

LONDON OLYMPICS 2012: ARMED FORCES TAKE GOLD

Defence**Focus**

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WAY TO ROW!

**Captain Heather Stanning and
Lieutenant Pete Reed win Gold**

Queen Victoria School, Dunblane (Scotland)

Wendy Bellars, Head



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Queen Victoria School (QVS) is a co-educational boarding school which provides stable, uninterrupted and high-quality education for the children of Scottish Service personnel, or those who are serving or have served in Scotland. Set in 45 acres of beautiful Perthshire countryside, Queen Victoria School is easily accessible by road, rail or air.

The children are aged between 10.5/11 and 18 (P7 to S6), the main intake being at Primary 7. The School offers its pupils a wide and balanced curriculum following the Scottish educational system and includes courses at Standard, Intermediate 2 and Higher Grades of the Scottish Certification of Education. Pupils also have the opportunity to study in a number of subjects for the Advanced Higher examinations. Increasingly, pupils move on to Higher and Further Education but career links with the Services remain strong.

Pastoral care is given a very high priority along with careers guidance and personal and social education. Queen Victoria School aims to promote the welfare and happiness of each individual child and develop their self-esteem. In addition,

there is a very full programme of sporting, cultural and spiritual development.

Queen Victoria School is a unique boarding school which seeks to achieve the best that is possible for its pupils. The School prides itself on developing its pupils in the widest possible sense and aims to achieve success academically, in sport, music, drama and many other extra-curricular areas.

A very special and unique dimension of Queen Victoria School is the ceremonial side which preserves the very best of the School's traditions. Marching as part of the School on one of its six Parade Sundays a year, and on Grand Day – the final day of the academic year – is one of the proudest moments of a Victorian's life (as well as that of his or her parents)! The Pipes, Drums and Dancers of QVS are internationally renowned, having played at tattoos both at home and abroad, most recently in the Edinburgh International Military Tattoo 2008 and in Basel, Switzerland, in 2009 and will again play in Edinburgh, at the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo 2012.

Dunblane is on a main rail line to Glasgow and Edinburgh, and within easy driving distance of the majority of Forces bases in Scotland.

Queen Victoria School is holding an Open Morning on Saturday, 15th September 2012, and all eligible families are welcome. There is no substitute for visiting a school, meeting its pupils and staff and picking up the atmosphere. If you would like to know more before travelling to Dunblane to visit the School, however, please request a DVD and further information from the Admissions Secretary, Queen Victoria School, Dunblane FK15 0JY, or via our website www.qvs.org.uk.

Raising to Distinction

Open Morning

Sat 15 Sep 2012

Admissions Deadline

Tue 15 Jan 2013

Queen Victoria School in Dunblane is a co-educational boarding school for children of Armed Forces personnel who are Scottish, have served in Scotland or are part of a Scottish regiment.

The QVS experience encourages and develops well-rounded, confident individuals in an environment of stability and continuity.

The main entry point is into Primary 7 and all places are fully funded for tuition and boarding by the Ministry of Defence.

Families are welcome to find out more at our Open Morning, or by contacting the Admissions Secretary on +44 (0) 131 310 2927, Military 94745 2927 or email: admissions@qvs.org.uk to arrange a visit.



Queen Victoria
School



Queen Victoria School
Dunblane Perthshire
FK15 0JY
www.qvs.org.uk



NAVIGATOR

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TRISTAN KELLY

Once again it has been a busy month in Defence, and the Armed Forces, together with their civilian support, have shown that when called upon they can be relied on to deliver the goods with efficiency and good humour.

The Olympics were a resounding success both for Team GB and Britain as a whole and no small part was played by the Armed Forces both in sporting and support roles. Indeed, after such a long build-up it is hard to believe that the Olympics are already over. But as we bask in the afterglow of a job well done we can relive some of those golden moments with an array of pictures in this month's issue, not least the fantastic golds won by Captain Heather Stanning and Lieutenant Pete Reed at Eton Dorney.

Thankfully this isn't the end of Defence participation in the summer of sport, with many involved in the Paralympics, not least Private Derek

Derenalagi who we feature in this month's issue. We wish him and all Team GB paralympians the very best of luck.

While the Olympics showed that nations and peoples can come together in a spirit of friendship, the world outside of stadiums too often shows the opposite. The ongoing bloodshed in Syria and increased tensions in other parts of the globe perhaps show more than ever the need for a modern and adaptable Armed Forces ready to respond to a volatile world, something which General Sir David Richards speaks of in this issue in his interview with Amba Wade.

Afghanistan too is far removed from East London, but progress continues and Ian Carr has been in Helmand to bring the latest news on how our people are bringing about Transition with two fascinating features on life on patrol and the challenge of dealing with a decade of redundant ammunition.

We hope you enjoy this issue and don't forget that you can keep up with all the news in Defence on the MOD website and intranet.

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IN MEMORIAM

DEATHS ON OPERATIONS – 1 JULY TO 15 AUGUST 2012



Lieutenant

Andrew Robert Chesterman

Lieutenant Andrew Robert Chesterman, from 3rd Battalion The Rifles, was killed in the Nad 'Ali district of Helmand when he was hit by small arms fire on Thursday 9 August 2012.

Lieutenant Chesterman was commanding a vehicle patrol in the Nad 'Ali district of Helmand province when the lead vehicle struck an improvised explosive device. As he moved forward to take control of the situation the patrol was engaged by insurgent small arms fire and Lieutenant Chesterman was shot. Despite the best efforts of his fellow Riflemen at the scene, the Medical Emergency Response Team and the staff at the Bastion Hospital, Lieutenant Chesterman could not be saved.

Lieutenant Chesterman was born on 14 January 1986 in Guildford and studied Mechanical Engineering at the University of Southampton before attending Britannia Royal Naval College Dartmouth and then

the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst. He commissioned into The Rifles in December 2010 and after completing the Platoon Commanders' Battle Course joined the 3rd Battalion.

Lieutenant Chesterman deployed to Helmand province in Afghanistan on 7 April 2012. As a Platoon Commander in C Company, 3rd Battalion The Rifles, he initially worked in the Nad 'Ali district as part of the 1st Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment Battle Group.

In June 2012, as part of an increased focus on mentoring the Afghan National Police, Lieutenant Chesterman was given a new task of forming a Police Advisory Team, working for the 1st Battalion Welsh Guards Battle Group.

Lieutenant Chesterman was quite simply an exceptional Rifles officer. He was popular, utterly professional, dependable and naturally gifted. Through his inspiring leadership he had earned the respect of his fellow Riflemen on operations under the toughest of circumstances. He had a very bright future ahead of him.

He leaves behind his father Paul and sisters Anna and Olivia.



Lance Corporal

Matthew David Smith

Lance Corporal Matthew Smith, from the Corps of Royal Engineers, was killed in the Nad 'Ali district of Helmand province when he was hit by small arms fire on Friday 10 August 2012.

Lance Corporal Smith was born on 12 March 1986 in Hong Kong. He grew up in Aldershot, going to school in the local area and playing his favourite sport, football, for Hale Football Club. He enlisted in January 2003 and joined the Corps of Royal Engineers in September of the same year. He quickly progressed, and successfully completed a Junior Non-Commissioned Officer cadre in July 2008, promoting three months later.

Lance Corporal Smith deployed to Afghanistan on 16 March 2012 with 30 Armoured Engineer Squadron, 26 Engineer Regiment. He was based in the Nad 'Ali district of Helmand province where he supported 1st Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment as a section second-in-command, crane operator and driver.

Since arriving, he had been heavily involved with the transition to Afghan-led security, using his specialist skills to assist in the closure and drawdown of International Security Assistance Force bases. As a crane operator he was involved in the construction of a new bridge, allowing the local population of Nad 'Ali to cross the Nahr-e Bughra canal. In this task, as with everything, he was the epitome of professionalism.

Lance Corporal Smith had been a member of 26 Engineer Regiment for nearly three years. In his time in the regiment his personality had touched a lot of people. He will be justly remembered as one of the most popular, professional and devoted soldiers by anyone who was lucky enough to work with him. He will be sorely missed by the whole regiment.

