a complex insurgent ambush resulted in him receiving a Mention in Dispatches and he returned to theatre in 2009 when he was wounded in action.

"The bravest of the brave, he died as he lived leading from the front in the face of the enemy," said Lt Col Colin Marks, commanding officer of 2 Mercian.

"He was such a sincere and fun-loving person. His brother officers loved him dearly and we will remember him for his infectious smile and wicked sense of humour."

Capt Bowers leaves behind wife Victoria, parents Patrick and Jane, sister Juliet and his son Hugo, who was born when the officer was home on leave in February.



SGT LUKE TAYLOR (33)
ROYAL MARINES
KIA MARCH 26
– AFGHANISTAN

MEMBERS of Task Force Helmand are mourning the loss of two British colleagues who were shot dead outside Lashkar Gah Main Operating Base in Afghanistan.

Sgt Luke Taylor of the Royal Marines and LCpl Michael Foley of the Adjutant General's Corps were manning the front gate as part of the centre's guard force when a rogue member of the Afghan National Army attacked them.

Over the course of his impressive career, 33-year-old Sgt Taylor acquired extensive operational knowledge.

His commanding officer said: "He was one of those very unique 'soldiers' who combined the highest professional standards with a completely disarming and relaxed personality.

"With a wealth of experience under his belt, he was fearless and would tackle every challenge head on.

"Those junior would look up to him, those above would listen when he spoke."

The senior NCO's officer commanding added: "Sgt Taylor was a formidable character who doted on his family.

"For me, he epitomised everything positive about the military – he worked hard and played hard and his efforts in Helmand province will not be forgotten."

A colour sergeant from the Royal Marines said: "It is difficult to summarise in a few words the sorrow and grief felt for Luke's loss.

"Sadness for his immediate family but also that empty feeling and grief gripping us – the remaining members of his extended family – the

Royal Marines brotherhood."

Sgt Taylor, who was from Bournemouth, leaves behind his wife and young son Roan.

LCpl Foley enlisted in September 2003 and joined The Royal Logistic Corps around six months later.

After changing trades to become a combat human resources specialist, he was posted to 9 Regiment, RLC as a military administrator. He arrived in Sennelager, Germany, in December 2010 to take up a position with 20th Armoured Brigade and deployed on Herrick 15 as a member of the task force headquarters' information hub team.

"LCpl Foley died protecting his comrades – his final gift of service to the Army and his country and the ultimate sacrifice by a young commander who epitomised selflessness and dedication throughout his career," said Maj BJ Cattermole (Scots DG), chief of staff of Headquarters 20th Armoured Brigade.

"His cheeky wit, constant smiles amid adversity and indomitable spirit leave a hole here in Helmand and in Germany."

Sgt Richard Dawson-Jones, information hub manager, added: "He may have been short in stature, but he was huge in personality and would always be in the middle of any department mischief."

LCpl Foley leaves behind his wife, three young children, parents, sister and brother.

A family statement said: "Michael will be sorely missed by family, friends and everyone privileged to serve with him."



LCPL MICHAEL FOLEY (25)
ADJUTANT GENERAL'S CORPS
(STAFF AND PERSONNEL SUPPORT)
KIA MARCH 26 – AFGHANISTAN

A SERVICEMAN described by colleagues as a true "Jack the lad" has died of wounds sustained in an IED attack earlier this year.

Cpl Jack Stanley, who served with Combined Force Lashkar Gah (The Queen's Royal Hussars Battlegroup), was being treated at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham after being transported back from Afghanistan.

The section commander was injured on February 3 while his multiple conducted an intelligence-gathering patrol in Pupalzay Kalay.

The 26-year-old joined the Army in January 2003 before deploying on Ops Telic 8 and 13.

An outstanding footballer, the Bolton Wanderers fan was a key member of the team that won the British Army (Germany) Cup in

2010 and Cavalry Cup in 2011.

Lt Col Ian Mortimer, commanding officer of Combined Force Lashkar Gah (QRH Battlegroup), said: "Cpl Stanley was utterly dedicated to his friends and the regiment, and this just shone through in everything he did."

"Both on and off the sports field he excelled. He epitomised the very best of his generation."

The soldier leaves behind his mother, father, sister and girlfriend.

His mum Brenda said: "Jack was a kind, generous lad with a ready smile."

"He fought so hard to stay with us and the devastation we feel cannot be described. The world is a duller place without him and heaven brighter."



CPL JACK STANLEY (26)
THE QUEEN'S ROYAL HUSSARS
(THE QUEEN'S OWN AND ROYAL IRISH)
DIED APRIL 8

IN MEMORIAM



SPR CONNOR RAY (21)
33 ENGINEER REGIMENT,
ROYAL ENGINEERS
DIED APRIL 18

AN IED searcher who was caught in a bomb blast on the eve of his 21st birthday has died.

Spr Connor Ray of 33 Engineer Regiment (Explosive Ordnance Disposal), Royal Engineers was involved in a search and clearance operation in Nad-e Ali on April 11 when he was injured by the explosion. He was taken to Camp Bastion before being moved to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham but died a week later from his wounds.

The 21-year-old from Newport began his military career in 2008 at the Army Foundation College before joining the corps in 2009 and qualifying as a building and structural finisher.

He joined his regiment in April 2010, where the Serviceman trained as an advanced searcher

and later saved many British and Afghan lives by undertaking the high-risk work.

Commanding officer Lt Col Simon Bell said: "This tragic loss has shaken both the EOD and Search Task Force and the regiment deeply.

"An extremely positive and determined young soldier, Spr Ray was a real team player.

"Amiable and upbeat, he had a natural ability to encourage and inspire others with his limitless optimism."

Spr Ray leaves behind his brother, stepfather, two sisters and girlfriend.

A family statement said the soldier had joined his mother in heaven.

"Connor was a hero to all of his family and friends," it said. "He loved his time in the Army."

Malaysian air crash victims remembered

FIVE British soldiers have finally been formally laid to rest nearly 62 years after they died in a plane crash in the Malaysian jungle.

Personnel from 47 Air Despatch Squadron, Royal Logistic Corps helped to bury the 12 passengers and crew killed when their Royal Air Force Dakota KN630 went down in 1950 after losing power.

Those on-board the aircraft had been on a target-marking sortie for Lincoln bombers tasked to destroy communist insurgent camps.

But due to the security risk and inhospitable terrain, a rescue party was forced to put the deceased in makeshift graves close to the crash site. Only after a 2008 expedition involving 150 searchers were the human remains found.



Site of sorrow: The wreckage of the fallen RAF Dakota which crashed in 1950 Picture: Cpl Scott Robertson, RAF

Royal Army Service Corps despatchers Cpl Philip Bryant, Dvr Peter Taylor, Dvr Roy Wilson and Dvr Oliver Goldsmith were interred alongside passenger Maj John Proctor

of The Loyal Regiment and their RAF and civilian counterparts at a service for the families of the fallen. Their loved ones were awarded Elizabeth Crosses in recognition of the sacrifices made.

Commander to fight for fitness

THE incoming colonel commandant of the Royal Army Physical Training Corps has vowed to continue the unit's efforts to help soldiers stay fit.

The general officer commanding 1 (UK) Armoured Division, Maj Gen James Bashall, has taken over from Gen Sir Jeremy Mackenzie, who held the post for a record 15 years.

"I am proud and honoured to take this role," the officer said.

"The professionalism, dedication to duty and strong leadership in the areas of physical training, adventurous training, sport and

rehabilitation has ensured the Army has remained fit to fight during the many operational deployments the corps has been part of since it was established in 1860.

"I look forward to supporting the unit as it continues its fine tradition of ensuring that our personnel are given all the opportunities and resources they need to maintain their fitness, health and well-being."

The RAPTC was originally formed as the Army Gymnastic Staff. It was given its royal title by the Queen in 2010.



Picture: Graeme Main

60

PERCENTAGE INCREASE IN TELEPHONE ENQUIRIES TO THE BRITISH ARMY SINCE THE SERVICE BEGAN AN AMBITIOUS TELEVISION ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN TO BOOST TERRITORIAL ARMY NUMBERS AT THE START OF THE YEAR (PAGE 19)



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THE BIGGER PICTURE

THE 100-day countdown to this year's Olympics have been marked by troops from the Grenadier, Coldstream, Scots and Welsh Guards at Horse Guards Parade – venue for the Games' beach volleyball competition. Prior to the sporting spectacle the site will host scenes of pageantry for the Diamond Jubilee and Trooping the Colour events. Picture: LOCOG





Innovation ASSAULT

PROGRESSIVE GADGETS PRIMED FOR BRITISH ARMY USE

Report: Joe Clapson
Pictures: Steve Dock

A SHOWCASE of impressive gadgetry that could one day be heading for the Service stockpile has been revealed by the MoD.

Among the intriguing designs to receive funding from the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory's Centre for Defence Enterprise are a robotic platform set to revolutionise ground patrols, protective vests which expand with the wearer's chest and a helmet gunshot detection system.

The cutting-edge contraptions have been produced by small or medium-sized enterprises and are either in use or being developed with a view to entering theatre in the coming months.

Here is a taste of the novel devices...



SPARTAN SOLDIER SYSTEM

ENERGY dissipation in this technology from Crib Gogh could offer the same protection as the Osprey kit while reducing weight and increasing comfort. Clips



are used instead of Velcro, giving easier access to casualties. In like-for-like tests the vest and rucksack finished ahead of leading market manufacturers and the design permits the wearer's chest to expand when inhaling. The concept behind the system centres on allowing soldiers to operate at maximum capability.



POWERQUBE

SOMERSET-based company Aardvark EM has developed this anaerobic digestion unit that converts sewage and food waste into front-line power. The ingenious device could be used to provide heat and electricity in forward operating bases, utilising the water created on-site. Taking into consideration the cost of fuel needed for camps, it is estimated that PowerQube could save the MoD £839,545 per year. Mark Clayton, managing director of the firm, said: "You could take this to a FOB and conserve 21,000 litres of diesel which saves a lot of money and also reduces the risk to soldiers transporting fuel."

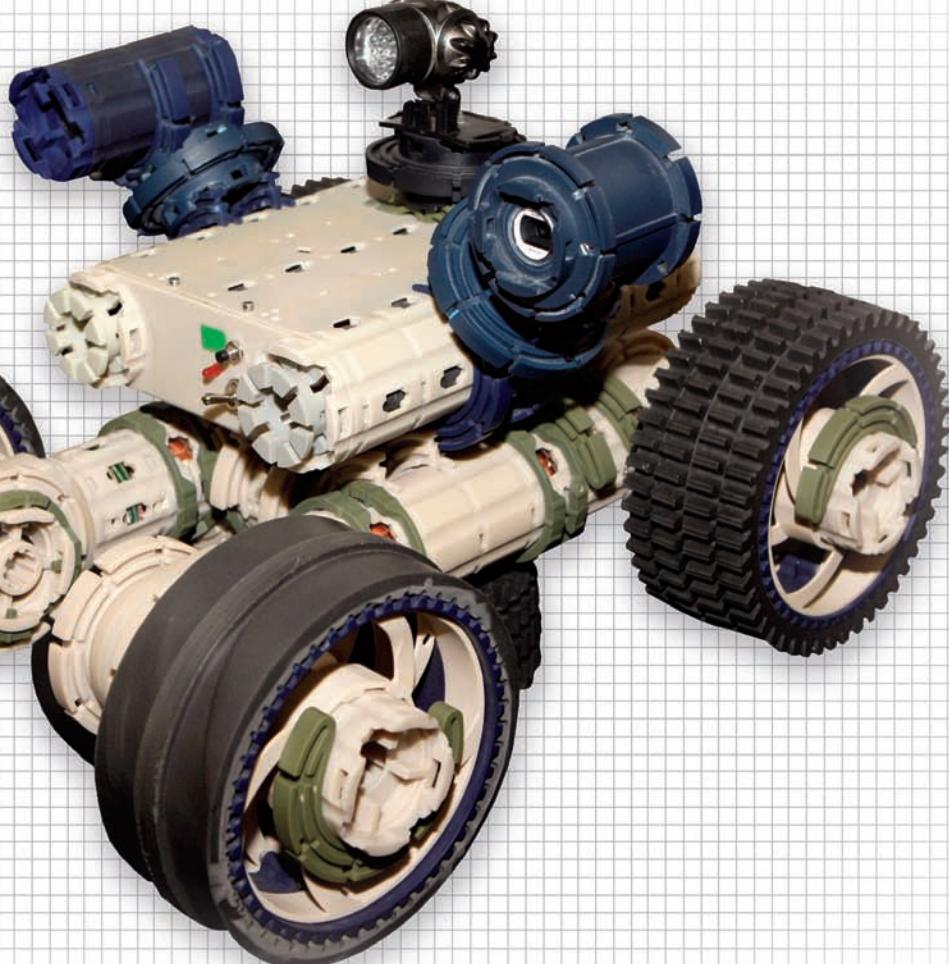
EX-FIX BIKE

BLAST injury patients whose lower limbs are supported by external fixation devices are often unable to use conventional cycling machines. But thanks to knowledge gained from the training of Olympic athletes, this customisable exercise bike enables wounded Service personnel at Headley Court's Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre to improve their strength and conditioning. The cage-like structure has been developed by Frazer-Nash Consultancy and facilitates a range of movements for each leg. Speaking on behalf of the company, Mark Dorn said: "This allows you to do some serious exercise whereas before you wouldn't be able to."

EXTRM ROBOT

THIS "plug and play" system, developed by Robosynthesis, can be snapped together in minutes and has the potential to revolutionise ground patrols by providing quick intelligence and bomb detection. The unmanned vehicle uses a state-of-the-art gearbox and is compact enough to pack away into Bergens. It can be fitted with ground-penetrating radars to detect explosive devices and the tyres can be replaced with tracks for difficult terrain.

Larger versions are able to go out ahead of conventional vehicles to scout safe routes and the technology is capable of being submerged in water.



AUTONOMOUS VEHICLES

TECHNOLOGY to support driverless vehicles on military operations is being developed by TRW Conekt. The innovator's stand-alone guidance system comprises a number of sensors and cameras to allow trucks to follow a convoy's lead without falling out of line. The lightweight equipment is being designed to mitigate risks associated with driver stress, fatigue and changeable environmental conditions. Julien Burlett, principal



E-TEXTILES

A BRAND new concept could drastically reduce the weight burden and cost of batteries used by troops. Surrey-based enterprise Intelligent Textiles has developed conductive yarns that weave directly into fabrics and pass electrical power and data. The futuristic materials replicate a printed circuit board, allowing a single energy source to replace costly and heavy batteries. Such fabrics also eradicate the need for personnel to carry wires and cables. Asha Thompson, director of the company, said: "At the moment troops are carrying 60 AAAs and



wasting 70 per cent of power but with this technology you can have one battery that lasts for two to four missions depending on its size. It's all about reducing the burden for the soldier." Intelligent Textiles currently holds the Guinness world record for running the most power through a piece of fabric. Its system is being field trialled this month.

engineer at the company, said: "We're looking at reducing the burden of drivers who work in difficult conditions for long hours. This technology provides warning signals if the vehicle in front is lost and the next phase is working on autonomous steering and braking with a driver in the cab." The expert added: "The technology for completely autonomous driving is there but there are legal issues that need to be worked through before bringing that into service."

GUNSHOT DETECTION

THE Centre for Bio-Inspired Technology at Imperial College London is developing a helmet-mounted gunshot detection system that can identify the origins of incoming fire. Rounds are pinpointed by an array of sensors that measure sound waves and then calculate the bearing and range of the firing point. Dylan Banks, research fellow at the centre, explained: "This equipment uses micro-electro-mechanical systems – speaker technology – which was developed for mobile phones and will also give accurate information about distances. Microphones pick up noises then a computer at the back of the helmet carries out signal processing and passes it on vocally or via a wristwatch. It will definitely help to improve soldiers' situational awareness."



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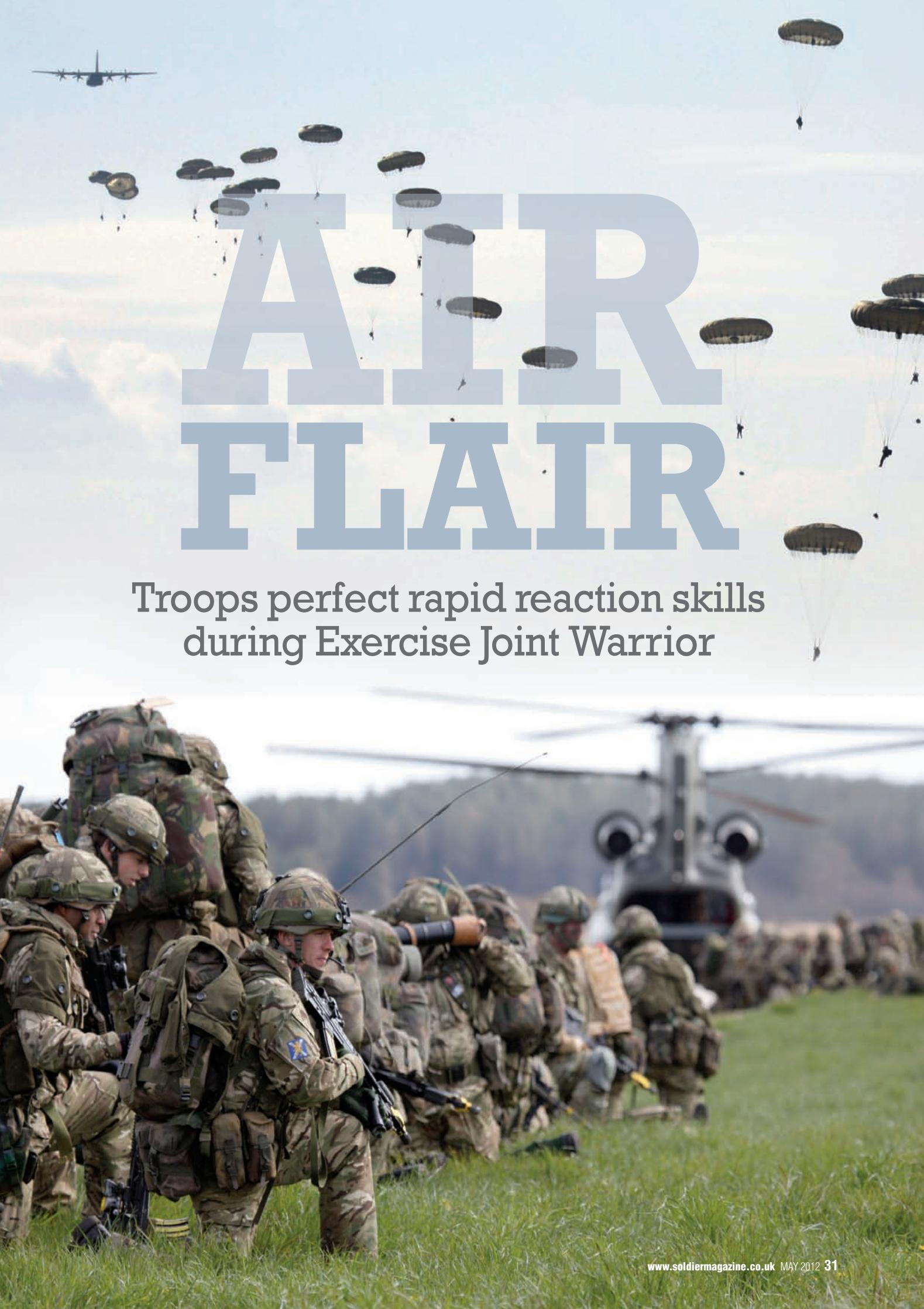
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AIR FLAIR



Troops perfect rapid reaction skills
during Exercise Joint Warrior





Report: Sarah Goldthorpe
Pictures: Steve Dock

AS the quiet thumping of a Chinook helicopter intensifies through the nippy air of south west Scotland, tensions are mounting.

