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AN COSANTÓIR

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APRIL 2013

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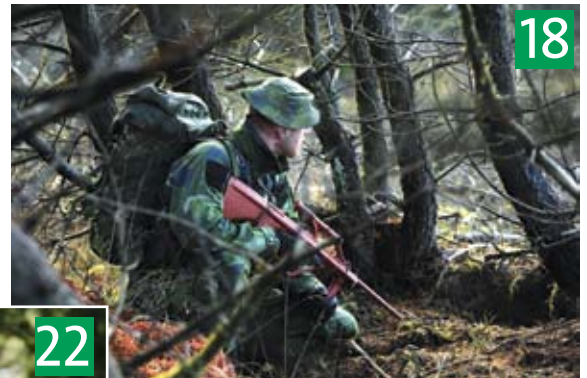
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Lt Gen Dermot Earley DSM

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With the Kind Permission of the Earley family a charity golf event will take place in the Curragh Golf Club on
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Front Cover

ESSC team with 106/107 Inf Bn in Lebanon. Photo By: Cpl Colum Lawlor

For more Defence Forces photographs, checkout: www.flickr.com/photos/dfmagazine

Hello and welcome to our April issue, with the months going by fast please keep us informed of any events or training you are doing. Our *On Parade* pages feature your photos – please keep them coming. *In Focus* has news from *IUNVA Post 30*, and we recently visited the latest *IMCC Militaria Fair* plus we have a great feature from Poland on their *Irish DF Exhibition*. Our Lebanon articles continue with how BSG keeps the Irish/Finnish Battalion on the road, we also have *Camp 6-52 & 6-50* by Wesley Bourke. In *Man Hunt*, Wesley follows the International Combat Tracking course that was recently ran by the Ord Sch, DFTC in conjunction with the EDA and Pencari. Our *Def-Tec* centre spread features the *Corps of Engineers* during their annual training exercises. In *Strategic Review* Paul O'Brien MA brings us up-to-date on the DF latest overseas mission – Mali. In *Reserve* features the 62 Res Inf Bn's Exercise 'Sugarloaf' penned by Cpl Conor Walls and photographed by Capt Peter Cumiskey. In *On Hallowed Ground* our *History* feature is about Arbour Hill Church and grounds by military historian Paul O'Brien MA. Our *Sport* pages bring you the latest news on the *In Door Athletics Championships* and *Rugby* match against the Royal Navy. Plus our other regular features – *World Strategic Picture*, *Tac-Aide*, *Gear Review*, *Noticeboard*, *Reviews* and *What I Do*.

Wayne Fitzgerald

Sgt Wayne Fitzgerald - Editor



BEST RECRUIT

Pictured on the 1st March 2013 at the Passing Out Parade of the 48th Recruit Platoon, 27th Inf Bn are (l/r): Fr Bob McCabe CF along with Best Recruit Mark Healy and his cousin Cpl Finnola Lafferty (formally of An Cosantóir). Well done to all the members of the platoon. Photo: Sgt Damian Faulkner (105 Sqn, Air Corps)

WITH THANKS

On the 19th March 2013 myself and Cpl Paul Millar presented a cheque for €1,000, from last year's An Cosantóir 10K road race to Lt Col Eddie Scanlon on behalf of the Defence Forces Benevolent Fund. Photo: Cpl Paul Millar (PR Branch)



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CAVALRY CLUB ▶

Pictured on the 21st February, 2013 are members of the Cavalry Club, who held its 68th AGM in the Col AT Lawlor Room in the former Plunkett Officer's Mess Curragh Camp. *Photo: Lt Damien O'Herlihy*



BARRACK RATS

This photo was taken in the Officer's Mess, McKee Bks at a recent Barrack Rats social club function, which is a club for RDF officers' past and present who served in or with a unit in Collins Bks, Dublin. Pictured (l/r): Lt Tom O'Connor, Capt John Keogh and Comdt John Fitzsimons all from the 62 Res Engr Coy, McKee Bks. This function was the last uniformed event for Comdt Fitzsimons who served 49-years in the Corps having joined in 1964. *Photo: Capt John Keogh (62 Res Engr Coy)* ▼



MILITARY MEDICAL CARE ▲

Pictured are UCC staff and Defence Forces students who are studying for a Diploma in Military Medical Care Programme in the School of Medicine, UCC. Standing: Class of 2013, Seated (l/r): Lt Col Anthony Corcoran (D MC), Col Barry Hanan (CAS SP, Air Corps), Prof George Shorten (Dean School of Medicine), Minister Sean Sherlock TD, Prof John Higgins (Head of College of Medicine & Health), Comm Mark Mellett (FOCNS), Col Jim Burns (D DFT&E). *Photo: Lorraine Crossan (School of Medicine, UCC)*

NEW DRIVING INSTRUCTORS ▼

The Driving Instrs Cse students and instructors are pictured, the course was held recently at TVMS, Tpt Gp DFTC. *Photo by: Pte Alan O'Brien*



OUTSTANDING STUDENT ▲

The Director of Infantry Award for outstanding student on the 33 Senior NCO Course. Pictured (l/r): Coy Sgt Mick Smyth, Comdt Sean Holly, 'Outstanding Student' Sgt John Killeen (DFTC), Col Eamon Caulfield (Director of Infantry & School Comdt, The Infantry School) and RSM Phil Hayden. *Photo: Sgt JJ Ryan (HQ DFTC)*

107 INF BN DONATES ▼

Members of the 107 Inf Bn on duty with UNIFIL in South Lebanon raised \$750 to help promote the work and raise awareness of IRVA (Irish Road Victims Association) based in Mullingar. Gathered at the World Day of Remembrance Tree planted in Belvedere House and Gardens, Bty Sgt Mick Devaney on leave from Lebanon handed over the funds to Donna Price (Chairperson IRVA) and RSM Noel O'Callaghan (Vice Chairperson IRVA), and Sgt Paddy Poynton (2 Arty Regt). *Photo: RSM Noel O'Callaghan*





ONE MEMBER HONORED ▲

At the February meeting of the Thomas Kent Branch ONE, a presentation was made to one of ONE's longest serving members, their branch Secretary Joe McCarthy. Joe has stepped down after many years of loyal service to the organisation, and thankfully is recovering well after major surgery, and we would all like to wish him well. Photo: Domhnall Mac Cárthaigh FS (PRO, SAC ONE)

ONE LEINSTER AREA COUNCIL 2013 ▼

Photo from the Leinster Area Council (LAC) of ONE, at their AGM, on the 24th February 2013. Were Issador Flemming handed over the chain-of-office to incoming chairman Jim Fay. Also pictured are the newly elected LAC members and delegates for 2013. Photo: John Whelan



CISM FUN RUN ▼

Photo shows Brig Gen Paul Fry (GOC AC) and members of the Air Corps who took part in the CISM Day run held on the 18 Feb 2013 in Baldonnell. Photo: Armn Jason Byrne (105 Sqn, Air Corps)



RECCE LEADS THE WAY ▲

Picture shows members of 2 Cav Sqn's Recce Course which ended on Friday 1st March 2013. Pictured are students and instructors, back row (l/r): Sgt Phelan (Instr), Tpr O'Connell, 2/Lt Humphreys, Cpl Moran, Pte Buckley, Sqn Sgt Caffrey (Instr). Front row (l/r): Tpr Lowry, Tpr Westwood, Lt Towell (Instr), Tpr Connolly and Lt Gowran, (Not present Cpl Scollard). Photo: Glen Phelan



MEDEVAC 112 ▲

Pictured on the ramp at UCH Galway on the 15 March is Air Corps AW139 '275', Callsign 'Medevac 112', who provide a great service. Photo: David McGrath



A Gathering of International Militaria Collectors

BY SGT WAYNE FITZGERALD PHOTOS BY SGT KARL BYRNE

On 23rd February, An Cosantóir visited the International Militaria Collectors Club (IMCC) Fair at The North Star Hotel, Amiens St., Dublin. The first of five fairs the IMCC hold every year. The North Star Hotel fairs have become well known on many a militaria collectors calendar, there is a nice warm atmosphere and it is easily accessible by Luas or bus and is across the street from Connolly train station. The fifth fair is held in Christ Church Old School in Gorey, Co. Wexford, and includes re-enactors displays and vehicles. The fair times are 10am-3pm Admission to the fairs is €4 (current members free).



The dates for 2013 are as follows:

The North Star Hotel, Amiens St. Dublin 1 - Saturdays 18th May, 17th August, 16th November. The Old School, Gorey, Co. Wexford - Saturday 29th June

The IMCC is a non-profit organisation founded in 1995 for the purpose of allowing collectors who want to learn more about militaria, avoid costly mistakes and gain access to new items for their collections. Joining the club entitles a member to free entry to all the fairs, a newsletter, advice and free advertising in the newsletter, as well as many other benefits. An annual membership costs €15.

For further info on the IMCC please contact: Eddie Wyer (Hon. Treasurer) 0863410159 or Mark Hayden (PRO) 0861602228 - info@internationalmilitariacollectorsclub.com, www.internationalmilitariacollectorsclub.com



IUNVA POST 30 GALWAY VISITS ÁRAS AN UACHTARÁIN

REPORT & PHOTOS BY JIM CASEY



On Friday 14th December 2012 members and families of Post 30 of the Irish United Nations Veterans Association (IUNVA) visited Áras an Uachtaráin. On arrival all the members were introduced to President Michael D Higgins. Post Chairman Liam Joyce presented a gift to the President on behalf of the Post. The president then posed separately with all the families and groups for photographs, his patience and composure were of the highest professional standard during the photo shoots, taking time to converse with all present.

We were then treated to a buffet meal and afterwards were given a guided tour and talk around Áras an Uachtaráin. An excellent day was had by all. The photos can be viewed by visiting Post 30 web site under Áras an Uachtaráin section - <http://iunvapost30.webs.com/>.

Our next assignment is a visit to Boston USA to march in St. Patrick's Day Parade, we are all really looking forward to this event.



POLISH EXHIBITION HONOURS IRISH DEFENCE FORCES

REPORT BY MS JUSTYNA MAZUREK-SCHRAMM
(VICE-CHAIRMAN IRISH CULTURE FOUNDATION)

The Irish Culture Foundation is a non-profit organisation in Poland that has promoted Irish culture in all its aspects since 2003. Our biggest project each year is organising St Patrick's Day celebrations. This year we organised events in eight cities (Warsaw, Kraków, Lublin, Zamość, Kalisz, Poznań, Gdańsk, Wrocław) with Irish music concerts, dancing workshops, Irish film festivals and events for children.

Many landmarks in Poznań, including the City Hall in Old Market Square, the Municipal Stadium, and Judges Tower at Lake Malta, were illuminated in green from the 15th-17th of March to send 'green greetings' to Ireland. The switching-on ceremony was attended by the Mayor of Poznań, the Irish Ambassador to Poland, the Irish Honorary Consul in Poznań, and the Foundation's vice-chairman.

One very special event organised was an exhibition dedicated to the Irish Defence Forces - a first in Poland - at the museum in Kalisz. The opening of the exhibition on March 13th was attended by local media, a representative of the Polish Army from the local barracks, a representative of Kalisz City Council, and many people interested in military history.

As a historian interested in the Irish Defence Forces I have a private collection of memorabilia, which I put at the museum's disposal. The exhibit referenced the history and activities of the Defence Forces through information panels and displays from my collection, which included: uniforms, cloth patches, publications (including a few An Cosantóirs) and books. The exhibits also included a combat uniform loaned to the museum by Comdt Padraic Kennedy of Military Archives, to whom the organisers wish to extend special thanks for all his help.

