

SOLDIER



MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ARMY

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ARMY

Op Herrick's final months

WITH the end of combat operations now less than six months away, this issue takes a detailed look at what is being done to give Afghan forces a fighting chance post-2014.

On the chaotic streets of Kabul, members of the Coldstream Guards were keen to talk to *Soldier* about their "completely different" force protection role – one that is set to equip them well for the future despite the tour being much quieter than previous deployments (pages 23-25).

As the logistics effort behind the campaign ramps up towards a conclusion (pages 33-35), it is also proving important that there is no let-up in the effort to keep Camp Bastion secure (pages 28-31). This month we have interviewed troops making both of these things a reality.

While our colleagues within 20th Armoured Brigade ensure that Operation Herrick is wound up properly, other personnel are busying themselves with a mixture of home-turf and overseas activities (pages 8-9).

From supporting international events such as this month's Commonwealth Games and Tour de France (page 16), to representing the Army in sport (page 85) or embarking on brutal training in Eastern Europe and the Canaries (pages 13 and 41-44), life in the British Army is as varied this summer as it has ever been.

Whether you are spending July on exercise, engrossed in what's left of the World Cup or earning your operational allowance in the desert, we hope you enjoy the issue. ■



Sarah Goldthorpe • Editor

S. Goldthorpe.



Striking in style

Reds retain Twenty20 title (pages 86-87)

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Picture: Graeme Main

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“We are in the Canary Islands but it's definitely not party time”





‘
I remember the
hardship and the
friendship of my
fellow prisoners
’

46



“It is almost like aggressive housekeeping”

The mammoth task of boxing up Bastion p33

“Some boots wouldn’t look out of place on a vagrant”

Reader bemoans footwear fail p60

“I never thought I could work in this industry”

Veteran overcomes illness to land F1 job p94





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Picture: Steve Dock

Transfer talk 'pays off'

Fewer to leave under tranche four than predicted

THE impact of the final round of redundancies has been softened thanks to the Army's efforts to promote transfer opportunities within the Service.

Last month a total of 996 Servicemen and women were given notice to leave under tranche four of the reduction programme.

Of those, 268 had not applied but many could still transfer to alternative roles within the military before their notice period ends and thus avoid the cut altogether.

"We are putting a collective effort into encouraging transfers," Director of Army Manning, Brig Nick Cavanagh told *Soldier*.

"We've been pushing the option really hard down the chain of command to encourage individuals who want to stay in the Service to move rather than having to leave."

According to the senior officer this has reaped some valuable dividends.

In January it was announced that up to 1,422 jobs could go in the fourth round of cuts under the Strategic Defence and Security Review.

Since then, around 160 personnel who were warned that they were in line for selection for redundancy have transferred within the Army.

It was this initiative, along with

some crucial last-minute number crunching on manning predictions, that led to the actual figure for job losses to be revised down.

"Redundancy is a difficult process and we must always ensure the best interests of our people remain at the forefront of our decisions" commented Brig Cavanagh.

"Unfortunately, there are certain capabilities no longer required under the Army 2020 structure.

"Primarily, these are dental hygienists and dental technicians and the pioneer trades," the officer added.

"The only way of removing them was through compulsory redundancy.

"There has also been a higher percentage of Gurkhas given notice

to leave in this round because, historically, they tend not to volunteer so restructuring has hit them relatively hard."

For all those given notice, willingly or not, there is still a good chance of extending their military career.

"There are many exciting transfer opportunities still available," Brig Cavanagh said. "And for those who do leave, there are plenty of part-time roles available – the financial incentives for joining the Reserves really make it worth considering."

IN NUMBERS

160

Soldiers eligible for redundancy in tranche four who transferred to another role

Q&A

We quiz the Army's Director of Manning, Brig Nick Cavanagh, on final redundancies



» Were the terms of redundancy the same as previous tranches?

Yes, those serving, preparing for or recovering from operations were protected from compulsory redundancy. Non-applicants have 12 months' notice from June 12 and volunteers have six. Applicants in theatre have six months from the day their post-operational leave ends.

» Why are we making cuts and recruiting hard at the same time?

We must constantly recruit people at the bottom end. If you were to switch that off we would very quickly become structurally unbalanced. When you reduce recruiting it is very difficult to grow again.

» What support is there for the soldiers affected?

Anyone made redundant is entitled to the full settlement package containing training grants, paid courses, career transition workshops and CV writing lessons, among other things. I'd also encourage non-applicants in particular to attend the many transfer fairs being staged (page 63).

» There's a strong onus on the individual though, isn't there?

To a degree but there's lots of help too. Personnel should engage with the unit resettlement team as early as possible to ensure they receive all the support they're entitled to.

» How do Service personnel find out about all the financial benefits available?

Everybody receives a forecast of benefits and admin staff are on hand to answer questions. What is new this year is the launch of the Forces Help to Buy scheme, which enables those being made redundant who do not own a home to apply for a mortgage based on their redundancy payout before they leave the Army.

“There are many exciting transfers available”

GLOBAL SITREP

1 USA

ALASKAN ASCENT

A TEAM from 1st Battalion, The Rifles have launched a bid to scale Alaska's Mount McKinley.

The 13-strong group of predominantly novice climbers was due to tackle North America's highest peak as this issue went to press.

Standing at 6,168 metres, the mountain is also the world's coldest and the soldiers underwent rigorous training in the Swiss Alps and Scottish Highlands to prepare.



2 UK

TEN-YEAR HIGH

RESERVISTS from across Northern Ireland have taken part in a major joint exercise in southern Scotland – their largest training event in more than ten years.

Based around Dumfries and Galloway, the package involved troops from 2nd Battalion, The Royal Irish Regiment; the North Irish Horse; Royal Artillery; Royal Engineers; Royal Signals; Intelligence Corps and the Royal Army Medical Corps.

Personnel were tasked with clearing enemy forces while protecting a civilian population under threat from chemical and biological warfare, as well as conducting urban operations.

Business leaders from Northern Ireland also attended to observe members of their workforce.



3 PERU

SAPPERS V VOLCANO

ROYAL Engineers have made it to the top of Peru's highest volcano – despite bad weather threatening to halt the expedition.

A team of 12 from 101 Engineer Regiment (Explosive Ordnance Disposal) began an ascent of the country's loftiest peak – the 6,746-metre Mount Huascaran – but were forced to abandon that effort when treacherous conditions set in.

Instead, they headed south to tackle the rarely-climbed Coropuna, which stands at 6,425m.

Capt Damian Warren described the feat as a "truly incredible and hard-won achievement".

"Summit day was exhausting, with a 1,000m climb and temperatures below freezing, where even our water bottles froze solid," he added.

The Falkland Islands

4 FRANCE

A PLEA TO SKI

THE leader of an ambitious ski mountaineering exercise is calling on fellow personnel to join her team.

Capt Tania Noakes (R Signals, pictured) is recruiting troops to traverse from Vienna to the Mediterranean coast of France from January 1 next year.

"The expedition is open to all applicants and it is hoped there will be an even mix of Regulars and Reserves," said the officer.

Applications close at the end of September and for details read **2013DIN07-166**



“A truly incredible and hard-won achievement”



8 AFGHANISTAN

THE FINAL PUSH

THE final command team responsible for military logistics on Op Herrick has arrived in Helmand province to finish the job of bringing UK troops and equipment home.

Joint Force Support (Afghanistan) will oversee the withdrawal and redeployment of approximately 5,000 troops and manage the removal of some 5,000 shipping containers' worth of materiel – including 400 tonnes of ammunition, 3,400 vehicles and 50 aircraft.

Incoming commander Brig Darrell Amison said his team would build on the work of their predecessors, detailed on pages 33-35 of this issue.

"We will continue to make sure that personnel remain supported, as well as being able to conduct their jobs safely and to the usual high standard of UK Armed Forces," the senior officer added.

30

Number of UK troops on the Army's first joint exercise with Indonesian forces – page 14

7

NO TIME TO KUWAIT

Soldiers share their expertise in Middle East – page 10

5

ESTONIAN EXERTION

Eastern efforts press on – page 13



Picture: Sean Gallup

6 LIBYA

INFANTRY SUPPORT

MEMBERS of the Libyan security forces have begun lessons in basic infantry skills and military leadership thanks to troops from 3rd Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland.

A 24-week training package for 300 troops is being held at Bassingbourn camp in Cambridgeshire which will also cover drill, fitness, first-aid and the law of armed conflict.

Last year the UK announced it would train up to 2,000 Libyan personnel in order to help the country's government disarm militias and improve security and stability in the region.

“It was down to discipline that we could play”



9 NEPAL

TACKLING EVEREST

SPORTSMEN from the Household Cavalry have set a new record for playing the highest game of rugby in the world.

The 28-man party trekked to Everest base camp for the match, which was staged in a flat lake bed at an altitude of 5,165 metres and saw The Blues and Royals defeat The Life Guards 10-0.

"In hindsight, we underestimated the task of getting such a large-scale group of people to such a high altitude," said Capt Mike Wilmot. "It was down to individual discipline and determination that we were able to play rugby above the 5,000-metre mark."

The officer added: "It was a privilege to be part of something that will not be forgotten easily."





"THEY ARE ONE OF THE STRONGEST TEAMS I HAVE EVER PLAYED WITH" - SQUASH SCENE THRIVES, PAGE 97

MIDDLE EAST MENTORS

■ SOLDIERS in the Middle East are coming to the end of a challenging year training Kuwaiti and other international troops.

The 35-strong British Military Mission (Kuwait) team provides support to the country's training establishments, including the Mubarak Al-Abdullah Joint Command and Staff College, where 107 students from different nations recently completed the final operational planning and management exercise of their ten-month course.

Meanwhile, personnel at the Kuwaiti Land Forces Institute shared expertise on topics such as high risk search techniques, field engineering and security and counter-insurgency methods. They also helped with English language skills.

BACK TO IRAQ

■ BRITISH troops have travelled to Iraq in a non-combat role after a terrorist organisation took control of the cities of Mosul and Tikrit.

The personnel are part of a team providing consular assistance to UK nationals while assessing the situation on the ground.



HAS SOMEONE
MADE A BIG
DIFFERENCE TO
YOUR HEALTH?

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A change of tack

Medics 'must focus on disease and prolonged care'

THE training of Army medics must be overhauled in readiness for future operations, a military conference has been told.

Speaking at the Director of Army Nursing Services symposium, Permanent Joint Headquarters medical planning coordinator Lt Col Tim Davies (QARANC) said: "We can't be trauma-centric anymore."

"We are used to training and delivering teams for theatres like Afghanistan but this doesn't deal with many of the threats we're going to be facing in the future."

"Due to the long Cold War era and then enduring campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan we may have forgotten, for instance, how to deal with disease control and prevention at a tactical level in places like Africa – and that's where we're far more likely to be operating in years to come."

The officer added that future theatres will present different operational restrictions compared to Helmand province.

"We have to plan for the fact that our airspace may be contested and so things like medevac won't necessarily be available to us," he continued. "That means we must focus more on preparing for



Picture: Brian Gambble

Only part of the picture: Army medics must move beyond a focus on trauma if they are to support future missions

emergency procedures in the field – for example, using prolonged field care treatment regimes."

The restructuring associated with Army 2020 will also have an impact on training and education.

Different formations are to assume responsibility for supporting operations in specific regions of the world which, according to the officer, will require medical brigades to learn about conditions in certain geographical zones "in great depth".

WIN

...a home security device

THE clues to last month's spine lines competition may have been a breeze for personnel still involved with Op Herrick.

Brigadiers (James) Chiswell, (Richard) Felton, (Rupert) Jones and (James) Woodham have all led Task Force Helmand.

This month, following a theft warning from the Royal Military Police (page 15), we have teamed up with home security specialist Pipe – <http://getpipecor.com> – to offer three readers a monitoring device worth £140.

To be in with a chance of winning this clever gadget – which surveys property with a camera and sensors that link to your smartphone – tell us what links the words on the spine of this issue. Answers to the usual address or comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk by July 31.



The final flush:
How the last
moments of
Op Herrick will
create a splash
for troops on the
ground
– pages 33-35

Tattoos reviewed

Capita questions policy in bid to increase Reserves

ARMY rules on where soldiers can display tattoos are being reviewed.

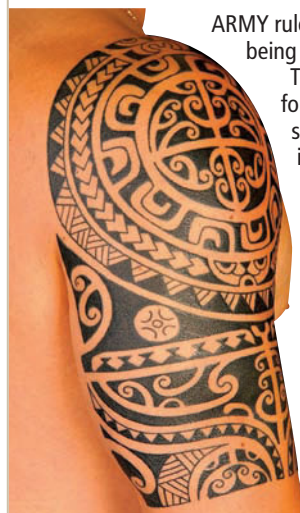
The Service's joining requirements, including those for body mass and the appearance of ink on the skin, are being assessed by Capita in a bid to increase recruitment into the Army Reserve.

"Tattoos are a lot more prevalent in today's society," explained Dawn Marriott-Sims, chief operating officer of the company.

"We are challenging the thinking around those sorts of things."

Under current rules, troops are permitted to have tattoos as long as they are not excessive, offensive, obscene or visible in parade uniform.

"This will be carefully considered and needs to remain relevant to modern society but also be consistent with the high standards that the country demands from members of its Armed Forces," an Army spokesman said.



“WE’RE KEEN TO UNDERSTAND THE DIFFICULTIES THAT RESERVES MEET” - FEDERATION’S CALL TO ARMS, PAGE 18



Army attitudes revealed

Reports shed light on highs and lows of military life

HALF of the Army’s Regular personnel are satisfied with life in the military and the standard of personal equipment, the latest Armed Forces continuous attitude survey has found.

The study also revealed that 43 per cent of soldiers rate their workload as too high, while 11 per cent believe they have been discriminated against, bullied or harassed in the last year.

“We want our people to feel valued and have their immense contributions recognised, which is why we are continuing to invest in better medical and welfare support, have increased pay for military personnel and introduced a new scheme to help get them on the property ladder,” an MoD spokesman responded.

One third of the Servicemen and women who received the survey gave their feedback.

Among their replies were the findings that 54 per cent of officers and 36 per cent of other ranks are content with their basic pay, while just under half (47 per cent) are satisfied with allowances overall.

The impact of a military career on family and personal life remains

the top reason for Regulars leaving the Service.

The spokesman added that the department took the issue of increased pressure at work “extremely seriously”.

Results from the first tri-Service annual survey of Reservists have also been published, revealing that 91 per cent of the Army’s volunteers feel proud to serve and 81 per cent would recommend joining the Reserves.

However, a quarter of those who responded said they do not believe they have the kit and equipment required to do their job effectively and 44 per cent do not think defence transformation will improve working in the Army.

Some 64 per cent of respondents said they were satisfied with the support they received when they were last mobilised.

Commenting on the findings, Defence Minister Anna Soubry said: “It is extremely encouraging to see the vast majority of Reservists are proud to be in the Forces.

“We know we can still do better which is why we are working closely with employers, local communities and Reservists and are investing £1.8 billion in training and equipment.”

**‘WE WANT
OUR PEOPLE TO
FEEL VALUED’**

IN NUMBERS: ARMY ATTITUDES 2014

REGULARS

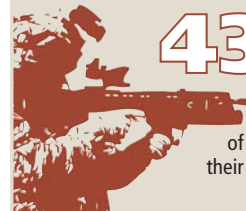


49%

are satisfied with life in the Service and the standard of personal kit

36%

of soldiers are satisfied with pay



43%

of soldiers rate their workload as too high

RESERVES



64%

are satisfied with the support they got when last mobilised

61%

are satisfied with pay



72%


are satisfied with Army life

INTERPRETER HOPE

■ THE High Court has ruled that three former Afghan interpreters can proceed with a legal challenge against the British government over alleged discrimination.

Lawyers acting for the men argue that they should be given the same rights as Iraqi translators, who were allowed to resettle in the UK after working with its Armed Forces on combat operations.

Judge Mr Justice Mitting agreed the policy of only letting some Afghans immigrate could amount to unlawful treatment and gave permission for the group to present their case.



IN NUMBERS

49

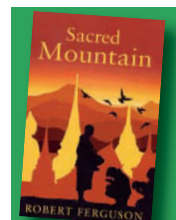
The weight category, in kilograms, that Army boxer **LCpl Ashley Williams** (R Welsh) will compete in at this month’s **Commonwealth Games** – pages 88-89

SERVICE PERSONNEL HONOURED FOR EXCELLENCE

A TOTAL of 70 Army officers and soldiers have been named by Her Majesty The Queen in the latest birthday honours list.

Decorations were awarded to a total of 169 defence personnel – including 51 civilians.

For a rundown of the recipients from across the Armed Forces log on to www.gov.uk/government/news



“THIS TITLE HAS IT ALL – WAR, ADVENTURE, LOYALTY”

BOOKS
PAGES 80-81



“IT’S ABOUT GETTING AWAY FROM THE PING PONG IMAGE” - STARS OF TABLE TENNIS, PAGE 92



BEWARE LETHAL PLANT

■ **SOLDIERS** are being warned about the risks of bringing a banned plant into the UK after customs officers seized two packets of the substance.

Kava kava is found throughout Fiji and other Pacific Ocean islands but is illegal in Britain due to potentially toxic side effects.

Officials at Coventry Airport recently intercepted two parcels containing roots of the shrub.

“The Food Standards Agency are aware of 110 cases of liver damage associated with the use of kava kava,” said Lt Col Andrew Charnick, environmental health officer at the Army Medical Directorate. “Not only is it against the law to import, use or possess it but it could be lethal.”

A member of the pepper family, the plant is said to have calming properties and is chewed or crushed to use in drinks and herbal medicines.

If a package intercepted at a UK port is found to contain kava kava, the recipient will be billed for its destruction.



SHOOTING BLIND

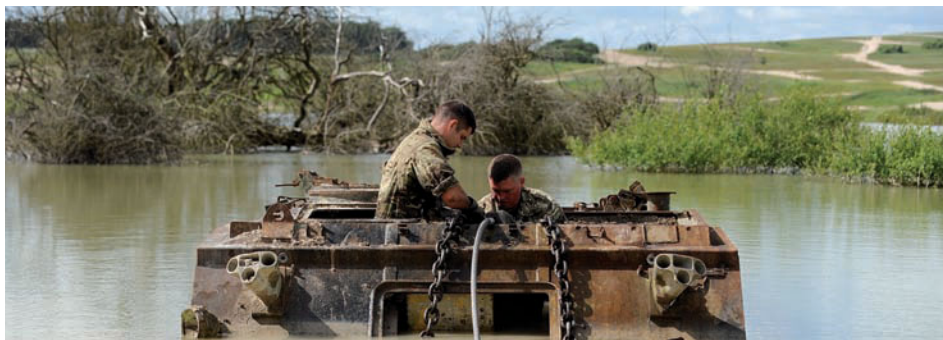
■ **EX-SERVICEMEN** who have lost their sight have conquered their rivals in a very unlikely sport.

An archery tournament arranged by the charity Blind Veterans UK saw a UK team compete against the US and South Africa by shooting balloons at a distance of 20 feet.

“This is normally thought of as a sport where you have to rely on your eyes,” said Simon Brown (ex-REME), who was blinded by a sniper bullet in Iraq in 2006. “Being able to do it with sight loss was incredibly liberating and a confidence-builder.”



Pizza Hut, PT and Patrol Link: the latest changes at Camp Bastion – pages 33-35



SINK OR SWIM...

■ **REMOVING** a submerged tracked vehicle from a lake was just one of the tricky tasks facing members of the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers on a recent training stint.

Exercise Southern Bluebell saw 170 Reservists from units across the south of England descend on Salisbury Plain to update their skills on operational kit.

Serials included vehicle recovery, battle damage repair, metal work and welding.

FEARLESS FUNDRAISING



VOLCANO STRUGGLE SUCCEEDS

A TEAM comprising soldiers, veterans and British politicians has scaled Cotopaxi – a 19,347ft active volcano in Ecuador – to raise money for wounded personnel.

The group’s final ascent took 15 hours in treacherous conditions, with only seven of the 12-strong party making the summit – among them Pte Paul Hunter (Mercian), former Royal Engineer Lyndon Chatting-Walters and Greg Mulholland, MP for Leeds North West.

Funds raised from the challenge will go to The Royal British Legion’s Shropshire-based Battle Back Centre for injured and sick troops.



CANOE CONQUEST

A FORMER sapper was part of a two-man team that completed the Devizes to Westminster International Canoe race in aid of injured Service personnel.

Luke Harding paddled the gruelling 125-mile course alongside civilian Jon Wight in a time of 28hrs 23mins.



GOT AN EVENT?

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@soldiermagazine

“YOU CAN LEARN ABOUT PEOPLE WHO USED THEM OR DIED IN THEM” – TANK COLLECTOR TALKS, PAGES 48-51



P Company revenge

Instructors get a taste of their own medicine

PARACHUTE Regiment instructors from Catterick's Infantry Training Centre got a reminder of what their recruits go through during a punishing charity event.

The team of 15 permanent staff members set themselves the gruelling challenge of completing all of the tests on the infamous Pegasus Company selection course in 24 hours instead of the usual five days – the first time that such a feat of endurance had been attempted.

Each stage was carried out to the same time and weight standards expected of prospective paratroopers, including two loaded marches carrying a 37lb Bergen and weapon, a two-mile log race and the hand-to-hand combat trial known as milling.

“In keeping with the tradition of these tests everyone had their own individual event which they disliked the most,” commented Maj Chris Collier, officer commanding P Company, afterwards.

“For me, the shock of being punched in the face for the first time in 15 years took some getting used to.

“The 20-mile endurance march, which is hard enough as it is, also proved very difficult as we set off at 2100, having already completed six events that day.”

Despite warm weather making the task even more strenuous, the whole team finished intact and on time, raising almost £5,000 for The Parachute Regiment Charity and the Afghanistan Trust.

To add to the group's funds visit www.justgiving.com/pcompany24



“
Being
punched
in the
face took
some
getting
used to
”

Left, Taking the P:
Staff were pushed to
their limits but raised
£5,000 for charity in
the painful process

Pictures: WO1 Justin Gooch

ELECTION TASKING

■ A TEAM of 90 Army personnel are set to deploy to Bosnia and Herzegovina this month to support a European Union mission during the nation's election period.

Two reconnaissance platoons from The Light Dragoons will join the EU Force Althea deployment in Sarajevo for six months to foresee, monitor and prevent civil unrest across the country.

“The October elections are an important milestone in Bosnia and Herzegovina's journey towards long-term security and prosperity,” said Minister for International Security Strategy, Andrew Morrison.

“This additional contribution from the UK will strengthen the mission to maintain stability over that period.”



WOOD AND THE GREAT

■ THE military training area at Castletlaw and Dreghorn, south of Edinburgh, will become home to a First World War centenary wood.

Over the next four years the Defence Infrastructure Organisation will work with Woodland Trust Scotland to plant more than 50,000 oak, birch and rowan trees on a 40-hectare patch of the estate to create an area where the heroes of the conflict can be remembered.

The “living memorial” is part of the Woodland Trust's national project to grow more than three million native trees across the UK, representing the millions of heroes of the First World War.

Storming ahead in Eastern Europe

TROOPS from 1st Battalion, The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment have undergone training alongside their Baltic counterparts as part of a large Nato exercise.

With the eyes of the world focused on the political situation in neighbouring Russia, 80 members of the formation's Burma Company were put through conventional warfare drills with the Estonian Scouts Battalion.

Exercise Spring Storm was conducted in thick forest terrain and saw British personnel acting as enemy forces.

Capt Dave Walker (1 Lancers), the regiment's signals officer, said UK soldiers had coped well with a change in environment and tactics.

“We had to adjust our operating procedures to those of an eastern foe but everyone adapted and rose to the challenge,” he added.

The two units train regularly and have served together in Afghanistan.



