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MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY

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

All enquiries: Tel 01252 787107 / 94222 7107

Fax: 01252 787110 / 94222 7110

Email: news@soldiermagazine.co.uk

Editor

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

Assistant Editor

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

Assistant Editor

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

Sports Editor

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

Art Editor

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

Designer

Maddie Marchment 01252 787101 (7101)
mmarchment@soldiermagazine.co.uk

Photographer

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

Photographer

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

Managing Editor

Steven Muncey 01252 787095 (7095)
smuncey@soldiermagazine.co.uk

Business Manager

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

Advertising

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

Subscriptions

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

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

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ARMY

Far from a black and white issue

WHEN the *Soldier* team learnt that the British Army was embarking on a campaign to dissuade troops from using sports supplements (pages 23-33), our reaction was similar to that of our fitness-fanatic readers: why, how and what planet are they on?

In an organisation that demands high – often superhuman – physical standards from its people, and where there is understandably a limited choice of food in certain circumstances, was this honestly a realistic prospect? And on top of that, was it a good idea?

In an effort to try and understand more, we did some research. And what we discovered was that the issue is far from black and white.

The dangers posed by “stacking” different items – or by ordering cheap from unregulated companies over the internet – are a very real threat to troops’ careers. As the man in charge of compulsory drug testing tells us (page 27), a fail is a fail whatever the excuse.

But what about food provision? Late night gym sessions and the ease with which these products can be taken often leads soldiers to opt for powders and shakes over private stashes of sardines and pickled herring.

So what are Service personnel to do?

Read on for some practical suggestions on protein-rich foods (page 33), substances that should always be avoided (page 27) and how to ensure any use of supplements is as safe as possible (which, it turns out, is never 100 per cent).

We look forward to hearing your thoughts. ■

S. Goldthorpe



Welsh promise

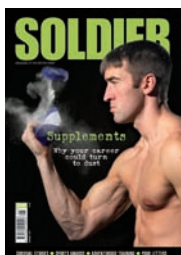
High climbers tackle
adventurous training
at Capel Curig
(pages 34-35)



Sarah Goldthorpe • Editor

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Picture: Steve Dock

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It's amazing to think what must have been done to save my life

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“I’m not saying I’m going to be the next Howard Webb”

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BRITISH
TROOPS'
NEWS
ASSET

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Pictures: Oxfam and (Photo) Nicky Wilson

Lynx's mercy mission

Army praised for humanitarian relief role

BRITISH soldiers have been commended for their part in the UK's humanitarian mission to the Philippines following Typhoon Haiyan.

Three of the Service's Lynx helicopters, along with 79 troops from across the Army Air Corps, the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers and the Royal Engineers, deployed to the country with HMS *Illustrious* at the end of last year.

The airframes, from 9 Regiment's 659 Squadron, were redirected from counter-piracy operations around the Horn of Africa and quickly proved their worth in assessing the scale of damage and determining where aid was most needed.

Supporting their Royal Navy colleagues, the troops repaired buildings, constructed bridges and lifted supplies and medical teams to remote regions of the country.

"I am immensely proud of all those involved and what they have enabled the air group to achieve for the people of the Philippines," commented Cdr Nick Walker, commander air on-board the vessel.

"I don't think there has been a busier day on the flight deck since *Illustrious* converted to a helicopter carrier in 2010."

Maj Hannah Hayward, officer commanding 659 Squadron, said the Army's role had been a key one.

"Helicopters will be the only way

to deliver essential aid until roads and other infrastructure have been repaired," she added.

"We worked hard to make sure our aircraft were ready and had a great amount to offer the aid effort; we can survey large areas of country and access remote places that others simply cannot get to."

Eight members of 24 Commando Engineer Regiment were on-board HMS *Illustrious* prior to the mission, providing support for 42 Commando, Royal Marines.

When the ship docked in Singapore en-route to the Philippines they were joined by further colleagues.

"In humanitarian disaster relief operations our skills complement those of the Royal Navy very well," explained Lt Col Ben Campbell-Colquhoun, CO of 24 Cdo Engr Regt.

"The Senior Service has expertise in electrics and mechanics, while we have skills in construction and artisan engineering."

HMS *Illustrious* carried around 500 tonnes of aid organised by the UK, including 1,000 jerry cans and 1,900 water carriers.

Happier New Year:
Soldiers on Op Patwin have helped deliver life-saving supplies to the people of the Philippines



“
Our skills
complement
those of the
Royal Navy
very well
”

IN NUMBERS: ARMY RESCUE EFFORT

1,000

Jerry cans distributed to Philippines communities from HMS *Illustrious* by the troops

6,000

People thought to have died as a result of the disaster

30

Number of Royal Engineers involved in the operation

£60M

Amount of aid that has been made available to the people of the Philippines by the UK government



Pallets flown off the ship altogether by the aircrews

274

Flying hours clocked up by the Forces team one month after the disaster

A TASTE OF
ARMY EVENTS
ACROSS THE
WORLD

GLOBAL SITREP



1 UK

CORNISH COOPERATION

PERSONNEL from Headquarters 3rd (UK) Division spent three weeks at RAF St Mawgan in Cornwall training alongside French troops.

Exercise Iron Triangle saw around 650 Servicemen and women operating as the new Combined Joint Expeditionary Force, the first time that the UK and France have trained together in the role since it was announced in 2010.

"We were able to test the rapid deployment of our headquarters, and we now know that we're ready for any mission," commented Maj Laurence Roche (AGC (ETS)).

2 UK

FLOOD SUPPORT

SOLDIERS and airmen joined forces to help stricken communities affected by flash flooding up and down the east coast of the UK.

The operation saw troops from 2nd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment, The Light Dragoons and 5 Training Regiment, Royal Logistic Corps support the Royal Air Force as high tides hit several towns including Southend, Maldon and Grantham.

Personnel assisted with the evacuation of homes and built flood defences at an electrical sub-station in Great Yarmouth.



Falkland Islands

“
We now
know
that
we’re
ready
for any
mission
”

3 CYPRUS

CROWD CONTROL

MEMBERS of 2nd Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers have conducted a two-day public order training exercise with the Cypriot National Guard.

It was the first time such joint working had taken place between the two forces.

The UK unit, which relinquished the role of theatre reserve battalion to 2nd Battalion, The Yorkshire Regiment in November, passed on their crowd control skills from previous tours of Northern Ireland.

"We are learning from their expertise," commented 1st Lt Ioannou Angoustinos of the National Guard.

"We have our own procedures and in many ways the British soldiers work the same but we are exchanging opinions about how we both operate."

"It was a great experience."



Intelligence for the atlas? Brief the team now:



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2,025

Number of shipping
containers of materiel
returned to the UK from
Afghanistan to date

4 NEPAL

MOUNTAIN MISSIONS

TROOPS have been tackling some of the world's highest peaks.

Personnel from the 2nd and 6th Battalions, The Rifles trekked to Everest base camp.

Team leader Capt Guy Davies said it had taken the predominantly novice team nine days to reach their destination but only four to hike back.

"Soldiers are fit and want to get on with things so sometimes it was a case of slowing them down to give them time to adjust to the altitude," he added.

Members of 103 Battalion, Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, the Royal Engineers and The Royal Welsh also completed a three-week expedition to the Himalayas.



“
Soldiers
are fit
and want
to get
on with
things
”

5 RUSSIA

CLASH UP CLOSE

MEMBERS of Headquarters 1st (UK) Armoured Division travelled to Russia to study one of the most significant battles in history.

Fifty officers and senior NCOs visited Stalingrad (now Volgograd) to examine what the 1942-43 clash between Russian and German forces can teach modern soldiers in terms of strategy, leadership, firepower, urban warfare and logistics.

The group also spoke to a Red Army veteran who had fought in both Kursk and Stalingrad.

Trip organiser, Brig Simon Humphrey, said the suffering and courage shown by soldiers and civilians during the campaign had been "a sobering reminder of the realities of large-scale warfare".



6 AFGHANISTAN

THE END DRAWS NEAR

THE new commander of Joint Force Support (Afghanistan) has vowed to ensure the redeployment of kit from Helmand continues at pace.

Brig Martin Moore officially succeeded Air Cdre John Bessell last month in a brief handover ceremony that marked the start of another crucial phase in the drawdown process.

The formation works in parallel with Task Force Helmand to assist Britain's Armed Forces across Afghanistan with responsibilities ranging from personnel policy and logistics to infrastructure, training and commercial support.

One of its key tasks has been coordinating redeployment, which includes getting aircraft, vehicles, weapons and surveillance equipment back to the UK in good order.

More than 1,300 platforms and items of kit and the equivalent of 1,800 shipping containers of materiel were returned home safely during the previous tenure.

"The next six months will be crucial in positioning Op Herrick for the conclusion of the campaign," said Brig Moore.

In a further milestone, the military-run organisation that provides the link between Helmand citizens and their government is winding down.

The Military Stabilisation Support Group has been key in helping Afghans to lead normal lives. Over the last two years the team's role has been to tell people which organisations can help them now that security responsibility is being handed back to the country's forces.



Temporary jobs Full time Adventure

Opportunities exist for Temporary Staff to be seconded from their parent units to Army Adventurous Training Centres in UK, Germany and Cyprus for up to 12 months.

Minimal qualifications required.

For further detail look at **2013DIN07-127** available on the Defence Intranet

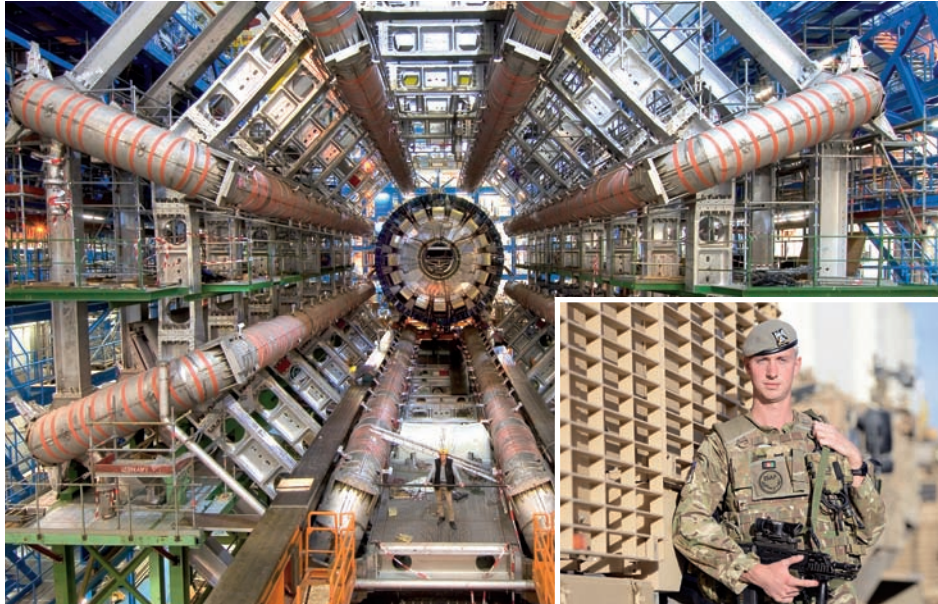


For guidance on expeditions or information on Adventurous Training courses visit: www.atga.mod.uk or search for 'Adventurous Training' on the Defence Intranet



"THE LAST THING I REMEMBER IS FEELING THE SANDSTORM. I BLACKED OUT THEN"

- INJURY THROUGH THE LENS, PAGES 49-53



Pictures: Cern and Sgt Dan Bardsley, RLC

From Hadron to Herrick

WHO would have ever guessed that the legacy left behind in Afghanistan by the British Army may well include top-notch science education for the students of Kabul?

If it does, that will be down to Lt James Jackson (Scots DG), who is serving on Herrick 19 as a force protection troop leader, defending the Afghan media operations cell and any journalists that visit the capital.

The officer is a former particle physicist with Cern, the research organisation that operates the world's highest-energy particle collider – considered one of greatest engineering feats of all time.

He even has his name on the Nobel Prize-winning paper recording the discovery of the Higgs Boson particle, the so-called "maker of mass".

But in 2012 the 29-year-old swapped careers, inspired by his uncle, Brig Jolyon Jackson, who commanded 1st Battalion, The Royal Green Jackets.

Now he is finding out more about the sort of science courses that are available to Afghan students with a view to passing on some of his knowledge to colleges there.

"Their rough syllabus looks decent for undergraduates," the Serviceman told *Soldier*.

"I don't know to what level the topics are taught so I'll be finding out more during my time here."

Lt Jackson joined the Army aged 27 and completed a year at the Royal

Military Academy Sandhurst where he was awarded the Queen's Medal, given to the cadet who gets the highest mark in everything assessed.

Obviously, he was never going to struggle with the academic element.

"I'm one of those people who finds maths and physics very easy," he added.

"In my final year at Bristol University I completed a project in particle physics and from that I went on to study for a PHD in the subject."

Lt Jackson appears to have taken the overall transition from the scientific world to the military comfortably in his stride.

"Both fields actually require a very similar mindset so there is significant overlap," he said.

"On the whole, those in the Armed Forces and research science are dynamic, adaptable, driven, not scared of uncertainty and keen to solve problems. This is one of the reasons why the move from science to soldiering was not as vast as you might expect."

The lieutenant's efforts to work with local universities in Kabul shows he will never be free of his passion for science, though, and he still closely follows the work at Cern.

"I can only hope that the Higgs is just the tip of the iceberg and that when more data is analysed my friends and ex-colleagues can tease out more of the universe's secrets," he added. "I'll continue to watch with interest."

Battlefield boffin: Lt Jackson has gone from working as a top physicist to serving as a force protection troop leader in Kabul

“The move from science to soldiering was not as vast as you might expect”

MILLIES SALUTE ARMY

THE professionalism of British Army personnel has been honoured at a star-studded bash in London.

Among the famous faces to attend the 2013 *Sun* Military Awards were the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall, and sporting and TV personalities such as Sir Bradley Wiggins and Holly Willoughby.

Held at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, the event recognised the achievements of Armed Forces personnel and members of the public who work hard to support them.



Picture: The Sun

The Army winners:

- Overcoming Adversity: Cpl Joshua Boggi (9 Parachute Squadron, Royal Engineers);
- Most Outstanding Soldier: Rfn Joshua Dodds (B Company, 4th Battalion, The Rifles);
- Best Reservist: LCpl Keith Mallon (The Royal Yeomanry, mobilised with 2nd Royal Tank Regiment, pictured above);
- Support to the Armed Forces: Families Activity Breaks;
- Judges' Award for Special Recognition: The veterans of the Battle of the Atlantic and Camp Bastion's support to operations in Afghanistan.

A bumper set of DVDs

WIN



LAST month's spine lines competition was easy for fans of Alan Partridge.

Sonja, Lynn, Michael and Dan are all the names of characters who have starred alongside television's comedy DJ, who recently hit the big screen in *Alpha Papa*.

This month we have a bumper pack of military themed DVD box sets worth more than £300 to give away, courtesy of www.revfilms.co.uk

To be in with a chance of winning it, tell us what links the words on the spine of this issue. Send your answers on a postcard to the usual address or comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk by January 31.



"I'M EXCITED ABOUT BRINGING MY ABILITIES AS A SIGNALLER TO THIS JOB"
- TROOPS TAKE ON NEW AIR ROLE, PAGE 98

HOME TRUTHS



A personal view from Catherine Spencer, chief executive of the Army Families Federation...

Hope beyond Groundhog Day

JANUARY has the feeling of Groundhog Day as redundancy announcements loom with familiar monotony.

Over the past four years our employment, training, allowances and money specialist, Caroline Mayne, has forged a good relationship with the Army redundancy cell to ensure that enquiries from families and troops seeking advice is fed back to instigate change.

This has meant that the information and instructions surrounding these reductions have been improved with every tranche.

The introduction of family briefs has provided the opportunity for questions over housing and resettlement to be raised and the AFF is grateful for the collaborative working we experience across the MoD, allowing us to influence policy.

The unveiling of tranche three this time last year seemed particularly distressing given the gloomy economic forecast.

But by the time redundancy selections were announced in June the country was showing very real signs of recovery and thankfully this has been maintained.

Initiatives such as the Career Transition Partnership's virtual job fairs have provided Service leavers with excellent access to employers

who recognise the skills and traits that the military has provided.

I am also inspired by X-Forces, which provides great business advice and start-up funding.

All of this makes leaving the Army a far more attractive option than it has seemed in recent years.

As chief executive I have the privilege of representing family issues to higher command through meetings with the adjutant general and other senior staff.

However, suggestions we make are often replicated at desk officer level, who also recognise where policy creates problems.

A recent example of this was flights for university students whose parents are serving overseas. These individuals became ineligible for financial assistance toward travel costs during the holidays – despite many accepting assignments on the understanding this was in place.

Army personnel worked very hard juggling sums to ensure the allowance was reinstated, whilst having no extra resources to fund the change.

Success stories like this are often reliant on the relationships we develop with personnel across the MoD and it is our combined effort which creates positive change.

www.aff.org.uk

“It is our combined effort which creates positive change”

NEW YEAR, NEW ROMANCE?

LOVE-LIFE looking gloomy in 2014? Fear not. According to a recent poll by a UK dating website, military personnel are some of the most appealing partners among the country's uniform-wearing professionals.

Working with YouGov to survey the public's opinion of those in uniform, www.uniformdating.com found that only doctors and nurses were listed above soldiers, sailors and airmen as preferred lovers.

Among the reasons cited for the high ranking of UK troops were loyalty, reliability, honesty and physical fitness.

However, 37 per cent of the Forces personnel quizzed said they worried about being seen as having plenty of opportunity to cheat.



Pictures: Graeme Main

STAGGERING SURGERY

■ A SOLDIER whose right arm was blown off while fighting insurgents in Afghanistan has become the first person in the UK to receive a revolutionary mind-controlled prosthetic limb.

Cpl Andrew Garthwaite (QRL, pictured above) was hit by a rocket-propelled grenade in 2010 but has since undergone groundbreaking nerve transfer surgery known as targeted muscle reinnervation.

The courageous Serviceman, who also appears in the book *Wounded: The Legacy of War* featured on pages 49-53, is now able to control movement of his high-tech artificial arm with his mind.

Read next month's issue for an in-depth look at the incredible technology behind Cpl Garthwaite's new arm.

CHILTON'S NEW TUNE

■ AFTER four albums and a chart high of number four in 2009, *The Soldiers* may be no more but the group's lead singer, WO1 Gary Chilton (CAMUS), has decided to launch a solo career.

His debut single, *The Unknown Soldier*, is out now with some of the proceeds from its sale going to ABF The Soldiers' Charity.

"The tune is based on an ancient Welsh love song called *Myfanwy*," said WO1 Chilton, who is based at The Royal Military School of Music at Kneller Hall.

"It's really haunting and was written by a Welshman who was my first musical director here at CAMUS, Nigel Hopkins.

"I always kept it on the back-burner but now it's out – I can't believe it."

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"A LOT OF PEOPLE THINK IT'S A TEENAGERS' SPORT" - BMX TEAM BUST MYTHS, PAGES 84-85



FAMILY TRAVEL BOOST

■ FAMILIES of Regular personnel assigned to temporary posts in British Army training establishments in Canada, Kenya and Belize are benefiting from increased welfare support.

Troops serving in Batuk, Batus or Batsub can now claim concessionary travel for their dependents to visit other close family and vice versa.

The soldier's home unit is also eligible for the families' welfare grant, which enables them to boost their support to loved ones of deployed Servicemen and women.

For further details read **ABN 129-13**.



ARE YOU UP-TO-DATE?

■ SOLDIERS are being urged to update their qualifications on the joint personnel administration (JPA) system before new filter requirements for promotion take effect.

From April, junior NCOs will require a level one grade in English and maths, while senior NCOs will be expected to reach level two.

The information must be recorded on JPA under a Serviceman or woman's competency profile.

It is feared that many troops eligible for promotion this year may miss the opportunity because they have not checked that their achievements are appropriately recorded.

They are being advised to contact their administration office as it is an individual's responsibility to make sure their details are correctly logged on the system.

Those who do not have English or maths at the relevant level should visit their education centre, where they will receive a learning plan and support to meet the required standard.



WALK IT OFF IN 2014

■ THOSE looking for a mission to burn off the excesses of the festive period are being encouraged to sign up for a gruelling 100-kilometre walk.

The annual London-to-Brighton event in aid of Blind Veterans UK will take place on the weekend of June 21-22.

Visit www.walk100.org.uk/sign-up

“I've heard that platoons fire off thousands of rounds of ammunition with no training value whatsoever”

TALKBACK
PAGES 55-59

mail@soldiermagazine.co.uk
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Warning to personnel over pension liberation schemes

SOLDIERS are being urged to think twice before agreeing to cash in their pensions early.

So-called pension liberation schemes use text messages, cold calls and website promotions to encourage people to claim funds before the age of 55.

But according to the Forces Pension Society, troops who enter into such agreements could end up paying a “hefty” price.

“We are concerned that personnel should be fully aware of the consequences of ‘liberating’ their pension fund before agreeing to take so little for such a valuable asset,” said David Marsh (pictured), pensions secretary of

the society and a former lieutenant commander in the Royal Navy. “The true cost can be astronomical.”

Up to 70 per cent of any cash released from a pension fund early could end up going to HMRC because this sort of saving is tax privileged.

Scheme operators can also remove between 10 and 30 per cent of the fund in fees and commission charges.

Earlier this year, it was announced that pension liberators were coming under more scrutiny by the government.

● Got a story to share with the *Soldier* team? Call us on 01252 787107 or tweet the magazine via @soldiermagazine



LEAGUE OF GENTLEMEN

SWAG

£100,000

TEA-DRINKING TRIUMPH

SSAFA's flagship fund-raiser has once again totted up an impressive amount for the charity. Around 1,300 events were held at bases across the world in what was the occasion's sixteenth year.

QUIDS IN

SSAFA



£1,200

THE BIG MATCH

Colleagues of Army medic Cpl Channing Day (shown right), who was killed on patrol in Helmand, played a memorial football match in her honour. The Servicewoman's family travelled to Fulwood Barracks in Preston for the game, which was staged a year after her death and saw the Army Medical Services ladies team defeat the Royal Engineers 4-1.

