

SOLDIER

MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY

CRISIS IN THE GULF

Op Telic stories,
pictures, units,
welfare contacts

March 2003 £2

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Cover picture Cpl Russ Aston, serving with 156 Provost Company, Royal Military Police, carries out nuclear, biological and chemical (NBC) training at Colchester. The military police unit is part of 16 Air Assault Brigade, which it will support in the Gulf. More in Page 23.
Picture: Graeme Main

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... of your award-winning magazine

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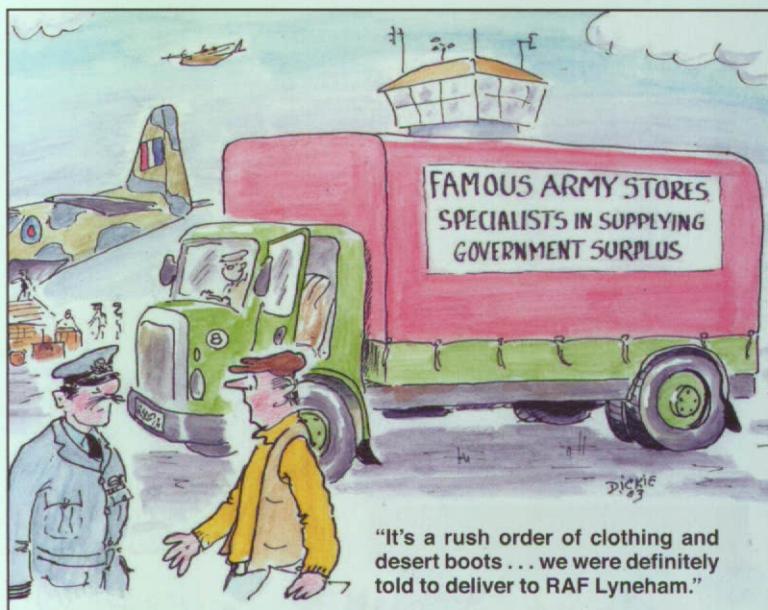
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"It's a rush order of clothing and desert boots... we were definitely told to deliver to RAF Lyneham."



Square meals?

Not really... the new ten-man ration pack, pictured left, comes mostly in round tins. Even the packaging can be recycled in the field as a ready-made larder

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Armed Forces' Pay Review Body

THIRTY-SECOND REPORT 2003

Chairman: The Rt. Hon. Baroness Dean of Thornton-le-Fylde

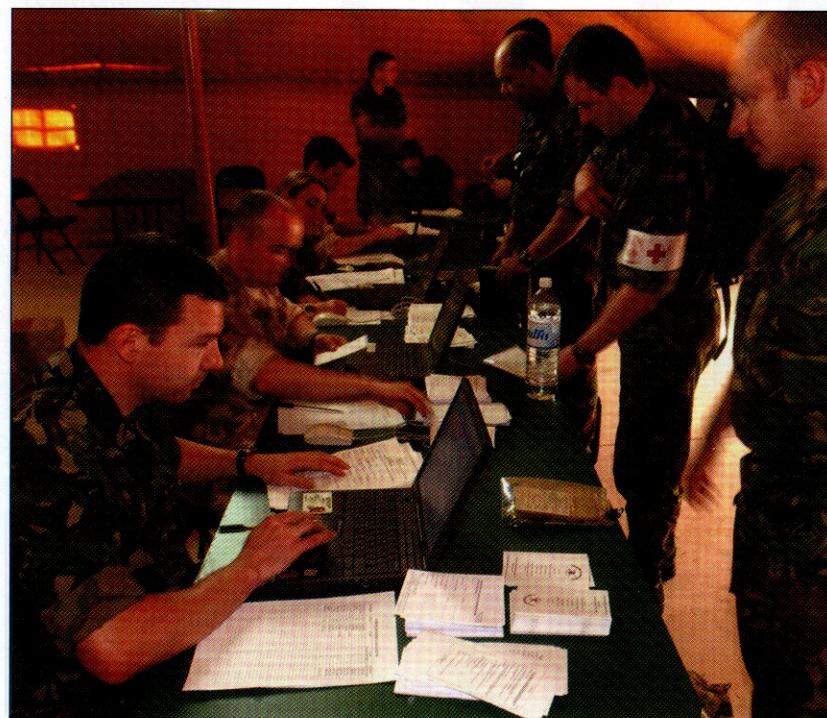
Little red book

The stories behind the recommendations for your 2003 pay award
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Off-the-shelf anti-tank missile to be fast-tracked into service – Page 37

Milan replacement with units by 2005





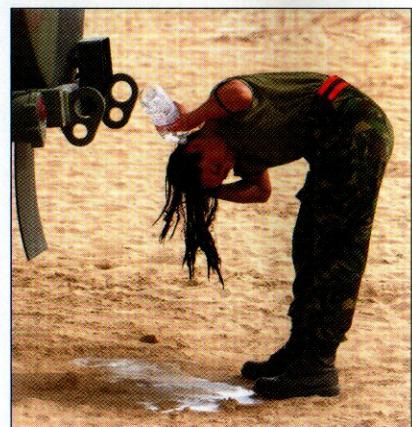
Welcome to Kuwait: Sgt Pete Farrant, left, serving with 17 Port and Maritime Regiment RLC, swipes in new arrivals as part of their administrative induction, above

Queue here: Troops just arrived from the UK wait their turn to go through the administrative process, right. Newcomers are briefed on local laws, customs and security



Signing in: LCpl Joanna Rimmer, a combat medical technician with 4 GS Regt RLC, fills in her arrival paperwork at the military reception area at Kuwait airport, above

Good hair day: Pte Sian Haggerty, a military clerk with 67 Supply Services Sqn, 6 Supply Regiment RLC, freshens up, right



Desert force settles in

Troops adapt to new surroundings as camps grow and supplies flood in

From Capt Guy Gatenby in Kuwait

THE welcome from the Royal Air Force flight lieutenant greeting British soldiers as they arrive in Kuwait is considerably friendlier than the one they received from Iraqi forces 12 years ago.

Their first taste of the multi-national operation after leaving the aircraft is an American MRE (Meal Ready to Eat). Despite being in theatre only a matter of weeks, the Royal Logistic Corps has put into action a well-practised routine of briefings and documentation to ensure troops are held in transit for the shortest possible time.

A few wistful faces can be seen among new arrivals as they hear the news for the first time that Kuwait is completely

dry; there is no "two-can" rule here.

Outside the airport terminal it is immediately obvious that they have entered an operational theatre. Heavily-armed escorts, provided by either the US Army in Humvee vehicles or 23 Pioneer Regiment, take arriving troops to the various camps springing up all over Kuwait.

Many deployed here served on Operation Veritas and for them the terrain could not be more different. Instead of the snow-tipped peaks of Afghanistan they find a pool table-flat desert, punctuated by occasional herds of camel.

The feared Kuwaiti summer is still several weeks away, with current temperatures ranging from 18 to 26C. Rain and high winds explain the bizarre sight of Royal Engineers wearing ski goggles and battling through sandstorms to erect tents and new camps. But morale is extremely high as Servicemen and women adapt to their new surroundings.

One is Fox Camp, run by Lt Col Rory Maxwell, CO, 6 Supply Regiment RLC:



**Bigger: Lt Col
Rory Maxwell**

"When I arrived three weeks ago this was flat desert as far as the eye can see. Every day it gets bigger and bigger and ultimately we will be 8 sq km."

Living conditions are sparse but comfortable. Most soldiers are sleeping on American camp beds and sharing 20-man tents. The food is fresh and there is lots of it. Those at Camp Arifjan, an American base, get waffles and chocolate doughnuts for breakfast. The difference between the two nations' exercise routine is never more apparent than in a shared base. The Americans pack out the gyms and pump "big" weights while the Brits run.

A real feel for the size of the operation can be gauged at the port, where troops serving with 17 Port and Maritime RLC are working 24 hours a day. The unit has been responsible for unloading as many as four ships a day from the UK. ISO freight containers full of essential supplies have to be lifted onto waiting lorries for distribution to the camps dotted around the country.

British Army begins to make its presence felt as force levels build up in Kuwait

Report: John Elliott

BRITAIN'S military build-up in the Gulf was rapidly approaching completion as this issue went to press. It was anticipated that virtually all troops and equipment would be on the ground in Kuwait by the beginning of March.

The speed of the deployment has kept movers and facilitators working round the clock ever since Operation Telic was announced on January 20. By the second week of February 8,000 British troops were in-theatre, and a week later that number had virtually doubled.

In all, nearly 26,000 soldiers will have been mobilised, mainly based on HQ 1 (UK) Armoured Division, 7 Armoured Brigade and 16 Air Assault Brigade. Plan-

ning for the huge movement had been in progress for several weeks, and the first elements of signallers, sappers and loggiers flew into Kuwait on January 5.

They, and many who followed, were accommodated initially at the large American logistic base at Camp Arifjan, where accommodation takes the form of an enormous aircraft hangar crammed with cot beds.

From there, elements have moved to forward locations prepared in the desert by British sappers and contractors.

A second, even larger, American base has been set up at Camp Doha.

Media operations officer Lt Col Debbie Noble, usually based with 4 Division in Aldershot, told *Soldier* from Kuwait as we were going to press that eight vessels had arrived with most of the force's B vehicles and that another 50 ships were expected in the following three weeks.

At that point, the bulk of 3 Commando Brigade was on the ground, as were lead elements of the British divisional headquarters, 7 Armd Bde, 16 Air Asslt Bde and the Joint Helicopter Command.

In the desert to the north, troops were moving into large tented camps. Daytime temperatures were described as "pleasantly warm" at about 24C, but are expected to rise sharply within weeks. Troops were wearing fleeces and combat jackets at night to keep out the night chill as temperatures dropped to 4C during the hours of darkness.

Where possible, British troops have benefited from blistering on to well-established American formations. As a result many had access to fresh food, augmented by ready-to-eat rations at midday. Many of the US forces in the area have been in Kuwait for up to four months.

Many British soldiers were still in green in mid-February but the issue of desert combat was being resolved and NBC gear was being allocated in-theatre. With the mission barely a fortnight old, welfare facilities were still patchy, with no telephones available and internet access basic but improving. Mail was arriving.

Soldiers have been permitted to take their mobile phones with them and networks were available.



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Troops allowed to take mobiles to Gulf

BRITISH troops deploying to the Gulf will be allowed to carry mobile phones, but there will be strict rules about when they may be switched on.

Lt Col Hugh Blackman, commanding officer of the Fallingbostel-based Royal Scots Dragoon Guards, told *Soldier*: "There will be times when they are not allowed to use them."

He said security was a major considera-

tion and the chain of command had to be allowed to kick into action in the event of injury or death.

"But we are aware that in the age of the mobile phone that can be circumvented. The policy is that people will be allowed to take mobile phones with them but there will be times when they are not allowed to use them."

"Soldiers and families understand that.

I have spoken to the wives and I asked the question 'are you prepared for someone to put your husband's life at risk by using a mobile phone when he shouldn't?' It's as simple as that."

For those without phones, blueys and e-blueys will be widely available. Under the operational welfare package, telephones will be installed in the desert where possible.

● **Morale's high – Page 19**

Pictures: Sgt Shaun Lewis



On guard: B Squadron HCR Scimitars outside Terminal 1, above, and a B Sqn trooper inside the terminal

Troops bolster airport cordon

TROOPS from the 1st Battalion, Grenadier Guards and the Household Cavalry Regiment reinforced 1,000 extra police officers at Heathrow and around London last month in measures to counter possible terrorist attacks.

About 450 troops in Scimitars and other tracked vehicles gave a high-visibility presence at the world's busiest airport as part of a security clampdown that included the airport, its perimeter road and the flightpath over Staines and Windsor. They also patrolled parts of the M25.

They sealed off car parks and lay-bys on the A30 approach road to prevent vehicles stopping and manned check points.

The Metropolitan Police, which led the operation, said in a statement that the

current strengthening of security was precautionary and was related to action being taken in other countries and the possibility that the end of the religious festival of Eid might erroneously be used by Al-Qaida and associated networks to mount attacks.

The strengthened security, most visible to the public at Heathrow Airport, related to a potential threat to the capital.

The heightened arrangements included the use of military personnel in support of the Metropolitan Police.

"The use of troops is part of a long-standing contingency, authorised by the government," said the statement.

Troops were last at Heathrow in 1994 after an attempted IRA mortar attack.

Security was also increased at Manchester Airport.

Cyprus unit gets extra five months in the sun

THE 1st Battalion, The King's Own Royal Border Regiment, is to remain at Episkopi in Cyprus for an extra five months as a consequence of the Gulf deployment.

Instead of moving next month to St George's Barracks at North Luffenham, 1 KORBR will stay on the island until September. It will be relieved as the resident infantry battalion in the Western Sovereign Base Area by the 1st Battalion, The Royal Highland Fusiliers.

Although the late change of plan has caused some disruption to the battalion's 600 men and women, many of whom have young families, an extra six months on the popular Mediterranean holiday destination is seen to have its consolations.

Lt Col Geoff Moss, commanding 1 KORBR, said the extension had come as no surprise given the number of units tasked to Op Telic, the planning and preparations for possible conflict in Iraq.

News of the delay came before the battalion started to move families and possessions to the UK. Some, however, had shipped cars back, put pets in quarantine, and secured jobs in the Rutland area. A few families posted into the unit had already moved into homes at North Luffenham.

"UK-based units are very hard-pressed covering operations and the firefighters' strike," said Lt Col Moss, "so we feel fortunate to be remaining here with a good operational task and the attendant benefits of life in Cyprus."

● **Snow guard in Cyprus – Page 15**

PAY 2003

Defence Secretary impatient with slow pace of work on barrack blocks

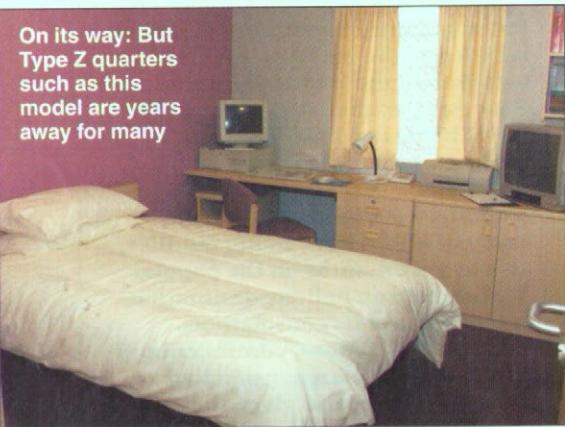
DEFENCE Secretary Geoff Hoon told Armed Forces' Pay Review members he shared their impatience at the slow pace of improvement to single living accommodation (SLA).

Their 2003 report reveals that he had been convinced it was impractical to bring forward the work or funds.

While understanding the need for contractual procedures to be put in place and best value to be achieved, the AFPRB urges the MoD "in view of the potentially damaging impact of slow delivery on retention" to "examine every avenue for releasing funding more quickly and accelerating the pace of the programme".

The slow delivery, says the report, "is an unsatisfactory situation for commanding officers and the people they command".

AFPRB members found on their unit visits that promises of additional funding had raised initial expectations, but it had since



On its way: But Type Z quarters such as this model are years away for many

become clear that new funding would only begin to have an impact on SLA from 2004.

"Assuming that there will be no slippage, it will take a further nine years (to 2013) to deliver in its entirety."

Service personnel of all ranks continued to stress the damaging impact of poor accommodation on quality of life and retention – and many believed it would not improve during their time in uniform. "These concerns, which we share," says the report, "were also raised by commanding officers we met during our visit programme."

In recognition of this, the AFPRB has increased only rents for the highest quality accommodation by limited amounts and has not added any increase to the lowest standard of single accommodation where conditions remain poor.

Full pay scales, allowances and charges will appear in the April issue

Your view: X-factor cash doesn't cover negatives

Independent verdict: disadvantages have increased, but not enough for a rise

THERE is widespread belief in the ranks that the X-factor – the adjustment to Service pay which recognises the disadvantages of life in the Armed Forces – is no longer adequate.

Servicemen and women told the independent Armed Forces' Pay Review Body (AFPRB) that the X-factor of 13 per cent was no longer adequate compensation for the differences between Service and civilian life.

They pointed to negative factors such as turbulence, long working hours, and difficulties with spouses' employment. They also felt the positive advantages of Service life, such as travel, adventure and sport, were diminishing.

An exhaustive review by independent researchers for the AFPRB of all the elements which underpin the X-factor led it to conclude that, compared with civilians, the Services remained disadvantaged. It also concluded that there had

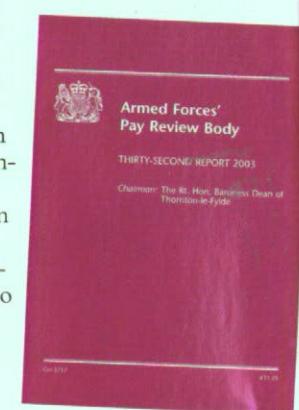
been a slight increase in that disadvantage, but not enough to raise the level of X-factor above 13 per cent.

Among elements showing a shift in favour of the Armed Forces were job security and training, progress in provision of support to personnel and their families, and a higher leave entitlement than civilians, who also took less leave.

Nevertheless, the AFPRB did recognise that some personnel were disadvantaged more than others (for example, those who suffer most from lengthy separation) and prioritised increases to LSSA (see below), rather than a flat-rate increase to all Service personnel.

Operational infrastructure

Efforts to improve and deliver operational welfare had been welcomed "but," says the AFPRB, "we are aware of discontent concerning the level of



infrastructure support on operations.

"We would remind MoD that Service personnel judge how they are valued by their Service by the support they are given both when on operations and at home. This sense of value significantly influences decisions to stay or go."

Longer hours

A 2001-02 survey into working hours had revealed what the report says was a "worrying change to the recent downward trend" within the Armed Forces.

A significant increase in working and duty hours was found across all three Services and all ranks during a period of significant international events.

On average, working hours increased from 48.1 to 54.5 hours a week; hours on duty from 75.1 to 89.5 a week; and more people worked excessive hours (up 8.4 to 18.8 per cent).

The Army experienced the highest increase in average working hours a week while the Royal Navy had the largest proportion of personnel working 70 or more hours. As in previous years, the worst affected were sailors at sea, troops in Northern Ireland and RAF units stationed in the Falkland Islands.

Although the Forces have exemptions from working-time regulations, it was

hoped the Services would continue their efforts to manage working hours within the spirit of the regulations.

Fewer days of leave

There was also a disappointing performance in the taking of leave compared with the improvements which had been seen in previous years. On average, personnel from both Services took fewer days' annual leave – in the Army 25, compared with 27.5 the previous year. Lost annual leave doubled to five days in the military.

Pay delivery system

"Highly frustrating" is how the report describes efforts to reconcile an inflexible pay delivery system with sophisticated, long-term solutions to address skill shortages in some specialist areas. The issue will be resolved when the planned Joint Personnel Administration System (JPAS) comes on stream, but the report notes that even without slippage this is unlikely to happen before 2005. "We find this highly frustrating, as must the Services and individual personnel."

● The AFPRB's 2003 report is based on evidence from 2002. Implications from the deployment of Servicemen and women in 2003 will be considered in the 2004 report.

At-a-glance guide to key elements

- AFPRB recommendations accepted in full, with no staging.
- Overall basic pay increased by 3.2 per cent for majority of Regular Army and Reserves.
- Greater increases for some – 3.7 per cent for privates and lance corporals in some pay ranges – and adjustments to some pay ranges.
- Single rate of pay of £11,122 for all new entrants.
- Previously excluded groups – veterinary officers, chaplains, Regular and Reserve officers commissioned from ranks – to be taken into Pay 2000 and to get a pay increase of 3.2 per cent.
- No change to X-factor, which remains at 13 per cent.
- Reduction in initial qualifying period for Longer Separated Service Allowance (LSSA) from 18 to 12 months; increase of 5 per cent in daily rate; and Accumulated Turbulence (AT) and Accumulated Turbulence Plus (AT+) bonuses increased from £1,000 to £1,250.
- Increases, by up to 9 per cent, to rates of all Reserve bounties.
- Special measures to retain "professional aviators".
- All forms of specialist pay – including parachute pay, flying pay and diving pay – and all forms of non-specialist

See the full report at www.army.mod.uk/servingsoldier/condofser/mm

- pay to increase by 3.2 per cent.
- Financial retention incentives for Royal Signals operators, technicians and selected supervisors on completion of their Class 3, Class 1 and supervisory courses. These will be £2,500, £5,000 and £10,000 respectively for a specified return-of-service period, corresponding to the training requirement for the relevant course.
- Previously-announced golden hellos of £50,000 to attract qualified doctors and dentists and significantly enhanced pay scales for serving consultants, doctors, dentists and senior medical officers.
- Service families accommodation (SFA) rent rises ranging from £1.19 a day (7 per cent) for larger, best-quality quarters to 2p a day (0.5 per cent) for smallest and worst.
- Garage rents up by 1p to 58p a day.
- Single living accommodation (SLA) charges up by 13p a day (2.7 per cent) for Grade 1 (the best), lower increases for Grades 2 and 3 and no increase for Grade 4 (the worst).
- Water and sewerage charges for all SFA set at annual rates of between £223 and £252 (a rise of 4p a day) for SFA and £77 for SLA (no increase).
- No change to food charges, which remain at £2.47 a day for married unaccompanied personnel and £3.38 a day for single personnel.

Anthony saved mother and child

FOR saving the lives of a mother and daughter hurt in a road accident, LCpl Anthony Simpson, right, of B (Green Howards) Company, The Tyne Tees Regiment, has received a commendation from C-in-C Land Forces.

It was presented to him by Gen Sir Mike Jackson before the then C-in-C took up his appointment as Chief of the General Staff.

LCpl Simpson was first on the scene of a five-vehicle road traffic accident at Ravensworth near Scotch Corner in North Yorkshire last July.

A 20-year-old mother and her baby daughter were trapped, with the mother unconscious and suffering head and chest injuries. She had swallowed her tongue.

"My training in the Territorial Army kicked in," said LCpl Simpson. "I managed to force her tongue out and started to revive her. He remained with her and her baby until they were transferred to an ambulance.

Paramedics later told him he had done the correct thing and praised him for his comprehensive and professional assessment of the condition of the casualties.

Capt Brian Noble, B Company commander, said: "His first-aid training helped to save the life of a young mother."

● Two other Green Howards, Cpl Ronnie Sawdon and LCpl Peter Stephenson, received Lord Lieutenant's certificates for service to the TA and the community.

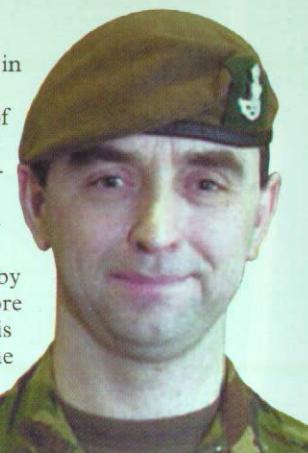
SSAFA gets Lotto cash

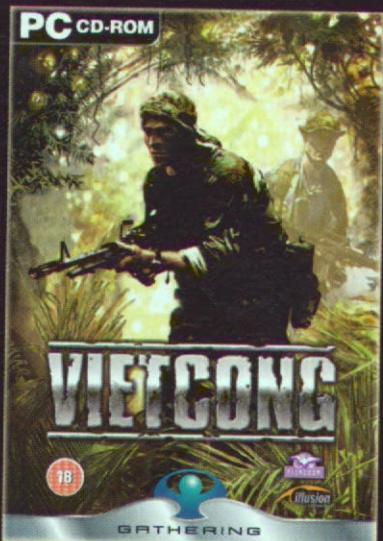
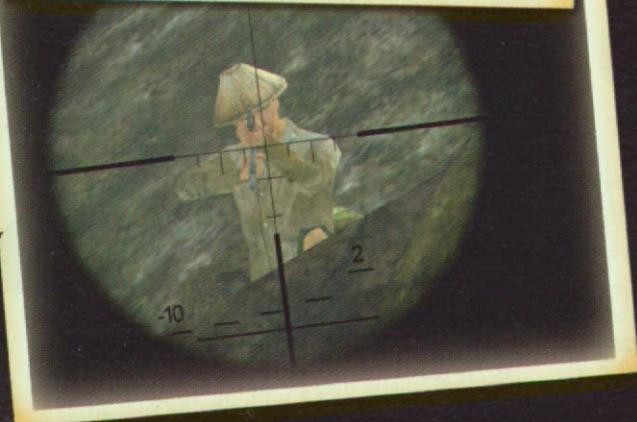
A GRANT of £450,000 to SSAFA-Forces Help from the National Lottery Community Fund will be used to improve the training of more than 70,000 volunteers and to develop new initiatives.

A need for a bereavement training package has been identified.

● New awards to honour the work of SSAFA volunteers have been announced. They give the Services community the opportunity to nominate people for outstanding achievement and commitment by an individual, and for positive contributions to lives of serving personnel and their families by a group project.

Contact Katy Booker on 020 7463 9257, e-mail her at katy.b@ssafa.org.uk or go to www.ssafa.org.uk to make a nomination.





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QLR's new badge unveiled

A NEW regimental badge for all ranks of The Queen's Lancashire Regiment is to be issued this month. From March 25, the 33rd anniversary of the modern regiment, Regular, Territorial Army and cadet units cap-badged to the QLR will be wearing the revised version, left.

The regimental crest, enamelled red rose of Lancashire charged with the Queen's Crown, over a scroll inscribed "Queen's Lancashire", is finished in burnished gilt. Warrant officers, NCOs and soldiers will continue to wear a primrose diamond cap-badge backing on their beret and an improved material will be introduced with the badge. Officers will continue to wear a gold wire embroidered beret badge, revised to include the crown.

The reasons for the change, not taken lightly, were to emphasise the QLR's identity as Lancashire's county regiment and its loyalty to the

Queen. These strong symbols, obscured on the old badge, right, have been displayed to full advantage in the new. In addition, the rose, which was inaccurately depicted on the previous badge, is now correct and displayed in a more deeply cut and three-dimensional design.

Soldiers were obliged to paint the rose red in the old badge, which was stamped out of lightweight and easily bent anodised aluminium. The new version is made of more substantial metal alloy and boasts a quality of finish worn previously only by officers. The roses are filled with red enamel, making the Queen's Lancashires the only regiment in the Army authorised to wear a coloured enamel badge. The change will also make the cap-badge consistent with the regimental crest used on its flag, notice boards and stationery.



A day with the lads:
Sgt Jarrod Hammond shows 11-year-old Ricky Mayhew over an armoured vehicle during the youngster's visit to the Light Dragoons' Light Aid Detachment REME at Swanton Morley.

Ricky, who has a brain tumour, spent his VIP day with the Army through the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

Tank trainer opens for business

AN £8 million hi-tech training base for tank crew warfare training was opened in the Midlands last month by Maj Gen Arthur Denaro, GOC 5 Division. The Precision Gunnery Training Equipment (PGTE) suite at Venning Barracks, Donnington, will provide Regular and Territorial Army soldiers in the division with state-of-the-art virtual reality technology. It is one of three of its kind in the UK.

The ceremony was the last official function carried out by Maj Gen Denaro before he retired from the Army. His successor as GOC 5 Div is Maj Gen Nick Cottam.

● A £1 million regional headquarters for the West Midland Reserve Force and Cadets Association has been built by the Linford Group at Telford.

Global Eagle on way

WO2 Barry Jones of 9 Regiment AAC was attempting a world autogyro distance record of 580 miles by flying from Wick to Culdrose on February 24. As reported in *Soldier* (February), his circumnavigation of the world in the tiny Global Eagle will begin on March 22.

Old order bows out in Balkans

COL Harry O'Hare became the first officer to head the new British Forces headquarters in the Balkans during a change-of-command ceremony at the Banja Luka Metal Factory base in Bosnia last month.

He took over from Brig Andrew Farquhar, the outgoing Commander British Forces (Britfor), and ushered in the newly-formed HQ United Kingdom National Support Command (HQ UK NSC).

Col O'Hare's headquarters will control troops in both Bosnia and Kosovo as part of a new pan-Balkans initiative. It replaces

the former HQ Britfor Bosnia and HQ Britfor Kosovo.

By May 1 the number of troops in Kosovo should have been greatly reduced and the staff in Banja Luka will support the remainder, together with a small staff based in Pristina.

As part of the same reorganisation, Lt Col Geoff Moss, deputy commander in Kosovo, moved to Bosnia to relieve Lt Col Mike Hughes, the deputy commander of HQ UK NSC.

● **Chip on Kosovo** – Page 35

Magnificent seven

NAAFI Financial says its seven cash machines have saved troops £110,840 by processing 88,672 transactions free of charge in the past year. The machines are located at ATMs Lichfield, Bassingbourn and Winchester and at RAF stations Worthy Down, Brize Norton, Shrivenham and Cranwell.

Medical excellence

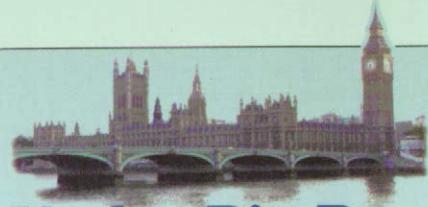
COL Jeremy Rowan, acting commander of 2nd Medical Brigade, cut the first turf last month for a new medical headquarters in York. As a centre of excellence for Territorial Army medics, it will house the brigade HQ and the Central Volunteer HQ Army Medical Services.