The exhibition will be open to the public until 31st of May 2013. During this period the Irish Culture Foundation will organise Irish history lessons in the museum for local high schools. For more info please visit: www.fki.home.pl or <http://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.54941993509071.1073741825.485156578183720&type=1>





EUROPE



The 76-year-old Argentinean cardinal, Archbishop Jorge Mario Bergoglio of Buenos Aires, was selected

as the new pope and head of the Roman Catholic Church by the cardinals' conclave in the Vatican.

As a gesture of goodwill in ongoing peace talks with Turkey the illegal Kurdistan Workers' Party released eight Turkish soldiers and officials it was holding hostage.

Latvia made a formal application to become the 18th member of the Euro Zone.

Vaclav Klaus, the outgoing president of the Czech Republic, was charged with treason by the upper house of parliament because of his wide-ranging judicial amnesty at the start of the year, which stopped several high-profile corruption prosecutions.

An Italian court sentenced the former prime minister, Silvio Berlusconi, to a year in jail for releasing details of a private telephone call recorded during investigations into a banking scandal.

A 10,000-tonne meteor disintegrated in the skies above Chelyabinsk, a Russian city near the border with Kazakhstan, releasing 500 kilotonnes of energy (equivalent to the yield of a large nuclear bomb), blowing out windows and injuring more than 1,000 people.

Africa

Sudan and South Sudan have agreed to restart the flow of oil after more than a year of disrupted supply following a disagreement between the two countries. South Sudan gets 98% of its revenue from oil.

A French hostage held in Mali has



been executed by 'al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb' (AQIM), Mauritania's ANI news agency has reported. The agency attributed the information to an AQIM spokesman. Six other French hostages are still being held.

THE MIDDLE EAST



One of the many rebel factions in Syria kidnapped 21 Filipino observers serving with UNDOF on the Golan Heights. The area is contested by Israel and Syria but has been comparatively stable since the 1970s. The observers were later released.

According to Human Rights Watch a recent string of missile attacks carried out by the Syrian government killed 141 people, including 71 children, in Aleppo. Meanwhile, an international conference on Syria held in Rome was attended by new US Secretary of State John Kerry.

ASIA

Xi Jinping was officially appointed as China's president by the National People's Congress.

Nearly 90 people were killed and more than 160 injured in a bombing in the city of Quetta, in western Pakistan. Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, a Sunni militant group, claimed responsibility.

One of four leaders of Cambodia's Khmer Rouge to have been charged with crimes against humanity, Ieng Sary, the regime's foreign minister, died during his trial at the age of 87.

In Karachi, Pakistan's commercial capital, a bomb killed at least 45 people in a mainly Shia area.

An armed conflict has broken out in the Malaysian province of Sabah. More than 200 Filipinos landed last month to enforce a claim on the province by the sultanate of Sulu in the southern Philippines, which ruled parts of Borneo for centuries. In response Malaysia launched

a raid on the group, but the clan members escaped.

After North Korea conducted a third nuclear test, the US has proposed a resolution to expand UN sanctions on the rogue state. North Korea threatened to scrap the armistice that ended the Korean War in 1953 and launch a nuclear attack. Meanwhile, Park Geun-hye was sworn in as South Korea's first female president.

The NATO coalition in the Afghanistan admitted there had been no drop in the number of Taliban attacks in 2012. It said it had made an "error" in its previous statement that the number had fallen. The Taliban claimed responsibility for an attack in eastern Afghanistan that killed 11 police officers and six others.

The International Atomic Energy Agency, the UN's nuclear watchdog, reported that Iran had begun installing advanced centrifuges for enriching uranium at its nuclear plant at Natanz.

THE AMERICAS

After a long battle with cancer Venezuela's outspoken leftist president for 14 years, Hugo Chávez, died. Nicolás Maduro was sworn in as the interim president.

A referendum was held on the Falkland Islands (known in Argentina as Las Islas Malvinas) on remaining under British rule. Of the 1,517 valid votes only three opted against the status quo. Argentina has dismissed the vote as irrelevant, since it considers the residents to be colonial settlers.



Raúl Castro began a new five-year term as Cuba's president. He announced it would be his last and unveiled his chosen successor as Miguel Díaz-Canel.

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KEEPING THE **SHOW** ON THE **ROAD**

BY WESLEY BOURKE PHOTOS CPL COLUM LAWLOR

The Battalion Support Group (BSG) is a small group that has a huge impact, consisting as it does of specialists without whom an overseas battalion simply wouldn't function: engineers, transport, military police, ordnance, CIS and medics.

TRANSPORT PLATOON

We tend to think in terms of personnel when speaking about our overseas battalions but as modern military forces they depend heavily on all sorts of vehicles. Our current battalion in Lebanon is equipped with a fleet of 105 vehicles, including 31 Mowag APCs and CRVs, four LTAVs, and several armoured Nissans.

Transport Platoon, with 24 fitters and drivers divided between two sections, Motor Transport and Workshops, literally keeps the battalion on the road.

"Transport Platoon is responsible for all the battalion's food and water resupply, heavy movement, and vehicle maintenance," explained Lt Kieran McKewon (2/ic Tpt Pl). "In the workshops we do preventative maintenance, vehicle inspections, heavy-duty maintenance and unscheduled maintenance."

During a single tour a battalion will go through, on average, 1,500,000 litres of water, so it is unsurprising that one of the most vital resupply missions is for water and is carried out on a daily basis. Water truck drivers, such as Pte Robbie Bannon, who affectionately call their big 8x8 water truck 'the donkey', have to bring water into camp for the engineers to purify it before it is distributed to the battalion's two OPs, and a local hospital and prison.

To keep the fleet on the road Fitter Sgt Mark Greeny has a team

of three corporals and ten privates, who are rotated around the workshops to build up their experience and skillset. Workshops comprise the heavy section, light section, and the tyre bay. "By the time 106 Inf Bn were deployed the Mowags had been out here a year, which meant the maintenance requirements were going up," said Sgt Greeny. "At one point we were operating out of two camps, both in terms of driving and maintenance."

Everyone in Transport Platoon is a driver and when the move came from Camp 6-5 (Shamrock) to Camp 2-45 it was up to them to lift and shift everything, from the dining complex to the last nut and bolt. At the same time they also had to keep the battalion fully operational.

"We had to lift and move 250 containers and 60-plus accommodation units. The dining complex alone required 20 containers," Mark said. "At one point we were working 24/7 and there was great pride in Transport Platoon after it was all done."

A positive aspect of the move was that the fitters got to design and build their own workshops. For a maintenance crew this is the equivalent of someone designing and building their own home, and they treat it as such.

In the transport stores there are over €3 million worth of parts and CQMS Ben Connaughton and Cpl John Grant must account for everything. If anything, from an engine to a bolt, gets shipped from



Ireland it has to go to them first before it goes out on the floor.

Breaking down far away from camp is something that no driver wants to happen. “When large convoys leave camp, such as to Beirut, a fitter travels with them,” Lt McKewon told us. “If there’s a problem the fitter can’t solve we have a recovery team with an armoured 8x8 MAN ‘Beast’ on standby 24/7.”

During 106 Inf Bn’s tour of duty the team carried out 44 vehicle recoveries. These included helping out several other contingents that do not have a heavy-vehicle recovery capability. Two such incidents involved a Malaysian APC that had overturned, injuring several personnel, and a Finnish Pasi APC that broke down near a minefield.

The real skill in recovery is the individual operator’s ability to assess how to recover the vehicle while ensuring no further damage is done to the vehicle or injury to personnel. Lt McKewon explained that rank doesn’t come into it when operating the Beast. “If you have the course done you are in charge,” he said. “I went out one of the times we helped the Malaysians and on that occasion Pte Dan Foley was in charge as he had the advanced course done and we were operating in a local village with a lot of people gathered around the scene, including members of the LAF.”

“I had to explain to a Malaysian major at the scene that it was ok; that Dan was in charge,” Lt McKewon recalled with a chuckle. “Later, we received a letter from the Malaysian battalion com-

mander thanking us for the assistance, which was great for the guys. The skillset they have is phenomenal.”

ENGINEERING PLATOON

Another small unit with a big impact is Engineering Platoon. They have many responsibilities including camp construction and maintenance, water purification, and engineer specialist search and clearance (ESSC).

The running of Camp 245 is a 24/7 job and the platoon’s main priorities are water and power. Eng Pl has to put the millions of litres that Tpt Pl brings in through the water purification system, providing clean water for drinking and ablutions.

The platoon is also responsible for the generators, which are kept running 24/7. Their regular purr is a good indicator that the air conditioning system in your room will keep you warm in the winter and cool in the summer. “One of the big challenges for us with 107 Inf Bn is making Camp 245 a bit more comfortable,” said Capt Tom McNally. “It wasn’t the smoothest ride down here from Camp 6-5 for the accommodation units and many of them will need to be waterproofed. There are a few other things we have to do around the camp as well, such as street lighting: every little bit helps.”

Eng Pl’s ESSC teams, trained to detect mines, IEDs, and UXO, all of which are an ever-present danger in South Lebanon, are always on



standby and get called out regularly. On one occasion an ESSC team was called out to accompany Tpt Pl personnel to the recovery of a Finnish APC that had broken down near a minefield. The ESSC team ensured the area was safe before the recovery operation began.

A first for the Engineer Corps is the deployment of a fire-tender overseas. Camp 245 contains the reserve fuel for Sector West and it is a requirement that a fire crew must be available at all times.

"Engineer personnel are trained in fire fighting, the use of BA (breathing apparatus), and dealing with RTAs (road traffic accidents)," Capt McNally told us. "For us it is an opportunity to deploy more assets and skillsets overseas. We are currently looking at providing a service beyond the camp, to UNIFIL and the local community. RTAs are, unfortunately, always a danger overseas and all our crews are highly trained to respond to such incidents. We are also looking at the possibility of providing a fire service to the immediate local population if it is a case that we are closer to the scene than the local fire service."

MEDICAL DETACHMENT

Camp 245 has a Level 1 hospital with eight beds, two soft-skinned ambulances and one armoured ambulance. In addition to their duties in camp the Medical Detachment provides a medical team, consisting of a doctor, two paramedics, and four ambulance-skilled medics to accompany every patrol and convoy. There is also a medic and ambulance permanently based at OP 6-52.

"This is a busy station," said Comdt Maksymilian Karpala, "and it

is also the first time we have sent only one doctor with a battalion. For more serious cases there is a Level 2 hospital in Naqoura. In case of a casevac there is a helicopter permanently on five minute's notice to move in Naqoura, with a flight time of 15 minutes."

"Most of the ailments patients come in with are colds, flus and sports injuries," Sgt John Collins told us, "but a big thing for us to look out for over here is an outbreak of gastric problems. To prevent this, the water is checked very regularly: this is extremely important. There are also random hygiene spot-checks around camp, especially of the ablution units and dining complex."

Everyone overseas has left family behind but in the Medical Detachment we came across one unusual case in Cpl Brigit MacCormac whose two babies, Molly (10 months) and Erin (22 months), are at home with her husband Ken, a corporal with the engineers in Collins Bks, Cork. "Of course, it's not easy," Brigit told us, "but you are so busy on the form-up and the first few weeks here that you can't let it bother you. We have great support at home, and I have two leave blocs during the trip so I'll get to see them then."