Soldiers in Mind



£740

D-DAY DOSH

Troops and civilians at the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers Arms School in Arborfield raised funds by simulating the route taken by 30 Corps during the D-Day landings. Using rowing and running machines, around 40 staff members spent three days covering the 124 miles from Portsmouth to Normandy, before tabbing 15km.

Veterans Aid



RESERVES ROUND-UP



Picture: Graeme Main

Troops lead the way on road to one Army

A UNIT of light cavalry Reservists has taken an innovative approach to Army integration by setting up a new detachment in a camp belonging to Regular troops.

Members of Swindon-based A Squadron, The Royal Yeomanry spotted the opportunity to build on historic ties with the Household Cavalry Regiment by establishing a troop at Combermere Barracks in Windsor.

The soldiers hope the initiative will boost recruitment by extending the regiment's footprint east along the M4 corridor and targeting those leaving the HCR.

"We started this pilot a year ago and it's working well," said permanent staff administration officer, Capt Chris Elliot (RY).

"It's much better than being in an Army Reserve centre because the guys feel like they're part of the Regular force.

"The support from the HCR has been fantastic.

"We have access to their training wing and equipment, including four RWMK Land Rovers permanently on loan to us, which is the vehicle we'll be using in our new role under the Future Reserves programme.

"Having Reserve instructors trained on the platform also helps the HCR maintain their capability so both sides benefit."

A total of 17 soldiers have joined the troop so far, several of them ex-Regulars from the HCR.

Among them is Sgt Stu Game (RY), who explained he would not have enlisted if the new detachment had not been formed.

"There are 60 miles between here and Swindon and having it on my doorstep, with these resources too, has been a massive factor," said the 37-year-old. "I was also excited by the light-cavalry role.

"It's great that lots of guys leaving the HCR are joining and bringing their experience with them."

Promising plan: By setting up a new detachment in a Regular base, A Squadron has already boosted recruitment

“It's much better than being in a Reserve centre”

DO SOMETHING NEW

■ TROOPS who are not usually interested in filling out feedback forms are being asked to break with tradition this year.

Reservists are invited to give their opinions in the 2014 Reserve continuous attitude survey by visiting www.defencegateway.mod.uk

Maj Gen Ranald Munro, Deputy Commander Land Forces, said: "At a time when the whole Army is undergoing substantial transformation, placing increasing reliance on the commitment and availability of Reservists, their opinions and those of their employers and families and friends are vital.

"If you don't flag it up, your voice will not be heard."

The forms are anonymous and the deadline is February 28.

CIVIL SERVICE CHAMPS

■ A NETWORK of "Reserve champions" has been established across government departments to promote the benefits of joining the military on a part-time basis.

The civil servant soldiers explain their experiences to colleagues and how they balance being a Reservist with work and family commitments.

Sir Bob Kerslake, head of the civil service, said the skills gained by Reservists could help to transform government workplaces in future.

"Developing individual skills and capabilities is at the heart of our reform plan and we want our staff to have the broadest possible range of backgrounds," he explained to the www.gov.uk website.

"Reservists develop strengths in areas like leadership, teamwork and problem solving, often working under considerable pressure.

"These qualities can help us deliver better services to the public."

Olaf Dudley, a Cabinet Office policy adviser and captain in the Royal Engineers, is one of 19 champions across Whitehall.

"The Reserves are brilliant at giving people the chance to grow as leaders and to learn from your successes and failures," he told the civil service website in an interview.

SINKING IN THE SOLENT...

PERSONNEL serving with 131 Independent Commando Squadron, Royal Engineers have refreshed their underwater skills by training at the Royal Navy's Defence Diving School.

As the only dive team in the Reserves, the squadron's members must maintain their qualifications to ensure they meet industry standards and are able to deploy alongside Regular personnel.

The exercise on Horsea Island in Portsmouth saw troops use specialised equipment such as underwater bolt guns and cutters, and practise sub-aqua recovery skills, which can see them dive down as far as 30 metres.

Picture: Stewart Turkington



Latest research* shows sharp fall in pension satisfaction!



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* 2013 Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey shows satisfaction among those serving in the Army fell from 60% to 39% over the last 5 years.



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Tidworth:	05 - 16 May 14	Paderborn:	05 - 16 May 14
Larkhill:	26 May - 06 Jun 14	Colchester:	09 - 20 Jun 14
Aylesbury:	09 - 20 Jun 14	RAF Honington:	14 - 25 Jul 14
Tidworth:	14 - 25 Jul 14	Catterick:	15 - 26 Sept 14
Hohne:	15 - 26 Sept 14	Aylesbury:	29 Sept - 10 Oct 14
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Tidworth:	07 - 11 Jul 14	Hohne:	04 - 08 Aug 14
Aylesbury:	04 - 08 Aug 14	Catterick:	04 - 08 Aug 14
Colchester:	08 - 12 Sept 14	Paderborn:	06 - 10 Oct 14

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“WE HAVE A LAUGH WITH OTHER LADS DURING THE ACTIVITIES”
- GUARDS HIT A HIGH, PAGES 34-35



£11,320

Total value of the prizes won by readers in our fifth festive giveaway, Operation Reindeer's Hoof



Winning attire: Items of clothing were among the many freebies won by British troops during Op Reindeer's Hoof

A FEW THANK YOUS...

Among those businesses that the *Soldier* team would like to thank for their Christmas spirit are: Aston Villa Football Club, The Bluebeard's Revenge, Rivington Grill Restaurant, MacWet, Wingman, Everton Football Club, Classic Lodges, Snuggpak, Mustard, Newquay Activity Centre, Homedics, TRX, Mikey Digital, RHA, The Seafood Restaurant, Optical Express, Kobo, Watch Shop, Smart Turnout, Haix Schuhe, Banana Moon Workshop, Sent With A Loving Kiss, Heinnie Haynes, Jabra, Garmin UK, National Geographic, Tesco, Canoe, Daniel Footwear, Blizzard Entertainment, Electronic Arts, Chelsea Football Club, Cosa Nostra PR, Powertraveller Ltd, Atomic Floyd, House PR, Nira Caledonia, Thruxton Racing, Naafi, Gloucester Rugby, CubanEight, Team Sport, Experience Megastore, Brooks Hotel Edinburgh, Military1st, War and Peace Revival, Tivoli, The Headland Hotel Cornwall, Revelation Films, Wyck Hill House Hotel, Alex Wise, Telegraph Outdoor Show, Paramount, Edinburgh Dungeons, Eco Services, Jabra, Heat Holder, SealSkinz, Pitch Publishing, Know the Score Books, Steve McLaughlin, Craig William Emms, Quercus, Helion.

Giveaway gratitude

Annual *Soldier* draw brings New Year cheer to Service personnel

SCORES of Servicemen and women are celebrating after winning big in *Soldier's* annual festive giveaway, Operation Reindeer's Hoof.

Thanks to the generosity of businesses up and down the country, our magazine was able to distribute £11,320-worth of goodies to troops last month.

"I am delighted that once again we were able to bring some valuable festive cheer to troops, their families and friends," commented Managing Editor Steven Muncey.

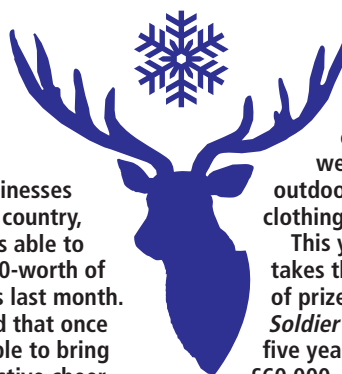
"Thank you to all the firms, large and small, who made this giveaway possible and helped to spread the word about the quality of prizes on offer."

Among the goodies that were up for grabs via the social networking site Facebook were DVDs, books, football memorabilia, computer games, weekend breaks, outdoor experiences and clothing (pictured above).

This year's success story takes the total value of prizes distributed by *Soldier* HQ over the last five years to approximately £60,000.

Any business or individual wishing to donate items to any of our 2014 competitions is asked to call the editorial team on 01252 787096 or send an email via news@soldiermagazine.co.uk

Happy New Year to our army of loyal readers.



THIS MONTH
IN REVIEWS



“THIS IS ONE OF THE MOST EXTRAORDINARY STORIES I'VE EVER BEEN TOLD”

”

- PAGES 71-81



GAMES: "It quickly becomes stale"

★★★★★



TOP GEAR: Nissan hits the right Note with the evolution of a small, economical vehicle

THE BIG PICTURE

> ANDOVER, HAMPSHIRE

WHEELIE THRIVING

BMX is booming in the Army and the Service will soon have a strong squad of riders competing at regional, national and possibly world championships. For now, it's all about practice ahead of some serious competitions later this year. The fledgling outfit, recently set up by WO2 Willie Plowman (Mercian), is currently using Andover BMX Club's demanding circuit to prepare. Turn to page 84 for a full report.

Picture: Graeme Main







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Supplements and service

Why bodybuilding products
are causing a stir among
the ranks

Reports: Steven Muncey and Joe Clapson
Pictures: Steve Dock

» INSIDE

P 24-25 Powder problem

Army concern over
growing trend

P 27 How to stay supplement safe

Check your products
have been quality
tested

P 28-29 Q&A

Powerlifting star
dispels myths

P 31-33 Food facts

Nutrition advice
for troops

The following photos are for illustration purposes only and are not intended to represent any particular product. Any resemblance is purely coincidental.

www.soldiermagazine.co.uk JANUARY 2014 23

Ripped off?

The potential cost of protein powders and shakes



Definition:
Stacking > n. Where use of a combination of different sports supplements can create something else entirely, and possibly a banned substance

NO ONE should be surprised that nutritional supplements like protein powders are popular among soldiers.

Working out to become fit, agile and strong is all part of military life. And guess what? The sports nutrition industry spends millions of pounds every year trying to get young men and women to buy their products.

Predictably, the conclusion that many manufacturers have come to is that the Army provides a ready-made and receptive customer base.

There are no official statistics on the use of fitness foodstuffs among troops but if, for example, one in ten use protein shakes on a regular basis then the Service alone represents a market worth around £8 million per year in gross sales.

No wonder the shelves of stores across the country are stacked with these products.

The increasing popularity of supplements among military personnel reflects what's going on society-wide.

According to the research company Euromonitor International, fitness fans in the UK purchased nearly £300 million-worth of protein shakes and other sports nutrition products in 2012 – more than four times the amount consumed just a decade ago.

However, the chain of command has a number of concerns about this trend taking hold in the Army.

And the first doesn't focus on the effects on muscle but on the pocket.

"These products are expensive, averaging around £50 per tub," says Brig John Donnelly, Director of the Army's Personal Services, who oversees policy on the health and welfare of British troops.

"There's simply no need to spend all that money when you can get just as much nutrition from a well-balanced diet," he adds.

"It's quite the done thing at the moment for soldiers to look 'ripped' so there is a view that you need to take all these drinks and shakes to supplement your daily diet, which is simply ludicrous.

"If you eat healthy whole foods then that's all you need.

"If you are a serious bodybuilder you probably need about an extra six grams of protein per day – that's a chicken sandwich or an egg in a pint of milk.

"If you've been training hard, say on a ten-mile run, then a pint of milk and a banana is just as good as a protein shake or recovery drink."

Brig Donnelly's views are endorsed by, among others, Dr Rob Child, a world authority on the subject of sports nutrition who advises Olympic squads and is also a consultant biochemist to the Army.

On page 31 this expert reveals how, in most cases, conventional foods are

superior to sports supplements for bodybuilders, athletes and soldiers alike. He also shows how to make a quick, cheap and totally natural post-exercise alternative to rival any manufactured protein shake.

However, despite the widespread scepticism of many of the claims made by sport supplement makers the trend for using bodybuilding products is likely to continue in the Army as well as the civilian world.

And a quick poll conducted at the Aldershot garrison gym (see below right) would appear to back that up.

"Simply telling Servicemen not to use supplements is unrealistic," says Brig Donnelly.

"We must therefore educate them on the potential consequences of their use in order that they can make properly informed choices."

It's in this area that the Army's other big concern on the issue lies.

With a plethora of products on the market and many websites marketing supplements imported from abroad, where controls on ingredients can be far less stringent, some soldiers could be putting themselves in danger of failing their compulsory drugs test (see page 27).

There are also some more complex issues concerning ingredients that many consumers of nutritional supplements may not fully appreciate.

These include "stacking", where a combination of different products can create something else entirely and possibly a banned substance.

On pages 28-29 Capt Neil Thomas (AGC), Chairman of Army and Combined Services Powerlifting, explains more on the subject and why protein shakes and other sports supplements can never be considered absolutely safe when it comes to Army drug testing.

The potential dangers to a soldier's career and health from taking banned substances, accidentally or not, have prompted the Service to take a stronger stance on the issue.

It has just produced a video on the British Army's YouTube page called Army Health Supplements Advice, offering words of wisdom, and in June it issued an Army briefing note, which stated: "In the vast majority of cases soldiers do not require dietary or sports supplements to maintain the physical standards that are required by Service life."

"Where soldiers do take supplements, military policy is unequivocal – they should only use products tested by the HFL Informed Sport programme (see page 27) and only in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions."

If you believe the Army's approach is overly cautious, think again.

In 2013 there were 44 compulsory drug test (CDT)



failures for performance-enhancing substances – some of which hit the national headlines – and those personnel were either sacked or are currently in the process of being dismissed from the Army.

"If a soldier feels like he must take supplements then he should always check the list on the Informed Sport website," reiterates Brig Donnelly.

"While the products sold in this country shouldn't contain steroids or other banned substances, that's not the case everywhere."

The senior officer adds a final stark warning: "If you fail a CDT for a steroid or other banned substance then, whether you took it deliberately or not, you can expect to be discharged." ■

SUPPLEMENTS AND SERVICE

In numbers:

£300m

– amount spent on sports nutrition products by UK fitness fans in one year

Do you use supplements?

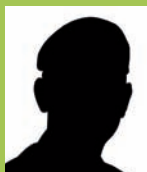
Soldier quizzes troops at the Aldershot garrison gym...

YES

"MY fitness has to be higher than the regular guys in the Army and I take protein supplements in the form of powdered shakes."

"Some products have things like creatine included to help your body recover faster, which is why I take them now and then. I always try and eat healthily anyway but it's just that added extra you need sometimes when you're training hard."

LSgt Sean Martinez (IG), a physical training instructor who spends 24 hours a week in the gym.



NO

"THERE'S so many different types of supplements out there that it's better to be safe than sorry."

"Our lifestyle is such that you don't really have the time to dig down deep and investigate the contents of every tub you buy so the best bet is to steer clear."

"In the gym at Camp Bastion most soldiers seemed to rely on their peers and word of mouth for advice on supplements."

Maj Mark Pereira (AGC (SPS)), who recently returned from Op Herrick.



MAYBE

"ORDINARILY I don't take supplements but they are useful in places like Afghanistan because it's harder to get all the nutrients you need. The food is okay there but it's not easy to get extra calories as and when you require them."

A lance corporal from The Parachute Regiment, who wished to remain anonymous.



If soldiers must take them they should always check the list on the Informed Sport website





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*National Student Survey 2012

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Staying safe

Crucial points to consider when using sports supplements

Quality

INFORMED Sport is a supplement quality assurance programme. It is useful for soldiers because it can tell you if a particular item has been tested for banned substances that may cause you problems.

All nutritional products and ingredients that carry this logo have been tested by the HFL Sport Science anti-doping laboratory.

Individuals who choose to use supplements should visit www.informed-sport.com to discover if the products they are considering have been through the rigorous certification process.

All supplements stocked by Naafi stores carry the logo. If an item does not appear on the portal, approach with caution.



Legality

WHILE some troops may make an informed decision to use sports shakes safely, others who are less careful could land themselves with the sack and a criminal record to boot.

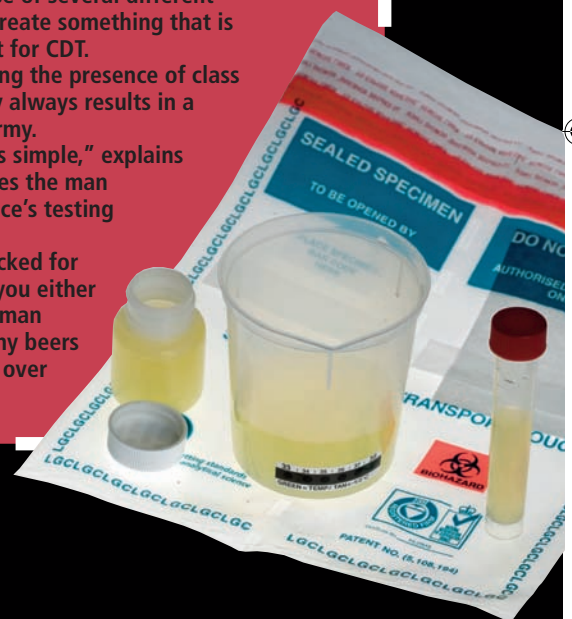
More than 100,000 compulsory drug tests (CDTs) were carried out in the Army in 2012 and of those there were 520 failures, caused by substances that are classified under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

Whether these failures were down to deliberate law-breaking or an inadvertent mistake such as "stacking" – a problem where use of several different supplements mix to create something that is banned – is irrelevant for CDT.

Any result confirming the presence of class A, B or C drugs nearly always results in a discharge from the Army.

"The CDT process is simple," explains Maj (Retd) Chris Davies the man in charge of the Service's testing programme.

"It's like being checked for drink-driving in that you either pass or fail – a policeman doesn't care how many beers you've had if you are over the limit."



What is illegal?

The following substances are among those that can get you the sack...

Class A: Ecstasy, cocaine, heroin, LSD, mescaline, methadone, morphine, opium and injectable forms of class B drugs.

Class B: Oral preparations of amphetamines, barbiturates, cannabis, cannabis resin, codeine and methaqualone (Mandrax).

Class C: Most benzodiazepines (eg temazepam, valium), other less harmful drugs of the amphetamine group and anabolic steroids.



'There's no such thing as a 100% safe product'

Powerlifting champion speaks out on the issue of sports supplements



WHEN it comes to fuelling your body safely to maximise performance, Capt Neil Thomas knows his stuff.

The Adjutant General's Corps officer, attached to The Light Dragoons, is chairman and founder of Army and Combined Services Powerlifting, president of the British Drugs Free Powerlifting Association and chief drugs control officer and drugs test director for the World Drugs Free Powerlifting Federation.

He has competed as a powerlifter for Great Britain for nine years and has won world and European titles.

Soldier quizzed the Serviceman on the issue of sport supplements...

● Do you use supplements?

I have used supplements for more than 20 years because I am in pursuit of elite-level sporting targets. I have been subject to 123 drugs tests and always passed.

● Do other soldiers need them?

Some nutrients are easily available in food groups while others, such as glucosamine, need to be topped up by the use of a supplement. Direction from all governing bodies, health professionals and the Armed Forces is that in the first instance this should be sought from a healthy balanced diet and increasing the required item, such as protein or carbohydrates. Supplements might be appropriate if you are engaged in elite-level sport or any strenuous physical activity, when you feel that your nutritional needs have not been met by food.

● Any myths to bust?

Supplements are not muscles in a tin as some believe. Relevant products can assist in the development, repair and overall health of the body when combined with a balanced diet, active lifestyle and structured training regime. Taking more than the stated dose will not increase the effect but can lead to adverse health issues.

● Which products are best?

Many supplements make all sorts of unsubstantiated claims about what they can do for the user. Read the label carefully and you will see myriad disclaimers relating to its advertisement. Be cautious about in-house labs and testing as this is not independent. Studies indicate on average that around 10 per cent of all supplements sold contain some kind of contamination that may result in a positive drugs test.

● Is there a list of safe supplements to take?

No. There is no such thing as a 100 per cent safe product. People should only ever consider the use of supplements listed on the Informed Sport website (see page 27). This portal provides details of products that have undergone testing to ensure they are free from contaminants to a specific level.

● There are so many products available on the internet – should Service personnel buy these?

Only with caution. You can get just about anything from the internet and many countries have different laws regarding ingredients. For example, products from the USA can contain things that are class C drugs in the United Kingdom.

● What about supplements from overseas?

It's your choice and your responsibility to be informed. The purchase of products from outside the EU is where you are most likely to go wrong.

● Regardless of extra-curricular activities such as sports, can supplements help soldiers do their jobs?

There are no day-to-day tasks within camp that require the definitive use of supplements. When troops need extra nutrition they should always consider the appropriate food groups first. For activities such as P Company and the commando course there is an increased requirement and this is provided in food form by the establishments concerned.

● Could any increase in positive drug test results be linked to a national increase in steroid use?

There is a perception that the problem is increasing. The truth is probably that it has always been there and we are just more aware of the public cases such as Lance Armstrong, coupled with more readily available statistics in the military.

CAPT THOMAS' TOP THREE TIPS FOR STAYING SAFE WITH SUPPLEMENTS:

1

Think carefully about whether you even need to take supplements in the first place: **think about your diet**

2

Use products that have been subjected to independent testing: look at **www.informed-sport.com**

3

Remember that unless it is being done under medical advice, if you are injecting a substance then it is probably illegal

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Expert advice

A WORLD authority on all things dietary, Dr Rob Child is a nutritional adviser to the Royal Yachting Association, Team GB Archery, Team GB Swimming and the Amateur Boxing Association. Here, he offers his thoughts on whether soldiers should use sports supplements...



Dr Rob Child

Supplements typically contain a more concentrated source of nutrients than conventional foods and require minimal (if any) preparation before they are eaten.

This can make them more convenient than some vegetables, fresh meats and fish.

However, with careful choices food cannot only match but be superior to shakes and powders – both in terms of convenience and nutritional content.

They also have the advantage of being much cheaper and carrying a far lower risk of producing a positive Army drugs test result.

For soldiers, athletes and the general population alike consuming the correct balance of food on a daily basis should be the key priority for nutrition.

It can definitely meet regular protein requirements – even during the most demanding training and physically challenging deployment scenarios.

Using this approach and considering the timing of your intake in the hours before, during and after every training session maximises the benefits of exercise.