Picture: Richard Phole

2005 Year the UK and Estonian units began training together regularly



“WE ARE DOING VERY, VERY TOUGH TRAINING AND WE HOPE TO WIN IT”
- GURKHAS WALK THE WALK, PAGES 54-55

Indonesian adventure

Regulars and Reserves in flood relief first

BRITISH soldiers have paired up with Indonesia's army in the hot and humid country for the first time in recent history.

Around 30 Servicemen and women from the Military Stabilisation Support Group (MSSG) visited Jakarta for the humanitarian aid and disaster relief training package known as Exercise Civil Bridge.

The Brits worked alongside the country's troops and local government organisations to provide guidance on the way its capital city deals with flooding.

"We offered advice on how the UK would organise things and have learnt a great deal in return," said Lt Col Huw Evans (RA), commander of the three-week package.

For Cpl Duncan Booth (RE), who was responsible for gathering ground intelligence, the mission was his first taste of working alongside colleagues in the Army Reserve.

"Things have gone really well," he told *Soldier*.



"It's been great to learn how the Indonesians operate, to work with Reservists and visit a new country – until this exercise Afghanistan was the furthest east I had been."

In September the MSSG will become part of the new Security Assistance Group.



On a unique mission?
news@soldiermagazine.co.uk

NEW FLASH FOR MONEY MINDERS

■ ARMY accountants have seen their profile boosted with the award of their own tactical recognition flash.

Members of the Management Accountant Service (Army) will sport the new insignia instead of the Adjutant General's Corps Staff and Personnel Support badge.

Maj Damion Greetham (AGC (SPS)), who oversees training for the Army's number-crunchers, said the move would help to define different roles within the corps, which is looking for more troops to consider a career in military accounting.

"It's a good qualification to have because it can be used on civvy street and the Army pay for it so I would urge soldiers of any rank to look into it," he added.



Air operators team up

PARATROOPERS have conducted joint jumps onto Salisbury Plain training area alongside their American colleagues.

Exercise Airdrop Warrior saw personnel from 2nd and 4th Battalions, The Parachute Regiment train in their specialist airborne role alongside members of the United States Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (Airborne).

Approximately 100 soldiers descended from three Hercules transport planes before moving into a tactical scenario.

"I've been looking forward to this jump; there is always anticipation before you do it but it's what we train to do," commented Reservist LCpl George Moffit (4 Para). "We get a lot of opportunities to train with members of 2nd Battalion now."



Picture: Richard Watt

GOOD
DRILLS

GLOBAL REACH

THE Royal Anglian Regiment has been praised for using the internet to achieve the highest intake of new recruits across the Infantry. The formation overhauled its website and used online videos and social media to reach potential personnel. Fighting off competition from industry professionals, it scooped third place in the "effective communication" category at the International Visual Communications Association Awards.



A MOTORING rally set up by two Servicemen is celebrating raising hundreds of thousands of pounds for good causes. Thanks to the efforts of Sgt Mick Clark (RMP) and WO2 Benn Laidler (AAC), Rally for Heroes has grown from a one-off fundraiser in 2010 to one of the largest independently organised events in support of Service charities. For details on the team's latest European adventure – where five miles will be driven for each soldier who has died in Afghanistan – visit www.rallyforheroes.com

RALLY SUCCESS STORY

“EVERYONE HAS A MASTER PLAN FOR THEIR SON BUT I WILL STAND BY HIM” – A HERRICK FAMILY AFFAIR, PAGE 31



CAMERA ACTION

■ A NEW television channel has been launched for British personnel.



Forces TV is produced by the same charity that operates the British Forces Broadcasting Service.

Unlike the existing channel, the latest one is a strictly commercial operation so expect to see an increasing number of programme breaks for “a message from our sponsor”.

The service can be viewed on Sky (299), Virgin (244) and Freesat (652).



CHINOOK FACELIFT

■ THE first batch of 14 new Chinook helicopters that will support soldiers on front-line operations have entered service.

Royal Air Force pilots have begun training on three of the Mark 6 airframes, which feature a new digital automatic flight control system for improved handling, stability and safety.

Chief of the Air Staff, ACM Sir Andrew Pulford, said the new platform represented the “pinnacle” of the RAF’s heavy lift capability and would continue to play a key role on the battlefield in the future.

The rest of the helicopters in the £1 billion programme will be delivered to the Ministry of Defence before the end of next year and are on track to be fully operational by early 2017.

IN NUMBERS



101

Runs scored by **Capt Storm Green** in the Army’s win over the Royal Navy at the Inter-Services **Twenty20** cricket

– pages 86-87

Theft rise at Army bases

Soldiers must keep closer eye on kit, RMP warns

TROOPS must do more to protect their belongings from opportunistic criminals, the Royal Military Police is warning.

The message follows a rise in the number of reported thefts from Army bases.

In response, a series of crime prevention clinics have been launched – across the south of England initially – which see members of the RMP visiting units to advise on keeping items secure.

Capt Andy Ramsay of Aldershot’s 160 Provost Company started the campaign.

“In the financial year 2012-13 thefts across the Army community went up,” he told *Soldier*.

“We estimate the average value of items stolen is between £250 and £600.

“It’s mostly electronics and phones, but also bikes and pieces



Picture: Shutterstock

of military kit.”

To organise a crime prevention clinic for your unit contact the local RMP detachment.

Soldiers can also enter their kit details on the national property register – www.immobilize.com – which is used to reunite owners with stolen goods.

● WIN a home security device – page 10

Ration packs spiced up

A SERIES of updates to military rations has got off to a fiery start with the introduction of a spicy new condiment.

Some 75,000 bottles of Hot Diggidy Dog pepper sauce have been bought by the MoD for the 24-hour ration pack.

The recipe was developed by company director Simon Llewellyn, a former submariner who began experimenting with bags of dried chillies during underwater deployments.

The sauce is the first new foodstuff to be added to rations since 2010 and will be followed by further changes.

“There are plans to introduce several new pack types designed to meet specific operational requirements, for example multi-climate, 12-hour and jungle rations,” said an MoD spokesperson. “Choice will also be widened with new products such as savoury snacks, breads, pastries and breakfast cereals. Chocolate will also make a return.”



‘SHEEP’ TWEET PROVOKES VETERANS

FOOTBALL pundit Stan Collymore triggered an angry backlash from veterans after claiming Britain had “thieved” the Falklands Islands. The former Liverpool player described the archipelago as “an island with sheep” to his 565,000 Twitter followers, before adding, “what glory, what triumph”. His comments prompted calls for him to be sacked from his job as a radio commentator for *Talksport*.



BAD weather in the English Channel scuppered an attempt by canoeists to paddle 200 miles from Portland to Arromanches in time for the D-Day commemorations. The team of five ex-soldiers and one civilian were forced to abandon the crossing and two of their craft after encountering heavy seas but they have pledged to complete the fundraising challenge in the coming months. To sponsor the group log on to www.normandyklepperchallenge.co.uk

KAYAKS GET THE CHOP

BAD DRILLS



“TRAVEL LIGHT OR GET A CREW OF MINIONS TO CARRY ITEMS” – TOP BIKING TIPS, PAGES 52–53

STAMMER SUPPORT

■ A CAMPAIGN to raise awareness of stammering has been mounted by two UK personnel.

Cpl Emmanuel Otth (RLC) of 2 Medical Regiment has set up the British Army Stammerers' Society after the Service paid for him to go on a course to address the speech problem, which can develop in childhood or as the result of illness, injury or trauma.

“I was frustrated and angry that my stammer was in control of me so I sought help,” Cpl Otth said.

“The therapy really boosted my confidence so I’ve set up the society to show others that they are not alone and a stammer doesn’t need to hinder their dreams.”

Meanwhile, WO1 Jimmy Lang (RAMC) is urging the Army to sign up to the Employers Stammering Network (ESN) – an organisation that helps bosses to support workers with the speech problem.

“I’ve had no formal help but that’s only because people don’t understand it,” said the member of 243 (The Wessex) Field Hospital, who has served in the Army for 18 years.

“My aim is to raise awareness of stammering and break down any misunderstandings or stigma.”

He added: “I’ve become a regimental sergeant major despite having a stammer, which hopefully shows that you can work past it.”

As a result of WO1 Lang’s efforts the Army’s equality and diversity department is now looking into whether a policy on stammering should be drafted and if the Force should sign up to the ESN.

For more information log on to www.stammering.org or the British Army Stammerers’ Society Facebook page.

1 IN 100

NUMER OF ADULTS THOUGHT
TO HAVE A STAMMER



Recruiters target cycling spirit

HUNDREDS of soldiers will attend the Yorkshire Festival of Cycling this month in a bid to boost Army recruitment at the ceremonial start of this year’s Tour de France.

Regular and Reserve personnel from a broad spectrum of cap badges will host displays and information stands at Harewood House, near Leeds, from July 4 to 6.

Among the military attractions on show to civilian cycling fans will be a Warrior vehicle recovery by members of the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, a diving tank demonstration by the Royal Engineers and an assault course and bungee run.

Members of 15 (North East) Brigade will also

be scattered around the main spectator hubs during the course of the Grand Depart.

Graham Milson, a Capita support manager responsible for coordinating Army recruiting in the north of England, said he hoped the festival would help to draw attention to part-time service.

“There are potentially going to be up to 30,000 individuals there, the type of people we are keen to reach,” he added. “If you cycle then you are probably fit and keen to be out and about and that is the type of person we want in the Army Reserve.”

“The Recruiting Group have really gone for this event in a big way.”

● **Top Gear’s slickest cycles – pages 82-83**



Picture: Shutterstock

Worthy Down develops

Site to bring support role training under one roof

A RMY personnel are set to benefit from a new £250-million training centre at the Worthy Down camp in Hampshire, it has been announced.

The Defence College of Logistics, Policing and Administration will bring support role learning for each of the three Armed Forces onto one site for the first time, covering areas such as catering, supply, transport and military human resources.

The contract for the construction of the facility – which includes accommodation – has been handed to Skanska and work is scheduled to begin later this year.

The MoD plans to have the site completed by the end of 2018.

Defence Minister Dr Andrew Murrison said: “The new college will ensure our Servicemen and women

have state-of-the-art training with great accommodation in which to live and learn.

“By co-locating activities for all three Services we are improving efficiency and saving taxpayers’ money by making the best use of the defence estate.”

Under the development programme military units from Princess Royal Barracks in Deepcut, which is being sold, will also move to Worthy Down.

The Defence Maritime Logistics School, currently located at HMS Raleigh in Cornwall, and the RAF Supply and Movements Training Wing, based at RAF Halton, will also relocate to the site.

A new museum for the Royal Logistic Corps will be stationed there as well.

“
I was
angry it
was in
control
of me
”

MOVIES >>>

LATEST DVD RELEASES – PAGES 74-75



**“WE HAD TO LIVE OUR LIVES AND
NOT MAKE TOO MUCH FUSS”
- PRISONER OF WAR, PAGES 46-47**



D-Day: the final salute

Troops mark great sacrifice of their predecessors

AN 89-year-old D-Day veteran joined hundreds of Service personnel for a special parachute jump to mark the 70th anniversary of the Normandy landings.

Jock Hutton (pictured below) completed a tandem jump with the Red Devils display team in Ranville as part of a series of events honouring the airborne contribution to Operation Overlord.

Among the soldiers to take part was Pte Nick Rabson (16 Medical Regiment), who carried the parachute wings worn by his grandfather Donald Rabson on D-Day.

“It was a very emotional experience to think I was jumping into the same area that my grandfather did in 1944,” the Serviceman commented afterwards.

Elsewhere, personnel from the Royal Engineers, Royal Artillery, Royal Signals and Corps of Army Music took part in commemorations at Pegasus Bridge, Bayeux, Arromanches, Sword Beach and Portsmouth.

The events were attended by more than 650 veterans of the Normandy campaign and watched by thousands more spectators. One individual to make the journey was John Millin, son of Bill Millin, who famously played his bagpipes while troops were storming Sword Beach.

In a tribute to his father, the civilian completed a month-long, 1,000-mile voyage around 20 British ports before presenting replica pipes to the town of Colleville-Montgomery.



Pictures: Cpl Neil Bryden, RAF; Cpl Andy Reddy and Cpl Jamie Peters, both RLC

Complaints system overhaul

MINISTERS have outlined new legislation to protect and support to the Armed Forces.

The Service Complaints and Financial Assistance Bill features a raft of measures to improve the current system for lodging grievances, including the introduction of a new watchdog with the power to investigate concerns from troops who feel their cases have not been dealt with properly.

The new arrangement will cut down

what can often be a lengthy and anxious appeal period for soldiers.

It follows repeated calls by Service Complaints Commissioner Dr Susan Atkins for the MoD to make the process faster and more accountable.

According to her last report, the Army saw a 12 per cent increase in new complaints last year, with only a quarter resolved in the 24-week target period.

Other elements of the bill will make it easier

for the government to distribute funds under the Armed Forces Covenant.

24

Target period, in weeks, for complaints to be resolved. Most exceed this

PANT PROGRESSION

■ INNOVATIVE trousers are being developed that could help wounded troops during their recovery.

Clothing supplier Rackety's, which makes specialist garments for disabled adults and children, has been given funding by the MoD to design trousers for soldiers who have suffered serious leg injuries.

Up until now, personnel whose wounds need external supporting frames have either had to cut their existing trousers or wear shorts.

But the new items can be worn over the top of frames, which will help to reduce infection and afford the wearer more comfort.



RESERVES UNDER FIRE

■ ARMY Reserve personnel will continue to train in an Inverness park despite concerns being raised about them carrying machine guns.

A member of the public had complained that soldiers from 7th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland were using Bught Park to conduct weapons drills.

But the Service said the matter had been discussed with Police Scotland and Highland Council and it had been agreed that training could continue.

“The unit will ensure that enhanced public information and reassurance is in place,” a statement added.

BRUNEI LAW CHANGE

■ THE MoD is seeking assurances from Brunei about the implications of strict new laws for British troops based there.

The country, home to around 700 Gurkha soldiers, has introduced an Islamic penal code that will eventually include death by stoning for adultery and homosexual acts.

Sharia law will be brought in over three years, with the first phase of penalties covered by fines and prison sentences.

An MoD spokesman said ministers were pressing for a lenient approach.

“
THEY DON'T
CARE
ABOUT MY
PROMOTION
PROSPECTS
”

– FORCE
FRUSTRATIONS,
PAGES 57-60



“THERE ARE THOUSANDS STILL OUT THERE. IT’S A VERY SLOW PROCESS”
– THE MENACE OF MINES, PAGES 37–39

ARMY 2020 UPDATE

Picture: Steve Dock



RESERVES ROLL WITH CAP BADGE CHANGES

■ A RESERVE Infantry unit has taken on its new role as part of the Army Air Corps.

B Company, 6th Battalion, The Rifles has been formally renamed 675 (Rifles) Squadron and paired with 1 Regiment, AAC – which is moving from Germany to Yeovilton.

More than 50 troops from the Reserve unit will soon begin training for their ground support role with the Wildcat helicopter.

Over the coming years the formation will grow to be 130-strong and split between its current base in Taunton and the Army Reserve Centre in Yeovil.

Picture: Mark Owens



INFANTRY MARCH ON

■ MEMBERS of 1st Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland have held a series of events to mark their move from Edinburgh to Belfast next month.

Parades were held in Colinton, Hawick and Prestonpans as well as a beating retreat at Dreghorn Barracks.

Elsewhere, troops from 2nd Battalion, The Mercian Regiment have moved from Northern Ireland back to Chester where their families are based.



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



Our aim for Reservists

MEMBERS of 103 Regiment, Royal Artillery gave a fantastic start to our Reserves roadshow programme at their St Helen’s HQ recently.

It was great to meet so many troops and their loved ones to demonstrate our support for the whole Army family and learn more about what matters to them.

The AFF works on the problems brought to us by you and these have predominantly been the effects of frequent moves on housing, education and employment.

Although Reservists are far less likely to encounter these issues, we’re keen to understand the difficulties they do meet due to the nature of their service.

I am full of admiration for these soldiers, many of whom have very little prior knowledge of life as an Army family and have a real need to know where to go for help.

Operational tours may be more challenging for part-time personnel who are unfamiliar with separation and families of Regulars living away from the Army unit are likely to experience similar issues.

As more full-time personnel move into their own homes we will find that these geographically dispersed communities need different ways of accessing information.

At the roadshow we were asked about online forums and we are working to develop such tools but in the meantime our virtual coordinator can answer queries via our website.

Just as families get used to the reduction in deployments to Afghanistan – which ironically offered some certainty due to the operational commitments plot – a period of unpredictability looms in the form of Eastern Europe exercises.

While many will undoubtedly be looking forward to the possibility of new adventures it also signals doubt for families and highlights the shifting nature of global politics.

The AFF met with Commander Land Forces and Chief of the General Staff designate, Lt Gen Sir Nick Carter, and we were able to provide him with a clear view of the current issues facing Army families.

He was receptive to understanding the effects of redundancy, rebasing and restructuring and among the topics we discussed, childcare was top of the list.

We look forward to welcoming him along with other senior staff to the AFF’s Big Debate conference on October 21 where you can have your say. Register via our website.

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Pictures: SSgt Adrian Harlen, Sgt Steve Blake, Sgt Tom Robinson and Sgt Paul Shaw, all RLC



THE BIG PICTURE

> HORSE GUARDS PARADE, WHITEHALL, LONDON

COLOUR VISION

MORE than 1,000 soldiers from the Household Division were on parade to mark the Queen's official birthday last month. This year it was the turn of Nijmegen Company of the Grenadier Guards (bottom left) to troop the colour, its crimson silk carrying 45 of the regiment's 77 battle honours. Members of The King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery, The Life Guards and The Blues and Royals then rode past before all personnel marched off in ceremonial procession down The Mall.

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PERSIMMON
Together, we make a home

Report: Richard Long
Pictures: Graeme Main

WITH the final curtain now falling on the Service's efforts in Afghanistan it would be reasonable to assume that the pace of military life may start to slow down somewhat.

But the demands of Army 2020, a return to contingency operations and the continuing training cycle mean such notions are far from reality.

And the workload of the Coldstream Guards highlights this point perfectly.

Having deployed to Kabul in a force protection role the regiment is nearing the end of another busy tour but once their Herrick mission is complete the focus will almost immediately switch elsewhere.

From next year certain elements will be on standby in a high readiness role and others will deploy to the Falkland Islands.

A series of overseas exercises are also in the pipeline and the soldiers will offer their support to colleagues testing themselves in Kenya.

In 2016 they will resume their secondary role of performing ceremonial duties.

Commanding officer Lt Col Toby Till believes such commitments point to an exciting future for the regiment and the variety of roles tackled in theatre will prepare them for what is to come.

As the Kabul Support Unit they have been responsible for transporting personnel to various sites across the city and they have offered protection to those working as mentors at the Afghan National Army Officer Academy (ANAOA).

The Coldstream Guards also form a quick reaction force for Isaf troops in the capital – should it be required.

"This is very much a supporting role; we have taken a step to the rear while the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) take the lead," Lt Col Till told *Soldier* during the magazine's visit to Kabul.

"There were a few incidents in the build-up to the elections but the way we worked with the Afghans to secure the city was very impressive.

"A lot of young guardsmen were looking forward to coming here. We have rotated guys throughout the tour so everyone gets an opportunity.

"It is not Helmand but they want to see the culture and sites of Kabul. At least they are feeling like they have experienced a foreign country. »

SUPPORT SERVICE

**COLDSTREAM GUARDS FIND NEW CHALLENGE
ON THE STREETS OF KABUL**

» "I don't think they really knew what to expect. The Infantry's role is to close in and engage the enemy but we are now in a supporting function that will be key to the future success of Afghanistan."

While their front-line skills have not been tested in the same way as previous tours the troops have gained valuable experience in other areas.

Lt Col Till said: "These guardsmen are moving brigadiers and senior officers around the city. They are interacting with them on a daily basis and giving briefings. That is a great confidence boost for them."

"It has been fairly routine and there are not many exciting stories to tell. The Afghans are dealing with things themselves but we are ready if required."

To fulfil this role personnel have had to familiarise themselves with Foxhounds and civilian armoured vehicles, while also adapting to the challenge of driving on the chaotic streets of Kabul.

"It is completely different," said Gdsm Craig Gray. "We train for foot patrols and all of a sudden we were told we would be taking vehicles out."

"The locals drive down the wrong side of the carriageway and if they miss a junction they'll stop and do a U-turn in the middle of the road."

"It is dusty and bumpy but the vehicles we use are ideal."

"It takes some getting used to. Trucks can take up two lanes and they even travel at night with no lights on."

"However, I have been driving for quite a few years now so it didn't take long to adjust and once you get your confidence up you are okay."

The Guards have one company at Camp Souter, near Kabul International Airport, and another at Camp Qargha on the outskirts of the city, where they provide force protection for the ANAOA mentors as well as escorting visitors to the site.

The facility benefits from a 17-kilometre perimeter but security remains a top priority for British personnel and their colleagues from Australia and New Zealand.

"It is not as action packed as Helmand province," said Lt Tom Neverauskas, of The Royal Australian Regiment. "But we are here to do a job."

"It is really busy and we are working every day. There are a few differences in culture and language with the Brits but as armies we are pretty similar."

"We know it is a long, slow tour but we have to maintain our strength at all times."

"The Australians and New Zealanders have suffered from green-on-blue attacks in the past and that is something we have to guard against."

Having worked alongside members of the ANSF on two previous Herrick tours Sgt Anthony Mark has seen a considerable improvement among those passing through the officer academy.

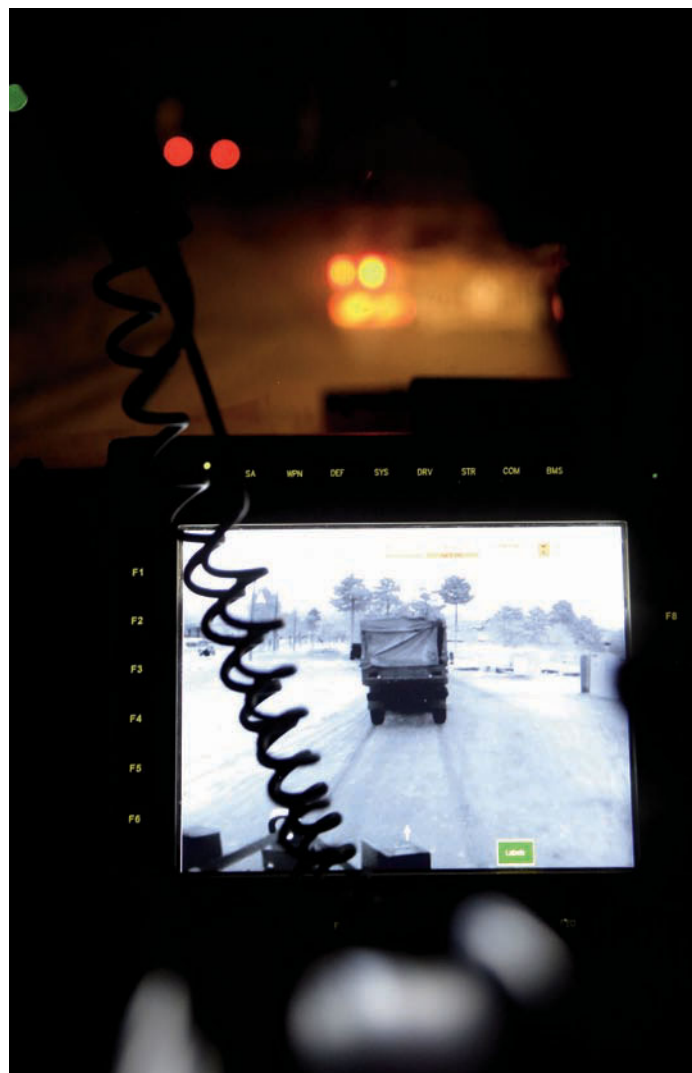
And while admitting his role in theatre may not be as intensive as the one performed during earlier deployments, he acknowledged its importance as part of the bigger picture in Afghanistan.

