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THE DEFENCE FORCES MAGAZINE /

AN COSANTÓIR



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na hÉireann
IRISH DEFENCE FORCES



JULY/AUGUST 2023

ACOS | GAINNEY CUP | DF OPEN DAY

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FEATURES

08 Interview with A COS Brig Gen Rossa Mulcahy

Interview By Comdt Gemma Fagan
Photos by Armn Sam Gibney

12 Gainey Cup 2023

By Lt Alex McNamara
Photos by Lt Alex McNamara

14 122 Inf Bn UNIFIL currently serving in Lebanon

Provided by Comdt Barry Hannon

17 Exercise Raven's Challenge 2023: Enhancing Expertise through International Collaboration

By DF EOD Officer
Photos by DF EOD Officer

18 Defence Forces Open Day

Photos by Armn Sam Gibney

20 Forging Resilience and Expertise: Inside the 14th SERE Level C Instructors Course

Interview By Cpl Eric Ryan
Photos by Cpl Jonathan Tuft

22 Empowering Veterans: The Mission of Óglaigh Náisiúnta na hÉireann

By Cormac Kirwan CEO ONE
Photos by Wayne Fitzgerald

24 "Go Mear, Máirseáil" 4 Day March in Nijmegen, The Netherlands

By Lt (AR) Fergal FitzGerald
Photos by Lt (AR) Fergal FitzGerald

26 Homes for Heroes: The Centenary of the Killester Garden Village

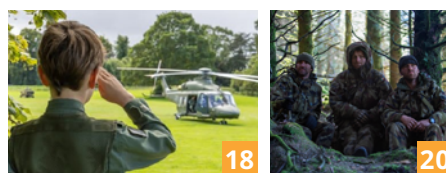
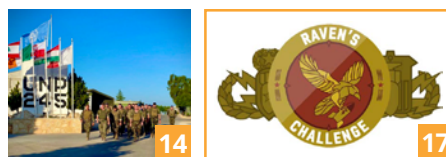
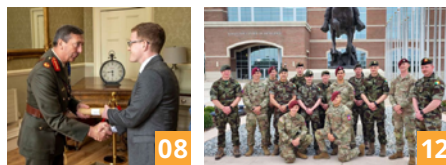
By Armn Aaron Crampton
Photos by Armn Aaron Crampton

29 DF Ladies Camogie

By Capt Catherine Barrett
Photos by Capt Catherine Barrett

32 100 years of Basketball in the Army, 1923-2023

By Lt Col Padraic Kennedy
Photos by Lt Col Padraic Kennedy



REGULARS

04 Noticeboard

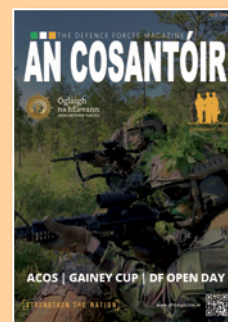
11 On Parade

30 DF Sports & Clubs

34 From The Archives

Contents

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Front Cover

1 ACS at the Gainey Cup
Lt Alex McNamara

Editorial

Hello, and welcome to our fourth issue of 2023, our 83rd volume of the An Cosantóir magazine.

We hope you enjoy reading this edition and continue to enjoy reading all the other An Cosantóir magazines we have published. Did you know that you can access all of our magazines from 2011 to the present day by simply searching for them online? We are in the process of moving them all on to our website and very soon you will be able to browse previous editions at www.military.ie/magazine

If you have any ideas for the magazine, or would like to be featured in the On Parade section of An Cosantóir, please send us any submissions to magazine@military.ie

We have a great selection of articles in this magazine, including a mix of interviews, photos, an update on our sports and clubs and our popular 'On Parade' section which features recent events across the DF.

Our main feature this edition is an Interview with Brig Gen Rossa Mulcahy, Assistant Chief of Staff (ACOS). In this

interview, by DF Press Officer Comdt Gemma Fagan, Brig Gen Mulcahy discusses the Women of Honour documentary and the steps the Defence Forces have been taking since this documentary aired. Other areas covered in this excellent interview are the Organisational Culture Standing Committee (OCSC) and the IRG report which was published in March 2023.

Lt Alex McNamara describes the journey of the 1st Armoured Cavalry Squadron following their selection for the prestigious biannual International Scout Competition, known as **The Gainey Cup**. Held in the heart of Fort Benning, Georgia (now Fort Moore), this gruelling event brought together the world's most proficient scout squads for a week of intense challenges that tested their mental acuity, physical stamina, and unwavering teamwork.

Facing off against 22 teams from the United States and four international squads, the 1st Armoured Cavalry Squadron team embarked on a journey that would define their mettle.

122 Inf Bn UNIFIL are currently deployed in Lebanon, in this article from Comdt Barry Hannon, we have a brief history of the UNIFIL mission and some information on their mission training and daily tasks. We are also given a short insight into the background and daily taskings of several members of 122 Inf Bn.

A serving DF EOD officer that recently attended **EOD Ex Raven's Challenge, Camp Dodge Iowa** provides us with a description of the five-day exercise that set new standards for inter-agency collaboration. Drawing from a year's worth of EOD callouts, the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) assembles scenarios where EOD teams and Public Service Bomb Squads (PSBSs)

can refine their skills and techniques.

Our centre spread is a photo feature of the very successful **DF Open Day** that took place in Farmleigh House at the end of July.

One of the most challenging courses in the Defence Forces is the **SERE Course** which is designed to equip military personnel with the skills and knowledge needed to survive and operate effectively in hostile environments. Cpl Eric Ryan from the An Cosantóir Office sat down with Lt Stephen King from the Military Training and SERE School to discuss the structure of the course, and what it takes to succeed on it.

Our retired personnel are an important part of the Defence Forces family and to reflect that, we are hoping to feature some veterans organisations over the next few editions. In this edition we have an article about ONE – **Empowering Veterans: The Mission of Oglagh Náisiúnta na hÉireann** which gives a detailed overview of the great services that ONE provides for veterans, including details on the Free Veteran Counselling Service.

"Go Mear, Máirseáil" by Lt (AR) Fergal Fitzgerald details the Vier Daagse Marches, the world's largest multi-day walking event which took place in Nijmegen in the Netherlands in July 2023. A team of 11 Army Reservists from 2 Bde took part in this event which draws participants from 70 countries, to walk 163km in 4 days, carrying at least 10kg of weight.

Homes for Heroes, The Centenary of the Killester Garden Village is a fascinating article into the history of Killester Garden Village written by Armn Aaron Crampton. The village was built for Irish WW1 ex servicemen in 1923 and the idyllic retreat provided not just physical shelter, but a sanctuary for those battling the invisible scars of war-PTSD, shell shock, and physical disabilities. The community survives to this day.

We finish the magazine with our **Sports and Clubs** update – an update on **DF Camogie**, all of the latest news from DF Sports and clubs, and finally an article commemorating **100 years of basketball in the Defence Forces**. Our From the Archives section features the article published in An Cosantóir in December 1978 commemorating 50 years of Basketball.

Thank you for your continued support of the magazine and all of the articles and photos submitted thus far. We are looking forward to seeing many serving and retired DF personnel at the upcoming An Cosantóir Race, taking place on 11th Oct 2023 in the Phoenix Park. Registration will be open until 08th Oct 2023.