Above everything else, Lance Corporal Smith was devoted to his family. He talked about them endlessly. He leaves behind his father Kenneth, mother Caroline, fiancée Laura, brother Bradley and four children, Lainie, Ella, Tilli and Jai (aged between one and seven).

OLYMPICS 2012



Stadium support act: soldiers help the Games run smoothly

Picture: Sergeant Alison Baskerville RLC



Here to help: soldiers ensure the public fly through security screening

Picture: LA [Phot] Dan Rosenbaum

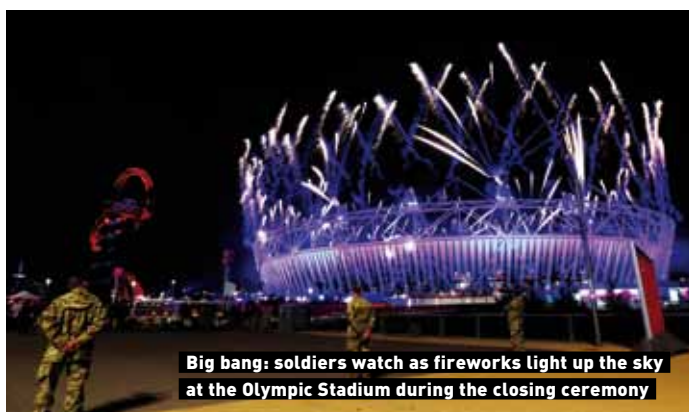


Marine muscle: Chris Sherrington competes in judo



Services with a smile: Flight Lieutenant Lindsey Clarke on Olympics duty

Picture: Sergeant Beattie RAF



Big bang: soldiers watch as fireworks light up the sky at the Olympic Stadium during the closing ceremony

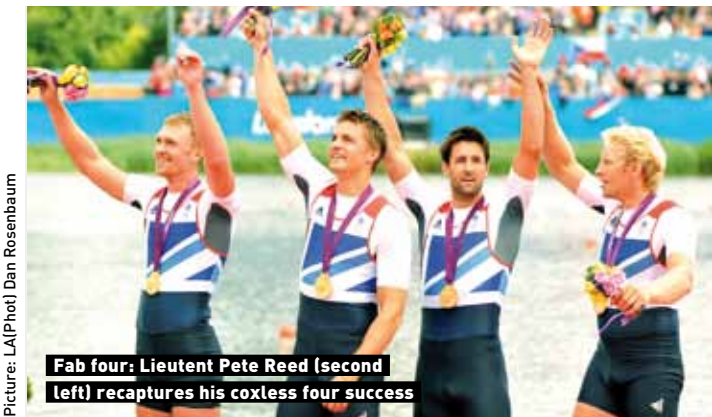
Picture: Sergeant Alison Baskerville



Soldier support: recording a message of support for Captain Heather Stanning before her Olympic final

Picture: Captain Dave Scammell

IT WASN'T JUST HEATHER STANNING AND PETE REED WHO SHONE FOR TEAM GB. OUR TROOPS WON PRAISE TOO



Picture: LA(Phot) Dan Rosenbaum

Fab four: Lieutenant Pete Reed (second left) recaptures his coxless four success



Picture: Bombardier Murray Kerr

Oarsome: rowing legend Sir Steve Redgrave thanks the Army at a Team GB breakfast



Golden girls: Army Officer Captain Heather Stanning (right) won Britain's first gold medal with crewmate Helen Glover in the women's pair event

Picture: Courtesy of The Sun newspaper

YOU'RE FIRED

Ammo belt: destroying out of date
ammunition at Camp Bastion

FOR THE NEXT 18 MONTHS, TONNES OF OLD BULLETS WILL BE TURNED INTO “BRASS” AT BASTION WRITES IAN CARR

This might surprise you, but bullets go off. Or rather, like milk, fresh fruit and even back editions of *Defence Focus*, ammunition has a shelf life. And just as munching on a round of past its best prawn and mayonnaise sandwiches may end in an unhappy event, so putting an out-of-date round in your SA80 could spoil your day.

Not surprisingly, one of the assets that soldiers in Afghanistan cannot afford to run out of is bullets. So making sure you have more than enough immediately available is crucial. A just-in-time storage and distribution policy won't do if combat operations suddenly go “hot”. That's not the time to be told that the next delivery is in the pipeline and should be with you in the morning. But that means that at the end of each Herrick there is some ammunition left over, and any unused bullets have to be disposed of responsibly.

“Storing old bullets safely isn't in itself a problem,” said Captain Nathan Evans (SO3 Ammunition Plans Theatre). “Ammunition only really becomes dangerous when you put it in a gun. But eventually you have to do something with it.”

But, hold on, why do bullets have a best-before-date anyway? Can't spare ammo be handed on to the next soldiers coming through, or be used for training on ranges?

“We can't do that because ammo has a shelf life of just six months,” explains Captain Evans. “That's because the propellant in each cartridge case degrades. And if you think about what's happening to those cartridges while they are out and about with the guys, rattling around in magazines, being loaded on and off vehicles and being exposed to the harsh environment here, getting wet, drying out again, you can see how they will deteriorate.”

So ensuring the highest levels of quality assurance in small arms ammunition makes perfect sense. “It is part of our appropriate application of lethal force so we know that each bullet will go where it's being aimed and will work correctly,” said Captain Evans.

Until this year the disposal method using a burns tank could only process 150kg of ammunition at a time, followed by a 12-hour period for the tank to cool down. “It was pretty labour intensive too, especially in terms of supervision,” said Captain Evans. So to solve the problem in

an environmentally responsible way, after a proper tendering exercise was carried out in March this year, a two-year contract was awarded to EOD Solutions.

The incinerator brought in to do the work is essentially a large rotary kiln heated by a diesel burner. But surely you don't just shovel the bullets in? “Well it's fairly close to doing that,” said project manager Steve Turner, an ex-army ammo technician; a precise man with 24 years, 200 days military experience behind him. “We feed the ammo into the kiln at a controlled rate, different ammo needs to go in at different speeds so we can be sure it goes off.” Before being tipped into the hopper, the ammunition is carefully sorted through to make sure there are no nasty surprises, like a rogue hand grenade finding its way into the mix.

At this point you might be forgiven for thinking that burning off a heap of old bullets might lend a new interpretation to the phrase ‘bang goes the neighbourhood’, but the process is, according to Steve, entirely safe, and without drama.

“The heat of the oven causes the rounds to function, but because they are not confined (the experts call it obturation) they just split apart, so when the propellant is set off, the bullets don't fly off anywhere.” It sounds like it could be quite noisy, but in fact measurements show the sound levels

are below 100 decibels – which equates to standing beside a cement mixer – or, as Steve puts it, “putting a pair of jeans in a tumble drier having forgotten to take the small change out of your pockets.”

The resultant salvage though is far from small change. Once it has been successfully burned off, the debris is cooled off, inspected to make sure it has all functioned, and then palletted up and sent to the UK to be sold as salvage. “There's some quite valuable material in the residue such as brass, lead, copper and even antimony which is used in armour-piercing bullets,” said Captain Evans.

Value for money and responsibility are two of the guiding principles of the process. As the rounds go off in the kiln it helps to heat up the furnace so the burners automatically cut off to save money. The gases produced are sucked away and filtered so the emissions fall well within EC directives.

So, for the next 18 months or so, at a steady flow of 50 to 100 rounds at a time the machine will be running four-days-a-week, burning for five to six hours a day.

“It's working well within its capacity. The rest of the time is spent on inspection, maintenance and cleaning,” said Steve calmly. After all, why get fired up over a little matter of burning off a few tonnes of bullets that have gone past their best-before-date. **DF**



Loading up: the small arms ammunition incinerator at Camp Bastion

Picture: Cpl Paul Morrison

Lance Corporal
Mark Lees laying
out his kit

Picture: Corporal Dek Traylor



ROUTINE SLOG

SOLDIERS FROM THE KING'S ROYAL HUSSARS EXPLAIN TO IAN CARR WHAT'S ALL IN A DAY'S WORK OUT ON PATROL

Lance Corporals Jamie Blay and Mark Lees and Trooper Jamie Hardacre are having a laugh. They've earned it. Half way through their tour they have kindly interrupted their preparations for a spot of R&R in order to talk to *Defence Focus* about what life is like on patrol.