Developing situation

EVENTS in the Middle East have led to the Army and *Soldier* photographic competitions being postponed indefinitely. The prizewinning was due to have been held on March 14. Enquiries about the competition to SO2 (Profile), DCC(A) on 0044 (0)20 7807 8653 or (mil) 9621 78653.

Controlling arms

ALL agencies involved in arms control took part in a seminar arranged by the Joint Arms Control Implementation Group (JACIG) at RAF Henlow. Seventy officers and SNCOs carry out missions from the Atlantic to the Urals as interpreters and equipment specialists.



Under Big Ben

A digest of what's being said on Army matters in Parliament

MoD scheme pays out for lost holidays

BETWEEN June and December last year about 50 Service personnel claimed a total of £11,000 to reimburse them for holidays ruined by unforeseen military commitments.

They received their refunds under the Nugatory Holiday Expenditure Scheme, which repays otherwise irrecoverable expenses incurred through having to cancel or curtail holidays at short notice.

Reservists: The number of Reservists called out for possible operations against Iraq has been revised to a total of 6,000, Defence Secretary Geoff Hoon said on January 30.

Desert role: Part of the preparation of Challenger 2 tanks for the desert role was carried out before they left for the Gulf. Completion of the "desertification" process was taking place on arrival in theatre, Armed Forces Minister Adam Ingram said in a written answer.

Weapons: All troops on Op Telic are equipped with the modified SA80 A2 rifles.

Ptarmigan: Minor modifications are being made to the Ptarmigan trunk communication system for land forces to enable it to be used more effectively.

On target: Laser target locator systems for forward observers are expected to enter service with the Royal Artillery by the end of this month. The equipment will be issued to RA forward observers operating from Warrior observation vehicles, Saxon, or in the dismounted role. A separate programme for the Warrior infantry vehicle and CVR(T) fleets will be rolled out between 2004 and 2006.

Shower bags: Shower bags are not part of the standard personal equipment issued to Service personnel but will be available as required for Op Telic, Defence Minister Dr Lewis Moonie said in a written answer.

Gas masks: Some 180,000 in-life gas masks have been issued to troops deployed on Op Telic. The canisters were originally designed with a ten-year shelf life, which has been extended to 15 after extensive testing. The oldest stocks were made in 1991 so will not expire until 2006.

Report signals way ahead for initial training

GUARANTEED confidential access to officers, lower staff-student ratios and a covenant setting out the obligations of trainer and trainee are among recommendations to come out of a survey of initial training establishments in all three Services.

At the heart of the wide-ranging review of initial training were insights culled from 2,450 questionnaires and more than 1,500 interviews and discussions with recruits and trainees at 17 Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force initial training establishments.

Among a raft of major recommendations was concern at the extent to which "training risk" candidates were passed into the front line to push down wastage rates. The report calls for the extent to which training risk is carried into the front line to be investigated and quantified.

Other major recommendations:

- Personal profiles of individuals to enable career paths and training to be matched and to identify early on those at risk or in need of additional care in the transition from civilian to Service life.
- MoD to review the law and policy relating to under-18s and to re-issue guidance.

- "Absolute and guaranteed" confidential access for every recruit and trainee to an empowered officer on issues of well-being and welfare.

- Trainer/recruit ratios of between 1:12 and 1:14.

- Urgent attention to staff shortages at SEME Bordon and the Defence School of Transport at Leconfield.

- Harmonised disciplinary and corrective guidelines for instructors.

- A simple covenant articulating the obligations of the recruit and system.

- Regular independent reviews of Initial Training across all three Services.

- Recruits to complete and sign a questionnaire, administered and retained by an authority outside the chain of command, about their experiences.

The report's overall assessment was that the Services could have confidence in a lean, hard-worked initial training system, staffed by professionals with a strong sense of duty and purpose, and providing highly-effective training for about 23,000 recruits a year.

It compared favourably with other nations' arrangements and with large-volume training regimes, civilian and uniformed.

Although morale, ethos and motivation, among recruits and instructors, was "predominantly buoyant", strains were evident in a number of areas as a result of the sheer size of the task and the unremitting throughput of trainees.

Maj Gen David Leakey, Director General of the Army Training and Recruiting Agency (ATRA), welcomed the findings of the report. Although it did not mention many measures and initiatives already in place, he said it would encourage those involved in training to dwell on its positive message.

"Most of the recommendations fully support our drive to improve existing procedures in the ATRA and the introduction of new measures, in particular, increasing the numbers of military staff. Ministers have now put their weight behind the recommendations and that can only be helpful in delivering them."

"Work has already been done to identify numbers of extra staff to improve out-of-hours supervision, duty of care and continuity training."



On their way: LCpl Kelly Richardson, a health care assistant and one of more than 80 medical staff from Frimley Park Hospital in Surrey who have deployed to Kuwait, checks the pulse of Cfn Gareth Bills, serving with REME Workshop, 4 General Support Regiment RLC. In all, 2,030 Regular and Territorial Army and Reserve medical personnel have been deployed or mobilised for Operation Telic in the Gulf.

Elements from 1 Close Support Medical Regiment RAMC, 5 General Support Medical Regiment RAMC, 33 Field Hospital, 34 Field Hospital, and 4 General Support Medical Regiment RAMC are already in Kuwait and the remainder are set to follow shortly.

Vaccine records aren't a 'waiver'

THERE has been no requirement for Gulf-bound Servicemen and women offered vaccinations to sign waivers or disclaimers, whether they accept the vaccinations or not.

In a written answer to Parliament on February 10, Defence Minister Dr Lewis Moonie said all vaccinations were administered on a voluntary basis.

As part of the individual giving their informed consent to receive the vaccination, they were advised of the consequences of their refusal and of any possible side-effects of the vaccine. He said units may, if required, maintain

administrative records of which personnel have received the necessary briefings or need to be re-offered boosters so that the continuity of the immunisation programme can be maintained.

None of these records, said Dr Moonie, constituted a legal waiver or disclaimer, and none supplanted the MoD's responsibilities in respect of the health and safety of Service personnel.

● As at January 21, 16,538 personnel had been offered immunisation against anthrax, of whom 8,103 had accepted. Information on the uptake of other vaccines was not held centrally.



Welfare package will depend on where you are

TROOPS deployed in the Gulf have been warned that provision of the operational welfare package (OWP) will depend on what can be realistically delivered.

The package is designed to meet basic communications and entertainment needs during the initial stages of an operation, expanding during follow-up phases.

According to a time-frame for delivery of the OWP, welfare telephone allowances, telephones for private use, blueys, newspapers, EFI shops, one TV and video to 30 personnel and equipment such as video and board games would be in-theatre during the first month of the deployment.

But it is not a standard package and it depends on factors such as the nature of the operation and what is logically possible.

Not all units will benefit to the same degree, as many discovered in Oman during exercises in 2001, when the expeditionary and austere nature of the undertaking made it impossible to deliver all elements of OWP during tactical phases. It was unrealistic, for example, for units to expect a Portakabin full of welfare telephones to follow them around the battlefield, and unrealistic for units in the field to have the generator capacity to have all elements of OWP available all the time.

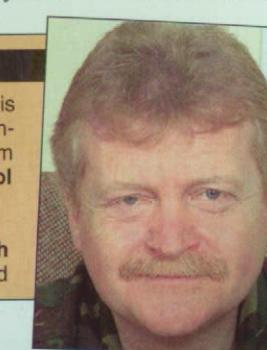
Phase two provision, from the first to the fourth month of the operation, invokes all the initial phase goodies plus e-blueys, radio and TV from BFBS and SSVC, fitness equipment, libraries and a welfare guide specific to the operation. After four months, OWP is designed to kick in with R and R periods for troops, additional carry-over of leave, extra family travel warrant and travel from abroad, access to the internet and CSE shows.

THE March issue of the Army Families Federation Journal, right, should be with all units and rear parties for onward delivery to their families by mid-March. The AFF is happy to send copies to Territorial Army units with deployed soldiers for their families. Contact the Journal on 01980 615517.

● Sue Bonney – Page 73

IN BRIEF

- Brig Tony Barton, right, is the new commander of Colchester Garrison and Wattisham Station. He takes over from Col Julian Lacey, who has retired.
- Control of Farnborough Airfield has been transferred



from the MoD to TAG Aviation and regulation of flying from the Royal Air Force to the Civil Aviation Authority.

- A cheque for £2,290, collected by British

troops serving throughout Bosnia, has been presented to the Royal British Legion's Poppy Appeal by Lt Col Mike Hughes, right, who was deputy commander HQ Britfor at Banja Luka (see "New order in Balkans", Page 13).



The Minerva Consortium has been chosen to build and manage a new Defence Sixth Form College on the site of a disused barracks near Woodhouse in Leicestershire. When it opens in September 2005, the present Army Sixth Form College at Welbeck Abbey will close.

- A detailed look at the delivery of support to the Armed Forces is to be carried out. The End-to-End Review (E2E) will begin at the point of manufacture and end with the pulling of the trigger in the front line. Feedback is being sought by the review team, and comments should be e-mailed to Paul Blakiston at dgmo.mod@zoom.co.uk

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New dDirectory is a jungle path

A NEW and improved dDirectory, to be launched very soon, will help MoD personnel forge a path through the information jungle.

The single comprehensive electronic directory of contact data for Defence covers all civilian and military personnel, posts and locations, and includes pictorial views of the whole organisation.

To access it, log on to dNet, go to the directories menu, and click on dDirectory. For those not on dNet or MODWeb a CD-ROM is available as long as you can use a PC.

Once you have called up the home page on the dDirectory, go straight to the search box, type in a name, post or unit, and a screen will come up with phone numbers, e-mail and location details.



By the end of April, there should be about 100,000 people in dDirectory. If you aren't one of them and you are online, click the link and add your details. If your details are wrong, it helps everyone if you amend them immediately.

If you've lost contact with someone still in Defence, tap their name into the search box and see if they come up. It's like a military version of friendsreunited.com

There is a more compelling reason to take an interest in the system. In a few years, individuals will need to be on dDirectory to get paid.

If you would like dDirectory on CD-ROM, send a fax with numbers required to 0800 7316007 or call 0800 7836314 for more information.

No, it's not the Balkans

A soldier on guard in the snow... it must be a military base in the grip of a Bosnian winter. But no, this is sunny Cyprus as you don't often see it.

Pictured outside a remote communications installation 6,400ft up Mount Olympus in the Troodos Mountains is Pte David Moffitt of Burma Company, 1st Battalion, The King's Own Royal Border Regiment.

Picture: Cpl Will Craig



One-stop shop to defeat debt

CREDIT Action, the charity that produces debt and money management guides for soldiers, has teamed up with another charity, the Consumer Credit Counselling Service (CCCS) to offer a one-stop solution for anyone with financial problems.

A new helpline will be open from 0800 to 2000, Monday to Friday, for people needing in-depth, confidential advice. CCCS can draw up a management plan for anyone with multiple debts.

After counsellors have worked out with you what you can afford to pay creditors each month, you will make just one payment a month direct to CCCS, who will distribute agreed amounts to creditors on your behalf.

Keith Tondeur, Director of Credit Action, said: "This partnership will greatly improve the service offered to Army personnel and their families. We will

continue to concentrate on providing written material, but all counselling will in future be done through CCCS.

"And everyone will be entitled to confidential advice on their helpline, which is open from 0800 to 2000, Monday to Friday.

"Those who need in-depth interviews over the phone will be able to arrange them at their convenience, and those who have multiple debts may be suitable to go on a debt management plan."

He said that, unlike companies offering debt solutions on TV and in the press, the CCCS service was free. It would be of enormous benefit to anyone in debt and would be particularly aware of personnel serving away from home.

If you have any worries, you can contact CCCS on 0800 1381111.

● Keith's regular column is on Page 43

Paper talk

What the Press has been saying

● The Army is surely the last bastion of a Britain where people put their duty before themselves. Troops instinctively accept an hierarchical chain of command, a dress and behaviour code and the need to conform. They feel strengthened not demeaned by autocratic leadership. Service wives tend to be intrepid, uncomplaining and valiant.

... our troops are the finest and least corruptible in the world. — Lynda-Lee Potter, *Daily Mail*

● Prince Harry is likely to embark on a full-time Army career after leaving Eton. — *Sunday Times*

● Scores of British Servicemen heading to the Gulf are visiting sperm banks so their partners can still have their children if they are killed or rendered infertile by chemical or biological weapons. — *Observer*

● The two-and-a-half mile King's Troop Steeplechase at the Royal Artillery point-to-point at Larkhill, Wilts, worth a tidy £100 to the winner, had to be cancelled because most of the regiment was in London on Green Goddess duty. — *Daily Mail*

● British soldiers will take on Saddam Hussein armed with a bizarre secret weapon... Red Bull. Army bosses have ordered 1.8 million cans of the caffeine-packed drink to counteract battle fatigue in Iraq. — *Daily Star*

● A £40,000 study funded by taxpayers claims that the British Army is sexist because it uses the word "manning" rather than "staffing". Senior military personnel are criticised for using the term "girls" to describe female officers, even though "our boys" is common parlance for male soldiers. — *Daily Telegraph*

● British troops could be stuck in Iraq for three years — trying to keep warring factions apart. Squaddies heading for Kuwait are being earmarked for peacekeeping and rearguard duties, rather than in front-line fighting, if war breaks out. — *Daily Star*

● After three decades reporting the world's battlefields, the BBC's veteran war correspondent Kate Adie announced she was hanging up her flak jacket. She said she was quitting her £100,000-a-year post for the life of a freelance. — *Independent*

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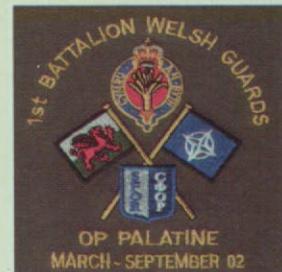
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who's there

British Army units in Kuwait

FOR reasons beyond our control, the list of Operation Telic units published in the February edition of *Soldier* was incomplete. Here is a revised list.

HQ 1 (UK) Armoured Division

(Commander: Maj Gen Robin Brims)

1 (UK) Armd Div HQ and Sig Regt
1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards
28 Engineer Regiment
1 General Support Regiment RLC
2 Close Support Regiment RLC
2nd Battalion REME
1 Close Support Medical Regiment
5 General Support Medical Regiment
1st Battalion RMP

Including elements from:

3rd (UK) Div HQ and Sig Regt
5th Regiment RA
12th Regiment RA
32nd Regiment RA
40th Regiment RA
1st Military Intelligence Brigade
33 Engineer Regiment (EOD)
2 Signal Regiment
14 Signal Regiment
30 Signal Regiment

Bandsmen

MUSICIANS from seven Army bands are among the many reinforcements joining units deploying to the Gulf.

Personnel from the **Band of the Royal Dragoon Guards** and the **Band of the Hussars and Light Dragoons** will join 1 Close Support Medical Regiment, part of HQ 1 (UK) Armoured Division.

Other bands involved, with the units they are reinforcing in brackets, are:

Royal Engineers (5 GS Med Regt)
Highland Division (33 Fd Hosp)
Lowland Division (33 Fd Hosp)
Normandy Band of Queen's Division (34 Fd Hosp)
Clive Band of Prince of Wales's Division (34 Fd Hosp).

16 Air Assault Brigade

(Commander: Brig Jacko Page)

16 Air Asslt Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
1st Battalion, The Royal Irish Regiment
1st Battalion, The Parachute Regiment
3rd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment
7 Parachute Regiment RHA
105mm light guns
23 Engineer Regiment
Household Cavalry Regiment
Armoured reconnaissance squadron
3rd Regiment AAC
Lynx and Gazelle helicopters
7 Air Assault Battalion, REME
13 Air Assault Support Regiment RLC
16 Close Support Medical Regiment
156 Provost Company, RMP
Including elements from:
47th Regiment RA
132 Aviation Supply Squadron RLC

7 Armoured Brigade

(Commander: Brig Graham Binns)

7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards
Challenger 2 main battle tanks
2nd Royal Tank Regiment
Challenger 2 main battle tanks
1st Battalion, The Black Watch
Warrior infantry fighting vehicles
1st Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Fusiliers
Warrior infantry fighting vehicles
3rd Regiment RHA
AS90 self-propelled guns
32 Engineer Regiment
Including elements from:
4 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn
The Queen's Royal Lancers (Challenger 2)
1st Royal Tank Regiment
1st Battalion, Irish Guards (Warrior)
1st Battalion, The Light Infantry (Warrior)
26th Regiment RA
38 Engineer Regiment

Germany reports: Ray Routledge
Pictures: Mike Weston

Colchester reports: Andy Simms
Pictures: Graeme Main

Additional reporting: John Elliott
and Nigel Kendall
Pictures: Steve Dock

102 Logistics Brigade

(Commander: Brig Shaun Cowlam)

Headquarters 102 Log Bde
36 Engineer Regiment
33 Field Hospital
34 Field Hospital
4 General Support Medical Regiment
3rd Battalion REME
6 Supply Regiment RLC
7 Transport Regiment RLC
17 Port and Maritime Regiment RLC
23 Pioneer Regiment RLC
24 Regiment RLC
5 Battalion RMP
Defence Fire Service
Including elements from:
35 Engineer Regiment
9 Supply Regiment RLC
10 Transport Regiment RLC
11 EOD Regiment RLC
27 Transport Regiment RLC
29 Regiment RLC
Joint Force Engineers:
Military Works Force (62, 63 and 64 Specialist Teams RE)

Air Support:
HQ 12 (Airfield Support) Engineer Bde
39 Engineer Regiment (Airfield Support)

Additional RLC regiments

Reserves

The following units will provide elements for Op Telic:

The Royal Yeomanry
165 Port and Maritime Regiment RLC (V)
166 Supply Regiment RLC (V)
131 Commando Squadron RE (V)

Additional Reserves to follow

Top tip

**Cpl Dave McGeachie,
17 Tpt Sqn, 7 Tpt Regt**
I took part in the last
Gulf War and told our
soldiers about the climate
they can expect. It will be hot in the day,
and cold at night, so pack gear
for both extremes.



Loads of work: Troops serving with the 1st Battalion, The Black Watch drive their Warrior infantry fighting vehicles onto civilian transporters for the journey to the port at Emden

All fired up

1st Battalion, The Black Watch

"THE boys are ready to go and relieved that the decision has been made and we can get on with it," said Lt Col Mike Riddell-Webster, commanding officer of the 1st Battalion, The Black Watch, as his Warrior vehicles, freshly painted in desert colours, were loaded on to transporters bound for Emden during a north German blizzard.

"Preparations have gone well. We have got the extra armour on and we are now in the pipeline ready to go," he told *Soldier*.

Sgt Peter Comisky and his Milan Platoon members, who had just spent a gruelling week preparing Warriors, echoed his thoughts. "We have been painting the wagons and putting the armour on," he said. "There is a lot involved and the boys have worked



Relieved: Lt Col Riddell-Webster

from 0800 until late in the evening every day and in very cold weather.

"We are fired up for it. With the addition of the Irish Guards, we have gone from a 45-man platoon to 68 and the guys are getting on well."

LSgt Andrew White, IG, is one of those reinforcements. He said his soldiers had been made welcome by the Black Watch.

"They have looked after us during the preparation week in Fallingbostel," he said. "There is not much room in the back of a Warrior but we will find ways of squeezing in little comforts to make life easier in the desert."

"The experience we had on Exercise Saif Sareea has paid dividends and means we know what to take."

Keeping in touch with home is important to soldiers. Here's what some thought about communicating with their families.



**Gdsm Aaron Jeffrey, SG
att 1 BW**

"I have confidence that we will be able to contact home from the Gulf. But using a mobile is too expensive so I am not taking mine. I'll stick to blueys and e-blueys. They work well. I'd like lots of people to write to me – it will keep morale up."



**Capt Alex Holroyd-Smith,
SG att 1 BW**

"The normal bluey is good enough. They only take a few days to get back and the post squadron will be there to make collections and deliveries. They will have to work hard. Daily postal delivery out there will be a big thing."



Pte Pete Fotheringham, 1 BW

"I have experience in Canada, Northern Ireland and Hong Kong and had no problems. I don't have any doubts that I will be able to contact my parents and they have access to e-mail, so I hope to use that. I have used blueys frequently in Kosovo and Canada. They are very handy, and cheap, you save money on envelopes and postage. And that can't be bad."



Packing: Cpl Jimbo Davies takes cam nets for their Chieftain bridgelayer off Spr Pete Kellett, with LCpl Parky Parkinson assisting. They are serving with 31 Armd Engr Sqn, part of 32 Engineer Regiment



Parking up: Challenger 2 main battle tanks of C Squadron, the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards return to their home base at Fallingbostel after their final exercise before deploying

Hohne sappers will pave way for armour

32 Engine Regiment

IF the heavy mob goes in, the Royal Engineers will not be far away.

In the case of 7 Armoured Brigade that support is provided by the sappers of Hohne-based 32 Engineer Regiment, who were involved in the 1991 Gulf War.

The regiment's 21, 26 and 29 Armoured Engineer Squadrons, 2 HQ Squadron and their workshops, reinforced by Ripon-based 25 Armoured Engineer Squadron, have deployed. In all, about 720 soldiers, male and female, are involved in Op Telic.

Regimental signals officer Capt Jon Kerr said: "Our main kit for engineering

support includes the heavy A vehicles, AVRBS and AVROS, as well as 432s, Spartans and plant vehicles."

The sappers will also support 1 RRF, 1 BW, 2 RTR and the Scots DG.

During any advance they are the specialists who make it possible for tanks and infantry fighting vehicles to cross minefields, bridges and ditches.

"If there is an obstacle in the way, it's our job to get rid of it," said Capt Kerr.

While many of the heavy repair vehicles are based on the old Chieftain variants, they are perfectly capable of doing the job.

Morale's high

The Royal Scots Dragoon Guards

MORALE in the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards is high, said commanding officer Lt Col Hugh Blackman.

"I have soldiers who have signed on for extra time so they can take part. As soldiers we have concerns, both publicly and privately, wondering what is going to happen. But they are genuinely ready."

The Fallingbostel-based Challenger 2 regiment had been preparing for the Gulf for months, he said.

The battle-group numbers about 1,000 and most of its elements are from 7 Armoured Brigade's normal affiliations. Other units blitting on include two companies from the Irish Guards.

A US Marine Corps Air-Naval Gunfire Liaison Company (Anglicos) will provide the Desert Rats with front-line cover, ensuring naval and air-fire support is directed at the right positions.



Signed on: Lt Col Hugh Blackman

vehicle repairs and so on.

"The way points will give us a natural link back to where the individual casualty or vehicle needs to get to."

● The Challenger 2 attributed to the Scots DG on Page 7 of the February issue belonged to 2 RTR

The Campbells are coming: Four brothers serving with 26 Regiment Royal Artillery have deployed to Kuwait. The Campbells, who come from Lanarkshire, are Robert, who with brother Stuart is a veteran of the 1991 war, and Gordon and Scott, who have served in Bosnia together. All will be attached to 3 RHA in the Gulf.

Clockwise from front are: Sgt Robert Campbell, 55 (The Residency) HQ Bty; Gnr Scott, 127 (Dragon) Bty; Sgt Stuart, 16 (Sandhams Coy) Bty; and LBdr Gordon, also of 127 (Dragon) Bty.



Time for talking: Gnr Durnell Common, No 3 layer; Gnr Ben Haycocks, No 2 loader; Bdr Gary Allen, 2ic coverer and Sgt Danny Felton, right, the No 1, discuss last-minute plans in the Gutersloh snow. They make up an AS90 gun crew with 17/16 Bty, 26 Regiment RA in the Gutersloh snow. They make up an AS90 gun crew with 17/16 Bty, 26 Regiment RA

Not going? Yes we are

26 Regiment RA

A GLANCE at the list of units deployed to Kuwait suggests Gutersloh-based 26 Regiment, Royal Artillery is not a major contributor. In fact, the unit has sent more than 500 gunners to the Gulf, making up more than half the personnel of 3 Regiment, Royal Horse Artillery, which they are reinforcing.

"While we are disappointed not to be deploying the regiment as a whole, we are aware of the vital contribution our soldiers are making to 7th Armoured Brigade," said commanding officer, Lt Col Nick Eeles.

"Our soldiers have been undergoing sustained training since last October and I am confident they will



Vital contribution:
Lt Col Nick Eeles

Trainer

Using the observation post vehicle trainer, they sharpened their tactical skills. The simulator is similar to the Sennelager-based Combined Arms Tactical (CATT), but more orientated towards the work of the gunners.

deliver effective support if required." The regiment has completed three Balkans tours in the past four years and wives and families had been very understanding, said Lt Col Eeles. "They will give great support to those deploying to Kuwait."

Soldiers from 26 Regiment took the chance to get in some last-minute training at Gutersloh before embarking for the Gulf.

Using the observation post vehicle trainer, they sharpened their tactical skills. The simulator is similar to the Sennelager-based Combined Arms Tactical (CATT), but more orientated towards the work of the gunners.

Top tips

SSgt John Kendrick, 17 Tpt Sqn, 7 Tpt Regt

The last time I was there it snowed in the desert. There is a big difference between day and night temperatures. On Saif Sareea we found we had to cover up personal kit and vehicles to keep out the dust.



LCpl Tyrone Hall, 7 Tpt Regt

A top tip is to wash your kit properly. Don't use washing powder, use liquid, otherwise you can get soap grit in your pants, which is not nice. It's the minor things that make the difference.



Cover job: LCpl Esther Humby, 7 Armd Bde HQ and Sig Sqn (207), on attachment from 4 Armd Bde, works on a radio relay mask



Signals in Saif hands

7 Armoured Brigade Q and Signal Squadron

LESSONS learned in Oman two years ago will stand signallers deploying to the Gulf in good stead, especially when it comes to looking after their very sensitive equipment in the extremely harsh desert environment.

Dust seeping into laptop computers was a problem on Saif Sareea, as was the heat for bigger computers.

Maj Christopher Ford, of 7 Armoured Brigade HQ and Signal Squadron (207), said laptops had been ruggedised and additional ventilation and portable air conditioning units



Lessons: Maj Christopher Ford

gave greater protection to larger equipment. "Our communications problems of Saif Sareea are pretty much solved," he said.

The 213 male and female signallers attached to the squadron are part of a high-readiness brigade so had started planning for a generic deployment last November. As a result they were well prepared when the green light to the Gulf was given. When the order came, they were ready to go within five days.

They will set up headquarters comms, including telephones, satellite links and computer terminals.

Maj Ford said a new specialist trade capable of building computer networks had been created. Their name: information systems operators.

No releases unless it is a dire emergency

SOLDIERS in the Gulf will be released to return home only in cases of dire emergency.

Unlike tours of duty to the Balkans, from where soldiers have been repatriated on compassionate grounds in times of family crisis, the Gulf will be different. For example, baby-sitting while a wife is in hospital will not be considered.

Nevertheless, families can expect the highest standards of care and consideration their absence, said Lt Col Mike Ridgell-Webster, CO 1 BW. Much time and effort have gone into trying to get the welfare of families right.

"We have briefed wives to tell them what is going on and to assure them that the rear party is there to look after them. The children also have recent experience of deployment. My own, who are aged seven and five, understand that I am going away."

Capt Brian Gilfillan, the Black Watch's unit welfare officer, runs the Red Hackle Centre at Fallingbostel. It has a functions room, a coffee shop, a welfare office, a padre's office, a mailroom and an internet suite.

"We have 268 spouses on site and more than 300 children," said Capt Gilfillan. "The Black Watch hasn't deployed to a battle situation since the Korean War and we have had to deliver



Deployment issues: Capt Brian Gilfillan, 1 BW's unit welfare officer, briefs Mrs Amanda Blyth, whose husband, Cpl Mark Blyth, has departed for Kuwait

a hard message that the husbands will be allowed back, if possible, only in extreme cases.

"If a wife is in hospital, even for several weeks, it is families from the UK who will be brought here, not a husband returned. Each married soldier has to nominate a 'babysitter'."

Capt Gilfillan is producing a newsletter to keep wives updated and plans to arrange weekly briefings for them. The newsletters will be sent to the 20 per cent of soldiers' families returning to the UK.

Vital task at home

BRIG Paul Gibson would rather his 4 Armoured Brigade was deploying to the Gulf, but he is in no doubt that it is an important role to play in the months ahead.

"I would like to be going on this operation, but I am personally delighted to be commanding 4 Armoured Brigade. It is a great privilege," he said at his headquarters at Herford.

"Many parts of 4 Brigade are on this operation, including the Irish Guards, squadrons from the Queen's Royal Lancers and others such as signals and the provost company. We as a headquarters and I as a

commander are disappointed that the opportunity this time has not come but we put that behind us.

"I have been appointed commander Division Rear and the responsibilities here are crucial, both to support the Division Forward in-theatre and just as importantly to ensure that back here in Germany we have a secure base and to make sure wives and dependants have the right welfare support in place."

"To those deployed I say whatever the Division Forward requires from Germany, we will provide."



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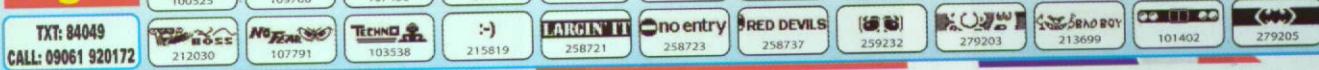


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We've got you taped: Pte Vilame Gukibali, left, treats "casualty" Cpl Steve Nicholson, while Cpl Geordie Holmes, right, checks he is doing it correctly. All three soldiers are from 187 (Tancred) Company, 23 Pioneer Regiment and were carrying out battlefield first-aid training. About 400 of the Bicester-based Pioneers are providing reception, staging and onward integration (RSOI) facilities in Kuwait as well as specialist support.