What was yesterday a placid and pleasant environment has quickly become a violent and hotly-disputed region requiring British troops to intervene at high speed.

Using a combination of landings, soldiers from 16 Air Assault Brigade arrive to confront a dangerous enemy force ahead of a United Nations peacekeeping mission.

But civvies in this conflict zone remain suspiciously calm and business in local hostelleries is booming with senior officers.

After being staged here for more than ten years, Exercise Joint Warrior – the largest of all UK defence serials – has become a firm part of the Dumfries and Galloway landscape.

"Apart from when they are doing something with planes or helicopters, we hardly know soldiers are here," said Cindy Doran, proprietor of the Torrs Warren Country House Hotel in Stoneykirk.

Her husband Jim added: "When we first came here eight years ago, the locals were full of stories about finding Gurkhas inside their dustbins.

"There is certainly no resentment over it and long may the exercise continue."

As residents carry on with their day-to-day chores, the tri-Service operation unfolding around them is anything but routine business for the Army personnel involved.

Great Britain's Airborne Task Force must be ready to deploy anywhere in the world

'It's about being able to deal with the unknown'

at five days' notice and, to that end, the demands of this serial are considerable and sometimes unfamiliar.

"Training to undertake this duty is incredibly challenging and requires skills which we have not used for some time," admitted Lt Col Neil Den-McKay, commanding officer of 5th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland.

His battlegroup takes lead responsibility for the formation from this month.

Col Andrew Jackson, deputy commander of the rapid reaction force, said the exercise was equipping troops with capabilities other than those required to combat a desert-based insurgency.

"This represents a culmination of training for the brigade's personnel; they have been building up to this," he explained to *Soldier* ahead of a tactical air landing.

"We have recalibrated from Herrick 13.

"A lot of the qualities needed in Afghanistan translate across to contingency operations but the methods are different."

After 100 parachuting troops scatter over the region from a Hercules aircraft, the mission to seize and secure an airfield at West Freugh picks up pace with support from Apaches and Sea Kings from the Joint Helicopter Force.

Kitted out in tactical effect simulation gear and with only their feet to transport casualties and resources, the soldiers work

Scottish stamina: Members of 16 Air Assault Brigade get to grips with a theatre entry operation during the international military serial in Dumfries and Galloway

across boggy and bramble-filled terrain alongside colleagues from France's 11 Parachute Brigade.

"It has been good so far," said Spr Gwynne Griffiths (RE), one of around 1,600 troops on the serial.

"I was on Joint Warrior last year but this one seems a lot more realistic.

"When I think about deploying like this I feel pretty positive about it.

"The skills we are learning are useful."

Col Adam Griffiths, commander of the Field Training Unit, said the episode and its after-action reviews were teaching troops to work without the well-established communications and vehicle support found in Helmand province.

"The aim is for soldiers to go away having worked hard and knowing there's more to life than just Herrick," the officer explained.

"Everyone needs to be able to administrate and look after themselves.

"This is not the culture of going back to the FOB where your bags are; what troops land with is what they have got."

Intelligence officer Capt Colin Wood (Scots) helped to write the scenario.

"We are not just dealing with a straightforward enemy," he added.

"There is complexity across the board here and it's about being able to deal with the unknown."

With conflict simmering across the world's continents, the barren backdrop of Joint Warrior provides a blank canvas on which British troops can paint a picture of the possibilities facing them on future operations – wherever they may be. ■



Picture: Sgt Russ Nolan, RLC



Report: Joe Clapson
Pictures: Steve Dock

THE defeat of Hitler's ruthless regime during the Second World War is usually credited to the undoubtedly courageous efforts of soldiers, sailors and airmen of the Allied forces.

But perhaps as significant in bringing an end to the suffering of millions were Bletchley Park's crack cryptographers.

The astounding abilities of Government Code and Cypher School staff at the Buckinghamshire stately home uncovered enemy plans and enabled British personnel and their international partners to pre-empt deadly attacks.

Now, for the first time, Servicemen and women can get a deeper insight into the genius behind such feats at a public exhibition dedicated to Alan Turing.

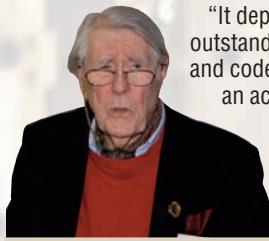
The late Cambridge graduate led the way in devising groundbreaking techniques for

solving Nazi ciphers and ultimately discovered

settings for the Enigma machine used to encrypt and decrypt classified messages.

As well as highlighting his vital contribution to the conflict itself, the display reveals Turing as the original computer scientist who foresaw the PC as it is known today.

In 1936 the expert set out the idea of a one-stop-shop workstation and the resulting code-cracking Colossus



At that time there was nothing else that could've saved Britain or Europe

machine – designed and built by engineer Thomas Flowers – is presented for visitors to see along with his mathematical workings and personal artefacts.

Iain Standen, chief executive officer of the Bletchley Park Trust and a former colonel in the Royal Corps of Signals, said: "This exhibition gives long-awaited recognition to the short but brilliant life and legacy of the father of computing."

"It depicts a man who was not only an outstanding and visionary mathematician and code breaker, but also a beloved son, an accomplished sportsman and a man of humour and sensitivity."

Turing's colleague, 91-year-old Jerry Roberts (pictured left), explained the mastermind's impact to *Soldier*.

"In the spring of 1941 Britain was losing the war and German U-boats were sinking incoming ships left, right and centre. But of course, we did not know where the enemy wolf packs were waiting and lurking.

"At that juncture, Turing made his fantastic achievement of breaking the Enigma.

"After that, the number of ships being sunk dropped by 75 per cent."

The former Intelligence Corps officer added: "At that time there was nothing else that could've saved Britain or Europe.

"I hate to say it but the code breaking was as important in the war as the soldiers fighting on the ground."

Alongside previously unseen documents at the exhibition is a government apology, issued posthumously to Turing by Gordon Brown in 2009.

In it the then prime minister expressed his regret at the "appalling" way the mathematician was treated when convicted of gross indecency in 1952, at a time when homosexuality was illegal in the UK.

After admitting he was gay, the pioneer was sentenced to a hormone treatment that amounted to chemical castration.

Just two years later Turing was adjudged

to have committed suicide at the age of just 41.

Now considered one of the most influential thinkers of modern times, the scientist's contribution to the campaign against the Nazis is impossible to overstate.

After the conflict Gen Dwight Eisenhower, supreme commander of Allied forces in Europe, said intelligence from the code breakers was of "priceless value".

"It saved thousands of British and American lives and, in no small way, contributed to the speed with which the enemy was routed and eventually forced to surrender," he said.

But Roberts recalled his colleague being modest about such achievements.

"He wore a mid-brown sports jacket and grey, rather crumpled trousers – a less heroic looking man you could never imagine," the veteran said.

The nation now has chance to recognise just how important this reserved individual's calculations were – both to computing and to the entire war effort.

Left to right, War winner: The Government Code and Cypher School at Bletchley Park, a Typex cypher machine, a slate sculpture of Alan Turing and components of the pioneer's secret speech system

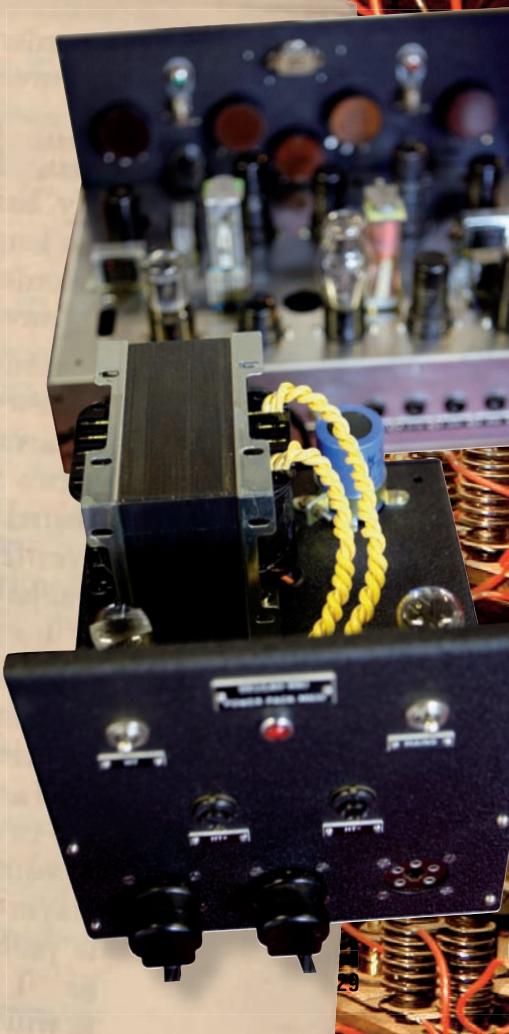
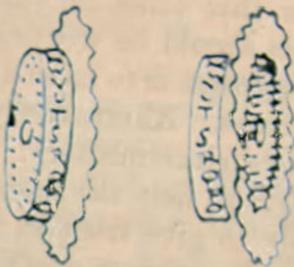
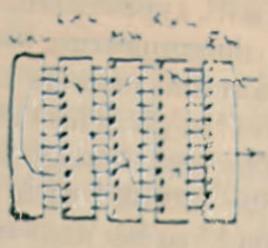
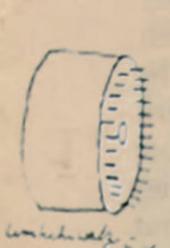
Background picture: Relay gate of Turing's code-cracking Bombe machine





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1. BAKER

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: UK

In service: 1800 – 1838

Weight: 4.08kg

Length: 1,162mm

Calibre: 15.9mm

Action: Flintlock

Rate of fire: User dependent, usually

two or more rounds per minute

Expert opinion: *"Revolutionary during the Napoleonic War, this weapon allowed riflemen to shoot accurately at individuals."*



2. LEE ENFIELD

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: UK

In service: 1895 – 1958 mainstream (.22 no 8 out of service date currently under review)

Weight: 3.24kg to 4.19kg

Length: 44.5 inch (no 4 mk1)

Calibre: .303 British (7.7 x 56mm)

Action: Manually operated, rotating bolt

Rate of fire: Average 15 rounds per minute with a record of 38

Expert opinion: *"Extremely accurate and powerful weapon."*



3. KALASHNIKOV

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: RUSSIA

In service: 1952 – present

Weight: 4.3kg to 3.14kg

Length: 870mm

Calibre: 7.62 x 39mm

Action: Gas operated, rotating bolt

Rate of fire: 600 rounds per minute

Expert opinion: *"The definitive assault rifle, with in excess of 100 million produced in more than 90 variants."*



4. M1 GARAND

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: USA

In service: 1936 – present

Weight: 4.32kg

Length: 1,103mm

Calibre: .30-06 (7.62 x 63mm)

Action: Gas operated, rotating bolt

Rate of fire: 120 rounds per minute, user dependent

Expert opinion: *"The first general issue, semi-automatic rifle. Famous for its "en-bloc" clip that ejected on the last round."*



5. PATTERN 1853

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: UK

In service: 1853 – 1867

Weight: 4.3kg

Length: 1,400mm

Calibre: 14.66mm

Action: Percussion lock

Rate of fire: User dependent, usually

three or more rounds per minute

Expert opinion: *"The first general issue infantry rifle in the British Army."*





6. MOSIN NAGANT

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: RUSSIA

In service: 1891
Weight: 4.22kg
Length: 1,306mm
Calibre: 7.62 x 54mm
Action: Manually operated, rotating bolt
Rate of fire: User dependent, approximately ten rounds per minute
Expert opinion: *"Perhaps best known for its sniper conversion, this weapon was the standard Russian service rifle from 1891."*



7. FAL

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: BELGIUM

In service: 1957 – present
Weight: 4.45kg (3.77kg for para models)
Length: 1,100mm (990mm or 736mm)
Calibre: 7.62 x 51mm
Action: Gas operated, tilting block, select-fire or semi-auto only (British self-loading rifle)
Rate of fire: 650-700 rounds per minute
Expert opinion: *"British and Argentine variants of this weapon clashed in the 1982 Falklands War [pages 40-43]."*



8. L85A2

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: UK

In service: 2001 – present
Weight: 4.98kg with loaded magazine and optical sight
Length: 785mm
Calibre: 5.56 x 45mm
Action: Gas operated, select-fire, rotary bolt
Rate of fire: Cyclic 610-775 rounds per minute
Expert opinion: *"The A1 version showed its flaws during the Gulf War but after modifications the A2 has been very successful on combat operations."*



9. M16

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: USA

In service: 1964 for XM16E1
Weight: 3.4kg
Length: 1,000mm
Calibre: 5.56 x 45mm
Action: Gas operated, select-fire, rotary bolt
Rate of fire: Cyclic 700 – 950
Expert opinion: *"This is a favourite with soldiers and will probably be around for some years to come."*

10. L129A1

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: USA as the LM7

In service: 2010 UOR
Weight: 5.0kg
Length: 900mm – 945mm
Calibre: 7.62mm
Action: Gas operated, semi-automatic
Rate of fire: User dependent, as fast as you can pull the trigger
Expert opinion: *"Does exactly what it says on the tin, proving very successful in Afghanistan."*



Report: Joe Clapson

MAY 1982 saw some of the most significant military acts in modern history, with the sinking of the Argentine *General Belgrano* warship and the recapture of Goose Green.

It was 30 years ago this month that the occupying Argentine force was to feel the full effect of a tri-Service British task force.

Prime minister Margaret Thatcher sanctioned the firing of torpedoes at Argentina's second largest ship on May 2 – it was destroyed, killing 323 of the enemy.

Following the British attack there were allegations that the vessel had not been inside the 200-mile exclusion zone when hit and as a result the conflict intensified, both diplomatically and for the Service personnel fighting for the islands' sovereignty.

Speaking at the time, the defence secretary John Nott said: "The *General Belgrano* was a threat to our men and

therefore it is quite correct that she was attacked by our submarines."

While a battle in the Atlantic raged, with several UK ships and many lives lost, Britain demonstrated its intent to win the conflict by requisitioning the QE2 ocean liner to transport 3,000 extra troops to the war zone.

Soldiers from 5 Infantry Brigade – including personnel from 2nd Battalion, Scots Guards; 1st Battalion, Welsh Guards and 1st Battalion, 7th Duke of Edinburgh's Own Gurkha Rifles – travelled on the iconic ship and joined the fight in the Falklands on May 27.

But it was the dramatic images of British units fighting for their countrymen on the tiny overseas territory that captured the nation's imagination.

The raid on San Carlos by the Royal Marines of 3 Commando Brigade enabled

a beachhead to be established, giving UK forces a vital foothold on the islands.

This was followed by a fierce 18-hour battle, which led to the recapture of Goose Green and Darwin.

It was in that East Falkland arena that Lt Col Herbert Jones, commanding officer of 2 Para, lost his life while leading a charge on an enemy position. For his actions he received a posthumous Victoria Cross.

Soldier spoke to the man who took over the lead role from "H", Chris Keeble, about his unforgettable experience in the South Atlantic.

"Ammunition and resources were low, we were light on numbers and everything we had needed to be carried for 25km," he said.

"It was about zero degrees and one minute it was wet and the next it was freezing with a polar wind blowing.



Bold battle

Historic events signalled all-out war 30 years ago

TIMELINE
How the conflict unfolded in May 1982...

May 1
British Vulcan bombers launch the first air attacks on Stanley airfield



May 2
Argentine cruiser, the *General Belgrano*, sunk by HMS *Conqueror*

May 4
HMS *Sheffield* lost after being hit by an Exocet missile



"But we drew on the spirit of the British Army and The Parachute Regiment and worked to the motto 'utrinque paratus' – ready for anything'."

The ex-officer, who retired as a colonel, went on to explain how it was teamwork and a recognition that "it was inconceivable that we would lose" that was critical to the paratroopers' success.

"The odds were 3-1 in favour of the defence; it was dark, uncertain and the Argentines had been prepared for about six weeks."

Describing how he came up with a plan to get the enemy to lay down their weapons, the 70-year-old said: "It was a long winter night and I came to the conclusion

that there was a possibility of a counter-attack and we were extremely low on ammunition.

"One in six of our men had been killed or injured and all conventional military options had been exhausted.

"I knelt down and prayed and suddenly got this idea that I would walk down and offer them the chance to surrender."

The veteran added: "Extraordinarily they said 'we've had enough of this, we never wanted to fight for the Malvinas and as long as we can do it with dignity we'll surrender'.

"The fact of the matter was that their will had gone – once that's gone then you cannot win."

Following the liberation of Goose Green, the major's men freed the Falkland Islanders who had been held as

detainees by the Argentines.

"As we released the prisoners a little girl bowed up to me and looked me in the eye," said Keeble.

"The nine-year-old, called Andrea Grey, offered me a glass jar of coins and notes.

"I said I couldn't accept her gift and she responded 'my freedom is worth all of my pocket money'.

"That summed it all up and I would go to hell and back and do it all again if I had to."

First steps: Troops from 5 Infantry Brigade come ashore by landing craft from HMS *Fearless* at Port San Carlos

Picture: Paul Haley, *Soldier* archive



May 7

Argentina warned that warships or aircraft more than 12 miles from their home coastline would be regarded as hostile

May 21

3,000 British troops establish a beachhead at San Carlos. Argentine aircraft sink HMS *Ardent*

May 25

HMS *Coventry* and *Atlantic* Conveyors lost

May 30

Royal Marines take Douglas settlement. 3 Para recapture Teal inlet

May 23

HMS *Antelope* irreparably damaged. Ten Argentine aircraft are shot down

May 28-29

Argentines surrender at Goose Green and Darwin



Stuff of nightmares

Atlantic aviator lifts lid on fearless Falklands flights

Interview: Joe Clapson

THIRTY years after his death-defying journeys through snowstorms and relentless enemy fire, helicopter pilot Capt Sam Drennan has reflected on the importance of his contribution to the Falklands mission.