Relaxing in their tented accommodation at Lashkar Gah the soldiers of the King's Royal Hussars Quick Reaction Force are lounging on their beds. They are surrounded by inflatable parrots hanging from the tent poles and various calendars display the lads' appreciation of the beauty of the human form. Carefully arranged on bedside boxes are an impressive selection of moisturising and grooming products.

They are happy to chat, but can't see what the fuss is about. But then, what they take for granted as all in a day's work is unimaginable for most of us. At best we get a glimpse of what their lives might be like when news clips show troops tabbing round carrying loads that would make civilian knees buckle in heat that is as heavy as an anvil.

Lance Corporal Blay gets the ball rolling with a plea. "Can you do one thing for us? Can you tell whoever it is that puts the ration packs together... 'no more beans'. When we are living out in compounds, there's bean pasta, Mexican bean feast – everyone just chucks them to the side – so when you go to the little tent we use as a cookhouse hoping for a quick meal – all there is, is beans."

Someone, maybe it was Trooper Hardacre, mentions dreamily Rat Pack 18, menu B; a chorus of "mmm, beef casserole" echoes round the tent. I promise to mention it.



A HOME FROM HOME

For the first couple of months of their tour, twenty of them were living away from Main Operating Base Lashkar Gah in a small checkpoint. There they had all they needed, but not much more than that. Dealing with the heat was a daily challenge.

Without air-conditioning the temperature in the tents often climbed to 65 degrees Celcius, so to get any sleep they preferred to kip outside on mats.

An eight-hour patrol would understandably leave them yearning for a cold drink, instead they would have to quench their thirsts with bottled water hot enough to make tea. Although there was a small fridge in the checkpoint, it was reserved for fresh food – no room for chilling bottles of water.

Dreams of freshening up under a cold shower were dispelled by the harsh reality of a shower bag sprinkling them with well water boiled by a day in the

desert sun. It sounds intolerable. But they love it – well to start with.

"For me the first sector of the tour went so quick, 'cause you are having such a laugh," says Lance Corporal Blay. "You're with a cracking bunch of lads, they make the place what it is and it's just fun."

Fun?

"Yeah!" they all chorus, but then admit that after a couple of months "the fun factor does go out of it".

But for the first few weeks at least it's the freedom that they really relish. "At the checkpoints you are left alone. So it's your own little domain, you can do your job, how you want to do it, and get into a nice routine," said Lance Corporal Blay. "Because it's only a small place you never have to go far, say to the cookhouse. In Lash you have to walk further to get anywhere."

While in the checkpoints life for the lads comes in a bag – showering under a bag of water, sleeping in a bag, eating out of a bag, even going to the toilet in a bag. "You've got to make sure you get your bag admin in the right order!" someone says.

But even these lads, after a couple of months, have to start to dig deep. Getting back hungry from a day patrol but too tired to sort themselves out. "Sometimes you just can't be arsed to cook so you go straight to bed and wake up groggy. At times you are so tired you can't sleep, though you know you have to because you know you are going to have to do it all again tomorrow," explained Lance Corporal Blay.

But don't get the wrong idea, none of this is meant as a whinge – well maybe apart from the bit about the beans. It's just how it is – a sitrep. Nothing is straight forward.

Take the episode of the wells. "To start with we had two wells. They provided the water to shower in and use to wash our clothes – to finish with we had none," laughs Lance Corporal Blay. The first well failed when a routine check showed that it had gone down with E coli. "Something took the easy option and died in it." Then, being old, the second well eventually failed. The lads managed to rig up a fix – but when the engineers came to repair it they heeded the shout "don't cut that rope!" moments too late, resulting in the pumping bar falling into the depths, never to be seen again.

After that, all water use had to be bottled – which meant a weekly drop off of 1,000 litres which had to be unloaded from the back of a truck by hand. Hot heavy work, but even this tale provokes a positive reflection. "The good thing is though, because it's so hot everything dries really quick – you can wash your clothes and have them dry in three hours, that's not too bad."

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Everything is relative of course, and what passes for normality in Helmand province would be unacceptable



in the UK. But by Afghan standards the lads say things haven't been as bad as they had expected. "Because it's a first tour," said Trooper Hardacre, "you've heard stories of what others have been through and you expect it to be the same. The first time I went through the gate I was twitching, I thought, here we go, every day there'll be fighting in the streets – but it's totally different, it's been relatively quiet for us."

Then Trooper Hardacre puts it nicely into context with an example of what had happened when they were with Afghan soldiers in a checkpoint. "We'd been told that it was a place where something always happened." Sure enough, having waited for nearly an hour they came under fire. Instantly they followed their drills assessing the situation, "we were all ready to go and getting psyched up about getting ourselves into a sangar when we noticed the ANA guys were just laughing at us and flapping their arms about. So we asked the interpreter why they were laughing and he said 'why are you flapping around like frightened birds? This is an everyday thing!' So we just laughed too, they were taking the piss; that's fine but we'd done our job."

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

A large part of the job is getting to know the locals and building trust. So what sort of a reception have they had?

"The older generation who have seen Afghanistan as a once thriving place just want it to be like that again. They generally come and chat and offer us some chai (tea), sometimes it's to get something off us – but that's fair enough, generally they are just people who want to get on with their lives," said Lance Corporal Blay.

"But the younger generation, those in their twenties and thirties who have known nothing but war see us as uniforms coming to take their place. And the kids, well they come and nick all your pens and some throw stones, but they're just kids. Sometimes we stop and kick a football about with them. I tell them I'm from Manchester – and they all know about Man United."

Getting to know the locals also means getting to know some of the customs. Stone-throwing is something the local children have a talent for – skills that are honed in a local game that the squaddies refer to as 'Flintstone marbles'.

The aim is to pitch stones into a circle made up

of other stones. The circle gets smaller as the game progresses.

On one occasion, while driving past a compound in their Jackals, the lads heard chanting and noticed that the locals were gathering up rocks. Their first reaction was that they were in for a stoning, but instead of angry shouts they heard cheering. Slowing down to see what was going on, rather than being confronted by an intimidating mob, what they saw was a big family gathering all enjoying a game of Flintstone marbles.

As well as sharing a game of football with the locals, footbread is also often on offer. Footbread is a local speciality where the dough is kneaded by the baker's feet. It may not sound appetising, especially when garnished by tales of toenails emerging from the mix, but apparently the lads love it. The first time they tasted it was when they had been invited for dinner by the head of the district police. "We were given rice and footbread and I thought, that's it, I'm going to have the trots tomorrow morning after this – but I had a nibble, then a nibble turned into a whole piece of bread, it was really nice," said Lance Corporal Bray. "And, what's more, it didn't end up with me in the dungeon." The dungeon being – well I'm sure you can work that out for yourself.

GROUND SIGNS

Getting to know the patch they are patrolling is critical. Going out every day, sometimes twice-a-day, on patrols that can last for just a few hours, or for days, builds up that knowledge, and helps develop a gut instinct. "You might be physically exhausted, but as soon as you go out of the gate you are mentally switched on. You go down a track and you think 'uh oh, this isn't how I remember it'. One of our lads found an IED in a mud bank by a track. He spotted it because the track looked just a bit narrower than he remembered it," said Lance Corporal Bray. "If you'd never been down that track before, you probably wouldn't have noticed it."

They also spot 'farmers' standing in fields holding rakes but who disappear from time to time clearly to report on the soldiers' progress. On one occasion the fake farmer calmly erected a screen on the roof of his compound, then hiding behind it loosed off a few rounds at them, then nonchalantly stood up, stretched, and returned to his field. "We knew the firing had come from his direction, we knew it was him but couldn't prove it. They are really good at watching us and spotting patterns, so he would know that in those circumstances we wouldn't fire back, so you just think 'cheeky git' then report what you have seen at the end of the patrol, so we know who we need to be keeping an eye on," said Lance Corporal Bray. "You get sniper fire and they're not bothered about there being kids or shops or stuff like that being about."