This advice holds true whether your goal is attaining optimal health, improving performance, building muscle or losing fat.

Only when the opportunities provided by conventional food have been exhausted is it worth considering supplements.

For soldiers, athletes and the general population alike consuming the correct balance of food on a daily basis should be the key priority



Catering to your needs

The Army takes a strong interest in food provision but does it have all the right ingredients?

HAVING been issued with a copy of the *UK Armed Forces Personal Guide to Nutrition*, phase one recruits and officer cadets are told they have the tools to make informed choices about food.

Obviously, on deployments and exercises those choices are limited but the operational ration pack contains enough food to fuel a Serviceman or woman for a period of 24 hours.

Each box contains a minimum of 4,000 calories and includes the five major food groups (dairy, fruit and vegetables, protein, carbohydrate and fat), with a raised level of nutrients to account for the environmental challenges that personnel face.

At pay-as-you-dine facilities it's a different matter but caterers have to adhere to the guidelines of joint service publication 456, which sets out a menu cycle of 28 core meals, based upon providing an adequate variety of dishes made up from the five nutrient groups.

So the only question is, do these meals contain enough food for a soldier looking to pack on muscle?

"There would appear to be two issues here," said Clive Dunlop of the Ministry of Defence's catering services management team.

"Firstly, access to calories and secondly having a bespoke diet. Generally speaking, carbohydrates – which equate to calories – are provided on a self-service basis so an individual can load up on them.

"However, I suspect that any claim of 'not being able to get all the food I need' from a gym user is directed more to the protein items which are served – hence why some individuals opt to purchase supplements.

"The meal menu plan is designed

to meet the average customer's needs and not those requiring a specific high-level intake."

Soldier's cover model, Sgt Brett Steeles, a physical training instructor based at the Army School of Physical Training in Aldershot, agreed.

"I use protein shakes in the evening if I can't obtain any food," he said.

"I'm very careful and always check with the Informed Sport website but high activity personnel like myself need the extra protein right after training in the gym.

"I believe in supplements because they contain the right ingredients to benefit your body and they can be absorbed quickly.

"Also, the protein offered per serving through pay-as-you-dine can be limited. Although you can load up on carbs and vegetables, if you want more meat you have to pay again.

"Having said that, I prefer to get my protein through food but catering is available only at very limited times – it would help a lot if there was a late session in the mess, say around nine in the evening."

Food for thought, perhaps.





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Sport is also covered and we help clients with their fitness activities and outdoor pursuits, depending on their ability. Adventure training is also provided from gym, martial arts, boxing to rock climbing, parachuting, survival and more. Jobs available in both activities.

Security – Sporting events, in house (when owners are away), property (buildings, MoD), airports, nightclubs, casinos, hotels, concerts and other functions, escort and VIPs.

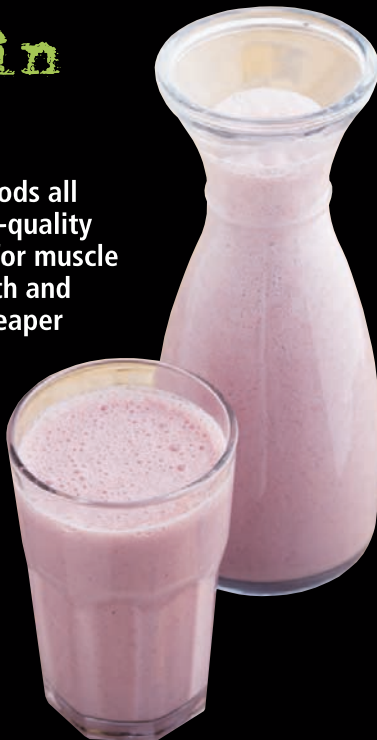


Grub to pack a punch

Protein power

The following foods all provide the high-quality protein needed for muscle repair and growth and can prove far cheaper than sports supplements...

- Tinned tuna
- Sardines
- Mackerel
- Pickled herring
- Corned beef
- Cooked meats
- Turkey breast
- Chicken breast
- Yoghurt
- Milk
- Nuts



Back to nature

A smoothie to rival concocted dietary supplements

Typical post-exercise supplements for recovery or muscle building contain around 20g of protein and 60g of carbohydrate. So why not try this cheaper natural alternative and blitz the following together in a blender?

- 150g of low-fat yoghurt
- 1 banana (100g)
- 1 peach (140g)
- 150ml of skimmed milk
- 150g of strawberries

Dr Child says... "This drink is not only delicious but it contains the same amount of protein and carbohydrate, with a wide range of other vitamins, minerals and antioxidants so is arguably more beneficial than shakes you can buy off the shelf."

Energy boost

The ideal items to get you up and running:

- Breakfast cereals
- Fruit such as bananas, pears, peaches, mangos, grapes and plums



HIGH CLIMBERS

Adventurous training activities take British troops to all corners of the globe. But what do personnel get out of action-packed trips closer to home? *Soldier* visited Capel Curig training camp in north Wales to find out...

Report: Sarah Goldthorpe
Pictures: Graeme Main

WHEN considering the best country to visit for some outdoor adventure, a week in wintery Wales may not be at the top of everyone's travel wishlist.

For those who have endured Salisbury Plain during the colder months, an opportunity to let off steam in yet another drizzly UK location is unlikely to delight.

However, the five-day multi-activity adventurous training package on offer in the heart of the Snowdonia National Park proved to be surprisingly enjoyable for a recent contingent of Foot Guards.

The Servicemen visited the region to try their hands at rock climbing and kayaking, and found the British wilderness held more appeal than they first expected...

“
**THERE'S
CRAGS,
LAKES,
MOUNTAINS
AND MORE**
”

THE VERDICT



“THIS is our company's third time here in a year; the package is very good. Trips like this are an incentive for guys to keep at it. We don't do much of the greener stuff on ceremonial duties in London so this is also a good chance to refresh navigation and compass skills on the hills.”

**2nd Lt Tom
Montgomery (SG)**

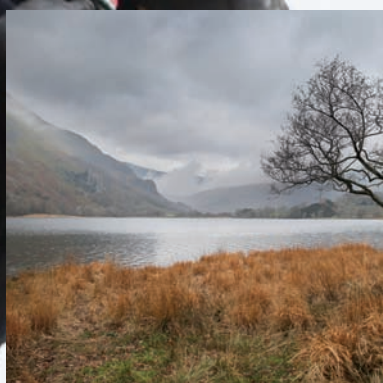


“IT'S cold and they don't seem to know how to make kebabs or pasties in Wales, but it's good to come away and it's something different. We have a laugh with the other lads during the activities.”

**Gdsm Harley
Newton
(Coldm Gds)**

"Snowdonia has various environments condensed into one little spot. You come out of camp and don't even have to get into a vehicle to find yourself in an awesome region. There's crags, lakes, mountains and more."

Sgt Matt Ford
(7 Para RHA)
Capel Curig AT instructor



"ROCK climbing has been great. I have only been in my company for a month-and-a-half and there are guys from the unit who I have never spoken to. Activities like this are good because you get to know your colleagues and have a laugh. It's better than sitting in camp."

Gdsm Greg Burns (SG)



THE SITE

- AROUND 1,200 military personnel pass through this adventurous training centre every year, mainly from the British Army
- WITH the exception of Christmas, the site operates all year round
- BOTH multi-activity and foundation adventurous training courses are available



THE ACTIVITIES

IN NORTH WALES SOLDIERS CAN TAKE PART IN:

- Kayaking
- Canoeing
- Climbing
- Hill walking
- Mountain biking
- Abseiling

THE ENVIRONMENT

- CHALLENGING terrain, both boggy and rocky, with areas of dense tree cover
- THICK vegetation and steep inclines. In all there are more than 90 summits above 2,000 feet and 15 over 3,000 feet
- VARIOUS lakes make the region ideal for kayaking and canoeing

THE SCHEDULE

TYPICAL MULTI-ACTIVITY WEEKS AT CAPEL CURIG TRAINING CAMP

- Monday**
Half a day of indoor climbing followed by an introduction to basic kayaking skills at an indoor swimming pool
- Tuesday**
Full day of outdoor climbing
- Wednesday**
Kayaking and canoeing in nearby lakes
- Thursday**
Walking
- Friday**
Abseiling

THE INSTRUCTORS

The Adventurous Training Group (Army) is looking for keen and motivated personnel to serve as incremental staff at Capel Curig and other locations.

This may be of particular benefit to young soldiers and junior NCOs who wish to develop their leadership skills. Previous adventurous training qualifications are not always necessary. Read 2012DIN07-127 for details.

KENYAN CONSTRUCTION

Royal Engineers transform
dusty wasteland into the
Army's African HQ



Report: Joe Clapson
Pictures: Graeme Main

EXERCISES over demanding, arid terrain are set to feature on the Army's training calendar with increasing frequency and to keep pace the Service's Kenyan headquarters is undergoing a multi-million pound overhaul.

Under the radical facelift all elements of British Army Training Unit Kenya (Batuk) currently located at Nanyuki Show Ground are moving to a purpose-built site at Laikipia Air Base.

Soldiers working on the programme have been tasked with transforming an area of dusty African outback into a high-specification military hub at the sharp end of training operations.





Explaining the importance of the project, Maj James Cackett, officer commanding 30 Armoured Engineer Squadron (30 AES), 26 Engineer Regiment, said: "It's a multi-million pound four-year programme made up of 24 exercises for the Royal Engineers, which will deliver a forward mounting base for exercise activities in Kenya.

"Batuk is here to enable foundation packages for British troops and this development will provide them with modern buildings – it is the biggest trade training programme they will have ever undertaken."

Soldier caught up with 30 AES on Exercise Crabapple – the last of four joint force-enabling exercises at Laikipia this year – as they put the finishing touches to a welfare facility for more than 250 Kenyan civilians and a building to accommodate UK Service personnel.

And while vital for many battlegroup rotations and deployments throughout the year, the construction project has also proved valuable for sappers who have been using their artisan skills, managing limited resources and procuring materials from numerous suppliers in Nanyuki and Nairobi.

"This development was built completely from scratch – from the foundations and blockwork through to the finish," explained Maj Cackett.

"The squadron got to work solidly on its trades for 12 weeks so it's been really good for honing techniques."

The man in charge of the military construction force added: "It was a huge project which required us to use the whole skill set including designing, planning, building and managing resources."

Working alongside locally employed civilians and Kenyan combat engineers the soldiers toiled in the 35-degree Celsius heat and against flash rainstorms to revamp the site, which covers an 18 square-kilometre area.

With a need to conform to British standards of work practice and construction, a ten-week deadline and a £185,000 budget, 30 AES troops were pushed to the limit to achieve their challenging mission.

Cpl David Torbitt, task commander, said: "There are no builders' merchants like Travis Perkins around here so we had to work with the Kenyan system and adapt to it.

"There has also been a language barrier so we've spoken via a liaison worker and I've learnt a bit of Swahili to get by on-site."

Spr Jake Matthews, added: "I'm a bricklayer and for my first construction tour it was very hard

Such financial investment in Kenya as an exercise outpost has not been lost on those running the building operation.

"I only finished my troop commander's course in July so this was a pretty big job to start with but it's gone really well," said 2nd Lt Kirsty Clifton.

"There has been quite a lot of pressure with deadlines, especially when we were dependent on resources and had to work around the extreme weather, but we've achieved a lot."

Safety and attention to detail were top priorities during the major project.

"This has all been built with a 25-year minimum life expectancy so that's why the quality had to be excellent," insisted Maj Cackett.

"If an Infantry exercise goes wrong they can go back and start again but with this it had to be perfect the first time otherwise buildings would fall down and people would get hurt."

As with any undertaking by British soldiers, the task was treated as a military mission and completed exactly to orders with future combat in mind.

"This job has set all of the squadron in good stead for any operation from bridge building to putting up a complex development," concluded Maj Cackett. ■



"This development was built completely from scratch"
Maj James Cackett, RE

work but also enjoyable.

"We don't get too much time to work on our trades so it was a good opportunity and it was interesting to see the way Kenyans do things."

The master plan for the entire programme is to provide facilities that allow Batuk to sustain Service packages in the foothills of Mount Kenya for extended periods of time for up to six battlegroups per year.

So far phase one of the project, which created austere accommodation for exercising troops, has cost £13 million and phase two has a budget in excess of £19.5 million, with funds being provided by the Army's Collective Training Group.

There is also the possibility of a third development phase that would see Royal Engineers constructing 60 Service family accommodation quarters on-site.

Big plans: Cpl David Torbitt and 2nd Lt Kirsty Clifton study drawings of the site



RESERVES ROLE REVAMPED

TROOPS CHANGE TRADES TO BOOST STRENGTH OF ARMY AIR CORPS

Report: Joe Clapson
Pictures: Steve Dock

"THIS is a great job, you get to play with the best assets in the Service," said Rfn Andrew Little (6 Rifles) at the Army Aviation Centre in Middle Wallop.

It's no wonder the soldier was smiling.

He is one of many Reservists transferring into the exciting world of military flying to expand the capacity of 6 Regiment, Army Air Corps – the only Reserve unit dedicated to providing ground support for the Service's fleet of helicopters.

The number of squadrons in the formation will be doubling during 2014 (see page 39) and as a result a staggering 400 Reservist posts need to be filled over the next three years.

Many of the additional personnel will, like Rfn Little, be transferred to the AAC on a voluntary basis from other Reserve units.

However, that has thrown up some significant challenges as the vast majority of those changing cap badges will have little or no relevant experience.

Maj Chris Oswald (AAC), in charge of ground training at Middle Wallop, said: "If we don't get this right, the corps simply won't meet its capability.

"We are leading the way when it comes to training – we have really taken the bull by the horns in deciding to get the Reserves going."

For many existing troops this will represent a sea change in their duties.

"They will do exactly the same as Regular soldiers; they will refuel, rearm, push and pull and do everything else required," the officer added.

Once accepted onto the 15-day phase two Army aviation trade training course, personnel undergo tuition to provide all the basic skills required to work with battlefield helicopters.

This ranges from learning to marshal an aircraft into a landing zone to refuelling a multi-million pound attack asset and understanding complex flight documentation.

Rfn Little commented: "This package is a lot different to what I'm used to as there's a lot more paperwork involved to ensure we know exactly what the helicopter is doing, because you can't afford to get it wrong.

"It's difficult as you've got to take so much information in and so it is very intense."

Pte Chris Payne (3 PWRR), another soldier set to transfer, added: "In the Infantry you are pretty much told to lie down in icy puddles whereas this is much more comfortable, although it's more academic.

"You need to be able to ensure paperwork is perfect otherwise flights could be put in danger."

The expansion in 6 Regiment was sparked by the Army 2020 and Future Reserves 2020 reviews which concluded that helicopter

**"YOU GET THE ADRENALIN
BUZZING THROUGH YOU
KNOWING YOU'VE GOT TO LOOK
AFTER YOUR MATES"**

ground support units needed bolstering if they are going to play an effective role in helping to provide air support for the new Reaction Force.

As part of those plans this initiative will prepare trainees in the same teams they will deploy with, as the Army Air Corps readies itself to meet contingency requirements.

The aim is that the former infantry troops learning how to rig a helicopter near Salisbury could carry out the same task anywhere in the world.

"Regulars will also learn from the Reserves, whether from their knowledge of industry or their life skills," added Maj Oswald. "They will have done things outside the Army that others can benefit from."

After passing through the course as qualified ground crew the soldiers will have the opportunity to train on the Apache or Wildcat airframes.

Rfn Joe Proctor (6 Rifles) said: "Being under the aircraft

is absolutely brilliant – you get the adrenalin buzzing through you knowing that you've got to look after your mates.

"It's completely different to anything I've done before and if I am able to use my infantry skills while doing this it will be a great job."

Colleague Rfn Alex Pead-Walsh (6 Rifles) added: "We are used to working with weapons, webbing and Bergens so it's been a pleasure to get to grips with big and exciting bits of kit like a helicopter.

"In civvy life I have a private pilot licence and I'm looking into the commercial world so the qualifications I can get with the Army Air Corps will link perfectly with that."

With the vital role of providing a world-class offensive arm as well as helicopter support to ground troops, the formation is under immense pressure to turn its new Reservists into well-oiled machines.

"These soldiers may have been trained as riflemen, signallers or gunners but within six months at the aviation centre they could be fitting weapon systems to an Apache or defensive aid suites on Wildcats," continued Maj Oswald.

"They will become aviation specialists, carrying out important technical jobs.

"With the introduction of Apache and Wildcat people now see our corps as a teeth arm with an ability to do more on all sorts of operations.

"We don't know what the future is going to bring but we need the ability to deal with it and restructuring will help provide that." >>

● Final Word: troops talk on changing roles – page 98



THE Army Air Corps' role is to provide the offensive air elements of 16 Air Assault Brigade under the new Reaction Force.

This meant it needed a significant overhaul under the Army 2020 plan if it was to meet operational requirements.

As a result, 6 Regt AAC, currently made up of 677 and 655 Squadrons, will have the following structure in place by April:

6 REGIMENT'S NEW STRUCTURE



675 (Rifles) Squadron

Located in Somerset (Taunton and Yeovil)

Created from the transfer of B Coy, 6 Rifles

Paired with 1 Regt, AAC in Yeovilton

Provides ground support to Wildcat and helicopter handling teams (HHT)

679 (Duke of Connaught's) Squadron

Located in Hampshire (Portsmouth and Middle Wallop)

Created by the renaming of 655 Sqn, AAC at Middle Wallop and then the re-role and transfer of D Coy, 3 PWRR in Portsmouth

Paired with the Army Aviation Centre at Middle Wallop

Provides ground support to the centre and Apache

Assists 675 Sqn with the provision of HHT

678 (Rifles) Squadron

Centred in Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire (Milton Keynes and Luton)

Created from the transfer of E Coy, 7 Rifles and 201 Bty of 100 Regt, RA

Paired with 4 Regt, AAC in Wattisham

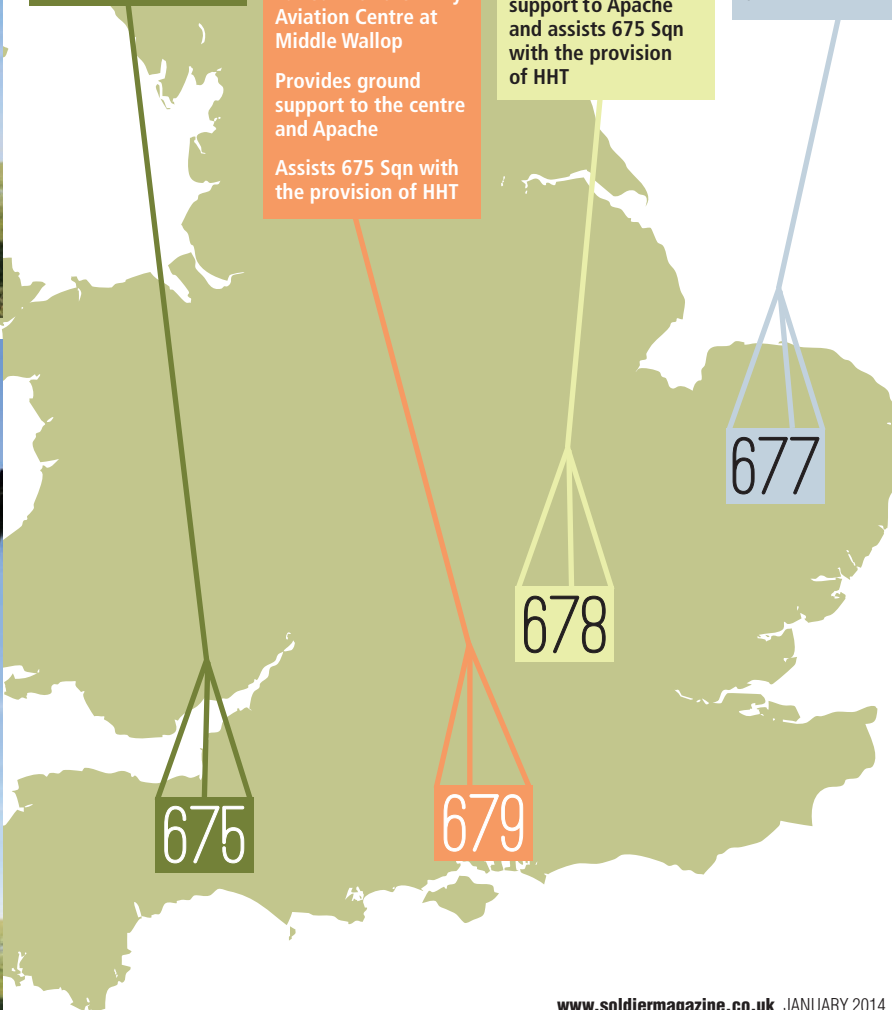
Provides ground support to Apache and assists 675 Sqn with the provision of HHT

677 (Suffolk and Norfolk Yeomanry) Squadron

Based around East Anglia (Bury St Edmunds, Norwich and Ipswich)

Paired with 3 Regt, AAC in Wattisham

Provides ground support to Apache and assists 675 Sqn with the provision of HHT





AIR CORPS ON THE HUNT

» 6 REGIMENT, AAC is undertaking an urgent nationwide hunt in the search for 400 extra Servicemen and women.

The transfer of other Reserve personnel into the unit as part of the Army restructuring programme will only solve half the manning problem it faces, however.

"Sustaining the corps' capability for operations was proving painful for the Regulars and the Army identified more Reservists as a solution," explained Lt Col Nigel Banks, 6 Regiment's commanding officer.

"Moving existing personnel will give us around 200 of the much-needed extra bodies but we need the same again from the new Reserve recruitment programme."

The formation is now recruiting in the areas around each unit's location and they have high hopes for 678 (Rifles) Squadron in particular, which is based in Buckinghamshire.

"That whole hub around Milton Keynes and

Luton has masses of commerce relevant to our trades," said Lt Col Banks.

"We will be targeting people working at Luton Airport, for example, who may have aviation experience as well as those with driving and logistics skills but we'll consider a wide range of people willing to join as we have all the facilities required for retraining."

In addition, 6 Regiment is banking on the locations of its bases attracting further newcomers to the ranks.