"I've noticed a massive difference among the recruits," he explained. "They now seem to be more keen and that is down to the mentors."

"This tour has not been as kinetic as Herrick 11 but we are still busy; there is a lot of work to be done."

"If we were not here to provide force protection for the mentors they could not do the important job they have been doing." ■

Guards on the ground: Lt Col Toby Till (left) is excited by the regiment's future; troops get to grips with their roles in and around Kabul (right)



◀ IT IS NOT AS ACTION
PACKED AS HELMAND
PROVINCE BUT WE ARE
HERE TO DO A JOB ▶



◀ THE AFGHANS ARE DEALING
WITH THINGS THEMSELVES BUT
WE ARE READY IF REQUIRED ▶



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Most people just soldier on in the same old job. But Paul D. isn't most people. He and his teammates put in weeks on end in Helmand, even in combat zones and lockdowns, for home leave that's over all too soon.

It sounds a bit like the army. And Paul has proudly picked up four medals in war zones from Iraq to Afghanistan. Like everyone else on the team, he's a different kind of service man.

A civilian who happily commits to 14-16 hour days to implement changes to military IT systems when they're in downtime. Because for obvious reasons, you can't work on them when they're in use.

Like many others, Paul is always ready to go back, again and again. Hardly the attitude of a cog in a machine.

It's the teamwork of people dedicated to a vital task. Maintaining systems that cannot be allowed to fail, despite the climate, the conditions, the intense situations.


If IT Support went down here, it would be all over the front page. This is the first time Paul has appeared in print. Commitment passes unnoticed.

hp.com/uk/publicservants



Make it matter.





Round-the-clock cover: Hldr Josese Nayacakalou (4 Scots) from the Camp Protection Force watches out from a tower on the perimeter fence at Camp Bastion

TO PROTECT AND

Report: Richard Long
Pictures: Graeme Main

WITH Helmand's frontier patrol bases now confined to the history books the Army's footprint in southern Afghanistan is fully concentrated on Camp Bastion.

This move points to the end of an arduous campaign that has lasted for more than a decade and while troops rightfully look forward to returning home it is very much business as usual for

those who will be performing an increasingly important role between now and the end of the year.

Having UK personnel based solely within the confines of one key location has prompted questions as to whether the Taliban will launch a concerted attack on the site but with security remaining a top priority every effort is being made to ensure this possibility does not become a reality.

A plethora of surveillance cameras and unmanned aerial systems provide a

**THE AREA OF
OPERATIONS
IS STILL
DANGEROUS**

comprehensive intelligence asset for monitoring activity outside the wire, while the soldiers manning perimeter towers and gun lines offer a timely reminder of the fearsome force that awaits potential imposters.

Falling under the umbrella of Task Force Belleau Wood, the UK contingent is responsible for security operations in and around Camp Bastion and Leatherneck while working alongside counterparts from the US, Jordan and Georgia.

"This area of operations is

SERVE PERSONNEL MAN BASTION DEFENCES FOR CAMP DRAWDOWN

still dangerous," Lt Col Peter Stitt (RRF), the task force's deputy commander, told *Soldier*. "The manoeuvre battlegroup is going out to dominate the places where the enemy threat remains.

"We are pushing out to the outer range of their IDF capability, patrolling to disrupt potential firing points.

"There has not been a successful IDF attack in well over a year and that is because we are putting ourselves in harm's way.

"Some people say the threat will increase

The winter was tough:
Hldr Dean Brown during the lengthy tour manning a stretch of perimeter towers at Camp Bastion



between now and the end of the year, while others believe it is dying away. But whatever happens, we will continue doing our job to provide that envelope of security."

And the senior officer believes his personnel will maintain the highest standards given the level of experience within the ranks.

"The Royal Air Force's force protection wing has been doing this since we started in Afghanistan," he said.

"They exist to safeguard airfields and they are very good at it. Elsewhere we have plenty of people who are on their second or third tours.

"While other units are coming back to Bastion to pack up and go home we will be here to the end to ensure security is in place."

Soldier visited other elements of the mission for a behind-the-scenes look at the efforts being made to protect the Army's last remaining camp in Helmand...



**“IT HAS BEEN
A BONDING
EXPERIENCE;
AT THE START
WE WERE JUST
A MULTIPLE OF
16 GUYS”**

TALK OF THE TOWERS

● PERSONNEL from 4th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland have just returned home after completing a lengthy tour manning perimeter towers at Camp Bastion.

Operating 24-hours-a-day, seven days a week the troops were responsible for maintaining a presence on the eastern sector, which included an entrance to the site.

Despite enjoying a relatively quiet tour the soldiers faced varying threat levels, with the festive period proving to be particularly volatile.

“There was a suggestion there would be a complex attack on Bastion just before Christmas,” said Lt Ollie Gourd.

“We went to a surge state, which saw us use maximum manpower and put extra weapons in place. We also did more patrols.

“That was sustained for two weeks and the same thing happened in mid-January.

“We were seeing a lot of recce activity and the information we received suggested that fighters posing as goat herders were coming to the area.”

Fortunately, the situation failed to escalate further as the strong British presence achieved the desired effect.

The troops then faced an IDF attack but with the rounds falling well short of their intended target there was little concern for the individuals involved.

“It was all fairly routine but that incident helped maintain our focus,” explained Lt Gourd.

“Complacency is one of the big issues we face and we have to make sure that is not a problem.

“Checks are done every day and we work as if something is going to happen, it is just a case of what and when. We need to be ready to react.

“Even if someone gets through the gate and steals a jerry can it would be mission fail. There is a lot of emphasis on not letting the perimeter be breached.”

Conditions at the towers are not as comfortable as other locations in Bastion and teams of four would be based at each site for two weeks before enjoying a couple of days off.

“Throughout our training we were focusing on going out on patrol so this is very different,” said Hldr Dean Brown.

“It has been an experience. The winter was tough and the temperature was as low as -18 degrees Celsius at times. The wind chill coming through the towers was not nice.

“But I have quite enjoyed it. It has been a bonding experience; at the start we were just a multiple of 16 guys and it was almost like being at school.

“While it has been fairly quiet I think it may kick off on Herrick 20. The Taliban will want to make it look like they are pushing us out and I’m quite surprised that has not already started.”

EYES IN THE SKY

● FOR the troops of 32 Regiment, Royal Artillery Herrick 19 was as busy as the many tours that have gone before.

The eight-month deployment saw the unmanned aerial systems specialists of 57 Bhurtapore Battery flying the Hermes, T-Hawk and Desert Hawk platforms on a regular basis.

They helped negate the threat to personnel during the withdrawal from Lashkar Gah and played a key role in supporting convoys and combat logistic patrols, while providing security for the ever-dwindling number of forward operating bases.

As Task Force Helmand closed they fell under the control of Regional Command South West but the move did not result in a reduced workload.

“We get to work with the United States Marine Corps and that has been great,” said Maj Charlie Harmer, the battery commander.

“It makes things more interesting for the crews and they see there is still quite a lot going on out on the ground.

“We get to go to areas that have not been flown in before on Op Herrick and are really making the most of the closing months.”

Hermes pilot Sgt Craig Neil was on his sixth tour with the asset and in that time he has seen the capability’s reputation soar.

“People have been educated more and more,” he said. “It progressed to the stage where guys on every patrol would go out with UAVs.

“The drawdown has impacted on what we have been doing. We have supported the closure of forward operating bases and provided security as equipment was brought back to camp.

“And now we are part of Regional Command South West we are working with the manoeuvre battlegroup and collecting a lot of intelligence.”



BATTERY LIFE

● WHILE the gun line manned by 3rd Battalion, Royal Horse Artillery failed to unload a single high explosive shell during their tour, the soldiers were still able to showcase their military might.

Illumination rounds were regularly fired in support of security operations being conducted by the RAF, United States Marine Corps and Georgian troops and the effort has helped to deter potential insurgent attacks.

"We are firing in defence of Camp Bastion and also to disrupt the enemy," explained Maj Richard Crawford.

"We have used around 1,200 rounds since the start of October. The illuminations thwart the insurgents and also underline the capability we have.

"High explosives have not been fired and that shows how far the campaign has come. Our troops are no longer in a position where they require that level of support."

The change in emphasis has allowed the gunners to perform a mentoring role for their Afghan National Army counterparts, who are rapidly expanding their artillery strength.

They also had a busy start to the tour, when they were transporting guns to and from different patrol bases.

"The last deployment was a lot more kinetic," said Bdr Kameli Damuyawa, a veteran of Herrick 13.

"We could actually see where the rounds were landing. Most of the missions we get now are for illuminations; it is about showing the insurgents we are still here.

"I was expecting things to be at a standstill but as soon as we arrived we were firing from a patrol base.

"It is good to be part of one of the last tours. I helped with the close down of Op Telic and now I'm doing the same here; it is something to be proud of."



● LIFE on tour proved to be a family affair for Sgt Warren Blyth and his son Gnr Lewis Blyth (both 3 RHA).

The experienced NCO was on his third Afghan deployment and helped with the closure of Lashkar Gah on Herrick 19 before moving to Regional Command South West.

However, his son was at the opposite end of the spectrum having transferred to the gunners from the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers and embarking on his first Herrick commitment.

"We try to keep things professional," said Blyth senior. "Not many people know we are father and son and, if anything, I find myself actively trying to avoid him at times.

"I would have preferred him to stick with the REME; everyone has a master plan for their son but I will stand by him and see how it works out.

"However, he is in a good regiment. I have worked with most other artillery units and this is definitely one of the best."

Having grown up within the Army environment it was no surprise when Blyth junior decided to follow in his father's footsteps.

"I had wanted to join for a while," he said. "This is my first tour and I was keen to come and see what it is all about.

"I wasn't really enjoying the REME so I decided to transfer and I've been working on the guns since I got here. But it means I don't really see my dad that much."



SON OF A GUNNER

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THE LOGISTICS PLAN BEHIND THE ARMY'S HERRICK WITHDRAWAL

Report: Richard Long
Pictures: Graeme Main



ITH just months remaining of the British Army's campaign in Afghanistan one of the biggest challenges facing the last soldiers in theatre is ensuring the drawdown process reaches a successful conclusion.

Having invested billions of pounds in vehicles, kit and equipment the Service wants to see high-value items returning to the UK as it moves towards contingency operations.

Like any military mission the procedure requires detailed planning and oversight but with some of the finest logistical minds in uniform taking the lead the redeployment effort is already at an advanced stage.

As of May 31, some 2,288 vehicles and major pieces of equipment had safely returned home – a figure that represents 66.1 per cent of the kit in theatre.

And a further 3,392 ISO containers packed with spare parts, surplus stock and other items had been shipped back to the UK.

One of the key considerations for those involved is the need to deliver value for money and with a computerised

redeployment programme determining the fate of everything from a Mastiff to a battery pack there is little chance of things going wrong.

In simple terms, the system decides whether something is sent back to the UK, disposed of in theatre or reissued.

"The vast majority of vehicles and equipment will return to the UK; platforms such as Mastiff and Foxhound will be used for contingency," explained Brig Martin Moore, outgoing commander of Joint Force Support.

"But for certain items it is cheaper to dispose of them than bring them back home.

"We can either gift them, sell them or use them as scrap metal. We have a company which sells smaller items such as toolsets, furniture and televisions to local traders, while larger objects like tented accommodation are sold on the international market. The money then goes back to the Treasury.

"The gifts have been minimal. It is things like Hesco bastion for forward operating bases. It maintains our relationship with the Afghan National Army and helps them to protect themselves, while keeping Afghanistan on the right foot."



“
WE HAVE
LEARNT
LESSONS
FROM IRAQ
”





Lt Col Allan Hinton (RLC), a senior officer involved in the redeployment effort, told *Soldier* the Army's withdrawal is

going exactly to plan thanks to its well-oiled logistics chain.

Having established numerous methods of removing material from theatre there have been few delays as each deadline is successfully met.

"I was involved in the drawdown of Iraq but this is a bit more complex," he said.

"We have learnt lessons from that and updated our systems so there is proof of good order.

"So far we have been quite fortunate. The past couple of months have been fairly quiet and the border crossings have all been open.

"We have exceeded all the targets we have set ourselves and the lines of communication have been working well.

"The airframes have been performing and there are various modes of transport available to us."

Kit can be flown out to the Middle East for shipping back to the UK and road moves via numerous different routes are also carried out. Direct flights home are another option.

"We try to build in a degree of flexibility so we are not relying on one system," the officer added. "We have multiple ways in and out of theatre and those options have assisted us in getting stuff out.

"I am going to see this process out and that will give us a degree of continuity. Within the headquarters there are quite a few of us who were involved in the Iraq drawdown and that will hold us in good stead.

"I see it as a privilege to be part of this."



CHAIN GANG

■ TO ensure the drawdown runs smoothly the Reverse Supply Chain Squadron has a heavy workload.

Whether it is disposing of scrap metal or managing Camp Bastion's bio-wash facility, there is no shortage of tasks for these soldiers.

The formation is 173-strong and personnel work around 14 hours a day in a variety of roles, the most strenuous of which sees them smashing items in the scrapyards.

"Anything that could be used against us has to be cut up," explained squadron OC Maj Austen Moore (RLC). "Tubing may form part of a rocket launcher while items such as springs can be component parts for an IED.

"Computer systems will have their hard drives wiped and they

will then come here for an axe to go through them.

"It is almost like aggressive housekeeping and all the stuff we do not need is sent here, where it is either sold via logistics specialist Agility or disposed of."

Ammunition that has reached its shelf life is passed through the small arms incinerator – with up to four tonnes processed each day. The resulting metal is then boxed and sold as scrap.

The bio-wash plant sees vehicles sprayed with DEFRA-endorsed chemicals before being moved to the airhead for transportation and all the kit being transferred home will reach the standard where it can go straight back on the shelf in preparation for contingency operations.



IT IS
ALMOST LIKE
AGGRESSIVE
HOUSEKEEPING



THE CHANGING FACE OF BASTION

■ WITH the Army's forward operating bases now a distant memory the chain of command's attention has switched to closing the biggest camp in Helmand province and handing it over to the Afghans.

Lt Col Laurence Quinn (RE) is helping to steer the process and having performed a similar role at the end of the Iraq conflict his experience has been vital.

"Camp Bastion is a huge town and has everything you need, from a water treatment plant to entertainment facilities and three or four chapels," he told *Soldier*.

"In other operations we have taken over existing infrastructure but here we went into the desert and built everything ourselves. We were being shot at and blown up as we brought things in.

"We often hear the comparison that it is the same size as Reading but I would say it is more like Aldershot, with Gatwick Airport next to it.

"This is the largest base the Army has built since the Second World War. It is important we leave it in good order and I am focused on making sure it is handed over well.

"The standard of remediation has been a big talking point. The Afghans are keen for us to leave everything but we do not want to give them lots of new goodies that they will have to look after and guard."

One of the initial targets was to return kit that has been identified as having high value to the MoD.

"Some of the tented systems are a top priority," Lt Col Quinn added. "Small field generators are great for the contingency phase so they are also going back."

The scaling down of the site will result in a more expeditionary feel between now and the end of the year, with every eventuality being covered.

For example, the last normal meal in the dining facility will be served ten days prior to departure, while the last flush of the

toilet and shower at Camp Bastion will be at 0800 on the third day before leaving.

Welfare options such as Pizza Hut have now closed and changes are being planned to the internet and telephone cabins and gym facilities.

From August or September the Patrol Link system will be issued to units to cater for their communication needs, with phone terminals and online connections available from equipment housed within two bags.

The gym-in-a-box will also be rolled out with items such as punchbags, kettle bells and medicine balls included, allowing Servicemen and women to work out once the base's main gyms shut down.

"We are aware that the personnel remaining here are going to want to exercise and stay fit," said Wg Cdr Alex South, a member of the Joint Force Support team.

"This is something we can do to mitigate the loss of the gyms.

"We also understand that one of the key elements of welfare policy is communication. We've had camps working from Patrol Link and it is a very good solution."



Closing time: Lt Col Laurence Quinn; a tented system being dismantled



WE HAVE SOLD TWO AIRCRAFT DE-ICING MACHINES IN A COUNTRY WITH 46-DEGREE HEAT



CASH TO THE CROWN

■ THE drive to deliver value for money during the redeployment process has seen the Army employ logistics specialists Agility to oversee the sale of surplus kit.

While ammunition and other contentious equipment is destroyed items such as beds and gym apparatus are sold to local traders at auction.

But it is not just low-value goods that fall within Agility's remit as high-end commodities such as tented accommodation are advertised on the international market.

"We are here to sell things for the best recoverable value to the crown," said project manager Jonathan Davis, a former soldier in the Adjutant General's Corps.

"We have sold millions of pounds' worth of stuff. Before we arrived people were being paid to take this away but we are bringing the UK money."

For example, a 20-foot container full of mattresses will now be sold, whereas before its contents would have simply been burnt.

"The MoD wanted a viable solution that combined value for money with ethical disposal," Davis added.

"There is nothing we will not be able to sell – we have sold two aircraft de-icing machines in a country with 46-degree heat.

"Wood is of high value as there are no trees in Helmand province but the lack of interest in items such as televisions is surprising.

"By contrast we can sell tented accommodation for up to 100 people in one container.

"They are generally sold to the African market and we are targeting places like Mozambique, where there is a mining community and oil exploration.

"We can also offer them shower units or generators to go with the bed spaces. Before we were here things like that would have been disposed of."

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BELOW THE SURFACE

The landmine hazard lurking 32 years on

Report: Joe Clapson
Pictures: Graeme Main

 TS unforgiving landscape may have seen countless British soldiers beasted through exhausting battles and training serials but the idyllic white sandy beaches surrounding the Falkland Islands could easily be mistaken for those of the Maldives.

A rich population of rare birds and plants marks the South Atlantic archipelago out as an exceptional habitat but one key thing sets it apart from other picturesque destinations –

much of its ground is littered with landmines and unexploded bombs.

Following the Falklands War in 1982, between 25,000 and 30,000 devices were laid by Argentine forces and many of them remain in place today – as deadly now as they were back then.

The British territory might be home to the world's largest population of Gentoo penguins but, unfortunately, any notion of twitchers being able to lounge about on a quiet beach to watch these birds is but a pipe dream because of the very real threat of being blown up.



"We are strict
- it's a case
of either
reprimand
these
individuals
or potentially
let them get
blown up"



Today there are 113 minefields in existence, which remain shut off to the public 32 years after the ten-week conflict ended.

Red triangular signs alert passers-by to the hazard, meaning it is both highly dangerous and illegal to take another step into these areas.

The job of explosive ordnance disposal at the remote outpost falls to the British Army's Ammunition Sub Depot (ASD) – part of the Joint Service Explosive Ordnance Disposal Operations Centre.

Led by WO1 Moxy James (RLC), the team comprises nine loggies, who are on continuous alert for calls to newly discovered or suspect devices as well as their additional duties of storing and maintaining £88 million-worth of ammunition in support of troops operating in the Falklands.

And as the officer commanding explained, the responsibility is anything but straightforward.

"Back in 1982 the Argentines would have sent their blokes into the field and dug the mines into the ground and there are thousands still out there," said WO1 James.

"It is a very slow process to get them all out because of the nature of the soil and finding them in the first place takes a long time due to the boggy turf.

"When we do uncover a mine detonation can be problematic

because of the devastating effect on the terrain and the danger of setting off other explosives."

The problem is not just limited to mines. Unexploded bombs, small arms ammunition, mortars, rockets and artillery munitions are all known to be lurking in the ground at old battle sites including Stanley, Fitzroy, Goose Green and Fox Bay.

Following the so-called Ottawa Convention in 1997, which aimed to ban the use of anti-personnel devices

around the world, the UK and Argentine governments agreed to look into the feasibility of clearing remaining landmines and unexploded ordnance.

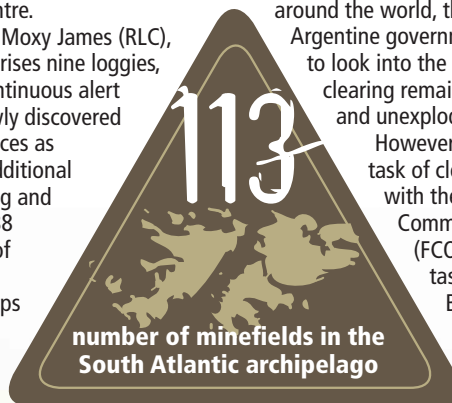
However, the overall task of clearance lies with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), whose efforts tasking contractor Bactec to remove the devices have been frustrated over the last 12 months

while the UK and Argentina attempt to create a longer-term plan.

Sophie Benger, a spokesperson for the FCO, added that the territory posed a "unique challenge" for demining operations.

"The location, difficult weather conditions, concerns over the environment, incomplete Argentine minefield records and the tough financial climate are all factors the UK must contend with," she said.

As talks on how to make these areas safe drag on, Service personnel



continue in the important task of keeping the landscape as secure as it can be.

Just a few months ago some walkers spotted a suspicious looking object protruding through the powdery sand at Gypsy Cove, meaning the ASD team was called into action.

"We marked the area as dangerous; it just highlighted how the sand does shift and the mines move with it," explained WO1 James.

"It's very difficult to classify any land as completely safe because the explosives can migrate due to the impact of the weather.

"It's a real shame that somewhere so beautiful is completely shut off."

Bizarrely, while the average tourist might be put off by the fact these seaside spots are off limits others have flocked to them to soak up the military history.

Kyle Biggs, Executive Secretary at the Falkland Islands

Tourist Board, believes this legacy of war has actually boosted the number of trips to the territory.

"Having minefields has a positive

effect on tourism when people with an interest in the Falklands War come," he said.

"I have had visitors ask me about seeing a minefield whilst they are here on quite a few different occasions."

Such intrigue might be a welcome by-product of the conflict for the local economy but the increased focus on these fields has posed an extra challenge for ASD personnel.

Sightseers have been discovered illegally posing for photographs inside minefields, directly on top of lethal ground.

"There are still people who enter these areas and that's why we are so strict with the laws – it's a case of either reprimand these individuals or potentially let them get blown up," explained WO1 James.

"It's an offence to enter a minefield, damage its fence or remove warning signs.

"The penalties for breaking these important laws are imprisonment, a fine or of course being seriously injured or killed."

Although veterans of Afghanistan may be accustomed to dealing with the risk of IEDs, the nature of the explosive threat in the Falklands is quite different and the ASD team have a clear message to any troops visiting the region.

"These devices are not like roadside bombs in Helmand province and the rules out here have been in place for a long time – once a mine has been seen you should not go anywhere near it," continued the warrant officer.

"People should not approach any suspect



items but instead place a marker close to it, note the location, take a photograph and then report it so that we can act.

"Troops exercising out here need to forget Herrick and realise they are in the Falklands."

Aesthetically, the South Atlantic might be stunning but below its surface are the remnants of a vicious conflict and it is down to British Army experts to ensure this ordnance does not cause the same kind of casualties to this generation as it did to the one before it. ■

Watch your step:
The Falklands Islands are littered with signs warning of the danger of devices such as the anti-tank mine above



"It's a real shame that somewhere so beautiful is completely shut off"

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SUN, SAND... AND 'SERIOUS WORK

Report: Joe Clapson
Pictures: Steve Dock

A FORTNIGHT on the sun-baked Spanish island of Fuerteventura would usually be the preserve of tourists in search of a tan rather than soldiers preparing to fight.

But to the surprise of troops from 7th Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Scotland, that was the mission facing them on the latest Exercise Iberian Star.

Even more of a shock was the tough mountainous terrain and barren conditions the Reservists found themselves in – a far cry from the landscape of air-conditioned hotels and swimming pools that many come to expect from the popular holiday destination. »



» It was the first time the formation had taken the lead in a major exercise, with their Regular colleagues from the regiment's 3rd Battalion stepping into a support role, and as such this is a milestone in the development of the integrated Army.

Under the 2020 construct, such a scenario – Regular soldiers taking orders from Reserve commanders – will routinely occur on live operations.