But despite admitting that some experiences were "the stuff of nightmares", the former member of 656 Squadron, Army Air Corps said his flights to recover injured comrades were rarely as risky as events unfolding on the ground.

Speaking to *Soldier* ahead of the anniversary of the renowned Mount Tumbledown assault, the Scotsman explained the true impact of sky-bound operators in a conflict that usually conjures images of hand-to-hand combat.

"The air side of things was vital because it was the only way of getting around with any speed," he recalled.

"The terrain was so awful that it was really unsuitable for vehicles so we combined taking ammunition to the front with carrying the injured out.

"Without this support I believe a lot of those seriously wounded would have died."

Drennan (pictured right), who retired from the Service in 2000 as a lieutenant colonel, was drafted in to action at short notice in 1982 because of his ability to fly both the Scout and Gazelle airframes.

Arriving in the region on June 2, his first task was to carry underslung loads –

including a spare Scout engine – from San Carlos to Goose Green.

"The flying conditions varied from brilliant where you could see for 100 miles to storms where you could barely discern anything," the airman said.

"The problem was that I had to go through the no-fly zone so I just clenched my buttocks and flew straight through, hoping I didn't get shot down."

With their comrades fighting in austere conditions against a vicious Argentine force, it was down to the personnel on-board 12 Scouts and 15 Gazelles to ensure supplies reached the front line and to rescue stricken troops.

"There were problems getting casualties off Mount Tumbledown because to carry someone on a stretcher you needed four men as the ground was so terrible," the aviator added.

"It was very dangerous because they were getting fired at."

Drennan's debut sortie on the peak was to collect a wounded Gurkha and Scots Guardsman from a minefield as Argentine shells fell around them.

"With the truly awesome Cpl Julian Rigg as a gunner, we were successful," the 65-year-old explained. "We were asked if we could go once more to the right flank of the mountain because there were some severely

hurt soldiers there.

"Our helicopter was exposed to fire from the Argies but we used a bit of fieldcraft and kept close to the rocks to sneak along the side of Tumbledown.

"Then when we'd established where the troops were, we took a deep breath and exposed ourselves and landed right where they were, very open to the enemy."

That's the most frightening thing that's happened to me but it was a case of 'fly on this or die'!

Injured personnel were flown at speed to the Army's medical team back at the British base in Fitzroy before Drennan returned to the battlefield seven more times to retrieve maimed colleagues.

For that particular mission, in which he rescued 16 men, the courageous veteran was decorated with the Distinguished Flying Cross.

"I received the award for being stupid," he insisted. "But it was simply not possible for them to get out by stretcher."

"It was actually quite exciting because there were a lot of bangs going off and the Scots Guards were firing grenades right over the top of my aircraft to keep the baddies' heads down."

But it was on a separate sortie that Drennan's nerves were tested to the limit – his operating system failed while transporting a dying British soldier to the field hospital.

"We were in a snowstorm in the dark, in a little primitive helicopter, and my main instruments went down," he remembered.





"That was the scariest moment of my whole life, it just doesn't compare to anything else."

"Mick Sharpe – a superb aviator – was in the back with the casualty. We got hit by the most violent updraft which shook the aircraft badly and my main flight instrument and gyro toppled.

"At the same time we were completely engulfed in snow."

Drennan used his standby artificial horizon instrument to stay in the sky and ensure a safe landing for passengers.

"I was working this separate little system and we could basically see nothing," the ex-officer added.

"I'd been trained to fly on it but not at 200 feet in a storm in the dark – it was the stuff of nightmares."

"That's the most frightening thing that's happened to me but it was a case of 'fly on this or die'."

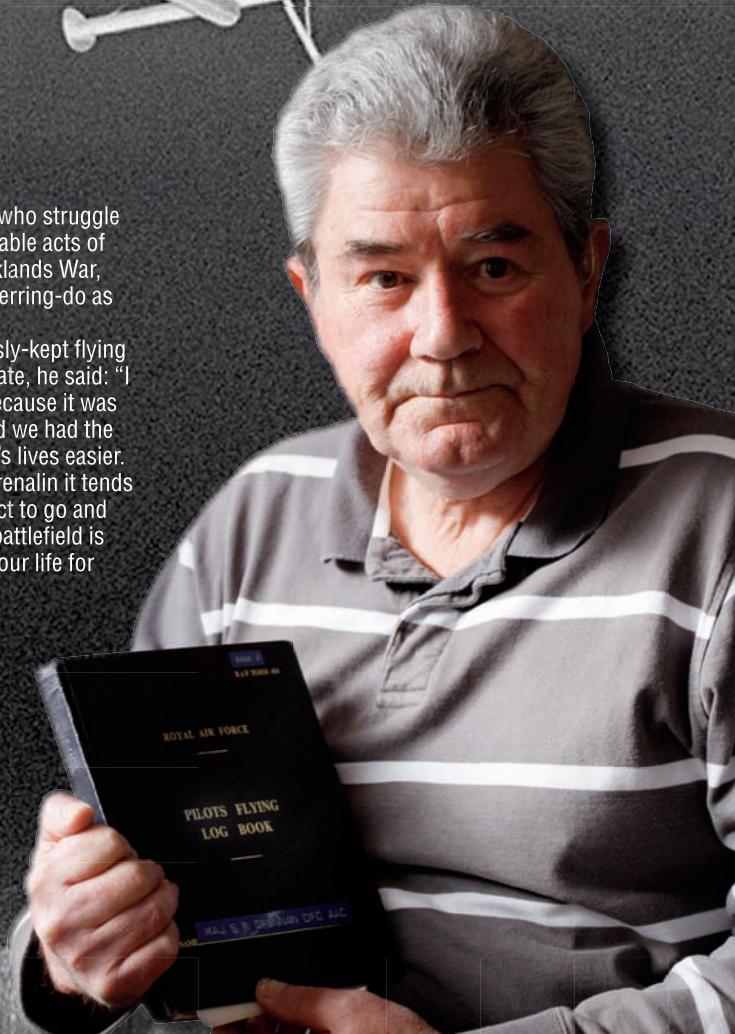
Just like the ground troops who struggle to see heroism in their remarkable acts of bravery during the 74-day Falklands War, Drennan views such feats of derring-do as simply "part of the job".

Looking over his meticulously-kept flying record from Operation Corporate, he said: "I was delighted to be doing it because it was so vital to the overall effort and we had the capacity to make other people's lives easier.

"When you get a buzz of adrenalin it tends to overcome the natural instinct to go and hide. And the etiquette of the battlefield is that you are prepared to risk your life for your comrades."

Vital: Casualty evacuation by Westland Wessex and Scout helicopters at Goat Ridge after the battle on Tumbledown

Pictures: Paul Haley, *Soldier* archive



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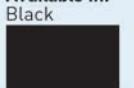
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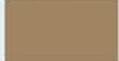
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YOUR letters provide an insight into the issues at the top of soldiers' agendas . . . but please be brief. Emails (mail@soldiermagazine.co.uk) must include your name and location (although we won't publish them if you ask us not to). We reserve the 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.

Regiments should share the love equally

MY partner is serving with a squadron which is detached from its parent regiment and recently returned from a six-month tour of Afghanistan.

It has come to light that during the deployment the unit's welfare budget was not fairly allocated. The remote element was only given a fraction of the total sum – a figure disproportionate to the manpower strength on ops – and consequently the amount of support and activities afforded to families was limited.

Those affected are understandably disgruntled and feel let down that the level of welfare did not match that received by their regimental counterparts.

On raising our concerns we were told the responsibility for allocating the budget rests with the commanding officer.

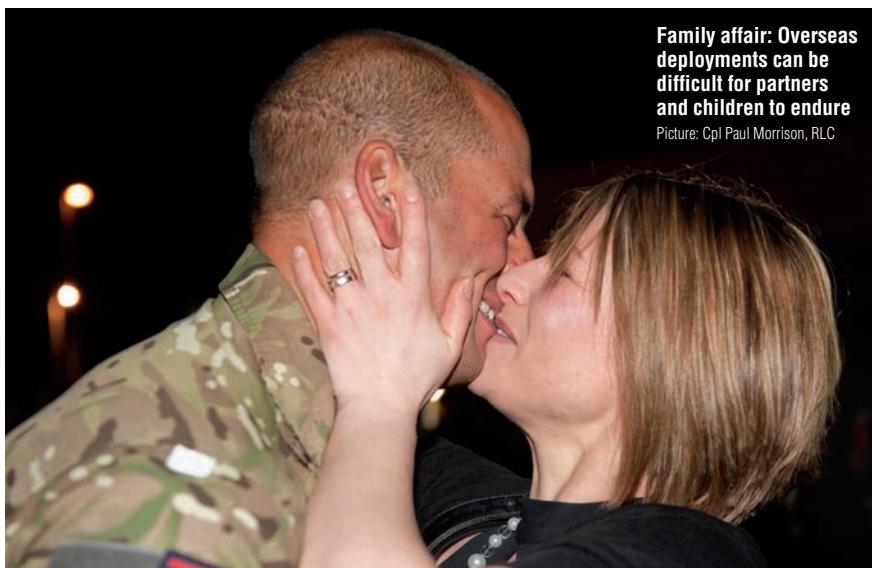
I am perplexed as to why common sense was not applied to this process. Why is this welfare fund not distributed proportionately based on the number of families whose husbands have deployed?

Operational tours are very difficult for partners and children to endure when living away from their own families and to be left to your own devices due to someone's ego and power is frankly disgusting. – Name and address supplied.

Brig Tim Hyams, Director Personal Services (Army), responds: Every unit will be different in terms of location, standards and availability of facilities, numbers of families and single personnel and levels of support required.

Therefore, the commanding officer (helped by the unit welfare officer, who in turn can draw on advice and assistance from a range of subject matter experts) is best placed to make appropriate and informed judgements.

In units deploying from dispersed



Family affair: Overseas deployments can be difficult for partners and children to endure

Picture: Cpl Paul Morrison, RLC

bases, each with a particular set of factors influencing the provision of welfare, it is common for the allocation of grants to vary across sub-units or locations, such that a consistent standard and level of support is provided.

The policy is contained in Joint Service Publication 770, part 2, chapters 1 and 2. This document highlights that units are responsible for managing the expectations of personnel and their families in terms of welfare, both before and during tours.

You and your partner should have been offered the chance to attend pre-deployment briefs, which aim to provide details on what to expect and present an opportunity to ask questions.

Against that explanation of the generic policy position, it might now be appropriate to raise specific concerns direct to your unit welfare officer, such that you can be afforded clarification of the particular factors influencing the commanding officer's decision.

■ IN the personal clothing system combat uniform we finally have a modern and practical form of dress and direction as to how to wear it.

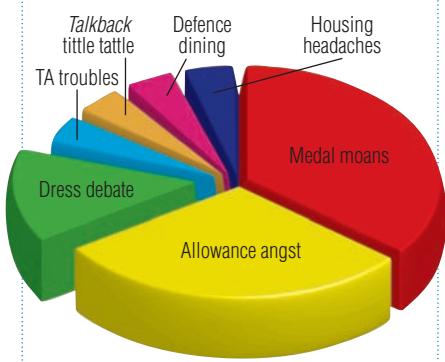
And yet, after more than a year in service, there are still some units defying the Chief of the General Staff's direction by wearing it incorrectly – with the jacket tucked in.

This blatant disobedience and disrespect undermines the values and standards of the British Army, so why is it still happening? – Name and address supplied.

● No uniformity when it comes to uniform – page 49

Slice of Service life

This month's ruminations from the ranks...



Fly in the soup of privates' passport to mess

WITH reference to the "Come dine with us, say chiefs" article in April's magazine [which detailed "plans" to grant soldiers regular access to the officers' mess], what a great idea!

However, I have one comment. Soldier forgot to add that before joining commanders for dinner, junior ranks must report to Maj Simon Greggs to pick up their Cornish pasties – ensuring of course that they have not been pre-heated to avoid the punitive 20 per cent VAT rate that will kill this policy change dead in the gravy.

Nice article! – Lt Col Steve Brunt, Land Warfare Centre, Warminster.



Gnashing of teeth over insurance cover

RECENTLY attended a dental appointment at Tidworth – a round trip of almost 60 miles from Warminster.

I used my own vehicle for the journey and submitted a motor mileage allowance claim for the grand total of £15, which was duly paid into my bank account.

However, I have since been told that the sum will be deducted from my pay as my car insurance does not include business cover.

Why is this relevant to a visit to the dentist? My car is taxed, tested and insured and I am also in receipt of a non-availability chit as there were no vehicles on camp I could have used.

I have a follow-up appointment coming up and will now request a hire car at a cost to the military of between £40 and £60.

Surely a common sense approach needs to be applied for claims such as this, especially if it is going to save the Army money. No wonder the MoD is skint. – WO2 Tony Gill.

Brig Tim Hyams, Director Personal Services (Army), replies: I can appreciate your frustration. However, in these circumstances the primary responsibility of the chain of command is to ensure that both you and the MoD are protected, legally and financially, should you have an accident.

Service personnel may use their own vehicles and claim motor mileage



Picture: Pierre Drap

allowance when travelling to and from hospitals for medical treatment.

However, the policy is clear also when it states that Servicemen and women who use private transport for authorised duty journeys must ensure their insurance includes business cover. This is for a very good reason.

The Army cannot order you to use your own vehicle for official travel. However, if you choose so to do, then you are required to take out business insurance as the MoD has a duty to protect the individual and the department against compensation claims.

If a Service person has an accident and causes damage or injury to another

party whilst using a private car for duty purposes, their own insurance cover may be invalidated as the vehicle was being used for business purposes, rather than for private (social, domestic and pleasure) use.

As a result, the other party involved in the accident might seek to pursue a compensation claim against the individual or the MoD. It would, therefore, be inappropriate to allow you to conduct department business in your own vehicle without ensuring you have the necessary insurance cover; even if providing a hire car may appear to be at additional cost to the department in the short term.

Long odds of changes to medal clasp's qualifying criteria

I HAVE read the rules regarding the award of the clasp to the Long Service and Good Conduct (LS&GC) Medal and unless an individual has spent 22 years in the ranks they will not receive the decoration. The regulations state that seven of the last 15 of 30 years must have been served as a soldier, restricting the fastening to a fortunate few.

Surely these rules must be amended to reflect the terms and conditions that personnel sign up to in the 21st century. Those who have earned a medal should not

be denied the clasp due to outdated criteria.

If a person is awarded the LS&GC decoration and continues to serve for another 15 years, no matter at what rank, then they warrant the additional recognition. Thirty years is a lifetime. – Maj P Corker, AGC.

Brig Mike Griffiths, Director Personnel Operations, responds: The award of both the decoration and the clasp are principally to recognise 15 years of unblemished service in the ranks for the

medal and a further 15 for the latter.

However, there are two concessions for those individuals who are commissioned after a period of service in the ranks.

The first is a reduction in the qualifying period of 15 years for the medal if an individual is commissioned after only 12 years service in the ranks but who then completes a further three as an officer.

The second is a reduction in the qualifying period for the award of the clasp from an additional 15 years service in the ranks to seven (after a period of 22) provided there is a total of 30 years.

These two concessions recognise the unblemished service of an individual in the ranks.

To reduce these periods further for those who are subsequently commissioned would diminish the high standing of both the medal and the clasp, particularly among those whose entire service has been in the ranks.

The Army has never made any formal recognition of unblemished service by officers who, as holders of the sovereign's commission, are expected to set and maintain higher standards of personal conduct than those in the ranks.

To award a clasp to an officer who has not met the qualifying periods of service in the ranks would again diminish the standing of the award.



"Late again Fosdyke... you were more reliable when you walked to barracks."

If an organisation as large and diverse as the NHS can participate in the scheme, why not the MoD? – Terry Anderson, London.

I WOULD like to take issue with Brig Tim Hyams' response to the Armed Forces' reluctance to participate in the government's cycle to work scheme.

While there is recompense in the form of home to duty travel allowance with a personal contribution of three miles, it is unfair to class it as an incentive or to try and pretend that it ever was. Besides, the contribution is set to increase to nine miles in 2013 [this is no longer the case, see "Allowance hike scrapped" on page 8].

As for the tax and other implications, why are they deemed to be any more complex and inappropriate for Service personnel than for any other section of society?

Are we any less capable than our civilian counterparts when it comes to making an informed decision on these matters?

Sick of paying single soldier surcharge

After 20 years in uniform I feel it's time to publicly air my gripe regarding the disparity between the entitlements of single and married soldiers when assigned to a "rest of the world" location.

As an unmarried staff sergeant I am afforded 2.85 cubic metres to move my life despite previously being given six cubic metres for a posting from the UK to British Forces Germany.

What am I expected to do with the gear which filled that extra space? Sell off my worldly goods for a pittance?

Why are single soldiers assigned outside of Europe not allowed to store items like our married counterparts?

To add insult to injury, we also receive far less disturbance allowance compared to those with partners but no children.

Single soldiers set up their "homes" in their rooms and like to personalise their living space just like married couples do, but the subsidy does not come close to covering the cost of a Service move.

Please don't get me wrong, I am relishing the opportunity to serve in an overseas location and realise that such assignments are few and far between nowadays, but as time goes by I cannot help resenting the fact I am being forced to sell my personal effects.

Surely the MoD has enough real estate to set up a storage facility for personnel.

Hopefully this letter will open married troops' eyes to the problems associated with serving as a single soldier and, just maybe, I won't be fobbed off with an "if you don't like it, get married" type of response from an organisation that doesn't have the greatest divorce statistics.

Fair is fair, we do the same job as our married counterparts. Maybe it's time to address the regulations. — Name and address supplied.



"You're right, sir. SSgt Jones did get off lightly on the digging front – it's all down to a new labour-saving compensation package for the accommodation-deprived single soldier."

Brig Tim Hyams, Director Personal Services (Army), writes: I am aware of, and can appreciate your frustration over, the issue of entitlements for the movement and storage of personal effects; this affecting single soldiers and officers alike.

The self-pack service is intended primarily for use by single non-homeowners. It also can be used by married unaccompanied personnel.

As soldiers moving to single living accommodation more commonly move from one room into another, this generates a lower entitlement compared to those accompanied personnel who move from house to house. Partly for the same reason, single personnel do not receive the same rate of disturbance allowance as their married accompanied counterparts.

The capacity for self-pack service in relation to rest of the world locations is determined by a review conducted every

five years.

While any such evaluation might establish the entitlement is insufficient, financial reality is such that resourcing an uplift is most likely to be unaffordable. Accordingly, the only realistic manner in which to make equitable the two allowances would be to reduce the entitlement for north west Europe.