"You cannot make progress without making decisions" — Jim Rohn

Sgt John Rossiter – Editor

ON PARADE



46th Potential NCO's course passing out parade which took place on the 20 Jul



Slovenian Ambassador Stanislav Vidovic visiting the Naval Base, Haulbowline on the 30 Jun



Maj Gen McKenna (DCOS Ops) & Gen Birame Diop at UNHQ during a recent visit to New York. Gen Diop is the Mil Advisor to the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Ops



Chief of Staff visit to L.É. William Butler Yeats in Valletta, Malta



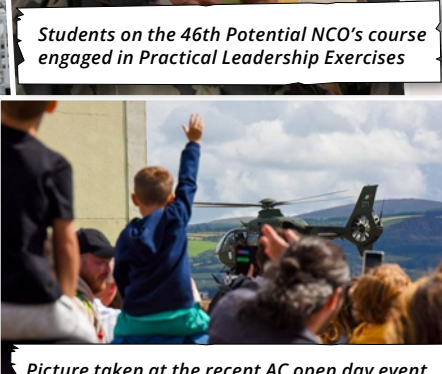
Students on the 46th Potential NCO's course engaged in Practical Leadership Exercises



Excited families welcome home NS members



WB Yeats members happy to be home from the EUNAVFOR MED Operation IRINI



Picture taken at the recent AC open day event



OP REGULUS exchange programme conducting dive training

ON PARADE

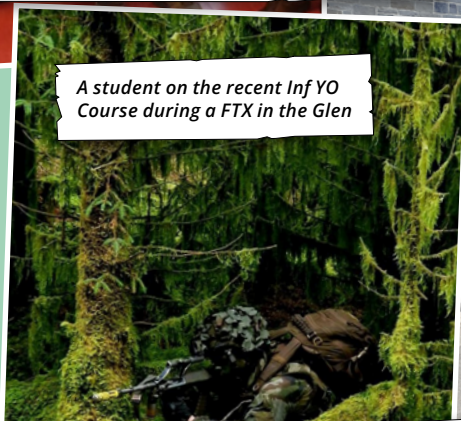


Pte Mick Keane 1 Inf Bn receiving his meritorious promotion to Cpl from Lt Col McDonagh

UNIFIL soldiers flying their county flags before the All Ireland football final



Kelly-Ann O'Brien the winning female of the recent ONE Pte Rooney 5km challenge held in Dundalk Institute of Technology



A student on the recent Inf YO Course during a FTX in the Glen



Ben Sheery, an honorary Capt for the day on his recent visit to 7 Inf Bn in Cathal Brugha Bks



Recent 2 BTC MOUT course rehearsing room entry drills

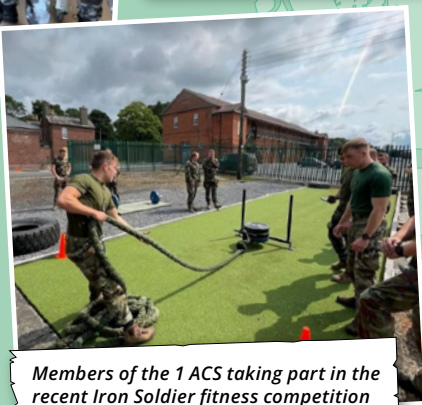
From L-R Jim Brotherton American Legion The Netherlands, M/Sgt Ron Howko American Legion Mayo, Lt Col Nolita Defence Attaché US Embassy Dublin, Vietnam Veteran Michael Slyman American Legion, Mr Michael Feeney, Founder of Mayo Peace Park



OP REGULUS exchange programme members



After 43 years of service Cpl Martin Burke, 1 Bde Tpt Coy, brought an end to his career in the DF. This also brings to an end the 'Burke/Bentley' family service with the DF. A service that stretches up to 187 years for those that served - Cpl Martin Burke, CQMS Tommy Burke (uncle - RIP), Pte Thomas Burke (cousin - Rtd), CQMS William Bentley (uncle - RIP), Pte Joe Bentley (uncle - Rtd) and his brother Sgt Mick Burke (Rtd). The photo was taken at Martin's retirement party in the Tpt workshop, where Martin received some parting gifts from his transport colleagues.



Members of the 1 ACS taking part in the recent Iron Soldier fitness competition

ON PARADE



Sgt Garry Canavan getting the troops ready for Battle PT

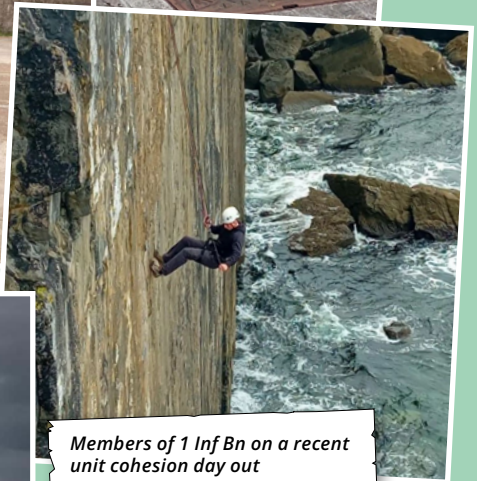
Recent 1st Combined IRL SOF & Defence Forces Medical Services Symposium held in ARW HQ



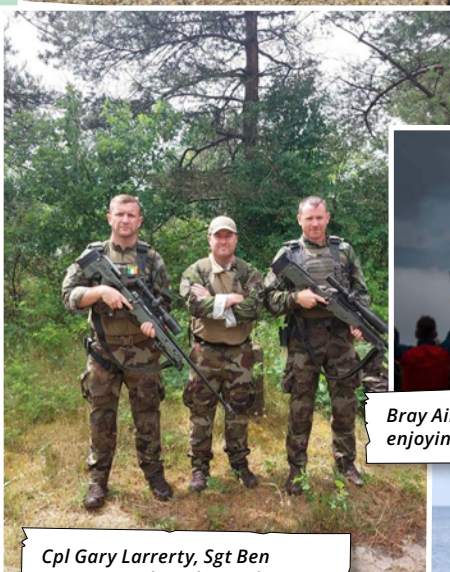
Comdt Pdraig Murphy, BQMS Michael Stynes and CS Anthony O'Reilly from 26 IRCON KFOR, handed over a cheque to Louise Quail and Barróg from Ronald Mc Donald House for €5773.28 from their "Irish Soldiers 'Home Run' from Kosovo to Ireland".



Team from the CMU & Medical Corps taking part in Arduous Serpent in the UK



Members of 1 Inf Bn on a recent unit cohesion day out



Cpl Gary Larrerty, Sgt Ben Houston, Cpl Noel McHale, seen here at the Danish International Sniper Competition



Bray Air show spectators enjoying the display



Black Knights after another successful jump at the annual Bray air show



Picture taken at the recent Bray Air show

ON PARADE



Members of the RAF enjoying the Bray Air show event



Early morning PT in 1 Inf Bn for 2* Soldiers



Lt Rory Behan briefing the future troops at the recent DF open day



2* Soldiers training with the 3 Inf Bn were presented with 3* rank markings after a tab up Mount Leinster



Recent installation of EV chargers in Collins Bks Cork

Members of the 99th Cadet class on their tab from the Glen to the DFTC with the Class pennant



Officers who recently completed the 34th Engineer Officers Course



27 Inf Bn members taking part in the Blackrock Summer Festival





INTERVIEW WITH BRIG GEN ROSSA MULCAHY, ASSISTANT CHIEF OF STAFF (ACOS)

BY COMDT GEMMA FAGAN

The Women of Honour documentary which aired in September 2021 revealed lived experiences of bullying, misogyny, violence and inappropriate behaviour within the Defence Forces. What was your reaction when you saw the documentary first?

I was initially shocked and it was difficult to read and hear these experiences being played out in the media. I suppose none of us can say we were surprised because we did have these issues highlighted in the early 2000's with Tom Clonan's research and then during the Independent Monitoring Group (IMG) process. However, by 2021 it was felt that we had turned a corner and we were getting positive feedback both from the previous IMG reports and our own statistics that this type of behaviour was on the decline.

Following the documentary, the Defence Forces set up the Organisational Culture Standing Committee (OCSC), which you chair. Can you tell us what you were tasked with doing?

Following the documentary, the Chief of Staff made it very clear that these types of behaviours are not tolerated in our organisation. He immediately set about addressing the problem by establishing the Immediate Action Group (IAG). One of the actions of the IAG was to brief all members of the Defence Forces on what constituted appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. Another initiative that resulted from the work of the IAG was establishing the Raise a Concern phone line. The OCSC was subsequently established to build on the actions of the IAG as a longer term approach to drive cultural change in our organisation. It was established in November 2021 and I was appointed as its Chair.

The terms of reference for the OCSC requires us to look at anything that we can do to enhance the culture and improve behaviours across the organisation. To achieve that requires a really open and honest discussion with representatives from all corners of our organisation. For this reason, the committee comprises of reps from the three services – Army, Naval Service and Air Corps and across all ranks, from private rank up to general. There are specialist reps on the committee as well; such as Medical, HR, Training, Legal PR, GENAD and PSS with meetings held monthly since December 2021.