"The partnership between the two battalions has been in place for about ten months but this is us formally starting to make the pairing work on exercise," explained Lt Col Pete Little, commanding officer of 7 Scots.

"We are in the Canary Islands but it's definitely not party time.

"They've had ten days of hard work in the field, operating on shale, stone and scree in very hot conditions."

Exposed to high temperatures and relentless trade winds on a dusty 50 square-kilometre training area, the Scots worked on basic warfare skills alongside members of the Spanish Regimiento de Infantería Ligera Canarias 50 from nearby Gran Canaria.

With two Spanish companies fighting forward against a mock enemy, the British troops focused on providing effective cover for their European allies from the flanks.

Explaining why UK troops had descended on Fuerteventura for the very first time, Lt Col Little said: "There has been a huge increase in the number of overseas exercises recently which is part of a better offer to recruits.

"But aside from that, training abroad provides some fascinating opportunities for our personnel.

"Here, Reserves have a chance to integrate with Regulars while gaining exposure to foreign nations."

Following a 12km insertion across ground formed from volcanic lava, the Brits were tasked with extracting insurgents from the mountains before capturing the sizeable "Hill 251" and setting up a defensive position.

In what was a world away from preparations for operations in Afghanistan, personnel were able to work at speed across large areas without any concern about improvised explosive devices.

"Normally we would take the lead on exercise and ops but having Reservists in charge has been absolutely fine," said LCpl Fraser Gracie (3 Scots) after conquering the final ascent.

"I worked with Reserve lads in

Afghanistan and they fit in right away – it's not a problem.

"Operating with them is about being patient because they haven't spent as long on the basic stuff."

For this particular contingent, however, it was not long before such patience paid dividends on the ground.

"It's been a challenging environment to work in and I've never taken a hill like the one in the final exercise," admitted LCpl David McNicol (7 Scots).

"But training at locations like this alongside full-time soldiers can only make us better as a whole.

"Interacting with the Spanish has helped us learn how to get past language difficulties by using demonstrations and drawings."

Although there was little let-up in the efforts of those involved in Ex Iberian Star, the attractive surroundings were not altogether lost on the British visitors.

"As a recruiting tool trips abroad are great – I joined in 2011 and since then I've been to Germany, Cyprus, America, Denmark,

France and served at the Olympics," LCpl McNicol continued.

"If you want to travel then the opportunities are certainly there."

In the last 18 months 320 troops from this Reserve battalion have deployed overseas to hone their skills and refresh their training in landscapes far different to Britain's green and pleasant land.

At a time when the sluggish start to the Army's recruitment campaign is coming under increasing criticism, Lt Col Little believes travel could be the real answer – even over cash.

"There are now a lot of financial incentives to join the Reserves so you might argue that is what people



want. But the real reason individuals join up is to do something active and extraordinary," said the senior officer.

"Going the extra mile away from their usual job and family commitments should be the appeal of Service life.

"If we can offer really adventurous military training like this then we are absolutely fulfilling what Reservists want out of their careers."

As far as forming one integrated fighting force is concerned, Pte Gavin Ash (7 Scots) is better placed than most to judge whether the process works in reality.

He served full-time with 42 Engineer Regiment until 2004 before rejoining the organisation as a part-time soldier last year.

"The 7 Scots lads are a great bunch and willing to work, and us being in the lead has gone really well," he told *Soldier*.

"The Army 2020 plan and this idea of units being paired will happen providing the time and investment is put in and we have enough guys who want to work hard.

"But like anything, it clearly can't be done if the funding isn't in place or if all parties don't cooperate."

They might not have got anywhere near a sun-lounger or a sip of sangria but Scottish Reservists have proved that two weeks of hard graft in a sunny destination can reap huge rewards – the benefits of which will be felt for many years. ■

No holiday: Troops from the paired battalions, 3 and 7 Scots, take on the unforgiving Fuerteventura terrain



“It’s been a challenging environment to work in and I’ve never taken a hill like the one in the final exercise”



FUERTEVENTURA: THE FACTS

The English translation of Fuerteventura is
STRONG WIND

426,448

British tourists visited
the island in 2013



THE ISLAND'S
AVERAGE
TEMPERATURE
IN JULY



Approximate flight time to the
holiday destination from the UK is

4.5 hours



Usual number
of rainy days
in the summer
months is

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'Don't grizzle'

The man thought to be Britain's oldest surviving former prisoner of war has some straightforward advice for today's soldiers – wisdom he learnt the hard way

interview: Joe Clapson
Pictures: Steve Dock

WITH a huge amount of pomp and ceremony surrounding the First World War and D-Day anniversaries this year, it is easy to lose sight of the very personal stories from those vast battlefields.

But a few words from the 100-year-old man thought to be Britain's oldest surviving former prisoner of war serves as a stark reminder of the type of characters this country has had fighting its corner for generations.

David Arkush, an ex-captain in the Royal Army Dental Corps, was captured by Japanese forces in Singapore on February 15, 1942 in one of the country's worst defeats of the Second World War.

British soldiers had surrendered and were held under the brutal watch of enemy troops until September 1945.

During that time, alongside 16,000 Allied comrades, Mr Arkush was moved between the camps

of Ban Pong, Kanchanaburi, Chungkai and Changi – the latter having been made famous by Eric Lomax's *The Railway Man*.

All of these locations were sites of torture, disease and malnutrition and prisoners at Changi were forced to labour in the sweltering heat in exchange for food. If they didn't or couldn't, they would

simply go hungry.

"That time is still very vivid in my mind – those horrible years in Singapore, Malaya and Thailand," Mr

Arkush told *Soldier* in an interview to mark his 100th birthday.

"I remember the hardship and the friendship of my fellow prisoners."

Work imposed on the frail soldiers included loading munitions onto ships, clearing damaged sewers and building the notorious 415-kilometre Burma-Thailand "death railway" from Ban Pong to Thanbyuzayat.

Shifts ranged from 24 to 33 hours long and those suffering with diseases were required to work just as hard as the healthy men.

As a direct result of this project alone, more than 12,300 Allied soldiers died.

However, in the self-effacing manner often assumed by men of his generation, this veteran is keen not to be singled out for his endurance.

"Life was hard and food was short but there were other soldiers fighting and they also went through tough times," he explained.

"We had to live our lives and not make too much fuss."

Although now happy to discuss the ordeal, it was 20 years after his release before Mr Arkush felt able to talk about it.

Only after he made the decision to return to the site of his haunting memories – most recently in 2004 – could the ex-Serviceman start to find his voice.

"When I went back it all just flowed out," he recalled.

"My last visit was when I was 90 and one particular memory that stuck out was of a fellow Jewish inmate who I had to bury.

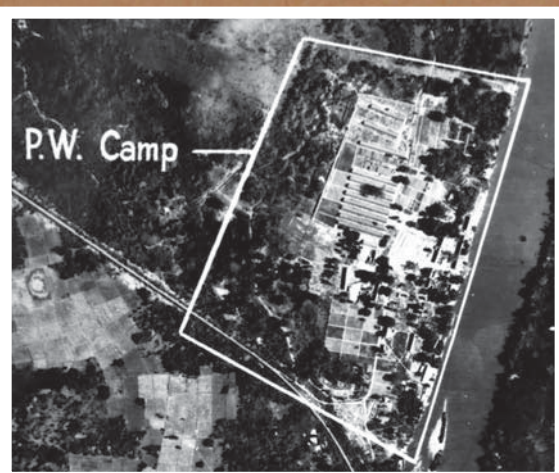
"While a prisoner I had arranged through the chaplain general to hold Jewish formalities for troops – my father was a rabbi so I had some training in that area.

"I took a service every Saturday for 45-50 soldiers, which I thought was important and I also held ceremonies for fallen personnel.

"I remember saluting that Jewish serviceman and just found it so sad that he was buried out there, his tomb stuck in Malaya."

During his time at the barbed-wire encircled prisons Mr Arkush saw further comrades perish at the hands of barbarism and poor hygiene.

Like others, the dentist suffered

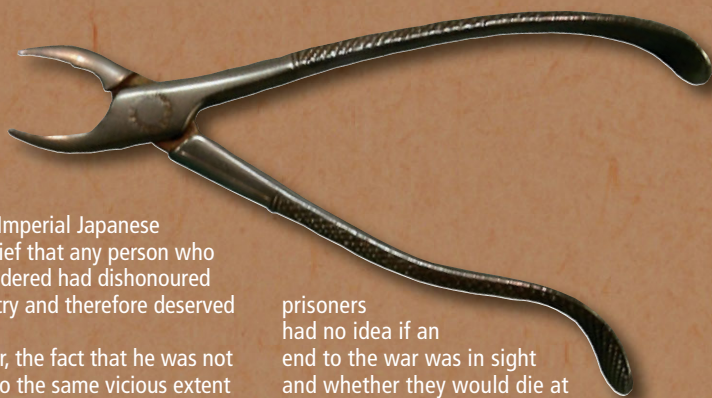


Horrible hardships: An aerial photograph of Chungkai prisoner of war camp in Thailand and an illustration of David Arkush's dentist chair fashioned from bamboo

Pictures: Army Medical Services Museum



Tools of the trade: Dental forceps and a cartridge syringe with anaesthetic ampoules that were smuggled into the camp



Optimism that I was going to survive got me through



under the Imperial Japanese Army's belief that any person who had surrendered had dishonoured their country and therefore deserved no mercy.

However, the fact that he was not punished to the same vicious extent as his comrades was, he believes, down to his medical credentials.

"The Japs had a certain amount of respect for me because, when asked, I treated them," he said.

"I didn't go looking for those patients but if someone came in and he was Japanese I had to deal with him because that is just proper medical etiquette.

"It wasn't difficult for me to take care of someone who I knew had behaved badly towards my colleagues – I was just being professional."

Despite living in primitive conditions on a diet of rice and boiled river water, Mr Arkush never lost sight of his duty to the men who were suffering.

"As a dentist it was difficult to do my job as there was a constant struggle to get materials to carry out the work," he admitted.

"But I had a marvellous chair built for me out of bamboo and with it I was able to undertake a fair amount of dentistry.

"My patients required treatment so I had to carry out the work to the best of my ability."

Some routine procedures, though, such as making dentures were almost impossible due to a lack of tools and resources.

"There was one case of a man swimming in the sea whose false teeth fell out and he came to see what I could do about it," recalled Mr Arkush.

"I just said 'dive', which he did and believe it or not he found them."

Improvising where he could, the dental officer was able to create temporary fillings and repair dentures using whatever he could lay his hands on – including the likes of aluminium from mess tins, wire and vulcanised rubber.

"That was the case for all the soldiers in the camps – we made the most of what we had," he said.

With little access to outside news, other than from radios smuggled into the site, Allied

prisoners had no idea if an end to the war was in sight and whether they would die at the Far East location.

Each soldier dealt with their capture and imprisonment in their own way but for Mr Arkush his strategy was simple.

"Optimism got me through," he commented. "Optimism that I was going to survive, Japanese or no Japanese, and I did.

"I knew I was going to go home to my parents."

Following Japan's surrender three years later, the prisoners were released and Mr Arkush's wish to return home to his family in Blackpool was finally granted.

On leaving the Army he settled in Hampstead, London, and set up a dental practice in Edgware.

While in London, the ex-Serviceman met his wife Shirley, now 83, with whom he has two children, six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

"The children ask me questions like 'grandpa what was it like?' and 'how did you manage for food?' and I just say that we managed as best as we could and hoped that we would survive," Mr Arkush said.

"When we were released I just thought 'thank God it's all over and I can have a normal life again'.

"But how could anybody foresee that I would live to 100 years of age?

"I've been married 62 years, I've got a lovely family and we are very happy – the rest of it is just like a bad dream.

"I'm pleased with my age – so far so good."

Last month Mr Arkush celebrated his centenary with a special event at the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst but on a normal day, without the cluster of medals on his chest, this man would look like any other senior citizen.

Having lived through such extraordinary times, he concludes his interview with a straightforward but vital message for today's generation of Service personnel.

"The main thing I have learnt in my time is that you must do the best you can and don't grizzle," he said.

"That is obviously easier said than done but you just have to live your life."

A simple statement. But one that is undoubtedly worth clinging onto through the ups and downs of life in the Armed Forces. ■

MAKING TRACKS

Interview: Steven Muncey

“USED to have a Porsche,” said military memorabilia fanatic Bruce Crompton. “It was a bit of a mid-life crisis car; it sat out there on the drive and I hardly ran it. After a couple of years I’d lost a fortune on the thing.

“But these babies, you spend a bit doing them up and when they’re finished they’re worth a hundred grand more than you’ve paid out.”

He’s pointing at a pair of very rare 1940s German half-track armoured personnel carriers (they are SdKfz 251s, for the anoraks among you) at his farm in Suffolk.

“I’m restoring one for a private collector in Russia who I deal with on a regular basis and I’m keeping one for myself,” he explained.

Bruce, originally from London’s East End, is a former Reservist in The Parachute Regiment and is fanatical about all things military but especially Second World War vehicles.

He’s made millions in the engineering sector – one of his companies maintains London’s Tube network – which is handy because you need deep pockets to indulge in this kind of hobby.

The ex-Serviceman’s flash German sports cars may have cost him a packet in depreciation but one of its caterpillar-tracked compatriots sitting in the workshop has just swallowed a sum north of £120,000 in order to become roadworthy.

It was dug up in bits, literally, from an Austrian riverbed but that level of deterioration is not unusual when hardware of this age is discovered out in the wilds.

In recent weeks he has travelled to France and the Czech Republic, where he discovered a Second World War vintage Steyr truck engine being used to power a farm threshing machine.

And he is off to Ukraine as soon as the situation there stabilises to assess the condition of a rare German Ferdinand tank that is sitting at the bottom of a lake.

There aren’t many private collectors of vintage military hardware as serious as Bruce and he has become a major buyer and seller, using his entrepreneurial skills and business nous to develop a network of contacts around the globe.

It has allowed him to create what is perhaps the largest private collection of its type in Britain with gems like Willys Jeeps, German Hetzer tanks, Demag and Steyr trucks plus an assortment of German and American trucks and motorbikes. He also has a range of artillery pieces including German 88-millimetre howitzers and U-boat guns in his farm sheds.

The veteran doesn’t keep everything and often sells desirable and rare items to help fund other restoration projects.

“You wouldn’t believe how much money is out there for this sort of stuff,” he said.

“There are hundreds of collectors in Russia, America, Canada and even Australia. “Some like to drive them around their private land and others have museums.”

Bruce has recently been the subject of a TV show on Discovery Channel called *Combat Dealers*.

The programme also features a couple of his employees, Chris Kruyer and Ian Sandford, who are former members of 3rd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment. »

“WHEN THEY’RE FINISHED THEY’RE WORTH A HUNDRED GRAND MORE THAN YOU’VE PAID OUT”



FORMER PARATROOPER BRUCE CROMPTON
HAS CREATED PERHAPS THE BIGGEST PRIVATE
MILITARY VEHICLE COLLECTION IN BRITAIN



Tank team: Bruce Crompton
(centre) with some of his
highly skilled vehicle restorers
Picture: Quest TV



From top: Bruce's first vehicle, a German Schwimmwagen; Ian Sandford; Chris Kruyer
Pictures: Graeme Main



» "I still have a great affinity for the Service and I always like employing ex-Army guys," said Bruce. "They're naturally well-disciplined and have a great work ethic."

Over the last three years or so Chris and Ian have become essential cogs in the team, restoring and maintaining the ever-expanding group of vehicles and guns.

"They say if you do a job you love you never work a day in your life so I've retired essentially," said Chris, who joined Bruce's ranks after he left the Service in 2011 having completed tours of Iraq and Afghanistan.

"I did my 22 years and had reached the rank of sergeant so when I left I wasn't interested in doing security work out in Afghanistan like many of the lads.

"I'd spent years away from my family so I wanted to be at home," added the former soldier, who was an engineer at the Royal Small Arms Factory before joining the Army.

"Bruce offered me a job through a mutual friend and I haven't looked back.

"We get to work on historic vehicles and travel around Europe to military fairs. Last week I drove our Hetzer tank at a show in Holland – it was great fun."

Showing the platforms at commemorative events is one side of the business; another is lending them to filmmakers who require authentic props.

Bruce supplied vintage anti-aircraft guns for *Saving Private Ryan*, vehicles for *Band of Brothers* and *Captain Corelli's Mandolin* and even U-boat guns for the 2000 flick, *U-571*.

The most recent assignment was to send a fleet of tanks and armoured vehicles to Hertfordshire for the filming of *Fury*, starring Brad Pitt, for a reported fee of £3 million.

"They pay well but they treat the equipment terribly," said Bruce of film companies in general.

Despite the huge sums involved he insists that, for him, the collection isn't about generating profits but creating links with the past.

"I love the historic side of this business, taking these things apart and restoring them to their former glory," he commented.

"You can learn about the people who used the vehicles or even who died in them."

The former paratrooper's passion extends beyond ironclad monsters. Over the years he's even acquired two baths – one that belonged to Joachim Peiper, a famous

German tank commander, and the other to Winston Churchill – and he purchased the Parachute Regiment flags and insignia that once adorned the walls of the legendary Aldershot pub, the Rat Pit.

So what exactly sparked his huge obsession with military memorabilia?

"I'm nearly 60 years old now but it all started when I was just 11 after I was given a German soldier's helmet which had flowers planted in it," he recalled.

"Then I had to get a British helmet to go with it and it grew from there.

"I joined the Army cadets and, believe it or not, I read an edition of *Soldier* magazine which was absolutely brilliant and I thought, 'that's it, I'm joining the Army'. I've still got that very issue somewhere in my house."

He was all ready to enlist in the Service full-time at 16 but in the middle of the recruitment process he met his wife Sue.

"My dad then asked me to join his business so I decided to sign with the TA instead and joined the now disbanded 10th Battalion, The Parachute Regiment, serving from 1978 to 1982 with a mortar platoon support company.

"I had a great time and absolutely loved every minute but I had to stop when we had our first child."

Bruce's passion for military hardware continued unabated, though, and he somehow grew his collection in tandem with developing a highly successful career in the engineering sector.

He bought his first vehicle, a German Schwimmwagen, in 1986, which he found at a French monastery being used by the monks to run errands. The small amphibious reconnaissance platform is now worth around £500,000, he believes.

"I always said it would be the first and last one but once the Berlin Wall came down in 1989 and East Germany dissolved it opened a vast expanse of rich pickings," Bruce added. "I couldn't help myself."

Not all his passion in this area is focused on his own collection, however.

He serves on the board of the Tank Museum in Bovington and is currently working with the Bosnian government to create a museum in Banja Luka dedicated to commemorating the 1990 Balkan conflict.

"They want to have vehicles from different nationalities that took part, including British ones which I might be able to help with," he said.

"They have a terrific number of Russian, American and German Second World War vehicles out there and I want to get some of them for Bovington so I'm trying to create an arrangement where both sides benefit."

If there's anyone capable of doing a deal, it's Bruce. ■



I LOVE THE
HISTORIC
SIDE OF THIS
BUSINESS,
RESTORING
VEHICLES TO
THEIR FORMER
GLORY

BE CIVVY-STREET SAVVY

Bruce Crompton is not only a collector of military vehicles he's also a major employer with many ex-military personnel working for his various companies in industrial cleaning and maintenance. Here are his tips for Army personnel looking for opportunities in the civilian sector...

1 DON'T THINK YOUR MILITARY EXPERIENCE IS WORTHLESS TO EMPLOYERS. Being used to planning and organising, for instance, are real attributes that many bosses would value so emphasise it strongly on your letter and CV.

2 GO ON A RECOMMENDED COURSE TO LEARN HOW TO WRITE A GOOD APPLICATION LETTER AND CV. I receive too many that are far too long and wordy. You need to spark the recruiter's interest quickly.

3 DO YOUR RESEARCH. When I interview a candidate I expect him or her to know lots about my company and my industry, what we do and how – even the history of the firm. The internet has made that so much easier so there's no excuse not to do it.

4 GET USED TO BEING IN INTERVIEWS. There's so much competition out there. You need to be able to talk to the employer without letting nerves get the better of you so go to every

interview you get invited to even if you've gone cool on the role just to get the experience.

5 For soldiers still in the Army, think about what you want to do when you eventually leave and **GET EVERY PAPER QUALIFICATION YOU CAN AHEAD OF YOUR DEPARTURE DATE.** It can only better your chances of getting work later on.

6 OBTAIN THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF COMPUTER SKILLS YOU CAN – not programming but office stuff like creating and managing spreadsheets, for example. Even if your role doesn't require you to have these abilities it is worth it. Most civvy jobs have so much computer-based work now, even the more practical roles.



Picture: James Cheadle

ENDURANCE CYCLING: IN TOP TIPS FOR SUCCESS IN THE SADDLE

8

WITH the world's biggest bike race departing from Yorkshire this month and the sport enjoying a boom in Army circles, *Soldier* asked endurance cyclist and ex-Serviceman Gareth Sell for his words of wisdom when it comes to powering the pedals...



WHILE CYCLING I BURN 500 CALORIES AN HOUR

1. EAT OFTEN AND RIGHT

While cycling I burn 500 calories an hour so the right foods are essential. Eat three or four square meals each day, depending on the length of your trip, and snack in between. Cereal and chocolate bars are ideal but personally I like concentrated jelly cubes.



2. REMAIN HYDRATED

Drink as often as you can. For those with a trip computer, I find it useful to take a few sips of fluid every kilometre or two. Water is best but the occasional energy drink isn't bad and will replenish your salts. On rides where I can stop I like to have a pot of tea – full of goodness and great for wellbeing too.



3. DON'T OVERLOAD

I have broken myself and bikes by doing this. Travel light or get a crew of minions to carry items for you. Take essentials but remember you can stock up on food, water and almost everything else you may need as you go.



4. PLAN YOUR REST STOPS

It's easy to grab the first accommodation that comes your way but this can break a budget. Try and plan rest stops in advance to avoid "no vacancy" situations. If the weather permits consider camping – it is often cheaper and some online cycle communities can help with suggestions.





5. PROTECT FROM THE ELEMENTS

Use sunscreen and reapply it on breaks – particularly to the ears, which are often forgotten. Keep your head covered too: heatstroke is common and can set you back for days. Many soldiers hate Gore-Tex clothing but any fool can get wet. Keep as dry as possible because damp clothes can cause you to chafe.



6. STAY FIT FOR SERVICE

It is just as important to keep your bike in good working order as it is yourself; you're a team. Every evening clean and lube the chain and gears. As soon as you feel any niggles get them checked; they won't go away and you don't want anything to fail when you are miles from anywhere. Service the bike regularly and get your local cycle shop to give it a once-over before you embark on any big trips.



AS SOON AS YOU FEEL ANY NIGGLES GET THEM CHECKED



7. MEET AND GREET OTHERS

Write your contact details down. Not just for emergencies – you will meet other cyclists on the road and it is good to swap information, tips and advice. Remember that people coming from the opposite direction will know first-hand the environment you are about to encounter.



8. KEEP IN CONTACT

Stay in touch with your friends and family to keep their minds at rest. Routes may change and if the worst happens loved ones can help to reduce the search area. I like to use apps where I can log my daily progress and post the details onto social network sites along with a blog.



Gareth Sell left the Army in 2013 having served in both Afghanistan and Iraq. To find out more about his recent charity bike ride visit www.epic83.webs.com



TAKING ON THE TRAILWALKERS

SOLDIERS GO HEAD-TO-HEAD TO SCOOP EVENT CROWN

Report: Sarah Goldthorpe
Picture: Graeme Main

BETTER to die than be a coward", goes the motto of the British Army's fearsome Gurkha soldiers.

And although a 100km walk across the countryside of southern England might sound like one of the less daunting tasks to have faced these renowned warriors, anyone who fancies their chances at beating them is going to need some serious stamina.

Over the weekend of July 26-27, around 140 British soldiers and hundreds more civilians will be aiming to do just that.