Turning finally to your point concerning storage, there is no entitlement for single, non-homeowner personnel to store personal effects.

Although the inequality is recognised, an amendment to policy is simply unaffordable; the cost implications of funding storage for single soldiers (increasing warehouse capacity, installing the appropriate level of contract management, transporting the additional items) are unrealistic in the current economic climate.

Cross words and compliments

■ IT is with regret that I write to highlight such an appalling error on *Soldier's* part.

Lcpl Johnson Beharry is not this country's only living recipient of the Victoria Cross as stated in April's issue.

I can only hope that John Alexander Cruickshank and William Speakman miss this particular edition of an otherwise excellent magazine or you may end up receiving variations of Mark Twain's words, "the reports of my death are greatly exaggerated". — R Holloway.

■ **SOLDIER** magazine is absolutely awesome. I know I should not compare



the journal to our own as we are a relatively young defence force, but it was absolutely great to read through last month's 100-page volume.

As a member of the reserves in the South African Medical Health Services I thoroughly enjoyed the feature on Territorial Army training, "Applied force".

I will definitely be visiting your website on a regular basis to read future issues as they come out.

Keep up the good work.
— Lt Marina Valentine, 6 Medical Battalion Group, Gauteng, South Africa.

■ MY unit has moved single living accommodation twice in the last 18 months and in each instance my colleagues and I were told that we could not claim disturbance allowance. I have read Joint Service Publication 752 and it suggests we are eligible. — Name and address supplied.

Brig Tim Hyams, Director Personal Services (Army), writes: Having read the relevant document, you will have seen that disturbance allowance is not payable for mid-assignment moves between single living accommodation.

However, if your unit has moved to a different barracks, and you have as a direct result been required to go with it, then you should be entitled to claim the payment. If this is the case, then you should submit casework through your regimental admin officer to the Pay and Allowances Complaints Cell.

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Sleeves down, jackets untucked: Personnel from 3rd Battalion, The Yorkshire Regiment demonstrated the correct order of dress for the British Army's new personal clothing system combat uniform to well-wishers during their pre-deployment parade through the town of Warminster in Wiltshire. Picture: Graeme Main

No uniformity when it comes to new uniform

I HAVE just been on a course at the Defence School of Transport in Leconfield and am concerned at the variation in policy when it comes to the wearing of the Armed Forces' new multi-terrain pattern uniform.

It seems that despite a tri-Service diktat on how the clothing should be worn, high-level committees agreeing on direction and various replies from senior officers to letters written to this magazine by naysayers who insist it is scruffy, certain units are still dressing as they please.

While I personally agree with those "rebels" who believe the uniform looks better with sleeves rolled up and shirts tucked in, the instruction passed down the chain of command couldn't be clearer.

Is the dress policy just to be viewed as a guideline open to unit discretion or individual preference? – **Sgt Doug Watson, 32 Engineer Regiment, BFPO 30.**

Brig Mike Griffiths, Director Personnel Operations, responds: Your letter is one of a series on the subject of the personal clothing system combat uniform (PCS CU) and how it is to be worn.

I can be quite clear on this order of dress. When wearing the new clothing and specifically the temperate jacket and trousers, it is to be worn with sleeves rolled down and untucked. Exactly as Army policy has stated.

However (and in the knowledge that this

will initiate an avalanche of letters), there are a number of units and individuals who have the "old style" Combat 95 multi-terrain pattern uniform.

Where permitted by the person's unit, this can be worn with a belt, sleeves rolled up and shirt tucked in.

The very clear caveat here is that the chain of command must authorise this style of wear. This is a temporary measure: read on.

In respect of combat attire (and I can hear the keyboards tapping away already), several regiments and corps have specific orders of dress that permit a different style of wearing uniforms with regimental shirts

and jerseys over the trousers.

This has been granted by their hierarchy and is within their authorised dress regulations.

However, PCS CU is outside of these protocols and again I reiterate that when the jacket is worn, it must be with sleeves down and untucked.

The new clothing system has caused much discussion and dissent. The Chief of the General Staff and the Army's chain of command are very aware of this and will shortly initiate a review of the uniform, its utility and the orders of dress.

Abide by the principles outlined above and await further orders.

■ DUE to the deluge of comments in *Talkback* about the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal, the question of the expense of mounting decorations springs to the fore.

I recently received my Long Service and Good Conduct Medal and the cost of adding the full-scale and miniature to my collection was more than £65. Being presented with the jubilee award will mean a further layout of money.

Soldiers are required to wear medals and it is a corps regulation for them to be court mounted. With this in mind, why is the service not provided or an allowance available to cover the expense? – **SSgt Jocky Wilson, RLC.**

Brig Tim Hyams, Director Personal Services (Army), writes: The long-

standing policy is that soldiers are entitled to have ribbons and swing-mounted medals altered at public expense. Officers, on the other hand, are required to fund their own alterations.

Medals only are court mounted at public expense for personnel of the Household Division, those battalions fulfilling public duties and the Bands and Pipes and Drums of the Scottish Division engaged in ceremonial duties.

If a soldier of any rank wishes to have medals court mounted they can do so at their own cost. If it is regimental or corps policy then this is a matter for the individual to take up with their immediate chain of command.

Complaint logged over 'sexist' summary

MY BOOK, *Bad Company*, was reviewed by an RLC officer in April's issue of *Soldier*.

In previous editions of the magazine Capt Douglas Searle has been very generous when critiquing commanders' accounts of war, yet he chose to use a poor description of my own endeavours.

I also notice that most of the title's reviewers are men – possibly guys wishing to one day commit their "boys' own stories" to print.

Yes, I do refer to my past throughout the book and if Capt Searle would start looking down as opposed to up he might see that most of the soldiers in his care are from similar backgrounds to my own. This should be celebrated and not frowned upon.

My account covers a vast amount about the brave young men of the Argyles, yet he chose not to mention them. His review sounded sexist and almost bitter – to mention Sarah Bryant's very sad death as the best point made is in bad taste.

I am not overtly kind to some officers in my book and rightly so when I have been stuck at the receiving end of their sometimes ridiculous orders.

It would be far better [for *Soldier*] to hand books out to men and women of every rank.

Capt Searle seems to be the in-house expert on all things green.

I served my country and unlike most authors I sought clearance from the MoD prior to publication. My book is pro-military

and pro-soldiering, so a little more thought could and should have gone into its review.

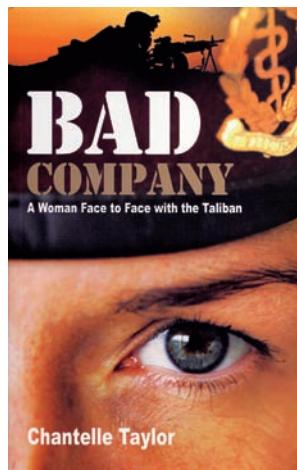
Bad Company was written from the ranks of the British Army – its backbone.

Maybe I should have put a combat helmet and pair of stiletto shoes on the front cover or made up some stories to boost the ego of this logistics officer.

My less than privileged background has pushed me to great lengths and I am currently guarding a diplomat in a place far removed from Capt Searle's comfortable surroundings.

Please pass on my thoughts to the aforementioned reviewer – I do believe my little criticism of a logistian in the book has clouded his judgement. I look forward to a record of his own endeavours going to print some day. –

Chantelle Taylor, author of *Bad Company*.



The editor, moving aside a mountain of books awaiting review, types: *Soldier's* team of combat critics do range in rank from private to colonel and, although predominantly male, we have a number of female personnel writing for us. That said, the magazine is always on the lookout for Servicemen and women – regardless of seniority or cap badge – to join our line-up. Anyone interested in seeing their name in print should email reviews@soldiermagazine.co.uk

● Reconnoitring reading – page 72

Disappointed by dog-walking Walts

HAVING read SSgt Mark Smith's letter, "Buying baubles devalues medals" (March), it strikes me that those who responded last month are somewhat missing the point.

I am a serving soldier and would never wear a medal I was not entitled to or that had not been formally issued. Doing so would make me feel like a "Walt".

My grandfather was called up for national service in 1955 and chose to continue with a career in the Army, eventually retiring as a warrant officer in 1977. I have his General Service Medal with Cyprus bar, Borneo and South Arabia (Aden) award and Long Service and Good Conduct Medal at home.

From what I understand of the commemorative argument, if my grandfather was alive today some of his peers could be wearing as many honours as him without having ever served in a qualifying area.

Although in the cases of Korea and nuclear test veterans there are strong arguments for awards, it should be for the

MoD and government – and not individuals – to decide if that is the case.

If personnel believe they deserve recognition then they should petition the powers that be and force a decision.

Don't award yourself a decoration because it does devalue the efforts of those with a single operational medal.

A veteran who completed national service in Paderborn and spent their time in uniform looking after the commanding officer's dog should not have more decorations than those returning from today's theatres.

It could be argued that all those who put on an Army uniform become a target for some fool but that does not mean doing so should qualify for a medal.

When I leave the Service I will be proud to have served and of my colleagues.

This is what is really important, not a piece of tin hanging from a ribbon. – Pte Betteridge-Lyness.

● Will we get a German gong? – page 53

FRESH APPROACH NEEDED

■ I WRITE to add to LCpl Collins' complaint (*Talkback*, April) about being overcharged for a healthy option in the cookhouse at Catterick Garrison.

This is a common occurrence, not helped on some camps by staff who seem to be McDonald's rejects.

I was recently at a barracks in Grantham and had a two-minute argument with a cashier over my breakfast entitlement – the same selection I have everyday.

The meals on offer do represent value for money, with prices clearly printed on menu boards, but canteen staff should receive the correct training and the chefs could do with some inspiration.

The same dishes appear over and over again and leftovers from previous meals seem to be reused, with breakfast ingredients being reheated for lunch or dinner service.

At a normal high street restaurant you pay for freshness and know what you are getting and this needs to be replicated in cookhouses to stop future complaints. – Name and address supplied.

RATIONALISE TIN RATTLERS

■ MILITARY and Service charities do an incredible amount of good work, most of it without publicity or recognition.

However, in a climate where financial efficiencies are being actively sought at every level, is it not beholden on fund-raising organisations to look to see whether or not they are making that all-important difference or whether their work could be more cost-effectively carried out by a bigger professional body?

For every charity that exists there is a management structure of some description incurring expenses and costs, holding an annual general meeting and producing accounts. All money that is being taken from the front line.

Self-sacrifice is a key value of the British Army and military supporters should look to see if they are making the most of the scant funding available or whether it is time to merge for the greater good.

One Army, Regular and Territorial, but more than 400 charities? This cannot be value for money. – SSgt Mark Smith, 55 MI Coy (V).





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Disbelief at deployments dismissed

HAVING read a series of articles in *Soldier* regarding the Accumulated Campaign Service Medal (ACSM), I counted the number of days I have spent deployed during 21 years in a British Army uniform.

From my first experience of serving overseas on Op Granby through tours of Northern Ireland, Bosnia, Kosovo and Macedonia, I have amassed more than 24 months away from home.

However, after filling out the necessary paperwork I was told by the medal office that none of the aforementioned theatres qualify for the issue of the ACSM. Can I ask why? Why don't these deployments count? –

Name and address supplied.



a discrete mission over a relatively short period of time (seven months) and presented to those who took part.

Bosnia, Kosovo and Macedonia were all operations for which Nato not only issued a number of medals but rewarded repeat tours of the same theatre with numerals attached to the ribbon.

Because these deployments were acknowledged by international decorations, no British medals were awarded and time spent on these operations does not count towards the ACSM.

Northern Ireland was a campaign recognised only by the award of a clasp to the General Service Medal, with no nod to repeat tours.

Similarly, **Iraq and Afghanistan** are operations with no acknowledgement of return visits to theatre and therefore service during all three counts towards the ACSM.

On this basis, the MoD medal office was quite correct in saying that your contribution to the Gulf War and the Balkans (for which you have four awards) does not qualify for a further decoration.

Brig Mike Griffiths, Director Personnel Operations, responds: Both the ACSM and ACSM 2011 are awarded to recognise repeat tours on operations for which only a single decoration is issued.

The important word in the title of the honour is "campaign".

The Gulf Medal was awarded for

Are we going to get a German gong?

THERE are rumours circulating of either a British Army of the Rhine or British Forces Germany (1945-1989) medal being issued. Is there any truth to this?

Some suggest that those who qualify will have to buy their decoration while others say that it will be presented by the German government. Please could you shed some light on this. – Ken Gregory.

Brig Mike Griffiths, Director Personnel

Operations, replies: Although I have also heard these rumours, there is no truth in any of them.

There is no current intention to issue an award for service in West Germany as part of the British Army of the Rhine.

Although there may be unofficial medals for sale to individuals who believe that they may qualify, these decorations will not be recognised and as such must not be worn on uniform.

Shine some light on Diamond decision

A NUMBER of letters that got right to the heart of why so many veterans buy commemoratives (or bling as some call them) were published in April's edition.

I raise my beret to Charles Lovelace who made the point that "medallic recognition in this country has been shambolic and riddled by inconsistencies", to Gerry P for pointing out "[commemoratives are] a direct result of the niggardly attitude of the MoD and honours committee" and to A Davies who argued "that it is precisely because the UK is so reticent in awarding decorations



that the proliferation of commemoratives exists".

All three letters made some very good points that seem hard to contest, which may account for there being no published response from the MoD attempting justification of its various medal policies.

It would be interesting to see the rationale behind the department's decision not to issue the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal (pictured) to former Service personnel and as to why a national defence-style decoration was approved for Australian and New Zealand veterans, but not for the British. – Mark Iles, ex-Army.

Hard done by? Heed Winston's words of wisdom

I HAVE read with interest letters in recent editions of *Soldier* deliberating the growing trend towards "baubles and bling" and the perceived injustices of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal's qualifying criteria.

These discussions are not new and over my 30 plus years of service I have frequently heard similar cries.

For me, you can get no better perspective on this than that expressed by Winston Churchill on March 22, 1944: "The object of giving medals, stars and ribbons is to give pride and pleasure to those who have deserved them.

"At the same time a distinction is something which everybody does not possess. If all have it, it is of less value.

"There must, therefore, be heart-burnings and disappointments on the borderline. A medal glitters, but it also casts a shadow.

"The task of drawing up regulations for such awards is one which does not admit a perfect solution.

"It is not possible to satisfy everybody without running the risk of satisfying nobody.

"All that is possible is to give the greatest satisfaction to the greatest number and to hurt the feelings of the fewest."

But then, as the holder of 11 medals, I suppose I can be sanguine.

– Lt Col David Gorton, AGC (SPS).





COMPETITIONS

Spine line winners: SSgt T W Abbott, 37 Sig Regt (V), Redditch; C Duckworth, Telford, Shropshire.

D30 phone covers: Mr L Matthews, Basildon, Essex; Mr P Astley, Bovington Camp, Dorset; Cpl Vernazza, MDHU Frimley Park, Surrey; Mr S Robinson, Guildford, Surrey; Mr J Grant, Long Eaton, Nottingham.



DIARY

May 2: The Corps of Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers Band are joining their Royal Logistic Corps counterparts for a **concert in aid of ABF The Soldiers' Charity, The Royal British Legion and Help for Heroes**. Tickets for the event, which is being held at Guildford Cathedral and begins at 1930, are priced at £10 and £15 and can be purchased from the box office on 01483 547870. For further details visit www.guildford-cathedral.org

May 12: **British Military Train 1945-1990 – The 2012 Berliner Tribute.** In celebration of the calm professionalism of railway people, civilian and military, a steam locomotive will head a train of 1960s' carriages including a dining car from Berlin to Hanover and back. Fares start at £90 with proceeds going to The Royal British Legion in Berlin. There will also be a pre-train party in the city on May 11. For reservations and further details contact militarytrain2012@gmail.com or call Neil Howard on 07982 786529.

May 19-20: *Inscape Landscape*, an art exhibition featuring the work of **Rachel Lomas** and commemorating the 30th anniversary of the Falklands conflict, is being held at the Helicopter Museum in Weston-super-Mare, Somerset.

June 16: The Military Wives Choir will perform a concert with **One Accord** and soloist **Jenny Abbot** at Dartington Hall, Totnes, South Devon. The event, which starts at 1900, is raising funds for The Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal. Tickets are priced £20 and are available by calling 01392 273111 or 07769 671590.

June 30: **Armed Forces Day.** Visit www.armedforcesday.org.uk for a full rundown of events happening up and down the country.