We also established committees in each service and formation to support the work that we're doing at DFHQ level. This provides a coordinated and cohesive approach to drive cultural change down through the organisation to all units.

Rather than wait for the IRG (Independent Review Group) report to come out, the OCSC, conducted a variety of actions while the IRG were doing their work.

Could you tell us what the OCSC has been doing since it was convened?

The first thing we had to do was send out a clear message across the organisation that the health and safety of our personnel is our priority and that our workplace is one where dignity and respect are upmost in everyone's minds. We built a whole campaign around the "It Stops Now" tagline which not only encouraged people to change behaviours, but also provided information on where help could be accessed for people who did experience either inappropriate behaviour, bullying or sexual harassment. We created a set of videos and posters around the message of



**Brig Gen Mulcahy meeting the
DF GENAD Lt Cdr Caroline Scanlon**

dignity and respect in the workplace, and they were championed by senior male leaders across the organisation, from officers to NCOs.

We also wanted to identify the scale and extent of the problem we were facing, so we did our own baseline cultural survey, in the summer of 2022 and it was open to all members of the Defence Forces. There was a very

strong representation in the feedback – about 10% of the organisation took part. One of the things that the survey told us was that the experiences of women and men in the organisation are very different. For example, there was a higher percentage of men who said that they felt that their work was respected as opposed to women. This information from the survey was needed to carry our work forward and decide what are the next objectives and goals we need to go after.

Another key initiative we developed was the Sexual Ethics and Respectful Relationships (SERR) workshop. It is a scenario based workshop, led by trained specialists and military champions, where personnel can speak in an open forum about how they would address and deal with certain situations if they happened. We rolled it out in a number of pilots in the last quarter of 2022, and again for the last cadet class and a Standard NCO course, because they are the future leaders of the organisation. We've just secured the services of UCC to roll out that program across the Defence Forces for the next nine months. Following that, we're going to employ five full-time SERR advisors, social workers who will deliver this workshop and training.

The last significant element is a review of our A7 brief, our interpersonal relationships brief that every individual gets when they come into the organisation or when they go on career courses. We have standardised and updated it with the modern definitions and the modern practices that we know are required. And that has been rolled out since December of last year.

Now the OCSC is looking at what is next, and to build on the work of the IRG, there are a number of recommendations there, especially in the area of redress of wrongs and that will be taken forward by the subject matter experts in the HR space in the organisation.

The IRG published their report in March of this year with their recommendations. Can you go through some of the recommendations? Have any been progressed at this point?

The report was stark reading. One of the key points about the report is that while it wasn't designed to find facts, it did come up with some very clear recommendations that have to be implemented. We will soon have a Head of Strategic HR (a civilian appointed

member) who will report to the Chief of Staff and will be the lead in implementing the IRG recommendations.

There were a number of pillars to the recommendations, the first being that an inquiry will be established. The Tánaiste has announced that while the exact terms of reference aren't finalised, it will be a public, judge led inquiry, that will have significant powers to look at the systems that the Defence Forces have in place and whether they were fit for purpose or not. This may also lead to individual cases being looked at and how they were addressed by the organisation.

There will also be an External Oversight Body, chaired by Prof. Brian MacCraith. They have been given broad terms of reference, which have been published in the last number of weeks. Some of the things they'll be responsible for will be examining our complaints system and seeing if it is fit for purpose? They have a broad remit over a range of other areas from training to administration and HR.

Another area recommended by the IRG was the area of clothing for female serving personnel and particular issues about maternity wear. The Defence Forces Clothing Committee met with external consultants who specialise in the design of uniforms and the next iteration of our uniforms will have female specific uniform variants, which is very positive.



Brig Gen Mulcahy at a recent conference

There were recommendations around our PSS service, specifically around confidentiality clauses and they were more or less already in place.

And then there will be a look at our medical system and

how medical boards are conducted. A lot of the other recommendations are in the HR space which will be the remit of the new Head of Strategic HR.

There is also a recommendation focused on the area of reprisals - identifying if there are incidents where people who have made a complaint have been victimised or ostracised for bringing forward something? But I think the review of the redress of wrong system has to happen first.

Are you concerned at all, Sir that this report is going to affect recruitment levels in the DF, particularly females, which are already in the minority at around 7%?

We have to be sure that the Defence Forces is a safe and positive environment in which to work. That's the primary goal of any employer. The Chief of Staff has been very clear that the Defence Forces will not



**Brig Gen Mulcahy seen
here during a recent
visit to KFOR**

tolerate any incidents of inappropriate behaviour. The IRG report may impact on recruitment, and when the tribunal is established, that may bring more incidents out into the public domain that may have an impact. But we've had very positive indications with regard to our recruitment campaign, even since the publication of the report. This year we established a new Joint Induction Training Centre (JITC) in Gormanston Camp where 60 recruits started training in April of this year, the week after the report was published. We have had more recruits starting throughout the summer and also later on in the year with females as part of those platoons. We also have a cadet competition ongoing. There has been a strong number of applications from females as well as males. Why should anyone join, and women in particular? The Defence Forces is a wonderful organisation, with really fulfilling career opportunities. Our recruitment campaign at the moment is around the message - BE MORE. You can join the Defence Forces and be given every opportunity that you want to take to better yourself, to better your country, to better your family, to better your own life. You can get educated right the way up through to Masters level, with plenty of challenges and opportunities to demonstrate your leadership potential. It's an excellent career. I've no doubt that as an organisation we will come through this particular challenge, and it is a huge challenge for us. But we see the report as an opportunity to make ourselves better, to make ourselves more transparent, so that our personnel have trust in the organisation and that they feel valued within the organisation. This will help retention of our personnel.



Sir, what will the role of the OCSC be going forward?

There are a number of areas that I didn't mention regarding the work of the OCSC. It talks about a range of recommendations around training, and raising cultural awareness in the organisation. I already mentioned the SERR Workshop that we designed ourselves, and UCC will deliver. Those workshops will continue for the foreseeable future and we'll have to engage with the EOB and make sure that they're fully briefed on our plans in this regard. And there's a range of other areas that we've also initiated. We want to ensure that every individual is aware, either on the CONNECT app or from posters in various locations, that if you do experience something, that you're able to reach out to the services available and access them. The work of the OCSC will continue for the foreseeable future. We will also have to sit down with the new Head of Strategic HR when he commences in September and see what the areas of overlap are. The benefit that we can bring to the Head of HR is that the OCSC committee is a very diverse group, across all the services and formations and we can bring a huge amount of information from the ground up as to

the issues and where change is being seen or not being seen. The OCSC also have a role in regard to future surveys, future audits examining if the negative aspects of our culture are changing.

Sir, what is your vision for the culture of the DF in the future?

My vision is for a stronger Defence Forces where all of our personnel are treated first of all with equity, dignity and respect; and where our diversity makes us more operationally effective. That's it in a nutshell. So how does that vision come about? What we know we need to do is to change what some saw as acceptable behaviours of the past and clearly identify to all that these are not acceptable. People need to see visible champions out there. This isn't just coming from the top down. This has to come from the person who's sitting beside you on the APC, on the ship or in a hangar in the Air Corps. It's your friends, it's your peers, it's those above you and it's those below you. If someone sees inappropriate behaviour, they have to stand up to it. I think what we'll see in the immediate future is a spike in the number of cases of inappropriate behaviour being reported.

That's positive, which may seem counterintuitive, but it

is a positive because it means people now trust that if they bring something forward, it will be dealt with swiftly, appropriately, and there'll be no reprisals for it. If you see something inappropriate, you have to call it out, that's fundamental. Hopefully we'll also see a significant increase in the number of females serving in the DF. The target from the Commission on the Defence Forces is over 30% of females serving, which is highly

ambitious when you look at other militaries around the world. But we certainly need to get way beyond 7%. That will make a significant difference to our operational effectiveness. It'll make for better decision making and it will bring equity, dignity and balance across the entire organisation. Ultimately what we want to see, is the Defence Forces being an exemplar in society and in the public sector. We're always at the vanguard of making change, of leading change. We're not afraid of change. And when we do take on something, we always address it wholeheartedly in a very honest, open and transparent way. And if we do that in this instance, I think we will be seen as exemplars of being open to change, being able to change and delivering on change as well. And we will be a stronger Defence Forces.