Oxfam's Trailwalker challenge,

which began as a training exercise for the Queen's Gurkha Signals some 30 years ago, will see teams of four going head-to-head with the event's long-standing champions to complete the course as fast as possible, while raising vital funds for charity.

But with a reputation for being among the fiercest troops in the British Army – and indeed the world – any serious competitors will need to be in peak condition to get a look-in at conquering the Brigade of Gurkhas.

Lt Scott Mapplebeck (R Signals) is among this year's hopefuls.

His team came fifth in the event last year and is drawn from 216 Parachute Signal Squadron.

Training at least four times a

TIME TO BEAT

To date, the Trailwalker record for a military team is **9hrs 50mins.** This was achieved by a team from The Queen's Own Gurkha Logistics Regiment back in 2004. Last year's winning time was set by the same unit at **11hrs 13mins.**



THE ROUTE

week, with a mixture of hill reps and steady-state running, the group is confident it will perform well even if its members can't beat the Gurkhas' record time of 9hrs 50mins.

"We are gradually building up the distances in training going up to around 50km," the 26-year-old told *Soldier* ahead of the event.

"We try to get swims in where we can too.

"We are not hopeful of winning – this is a Gurkhas event after all – but we will give it a good crack and are aiming for a top ten place.

"There would probably be a bit of an upset if we did win but that doesn't mean we won't try!"

Sgt Bharatmani Limbu, the Trailwalker trainer and coordinator for the Queen's Gurkha Signals – the organising unit – is putting two teams into the competition this year.

Working out almost every day, with a mixture of long and short walks, the Serviceman put his brigade's winning streak down to a combination of "diet, training and experience".

"I am not sure we will beat the record but we are really looking forward to it," commented the senior NCO.

"We are doing very, very tough training and we hope to win."

But whichever unit takes the crown at this year's event, cap badge rivalry will help Oxfam and The Gurkha Welfare Trust to drum up around £1 million for poor communities around the world.

Not bad for a country stroll. ■



**WE'RE
DOING
VERY,
VERY
TOUGH
TRAINING**



CHALLENGES THAT ENTRANTS FACE IN THE 100KM TREK ACROSS THE SOUTH DOWNS...

- ▶ A total ascent of **2,500 metres**
- ▶ **Tricky climbs** such as the 100-metre V-shaped valley Devil's Dyke and Jack and Jill near Clayton
- ▶ Potential **foot problems** – blisters are one of the main reasons why people don't finish Trailwalker
- ▶ **Warm weather.** July temperatures in southern England have been known

to reach beyond 35 degrees Celsius so entrants will need to protect themselves from the heat and ensure they stay hydrated

▶ **Team issues.** Trailwalker requires groups to start, walk and finish the event together. Troops must therefore keep an eye on each other to ensure everyone is okay

FOR A GOOD CAUSE

Trailwalker raises vital funds for both Oxfam and The Gurkha Welfare Trust, helping to transform the lives of poor communities across the world – including veterans such as former Gurkha rifleman Yambahadur Thapa (pictured), who relies on the trust's monthly pension. The organisation supports more than 7,200 other Gurkha veterans and their widows in Nepal.





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TALKBACK

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

“

WE ARE HEADING FOR SOME CHAOTIC AND POTENTIALLY EXPENSIVE MISTAKES

”

Job mapping takes wrong turn

I AM concerned and disappointed over Reserve restructuring and its impact on manning levels.

I am a vehicle mechanic with the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers on a non-regular permanent staff contract and a mapping board is due to sit soon to decide the future of my post.

As well as being worried about my own position, I feel that unless someone drives a chariot of common sense through the whole procedure then we are heading for some chaotic and potentially expensive mistakes.

According to the defence information notice on the mapping process, even a simple change of rank will result in a post disappearing from the new structure.

Surely it would be better to retain and retrain the people we have instead of treating them as disposable commodities – they may not be easily replaced, especially in our trades.

There will also be the additional

expense of redundancy payouts and recruiting costs.

Is this mapping process and criteria set in stone or is there scope for some flexibility and common sense? – **Name and address supplied.**

Maj Andrew Banks, Reserves Policy, Directorate of Manning, replies: The REME restructuring is significant as a number of new Reserve battalions under this cap badge are being formed.

The mapping process is being carried out in line with Army 2020 and involves a comparison between the roles, objectives and responsibilities of existing posts and those in the future structure.

It is inevitable there will be positions that do not map into the new construct and that will impact current job holders.

I appreciate your apprehension but everything is being done to ensure the new establishments are

fully met, the new organisation is affordable and that both the Service's needs and the requirement to treat people fairly are achieved.

When posts do close, other opportunities to serve within the Army Reserve will be highlighted to the individuals affected.

Your immediate chain of command will be in a position to explain the whole process further.



Picture: Steve Dock

Under threat: Mechanics could lose out

'Why don't my gloves ever fit?'

I HAVE had to cut a centimetre off the fingers of my combat gloves after being told it was pretty common for them to be too short but they would stretch with wear (they didn't).

My chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear protective (CBRN) gloves are also inadequate and have fingers that are about two centimetres too long for me – and the next glove size down doesn't fit.

At a recent CBRN training event more than half the people present also said the fingers on their gloves were too long.

The course instructor told us that many other groups had reported similar

difficulties with the fit of these items.

If these are known problems why isn't anything being done about it?

The taxpayer is funding expensive kit that is almost useless.

Also, I'd like to know why sun hats are not standard issue.

After a day on the ranges recently there were many sunburnt faces in my unit.

Of course we should wear sunscreen but it's very difficult to keep your head covered in the stuff when you're wiping sweat out of your eyes and taking your helmet on and off.

Sun hats are not expensive so isn't it time to consider the health and welfare of our soldiers a little more?

What is given to us is a British Rail-style cap that looks ridiculous and doesn't protect your ears or your neck from the sun.

Fortunately, they don't appear to be on general issue. – **Name and address supplied.**

Maj (Retd) Allan Law, Logistic Support, Army Headquarters, responds: This is the first

observation we have received on the combat and CBRN gloves and your comments have been passed to the respective procurement teams for action.

The correct procedure for reporting such defects is to submit MoD form 1197, which should be available from clothing stores.

Submissions from units are actively encouraged.

Sun hats are normally only issued as an authorised clothing supplement for qualifying operations and exercises as a result of the climatic and environmental conditions on the ground.

The core headwear you refer to as "British Rail-style" is issued to all Army personnel and should provide good protection as it has a peak and neck flap to shield you from the sun's rays.

This item, while not sitting high in the military fashion stakes, is entirely suitable, fit for purpose and readily available.

Suncream should also be provided for you.





DIGITAL DOSSIER

This month's elite tweets

#NEWS

@KTHopkins

Lovely Falklands vets protested outside *TalkSport* studios today against the revolting tweets by Stan Collymore

#OP HERRICK

@soldieronorg

Thoughts and prayers with QRH who have arrived for final tour of Afghanistan

#CYCLING

@Lord_Sugar

Flying to Pisa today, staying Forte Dei Marmi for few days. Taking my favorite Pinarello, good riding there. The Italians love that bike

@stuh4823

Awesome effort from the boys in red !!! A privilege to be involved #HomeofCricket #CSCA_IST20 #TeamArmy

#COMMONWITH GAMES

@ashleyjohnw

Another tough session in the bank now relax and onto the next #CWG2014 not long nw the time is nearly here :)

@domcug

@Glasgow2014 tickets have arrived can't wait to see @ashleyjohnw and @Alanna543 of the @armyboxingteam in action

#SOLDIER BACKSLAPS

@NudgerSS

@soldiermagazine @BritishArmy Great magazine. Read it every month and take it to my 92 year old gt uncle

@duggie123

@soldiermagazine One of the best mags around, love it.

Feeling the strain: Capt King's maternity dress is no laughing matter



Picture: Graeme Main

Maternity wear needs bumping up

“WE’RE BEING DENIED THE OPPORTUNITY TO LOOK PROFESSIONAL IN THE WORKPLACE”

As a pregnant woman trying to work right up until my due date, I’m shocked at how poor the Service’s maternity wear is.

I have spent the last eight months switching between clothing as my bump grew.

I initially went down the route of getting larger and larger sizes of standard shirts and trousers.

I then tailored my slacks myself using elastic panels so that I didn’t have to wear a pair that swamped me in other areas.

However, a couple of months ago this no longer sufficed; getting a pair with the dimensions to fit around my sizeable midriff meant I had started to look like MC Hammer!

I switched to the issued maternity trousers but when I wore them for a whole day their elastic panel gradually lost its strength and they had a habit

of suddenly falling to the floor.

My last option was the unstylish beige maternity dress, worn with beret, cardigan and brown lace-up shoes.

It’s fair to say the look this creates has generated a fair amount of amusement among my colleagues.

It’s not really a laughing matter though when pregnant serving women are being denied the opportunity to look professional in the workplace.

With that in mind, can’t we be supplied with smart maternity garments that look and work as well as the standard versions? – Capt Susie King, R Signals.

Lt Col Simon Blake, Logistic Support, Army Headquarters, replies: Maternity wear is under scrutiny and the points you raise have been examined.

The view is that although the range of clothing is sufficient, its design is dated and its functionality can be improved

MoD uniform acquisition has been focussed on operational requirements in the last few years, with combat garments and high-profile parade and ceremonial uniforms understandably being the top priorities.

As the Army returns to contingency we are looking more at workwear appearance and it’s hoped that this will include the maternity uniforms.

I see you took the initiative to tailor your uniform but remember all Army personnel have the support of and access to a formal military tailoring contract service.

Furthermore, when clothing is found to have a clear defect, either in the manufactured standard or overall design, personnel are actively encouraged to submit a report through MoD form 1197.

SLICE OF SERVICE LIFE

This month's ruminations from the ranks...



“I HAVE BEEN INFORMED IT IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY I WILL BE ABLE TO COMPLETE THIS TRAINING”

‘Promotion rules need flexibility’

I HAVE been a sergeant for four years and have completed every course, exercise and deployment the Army has sent me on.

The only aspect of my development that the Service seems not to have cared about is allowing me to qualify for promotion to my next rank.

Back in 2010, after completing the first part of the command, leadership and management (CLM) course, I was informed that the format for the second section had been changed although the third and final instalment would remain the same.

I was told to wait until a later date to undertake section two because there were a couple of sergeants senior to me who needed to complete that part of the course first.

My CLM training was then delayed again after my unit moved to Kinloss in 2012 followed by a transfer to my current formation and then being deployed at short notice.

On returning from tour I was informed that part two of the CLM course was no longer

extant and that I only needed to complete part three.

If I'd known this I could have taken it while deployed – operational commitments allowing – to complete the training.

So I applied to do the final slice of the package only to find out that I was now so far down the list it was impossible for me to complete it before the board was due to sit.

The Army Education Centre have also informed me that it's highly unlikely I will be able to complete this training in the foreseeable future.

I think there should be some leeway on the rules for promotion, especially considering the backlog of applicants for CLM courses. – **Sgt David Curran, AGC (SPS).**

Lt Col Jo Burgon, Operations Directorate, Educational Capability, responds: All personnel should note that part three of the CLM course is not a prerequisite for promotion to the next rank but the final part of preparation for their current position.

The programme's priority loading system rewards those who have been substantive for less than 18 months because evidence shows that soldiers gain far greater benefit from completing part three of this training when



they take it early on in their new roles. Unfortunately, this may now be working against you.

However, if you've been prevented from completing the tuition through your duties then you can be given what's called "priority 1A" status.

This is specifically designed for personnel who have been disadvantaged by the needs of the Service and ensures they obtain part three training.

I advise you to approach your career management officer as soon as possible to investigate this.



DOUBLE SHOT ON SERVICE BOOZING

● WHILE reading the June edition of *Soldier* I came across the news article regarding the booze culture that supposedly exists within the Army.

In my opinion, the binge-drinking reputation of the Service has long since gone.

Fitness is the order of the day now and since the MoD took steps to discourage people from excessive alcohol consumption the majority of personnel seem to stay in their barracks or at home watching TV or playing computer games.

During most evenings there are

more Servicemen and women in my local gym than in the bars.

Secondly, I wonder if the MP Madeleine Moon would have had "the fright of her life" if the drinks served in Westminster Palace were as cheap as the ones she saw for sale in the Falklands?

Maybe she was gutted the soldiers were getting a better deal.

If military establishments are forced to charge high street prices for their alcoholic beverages then the Houses of Parliament should do the same. – **Name and address supplied.**

“We might have been a bit late
but we got there in the end!”

TALKBACK

D-DAY AT THE DOUBLE

● I REALLY enjoyed your fine preview coverage of the 70th anniversary celebrations of Operation Overlord in the last issue of *Soldier* (“Veteran Voices”).

I was lucky enough to go over to Normandy this year to attend many of the special ceremonies and memorial services.

One event I witnessed was the mass parachute drop at Ranville, the very place where I landed in a glider on June 6, 1944 – on my second attempt.

The first flight ended in a major anticlimax.

Having lifted off from Brize Norton in the very early hours of D-Day morning, the tow rope snapped and our glider had to make a forced landing at Odiham airfield in Hampshire.

We were quickly transported back to Brize Norton where, during the afternoon, a replacement aircraft was supplied.

We then landed in France early on the evening of D-Day.

We might have been a bit late but we got there in the end!

– Geoff Pattinson, ex-Para.



‘These boots wouldn’t look out of place on a vagrant’

BACK when I joined the Army in the mid-nineties, boot care was very easy.

Whether they were dirty, new, worn or scuffed, you simply covered them in black shoe polish, allowed them to dry and then brushed them off.

Forgive the pun, but everyone knew where they stood.

However, that has all changed.

I was given a pair of brown Haix Gore-Tex boots a few months back and after hearing the horror stories about what happened when people used dark tan polish I decided to find out how to maintain them.

When I asked the staff in the clothing store they told me to use clear polish but they were at a loss when I questioned them how I should go about acquiring some.

I’m based in Germany and they don’t seem to stock it here (I’ve tried at least four different camps), leaving us to shop around for an equivalent.

I’ve found something similar but have no idea whether it is doing the job properly or damaging the leather.

Along with many other soldiers, I have a fairly physical job and my boots get badly scuffed on a regular basis.

Unlike the days when I could use a layer of black cream to cover a multitude of sins, my new boots already look fairly shoddy.

The clear polish I found in town seems to add a bit of shine but doesn’t hide damage to the leather.

These look awful after only a couple of months of semi-regular use.

I look around the camps wherever I go and it’s always the same sight –

some boots wouldn’t look out of place on a vagrant.

Is clear shoe polish as good as we’re ever going to get or is there something else out there we’re not aware of? –

Name and address supplied.

Maj (Retd) Allan Law, Logistic Support, Army Headquarters, replies: There have been similar observations regarding the appearance and use of normal boot polish on the new sets of brown boots and, unfortunately, there appears to be no immediate solution to hand.

The range of new footwear, which are all commercial off-the-shelf items, are made from a mix of natural and synthetic materials.

The manufacturer produces an own-brand range of polishes (go to www.haix-bootstore.com for details) but you should be able to use standard cleaning products too.

You might have to indulge in some trial and error regarding the choice of colour, though.

The Defence Clothing Team is aware of the user feedback and this will, no doubt, influence the specification of the next generation of issued boots.

Naafi in Germany should be open to stocking a suitable polish if a formal approach is made.



“BLACK POLISH USED TO COVER A MULTITUDE OF SINS”

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The latest Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey shows satisfaction with pensions has fallen sharply over the past 5 years, across all three Services. But you can protect your interests and find out how to get the most from your pension by joining the Forces Pension Society.

HOW WE CAN HELP

Armed Forces Pensions are complex and we can help ensure you **get the most from your pension** by advising **when to leave** (and when not to), commutation, how to deal with **pension troughs**, the impact of **AFPS2015**, the implications of **redundancy, divorce**, how you might be able to top up your pension, and much more. Help is available from our acknowledged **Pension Advisory Service experts**.

INDEPENDENT, NOT-FOR-PROFIT

We value our independence as it enables us to **serve the interests of our Members** as their pension watchdog. We campaign to **put right injustices** in the system such as the case we are arguing now for **all Service widows who**

remarry to be allowed to retain their pension. Our role also includes **holding the government to account** to ensure the Armed Forces Covenant recognises the vital importance of pensions.

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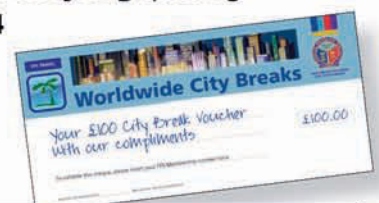
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APPOINTMENTS

Brig Alastair Dickinson was appointed **Director General Army Basing and Infrastructure, Army Headquarters** in the rank of major general in June.



CAREERS

Cross Deck, a specialist military recruitment company, uses a digital job centre to match skills with opportunities in the private and public sectors. Supporting the Career Transition Partnership, their database has more than 12,000 jobs available. For more information visit www.cross-deck.co.uk

Living and Working in Wiltshire and Swindon Transition Fair on July 3 from 1000 to 1500 at Tidworth Leisure Centre, Nadder Road, Tidworth SP9 7QN. Advice on education, employment, health, housing and welfare. For further information visit www.army.mod.uk/transition

Living and working in London Transition Fair on September 18 from 1000 to 1300 at Barking Learning Centre, Barking IG11 7LU. This event is open to all serving and former Service personnel and their families. For further information contact Londist-S02Transition@mod.uk

The Armed for IT Careers programme provides a one-stop shop for ex-military personnel looking to launch a career in IT, helping them find training, resettlement funding and qualifications. For more information visit www.armedforitcareers.org

Transition Force uses a combination of technology and events to provide personalised career support for ex-Service personnel nationwide. To register visit <http://events.transitionforce.com>

HighGround is a charity providing land-based skills to serving and ex-Service personnel, helping them move into civilian life. For details visit www.highground-uk.org



COMPETITIONS

Spine line winners: Pat Carroll, Dalton-in-Furness, Cumbria

Film Collection: LCpl Steven Wood, Hameln, BFPO 31; Peter Fisher, Winchester, Hampshire.

Firearms: An Illustrated History: Ian Yates, Clitheroe, Lancashire.

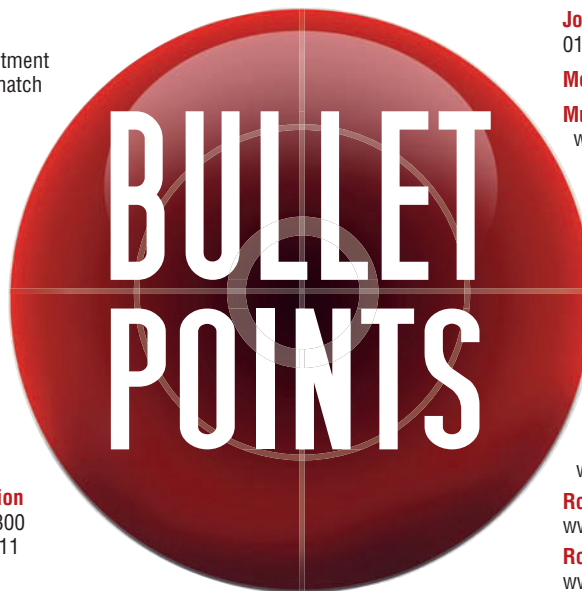


DIARY

July 26-27: Trailwalker Gurkha Challenge.

Take on the Gurkhas in this epic 100km endurance challenge across the South Downs National Park. Trek or run non-stop, day and night, in teams of four. Supporting Oxfam and the Gurkha Welfare Trust. Turn to pages 54-55 for details.

August 2: Green Howards northern meet. The Longlands Club, Middlesbrough will be renaming its bar after Green Howard CSM Stanley Hollis, the only man to be awarded a Victoria Cross on D-Day. His son will unveil a plaque at 1330 (meet opens at 1200). All ex-Green Howards welcome. For more information call 01642 272006



DIRECTORY

ABF The Soldiers' Charity: 0845 241 4820

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

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

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

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

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

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

Army Libraries: 01252 340094

Army Ornithological Society: www.armybirding.org.uk

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

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

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

Career Transition Partnership: 0207 4696 661

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

Erskine: www.erskiner.org.uk; 0141 814 4569

Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society:

01372 841600; www.combatstress.com

Family Escort Service: 0207 463 9249

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

Forces Pension Society: 0207 820 9988

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

Heroes Welcome: www.heroeswelcome.co.uk

Joint Service Housing Advice Office: 01722 436575

Medal Office: 94561 3600 or 0141 224 3600

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

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

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

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

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

Remount: 01451 850 341; www.remount.net

Royal British Legion: www.britishlegion.org.uk; 0808 802 8080

Royal British Legion Scotland: www.legionscotland.org.uk; 0131 550 1583

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

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

Service Personnel and Veterans Agency: 0808 1914 218 (from the UK); 0044 1253 866043 (from overseas)

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

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

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

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

The Royal Star & Garter Homes: 020 8481 7676 www.starandgarter.org

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



INTELLIGENCE

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

ABN 72/14 CDCS collocation at Army HQ

ABN 71/14 Alignment of officer terms of service with AFPS 15

ABN 70/14 Appointment of Army Reserve sports secretaries

ABN 69/14 Forces TV

ABN 68/14 Agile Warrior 2013/14 report

Continued on page 64

ABN 67/14 ABF Carrington Drum Trophy 2014/15

ABN 66/14 Changes to the Army basing programme

ABN 65/14 Army Smoking Cessation Competition 2014

ABN 64/14 Change to concessionary travel for families eligibility for VOLSEP Service personnel

ABN 63/14 Army skills offer

ABN 62/14 Countdown to Armed Forces pension scheme 2015

ABN 61/14 Chief engineer (Army) post created

ABN 60/14 Army officer selection board reduced period of mandated deferral for main board

ABN 59/14 2014 Armed Forces continuous attitude survey

ABN 58/14 Sandhurst Trust and keynote address by Chief of General Staff

ABN 57/14 Army basing programme SPTA master plan

ABN 56/14 Uniform to Work Day 2014

ABN 55/14 National housing prime contract

ABN 54/14 Exercise Transglobe

ABN 53/14 Part-time volunteer Reserves national TACOS

ABN 52/14 RMAS lead first scheme

DIN 2014DIN01-126: Reformed casualty notification and compassionate travel process for MoD civilian personnel serving overseas

DIN 2014DIN01-125: JSP 770 – deployed welfare package

DIN 2014DIN01-124: Corps RSM Army Medical Services

DIN 2014DIN01-123: Statistician functional competency framework

DIN 2014DIN01-122: Release of tri-Service DVD on domestic abuse in the Armed Forces withdrawn

DIN 2014DIN01-121: MoD education support fund 2015

DIN 2014DIN01-120: Citizenship (Armed Forces) Act 2014

DIN 2014DIN01-119: Engagement with suppliers, contractors and potential bidders during the materiel strategy managed service providers procurement process

DIN 2014DIN01-117: The arrest, detention and treatment of persons detained under the Extradition Act 2003

DIN 2014DIN01-116: Documentation to be provided to a person in custody in accordance with regulation 6(3) of the Armed Forces (custody without charge) regulations 2009

DIN 2014DIN01-115: The statutory powers of arrest, and investigation of Service offences by persons other than the Service police

DIN 2014DIN01-114: Introduction of full-time Reserve service (full commitment (lead first))

DIN 2014DIN01-112: Defence humanists annual meeting

DIN 2014DIN01-111: *Manual of Service Law*

(JSP 830) – new defence intranet address

DIN 2014DIN01-110: Career management of personnel in cyber roles

DIN 2014DIN01-108: Arrangements for the MoD provision of passports for Service personnel and their dependants serving overseas following the closure of regional passport processing centres

DIN 2014DIN01-107: Late entry commission in the Royal Artillery and the Royal Army Physical Training Corps

DIN 2014DIN02-010: Volunteers for specialist debriefing duties – OS

DIN 2014DIN02-009: *The Defence Manual of Security* (JSP 440): publication of issue 5