DIRECTORY

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

Armed Forces Humanist Association: www.armedforcesthumanists.org.uk

ABF The Soldiers' Charity: 0845 241 4820

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

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

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



INTELLIGENCE

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

ABN 21/12: Army recovery capability – families' guide for wounded, injured and sick personnel

ABN 22/12: Grants for welfare, recreational and sporting projects

ABN 23/12: Application of functional tests in PAP 10 V3

ABN 24/12: Changes to Army equality and diversity training

ABN 25/12: Publicly-funded further education/higher education scheme

ABN 26/12: Home to Duty Travel (Public) – personal contribution

ABN 27/12: Army families continuous attitude survey

ABN 28/12: Future Armed Forces pension scheme consultation

ABN 29/12: The Queen's diamond jubilee muster at Windsor on May 19

ABN 30/12: The care maintenance and repair of standards, guidons and colours

ABN 31/12: Launch of the Army common operations picture

ABN 32/12: The Royal United Services Institute land warfare conference

ABN 33/12: Project Avanti – disbandment of HQs 2 and 5 Division and establishment of Army HQ Scotland, 51 Scottish Brigade and general officer commanding Scotland

DIN 2012DIN01-097: Revised messing and single accommodation charges for MoD civilians temporarily residing in Service messes in the UK

DIN 2012DIN01-096: Staff specifically recruited for overseas service – annual uplift to monthly accommodation charges

DIN 2012DIN01-095: JSP 819 – delivering early years foundation stage in overseas settings

DIN 2012DIN01-094: Use of PARs/PADRs and equivalent in the recruiting process

DIN 2012DIN01-093: London Pride event, July 7

DIN 2012DIN01-092: Tax relief on laundry costs

DIN 2012DIN01-091: Late entry commission in the Royal Artillery and Royal Army Physical Training Corps

DIN 2012DIN01-090: Late entry commissions into the Army Medical Services

DIN 2012DIN01-089: Senior officers' course 121, Nato Defence College, Rome – August 27, 2012 to February 1, 2013

DIN 2012DIN01-088: Notifying changes to the Reserve Forces pension scheme, Armed Forces pension scheme and the attributable benefits scheme

DIN 2012DIN01-087: Dental treatment rates overseas

DIN 2012DIN01-086: Increase in the rate of excess fares allowance from April 6

BULLET POINTS

DIN 2012DIN01-085: Relocation allowances – additional housing costs allowance for renters

DIN 2012DIN01-083: Home to Duty Travel (HDT) allowance – retention of personal contribution for HDT (Public) at three miles

DIN 2012DIN01-082: How to become an Office of Government Commerce gateway reviewer

DIN 2012DIN01-081: Revision of maximum figure for car import duty

DIN 2012DIN01-080: Pension tax relief, lifetime allowance – notification date to SPVA

DIN 2012DIN01-078: Use of supplements by members of the Armed Forces

DIN 2012DIN02-007: Advice on providing national security vetting clearance details to non-governmental organisations

DIN 2012DIN02-006: Notifiable posts (alongsiders) – removal of requirement for submission of annual return

DIN 2012DIN03-010: The process and priorities for the allocation of fixed-wing air mobility support

DIN 2012DIN04-069: Weapon equipment – declaration of obsolete/obsolescent status

DIN 2012DIN04-068: Policy for the retention of captured enemy equipment as operational memorabilia

DIN 2012DIN04-067: Declaration of obsolete for image intensifying and optics

DIN 2012DIN04-066: Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S) change of contact arrangements for SLV material management

DIN 2012DIN04-065: DE&S change of contact arrangements for Land Rover

DIN 2012DIN04-064: DE&S change of contact arrangements for fire fleet

DIN 2012DIN04-063: Declaration of obsolescent optical aids, surveillance

equipment, lasers

DIN 2012DIN04-062: Land-based test site, Portsmouth Technology Park

DIN 2012DIN04-061: Confirmed out of service date – Cobra radar

DIN 2012DIN04-060: Accommodation, booking requirements and charges in Gibraltar

DIN 2012DIN04-059: Declaration of obsolescent equipment – various Racal acoustics and Clansman items deemed out of service date/unsupported

DIN 2012DIN04-058: Water safety equipment management – the selection of life jackets and buoyancy aids

DIN 2012DIN04-056: Certificate of clearance for use

DIN 2012DIN04-055: Third-line support for secure management radio equipment

DIN 2012DIN04-054: MoD Sanctuary and Energy Awards 2012 – calling notice for nominations

DIN 2012DIN04-053: Equipment and system code management

DIN 2012DIN04-052: Nimrod PT – points of contact post March 2012

DIN 2012DIN04-051: Accommodation booking – HQ Cardiff Station, Maindy Barracks, Cardiff

DIN 2012DIN04-050: Outfit AS1115 towed array on-board trainer – withdrawal from service

DIN 2012DIN04-048: Guidance for the return of white fleet/Phoenix-leased vehicles

DIN 2012DIN05-018: Relocation of CRB disclosures

DIN 2012DIN05-017: The launch of the Joint Forces Intelligence Group on April 2

DIN 2012DIN05-016: Defence reform – finance and military capability transformation

DIN 2012DIN05-015: The launch of the Joint Forces Command on April 2

DIN 2012DIN06-018: Joint Service adventurous training sub-aqua diving on Ascension Island – risk assessment and emergency assistance plan

DIN 2012DIN06-017: Problem anger workshop

DIN 2012DIN06-016: Reporting of injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences regulations – changes

DIN 2012DIN06-015: Cross-government contract with Specsavers for the provision of personal protective equipment (safety eyewear) and display screen equipment eyesight tests and spectacles

DIN 2012DIN06-014: The prescribing and supply of anti-malarials to Army personnel

DIN 2012DIN07-063: Army Educational Services support to the military knowledge concentration programme

DIN 2012DIN07-062: Basic close combat skills – instructor training

DIN 2012DIN07-061: Casualty procedures – visiting officer training course (Army)

DIN 2012DIN07-059: Instructions for the all arms commando course

DIN 2012DIN07-058: Urban operations instructors and advisers courses

DIN 2012DIN07-057: Fast-track membership of the Chartered Management Institute

DIN 2012DIN07-056: Air Warfare Centre – courses available to the wider defence audience

DIN 2012DIN07-055: School of Aerospace Battle Management courses

DIN 2012DIN07-054: Purchase and use of Rosetta Stone language licences

DIN 2012DIN07-053: Military annual training tests and workplace induction programmes policy update

Continued on page 56

NO. 846

JUST HOW OBSERVANT ARE YOU?



TEN details have been changed on this photograph of Cllr Anita Ward, the Mayor of Birmingham, with her son LSgt Vince Hockley (1 IG) after the Foot Guards were granted freedom of the city.

Circle the differences in the left image and send the panel to **HOAY 846, Soldier,**

Ordnance Barracks, Government Road, Aldershot, Hampshire GU11 2DU by May 31. 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 July issue.

March's competition: First correct entry drawn at random and winner of the £100 was Ms K Whitlock, AFCO Bournemouth, Dorset. **Runners-up:** Capt Ravera RLC (V), Liverpool and Sgt K Chapman, GS UOTC, Glasgow.



DIN 2012DIN07-052: Information systems short courses for May-July 2012 at the Defence Academy, College of Management and Technology

DIN 2012DIN07-051: Applications for courses at the Empire Test Pilots' School

DIN 2012DIN08-003: Use of the purchase to payment miscellaneous invoices extract

DIN 2012DIN09-013: The Civilian Service Medal (Afghanistan)

DIN 2012DIN09-012: Nato Meritorious Service Medal

DIN 2012DIN09-011: End of Op Telic – entitlement to the Iraq Medal and Accumulated Campaign Service Medal

DIN 2012DIN10-017: Army festival of climbing 2012

DIN 2012DIN10-016: Army Football Association – affiliation and cup competitions

DIN 2012DIN10-015: Military equitation courses 2012

DIN 2012DIN10-014: Army Golf Association major events 2012

AACHQ-RHQ-RegtSec@mod.uk or telephone 01264 784426.

Annual parade and service of the Combined Cavalry Old Comrades Association: Serving and retired members of the cavalry are invited to muster on Sunday, May 20 in Hyde Park. The parade steps off at 1055 and the salute is expected to be taken by a senior member of the royal family. Those attending are invited to form up with their regiments on The Broad Walk between 0930 and 1030. A limited number of wheelchairs pushed by cavalry-badged cadets are available but applications should be made through regimental home headquarters. For further information contact Maj Stretton on 01753 755132.

British Army and RAF rally crews (from the 1970s and 1980s): A reunion will be held at the Park Inn, Telford on May 26. Anyone who was involved with Service motor sport and is interested in attending should contact the organiser, Les Dalton, on 0033 545 240 763 or by email at les.dalton@orange.fr

The 78th Artillery Clerks' reunion and association dinner will be held at Larkhill from June 15 to 17. For further details contact Andy Tibble on 07793 266705, via email at andy@tibble86.fsnet.co.uk or visit [www.artyclerkassn.org](http://artyclerkassn.org)

RMP Memorial Parade at the National Memorial Arboretum. This event will be held on Saturday, June 16 at 1115. In 2013 the date will return to the first Saturday of June. Email rhpqrmp@btinternet.com for further information.

10 Trg Bn REME, Bordon: Reunion for all serving and former recovery mechanic SNCOS to be held in the sergeants' mess on June 29-30. For further details contact Sgt Simmo Sieminski at 7739siemi@armymail.mod.uk or on 01420 485557.

www.soldiermagazine.co.uk

Army Air Corps Association: Reunion dinner at the Victory Services Club, London, on May 19. Serving ranks, AAC veterans, association members and partners welcome. For more information email the regimental secretary at

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www.stressandflashbacks.co.uk
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www.welshwarrior.org

We may be able to offer assistance to all Welsh Regiment personnel and any serving Welshmen/women. Contact us on the above website or on 07731689987.

The Mercian Regiment: The annual pilgrimage to the Regimental War Memorial, Crich, Derbyshire will be held on July 1, with the remembrance service starting at 1500. All those wishing to attend should be at the memorial grounds no later than 1430. The refreshment tent will open at 1200. All welcome.

Close Protection Unit: Anyone who has passed the Royal Military Police close protection course is invited to Longmoor Camp over the weekend of August 4-5 for an informal reunion. For further information contact SSgt Drew Bear on 01420 537082 or at cpureunion@yahoo.co.uk

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

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 can contact him by email at churchill422@sky.com

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.

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 should apply via the association's website at www.birgelenvets.org

SEARCHLINE

Tony Levy, ex-Royal Signals (1972-1981), is trying to locate the **commemorative wall plaque** he was presented with in recognition of his time served as a permanent staff instructor on **Exercise Snow Queen**. The former sapper is happy to pay any reasonable expenses incurred in returning the item to him. Contact 07860 715603.

Richard Wareing is looking for information from current or former members of any **Royal Horse Artillery** unit, whether operating now, suspended or disbanded. 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



HOME TRUTHS

A PERSONAL view from Julie McCarthy, chief executive of the Army Families Federation. Log on to www.aff.org.uk for more information



Picture: Sgt Ian Forsyth, RLC

Grey area: A £100-million boost to Service accommodation falls short of what is being taken from troops and their families in a three-year spending pause

Budget measures far from black and white

HERE were a number of items of good news in the budget and annual spending round for Army families, not least the doubling of the operational welfare grant which will be a real boon for regiments dealing with the rigours of tours.

Those who will notice the biggest difference are units with only a company or squadron deployed at any one time, who often struggle to provide activities and support to loved ones.

Most do a sterling job with the funding they receive but often the numbers do not add up so the doubling of this money is definitely welcome.

In the announcement much was made of the increased council tax relief for personnel on operations.

Some confusion remains as to who this is reclaimed from and troops, including those who live in their own home, should seek advice from their admin officer as relief is paid by the MoD and not local councils.

Even more welcome was news that changes to the home to duty travel allowance are being shelved.

The personal contribution was set to increase significantly over a three-year period but at a time when the salary freeze continues to bite and with petrol at nearly £1.50 per litre, this is a good result.

The Army Families Federation campaigned widely to highlight that those allocated Service accommodation furthest from their

unit already contend with longer commutes, frequently need to bear the costs of a second car and often feel isolated.

Even if your journey is a short cycle ride, the decreasing availability of this type of housing will mean that we'll all be faced with living further away at some point – especially as the reality of rebasing is felt.

The decision by command to buy back the estimated savings on this measure and allow the personal contribution to remain capped at three miles is a victory for common sense and fair play.

It should reassure us that despite financial pressures within the department, someone understood the wider damage this would have caused.

But we should save the biggest fanfare of all for the £100 million put towards accommodation in the next financial year.

Or should we? This announcement was a surprise to everyone, even those within the Defence Infrastructure Organisation.

I don't mean to sound ungrateful but given the three-year pause in spending on homes, which takes hold in 2013, this is not in my eyes new money and falls short of what is being taken away from us.

The defence estate is in dire need of significant investment and while this cash is welcome, it is still not enough to create the housing soldiers require and that the Armed Forces Covenant tells them they deserve.

It has been stated that the funding will be used to repair and refurbish 650 properties, buy 25 new family abodes and install 600 en-suite bedrooms in single living accommodation. But there is no indication as to how this will help towards the huge infrastructure costs of rebasing.

At the same time, the Armed Forces Pay Review Body confirmed the wage freeze for those earning over £21,000 while also increasing housing charges, with those in standard one and two properties hit hardest.

This will confirm for many the suspicion that the plan is for us all to pay market rents.

The independent body made some interesting assertions in their report.

It said: "Accommodation is a central part of the overall package and plays an important role in attracting and retaining personnel [...] we received poorly evidenced proposals from the MoD to address its perception that the 'subsidy' to Service families has become too high [...] the needs of personnel and their families should not be overlooked in the pursuit of business benefits [...] we would expect any significant move to market rents to be accompanied by improved standards."

Personally, I was reassured by the board's pragmatic view on the future. They hit the nail on the head with the observation that until the MoD truly values and properly invests in its people, it will struggle to make any improvements to standards or to retain the right personnel.

Home to duty travel allowance was a step in the right direction, now let's do more. ■

While this £100 million is welcome, it is still not enough to create the housing that soldiers require,



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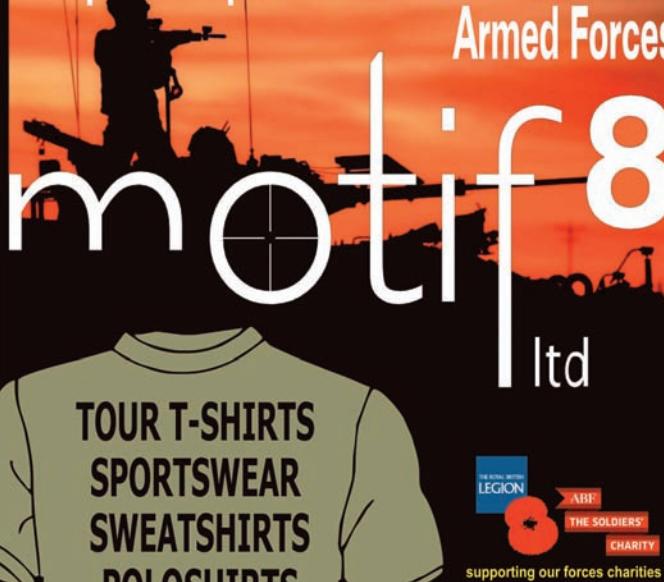
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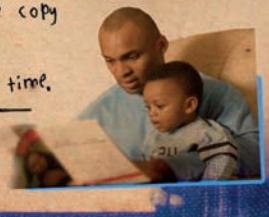


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Rodge Tapply, ex-RE



THE DIVIDE out May 14

WITH an atomic bomb destroying New York and eight strangers taking refuge in a basement before succumbing to cabin fever, this is a fairly predictable post-apocalyptic offering from director **Xavier Gens**. What is less expected is human behaviour that becomes more depraved as the movie goes on, with disturbing sex scenes and moments involving a septic tank that will turn any viewer's stomach. To say the 18 certificate is deserved is an understatement. Suitable if watching the degeneration of humanity is your thing, but avoid this as a date movie.

Joe Clapson, Soldier



FAREWELL TO THE KING out May 14

RELEASED on widescreen for the first time, this epic from director **John Milius** has echoes of his *Apocalypse Now* screenplay and takes a similar journey to the *Heart of Darkness*. In the action-packed adventure classic **Nick Nolte** is at his finest playing American soldier Learoyd, who escapes a Japanese firing squad in the Philippines during the Second World War and sails to Borneo. Among other things, the white soldier is adopted by a tribe, made king and teams up with British commandos. It is over the top and entirely fictional but still excellent.

Richard Long, Soldier



BOUNTY HUNTERS out now

THREE bounty hunters think they have hit the jackpot when a mob informant with a \$100,000 price on his head comes their way. However, the mafia sends their best assassins to bring him back and the trio find themselves in bother. This is a truly awful film starring the dubious talents of WWE wrestler **Trish Stratus** and Canadian comedian **Boomer Phillips**. It is difficult to be too critical as the target audience for this flick is probably teenage boys but the action is boring, the acting unintentionally funny and the script is simply ridiculous.

Jools Finch, MPGS



COLUMBUS CIRCLE out now

ABIGAIL Clayton (**Selma Blair**) is an extremely wealthy heiress who on her 18th birthday decides to go into a self-imposed house arrest to escape the world and a violent past. After nearly two decades of hiding under an assumed name, she is forced to confront her fears when a neighbour is murdered and the police start asking questions. Dubbed as a mystery/thriller, there are almost continuous twists and turns to the plot. Overall, this is well thought out with a good storyline that will keep you guessing.

Rodge Tapply, ex-RE



WAR OF THE ARROWS out May 17

THIS winner of 11 international film awards could ignite a passion for archery like no Olympic event could ever do. The film centres on Nam Yi – a master with a bow and arrow – who attempts to defend his beloved Korea from invading Chinese forces. The clever direction and use of sound takes you onto the battlefield and the fast-paced action really gets your heart racing. This gripping 17th century thriller is a cut above other releases in the same field. It will make you want to watch men fire sharp sticks at a target during London 2012.

Paul Morris, civvy

Interview: Joe Clapson

REGARDLESS of political allegiance, Margaret Thatcher's name undoubtedly conjures up a strong opinion in most – whether it's one of starry-eyed admiration or pure hatred. So with the UK's first and only female prime minister as the subject of a Hollywood movie and queen of the screen Meryl Streep stepping up to play the lead, the hope would be for a critically-acclaimed success.

The Iron Lady does serve as proof that the American actress is one of the finest performers of all time, with a stunning portrayal that documents Thatcher's life from her time as a politician on the world stage through to her battle with dementia.

However, as a whole the biopic fails as an analysis of an era when war was waged in the Falklands and Thatcherism divided the nation from left to right.

The script, written by Abi Morgan, attempts to cram the entire history of the Grantham-born leader into a 105-minute movie. But such a feat is not possible.

Those interested in the intricacies of Thatcher's mind, her ruthless decisions and the generation-defining events she oversaw won't find much here.

But as a fleeting look at the personality of the shop owner's daughter who rose to political prominence before losing the mental faculties that once made her such a force, it is engaging.

With Alexandra Roach playing the younger Conservative premier, everything is seen from the distorted viewpoint of an elderly woman as she suffers flashbacks to key points in her career.

Speaking about the use of the octogenarian's mental illness as a lynchpin for the movie, director Phyllida Lloyd said: "Abi, Meryl and I felt that the dementia is something that should be discussed – it's not shameful.

"This is a very tender portrait of frailty as much as somebody losing their mind.

"I think we felt that it wasn't degrading and it could be helpful to actually talk about these things; the idea that dementia is this foreign country over there and we're all over here.

"We thought it might be helpful to acknowledge that we are all in that hinterland in some way."

Whether the viewer is a lover or hater of the woman who ended free school milk for the over-sevens, the person playing the protagonist needed to provide their audience an accurate impersonation.

On the masterstroke of employing Streep in the role, Lloyd said: "I think that Mrs Thatcher was a kind of superstar on the world stage and had an enormous presence and personality and I think that we all felt that we needed somebody of that magnitude and stature to play her.

"Meryl just has great courage, a kind of fearlessness that was required."

There's not much for Thatcherites or paid-up union members to get stuck into in this film, but for the acting alone it is worth watching. ■

ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

OUT NOW
ON DVD

PICK OF THE MONTH: THE IRON LADY

MASTERFUL MIMIC

MERYL STREEP REIGNS SUPREME AS
THE FORMER MILK SNATCHER

games

MAY'S
GAMING GALAXY

PICK OF THE MONTH:

THE FORCE IS WITH YOU

LIGHTSABER DREAMS BECOME GAMING REALITY AS
STAR WARS KINECT FINALLY ARRIVES

IF ever there was a gaming platform to bring the majesty of the *Star Wars* films to the console galaxy, it must surely be the Xbox Kinect.

Fans of the generation-defining franchise have long yearned for the ability to wield a lightsaber in the mould of their hero Luke Skywalker and their intergalactic dreams have now come true.