Here is a link explaining the introduction of Sexual Ethics and Respectful Relationship training for Defence Force members.

NOTICEBOARD



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5km Walk 2023



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The Gainey Cup

1 ACS AT THE US ARMY INTERNATIONAL SCOUT COMPETITION 2023

BY LT ALEX MCNAMARA

PHOTOS BY LT ALEX MCNAMARA

The Irish Defence Forces Cavalry Corps secured an invitation to the biannual International Scout Competition (The Gainey Cup) in Fort Benning, Georgia. Hosted by the Commandant of the United States Army Armour School, the competition (named in honour of Command Sergeant Major (Retd) William 'Joe' Gainey), regularly includes scout squads selected from all the U.S. Army Divisions and U.S. Army Cavalry formations, and also Allied Nations. Encompassing a week of physically and mentally demanding events, the Gainey Cup showcases the competence, physical and mental stamina and competitive spirit of Cavalry Scout Troopers serving in formations that perform Reconnaissance and Security. Gainey Cup winners are recognised as the best scout squad in the world. Twenty two, 6-man teams from around the U.S., and 4 international teams, were tested in every aspect of the scout skill set with events focusing on reconnaissance and security, navigation, stealth infiltration and exfiltration, observation, target positive identification (PID), team communication, U.S. Army doctrine, physical endurance, stress shooting, LFTT, call for fire and vehicle identification. The competition, conducted over a 6 day period, had teams engage in 15 events testing over 55 military skills.

In March this year, the 1st Armoured Cavalry Squadron team consisting of Squad Leader Lt Alex McNamara, Team Leader Sgt Kevin Conlon, Scout Cpl Anthony Sheehy, Scout Tpr Gabrielus Garbencius, Scout Tpr Declan Behan and Scout Tpr Oisín Duffy began an intense training programme designed and overseen by their coaches, Comdt Thomas Tooher and RSM



Orders prior to route recon event



Team member performing a gruelling rope climb on the obstacle course



The Team after completing the sequencing events

James Scanlon. With this being the first time a team from the Defence Forces would compete, the landscape of training encompassed a large array of skills to ensure the team arrived ready for any scenario that the U.S. Army Armour School staff could devise. The restricted preparation timeframe presented to be a challenge from the outset. However, with the assistance and guidance from the ARW, and under the mentorship of a senior ARW CS, the team was put in its best possible position to not

just participate but to compete. In addition to this the team was assisted in their training by many other units within the DFTC, notably The Cavalry School, The Artillery School, CIS group, IWW and the DFPES.

Arriving at Fort Benning late on 23rd April, the team began an intense four day training program. During the course of the four days the team familiarised themselves with six new weapon systems, U.S. Army doctrine, communications equipment, call for fire procedures and scout reports. This was all completed whilst acclimatising to the unrelenting Georgia heat (upwards of 35(+)) plus with humidity of 80%, with morning physical training sessions.

The 28th April saw the commencement of the pre competition team sequencing. As a result of the team performance over four sequencing events, teams would be given the opportunity depending on place, to self-select the specified order of competition events.

Event One pitted all teams against another in a combined score range practice. Using the M4 weapon system, teams engaged 40 pop up targets, changed multiple magazines, whilst adopting different firing positions in a 3 minute time-frame. Event Two began early in the morning with a 5 mile Recon run. At the end of the 5 mile run, teams were asked a number of questions in relation to the route. Sequencing Event Three was a fifty question U.S. military doctrine and vehicle identification exam. Finally, Event Four was a stress shoot that saw squads conduct a manoeuvre live fire event to evaluate their individual strength, endurance and ability to accurately engage threats in a time constrained environ-



Crossing the Finish line during event 4, the stress shoot

ment. This was a huge challenging phase of the competition due to the heat and the huge significance placed on marksmanship but the team were confident in the individual skills, which allowed them to score very well, despite operating new weapons systems.

Having placed 12th after the sequencing events the Defence Forces Cavalry team chose competition order 'Gallegos'. This meant the team would keep the reconnaissance and security ground and tactical phase until the last day. Tuesday 02 May began at 0600 hrs with a communication lane. Using a Singars and Harris radio, the squad was instructed to construct a field antenna and send a multiple coded message to Arizona, over 2500km away. Having successfully completing this event the squad was broken into groups of two for the call for fire event. Using an artillery simulator, teams had to identify, adjust fire and neutralise the EN threat within a given timeframe. Following this event the team was moved to a location where each member was randomly allocated one of the weapon systems they had conducted training on just a few days previously. Each member had to disassemble, reassemble, perform a safety function check and complete immediate action drills on the new weapon systems under time constraints. Events on this day concluded with a conditioning course. This extremely physical obstacle course blended strength, endurance, speed and technique in order to manoeuvre through the course as a team. Two rounds of the course culminated with a 30ft rope climb, which tested each team member's individual physical condition and mental fortitude.



Award Ceremony

After some food, rest and a lot of water the team was ready to attack the next day of events.

At 0500 hrs the team took off on its land navigation event. The terrain for the navigation event was a blend of intricate cross country track systems coupled with dense forest jungle type terrain. This event proved to be a strong point for the Defence Forces Cavalry team, with all members completing the event in under two and a half hours. The second event of the day saw the team employ the U.S. medical principle of TCCC (Tactical Casualty Combat Care). The team was assessed in their ability to render medical aid to two half a million dollar dummies equipped with lifeline sensors. Having quickly accessed and addressed the wounds, the team performed a successful casevac and medevac out of the area. The last event of the day required the team to conduct combat vehicle identification as they looked through the feed

of an unarmed surveillance drone. From this drone feed the team had to correctly identify all Enemy vehicles shown and relay this information to higher HQ using U.S. Army reporting procedures.

The final day began earlier again. At 0400 hrs the team set off on its Route Reconnaissance event. During the event the team was required to disseminate information from an OPOD and gather information on the route with a focus on the curvature and gradient. The team gathered the necessary information accurately and timely before identifying an EN OP, destroying the EN by putting in a successful flanking manoeuvre attack. The next event was a squad live fire exercise as part of an area reconnaissance tasking. Having patrolled into an area, the squad identified and engaged multiple close in targets simulating an advancing enemy after which teams were hunted by an enemy force as they tactically withdrew



Medical Lane event

to the safety of a pickup point. The team achieved a perfect score in this event, winning the event outright. The last event of the day saw the squad conduct an OP Screen action in conjunction with other competitor teams.

Having completed the tactical reconnaissance and security tasking the team enjoyed a quick power nap before beginning the final competition event "The final charge". Beginning with a two mile run the event consisted of a combination of all the events and Cavalry Scout skills that the teams were tested on over the six day period.

Despite extreme temperatures, little to no rest, unfamiliar environments, and foreign weapons, the 1st Armoured Cavalry Squadron team placed 11th overall out of the 22 of the best scout teams from around the world. Their team spirit, communication, enthusiasm, and the comradeship they brought to each event was commended throughout. At the awards ceremony, the Irish team was the only other team alongside the overall winners (13th Light Brigade, Royal Netherlands Army) to receive a standing ovation. Irish Defence Forces participation at the Gainey Cup highlighted the world class Reconnaissance Soldiers produced by the Cavalry Corps, and the Defence Forces, on the International Stage.



The team on the Range, Zeroing the M4



DF International Scout Team + Coaches outside the US Army Manoeuvre Centre of Excellence

UNIFIL

PROVIDED BY COMDT BARRY HANNON

The UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) was established in 1978 in response to a surge in violence on the border between Israel and Lebanon. At the time, this Security Council resolution called for an immediate ceasefire and established UNIFIL to confirm the withdrawal of Israeli forces, restore peace and security, and assist the Lebanese government in restoring authority in the border area. But the peace was short-lived, with UNIFIL stepping in to provide protection and humanitarian assistance to the local population.



The Israel-Hezbollah War in 2006 further necessitated the expansion of UNIFIL, to conduct military observations in

addition to their peacekeeping duties. Following the 2006 crisis, the Council enhanced the Force and decided that in addition to the original mandate, it would, among other things, monitor the cessation of hostilities; accompany and support the Lebanese armed forces as they deploy throughout the south of Lebanon; and extend its assistance to help ensure humanitarian access to civilian populations and the voluntary and safe return of displaced persons.