"We hope towns like Taunton or regions such as East Anglia will appeal to those looking for a lifestyle change," added Lt Col Banks.

"We also believe that Regulars leaving the Service may be tempted to join us as they can forge a great long-term Reserve career with the Army Air Corps in beautiful parts of the country."

To find out more about opportunities within the unit telephone 0845 600 8080 or visit www.army.mod.uk/aviation/27836.aspx

CUTTING IT AS A CAPTAIN

This month sees the start of a new training package for officers. *Soldier* visited Warminster's Land Warfare Centre to see students being put through their paces

Report: Becky Clark
Pictures: Steve Dock

THE year is 2021. In a country called Atropia a heavily armed enemy has invaded two towns the size of Bristol and Bath.

As a member of the British Army's Reaction Force you are part of a multinational team that has been deployed to stabilise the region.

Your battlegroup is planning an offensive operation to push back the opposition but the terrain is built up and home to a large civilian population.

What is your next move?

The scenario may be fictional but this is the kind of complex problem that students on the brand new captains' warfare course are expected to tackle.

Starting this month, the programme will prepare Army and Royal Marine personnel for senior captain posts by developing their skills in operational planning, project management and problem solving. »

Mapping manoeuvres: Students on the captains' warfare course split into syndicates to plan and execute a battlegroup-level operation to retake enemy-held territory. Afterwards each group will analyse which approach was the most successful

“WE EXPECT THEM TO RAPIDLY DIGEST INFORMATION”



» Chief instructor, Maj Chris Wildman (QRH), explained that the eight-week package was developed to equip all cap badges with a "toolbox" for demanding roles such as regimental adjutant and operations officer or staff jobs in formation headquarters.

"This is about developing a general education and looking at different ways of thinking rather than trying to prepare them for specific posts," he added.

"We cover everything from planning to office work, how to write a briefing note and how to extract information from vast amounts of material in order to update their chain of command."

Among the first students to attend the pilot course was Capt Elliot Shale (R Signals).

The 30-year-old described how its lessons bridge the gap between junior officer training and the intermediate command and staff course that is attended by majors.

"There are a number of significant appointments at HQ level in which certain knowledge is expected of you and up until this point there's been no formal training to introduce you to the staff work you'll have to do," he said.

"So people were arriving in those posts and then having to learn on the job for four to six months.

"This programme gives a very good heads-up in terms of what skills you'll need and I feel like I will be considerably better prepared for

my next role."

In line with the massive changes to the Army's capability and framework over the next few years, course developers deliberately moved away from Afghanistan-specific training.

"The whole serial is based around a fully-fledged Army 2020 structure, so our exercises take place in 2021-2023," explained Maj Wildman.

"It's taking students forward into the organisation that they're going to be part of in years to come.

"Of course, they shouldn't discard the lessons they have learnt in Helmand province but we're trying to widen their thought processes.

"They'll be operating in an unfamiliar battle space and they won't be able to rely on the things they're used to having, for example a helicopter to extract a casualty within 30 minutes.

"We expect them to rapidly digest information we give them and come up with a strategy."

For the operational planning modules, participants have two days to develop a scheme of manoeuvre, before testing their approach on a simulator and in the field.

A computer programme known as the Battlegroup Command and Control Trainer allows each element of the formation to virtually recreate its movements on maps based on the terrain around Warminster.

The students also deploy into the countryside to identify whether the actual ground would have an impact



“THEY’LL BE IN AN UNFAMILIAR BATTLE SPACE”



on the proposed plan.

Finally, an after-action review compares each syndicate's approach to determine which methods were more successful.

Capt Alex Clarke (RAMC) agreed that the process was useful.

"Coming out into the field you notice a couple of things that hadn't been taken into account, such as how rolling the countryside is and how our movement would be restricted," he said.

"The experience definitely develops your individual skills in terms of the combat estimate at battlegroup level.

"After the junior officers' tactical awareness course some cap badges go away and use what they've learnt and others don't as much, so this brings people back together to benefit from each other's experiences and apply it again in more detail."

Run four times a year with 144 slots in each intake, the captains' warfare course will now be compulsory for those aiming to be promoted to major.

However, due to the relatively lengthy absence from regimental duty for participants it is crucial for potential students to plan ahead.

"I would encourage individuals and the chain of command to actively identify a period when they can attend the package," Maj Wildman said.

"It's a long time to be away but the aim for us is to send back officers who will be even better at their job." ■

Officers speak out on the new captains' warfare course:

» Capt James Davis (9/12L)
IT'S easy to be naive to other arms and so coming here and working alongside different cap badges gives you a better grasp of what they do.



» Maj Bob Stork (RE)
AS one of the course directing staff I've noticed that the thirst for discussion among students has been impressive. They question the doctrine constantly and their understanding of how contingency operations will be fought is massive.



« Capt Tim Lauwerys (RA)
IT has been very useful to revise battlegroup tactics. This gives you an environment in which you can learn – it's better to make mistakes in training than for real on operations where errors are magnified.



» Capt Joe Trott (RLC)
I THOUGHT eight weeks was a long time but you quickly realise just how useful this course is. You come away with a lot more understanding of what you're meant to do moving into a senior captain's post.



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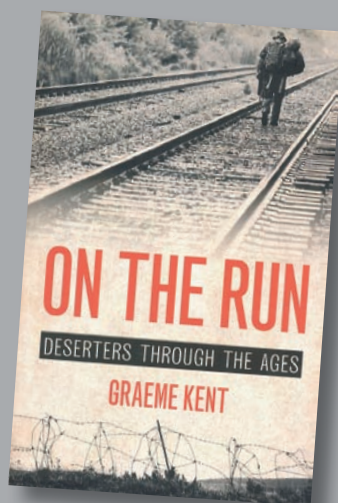
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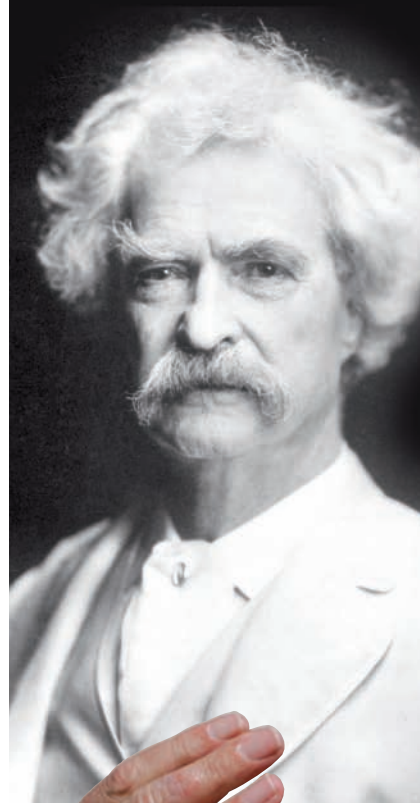
10 Famous deserters

FROM the very first battle in recorded history, soldiers have deserted or gone absent without leave. Most of these individuals have been ordinary squaddies but some went on to become well known in other walks of life. Here, Graeme Kent, author of *On The Run: Deserters Through the Ages*, lists his ten most memorable celebrity absconders...



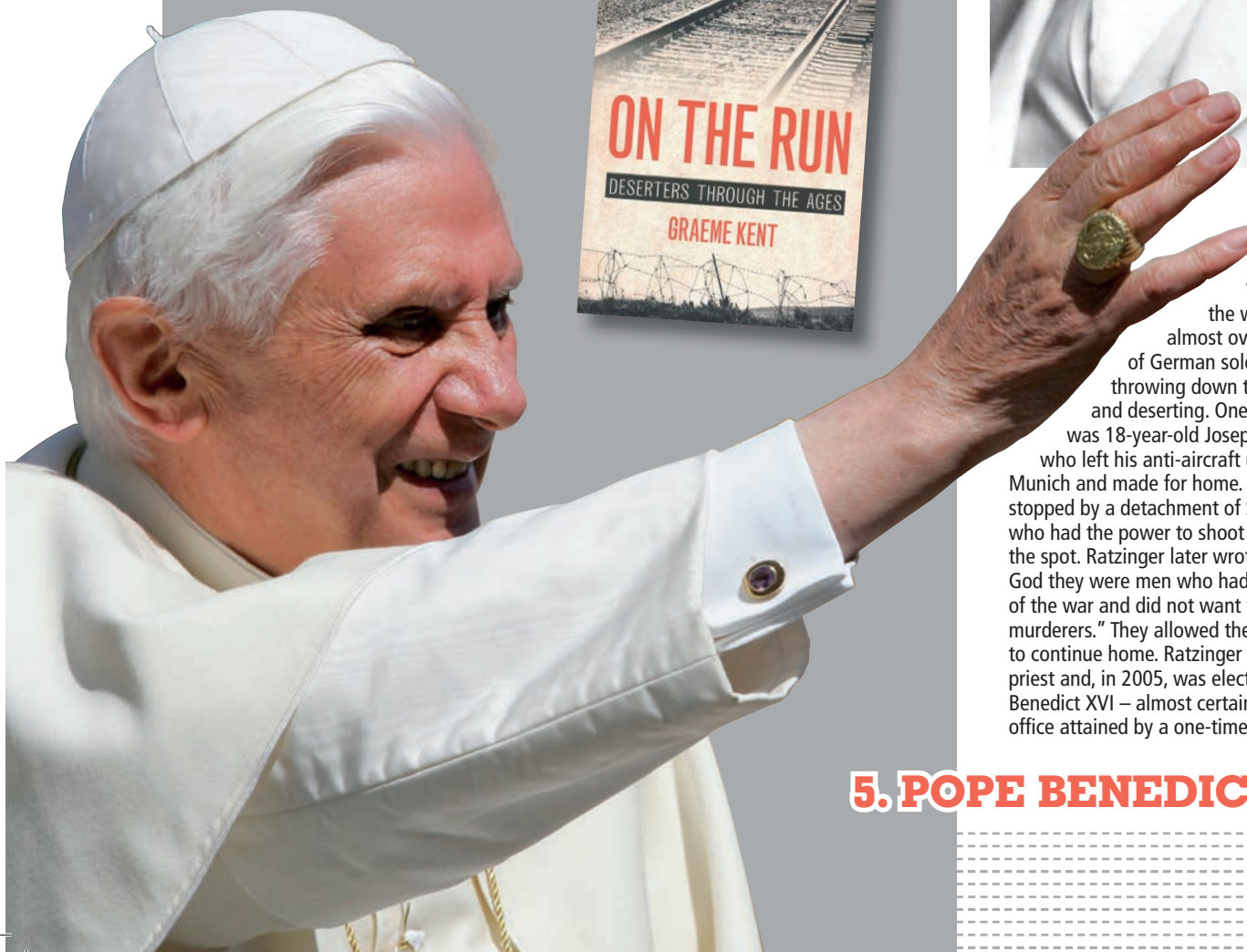
1. MARK TWAIN

■ THE renowned author of *Tom Sawyer* spent a few weeks in a unit of the Confederate Army at the beginning of the American Civil War in 1861. But after burning down a barn while trying to cook his breakfast and breaking an arm falling out of the top storey of another, he abandoned soldiering and headed inland to resume his writing in peace.



■ IN 1945, with the war in Europe almost over, thousands of German soldiers were throwing down their arms and deserting. One of them was 18-year-old Joseph Ratzinger, who left his anti-aircraft unit outside Munich and made for home. He was stopped by a detachment of SS troops, who had the power to shoot deserters on the spot. Ratzinger later wrote: "Thank God they were men who had had enough of the war and did not want to become murderers." They allowed the young soldier to continue home. Ratzinger became a priest and, in 2005, was elected Pope Benedict XVI – almost certainly the highest office attained by a one-time deserter.

5. POPE BENEDICT XVI



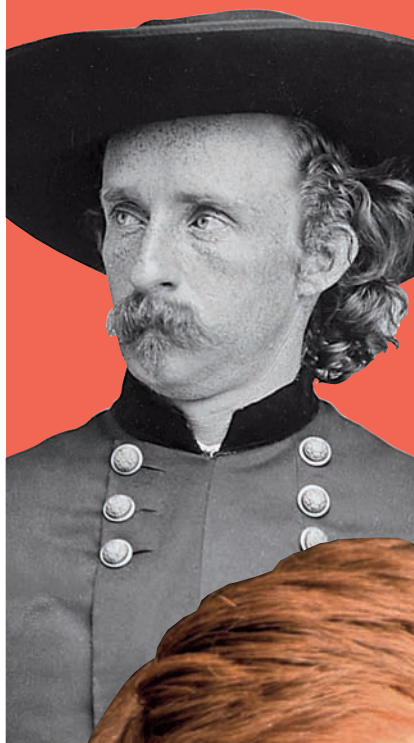
2. FRANKIE FRASER

■ NOTORIOUS gangster "Mad" Frankie Fraser revealed his true colours during the Second World War, deserting four times. He was recaptured on every occasion but spent only a few hours actually serving in the Army and boasted that he never once had time to put on a uniform. Fraser had more pressing things to do, mainly nefarious activities in London's underworld. When the war ended he complained bitterly, "I'll never forgive Hitler for surrendering".



3. GENERAL CUSTER

■ SOME years before 1876, when this celebrated American officer was massacred along with his cavalry troops at the Battle of the Little Bighorn, Gen Custer had been placed in charge of a remote fort in Kansas. When his wife did not join him on an appointed date he abandoned his command and set out with a force of 75 men to look for her, a search that took several weeks. He was subject to a court martial for desertion and suspended from duty for a year.



4. BENNY HILL

■ HE may have enjoyed doing the chasing when he was on-screen but the tables were turned on Benny Hill after he received his call-up papers while touring with a variety show in 1942. He ignored them, reckoning that the Army would never catch up with him on his travels, but two military policemen grabbed him in the wings of a Cardiff theatre. They transported Hill in handcuffs to a barracks in Lincoln. He was confined for a short time and then posted out as a driver. "They treated me like a criminal," he later complained of his time with the redcaps.



6. STEVE MCQUEEN

■ STEVE McQueen often took the role of mavericks in the movies and his military career only reinforced the popular notion that the legend simply played himself on the silver screen. In his most famous role in *The Great Escape*, McQueen's "Cooler King" character irritates the guards with frequent escape attempts and irreverent behaviour. Previous to his Hollywood success, McQueen worked as a merchant seaman, jumped ship in San Domingo and then enlisted in the Marine Corps, where he spent three years in a state of subdued mutiny. While on a two-day pass he met a girl and stayed with her for a fortnight. He was arrested as a deserter by a shore patrol and sentenced to 31 days in the brig – the first 21 of them on bread and water.



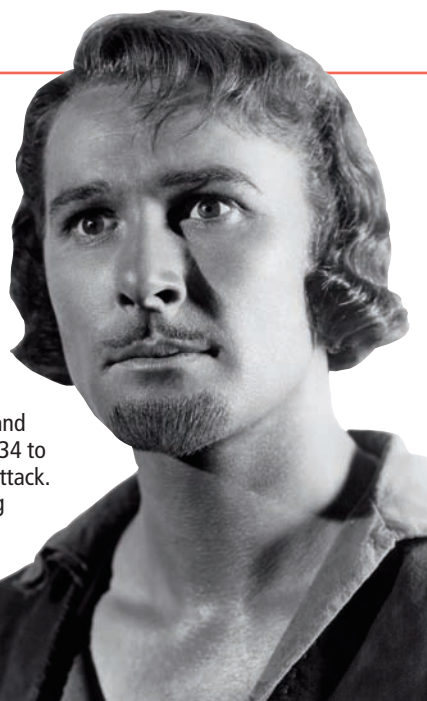
7. PERCY TOPLIS



■ **KNOWN** as the "Monocled Mutineer" for his habit of dressing up in an officer's uniform and sporting an eyeglass, Pte Toplis deserted from the Army during and after the First World War. He made national newspaper headlines in 1920 when, after a nationwide search, he was hunted down in Cumberland by 160 policemen and shot dead by marksmen following an exchange of gunfire.

8. ERROL FLYNN

■ HE may have played the swashbuckling hero in countless Hollywood films but the Aussie macho-man proved to be anything but in real life. Prior to finding fame, Flynn served in the Hong Kong Defence Force and was sent to Shanghai in 1934 to repel a possible Japanese attack. He was put to work digging trenches but as soon as he heard Japanese artillery fire in the distance he fled in a small boat to Saigon.



9. SERSJANT KLEMS

■ **KLEMS** joined the French Foreign Legion after serving in the German army in the First World War. Posted to Morocco, he deserted in 1925 and assisted an Arab uprising as a weapons training adviser. He became so famous that in 1926 a light opera called *The Desert Song* was written about his exploits as a freedom fighter and staged on Broadway.



10. ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER

■ IN 1965, at the age of 18, the muscleman and future movie star was called up to national service in the Austrian army. At the same time he was due to participate in the Junior Mr Universe competition. He climbed over the wall of his barracks and caught a train to Stuttgart, where he won the event with a perfect score. On return to his unit he was arrested and placed in a cell for seven days for being absent without leave. Fortunately for him, the national newspapers made such a story about the young soldier winning a European title that the military authorities were impressed and released Schwarzenegger with an admonition.

Disagree?

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“

THE bullet hit me on the left cheek, went through my nose and came out of my right cheek. I was able to treat myself for 25 minutes. I had to put my thumb in my mouth and hold my palate up so I could breathe.

”

Cpl Simon Brown
Ex-REME
Injured in Iraq, 2006

Survival stories

HIDDEN COST OF CONFLICT CAUGHT ON CAMERA

Report: Becky Clark

IT is an uncomfortable truth that for every soldier killed on operations, many more find themselves coping with life-changing injuries.

Their struggle to adapt goes largely undocumented but a compelling new

book by singer and photographer Bryan Adams aims to redress this and challenge perceptions about the lasting impact of conflict.

Wounded: The Legacy of War explores the devastating effects of bullets, improvised explosive devices and fire on the human body with a series of unflinching portraits. »

www.soldiermagazine.co.uk JANUARY 2014 49



» Equally disconcerting are the candid first-hand accounts that accompany each image.

ITN journalist Caroline Froggatt edited the title alongside the Canadian star.

"We hear about injured soldiers doing amazing things, whether it's running a marathon or rowing the Atlantic, and that's comforting for us but their daily lives and the simple things don't get any easier and that's what we wanted people to consider," she said.

"It's a delicate subject matter and we worked very hard to strike the right note – one that was both dignified and proud and that reflected the qualities that had enabled these extraordinary individuals to survive, whether it was their sense of humour or inner steel.

"I've been incredibly humbled by the project and the leap of faith that they took. It was a very brave thing for them to participate in and we were very honoured that they were prepared to reveal as much as they did.

"I'm hoping the book will prompt the public to be much more curious about the lasting impact of war."

Read on for a flavour of the title's images and stories.



“

IT'S amazing when I think about what must have been done to save my life. One of the medics who treated me in the helicopter contacted me about a year later and she asked, 'Did I do the right thing? Would you rather have died that day because of the position you're in now?', to which I obviously said, 'Yeah, of course you did the right thing.' I do feel very lucky to be alive.

”

Sgt Rick Clement
Ex-Lancs
Injured in
Afghanistan, 2010



“

BEFORE I was burnt and injured and scarred I had no tattoos at all. I had “unscarred” written because I found it ironic that a tattoo is really a scar itself. But it also fits because I've never needed any counselling. I never have flashbacks, though I do think about that day all the time.

”

Pte Karl Hinett
Ex-Staffords
Injured in Iraq,
2005

“

A LOT of stuff goes through your head in a short amount of time. My first thought was for my three-year-old daughter back at home in the UK. If I survived this would I be able to be a dad?

... The last thing I remember is feeling the sandstorm the helicopter blades created as it was coming down. I blacked out then. When I started to fade I thought I was dead.

”

Mne Mark Ormrod

Ex-RM

Injured in Afghanistan, 2007



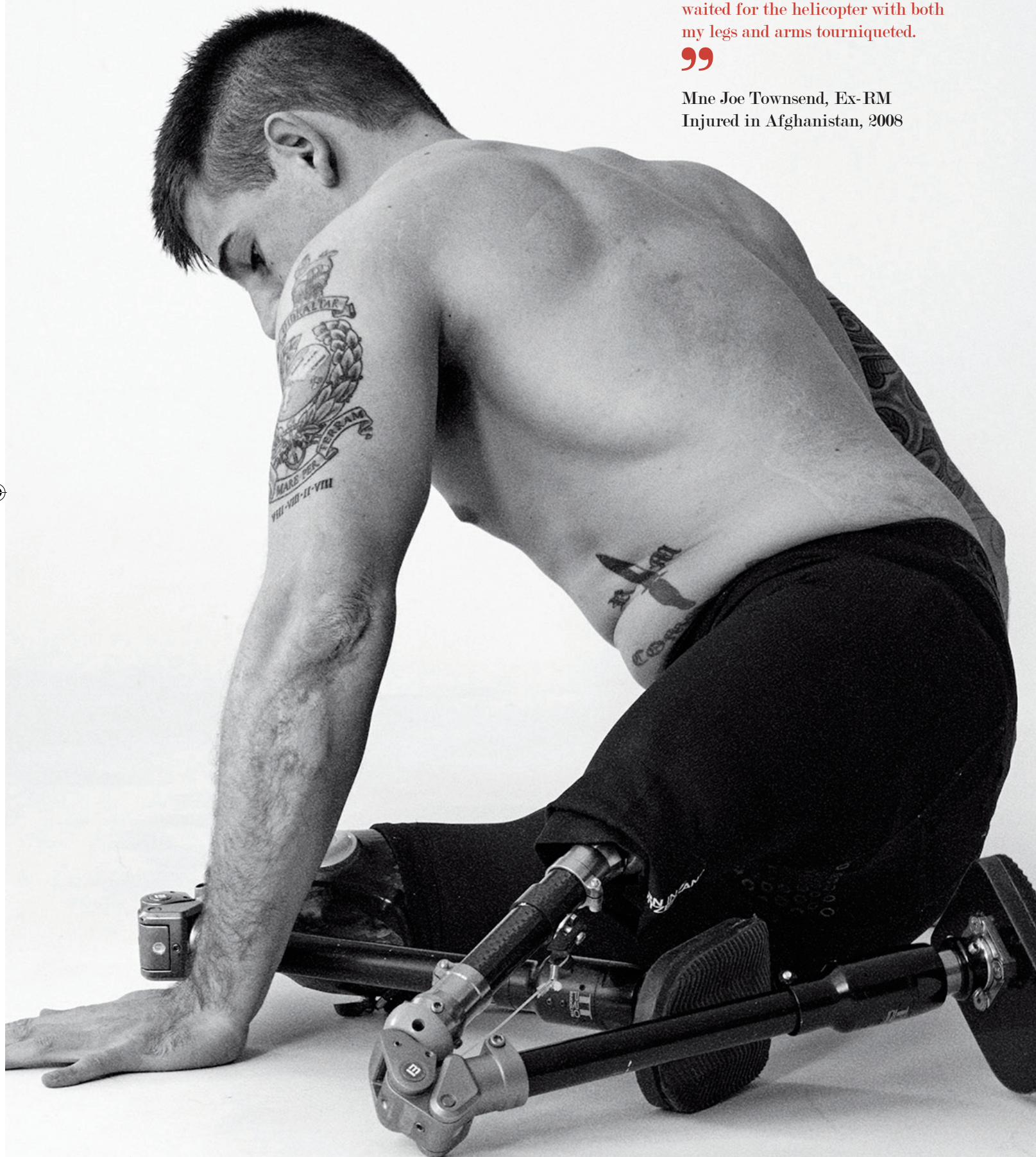


“

THERE wasn't any pain to be honest. I wanted to remain cheerful for the rest of the lads who had to deal with me to try and make their job a little bit easier so I stayed composed and told a few jokes and waited for the helicopter with both my legs and arms tourniqueted.