NBC training: LCpl Scott Key, LCpl Tom Keys, Sgt "HJ" Hamilton-Jewell and LCpl Wolfie Woolfenden of 156 Pro Coy RMP, part of 16 Air Asslt Bde, carry out drills at Colchester

Force protectors

FORCE protection is a major consideration for 156 Provost Company, RMP from Colchester.

Officer commanding Maj David Parry-Jones, who deployed with a 70-strong team, said the British Army on modern operations tended to lose more people through traffic accidents than it did through live contacts.

"To that extent we will be doing our utmost to maintain convoy disciplines and enforce speed limits," he said.

With experience in Sierra Leone, Mace-

donia and Afghanistan behind them, Maj Parry-Jones was confident his soldiers were equal to the challenges ahead.

"Because of our unique role as part of 16 Air Assault Brigade, as a company we are continuously held at high-readiness status and consequently this deployment has not come as a big shock to any of us," he said.

In common with other units going to the Gulf, much of the company's pre-deployment training focused on NBC drills and kit.

Gunning for the speeders

SPEEDSTERS beware . . . that is the message from a Hohne-based Royal Military Police unit in the Gulf.

To cut the road traffic accidents which have blighted other operations, military police armed with speed cameras and radar guns will be on the lookout for soldiers driving too fast.

But catching heavy-footed drivers is just one of the duties facing Capt Frank Park-Robinson of 1 Close Support Provost Company, 1 Regiment RMP, and his 73 male and female soldiers.

Joining them were RMPs from 115 Company to act as a general support and RHQ company.

"We provide manoeuvre support to get 7 Brigade where they want to go. The general support company works in the divisional area to the rear, where they look after movement and force protection."

Also deployed is 4 Regiment RMP, which will look after the brigade at the rear and which includes a Special Investigation Branch (SIB) detachment.

In the event of hostilities, the close support company would be farthest forward, anywhere 7 Brigade fighting echelons needed to go.

That support would include setting up a route matrix for fighting formations to follow and guarding bridges and cleared paths through minefields. MPs would also patrol concentration areas to prevent crime . . . and speeding.

RMPs would also escort PoWs such as one-star officers or above, special forces and aircrew to interrogation centres.



Married to the job: Capt Frank Park-Robinson and his wife Jules, also a captain, and officer commanding 61 Section Special Investigation Branch, will be spending their first anniversary in Kuwait



Media stars: Soldiers of 3 Para, 2 R Irish, 3 AAC and D Sqn, HCR go through their paces during a photo opportunity at 16 Air Asslt Bdg's Friday Woods training area, Colchester

We need to win US confidence

3rd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment

HAVING watched his men hone their infantry skills at Brecon and Sennybridge, the commanding officer of 3rd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment reckoned his soldiers were ready, and lucky, to be heading to the Gulf.

Lt Col John Lorimer told *Soldier*: "Morale within 3 Para is buoyant, there is a general feeling of anticipation and not one of fear at the prospect of deployment."

"As a regiment we have been extraordinarily lucky to have been on a number of operations, but Operation Telic represents the first time that two parachute battalions have deployed together since the Falklands in 1982."

Despite the regiment's wealth of operational experience, Lt Col Lorimer



Junior partner: Lt Col John Lorimer

insisted his battalion, which, including Territorial Army reinforcements, will number 680, will not rely on reputation.

"It is important to remember that we are very much a junior partner to the Americans on this operation," he said.

"We need to be able to gain their respect, their confidence and prove that we can do a good job working alongside them, otherwise we will not be used if there is a need for a show of force."

Lt Col Lorimer, whose father Gordon Lorimer commanded 3 Para from 1971-1973, is also aware that winning the trust of the American forces will have to be done in conditions unfamiliar to most of his soldiers.

Rumour control

DISPELLING media myths and keeping a tight reign on garrison gossip will become a prime concern for 16 Air Assault Brigade's unit welfare officers over the coming months.

"It will be vital that we keep any inaccurate rumours in check," explained SSgt Andy Fowler, unit welfare officer for Wattisham-based 7 Air Assault Battalion REME. "The

families of our soldiers live alongside those of men and women from 3 Regiment AAC who are also deploying, so it's possible spouses and partners may hear conflicting information.

"In the event of a conflict, the units will be performing slightly different roles and perhaps be in different locations, and that is how general confusion and misunderstanding can develop."

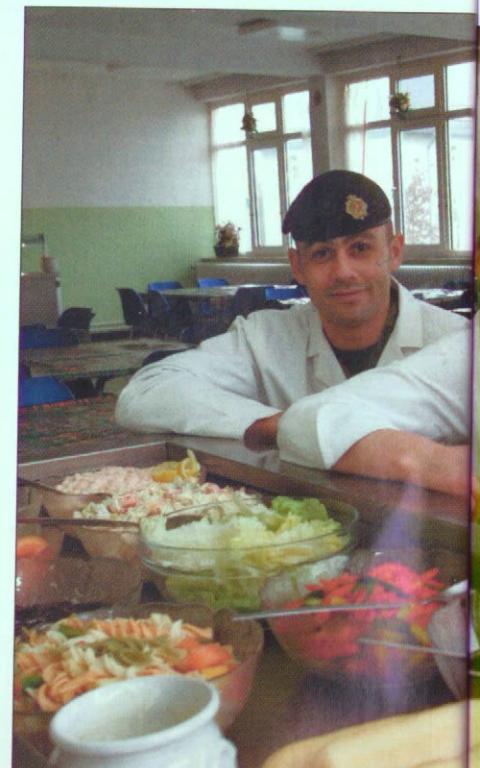
To combat the effect of "Chinese whispers"

Top tips

LCpl Simon Hayward 6 Sup Regt

The best advice I can give is on hygiene. Keep your feet powdered every day because it helps with the sweat. And instead of using shampoo, let your hair get greasy for a couple of days then use talcum powder. It will soak up the grease

and save water. As for haircuts, keep hair short, but start with a number four. Don't go with your hair shaved off because there is a risk of sunburn and sunstroke.



What's cooking: Regimental catering warrant officer WO1 Andrew Carter, left, Pte Andy Kemp, HQ and Sig Regt, which deployed from Herford



WO1 Andrew Carter, left, Pte Andy Kemp, HQ and Sig Regt, which deployed from Herford

Feeding the 26,000

FEEDING thousands of soldiers in the field is a challenge WO1 Andy Carter relishes.

He is the warrant officer responsible for catering for 1 (UK) Armoured Division HQ and Signal Regiment at its Birtwistle Restaurant in Herford. About 30 chefs have deployed from his unit, joining more than 1,200 other cooks in the Gulf.

"Where there is no fresh food or feeding facility in place we aim to feed

compo rations for up to 44 days," he said. "Afterwards, if the situation allows, we would look to set up a depot and start serving fresh food."

WO1 Carter warned that a vital aspect of food preparation for chefs and those who ate it was hygiene. "It affects everybody. People attending meals have to go through a mandatory hand-wash procedure because common sense tells us that if someone is suffering with something it can be transferred to everybody else."

and allay the fears of families, the welfare team at Wattisham intends to hold weekly briefings, produce regular newsletters and constantly update an information board at the station's drop-in centre.

"The welfare office will have access to facts, so if families hear something that disturbs them they should contact us so that we can ease their minds and worries," continued SSgt Fowler. "We aim to be the first port of call and already operate a 24-hour call system so

there is always someone on the end of a telephone – the last thing we want is for people to sit at home worrying."

The message was endorsed by Colchester's welfare support officer, Maj Terry Worster RA. "Our job is to keep things as normal as possible for the husbands, wives and children left at home," he said. "We will offer our families the same high standard of support we offered when troops deployed to Afghanistan."



We've got you logged: Mover Pte Clinton Gathercole checks in Royal Marines personnel

Frenetic times at forces' 'Heathrow'

THERE has not been a quiet moment at the Armed Forces' version of Heathrow's check-in hall since Operation Telic was announced.

Thousands of troops have poured through the doors of the Joint Air Mounting Centre at South Cerney, near Cirencester on their way to Kuwait.

In the first six days after the green light last month, movers from 29 Regiment RLC processed 19 flights from RAF Brize Norton and RAF Lyneham.

With the support of Army detachments at the two air bases, 29 Regt personnel have been responsible for the reception, processing and air despatch of thousands of military personnel. And the RLC controllers running the "Heathrow check-in" for Britain's Armed Forces have been working flat-out.

South Cerney's facilities include a reception lounge area, where personnel check-in for flights in a near-to-normal

airport fashion. Each soldier (or Royal Marine) carries 60kg of kit, which has to be weighed-in.

A meal is provided and there are TV, telephone and internet facilities to help passengers relax, make last-minute calls or e-mail before they depart.

Having passed from reception, through baggage x-ray checking, personnel are held in a sterile holding area before being taken by road direct to the steps of their aircraft at either Brize Norton or Lyneham. Heavy kit and vehicles are processed through an adjacent hangar at South Cerney.

If flights are delayed, South Cerney can billet up to 400 people. Under current circumstances, that would be stretched if delays built up. There are plans to improve facilities and the current level of throughput has underlined the fact that upgrading work cannot start soon enough.



Not at all like the desert: LCpl Simon Williams oversees a Drops vehicle delivery in deep snow during training in Germany by 17 Sqn, part of 102 Brigade's 7 Transport Regiment RLC

Unsung loggies make it happen

102 Logistics Brigade

THEY may carry out their work unseen and unheralded but 102 Logistics Brigade's role in supporting front-line troops will be vital in the coming months.

"The important guys are in the backs of Warriors, driving tanks and on AS90s," said Lt Col Rory Maxwell, CO 6 Supply Regiment RLC at Gutersloh. "If we are called to fight they are the guys who will have to do it. Our job is to make sure that they want for nothing, especially water, food, and ammunition."

Every commodity passes through the hands of the loggies on its way from supplier to front line.

Lt Col Maxwell's 660 male and female soldiers face a huge task in feeding, watering, and supplying fuel, ammunition, spares and medical aid to almost 30,000 Service personnel.

A key challenge for them is delivering medical supplies in working order. "Some are temperature sensitive," he told *Soldier* on the eve of his own departure to the Gulf. "We have to ensure items like blood, plasma and drugs will be in place, in time and within their temperature range."

Commercial support for the deployment comes from the 3663 Group, which was involved in Exercise Saif Sareea in 2001 and is acting as the contractor for British food supply.

The regiment's experience in Oman



Key challenge: Lt Col Rory Maxwell

and the last Gulf War has already been put to good use. "On Saif Sareea we were first in and last out. We spent seven months in the Omani desert and learned a lot."

Maj Gary Thomson, o/c 17 Transport Squadron, 7 Transport Regiment RLC at Bielefeld, put his soldiers through their NBC paces in the snows of Germany just hours before they flew to Kuwait.

His 142 soldiers took with them 73 Drops vehicles capable of shifting 1,440 tonnes of equipment. "Our role is providing logistic transport from the sea point of disembarkation into both the rear and forward support group areas," he said.

Lt Col Alistair Deas, commanding 2 Close Support Regiment in Gutersloh, said his soldiers had two ongoing commitments, to Op Telic and to the pan-Balkans mission. He has deployed 550 troops to the Middle East and 120 to the Balkans.

As well as their usual duties, his unit will form the Base Support Group HQ for 7 Armoured Brigade and run areas such as defence, NBC warning and prisoner-of-war handling.

Maj Mike Robertshaw, 2 i/c 1 General Support Regiment RLC, was also splitting his resources. One of his transport squadrons is in Northern Ireland.

A main task for his 612 soldiers in the Gulf is the movement of ammunition.

Chaplains at the front

THIRTY-six Army chaplains have deployed with their units to provide spiritual guidance, pastoral care and welfare support.

"A chaplain's first priority is to the soldier, which is why we are commissioned into the Army," said Church of Scotland minister James Aitcheson, senior chaplain at Hohne.

Members of the Royal Army Chaplains' Department posted to units regularly deploy on exercises and operations.

In the field, all denominations muck in to provide spiritual and pastoral care where needed. Because of the limited number of chaplains, soldiers confide in who they can get. "I can't pretend to be



Chaplain: Rev James Aitcheson

a Roman Catholic priest and we have to be true to our own church," said Mr Aitcheson. "But if a soldier wanted to confess to me, to all intents and purposes it is the same – and certainly the same in the eyes of the young lad who is sharing it with you."

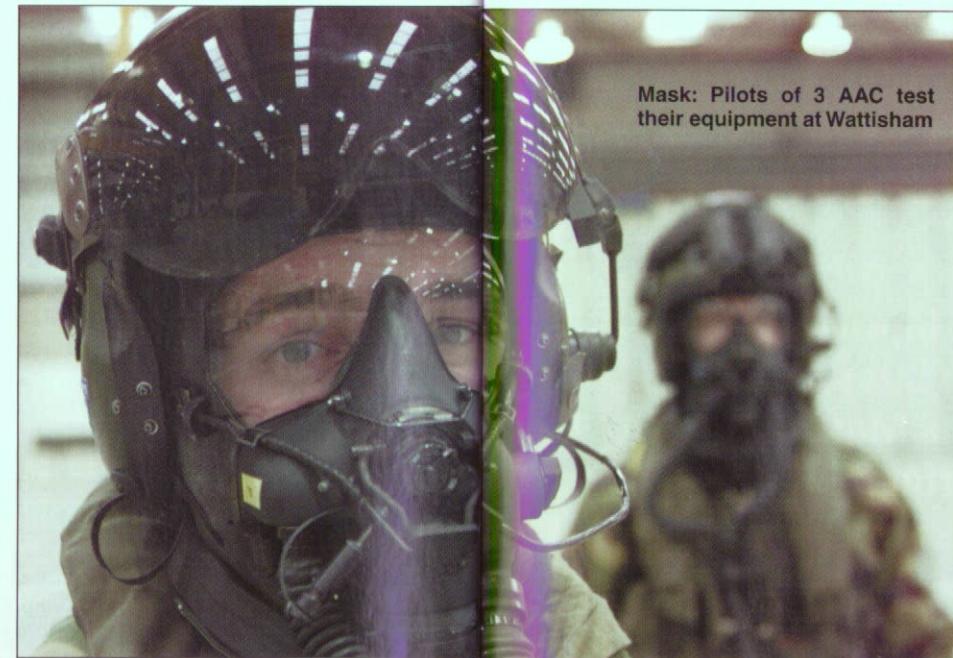
Chaplains train to help with casualties and to conduct battlefield burials.

Top tip



Maj Mike Robertshaw, 2 i/c 1 GS Regiment

You can't do the job unless you are fit, so acclimatise as soon as possible, drink water, eat properly, rest in the shade, stay out of the heat of the day and look after each other. Don't leave a man on the gate for hours on end. Keep an eye on him.



Mask: Pilots of 3 AAC test their equipment at Wattisham

Confidence 'sky high'

PILOTS and air crew from 3 Regiment AAC are well prepared to fly sorties in contaminated environments.

The Wattisham-based airmen have been drilled in the use of specially tailored NBC outfits. Their charcoal-lined suits have personal ventilators powered by lithium batteries with a life of more than 24 hours.

Although far from comfortable, the suits mean the 400-strong regiment would not be grounded in the event of an



Familiarisation: Lt Col George Butler

Mobilised reserves stream by the hundred through Chilwell

PLANNING for the mobilisation of 200 personnel a day had been going on since October at the Reserves Mobilisation and Training Centre at Chilwell and the first tranche of Reservists and Regulars started arriving on January 21.

First through the Nottinghamshire establishment were 165 Port and Maritime RLC specialists, bound for Marchwood. During the next three weeks more than 1,000 troops were processed. Fifty-five extra staff were drafted in to boost the centre's normal complement of 120. Personnel processing included 412

Amphibious Group (with 50 engineers being trained in Germany), 120 Royal Marine Reservists, 65 commando sappers from 131 Independent Commando Squadron, 140 Royal Yeomanry (to augment the Joint NBC Regiment), 120 soldiers for 4 Para, 60 4/5 R Irish and paramedics to augment 16 Air Assault Brigade. Also processed were 185 Territorial Army officers.

A second tranche began on February 16. Eventually a total of 3,000 Territorials will have been delivered through Chilwell.



Last minute checks: A 7 Air Asslt Battalion REME soldier makes pre-deployment checks

Desert dust-busters

7 Air Assault Battalion REME

DESPITE servicing and fitting sand filters to the engines of Lynx and Gazelle helicopters bound for the Gulf, the soldiers of 7 Air Assault Battalion REME are under no illusions that there will be a let-up in their workload – in-theatre.

"The challenges of working in a desert environment are plentiful and we are expecting to be kept very busy," said Maj Mark Snape, officer commanding 71 Close Support Company, 7 Air Asslt Bn REME. "The effect that heat and dust will have on aircraft will result in a lot of extra work for us."

"Even though we will use different oils and lubricants from the kind we would in temperate conditions, there will still be

increased wear on all things that go round and round.

"Dust and sand can clog-up engines, radically reducing their lifespan, and there will be more pressure on aircraft cooling systems," he said.

"A lot of time will also have to be spent dressing the helicopters' compressor and turbine blades, repairing nicks which, because of the extreme heat and particles of grit in the air, could grow into cracks if left untreated."

"Aircraft will be under enough pressure without having to worry about their aircraft, and we intend to give them that peace of mind," he said.



A lot of extra work: Maj Mark Snape



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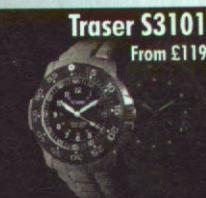
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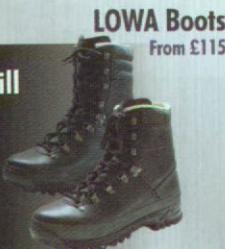
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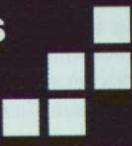
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School service as normal

STAFF at the Blankenhagen School at Gutersloh in Germany are ensuring that the most vulnerable members of families of soldiers deploying to the Gulf – their children – are keeping to a routine.

Sue Adams, head of the school which caters for girls and boys aged four to 11, and her team, have taken steps to maintain a calm atmosphere for their pupils.

"We have asked parents to let us know if anyone is deploying from their family and that has helped us keep an eye on some children who might be upset," she told *Soldier*.

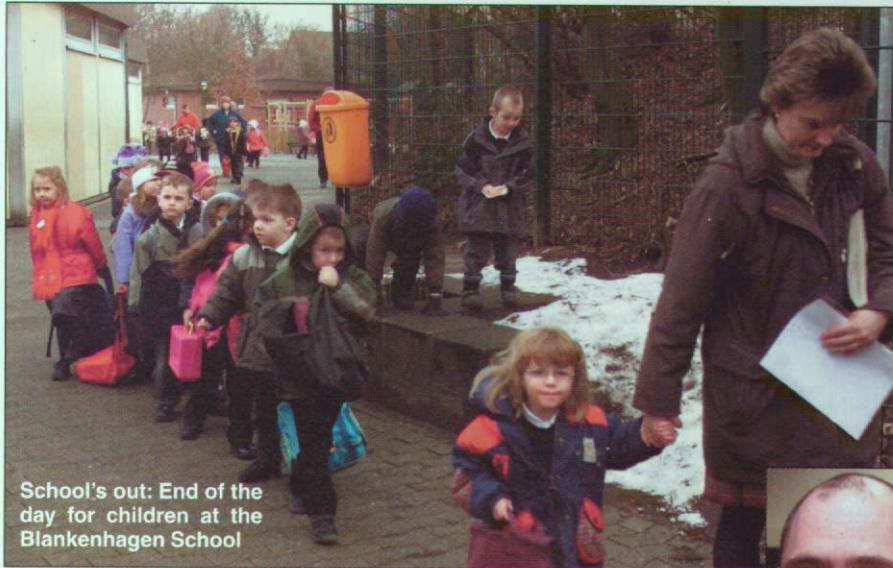
While many of the youngsters are used to parents deploying to the Balkans or Northern Ireland, limited phone time to and from the Gulf means there will be more emphasis on letters for those left behind. The school has set up a special place where children can write to mums and dads.

"It keeps them and their parents happy and it maintains contact, which is reassuring for the children," she said. Sue and her staff are aware that the youngsters could be upset by TV footage from the desert.

"We have asked parents to let us know if there are changes in their children's behaviour because we have social workers who can help us if appropriate," she said.



Head: Sue Adams



School's out: End of the day for children at the Blankenhagen School

Some of the staff are married to soldiers and so are personally affected by the deployment.

Op Telic has caused a bit of a crisis on the school's playing fields. Most of the football and rugby coaches have left for the Middle East. Civil servant Terry McCosh, who runs the football sections, said: "We have 11 teams and 25 coaches and most have deployed. The rear party and some parents stepped in to keep the football clubs going, but we need help."

It's worse for the rugby section, which

has no coaches left. Both sports are desperate for transport.

● Fears that a Scout troop at Bielefeld could fold after its founder was posted to the Gulf have been allayed. At a ceremony at which Sgt Robert Fullbrook, 7 Transport Regiment RLC, received a GOC's commendation for his work both in service and the community, it was revealed his wife Sabina is to take on the 100-strong troop.



Scouts: Sgt Robert Fullbrook

Ways to keep in touch

FAMILIES of troops deploying to the Gulf have been hearing about the wonders of communicating by e-blueys, the electronic letters which enable them to keep in touch via the internet.

E-blueys – effectively e-mails – are a rapid method of sending messages. Letters are downloaded and printed by the British Forces Post Office in the theatre of operations and, under normal circumstances, delivered within 24 hours.

Mail sent to the UK is downloaded and printed in London before being transferred to the Royal Mail for delivery to letterboxes.

To use e-blueys:

1. You need internet access.
2. Log on to www.bfpo.org.uk and click on the e-bluey link.
3. Click on New E-Bluey member.
4. Instructions and a new registration link will be sent to your e-mail address. You will be guided through the process. You will only have to do this once because your information will be securely stored on the website.

● Private mail to personnel on Op Telic should be addressed to: **Number, rank and name; unit/detachment; OP TELIC; BFPO number** (see below). Don't include Iraq or Kuwait in the address as this will delay to its delivery. 3 Cdo Bde BFPO 654, 7 Armd Bde 647, 16 Air Asslt Bde 660, HQ 1(UK) Div 641, DSG 645, JFLOGC/102 Log Bde 649/662, Qatar 637, JHC (AAS) 664, CP5 669, PSAB 634, Bahrain 632.

● Parcels may be sent through the BFPO system, although there is a weight limit of 2kg and restrictions on what can be posted (alcohol, for example, is banned).

● Free forces aerogrammes (blueys) will be available to troops. Stamps are not required but write "Op Telic" in the top right-hand corner. There should be no enclosures such as photographs. Blueys are available from all UK post offices.

● Welfare phones may become available in-theatre, but demand will be high.

Insurance

SOLDIERS deploying to the Gulf who are already life policy holders will be covered. New life policies are available, but at a premium.

Both Affinities and Naafi Financial will continue to offer life cover, but there are changes which would affect uninsured soldiers seeking policies.

Affinities, which took over the Armed Forces Financial Advisory Service, is offering, at double the premium, a special life insurance under its Forces Safeguard policy, which is authorised by the MoD and can be set up through pay offices using Form AF09576A.

Naafi Financial is still offering its £10,000 standard life cover to new Army customers.

The PAX, RPAX and XPAX personal accident policies are available to new applicants through unit admin offices. The policies exclude "bodily injury due to nuclear weapons of mass destruction".

Helplines

- Forces Safeguard: 0800 243 592 or 0800 316 1317 or e-mail Mark Elliott at mark.elliott@forces-group.com. Details on www.affinities.com.
- Naafi Financial has branches in the UK, Germany and Cyprus, or go to www.naafi-financial.com.
- Naafi Financial money helplines for troops in the Gulf and their families: UK and Germany 00800 21 22 23 24; international 0044 1959 56 88 29.

More useful numbers and contacts on Page 63; see also Sue Bonney's column on Page 73

Standing by - again

As the firefighters' strike campaign dragged on, troops were deployed across the nation to provide emergency cover

AS the latest chapters in the firefighters' strike unfolded, Servicemen and women, including thousands from the Army, again provided vital cover.

For a few, it involved the distressing task of dealing with bodies.

More than 19,000 military personnel stood in for 52,000 firefighters. Unlike the cover they provided during two stoppages before Christmas, troops had the benefit of an additional 177 red fire engines, normally used for training, to



Lucky horse:
Cassie with crew
commander Sgt
Jamie Fright

Cassie's heroes jump in

SOLDIERS from The Queen's Royal Hussars on fire-fighting duties saved a horse from a boggy grave last month. Cassie, a 27-year-old working horse, had plunged down a 20ft ravine, sunk up to his shoulders and was in mortal danger.

The crew was called out to Old Hall Farm, Bolton, while providing emergency cover in Manchester. First on the scene, the soldiers devised a winch using tools on their Green Goddesses.

Incident commander Sgt Jamie Fright used a tractor and loading straps to pull the horse clear enough for a vet to inject pain-easing steroids into Cassie. But the tractor could not be used to drag Cassie free without injuring him so the crew of six stripped to the waist, climbed into the ravine and gently levered the horse to safety in an operation lasting two hours.

Cassie collapsed with exhaustion but after a thorough check by the vet was declared to be shaken but otherwise unaffected by his ordeal.

RSPCA officer Kath Kay said: "Without the help from the soldiers, Cassie would have been put down."

assist their 827 aged Green Goddesses during two short strikes in January.

Their courage and resourcefulness was not enough to save one man in Scotland. Two Green Goddesses and the local police rushed to a first floor flat in Young Terrace in north Glasgow, where they were joined by a rescue support team (REST) and breathing apparatus teams (BARTs).

On arrival they found that a 63-year-old man had already died in his smoke-filled kitchen. A chip pan was suspected as the cause of the fire.

The Glasgow teams were among more than 2,000 military personnel to provide emergency fire cover in Scotland. They were equipped with 110 Green Goddesses, 36 BARTs and eight RESTs.

While most of the rescue support and breathing apparatus teams are made up of personnel from the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force, 300 soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment were trained to take on the specialist roles.

In Northern Ireland, troops were faced with a fatal road traffic accident during the 24-hour strike. Two teenagers were killed and four people injured when a people carrier went off the M5 before crashing through a fence and ending up on its side on the shore of Belfast Lough.

Two Yellow Goddesses (the appliances were painted yellow in the Province to distinguish them from military vehicles), one from Carrickfergus and another from Moscow Camp, Belfast attended.

They were joined by two BARTs and one REST from Theipval Barracks, Lisburn. Personnel from 1 RGBW, 1

and 2 PWRR and the RAF assisted. The soldiers had to recover the bodies by climbing across rocks while racing the incoming tide.

Lt Col Ed Brown, commanding officer of 1 RGBW, praised the crew's efforts. "The soldiers and airmen reacted very professionally to what was a serious and tragic accident. The military fire and rescue teams were able to extract the casualties from the wreckage for evacuation."

There were other fatalities during the 48-hour walk-out at the end of January.

In Barnet a man was killed when a tree fell on his car and a woman in Northampton died one minute before the strike began. There was good news for one family in Slough, however, when a Green Goddess crew rescued a trapped six-month-old baby.

While there were tragedies in some areas and excitement in others, many soldiers will remember their firefighting days as tedious.

Troops from the 2nd Battalion, The Royal Green Jackets on duty at Hereford were typical. "It has been an uneventful 24 hours, proving once again the unpredictable nature of this mission," said Capt James Gaynor, commanding the temporary Service fire station.

"The only significant incident was a chimney fire quickly dealt with by the men of Green Goddess Zulu Echo 2 commanded by Sgt Jamie Dwyer," he added.

Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment packed away their firefighting gear before preparing to deploy with 16 Air Assault Brigade to the Gulf. RAF personnel were standing by to take their places in the event of more strikes.

Call-outs during the 24- and 48-hour strikes in January totalled 2,065.

HOPES of an end to the firefighters' dispute rose at the beginning of last month when Fire Brigades Union leaders agreed to renewed talks.

No further dates for walk-outs were announced after the last strike ended at 0900 on February 3 and talks were expected to resume at the conciliation service Acas.



Northern lights: Soldiers from 4 Regiment RA, based at Osnabruck, fought a spectacular haystack fire on the A1 near Gateshead. With four Green Goddesses and one Red Goddess in attendance, the blaze was soon under control

Picture: Chris Barker

How fireman Duncan became Jay's godfather

TWO soldiers from the 1st Battalion, The Queen's Lancashire Regiment have received commendations from Merseyside Police for their actions during the fire strike.

Pte Duncan Smith and Pte Lee North rescued 20-year-old Kelly Turner and her baby son Jay from their burning flat in November last year.

The two, who were on a call-out in a Green Goddess as part of Op Fresco on Merseyside, found smoke pouring from flats on Benwick Road in West Vale, Kirkby.

When a resident who had escaped told the crew that Kelly and Jay were trapped, the soldiers put a ladder to a window

and brought out mother and baby. Pte Smith, who climbed the ladder first to carry the baby to safety, said: "I have a two-year-old son so I know what it means."