DIN 2014DIN02-008: Army national security vetting clearance requirements – OS

DIN 2014DIN03-017: Impact to outputs of Defence Electronic Warfare Centre due to five yearly electrical testing

DIN 2014DIN03-016: Maritime Aviation Support Force – operational support request process

DIN 2014DIN03-015: Publication of Defence Science & Technology plan 2014/15

DIN 2014DIN03-014: P2000 command – small vessel command qualification

DIN 2014DIN04-098: Trade receipts deliveries, booking in procedure for the LS Donnington, Bicester and St Athan sites

DIN 2014DIN04-097: Queen Elizabeth Class acceptance & assurance strategy and process – OS

DIN 2014DIN04-096: The use of cartridge .50 inch electric EOD propelling at training and operations

DIN 2014DIN04-095: BATCIS supported AESP withdrawal: notice of obsolete, cancellation and disposal

DIN 2014DIN04-094: Declaration of obsolete/obsolescent general purpose test and measurement equipment

DIN 2014DIN04-093: MoD oil contracts 2014

DIN 2014DIN04-092: Provision of an unscheduled transportation service for the collection and delivery of parcel freight within the United Kingdom (including Northern Ireland) and to EU member states

DIN 2014DIN04-091: Transfer of MoD commercial processes for consultancy and contingent labour procurements to crown commercial service

DIN 2014DIN04-090: Removal from service of simulator gunfire AFV flash and sound L18A2 Simfire

DIN 2014DIN04-089: Removal from service of marine sound signal Mk 8

DIN 2014DIN04-088: Equipment tables, scales and schedules

DIN 2014DIN05-019: Transfer of the Movement and Transport Safety Regulator website

DIN 2014DIN05-018: Medical information systems helpdesk

DIN 2014DIN06-007: *JSP 426 – MoD fire safety regulations* – volume 3, leaflet 3

DIN 2014DIN06-006: Publication of AESP 0200-A-092-013 CD CSS equipment support safety, health environment and fire guide edition 3

DIN 2014DIN07-093: The Army skills offer

DIN 2014DIN07-092: Army European winter activity instruction

DIN 2014DIN07-091: The aircrew instructors' course

DIN 2014DIN08-006: Joint Services Command and Staff College international student charging regime and allowances

DIN 2014DIN08-005: Non-entitled accommodation rates

DIN 2014DIN10-040: 2014 Army Motorcycle Championships

DIN 2014DIN10-039: Inter-Service and Tri-Service Ice Hockey Championships, June 2-6, 2014

DIN 2014DIN10-038: Army Lawn Tennis Championships 2014

DIN 2014DIN10-037: Services Offshore Regatta 2014 – notice of race

DIB33/14: PUS writes to update broader banded and skill zone civilian staff on the 2014/15 pay award

DIB32/14: Publication of the Armed Forces continuous attitude survey 2014 report

DIB31/14: A new civil service pension scheme in 2015

DIB30/14: Performance appraisal – 2014/15

DIB29/14: Launch of new “means of identifying and developing internal talent” scheme and recruitment 2014

DIB28/14: Armed Forces Day 2014: national event programme finalised

DIB27/14: PUS writes to staff on ensuring PARs are successfully uploaded by April 30

DIB26/14: Public consultation on draft scheme legislation for the Armed Forces pension scheme 2015

DIB25/14: The launch of the new DE&S organisation

DIB24/14: PUS and CDS write to staff as defence is changing

DIB23/14: PUS and CDP write to all staff about the new whistleblowing and raising a concern policy

DIB22/14: CDS and PUS letter to staff on the new government security classification system

DIB21/14: Publication of the Service complaints commissioner's sixth annual report

DIB20/14: Merger of Service Personnel and Veterans Agency into Defence Business Services

DIB19/14: The Armed Forces Covenant and you

DIB18/14: Two weeks to go until the launch of the new GSC

DIB17/14: New and revitalised financial incentives for ex-Regulars and new recruits joining the Army Reserve

DIB16/14: Update on the review of civilian allowances

DIB15/14: Armed Forces pay award 2014

REUNION

Arboretum Old Boys Association 75C reunion on July 5 at the Travelodge, Basingstoke Road, Reading, followed by a photo call at the Old Gates on July 6 at 1200. For details visit the Facebook page of 75C Army Apprentice College Arboretum

Royal Green Jackets Regimental Association. The annual veterans day will take place at ATR(W) Sir John Moore Barracks, Winchester on July 12. Attendance is open to all past and present riflemen and their partners. For more information contact Roy Stanger on 01962 887916

7th Intake AAC ACC 40th Anniversary reunion dinner on August 2 in Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire. Any permanent staff serving at the AAC at the time are also invited to attend. For further details contact Stephen Carroll at stephencarroll441@btinternet.com

The Somme Platoon recruits 1978 will be holding a reunion in the sergeants' mess, Queen Elizabeth Barracks, Strensall on August 30 from 1930. Early arrivals to meet in the Six Bells pub from 1400. For more information contact Philip Elwell on 01904 668233

BMATT Namibia reunion on September 27 at the Premier Inn, Telford at 1930. Open to all ex-members of BMATT Namibia. Early arrivals to meet in the adjoining Beefeater restaurant from 1400. For more information contact Philip Elwell on 01904 668233

Coldstream Guards drummers reunion will be held in Windsor on October 4. For details contact Peter Nightingale on 0188 337 0974 or email nigel.hoadley@graysinn.org.uk.

8 Regiment RASC/RCT/RLC 13th anniversary reunion dinner on October 18. Open to any ex-member of 8 Regiment of any cap badge who served between October 1964 and July 2012. For further information contact Jimmy Aspinall via jimmyasp@hotmail.com or David Southall via dcsouthall@aol.com

13 Martinique Battery reunion 2015 on April 18 2015 at the Copthorne Hotel, Merry Hill, Dudley. For details email k.brooksusher@hotmail.co.uk

SEARCHLINE

The Iraq Historic Allegations Team is trying to find any Op Telic veterans who could help to identify the American unit lodging with 1st Battalion, Queen's Lancashire Regiment at The Old Ba'ath Party HQ in Basra in September 2003. It is believed there was an American civil affairs unit at this location. Anyone with information is asked to contact Paul Mackie on military 94344 8020 or paul.mackie100@mod.uk

Volunteers are being sought to take part in a sponsored cycle ride on September 3-9 on behalf of the **Combined Services Disabled Ski Team**. Ride of Thrones will take cyclists from the Throne of Scone in Edinburgh Castle to the Royal Throne in the Tower of London, covering over 400 miles. The finish coincides with the start of the Invictus Games. For more information on how to take part, either as a cyclist or a volunteer fundraiser, contact Maj Mel Bowler via projects@csdst.co.uk

Richard Wareing is writing an article on the history of the **Small Arms School Corps in Sennelager** and would like to hear from any former or serving soldiers who have attended courses run by the SASC from 1964

to the present day. Photographs would be of particular interest. Please email richard.wareing79@gmail.com

The Desert Rats Association is looking for troops who have served on operations with **7th Armoured Brigade between 1948 and the present day**, to contribute to the archives of a new museum at Mundford, Norfolk. Contact chairman Rod Scott on 01359 270490 or via rodandtinascott@btinternet.com

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NO. 872

JUST HOW OBSERVANT ARE YOU?

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TEN details have been changed in this picture of Sgt David Beveridge, Edinburgh's District Gunner, handing over the Queen's Baton to television presenter Lorraine Kelly. Circle the differences in the left image and send the panel to **HOAY 872, Soldier**, Ordnance Barracks,

Government Road, Aldershot, Hampshire GU11 2DU by July 31, 2014.

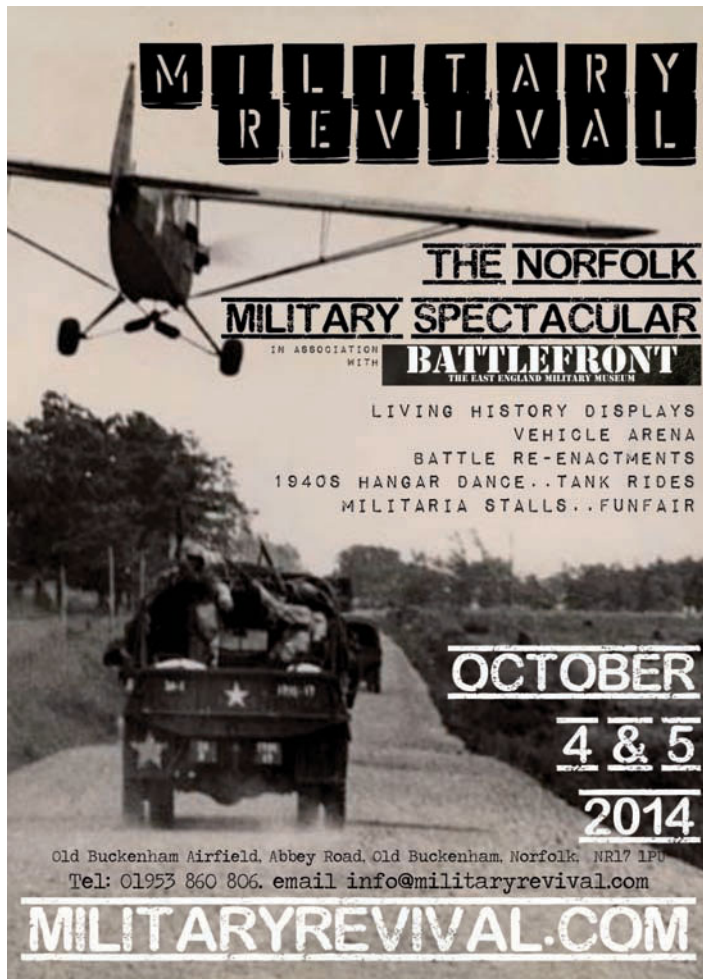
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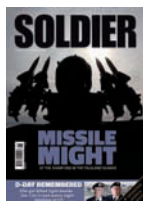
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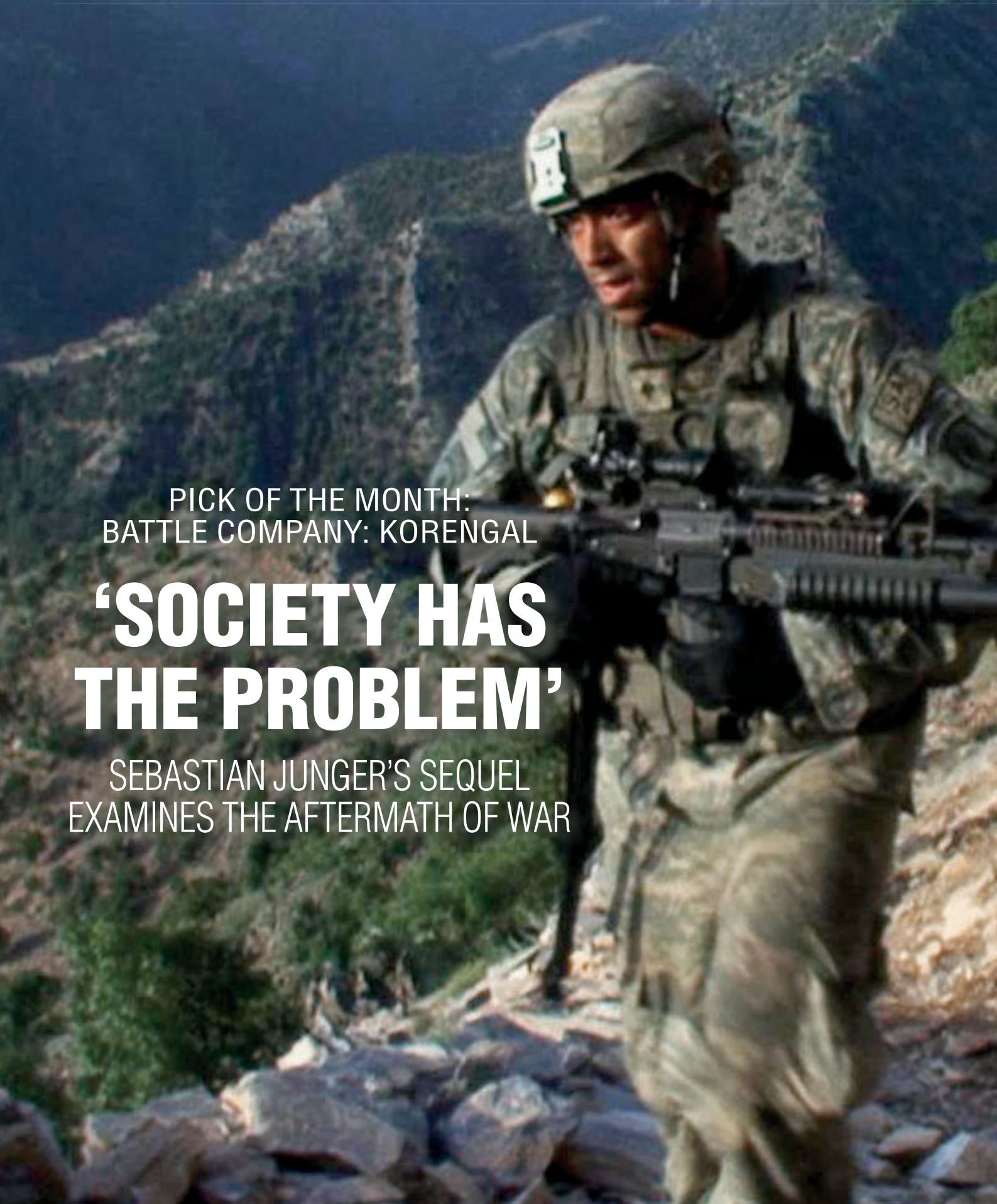
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MOVIES

PICK OF THE MONTH:
BATTLE COMPANY: KORENGAL

‘SOCIETY HAS THE PROBLEM’

SEBASTIAN JUNGER’S SEQUEL
EXAMINES THE AFTERMATH OF WAR



Review: Joe Clapson

FOR a glimpse of what war actually looks and feels like – and how it affects soldiers on the ground – *Battle Company: Korengal* provides an incredibly vivid picture.

The film from writer and director Sebastian Junger is a follow-up to *Restrepo* in documenting the 15-month deployment of US troops from 2nd Platoon, *Battle Company* to the Korengal Valley of north-east Afghanistan.

Unlike its Academy Award-nominated predecessor, though, and despite being filmed in the same location with familiar personnel, the focus here is on the after-effects of conflict rather than the action itself.

Junger shot the footage alongside his fellow journalist Tim Hetherington while living with the US operators for 12 months.

"We captured a huge amount out there and an awful lot of it was valuable but didn't get used in *Restrepo*," he explained.

"Then Tim was killed in Libya in 2011 and I decided to show the material in another film."

Since the tragic death of Hetherington, Junger has stopped covering war zones but is hopeful that *Korengal* will have a lasting impact.

His intention is to make his audience sit up and take notice, and with live coverage of machine gun battles juxtaposed with emotional soldiers talking directly to camera he certainly achieves that aim.

"The film is about combat so I only wanted people who were in combat speaking – not senior officers," he explained.

"Coming home from war is a lot more confusing for troops than serving in Afghanistan and I wanted to try and show that."

"The next big project that the US and UK have on their hands is the reincorporation of soldiers back into society."

Even though the style and setting are the same as the first film it does not have the same cutting edge but Junger still wants to raise eyebrows.

"I hope it will shock people by showing that most of the troops would choose to go back to Korengal," said the author of the bestselling book *War*.

"They miss the adrenalin, the enormous sense of urgency and being necessary and useful to a large group of people."

"The guys just miss the brotherhood and they get back home to a fragmented society where they feel alienated."

Through scenes of intense firefights, troops relaxing in ghetto accommodation and spine-tingling talking-head interviews the themes of fear, death and love are compellingly explored.

And although the movie is about US troops it will no doubt resonate among anyone who has pulled on an Army uniform.

"I imagine the military brotherhood is common to all soldiers," said Junger.

"And now they are coming home from Afghanistan and a very different experience awaits them in their new jobs."

"They feel like they don't fit in but I would argue that it's society that has the problem."

At times a high-octane action film and at others an emotional drama, *Korengal* is a valuable glimpse into the complexities of military service and the effects of modern warfare on young soldiers. ■

VERDICT: Another outstanding documentary from Sebastian Junger. Unparalleled insight ★★★★★

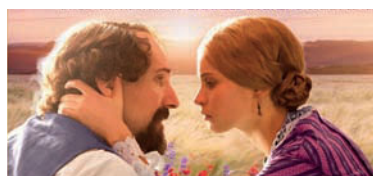


CUBAN FURY out now

THE ubiquitous **Nick Frost** is typecast as an overweight, unloved and repressed character – this time in the shape of a former teenage dancing sensation. Hopelessly infatuated with his new American boss, who just happens to be an avid flamenco fan, he is persuaded by his sister to rekindle his Cuban mojo. The storyline is somewhat predictable but as a comedy flick it is worth a gander.

Joe Clapson, *Soldier*

VERDICT: Middle-of-the-road comedy with some funny moments ★★★★★



INVISIBLE WOMAN out now

RALPH Fiennes' second film as a director confirms his credentials as a top-class movie man. Drawing on **Claire Tomalin's** intriguing, if highly speculative, book, he explores the clandestine love affair between a middle-aged Charles Dickens (played by himself) and a significantly younger Nelly Ternan (**Felicity Jones**). It's powerful stuff with huge attention to detail paid to the portrayal of the novelist.

Tom Jackson, *civvy*

VERDICT: Fiennes excels again in shining a light on Dickens ★★★★★



THE WOLF OF WALL STREET out now

MARTIN Scorsese's debauched black comedy based on former stockbroker Jordan Belfort's memoir of the same name was well received in the cinemas and is sure to become a cult classic for home viewers. Belfort (**Leonardo Di Caprio**) rises to the top of a corrupt financial industry amid a whirlwind of women, drink and drugs. Watching the inevitable unfold is both eye-opening and laugh-out-loud hilarious.

Joe Clapson, *Soldier*

VERDICT: Leo is on top form in a comedy triumph for Scorsese ★★★★★



13 SINS out now

AS a horror movie it is passable enough but the *Saw* formula of a mysterious voice guiding a hero through a series of depravities has gone a bit stale. **Mark Webber** plays a loser who gets a call ordering him to kill a fly and eat it. Each time he completes one of 13 grisly tasks his bank account is enriched but if he fails then he forfeits the game. It grows increasingly far-fetched as it goes on and the final twist doesn't have much impact.

Capt Damian Hern, (AGC (SPS))

VERDICT: A good start, plodding middle and far-fetched end ★★★★★



DALLAS BUYERS CLUB out now

FORMERLY the king of romantic comedy, **Matthew McConaughey** has transformed himself into Hollywood's man of the moment with a string of much-hyped films to his name. *Dallas Buyers Club* proves why. His portrayal of a dying AIDS-sufferer manages to be sleazy and moving all at once, while his physical metamorphosis is nothing short of disturbing. A strong supporting cast make it a must-see for any serious movie fan.

Becky Clark, *Soldier*

VERDICT: Troubling, thought-provoking, brilliant – don't miss it ★★★★★



WIN... STALINGRAD

AS the highest-grossing Russian film of all time *Stalingrad* contrasts the grand scale of the famous battle with the devastating human impact on the home nation's soldiers, the few remaining civilians and the German troops who invaded the city. *Soldier* has teamed up with Sony Pictures Home Entertainment to offer copies of the DVD to five lucky readers. To be in with a chance of winning tell us who directed the movie. Send your answers to the usual address or alternatively by email to comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk

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GAMES

The background of the entire page is a vibrant, action-packed scene from the video game Mario Kart 8. In the foreground, Mario is shown from the chest up, wearing his iconic red cap with a white 'M' and a red racing suit. He has a determined expression, with his blue eyes wide and his black mustache prominent. He is leaning forward, gripping the steering wheel of his red kart. The kart's front is a large, glossy red shell with a white circular emblem containing a red chevron pointing to the right. The kart is positioned on a blue and green track, with motion blur suggesting high speed. In the background, another kart is visible, piloted by a character with orange and yellow fur, possibly Donkey Kong. The overall lighting is bright and colorful, typical of the game's aesthetic.

PICK OF THE MONTH: MARIO KART 8

START YOUR ENGINES

NINTENDO RETURNS TO THE GRID
WITH KARTING MASTERCLASS

Review: Jamie Carter

WHEN Nintendo announces an update to one of its established franchises there are generally two reactions – a sigh of inevitability or a buzz of excitement to see how they will change the game.

It seems to be getting easier to fall into the former camp and resign yourself to yet another rehash of the original title from your childhood, comparing the new offering to memories of huddling round a 21-inch television in your bedroom trying to shave seconds off your personal best in the Ghost House One time trial.

Mario Kart 8, on the Wii U, straddles the line between update and rehash to an almost unparalleled degree.

At first glance it is a series of 16 new tracks and the same number of revised courses from older games packaged in high definition with online play.

It uses the console's gamepad for nothing more than off-screen play, a map display or, depressingly, a giant horn.

There is little that's new in the actual gameplay except for a super horn that can, if timed well enough, destroy a blue shell before it completely ruins your perfect race.

The inclusion of anti-gravity sections of track, which are more akin to something from *F-Zero* than previous versions of *Mario Kart*, is another addition.

So far, so somewhat underwhelmed.

However, part of the beauty of this game, as with much of Nintendo's output these days, is the trip down memory lane it takes you on.

Being reminded of those evenings huddled in your bedroom is not such a bad thing and the bonus here is that it is not just another instalment of *Mario Kart* but the best incarnation to date.

The online component is almost flawless and is an absolute revelation which sends the replay value soaring through the roof – even when using a sketchy one megabit-per-second internet connection.

There is a simple race highlights editor that allows you to easily upload videos to YouTube and this proves to be the perfect way to review your race and look for flaws, or just to boast about the win you snatched from the jaws of defeat.

There is also a local split-screen multiplayer option that remains one of the best and most competitive experiences money can buy.

And finally, it's still *Mario Kart*, one of the finest and most refined racing titles on the games market.

Winning or losing is as much about resource management as it is following a perfect drift boost along the racing line.

This offering proves to be another feather in the Wii U's cap and goes to show that the next generation of consoles shouldn't be restricted to releases from Sony or Microsoft.

Nintendo may be outsiders but they can still have a say on the future of video games, and at the core of that is fun. ■

VERDICT: Nintendo take pole position with this race classic reboot ★★★★★

WATCH DOGS

for Xbox/PS3 and 4/PC



THIS game is set in a highly detailed Chicago, where technology monitors and controls everything. You play as Aiden Pearce, a vigilante armed with a small arsenal of weapons and an ability to hack everything from bank accounts to traffic lights via his phone. The story sees our hero hunting the people responsible for a tragic event in his past but there is loads to do outside the main plot. The multiplayer is also great fun – especially when someone is hacking you.

Cpl Andy Cresswell, REME

VERDICT: An amazingly detailed game – hours of fun ★★★★★

WORMS BATTLEGROUNDS

for Xbox One/PS4



WITH *Worms* being released on the state-of-the-art Playstation 4 console I expected a little more from this title in terms of graphics. The game itself hasn't changed a great deal in almost 20 years but having said that it is very much a case of "if it isn't broken don't try and fix it". *Battlegrounds* will provide hours of bazooka blazing, sheep exploding fun for friends and family of all ages. You can also take your worms to war online, battling it out with people from all around the globe.

Ashley Swarbrick, ex-RLC

VERDICT: One to play when the family comes for a visit ★★★★★

ENEMY FRONT

for Xbox 360/PS3/PC



THIS release tells the story of war correspondent Robert Hawkins and his efforts to help the Polish resistance repel attacks from German forces. Unfortunately, *Enemy Front* is a pretty poor game that fell very short of my approval line. Certain aspects will be familiar from other first-person shooters but with more input it could have shown a lot of potential. The maps are quite large but the dumb enemies in each stage do not offer enough challenge.