KING COMEDY

The pace of a patrol is sedate, with stops every 300 yards or so to check ground sign or the patrol's position, or just to sip water, but even the fittest have to dig deep to cope. Walking with heavy weight across freshly ploughed fields is taking you into iron man territory. When teeth start to grit it's comedy that keeps them going. The lads relate with relish the time

the troop sergeant leapt across a ditch, but being top-heavy with his Bergan, although he landed OK he couldn't keep his balance and toppled over backwards into the brackish ditch water. "Every time someone falls over, it puts an extra couple of miles in your legs – another four if it's the boss," said Lance Corporal Lees.

The lesson that the lads have learned is that when you are feeling your worst, never forget the rejuvenating power of a piss-take. "You've got to snap out of it," says Lance Corporal Lees, "because if you don't it will only get worse and everyone will just take the mickey out of you. If you are the sort to get wound up, then you shouldn't be out here."

HOME COMFORTS

So, with a well-earned R&R break on the horizon, how easy is it to shake all this off when you go home? After even just a couple of weeks in Afghanistan, driving away from RAF Brize Norton through the Oxfordshire countryside can feel unreal, like finding yourself suddenly in the landscape of a Thomas the Tank Engine book. So going home after months of hard living must be fantastic – but strange.

"It's amazing how quickly and how much you forget about everything here," says Lance Corporal Bray.

"I love walking to and from my car with no kit on, not having to wonder where my weapon is. Just wandering around town feeling weightless and knowing no-one is going to attack you is amazing."

But what about that life-saving situational

awareness? Does that go too? "Not straight away. It's going to sound sad but I notice it most when I go fishing. I notice the little things that are different around the lake.

"And I'll notice if the neighbours have changed their curtains and I think 'hmmm, why have they done that?' It gets annoying after a while."

Well, having coped with all that they have had to deal with over the last few months, with home-comforts being thin on the ground, maybe getting a bit annoyed is just another luxury that has been well-earned and which the rest of us take for granted. **DF**

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Pilot can see 360 degrees around the aircraft through a helmet mounted display

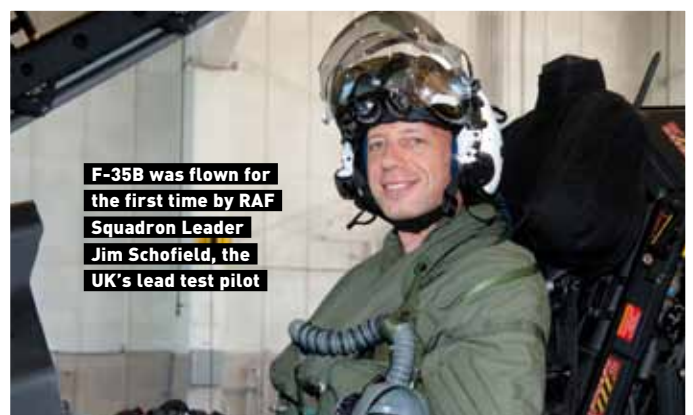


Internally the aircraft can carry two air-to-air missiles and two laser-guided bombs

F-35B (STOVL) JOINT STRIKE FIGHTER

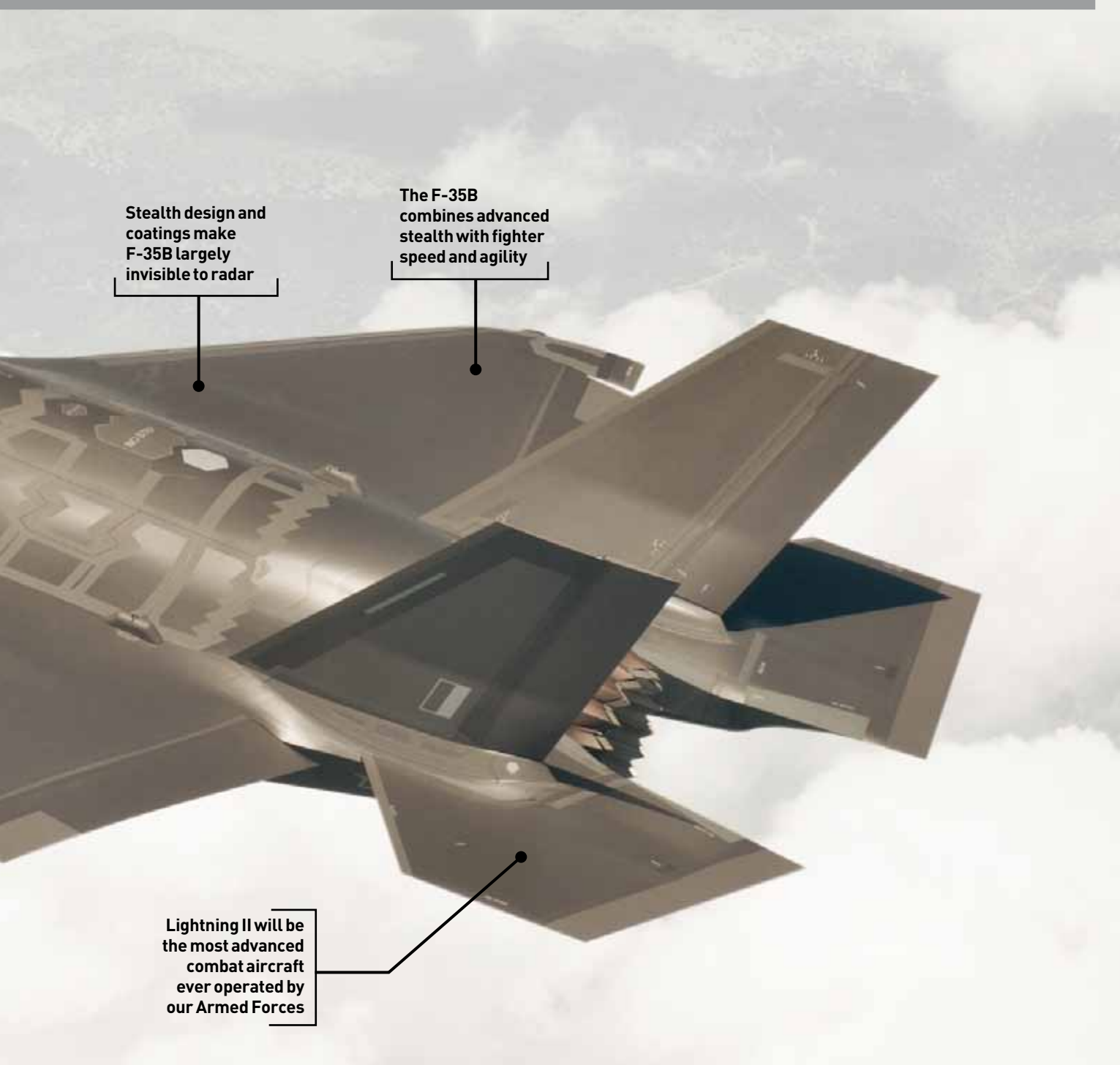
F-35B CAPABILITIES

- Speed: Mach 1.6+ (~1,200mph/~1,930kph)
- Cannon: 25mm (missionised, in stealth pod)
- 360-degree camera surveillance
- Short take-off and vertical landing (STOVL)
- Internal weapons:
 - 2 air-to-air missiles
 - 2 laser-guided bombs
- External weapons:
 - 2 under-wing missiles
 - Able to utilise variety of weapons weighing 15,000+lbs (6,804kg) on 4 hardpoints



F-35B was flown for the first time by RAF Squadron Leader Jim Schofield, the UK's lead test pilot

THE UK HAS FORMALLY ACCEPTED THE F-35B (STOVL) JSF LIGHTNING II - THE FIRST OF A FLEET OF NEXT GENERATION STEALTH COMBAT AIRCRAFT FOR THE RAF AND THE NAVY



Stealth design and coatings make F-35B largely invisible to radar

The F-35B combines advanced stealth with fighter speed and agility

Lightning II will be the most advanced combat aircraft ever operated by our Armed Forces

F-35B FACTS

- Crew: 1
- Length: 51.2ft (15.6m)
- Wingspan: 35ft (10.7m)
- Height: 14.3ft (4.36m)
- Wing area: 460 ft² (42.7m²)
- Empty weight: 30,000lbs (~13,600kg)
- Maximum weight: 60,000lbs class (27,215kg)
- Internal fuel: 13,000 + lbs (~5,897kg)
- Engine Thrust dry: 25,000lbs (111kN)
- Vertical Thrust: 39,700lbs (176.6kN)



2020 VISION: CDS LOOKS AHEAD TO THE FUTURE OF DEFENCE

CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE STAFF GENERAL SIR DAVID RICHARDS TALKS TO AMBA WADE ABOUT THE DEFENCE VISION

It's not every day you meet the Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) and ask him to explain what the Defence Vision means to him and how the changes it brings can affect everyone.