The effective deployment of the expanded UNIFIL and the activities that the Force now undertakes on a daily basis have been critical in preventing a recurrence of hostilities across the Blue Line and has helped to establish a new strategic military and security environment in southern Lebanon.

In addition to being responsible for monitoring the cessation of hostilities, in the early stages of the implementation of resolution 1701, UNIFIL also accompanied and supported the LAF, as they deployed throughout Southern Lebanon, for the first time in three decades. UNIFIL continues to provide ongoing support to the LAF, whose primary responsibility is ensuring security in the area. Many operations are performed in close coordination with the LAF across its Area

of Operation between the Litani River in the north and the Blue Line (Line of Withdrawal of the Israel Defence Force (IDF)) in the south. These include day and night patrols,

122 INF BN UNIFIL CURRENTLY SERVING IN LEBANON



THE 122 INFANTRY BATTALION

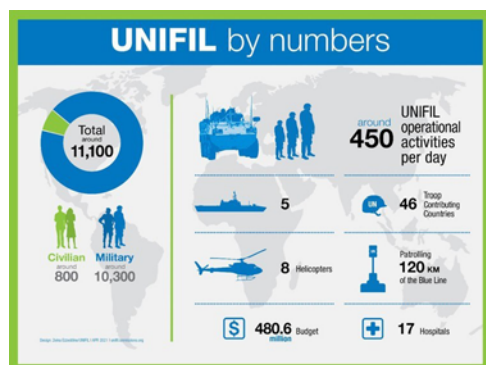
The 122 Infantry Battalion led by Lt Col Cathal Keohane began Phase 2 of Pre-Deployment Training (PDT) on the 13th of March in Kilworth Camp, Co. Cork. It was in Kilworth Camp and its surroundings where the 122 Infantry Battalion started to hone their skills prior to deploying to the Mission Area of South Lebanon in May. This

rigorous training plan culminated in Mission Readiness Exercise which took place in the Glen of Imaal, Co. Wicklow.

The unit has prioritized four key areas in their operational training both pre-deployment and in theatre; the ability to Move, Shoot, Communicate and Medicate. This means the unit rehearses and exercise all foot and vehicular patrols, there are numerous range days with combat shooting practices for dismounts and armor alike, the unit has developed extensive communications training and link up procedures and notably have qualified the entire Battalion as Battlefield First Aiders with each unit member now issued the new Individual First Aid Kits (IFAK). This training has allowed the Battalion to maintain its operational capabilities at the highest levels of readiness throughout the deployment. It keeps the unit agile to the evolving operational environment and supports the application of hard and soft power effects across the area of operations.

A COMPANY 122 INFANTRY BATTALION

A Coy, 122 Inf Bn constitutes the Irish Manoeuvre Company for IRISHPOLBATT, and conducts a significant amount of Framework Operations in the IRISHPOLBATT AOR in order to monitor the Blue Line and maintain a safe and secure environment. A Coy consists of three infantry platoons



of Irish and Maltese troops, and conduct operations in Armoured Utility Vehicles (AUVs) and MOWAG APCs. As a ground holding company, the role of A Coy is to maintain a presence of two platoons in UNP 2-45 and along the Blue Line with one platoon in UNP 6-52. In the event of a major incident, A Coy has the capability to constitute a platoon sized reserve element known as Wildcat to support the BMR when required.



Uniquely among IRISHPOLBATT troops, A Coy personnel maintain a Crowd Riot Control (CRC) capability in order to react to incidents involving hostile crowds. During 122 Inf Bn's tour

of duty A Coy has displayed the high standard of its CRC drills. As part of a major Sector West Combined Exercise (COMBINEX), A Coy, Recce Coy and Italian Sector Mobile Reserve (SMR) troops were required to extract a Polish patrol which had been blocked by a hostile crowd of role players. In addition, A Coy pers also conducted combined CRC training with Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) troops. Training such as this and in other areas like FIBUA enhance LAF tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs), and also enhances understanding and interoperability between LAF and IRISHPOLBATT troops

RECCE COMPANY 122 INFANTRY BATTALION

Recce Company, 122 Inf Bn constitute the Battalion Mobile Reserve (BMR) for IRISHPOLBATT. Part of the BMRs role is to work in close cooperation with (ICCW) other UNIFIL contingents. The Force Commanders Reserve (FCR) consisting of French and Finnish Manoeuvre Companies as well as a Multinational HQ is UNIFILs primary Quick Reaction Force (QRF) deployable at ten (10) minutes Notice To Move (NTM).

Recently, the FCR conducted a deployment to a forward staging area in the IRISHPOLBATT Area of Operations. This deployment was the culmination of training to test the



FCRs ability to deploy Tactical Forward elements at short notice in Battalion (-) strength. The ability to complete these tasks is facilitated by Battalions such as IRISHPOLBATT on the ground. Recce Coy IRISHPOLBATT supported the FCR by conducting a 'Mark and Guide' task to assist rapid deployment of manoeuvre companies



and command elements. This task required 'link up' with the FCR at the boundary of the Battalion Area of Operations, guiding each FCR package to a pre-reconnoitred, secure location known as a 'Vehicle Leaguer' from where it could conduct future operations. Exercises such as this enhance the BMRs ability to interact effectively and efficiently with UNIFIL HQ elements to achieve interoperability and operational objectives.

LT Clare MURPHY - Recce Tp Comdr, Recce Coy — 122 INF BN UNIFIL

I am Lt Clare Murphy from 2 Cavalry Sqn. This is my first appointment overseas and my appointment is Cavalry Troop Commander. As part of my appointment I am in charge of the Quick Reaction Team (QRT). I also have the additional job of Recce Coy training whereby continuous essential training and development will be continued and programmed for the



duration of the deployment.

Phase 2 training was in Kilworth Camp and is where I met the majority of my Troop. Training

proved challenging in that essential training needed to be conducted while also liaising and arranging with the CS personnel for Medicals, Dentals and Ranges. This was also the beginning of a rigorous training environment where we were drilled and trained on vehicle navigation, medial training, DFOM training and counter IED training.

Phase 3 training in the Glen of Imaal was a culmination of all aspects of the training programme from Kilworth. This training in particular is where I felt the most development in running a troop in an operational setting. A major aspect of the training focused on DFOM training where a red, amber and green escalation and reaction SOP was implemented. This training was done in various stages and each patrol commander was driven into a different scenario of different escalations and de-escalations. This is also where the QRT got drilled in Scheme of Defence, Groundhog and Highfield scenarios that we may encounter in UNIFIL. I feel the



FTX scenario prepared us successfully for various scenarios we may encounter and proved vital to reinforce skills.

CPL Raymond THOMPSON - Command Post Ack — 122 INF BN UNIFIL

My name is Cpl Raymond Thompson I am member of 1 Gun Battery 2nd Brigade Artillery Regiment. I am currently deployed on the 122 Inf battalion in UNIFIL with the mortar platoon. This is my 4th trip to Lebanon and my first summer trip. My appointment while deployed in the mission area is Command Post Cpl Ack. It is my responsibility to Lay out a battery of 120mm Mortars and process the firing data that



the Mortars need to get them firing on a target.

As part of pre deployment training I was based in Kilworth Camp for a period of

three weeks where we were rigorously trained on navigation, signals, DOFM and medical training. This culminated in a week long MRX in the Glen of Imaal where we were tested and evaluated to an extremely high standard on all the training we had received. I felt that all the skills and drills we had learned over form up would benefit us once we entered the mission area as a fundamental part of our tasks overseas is patrolling the AO in South Lebanon. Although we are in the mission area we are still upskilling on a daily basis on all our training requirements. I personally feel that the training we received has reinforced our skills and has benefited us as a battalion in the mission area.



Pte Rachel LORDAN Ord Section AAI

I joined the Naval Service in August 2014 at the age of twenty two and on completion of recruit training became an Able Mech onboard L.É. Niamh where I spent two years working in engine rooms with the engineering branch. I then joined the crew of L.É. Eithne in 2017 to go on the final Op Pontus Mediterranean migrant rescue mission. While onboard Eithne I worked both as a Mech and on deck I was given the opportunity to assist the medics with taking on board and caring for the migrants. On return to Ireland, I re-joined the crew of L.É. Niamh and again went to the Mediterranean for Operation Sophia before moving to the Army on a trainee technician scheme.