Sgt Craig Backhouse, Coldm Gds

VERDICT: With no original ideas this leaves a lacklustre aftertaste ★★★★★

FIFA WORLD CUP 2014

for Xbox 360/PS3



CONSOLE fans could be forgiven for being sceptical about yet another official tie-in to a major sporting event. Fortunately, the brains behind the all-conquering *Fifa* franchise have picked up the baton for the 2014 World Cup and this title does not disappoint. The format is slick and easy to master and players get to prove national managers wrong by selecting their own squads for a full qualifying campaign ahead of the tournament. There is no excuse for not getting your tactics exactly right.

Richard Long, Soldier

VERDICT: The perfect remedy to England's inevitable downfall ★★★★★

TITANFALL

for Xbox 360/One/PC



TITANFALL is an all round great game with a mixture of first-person shooting and epic free running. While the pilot mode is a lot like *Call of Duty* playing as a Titan is similar to being in a giant robot simulator, where a shield perk allows you to catch incoming bullets and re-fire them while the rocket equivalent sees you unleash a vast arsenal at the chosen target. The array of weapons may be small but that is countered by the high quality graphics and the array of tasks that earn extra XP once completed.

Jack Lee, civvy

VERDICT: A superb offering that ticks all the boxes ★★★★★

TROPICO 5

for PC



IN this city-building title you take the role of a dictator on small islands and call all the shots. Early eras give way to the World Wars where both sides are furiously buying up supplies, which creates some basic risk-reward decisions. This continues throughout and problems start to become more economic and political with the Cold War. The humour will never fail to keep you smiling as you play and who doesn't want to run the show as El Presidente?

SSgt Lee Gibbs, REME

VERDICT: The most enjoyable slapstick sim in a long time ★★★★★

MUSIC

A black and white photograph of a man with short dark hair, a beard, and a dark cap. He is looking directly at the camera with a serious expression. He is wearing a dark sweater and a chain necklace. The background is a rough, textured stone wall. The word "MUSIC" is written in large, bold, white capital letters across the top of the image.

PICK OF THE MONTH:
FIRST MIND

ACOUSTIC ADVENTURE

GUITARIST LEAVES BAND LIFE
BEHIND ON SOLO QUEST

Review: Richard Long

AS a founding member of jazz collective Portico Quartet, Nick Mulvey achieved a personal high when the band was nominated for the Mercury Prize alongside the likes of Radiohead, Elbow and Adele.

But after helping them build on the success of their debut album *Knee-Deep In The North Sea* the singer-songwriter decided to leave the confines of the group on a mission to reinvent himself as a solo artist.

His thirst for change saw him arrive at a guitar school in Cuba as the only Brit in the room and he soon perfected the intricacies of picked notes and acoustic playing.

But the release of new material was not immediately forthcoming and in the first six months of his new career he deliberately made no contact with the music industry so that he could focus on his art.

"All I wanted to do was play my instrument every day, to be in a room on my own and study my heroes," he explained.

John Lennon's *Jealous Guy* and *When Doves Cry* by Prince were two of the songs that Mulvey listened to over and over, so he could pull them apart and understand the level of detail involved.

"My playing is all about lines, not strumming chords," he added.

"It's about having motion and rhythm and groove. It doesn't have to be complex but it has to be animated."

After spending time in the studio working with producers such as Dan Carey (Bat For Lashes) and Charlie Andrew (Alt-J) Mulvey was in a position to release the EP *Fever To The Form*.

"It was a real watershed moment," the artist recalled.

"The first line is, 'So whether music or madness/I live by one of the two'. That's what the choice between the band and my own music felt like to me.

"Even though there's a surface level difference between my music then and now, it's all the same to me.

"I do the same things on the guitar as I did on the hang [the instrument he played in Portico Quartet]. It's about repetition, hypnotic music, the groove."

The success of the record laid the foundations for debut album *First Mind*, which offers a sublime insight into his newfound guitar skills.

Mulvey's almost haunting vocals prove to be the ideal accompaniment to the music as the tracks flow effortlessly from one to the other.

Any acoustic album runs the risk of descending into monotony but this succeeds as each effort builds to a crescendo from a low-key start – with the songs *Fever To The Form* and *Cucurucu* providing impressive examples of this.

Admittedly, there are a couple of tunes that fail to hit such heady heights but this does not detract from the overall quality, which peaks with the outstanding *Meet Me There*. ■

VERDICT: An acoustic masterclass from the new kid on the block ★★★★★

Meteorites by Echo and The Bunnymen

HAVING never heard of **Echo and The Bunnymen**

I had no idea what to expect from this album. I must admit I was pleasantly surprised by what I found. The opening few tracks proved to be real favourites but after a strong start the music becomes slightly repetitive and the latter songs are indistinguishable from one another. However, the first five offerings make *Meteorites* worthy of a purchase alone. If you like chilled-out, storytelling indie rock then this is for you.



LCpl Andrew McEwen, RE

VERDICT: An impressive offering and I look forward to more ★★★★★

A Letter Home by Neil Young

I HAVE never listened to **Neil Young** but gather he is fairly popular. If this is consistent with his earlier work then I struggle to understand his fame. My first reaction to the album was that it was an elaborate joke. However, I checked online and it is clearly a very serious venture with **Jack White**, recorded in a 1947 voice-o-graph recording booth and you can tell. The sound quality is authentic (i.e. terrible) and the tracks are just one long drone of twangy guitar and rambling old-man-angst.



Maj Euan Mathieson, Yorks

VERDICT: A dull, depressing offering that is total drivel ★★★★★

Stockholm by Chrissie Hynde

SURPRISINGLY, after 35 years in the business, this is **Chrissie Hynde's** debut solo album.

The Pretenders star has roped in friends **Neil Young** and **John McEnroe** to help out but anyone hoping for something a little different will be disappointed. Her voice remains exquisite but many of the songs aren't. The appearance of Young on *Down The Wrong Way* adds some much-needed oomph and the closer *Adding The Blue* is by far the best track – showing she still has adventure if she lets herself go.



Capt Damian Hern, AGC (SPS)

VERDICT: A pleasant if unspectacular affair; for the diehards ★★★★★

White Women by Chromeo

TWO-man electro-punk outfit **Chromeo** return to the spotlight with new album *White Women*. I was

under the illusion this record would be quite frank about the fairer sex but on listening to the songs I soon changed my mind. It is packed with potential summer hits and *Old 45s* is the standout thanks to its great beat and lyrics. Artists such as **Solange Knowles** offer their vocal talents on a number of superb tracks and the music is very up-tempo on the electro side. Having never heard of these guys I'm now a fan.



Kim Cresswell, civvy

VERDICT: A great album that brings electro-punk up to date ★★★★★

Ghost Stories by Coldplay

IT has been well documented that the "conscious uncoupling" of **Chris Martin** and **Gwyneth Paltrow** formed the inspiration for **Coldplay's** sixth studio release and fans were right to expect a sombre and downbeat affair. While *Ghost Stories* lacks the anthems that have become the band's trademark in a 15-year career this offering is not without merit. The change of tone is noticeable from the start but tracks like *Magic* and *A Sky Full Of Stars* have enough about them to carry the album.



Richard Long, *Soldier*

VERDICT: Not the usual **Coldplay** but worth a listen ★★★★★

Turn Blue by The Black Keys

Listening to *Turn Blue*, the new album from **The Black Keys**, felt a lot like a really long and unproductive meeting in which your mind readily wanders to anything else. The only thing that stood out among the seemingly endless drone of the 11 similar-sounding tracks was the poor quality of the guitarist and his tone, rivalled only by the grating, whiny vocals. Even picking out a song that is not as bad as the others has been too challenging. My advice for to the band is "go away and practise" (or just go away).



Maj Fraser Dowling, AGC (ETS)

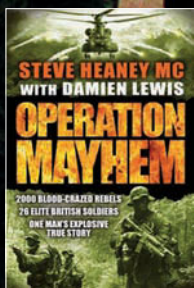
VERDICT: Buy this to feel good about your own musicianship ★★★★★

BOOKS

PICK OF THE MONTH:
OPERATION MAYHEM

SHOWDOWN IN SIERRA LEONE

ONE ELITE UNIT'S DESPERATE STAND
AGAINST 2,000 REBEL FIGHTERS



Operation Mayhem
by Steve Heaney and
Damien Lewis is out
now, priced £18.99

Interview: Becky Clark

“WHAT makes the grass grow? Blood! Blood Blood!”

Not the kind of battle cry you want to hear coming out of the pitch black jungle when you and your men are low on ammunition and the enemy outnumbers you 100-to-one but that was the situation Steve Heaney and his small band of fellow Pathfinders faced in Sierra Leone in 2000.

The 26-strong elite unit had been sent to defend the key village of Lungi Lol from the advancing Revolutionary United Front, a ragtag army of rebels and child soldiers who were sweeping the country, killing, raping and hacking off the limbs of innocent civilians along the way.

“They ruled by fear and intimidation,” explained Heaney, speaking to *Soldier* about *Operation Mayhem* – his newly published account of the episode.

“The abuses they dished out were some of the worst atrocities you could imagine, from beating people to within an inch of their lives, to mutilation, sexual assault, murder and everything else in between.”

Unsurprisingly, as word of the British soldiers’ presence spread refugees began arriving at the village seeking protection.

The deployment was initially slated to last only 48 hours but stretched on for 16 days, with the villagers and a meagre force of UN peacekeepers grafting alongside the troops to fortify the settlement.

Recalling the night the attack finally came, Heaney said: “It’s one of those once-in-a-lifetime things that is burned into your mind.

“The sights, the sounds, the smells – every fibre of your body retains a kind of imprint.

“In writing the book I also called on all the other guys for their memories and perspectives so I had a 360-degree arc of everything that went on.”

The resulting description of the battle, in which Heaney won the Military Cross, is a nerve-shredding page-turner that would rival any military thriller.

Thanks to the Pathfinders’ determination to repel the RUF at Lungi Lol, Operation Palliser, the British task force’s wider effort to evacuate hundreds of entitled personnel from the nearby airport, was a success.

As for what became of the villagers Heaney and his men fought so hard to protect, the 44-year-old added: “I’ve looked at the settlement on Google Earth and you can see it, it’s still there and has even grown a bit.

“I sometimes think about going back and trying to find out if any of the same people still live there today.

“One of the reasons I wrote the book was to get across how, after two weeks living with the villagers, some of the blokes had become extremely close to them – especially the children – and leaving them was very difficult and sombre for all of us.

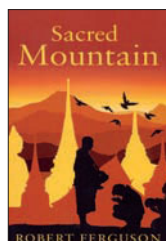
“The other aim is to get the guys the recognition they deserve.

“Not a lot goes right in Africa but even now the mission is widely recognised as a textbook intervention operation.

“My story is meant to be a tribute to everyone involved.” ■

Sacred Mountain

by Robert Ferguson



THIS novel delivers a riveting storyline set amidst the stifling jungles of Burma and the heights of Everest. Not beset with the complicated plots that often ruin other offerings of the genre, the book tells the gripping tale of a former Gurkha officer’s quest for redemption. The characters are all likeable; the descriptions vivid. This story has everything – war, adventure, loyalty and comradeship. I can’t recommend it enough and would like to think that I’ve probably learnt something along the way.

SSgt Wallace Stephenson, Int Corps

VERDICT: A highly enjoyable page-turner with an absorbing plot ★★★★★

Three Days in June

by James O’Connell



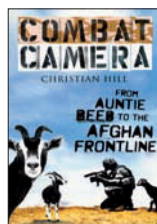
FORMER members of 3 Para and its attachments recall the brutal fighting and hostile terrain they faced during the battle for Mount Longdon. Combined, their perspectives provide a formidable account of the clash that reveals their tenacity, teamwork, courage and humour. For me this is the definitive title on the campaign that inspired me and many of my peers to join The Parachute Regiment. If you only read one book about it make sure it’s this one.

Cpl Adam Jackson, Para

VERDICT: Pull up a sandbag and prepare yourself ★★★★★

Combat Camera

by Christian Hill



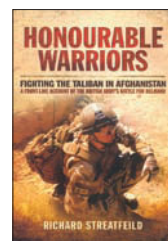
EX-COMBAT cameraman Christian Hill’s experience of Afghanistan is best summed up as “so near, but yet so far”. In his role he was often close to the action but never in the thick of it – not that he particularly wanted to be. Funny in parts, this is a reasonable account of life in theatre and shows that working within the military media isn’t always about filming the battle. The inclusion of daily incident reports opens your eyes to the casualties sustained on all sides.

Steve Dock, Soldier

VERDICT: An okay collection of front-line anecdotes ★★★★★

Honourable Warriors

by Richard Streatfeild



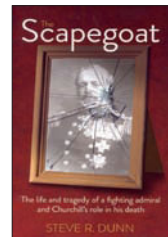
WITH countless titles available on Afghanistan it takes something special to stand out from the crowd. Here, a former company commander has chosen to criticise the MoD’s strategy and Isaf tactics as well as admitting misleading the public in a blog. The book itself is well written and although it sometimes gets bogged down with “military speak” it is obvious that Streatfeild cared for his troops. Unfortunately, this may get lost amidst the publicity generated by his revelations.

Capt Damian Hern, AGC (SPS)

VERDICT: Readable, if controversial – one for enthusiasts only ★★★★★

The Scapegoat

by Steve R Dunn



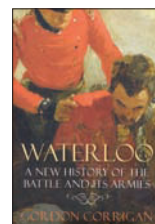
THE Battle of Coronel in the First World War has, for the most part, faded into the annals of history but this title sheds new light on the engagement. Drawing upon myriad primary sources, it highlights the politics, jealousies, tragedy and farce that undermined the ultimately-futile efforts of Admiral Cradock to stop the German Far East fleet from escaping back to Germany at the beginning of the conflict. A well-written, balanced and critical text.

Maj Chris Buckham, RCAF

VERDICT: An engaging read on a noble yet tragic figure ★★★★★

Waterloo

by Gordon Corrigan



THE cost to Britain of the battle of 1815 was, as the author put it in his lively and entertaining style, “cheap at the price to avoid our having to speak French and eat snails”. Although details of background, armies and weapons may already be familiar to readers, on the whole the book is informative and Corrigan’s extra touches add to the quality of the work. Even for those well acquainted with Waterloo, this text is an enjoyable contribution to the extensive literature.

Dr Rodney Atwood, military historian

VERDICT: A well-written, useful addition to the Waterloo genre ★★★★★

TOP GEAR



PICK OF THE MONTH:

TOUR DE FORCE

ELITE RACER PUTS JAGUAR ON BIKING MAP

COULD this be the bike that wins the Tour de France?

Defending champion Chris Froome and the rest of Team Sky will certainly be hoping so.

In a first-time collaboration – and something of an unlikely one at that – Jaguar Land Rover's boffins have lent their expertise to Italian bike manufacturer Pinarello in order to develop the professional team's latest frame – the Dogma F8.

With the technical experience of producing some of the world's finest sports vehicles, the car maker has certainly created a worthy successor to the Dogma 65.1 – a piece of kit which has claimed numerous victories in international competitions.

The main focus for the team's latest two-wheeled weapon was on further improving aerodynamic performance.

And to that end, the weight of the frame has been reduced by just over nine per cent and its stiffness improved thanks to a better grade of Torayca carbon fibre.

"Applying this level of engineering capability and analysis to the development of a bike has probably not been done before," said Jon Darlington, the head of aerodynamics at Jaguar Land Rover. "But the skills needed are fundamentally the same as for a car.

"Pinarello were very keen to protect the handling as it's key to their bike design and it's one of the areas Team Sky love with the Dogma 65.1."

To meet their brief the designers used aerodynamic principles to create an altered tube shape on the frame.

Putting their knowledge of fluid mechanics into action, and following a series of detailed wind-tunnel tests, engineers reduced the drag of components mounted on the bike

"It was really interesting to apply our knowledge to bikes," Darlington added.

"We loved the short time between testing and production – much faster than for cars."

"Goosebumps included," boasts the high-tech frame's confident slogan to users of the Pinarello website.

And as you might expect, the cost of such cutting-edge technology is certainly enough to prick the skin of the average road cyclist.

With a price range starting somewhere in the region of £10,000, the Dogma F8 does not come cheap to consumers.

But the money has been well spent for our elite cyclists.

Pinarello is confident that, thanks to a swift injection of vehicle venom, this is the fastest frame it has ever produced.

"The difference was clear when I first rode the Dogma F8," commented Froome ahead of his outing this month. "It is obviously lighter and feels more rigid.

"This is a bike on which I know I can win another Tour de France. I'm going to be doing everything possible to make that happen."

As cycling-mad Service personnel descend on Yorkshire for the Grand Depart this month, those with a passion for this sport will be looking on keenly to discover if the switch from petrol to pedals was a leap worth making for the renowned British car maker. ■

ROAD BIKES FOR UNDER A GRAND...

A GOOD FIRST RACER

£600

BUYING your first road bike is far from straightforward – or cheap. Prices begin at around the £500 mark so it could be assumed that this budget does not buy anything too impressive. However, the **Specialized Allez** has proved very popular with those new to the world of road racing. One highlight is the light wheels. Buy the C2 2014 model for £600 or else hunt around online for second-hand versions of the frame for even less.



A FIRM FAVOURITE

£499.99



WITH a reputation for giving riders more for their money, **Boardman's** two-year-old **Road Sport** model has received some good reviews. Its lightweight alloy frame is finished in the popular red paint and with improved Shimano Claris gears in the 2014 iteration, aspiring cyclists – and those with experience – could do a lot worse than invest in one of these impressive bikes.

A FINE BALANCE

£999

AT the top end of the "affordable" price range, the **Giant Defy 1** is said by many to climb, corner and sprint as well as bikes costing thousands of pounds' more. And the proof would appear to be in the positive online reviews. This frame is made from premium lightweight aluminium tubes produced in Giant's own facility, meaning it strikes a good balance between performance and comfort.



A NEW KID ON THE BLOCK

£549.99



THE **Mekk** brand is probably an unfamiliar one to many but the men behind this business – Mark Edwards and Ken Knight – have decades of experience in the cycling industry.

That knowledge has been translated into a strong range of bikes with performance that is anything but budget-like. One good pick from the company's website is the **Pinerolo AL ZR**. This lightweight, aluminium bike has as much front as its cheeky name suggests (read our main review if you don't know what we mean). Rather than own-brand wheels, this model features Shimano R500 ones – a bonus for the price.

WIN... £325 of cycling kit

TO mark the 2014 Tour de France, **Soldier** has teamed up with **Vulpine** (www.vulpine.cc) – makers of some pretty stylish cycling garments – to offer one reader attire worth £325. The bundle includes a Harrington rain jacket plus long and short sleeve merino wool base layers. To be in with a chance of winning, tell us which northern city the Grand Depart kicks off from this month. Answers on a postcard to the usual address or comps@soldiermagazine.co.uk by July 31.



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SOLDIERSPORT

Sports Editor: Richard Long

Photographers: Graeme Main and Steve Dock

Winning run:
LCpl Jay Boynton
(REME) puts
the Army on the
front foot against
the Royal Air
Force. Read more
about the Reds'
Twenty20 triumph
on page 86...



Storm wreaks havoc

Inter-Services Twenty20

Royal Air Force v Royal Navy
Match abandoned

British Army 172-7
Royal Navy 123-6

Royal Air Force 163-6
British Army 166-4

TWO dominant batting displays saw the Army's cricketers toast further success at Lord's as they retained their Inter-Services Twenty20 title in emphatic style.

A sublime century from Capt Storm Green (Coldm Gds) laid the foundations for a commanding total of 172-7 against the Royal Navy, before a 118-run stand between LCpl Brannon Varley (3 Med Regt) and LCpl Jay Boynton (REME) downed the Royal Air Force in the tournament decider.

On a day that was severely disrupted by rain it was the Reds who shone brightest when the sun finally broke through and they set the perfect tone in their clash with the Senior Service.

Having lost the toss the soldiers were asked to bat first and Green underlined his side's intent by pulling the opening delivery from Lt Cdr Jonathan Parker for four.

Gnr Graham Wiseman (RA) also started in confident mood and a flurry of boundaries saw the wicketkeeper accelerate to 22 before being caught at mid-on off the bowling of ETME Ben Kohler-Cadmore.

The setback failed to deter Green and the left-hander found the rope with regular ease as the runs continued to flow.

However, all-rounder Lt Dan Robbins put the brakes on proceedings as he dismissed Varley and Capt Michael Parton (RE) in the tenth over.

With the middle order failing to fire the onus was on Green to maintain the momentum. He struck two boundaries as Robbins' next over leaked 14 runs and then smashed two booming sixes off spinner LReg Chris Howes to inch closer to his hundred.

The landmark moment came in the final over as he scampered two runs before being caught off the penultimate delivery while attempting one last big shot.

In reply, the Navy never

“
As a schoolboy scoring a hundred at Lord's is something I could only dream about
”



Capt Storm Green (Coldm Gds)

looked like overhauling their rival's total and Parker was the only batsman to show any form as he posted a run-a-ball 56.

Sgt Alvin Pollard struck a couple of lusty blows before being caught off the bowling of paceman Fus Marlon Simon (R Welsh) but the returning rain arrived too late to save the sailors as they slipped to a 39-run defeat under the Duckworth-Lewis method.

Skipper LCpl Jacques Prinsloo (RE) was the pick of the bowlers as he returned figures of 1-17 – including a rare maiden over – while Simon (2-27) and Cpl Ian Redfern (170 Engr Regt) (1-23) offered superb support.

With the Navy dispatched the Army set about defeating the RAF and an early breakthrough from Simon helped their cause.

Wicketkeeper Cpl Jake Wray looked in good touch and he raced to 30 runs before being caught on the boundary off Prinsloo.

His dismissal brought Cpl Graeme Cessford to the crease but some athletic work by Simon saw the Worcestershire man run out for a duck.

Sqn Ldr Tim Adcock added some much-needed impetus

SOLDIERSPORT SITREP

Capt Storm Green v RAF. **101 runs** from **66 deliveries** at a strike rate of

153.03

Innings included **nine fours** and **five sixes**



LCpl Brannon Varley v Navy. **65 not out** from **35 deliveries** at a **strike rate** of **185.71** including **seven fours** and **four sixes**



Economy rate achieved by **LCpl Jacques Prinsloo** against the Navy, the **best of any bowler** on the day

5.67

118

Highest partnership of the day between **LCpl Brannon Varley** and **LCpl Jay Boynton**



Wickets taken by pace ace **Fus Marlon Simon**, the most in the tournament

figures v Royal Air Force: Simon 2-24, Redfern 2-46, Prinsloo 1-19

INTER-SERVICES CRICKET



after a quiet spell in the middle of the innings as he posted an unbeaten 68 from 47 deliveries, while Cpl Tom Chapman smashed 22 from just seven balls to help the RAF to 163-6 from a reduced quota of 17 overs.

Wiseman gave the Reds an ideal start with the bat as he struck two fours and a six from Cessford's first over.

Green continued the assault by launching two maximums off SAC Joe Peatman before his partner perished on the boundary edge for 20.

The centurion was trapped leg before shortly after and when LCpl Russell Emmanuel (LD) followed for just one run the defending champions were struggling at 43-3.

His departure brought Boynton to the crease and he set about repairing the damage alongside Varley.

After a cautious start the duo started to cut loose and they brought up a 50-run partnership off 34 balls.

The punishment continued as spinner Flt Lt Scott Edmed was dispatched for 18 off

his solitary over, with Varley proving particularly brutal.

His half-century came moments later and with the target rapidly decreasing the pair eyed a quick finish.

Cessford suffered further damage on his return as Boynton clubbed three fours and a six before holing out for a well-crafted 48 with just three needed for victory.