There is no denying that there is sweeping change taking place within the Armed Forces and the civilian workforce, at home and overseas. We will look different and act differently, both as a department of state and as a military HQ. The impacts are going to be felt for years to come. Transforming Defence will deliver the Vision of smaller but still 'battle-winning' Armed Forces supported by 'a smaller more professional MOD' and a 'more hard-headed approach to what we can afford'.

Transforming Defence is the biggest change programme to take place for decades. Driven by the Strategic Defence and Security Review and the recommendations in Lord Levene's report, the savings the MOD must make at its very heart are forcing us to look closely at ourselves, and how we think, behave and conduct our business outside operations. This is not just top-down change; everyone is being asked to 'think Defence' and 'do it better', from simple quick wins to supporting major change programmes across the board.

The tight squeeze on resources is creating real opportunities to empower our people, eliminate waste and simplify how we do things. Some examples of new thinking and new ways of working are the Royal Navy's '10 Small Steps', the recent changes to how the Submarine Operating Centre provides business support, and the introduction of flexible resourcing within the HR Directorate.

CDS explained what the Vision means to him: "I think it's all about team work. I view the Vision as tantamount to what we in the military refer to as unity of purpose and 'Commanders' Intent'. Many civil servants who have now been on operations with us also share this view. It's being able to see where it is we should all be going, so the Vision enables people independently to act in support of it, without lots more detailed instructions or orders to achieve it."

Defence has a unique DNA compared to every

other department being asked to make savings. We mix two distinct cultures, the military and the civilian, which allows us to think and act in new ways other government departments simply could not.

General Richards feels this is one of our biggest strengths and opportunities to really drive change through: "I've often come back from operational command and said 'why can't we work in the same way where we do delegate and we do give clear Commanders' Intent and allow people to get on with it?' You can really work very efficiently and with less bureaucratic top-down interference. I think Service personnel and civilians work very well together on the whole already but they're encumbered by too much bureaucracy. We just need to trust each other more at subordinate levels. We also have to decide what we don't need to do.

"Maybe my Civil Service friends would say 'you would say this', but I think many of them would agree that the modus operandi used amongst the Armed Forces on operations is a very good one to use as a basis for how we should be working here in the MOD and at the top levels of Defence more widely within the Single Services.

"People will make mistakes but reinvigorating the process of our daily business is worth that risk, and if we can bring that into our daily work in the MOD then it will be a much healthier place."

The Vision demands realism about what we can afford in the future so that we avoid the budget black holes of the past. While much work is already being done to make efficiencies, there is still more to do. How much more change can we all take and still deliver everything the UK needs from Defence?


General Richards said: "Change isn't necessarily bad; it's uncertainty that is demoralising. I do think and hope that since the SDSR there is a sense that we now know our financial boundaries and there is a growing understanding in the Armed Forces of what we can do, what we can't do, and how we might do things differently.

"The work we're doing at the moment, mainly within the military but integrated across Defence, is called 'How We Fight'. This looks at finding new ways of achieving an objective, where once we might have

gone about things in a certain way but have decided that the equipment is not needed or not affordable. So we need to incorporate that novel, more hard-nosed sort of thinking into the Vision and give people the confidence that we can still produce the goods at the end of the day.”

So is the Vision of being ready to ‘address tomorrow’s threats’ realistic and achievable? After all, from 2014, there will be no more combat troops in Afghanistan and Future Force 2020 will reduce Regular Forces in size and increase the numbers of Reserve Forces. The civilian workforce will also be reduced. CDS was in no doubt that Defence would be more than equipped to meet all challenges.

He concluded: “I’ve been around 41 years now in the Armed Forces. I’ve heard the view before that history is dead and there will be no more wars and no more conflicts and crises. As I look out at the world as it is and how it’s likely to evolve in the next 10 to 15 years I think there will be a huge demand, a continued demand on the Armed Forces.

“With the fighting experience and combat maturity we’ve gained over the last 15 years I think we will continue to be a very effective, integrated joint force which will worry hugely our enemies when we turn up and hugely reassure our friends.” 



SUPPORTING OUR PEOPLE

**ADJUTANT GENERAL, LIEUTENANT GENERAL SIR MARK MANS
TALKS TO IAN CARR ABOUT FUTURE CHALLENGES**



DF: What is the role of Adjutant General?

MM: Traditionally the alternative name for the AG is Principal Personnel Officer. My role is similar to that of the Second Sea Lord in the Navy and the Air Member for Personnel in the RAF.

Our roles have expanded significantly over the last few years. In addition to personnel, I now have responsibility for infrastructure, children and young people, including cadet forces, Service schools and adventure training, to name but a few.

But central to everything we do is our people, and by that I mean Servicemen and women and their families.

DF: So you have single Service and defence-wide responsibilities?

MM: In an era of empowerment, I do feel that the single Services should be given additional defence-wide responsibilities. The responsibility I have for all Service children and young people is an example.

DF: What is your involvement with the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO)?

MM: Put simply it is to make sure that the Army is both an intelligent customer and an intelligent user and that the DIO understands the Army's requirements. Accommodation is important of

course, but it's about a lot more than just buildings; housing, facilities management, services, training areas and the like are all key to delivering military capability. This is all the more important during a period of considerable change for the DIO.

DF: How will Army 2020 affect things?

MM: The big idea is to organise and use the Army to deliver three core purposes. With the end of combat operations in Afghanistan approaching, we will be moving to a more contingent posture, which means being ready for the unexpected. That is the primary purpose.

The second purpose will be overseas engagement, or what is known as upstream capacity building, which means influencing events overseas in a positive way before a crisis emerges.

And lastly we must continue to serve the UK under the banner of national resilience. Our support to the Olympics is a good example of that.

DF: How are the changes stemming from Army 2020 being approached?

MM: Army 2020 is a huge change programme that has come up with innovative ways to deliver the three purposes I have just mentioned.

Effectively it is the redesign of the British Army, and arguably the biggest change since the end of National Service, not just because of the downsizing of the regular element, but also because of the integration of the reserves, which means coming up with different ways of delivering the Army's outputs.

So the future will be about redesigning what we do in an integrated way rather than just taking a slice off the regular Army and building up the reserves.

DF: Perhaps ten years in Afghanistan has helped to prepare the way that reservists will integrate?

MM: It was a conscious decision that we would have up to 10 per cent of reservists deployed on operations in Afghanistan. So the regulars and reserves have become very used to working alongside each other and understanding each other's skills and we have to build on that.

Reservists have much to offer but we have to get the structures right.

DF: Might the end of combat ops in Afghanistan help or hinder the recruitment of reservists?

MM: It will be a challenge. If you are a reservist, being able to contribute to operations has been a significant attraction. Without that opportunity we will need to make sure that reservists still have a fulfilling and vibrant role to play in a more integrated Army. In this respect undertaking rewarding training will be key.

DF: Despite the cut in the numbers of regulars, that doesn't mean that recruitment has stopped?

MM: No, far from it. The Services are bottom-fed, which means we have to grow our own individuals for the future. We can't just go into the open market and recruit the experienced soldiers we need.

Because the Army is getting smaller, we have reduced recruitment, but not significantly as we still

need to have a steady stream of young recruits to populate the junior end of the Army.

DF: Reducing the regular head count cannot have been easy?

MM: To downsize the regular Army by 20 per cent has meant making some very difficult calls in terms of how we achieve it. Redundancy is one necessary mechanism I'm afraid.

It is a significant challenge, but that is the position we are in and we are putting a lot of effort into helping soldiers transition into civilian life.

DF: What support are you giving to those who are having to leave the Army?

MM: We are focusing a lot of activity on potential future employers. We are making sure that they understand the skills sets that soldiers have which can be mapped straight across into their businesses.

But it's not just about employment, it's also about facilitating housing, welfare, healthcare and children's education so we are engaging with local authorities too.