CIS DETACHMENT

In all walks of life today communications play a fundamental and vital role. This is no more so than in the case of our military units operating overseas, which means that the CIS Detachment plays a crucial role. A lot of the detachment's work is classified but the signs of their presence are everywhere, with masts, computers and servers all around the camp and the Ops, and aerials protruding



B COY



Every mission overseas consists of a mixture of first-timers and those that may have several trips under their belts. It is those seasoned and experienced privates, NCOs, and officers that allow a unit to hit the ground running. In many cases they know the land, the people, and the mission. First-timers look to them for guidance, reassurance, and leadership. Coy Sgt Tony Grehan is one such experienced peacekeeper. Arriving in South Lebanon with 107 Inf Bn he was embarking on his seventeenth overseas tour of duty and his thirteenth with UNIFIL. His other tours were in Liberia (twice), Kosovo and ISAF HQ in Afghanistan.

"I've seen phenomenal changes over the years," said Coy Sgt Grehan. "I first came to South Lebanon as a corporal with 50 Inf Bn in 1980. Back then it was foot patrols and checkpoints where you were face-to-face with the locals, many of whom were in armed militias."

At that time Lebanon was in the grip of civil war and it was not uncommon for UNIFIL's troops to get caught up in the fighting. "There were moments over years when it was very scary," Tony recalled, "with shelling, gunfire and IEDs. Over the years I've experienced it all. When 155mm heavy artillery shells land close to your 30sq-metre post you just pray you'll make it out alive."

B Coy is a mechanised company comprising 111 peacekeepers with 24 Mowags. The company conduct regular patrols, day and night, throughout their AO. "Our job has changed over the years," Tony says. "The civil war is over but the current security situation has brought new challenges for us. One thing I have long known about South Lebanon is that it is very volatile; the slightest thing can escalate into a full blown incident. Part of my job here is to use my long experience of UNIFIL and South Lebanon to assist my colleagues, superiors and subordinates, as best I can. We came over with 111 in our company and that's the way we want to go home." ■

from buildings and vehicles alike.

"At any one time we have to have secure communications with our two OPs, and any patrols or convoys that are out," explained Lt Brian Thornton. "To provide us with situational awareness of everyone outside of camp every vehicle is equipped with VHF and HF. The Tactical Battlefield Management System then allows us to see where everyone is."

Secure satellite and HF rear-links provide Operations in DFHQ with a constant comms link to our battalion in South Lebanon. Within the camp the CIS team provides IT solutions including intranet, internet, welfare phones, and IT for offices.

MP DETACHMENT

The MP Detachment in Camp 245 is staffed with both Irish and Finnish MPs. Both nationalities have their own contingent responsibilities but generally they are there to police all personnel operating within the battalion AO.

"We have the same roles as at home," Sgt Pat Balfe explained to us: "enforcing discipline, investigation of serious crime, and any other tasking handed down to us by the battalion commander. We also enforce the force protection policy, which means that anybody leaving camp must have the right kit with them. All SOPs within camp are also enforced through things like speed checks and documentation checks."

Another responsibility of the MPs is baggage search during rotations. "We check people going home for contraband or for dangerous goods such as gas canisters or sharp objects," Sgt Balfe said. "You'd be surprised what guys buy in the local shops and think they can bring home." ■



RECCE

COY

BY WESLEY BOURKE
PHOTOS CPL COLUM LAWLOR



Recce Coy is considered by many to carry out a special forces role for our overseas battalions. It consists of gunners, troopers and infantrymen, all of whom are reconnaissance trained. Organised with cavalry, Javelin, and heavy mortar platoons, Recce Coy provides an ISTAR (intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition, and reconnaissance) package and heavy fire-support capability for the battalion commander.

Recce Coy's role is somewhat different to that of A and B Coys. Equipped with Mowag close-reconnaissance vehicles (CRVs), light armoured tactical vehicles (LTAVs), Javelin anti-tank missile systems, and 120mm heavy mortars, Recce Coy carries out reconnaissance patrols to establish safe routes for patrols and convoys. In addition, at any one time there are two teams in Camp 2-45 on QRT (quick reaction time) standby. "The teams operate on two different QRT levels," Sgt Trevor MacGarren told us. "The team on QRT 1 have 15 minutes notice to grab their kit and get out the gate. The QRT 2 team have 30 minutes to move. If QRT 1 is called out QRT 2 automatically steps up to QRT1. We could be called out to anything from a road traffic accident to a major incident. For example, the Ghanaians recently came across a UXO and we were called in to secure the area until the IED disposal team arrived."

Recce Coy was also tasked with manning and securing Camp 2-45 while the rest of the battalion moved across.

Personnel in Recce Coy are trained to do each other's jobs and with their recce and corps skills are as comfortable acting as vehicle crew or dismounts. LTAV driver Cpl Noel Henderson told us: "I'm qualified on the LTAV as a driver, gunner, and signals operator and I'm a 120mm fire-support team commander with the Artillery Corps at home. The LTAV is a great piece of kit. You feel very well protected in it with no fear of mines or small arms. It is a good off-road vehicle and handles the terrain very well. It's tight inside but comfortable."

Regarding the Javelin, Lt Eoin Nolan, who is on his first trip overseas, said: "The Javelin is an excellent weapon. Its great firepower and top-of-the-range optics system, make it ideal for fire-support and reconnaissance. For me this was a great opportunity to be able to deploy overseas with the Javelin Platoon and also to get to command a patrol. It really gets you focused." ■

Posts 6-52 and 6-50

BY WESLEY BOURKE PHOTOS CPL COLUM LAWLOR

Irish/Finn Batt is responsible for two OPs along the Blue Line. Post 6-52, manned by A Coy, is close to the villages of Maroun al-Ras and Bint Jubayl, and Post 6-50, manned by B Coy, is near Yarun. Both posts are heavily fortified with bunkers and reinforced walls, and watchtowers allow for a 360° view of the surrounding area.

As always in South Lebanon, things can get a bit surreal. The posts are separated from the Blue Line and the Technical Fence by minefields, with Israeli OPs beyond more minefields on the other side; and in the middle of it all we watched as a local goatherd went about his business as if nothing was out of the ordinary.

Each post is of platoon strength, equipped with Mowag APCs to conduct patrols. Of the two posts 6-50 is slightly more isolated and has a helicopter pad for resupply or casevac if the post gets cut off. Personnel from the two OPs are responsible for monitoring the Blue Line and conducting framework patrols. Generally, the platoons are rotated by their company every eight weeks.

"It's great to operate as a platoon away from the main battalion" says Lt Kieran Monahan, (4 Pl, B Coy). "Once you settle into your routine the two months pass quick enough. When not patrolling we have an excellent gym here, and if the guys want to go out for a run we put security out with them. We also do little things like running a 'movie night' to keep morale up."

From both posts you can watch the IDF patrolling their side of the Blue Line. "When you are on the tower you can see the Israelis watching us," Pte John Paul Stevens (4 Pl) told us. "They monitor our patrols and we monitor theirs. Both sides also look out for hunters who sometimes try to cross the Blue Line. In the evening the Israelis are often out smoothing the sand on their side of the fence with rakes so that they can check the next day it to see if anyone crossed over during the night."

"Our job here is the same as back in Camp 2-45," Pl Sgt Joni Kuusiah (3 Pl, A Coy) told us as he supervised his men, who were gearing up to go on patrol from Post 6-50. "The only difference here is we are right on top of the Israeli border. At times you can feel a bit enclosed but we make the best of it. Each platoon adds a bit more to the facilities to make life that little more comfortable." ■



Man HUNT

BY WESLEY BOURKE PHOTOS BY CPL COLUM LAWLOR

"There is no hunting like the hunting of man, and those who have hunted armed men long enough and liked it, never care for anything else thereafter."

Ernest Hemingway

Picture yourself as an insurgent who has just set an IED (improvised explosive device) in the path of a UN patrol. You have been planning this for days. Now, sitting back up the hill with a command wire in your hand you wait. The IED is well concealed and once it goes off it will cut through any armoured vehicle.

But...something's wrong! The lead vehicle has stopped 150m up the road and the driver is pointing at the roadside. Unknown to you the driver spotted a 'sign'. Off-coloured clay had encouraged the driver to stop and investigate. Whatever has happened you know your plans have been foiled and there's nothing left but to run. However, shortly afterwards a combat tracker team is on your trail.

Thankfully, this was only part of an international Counter-IED (C-IED) exercise scenario in the Slieve Blooms. C-IED techniques are now being taught to all members of the Defence Forces serving at home and overseas. In addition, following a Defence Forces' C-IED contribution to the ISAF mission in Afghanistan, we became active members of the European Defence Agency's (EDA) C-IED project team.

A document by Lt Col Ray Lane, entitled 'Guidelines for Developing a National C-IED Capability', set the C-IED agenda for the EDA for the next five years. This document listed the core elements of C-IED and recommended that train-the-trainer courses in the areas of ground-sign awareness and combat tracking be undertaken.

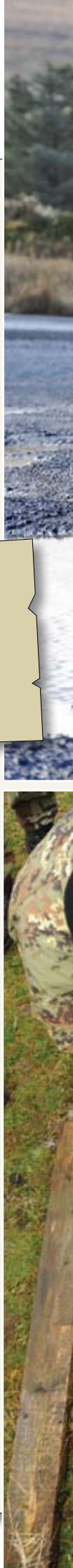
In 2011 the EDA contracted Pencari, specialists in C-IED, to run a ground-sign awareness course in the Ordnance School, DFTC, for member states of the EU. The course

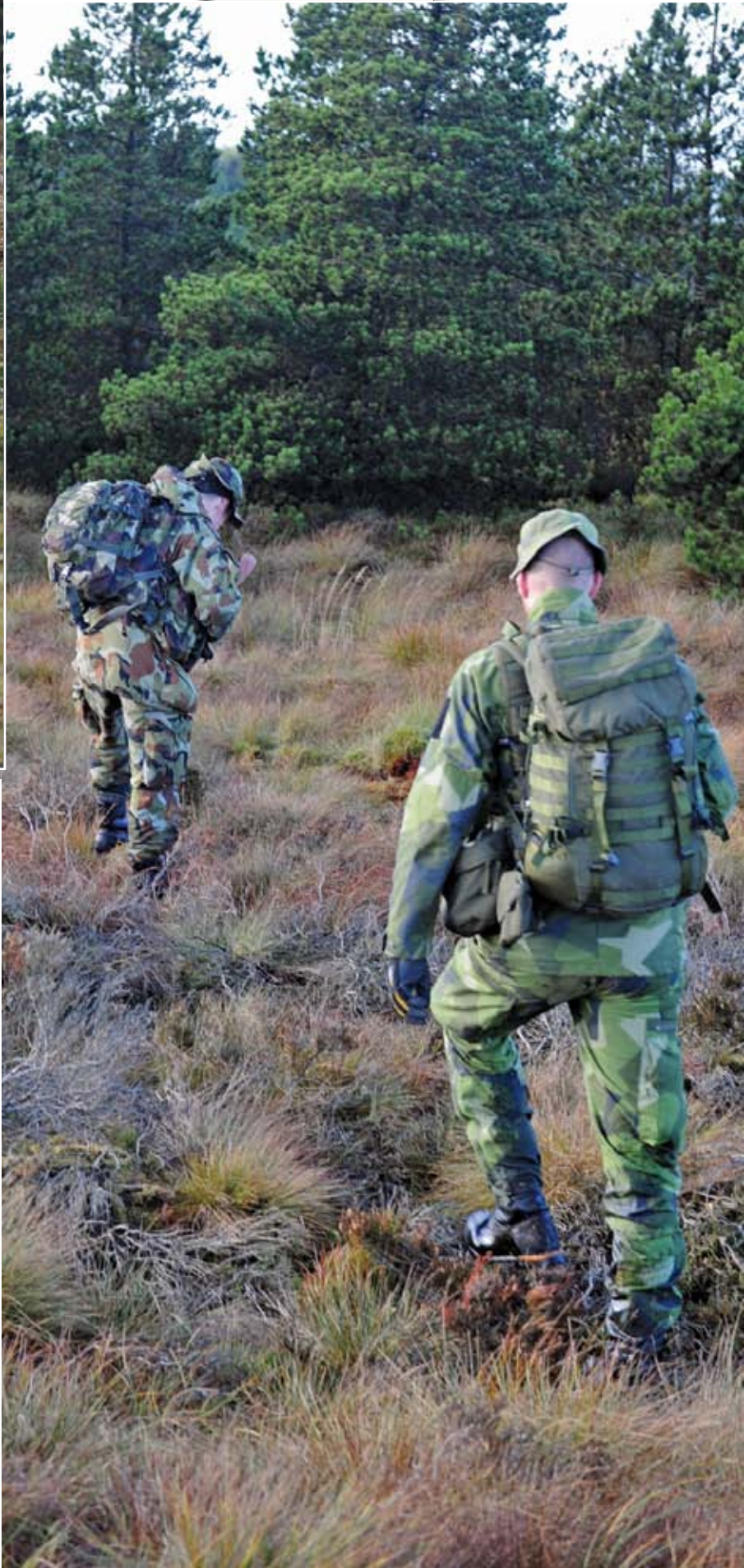
taught students how to read 'sign', which can be defined as any change to the natural environment made by a human, animal, or machine: a boot-print or Mars Bar wrapper, for example. This is a very simple but highly effective skill that allows personnel to spot potential IEDs and assist investigators in 'attacking the network'.