Cfn Barry Rauwerda (REME) had the honour of hitting the winning runs as Varley remained unbeaten on 65 from 35 balls. ■

Game brief

Date: Tuesday, June 3 2014

Competition: Inter-Services T20

Venue: Lord's Cricket Ground

British Army

Prinsloo	Wiseman	Dearden
Boynton		
Varley		Kyangungu
Redfern		
Parton		Green
Robinson		
	Simon	

Captain's comment

It was a bit nip and tuck at times and the batsmen had to dig in. It was not easy with the weather and all the interruptions but we managed to keep our focus.

The partnership between Varley and Boynton sealed the deal against the RAF and I thought they batted with great maturity. They showed why they are such valuable members of the team.

Against the Navy we showed how well we can play as a unit.

But this is such a funny tournament and it is anyone's game. We went to Denmark for some pre-season training, which was a fantastic opportunity, but we only had two games leading into this competition so the guys had not played much cricket.



LCpl Jacques Prinsloo (RE)

Army athletes eye

» **CYCLIST** Maj Claire Fraser (RA) will continue her international adventure by representing Guyana, having previously raced at the 2010 Commonwealth Games in India.



Maj Claire Fraser (RA)

WITH the 2014 Commonwealth Games getting underway in Glasgow this month a number of Army athletes are preparing to test themselves at sport's elite level. Here, we profile those in contention and learn more about their hopes for the Scottish spectacular...

» **INJURY** may have hampered judo star Tpr Emmanuel Narthey (RTR) at the start of 2014 but he is fighting fit ahead of the Commonwealth Games.

The 73kg player warmed up for the showdown by competing at the Budapest Grand Prix and African Championships and with a number of the world's best athletes ineligible for Glasgow the pressure is on to deliver.

"It was disappointing to get injured when I did but the rehabilitation has gone well and I feel strong," the Ghanaian ace explained.

"People are saying I'm the best player in my weight category and that I should win, but I will see how it goes.

"The top guys are from Japan, Korea, Uzbekistan and Russia so they are not going to be there. However, anything can happen in judo; I will have to be careful and make sure I'm switched on.

"In a way there is a certain amount of pressure but that just inspires me."



Tpr Emmanuel Narthey (RTR)

» **BOXING** sensation LCpl Ashley Williams (R Welsh) can't wait to step into the ring after a succession of training camps ahead of the Games.

The 49kg fighter has tested himself at facilities in Canada and Lanzarote in recent weeks and believes he will be in ideal shape when the opening bell chimes for his first bout on July 26.

"I've been setting personal best times on all my runs and am lifting twice as much on the weights," the Welshman told *SoldierSport*.

"The open sparring has been going pretty well but I'm not expecting it to be perfect just yet. I want to peak at the Games so now it's all about the build-up and getting the rounds under my belt."

And with preparations going well the soldier has set his sights on being the main man in his weight division.

"I have given myself the target of winning a medal," he said. "I definitely want that and will be going for gold. I don't want to settle for anything less.

"I've not seen the other teams. I don't want to focus on what they're doing and I'll worry about them when I get there. For now I just want to concentrate on my own training and prepare well."



LCpl Ashley Williams (R Welsh)

Glasgow glory



» **HAVING** starred for the Army at Inter-Services level Cpl Nordia Masters (AGC (SPS)) is now pursuing success on the international stage with the Northern Ireland netball team.

The Servicewoman has been named in a 12-strong squad for the Games and has been in full-time training to ensure she's in peak condition for Glasgow.

"This is definitely the highlight of my sporting career," she told *SoldierSport*. "Words cannot explain how happy I am, when I got the email to say I'd been selected I cried.

"We have a group of 21 girls to choose from so you have to keep your standards up at all times."

Masters qualifies to represent Northern Ireland on residency grounds and a posting with 2nd Battalion, The Mercian Regiment in Belfast saw her fulfil the necessary criteria.

As a nation they are currently ranked 11th in the world but the soldier believes they can improve on that status this month.

"Our target is to reach the top eight," she explained. "The potential is there to do that if we apply ourselves and perform to the level we

know we can.

"We recently went to Fiji and Trinidad to play teams that are ranked higher than us. We won some games and pushed them close in others and are giving these sides a good run for their money."

“
This is the
highlight of my
sporting career.
Words cannot
describe how
happy I am, when
I got the email
to say I'd been
selected I cried
”

And Masters has also thanked her unit and the Army Netball Association for their support as she pursues her sporting dream.

She said: "I am more than appreciative and cannot praise my regimental admin officer, adjutant and commanding officer enough.

"They have given me time off to train and have supported me at matches; it means so much."



Cpl Nordia Masters
(AGC(SPS))

» **FORMER** soldier Micky Yule will continue his remarkable progress in the gruelling sport of bench press as he competes on home turf in Glasgow.

The double amputee completed his discharge from the Service last year and has been in full-time training ahead of this month's showpiece.

He reached the qualifying standard for the Commonwealth Games early in the cycle and that has allowed him to focus on improving his level of performance in a pressure-free environment.

In April Yule finished fifth at the World Championships in Dubai and he believes a lift in excess of 190 kilogrammes will be needed to secure a medal when he takes to the stage on August 2.

"As long as I keep banging out the numbers I'm hoping the dream of a medal will come true," he said.



Micky Yule



LCpl Alanna Murphy (RLC)

» **WITH** women being allowed to box at the Olympic Games for the first time in 2012 the trend is set to be repeated this month in the Glasgow spotlight.

LCpl Alanna Murphy (RLC), who has been included in the Northern Ireland squad, will represent the Army in the ring and is hoping to push for a medal.

As a seasoned international she has fought for Ireland at World Championship level and grew up boxing alongside Olympic champion Katie Taylor.

She also won the English Championship title in 2010, 2011 and 2012, along with the Northern Irish equivalent in 2013 and 2014.

SPORT SHORTS



» THE Army's equestrian stars gave a strong showing at the Monte Cassino International Peacefix Festival of Sport.

Maj Nicky Cripps (RLC), Cpl Maj Skip Nicholls (HCMR) and LCpl Georgina Bell (Int Corps) travelled to Italy for the competition, which commemorated the 70th anniversary of the battle of Monte Cassino.

Bell produced a superb clear round in the 1.05-metre speed class to take her to sixth place in the individual standings. However, the soldiers suffered faults in the team events as they finished outside the placings for the overall title.



» THE Royal Artillery have been reflecting on a historic season on the pitch after winning a clean sweep of football titles in 2013/14.

After securing the Woolwich Cup the gunners went on to claim the inter-corps Massey Trophy and the quadrangular tournament.

Over the course of the campaign they scored 60 goals and suffered just one defeat in 16 games, picking up the fair play award along the way.



Red Pits hit top gear

Picture: Sarah Barrett Photography

ARMY cyclists have been testing themselves against the best in the business at the UK's top downhill mountain biking events.

Now recognised nationally as a professional team the Red Pits have locked horns with the likes of Giant and Trek in competitions such as the British Downhill Series.

The soldiers have built on last year's Inter-Services success and Capt Trevor Byrne (SASC), WO2 Zak Needham (RE) and Sgt James Heal (RTR) are now ranked among the top 15 in the country within their categories. "We continue to go from

strength to strength and are attracting more interest year-on-year from not only new riders within the Army's ranks but also sponsors, civilian teams and, more importantly, the general public," said Maj Justin Revell (RLC), secretary of Army Cycling Downhill.

But the set-up is not just focused on the elite level and newcomers are urged to join the fold and experience the buzz of the discipline.

"We encourage everyone who is passionate about the sport to get in touch and ride with us," Revell added.

"Every space on the team is open to talent and we pride ourselves on having a

grassroots attitude, always willing to welcome and nurture new talent and riders."

The Army benefits from a number of privileges, including discounts on kit, and Revell has high hopes for the future.

He said: "Though we are some way off at the moment, an aspiration is for at least one of our riders to represent the Service on the full World Cup circuit."



For more details on the downhill discipline and cycling in general visit the Army Cycling Union page on Facebook.

» THE Combined Services ladies claimed victory over the Marylebone Cricket Club in their first-ever match at Lord's. Having won the toss and elected to bowl, the military team restricted their opponents to 71-3 before rain stopped play. In reply, they were set a target of 89 inside 15 overs under the Duckworth-Lewis method and an innings of 47 from Royal Navy star Lt Hazelle Garton put them on the path to victory. Cpl Eddie Koff (RE) and Lt Cdr Charlie Yemm finished the job by hitting ten runs from the last 11 deliveries.





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TABLE TENNIS » Top team: Cpl Hilary Greig, Rev Nicola Frail, Cpl Dawn Buxton-Berry, Pte Robyn Lumas, Cpl Hannah Bacon

Top of the table: Army player Cpl Peter Owusu (RLC) showcases his skills with the bat



Talent for the table

ARMY table tennis is searching for an injection of fresh talent as it looks to evolve from its status as a minority sport.

A new committee has been formed to help drive the discipline forward and with plans in place for training weekends throughout the year and a rejuvenation of the annual Service championships the future is looking bright.

The women's team underlined their potential by winning the Inter-Services title in April but with operational commitments hitting the men's squad a broader player base is now needed.

"The awareness of the sport is not what it should be," explained secretary Cpl Dawn Buxton-Berry (AGC (SPS)).

"I don't think people even realise there is an Army team. It is an Olympic event that is fast paced and played at a competitive standard.

"We want to get more

people involved – from beginners to those with experience at county and national level."

The season runs from September through to May and the Army championships have been provisionally set for February next year.

Fixtures with civilian clubs are in the pipeline and training camps will be held to give individuals the chance to perfect their skills.

The organisation also hopes to stage a tour to Berlin, where soldiers will be able to train alongside some of the top competitors in Europe.

"Germany has a fantastic set-up – from professionals down to club-level players," said chairman Rev Nicola Frail (RACHD).

"It is a chance for us to go and learn from their coaches and see some of the top stars in action.

"A lot of people will have tried table tennis on tour or

"It is an Olympic event that is fast paced and played at a competitive standard"



in camp but there is a big difference between picking up a bat in that context and the sport we play.

"However, we can offer those beginners the chance to develop their skills."

The Army Table Tennis Association has taken to Facebook and Twitter in an attempt to broaden the game's appeal and it hopes to recruit fresh talent from training establishments such as AFC Harrogate.

"It is about getting away from the ping pong image and promoting table tennis as a serious discipline," added Frail.

"It is dynamic and players have to rely on their reflexes and agility. It is low cost and accessible to all." ■



For more information on how to get involved contact Cpl Buxton-Berry on dawbb1978@yahoo.co.uk



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» Caterham F1 Team fact file: Formed – September 12, 2009; Best finish – tenth in the constructors' championship in 2010 and

Back on track

Picture: Glenn Dunbar/LAT Photographic



WHEN illness brought a premature end to David Colman's military career a reinvention in the turbo-charged world of Formula One was considered a remote possibility at best.

Having been diagnosed with ulcerative colitis the 30-year-old was forced to turn his back on his role as a driver with 4 Regiment, Royal Logistic Corps as a catalogue of medical setbacks plagued his life.

On reaching his lowest ebb the former lance corporal was introduced to Forces charity Mission Motorsport and the first steps on an unlikely path to the pit lane were taken.

After excelling during a work placement Colman is now a graphics assistant with the Caterham F1 team and the blow of being medically discharged after eight years in the Army seems to finally be behind him.

"I was always interested in the Armed Forces; I just wanted to get out of the job I was in at the time and join up," he told *SoldierSport*.

"I deployed to Afghanistan on Herrick 6 in 2007 but came down with sickness and diarrhoea while based at FOB Robinson; it just never cleared up or got any better.

"When I got back to the UK I was put on a course of tablets but nothing seemed to be working. Almost a year later I went to see a consultant and was diagnosed with ulcerative colitis."

In May 2010, after recognising that various medical options had proven unsuccessful, he underwent a last-ditch procedure to remove his large bowel.

It was the first of four operations but Colman suffered numerous complications along the way – the worst of which saw him rushed to hospital with a suspected blood clot on the spine.

The ex-soldier was directed towards Mission Motorsport via his personnel recovery unit and the organisation soon set about boosting his rehabilitation.

Life in the fast lane: Ex-soldier David Colman has forged a new career in Formula One after being medically discharged from the Army

"I was in a bubble where I didn't want to leave the house," he explained.

"I then got a call from Jim Cameron (one of the charity's founders and a former major in the Royal Tank Regiment) asking me to come and see him at their warehouse.

"He showed me around the cars and invited me to Silverstone. I'm interested in photography and took my camera along to watch fast cars speeding round the track.

"He then took me on and I was getting out of the house more and more. The medical side had settled down and I got my confidence back."

Due to the nature of his condition getting behind the wheel was not an option but Colman gained experience by covering track days with Fresh Orange Photography.

He then completed a vehicle livery course and after showcasing his skills in demonstrations at the Goodwood Festival of Speed he got his big break with the Caterham team.

"Mission Motorsport contacted them to see if





“It is a great place to work and is pretty similar to the Forces in the way we have different sections and disciplines that come together as a team”



they needed a hand. I went over and they saw how good I was,” Colman said.

“I got invited back and from then on I was there every week until it eventually became a full-time position.”

In his new role the former Serviceman is responsible for emblazoning the team’s sponsors on everything from garage panels to F1 cars.

“My photographic skills helped,” he explained. “I’m quite artistic and have an eye for detail, my military background has also been a real benefit.

“I thought it was relatively easy but a lot of people struggle with this.

“It is a great place to work and is pretty similar to the Forces in the way we have different sections and disciplines that come together as a team.

“I never thought I could work in this industry. As I was preparing to leave the Army my career advisers asked what I wanted to do and I said I just wanted a job.

“But they told me to aim high so I suggested getting

involved in Formula One. I’ve always been interested in the sport – Nigel Mansell and Damon Hill were heroes of mine growing up.

“They thought that might be unrealistic but I’m now proving them wrong.”

Colman has been quick to acknowledge the help he has received and is looking forward to an extended career in his new field.

“I was lost,” he added. “Everything I was qualified for was taken away due to my illness. I did not know what to do next.

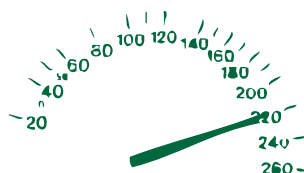
“I would like to stay for a long time. I’m still settling in but hopefully I can work my way up.

“There is a unique buzz in the air, which makes it a truly amazing place to be. Having a job in Formula One was a dream that I never thought could be a reality – and that reality is now even better than I imagined.

“I never really thought about this opportunity and if it was not for my illness I’d still be in the Army.

“I’ve been very lucky.” ■

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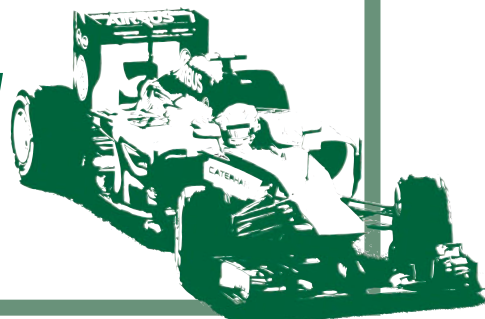
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8	71%	Badminton School	81	44%	Mill Hill School
9	71%	Benenden School	82	43%	St Bees School
10	71%	St Catherine's	83	43%	Ampleforth College
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12	68%	Faculty of QE	85	43%	The Leys School
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17	66%	Dulwich College	90	41%	Wellington School
18	65%	St Clare's	91	41%	Burgess Hill Girls
19	64%	Headington School	92	41%	King's School
20	64%	Malvern St James	93	41%	Royal Dungannon
21	63%	Godolphin School	94	41%	Wells Cathedral S
22	62%	Caterham School	95	40%	Queen's College
23	62%	Moreton Hall	96	40%	Glenalmond College
24	61%	Bromsgrove School	97	40%	St Margaret's Bushey
25	61%	Royal High Sch Bath	98	39%	St Edmund's College
26	60%	Ruthin School	99	38%	Purcell School of Music
27	60%	St Michael's School	100	38%	Bruton School for Girls
28	59%	King's School	101	38%	Stamford School
29	58%	Marlborough College	102	38%	Wrekin College
30	58%	d'Overbroeck's Coll	103	38%	Victoria College
31	57%	St Leonards-Mayfield	104	38%	Leighton Park School
32	57%	City of Ldn Freemens	105	37%	Welbeck College
33	56%	Talbot Heath School	106	37%	Tring Park School
34	56%	Haileybury	107	37%	St James Senior Boys'
35	56%	Queenswood	108	35%	Ratcliffe College
36	56%	St Peter's School	109	35%	Rossall School
37	55%	Warwick School	110	35%	Kirkham Grammar
38	55%	Woldingham School	111	35%	Lord Wandsworth Coll
39	55%	Queen Margaret's	112	35%	Ashville College
40	54%	Rugby School	113	34%	Plymouth College
41	54%	Roedean School	114	34%	St Edmund's Cantbury
42	54%	Bedford School	115	34%	St Joseph's College
43	54%	Uppingham School	116	34%	Pocklington School
44	54%	Bishop's Stortford	117	34%	Stamford High School
45	53%	Lancing College	118	33%	The King's School Ely
46	53%	Haberdasher Girls	119	33%	Bede's Senior School
47	53%	Oakham School	120	33%	Sutton Valence School
48	53%	Gresham's School	121	33%	Langley School
49	53%	St Francis' College	122	32%	Battle Abbey School
50	52%	St Teresa's, Eff	123	31%	Felsted School
51	52%	Brentwood School	124	31%	Kelly College
52	52%	Surbiton High School	125	31%	Ackworth School
53	51%	St Mary's Cambridge	126	30%	Millfield School
54	51%	Loughborough Gram	127	30%	The Oratory School
55	51%	Merchiston Castle	128	30%	Sedburgh School
56	50%	Bootham School	129	29%	Farringtons School
57	50%	Dauntsey's School	130	28%	Shebbear College
58	50%	Reed's School	131	28%	Clayesmore School
59	50%	Marymount School	132	28%	Box Hill School
60	50%	Kingswood School	NR	28%	Giggleswick
61	49%	Ipswich School	NR	28%	Polam
62	49%	Merchant Taylors B	133	26%	Tettenhall College
63	49%	Prior Park College	134	25%	St John's College
64	48%	Tudor Hall School	135	25%	Woodhouse Grove
65	48%	Downside School	136	24%	Sibford School
66	48%	St John's School	137	24%	Culford School
67	47%	Mount School (York)	138	24%	Friends' School
68	46%	Chigwell School	139	24%	Lincoln Minster School
69	46%	Chetham's Music	140	24%	Hampshire Collegiate
70	46%	Sidcot School	141	23%	LVS Ascot
71	46%	Kimbolton School	142	22%	Seaford College
72	46%	Bradfield College	NR•	21%	Barnard Castle
73	46%	Cheltenham College	143	20%	Trinity School
74	46%	Bury Grammar Girls	144	18%	The Royal Ballet School
			145	18%	Fulneck School
			NR•	16%	Read School Drax

SPORT SHORTS

» PREMIERSHIP giants Liverpool have shown their support for the Armed Forces by becoming the first football club to sign the Corporate Covenant.

The agreement will see the Reds offering exclusive coaching sessions to more than 100 veterans in the community while giving a number of free tickets to Service personnel and their families for matches at Anfield.

They will also organise networking opportunities with local employers and health experts.

» A SUCCESSFUL Army hockey season came to an end at the Inter-Corps Championships in Aldershot.

The Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers needed extra time to blunt the challenge of the Royal Signals in the men's final, as they eventually ran out 3-2 winners.

And the corps celebrated a double as the women defeated the Army Medical Services 3-2 in their final.

Leading lights: LCpl Simon Robinson (R Signals, in white) and LCpl Richard Jones (R Signals) take to the court in Aldershot



Squash scene thrives

A CLEAN sweep of titles at Inter-Services level was the highlight of another successful court campaign for the Army's squash stars.

The women, veterans and under-25s all enjoyed comprehensive wins but the men were made to sweat in their pursuit of silverware.

Having defeated the Royal Air Force 4-1 the soldiers then slipped to a 3-2 defeat against the Royal Navy – meaning their fate was in the hands of their rivals.

But the airmen rallied to beat the Senior Service and

the trophy was handed to a grateful Reds team.

The success highlights a flourishing squash scene within the Army's ranks and Combined Services individual champion LCpl Simon Robinson (R Signals) believes an extended winning run is on the cards.

"The under-25s are about to go on tour in Gibraltar and they are one of the strongest teams I have ever played with," he told *SoldierSport*.

"But it is the same at senior level – selecting the final Inter-Services squad was a really difficult task as so many

people were in contention.

"Most of the guys were playing before they joined the Army, whereas others have progressed from inter-unit to Combined Services level.

"The strength in depth has really helped us this season. We lost the men's title last year and the onus was on us to get it back." ■



For more details on Army squash and how to get involved in the sport visit

www.armysquash.org



Tour success points to bright future

RUGBY union players from the Infantry Training Centre Catterick ended their season in style with a ten-day tour to South Africa.

Having reached the quarter-final stage of this year's Premiership Cup the soldiers took a 25-man squad on the trip, which was aimed at building a strong and confident unit ahead of the 2014/15 campaign.

The visit started with a

12-5 victory against the False Bay Crocs in Cape Town before the team locked horns with the South African Navy 48 hours later.

And it was the tourists who triumphed in an end-to-end game as a dominant performance from their pack laid the foundations for a 12-8 triumph.

The winning run came to an end with a 32-10 defeat against Helderberg but a

number of positives were taken from the experience.

"The tour was a great success," said Capt Rob Townsend (Yorks). "It gave the squad time to train and play together without the disturbances of ITC routine.

"It introduced a group of young and inexperienced players to the spirit and nature of rugby and cemented their passion for the game."

Final word

With Army 2020 changes in the air we asked troops from The Royal Regiment of Scotland what the future holds for them and their colleagues...



Pte Paul Currid, 3 Scots

Personally I would be happy to continue in the direction we are currently working in. However I think we need to recruit more soldiers – Regulars and Reserves – and the Army would do well to look at the whole package of what it offers to those signing up. With people leaving we could do with more corporals and the like.

Pte Scott Masterson, 7 Scots

Banter across the Army is great but there is definitely some more grim humour among the Scots and that will always remain. A lot of lads grew up in rough areas and their tough attitude and our long military history shapes us as Servicemen. Being miserable and fighting is ingrained in us!



Pte David McAulay, 6 Scots

With Army 2020 we have just got to grin and bear it and hopefully it should work out. As soldiers it might seem as if politicians get in the way but we'll get on with our job. We'll just wait and see what happens but the outlook for the Army is bright because of its experience in Iraq, Afghanistan and the Balkans.



LCpl Stefan Duncan, 7 Scots

Ours is one of the most recognisable regiments in the British Army, purely because of our heritage and history. The formation has come a fair way since it was established and each unit is now well known. In terms of serving, we are all British, all fighting as one force – regardless of where we're from, we are all the same boys and girls.



Pte Thanan Sapsuri, 7 Scots

I am looking forward to many years serving in Scotland as I learn a lot working with these troops. I am originally from Thailand and I joined the Army to do something different. With my regiment I get the opportunity to do so many things and I'm hoping to stay for as long as I can because I really enjoy it.



Pte Patrick Harris, 7 Scots

I'm about to move south as I'm transferring to the Fusiliers but for those remaining in Scotland there will be plenty of work to do. There seems to be that extra level of camaraderie among Scots, maybe because it's a smaller community, and that will always be there. We get around the world quite a lot and that should continue.



Pte Omar Sey, 3 Scots

Working with Reserves is good because it enables part-time troops to learn from us and vice versa. I also think personnel will work more and more with foreign countries in the coming years. For things to improve it would be good to see an end to the practice of making people redundant and then recruiting – the Army must retain the people it needs.

Sgt Robert Semple, 7 Scots

Soldiers in Scotland are going to be very busy under the Army 2020 strategy. We've already seen a huge difference with the issue of more kit and the latest equipment. We are completely integrated with different nationalities, and both Regulars and Reserves, and this is only going to continue in the future, which is a good thing.



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