”

Mne Joe Townsend, Ex-RM
Injured in Afghanistan, 2008



No hiding

One of the book's stars on putting his injuries into print...



VETERAN Rory MacKenzie (ex-RAMC, pictured left) is one of those to feature in *Wounded: The Legacy of War*. The 31-year-old medic was injured in Iraq in 2006.

"I had significant problems with body consciousness for the first few years after I was injured and some of the other guys in the book had been wounded much more recently so for them it was a big thing," he told *Soldier*.

"It's quite something to deal with and to see it laid so bare in print.

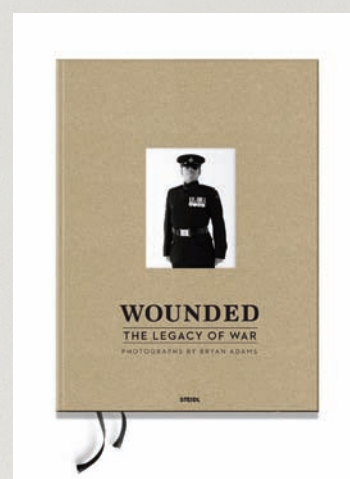
"There's no hiding from it – that's my story, that's what happened.

"I don't normally talk about it in detail but something about speaking to Caroline drew it out of me and because it was for charity I was happy to do it.

"It was a great experience. We went to Bryan's house and even though he's this huge superstar there was no pomp and circumstance. Within five minutes it was like chatting to an old mate.

"I hope people absorb that for every soldier you hear about who has been killed, many more have been either maimed or wounded.

"This title shows how serious some of those injuries are and I hope that will spur people on to support the various Service charities." ■



***Wounded: The Legacy of War* is available to buy now, priced £50, with proceeds going to BLESMA, Combat Stress, Blind Veterans UK, SSAFA and War Child**

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TALKBACK

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

'Left cold by our kit'



Picture: Graeme Main

WHILE there seems to be an emphasis currently on ensuring that the Reserves have the right equipment and training, can we please spare a thought for the many Regular soldiers who are currently serving in Afghanistan and who haven't been issued with suitable boots, socks, cold weather kit and much more in order to do their jobs properly and in comfort.

Why is it that our equipment is provided

to us only a few weeks, if not days, before we deploy?

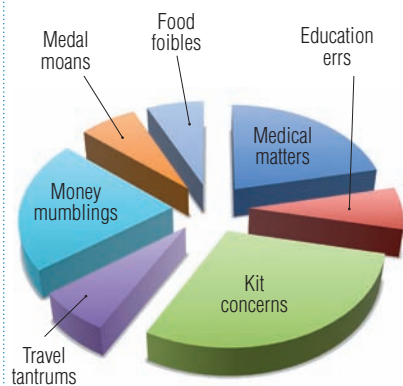
I recently served on Op Herrick and while out there was told that I wouldn't be getting any more kit as it all should have been issued to me prior to the tour.

If this had been my first deployment I would have been pretty cold and miserable but I managed to cobble together things from previous tours and that kept me going.

— Name and address supplied.

Slice of Service life

This month's ruminations from the ranks...



Maj (Retd) Allan Law, SO2 Mat Sp, Log Sp Branch, replies: There have been no reported shortages of clothing from troops serving on Op Herrick 19.

Your unit was issued with sufficient cold weather items, as per the unit demands, to equip 778 personnel between March and November last year.

If you need new or replacement kit you should go to the parent quartermaster or clothing store.

Every soldier deploying is issued with the black bag with personal equipment worth more than £3,600 which includes body armour and a special cold weather clothing supplement.

Replacement stocks of all items are held in theatre and can be acquired via your parent quartermaster.

'Troops aren't being served'

I AM writing about Naafi's Expeditionary Force Institutes (EFI) shop in Isaf's headquarters in Afghanistan.

It is never stocked and when it is the provisions last about two days at most before the shelves are empty again for the next month – if we are lucky.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not complaining about it per se.

I have been in Afghanistan on tour and experienced the other end of the scale, where we didn't have shops at all.

I just don't understand why we can't get this facility right. It would be better if the shop closed as, to be honest, it is a complete embarrassment.

Isaf is full of high-ranking officers and soldiers from numerous nations.

There are two other shops in Isaf, an Italian PX and an American PX, and they are always fully stocked.

Can anyone explain this to me please? — Name and address supplied.

Maj Jamie Lawrence, SO2 J1 Herrick Ops, PJHQ, responds: Over the last 12 months several Isaf/Nato supply convoys containing EFI stock have been delayed at border crossing points.

The delays are due to a number of reasons such as local customs and tax disputes restricting the freedom of movement of these convoys transiting in and out of Afghanistan.

Additionally, extended religious holidays for local contractor staff have compounded delays in the delivery and distribution of stock into theatre.

EFI, Joint Force Support (Army) and the Permanent Joint Headquarters are working collaboratively to mitigate delays where possible to ensure that EFI provisions are delivered and distributed as efficiently as they can be.



Shelf space: Convoy delays EFI shop stocks

Picture: Shutterstock

DIGITAL DOSSIER

THIS MONTH'S ELITE TWEETS

#WAR WOUNDS (P 49)

@hollar4mimi

The soldier above all others prays for peace, for it is the soldier who must suffer and bear the deepest wounds and scars of war.

#PTSD

@Hacked0ffHugh

Congrats to @bryanadams on *Wounded-The Legacy of War*. Brilliant photos, book, idea, causes.

@rubycooper007

@HackedOffHugh @bryanadams Yes saw some of it on TV. It's amazing!! Inspirational bunch of people for him to capture so well by photography.

#SPORTS AWARDS (P 91)

@domcug

And the Army sports team of the year is the @armyboxingteam. More trophies for the cabinet, very proud of the team.

@MickyYule9

Army Sports Awards :-) Woowoooo!!!

#MILLIES (P 11)

@KlassMyleene

The Sun Millies. Incredible. Shared a table with the funniest and most humbling WW2 veterans.

@petatodd

What an amazing night at @TheSunNewspaper #millies... Never fails to humble & astound me. So proud of our Armed Forces.

REVIEWS (P 71)

@VisitScotland

The *Railway Man* features some great shots of #Scotland! Watch the trailer and find out more here <http://visit.sc/19eS8QY>

@DuffMcKagan

Last @WalkingPapers1 show of this Europe tour. A HUGE thanks to the @BiffyClyro fellas. A class-act the lot of them.

@Rconwayd

Bear Grylls mate, just book yourself an all-inclusive hotel next time.

@themotleyfool

If anything can save Nintendo's struggling WiiU console, it's a new, acclaimed Mario game... right?

@soldiermagazine

Firing off over ammo

I WOULD like to draw your attention to what I feel is a massive issue in today's financial climate and one that every soldier will be able to relate to – the wasting of ammunition.

I believe there are many troops out there who, like me, have come to the end of an exercise with a few hundred rounds still left over in sealed boxes and a member of the directing staff or a range control officer comes out with, "start bombing up, we can't take any ammo back".

I've asked if there's a reason why we shouldn't return unspent bullets and have received a plethora of answers ranging from "we have to get rid of them all" to "it's too much paperwork when we return them" or "it's good training to feel what full automatic feels like".

I've heard stories of platoons firing off literally thousands of live and blank rounds after an exercise with no training value whatsoever.

So why are we wasting so much ammunition and money?

Is it because when 900 rounds are requested and 300 are sent back you'll only get 600 the next time?

Is the paperwork involved in returning ammunition a nightmare?

I've been informed it isn't and that you simply fill out a single form.

Maybe some people think it's just easier to say they have fired all the rounds off rather than try to work out how many of them are left over.

I also wonder if Blenheim, the training tool used for exercises and range drills, has something to do with it.

When you use this document you state the quantities of hardware required and a slice of the budget is allocated accordingly.

Strictly speaking, it is a planning implement but it is also employed in the budgeting process and, as I understand it, if a unit doesn't use its allowance in a particular year then its funding is cut more often than not.

Why can't we return to the ammunition bunker and hand sealed boxes of bullets back over?

Maybe units should be rewarded for not using as much as they budgeted for.

It's human nature to be lazy, take short cuts and find quicker ways of doing things but that's no excuse and this is a problem

that no one seems to be trying to fix. – Cpl Neil Mackie, 30 Sig Regt.

Lt Col Dom Cooper, Army HQ, SO1 Ammunition Management, replies: It is unfortunate that some unit personnel appear to have engaged in ammunition "firing off".

Such behaviour is wasteful and there can be no excuse for it.

Once all resourced training has been achieved users should simply return the leftover rounds through the reverse supply chain.

If all packaging is returned too, these items can be issued again.

To make the returns process more straightforward ammunition boxes should be opened as close to the point of consumption as possible.

In short, good planning and proper control is key to minimising waste.

This approach is not only a matter of common sense but summarises defence policy.

It's not surprising that many defence publications, most notably LFSO 4414 and JSP 886, require the chain of command to ensure ammunition is properly managed.

Moreover, LFSO 4414 is currently being rewritten – to be republished in early 2014. By providing additional guidelines and requirements for individual users

and units, it will very much address the valid concerns you have expressed.

With regard to the Blenheim tool and budgeting, I must emphasise that there is no "use or lose" policy.

Unit allocations are generated by the types of training directed that year, Army operational shooting policy consumption rates and the quality of the unit-level training plan already approved by their chain of command.

Finally, in the context of other defence ammunition initiatives, Army Headquarters is looking to further assist unit forecasting accuracy and to shorten demand timelines and simplify the reverse supply chain.

These developing initiatives, combined with the correct user and unit behaviour, will further help to prevent the problem of "firing off".





TALKBACK

'Corporals' mess shouldn't be compulsory'

PLEASE can you provide some clarification on the official status of a unit's corporals' mess in the Queen's Regulations?

I have recently been posted to an Infantry battalion where I've been told it's compulsory to become a mess member.

The bills for this are issued by the regiment's accountant and attendance of important meetings and social events are enforced with the threat of extra duties for those who don't turn up.

Every mess meeting I've been to has simply consisted of all those present voting for everything put forward by the RSM in order to have a quiet life rather than being seen as a dissenting voice.

While I respect and, indeed, see the need and importance of both the sergeants' and officers' messes, I cannot see why I should pay for an institution that I will only be a member of for a couple of years while serving with this unit.

Indeed, in the current financial climate I don't see why I should be worse off simply for being in a formation which

cannot fill the skill set that I, as a tradesman, possess. Also, most meetings are held outside of normal working hours so given how busy I am with courses, exercises and everything else that comes with Army life I've even less time to spend with friends and loved ones. – **Name and address supplied.**

Brig John Donnelly, DPS(A), replies: This is a common question and units often misunderstand the status of corporals' messes.

The existing policy about officers' and sergeants' messes that is contained in

part 18 of Queen's Regulations does not apply to corporals' facilities.

These clubs or messes have no official standing within the regulations so any funding is on a purely voluntary basis and membership is at the discretion of the individual.

That said, the quality of life in a regiment can be enormously enhanced by a lively and diverse corporals' mess; just as it is by having active officers' and sergeants' messes.

As a former Infantry officer myself, I felt that the working, sporting and social life of my battalion was greatly improved by their contribution.

I would encourage you not to simply voice dissent but to engage and provide an

objective viewpoint.

In an era where we are all stretched for time and money it would be a shame to lose social institutions like these.

Compulsion is not the answer but rather to have corporals' messes which provide an atmosphere that people enjoy and a club that people want to be part of.

'Far-from-smooth operators harm recruiting'

I SERVED in the Territorial Army from 1982 until 2002, when my work took me out of the UK.

In 2002 I transferred to the Regular Army reserve of officers (RARO) in my final rank of captain in the Adjutant General's Corps (Staff and Personal Support branch).

I returned to Britain last year and after reading about the expansion of the Army Reserve I enquired about rejoining.

Being aware that many Central Volunteer Headquarters (CVHQ) have AGC (SPS) officer vacancies within their establishments, I decided to contact the MoD recruitment website rather than write to each centre separately.

I used the live chat option and conversed with an operator.

I explained my situation and after some back-and-forth questions the advice I was given really surprised me.

The operator's only suggestion was that I should visit the CO at my local Army Reserve unit.

Neither could they tell me if the Reserve would consider moving me from RARO to an active role due to my age (52) or the locations of CVHQs within the UK.

My local Army Reserve unit is actually an Infantry mortar platoon and anyone familiar with the nature of our Service would know that this is unlikely to have any AGC (SPS) officer posts.

In addition, operators should have access to a list of current vacancies and be aware of new units being formed and their future manning requirements.

I found the whole experience a waste of time and I'm not clear how the MoD hopes to recruit another 30,000 Reserve soldiers with poorly informed staff like these. – **Name and address supplied.**

Lt Col Kevin Bingham, SO1 RPP Comms, Army Recruiting & Training Directorate, replies: The Recruiting Group (RG) is

very sorry that your experience with the National Recruiting Centre was not as you, or we, would wish it to be and we are working hard to ensure that all our operators are kept up to date so they can deal with cases like yours more effectively.

While you are quite correct in saying that our operator should have been able to talk in more detail about your application you should be aware that the RG does not have details of specific vacancies in

units or sub-units. This is something that can only be achieved by talking directly with the formation in question.

You should still be eligible to rejoin the Reserves from RARO and your best option, as you have identified, would be to contact one of the CVHQs directly or visit your local Army careers centre.

Details of all the centres can be found on the British Army website.

More details can be found by visiting www.army.mod.uk/royalengineers/units/28733.aspx



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TALKBACK



On the march: Phase one soldiers look fine in their livery at Pirbright, where tailoring is free

Free flashes for trainees

I HAVE recently arrived at my phase two training establishment, where we were told we would need to get our flashes and regimental insignia ourselves and that the military tailor on site would charge to attach them and our names to our clothing.

However, at our phase one centre (Pirbright) all tailoring was provided free, as was kit if you had not received it before.

I do find it odd that two training establishments should be so different. Can you advise if this is correct? – Name and address supplied.

Brig Matthew Lowe, D Pers Ops, responds: Tactical recognition flashes (TRFs), formation flashes and embroidered name tapes are still, officially, optional items for wear.

Regiments and corps may decide to wear the tactical flashes and all have decided to do so.

Because all three are optional items they cannot be purchased or tailored at public expense.

TRFs may only be worn by trained soldiers defined as having completed phase one and these trainees should not be wearing formation flashes or name tags until “badged” to their future regiment or corps.

All the badges worn on No 2 dress and combat clothing are provided and tailored at public expense.

This is the reason that you perceive that all tailoring for trainees at phase one establishments is done for free.

The TRF and name tags for those that wear them should be donned by individuals when they start their phase two training but they will need to make their own arrangements to procure and tailor them. This is the reason for the charge being made to you.

‘BMI is out of date’

WHY is the Army still adhering to the outdated form of medical assessment called the body mass index (BMI)?

The current formula leads to confusion and misinformation and here is an example. A couch potato who is 1.83 metres tall and never does any exercise weighs 92 kilograms (203 lbs). His BMI would be rated at 27.

Now compare him to an Olympic sprinter, who is also 1.83 metres tall and does an incredible amount of training. He weighs 96 kilograms so his BMI is 28.

This method of assessment is so out of date that Usain Bolt, the fastest sprinter ever, would be classed as overweight and Rory Best, the Irish international rugby player, with a BMI of 33.7, is officially obese as well.

The British Army trains soldiers to be no less fit than athletes so why is the medical profession within the Service out of touch and out of date with modern ways of assessing physical fitness? – LCpl G Barr, R Irish.

Sqn Ldr Mark Anthony, SO2 Service Health Issues, Service and Veterans’

Welfare, Chief of Defence Personnel, responds: The BMI is a practical tool and not a medical examination and it is also a validated method recognised by both the World Health Organisation and the National Institute of Clinical Excellence, which we benchmark our clinical practice against.

It is widely considered to be a good general guide for assessing weight and obesity, using the measures of both height and mass.

It does not differentiate between weight associated with muscle mass and body fat, as you have indicated.

Therefore, the relationship between BMI and body fat varies according to build and composition.

To improve on the accuracy of the risk assessment it is our policy to calculate an individual’s obesity health risk by using both the BMI and waist circumference measures, not a BMI score in isolation. Waist circumference measurement is used to indicate abdominal body fat. It is a reliable, independent predictor of increased risk of ill health from conditions such as type two diabetes and heart disease.



Commemorating the fallen

I WAS very surprised to read your correspondent’s letter in the November issue (“Why no memorial day for 9/11?”), particularly given the strength of feeling exhibited by the author.

What is most shocking is that the writer did not press equally as hard for a memorial day to mark the atrocities of the 7/7 attacks in London.

Or what about the Omagh bombing, Hyde Park and Canary Wharf?

Or perhaps we should also have a day to commemorate the victims of the recent Boston Marathon bombing?

The list goes on, and will sadly almost certainly continue to grow.

For my own part, however, I am content that the UK does the right thing: we commemorate the fallen on Remembrance

Day and that is a moment to reflect on the casualties of all wars and conflicts.

Your correspondent may be too young to recall the Omagh atrocity but I was serving in Northern Ireland when it occurred and the events of that day affected me deeply.

However, I do not feel there is a need for a national memorial day to mark that particular event.

I feel that my own brief pause for reflection to mark the occasion, in private, is appropriate.

May I therefore suggest that if your letter writer feels so strongly about it there is nothing to stop him taking a brief pause on the anniversary of 9/11 to remember the victims, both direct and consequential, of that attack. – WO2 Tobias Woolfit, PJHQ, Northwood.



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COMPETITIONS

Spine line winner: Capt A J McLean, BFPO 801
WWE Summerslam 2013 DVD: Steven Bighi, Barnack, Cambridgeshire; CPO Iain McCallum, DE&S, Yeovil; Capt C Lucas, Highbury, London; SSgt E Roberts, Fulwood Bks, Preston; Mark Gillgrass, Carlisle, Cumbria.

Empires of the Dead: Ian Williams, Maghull, Merseyside; Mrs J Matthews, Dallas, Morayshire; Jennifer Avis, Luton, Bedfordshire; Maj E Mathieson, Marlborough Lines, Andover; LCpl S Wood, Hameln BFPO 31.