Ground-sign awareness training for troops serving with ISAF is estimated to have improved its personnel's capability to recognise an IED by up to 80%. Indeed, ground-sign awareness training across the EU has proved so successful that the EDA and Pencari were back last November, this time to bring C-IED instructors to the next level: combat tracking.

"Combat tracking has been identified as a key capability, not just in helping to identify where IEDs have been placed but also in gathering intelligence on who is placing the devices and where they come from," Jim Blackburn, EDA Engagement and Project Officer for C-IED, told us. "This allows our soldiers to follow up and prevent future attacks by tracking insurgents and taking them out of the picture."

Techniques learned on this course will enable personnel to aggressively exploit information to pursue and apprehend their quarry. Students learn in a progressive manner, starting with how to track as an individual before moving on to learn how to track as a member of a tracker team. They learn booby trap indicator recognition; how to identify, interpret and follow a track; tracker team formations; immediate action drills; reacquiring a







track that is temporarily lost; recognition of common counter-tracking techniques; and determining the age of a track.

The combat tracker works as part of the combined C-IED mechanism. "Combat tracking is part of the holistic approach in 'attacking the network,'" explained Pencari director Dean Williams. "On the last course we taught personnel how to read 'sign' to spot potential IEDs. Now they will learn how to track the insurgent by using 'sign'."

While it might appear difficult to track someone who may have planted an IED several days before, that is not necessarily the case. Depending on the type of IED, the person who set it may have had to remain in the area to set off the device by means of a command wire or to set a timer. So, often when 'sign' is picked up the target may not be that far away. Naturally, there is no guarantee that a tracker will catch the insurgent each time but as Dean explained, "You are always building up a bigger intelligence profile. Each 'sign' the tracker finds, each piece of an IED, all adds to a profile."

A lot of common sense is used in reading 'sign'. In one simple exercise trackers were asked to analyse the 'sign' they found. Bits of broken grass and boot-prints found in one location indicated the direction of flight. In another area the students found a piece of red wire, tea and coffee sachets, and disinfectant cream. When asked for his analysis, one of the students told Dean, "It looks some sort of a layup area where the insurgents were making tea and coffee while constructing an IED. One of them may have cut themselves in the process, hence the cream."

Of course it's not always that easy. Trackers can be faced with a number of obstacles that can put them off the track, like a 'foul sign' for example. This is where the track passes through a congested area such as a market place or a cattle crossing. "In such cases the trackers learn to look

out for key 'sign'," said Dean. "This could be something as specific as the particular pitch of a boot. Armed with this, an experienced tracker faced with a congested area can often jump ahead and pick up the track on the far side."

Tracking in a natural environment is one thing but what about an urban area? Away from areas where targets can be tracked by broken blades of grass and boot-prints on soft ground, the challenges are different but not unsurpassable for the trained tracker. Because urban areas can be full of 'foul sign' caused by vehicles, concrete pavements, and people, trackers often rely on 'track traps'. These could be areas where windblown dust and dirt accumulate and allow for 'sign' to be left.

In built-up areas there are also a lot of people the tracker can question as to what, and who, they have seen.

Dean told us, "When students complete the urban phase their confidence goes way up and when they go back to a rural scenario they tend to fly along."

The natural progression from ground-sign awareness and combat tracking is advanced situational awareness training (ASAT). All people, events and vehicles give off certain signals when they are measured against context, relevance and the societal baseline. ASAT identifies these signals as anomalies.

ASAT, which has been successfully introduced into ISAF, is a scientifically-validated and battlefield-tested training programme that allows individuals to cognitively make sense of highly complex situations. It is an experientially-based, predictive, tactical problem-solving system that improves environmental awareness. It is hoped that in 2013 a train-the-trainer ASAT course will be run in the Ordnance School.

The Ordnance Corps has also submitted a 'food for thought' proposal on the future of C-IED up to 2018 to the EDA. ■

Vox Pop

The Students' View



Ranger X, ARW

"This was an excellent course. The instructors from Pencari were brilliant. The wealth of knowledge and experience they have is phenomenal, and the way they put across their lessons was very professional. The course material is very beneficial to the unit and the Defence Forces. While being able to read 'sign' to prevent IED casualties is of invaluable benefit, the ability to carry out a follow-up mission to track your opponent is also a huge asset."



Sgt John Doyle, 27 Inf Bn

"As a C-IED instructor I found this a very good course because it really makes you look at and analyse areas where you operate. For example, I can look at an area and see the way it should look. Then if I come back to the same area again and things have been moved around or something is out of place I know something is wrong. And now combat tracking is bringing us to the next level."



WO Robert Wagensteiner, Engineer School, Austrian Armed Forces

"I did the ground-sign awareness course here in Ireland last year. This was an excellent course as it is the missing piece in the C-IED puzzle in terms of 'attacking the network'. At present Austria does not have combat trackers but from what I have learned over the last two courses here I will be advising that we implement and use these valuable tools; and not just to specialists like engineers but to all our soldiers."



Maj Alessio Apkella, Combat Engineer HQ, Italian Army

"We are currently implementing ground-sign awareness training using the templates that we learned on the course here last year. At some point we may develop combat trackers but first we need to teach our soldiers 'sign'. These courses are of huge benefit in allowing us access to the latest C-IED techniques."



CORPS OF ENGINEERS TRAINING

BY WESLEY BOURKE

PHOTOS BY ARMN NEVILLE COUGHLAN



The Corps of Engineers (CoE) are a Combat Support element. They are probably one of the most diverse and versatile Corps in the Defence Forces. Their ranks are full of electricians, plumbers, carpenters, fitters, mechanical engineers, construction engineers, environmental engineers just to name a few. All personnel PDF and RDF are trained in Combat Engineering. At home and overseas their contribution is invaluable. Fire-fighters, Engineer Specialist Search and Clearance (ESSC) teams nationwide, bridge building, watermanship, water purification, demolition, and mine clearance and just a few of the specialist skills within the Corps of Engineers.



To exercise such a varied skill set the Corps has adopted a model whereby units annually conduct two ESSC exercises (spring & autumn), a PDF Corps Concentration and an RDF Corps Concentration. Each iteration has varied in its focus and has resulted in very tangible improvements in the Corps deployability and effectiveness. These exercises also serve to benchmark current capabilities, training and equipment and this in turn drives future activities and equipment procurement.

One such ESSC exercise took place in Dundalk this May. Overseas our personnel face all sorts of unseen threats from mines, UXO's (Unexploded Ordnance), and IED's (Improvised Explosive Device). At home IED's are still a considerable threat from dissident movements. To find and isolate such devices the Defence Forces employ ESSC teams.

At home the Corps of Engineers have seven ESSC teams; all of which are ready to be deployed at short notice. There is also an ESSC team deployed with 107 Inf Bn in Lebanon. ESSC teams are primarily made up of technicians; such as carpenters, electricians and plumbers. Their skills are invaluable to the team's success.

Continuous training is vital for these teams. They are exercised and certified at least twice a year. At a recent exercise in Dundalk the ESSC teams were presented with a real life scenario. A Northern Irish Peace Process meeting is due to be held in Dundalk. An Garda Síochána has requested the Defence Forces to carry out searches of the surrounding area. In response the Corps of Engineers have deployed an ESSC Group which consists of three teams. Working with the Group is an Ordnance IED Disposal (IEDD) team.

The scenarios presented to the teams tested them in three main areas.

Offensive Searches: this is where the teams go out taking the initiative and search an area. This could be for weapons, money, or IED's.

Defensive Search: this is where there is a VIP visit planned for example. Searches are carried out in advance of that visit searching in case something has been planted in advance of the visit.

High Risk Incident Searches: a live device or suspected device has been found and actions have to be taken. There is a high threat to the personnel involved. Typically this would involve a live IED or mine for example. The ESSC teams must clear a safe route in order for the IEDD team to deal with the device.

In 2012 the ESSC teams were equipped with new Scania P 280 trucks. This is a 4x2 9-litre turbo-charge diesel engine. The truck is designed and fitted out to carry a wide variety of specialist search equipment required to enable the Teams to conduct ESSC operations. ■



At
the



GATES OF HELL

BY PAUL O'BRIEN MA PHOTOS WHERE CREDITED

Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) teach mounted infantry tactics to soldiers from the Malian Army in Timbuktu, Mali. (Staff Sgt Edward Braly, USAF)

The old saying 'from here to Timbuktu' was used to invoke images of exotic, far-distant lands. However, in recent months the African country of Mali, where the city of Timbuktu is located, has made headlines throughout the world. Two months ago France began military operations in the country at the behest of the Malian government. This intervention, codenamed 'Operation Serval', is aimed at halting fighting and restoring government authority in the conflict-torn north of the country.

Mali, a former French colony, and the world's 24th largest country at 480,000 sq miles, is a landlocked nation in West Africa comprising eight regions, and is comparable in size to South Africa. The country's northern border reaches deep into the inhospitable Sahara Desert and its north-eastern border lies in the mountainous terrain of the Adrar des Ifoghas.

The south of the country, where the majority of its inhabitants reside, is tropical and dominated by the Niger and Senegal rivers.

In January 2012, a Tuareg rebellion in northern Mali led to a period of instability in the region. The chaotic situation provided an opportunity for extremist Islamic groups, including Ansar Dine and Al-Qaeda, to turn on the Tuaregs and seize control, with the expressed aim

of implementing strict Islamic Sharia law in Mali.

According to UN estimates, thousands of people subsequently fled south to avoid the fighting. The situation caused Western powers to become increasingly concerned that Mali may be used as a staging area for terrorist attacks throughout the world.