And with five game modes on offer there is plenty to sample here.

Jedi Destiny proves to be a surprisingly lengthy adventure set in the clone war era that involves droid blasting, space battles, speeder chases and much more.

While this proves entertaining enough, there is an underlying feeling that it could have been so much better.

The backdrop to the action is somewhat alien, despite the odd cameo from the films' famous characters, and staging the scenes within the setting of the original trilogy would have held far greater appeal to diehard *Star Wars* fans.

The swathes of droids, lizards and other enemies attack with rigid familiarity, meaning their demise is easily brought about once the initial skirmishes and contacts have been successfully mastered.

But using the force brings an added dimension as foes can be flung into buildings or over cliffs at the simple flick of a wrist.

While this is an offensive highlight, the lightsaber disappoints due to the surprisingly poor correlation between your arm movements and what appears on screen.

Attempts to block incoming shots often lead to direct hits against you and attacking moves, if not slow and precise, rarely deliver the intended damage.

This weaponry failure is further exposed in *Duels of Fate*, which provides a laborious tournament of lightsaber battles that culminates in a showdown with Darth Vader.

The pod racing element fares much better and is firmly orientated towards family fun.

The controls are easily mastered as the Kinect sensor finally starts to deliver but the top speeds are mundane and pedestrian to say the least.

The Rancor Rampage mini-game is one of the undoubted highlights and rewards players for creating havoc and chaos in the Mos Eisley spaceport.

Building destruction, robot crushing and civilian slaughter all offer a healthy boost to your score as strategies and game plans are replaced by all-out carnage.

The roster is completed with a galactic dance off, in which you compete against a bikini-clad Princess Leia in a bid to impress Jabba the Hutt.

Other positives include the graphics, sound effects and animations, which are impressive throughout, while the excellent film-like interludes and cut scenes add to the sense of adventure and excitement.

All in all, this is enjoyable enough but it evokes the same reaction as when director George Lucas delivered his prequel trilogy in the noughties – eagerly anticipated but ultimately disappointing. ■

VIRTUAL PLAYGROUND

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 13

for Xbox 360/PS3

HAVING stood by their successful formula for recent incarnations of the *Tiger Woods* franchise, developers EA Sports have now taken the game to the world of Xbox Kinect and PS



Move. The transition has been a success and players can expect to find the fairway with a comfortable swing from the living room. The usual selection of game modes and real-life stars are back and there is a wealth of extra downloadable content available. However, the total swing control takes some mastering, making this a game for committed golfers, rather than the more casual players.

Richard Long, Soldier

TOP GUN HARD LOCK

for Xbox 360/PS3/PC

SET in the world of the hit 80s film, *Top Gun Hard Lock* puts you in the role of Spider, the US Navy's latest high flier. The familiar F-14 Tomcat and cameos from Maverick, Iceman and others help set the scene and give the game a nostalgic feel. While borrowing heavily from the *Ace Combat* titles, this offers a more action-oriented experience complete with infinite ammunition. However, there is little variety in the missions, graphics or fighting. This could have made for a fine arcade offering but is probably best played in small doses.



Stephen Smith, MoD Corsham

THE WITCHER 2

for Xbox 360/PC

IF there's one thing that *Skyrim* proved last year, it was that the fantasy genre is far from stale and predictable. But it also opened the door for other, equally ambitious titles. *The Witcher 2* is



no exception, albeit with more gore. You step into the shoes of Geralt, a witcher imprisoned for a crime he did not commit – the murder of King Foltest – and you are quickly tasked to find the real killer. This is an interesting, if bloody, game, with enough diversion, distraction and interesting characters to bring the fiction to life, making it a title that definitely deserves your attention.

David McDougall, JHQ Rheindahlen

NINJA GAIDEN 3

for Xbox 360/PS3

THIS game is a hybrid of *Street Fighter* and the machine gun arcade games you used to play at service stations, only with a sword. You start off in London fighting a group of terrorists



who are holding the prime minister hostage before the campaign moves to different cities around the world. The action is fast and furious with an array of futuristic challenges and imaginative machines. The graphics and sound quality are excellent, giving you a true feel for the mayhem that is going on around you. This is a true beat 'em up and, if you don't mind the gore, it is an interesting game.

Cpl Neil Holbourn, R Signals

RIDGE RACER UNBOUNDED

for Xbox 360/PS3/PC

THE latest *Ridge Racer* instalment comes across as a game that's just seen *The Fast & The Furious* and is intent on getting itself an ASBO. As you tear around city streets all types of dangerous driving, drifting, drafting and getting airborne reaps rewards. This is a good solid racer, but not a great one. The main problem is that it compares unfavorably with its closest competitors. If this once-mighty franchise is to continue with its bad boy image it needs to upsize across the board and create bigger tracks, more destruction and deliver loftier ambitions.



LCpl John Murphy, QARANC

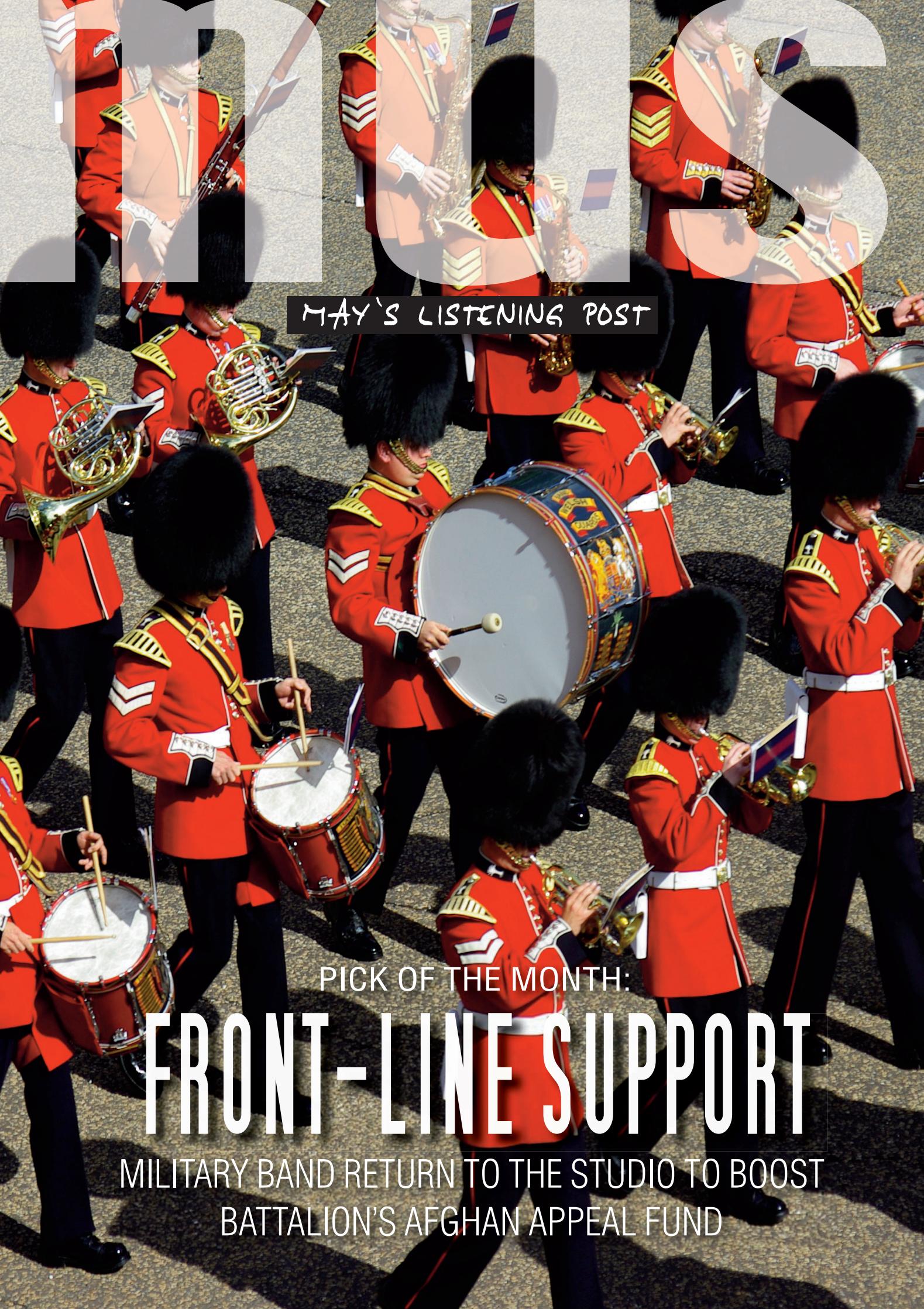
ZUMBA FITNESS: RUSH

for Xbox 360

WITH no discernable dance skills and a distinct lack of timing, I am as far removed from the target demographic of this title as you can get. My wife, who is much lighter on her feet and a fully paid up member of the Zumba revolution, is not. Intent on ignoring my derogatory comments and the fact that a fitness-based video game is a contradiction in terms, she happily shook her booty through a selection of the 42 routines featured. My better half insists that playing *Rush* does work up a sweat, but she will be left wanting when it comes to finding a partner for the game's two-player mode.



Andrew Simms, Soldier



MAY'S LISTENING POST

PICK OF THE MONTH:

FRONT-LINE SUPPORT

MILITARY BAND RETURN TO THE STUDIO TO BOOST
BATTALION'S AFGHAN APPEAL FUND

TUNES FOR THE TROOPS

Review: Richard Long

THE Band of The Welsh Guards are aiming to deliver the perfect boost for the battalion's efforts on the front line of Helmand province via the release of their latest single *Tell My Father*.

The record, which includes the track *Men of Harlech*, features the vocal talents of baritone Mark Llewellyn Evans and is being used to raise crucial cash for the formation's Afghanistan appeal fund.

Project coordinator CSgt Adrian Beckett told *Soldier* the musicians hope to generate £50,000 by the end of the year and the money is already pouring in.

"We performed four concerts in Wales and received £11,000 in donations, which is a fantastic start," he said.

"The appeal is there not just for the soldiers but for the wider regimental family.

"It is for the wives and children and will help to look after any guardsman who comes home injured.

"We are still caring for those involved in the 2009 tour.

"The Welsh Guards always looks after its people, we are obviously hoping that nothing happens during this deployment but there are no guarantees."

Insurance website *Go Compare* has already bought 5,000 copies – which the band will be able to resell – and with the single now available online it is hoped a flurry of downloads will follow.

Beckett carefully selected the tracks for the release and believes the inspirational music will have a strong appeal for those serving in southern Afghanistan.

"The words behind *Tell My Father* will resonate with the guys in Helmand, but I wanted a second track that was a bit more lively," the trumpet player said.

"*Men of Harlech* is our regimental slow march and the actor Richard Elfyn reads the Welsh Guards' prayer.

"I thought that would appeal to our troops as they know it well. They can play it while they're away and hopefully it can inspire them and offer some morale.

"We are really pleased with the end product and everything was done in the space of just ten days.

"It is not going to beat Madonna to the number one spot but if we can raise awareness of the appeal fund then we have done our job."

To order your copy of the band's single visit www.welshguardscd.com ■

This Machine by The Dandy Warhols

THE eighth studio album from American rockers **The Dandy Warhols** has a great eclectic collection of tracks with many exciting elements. It is intense, moody and dark with pulsating baselines and occasional reminders of their alternative pop-grunge roots. The standout offerings include the psychedelic sound of *Don't Shoot She Cried* and the uplifting *I am Free*. *This Machine* works well on so many levels, whether it's being played in the background, while in your car or when chilling out. If you are not familiar with the band you should grab a copy of this album, sit back and enjoy the ride.



Ray Kalaker, ex-RE

Home Again by Michael Kiwanuka

THE debut album from this highly-rated young British singer-songwriter starts brilliantly. The music is subtle, beautiful, melancholy and nostalgic – reminiscent of **Nick Drake** in his prime. *Home Again* enjoys a strong start and the first four songs are gems, especially *Tell Me a Tale* and *I'm Getting Ready*. However, the title track is less original in style and this sets the tone for the rest of the album. **Kiwanuka's** voice is powerful and soulful, but tends to overpower the music rather than complement it. Not one to buy, but I would recommend a download of the promising opening tracks.



Pat Jordan, ex-RAMC

Weapons by Lostprophets

POP-metallers **Lostprophets** come out swinging with their brand of teenage defiance and emo hairstyles. With thundering energy and sing-along choruses, tracks like *We'll Bring An Arsenal* and *Better Off Dead* make you want to open some hair gel and start a riot. Lyrics are catchy and insightful, although the ballad *Somedays* lacks the power to really tug the heart strings and the less said about the party-remix of *Bring 'Em Down* the better. They may be an acquired taste in the rock world but you can't help but be roused by this offering, making them another band of the millennium to come of age with their most impressive effort yet.



Capt Matt Walpole, PWRR

Kids In The Street

HAVING not heard of **The All American Rejects** I didn't really know what to expect from album *Kids In The Street*. After a quick listen I searched online for their older stuff, then returned to the new material and found myself getting into it. Their style is hard to pin down and this offering goes in many different directions. The real highlights are the *Beekeeper's Daughter*, which is carefree in a **Blink 182** style, and the slower, more folky *I For You*, that comes across as a brilliant track. This is a record you can go back to over and over and you wouldn't skip it when it pops up on shuffle.



LCpl Adam Jackson, 3 Para

MDNA by Madonna

THE queen of pop is back, bigger, brighter and bolder than ever. As always, **Madonna** doesn't mess about by experimenting in various styles and genres, she knows her audience and knows exactly what they like. *MDNA* is an electrifying collection of shiny, dancefloor anthems that are perfect in any setting. Highlights include the **William Orbit**-produced *I'm A Sinner*, soaring ballad *Falling Free* and the clubland stomper *Turn Up The Radio*. Overall, this album is flawless throughout and it's not so much the queen of pop is back, more she's back with a vengeance and here to stay.



Rodge Tapply, ex-RE

Storm Corrosion by Storm Corrosion

THE alliance of Mikael Akerfeld (Orpeth) and Steven Wilson (Porcupine Tree) has come as a surprise to many. Gone are the amped-up sounds of their respective bands to be replaced by a surprisingly mellow refrain. Opener *Drag Ropes* is augmented by lush atmospherics and the **Jean-Michel Jarre**-esque synthesisers of *Lock Howl* give an intriguing twist. This is no fast-paced rollercoaster and with the shortest composition a shade under five minutes some of the music has a film score feel. This is a CD you will love or loathe. It has no catchy hook and will need a few airings, but it deserves your attention.



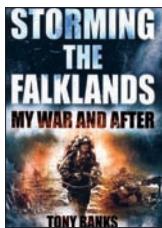
Steve King, Soldier

RECONNOITRING READING

Storming the Falklands

by Tony Banks

DESPITE the hard-hitting title and dramatic cover sleeve, only about a third of this book details the events that took place in the South Atlantic in 1982. The first few chapters recall the author's upbringing in Scotland and deal with family tragedy and a life with little hope of work. **Tony Banks'** own recollections of combat are graphic, with contributions from both sides penned in a brutally honest style. Equally poignant are the writer's dealings with post-traumatic stress disorder and how his experiences drove him to seek out a former enemy to return a pilfered war trophy.

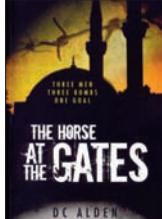


WO2 Ian Barracough, REME

The Horse at the Gates

by D C Alden

THIS offering from Serviceman-turned-author **D C Alden** follows on from the cult success of his first book, *Invasion*, and is currently being adapted for the big screen. It tracks the fate of two individuals, the British prime minister and a homeless ex-soldier, who are fused together during an explosive encounter in 2042. Featuring a legion of home-grown radical Islamists, this title quickly takes a grip and holds you beneath the interrogator's lamp from beginning to end; a gritty and uncomfortable book which will stir even the most liberal heart.

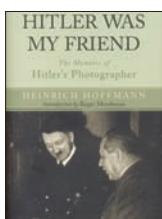


SSgt Paul Barnes, RLC

Hitler Was My Friend

by Heinrich Hoffmann

FIRST printed in 1955 on his release from Allied imprisonment, this fly-on-the-wall account by court photographer **Heinrich Hoffmann** documents Hitler's private life and inner circle. Loathed by Goebbels and Bormann due to his apolitical nature, the author was the Nazi leader's confidant and lightening rod. *Hitler Was My Friend* becomes increasingly absorbing as the dictator's numerous wartime crises deepen but do not expect insights on the major strategic or operational decisions as Hoffmann was neither present nor involved.

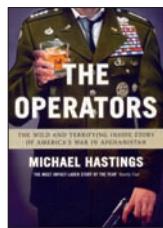


Lt Col Andy Gladen, RE

The Operators

by Michael Hastings

A SELF-confessed war zone addict, **Michael Hastings** was the author of *Rolling Stone* magazine's profile article *The Runaway General*, notably reporting the conduct and candid opinions expressed by Gen Stanley McChrystal while travelling across Europe during his command of the International Security Assistance Force in 2010. Revelations within resulted in a political maelstrom and the officer's immediate departure from the US Army, giving an indication of the few-holes-barred approach this book adopts. Highly recommended.



Capt Jim Vincent, RLC

Scram!

by Harry Benson

OPENING with details of a failed aerial insertion, this helicopter pilot's account of the Falklands War is difficult to put down. While initially taking the guise of a *Chickenhawk*-style tale, *Scram!* evolves into a unique perspective of the 1982 campaign. **Harry Benson** provides an informed insight into the flying and logistical planning that goes into such a hurried and large-scale deployment. Never a page away from the next big event or bit of military banter, this is a good read for anyone with an interest in aviation.

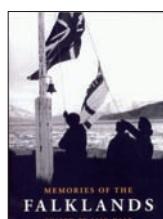


Cpl Dom Collins, AGC (SPS)

Memories of the Falklands

edited by Iain Dale

A MOVING anthology of recollections of the Falklands War, this book's greatest strength is that it successfully combines the ordinary soldier's experiences with those of politicians, diplomats, islanders and journalists. The various contributors – whether those at the very top of the chain of command or the men who did the fighting on the ground – offer an intensely personal insight into the conflict. Although somewhat poorly edited, this very human view of the events which unfolded in 1982 is a fitting commemoration 30 years on.



Tpr Dominic Kirby, R Wx Y

THREE decades ago, *Soldier* was covering perhaps the strangest conflict of the 20th century. The Falkland Islands had been invaded and the British people's keen support for a powerful response by UK forces was reminiscent of the heyday of the Empire.

Looking back on this remarkable episode, it is clear that it was a close-run thing. We lost 255 personnel, six ships, Harriers and helicopters. The Argentine losses were, however, far greater and the islands were recovered. But if anyone thought that Argentina's sound defeat was the end of the matter, they were very wrong.