DIRECTORY

ABF The Soldiers' Charity: 0845 241 4820

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

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

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

Armed Forces Muslim Association: Chaplain 0207 414 3252; www.afma.org.uk

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

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

Army Libraries: 01252 340094

Army Ornithological Society: www.armybirding.org.uk

Army Families Federation: 01264 382324; mil.94391.2324@aff.org.uk

Blind Veterans UK: (formerly St Dunstan's) www.blindveterans.org.uk; 0207 7235021

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

Career Transition Partnership: 0207 766 8020

Children's Education Advisory Service: 01980 618244; enquiries@ceas.detsa.co.uk

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

Family Escort Service: 0207 463 9249

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

Forces Pension Society: 0207 820 9988

Heroes Welcome: www.heroeswelcome.co.uk

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

Joint Service Housing Advice Office: 01722 436575

Medal Office: 94561 3600 or 0141 224 3600

Mutual Support (Multiple Sclerosis group): www.mutualsupport.org.uk

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

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

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

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

Remount: 01451 850 341; www.remount.net

Royal British Legion: www.britishlegion.org.uk

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

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

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

Stoll: (formerly known as the Sir Oswald Stoll Foundation) 0207 385 2110; info@stoll.org.uk; www.stoll.org.uk

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

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

uk4u Thanks! 01798 812081; www.uk4u.org

INTELLIGENCE

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

ABN 130/13: *British Army Review* available on Defence Gateway

ABN 129/13: Deployed welfare package

(overseas) for temporary assignment to British Army training units

ABN 128/13: Small Arms School Corps selection courses

ABN 127/13: Management joint deployed inventory converged business processes

ABN 126/13: Increased PAX insurance premiums

ABN 125/13: Dependants business start-up programme

ABN 124/13: Part-time volunteer Reserves leave

ABN 123/13: Reservists HTD travel allowance

ABN 122/13: FTRS and ADC delegation of accommodation charging waiver

ABN 121/13: Adjustment of terms of service on the introduction of the Armed Forces pension scheme 2015

ABN 120/13: Pension liberation – tax implications of early access to Armed Forces pension

ABN 119/13: PCS uplift for Army Reserve recruits

ABN 118/13: Armed Forces pension scheme 2005 members who have rejoined after previous service on Armed Forces pension scheme 1975: impact on qualification for the early departure payment and resettlement grant

DIN 2013DIN01-246: Chain of command guide regarding non-Regular permanent staff affected by restructuring

DIN 2013DIN01-243: Defence augmentation policy

DIN 2013DIN01-242: Scottish independence referendum – guidance for Service personnel wishing to vote

DIN 2013DIN01-240: AGC(SPS) late entry officers: amendment to career path

DIN 2013DIN01-238: Relocation allowances – new interest rate for calculating net income earned from sale proceeds

DIN 2013DIN01-236: The Firmin Sword Of Peace Awards 2013

DIN 2013DIN01-235: PAX personal accident insurance premium increase

DIN 2013DIN01-234: Career assistance for spouses and civil partners of Service personnel

DIN 2013DIN01-233: Service pupil premium details for 2013-14

DIN 2013DIN01-231: Aggregation of separate periods of service between AFPS 75 and AFPS 05 – an explanation of changes to EDP legislation

DIN 2013DIN01-230: Additional duties commitment forms

DIN 2013DIN01-229: Pension liberation and tax

DIN 2013DIN01-228: Launch of the government knowledge and information management professional framework and removal of the MoD information management competence set

DIN 2013DIN03-025: Battlespace management and coordination on Collective Training Group land exercises

DIN 2013DIN03-023: Permanent Joint Headquarters portable electronic device policy

DIN 2013DIN04-207: Weapon equipment – declaration of obsolete/obsolescent status

DIN 2013DIN04-206: New arrangements for the supply of the roll-feed, thermal paper used by the BID/2020 printer

Continued on page 63

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DIN 2013DIN04-205: Pre-contract let of Capita Lot 1 call-off contract

DIN 2013DIN04-204: Defence Equipment Support change of contract arrangements for support of NEST

DIN 2013DIN04-203: Contact with the Lynx/Wildcat project team after the replacement of the Naval shore telegraph system

DIN 2013DIN04-202: Reduced availability of single living accommodation – MoD Caledonia

DIN 2013DIN04-201: Reduction to the number of assets that make up the laser wire marking fleet based at aircraft maintenance units across the UK

DIN 2013DIN04-200: Laerdal suction unit – conversion to Serres suction bag system

DIN 2013DIN04-199: Revised version of the Army form C351

DIN 2013DIN04-197: JAMES structures/organisation tree current

DIN 2013DIN04-196: Declaration of ALC obsolescence equipment – various concrete equipment

DIN 2013DIN04-195: Equipment tables, scales and schedules

DIN 2013DIN04-194: Amendments to operational medical modules contents (October 13)

DIN 2013DIN04-193: Change of location report

DIN 2013DIN06-037: Defence annual road safety awards 2013-14

DIN 2013DIN06-036: Publication of JSP 454 – *Land systems safety and environmental protection, Issue 6*

DIN 2013DIN07-170: Psychological operations course

DIN 2013DIN07-168: Board and search pre-course fitness programme

DIN 2013DIN07-167: Qualified helicopter tactics instructor course

DIN 2013DIN07-166: Ski mountaineering exercise: Ex Alpine Arc 2015

DIN 2013DIN07-165: Nijmegen Marches 2014

DIN 2013DIN07-164: Volunteers for 4/73 (Sphinx) Special Op Battery, Royal Artillery

DIN 2013DIN07-163: The ethical issues for DMS personnel (dealing with CPERS)

DIN 2013DIN07-162: JMC battlefield advanced trauma life support course loading policy 2013

DIN 2013DIN07-161: Exercise Rucksack 14 – medical instruction

DIN 2013DIN07-160: Introduction of online training for ethical issues for medical personnel awareness – PMS 124A

DIN 2013DIN07-159: MoD personnel using Fort Bovisand

DIN 2013DIN09-018: Royal garden parties 2014 – civilian staff

DIN 2013DIN10-045: The Army Indoor Tennis Championships 2014

DIB60/13: PUS writes to staff about the MoD Your Say 2013 results

DIB59/13: Standard learning credits scheme – extension of eligibility to Reserve personnel

DIB58/13: Revised terms of service on the introduction of the Armed Forces pension scheme 2015



REUNION

RAMC Reunited 2014 will take place at The Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool on February 7-10. For details contact Mick McCran via 01522 879307 or email michael.mccran@ntlworld.com

Field Ambulance (V) reunion dinner. The next event will be held on February 22. To attend contact the secretary via secramcem@hotmail.co.uk by January 23.

Singapore Dawnwatchers' Society for members of the Intelligence Corps or those attached to it

in Singapore during the 1960s and 1970s. The next reunion will be at The Maids Head Hotel, Norwich on April 4-6. Contact Nik Collett, secretary, at sdws-sec@hotmail.co.uk

The Combined Cavalry Old Comrades Association annual parade and service, 2014. All serving and retired members of the Cavalry and Yeomanry are invited to muster in Hyde Park on May 11 at 1030 for the annual parade and service. Further details are available from the home headquarters of the present day regiments and their associations.

42 Sqn AMF(L) 1st Gulf War and Norway Accident reunion. To coincide with the annual reunion this event will take place on July 5, 2014 at The Kings Arms, Amesbury, Wiltshire. Visit the 42 Sqn AMF(L) Facebook page for further details.

P (Parachute) Troop, 7 Para RHA reunion at the Elephant and Castle, North Camp, Farnborough on Airborne Forces Weekend, July 5, 2014, to mark 30 years since the formation of P Troop. All ex-members and friends welcome. For details contact Mark Flannigan via mark.flannigan@yahoo.co.uk



SEARCHLINE

Tony Dixey is trying to trace members of the intake **86/18 RAC at Cambria Barracks, Catterick** with a view to holding a reunion. Anyone interested can contact him via stores@robertpearson.co.uk

The producers of the National Talking Express, an audio magazine for the blind and visually impaired, want to hear from **soldiers and veterans who are willing to tell their stories on tape**. Anyone interested is asked to call Stephen Kingsberry on 01614 785897. Visit www.ntexpress.org.uk for details.

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REVIEWS

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JANUARY'S GEMS

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A man with dark, wavy hair and glasses is sitting in a train carriage. He is wearing a light-colored, button-down shirt. He is looking out of a window on the right side of the frame. The window shows a view of green trees outside. The interior of the carriage is made of wood. The word "MOVIES" is written in large, white, sans-serif capital letters across the top of the image.

MOVIES

PICK OF THE MONTH: THE RAILWAY MAN

ALL CHANGE

THE UNBELIEVABLE TALE OF A
TORTURED SIGNALS OFFICER

Interview: Joe Clapson

A HARROWING yet inspiring true story of a Royal Signals officer's horrifying experience at a Japanese labour camp and the mental scars it created hits the big screen this month.

Based on Maj Eric Lomax's memoir of the same name, *The Railway Man* required no dramatic licence – the depiction of the consequences for the thousands of British soldiers who were surrendered to enemy forces in 1942 is enough.

With a script by Frank Cottrell Boyce and Andy Paterson, and the lead roles played by Colin Firth, Jeremy Irvine and Nicole Kidman, it is a powerful tale of survival, love and redemption as well as a reminder of the atrocities of recent history.

Speaking of *Soldier*, Paterson explained his reasons for devoting 14 years to getting the movie into cinemas.

"Firstly, this is one of the most extraordinary stories I've ever been told," he said.

"I was so moved by the idea that someone could make the most extreme journey from wanting to kill someone to finding forgiveness.

"We were very interested to explore the factors that go into making a man so messed up and trying to find what happened to allow him to find peace."

The film portrays a dishevelled railway enthusiast living in Scotland in the 1980s struggling with the mental agony of what he has been through, while refusing to explain his anguish to his wife, Patti.

As Lomax breaks down with nightmare visions the story flashes back to the appalling treatment meted out to the 21-year-old engineer as he and his comrades were forced to work on the notorious Burma-Siam line.

"The British troops found themselves surrendered to a race that found the idea of admitting defeat worse than death," explained Paterson.

"They were then treated like animals because they were deemed to have no honour.

"Eric was beaten and tortured and then he came back to a country that didn't want to know – the level of injustice for these men is unbearable."

Without any of the flashes or bangs of a standard war film, this feature shows the reality of conflict without reverting to Hollywood effects.

Watching an emotionally wrecked middle-aged man standing before the person who destroyed his life is more powerful than any action sequence.

"These are incredibly violent situations, emotionally," explained Paterson.

"At stake is the salvation of these soldiers so you care much more than you would about a film with lots of computer-generated imagery and explosions.

"The decision was to leave as much to the imagination as we could without dishonouring these brave men."

Although Lomax was heavily involved with the film project he could never bring himself to watch it. Reliving his ordeal would have been too painful.

The heroic soldier, who fought to tell the tale of thousands of British Service personnel, then died in October 2012.

Paying tribute to his incredible memoir, Paterson said: "It's about so many soldiers' lives and it has been a privilege to put it on screen.

"It's hard to know where to go after this because there is no story like it." ■

VERDICT: A remarkable insight into the suffering and redemption of British soldiers

★★★★★



PACIFIC RIM out now

THIS blockbuster has divided audience opinions worldwide but there is no denying what a fantastic spectacle **Guillermo Del Toro** has dreamt up. Giant robots thump spiky sea monsters among crumbling skyscrapers. At times the acting can be painful and the plot is nonsense. However, the human-versus-invader battles are spectacularly addictive viewing and I cannot wait for the sequel to be released.

Cpl Paul Thomas, Int Corps

VERDICT: A masterpiece of old-school entertainment

★★★★★



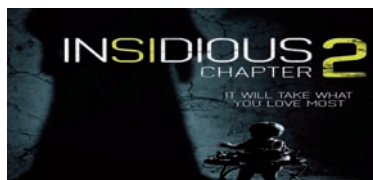
BATTLE OF THE DAMNED out now

IN the wake of a deadly viral outbreak the ripped blonde bombshell that is **Dolph Lundgren** (*The Expendables*, *Universal Soldier*) plays private soldier Max Gatling – leader of a handful of survivors. They are fighting alongside robots against an army of the infected. Lundgren was built to fight toe-to-toe with rabid zombies but unfortunately this film is total garbage and not up to the standards of his past efforts.

Dave Holmes, civvy

VERDICT: Save time and money by not watching this

★★★★★



INSIDIOUS CHAPTER 2 out January 6

THIS sequel attempts to provide both a backstory and a continuation to the successful first film. A promising start had hairs raising but sadly this effort deflates early. The special effects are so poor that the main nemesis isn't even slightly alarming. The initial instalment had people screaming in the cinema but sadly – despite having the same cast – it is very doubtful this offering will have a similar effect.

Cpl Paul Thomas, Int Corps

VERDICT: Dire special effects remove all elements of fear

★★★★★



THE WOLVERINE out now

FURTHER origins of the Wolverine are revealed as **Hugh Jackman** claws his way through modern Japan. The brooding star fits the role perfectly with painful frowns and the odd one-liner. Unfortunately the supporting cast of X-Men seem to be the worst and most uninteresting bunch yet. Luckily some memorable action scenes and other recognisable icons limit the damage and make this film still worth viewing.

Cpl Paul Thomas, Int Corps

VERDICT: Dragged down by over-the-top silliness and poor villains

★★★★★



JURASSIC PARK 3D out now

SOME movies look worse when given the 3D treatment but 20 years after its first release **Steven Spielberg's** dinosaur masterpiece revels in the fresh format. As we follow Dr Alan Grant and Dr Ellie Sattler into millionaire John Hammond's new amusement park the enormous beasts are scarier than ever. Everything about the film looks and sounds better – in 2D it's great and the conversion has improved it.

Joe Clapson, Soldier

VERDICT: Dinosaurs are even scarier in 3D

★★★★★



WIN... NOTHING LEFT TO FEAR

THE disturbing debut horror release from Slasher Film Productions, co-owned by rock legend **Slash**, is out on February 17. Starring **Clancy Brown** and **Anne Heche**, the movie's chilling plot and haunting musical score should delight horror and rock fans alike. *Soldier* has teamed up with Anchor Bay and Content to offer a copy of the DVD to five lucky readers. To be in with a chance of winning, tell us Slash's real name. Answers on a postcard to the usual address or comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk

Closing date: January 31

www.soldiermagazine.co.uk JANUARY 2014 73



GAMES

PICK OF THE MONTH: SUPER MARIO

BACK IN THE BIG TIME

PLATFORM PLUMBER REVELS
IN NEW 3D UNIVERSE



Review: Jamie Carter

FROM the moment *Super Mario 3D World* begins you can tell this is the return to action that WiiU owners have been waiting for.

Last year's *New Super Mario U* saw the plumber starring in the console's launch title but with the dizzying freedom of the Wii Galaxy games still fresh in minds, it is here that fans of the new and improved machine can get their fix of platforming perfection.

It offers a challenge for the single player but it is with two to four characters that the levels really shine, with a score meter at the end of each stage and a crown for the winner to claim bragging rights.

The inclusion of multiple players turns each new adventure into a playground for everyone to discover together, although the friendly fun can soon turn into a fight to see what the next surprise will be.

From the usual Mario levels unfolds a game full of innovation, some inspirational nods to other Nintendo franchises and the most rounded and exciting game on the WiiU by far.

Power-ups include a catsuit which turns every vertical wall into a new route and a multiplying cherry which replicates your character every time you pick it up.

I challenge anyone not to have a huge smile on their face while five Luigis run around throwing fireballs in every direction.

Like other WiiU franchises, such as *Pikmin 3*, the upgrade to HD has seen the art direction take a turn for the utterly stunning with the vistas of Bowser's castles drenched in beautiful fiery sunsets.

One level in particular has the most impressive rain effects I've seen since that heart-stopping first level of *Call of Duty 4*, which is a fine example of the problem Nintendo has to deal with.

How can they convince a new generation that the fear of being chased through a level by a giant Boo can be comparable to something Captain Price would face?

However, such thoughts detract from the core concept of the game, which is fun, and this is designed and boxed by a company that seems to exclusively focus on it.

It isn't without a few frustrations though. The gamepad continues to be only mildly effective and the release doesn't really make a compelling argument for the controller's inclusion with the console, and this really is the WiiU's main problem.

It looks like first-week sales have seen *Super Mario 3D World* outperformed by the PS4 platformer *Knack*, but it is in comparisons like this that the beauty of Nintendo's level design and sense of fun really outshine the competition.

With the WiiU suffering from something of a personality crisis against the new Microsoft and Sony consoles, this should be the game to change its fortunes. Whether the *Call of Duty* and *Battlefield*-buying public feel the same way remains to be seen. ■

VERDICT: A fun-filled adventure that sees Mario hit top form ★★★★★

NEED FOR SPEED RIVALS

for Xbox/PS3 and 4/PC

THIS game is great fun to play. The controls are easy to master as they are similar to other driving titles and the sound quality is superb, meaning small details like screeching brakes, wheelspins and gear changes are pitch perfect. Players can take to the road as petrol heads or cops and the scope of this release allows you to drive around the streets and race whenever you like. The only downside is the map that highlights race venues and garages, which is hard to read due to its background.



Josh Main, civvy

VERDICT: A highly enjoyable game that ticks all the boxes ★★★★★

ANGRY BIRDS STAR WARS

for Xbox/PS3 and 4/Wii

IN a galaxy far, far away... is where this miserable offering well and truly belongs. I am not exactly sure why anyone would want to buy this game. It offers nothing more than the mobile version; the only difference is the size of your television screen. Unless you are a serious *Star Wars* geek or a devoted *Angry Birds* fan, I suggest leaving this one on the shelf. I struggled on for an hour or so – which was an hour or so too long – before consigning the disc to my growing drinks mat collection.



Sgt Mike Owens, 26 Engr Regt

VERDICT: May the force be with you if you play this game ★★★★★

LEGO MARVEL SUPERHEROES

for Xbox/PS3 and 4/Wii

LEGO have hit the mark yet again as Marvel's main men unite to stop Loki and a host of other villains from assembling an evil super weapon. With more than 100 characters there is plenty of enjoyment to be had and this series of puzzles provides comical shenanigans for players of all ages. The animation is also wonderful and the Hulk, in particular, moves just like his screen counterpart. A classic, fun game that will keep the whole family entertained.



Cpl Neil Edwards, R Signals

VERDICT: A superb offering for parents and children to enjoy ★★★★★

ASSASSIN'S CREED: BLACK FLAG

for Xbox One/PS4

THE latest instalment in the *Assassin's Creed* series arrives on the next generation of consoles. Sailing the expanse of the Caribbean Sea, exploring unique islands and getting into all sorts of swashbuckling trouble provides some of the most rewarding stretches of gameplay seen in this series. *Black Flag* has kept me occupied for hours, even though its story isn't the strongest, and if you look beyond the disappointing main campaign it delivers a true masterpiece.



SSgt Lee Gibbs, REME

VERDICT: Explore and plunder at your pleasure ★★★★★

WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP 4

for Xbox 360/PS3/PC

AS a game *WRC 4* is passable and far from broken but it is missing the key ingredients to make it stand out from the crowd. The gameplay soon becomes repetitive as you take what seems like the same corner for the hundredth time while your co-driver barks orders at you. This is a glowing example of an annualised title at its worst, churned out to produce a sub-par performance which sits comfortably in mid-table. It has no drive to go the extra mile and is not worthy of your hard-earned cash.



W02 Graeme Russell, 39 Engr Regt

VERDICT: A mediocre offering with dated graphics ★★★★★

INJUSTICE: ULTIMATE EDITION

for Xbox/PS3 and 4/PC

THE summer release of *Injustice: Gods Among Us* was a welcome sight for fans of fighting titles as a plethora of DC's favourite characters locked horns in the combat arena. The *Ultimate Edition* sees a raft of downloadable content thrown into the mix, however, this adds little to the original release as the game remains largely the same. There are a few tweaks that make it look a little slicker and run slightly smoother but that's about as good as it gets.



Richard Long, *Soldier*

VERDICT: Lack of originality sees this title suffer ★★★★★



MUSIC



PICK OF THE MONTH: DUFF MCKAGAN

WALKING WITH THE WOUNDED

ROCK STAR TALKS SERVICES SUPPORT
AND A NEW MUSICAL DIRECTION

Interview: Richard Long

HAVING enjoyed an impressive career spanning sell-out tours and hit albums, Duff McKagan has stepped back into the limelight with new band Walking Papers.

The former Guns N' Roses star embarked on a recent British tour with the group and found time to speak to *Soldier* about a change in musical direction and his proud support of the armed forces on both sides of the pond.

McKagan (pictured on the right of the main image) has given his backing to US charity The Heroes Project, an initiative that helps wounded personnel through climbing programmes and other activities, but also has first-hand experience of the work being done by causes in this country.

"Every time I seem to tour the UK it's in November," he explained. "I've been there on Remembrance Day four times in recent years.

"I think Help for Heroes is great, in fact I've done a gig for them, and the Poppy Appeal is amazing – I have a nice collection of poppies.

"The Heroes Project is something I got involved with through my friend Tim Medvetz, who was injured in a motorcycle accident.

"He was in hospital for a long period and was not expected to walk again but during that time he got inspired to climb Mount Everest and he started to train.

"He was coming back from a trip to the Himalayas and met a US serviceman who was returning home after losing a leg.

"Tim decided to take these guys under his wing, whether they are single or double amputees, and challenge them so they can go out and climb mountains."

A mutual love of outdoor pursuits saw McKagan tackle a peak while immersing himself with military personnel and their determination to succeed left a lasting mark on the bass player.

"I trained hard and did a summit with them," he said. "I've seen injured marines and to survive they have to be at the top of the heap. They are already athletes, even if they have missing limbs.

"A guy I climbed with had a prosthetic leg and ran 100 yards in ten seconds.

"I have seen people who are totally demoralised but Tim is a motivator and knows there is something left in them. I am so proud of what he has done."

While quenching his thirst for adventure McKagan was also keen to return to the day job and when the opportunity to join Walking Papers came around it was simply too good to turn down.

"These are guys I had wanted to play with for a long time," the musician explained. "I jammed with them in the past and hoped to do something more.

"It's just a great band, really soulful and almost like going to church.

"We are still a rock 'n' roll outfit but it is definitely more bluesy. It's a musical change for me and that is what I'm all about.

"I never look for anything new but some cool things have happened to me. This has flavoured my life in a positive way." ■

● Walking Papers' self-titled debut album is out now.

Swings Both Ways by Robbie Williams

ROBBIE Williams is so popular these days that he can pretty much produce anything and his fans will lap it up. While this album is by no means bad it is simply bland beyond belief. The pop sensation has called on a suitable list of fellow celebrities to lend a hand and it is **Lily Allen** who really shines, following on from her recent chart success. **Michael Buble** comes a close second but going into detail on this release misses the point as it is a background filler and should not be listened to with a finely tuned ear.

Maj Euan Mathieson, Yorks

VERDICT: A decidedly average offering from pop's main man ★★☆☆

Saturday Night at the Movies

THE Overtones have come a long way from where they were originally found – working as decorators and singing during their tea break. *Saturday Night At The Movies* is a celebration of some of the most loved songs in cinematic history which have been reinvigorated by the group's tight vocal harmonies. Although this style of album would not be my first choice it is very listenable and given most people will instantly recognise the tracks I can see it being a big hit.

Rodge Tapply, ex-RE

VERDICT: An excellent party album that hits the right notes ★★★★★

Salute by Little Mix

POP princesses **Little Mix** have returned with an explosive, vibrant and exciting second album that you will want to listen to over and over again. The title track offers an upbeat opening and the record serves to showcase the vocal style and range of each individual member. The inclusion of two ballads highlights the girls' soft and emotional side as well as their immense versatility. I only hope they are here to stay and look forward to them making more uplifting music in the future.

Julie Jessup, civvy

VERDICT: A razor-sharp and dynamic album ★★★★★

Recharged by Linkin Park

THIS is the second remix album from rock outfit **Linkin Park** but fans will be disappointed with what proves to be an underwhelming effort. *Recharged* features names such as **Steve Aoki**, **Pusha T**, **KillSonik** and **Ryu** who combine to spoil good music with the ever-growing dubstep touch. **Rick Rubin** saves proceedings on the last track, which is a reworking of the single *A Light That Never Comes*. The producer's efforts almost save the record but it ultimately fails to justify its electro approach.