To become an Armourer Artificer Instrument, I applied for the trainee technician scheme through the Ordnance Corps, on

acceptance into the scheme I attended Carlow Institute of Technology to study Electronic Engineering. Throughout my time in college, I had two baby girls, Skye in 2020 and Willow in 2021, and I was fortunate to be able to move to Munster Technological University to continue on in college and be home with my girls as due to Covid-19 everything had been moved online and I was able to work from home. On completion of the degree, I attended the Ordnance School in the Curragh to complete the weapons phase of the course to finally qualify as the first female AAI of the Defence Forces. As my first appointment as an Armament Artificer Instrumentation in the Defence Forces my role is to look after

the weapons systems and the optical equipment of the 122 Inf Bn in Lebanon.

Once I completed the course, I joined the technicians of the Ordnance Corps of the 122, which consisted of an Ordnance Mechanical Engineer (OME) officer, armament artificer and an armourer and went straight to the Glen of Imaal for the final two weeks of form up for the MRX. Here we were all responsible for the different pre fire checks of the MOWAG's



weapons, remote weapons systems, and Dual Remote weapons systems. The Javelin CLUs are inspected before live firing and as my first job as an AAI it was a great experience to be on the firing line for a javelin shoot and be at MOWAG live firing training exercise with both A Coy and Recce.

CIVIL MILITARY COOPERATION

UNIFIL attaches great importance to relations with the local population among whom the peacekeepers operate. There are several facets to this relationship: these include informing the people of South Lebanon about UNIFIL's mandate and activities; providing or facilitating limited assistance within means and capabilities; respecting and understanding local culture, customs and concerns; participating in community events and ensuring minimum disturbance to normal daily life from UNIFIL's operations in the area. To this end, interactions with the communities are regularly conducted at every level.

Civil Affairs (civilian) and Civil Military Coordination (military) are the main interface between UNIFIL and the communities in which it operates. IRISHPOLBATT CIMIC endeavour to assist the local population in order to facilitate the achievement of military objectives and our mission. Through the Mayor's and elected officials, IRISHPOLBATT coordinate and implement Quick Impact Projects (QIPs) in order to address the needs of the people as identified by the Key Leaders. The types of projects that we have implemented have been focused on addressing critical issues with power, water and waste management in the region. Funding for these projects is drawn from the Governments of Ireland and Poland with the assistance of the Municipality. To date, the 122nd Battalion have provided funding and assistance for a wide array of projects in the local communities of our area of responsibility. The CIMIC cell of the 122 Inf Bn has assisted in projects for a well, solar panels, a bobcat, a waste vehicle and sports equipment just to name a few. The 122 Inf Bn CIMIC cell also has a number of projects in the pipeline and are continuing their planning in order to ensure they are best prepared to assist the local communities. The CIMIC cell's diligence and soft skills are key to maximising our force protection in the local communities.

EXERCISE RAVEN'S CHALLENGE 2023

ENHANCING EXPERTISE THROUGH INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION

BY EOD OFFICER
PHOTOS BY EOD OFFICER

Camp Dodge, Iowa, recently played host to a remarkable five-day exercise known as "Raven's Challenge," coordinated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) from the USA. This event brought together approximately 20 highly skilled teams from various

US police departments, military services, and international participants including an EOD team from the Irish Defence Forces. The ATF conducts Exercise Raven's Challenge on an annual basis, with 4 x exercises ran each year in different locations



DF EOD team member approaches an IED workshop during a training scenario

across the USA. The ATF collates information from throughout the previous year's EOD callouts and identifies scenarios which EOD teams / PSBs (Public Service Bomb Squads) may benefit from training in.

The DF EOD team were paired with another military EOD team from the US and worked closely with them throughout the week, fostering an appreciation between both teams for each other's methods and approaches.



DF EOD approaches an IED

HME LABS (HOMEMADE EXPLOSIVES):

HME labs pose a significant threat due to the accessibility of ingredients and knowledge on homemade explosive production. This scenario aimed to test the teams' abilities in identifying, securing, and neutralizing these volatile environments. The participants demonstrated their expertise in recognizing precursor chemicals, assessing potential hazards, and conducting controlled detonations, ensuring the safety of both the responders and the surrounding communities.

RCIEDS (RADIO-CONTROLLED IMPROVISED EXPLOSIVE DEVICES):

Dealing with RCIEDs requires a high level of technical knowledge and expertise. The teams involved in Raven's Challenge focused on identifying and disabling these devices while minimizing collateral damage. They utilised advanced protective equipment to effectively neutralise the threat posed by RCIEDs, honing their skills in combating this prevalent danger.

IEDS IN TRANSPORT:

EOD teams were confronted with a unique and potentially dangerous situation: an improvised explosive device (IED) left behind by its manufacturer for collection. This scenario aimed to test the teams' abilities to assess and neutralise an abandoned explosive device while ensuring the safety of the surrounding area.

Raven's Challenge showcased the power of collaboration and knowledge sharing among domestic and international law enforcement agencies, military services, and first responders. The exercise not only allowed participating teams to observe and learn from each other's TTPs but also emphasized the importance of adaptability, innovation, and continuous learning in countering the ever-evolving threats of modern society.

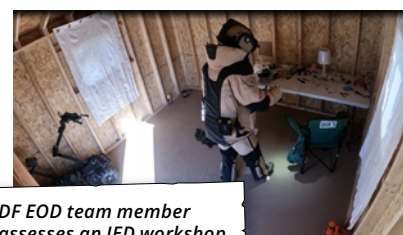


DF EOD team member assesses an IED workshop

Raven's Challenge aimed to promote collaboration, knowledge sharing, and the refinement of Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTPs) in various scenarios. Some of the scenarios which faced the EOD team from the DF are:

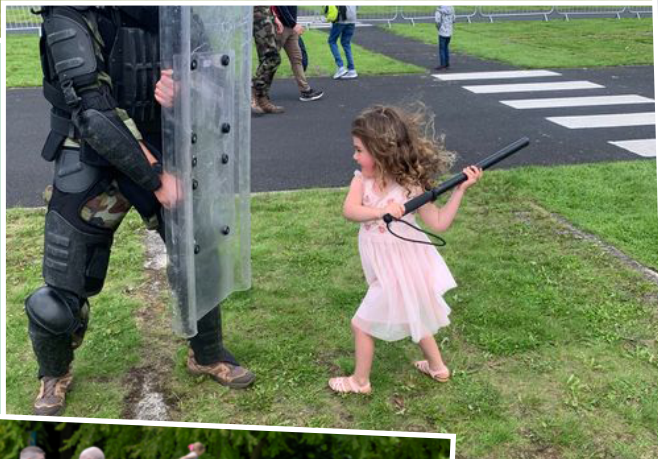
NO LIGHT/LOW LIGHT OPERATIONS:

The first scenario, focused on no light/low light operations, provided a unique opportunity for the teams to enhance their skills in environments where visibility is severely restricted. With the use of night vision equipment, thermal imaging devices, and other specialized tools, the teams navigated through challenging terrains and executed precise manoeuvres, emphasising the importance of coordination and communication in such conditions.



DF EOD team member assesses an IED workshop

DF OPEN DAY



DF OPEN DAY



FORGING RESILIENCE & EXPERTISE: INSIDE THE 14TH SERE LEVEL C INSTRUCTORS COURSE

BY LT STEPHEN KING

INTERVIEW BY CPL ERIC RYAN

PHOTOS BY CPL JONATHAN TUFT

SERE (Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape) training is designed to equip military personnel with the necessary skills and knowledge to survive and operate in hostile environments. The training is extremely robust, as it involves physical and mental challenges that test the limits of the students.



Sgt Eddie O'Neill Mil Col

The SERE Course is 4 Weeks in duration, and is ran out of the Military Training & Survival School in Baldonnell.

The failure rate for the course is variable depending on the student's physical and mental capability,

coupled with their personal attitude towards the course. We have had courses with the full complement of students finish and another course where only one student passed.

SERE instructors are highly trained professionals who impart skills such as survival, evasion techniques and resistance during enemy captivity. The instructor's job is to prepare military personnel for worst case scenarios, ensuring that they have the mental and physical stamina to overcome any obstacles. In this article, we delve deeper into the SERE Instructor course and ask Lt Stephen King from the Military Training & SERE School questions about the course.