Using the country's capital, Bamako, as a forward operating base, French forces deployed 2,500 troops to bolster the Malian army. They are also working with 3,000 West African troops who are participating in a UN-approved intervention mission.

Responding to the French intervention Oumar Ould Hamaha, a spokesman for MUJWA (Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa), which has imposed Sharia law in the north of the country, said: "France has opened the gates of hell ... it has fallen into a trap much more dangerous than Iraq, Afghanistan or Somalia."

This threat did not deter the French and in January a column of French Foreign Legion armoured vehicles moved into position at Niono, 190 miles from Bamako. At the same time Malian troops secured an area near the Mauritanian border. This was achieved with French air support, in the form of four Mirage 2000D and four Rafale fighter jets, which bombed and strafed enemy positions, forcing them to fall back.



A French military armoured vehicle is unloaded from a British C17 plane after it landed at Bamako airport, Mali. (AP Photo/SAC Dek Taylor, MOD)



Defence Forces personnel in pre Mali training in the Curragh. (Cpl Colum Lawlor, DF Photographer, PR Branch)



However, in the nearby town of Diabaly Islamic fighters fought running street battles with French and Malian troops. In an attempt to cut off and encircle the insurgents, French paratroopers were dropped into towns that were considered strategically important. Helicopter gunships provided air support and after a number of gun battles and strategic air strikes, the militants were forced to fall back and vacate their positions.

At the time of writing, fighting is currently taking place in the area along the Algerian border where insurgents have adopted guerrilla tactics and are using the mountainous regions of the Adrar des Ifoghas as their area of operations. In spite of some initial successes, French military sources acknowledged that they faced a long fight against well-equipped and determined militants and appear to be concerned that France may become bogged down in a war of attrition.

However, according to the French defence minister, Jean-Yves Le Drian, the French government is determined to shatter any hold that extremists may have on Mali and is working closely with the United States, which has operated a counter-terrorism training programme in the region.

France's call for international support has been answered by a number of countries who have offered logistical and training support. Nigeria will be sending 900 troops as part of the 3,300-strong West African force and others will soon follow suit. The UK has already provided two C-17 transport aircraft and the Pentagon is contributing transport aircraft, air refuelling tankers and on-the-ground intelligence. Belgium is contributing transport aircraft and a medevac helicopter. Canada, Germany and Denmark are also contributing transport aircraft.

In Ireland Minister for Defence Alan Shatter has been granted permission by the government to contribute members of the Defence Forces to a planned EU training mission in Mali.

Working with members of the British Army in a combined training contingent, they will be responsible for providing Malian armed forces with military training and advice, according to an official EU press release.

In relation to the operation, Minister Shatter said: "Alongside standard infantry training, training will also be provided in international humanitarian law, the protection of civilians and human rights."

The proposed EU training mission to Mali will be deployed in four teams, each comprising 24 trainers. It is expected that with the inclusion of force protection and administrative elements the overall deployment will consist of an estimated 500 personnel.

Defence Forces personnel deploying to Mali will know they face tough challenges, but their experience and training will contribute greatly to what many believe is going to be a very difficult mission. ■

About the author: Paul O'Brien MA is an Irish historian, author and regular contributor to An Cosantóir. He has published four books on 1916: 'Blood on the Streets: 1916 and the Battle for Mount Street Bridge', 'Uncommon Valour: 1916 and the Battle for the South Dublin Union', 'Crossfire: The Battle of the Four Courts 1916' and 'Field Of Fire: The Battle Of Ashbourne 1916'. His fifth book 'Shootout: The Battle for St Stephen's Green 1916' is due out shortly.

www.paulobrienaauthor.ie

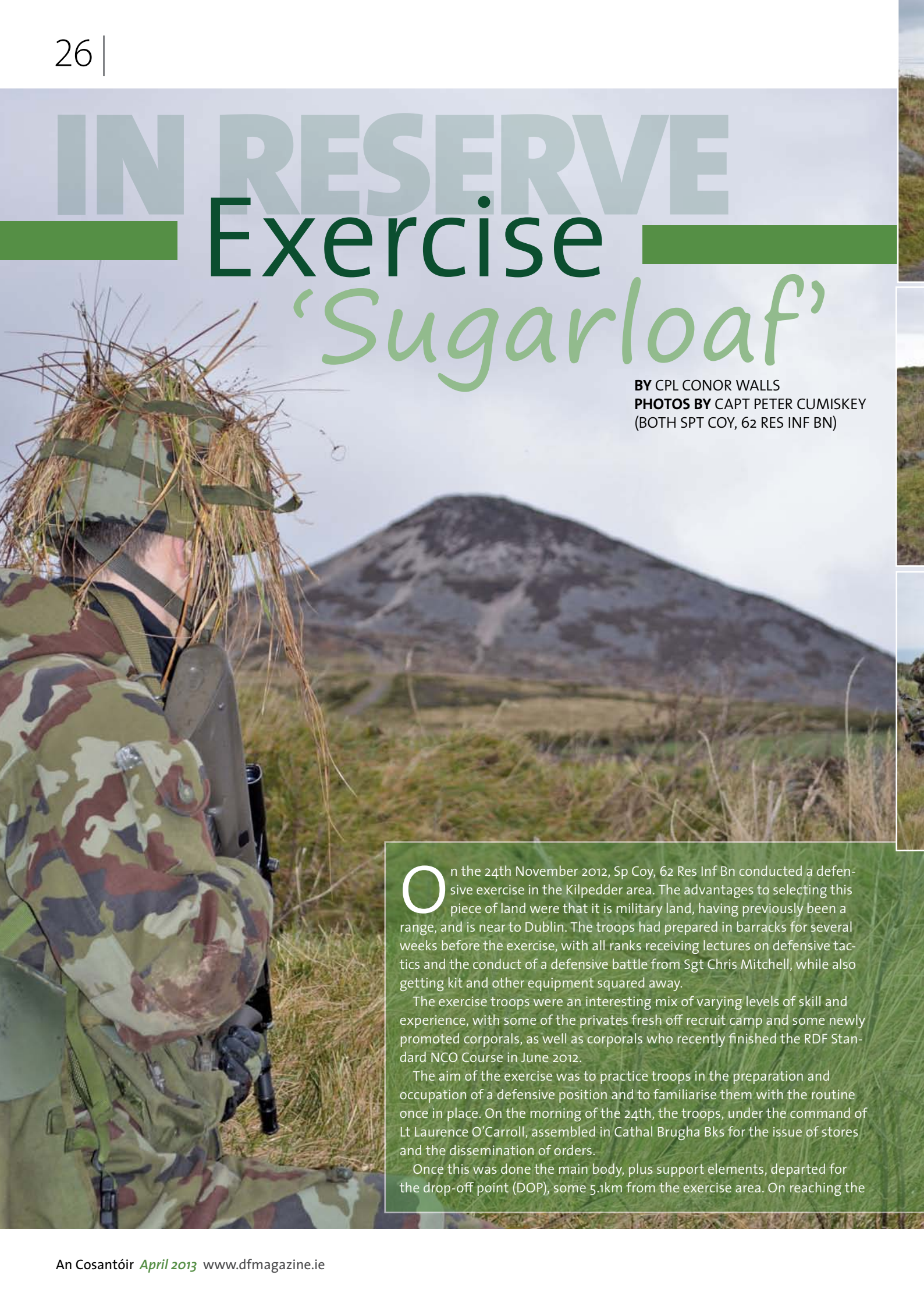
IN RESERVE

Exercise

'Sugarloaf'

BY CPL CONOR WALLS

PHOTOS BY CAPT PETER CUMISKEY
(BOTH SPT COY, 62 RES INF BN)



On the 24th November 2012, Sp Coy, 62 Res Inf Bn conducted a defensive exercise in the Kilpedder area. The advantages to selecting this piece of land were that it is military land, having previously been a range, and is near to Dublin. The troops had prepared in barracks for several weeks before the exercise, with all ranks receiving lectures on defensive tactics and the conduct of a defensive battle from Sgt Chris Mitchell, while also getting kit and other equipment squared away.

The exercise troops were an interesting mix of varying levels of skill and experience, with some of the privates fresh off recruit camp and some newly promoted corporals, as well as corporals who recently finished the RDF Standard NCO Course in June 2012.

The aim of the exercise was to practice troops in the preparation and occupation of a defensive position and to familiarise them with the routine once in place. On the morning of the 24th, the troops, under the command of Lt Laurence O'Carroll, assembled in Cathal Brugha Bks for the issue of stores and the dissemination of orders.

Once this was done the main body, plus support elements, departed for the drop-off point (DOP), some 5.1km from the exercise area. On reaching the



DOP, the section commanders issued orders and supervised their troops as they 'camo'd' up and moved out in tactical formation.

After reaching the exercise area, adopting all-round cover and allotting arcs of fire, the platoon scouts and section commanders were positioned over their trench sites and the platoon was briefed on the steps that were to follow by the platoon sergeant, Sgt Chris Mitchell. The sections then occupied and began to prepare the positions.

Following a break for food, digging resumed in earnest and concurrent activity resumed, which included work parties and the sending out of recce patrols to gather up-to-the-minute information about the surrounding terrain.

It was impressed upon all ranks that defensive tactics are proactive and information based, rather than merely occupying trench positions and waiting for an enemy to attack.

Due to time constraints, one selected trench position had been partly prepared in advance by the engineers and then finished off by work parties from the platoon. This was used as

a demonstration trench to show the dimensions, required standard of camouflage, and overhead protection, of a three-man battle trench.

Additionally, the exercise troops received lessons and briefings on defensive routines during the exercise itself, and the section commanders and 2i/cs made sure their troops were working efficiently at all times, whether digging or on a work detail.

'End-Ex' was called at approximately 1600hrs, and the platoon filled in their positions. On returning to Cathal Brugha, weapons and equipment were cleaned and handed back before Capt Peter Comiskey (OC SP Coy) debriefed everyone who had taken part.

Overall, the exercise was judged to be an important step in the right direction, being a precursor to a potential future battalion-level defensive exercise in the New Year.

The 'can do' attitude and the quick learning curve of the exercise troops bodes well for the future of the RDF as it faces new challenges after the recent reorganisation of the Defence Forces. ■



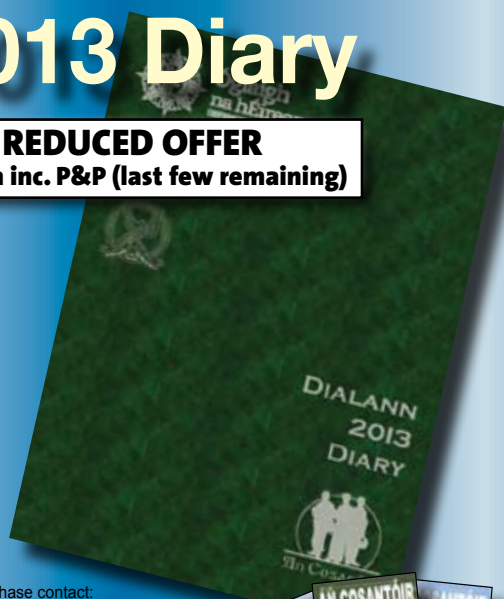
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SURVIVAL

This is the second of a three part series looking at a small selection of survival skills. All the skills presented here are linked to the basic survival principles; Protection, Location, Water and Food.

BY CPL PAUL MILLAR

Fire Lighting

The two things you need for this part are: dry tinder and a source of heat. Tinder and fuel types were covered in the last issue. Here we'll focus on how to get that vital spark.