Cpl Nick Reader, Rifles

VERDICT: An album that lags behind their best efforts ★★☆☆

Self Help by Young Aviators

GLASGOW-based band **Young Aviators** bring fuzzy melodic riffs and tongue-in-cheek lyrics to the fore on debut offering *Self Help*. This album is a rush to the senses and is comparable to the likes of **Buzzcocks** and **The Undertones**. Through sardonic songs of rejection and failure they poke an oversized stick at the trials, tribulations and uncertainty that young people face in society today, with tracks such as *We've Got Names* rejecting mainstream culture and obsessions with personal gain.

Sgt Craig Backhouse, Coldm Gds

VERDICT: An up-and-coming band set for a bright future ★★★★★

That's What Happens by Chas and Dave

THIS first new recording in 18 years from the legendary Londoners who gave us *Gertcha*, *Rabbit* and *The Sideboard Song* shows fantastic musicianship and some tight vocals. The pair may be seen as a novelty act in some quarters but their famous blend of skiffle, rock 'n' roll and rhythm and blues is laid bare with excellent production of some world-class piano playing and delicate warbling. *Glory of Love* with **Martin Taylor** on guitar is a standout track. There's plenty of life yet in these cockney old-timers.

Joe Clapson, *Soldier*

VERDICT: An intricate piece of work from the talented duo ★★★★★

BOOKS

PICK OF THE MONTH: TRUE GRIT

BEAR'S BORN SURVIVORS

TV ADVENTURER PAYS TRIBUTE TO
HIS PERSONAL HEROES



Available to buy now,
priced £20

Main picture: BGV

Review: Becky Clark

THESE days it is hard to switch on the Discovery Channel without encountering a survival show of some kind.

From the comfort of our sofas we can watch strangers pitting themselves against the world's most inhospitable environments and tell ourselves that in the unlikely event we were ever called upon to fashion a water bottle out of a snakeskin, we could probably pull it off.

Leading the charge of TV daredevils is ex-Special Forces soldier and chief boy scout Bear Grylls, who has earned himself a worldwide following through such antics as sheltering in a rotting camel carcass, self-administering an enema and munching on a variety of stomach-churning fauna.

And while it's hard to escape the feeling that some of his on-screen adventures are a tad exaggerated – after all, he is never more than a satellite phone call away from rescue – his latest literary offering, *True Grit*, sees him pay tribute to history's real survivors.

From the likes of Shackleton, Scott and Mallory to ordinary people who found themselves in extraordinary life or death situations, the title is Grylls' response to a question he is often asked: who are his personal heroes?

"I hope the book will uncover some of the world's most inspiring, moving and mind-blowing feats of human endurance ever undertaken," he tells readers.

"Every single one of these individuals was squeezed to within an inch of their life and they had to plumb untold reservoirs of courage, fortitude and tenacity."

And "mind-blowing" is no overstatement.

US Navy Seal Marcus Luttrell saw his comrades die in a firefight with the Taliban before dragging his bullet-ridden body through the Afghan mountains for six days.

Aaron Ralston hacked through his own arm to escape certain death in a desert ravine.

After Louis Zamperini's B-24 bomber crashed into the sea, the airman survived 47 days in shark-infested waters only to be "rescued" by the Japanese and horribly tortured.

Somehow, these and the 22 other people featured "found a fire inside that goes far beyond the physical," as Grylls puts it.

Each chapter is delivered in concise, easy-to-digest chunks and at times this approach left me feeling a little short-changed on detail.

But then this is a does-what-it-says-on-the-tin kind of a book, not an in-depth examination of the human condition in times of hardship.

Its strength lies in bringing some of the less familiar tales of triumph over adversity to life for a new audience.

Even those who would rather drink their own urine than watch Grylls on television can't fail to wonder at the staggering lengths man will go to in order to survive.

And the next time I complain that my feet are cold I will try to remember Jan Baalsrud, the Norwegian special operative who was stranded for weeks on an icy plateau while trying to evade the Nazis and who chopped off all of his toes to stop gangrene spreading. True grit indeed. ■

VERDICT: An easy-to-read homage to history's greatest feats of human fortitude ★★★★★

Monty's Men

by John Buckley

THIS book chronicles the progress of Montgomery's 21st Army Group from D-Day through to the German capitulation in May 1945. Attempting to cover such a complex subject in a meaningful manner is a risky undertaking but John Buckley's book succeeds quite brilliantly. He covers every significant operation and, where appropriate, puts them in the context of the overall Allied strategy. Eyewitness accounts add considerably to the reader's understanding of events.



George Robey, ex-GH

VERDICT: Has appeal beyond the military historian fraternity ★★★★★

The Real Jeeves

by Brian Halford

THE First World War is awash with tragic tales of young men cut down in their prime. Brian Halford explores this theme via the sporting career of Percy Jeeves, a hugely talented cricketer destined for the top of the game. A vivid picture emerges of the hard-hitting all-rounder – the inspiration for one of PG Wodehouse's most famous characters – and it is hard to escape a feeling of what might have been had the call to arms not ended his England hopes, as well as his life.



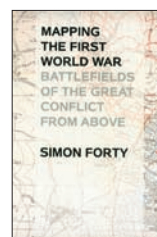
Richard Long, *Soldier*

VERDICT: A poignant read that underlines the tragedy of war ★★★★★

Mapping the First World War

by Simon Forty

AS with all conflicts, the First World War triggered huge progress in technology and science. The combatants' urgent need to know what was on the other side of the hill spurred huge advances in military cartography, aerial reconnaissance and photo interpretation. This book uses contemporary maps to chronicle the conduct of the Great War in an intriguing and stimulating way. The format allows the reader to dip in and out of the chapters or to enjoy a real map-fest.



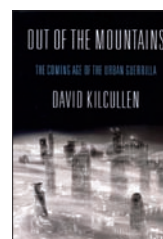
Maj Mike Peters, AAC

VERDICT: A great title and more than just a coffee table book ★★★★★

Out of the Mountains

by David Kilcullen

AN outstanding book relating to the future of non-traditional warfare. The author draws upon extensive first-hand experience as well as copious amounts of primary source discussion and material to map out his view on the changing nature of conflict. Focusing upon four main themes – population growth, urbanisation, littoralisation and connectedness – he concisely and clearly identifies the impact of demographic and technological changes on the future asymmetric threat.



Maj Chris Buckham, RCAF

VERDICT: A must-read for military planners or developers ★★★★★

Dead Man's Land

by Robert Ryan

SIR Arthur Conan Doyle's Dr Watson is reinvented in a First World War whodunnit of unexplained deaths in the trenches. Robert Ryan's book successfully combines the feel of life on the front line with criminal intent but relies on stereotypes for impact. The ruthless German sniper, romantically unbalanced nurse, officious military policeman and steadfast Tommy are all there. Easy to follow but the denouement arrives too late and is overly condensed.



Lt Col Andy Gladen, RE

VERDICT: A military mystery that would work on the small screen ★★★★★

Win... The Railway Man

by Eric Lomax

FIRST published to great acclaim in 1995, this searing account of Eric Lomax's hellish experiences as a Japanese prisoner of war on Burma's infamous "railway of death" has been turned into a major motion picture (pages 72-73). *Soldier* has ten copies of the movie tie-in edition to give away. To be in with a chance of winning one tell us which actor plays Lomax as a young officer in the film alongside Colin Firth and Nicole Kidman. Answers on a postcard to the usual address or by email to comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk



Closing date: January 31

ON-THE-ROAD RECCE

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE NISSAN NOTE...

TECHNOLOGY

AN around-view monitor controls the wide-angled rear bird's-eye view camera (with auto wash-wipe) and safety shield trio of features which combine a lane departure warning, blind spot alert and moving object detection. Satnav with Bluetooth, USB and iPhone connectivity add to the impressive standard package.



INTERIOR

SPACE inside the car is ample. With best-in-class legroom in the back and 90-degree wide opening rear doors there is plenty of space to get in and out, while still leaving enough room for a week's groceries. In fact, the split-level, 325-litre boot extends to 411 litres with the back seats folded down. Not bad at all for a car of this size.

ENGINE

THEY say that size isn't everything. And this certainly rings true with the Note. Its tiny-yet-powerful engines are uber-economical (see below). The choices are a 1.2-litre petrol, a supercharged 1.2-litre DIG-S petrol and a 1.5-litre dCi turbo diesel. High marks must be given for tax-free motoring with the latter two of the three engine types.



DASHBOARD

THE layout of the Note's dashboard is neat and clean with good quality materials used all-round. Stop-start ignition systems, six airbags and cruise control with a speed limiter are standard on all three versions of the car. There are too many features to list, but another highlight is the presence of connect technology, which allows drivers to use Google's "send to car" feature to plot their route before they even get near the vehicle.

ECONOMY

AN eco-button on the Note allows its users to drive more efficiently by way of LED light displays on the dashboard. In terms of fuel efficiency, Nissan quotes a combined MPG of 65.69 and an urban figure of 54.32. Not bad, but neither is this the best around. For the 1.2-litre DIG-S petrol model tested, CO2 emissions sat at 99g per kilometre.



INCLUDED OR EXTRA?

AS the mid-range trim, the Note Acenta comes with features including air conditioning, Bluetooth, electric windows, 16-inch alloys, tyre pressure monitoring, heated door mirrors and sliding rear seats to name just a few. Visit www.nissan.co.uk to configure your own car. Also available as an option is the "family pack" – which includes handy extras such as rear privacy glass and seat-back tables.

Review: Melissa Terry

NISSAN'S small British-built Note has undergone a total redesign – one that is likely to put a smile on faces of frugal motoring fans and gadget addicts alike.

In a bid to shake off the model's dated, boxy attributes the car maker has smoothed off the sharp edges to great effect, bringing it swiftly into the headlights of the competition – the Volkswagen Polo and Ford Fiesta.

With prices starting at £12,100, it's all about technology with the new Note – the first vehicle in its sector to offer some fairly premium kit.

Most significantly, its safety shield system monitors the car for risks, provides driver alerts and can even take action to prevent accidents.

An around-view monitor operates a lane departure warning, blind spot alert and moving object detection.

This links to a rear camera, which provides a bird's-eye view of the back of the car to enable safer and easier reversing.

The connect navigation system, which integrates satnav with Bluetooth, USB and iPod/iPhone connectivity, is equally impressive.

And if those technological treats are not enough, simple but thoughtful design tweaks such as rear doors that open to 90 degrees will no doubt please this car's new generation of users.

Split-level boot space, generous legroom and a cool eco-pedal guide to negotiate the road more efficiently combine to make this a comfortable driving experience all-round.

Make no mistake, travelling in the Note will not set your world on fire.

But in terms of design and user innovation it is probably best described as like driving the motoring equivalent of a MacBook Air.

If Apple made cars they'd surely be small Nissans.

VERDICT: Great economy, innovative technology and not at all bad looking ★★★★★

TOP GEAR

PICK OF THE MONTH:

A CAR OF NOTE

BRITISH-BUILT MODEL REVAMPED
WITH DECENT RESULT



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SOLDIER SPORT

EDITED BY RICHARD LONG PICTURES BY GRAEME MAIN

Playing hard: The Army senior team battled their way to a 1-1 draw with the Amateur Football Alliance as they maintained their unbeaten start to the season. Read more about their Southern Counties Cup clash on page 87...



GETTING INTO GEAR

WITH cycling enjoying a boom period on the back of Great Britain's Olympic dominance the Army is seeing more and more soldiers taking to the saddle in pursuit of sporting excellence.

The Service's road race and mountain biking teams celebrated superb seasons in 2013 and a new discipline is now joining the fold to ensure the success story continues.

BMX racing made its debut in Andover in the build-up to Christmas and regular training sessions have been planned to improve standards and attract newcomers.

A total of eight soldiers took part in the inaugural meeting and organiser WO2 Willie Plowman (Mercian) is hoping the pursuit will flourish in the coming years.

"This is an Olympic event and is a great recruitment and retention tool," he told *SoldierSport*.

"We need to offer something that is fun and the guys seem to like this.

"It is very much in its early stages. This is our first training session and is a chance for people to come down and have a go.

"There is a range of abilities here. It's all about getting them interested but I'm also looking for up and coming riders to represent the Army.

"In March we will be naming a squad

to compete on the civvy circuit. We will be racing against professional teams and these lads will be testing themselves against the top guys in the sport."

Plowman hopes to see his riders compete at regional and national level and, if successful, they could potentially push for a place at the World Championships.

He is also hoping to organise an inaugural Inter-Services competition in the near future.

In the meantime the Andover BMX Club will continue to host the Army's riders and the facility is the perfect venue for those looking to develop on the bike.

"This is a 400-metre track that is full of bumps so there is a lot of excitement to be had," Plowman said.

"They can have a laugh and a joke and all I want is for this to be fun.

"Complete novices can come and have a go. Some safety equipment is needed but we can help with helmets and bikes.

"The long-term aim is for this to become something guys can do on their sports afternoon. They can come

and push themselves in a different event that is also low cost."

Among the newcomers taking to the track was Cfn Jack Harris (REME), who is now looking forward to an extended run in the sport.

"The fitness side was a big attraction for me," he explained. "Riding round a place like this all day is a much better workout

than a normal sports afternoon.

"It is something completely different to activities such as football, rugby and basketball.

"After coming here and finding out what it is like I want to keep going and I've already signed up for the next three sessions.

"I took nine seconds off my lap time during the course of the day and my confidence on the bike has grown a lot. If that continues who knows what might happen in the future.

"If I get picked for the Army team that would be great, if not it is still good exercise."

For more information on how to get involved in the sport contact WO2 Plowman on military 94344 8006 or email william.plowman423@mod.uk ■

"THIS IS COMPLETELY DIFFERENT TO ACTIVITIES SUCH AS FOOTBALL, RUGBY AND BASKETBALL"

PROFILE: CPL ADY RUMSEY

SPEARHEADING the Army's BMX team is Cpl Ady Rumsey (R Signals), a rider who tasted elite-level competition at the 2012 World Championships.

The soldier was inspired to take to the saddle after the 2008 Olympics in Beijing and was racing against the country's top prospects three years later.

"I started competing nationally and came 13th in my class," he told *SoldierSport* during a break in training.

"That qualified me for the 2012 World Championships in Birmingham where I finished 21st out of 76 riders.

"I broke my arm in October 2011 so it was not exactly a great run-up. At the same time I was trying to push BMX as an Army discipline but unfortunately there was not much interest.

"A lot of people think it is a teenagers' sport but at national level there are guys who are 45 years old and above."

While maintaining his own form Rumsey is also driving the Service scene and was delighted with the squad's debut showing in Andover.

"At the moment I'm trying to get guys interested," he added. "This is our first season but by 2015 I'm hoping we can have a national team and attract more people to the sport.

"This session has been a big success. Some of the guys are already talking about getting a BMX for themselves so it is a great start."







On the break: Army striker Pte Rachel Rigby (RLC) takes the attack to the Sussex defensive line

Point pleases Treharne

Women's Southern Counties Cup
Army 1 – Sussex 1

THE Army women started their Southern Counties Cup campaign with a hard-fought 1-1 draw with Sussex in Aldershot.

A host of new players took to the field for the Reds in their first competitive fixture of the season and they gave an encouraging showing against a well-drilled outfit that missed out on last year's title on goal difference.

Adopting a 4-5-1 formation the soldiers relied on Pte Rachel Rigby (RLC) to lead the attack and she did not disappoint.

The striker was a constant threat to the Sussex backline, particularly in the first half when she tested the keeper on several occasions.

But the visitors were also sharp in attack and Army number one Pte Terri Brown (AMS) offered a reassuring presence between the posts and repeatedly rushed from her line to clear any danger.

After an even opening period LCpl Tara Lofts (RE) gave the hosts the lead after a mix-up in the visitors' back line.

Keeper Charlotte Sole blasted a clearance against a back-peddalling defender and Lofts (pictured celebrating)



was on hand to roll the ball into the net.

But Sussex fired an immediate response as an attempted cross from Kim Whitcombe evaded Brown's grasp and sailed into the far corner. The challengers hit the post late on but the Army held firm to secure a point.

"Last season they put a few goals past us but the girls put in a real shift tonight," Reds skipper LCpl Jess Treharne (RLC) told *SoldierSport* at full-time.

"We're happy to come away with a draw and I think we deserved that.

"We've had some new people coming into the squad this season but it's as if we've been playing together for a number of seasons. I'm really pleased.

"We're now looking forward to our next game. We have to go away, train hard, play at corps level and then progress through the season.

"Our aim is to win the Inter-Services and we go into that as the defending champions.

"This is good preparation. We always start the competition on a high and I hope that continues this season with the changes we've made and the new players we have."

Army: Brown, Koff, Kidd, Wells, Treharne, Gwilliam, Jaffe, Keane, Rigby, Lofts, James. **Subs:** Jennings, Heap, Jones. ■

WOOLWICH CUP



■ **THE Royal Artillery** (pictured in blue) booked their place in the **Woolwich Cup** semi-finals with a 2-1 win over the Royal Logistic Corps in Aldershot.

Goalkeeper Capt Gav Smyth denied the loggies' forwards with some excellent saves in the early exchanges before the gunners established a foothold in the game.

Gnr Nathan Tidy opened the scoring in the second period when he was given time and space to volley home from a free kick before Gnr Peter Williams grabbed a second from the penalty spot after Sgt Paul Dunkerley was hauled down in the area.

The RLC clawed a goal back in the dying stages but the Artillery held firm to book their place in the next round.

■ **A THREE goal burst in the first half set the Royal Signals on their way to a convincing win over the Royal Army Physical Training Corps in their quarter-final clash.**

The signallers added two further goals to their tally after the interval as they completed a comfortable 5-0 triumph.

Sig Darren Elliot, Sig Ryan Paddock, LCpl Ben Lewis, LCpl Jay McAnespie (pictured) and Capt Liam Crane were all on target for the victors.



Elsewhere, Army ace Cpl John Mathis bagged a brace as the Royal Engineers downed the Army Medical Services 7-1 in a one-sided contest.

The Adjutant General's Corps also progressed to the semi-finals with a 2-1 success against the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

Greenfield's late show

Southern Counties Cup
AFA 1 - Army 1

A LAST-GASP equaliser from LCpl Gav Greenfield (RE) preserved the Army's unbeaten start to the season as they battled their way to a 1-1 draw with the Amateur Football Alliance (AFA) in Enfield.

The central defender was on hand to bundle home a corner from LCpl Calum Wilkinson (RLC) in the dying minutes of a lacklustre Southern Counties Cup clash that failed to hit top gear.

The hosts had the best of the chances and the Reds were indebted to keeper Spr Luke Cairney (RE) for a string of second-half saves that underlined his growing reputation.

A quiet opening period was characterised by a succession of wayward shots from the AFA forwards as the Army's failure to retain possession went unpunished.

The pattern was repeated after the interval but as the game evolved the home side began to find a clinical edge.

Cairney produced a superb close-range save to deny James Shea following a neat turn in the box but the Reds failed to heed the warning as they fell behind moments later.

Having won the ball in the final third the AFA shifted play to the right where substitute Jon Harrold was on hand to drill home from the edge of the area.

Cairney then foiled Alan Taylor as the midfielder raced clear before the soldiers finally sprang into life.

Skipper WO2 Glenn Davidson (AGC (RMP)) had their first meaningful effort as he flashed a shot across goal after being played in by Wilkinson and Cfn Matt Evans (REME) tested the keeper following a cross from Sig Rob Lonorgan (R Signals).

However, the Reds were rewarded in the 90th minute as Greenfield found the net and they almost snatched a winner in injury time but LCpl Jay McAnespie (R Signals) fired wide.

Speaking at full-time Army coach Capt Joe Collins (R Signals) said he was disappointed with his side's display but pleased to take a point.

"We've worked really hard on keeping possession but tonight that did not really happen," he told *SoldierSport*.

"Their goal came from us giving the ball away in the wrong area but that encouraged us to go forward and we could have snuck it at the end.

"It shows we have spirit. We go for the full 90 minutes and never give up. That is one of our qualities."

Davidson echoed the coach's comments and also found time to praise the efforts of Cairney.

"He is quality," the captain added.

"We are blessed with good goalkeepers in the Army and he is playing really well.

"This was a tricky match. They were moving the ball around quite quickly and we let ourselves down with the pace of our game.

"We were missing a few players but that has been an excuse for a while. There are a lot of young lads coming through and that is good for the team."

Army: Cairney, Paddock, Cooper-Tomkins, Poulter, Greenfield, Rizza, Lewis, Davidson, Wilkinson, Mathis, Lonorgan. **Subs:** Riley, Ellis, Evans, Smith, McAnespie. ■

Soldier man of the match

SPR LUKE CAIRNEY

THE goalkeeper was in superb form on a freezing night in Enfield and the Army were indebted to a string of fine second-half saves that allowed them to grab an equaliser at the death.





Pictures: Roger Thompson

On the charge: The all-conquering Army team secured yet another title at under-23 level with a 39-3 demolition of the Royal Air Force in Aldershot

REDS SEAL TRIPLE CROWN

Inter-Services Under-23 Rugby Union

Navy 14 – Army 25
Army 39 – RAF 3

THE Army's next generation of rugby union stars recorded back-to-back wins over their Forces rivals to claim a third straight **Inter-Services** title at under-23 level.

A 25-14 win over the Royal Navy was followed by a 39-3 thrashing of the Royal Air Force as the Reds continued their recent dominance of the tournament.

Scores from Cpl Morgan Evans (2 R Welsh) and Cfn John Lewis (REME), along with five penalties from the boot of LCpl Tom Lowe (WIS Coy MI), sunk the Senior Service before a five-try burst saw the airmen emphatically blown away.

The light blues made the worst possible start as they squandered possession from the kick-off. Evans fed Spr James Dixon (RE) and the fly half slipped through the defensive line to touch down.

A drop goal from SAC Chris Kirkham reduced the arrears before a penalty from Lowe restored the advantage.

The lead was extended further in the 27th minute as the RAF failed to stop a surging drive from the Army forwards and LCpl Alex Biggs (R Signals) crossed for a converted try.

Lowe slotted another penalty shortly after the interval and the challengers fell

further behind from the restart.