The Army's new Support Command is well placed to deliver a better support network, particularly as a lot of these issues come home to roost at a local level.

DF: How will the New Employment Model help in the future?

MM: NEM is fundamental because it is about supporting our Servicemen and women and their families in a more sophisticated way, as well as providing them with a greater degree of choice.

Work on the NEM predates the SDSR, as the Service Principal Personnel Officers realised some time ago that the way we employed our people was beginning to look a little bit dated.

We are seeking to put more emphasis on lifestyles, and although we can't exactly replicate what goes on in civilian life, we need to make sure that terms of service and conditions are appropriate for the future.

DF: Is the role of AG changing?

MM: Not really, but it is important that we don't lose sight of how we support our people during the blizzard of change that we are facing.

I am a great believer that organisations need to keep evolving, and, as a sapper by background, this comes naturally to me as an engineer. As such we must adopt a proactive approach to ensure we look after our people's needs.

DF: Will the end of combat operations in Afghanistan mean that the public will forget about their armed forces?

MM: We are acutely aware of that possibility. Sadly because of the casualties and fatalities suffered, the public are currently well aware of the sacrifices made by Servicemen and women.

As we approach the end of combat operations we need to continue to build on our existing relationships with society in all their forms to make sure that the wider public's understanding and perceptions of the Army do not recede over time. **DF**



Picture: Help for Heroes

GAMES WITHOUT FRONTIERS

FIVE YEARS AGO, PRIVATE DEREK DERENALAGI LOST BOTH LEGS WHEN HE WAS INJURED IN AFGHANISTAN. NOW HE'S BEEN SELECTED FOR TEAM GB IN THE PARALYMPICS. INTERVIEW: LORRAINE MCBRIDE

The amazing thing about paralympians is that they are not just extraordinary athletes, they have already triumphed in overcoming the most daunting of obstacles that life can throw at them.

Private Derek Derenalagi, from 2nd Battalion The Mercian Regiment (2 MERCIAN), lost both of his legs when an anti-tank mine exploded in Afghanistan, but now he is on the cusp of making his Paralympics debut in London 2012 competing in the F57 Discus event.

To those who know him, it is a miracle that he is here at all following the explosion that almost claimed his life. Five years ago, in July 2007, Private Derenalagi was on patrol in Helmand province with three comrades. Their task was to clear a site for a Chinook helicopter to land.

"We moved to higher ground for a better view of the area and I asked our driver to reverse our vehicle so we could gauge any enemy action," said Derenalagi. "But we rolled over a 44-gallon [167 litres] drum hidden underground filled with ball bearings, metals and six-inch [152mm] nails. When it exploded, I didn't realise I'd lost my legs."

Conscious throughout, a shard of metal ripped through his chin knocking out teeth, his left leg was blown away and his right leg hung by a thread below

the knee: "I also fractured my clavicle, broke my spine, was bruised and cut my nose, but today I am so thankful that I still have my balls!" he added.

In the visceral blurry moments that followed, Private Derenalagi lay in mud choking on his own blood convinced that his life was ebbing away. He felt overwhelmed with terror and prayed: "I looked up to the sky and said, 'Dear Lord Jesus, if I am willing to use my life to inspire and motivate others, please give me the chance to live'."

Twenty minutes later, his prayer was answered when a helicopter airlifted him to a field hospital where doctors amputated what remained of his legs. He slipped into a coma and woke up nine days later in Selly Oak Hospital in Birmingham.

During his recuperation Private Derenalagi was drawn to Battle Back – an initiative that rehabilitates injured troops through sport – at a talent-spotting day at Headley Court.

It changed his life. He threw his heart and soul into shot put, discus, javelin, sitting volleyball, wheelchair rugby, swimming and archery. But of all these, it was the shot put and discus that really had him hooked because they complemented his natural upper body strength.

Ask what disabled sport means and he says that competitive sport is the best medicine for any injury.

It is a sign of the leap in medical science that, just a decade ago, a double amputee had little chance of survival, whereas today triple amputees routinely survive: "Today in Afghanistan, they have fantastic facilities, doctors, nurses and medics and without them I wouldn't be here," Private Derenalagi said. "I was 'brown bread' and they prepared to put my body in a body bag.

"I am so thankful to the medic who found a very faint pulse." He told the doctors and medics, and after operating they flew me over to the UK. He is still in touch with the head of the medical team now based in Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham.



Hurly-burly: Private Derenalagi competes in the discus

Asked if his injuries have changed him at all, he said: "I'm still the same. I used to be cheerful all the time. It hasn't changed my outlook on life even though it changed my physical appearance. I'm still Derek Derenalagi."

Many paralympians feel this is the first Paralympics to be recognised as a major global sporting event in its own right, and Private Derenalagi is thrilled that the perception has evolved from worthiness to one of excitement and sporting excellence: "The Paralympics has changed in a big way," he said. "I watched the Paralympics in Beijing and it was fantastic. It has grown so much in four years. It doesn't just raise awareness of paralympians, but of disabled people all over the world, and I am so humbled to be part of it."

Private Derenalagi is pinning his hopes on the F57 Discus in the Olympic Stadium on 31 August. He is buoyant following his gold medal triumph in last month's European Championships in Holland where he beat Russia's paralympic champion:

"That has given me confidence that I'll do well," said Derenalagi with a smile.

Private Derenalagi, 37, trains for seven hours a day at Lee Valley near Enfield. Now with just days to go until the Paralympics, he is champing at the bit:

"I'm still on cloud nine," he said. "I just can't believe it because five years ago I lost my legs in Afghanistan, so to me it's like a dream come true. I'm honoured to represent Great Britain.

"From an athlete's point of view, to represent your country at the Paralympic Games or Olympics is the pinnacle of any career."

Does he ever experience dark moments?

"I do and I don't pretend I'm super-human," he said frankly.

"Normally I look to the positive which keeps me cheerful. Another thing that really helps is my faith in God, especially in overcoming obstacles."


Private Derenalagi follows a super-healthy diet and sees a sports psychologist to instill a mental edge even though he radiates courage and guts in abundance, making him a natural role model to inspire other disabled soldiers.

He credits the British Army saying: "My regiment, 2 MERCIAN, and my CO [Commanding Officer] have given me fantastic support and it has been a great bonus for a serving soldier to be given time off to train for two years. I can't ask for more.

"I want to thank the MOD and my regiment for supporting me to get where I am today. I'd like the whole Armed Forces to support me whether it's coming along to the Games or watching on TV. I just want your support."

What difference does it make when you are competing on home turf?

"Massive, because I'll feel the buzz right behind me. I'll be able to hear people cheering me on and it will be shown live on TV. I can't wait," he said with heartwarming passion.

"My regiment will provide security at some venues in London and it will be great to see them. I am not just representing my regiment - I am representing the whole Armed Forces and, of course, injured servicemen everywhere." 



Becks backing: David Beckham meets Service personnel at Stratford's Olympic Park

FORCES OLYMPIC EFFORT

THE GREAT AND THE GOOD AND STARS OF TEAM GB HAVE POURED PRAISE ON THE ARMED FORCES FOR THEIR UNIQUE OLYMPICS CONTRIBUTION REPORTS LORRAINE MCBRIDE

After the Armed Forces played a vital part in making the Olympic Games possible, Prime Minister David Cameron praised the Armed Services, police and volunteers as the 'very best of Britain'.

Mr Cameron's gratitude came just days after London 2012 Chairman Lord Coe described the Armed Forces involvement as one of the 'defining features' of the Olympics. Lord Coe visited military personnel providing security at Games venues both in and outside London.

Over the closing weekend, sports stars past and present, including cyclist Jason Kenny and Sir Steve Redgrave, hosted more than 100 Service personnel at a reception at Team GB House, near the Olympic Park.

Taking time out from competition, GB Olympians mingled with soldiers, sailors and airmen and women to thank them for their efforts, and share anecdotes about the UK's stunning success at London 2012.

All the athletes were unanimous in praising British forces' support. Rowing gold medallist Tom James, whose father Mike is a retired Army major, said: "They've done an amazing job, always professional

and polite. It's been great to see them helping out."

Cycling Olympian Jason Kenny commented: "Every time I went through the security gates they came across as professional, efficient and courteous. They really made me feel confident things were handled competently. A big vote of thanks."