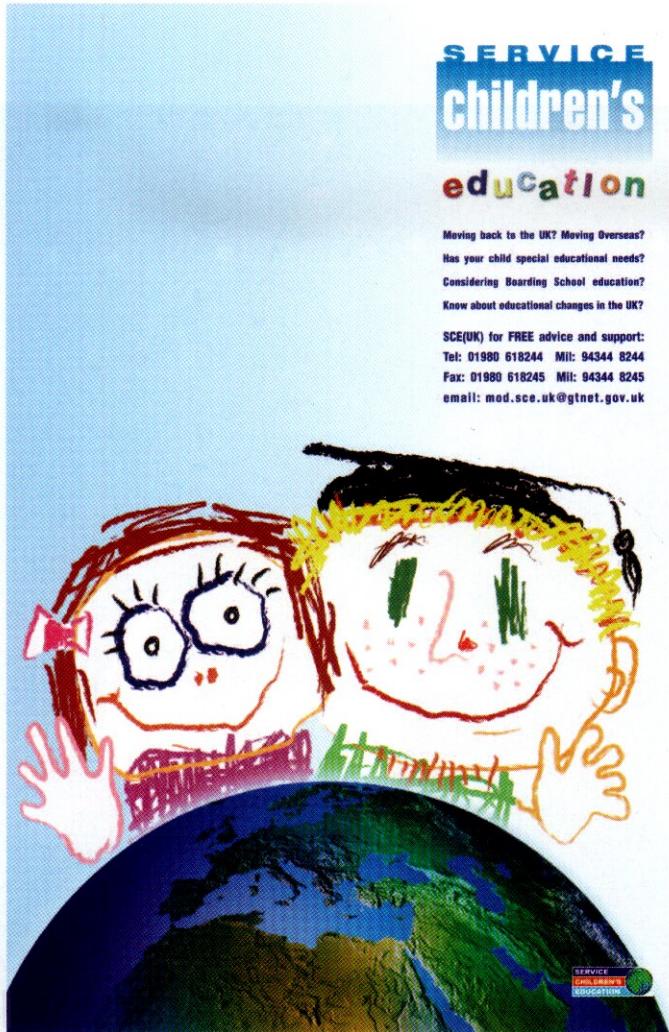
Pte North, who followed his father into the regiment, said: "I am just glad we got them out in time."

Lt Col Jorge Mendonça, CO QLR, said: "I'm delighted two of my soldiers have received commendations. Their actions epitomise the performance of every soldier and sailor deployed on Fresco."

Kelly, meanwhile, has asked Pte Smith to be Jay's godfather. She has also given her son a new middle name... Duncan.



Oh, baby: Pte Duncan Smith, left, holds Jay Turner while Pte Lee North holds the commendation citation



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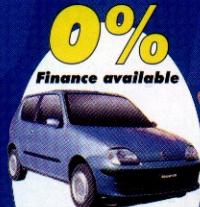
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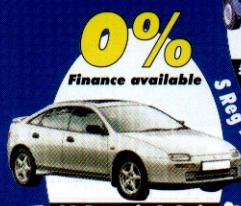


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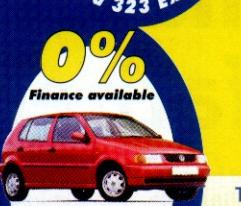


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Packing in the calories

Introducing the new ten-man ration fibreboard box coming soon to a field kitchen near you

Report: Ray Routledge
Pictures: Mike Weston

A NEW ten-man ration pack unveiled to *Soldier* will be available to British troops deploying to the Gulf and elsewhere.

It is based on four basic protein products – beef mince, beef stew, ham mince and chicken in white sauce – supplemented by sauce mixes and herbs to give variety and an increase in optional menus.

Carbonara, balti, honey-and-mustard and bolognese sauces are already on the menu and more are being considered. Custard – to go with the desserts – is included.

“The reason there are only four menus is because that is all that is commercially available in a tin. The shelf-life of the products is more than two-and-a-half years,” said Maj Simon Pearce RLC, who with John Kelly from Research and Development for Operational Ration Packs, part of the Defence Catering Group at Ensleigh near Bath, has been a key figure in producing the new pack.

The directorate covers survival and combat provisions for the Field Army and the Royal Marines, flying rations for the Royal Air Force and Army Air Corps and submarine crew survival packs... and everything in between.

Production of the old ten-man pack ceased in 1997, said Maj Pearce. The new pack incorporates the latest technology in packaging, food processing and what is



Pack man: Maj Simon Pearce from Ensleigh

commercially available. The Army, the Marines, the Royal Navy and the RAF were involved closely with the evolution and it was extensively trialled by all three Services. It is being issued to units around the world.

Even the waterproof fibreboard box is designed to be user-friendly, practical and tough enough to cope with the rigours of transportation and storage in the field. It was endorsed by the Defence Packaging Authority after laboratory tests and given the thumbs-up by soldiers who rated as very practical two inner compartments which can be used as a larder in the field.

In addition to snacks – or grazing food – the pack will provide three meals (calorie count: 4,500) per person per day. Although designed with chefs in mind, it is simple enough for anyone with a minimum of catering skills to use.

Costing between £35 and £37 a box depending on the menu, the expectation is that 40,000 packs – 400,000 meals – will be issued every year. Designed as a

Typical menu

Breakfast: Porridge, apple flakes, bacon grill, baked beans in tomato sauce, egg, and strawberry jam.

Main meal: Soup, stewed steak, buttery potatoes, assorted vegetables, raspberry pudding, and custard.

Snack: Corned beef, cheese, instant noodles, chocolate, boiled sweets.



What's in store? Goodies galore in tins

central feeding ration it will be issued only to units who have facilities to cook it.

While the ration meets Sikh, Hindu and vegetarian requirements, halal and kosher are not available but will be in time.

The Catering Group wants feedback from soldiers. “We have already altered components to reflect feedback from troops,” said Maj Pearce. “Because it is commercially produced and sourced we can chop and change menus and components quickly. It is a very flexible ration.

Marines trialled the pack on Dartmoor, while Army units tucked in at Sennybridge and Thetford.

Along with many of the items you would expect to find in a pack, the new ten-man ration also includes, at the request of soldiers, instant noodles, drinking chocolate, better quality coffee and tea, porridge, good quality jam – and a lot more food than the old pack.

Most of the contents are tinned, so every pack also contains a tin opener and a refuse sack.

While doing his research, Maj Pearce gathered rations from armies around Europe. Not surprisingly, he says the new ten-man pack will be regarded as one of the best in Nato.

● Also coming soon: Tabasco sauce, curries and rice dishes.

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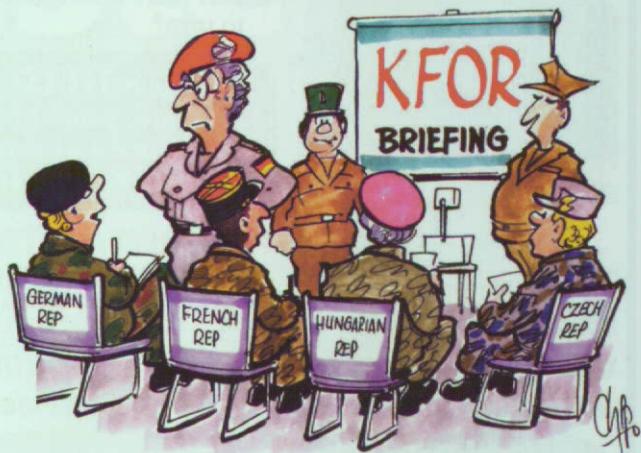
"Look, Sir . . . Would you kindly put your clothes on until we get it put together . . . You're putting the lads off"



"And we worry about Sellafield"

(Norwegian troops serving with KFOR are advised not to have babies for two years due to chemical pollution from Pristina power station)

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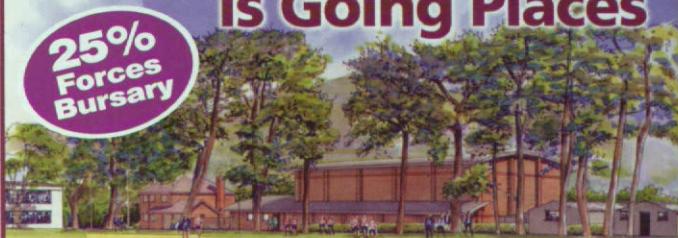
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Picture: Raytheon

Tank-buster

coming your way by 2005



Armoured arrow: An illustration of the new Javelin missile fired by a two-man team. Rapid reaction forces will be the first to get it

Proven missile will be Army's anti-tank weapon for next 20 years

AN "off-the-shelf" missile system has been chosen as the Army's replacement for its ageing Milan tank-buster, writes **John Elliott**.

Javelin, a joint venture by Raytheon, Lockheed Martin and the US Government, will be in service with rapid reaction forces, including 16 Air Assault Brigade, 3 Commando Brigade and mechanized infantry units by 2005.

The US Army has already deployed the medium-range, man-portable "fire-and-forget" missile in Afghanistan. Also used by the US Marine Corps, it will give Britain's Joint Rapid Reaction Force and its mechanized infantry units the firepower to stop the most sophisticated armour in its tracks.

Designed in the USA, the missile will be built in the UK under a £300 million contract announced by the MoD last month. The shelf life of Javelin is expected to be 20 years, keeping it on the inventory until 2025.

Although designed primarily to take out tanks and light armoured fighting vehicles, Javelin also provides a potent, all-weather, day-night capability against fixed defences such as buildings and bunkers. Deployed by a two-man team, it can be fired in enclosed spaces out to a range of 2,500m.

The command launch unit (CLU), or firing post, clips to a tandem warhead missile. It has an integrated daylight and longwave imaging infra-red thermal sight, which allows a soldier to acquire his target, lock-on, fire and "forget". Crucially, this means that as soon as he has pressed the trigger he can switch his attention to his next target – or get away from his by now compromised position.

The CLU sight can also double-up as a surveillance device.

Raytheon says Javelin will defeat any known armour and that there are no effective countermeasures against it.

The missile and its training systems

will be bought from Lockheed Martin and Raytheon while the CLU will come from the US Government. A repair facility will be established in the UK.

Javelin – officially known as a light forces anti-tank guided weapon, or LFATGW – was chosen in the face of stiff competition from MBDA-Rafael's Gill/Spike missile system.

Both were subjected to a year of trials in Canada and the UK carried out by the Infantry Trials and Development Unit from Warminster. Troops from 16 Air Assault Brigade and Royal Marines from 3 Commando Brigade fired the missile in a variety of environments and weather conditions. Since mass production in the US began in 1996, more than 900 Javelins have been fired.

Milan, which it will replace, won its spurs on battlefields from the Falklands to the Gulf but has become less effective against developing modern main battle tank armour and countermeasures.

● THE MoD is looking to procure a specialised missile which would give infantry the muscle to engage buildings and bunkers. Using enhanced blast explosives technology, the man-portable Infantry Anti-Structures Weapon

(IASW) would be capable of penetrating buildings and exploding inside.

Defence Minister Dr Lewis Mooney told the House of Commons on December 5 that there were no thermobaric weapons in

service with the British Army and that there were no plans to procure any. However, he confirmed that an anti-structures munition programme, based on enhanced blast explosives technology, had been established.

● A £2.4 million contract has been awarded to Falcon to supply 12 Scarus manpack Communications Electronic Support Systems, which will allow light forces in the field to locate radio signals. They will be operational by July.

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Raising standards

Three-phase regime promises to deliver better-trained Terriers

Report: Ray Routledge
Pictures: Steve Dock

A NEW training regime for part-time soldiers starting next month should reduce differences in basic military skill levels between Regular and Territorial Army troops.

"The quality of TA basic training has been variable," said Col Chris Argent, late PWRR, who has been instrumental in drawing up the Common Military Syllabus Recruit (TA), a new blueprint for individual training.

Responsibility for individual training lies with the Director General of Army Recruiting, who is now equally accountable for TA and Regular initial training.

On a visit to Army Training Regiment Lichfield, where 15 TA recruits were involved in a second trial of the phase-two module, Col Argent said: "The new regime will cover any soldier joining the

Teatime: Gnr Mark O'Neill, RA, left, and Tpr Michael Hedley, QOY brew-up at Lichfield

TA, whatever the cap badge. It will deliver a common syllabus and a baseline of skills to every soldier, so that at the end of the process we can be confident they have received an adequate standard of basic training."

In the past five years the TA has become more closely integrated with the Regular Army, with many of its soldiers going on operations. When they have worked with full-time troops, the gap in basic standards had become more apparent.

"TA soldiers perform well in their trades but suffer because they don't have a big enough foundation in basic skills," said Col Argent. "This is about addressing that."

With basic training often carried out at a local level, Terriers have, until now, had no common baseline of skills.

"They were very focused on their trade requirement but not the common military syllabus. The purpose of this new regime is to establish that baseline. The syllabus is very close to the Regular Army standard and will close the training gap and ensure that TA soldiers receive adequate, proper, validated training," said Col Argent.

It will be delivered in three phases moulded to the availability of the individual. The first, at unit level, covers military orientation, equipment and preparation for the second, which will be delivered at Lichfield, Pirbright or Grantham.

The third will be back in units, or part of a regional collective, and will add skills needed for specialist-to-arms training.

"The two-week phase two element is absolutely vital and will deliver core military skills," said Col Argent. "There is also a version of the phase-two training package which can be delivered in weekend modules but over a longer period. This is for the TA recruits who are unable to attend the two-week course."

Lt Col Nick Chapman, Cheshire, who commands ATR Lichfield, said: "There used to be Territorial training here so we welcome their return. Experience has shown that often TA recruits respond to training better than Regular recruits."

Up to 4,200 are expected to complete the training every year. Instructors will be the same as for Regular recruits. TA officer training is also under the spotlight and changes are planned later this year.

Thumbs-up from first recruits to test the water

WHEN Soldier visited ATR Lichfield, 15 TA recruits were in the middle of a field exercise focusing on skill-at-arms and gaining the confidence to look after themselves in the field. They gave the thumbs-up for the new



Tpr Potter

training regime.

Tpr Stephen Potter, Leicestershire and Derbyshire Yeomanry, is a police sergeant in civvy street. He said: "The two weeks has been quite intense but I feel it has been beneficial and my level of

fitness has improved while I have been here.

"I like the team spirit, learning new skills and being outside."

Tpr Annette Morley, Royal Wessex Yeomanry, based in Barnstaple, said: "I was dreading coming on the course



Tpr Morley

but it has turned out to be better than I expected. We have been well looked after and I have really enjoyed it. I work as an admin officer at an Army camp. Now I can go back and look them in the eye."

Para pay paved his way

TA service helped Geordie favourite to fall on good times

Interview: Nigel Kendall
Picture: Steve Dock

TIM Healy, Geordie character Dennis in the TV hit *Auf Wiedersehen, Pet* and a familiar face in numerous other series, looks back at his days as a Territorial Army paratrooper with considerable pride.

Married to former *Coronation Street* actress Denise Welch, he talked about his military experience at his home in Alderley Edge, near Manchester.

The couple have two sons, 14-year-old Matthew (a keen musician and karate expert), and two-year-old Louis ("he was a shock, he was. Big shock," quipped 51-year-old Tim). Crayon-scribbled walls underlined the tale very effectively.

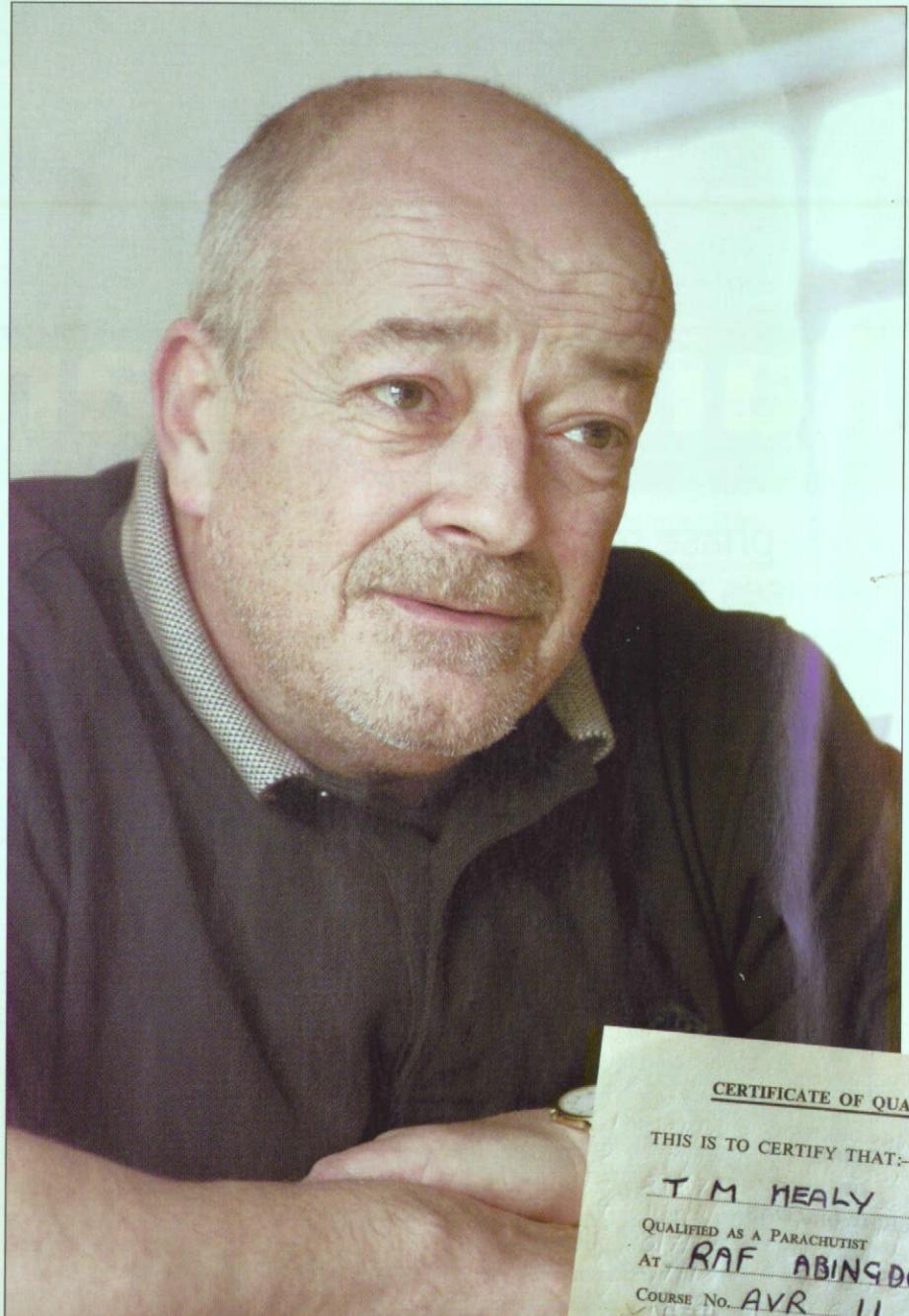
Tim was a welder with the Caterpillar Tractor Company in 1972. Although he did an apprenticeship, it wasn't what he really wanted to do, so he left and started a two-year drama course at Durham Technical College. Straight away he hit a snag: a drama student had to earn some money.

I didn't like the night jump very much. You just can't see the ground or the DZ. Your body hits the ground and flies off in a direction you're not expecting,

persuaded his cash-strapped friend to join the Territorial Army Voluntary Reserve.

Enlisting worked well for Tim, who quickly found it a useful means of support during his course.

"Of course, we were paid for weekends," he said. "We got a bounty which was quite substantial in 1972 – something like ten quid a day. It meant you got a couple of thousand a year if you did the camps and all that." Tim did his basic



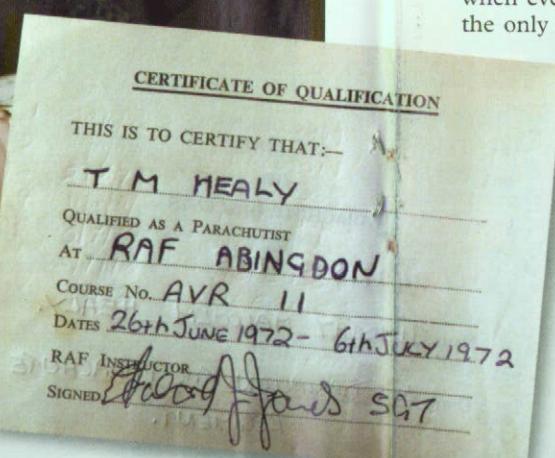
Just the ticket: Actor Tim Healy, above, and his certificate of qualification as a parachutist at Abingdon, right

military training at Aldershot before joining P Company to do his parachute training. He got really fit, of necessity.

"P Company was really tough," he recalled. "But I passed and went to RAF Abingdon. I did seven jumps, followed by a night jump at Otterburn. In all, I did 13. You start being treated more like a human

being when you get your wings."

How did he cope with the jumps? "Well, the second one is always the worst," he replied. "You don't really think about your first jump; it's the second one when you realise what can go wrong."



Tim's credits

Theatre:

Twelve Angry Men
(Comedy Theatre)
Shooting the Legend
(Theatre Royal, Newcastle)
Going Home (Newcastle Playhouse)
Zak (Royal Exchange)
Dumb Waiter (Haymarket Theatre)

Television:

Heartburn Hotel
The Grand
King Leek
Common as Muck
Frank Stubbs Promotes
Noel Gay
The Detectives
B&B

Flea Bites

A Perfect Spy
Boys From The Bush
A Kind of Living
Auf Wiedersehen, Pet
Casualty
Hard Cases
When the Boat Comes In
The World Cup – A Captain's Tale

"I didn't like the night jump very much. You just can't see the ground, or the DZ (drop zone). Your body hits the ground and flies off in a direction you're not expecting. You think you're going forwards when you are actually going backwards. It's a lot more difficult than when there's daylight."

Asked about the officers he served under, Tim said: "I was quite impressed with them in the Paras. We had lieutenants who would run up the hills in front of us, and by the time we had caught them up, feeling knackered, they'd be sitting there cleaning their boots."

Tim's fellow students on the drama course couldn't quite make him out. "It was in the days when everyone had long hair, and I was the only one coming into drama lessons with a short back and sides. They thought I was a police cadet."

Naturally enough, Tim became the entertainer in the ranks. He cracked gags and played his guitar late into the night. He freely admits to being the "clown of the gang". Shortly after leaving the Paras, he became a professional comedian and started performing in working men's clubs.

What about directing? "I have directed some plays in the theatre, but I haven't done any film. To be honest with you, I've been so lucky to be asked to do so many things. Once people stop asking me I'll have to start writing my own stuff."

Summing up his experience with the Paras, he said: "It gave me the confidence to be who I am. You're very proud when you've got your wings. I was probably more excited about that, than anything else I've done in my life. As a young lad, I was very proud to wear the red beret."

"Serving with the Paras was a long time ago, but it's something I'll never forget."

Secret of my success

Hard work and discipline paid off for former signaller

HOW do you measure success? For one former East End kid it's having a job you love, a good home, and children who are doing well for themselves. writes Ray Routledge.

Tony Levy, who left 22 Signal Regiment in 1981, puts it down to hard work and discipline. "I was an electrician before joining the Army, but had been out of my civilian trade so long that by the time I left I had lost my accreditation," he said.

He returned to the East End of London, settled in Leytonstone, and worked as a security man for Marks and Spencer while studying to re-qualify as an electrician. He was also caring for an ever-growing family of six children.

The hard work and perseverance paid off and Tony, who moved to the West Midlands, now runs his own small but successful business providing electrical installation services to industrial and commercial premises.

"The best thing I ever did was move out of the big city," he said.

"I know that by the standards of big business, I represent a small cog in a big wheel, but I have a four-bedroom house, children who have done well and a job that I love. By the time I am 55, I should be in semi-retirement. These were all targets I have set for myself and should achieve. And that is success."

Even now he works seven days a week and has taken just two one-week holidays in 20 years. He reckons a disciplined upbringing combined with Army experience stood him in good stead.

"The hard times I experienced in the mob, along with the surreal situations, the gut-wrenching moments, the sheer hard graft and the mind-numbing boredom helped towards a goal that I achieved by the time I hit middle age."

"My target was realistic and I know that with hard work, perseverance, a good wife, and a lot of luck, any discharged Serviceman can make it."

● If you have left the Army and have a story to tell that you think would be an inspiration to others, please contact Ray Routledge at r.routledge@soldiermagazine.co.uk



Picture: Wolverhampton Express and Star

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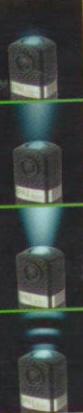
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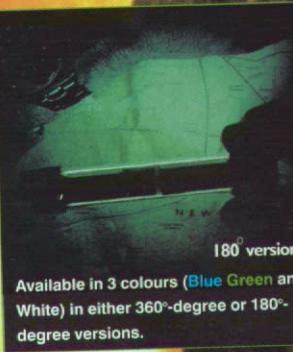
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Forces' fag-break culture lingers on

ALTHOUGH smoking has declined in the United Kingdom to around 27 per cent of the population, up to 66 per cent of Army recruits buck the trend.

"It is quite common to find at least two-thirds of new recruits lighting up with their instructors for the traditional smoke break," says BFBS Forces Action Editor Colin Livingstone, who has investigated the subject for a special programme to be broadcast on No Smoking Day, March 12.

"The health argument was won long ago," says Colin, "the case against passive smoking is widely accepted, a great deal is being done to help smokers give up if they want to, but for some reason there's still

no restriction on smoking by recruits.

"And, as everyone knows, cigarettes are still duty-free to the Forces serving overseas."

The programme, on BFBS 2 at 1830 UK time on March 12 and repeated at 1030 (UK) on March 15, presents new evidence about the effects of smoking on recruits and hears from Defence Medical Service experts.

Links between smoking and the Armed Forces go back a long way. According to one historian, British troops in the two world wars could survive without food, but not without smoking (see Page 69).

www.bfbs.com
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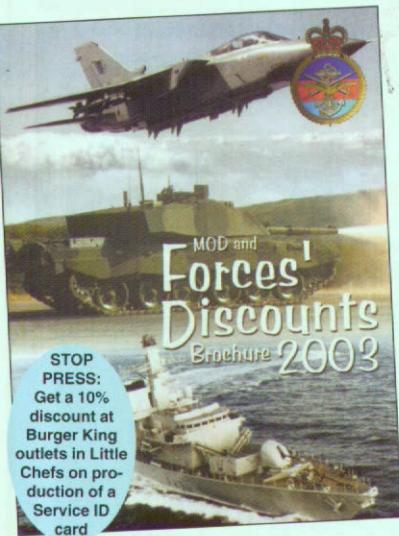


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COPIES of the 2003 edition of the MoD and Forces' Discount Brochure, left, are being distributed to all units. Enough have been produced for every soldier to have one. If you don't get a copy, ask your unit admin office or post room, and if they don't have enough they should send in a bid on MoD Form 999 to DSDC Llanguennech.

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Manage your money



Credit Action Director Keith Tondeur, will be pleased to answer, in confidence, specific questions addressed to the Editor.

When retail therapy went too far

CORPORAL G's wife had been depressed ever since the birth of their baby a year ago. Cpl G had been away for quite a bit of that year and his wife had felt increasingly lonely. The baby was also very demanding, which meant she got little sleep.

She wasn't able to go out much either so spent much time in front of the TV. She also had many catalogues sent to her. In her depressed state she turned to "retail therapy" to cheer herself up.

SHORT-TERM LIFT

At first she was buying things that were essential for both her and her baby but soon she drifted into buying things she just fancied. The new items gave her a short-term lift but soon she was worrying about how she would pay for them. Some could be returned but there were costs attached to that and so she kept repeating the cycle of getting depressed and then trying to cheer herself up by buying things.

She realised that things had gone too far when she started to hide from her husband items of clothing she had bought. He had always handled money well and (unlike some men) would have noticed if his wife had a whole range of new clothes. The amount she owed was building up and she knew she needed help.

Fortunately she found a copy of the Army's Better Money Management Guide and decided to give the freephone helpline a ring. It soon became clear to the counsellor that there were other issues to be dealt with as well as the debt. Firstly she was persuaded to talk to her husband about what she was doing and why. Her husband had not realised that his wife had been that depressed and wanted to help.

CLEARED THE DEBTS

Cpl G also rang the helpline for advice. He was able to be put on a debt management plan and was able to clear the debts in a matter of months. He also accompanied his wife to see her doctor, who was able to reassure her that this was quite a common occurrence among young mums.

Cpl G encouraged his wife to join a local mother-and-toddlers group, where she soon found others like her and she rapidly made some good friends.

As you will see in the Update section (Page 15) all soldiers and their families are now entitled to in-depth debt counselling over the phone, totally free of charge. If you have any worries at all please contact the Credit Action/CCCS freephone helpline on 0800 1381111.