The main methods used are: magnifying glass, electricity, flints, and the friction methods; fire plough and bow.

Magnifying Glass



The lens can come from glasses, binos, cameras or telescopic sights.

Angle the lens to concentrate the sun's rays onto your tinder.

Once it starts smouldering, gently blow on the tinder until flames appear.

Electricity



A battery from whatever equipment you have lying around is the best available source.

Use a bare wire or steel wool to join the terminals and produce a spark.

Flint



Usually found in an artificial form in a survival tin, the real thing is hard to come by.

Scrape a piece of metal against the flint in a downward motion onto your tinder.

Fire Plough

Cut a straight groove in a softwood base. Using a shaft made from hardwood with a blunt tip and a lot of pressure, plough the shaft up and down so that it pushes out small fibres of wood.

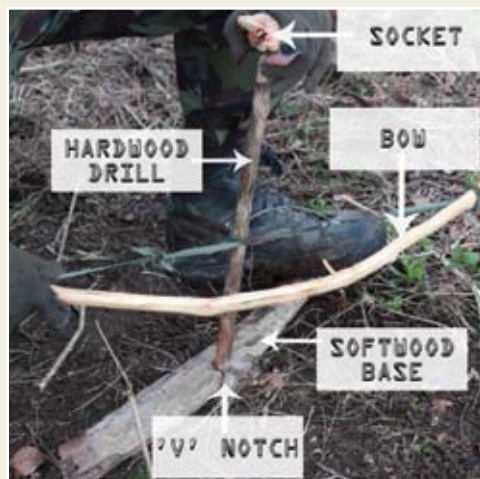
Gradually the friction ignites the wood fibres.

Fire Bow

You'll need:

- Socket; used to hold drill in place.
- Drill; 2cm diameter, 25cm long, hardwood.
- Base; softwood, roughly square, around 2cm thick. Carve a depression around 2.5cm from the edge with a 'V' shaped notch to the edge.
- Bow; type of wood doesn't matter, just use cordage that won't break.
- Place tinder under 'V' notch. Use the bow to rotate the drill while applying pressure with the socket. This creates friction and heat, which in turn lights the tinder.

- When you have the tinder lighting, gradually add kindling and then the fuel.
- Once you try to start a fire with a friction method, you'll always carry a lighter with you.
- The type of wood is key with the friction methods. Experiment with different types.

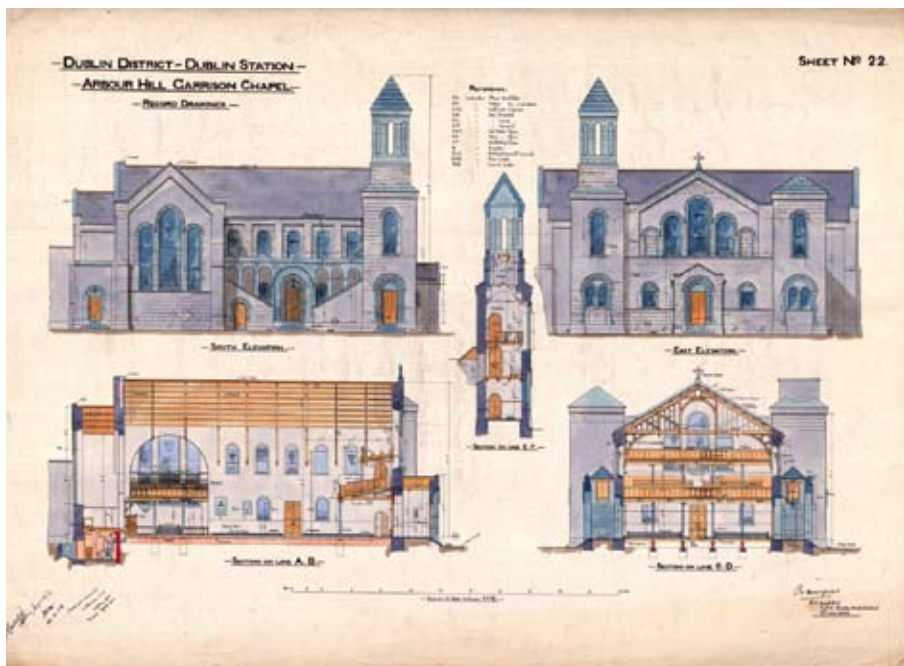


Next issue: Shelters

Everything shown here is not to be practised without instruction.

ON HALLOWED GROUND

BY PAUL O'BRIEN MA PICTURES BY DF PHOTOGRAPHERS AND MAIN IMAGE COURTESY OF MILITARY ARCHIVES



On the north side of Dublin city, hidden away amongst the side streets is Arbour Hill, an area whose church and cemetery are a place of pilgrimage to many, yet whose existence is not even known to many more.

This locality, steeped in history, has an important place in the annals of the Irish Defence Forces. Passing its church and walking through the old cemetery, one comes across a memorial to 14 of the men whose executions in 1916 led ultimately to the foundation of our state.

However, the story of Arbour Hill is a story of change. It is a place that has undergone a metamorphosis, growing from humble beginnings to become a place of national importance.

The area was first developed by Vikings in the 11th Century. Later, the area was partially owned by Christ Church cathedral and was used for the storage of corn. It is from this period that the name Arbour Hill derives, from its Irish name, 'Cnoc an Arbhair', which translates as Corn Hill.

In the following centuries Dublin continued to expand and further developments took place, the most prominent being the purchasing of land from the Duke of Ormond by the British crown to construct a military barracks. In 1701 the

grounds were prepared for the construction of the Royal Barracks, thus beginning the development of Arbour Hill as a military district that would in time encompass not only a barracks but also a provost prison, a hospital, schools, a garrison chapel and a cemetery.

The garrison church and the adjoining prison were constructed in the 1840s. A number of architects, both military engineers and professionals from the Board of Works, were involved in the construction and by 1845 the buildings were completed.

The design for the church was not original but was copied from the National Scotch Church (since demolished), in Bow Street, London, which was originally designed by Robert Wallace.

Throughout the next period of its history, the garrison church at Arbour Hill echoed to the sound of the thousands of British soldiers who marched through its doors to attend services.



Flag bearers from each of the brigades, the Air Corps and Naval Service, at the wreath-laying ceremony in 2010.



Wreath-laying ceremony at the Arbour Hill plot in 2010.



RY HISTORY HISTORY

Barracks after General Michael Collins. A new chapter in Ireland's history was about to begin.

In the early 1940s the Office of Public Works (OPW) took over the upkeep of the graveyard. When the Department of Defence suggested that a memorial to the 1916 leaders should be erected at the grave site, Gerry McNicholl, assistant architect in the OPW, forwarded a design

that incorporated the graves into an open public area. The plan was accepted and work commenced in 1955.

A screen wall was constructed in the prison yard that separated the graves of the leaders from the prison itself. Three paved terraces, connected by flights of stone steps, were installed, leading to the finished memorial. The plot in which the leaders are interred was transformed into an open terrace of Wicklow granite (the centre of which holds the graves) covered with a well manicured lawn. The names of those interred, Thomas Clarke, Thomas McDonagh, PH Pearse, Joseph Plunkett, Michael O' Hanrahan, William Pearse, John McBride, Con Colbert, Edward Daly, Michael Mallin, Seán Heuston, Eamonn Ceannt, Seán MacDermott, and James Connolly, are incised on the memorial in both Irish and English.

The backdrop to the area is the curved screen wall of Ardbraccan limestone with a gilded cross in the centre. The Proclamation of the Irish republic was hand carved into the wall in Irish and English by sculptor Michael Biggs. The works were completed by the late 1950s and since then many world leaders and foreign dignitaries have visited the Arbour Hill memorial.

Arbour Hill church and cemetery continue to play an important role in the history of the state. Every May, following a commemoration service in the church, the president leads a procession from the church to the memorial, where a wreath is laid on behalf of the Irish people in remembrance of all those who lost their lives during the 1916 Rising.

Over the years, many members of the Irish Defence Forces will have had the privilege of attending these occasions.

Though there is no dedicated war cemetery in Ireland for those who died in the service of the state, the Defence Forces ensures that Arbour Hill Cemetery remains an important key to our past and a symbol of our country's struggle for independence. ■

Arbour Hill cemetery is open to the public daily. As part of the OPW's Communities Initiative, military historian Paul O'Brien MA conducts free guided tours of the cemetery. For further information contact - www.dublinbattlefieldtours.ie

While many soldiers rotated through Royal Barracks as they prepared for deployment overseas, others stayed in Arbour Hill permanently, in its cemetery.

Headstones placed around the perimeter wall make interesting reading, revealing men, women and children, all connected to the Royal Barracks and its place in Irish history. Patrick Graham, a winner of the Victoria Cross during the Indian Mutiny lies in the cemetery in an unmarked grave. Three Grenadier Guardsmen who died tragically in a boating accident are also interred there. Others, having served throughout the world, or making ready for deployment, may also be found here, having died from accidents or one of a range of illnesses that plagued the population of the city in those times.

However, it was events that took place in the wake of the Easter Rising in 1916 that would catapult Arbour Hill into the consciousness of the Irish people.

On Easter Monday, April 24th, 1,500 men, women and teenage boys and girls of the Irish Volunteers and the Irish Citizen Army, under the command of Patrick Pearse, occupied a number of strategic buildings in Dublin city in an attempt to gain independence from Britain. After six days of bitter fighting the Volunteers surrendered and as trials by military courts-martial commenced, on May 3rd, the British military authorities prepared a burial plot in the yard of Arbour Hill prison.

Between May 3rd and 12th, 14 Irish Volunteer officers were executed in the grounds of Kilmainham Gaol. The bodies of the executed men were brought to Arbour Hill prison in a horse-drawn vehicle, placed in the prepared grave and covered with quicklime. (A British officer made a sketch drawing of the burial site at the time.)

In total 97 men and women were sentenced to death but due to public opinion in Ireland and Britain, the British government ordered its military to cease both the trials and the executions. For the next six years the bodies of those who gave their lives in the attempt to gain Irish independence lay guarded but not forgotten within the walls of Arbour Hill prison.