A poor kick gifted possession to the Reds and a clever chip from Lowe allowed LCpl Alex Stevenson (2 MI Bn) to score.

Skipper LCpl Rob Burnell (1 Coldm Gds) found the line for his side's fourth try before Pte Siva Naulago (1 Yorks) completed the rout in the dying minutes.

Speaking at full-time head coach WO1 Andy Campbell (WVG) told *SoldierSport* he was delighted with the outcome despite a below-par performance from his side.

"It did not go to the game plan but a win is a win," he said.

"We didn't play well against the Navy but came away with a victory.

"The RAF were really up for it; we produced some fantastic individual

displays but did not perform as a team.

"We wanted to play an expansive game but they slowed us down, we could not get into our stride. A lot of that was down to the opposition so they deserve credit."

Campbell also found time to praise the efforts of skipper Burnell.

"He has been fantastic," the coach added. "This was his last match for us as he's reached the upper age limit and we will lose around 80 per cent of our players in the same way.

"But guys like Pte Matt Lamont (29 Regt RLC) have come in and had a massive impact. We will start work with the development team in the New Year; there's plenty of talent out there it's just a case of nurturing it." ■



Soldier's star man LCPL TOM LOWE

THE Army under-23s came into their Inter-Services campaign searching for a third successive tournament win.

Five penalties from the boot of Lowe helped the Reds down the Royal Navy in a close opening match and the full back was in fine form against the Royal Air Force a week later.

He converted four conversion attempts and slotted two penalties in a 39-3 victory and gave his side important territory with some superb kicks from hand. Lowe also created two of the team's five tries.



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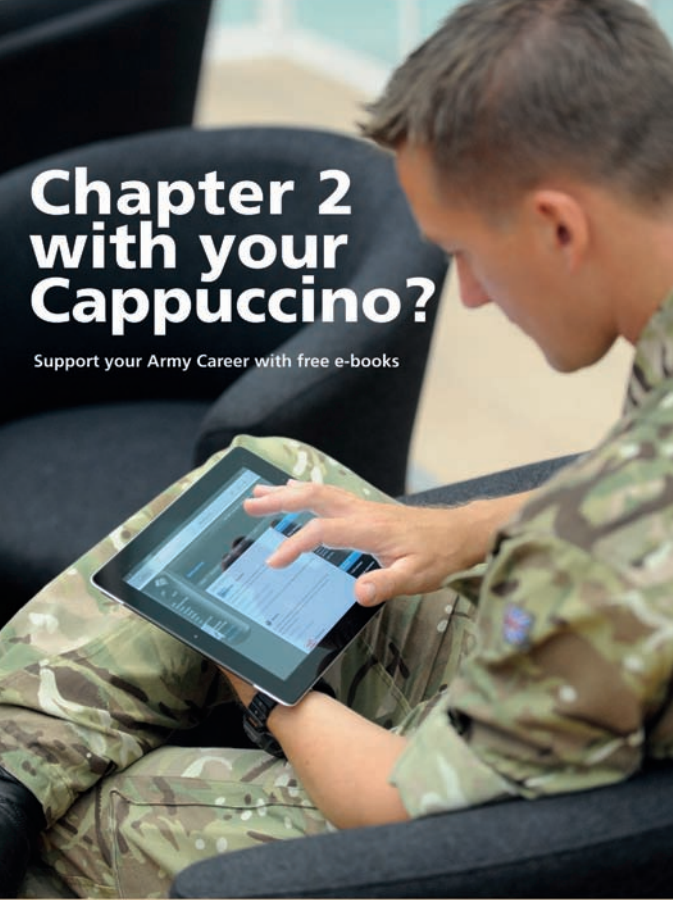
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ARMY SPORTS AWARDS



Big hitters: The Army boxing squad claimed the team of the year accolade while ex-soldier and powerlifter Micky Yule took the adaptive sport award

Army salutes sporting heroes

THE great and the good of the athletic world have seen their achievements over the past 12 months honoured at the annual **Army Sports Awards**.

A host of established stars and emerging talent gathered for the ceremony in Andover, which saw the Service's boxers add another accolade to their ever-expanding trophy cabinet.

A 30th consecutive Combined Services title helped them to the team of the year award and a spectacular season in the ring also saw the squad produce two male and four female Amateur Boxing Association champions.

"I'm chuffed to bits that the lads have

been recognised for their achievements," former coach SSgt Martin Anthony (RLC) told *SoldierSport*.

"The whole team did really well and it was one of the greatest seasons in the Army's history.

"For me it is about pushing them as far as they can go and seeing the enjoyment on their faces.

"It was one of the best years I've ever had as a coach and it will be etched on my memory for a long time."

Ex-soldier Micky Yule was among the other winners as he collected the adaptive sport award.

The double amputee, a former staff sergeant in the Royal Engineers, has

excelled in the field of powerlifting and will represent Scotland at the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow.

"I've just left the Army so this is a fond farewell for me," he said. "I'm really proud to win this trophy and hopefully I can now push on.

"Nick Beighton won this title last year following his efforts at the Paralympics and that is the level I want to get to.

"I've got to knuckle down, do the hard work and hopefully I can steal one of the medals in Glasgow."

The victorious soldiers will represent the Army at the Combined Services Sports Awards later this year. Read on for details of the other big winners. ■

AND THE WINNERS ARE...



● **UMPIRE WO2 Richard Smith (RAMC)** took the official of the year accolade following his efforts on the cricket field.

He is a firm fixture at Combined Services level and is part of the ICC Associate and Affiliate Panel, where he has stood in 120 international matches.

"It is great for the Army Cricket Association to win something at these awards," Smith said.

"I love doing this. I was the television umpire for the Ireland versus England game in Dublin last summer and that was a great experience. The Under-19 World Cup is coming up in February and hopefully I will be involved in that."



● **KARATE ace Sgt Hayley Just (RE)** was named sportswoman of the year after she retained her Army and Inter-Services titles before winning a bronze medal while representing England on the international stage.

"I was nominated for this award in 2012 and came third but I've achieved a lot more this year so I'm delighted to win," she said.

"I really have to thank my coach SSgt Brian Hall (REME). I've got another busy season ahead. I always aim to win the national competition and I'm hoping to qualify for the England team that will compete at the world championships."



● **A THIRD-place finish representing England at the home countries international decathlon competition saw athletics star LCpl Osman Muskwe (3 LSR) crowned sportsman of the year.**

He also won the Inter-Services showdown and is now pushing for a place at the Commonwealth Games.

"Winning this award is a total surprise," the athlete said. "My unit really believes in me, they've seen my potential and have helped by giving me time off to train.

"I had a hamstring injury last season but did well. I'm now fully fit and more experienced so I can only get better."

MEN IN THE MIDDLE



WITH the Army football scene continuing to flourish the demand for qualified and competent officials to take control on the pitch has never been higher.

Thankfully those charged with governing the soldiers' game have an established system in place to ensure the production line of refereeing talent is running at full pace.

Dates for three basic referees' courses have just been announced for 2014 and with interest expected to be high it promises to be a busy year at the Service's new football development centre in Aldershot.

While recruitment has not been an issue retention has been somewhat problematic but those at the top are now hoping to reverse the trend.

"We are trying to get as many applicants as we can on those courses but we want them to continue and keep the whistle going," WO1 Steve Finch (RLC), part of the Army referees' committee, told *SoldierSport*.

"The hardest part is the first few games after passing. They can get some abuse and it takes a while to get used to.

"But we mentor the new guys in their initial six matches to give them pointers and words of encouragement as it can be quite daunting.

"The Football Association (FA) is looking for younger referees as they are the future of the game. We want to show soldiers what is available to them within the Army.

"We also need to recruit female officials. We do not have any active women in this role at the moment so we are crying out for them."

The course teaches students the laws of the game via a series of workshops and once complete they will qualify as a level nine referee.

On successfully negotiating six matches they reach level seven and further progression is possible as experience builds, with level one referees qualified to take charge of Football League games.

One of the Army's emerging stars is LCpl Declan O'Shea (REME, pictured left). He turned to refereeing after being released from the Reading FC academy as a young player and has now achieved level four as an official.

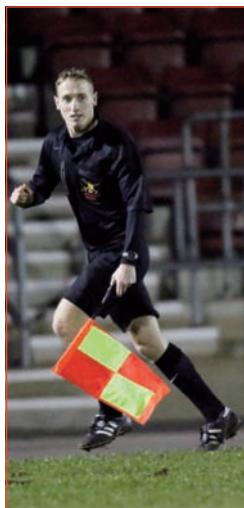
"I was a senior referee when I joined the Service but I help tutor the basic course and do a lot of work with the Army FA in terms of recruitment and retention," the 22-year-old explained.

"The opportunities are amazing. The Army runs a referee academy and we meet quarterly to talk about how we can progress. There is so much support in place and if you start young enough you can go all the way to the top.

"We have had guys in the Premier League and that shows we can juggle professional football with life as a serving soldier.

"I've got aspirations to go as high as I can. I'm not saying I'm going to be the next Howard Webb but there will be opportunities for me to push for the Football League in the future."

The 2014 referee courses run from February 17 to 21, June 17 to 20 and October 13 to 17. A fourth course in Germany has yet to be confirmed. For more details call 01252 787068 or email graham.brookland@armyfa.com ■



SIDELINE VIEW: ARMY'S ASPIRING REFEREES

CPL DANIEL SMITH (RE, LEFT)

“I kept getting injured as a player so I did my referees course through the Army. I'm really enjoying it, as a player you think you know it all but I had to learn the rules of the game.

The tutors made the course fun. I have done a lot of matches this year and hopefully I will get promoted to level five next month.

I just want to take it a level at a time and then see what happens.”

CPL FRANKIE REID (REME, RIGHT)

“Refereeing is something I've always been interested in. I thought I knew most of the rules but I soon realised that was not the case when I did the Army course.

I've not had much trouble in terms of dissent, I have a laugh and joke and just move on. My age may count against me in terms of making the Football League but if I could get some Conference games I would be happy.”





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SPORT SHORTS



■ THE Army's hockey stars claimed an early-season triumph over their Forces counterparts as they completed a clean sweep at the Inter-Services indoor tournament in Aldershot.

Capt Josh Tester (RLC) was among the scorers in a 10-4 rout of the Royal Air Force before a superb save from goalkeeper Sgt Dan Cattermole (R Signals) helped the Reds to a slender 6-5 win against the Royal Navy.

A similar pattern was repeated in the women's competition as strikes from 2nd Lt Gemma Darrington (RLC), WO2 Sharon Stones (REME) and Maj Nic George (R Signals, pictured) guided the team to a 7-2 triumph over the RAF.

A 7-1 success against the Senior Service followed as the Reds secured another title and the under-23s followed suit with two hard-fought victories. The Army masters recovered from a third-place finish last year to beat the airmen 6-3 and Navy 5-4.

■ THE True Heroes Racing team has welcomed new rider Luke Smith to its ranks for the 2014 season.

He will join former soldier Murray Hambro (pictured) on the grid in the Triumph Triple Challenge and with a medical discharge from the Army imminent he is relishing the opportunity to take part in the series.

"After a couple of seasons competing at club level, in amongst deployments to Afghanistan, I'm delighted to be offered the chance of riding alongside Murray," said the new recruit, who serves in The Parachute Regiment.

Hambro, a former lance corporal in 2nd Battalion, Royal Tank Regiment, lost both legs

in an IED blast in 2010 and enjoyed his first full season on the track last year.

"Having Luke on-board can only assist me and also achieve what we set out to do by offering more opportunities for injured Service personnel to get involved with the team," he said.

For more information on the set-up visit www.trueheroesracing.co.uk



Main man: LCpl Victor Ahiavor (1 RRF, right) won back-to-back matches in the dan grade contest

Judo's clean sweep

Inter-Services Judo Challenge Cup

Army 101

Royal Navy 41

Royal Air Force 6

ARMY players produced an emphatic performance at the annual Inter-Services judo championships to claim a clean sweep of titles against their military rivals.

The elite athletes in the dan grade team overpowered the Royal Navy 5-0 before battling their way to a 3-2 victory against the Royal Air Force, while the kyu grade soldiers downed the Senior Service 3-2 to win their category.

A lack of opposition saw the women win their competition without breaking sweat and the Army's dominance was confirmed in the Challenge Cup, where they finished on 101 points – 60 points clear of their nearest opponents.

LCpl Victor Ahiavor (1 RRF) claimed back-to-back wins in his matches and is now returning to full-time training with a view to qualifying for the Commonwealth Games.

"I took a year off from judo after missing out on a place at the 2012 Olympics," the Ghanaian told *SoldierSport*.

"I went back to my battalion and deployed on Op Herrick 18. It was important for me to go on tour, it was really busy but I was with a great team.

"I'm now back in training and have to start winning

tournaments if I'm going to qualify for Glasgow. When I came back from Afghanistan I went to Mauritius and won a silver medal so that is a good start.

"The Inter-Services is important as well. A lot of people turn up and they are hoping to reach the same level, it is a good opportunity for them to learn."

Another player returning to Service action was Tpr Emmanuel Nartey (1 RTR), who has been enjoying a successful spell on the international circuit.

"It is great to represent the Army and be part of the team," he said. "The standard is improving and a lot of work has gone into the sport."

"I've been very impressed with the development over the last 18 months. Hopefully that can continue in the future."

Army manager WO2 Lee Brown (REME) was delighted with his team's performance but hopes the rival Services improve so the event can flourish.

"Unfortunately they do not have the set-up we have," he said. "We are running four coaching courses a year and putting a platform down to build a good squad."

"It seems as though we have more fighters at the moment but we would be happy to have the RAF and Navy involved in these training programmes."

"We do not want this competition to die – it is the pinnacle for some of our guys."

For more information on how to get involved email lbrown.hq@da.mod.uk



● 2nd Lt Alex Paske (RE)



Going for gold: Sgt Tony Davis (RAPTC) is hoping to lead Team GB's fighters to Olympic glory

Davis lands dream job

BOXING stalwart Sgt Tony Davis (RAPTC) has returned to the international stage as a performance coach with Team GB.

The former England fighter was selected from a field of 40 potential candidates and is now working with the country's top emerging talent as well as the athletes who are pushing for places at the Commonwealth and Olympic Games.

London 2012 gold medallist Nicola Adams has been among those to benefit from Davis' immense experience and the soldier is delighted to be working alongside elite boxers once again.

"I fought at this level but missed out on going to the Olympics so this really is a dream job for me," the former Service coach told *SoldierSport*.

"It is the best thing you can do outside of competing.

"I've done three camps so far and it has been brilliant. The guys I deal with

are intrinsically motivated. Although I have experience as the Army coach it is a massively different set-up.

"There are some really talented people out there and we have a target of three to five medals for the Rio Olympics."

Davis' Team GB role has to fit around his Army commitments and he has praised the chain of command for helping his dream become a reality.

"The PT Corps has been really supportive," he said. "But this is what we do – we breed professionalism, physical training and sporting prowess.

"This opportunity has probably come a little earlier than expected but it is what I'm looking to do when I leave the Service.

"In the meantime I want to feed my experience back into the Army as I'm still involved in coaching courses.

"My ultimate aim is to become the Team GB coach and lead my country at the Olympics, that would be amazing." ■

SPORT SHORTS

■ **FOOTBALLERS** from The Royal Gibraltar Regiment took part in a memorial match to honour former colleague Christian Wink, who was killed in a traffic accident in 2001.

The game saw a combined seniors and officers team take on the junior ranks and goals from Cpl Paul Grech and LCpl Daniel Rodgers gave the young soldiers a 2-1 win.

■ **THE Episkopi Eagles** rugby team has officially retired its number six jersey as a tribute to the late Capt Andrew Griffiths (2 Lancs), who was killed in southern Afghanistan in 2010.

He wore the shirt with pride during his time with the squad and it was framed and hung in the clubhouse after a recent match with soldiers from 28 Engineer Regiment.

The sappers lost the game 13-0 but they used the occasion to honour the memory of Spr Richard Walker, who also died on operations last year.



■ **CRICKET** fans have been given an early diary date for the 2014 season.

The all-conquering Army team will return to Lord's on Tuesday, June 3 on a mission to defend their Inter-Services Twenty 20 crown.

A Marylebone Cricket Club invitational XI will lock horns with the Combined Services' ladies side on the Nursery Ground on the same day as part of the historic venue's bicentenary celebrations.

BOXING

Hot shots made to sweat

YOUNG footballers from Aldershot Town were put through their paces in the ring during a training session with the Army's boxing squad.

The link between the two set-ups was forged by the club's academy adviser Kevin Knights, a former private in 13 Air Assault Support Regiment, Royal Logistic Corps, who served with one of the team's coaches.

"Fitness-wise it will be a big help," Knights told *SoldierSport*. "At this stage of the season we tend to focus on the tactical side of things.

"We have 40 lads in the academy but some of those haven't been playing much lately, so this is great for them.

"I think it is good for Aldershot to be working with the Army as there is no link there at the moment."



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Final word

As Reservists retrained at Middle Wallop to join the Army Air Corps we asked troops for their thoughts on changing role in preparation for future conflicts.



WO2 Brian Furness (RA)

I think that changing roles will be a good opportunity for the younger lads to do overseas tours and attachments, which will be an improvement on what we have had up to now. Personally, I'm looking forward to the new challenges and what the future holds for us.

Bdr Gary Wishart (RA)

I have served in the Royal Artillery and Royal Army Medical Corps and now with the Army Air Corps I'm looking forward to a different challenge. The instructors we've got are top notch but obviously we'll be sad to lose the guns as that's been our identity. Now I'll be building on the skills I've already learnt.



SSgt Brian Low (RA)

I knew a role change was going to happen and I don't mind where I go as long as it's worthwhile. I'm happier coming to the Army Air Corps because it has a higher level of excitement than other jobs. I will always adapt my way of working to suit my role and I enjoy helping others through difficult times as I get a sense of achievement from it, so hopefully I'll be of some use.



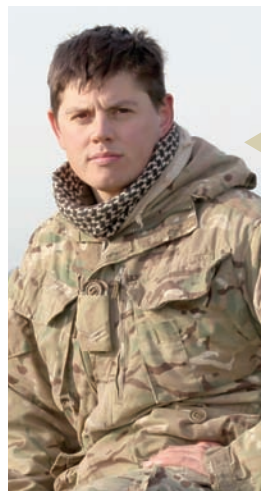
LBdr James McGrath (RA)

I have just come back from Afghanistan and was disappointed to be told that we would be changing roles because we've got a lot of camaraderie with the cap badge. However, we get 15 days to learn what the new job is all about and the instructors have been welcoming. I haven't worked alongside the Army Air Corps before so it is good to get an insight.



SSgt Baz Barovic (RA)

I've been in the Royal Artillery for 19 years as a Regular and Reserve so it's been difficult to tear away from a role that I'm comfortable with. However, we've got to get on with Future Reserves 2020 and I will be embracing this opportunity. Hopefully we should be able to integrate easily.



Cpl William McDermott (AAC)

As an instructor I think it's good for them to change roles as that's where the future of the British Army lies. When teaching the trained Reserves they ask lots of questions and bring much of what they already know to the job. We are very keen to get people to retrain with us in order to fill our capacity. We need to sell the excitement of this formation.



LCpl Sam Holmes (R Signals)

I'm looking forward to the fresh challenge and gaining some skills that will help me in the civilian world. The aviation technical qualifications will really assist me. Also working with new people and acquiring knowledge from Regulars will be brilliant. I'm excited about bringing my abilities as a signaller to this job.

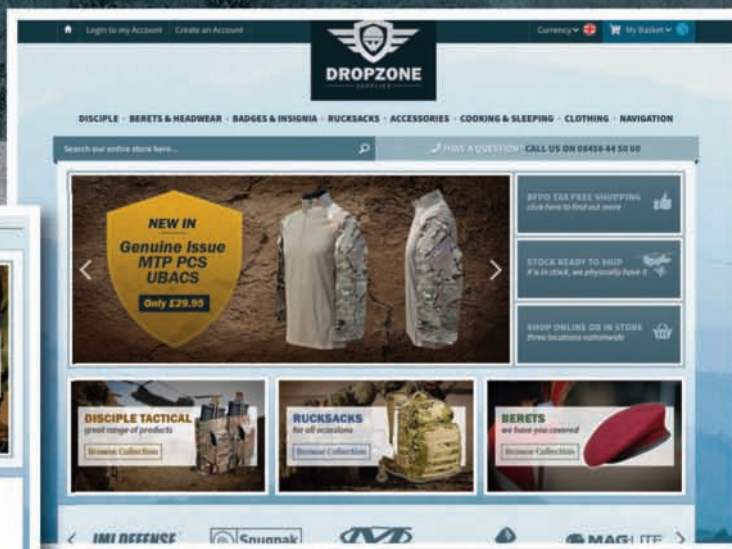
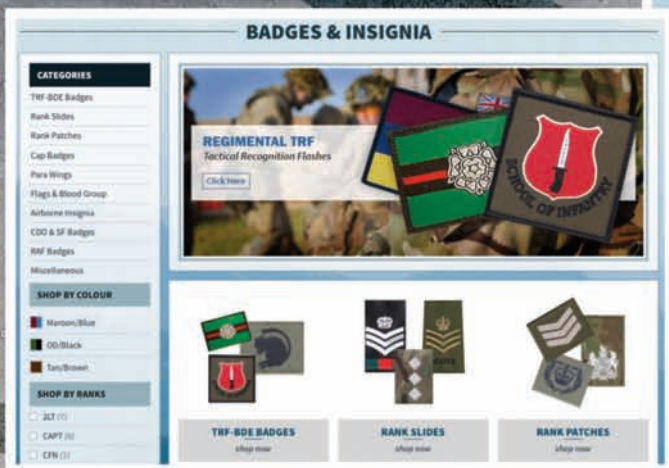
Sig Karen Akehurst (R Signals)

The Royal Signals are cutting numbers so a potential switch to the Army Air Corps gives me an opportunity to stay in communications, which is good because I enjoy that side of things. We have been discovering what the job is about and if I don't go to the aviation trade I would look at moving to the Royal Logistic Corps. It's a case of change role or leave the Reserve. I want to stay but people who have served for a long time might feel differently.





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