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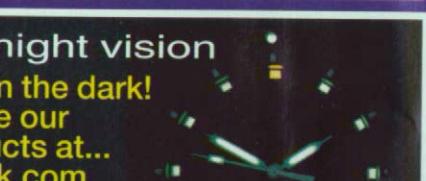
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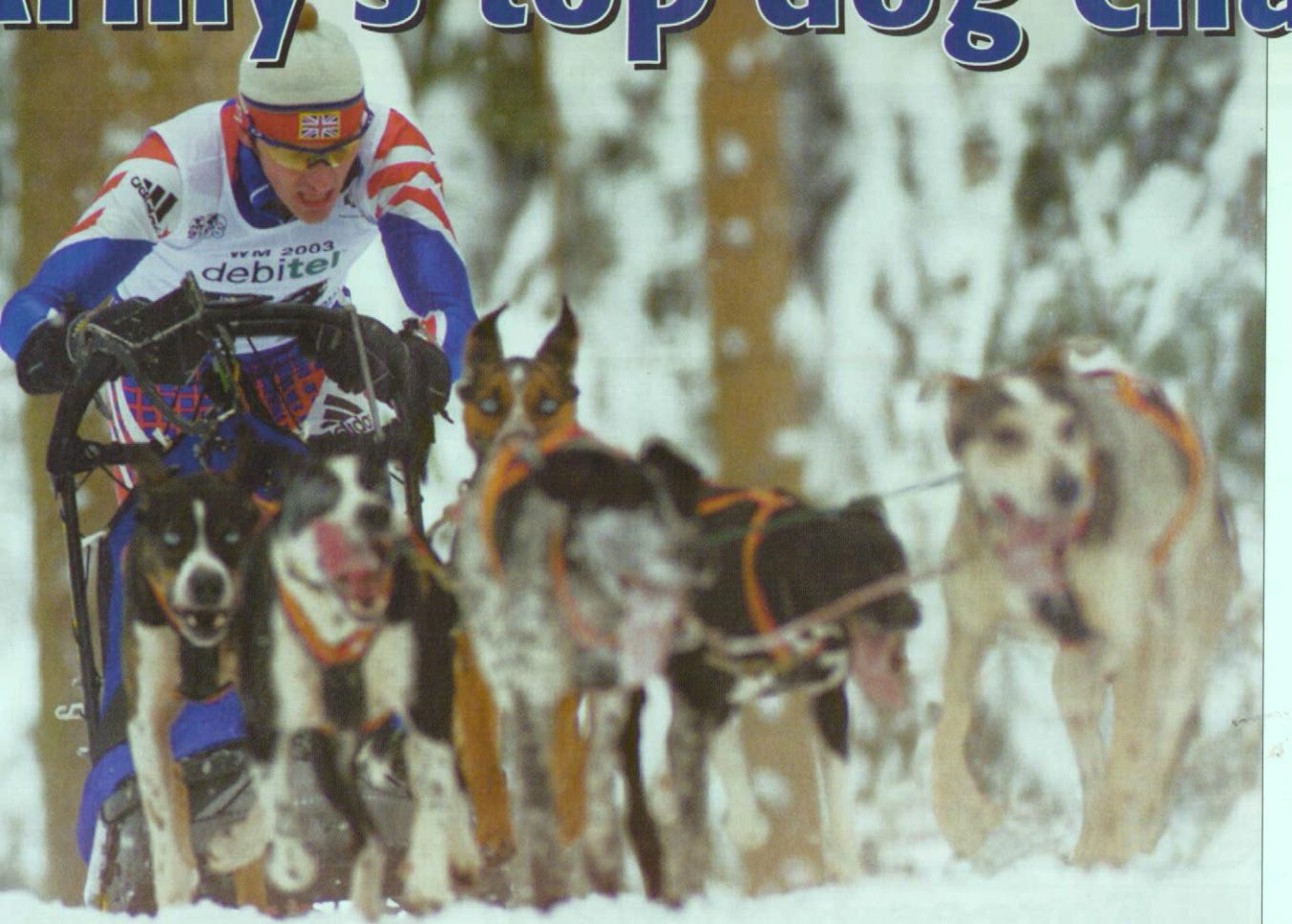
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Army's top dog chases Olympic bone



World championship debut: Great Britain's Capt Graeme Scott (RE), Huckle, Jenny, Flik, Zappa, Finch and Fernando in action

Meet team GB . . .

HUCKLE

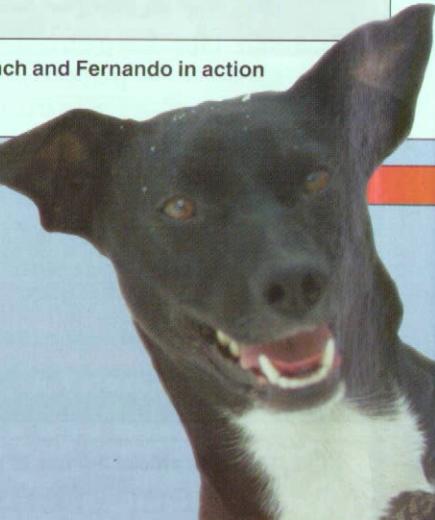
THE grandson of a current world champion in Alaska, Huckle is from good racing stock and joined team GB three years ago after finishing third in a Swedish eight-dog team at the 1999 world championships. Fiercely loyal to his coach, the five-and-a-half-year-old team captain is the oldest and most experienced member of Scott's squad.

"He is very personable and coaches the team as much as I do," said Scott. "When he steps up a gear so do the rest of the team."

JENNY

ALTHOUGH shy and retiring off the track, Jenny is the hardest working member of the team on it and is capable of setting an electric pace.

A natural athlete, she has forged a formidable alliance with Huckle in Great Britain's forward line, but does have a tendency to under perform when her regular strike partner is missing.



ZAPPA

A STRONG candidate to take over the captaincy of the team when age finally gets the better of Huckle, Zappa is the most vocal member of the squad. "He can be a bit of a thug and gets a little over-excited at times," said his coach. "At the moment he just lacks the experience of Huckle, but is a fast learner."



FLIK

GREAT Britain's pocket rocket. An able deputy to Jenny and the smallest member of the squad, Flik's unwavering commitment to the cause and "huge natural engine" helps to settle the team and create rhythm.

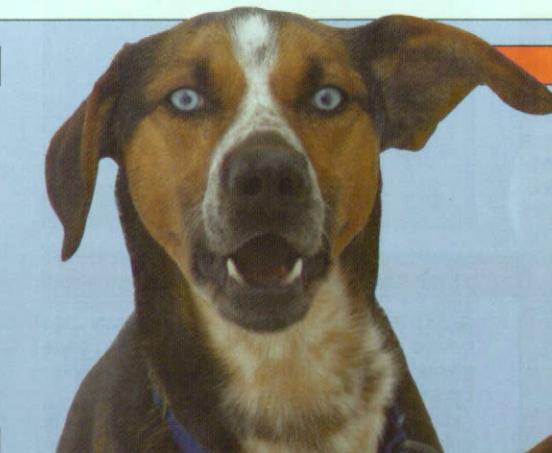
Partners Zappa in the middle of the six-dog line-up.



FINCH

THE biggest member of the squad, Finch has both the pace and power to "chase" his team-mates and take up the majority of the strain of pulling the sled.

"He's one powerful athlete and takes up any slack left by the others," said Scott.



FERNANDO

ALMOST identical in size to Finch, Fernando is the youngest and least experienced member of the team, but promises to become a regular face in the GB line-up after producing a series of confident performances at the world championships.

At the age of two he has what promises to be a prosperous racing career ahead of him.



Sapper proves his team's international pedigree at world championships

Report: Andy Simms
Pictures: Graeme Main

WITH a Union flag proudly displayed on the chest of his lead dog, Capt Graeme Scott's presence at this year's Sleddog World Championships in Todtmoos, Germany attracted similar bemused looks to those garnered by the Jamaican bobsleigh team at the 1988 Winter Olympics in Calgary.

Hailing from a country more renowned for its rainfall than snow drifts, Scott (Royal Engineers), who works as a ground liaison officer with 617 Squadron at RAF Lossiemouth, made sporting history at the three-day event by becoming the first British competitor to race a United Kingdom-based team at the championships.

"This is the first time that the competition has been held in Europe since the introduction of the Pets Passport Scheme," explained the three-times British sleddog champion. "So this was the first chance a British team has had to pitch a domestic team against the best in the world and then travel freely back home afterwards."

However, far from being just a novel sideshow for the thousands of racing fans who lined the competition's 12km course, Scott and his team-mates Huckle, Jenny,

Flik, Zappa, Fernando and Finch, all crossbred Alaskan huskies and short-haired pointers, quickly proved that they had travelled to Germany to do more than make up the numbers.

Scott, a former Army triathlete who became involved in the sport eight years ago after watching a television programme on sleddog racing in Scotland, said: "There is no bigger race in the sport of sleddog than the world championships and we approached it accordingly with five months of training back in the UK and a further month in Norway.

"Representing your country in an international event is not something you take lightly and I invested all of my spare time in making sure that I and the dogs had the best preparation possible."

It was hard work that paid off when his team, led by Huckle and Jenny, finished 14th in a field of 46, just 5min 44sec behind the medal winners in the six-dog class. The 34-year-old told *Soldier*: "I am absolutely delighted with the result. The dogs gave their all and performed as much for themselves, and each other, as they did for me."

"We were resigned to the fact that we would not come away with the gold medal before we got here – we'd only ever had one international race before and were up against a lot of experienced, full-time

teams who have big budgets and the opportunity to train on snow for most of the year," he said.

"As a team we have been winning races back in the UK by more than seven-minute margins and to now know that we are also knocking on the door of the top ten in the world is very encouraging.

"We must be doing something right and I have no doubts that the team, having now experienced international competition, will go from strength to strength."

And with breedings planned for this summer, Scott hopes that his soon-to-be-extended squad will not be away from the world stage for long.

"My intention is to return to the world championships in two years' time with an eight-dog team and a bigger squad to select from," he said. "Beyond that, I already have one eye set firmly on the Winter Olympics in Turin, Italy."

"The sport was showcased in Lillehammer in 1994, Nagano in 1998 and again at Salt Lake City last year, and the International Federation of Sleddog Sports are hoping that it will be given official status in time for the 2006 Games."

"Going to an Olympics is every sportsman's dream and if sleddog racing is accepted as a medal-winning sport then I will make sure that it is me and my dogs in Turin representing Great Britain."

Life after the legend

Army's association with toughest discipline in winter sports remains as strong as ever

Pictures: Graeme Main

BRITISH biathlon will always be synonymous with the name of former Royal Engineer Mike Dixon, writes Andy Simms.

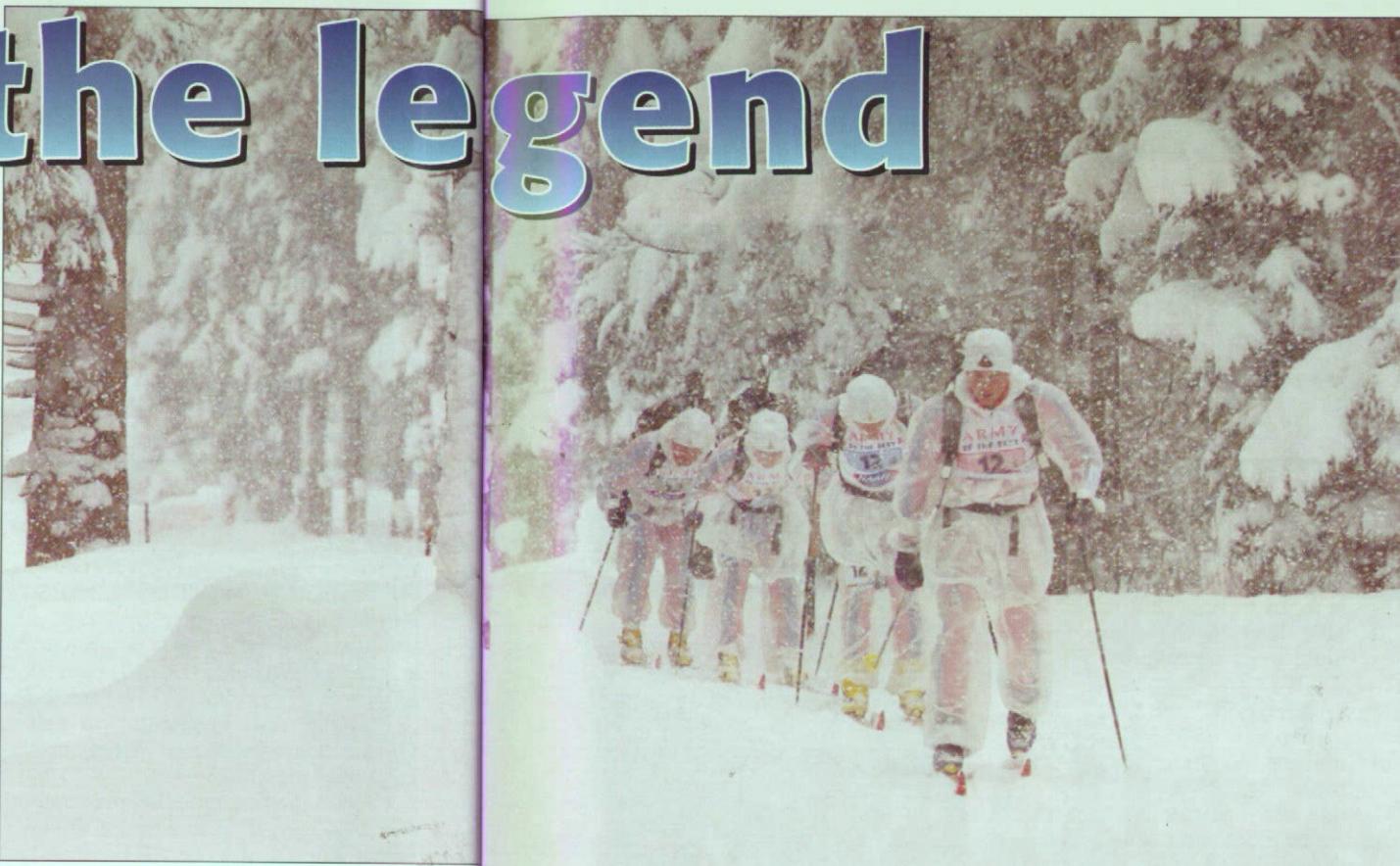
From Sarajevo to Salt Lake City, he was an ever-present in Great Britain's Winter Olympic biathlon team for more than two decades before hanging up both his skis and Army fatigues last summer.

And although no longer competing, the six-times Olympian, winter sport's equivalent to Steve Redgrave, has been unable to walk away from a discipline he first took up in 1987 and can now be heard commenting on the British team's progress in the World and Europa Cup series for satellite television

channel *Eurosport*. It is a role that has enabled Dixon to track the careers of his former colleagues and team-mates, and to see first-hand that, despite his own retirement, the British Army's association with winter sports' most demanding discipline remains as strong as ever.

Indeed, biathlon continues to be the most popular winter sport in the Army and many of the soldiers who appeared at this year's Army-run British national, Inter-Services and Nordic ski championships at Ruhpolding in Germany are already competing on the international stage.

Among those at the championships likely to be the subject of Dixon's expert assessment over the coming season and beyond are:



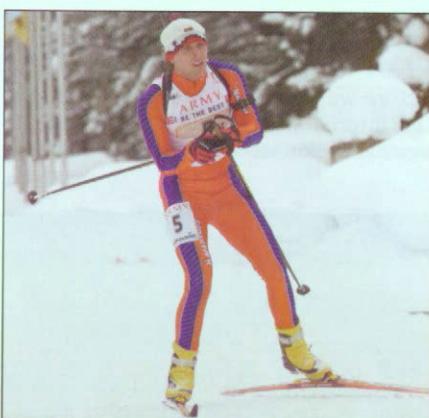
Postcard from Ruhpolding: Action from the military patrol race at this year's Army-run British national, Inter-Services and Nordic ski championships

CPL MARC WALKER (1 GS REGT RLC)

"AROUND 70 to 80 per cent of all the athletes who compete in biathlon have a Services background," explained Marc, who has been a regular member of Great Britain's World Cup squad this season. "In some ways it is a good thing. It means that you can understand the people you train with and of course the people you have to compete against."

"Despite having competed at international level, many of the highlights of my sporting career have been with my regiment's ski team. Training and competing in biathlon is usually done pretty much in isolation so it was nice to be part of the regimental team that won best combined skiing and best skiing regiment unit last year and be able to share the success with others."

GNR STUART PAINES (22 REGT RA)



THE fact that Stuart has caught the eye of the British Biathlon Union (BBU) just four months after taking up skiing suggests that a bright sporting future lies ahead for this 18-year-old – if he wants it.

"Although I have been nominated for the development squad I am not getting carried away," he said. "At the moment biathlon is just a hobby and my military career is more important to me."

"I have only been in my regiment for a year and currently work is at the top of my list of priorities – if I could balance the two that would be great."

LBDR LANCE HODGKINS (40 REGT RA)



SIG KATE CONNELLY (7 SIG REGT)

A STRING of top finishes in the junior and novice events at Ruhpolding look set to have placed Kate on the road to the 2006 Winter Olympics in Turin, Italy.

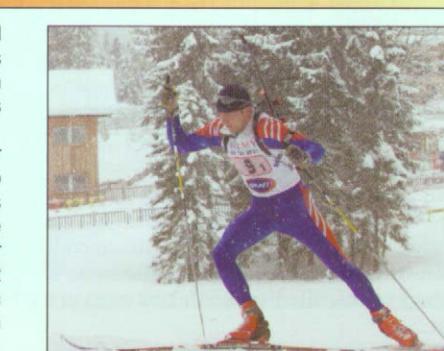
Despite having pulled on her first set of skis only at the start of this season, Kate has been invited to attend a national junior development camp in the summer by the British Biathlon Union (BBU).

"I used to do a lot of cross-country running and orienteering and only took up skiing because I was asked to," she explained. "However, I am very competitive by nature and this side of biathlon has got me hooked. Everything has happened so quickly but I am already determined to try to break into the British senior squad."

LCPL LEE JACKSON (1 GH)

ALREADY a member of the World Cup squad at the age of just 22, Lee is widely regarded as one of Great Britain's hottest biathlon prospects and has no doubts as to where his career is heading.

"I know I can still push myself a lot further and do not think that a top-ten World Cup finish and competing at an Olympic Games is beyond me," he said. "I know the British are not renowned for their success at winter sports, but in 1998 Mike Dixon finished 13th at the Olympics and I see no reason why I can not achieve a podium finish by 2014. I'm in biathlon for the long haul."



CPL JASON SKLENAR (28 ENGR REGT)

FAILING a basic fitness test (BFT) could prove to be the best thing 25-year-old Lance ever did.

"I was posted to Germany as a young soldier and was introduced to Becks beer and a poor diet," he said. "My battery commander sent me cross-country skiing in 1997 in a bid to get me fit and I went away, really enjoyed it and the following year I was selected for a number of national development camps."

"Six winters on and here I am – a member of Great Britain's Europa Cup team. I never dreamed that I would get to represent my country in any sport and am naturally proud of what I have already achieved."

"Before joining the Army my only knowledge of biathlon came from a computer game I used to have as a boy, and it still feels strange when I look back and think that I could soon be doing it for real at an Olympic Games."

THE first sapper to win a competition at Bisley, Jason had only been competing in biathlon for 18 months when, alongside Dixon, he was selected for the 1992 Olympics in Albertville France.

"Despite such a dramatic start to my career, a combination of injury and illness kept me out of the Olympic squads for ten years and I did not get a chance to compete at that level again until last year when I was selected for Salt Lake City at the eleventh hour," the current British team captain told *Soldier*.

"My late inclusion made me appreciate every minute of the Games this time round and I repaid the selectors by recording Great Britain's highest finish, which was obviously a fantastic personal boost."

Jason is currently out of action with a back injury but hopes to return to the World Cup squad before the end of the season.

CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS

Princess Marina Cup (Army skiing championships – nordic and alpine) – 1, 1 Hldrs; 2, 7 Sig Regt; 3, 4 Regt RA.

SAS Cup (Inter-Services championships) – 1, 45 Cdo RM; 2, 22 Regt RA; 3, 40 Regt RA.

Kentish Cup (Army nordic championships) – 1, 22 Regt RA; 2, 40 Regt RA; 3, 1 Hldrs.

Men's 15km – 1, Cpl Mark Gee (2 RTR); 2, Capt Phil Robinson (45 Cdo RM); 3, LCpl Lee Jackson (1 GH).

Men's 15km team – 1, 45 Cdo RM; 2, 22 Regt RA (LBdr Shane Clash, WO2 Pete Barnes, Gnr Stuart Paine, LBdr Craig Arnold); 3, 45 Cdo RM B.

Men's junior 15km – 1, Gnr Jamie Shilling (16 Regt RA); 2, Gnr Kevin Kane (40 Regt RA); 3, Gnr Ryan Murray (40 Regt RA).

Men's youth 15km – 1, Gnr Paine (22 Regt RA); 2, Gnr Simon Allanson (4 Regt RA); 3, Pte Paul Chambers (1 GH).

Inter-Services 15km – 1, Army (Cpl Gee, LCpl Jackson, LCpl Nigel McGillivray (1 Hldrs), LBdr Lance Hodgkins (40 Regt RA)); 2, Royal Navy; 3, Royal Air Force.

Inter-corps 15km – 1, Royal Artillery; 2, Infantry.

Women's 10km – 1, Cpl Adele Turner (29 Regt RLC); 2, Bdr Kendal Menzies (16 Regt RA); 3, Lt Kerri Munro (AGC).

Men's 5km pursuit – 1, Cpl Gee; 2, Cpl Marc Walker (1 GS Regt RLC); 3, LCpl Jackson.

Women's 5km pursuit – 1, Cpl Turner; 2, Bdr Menzies; 3, Lt Munro.

4x10km relay – 1, 22 Regt RA; 2, 1 Hldrs (Hldr Steve Jones, Hldr Chris Logie, Hldr Aiden Salmon, LCpl McGillivray); 3, 40 Regt RA (LBdr Hodgkins, Gnr Ryan Murray, Gnr Paul Jewitt, Gnr Kevin Kane).

Senior men's 20km – 1, Cpl Gee; 2, LBdr Hodgkins; 3, LCpl Jackson.

Senior novice men's 15km – 1, Cpl Darren Wilsher (2 RGJ); 2, Lt Rich Crawford (4 Regt RA); 3, LBdr Alex Woodhouse (22 Regt RA).

Youth men's 12.5km – 1, Pte Chambers; 2, Spr Matty Turrell (3 RSME); 3, Gnr Paine.

Junior men's 15km – 1, Gnr Kane; 2, Gnr Shilling; 3, Hldr Steve Jones (1 Hldrs).

Women's 12.5km – 1, Cpl Turner; 2, Bdr Menzies; 3, Sig Kate Connelly (7 Sig Regt).

Military patrol race – 1, 45 Cdo RM; 2, RAF; 3, 4 Regt RA (Sgt Paul Thompson, Lt Rich Crawford, LBdr John Cowley, Gnr Allanson).

Men's 10km sprint – 1, Cpl Gee; 2, Cpl Tom Clemens (1 D & D); 3, Cpl Walker.

Men's 10km team sprint – 1, 22 Regt RA; 2, 40 Regt RA; 3, 1 GH.

Junior/youth 10km sprint – 1, Gnr Paine; 2, Gnr Kane; 3, Gnr Shilling.

Women's 7.5km sprint – 1, Cpl Turner; 2, Bdr Menzies; 3, Lt Munro.

Men's 12.5km pursuit – 1, Cpl Gee; 2, Cpl Clemens; 3, Cpl Walker.

Men's 12.5km mass start – 1, Gnr Kane; 2, Pte Chambers; 3, Gnr Paine.

Women's 12.5km mass start – 1, Bdr Menzies; 2, Cpl Turner; 3, Sig Connelly.

4 x 7.5km relay – 1, 40 Regt RA; 2, 1 Green Howards (LCpl Jackson, Pte Jonathon Whymann, Pte Daniel Bullock, Pte Chambers); 3, 22 Regt RA.



SHORTS

Desert boots at the ready

FOUR soldiers from 29 Regiment RLC will join more than 700 runners at the start line of this year's Marathon Des Sables – a gruelling 150-mile race across the Sahara Desert.

Led by Sgt Steve Potter, the team will encounter daytime temperatures of up to 60C during the six-day race across the Moroccan desert, which begins on April 4.

The Marathon Des Sables is the equivalent of running six marathons end-to-end with only nine litres of drinking water each day to quench the thirst.

The quartet hope to raise more than £15,000 for the Army Benevolent Fund and a cystic fibrosis charity.

Deutschland dash

RUNNERS have not got long left to register for this year's Mitsubishi-sponsored Bruggen ten-mile road race.

For more details on the event, which is open to all military personnel and civilians, and will be held on April 15, contact Maj Campbell on Bruggen Mil 684736. Alternatively, postal entries can be sent to Bruggen 10, HQ Sqn, 7 Sig Regt, BFPO 35 and should be received no later than March 21.

Get your skates on ...

LEADING Army ice hockey team the REME Stallions are on the look out for new players for the coming season.

Players of any standard are invited to attend the squad's training sessions, which are held every Tuesday evening at the Guildford Spectrum. A limited amount of equipment can be loaned to players if required.

For further information contact Capt Tim Gillies on Tidworth Mil 94342 2837.

Gentlemanly conduct

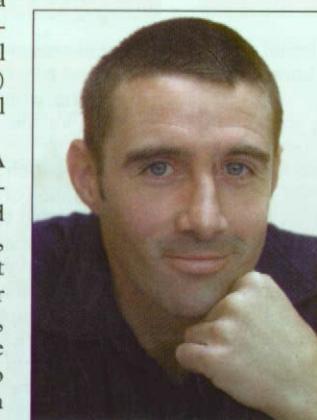
CRICKET fans at 33 Supply Squadron, 4 General Support Regiment RLC and the British Embassy in Kabul are appealing to *Soldier* readers to offer their support to the newly-formed Afghanistan Cricket Board.

Many Afghans picked up the fundamentals of the sport as refugees in Pakistan, and although a number of clubs have since been formed in Kabul, the cricketers are desperately short of equipment of any kind.

Anyone willing to donate kit, old or new, should send it to the Afghan Cricket Appeal, c/o 33 Supply Squadron, 4 GS Regt RLC, Dalton Barracks, Abingdon OX13 6JB.

Soldier accepts no responsibility if the Afghan team beat England at Lords in 2020 as a result of this appeal.

Pte Keith Spong (1 RRW), Pte Pete



Coach: SSgt Vinny Powell

opponent bloody-nosed and facing a standing eight count.

Winning's a walkover

Army boxing team continue their reign of dominance

WINNING the Inter-Services championships for the 21st time in succession proved, quite literally, to be a walkover for the Army boxing team at HMS Nelson, Portsmouth.

With the Royal Air Force and Royal Navy both failing to field suitable opponents, the Army were presented with an unattainable lead in the tournament, which doubles as a qualifier for the quarter finals of the national Amateur Boxing Association (ABA) championships, when six of the squad were gifted Combined Services Boxing Association titles.

"The title was ours before we even set foot in the ring," explained SSgt Vinny Powell, who marked a prosperous second year in tenure as Army boxing coach with a second Inter-Services title.

"Although it is great to have won the championship again, I, and all of the boys, would have preferred to have done it with our gloves on."

"The team trained hard for these championships and were ready to go the distance with whoever they were matched against, but unfortunately we were not given the opportunity to put all of our talent on show."

"However, I am confident the overall result would have been exactly the same if we had been called upon to box in every bout."

Indeed, among those lucky enough to be crowned Services champions without actually having to throw a single punch were England internationals LCpl Anthony Davis (1 RRF) and Spr Duncan Bariball (RE).

Murray (RLC), Spr Joe Elfidh (RE) and LCpl Neil Robinson (1 GH) also received byes to the next round of the prestigious competition.

Welterweight Gnr Simon Patterson (RA) was not quite so fortunate, but still came away with a winner's trophy and the judges' award for best boxer after beating the Royal Air Force's SAC Martin Hardy.

Patterson dominated the four-round contest and nearly brought proceedings to an early close in the second when a succession of head-shots left his

Winning's a walkover



Picture: Graeme Main

Simply the best: Gnr Simon Patterson (RA), left, en route to the Inter-Services welterweight title

To his credit Hardy recovered well and, after again feeling the full force of Patterson's unerring jabs in the third, enjoyed some success of his own in the final round, but not enough to swing the 16-14 result in his favour.

Patterson's Army team-mate, England international Pte Steven Briggs (1 PWO) was also made to work to ensure his continued interest in the national championships and extended the Army's winning margin by beating former junior ABA champion Mne Stuart Elwell (Royal Navy).

With a slight height and reach advantage, Briggs stalked his opponent from the opening bell and his victory was more convincing than the eventual 5-4 computer-assisted scoreline suggested.

However, the Army did not have things all their own way. Middleweight LCpl Dean Frost (RLC) failed to find

the form that has seen him break into the England squad against the Royal Navy's OM Shaun MacDonald, and consequently finished on the wrong side of an 11-9 points verdict – a result that produced the biggest cheer of the night from the partisan Portsmouth crowd.

Bdr Nick Okoth (1 RHA) also experienced defeat at the hands of the ever-improving Navy squad. Fighting at heavyweight, instead of at his preferred cruiserweight, Okoth struggled to contain the power of Mne Mick O'Connell, who looked every bit as good as his top five Great Britain ranking suggests and was well worth his overwhelming 10-3 victory.

◆ Middleweight Gnr Alastair Morrison (RA) and light welterweight Pte Chris Rose (WFR) both beat naval opposition in exhibition bouts.

FOOTBALL TABLES

MASSEY TROPHY						
	P	W	D	L	GD	Pts
RLC	9	8	1	0	20	25
Infantry	7	6	0	1	22	18
RA	7	5	0	2	15	15
RE	5	4	1	0	25	13
REME	5	4	0	1	26	12
AAC	6	3	1	2	4	10
CA Mus	8	2	1	5	-29	7
APTC	6	1	3	2	-5	6
AGC	6	0	2	4	-12	2
Int Corps	4	0	1	3	-14	1
R Signals	1	0	0	1	-1	0
AMS	6	0	0	6	-23	0
RAC	6	0	0	6	-28	0

■ To see your table published in *Soldier* simply e-mail tables@soldiermagazine.co.uk

FIXTURES

Your sporting guide to March ...

ATHLETICS: 12 – Inter-corps cross country championships (TBC).

BOWLING: 1-2 – Army tenpin championships (AMF Bowl Leeds).

BOXING: 5 – RLC championships (Aldershot); 6 – Minor unit finals (Aldershot); 20 – Army finals (TBC).