As the subsequent Irish War for Independence drew to a close, the newly established Irish Free State army marched into Royal Barracks, which was soon to be renamed Collins

HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY HISTORY

DF Indoor Track and Field Championships

BY CPL PAUL MILLAR PHOTOS BY CPL COLUM LAWLOR

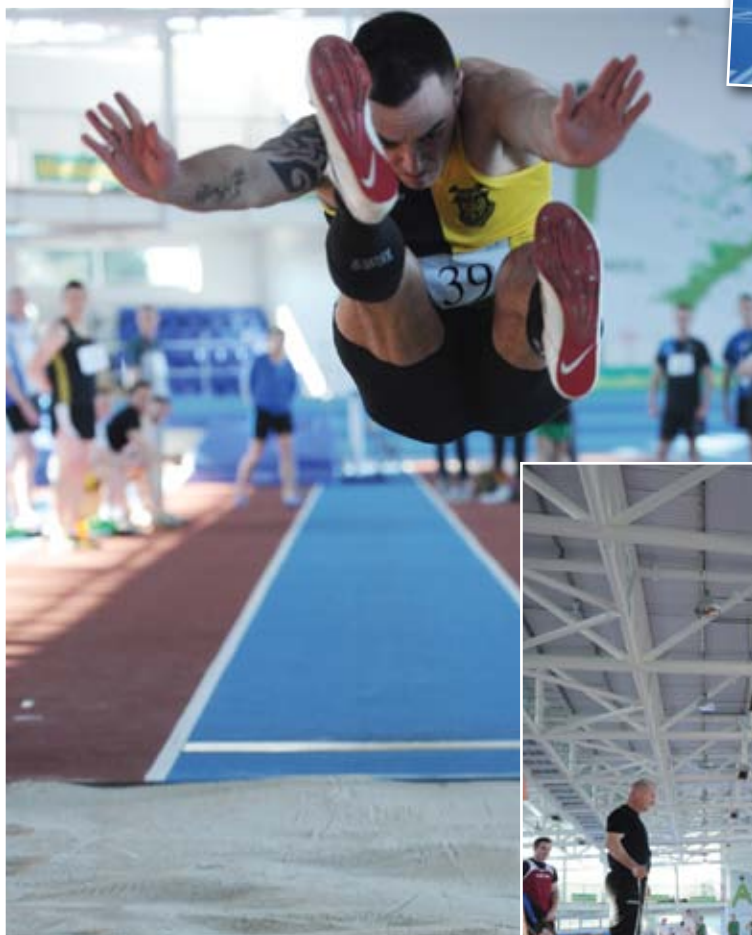
The DF Indoor Track and Field Championships were hosted by 2 Bde in Athlone IT on 25th February. With 21 different categories, the international-standard stadium was a hive of activity. The AIT €13m arena has a six lane 200m running track and seating for over 1,000 spectators.

One notable class was the recruit category, which covered the major T&F disciplines. The Cadets took home gold in the recruit 4x200m relay, while 2 Bde beat off the Air Corps and Navy to stand on top of the podium in the senior relay.

The largest participation came in the classic Senior Mens Mile. Cpl Eddie O'Neill (1 MIC), established himself as our fastest runner over this distance.

This year was the first time many new units had an opportunity to reveal their talent. Top of the new units was 7 Inf Bn. They had three notable athletes in the form of Capt Kedney who took gold in the 200m and relay and silver in the 60m, Capt Moody who won silver in the shot-putt and Lt Collins who added silver to the 7 Inf Bn tally.

The next occasion for the Track and Field athletes to prove themselves will be the DF Athletics Championships this summer. ■



SPORT

SPORTS ROUND-UP

Narrow loss to **ROYAL NAVY**

BY CAPT BERNARD BEHAN

PHOTOS BY CPL COLUM LAWLOR AND
ARMN JASON BYRNE

Wednesday 13th March a bitterly cold afternoon in Monsktown RFC, the Defence Forces Rugby team suffered a narrow defeat to the British Royal Navy.

Both sides have been great rivals since their first encounter back in 2001 and this game had all the hallmarks of a real derby fixture. The game didn't disappoint as both sides traded blows and gave the supporters a superb spectacle to cheer on. The game was a very evenly fought contest with the Navy coming out on top by a six point margin (Final score 10-16). Both teams should be congratulated on the spirit in which they played the game and the Defence Forces can count themselves very unlucky to come out of this game with a loss. Overall a fine display from the home side and this will set them up nicely for the forthcoming fixture against the RAF later in the year. Well done to all involved. ■



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7 - 9 JUNE 2013

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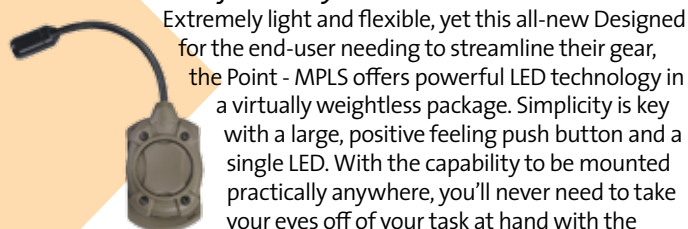
GEAR REVIEW

PRINCETON TEC POINT MODULAR PERSONAL LIGHTING SYSTEM (MPLS)

COLOUR: OLIVE DRAB BODY WITH RED LED.

PRICE: €28.95

The manufacturer says...



Extremely light and flexible, yet this all-new Designed for the end-user needing to streamline their gear, the Point - MPLS offers powerful LED technology in a virtually weightless package. Simplicity is key with a large, positive feeling push button and a single LED. With the capability to be mounted practically anywhere, you'll never need to take your eyes off of your task at hand with the Point - MPLS. Available in a range of LED and body colours. Point MPLS is extremely versatile; it is Molle compatible but also can be mounted on a helmet. Both the Molle and Helmet mounting hardware are included.

Specifications: Power: 10 Lumens, Lamp: Ultrabright LED, Burn Time: 36 Hours, Batteries: 2x 2016 Lithium Coin Cell (2032 for red and Infrared and Red LED) and Weight: 17 Grams

Waterproof Level 1: Lights rated at Level 1 are designed for water resistance to splashing and quick dunkings. (If a light with a Level 1 rating is accidentally submerged for a longer period of time, the batteries should be removed and the cabinets should be carefully inspected for signs of battery leakage. If water has entered the housing, the light should be dried and batteries replaced.)

Our reviewer Capt J. Tynan (1 ACS, DFTC) says...

The Princeton Tec MPLS is a simple but useful lighting system and includes the mounting brackets for both DF issue combat helmet and AFV Bose helmet and the MOLLE system assault vest. Separate brackets can be bought for helmet rail systems and Picatinny rails for weapon mounting. Its main selling point is the ability to attach it very quickly to a helmet or assault vest. The light simply clicks in firmly and confidently in seconds and can be rotated through 30°. The functionality is greatly enhanced by the flexible gooseneck, which allows accurate placing of the beam. One press gives a low light emission that's fine for tactical night navigation; a second press gives a brighter light.

I think its main usage will be as a helmet light rather than assault vest mounting. Vehicle crew commanders may find it particularly useful for map reading, maintenance and general work within the vehicle. The package states it can be used as a weapon light, I personally can't see that, as it is just not bright enough. With a battery life of 32hrs and the total weight 17grams, this is an excellent soldier task light with great design features.

Mounting Hardware 10 - Lumens/Brightness 9 - Waterproof 9 - Battery Life/Burn Time 10

KESTREL 2500NV POCKET WEATHER METER WITH TACTICAL RED BACKLIGHT

COLOUR: OLIVE DRAB

PRICE: €195.00



The manufacturer says...

The Kestrel 2500 Pocket Weather Meter measures wind and temperature with total accuracy, and has the added benefits of an air pressure sensor that provides altitude and barometric information. Kestrel 2500 technology enables you to follow changes in air pressure that help predict impending changes in the weather. Factor in the 2500's digital altimeter, and you have most of the weather information you need for outdoor activities ranging from model airplane flight to rifle practice.

The Kestrel 2500's sensitive and user-replaceable impeller technology provides accurate wind speed info. Additionally, an external temperature sensor and waterproof casing allow you to gauge the temperature of water (it even floats) and snow, as well as the open air. A hard slide-on case, lanyard, and battery are included.

Kestrel Pocket Weather Meters like the Kestrel 2500 are an essential tool for target rifle shooters and military professionals, and prove invaluable to outdoor enthusiasts (like skiers and mountain climbers) who need accurate and up to the minute weather information.

For military professionals, the Olive Drab NV version of the Kestrel 2500 features a night-vision preserving backlight. Backlight incorporates optical filter to reduce overall brightness and minimize blue and green spectrum light to preserve night vision. (Note: This backlight appears soft greyish pink, not "red", and is still in the visible spectrum, so is not compatible with night-vision equipment.)

The Kestrel Meter 2500 Meter Measures: current wind speed, maximum wind gust, average wind speed, air, water & snow temperature, wind chill, barometric pressure, altitude. Features: real-time clock, protective cover with sure-grip overmolding, data hold function, large easy-to-read display with backlight, waterproof and floats, innovative design for stability and accuracy in abrupt condition changes, patented user-replaceable impeller, quick response, external thermistor, high precision pressure sensor, reliable, portable and easy to use.

Our reviewer Cpl Flanagan (27 Inf Bn) says...

I tested the Kestrel 2500NV Pocket Weather Meter during the 'Recce Concentration' and found it to be like the saying goes "it does what it says on the tin". It was good for quick accurate wind-chill readings. For accuracy the temperature reading takes a bit longer, but this is acceptable. The settings were easy to control even without reading the manual. The protective cover is an excellent addition. Overall I would highly recommend it although it is very pricey.

Durability 9 - Accessibility 9 - Practicality 6 - Value for money 7

This month Team-Alpha are offering a €100 Voucher to be used on their website www.team-alpha.ie. For a chance to win this month's prize answer the following question: How much is a pair of 5.11 A.T.A.C. Side Zip - 8" Black Boots on the team-alpha website?

Answers on a postcard to An Cosantóir's regular address or by email to subs@military.ie by the 22nd

Apr 2013. Winner will be the first correct entry drawn.

Last month's winner of a €100 voucher for Team-Alpha.ie was Clodagh McConnell

COMPETITION



NOTICEBOARD

This page is designed to give our readers an easy-to-follow list of upcoming events or notices for our wider Defence Forces Family. Readers who want to submit notices that may be of interest to others should keep their notices to the point, include contact details and send by email to: magazine@military.ie or by post to: Editor An Cosantóir, DFHQ, Block 5, Ceannt Bks, DFTC, Curragh Camp, Co. Kildare, Ireland. PS. Our old noticeboard will still be made available on www.dfmagazine.ie

"Walk the Line" Challenge in support of the DWMRT - June 22nd

Up to 400 brave souls will take to the mountains on the summer solstice to raise much-needed funds for the Dublin and Wicklow Mountain Rescue Team (DWMRT). Walk the Line (WTL) which is proudly supported by 'Great Outdoors' will see participants run/walk across the stunning mountains in Glendalough. The event starts in the afternoon from the Brockagh Resource Centre and will run into darkness enabling participants to catch the sunset on a summer solstice evening.

Two challenges are available:

Rescue Navigation Team Challenge is limited to 100 participants, individuals or teams of 2-4 of which at least 1 must be a competent navigator (6-8 hrs).

Rescue Trail Challenge is a challenging 25km route designed for people who just love the great outdoors. See the advert on page 11 or visit www.walktheline.ie

Militaria Collector needs assistance

Hello, I am an ex-parachutist and collect para-wings, badges, patches and the other items from parachutist around the World. I would like communicate and exchange with similar collectors in Ireland.

Thank you for any help or assistance.

Sincerely yours, Dr. Ch Wójcik -

chester-commando@seznam.cz

Curragh Military Museum

Opening Times: Monday to Wednesday 10am to 1pm and 3 to 5pm; Thursday 2 to 8pm; Sundays 2.30 to 5.30pm; Closed Friday, Saturday and Bank Holidays. For all queries, contact: 045-445342 or email: curragh.militarymuseum@defenceforces.ie.

Word Search

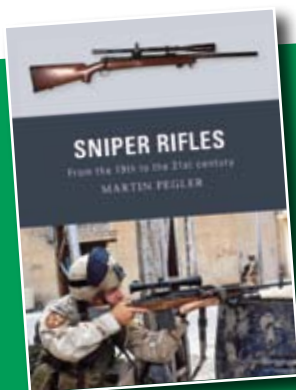
Cross off the words in the list as you find them.

Word searches are fun, they also bring benefits you may not realise and can play an important role in keeping you mentally fit.