Meanwhile social media buzzed with praise for the Armed Forces. Olympics TV anchorman Gary Lineker tweeted: "Special word for the great work done by our troops. Always a smile, a friendly word and a camera. Thanks all."

BBC sports presenter Clare Balding took to Twitter: "Gamesmakers, police and Armed Forces a big thank you for making the Games so special."

Cyclist Sir Chris Hoy tweeted: "To the volunteers, the Armed Forces, the police, the GB public, the organisers, the media, the weather, THANK YOU! What a show."

Royal Navy officer and gold medallist in the men's coxless four, Lieutenant Pete Reed, wrote: "Walking with my men to the GB house after-party. We have a lot to celebrate. Thank you champs, for all your messages and support."

Footballer David Beckham visited personnel from all three Services at the Olympic Park to see the work that went into keeping the Games safe and secure and thank them for their cheery efficiency.

Meeting troops from the Adjutant General's Corps, the Parachute Regiment, 5th Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland and 3rd Battalion The Royal Anglian Regiment, and posing for photos, Beckham told soldiers how much their work had meant to everyone involved.

Marathon runner Paula Radcliffe tweeted her own support: "Just to say the games makers, officials and helpers all over London have been the best and the nicest I have ever seen at five Olympics. Xx"

Many favourable comments were also left on the Armed Forces Facebook page.

Around 18,200 Service personnel supported the Olympics, providing a range of land, naval and air expertise at venues. Support included checking spectators on arrival, as well as ceremonial duties including flag-raising at the medal presentations, flag-bearing and taking part in 'team welcome ceremonies' and 'victory ceremonies'. **DP**

NORTHERN IRELAND

In 1994, months after IRA violence calmed down, the atmosphere remained tense. From a young officer's perspective, it was amazing going straight from training to operations. I did three tours and spent Millennium Eve stuck in an ops room in Armagh. Sometimes tours can be hard being away from home for so long but the atmosphere was really good because the CO created a fantastic team. During my last tour in 2003, my fiancée Andrea served in Iraq, which forced us to cancel our wedding. Luckily our vicar was very understanding so we got our deposit back. Andrea's deployment coincided with my tour, which meant we were separated for eight months. It felt romantic swapping emails at a point in life when separation felt like an adventure.

KOSOVO

In 1999, NATO went in to kick out the Serbs but what really sticks in my mind was seeing the bodies of an elderly couple executed on their own doorstep which was the first time I'd seen such an atrocity. To be part of the conflict in Kosovo was a remarkable experience. 3 PARA had just returned from Belize when we were warned off that we'd be needed in Kosovo. Three weeks later we were in Macedonia awaiting orders to go into Kosovo, and three days later we were in. The Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) thought NATO was there to support them but violence started to get out of hand. Our real challenge was proving our neutrality when we were there to support peace, yet we were too late to help that old couple. It made me so angry that people had abused the situation and it hardened us to the KLA. They lorded it around town thinking they were 'players' with NATO-backing, but that wasn't the case.



Picture: Jeremy Clifton-Gould

MY MEDALS

In an 18-year Army career, Major Russell Lewis from the Parachute Regiment has served all over the world and won eight medals including the Military Cross. Interview: Lorraine McBride

IRAQ

In 2004 it was a year after the invasion before the insurgency took hold so it wasn't one of our most brutal tours. On operations, good relationships are vital, and luckily I met a sergeant major that I chatted with easily over a brew, which really helped us both. In that situation, rank disappears and you grow a lot closer. You're a long way from home and if you overplay rank too much, you're going to be very lonely.

As a young officer, a company commander who'd served with the SAS taught me my most valuable lesson. He came up just as I was about to speak on the radio and gave me a phenomenal piece of advice which has stuck with me through my whole career.

His advice was simply: "be cool on the net!" (even better when said with a Bob

Marley accent – 'coo-ool on da net'). The net is slang for radio network. He reasoned that when you as commander speak on the radio, everyone can hear you. They listen not only to your words but also to your emotion and will read as much into your tone as to what you're saying. If you panic, then they will panic, so before you speak on the radio take a pause, think what you want to say and then 'be cool on the net'. It always calmed my heartbeat, making me think a little more clearly.

AFGHANISTAN

My Afghan tour in 2008 when I led 200 Paras has to be my favourite. I was even awarded the Military Cross for an air assault operation when a 40-strong enemy mob on the outskirts of Musa Qal'ah headed into town to cause havoc. Intelligence revealed

their location so a plan was hatched to conduct an air assault and insert 2 PARA right in the middle of the area to disrupt enemy action. It stands out as our best op and, within 13 hours of tip-off, we were in the back of a Chinook hitting the ground. We achieved the element of surprise at 2am and by dawn the enemy knew the writing was on the wall and melted away.

I was involved in more than 50 fire fights, but as Company Commander I'm responsible for everyone on the ground, all the heavy assets and the battle plan. That busyness means you don't have much capacity to worry about trivia. I came round to the view that a burden comes with command but also a wonderful clarity that you've got to get on with your job while all the other distractions get tuned out.

MILITARY CROSS

I was awarded my Military Cross for leadership and gallantry but my citation also singled out the rough conditions and my leadership in galvanising the company throughout the tour. To my mind, my MC represents the lads' incredible feats. Receiving my MC from Prince Charles, our regimental Colonel-in-Chief, was a special moment. I wrote a book about my Afghan tour after a chance meeting with a publisher at a party. I kept a journal during my tour and sat on it for a year before deciding to tell the story of my incredible company.

I noticed that many of members of the public showed amazing support for troops yet they only see a tiny amount of footage on the news. My view was that I could probably show readers the other 95 per cent of what happens.

Company Commander by Major Russell Lewis MC is out now, published by Virgin Books, £12.99.



By Surgeon
Commander Nick
Imm, a GP at
Navy Command HQ,
HMS *Excellent*.

SPORE POINT

FROM RINGWORM AND ATHLETE'S FOOT TO JOCK ITCH AND MOULDY TOENAILS, FUNGAL INFECTIONS ARE EASY TO TREAT

Hello from Whale Island in Portsmouth. It doesn't sound particularly pleasant but most of us have had a fungal infection at some point in our lives. They can affect us literally from top-to-toe.

Luckily, most of these conditions are annoying rather than life-threatening but they can still cause significant irritation and worry if they're not sorted out. Here are the most common fungal infections and how to go about getting rid of them:

■ **Ringworm** - it sounds pretty horrible but it's just a fungal infection of the skin which appears in rings. No worms involved, thankfully. Patches start small, are red in appearance, and then spread outwards, clearing from the middle. They can appear on the

body, arms or legs and are treated with an anti-fungal cream used regularly for a few weeks.

■ **Athlete's foot** - you don't have to be particularly athletic to catch this but it does tend to be passed on in warm, damp environments such as communal changing rooms. It thrives on hot, sweaty feet - especially affecting the skin between the fourth and fifth toes. To clear it you need to keep your feet dry, let your shoes dry out, and apply anti-fungal powder or cream. To avoid it, consider wearing flip-flops in changing areas and alternating your shoes to let them fully dry out.

■ **"Jock itch"** is a common name for a fungal

VITAL NUMBERS

THERE ARE PEOPLE OUT THERE READY TO HELP YOU

RN Benevolent Trust: Grants, advice and income supplements for veterans. Call 0239 2690112 or email rnbt@rnbt.org.uk.

RN Association: Comradeship for all serving and ex-Service members of the RN, RM, QARNNS, WRNS, Reserves, RFA and RNXS. royal-naval-association.co.uk

Royal Marines Benevolent Fund: Relieves hardship among serving and former Marines and dependents. royalmarines.charities@charity.vfree.com or call 02392 547201.

ABF The Soldiers Charity: Support to soldiers and veterans. www.soldierscharity.org or call 0845 241 4820.

RAF Benevolent Fund: Help for RAF personnel past and present. rafbf.org or call 0800 1692942.

Civil Service Benevolent Fund: Helps anyone who has worked for the Civil Service and their dependents. Advice about support and financial help. csbf.org.uk or call 0800 056 2424.

Army Welfare Service: HQ AWS has relocated to Upavon. Confidential support for soldiers and families. army.mod.uk/welfare-support/family/default.asp or call (UK) 01980 615975.