FOOTBALL: 4 – Sussex v Army women (Lancing, ko 1930), Cambridge University v TA (Cambridge); 5 – Royal Navy v Army (Portsmouth); 7 – AGC women v RA women (Worthy Down), REME women v RLC women (Bordon); 8 – Hampshire FA v Army youth (Eastleigh); 11 – Army women v Prison Service (Aldershot); 18 – Hampshire v Army U21 (Bournemouth); 19 – Army v Royal Air Force (Aldershot); 26 – Army youth v Army Foundation College (Aldershot); 27 – Army women v RAF (Aldershot).

GOLF: 5-7 – British Army Cyprus inter-corps champions v RAF inter-corps champions (Dhekelia GC); 13 – Army probables v Army possibles (Tidworth GC); 14 – Army players' coaching day (Larkhill); 15 – Army v Somerset (Minehead GC); 25 – Army women v Army GC ladies (Army GC, Aldershot); 29-30 – Brent Knowl Bowl (Burnham & Berrow GC).

MARTIAL ARTS: 15 – 4 Div championships (Aldershot).

NETBALL: 1 – Cambridgeshire v Army (Away); 2 – Essex Thurrock v Army (Away); 6-7 – Inter-Services championships (HMS Nelson, Portsmouth).

ORIENTEERING: 5 – 4/5 Div league meeting (Battlesbury Hill); 12 – 4 Div championships (Aldershot); 19 – 4/5 Div relay championships (Harewood).

RUGBY LEAGUE: 12 – Army nines tournament (Bordon).

SHINTY: 15 – The Highlanders v St Andrews University (Home).

■ Got a date for the diary? E-mail the details to fixtures@soldiermagazine.co.uk



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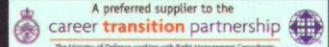
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No 736

How observant are you?

WIN £100!

Frank Finch has made ten changes in detail to one of his drawings taken from our archive. Circle the differences in the lower image, cut out the whole panel, add your name and address and send to HOAY 736, *Soldier*, Ordnance Road, Aldershot, GU11 2DU by March 31.

A photocopy is acceptable, but only one entry per person may be submitted.

Do not include anything else in your envelope.

First correct entry drawn

after the closing date will win £100; the second and third will receive £10 gift vouchers. No correspondence of any kind can be entered into.

The names of the winner and runners-up will be announced in the May issue.

Name : (Give initials and rank or title)

Address :

January issue (No 734): First correct entry drawn at random was from LCpl R T Cornish, of Bristol, who wins £100. Runners-up Kedive Douglas, of Plaistow, and WO2(SSM) N Land, 22 Tpt Sqn, 1 GS Regt RLC, BFPO 47, each receive a £10 gift voucher. The ten differences were: torch (right); top spear shaft; lower spearhead; left-hand man's beard; legs of each stool; line behind table; upper dog bone; dog's tail; drinking man's sleeve.



Freeze frame

“But I don’t want to go to the vet’s . . . I’m only a little horse”

Write a caption for the photograph, right, first published in *Soldier* in December 1952. The best, in the Editor’s opinion, will win a prize from our silver logo collection. Usual rules apply, entries to reach us by March 31.



BEST of a cracking bunch of captions for the February issue, left, came from Sgt E S Edwards of PA1, St George’s Barracks, Bicester. His offering was:

“And this, gentlemen, is where I bought the designer swimwear I am modelling.”

We also liked “I’ve come up with an idea – water rugby. It’s the only way us Navy lads will get past those Army Fijians” from SSgt G E McLorie, EHT, Med Branch, HQ 5 Div. And on a soccer note: “Right, lads, we’ll



run onto the pitch in just our pants, pretending we haven’t a clue about footie . . . then we’ll sock it to ‘em” from LCpl Roche, 65 Fd Sp Sqn, 28 Engr Regt; and “Watch how you tackle their No 9 – he dives in the box” from LCpl J G Manning, 1 LI, Paderborn.

Near misses, too, for “The

next one who says ‘why are you wearing a girl’s cozze, Sarge?’ is for it”, from Cpl Roger Eustis, Vessel Tp, 165 (V) Port and Maritime RLC; and “The QM explained to the swimming team that until the pool was built this would have to suffice” from Sgt Smith, Defence NBC Centre.

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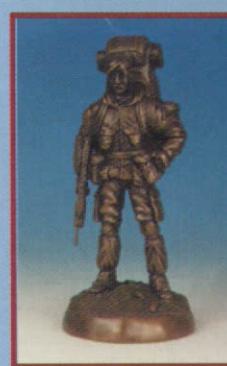
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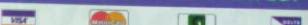
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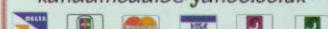
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All pen pal adverts must be prepaid

Patsy, 5'2" with blue eyes, average build and has been told she is cute. Looking for pen pals of any age group. She does not bite so get a pen and write. P277

Lisa, (29), 5'5" with long dark hair and blue eyes. Enjoys pubs, clubs, travelling, reading, music, having a laugh and enjoying life to the full. Seeking pen pals who would like to drop a line and have a laugh writing, 25+. P278

Vicky, (32), PQ Accountant with a son aged 10. Enjoys F1, reading, listening to music, pubs and clubs. Seeking pen pals of any age group, a photo would be appreciated. P279

Ian, (41), 6'2", with fair hair and blue eyes. Enjoys reading, socialising, cinema, music, nights in and enjoying life. Sincere, honest, caring with GSOH, looking for pen pals with similar interests, 35-45. P280

Maria, (53), 5'4", dark blonde with green eyes. Enjoys driving, walking, swimming, home crafts, pets, various music, cinema, pubs and meals out. GSOH, seeking male pen pals, 45+. P281

Small, slim, blonde, solvent, recently separated and drives an MX5. Hampshire lawyer seeks tall officer/soldier pen pal, 40(ish). Photo appreciated and ensures response. P282

Julia, (38), 5'6", medium build, blonde with blue eyes. Enjoys most things, football in small doses, cooking, sport and just chilling. Lived abroad for five years, likes to learn foreign languages. Seeking pen pals, 35-38. P283

Diane, (28), jet black hair and brown eyes. Enjoys swimming, walking, cinema, music and pubs. Single, caring, genuine, outgoing and faithful. Seeking pen pals, 25-35. Will answer each and every letter received. P284

Gerri, (36), slim, attractive brunette with outgoing and bubbly personality. Enjoys the finer things in life, running, walking, horse riding, keeping fit, socialising. No time to cook. Seeks genuine officer, with GSOH, any age group. Please supply photo. P285

Lisa, (31), single, seeking male pen pals, 28-35. Well then, action man, stop reading and start writing, over! P286

Tina, (44), 5'3", small build with chestnut brown hair. Enjoys pop/rock, cinema, TV, walking and travelling. Tolerant, loyal, sensitive with GSOH. Seeking single/divorced officer/soldier pen pals serving abroad or in the UK, 40-50. P287

Gillian, (38), 5'4", long dark brown hair and brown eyes. Loves animals, enjoys keeping fit, the countryside, renovating her old house and antiques. Seeking male pen pals with GSOH to share a few laughs and experiences with as a genuine friend, 35-44. P288

Nadia, (17), 5'6", slim with shoulder length light brown hair. Enjoys bowling, clubs and socialising. Seeking pen pals, up to the age of 27. P289

Tall, slim, attractive single employed mum with own house and car looking for pen pals any location age 35-45. Enjoys keeping fit, cycling, theatre, cinema, dancing, holidays and having fun. P290

Jacklyn, 5'7", brown hair and blue eyes with a wicked sense of humour. Studying for an OU degree and lives life to the full. Seeking pen pals, 25-45. P291

Angela, (35), 5'5", big blue eyes. Vivacious divorcee. Enjoys reading, cinema, theatre, music and meeting interesting and funny people. Seeking pen pals to share her wicked sense of humour. Photos please, 35+. P292

Typical 22 year-old, bubbly, good-natured, wanting more out of life. Height 5'6" with blue eyes. Looking for single soldiers, 21-29 to keep in contact with. Enjoys socialising and gym. Her dad was previously in the army. P293

Ann-Marie, (27), 5'7", slim with strawberry blonde hair. Enjoys swimming, walking, cinema, eating in or out, pubs and clubs. A single mum with GSOH. Seeking genuine pen pals, will reply to all letters, 27-35. P294

Heather, (33), 5'2", chef with blue eyes and blonde hair. Good/wicked sense of humour, animal lover, single with no ties. Enjoys walking the dog, going out and having a laugh with friends. She has a passion for wolves - the four-legged kind. Seeking male pen pal with GSOH. P295

Janice, (35), 5'4" with brown hair. Enjoys Aikido (martial arts), netball, dancing, watching cricket, pubs and clubs. Bubbly and talks a lot, works two jobs. Seeking pen pals, 30-40. P296

PEN PAL REPLIES:

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APPOINTMENTS

Major General: J C McColl, late R Anglian, to be Comdt JSCSC, Mar 03; M D Wood, late RLC, to be Dir Gen Defence Supply Chain, Aug 03; J A Gamon to continue as Chief Executive DDA.

Brigadier: A R Freer to be Comd Int Mil and Trg Team Sierra Leone/MA Gov of Sierra Leone, Jan 6; S V Mayall to RCDS, Jan 6; P R Newton to RCDS, Jan 6; S J L Roberts to RCDS, Jan 6; A R D Shirreff to RCDS, Jan 6; C W Tadier to RCDS, Jan 6; S M Andrews to DPS(A), Jan 6; J N Wolsey to Dir SPS(A), Jan 10; M D Wood to be Senior BLO USEUCOM, Jan 14.

Colonel: I D Cholerton to RCDS, Jan 6; M Cuthbert-Brown to be DCOS HQ 5 Div, Jan 6; D S J Homer to RCDS, Jan 6; J T Jackson to RCDS, Jan 6; S L Porter to Australia RCDS, Jan 10; A D H Budd to be Chief Media Ops AFNORTH, Jan 6; A P W Campbell to be COS HQ 2 Div, Jan 13; A J Foster to Col Mil Sec Soldiers, Jan 13; S C J Hutchinson to be Ch J1 KFOR, Jan 13; M D Relph to be Col Army Personnel Strategy, Jan 13; J D Wootton to be Col Manning (A), Jan 13.

Lt Col: Bijaykumar Rawat RGR to HQ BF Cyprus, Jan 13; W J F Bramble RA to CGS, May 5; G L Butt RA to HQ ATRA, Jan 13; A V Carradine RA to CDS, Feb 3; J R Chiswell, Para, to DCDS(C), Jan 6; M J Clements, R Irish, to be DA Vilnius, Mar 28; P W Glibbery, R Signals, to HQ SOinC(A), Nov 19; R C Goodall RRW to HQ AG, Oct 14; E Heritage, R

SEARCHLINE

14 Field Wksp REME Berlin: Former civilian mechanic Michael Goetzke, who was with the unit until disbandment in 1991, organises yearly reunions and would like to hear from all ex-members. E-mail MichaALT@aol.com

21 Signal Regiment. Ex-signaller Bill Pearson (1958-63) seeks mates from Laerbruch, Wildenrath, Bruggen and Geilenkirchen. He has located nine so far and has plans for a 21 Signals website. Write to him at 7 Fairview Crescent, Bacup, Lancs OL13 9LL or e-mail wd.pearson@ic24.net

Sherwood Foresters, 1946-52, Alan (Taffy) Richard, ex-Signals platoon and MT in Hamburg, Hildesheim and Goslar would like to hear from work colleagues, also families from Goslar. Telephone 01792 873775 or e-mail alanrichard@onetel.net.uk

Malta Platoon, RAOC Blackdown Barracks: Alan Kirkby passed out on March 19, 1976 and wants to contact other platoon members for reunion. Write to 6 Churchill Court, King Street, Dawley, Telford, Shropshire TF4 2AF.

Calling all sappers, Steve Rogers, RE 1971-92, was junior leader at Dover then served with 42 Fd Sqn, Tg Regt RE, 7 Fd Sqn, Army Apprentices' College Chepstow and 33 Ind Fd Sqn. He is keen to hear from old mates on stephen.rodgers705@ntlworld.co.uk

National Malaya and Borneo Veterans Association requires help in establishing branches in Scotland, Norfolk, Lancashire, Cornwall, Cambridge, Northampton, Cumbria, Dorset and Sussex. Open to all who served in Malaya, Borneo and Indonesia up to 1970. All enquiries and offers of help to nation-

Signals, to PJHQ(UK), Sep 16; R M Heward ACG(SPS) to SG, Oct 14.

M W Hiskett RRF to BLD IPT, Apr 21; R H Horner RA to DPS(A), Nov 4; J J Lemay RE to DOMA, Sep 12; I R McAlister, A and SH, to DASD, Jan 28; A D M Thomson REME to D Army RP, Jan 20.

SOLDIER COMPETITIONS

Race Tin (Jan) first prizewinner: J A Love, Gosport, Hants; runners-up: J Campbell, Ramsgate, Kent; C C Bernowski, Olton, Solihull, W Midlands. Answer: Ferrari.

Smack Down Shut Your Mouth (Jan) winners: O Barker, Ramsgate; LCpl Roche, BFPO 31. Answer: Hulk Hogan and The Rock.

Iron Storm (Jan) winners: Tpr M Butcher, Newton Abbot, Devon; 291 Cpl Lockett, Wareham, Dorset; D Irving, Church Crookham, Hants; D Andrews, Buckfast, Devon; K Bates, Amesbury, Wilts. Answer: 1964.

Marlborough (Jan) winner: Maj P Macfarlane, HQAG, Wilts; Answer: Sir Winston Churchill.

Soldiers and Sherpas (Jan) winner: M W Marshall, Mitcheldean, Glos. Answer: Ben Nevis.

DO you know this man? Mrs Kylie Mather, administration officer at the Army Winter Sports Association in Clayton Barracks, Aldershot, came across a framed photograph of Soldier X, right, in a second-hand shop and would like to return it to him or his family.

Kylie can be reached on 01252 348582 or (mil) 94222 3582.

ASSISTANCE TO AUTHORS

GHOST sightings or other paranormal activities experienced around Sennelager and Paderborn, especially in barracks and on training areas, required by writer Christiane Tucker. E-mails to Christiane555@aol.com

SHIPS officers sailing for Normandy on June 5, 1944 may recall, or still have, the good wishes and a poem, "God Speed", enclosed with their sailing orders by Wrens. A copy is needed to complete a book on WRNS services. Please contact Jenny Hamilton, 13 Totham Lodge, Richmond Road, Wimbledon SW20.

from Regina, Saskatoon, was a subaltern based at Seaford, Sussex around D-Day. Ex-infantry Wren Jenny Hamilton would like to dedicate a book to Rex. Write to 13 Totham Lodge, Richmond Road, Wimbledon, SW20.

National Ex-Services Association: Recently established London branch seeks veterans as members. Information from chairman Arthur Lane, 61 Charles Street, Stockport, Cheshire SK1 3JR or www.nesanews.cjb.net

Ex-LCpl Andy (Biggi) Bigginton, 19 Sqn and 21 Sqn RCT, now a firefighter, would love to hear from any old chums. Contact him at andrew.bigginton@kent.fire-uk.org or 18 Osborne Road, Broadstairs, Kent, CT10 2AE.

Any ex-5 Coy RASC Dusseldorf and Mülheim 1959-61, Ken (Binsie) Hinde would like to locate you. Tel 01246 827787 or e-mail to binsie_hinde@btopenworld.com

50 Group RADC Association is for all ex-ADC, RADC, QARANC dental personnel. Yearly reunions held and regular newsletters produced. Contact Roy Elliott, 12 Dumbrock Road, Milngavie, Glasgow G62 7RB, Tel 0141 955 1829 or royandval@tesco.net

Andrew Mark West, who was with the Army School of Catering in Aldershot 1980-81, is asked to contact Kirsty West at 12 Coronation Road, Durrington, Salisbury, Wilts SP4 8EB.

Ex-Hobbs Troop, Junior Leaders RCT, June 1983 intake sought for possible reunion. Contact Sean Pearson on 07753827281 or e-mail sean_d_pearson@hotmail.com

Ian McLaren would like to hear from anyone who served at Batus in 1972/74, particularly his best man Tom Spinks, R Signals. Replies to ian_mc@telusplanet.net



REUNIONS

RGBW: Back Badge Service, Gloucester Cathedral, 1215, Mar 16. Details from 01452 522682.

RHA Association, Trowbridge: 56th reunion dinner at the Civic Hall, Trowbridge, March 22. All past and present members of the RHA and ladies welcome. Full details from Maj (Retd) R J Whiteway, HQ Dulmen Station, BFPO 44, or Mike Carter on 01225 708233 or e-mail at dinnersec@rhaassn.fsnet.co.uk

75 HQ Sqn RASC/RCT: Centennial celebration, Mar 29, at 4 GS Regiment in Abingdon. For full details contact WO2 Mark Adams on 09256 3556 01235 543556.

69 (Centenary) Artillery Clerks: Reunion and association dinner, RA Sergeants' Mess, Woolwich, Apr 4-5. Details from WO1(SSM) A M Tibble AGC(SPS) on 01276 412250.

Duke of Lancaster's Own Yeomanry: Reunion Apr 5, TA Centre. Buffet, wine and tall stories. Details from D (DLOY) Sqn RMLY, Canal Street, Wigan Lancs WN6 7NQ or 01942 24882.

Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Regimental Association: Reunion, dinner and dance to be held in Hertford on Apr 19. Full details from John Baggard on 01234 294853 or johnbaggaridge@yahoo.com

63 Squadron RLC: Centenary, Roman Barracks, Colchester, Jul 26. Details from Capt A Loudon on 01206 783085 (mil 94651 3085) or SSM Sparrey on 01206 783066 (mil 94651 3066).

1, 4 and 7 Tank Regiments Old Comrades: Reunion at Renaissance Hotel, Solihull, May 2-4. Contact Geoff Bourne on 01752 880527.

5 Fd Amb: Reunion Oct 4 in Chester. Interested personnel should contact Axel Foley at muppet787@hotmail.com or 07801 443799.

Calling all ex-14 Field Wksp REME Berlin: Annual reunion is to be held at 6pm on Nov 1 at the SSV Casino, Streitstrasse 86, Spandau, Berlin. Point of contact is Michael Goetzke MichaALT@aol.com

Air Formation Signal Regiments' Association: Reunion for Army/RAF who served with AFSU or CAFSO, May 10, at Stoke-on-Trent.

Membership, details from Chris Collier on 01902 338662 or cecollier@supanet.com

Middlesex Regiment (DCO): Annual reunion at Victory Services Club, London on May 10. Members and families welcome. Details from Ron Morris on 020 8949 7605.

201 RCZ Workshop (V): 32nd joint mess reunion, open to former officers, SNCOs and families. Warwick area, May 16-17. Details from R F Smith, 6 St John's Place, Waterloo, Liverpool L22 5NP.

RAMC and RADC WOs' and Sgts' Mess Past and Present Dinner Club: Reunion to be held on May 31 at 34 Field Hospital, Queen Elizabeth Barracks, Streatham, York. For further details, contact Mrs Ann Bradley on 01276 41 2789.

Glosters, R Berks, Wilts, DERR, RGBW Regimental Association: Reunion, May 31-June 1, Devizes. Details from 01722 414536.

Movement Control WOs' Dinner Club: 40th reunion dinner to be held, Jul 4, at Daventry, Northants. Current and ex-MCWOS contact WO1 Nick Pidgley RLC 01264 285545 or e-mail nick@pidgers.freemail.co.uk

Squad 90, Int Corps enlistment: Reunion to be held Apr 24-25. Jez Tippett has details, e-mail JeremyOtter@aol.com

Glosters, R Berks, Wilts, DERR, RGBW Regimental Association: Reunion with 1 RGBW at Hounslow on Sept 6-7. Numbers required by May 1, details from 01722 414536.

5 Fd Amb: Reunion Oct 4 in Chester. Interested personnel should contact Axel Foley at muppet787@hotmail.com or 07801 443799.

Tours to mark next year's 60th anniversaries at Kohima and Imphal, Cassino and Anzio, Arnhem and the D-Day beaches are already being planned.

Highland Gunners bid farewell to Colchester

THE Highland Gunners – 19th Regiment Royal Artillery – will mark their departure from Colchester on March 6 with a regimental parade and march-past along Colchester High Street.

All past members of 19 Regiment who served in Colchester are invited to take part. They should telephone the event organiser, Maj Neil MacDonald, on 01206 783012 or (mil) 94651 3012 for details.

The regiment is moving to Larkhill, where it will be closer to other elements of 12 Mechanized Brigade, of which it is part.

Bound for Burma

PILGRIMAGE

Travel, the Royal British Legion's tours arm, is breaking new ground with a pilgrimage to Burma for former Chindits and their families.

It departs on April 2 and returns on April 15. Anyone who wants more details should ring the number below.

To obtain a copy of the Royal British Legion's 2003 brochure, which contains details of dozens of guided pilgrimages – many of them eligible for sponsored widows funding – and battlefield tours, call 01622 716729 or e-mail remembrancetravel@britishlegion.org.uk or visit www.remembrancetravel.com

Calls for more details should ring the number below.

and women 020 7723 5021; www.st-dunstans.org.uk

SAMA 82 (South Atlantic Medal Association) for Falklands conflict veterans 01495 227577 e-mail: densama@aol.com

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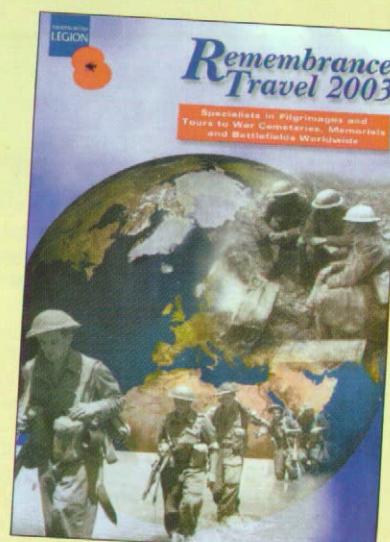
SSAFA Forces Help 020 7403 8783; www.ssafa.org.uk

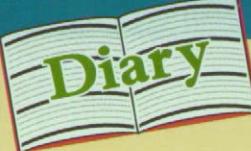
SSAFA Forces Help Housing Advisory Service 01722 436400

Veterans' Agency (includes War Pensions Agency) 0800 169 2277 (from UK); 0044 1253 866043 (from overseas); www.veteransagency.mod.uk

Victim Support Western Europe (SSAFA Forces Help) in Germany 02161 47 2272; from outside Germany 0049 2161 47 2272

WRVS General enquiries 02920 739906; www.wrvs.org.uk





DATES

JULY
18-20: Defence 2003, RAF Fairford (www.airtattoo.com)
AUGUST
1-23: Edinburgh Tattoo (tattoo office 0130 225 4783).

A journal of courage

* STORIES of great daring and unbelievable courage fill, unsurprisingly, the pages of the twice-a-year journal of the embryonic **Victoria Cross Society**.

Edited by Brian Best, it is sent to the 300-plus members of the society, which provides a forum for anyone with an enthusiasm for the ultimate award for courage in the face of the enemy.

If you want to join, send a cheque for £25 (£30 overseas) to the Secretary, The Victoria Cross Society, Kintons, Harlequin Place, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 1HZ (tel 01892 664234).

Incidentally, we have heard from author **David Harvey**, whose definitive two-volume *Monuments to Courage* has raised more than £20,000 for the Royal Star and Garter Home at Richmond, Surrey.

David, below, who was seriously injured in a hit-and-run incident while researching war cemeteries in France, has spent much of the past three years in hospital, where he

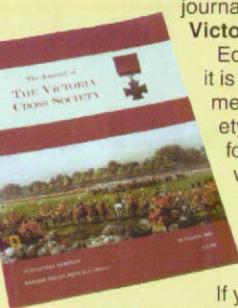
had his left leg amputated and underwent a series of operations on his back.

He tells us he is now at home in Angus, and hopes to be back in a wheelchair before long.

One legacy of David's massive work is that the sites of more than 20 previously unmarked graves of winners of the Victoria Cross have been furnished with headstones, and five more are at a planning stage.

* APPLICATIONS for scholarships from the **Guild of Air Pilots and Air Navigators** should be made by April 11 on the form available on the GAPAN website at www.gapan.org

On offer for 2003 are scholarships for full private pilot licence courses and flying instructor courses. Interviews will be held in London from mid-May.



Time catches up with heroes of El Alamein

MORE than 30 old soldiers who fought with the **Eighth Army** during the Second World War watched as their veterans' association standards were laid-up at the Imperial War Museum North in Manchester.

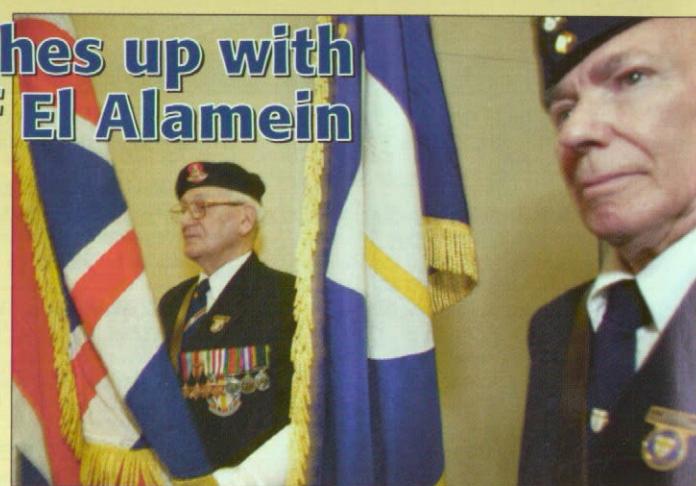
With most of its members now in their 80s, it was decided to disband the national committee of the Eighth Army Veterans' Association at the end of December.

Their part in history is assured. In 1942 they fought at El Alamein, regarded as one of the most important and pivotal battles of the Second World War.

Viscount Montgomery, son of their wartime leader, and Earl Kitchener of Khartoum, attended the laying-up ceremony, which was conducted by the Archdeacon of Manchester, the Ven Alan Wolstencroft. Also there were museum trustee Kate Adie and 12 mayors, including the lord

mayors of Manchester and Chester.

Although the association at a national level is now no more, a few branches have decided to carry on "as long as possible". Among them is Manchester's branch, on behalf of which Fred Hirst (01625 261 668) edits a news sheet. The Eighth Army Association was traditionally strongest in the North West and held an annual reunion at Blackpool.



Standard bearers: Eighth Army Veterans' Association members Edward Kelly, left, and John Connolly, parade their standards for the last time

This is Washington calling . . .



Pat hands over EM role

CAPT Pat Gibson, QARANC, left, officer commanding the Ethnic Minorities Recruiting Team (EMRT), hands over the reins to **Capt Leon Ayo** of 1 Kings.

Since it was established in 1997, the team's members have attended thousands of events all over the country, nurturing ethnic minority (EM) applicants through the recruiting process. The change of command took place at Clayton Barracks at Aldershot.

Serving soldiers from EM backgrounds who volunteer for the job spend two years with the team. Picture: Cpl Mark Ballantyne RLC



Dipen's Army jungle hat proves a tough customer

WHEN a battered jungle hat was found hanging from a bush by 8 Platoon, C Company, 2nd Battalion, The Gurkha Rifles, during a Pond Jump West exercise on Wainwright training area in Canada last year, section commander **Lt Dipen Libang**, left, a member of his own platoon. Dipen had been a

member of C (Gurkha) Coy, 2 Para when he mislaid it in 1999.

Proving that MoD issue kit will withstand the Canadian elements and wildlife, the hat has been washed, ready for use in Brunei's jungles next year, when 2 RGR swaps with 1 RGR.



Claire's a hit in Kabul

FORCES sweetheart Claire Sweeney became the first British entertainer to perform in Afghanistan during her ground-breaking tour of the Middle East with the Combined Services Entertainment team.

Claire went behind the scenes in military bases and troop locations in the Middle East and Kabul as well as visiting the ship's company of HMS *Argyll* and flying in an RAF Hercules.

She met troops stationed around Kabul and visited schoolgirls at the Alfaith High School, which British soldiers are helping with aid and a security presence.

Claire opened a power company workshop, built as a British military cooperation project in Kabul.

The multi-talented star spent weeks rehearsing a special show for thousands of soldiers, sailors and airmen. The spectacular hour-long concert, produced by CSE, featured classic numbers from the films "Moulin



"Rouge" and "Cabaret" and included a backing cast of singers and dancers, as well as comedy juggler Steve Rawlings.

Michelle takes a liberty



WHO'S that girl with a gun? It is none other than **Michelle** from pop group Liberty X, who toured military bases in Bosnia with the Combined Services Entertainment organisation and performed for, among others, soldiers serving with the Royal Scots. She is pictured dressed for the part at Prejedor in Bosnia.

Other outposts visited by the chart-topping fivesome – Michelle, Kelli, Jessica, Tony and Kevin – included Kotorvaros. They wowed their military audiences at the British Forces bases at Banja Luka and Mrkonjicgrad with their hit songs *Just A Little, Got To Have Your Love and Holding On For You*.

Over the three-day tour, the band members drove armoured vehicles of C Squadron, The Light Dragoons, visited the tracker dog section, had lunch in the officers' mess in Banja Luka and signed autographs and played pool with troops at Tommy Tucker's Bar. BFBS Bosnia Radio broadcast the shows.