Aircraft

N	I	G	S	Y	S	O	D	R	U	O	F	Z	N	L
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AEROSPACE
AGUSTA
AIRCORPS
CASA
CESSNA
EUROCOPTER
GULFSTREAM
LEARJET
PILATUS
WESTLAND

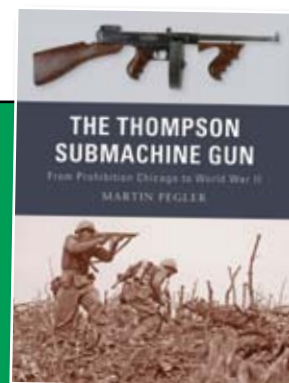


APRIL Q&A

1. What year was the IMCC founded (this issue)?

Answers on a postcard to our normal address or email subs@military.ie for a chance to win two Osprey books: The Thompson Submachine Gun and Sniper Rifles both by Martin Pegler.

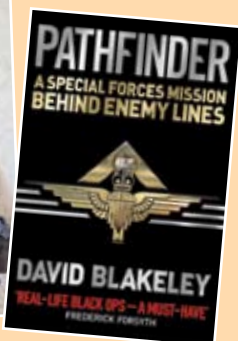
Last month's winner of the Osprey books: Katana, The Samurai Sword by Stephen Turnbull and Medieval Handgonnes by Sean McLachlan was Alan Kearney, DFTC.
Closing date 22 Apr 2013.



BOOK

PATHFINDER: A SPECIAL FORCES MISSION BEHIND ENEMY LINES

Author: David Blakeley



Publisher: Orion (May, 2012)

www.orionbooks.co.uk

Pages: 352

Price: €12.99 ebook (easons.com) €12.50 hardback (amazon.co.uk)

ISBN: 978-1409144113 / 978-1409144090

A GRIPPING STORY of a Special Forces mission in a modern war.

In 2003, Captain David Blakeley's unit spearheaded the British Army's 16th Air Assault Brigade during the US-led invasion of Iraq. *Blakeley writes: "The First Gulf War had been a race to liberate Kuwait, then 'home for tea and medals'...there was an expectation that this conflict would go likewise."*

Blakeley has seen action in Afghanistan, Kosovo, Sierra Leone and Northern Ireland, and was once the youngest captain in the British Army. In Iraq he was second-in-command of the elite Pathfinder Platoon, or 'Ghost Platoon' as they are also known.

However, leading a nine-man patrol 80kms into enemy territory to clear an airfield Blakeley soon realises his mission stands no chance of success due to the enemy's strength and decides they only have one option - to fight their way out.

What follows is an exhilarating tale of leadership, courage and professionalism as the small group endeavours to make it home and Blakeley's firsthand account provides the reader with a fast-paced, gripping read.

Because of rules introduced in 1993 after the Bravo Two Zero book, there have been no firsthand accounts of UK Special Forces operations for two decades. Pathfinder is the first such book for a generation, and may well be the last.

The Paperback (ISBN: 978-1409129028) is due out early May 2013. <http://davidblakeley.co.uk>

DVD

CODE NAME: GERONIMO - THE HUNT FOR OSAMA BIN LADEN

AKA SEAL TEAM SIX: THE RAID ON OSAMA BIN LADEN



Director: John Stockwell

Writer: Kendall Lampkin (screenplay)

Starring: Cam Gigandet, Anson Mount, Freddy Rodríguez, Alvin 'Xzibit' Joiner, Kathleen Robertson and William Fichtner

Certification: 15

Runtime: 1hr 30mins

Cinema Release: 24 December 2012



FROM ACCLAIMED PRODUCERS of 'The Hurt

Locker' and director John Stockwell in this made for TV

movie. Previously aired on the National Geographic Channel in November 2012, it is an interesting and action packed companion to the big budget version 'Zero Dark Thirty'.

In the now well published events surrounding the search, mission and eventual death of America's most wanted terrorist 'Osama bin Laden'. A team of Navy SEALs are trained and dispatched to a compound in Pakistan, that the CIA believe houses bin Laden and his family.

This version focuses more on the 'get in there and do it' aspect as opposed to the time spent looking for bin Laden in 'Zero Dark Thirty'. This approach means it's not a documentary of the actual events, but a well made and entertaining action movie. This has left a lot of critics and government officials citing a long list of inaccuracies to the story, most likely due to its rushed release.

On the downside, the power struggle between Gigandet and Mount and sub plot of the formers wife cheating with the latter - left me puzzled.

GAME

CRYSIS 3



THE AWARD-WINNING developer Crytek is back with Crysis 3, the first blockbuster shooter of 2013! Return to of the Nanosuit soldier, now on a quest to rediscover his humanity and exact brutal revenge. Assess, Adapt, and Attack - Crysis's highly-acclaimed sandbox gameplay is back with more open levels to let players choose their path and approach. Use the stealth and armour abilities of your unique Nanosuit as you battle through the seven wonders of New York's Liberty Dome. Unleash the firepower of your all-new, high-tech bow and alien weaponry to hunt both human and alien enemies. And uncover the truth behind the death of your squad while re-establishing the power of human will in a rich story full of exciting twists and turns. (www.crysis.com)

Genre: RPG - **Platform:** Xbox 360, PS3 & PC - **PEGI:** 16 - **Price** €49.97 (PC €39.97) (gamestop.ie). Released: 22 Feb 2013. © 2012 Electronic Arts. All Rights Reserved.

NAME DARREN MAHONEY **RANK** CORPORAL
UNIT 103 SQN, NO 1 OPS WING



I work as an aircraft maintenance engineer (AME) in No 1 Ops Wing. I enlisted in 1994 and underwent a four-year aircraft maintenance apprenticeship in the then Air Corps Apprentice School, Training Wing (now called the Technical Training School, Air Corps College).

No 1 Ops Wing is a 24/7, 365-days-a-year unit. We operate a wide variety of aircraft for a wide range of diverse operations including air ambulance, ministerial transport, Garda air support, and maritime patrol, just to name a few.

My squadron, 103 Sqn, is responsible for the first and second-line maintenance of the Grumman G1159C Gulfstream IV (G4), Gates Learjet 45, CASA CN-235, Britten-Norman Defender 4000, and the Cessna 172. I have done in-house G4 and CASA courses, and a manufacturer's course on the Learjet and the Defender.

First-line maintenance generally consists of day-to-day things, like checking oil levels, changing wheels, and dealing with any small snags that come in on an aircraft. Second-line maintenance involves heavier work, which would include component changes, engine changes, or big inspections (100hr, 200hr, 500hr) and so on depending on the aircraft.

As an NCO I am normally leader of a crew of several airman AMEs for whom I assign tasks and supervise on inspections and day-to-day maintenance. However, at the moment I am detached to the Air Corps Military Training School (MTS). Regardless of unit, all NCOs are rotated to the MTS to instruct on recruit, three-star, or NCO courses. At the moment we have 20 AME recruits and I'm really enjoying the job. It's a big change from the hangers.

In civilian life my passion is martial arts. I'm a 4th degree black belt in Kenpo karate, which is a modern, dynamic, self-defence based martial art, and I run my own club in Portlaoise.

In 2011, I completed the Defence Forces Unarmed Combat Instructors course. This was an excellent course, during which I learned a lot. Having to disarm someone with a Steyr was something I never had to think about before.

Since then I have gone on to join and train with the Defence Forces Judo club and the Mixed Martial Arts club. These are great clubs, allowing you to learn more skills. All of these combined allow me to bring an extra skill to the MTS and the Air Corps, as I am available if any course requires an unarmed combat training element.

For me the Air Corps is a great place to work. We provide vital services to the state and the work is very rewarding. ■



"We provide vital services to the state and the work is very rewarding"



Organisation of National Ex-Servicemen & Women

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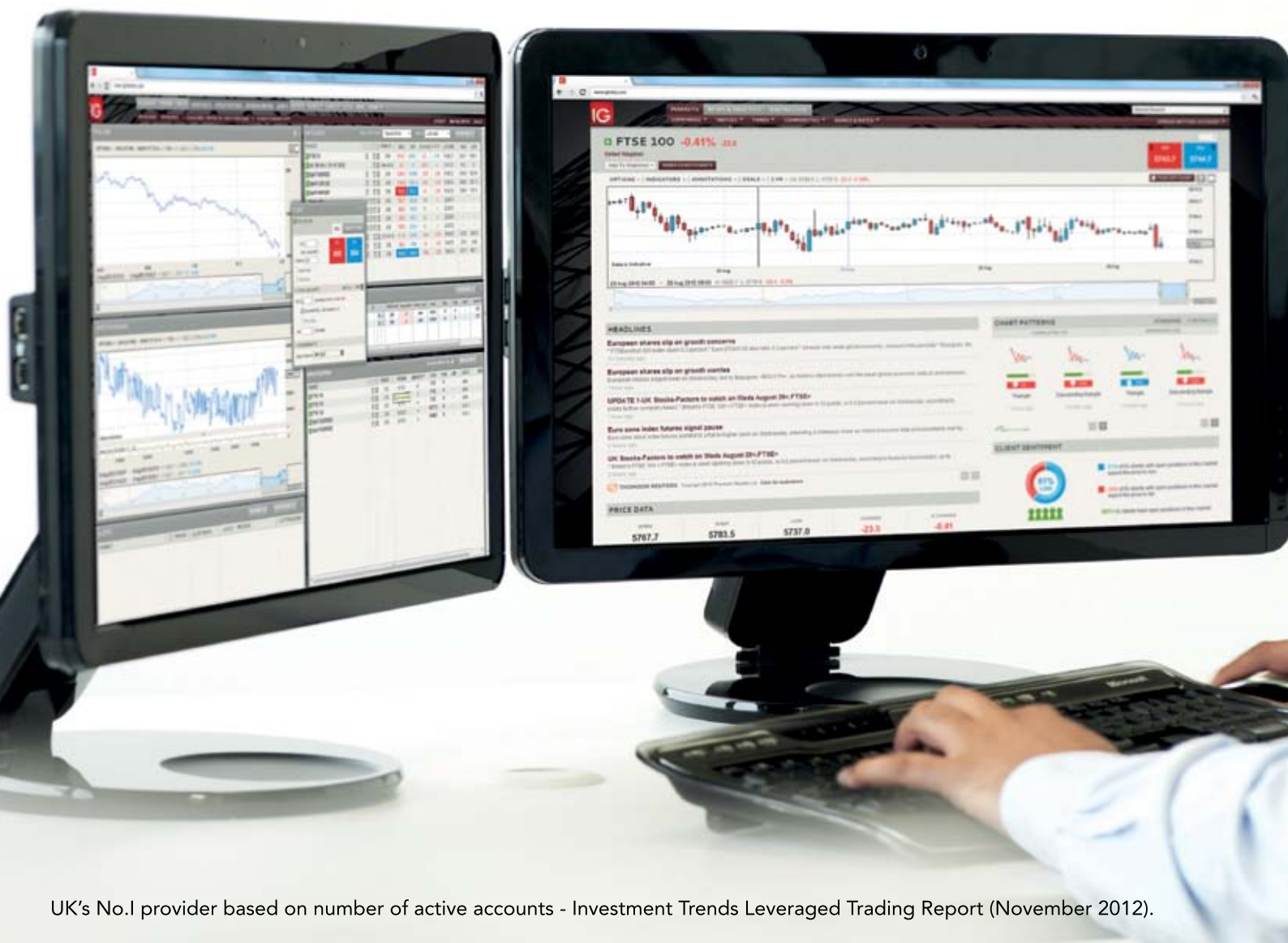
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