RAF Association (RAFA): Comradeship and care for current and former RAF members. rafa.org.uk/welfare.asp.

HIVE: Tri-Service information covering issues like education and health. 167 offices. hive.mod.uk.

Royal British Legion: Charity providing financial, social and emotional support to vets and serving, and dependents. www.britishlegion.org.uk or call 08457 725 725.

SSAFA Forces Help: Supports serving personnel, veterans and the families of both. Practical and financial assistance and emotional support. ssafa.org.uk or call 0845 1300 975.

Harassment, bullying or discrimination: JSP 763, The MOD Harassment Complaints Procedures, is a guide for Services and civilians. Navy: 023 9272 7331. Army: 94 391 Ext 7922 (01264 381 922). RAF: 95471 ext 7026. Civilians 0800 345 7772 (+441225 829572 from overseas) or email: PeopleServices@pppa.mod.uk.

Matters of conscience and whistleblowing under the Public Interest Disclosure Act. Call 0800 3457772. Select option four.

Service Personnel and Veterans Agency: Pay, pensions and personnel support for the Services and veterans, including the JPA system, and Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre: 0800 0853600: 0800 1692277 or veterans-uk.info

MOD Occupational Welfare Service: Confidential advice on work and personal issues. Call 0800 345 7047

Service Complaints Commissioner: To make a complaint or seek advice, contact: SCC@armedforcescomplaints.independent.gov.uk


Naval Personal & Family Service and Royal Marines Welfare: NPFS & RMW have three main offices in the UK, where the serving person's next of kin resides determines which office to contact.
Eastern area office - HMS Nelson - Tel: 023 92 722 712 - after hours 023 92 726 159.
Western area office - HMS Drake - Tel: 01752 555 041 - after hours 01752 555 220.
Northern area office - Helensburgh - Tel: 01436 672 798 - after hours 01436 674 321 (Ext 4005)
RM Welfare - 01752 836 395 (via duty officer, guardroom RM Stonehouse).

infection of the groin. It's especially common in people who tend to be very active and sweaty. It can also appear in overweight people in skin folds. With time, the skin can crack and weep. There is also a risk of picking up a secondary bacterial infection so you need to get on top of it. You should keep the area clean and dry and use an anti-fungal ointment from your medic or chemist.

■ If you have an odd looking toenail, it's possible that it could also be harbouring a fungal infection. These nails are often thickened, brittle and discoloured. To check, your doctor can send off a nail clipping to look for fungal spores. If they are present, you can decide whether or not to take a daily tablet to treat it. Because nails take so long to grow, you could be taking the medication for up to six months.

Usually, fungi give us minor infections which are unsightly rather than serious, but if you think you have one they're pretty easy to sort out. Recurrent fungal infections can be a sign of diabetes – another reason to have a check-up.

Stay healthy and I'll see you next month.

■ This is general advice only. If you have any medical concerns please see your medic or GP. 

SUDOKU

5				1			7	2
			2		6		5	
					3			
9		2				6	8	
	8						3	
	5	3				4		7
			5					
	6		3		4			
2	1			7				8

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9

7	5	3	1	8	9	2	4	6
8	2	6	4	7	5	9	3	1
1	4	9	2	3	6	5	8	7
3	1	5	8	9	4	7	6	2
2	6	8	7	1	3	4	9	5
9	7	4	5	6	2	8	1	3
4	9	1	3	5	7	6	2	8
5	8	2	6	4	1	3	7	9
6	3	7	9	2	8	1	5	4

Solution to the July 2012 puzzle

CHESS



Compiled by:
Carl Portman

They say the older you get the better you used to be. Well the 'old days' in the chess world championship were better than today. I used to love the acrimonious matches involving the likes of Kasparov, Karpov, Korchnoi and Short (he once referred to Kasparov as 'the rug' because of his hirsute back). Watching the latest offering between the 'nice' Anand and Gelfand was, frankly, boring. They were playing for big money yet the chess did not deserve such rewards in my opinion. Look at the Tour de France – those guys cycle thousands of kilometres for three weeks, up and down mountains and in all weathers and get frugal amounts of money in comparison to the chess players. There's still plenty of acrimony in cycling and it puts an interesting edge on proceedings. I vote for a bit more spice in the chess world! Psychology plays a big part in school so let's throw a few Ali-type comments about the opponent being 'a chump' in for good measure.

The chess problem this month is a classic. This was Ljubojevic-Browne from Amsterdam in 1972. It is black to



play and Browne played 1...f5 and only drew because after 2.Kb4 the white king is within the square of the pawn. How could black (to play) have won? This is a demonstration of the inner depths and innate beauty of chess.

Send your answers to me at carl.portman@hotmail.co.uk please. A book on the Lone Pine tournament of 1979 awaits one lucky winner.

The answer to July's problem was 1.Qd6+! Qxd6? (1...Kg8 is better but 2.Qxe6 fxe6 3.Rf-f7 Rb8 4.Rxg7+ Kf8 5.Rd-f7+ Ke8 6.Ra7 should win). 2.Rfxf7+ 1-0 2...Kg8 3.Rxg7+ Kf8 4.Rd-f7 mate. Winner to be announced. June's winner was Nigel Sheridan.

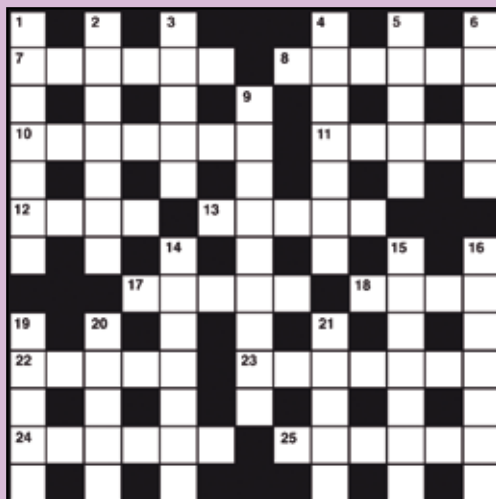
TOPICAL CROSSWORD

ACROSS

7. Wild drummer in 'The Muppets' (6)
8. Removal and examination of a sample of body tissue (6)
10. Members of the legal profession (7)
11. The reporter Marie Colvin was killed in this war-torn country in 2012 (5)
12. Passing mood of resentment or displeasure (4)
13. Celebrations to mark her Diamond Jubilee took place in 2012 (5)
17. Italian fashion city (5)
18. Columbus is the capital city of this US state (4)
22. British singer who won six Grammy awards at the 2012 ceremony (5)
23. Prairie wolves (7)
24. See 3 Down
25. Piece of music associated with the ice-skaters Torvill and Dean (6)

DOWN

1. And 2 Down. Hit BBC series in which Jessica Raine plays Jenny Lee (4,3,7)



2. See 1 Down
3. And 24 Across. Star of 'Gavin & Stacey' on television and 'One Man, Two Guvnors' on stage (5,6)
4. Kate, one of Britain's top movie stars (7)
5. Tall, pointed roof of a church (5)
6. Grape variety which is also called shiraz (5)
9. Statement intended to inspire confidence (9)

14. He presents football programmes on the BBC (7)
15. And 16 Down. US singer who died in 2012 (7,7)
16. See 15 Down
19. Long weapon used by a horseman (5)
20. Chelsea defender who was cleared in court in July of this year (5)
21. Mike, the controversial ex-heavyweight boxer (5)

SOLUTION (NO PEEKING)

- Across**
1. Call The 2. Midwife
 3. James 4. Winslet 5. Spire
 6. Syrah 9. Assurance
 14. Liner 15. Whitney
 16. Houston 19. Lance
 20. Terry 21. Tyson
- Down**
24. Corden 25. Bolero
 22. Adele 23. Coyotes
 13. Queen 17. Milan 18. Ohio
 10. Lawyers 11. Syria 12. Huff
 7. Animal 8. Biopsy

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Which soap opera is based in Weatherfield?

A. Hollyoaks

B. Coronation Street

C. Doctors

Send answers by email with your name, address and phone number to dmc-newsdesk@mod.uk by 17 September 2012. Include the phrase 'LEGOLAND' in the subject line.



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