A new book from Falkland journalist and former *Soldier* reporter Graham Bound casts a fascinating spotlight on a worrying situation in the South Atlantic.

In the months leading up to the 30th anniversary commemorations this year, sabres were again rattling. The government of president Cristina Kirchner has a hard line "Malvinas" policy, exemplified most clearly by its ongoing attempt to impose a trade and shipping blockade.

Buenos Aires is also rallying regional support for its demand that Britain opens negotiations over sovereignty and is making allegations in the United Nations that the area is being militarised.

UK ships have been banned in some South American ports, Argentina has said it may stop the islands' weekly air link with Chile operating through its skies and British flags have been burned in the capital. It is not surprising, therefore, that many living in the Falklands say they again feel under siege.

In response, Britain has ratcheted up its diplomacy but the prime minister has made it clear that, if necessary, the islanders' freedom will again be defended.

Bound concludes that the forces in the Falklands – with or without the Type 45 destroyer currently en route to assume responsibility for the South Atlantic patrol – are powerful enough to deter another invasion, but he says the Argentine government wants to modernise its forces. Procurement of newer combat aircraft is being discussed and by 2015 the country's navy may even have a nuclear-powered submarine.

The conviction that the islands must be "returned" to Argentina is as strong as it ever was. The message is that complacency in the Falklands would be a massive mistake.

For the time being though, the 3,000 people who live in this British overseas territory can sleep soundly and happily at night. They have done well out of the security and support that Britain gives them. The islands are wealthy now as rich fishing grounds are exploited and cruise ships queue up to enter Port Stanley and buy penguin-themed souvenirs. Most importantly, oil has been discovered beneath Falklands waters.

However, as this timely and very readable book makes clear, it is difficult to truly relax while Buenos Aires is watching resentfully.

But as Bound discovered, Falkland islanders are tough and used to adversity, and they are not about to cave in to Argentine pressure. As one community leader told the author, "it must be boring to live in a country that doesn't have a neighbour who's trying to throttle you." ■

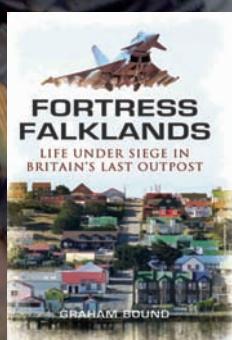
books

MAY'S
MUST READS

PICK OF THE MONTH:

FALKLANDS FALLOUT

FORMER SOLDIER REPORTER EXPLORES LIFE ON
THE ISLANDS 30 YEARS AFTER THE FIGHTING



Above, Islander's insight: Graham Bound's latest book, *Fortress Falklands – Life Under Siege in Britain's Last Outpost*, is published by Pen and Sword (£19.95)

Main picture, Local initiative: Troops of the part-time Falkland Islands Defence Force

EXCESS BAGGAGE

ROBERTS RATES THE PAYLOAD'S FEATURES...

COMFORT - 5/5

"A variety of padding and straps secure the daysack to the body comfortably. It rarely bounced during a run and the *Payload*'s cooling system prevents too much heat from building up."

SIMPLICITY - 5/5

"A design that pays off when using it in a combat situation. Everything is easily accessible and equipment can be found in a hurry."

DESIGN - 3/5

"Not unique in the fact that it offers a square design. Various straps and the possibility to add more pouches is the *Payload*'s saving grace."

CAPACITY - 5/5

"With five varying compartments and a total volume of 45 litres, this daysack can accommodate most of your kit. Just don't try and fit your weapon system inside!"

APPEARANCE - 4/5

"We all want the best looking daysack and the *Payload* doesn't fail in this respect. It certainly outperforms the jetpacks we've all had to use in the past."



Review: Lt Marcus Roberts (6 Scots)

T'S 0600 and members of 6th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland are on our first tab during hybrid foundation training in preparation for Op Herrick 17.

The *Payload* daysack is sitting firmly on my back and over the coming weeks it will be used continuously for all occasions: training, travelling, storage, the lot.

Its first major test is the short trip onto the Pentland Hills just outside Edinburgh, down to the Castlelaw Ranges and back again.

This gear is made for comfort and at times I forget it is there.

The chest strap that holds it to the body means it doesn't bounce as I run and my shoulders and back feel cushioned and supported.

Aside from tabbing, the *Payload* delivers further convenience including several areas on which to attach additional pouches and insignia.

In true tradition, the first thing I add is a St Andrew's Cross.

The main compartment opens completely and allows anyone needing a certain piece of equipment, such as medical supplies, water or ammunition, to access it quickly.

What concerns many troops is the fact that zips on this sort of kit are prone to breaking.

Although I haven't yet attempted to see how durable these ones are, the carrier is saved by four compression straps, two on either side. If the fastener was to break, the main compartment can still be held together securely.

Often daysacks fail to accommodate body armour worn in combat situations.

Although I cannot claim to know what its designer had anticipated, a large section holding the fluid system at the back of the *Payload* makes it possible to insert a rear plate.

My only worry is that its opening has very little leeway, meaning you have to cram the fluid system in when at capacity (three litres).

The middle pouch would be perfect to hold a command radio such as a Bowman.

However, small openings for antenna and cables would be helpful instead of merely having to close the zip around them.

The same applies to the rear compartment, which requires the user to secure the pipe of the fluid system in this way.

The bottom component of the daysack is slightly too big and impossible to stabilise.

When at capacity (45 litres), it shifts the weight away from your shoulders.

A number of other brands share this square design and, although compression straps help pull it closer together, if the *Payload* is full it starts to exert extra pressure on the lower back.

With the amount of equipment the modern soldier is required to carry, users must decide between being compact or filling to capacity.

This kit looks better than a number of its rivals and, personally, I cannot complain too much having moved to it from the Northern Ireland Patrol Pack.

It is not overly pricey for what you get and although flaws do exist, they are minimal and hardly affect those wearing it.

The daysack's designers seemed to have produced the *Payload* with the soldier in mind and in my opinion it would sit nicely in anyone's equipment cupboard. ■



WIN... BCB INTERNATIONAL'S PAYLOAD DAYSACK

SOLDIER has teamed up with outdoor survival gear supplier BCB International (www.bcbin.com) to give away five *Payloads* – worth around £100 each – to our readers. To be in with a chance of winning, tell us what the cargo capacity of the daysack is in litres. Answers, plus your choice of colour (black, coyote, multicam), to our new address or comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk before May 31.

www.bcbin.com

TOP GEAR

KIT RATED BY
THE RANKS

PICK OF THE MONTH:

DAYSACK DELIVERS

PAYOUT STANDS UP TO DEMANDS OF HYBRID
FOUNDATION TRAINING

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SOLDIERSPORT

Picture: Steve Dock

RUNNING HOT: ARMY STARS
PILE ON THE POINTS IN EMPHATIC
START TO SERVICES CAMPAIGN



Newcomers reach full throttle

Road race team braced for challenging debut season after gaining full sporting status

Report: Richard Long
Pictures: Graeme Main

AFTER lurking in the shadows for a number of years, the Army's legion of petrolheads are now sharing the top table with the Service's big hitters.

Elevation to full sporting status has already benefitted the motorcycle trials set-up and with the road racing team following suit, the 2012 season promises great things for those seeking action on two wheels.

The newly-formed squad gained their first taste of life in the fast lane at Brands Hatch, where the riders competed in the opening round of the Thundersport Championship, and a busy schedule of events is already planned for the coming months.

The turnaround in fortunes has been warmly welcomed by SSGT Rob Chisholm (RAMC), who has competed for a number of years without the level of support afforded to other disciplines.

"The Army did not officially recognise this as a sport until last year," he told *Soldier* from the team's garage in the Brands Hatch pit lane.

"They thought we came down to the circuit, rode round a few times and that was it.

"But we are now receiving the backing which means we can get transport to different venues and that takes a massive burden off us.

"There is so much kit that is required



"THE ARMY LADS ARE VERY POPULAR IN THE PIT LANE AND THEY GET A LOT OF ATTENTION"

and the Service is helping us in quite a big way.

"We want this to really take off. We want to go to different races and have two Army garages.

"With help from Thundersport we are hoping to get some sponsorship for the Inter-Services while pushing for television coverage.

"It can only get bigger and bigger but we need more members.

"They are out there but perhaps they do not know how to get involved. Guys

can come and talk to me and we can go from there."

The riders are competing in the Street Fighter class, which will incorporate Army, novice and Inter-Services competitions over the course of the season.

The team's array of equipment includes two Kawasaki ZX600s, which were crash damaged and bought with minimal outlay.

The impressive bikes produce in excess of 110bhp and can reach speeds of up to 160mph.

"Unfortunately we have to buy all the machines ourselves but we are lucky to have a couple of big sponsors," Chisholm explained.

"Stadium Garage in Doncaster has been a massive help with parts and the Hampshire Motorcycle Centre donated a bike to the team last year.

"Having them on-board is a huge boost for us, they want to help out and they can see something big coming from this.

"I think we should be within the top five of this year's Thundersport Championship while challenging for honours at Inter-Services level.

"We are in a good position to finish quite high."

The season runs until the end of October with race weekends staged at some of the country's top courses including Donington, Mallory Park, Snetterton and the Rockingham circuit.

Rider Sgt Tim Daisley (KRH) is another to praise the promotion to full sporting status and is already plotting his path to success on the track.

Service road racing team in numbers

160

THE TOP SPEED IN MILES PER HOUR OF THE ARMY'S TWO KAWASAKI ZX600 MACHINES, WHICH ALSO PRODUCE 110BHP

3

PODIUM FINISHES ACHIEVED BY SSGT ROB CHISHOLM (RAMC) DURING LAST SEASON'S ACTION AT THE MALLORY PARK CIRCUIT

5

THE NUMBER OF RIDERS IN THE ARMY TEAM FOR THE 2012 CAMPAIGN, WHICH FEATURES LEGS AT THE UK'S TOP TRACKS



Need for speed: Army rider Sgt Tim Daisley (KRH) familiarises himself with the Brands Hatch circuit ahead of the Thundersport Championship's opening race

He said: "I no longer struggle to get time off work and I'm recognised as an Army sportsman.

"I was massively into track days and was spending stupid amounts of money. But I've now officially been racing for 12 months.

"I want to win the Army and Inter-Services championships while finishing within the top five of the overall Street Fighter class.

"This is a proper sport and when people turn up they are blown away by how professional it is."

And like teammate Chisholm, he is keen to spread the word about the thrilling nature of the events so even more soldiers sign up.

"I recently met a phase two recruit in the tank park who is into his track days," Daisley added.

"He hopes to get into the racing scene and he is the kind of guy we want to get involved.

"He is an 18-year-old who could do very well.

"We can get them on-board, give them a go and see what they think.

"One of our sponsors has given us an ER650, which is the ideal bike to get people started.

"The Army lads are very popular in the pit lane and we get a lot of attention so there is massive scope for us."

Sgt Kes Bradley (RAMC) is one of the squad's newest recruits and the opportunity to race in an established series builds on her long-standing interest in motorcycles.

"This is a completely different ball game and I'm on a bike I have never ridden before," she said.

"I love superbikes and the Moto GP and I'm pretty competitive on the road so I was delighted to get involved.

"My aim is to move away from the novice class and have some fun.

"I realise I'm not going to be competitive this year so I just want to build my experience.

"I fell off at Mallory Park in my first test session and that was a wake-up call to slow down and get used to the bike.

"I want to get to the end of the season and see how things progress from there.

"Hopefully the team can grow and I want to grow with them."

Anyone interested in joining the road race set-up should email SSgt Chisholm at blasterbob76@yahoo.co.uk or log on to the Army Motorcycling Union page on Facebook. ■



Thundersport Championship

THE season runs from March to October and features a total of 17 rounds in 2012. The remaining race weekends are as follows:

- Oulton Park – Saturday, May 26
- Snetterton – Saturday, June 23 and Sunday, June 24
- Rockingham International – Saturday, July 28 and

Sunday, July 29

- Anglesey – Sunday, August 26 and Monday, August 27
- Cadwell Park – Saturday, September 22 and Sunday, September 23
- Mallory Park – Saturday, October 20 and Sunday, October 21

For information and results visit www.thundersportgb.com



Army dig deep for opening win

Report: Richard Long
Picture: Steve Dock

THE Army women started the defence of their Inter-Services Rugby Union title with a hard-fought win over a determined Royal Air Force side.

Tries from 2nd Lt Gemma Rowland (RA), Capt Alexis Coxon (Int Corps), Pte Marriette Classens (RAMC) and skipper Cpl Sarah Mitchelson (RLC) eased the Reds to a 24-7 victory at RAF Halton.

The first half was characterised by rugged defensive play and a series of unforced errors in the attacking third as both sides struggled to settle.

The only player to trouble the scorers was fullback Rowland, who collected an offload from Capt Kelly Douglas (AGC (RMP)) to score in the corner and establish a 5-0 interval lead.

But the Army doubled their advantage within minutes of the restart. Douglas broke through the RAF line and the ball made

“WE HAVE WORKED ON A DIFFERENT STYLE OF PLAY THIS SEASON AND IT IS NOW PAYING OFF”

its way to Coxon on the wing, who outpaced a number of would-be tacklers to power to the line.

The hosts reduced the arrears with a converted try from Cpl Lou Redmond before Classens settled any nerves with a simple try on the hour mark after an attempted clearance was charged down.

Rowland kicked the extras and Mitchelson was on hand to deliver the knockout blow in the final minute following a superb run from replacement Cpl Amy Robinson (AGC (RMP)).

The victory marked the start of a tough run of fixtures for the Reds, who concluded their Inter-Services campaign against the Royal Navy at Kneller Hall as this issue went to press.

Once the tournament is complete they fly to Australia for

a four-match tour.

Speaking at full-time, coach WO2 Dean Lewis (RDG) told *SoldierSport* he was delighted with the win and praised his players for successfully executing a new game plan.

“It was hard work for 45 to 50 minutes,” he said.

“We have worked on a different style of play this season and it is now paying off.

“The RAF came to give us a game and they really took it to us but we had great faith in the patterns of the team.

“We scored at the start of the second half and that was crucial. We have worked very hard on our fitness and that shone through.

“Cpl Rae Matthews (REME) had a great game at hooker and our flankers, Douglas and LCpl Tara McGlade (R Signals), were in superb form.

“We will make a few changes against the Navy and some injured players will come back into the fold, but this has been a fantastic start.” ■



Winning run: Back row forward LCpl Joe Kava (RLC) cuts through the Royal Air Force defence during the Army's comprehensive 59-0 Inter-Services victory

Roko runs riot in Reds rout

Report: Richard Long
Pictures: Steve Dock

ASUBLIME four-try burst from LCpl Samesa Rokoduguni (Scots DG) ensured the Army inflicted a crushing defeat on the Royal Air Force in the opening match of their 2012 Inter-Services campaign.

The flying wing used his searing pace to ruthlessly expose the home side's defensive frailties and with a host of other scorers joining the party, the Reds coasted to a stunning 59-0 victory at RAF Halton.

Former skipper Capt Mark Lee (AGC (ALS)) began the rout in the third minute when he bundled home in the corner and hooker LSgt Matt Dwyer (WG) crossed from a near identical move moments later as the airmen made the worst possible start.

Rokoduguni (pictured right) continued the onslaught as he ran from deep inside his own half to score a superb solo try and he doubled his tally on the stroke of half-time, when he intercepted a stray pass and ghosted to the line.

The 24-year-old completed his hat-trick shortly after the interval as the elusive Pte Jack Prasad (Scots) broke through the RAF rearguard to create space for an easy five points.

LCpl Gerhard Wessels (RE) piled further misery on the hosts before Rokoduguni, who was earning his first

full Army cap, completed his personal haul following further good work from fly half Prasad.

A second try from centre Wessels and a late effort from replacement LCpl Ben Seru (RE) rounded off the demolition job.

Cpl Ceri Cummings (REME) was in



assured form with the boot and kicked seven out of nine conversion attempts, while the Army defensive unit held firm against a sustained spell of RAF pressure in the second half.

The result means the Reds will again battle the Royal Navy for the title and the two sides were in action at Twickenham as this issue went to press.

Coach Capt Andy Sanger (RE) was thrilled with his team's showing in the competition opener but was wary of the considerable challenge posed by the Senior Service.

"It was a professional performance," he told *SoldierSport*.

"The RAF gave a good display and on another day they could have had a couple of tries."

"Rokoduguni obviously made the headlines in what was his first Army cap, but Sgt Darrell Ball (RE) played very well and it was great to have LCpl Isoa Damudamu (RLC) back in the side."

"We spoke at half-time about our performance level and we targeted a clean sheet."

"The RAF had a ten-minute spell in our 22, but we showed superb discipline and a real appetite for defensive work."

"The Navy will be a different challenge and the intensity of the Twickenham crowd will play a part."

"But we are in good shape and there is more to come from this team." ■

Paras pound sorry sappers

Report: Richard Long
Picture: Steve Dock

ARUTHLESS performance in the ring ensured fighters from 3rd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment continued their dominance of the Army Boxing Championships.

A storming opening burst saw the Colchester-based soldiers establish a 4-0 interval lead over a shell-shocked 22 Engineer Regiment squad, and with the vicious onslaught continuing after the break they celebrated a stunning 8-1 triumph at Aldershot's Combat Sports Centre.

Pte Stuart Garratt kicked-off the winning run with a 12-4 victory over LCpl Wayne Stewart in their featherweight clash, before Pte Joe Waterworth forced the first stoppage of the night in his bout with Spr Taff Hale.

The para made a cautious start to the opening round but subjected his opponent to a flurry of blows late on before the bell intervened.

Waterworth continued the assault with some well directed jabs and picked up the pace to force a second standing

“THE TEAM IMPROVED WITH EVERY ROUND AND JUST GOT BETTER AND BETTER IN EACH BOUT”

count before the referee ended the contest early.

Light welterweight Pte Jamie Ainsworth produced an impressive display to secure a comfortable points decision against Spr Pritch Pritchard and the determined Pte Craig Roberts overpowered Spr Bam Bamba to force a spectacular second-round stoppage.

The high tempo was maintained in the latter stages as Pte Jay Williams inflicted three standing counts on Spr Bobby McCall before the hard-working officials brought proceedings to a premature end.

Pte Tom Barry fought his way to a comfortable 13-1 points victory over Spr Ben Dillon and light heavyweight Pte James Nelson was simply too strong for Spr Rocky Bilbao, who suffered a first-round defeat.

Team captain Pte Errol Flynn

secured 3 Para's eighth successive bout as he celebrated a second-round win over Spr Ollie Oliver in one of the highlights of the evening before the Engineers stopped the rot in the final contest courtesy of Cpl Tom Main.

The heavyweight was awarded an 11-9 points decision against Pte Joe Allen but the success came too late for the struggling sappers.