Can you describe the qualities you look for in a soldier looking to complete the course?

SERE Instructor candidates are expected to have mental and physical robustness. Due to the demanding nature of the course, candidates should expect to be tested in pressurised settings and various environments. Students must be capable of operating individually and as part of a team for different lengths of time during certain phases of the course.

What are some of the key skills that are taught on the course?

Some of the key skills taught on the course are:

- Basic survival (fire, shelter, water, butchery, field cooking, improvised tools, nutrition, snares and traps)
- Escape & Evasion (Escape & Evasion techniques, escape from restraints, evasive plan of action & isolated personnel reports, foreign weapons training, basic combat tracking and counter dog techniques)
- Resistance Training (Conduct after Capture, psychology,

Geneva Convention, Law of Armed Conflict and Open Source Intelligence)

- Extraction (NATO Standard Heli Extraction Procedures, Ground To Air Signalling)
- Isolated Personnel Recovery (Intro to personnel recovery, personnel recovery operations, reintegration from isolation)



Students shortly after being captured

How would the SERE instructor course differ to that of Special Forces SERE level courses?

Special Forces Operators SERE, will qualify SOF personnel as SERE Level C, but not as a SERE instructor. (Level C is an international requirement for personnel operating in hostile environments and will enable you or your team to facilitate your recovery by personnel recovery forces, if required). While both are physically and mentally demanding courses, SOF SERE approaches the course from an angle that is unique to their Unit, and as expected, the Conduct After Capture phase is longer in SOF training. The SERE Instructor course also differs to that of Special Operations SERE as there is an emphasis on instruction on top of qualifying as SERE Level C. Successful students will be expected to return to their units as a potential USI (Unit SERE Instructor). This will involve running all elements of SERE training ranging



Students & Instructors after course completion



Conduct after capture, a student just after being captured



Course students receiving a brief during the course



Prepping students for extraction

from SERE A, B, C courses and supplementing overseas training missions in SERE training when required. In order for SOF to become Instructors in this area they will need to successfully complete the course ran by the Military Training School in Baldonnell. However, to qualify as a SERE instructor, successful students must return to instruct on a SERE Instructor course in the Military Training & Survival School.

Can you describe a typical day during the course, what are some of the challenges the potential instructors face on the course?

No two days are the same during the SERE Instructor course. However, Week 1 is mostly theoretical with an introduction to practical survival techniques. Week 2 consists of the students putting their theoretical and practical knowledge into practice by way of a 24hr survival exercise to finish the week. Some other topics covered during week 2 are PR (Personnel Recovery) Drills, butchery, coastal survival and various workshops from SMEs.

Week 3 sees the students plan and prepare for an Escape & Evasion exercise. This exercise will require the students to fully immerse themselves into the scenario and will see the students avoid “enemy forces” across a vast exercise area. The exercise will culminate in a resistance phase, which involves numerous role players as part of the exercise scenario.

Week 4, the final week of the course concludes with a 5 day survival exercise. Day 1 one of this exercise requires the students to survive individually for a minimum of 24hrs. The remainder of the week the students will make their way across various terrain to “friendly lines” in order to facilitate their recovery by Personnel Recovery forces.

How can the students be pushed to their limit both mentally and physically in a safe and controlled way?

Safety of the students and instructors themselves is paramount during a course as robust as this. The SERE Instructor course is run by professional and qualified staff who have decades of experience with SERE at home and abroad. This experience has been gained mostly through working with our

international partners and therefore operating by international best practice. Our course syllabus aligns with the SERE Level C guidelines as laid out in the NATO SERE STANAG.

Safety staff, safety supervisors and medically trained personnel from the Air Corps are present at all times and safety is the initial train of thought before any exercise. It is not lost on the Instructors the challenges the body faces during this course, and every element of safety is applied throughout.

Physically:

Students will undergo test conditions that many may have never felt before. Hunger and tiredness after days of tabbing across difficult terrain is a personal test for the individual. Add the importance of time and the necessity to be recovered, the body will undergo physical testing to which few have been exposed to. These conditions are set in order to simulate that of one escaping back to friendly lines on foot with little or no chance of rest or food in a dangerous environment.

Mentally:

There are many challenging tests and scenarios throughout the SERE instructor Course. Arguably the most challenging test would be the students’ ability to keep motivated during the Conduct After Capture phase. The isolation and unknown is overbearing at times but it is solely up to the individual to motivate himself/herself by any means possible to see it through. It must be said that this is extremely difficult to do as sporadic events are happening in between which draws an enormous amount of mental strength to overcome.

As stated, the isolation is not confined to the CAC phase. Students are expected to construct and survive on their own for a large portion of the course. The mental drive and will to survive is something that is paramount during this course.

Have you got any advice on mental and physical preparation for personnel interested in completing this course?

There is an onus on personal physical fitness prior to commencement of the course. This will especially become apparent during weeks 3 and 4 of the course. With regard to mental preparation, there are elements of the course where students themselves agree that the physical battle quickly subsides and the true test is to have mental endurance in order to continue.

Students must have an open mind and willing to immerse themselves into the course and its exercises in order to successfully overcome both challenges whenever they arise.

Sgt O’Neill looking focused for what lies ahead



EMPOWERING VETERANS: THE MISSION OF ÓGLAIGH NÁISIÚNTA NA HÉIREANN

BY CORMAC KIRWAN CEO ONE
PHOTOS BY WAYNE FITZGERALD

INTRODUCTION

Óglaigh Náisiúnta na hÉireann (Organisation of National Ex-Service Personnel - ONE) is a Veterans Organisation, Registered Charity, Company Limited by Guarantee, an Approved Housing Body, and a Sustainable Energy Community for veterans of the Defence Forces.

ONE was established on 10 March 1951 and the primary objective is to "Support the needs of Irish veterans by the provision of accommodation to homeless and other veterans in need of such domestic accommodation in its Veterans' Homes and the provision of other advice and support to veterans through its nationwide network of Branches and Veterans Support Centres". Comradeship, Advocacy, and Remembrance are ancillary objectives. Our services are available to all veterans of the Defence Forces and we facilitate veterans from other countries from time to time.

ONE's current capacity provides accommodation (board and lodging) for 51 veterans, who would otherwise be homeless, in its four residential homes in Athlone, Cobh, Dublin and Letterkenny. ONE is developing its fifth home in Cork City which is scheduled to open by the end of 2023 and two further homes in Limerick and Kildare which we plan to open in 2024. ONE has also developed a nationwide network of Branches and Veteran's Support Centres and has a counselling service for veterans of the Defence Forces.

HOMES FOR VETERANS

The provision of board and lodging is currently achieved through our homes in Athlone, Cobh, Dublin, and Letterkenny. The Dublin home (Brú na bhFiann) is located in Smithfield and has thirty five bedrooms dedicated to homeless veterans. The home in Letterkenny (Brú Doire Feá) has six bedrooms, while Athlone (Brú Chostúim) and Cobh (Brú na Farraige) can each facilitate five veterans. ONE continued its programme of improving its current homes in 2022, supported by the Department of Defence through the Dormant Account Funds, with over €115,000 invested in capital improvement projects.

Our fifth home in Cork City (Brú Uí Choileáin) with six bedrooms is being developed in partnership with Cork City Council and is scheduled to open by the end of 2023. Our sixth home in Limerick (Brú an tSáirséalaigh) with five bedrooms is being developed in partnership with Limerick City and County Council and the Department of Defence, and ONE's seventh home in Kildare (to be named) with six bedrooms is being developed in partnership with Kildare County Council. By the end of 2024, ONE will have sixty eight single bedrooms for homeless veterans nationwide with a

target of having eighty bedrooms by the end of 2026 with further developments in Galway and Louth.

Ryan & McConnell (2015) identified that it cost approximately €32,000 a year for every homeless person. While ONE receives funding through the Dublin Regional Homeless Executive in support of our home in Dublin, none of our other homes receive state funding for running costs. ONE pays approximately €7,700 net annually per homeless veteran in our homes outside of Dublin exclusive of residents' contributions. This costing per homeless veteran represents significant value for money.