Legends of the regiments and corps

44

Staffordshire Regiment Museum



Missing medals: Geoffrey Pratt, left, and Leslie Elsmore with LCpl George Pratt's set of medals and photograph

Lost and found

NEARLY 50 years ago, on July 9, 1943, LCpl George Pratt of Wolverhampton was one of a handful of soldiers from 15 Platoon, 2nd Battalion, The South Staffordshire Regiment, who, landing from gliders ahead of the main Allied assault on Sicily, captured the Ponte Grande, a key bridge.

For his part, LCpl Pratt received the Military Medal. But he lost touch with his regiment and former comrades after the war and when he died in the early 1970s his medals vanished.

MEDALS RANG A BELL

Last year the Staffordshire Regiment Museum was offered a medal set by badge collector Leslie Elsmore, who had acquired them by chance. The name on the medals, Pratt, rang a bell because George's brother, Geoffrey, had recently donated a model of the glider landing at the Ponte Grande bridge in memory of his brother.

With Geoffrey Pratt's agreement, the medals were handed over to the museum. George Pratt's Military Medal, now a treasured item in the museum's collection, was its first decoration for gallantry in the Sicily landings.

The Staffordshire Regiment Museum is adjacent to Whittington Barracks, north-east of Birmingham on the A51, between Lichfield and Tamworth. It is open weekdays all year, 1000-1600 and at weekends from April to October between 1230 and 1600. Tel 0121 311 3229.

www.armymuseums.org.uk

Switched on . . .



NO STRINGS ATTACHED ▲

INCORPORATING the same technology used by cordless phones, this PlayStation 2 controller from Logitech reduces cable clutter and allows gamers to move freely while playing.

A compact receiver, which connects to the PlayStation's controller port, lets players use the controller more than 20ft away from their console.

The controller, which has a 50hr battery life, features an eight-way pressure D-pad, eight action buttons and vibration setting.

① £49.99, from www.logitech.com

LIGHT ARMS ▼

THE next generation of light blaster for the next generation of gamer.

Boasting superb ergonomics, Logic 3's P9902 light blaster for the PS One and PlayStation 2 is G-Con2 compatible and comes with a reload footpedal, and auto-fire and auto-reload settings. It also sports a superb recoil effect – a realistic feature that will meet the approval of most soldiers.

The light blaster works with both *Time Crisis 2* and *Vampire Night*.

① £19.99, from www.logic3.com (0208 9022211).



DRIVE TIME ▲

COMPATIBLE with all PlayStation consoles, Logic 3's TopDrive Force racing wheel works with all driving games and features its own set of footpedals, realistic 14-button layout and an extremely comfortable sports handgrip.

With two levels of sensitivity, the wheel can be rotated by 180 degrees and has a feedback function, which allows gamers to actually "feel" the road.

① £59.99, from www.logic3.com (0208 9022211).

Game on . . .

HEARTS OF IRON, PC

OUT NOW

SET during the global struggle of the Second World War, this strategic war game is the first ever PC title to truly give players the decisions that will change the course of history.

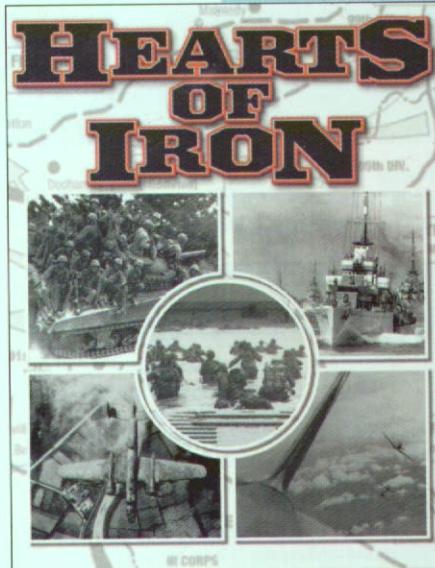
Developed by Paradox Entertainment, the team behind the award winning *Europa Universalis I* and *II*, *Hearts of Iron*'s game map spans the entire world and allows gamers to take the war to any new front of their choosing.

All the nations that existed between 1936 and 1946 can be controlled, but the game focuses on the epic struggle between the great alliances of the new world orders, fascism, communism and democracy.

The gameplay is suitably complex and features a unique system which simulates political systems and their effect on neutral nations in relation to alliances, more than 100 different ground, air and naval forces fighting at divisional level, and also a detailed cast list of historical generals and political leaders.

In addition, *Hearts of Iron* has its own scenario editor, which allows players to modify and construct their own settings and campaigns, and a multi-player option. Features that ensure gamers will keep coming back for more.

VERDICT: Not one to just pick up and play, but ideal company on a six-month tour of the Balkans. 8/10



WIN . . . WIN . . . WIN . . .

COURTESY of Koch Media, *Soldier* has ten copies of *Hearts of Iron* up for grabs. For your chance to win, simply tell us which conflict *Hearts of Iron* is based upon. Winners will be drawn at random from the correct answers received by April 1. Usual rules apply.

BYTE-SIZE NEWS

LONDON radio station Xfm has teamed up with Sony Computer Entertainment to launch a one-hour long weekly show called *The Third Place*, which promises to "provoke, inspire and stimulate" with a variety of uninterrupted "chilled out atmospheric grooves".

The show, which hit the airwaves at the end of January and is scheduled to run throughout 2003, is broadcast in the "post-clubland" slot of midnight until 1am on Sunday, and is produced by well-known radio figure Eddy Temple Morris.

LAST year the British public spent more than £2 billion on leisure software and hardware, making the UK the third biggest videogames market in the world behind only America and Japan.

SONY'S *The Getaway* stormed back to the top of the gaming charts following a hasty restock of the title.

The 18-rated gangster game had to be carefully edited when telecommunication giants British Telecom (BT) took exception to a scene in the original release, in which a BT engineer is run off the road and "disposed" of.

IGI 2: COVERT STRIKE, PC

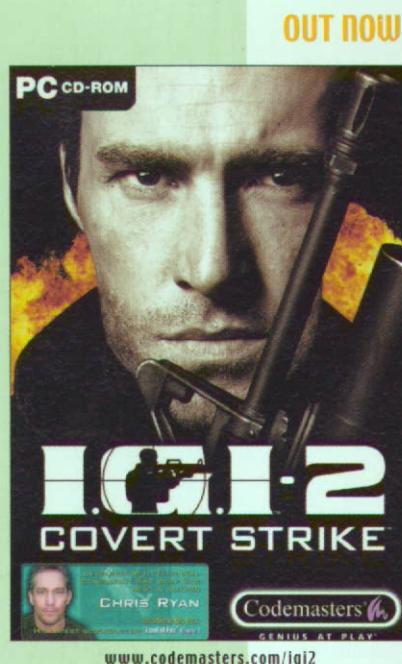
CODEMASTERS' *IGI 2: Covert Strike* brings the world of *Project IGI* back to PC screens as the acclaimed stealth-based first-person shooter returns, continuing the espionage theme of the original and featuring new multi-player arenas.

The game's missions of covert surveillance, stealth and blazing firepower continue the career of David Jones, once a key SAS member, who now works as a freelance operative for a secret organisation code-named IGI (Institute for Geotactical Intelligence).

Set soon after the events of the first game, Jones's assignment begins when he plunges into Russia to locate and retrieve any evidence of rumoured Electro Magnetic Pulse chips – new technology which IGI suspect could be employed in weapons development.

From Russia, the game's spiralling plot will transport players across Libya and into China, utilising locations including military airbases, harbours and secret government installations as a series of objectives are revealed.

Developed with the help of former SAS soldier and best-selling author Chris Ryan, the game features a vast array of realistically modelled weaponry, ranging



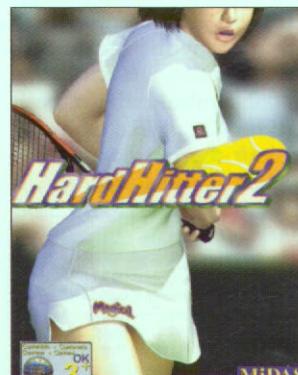
OUT NOW

PREMIER MANAGER, PS2

ARGUABLY the most complete football management game to date, *Premier Manager* allows wannabe Harry Redknapp to pick a team from one of five European leagues and take complete control of tactics, transfers, team management, squad rotation, finances and club development.

All of the action takes place in a 3D environment, within which players must interact with characters, fending off intrusive members of the press, massaging player's egos and asking the chairman for more funds.

HARD HITTER 2, PS2

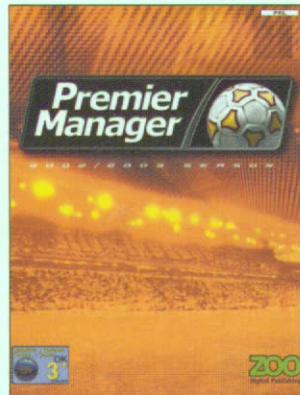


CENTRE Court: *Hard Hitter 2* builds on the success of its predecessor with improved ball physics, more stylish animated graphics and a host of new one and two player options.

Gamers can opt to guide their chosen player through a series of world-wide competitions, earning ranking points and prize money throughout the tournament year, or simply create their own unique character for a more personal challenge. However, as with most sports titles, *Hard Hitter 2* is best played with a mate.

VERDICT: Better than Rusedski. 8/10

OUT NOW



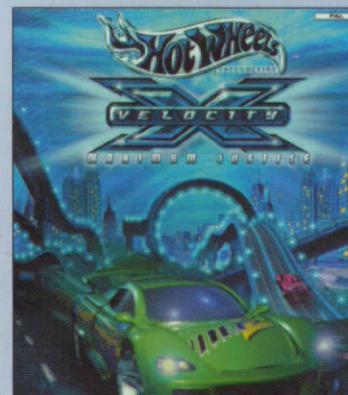
VERDICT: Football heaven. 9/10

HOT WHEELS: VELOCITY X, PS2

COMBINING cool cars, wild aerial stunts, blazing crashes, huge loops, banked turns, and lightning-fast speed with a destructible 3D environment, this mission-based racing adventure will push players' driving skills to the limit.

In *Hot Wheels: Velocity X*, gamers can also raise the stakes by choosing from an arsenal of futuristic weapons, with more than 12 offensive and defensive power-ups on offer.

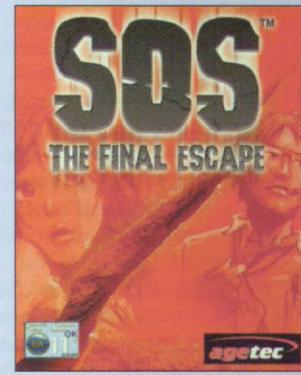
The game's 25 missions are also complemented by three different multi-player modes.



VERDICT: Good light-hearted fun. 7/10

OUT NOW

SOS THE FINAL ESCAPE, PS2



VERDICT: A truly novel release. 7/10

OUT NOW

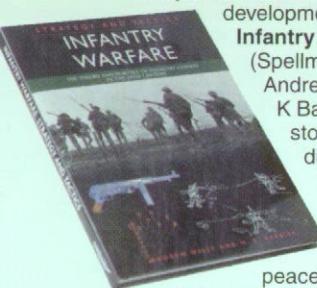
THIS action adventure title from Bigben Interactive pitches gamers into the realm of the unknown, to Capital City, a thriving industrial town, as it is ripped apart by violent earthquakes.

Assuming the role of an everyday civilian, gamers' sole objective is to find a safe pass out of the demolished city as it continues to shudder and fall from the ensuing aftershocks.

A harrowing sense of realism is created through these random quakes, which can hit anywhere and at any time, adding a chill of fear to the struggle for survival and affecting the gameplay.

Next up: robots to replace the infantry?

DRAMATIC changes have occurred in battlefield tactics over the past century: but are even more startling developments ahead? In *Infantry Warfare* (Spellmount, £18.99), Andrew Wiest and M K Barbier tell the story of combat during the past 100 years or so and go on to predict that although peacekeeping operations would still demand face-to-face contact, the future of combat may see some front-line soldiers being replaced by robots. Part of the Strategy and Tactics Series, this large-format volume is illustrated with more than 200 black-and-white photographs and artworks.



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Tank reference work a formidable feat

HOT in the tracks of one *Great Book of Tanks* (Soldier, February) comes an even greater one this month – *The Encyclopedia of Tanks and Armoured Fighting Vehicles* (Spellmount, £45). General editor Christopher F Foss leads an expert team who have produced a formidable and easily navigable

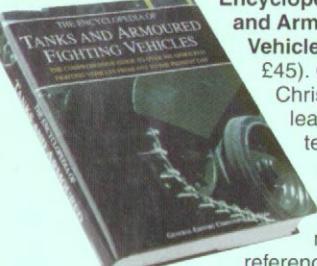
reference work

illustrated by more than 1,000 photographs and artists' diagrams. Detailed in its 544 pages are 900 tanks, armoured personnel carriers, tank destroyers, recce vehicles, armoured cars and self-propelled guns – organised first by country or region, then by vehicle type, and rounded off by a ten-page glossary.

How the 1939-45 war changed women's lives

DURING the Second World War the role of women in times of conflict changed for ever. All those between 18 and 60 had to register for war work and although a female auxiliary force of 25,000 was envisaged

– for routine domestic, driving and clerical work – by 1943 the Auxiliary Territorial Service had grown to almost ten times that many, including the all-female 93rd Searchlight Regiment. And of course, many other women in uniform routinely served under fire. Carol Harris tells the story in *Women at War in Uniform 1939-1945* (Sutton, paperback, £10.99).



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Rat race in the desert

Allies' proximity deepened 'latent Anglophobia'

An Army at Dawn: The War in North Africa 1942-43 by Rick Atkinson (Little, Brown, £20).

Review: Brian Jewell

A DETAILED history of the Second World War in North Africa from an American perspective was long overdue.

From a British standpoint we are not short of published information but where the involvement of the US is concerned we have been left comparatively in the dark. This new book by Pulitzer prizewinner Rick Atkinson, first of *The Liberation Trilogy*, helps to redress the balance.

It takes us, in 681 pages, from the Allied landings in North West Africa in November 1942 to the fall of Tunis to the Allies on May 13, 1943.

The volume is essentially the story of how the American army metamorphosed, from tentative beginnings, into a war-winning fighting force.

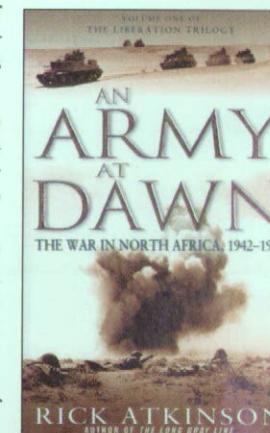
In meticulous detail, Atkinson describes the setting-up of the Allied chain of command, with Eisenhower as supreme commander, the massing and shipment of a great force of men and materiel across the Atlantic, and landings on African soil under Gen George Patton.

Atkinson has researched his subject in great depth, giving us an almost minute-by-minute account of developments both political and military.

He lifts the lid on the relationships between the commanders themselves, as well as with the French, in an entertaining way.

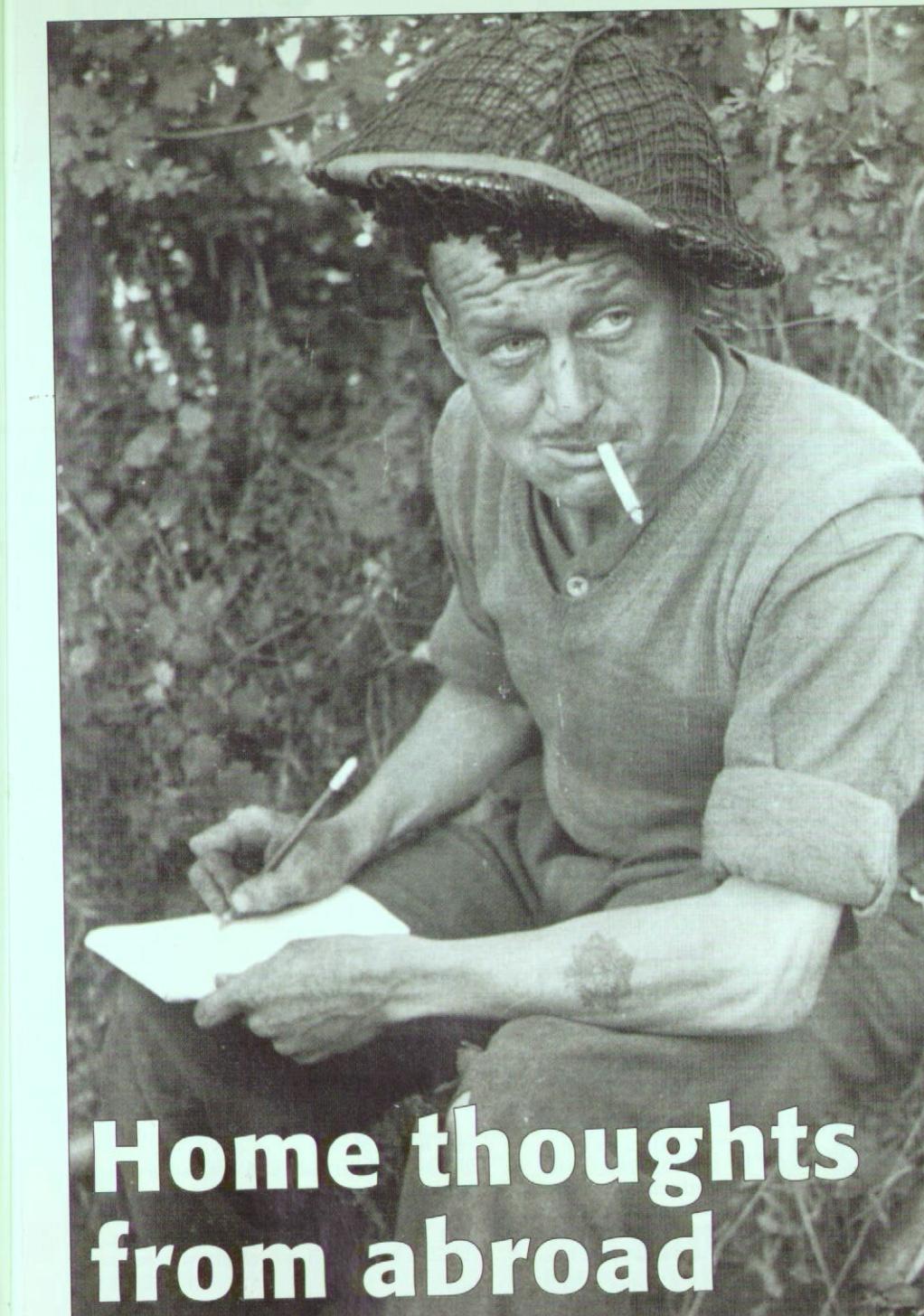
Dealing with the slippery Admiral Darlan, known to the American military as "that little son-of-a-bitch", ended when the admiral was assassinated by a French patriot. The author's description of the funeral is worthy of a film noir.

The pains and miseries suffered by the American forces and their allies, many of them quite inexperienced, as they inched their way eastwards in the teeth of tenacious German resistance, make for harrowing read-



Soldier ordering service

All books mentioned on these pages are available from Helion & Company, who can also supply 14,500 in-print military books and operate a free booksearch; p&p is extra. All major credit/switch cards taken. Please allow up to 28 days for delivery. Helion & Company, 26 Willow Road, Solihull, West Midlands B91 1UE, England (tel 0121 705 3393; fax 0121 711 4075). E-mail: books@helion.co.uk Website: <http://www.helion.co.uk>



Home thoughts from abroad

THESE days there are e-blueys and sometimes even mobile phones, writes Chris Horrocks.

In the Second World War and in most conflicts of the 19th and 20th centuries, the squaddie had to rely on the written word to communicate from a theatre of war – just like the British soldier above scribbling a note home to his father from Normandy in 1944.

The picture is taken from the attractively presented *Letters from the Front* (Brassey's, landscape hardback, £14.95), in which Judith Millidge tells the absorbing story of personal correspondence, from the American War of Independence in 1775 through almost to the present.

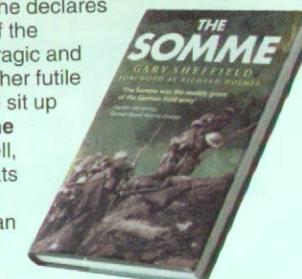
Though many of the examples are American, there is a substantial British representation, including two vivid descriptions of life in Afghanistan – one from a male officer in 1879, another from a female Royal Signals corporal in February, 2002, which ends: "Hopefully we should be home in mid-April. I hope it's sooner as I miss home very much."

What is somehow reassuring about this book is its confirmation that, in this world of electronic mail, the mobile phone and other ephemera, letters are still written between soldiers and their loved ones.

So there may still be a record of how people thought and felt at any given time – and raw material for more books as good as this.

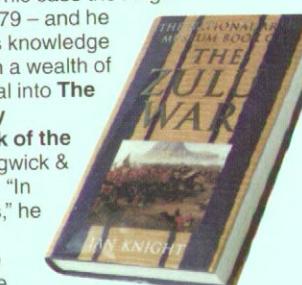
Fresh perspective on Somme battle

AS a leading military academic and expert on the First World War, Dr Gary Sheffield's is an authoritative voice. So when he declares that the Battle of the Somme, while tragic and bloody, was neither futile nor a defeat, we sit up and listen. In *The Somme* (Cassell, £14.99), he treats the battle as a whole rather than focusing on the first day, and concludes that over several months it may not have been an outright victory but was certainly a strategic success. Dr Sheffield is Land Warfare Historian on the Higher Command and Staff Course at Shrivenham.



Zulu War book will stir more interest

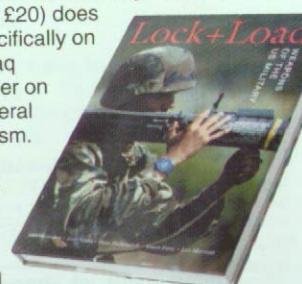
LIKE Gary Sheffield, Ian Knight is widely regarded as a leading expert in his field – in his case the Anglo-Zulu War of 1879 – and he has applied his knowledge and skill to turn a wealth of archive material into *The National Army Museum Book of the Zulu War* (Sidgwick & Jackson, £20). "In many respects," he says of the conflict, "in the years since the last shots were fired, it has achieved a prominence out of all proportion to its strategic significance at the time." Ironically his book is good enough to create another surge of interest in the war.



Current snapshot of America's arsenal

UNFORTUNATE timing means that the text of *Lock and Load: Weapons of the US Military* (Salamander, £20) does not focus specifically on the current Iraq situation, rather on the more general war on terrorism.

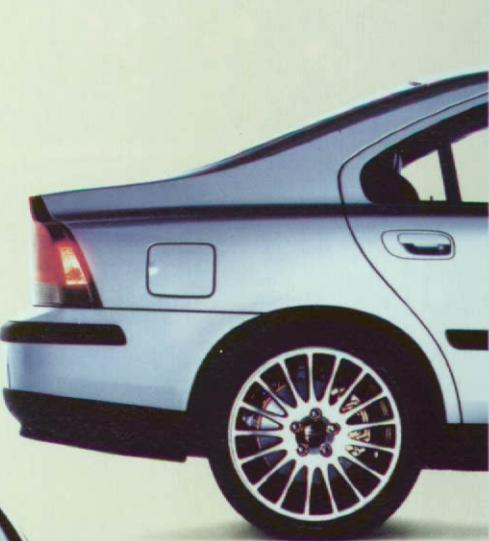
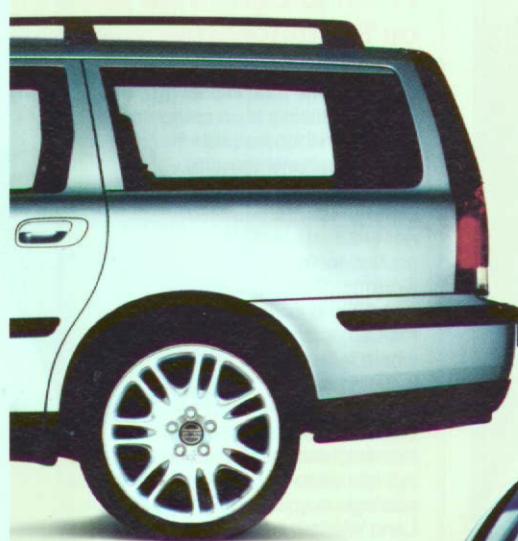
We are told, however, that what we are getting here are "the weapons and troops of the American armed forces today". In this sense the book could prove a valuable companion as we watch events unfold. The credit for this large-format, well-illustrated volume go to Angus Konstam, Jerry Scutts, Hans Halberstadt, Simon Forty and Leo Marriott.



● Books in brief – Page 71



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MUSIC
Gordon Turner

Great stuff from Irish


Great Irish Marches (BNA 5175)

THIS is a superbly played and presented programme of Irish music from the Drums and Fifes of the 1st Battalion Irish Guards.

The title, **Great Irish Marches**, aptly describes this recording. There is a generous helping of traditional airs, (many of which are rarely heard today), a few tunes that originated in the American Civil War, such as *Dixie* and *Marching Through Georgia* and three excellent marches – *The Irish Guards* and *The Aerial Review* (both by Albert Shrimpton) and *The Kosovo Micks* by Drum Maj Paul Teague.

The inlay is a 20-page booklet written by Paul Teague in which he describes the music. (Available from Bandleader Recordings, 46 High Street, Rochester, Kent ME1 1LD, £13 incl p&p.)

On Her Majesty's Service (SFZ 111)

THE Band of the Coldstream Guards recording released to coincide with its visit to Japan is an ambitious and entertaining programme which includes *Fanfare for a Festival*, *Fiesta*, *Stephenson's Rocket*, *Monck's March*; music by the Beatles, Lloyd Webber and themes from 007 films.

There are also two superb solos, *Concertino for Flute* and *Napoli*, which features the euphonium. *Monck's March* is in reality an overture telling the story of General Monck and his regiment marching from Coldstream to London in 1660.

The playing is quite outstanding. **On Her Majesty's Service** is issued by Egon and is available from the Band of the Coldstream Guards, Wellington Barracks, Birdcage Walk, London SW1E 6HQ, price £13 incl p&p (cheques payable to the Band of the Coldstream Guards).

The Stafford Knot (MMCD 504)

THE Staffordshire Regiment Museum has released an excellent compilation of music taken from four LPs made by their Regimental Band in the days when such bands existed.

There is a good mixture of regimental music, concert works, parade marches and bugle calls. Considering that some of the tracks were recorded almost 40 years ago the sound is very good. **The Stafford Knot** consists of two CDs in one case and is available from the Regimental Museum, The Staffordshire Regiment, Whittington Barracks, Staffordshire WS14 9PY, price £11.99 incl p&p.

• If you have difficulties obtaining recordings or any queries on military music please write to me c/o *Soldier*.

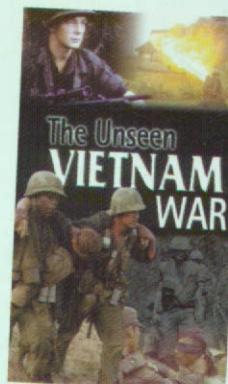
VIDEO/DVD

Vietnam archive sheds new light

PREVIOUSLY unseen and classified military material is included on a new video double-pack drawing on more than 20,000 reels of film stored in official US Military archives.

The Unseen Vietnam War, released by DD Video (hotline 01829 741490), ranges from the intense fighting during the Tet offensive in Hué and Saigon to American helicopter strikes against the Viet Cong. It also looks at the life of a GI during his tour of duty and the strategy and tactics of the war. (Price £14.99.)

BOXED sets of **Ealing Studios war films**, **British comedy favourites** from the 1940s to the 1960s, and feature films starring



Tommy Trinder, **Will Hay** and **George Formby** are also available from DD Video or all good retailers. (All the sets are priced £44.99.)

IF you want a good chuckle, try **Black Knight** and **Big Momma's House**, two Martin Lawrence comedies released for sale by Twentieth Century Fox.

In **Black Knight**, Martin is a bumbling medieval theme park worker whose life is transformed when he falls into a moat and wakes up in England in the year 1328. **Big Momma's House** sees Martin disguise himself as a 70-year-old Southern nanny to track down a dangerous bank robber. (Both titles are available as a double pack in VHS, £13.99, and DVD, £19.99.)

BOOKS IN BRIEF

Military Vehicle Modelling by Phil Greenwood. Excellent illustrated guide to skills and techniques. (The Crowood Press, paperback, £16.99.)

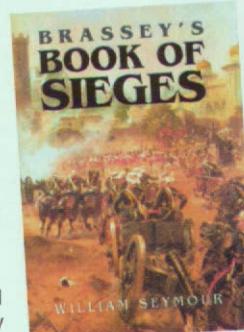
A Doctor's Visits by Ian Brown. Former RAMC officer's informative and entertaining memoirs cover his Second World War service in North Africa and Italy as well as an insight into the workings of the NHS. (The Book Guild, £16.95.)

Alvis Saracen Family and Humvee by Bill Munro. Separate books focusing on these famous vehicles by London cab driver turned military vehicle historian. (Crowood, £19.95 each.) See also *Jeep – from Bantam to Wrangler* by the same author.

Hot Blood and Cold Steel edited and compiled by Dr Andy Simpson. Life and death in the First World War trenches – told in the words of front-line soldiers. First published in 1993. (Spellmount, £20.)

Brassey's Book of Sieges by William Seymour, with illustrations by Lt Col W F N Watson. Fascinating study spanning nine centuries by Second World War special forces officer. First published in 1991. (Brassey's, £20.)

Bounce the Rhine by Charles Whiting. Originally published in 1985, the ninth title in the ten-volume Siegfried Line series. (Spellmount, £16.99.)