Speaking at the end of the night, 3 Para coach LCpl Ben Cunningham praised the ruthless approach of his squad as they maintained their sensational winning run.

“We performed exactly how I expected us to,” he told *SoldierSport*.

“The team improved with every round and just got better and better in each bout.

“This is the sixth time we have won the title in eight years. The other two we were deployed on Ops Telic and Herrick and couldn’t compete.

“Jamie Ainsworth has improved so much since he has been with us and Joe Waterworth has really come on considering he had not done much boxing before joining the Army.” ■





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Track mission gathers pace

Injured Servicemen take pole position as military motoring charity hits top gear

Report: Richard Long
Picture: Graeme Main

WOUNDED personnel are being offered a taste of life in the fast lane in a new initiative aimed at boosting the rehabilitation process.

Mission Motorsport will give soldiers an opportunity to compete on the track and learn mechanical skills as they work towards key goals in their recovery plans.

The charity took its first tentative steps in 2011 when Tpr Martyn Copleston (2 RTR), who was injured by an IED in Afghanistan, competed in the Lotus Elise Trophy and Lotus Cup.

A team also took part in the Wales Rally GB and the Bitcar 24-hour race.

But 2012 marked the official launch of Mission Motorsport and co-founder Maj James Cameron (2 RTR) explained how the venture will assist troops on three fronts.

"It is an experience, soldiers can come to the track and have the absolute life scared out of them," he said.

"We are also looking at the competition element by training teams

"SOLDIERS CAN COME TO THE TRACK AND HAVE THE ABSOLUTE LIFE SCARED OUT OF THEM"

and putting the whole motorsport package together.

"And finally there is the vocational element. We aim to offer work placements and secondments for injured Servicemen and women who are considering a return to civilian life.

"But we are not just focusing on amputees, we are helping able-bodied soldiers who have been affected by operations, along with families and the general serving population who have spent time in Afghanistan."

Mission Motorsport has already established links with Bentley and the first industrial placement is due to start later this year.

Tpr Will Maddern (2 RTR) joined the charity's fold after being injured by an IED blast in Helmand province.

He lost the feeling in his lower right arm and is determined to make the

most of his new life in the pit lane.

Maddern told *SoldierSport*: "I went to Donington for the Lotus on Track event. I was helping out with a spanner and then got invited to Barcelona for a 24-hour endurance race.

"I am going to be leaving the Army soon and I'm hoping a team will come up through Mission Motorsport and offer me a job.

"This is a massive boost. It helps guys in the Service and also those who are coming out.

"It is not just for the injured lads but for everyone affected by operations.

"The things you see and do on tour are very emotional and it is hard going. We had some serious injuries with double and single amputees and it can be difficult to deal with.

"This is all about coming home and chilling out. It is not just for fun – the opportunities are also there to get into the serious side of the sport."

Mission Motorsport has an extensive programme of events planned throughout the year. For more information on how to get involved visit www.missionmotorsport.org ■

Racers make dream debut

THE Race2Recovery team produced a superb performance at the Tuareg Rally to claim two stage wins on their international debut.

The pairing of driver Dave Marsh and navigator Cpl Tom Neathway (2 Para) finished tenth overall despite suffering a host of problems along the route through Morocco and Spain.

However, they claimed a memorable stage victory on the final day of action in Erg Chebbi.

Teammates Capt Tony Harris (RRF) and Ben Gott finished 25th and went through the second of the penultimate day's special legs the fastest.

Cpl Phillip Gillespie (1 R Irish) was also in action and switched roles from mechanic to co-driver to guide Jonnie Koonja to a stage victory.

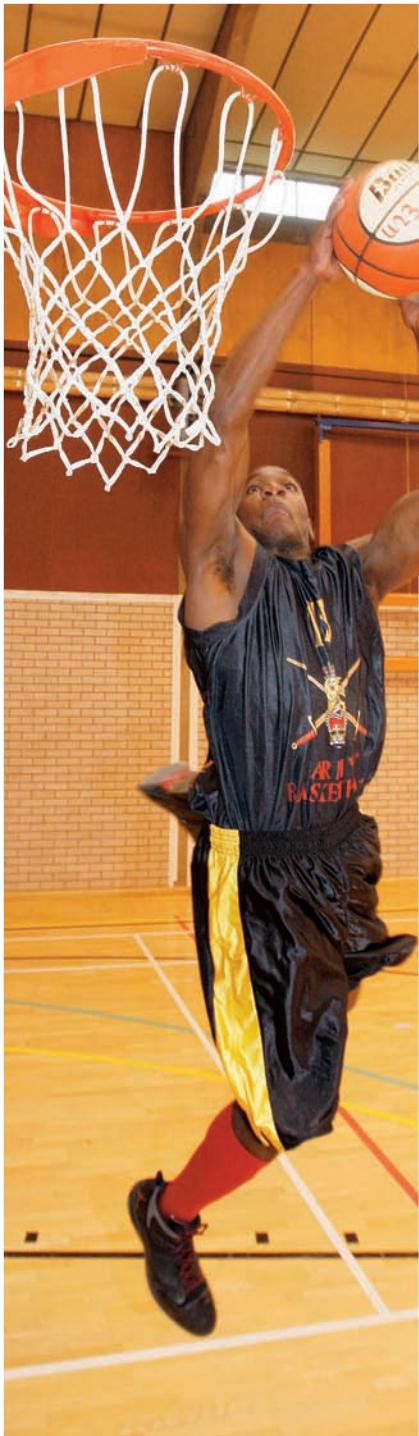
Speaking at the end of the eight-day rally, Harris said: "One of our major goals was to compete in and finish our first international event with two cars and we've done it.

"The experience we've gained has been first rate. Every day was different and meant that we needed to adopt and develop new skills."

The Race2Recovery team is comprised of injured personnel and rally experts.



Picture: Steve Dock



Army seal triple crown

Report: Richard Long
Pictures: Steve Dock

THE Army's basketball teams blew away their Forces rivals to secure an impressive clean sweep of titles at this season's Inter-Services championships.

The Reds dominated the courts at RAF Cosford as the men, women and under-23s all tasted success thanks to some emphatic scoring at the net.

A 96-63 victory over the Royal Air Force sealed a 12th successive trophy for the senior men's side, who started their campaign with a 72-61 win against the Royal Navy.

The women thrashed the Senior Service 64-21 before beating the light blues 66-42, while the under-23s comfortably downed the Navy and then battled their way to a narrow 63-60 triumph over the RAF.

Men's skipper Cpl Roshane Murray (RE) told *SoldierSport* he was delighted to lift yet another title after a sluggish opening spell from his team.

"We started quite slowly against the Navy as we expected them to be below par," he explained.

"But they were very well prepared and we didn't really get into the game until the third quarter.

"At that stage we stepped up our defence and took control of the contest.

"They scored seven points and we got 26 and it carried on from there.

"The game with the RAF was easier

than we expected and we thought they would give us a few problems.

"It was a close first quarter but we had established an 18-point lead at half-time and after that it was all down hill from there.

"I was very happy with the performance of the team.

"I'm going to miss the next couple of seasons due to course commitments and a few of our players have now retired, so it was important to win.

"We have also got a new coaching set-up this year.

"They have been brilliant and we didn't want to let them down."

While the men struggled early on before hitting top form, the women eased through their games to record two comfortable victories.

"The Navy were stronger than previous years but they weren't really a match for us," captain SSgt Wendy Eagle (RLC) said.

"We did not want to be complacent but we were able to rotate the squad and develop some of our new players.

"We were braced for a tough game against the RAF but they seemed to lack fighting spirit.

We came out all guns blazing and they couldn't cope, I don't know what happened to them.

"On the whole we are delighted. We had to let a couple of girls go before the tournament but they will be back next year, when everyone will be fighting for a place on the team." ■



McMAHON READY FOR RELAY RUN

ENDURANCE ace WO2 Drew McMahon (R Signals) has been included on the list of privileged athletes taking part in this summer's Olympic torch relay.

The 34-year-old was nominated by a family friend and received the spot in recognition of his tireless fund-raising efforts in support of Help for Heroes, Troop Aid and Children with Cancer.

McMahon injured his leg while serving on Op Telic 11 and used running as part of his rehabilitation programme.

He went on to compete in the New York Marathon and has completed the course on two other occasions, along with two entries in the London Marathon and attempts at the Great North Run and South Run.

The soldier deployed to Afghanistan in December and will return home just four days before running in the Poole to Dorset leg.

"I think it's about 300 to 400 metres so it is not a great distance but I'm sure I will find it more exciting than anything to date," he told *SoldierSport* from theatre.

"I don't think I've fully taken on-board exactly what it will mean."

"It is an amazing honour to be part of such a huge event coming to the UK."

"I have applied for tickets to the Games so I may get a chance to see the sport first-hand, if not I'm more than happy to get together with friends and watch it, possibly in the company of my Olympic torch."





Main man: Lt James Hudson (RA) has taken over as captain as the Army look for an improved showing

Cricketers primed for Lord's

ARMY cricketers return to the middle this month on a mission to avenge the Inter-Services heartbreak of last season.

The Reds came away empty-handed from the 2011 Twenty20 competition at Lord's as they crumbled to a miserable 104 all out against eventual champions the Royal Air Force.

And heavy rain scuppered their chances in the 50-over contest, which was also won by the airmen courtesy of a superior run rate.

Lt James Hudson (RA) will lead the team this term and the squad was put through its paces at a pre-season training camp in Aldershot last month. Army players also represented the

Combined Services in their victory over a Hong Kong touring side, in which batsman Pte Brendan Varley (RAMC) top scored with an innings of 98.

Matches against second XI sides from County Championship outfits Hampshire, Kent and Derbyshire are on the fixture list for this summer, alongside games with the British Police and Civil Service.

This year's Lord's showpiece has been scheduled for Tuesday, June 19 and tickets are now available online at www.tickets.lords.org or by calling 020 7432 1000.

The all-conquering Army women's team play their Twenty20 competition on Monday, July 16 in Aldershot. ■

LOGGIES SUFFER HIGHS AND LOWS

THE Royal Logistic Corps endured a day of mixed emotions as the Army Rugby Union season came to a nail-biting conclusion in Aldershot.

Defending champions the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers pushed the loggies all the way in the final of the men's inter-corps competition but the challengers held firm to record a 15-12 win.

A host of Army stars were on show and the half-back pairing of Cpl Tom Chennel and Cpl Ceri Cummings was at the fulcrum of the REME's best attacking moments.

Cummings scored the game's opening try but the RLC hit back via wing LCpl Malaki Magnus, who crossed for a well-worked score in the corner.

A strong forward drive produced a further five

points in the second period and the loggies held on to their slender advantage to seal the win.

While the men triumphed, the women relinquished the title they lifted after downing the REME in last season's final.

The Adjutant General's Corps dashed any hopes of back-to-back successes with a clinical performance that yielded a 17-7 victory.

The RLC fell behind following a superb spell of possession play that eventually created space out wide for a simple try.

A decisive line break produced further points as the AGC continued to keep the ball and roll through the phases. The loggies reduced the arrears in the second half but a third try from the challengers settled the contest.

SPORT SHORTS



A HAT-TRICK from skipper SSgt Matt Spruce (pictured) helped the Army Medical Services to an 8-2 thrashing of their Royal Navy counterparts in the Chatham Tankard football match.

The contest was rejuvenated last season and the Army side mounted an emphatic defence of the trophy at Keogh Barracks in Mytchett.

Capt Andy Pyne opened the scoring after a mix-up in the visitors' defence before Pte Monty Montague doubled the lead with a deflected effort from the edge of the area.

The Senior Service quickly pulled a goal back before two Spruce strikes saw the hosts secure a 4-2 lead at half-time.

Steve Redding slotted the fifth shortly after the break and Spruce added his third of the match as the Army started to run riot.

Further efforts from Montague and Redding completed the rout.



SPORT SHORTS

■ SWIMMERS from The Household Cavalry are planning a 250-mile charity challenge to raise money for the regiment's Operational Casualties Fund.

A team of six athletes will take part in September's relay, which is being staged on a route round the island of Menorca in the Mediterranean Sea.

To donate money to the cause visit www.justgiving.com/atlantiswarrior

■ SERVING personnel are being encouraged to put their fitness levels to the test in a new off-road race in the Lake District.

The Great Trail Challenge is being staged on Sunday, June 17 and includes ten-kilometre, half and full marathon events along the region's tracks, footpaths and bridleways.

Teams of soldiers can also take part in a forces showdown, which will see groups of four to eight runners competing for kit donated by sponsors Karrimor.

For more information and entry forms visit www.greattrailchallenge.org

■ THE Army's footballers will lock horns with their rivals from the German armed forces in a prestigious end of season friendly this month.

League Two outfit Aldershot Town will host the fixture at the EBB Stadium on Wednesday, May 23.

Admission is free and the game kicks off at 1800.

■ FOLKESTONE Racecourse has teamed up with ABF The Soldiers' Charity to launch a two-for-one ticket offer ahead of the Armed Forces meeting on July 12.

Admission costs £8.50 and the racing starts at 1800. To book tickets call 01303 405801 quoting the discount code FRCABF12 or log on to www.folkestone-racecourse.co.uk

■ CYCLIST Will Ferrier is nearing the end of a gruelling ride from Cape Town to London in support of Help for Heroes.

The 22-year-old will cover 13,000 miles and donations can be made at www.capeandbackagain.com



Hard running: The Army's cross-country team is looking for new members to help drive the sport forward

Athletes seek talent surge

Report: Richard Long

Picture: Graeme Main

THE Army cross-country team is looking for new recruits to join the fold and help secure the long-term future of the sport.

Despite enjoying an encouraging season, concerns have been raised about the lack of talent emerging from the ranks and runner WO2 Mark Greenwood (RAPTC) is appealing for more athletes to get involved.

"The senior females triumphed at the Inter-Services this year and the junior males also won," he said.

"But the veterans and senior men both lost to the Royal Air Force.

"We want to generate more interest in the sport. We tend to get lots of guys competing at junior level but for whatever reason they tend to drift away, it is a growing concern.

"We know the talent is out there but they need to pick up the phone."

The race season runs from October

through to March and features divisional, inter-corps, Army and Inter-Services competitions.

Greenwood is the current Army champion and represented England at the British and Irish Masters Cross Country Championships in November, where he finished in 14th place.

"We go on tour to South Africa or Australia every couple of years and we are happy to give guidance and details of upcoming events to anyone who is interested," he told *SoldierSport*.

"My advice to those who want to get involved is to join a local athletics club. A lot of people think they are too far down the chain but by being part of an organised set-up you really come on."

"Most soldiers already have a decent level of endurance so this is a chance to improve on what they already have and achieve something they perhaps never thought they could do."

For more information contact WO2 Greenwood on 01252 355329 or via RAPTCHQ-Trg-Analyst-6@mod.uk ■



Picture: Adrian Ray

Powers pushes his limits

ULTRA athlete Capt Sip Powers (RLC) has announced details of a punishing fund-raising challenge that will take him on a 1,000-mile journey across Great Britain.

The super-fit officer will tackle a 20-mile swim followed by an 870-mile cycle ride and a 140-mile run in just 14 days as a show of support for Battle Back.

"Having competed in iron man and triathlon events for years I see this as the ultimate challenge I can undertake," Powers said.

The sportsman is a type one diabetic which requires him to regulate his blood sugar levels every few hours.

The demands of swimming, running and cycling for up to ten hours a day will mean that his condition will need to be carefully managed.

He added: "My diabetes has never held me back and when I compare this to the challenges wounded personnel face it puts things into perspective."

"If I reach this goal then it will help them reach theirs and that's a massive motivation. I also hope it will show others with diabetes what is possible."

Powers starts his gruelling challenge on June 2 and donations can be made at www.battleback1000.com

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final word



We asked members of 16 Air Assault Brigade undertaking Exercise Joint Warrior for their thoughts on the Scottish serial and its challenges

INTERVIEWS: SARAH GOLDSBOROUGH
PICTURES: STEVE DOCK



Pte Tom Browne (RAMC)

All the preparations for the latest Exercise Joint Warrior have been demanding. For me personally it has been the most realistic scenario I have ever done. I think that making it as authentic as possible is important. The serial has been a challenge – especially the Scottish weather and living out of a daysack – and I think a lot of thought has been put into it.



Pte Sam Tooke (RAMC)

Lots of things keep changing on the exercise and there is plenty of learning involved. We have got vehicles over in Carlisle but here we are reduced to what we are carrying. That's quite challenging, having to think about what kit we will need. I have never done an Airborne Task Force serial and never worked with the Jocks before either. I have enjoyed it.



Pte Jason McAteer (5 Scots)

So far it has been tiring. I deployed on Operation Herrick 13 and that's my main experience to date and all I know but this exercise is really different. The primary effort in Afghanistan is IED training but here it's about assaults and position drills. That's new for me. Another crucial aspect of ops in Helmand is to win the civilians over but I think that will be key in every country we go to in future.



Pte Michael Duffy (5 Scots)

This has been a good bit of training. From what I have heard there has been a lot of money spent on the exercise and it's nice to get back into the old way of doing things. It is different for the new boys too. The terrain and the drills are challenging but you get used to it. You just have to neutralise the enemy threat and make sure that you keep everybody safe.



Pte Sam Cheverton (RAMC)

I have only been in my unit a little while so for me this has been all about prepping kit, knowing what I have to take and getting used to their way of running things. I have settled in pretty well and everyone's friendly. It's great. I have been looking forward to the week. It is nice to get out on the ground and do our jobs. It has been interesting with the weather too.



Pte Elton Alexander (5 Scots)

Everyone is kind of impressed and dumbfounded by this exercise. It gets you prepared for the real thing and although it isn't the toughest serial I have done, getting across the terrain has been a challenge. I am already putting what I have learnt into practice and am getting the most out of it. I haven't been on Herrick so for me this is all about learning and experience.



Pte Allan Meade (5 Scots)

Joint Warrior is good but the ground and lifting casualties across it has been challenging. The serial will help us to learn from our mistakes and drills go from command level all the way down so everyone gets to know what they are doing. Playing the enemy last time we saw a lot of soldiers bunching up, so as the task force we knew not to do that. The after-action reviews are really good.



Bdr Stuart Connor (Australian Army)

Just getting used to this freezing weather and trying to learn the lingo has been a challenge. I am attached to 7 Para RHA and came over to see how business was done here in order to take good and bad points back home. The build-up to this exercise was slow and there's a lot of sitting around and waiting. Maybe it should be compressed.

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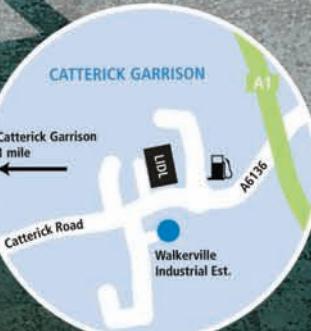
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