Warriors for the Working Day by Romy Wyeth. Local history with a difference – stories of the Wiltshire village of Codford, with its long Army connections, during the two world wars. (HobNob Press, Salisbury, £15; tel 01747 830015.)

British Army Handbook 1939-45 by George Forty. First published 1998. (Sutton, paperback, £14.99.)

Answering the Call. Letters from the Somerset Light Infantry 1914-1919, edited and compiled by John H F Mackie. The story of James R Mackie's war, told through his letters from the front. (Raby Books, £18.95.)

With Turbans to Tuscany by E V Byers. The story of a Royal Engineer's Second World War experiences with the Indian Army. Available from Mrs C M Byers, 14 Main Street, Kinoulton, Nottingham NG12 3EA. (Published by the author, £9 incl p&p UK, £10 Europe.)

The Forgotten Tragedy by Brian James Crabb. Account of the loss of the troopship *Lancastria* off St Nazaire in 1940. With as many as 2,000 lost, it remains Britain's worst maritime tragedy, and a little-known one at that. Detail was suppressed at the time to prevent morale from falling at home. (Shaun Tyas/Paul Watkins Publishing, £19.95. Available from the author on 0117 9737613 days or briancrabb@tesco.net)

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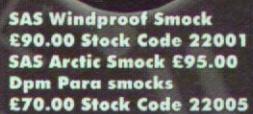


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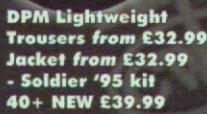
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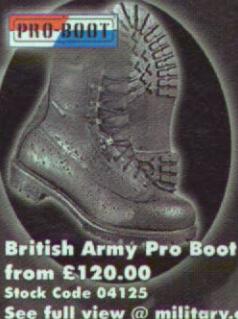
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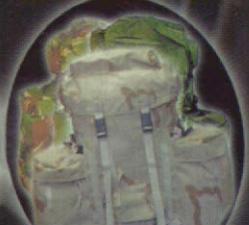
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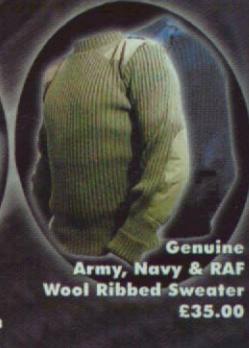
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SOLDIER to soldier

Problems with girls

WOMEN soldiers are regarded as "problematic" according to new research, which also concludes that attempts to attract and integrate them in the Army are being undermined by a "historically masculine" culture.

The report, by the Universities of Newcastle upon Tyne and Sunderland and partly funded by the MoD, gave national newspaper commentators plenty to chortle about. Suggestions that units should be "staffed", not "manned", and that calling women "girls" was belittling in a way that calling men "boys" wasn't, were greeted with not entirely undeserved derision.



But the crux of the report was that its authors found the Army "is still a traditionally masculine organisation which is only adapting gradually to the inclusion of women – and this adaptation process is uneven through the ranks".

It also found that media images of soldiers did the Army no credit, with women either "sexualised" or portrayed as gutsy tomboy figures who will never be quite good enough to be real soldiers.

"The Army," says the report, "needs to take on board and promote the idea that a woman soldier can be just that – a soldier who is a woman."



A RESERVIST concerned about compulsory call-up telephoned us because he was "over 50" and worried his age meant he would miss out on going to the Gulf.

Many of the youngsters in his Territorial Army unit had received their papers, but he and other more mature members had not. Did this mean they were too old? With advice from Land Command, we were able to assure him it did not.

Meanwhile, our teams covering Op Telic in Germany, Colchester and elsewhere report that everywhere they went the military was "up for the challenge" and pleased the waiting was over.

Useful contacts for Gulf families

BY the time you read this, thousands of soldiers from the UK and Germany will have deployed to the Gulf, so I've used my column this month to list useful contacts for soldiers and their families.

First place to go for help is your **Unit Welfare Office**, which will know most about what's going on.

For general info, help and advice, families can contact their local **HIVE, Army Welfare Service** office, **SSAFA-Forces**, their **Army Families Federation (AFF)** volunteer or co-ordinator, or AFF Central Office.

Details of all local welfare support are in the **Service Community Official Guides** issued direct to all quarters, or at www.army.mod.uk/aws

The Army Welfare Service provides a comprehensive and confidential support service to all single and married personnel and their families. For details of where to find the nearest AWS office, contact AWS, HQ Land Command, Erskine Barracks, Wilton, Salisbury SP2 0AG, tel 01722 436569.

The Army Welfare Service also runs the **Families and Friends Information Pages** on the Army website under the Soldier Welfare and Family button at www.army.mod.uk/soldierwelfare

These pages carry the latest information for families on Op Telic. The **Army Families Advice Bureau** can be contacted on the same number, and can give, or signpost to, information and advice on almost any topic. You can also e-mail them with a query at afab@hqland.army.mod.uk

SSAFA-Forces Help can be approached in confidence for advice on any matter. For details of local SSAFA social workers or volunteers, contact **UK SSAFA-FH**, 19 Queen Elizabeth Street, London SE1 2LP, tel 0207 403 8783; **Germany SSAFA-FH**, Trenchard Road 20, 41179 Monchen-gladbach, Germany. Or visit the SSAFA-FH website at www.ssafa.org.uk

HIVE information centres can be found in 145 locations worldwide and offer a wide range of information of use to families and Service personnel. For details of a HIVE in your area contact **HIVE GB** at HQ Land Command, Erskine Barracks, Wilton, Salisbury SP2 0AG, tel 01722 436498/499 or e-mail hivegb@hqland.army.mod.uk
HIVE BFG – G1 Branch, HQ UKSC(G), BFPO 14, tel (local) 02161 472 2029, e-mail hive.library@bfgnet.de
HIVE NI – HIVE Central Office, HQNI, BFPO 825, tel 02892 266379, e-mail resource_ni@hotmail.com
 Find out more about HIVEs on their pages on the AWS website at www.army.mod.uk/aws



**Sue Bonney is
Editor of the AFF
Families Journal**

Help,

The Army Families Federation (AFF) is a unique two-way communication channel between the Army and its families. If you have any concerns, or need any information or advice, just contact us – if we don't know the answer, we can signpost you to someone who does.

The AFF website will be regularly updated with news, information and advice as it comes in to AFF. Visit the special Op Telic pages on the website at www.aff.org.uk, which are also linked to the family and news pages on the Army website.

For details of your local AFF volunteer or co-ordinator contact:

AFF Central Office, Trenchard Lines, Upavon, Pewsey, Wiltshire SN9 6BE, tel 01980 615525; e-mail us@aff.org.uk

AFF Germany, Block 4, Harewood Barracks, Herford Station, BFPO 15, tel (local) 05221 995 3755; e-mail armyfamiliesfederation@hotmail.com

AFF Northern Ireland, HQ Northern Ireland, BFPO 825, tel 028 9226 6875, e-mail affni@hotmail.com

AFF Cyprus, Block E, Episkopi Support Unit, BFPO 53, tel (local) 25 962 110; e-mail armyfamiliesfed@cylink.com.cy
AFF worldwide website: www.aff.org.uk

Information for TA and Reservists

The Army website at www.army.mod.uk/ta lists some comprehensive questions and answers to assist deployed TA and Reservists. Reservists can also call the MoD hotline on 0870 607 4455 (Mon-Fri 0900-1800) and Regular Reservists can call their Helpdesk on 0141 224 2660/3746/3765. Members of the TA with queries should first contact their unit.

The Confidential Support Line (CSL) is run by SSAFA-Forces Help for soldiers and their dependents. It was set up mainly to address issues associated with harassment and equal opportunities, but its staff can provide support and advice with any emotional or psychological problem. The line operates seven days a week from 1030 to 2230 (UK time) and you can call it from anywhere in the world. See Useful Numbers in Page 63. You can also now email the CSL on csl@ssafa.org.uk



This answer wasn't the solution

THE response from DI Trg Pol(A) to a letter from a permanent staff instructor serving with a Territorial Army medical unit ("How can I instruct from an out-of-date manual", Jan) demonstrates a fundamental lack of understanding.

Regardless of what is the definitive pamphlet from which to give NBC instruction, the fact remains that "Survive To Fight" is the definitive aide memoire issued to soldiers and it is user-friendly. If it is issued to Regular soldiers during recruit training it should be issued to TA soldiers on enlistment, particularly as DI Trg Pol(A) is still not in a position to deliver formalised recruit training to the TA.

The only impractical proposition is the ludicrous offer of CDs to support instruction and Individual Training Directive 4. This is unlikely to provide substantial benefit to a TA unit with limited and outdated IT and audio-visual equipment. It also fails to recognise the training and operational need of all soldiers (TA and Regular) to have personal access to the latest "Survive To Fight" pamphlet.

DI Trg Pol(A) might wish to reflect on the effect this type of response has on the TA in general, particularly on the significant number of TA personnel (many in the Medical Services) who are about to deploy. — **Lt Col (Retd) P W Barnes, Medical Branch, HQ 4 Div.**

Paying to park

I WOULD be interested to know if there is anyone else in the Army who has to pay for car parking at their place of work.

Those of us who work at the military hospital unit at Frimley Park are required to purchase a pass so that we can park our own vehicles on site. Makes us wonder if we are still in the Army or just a part of the NHS. — **Lt Col A D Hendrickse, 16 CSMR.**

YOUR letters provide a real insight into the issues at the top of your agenda... but please keep them as short as possible.

The more space you take up to get your point across, the less room there is for other letters, and we are anxious to use as many as we can.

E-mails should include your name and location at the bottom (not necessarily for publication).

Anonymous contributions will be binned. The Editor reserves the right to accept or reject letters, and to amend for length, clarity or style.

Please be brief

MoD should open its very own bank

I AM a single WO2 based in Germany. I have held a Visa credit card with a high street bank for the past decade, presumably building a credit rating. Periodically the bank tells me that because I manage my personal finances so well they are raising my credit limit.

Prize letter

While attempting to apply for credit elsewhere by phone, navigating my way through an automated answering service, I am put on hold in a queue. I introduce myself as a member of the Armed Forces overseas and am put through the ordeal of surrendering personal details, only to be told: "Personnel in the Armed Forces are not eligible to apply."

As a further irritant I am informed that my credit history is not a relevant factor as I do not have a UK postcode.

In the 21st century the purchase of

goods with cash is outdated and credit companies are bending over backwards to attract customers. Forces personnel fall into the "very traceable" category and generate a lot of business as they often rely on credit cards during deployments. Why, then, is the privilege of choice for credit for us non-existent?

Maybe the MoD should consider setting up its own bank for the military and civil service. It could compete with the high street banks while offering competitive credit facilities — the accumulated transfer of business away from the credit companies might bring home to them how significant a customer base we are.

The alternative is for the credit companies to amend their databases to accept BFPO addresses... just a thought. — **WO2 S Lambourne RLC, BFPO 44.**

Worth being demoted to get a Type Z room

I AM a 30-year-old single sergeant serving in Aldershot and currently living in the antiquated Garrison Sergeants' Mess, of which more later.

Before this, as a recent divorcee, I lived for two years in a misappropriated family quarter, which was ideal as it allowed me to make use of my possessions rather than have to dispose of them or pay for their storage for three years. Unfortunately, because the quarter was needed for a family, I was required to move into the mess and had to put my possessions into storage after all.

My room is about 7ft by 10ft, it has a single bed, a sink which has seen better days, a small fitted desk just big enough for a TV and some CDs, and a fitted single and double locker.

I did have an Army chair, but as it blocked my way to the door — hazardous in the event of fire — I decided it was safer to use my bed as a seat. I have no floor space for anything else. I have two plug sockets and had to buy a power aerial (which is still not adequate to get a good picture) for the TV.

The radiator does not go above lukewarm and makes a knocking noise in the night and it takes ten minutes to run the

sink tap for hot water. I have the shared use of three showers and two tiny toilet cubicles, and washing machines — when they're working.

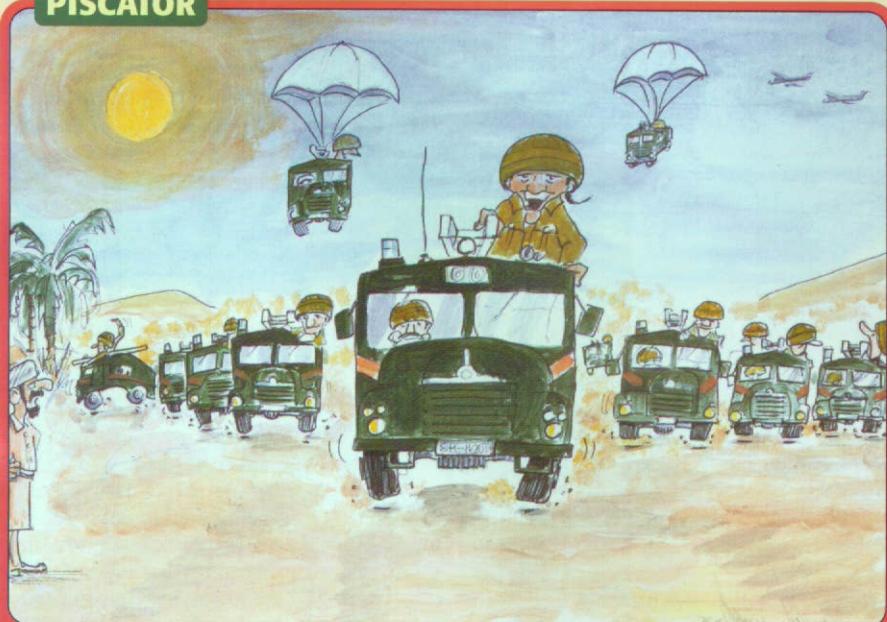
Having got that off my chest, here's the reason I wrote. I have read about Type Z accommodation and seen the images of nice rooms with *en suite* facilities, which, it seems, are only for junior ranks and below. I can only presume that this initiative is to keep young soldiers happy and persuade them to stay in the Army.

I'm all for that but when it comes to a private living in Type Z accommodation after two years in the Army and a SNCO of 14 years' service living in the conditions I have described, I feel I have a right to complain. Is it because the Army feels that SNCOs want a career and still enjoy the Army way of life that it feels no need to look after us any more?

I believed that if I stayed in long enough and earned some stripes I would eventually reap the benefits of being a SNCO, but I guess I was wrong.

It might make more sense to transfer to an infantry unit and demote myself by three ranks to get a decent standard of living. — **Sgt Mark Holland, RMP, Aldershot.**

PISCATOR



The Reserve

Win a superb ABF T-shirt. What is the nickname for the appliances used by the British Army during strikes by the Fire Service? Is it:

a) Green Tea, b) Green Goddess, c) Green Hero, d) Jolly Green Giant?

Answers on a postcard to ABF Competition Desk, 41 Queen's Gate, London SW7 5HR. The first ten correct entries out of the hat will win a T-shirt. Please specify size (M/L/XL).



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You can't have double medals

IN 2001 I completed a tour of duty in Kosovo. During that period I was offered and took the opportunity to take ten men to the Manyaka ranges in Bosnia to participate in a sniper cadre. I left Kosovo about a week before the cadre was due to arrive.

During our time there we were (in my eyes) operational as we had to provide our own armed escorts from within the cadre, as well as man the Ops room and supply a quick-reaction force – the period involved coincided with the September 11 tragedy.

In total I was in Bosnia for 38 days and,

prior to leaving, I received a Bosnia Medal from the in-theatre medals office.

On returning to my unit in Kosovo I was told that I could not wear the Bosnia Medal as I was not part of the Stabilisation Force commitment, although, as I have already stated, in my opinion we were operational.

Furthermore, the time I spent in Bosnia does not show on my Pampas print-out. Could someone please explain to me why this is the case. – 24755811 Cpl Mark Harvey, Training Wing, Black Watch, Fallingbostel.

men and women from claiming "double medals" for the same campaign is long established. In fact, it has been in place since the Korean War. The rule is one tour, one medal. Cpl Harvey's Pampas records are a matter for his unit. – Editor

G We have been told that Cpl Harvey is not entitled to a Bosnia Medal because he has already been issued one for service in Kosovo (Operation Agricola 6).

The medal policy which prohibits Service-

PS...

Termite takes look

I AM a corporal in the Australian Army on ops in Bougainville in the South Pacific.

I was surfing the net and came across your site www.soldiermagazine.co.uk. It was good to see that your magazine is similar to ours in that you have articles from around the world and about Exercise Long Look.

My unit in Australia is 35 Water Transport Squadron, based in Townsville. We are called Termites by other units back home. I work as a stevedore, the same as your people in 17 Port and Maritime Squadron, who I have worked with during their time in Australia on Long Look. – Cpl Paul Kleidon, Townsville, Queensland, Australia.

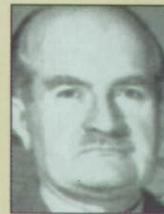
Legendary Bill Slim

I READ your article in Legends of the Regiments and Corps (Feb) concerning Monty's lost stripe. I note that you said he was the Royal Warwickshire Regiment's most famous soldier.

Can I suggest that another (seemingly forgotten) soldier who was serving with a Territorial battalion of the Royal Warwickshires on the outbreak of the Great War, was/is equally famous?

I refer to Fd Marshal William Joseph Slim. I think he achieved as much, if not more than Monty.

After all, Fd Marshal Slim started his career as a member of a University Officers' Training Corps Unit, even though he wasn't a student of that university. His subsequent career speaks for itself. – Chas Kenny, Ilford, Essex.



Achieved much:
Fd Marshal Slim

That's me, that is



I AM writing to you about the story "Yorkies refresh in Scotland" (Page 43, Feb). The caption to one of the photographs [reproduced above] identifies an infantry soldier in a sangar as Pte Simon Taylor of the 1st Battalion, The Prince of Wales's Own Regiment of Yorkshire. It isn't... it's me.

I am currently serving on an S-type engagement for six months with 1 PWO in Omagh. – Pte John Hunter, Quebec (PWO) Company, East and West Riding Regiment.

Disturbance Allowance discriminates against singlies

WITH regard to the qualifying criteria for Disturbance Allowance, what is publicly-funded accommodation? In my view, if a barrack block is publicly owned so are married quarters.

I am aware that they have been bought by a private company but rents are subsidised by public funds. The only descriptions I can find of non-publicly funded accommodation is one which has a private rent on it, levied by the council or private owner, or one which is having a mortgage paid on it.

Having served both as a married and a single soldier I know that posting creates problems for both and it is an inconvenience to both.

However, don't say that it is more difficult for married personnel to move. Their new quarter is normally ready and available for them prior to moving; if not they are accommodated at public expense. Pressure on the move is alleviated since they can have what is called a "full removal service".

The only real problem that I see is for the spouse to find a new job and to move the children to a new school.

This system of eligibility for Disturbance Allowance discriminates against the single soldier.

It is about time that the system recognised that single soldiers face the same turmoil as married personnel. I am not asking for the same rate of allowance as married personnel, but something to assist would compensate us for having to move our furniture.

I moved recently at my own expense as no reasonable method of moving my furniture was available through the current system. — **SNCO name and address supplied.**

Psst . . . want a used Saxon?

CAN anyone explain to me the Army/MoD disposal of military kit policy?

One of my soldiers claimed to have surfed the web and found a site where he could get an "ex-war reserve stock" British Army Saxon for under £10,000.

I looked it up and was surprised to discover it was true. Not just Saxons, but armoured personnel carriers, tanks and much more; all legitimate "war reserve stock".

Has Bicester run out of space? Why are most reserve units still training with well-overdue-for-retirement



Bedford four-tonners when nearly new kit is being disposed as "ex stock"? Our Bedfords are about to undergo yet another end-of-life upgrade while newer kit is being sold to collectors.

As if it's not enough to see nearly-new or new clothing and personal load-carrying equipment (PLCE) in military surplus stores, our vehicles are going the way of the Dodo.

By recycling internally on both counts we could save a fortune on the MoD's clothing and equipment budget. — **SNCO name and unit supplied.**

time of disposal, most armoured vehicles would need to be repaired in-depth to make them fully operational — a very expensive, specialist process.

It is also sometimes possible for prototypes, concept demonstrators, and unsold export models to be bought direct from the original equipment manufacturers.

Surplus equipment passed to the DSA is sold by competitive tender, public auction or through a marketing partnership with industry to get the best return for the taxpayer. The DSA currently has sole authority to act to dispose of all surplus MoD equipment and surplus stock.

Armoured vehicles are usually sold through competitive tender, surplus MoD vehicles (non-armoured) are sold through the contractor Witham (Specialist Vehicles) Ltd and surplus clothing is sold via the contractor Field Textiles Ltd.

Details of all contractors and DSA sales and activities can be found on DSA's website — www.disposalservices.agency.mod.uk

B The Defence Logistics Organisation (DLO), in consultation with the Disposal Services Agency (DSA), replies: Soft-skinned cargo and utility vehicles are disposed of either because they are surplus to requirement or because they are beyond economical repair. It may be that some vehicles presented for disposal are in better order than some of those with units, but it is likely that they will also be a different variant.

With the cargo vehicle fleet, there are no nearly-new examples in service. All the Bedford and Leyland cargo vehicles have exceeded their planned life.

Armoured vehicles may also be disposed of for the same reasons. There has, for example, been a steady reduction in the Combat Vehicle Reconnaissance (Tracked) (CVR(T)) and Fighting Vehicle 430 (FV430) fleets over the years as the Army's size, capability and force structure has changed.

A very small number of Saxon APCs have also been disposed of via the DSA. At the

report interview, I noticed that my efforts had not been recognised. I questioned this and was told that as I had been trained in such matters I was only doing my job.

I did not even get a "well done" or a "thank you" for my efforts. So much for keeping everyone safe whilst they were in their beds. The MGS has a lot to learn from the Army. — **David W Vaughan, MoD Guard Service, Tidworth.**

Word of praise would have done me

I WAS pleased to read in the January issue that Bdr Darren Needham had been rewarded for his actions in disarming a drunk who could have caused distress to a lot of families ("Gallantry medal for gunner who faced up to man with gun").

I am also glad that the Army recognised that although he was trained to face armed people, his actions on that day were something out of the ordinary and worthy of a medal.

I am a member of the MoD Guard Dog Service Section which patrols Bulford Camp. On two occasions I have faced gunmen and dealt with the situations successfully and at the time reports were sent up the Military Guard Service (MGS) chain of command.

However, I received no feedback from MGS management as a result of these reports.

Some time later, at my end-of-year staff

THEN AND THEN



25 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier* to *Soldier*, March 1978: Apparently there was a fire at a Yorkshire mill. When the Green Goddess got there, the sergeant in charge found two immigrant workers trying to douse the flames with buckets of water. "Where are you from?" he asked. "Karachi," they replied. "Good God," said the NCO, "they haven't got here from Barnsley yet."

50 YEARS AGO

From *Soldier*, March 1953: A road, above, is cut through the Rheindalener Forest, a well-known beauty spot near Moenchengladbach on the west bank of the Rhine. A new town is taking shape there at a cost of £12 million to become the joint headquarters for the new Northern Army Group, 2nd Allied Tactical Air Force and the Royal Navy in Germany.

How do we get some decent IT equipment?

I AM writing to highlight a chronic shortage of suitable IT in field force units.

I am chief clerk of a busy headquarters squadron in Colchester with a strength of 103. There are eight departments, not including the regimental HQ, and we have just three pieces of military IT.

These are held in my office and the offices of the Quartermaster and the QM (Transport). This leaves six major departments, including my OC, 2iC and SSM, with no IT other than their personal kit.

D Info(A) replies: We share the SNCO's frustration at the level of IT support available to units. Land Command has confirmed that laptops that operate on Windows 3.1 should have been withdrawn from service some time ago. Answering the specifics of the letter, three sources of IT are available for operational deployments:

UNICOM Out Of Barracks: UNICOM OOB is available to support the admin functions of any unit that deploys. Land Command controls the allocation of this equipment.

AtacCS: This ruggedised IT system supports command and control (C2) functions. Land Command controls its allocation.

Stand-alone IT: The systems above can be supplemented by stand-alone computers and laptops, which regional formations have purchased from funds brought together from Land Command as Top Level Budget.

The MoD has an effective process to allow

While I appreciate the MoD has priorities when it comes to buying equipment, surely if we approached a major IT supplier we would attract a hefty discount for bulk purchases?

My squadron has been allocated a laptop for deployments. It operates on Windows 3.1 and we have not been issued with a printer to go with it. I am supposed to be self-sufficient, but am unable to print anything. — **SNCO Name and address supplied.**

organisations to purchase small IT solutions quickly and cheaply. A requirement needs to be endorsed from both a business and funding perspective. As a rule, IT funding is broken down to brigade level and your unit should pass any requirements it might have up its chain of command.

Between January and this month units will have received four computers, which can access both the MoD's corporate e-mail system and intranet. Between mid-2003 and mid-2005 the Army will receive 5,200 new networked terminals, ahead of the roll-out of a single Defence-wide information infrastructure between 2005-2009.

Over this period other projects will deliver new and improved capabilities to deployed units, similar to those that will be found in barracks. While we are committed to improving the situation in barracks and when units deploy, your correspondent rightly identifies the critical issue of competing priorities.

PS...

The last charge

I REFER to the review (Feb) of the book *Ramnugger Boys* and the last cavalry charge in the British Army carried out by the 20th Hussars in 1920 during the Chanak crisis.

The last time I saw this cavalry charge claim in print it was described as the last full Regular regimental cavalry charge.

The last classic cavalry charge — the word classic being used to describe a soldier on horseback armed with a sword (*arme blanche*) with no support from other arms, ie artillery — was on November 8, 1917 at Huj in Palestine, carried out by 21/2 Squadron of the Warwickshire Yeomanry and the Worcester Yeomanry against batteries of guns, manned by Austrian gunners.

At the end of the charge, the Yeomanry had captured intact four 75mm field guns, three 150mm pack howitzers, four pack guns, and four Maxim machine guns and routed two battalions of infantry.

Two of the field guns were allocated to both regiments as trophies of war. The gun allocated to the Warwickshire Yeomanry was rediscovered in New Zealand and a kind benefactor gave it back to the regiment [an event reported in *Soldier*, Nov 2001]. After refurbishment it is now housed in the Warwick museum of the regiment.

The last cavalry in the British Army was in 5th Cavalry Brigade, comprising the Cheshire Yeomanry, the North Somerset Yeomanry, and the Yorkshire Dragoons. The last cavalry action in the British Army is generally accredited to C Squadron of the Yorkshire Dragoons on the Litani River during June 1941 against their former Syrian allies who were serving the French Vichy Government.

Are there any cavalry soldiers among your readership who know better? — **Derrick Smart, The Queen's Own Warwickshire and Worcestershire Yeomanry Regimental Association, Stratford-upon-Avon.**

My velcro-ed briefs

I READ the story on quick-change pants (*Kitstop*, Feb). This is not a new idea as issue cold weather quilted trousers with zips down the sides are already available. I was a member of a platoon involved in lots of observation-post work in the early 1980s and we used to modify our underwear by putting velcro on the sides.

I am sure soldiers were doing that sort of thing long before me. — **Ian (Hutch) Hutchinson, ex-Royal Regiment of Fusiliers, Netheravon, Salisbury, Wilts.**



As featured: Buttoned front view of Milipants

Vox pop

The regular feature in which we ask soldiers for their views on an issue

**LCpl Ryan Bamforth,
3 AAC Wksp,
7 Bn REME**

I've invested in a hammock because I don't want to be sleeping on the floor if I can help it. I have also got my own solar shower that I will set up between two trucks as soon as I get there. My electric tooth-brush will also be making its way over to the Gulf – just in case I do come across an electric power point.



**LCpl Simon Miller,
156 Provost Company RMP**

My one creature comfort will be my own sleeping bag – the Army issue bag is very good but I think it will be a bit thick and warm for the environment we will be working in.



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Creature comforts

We asked soldiers from 16 Air Assault Brigade what luxury items they intend to take with them on deployment to the Gulf

**LCpl Emma Morris,
156 Provost Company RMP**

We'll probably be rushed off our feet when we get out there, but I will be taking plenty of books and magazines with me to help keep my mind occupied and stave off boredom in the unlikely event that I am left with nothing to do.



Cpl Joe Smith, AGC (SPS) attached to 7 Bn REME

I'm going to make sure that I take my softie jacket with me – I bought it because it is a lot warmer than the jackets issued by the Army and, from what I've been told about Iraq, it sounds like I'll get plenty of use out of it when I get there.



**Cpl Andy Crisp,
7 Bn REME**

At the top of my list of creature comforts going with me when I deploy will be a solar shower, camp cot and as many cigarettes as I can cram into my bags.



**Cpl Dan Bull,
7 Bn REME**

In addition to my normal kit I'll be taking a camp cot, mobile phone, loads of books and plenty of writing paper. That will probably be it for me, but I know that some of the lads are also planning on taking their laptops with them.

**Pte Kadian Thorpe,
AGC att 3 AAC**

My only creature comfort, and the most important thing going with me to the Gulf, will be photographs of my future husband – things that will remind me of home and make life seem as normal as possible.



LCpl Martin Smith, 3 AAC

Like most other people I'll be taking my own sleeping bag with me. It's not that the Army's sleeping system does not keep you warm enough, but it is just too big and space on any deployment is always a prime factor. For that same reason some people are also taking their own bergens.

Interviews: Andy Simms Pictures: Graeme Main

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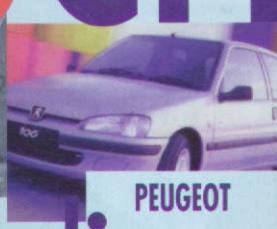
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