VETERAN SUPPORT CENTRES AND BRANCHES

ONE has developed a nationwide network of Veteran's Support Centres to provide veterans with information, advice, someone to listen and somewhere to meet with former comrades. Our Veteran Support Centres are seen as a cross between a meeting place and an advice centre and provides valuable support within the veteran community. Early intervention alleviates social stresses and significantly reduces homelessness among veterans. Veteran Support Centres staffed by volunteer members are now located in: Athlone; Athy; Casement Aerodrome; Cathal Brugha Bks, Dublin; Cavan; Cobh; Collins Bks, Cork; Curragh Camp; Dundalk; Finner Camp, Donegal; Galway; Kilkenny; Limerick; McKee Bks, Dublin; and Wexford. Of the fifteen Veteran

"NO IRISH VETERAN LEFT BEHIND"

"FREE" VETERAN SUPPORT & CONFIDENTIAL COUNSELLING SERVICE



STEVEN SHIELDS
086 138 0825



AUDRA LARKIN
085 218 2620

ONE Veteran Support Service:
Counselling and Advocacy Support. Private non-judgemental listening service, you can contact Steven or Audra by phone call, text, Whats App video or a face-to-face option on the above numbers.



Óglaigh Náisiúnta na hÉireann (ONE)
Organisation of National Ex-Service Personnel
WWW.ONE-VETERANS.ORG



Support Centres, eleven are located within a Defence Forces installation, with four located outside – Athy, Cavan, Cobh and Limerick. In addition to our Veteran Support Centres, ONE has developed a nationwide network of thirty-eight Branches which primarily provide comradeship to veterans.

VETERAN COUNSELLING SERVICE

ONE offers a counselling service and is there to listen and to provide veterans with direct access to a designated Veteran Support Team and ONE's Confidential Counselling Service. Full time Veteran Support Officers (Counsellors) are in:

- Head Office in partnership with the Leopardstown Park Hospital Trust.
- Brú na bhFiann (Dublin) in partnership with the HSE Dublin North Community Healthcare Organisation (CHO).
- Southern Area Council in partnership with the Tomar Trust and Representative Association of Commissioned Officers (RACO) from 01 April 2023.
- Business Cases were submitted to Cork / Kerry CHO and Sth Dublin, Kildare and West Wicklow CHO for 'Grant Aid', similar to HSE Dublin North CHO, to employ Veteran Support Officers in those CHO's.

FUNDING

It costs over €1,100,000 per annum for current services, not including capital costs. ONE receives approximately €475,000 from State / Local Authority funding annually in respect of those services. Therefore considerable funding must be raised. Funding streams are volatile in nature and while we can plan expenditure, planning income is a far greater challenge. ONE will therefore continue to develop more predictable funding streams.

FUTURE PLANNING

ONE would love to forecast an end to the plight of homeless veterans but we believe the situation will continue to dis-improve. This, coupled with other challenges facing veterans, is why we are constantly developing our services. In 2023 ONE will:

- Further develop ONE's counselling service for veterans throughout Ireland who need such a service, including a 24/7 helpline capability.
- Continue to improve the facilities in our existing homes, including an Energy Master Plan in partnership with the SEAI.
- Complete the development of a fifth home; Brú Uí Choileáin in Cork City with six bedrooms for homeless

veterans and complete the planning of our sixth and seventh homes which we plan to open in Limerick and Kildare in 2024.

- Further the development of our fifteen Veteran Support Centres and open further Centres as required.
- Complete further courses of training/education in Mental Health First Aid and other associated programmes..
- Further progress a strategy to ensure that ONE is a diverse and inclusive Veteran's Organisation that draws from the breadth of those who served in the Defence Forces; gains strength from that range of knowledge, experience and talent; and welcomes, respects and values the unique contribution of every individual.
- Continue to implement ONE's Strategic plan – ONE75 – that charts the future of the organisation out to 2026, the 75th anniversary of its founding.

HOW O.N.E. MAKES A DIFFERENCE

51 BEDS
Provided for homeless veterans every night

1,000 VETERANS
kept safely off the streets to date

19,000 BED NIGHTS
a year, between O.N.E. Homes in Athlone, Cobh, Dublin & Letterkenny.

90% OF HOMELESS VETERANS
supported move on to permanent accommodation.

Óglaigh Náisiúnta na hÉireann (ONE)
Organisation of National Ex-Service Personnel

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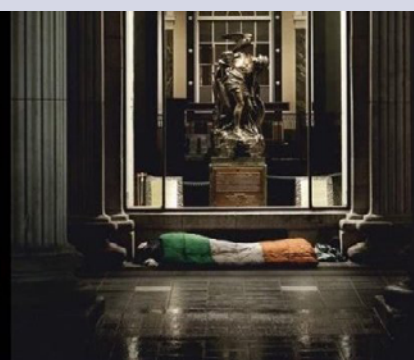
Finance is required to support many of the foregoing initiatives. New marketing and fundraising initiatives will be launched during 2023, including Hope Couture, and your enduring support is deeply appreciated.

CONCLUSION

ONE, whose primary pillar is the provision of support for veterans in Ireland, also fosters comradeship, advocates on behalf of veterans, and remembers those who served. We will be successful when we can grow the level of support to veterans through our Homes, Branches, Veteran Support Centres and Counsellors, while ensuring that we comply with all governance provisions.



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"GO MEAR, MÁIRSEÁIL"

4 DAY MARCH IN NIJMEGEN, THE NETHERLANDS

BY LT (AR) FERGAL FITZGERALD
PHOTOS BY LT (AR) FERGAL FITZGERALD

The Vier Daagse Marches (4 Day Marches) is an annual walking event held in the Dutch city of Nijmegen during the third week of July and is open to both military and civilian participants. Entrants undertake one of four distance categories dictated by their age: 30km, 40km, 40km (Military), and 50km each day for 4 consecutive days.

Dubbed "The walk of the world", the 4 Daagse is the largest multi-day walking event in the world and 2023 saw the 105th edition of the marches with 47,000 entrants from over 70 different countries.

The Marches have a proud tradition stretching back 114 years to the first March in 1909 when 300 Dutch soldiers completed a 150km route march via a series of garrisons. Routes and distances changed over the early years and eventually the 4 Daagse became permanently located in the southern city of Nijmegen on the river Waal in 1925. Marches did not occur during both world wars and more recently the 2020 and 2021 editions were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic with the walk returning in 2022.

Military participants must carry a minimum weight of 10kg throughout the march which is spot-checked at random points along the route. Military participants can enter either as individuals or as part of a team which must be made up of no less than 11 members. Individuals have significant flexibility on how they approach their march, their rest stops, and their chosen pace. Teams, however, have much less flexibility with strict departure times and must remain as a group at all times, particularly when reaching control points where the whole team must be present or face instant disqualification.

Members of the Army, Navy, Air Corps and Reserve have successfully completed previous editions of the Marches and a call for expressions of interest was released across 2 Brigade in September 2022 followed by an online briefing on training requirements and what to expect at the event itself.

Training is essential and consisted of one team training weekend each month, combined with individual training – each member of our team clocked up at least 300 kilometres before departing for Nijmegen. The final team of 11 Army Reservists, drawn from 2 Eng Gp, 2 BTC, 7 Inf Bn and 27 Inf Bn, departed for the Netherlands on the 15th of July and reached our military accommodation in Camp Humensoord

later that evening. The 2 Brigade Team were joined in Nijmegen with individual walkers from Air Corps, 1 Cn Cois and DFTC bringing the total number of Irish participants up to 17.

For the duration of the Marches, military participants are housed in Camp Humensoord, a temporary camp located in woodland approx. 5km south of Nijmegen city centre. Built to house 7,500 military personnel, the camp is built from scratch annually and consists of accommodation, ablutions, dining, medical and recreation marquees along with a temporary fire station, police station, administration cabins with its own bus stop and shuttle bus service to and from the city centre. Sunday morning commenced with a Parade on the camp square marking the official opening of the camp and the raising of 32 national flags with the Irish flag raised by Lt Alan Markey (27 Inf Bn) and Coy Sgt Brian O'Keeffe (7 Inf Bn).



Each day individuals are the first to cross the start line and depart between 0400 hrs and 0500 hrs followed by teams who are allocated a different daily departure time from the camp. Tuesday 18th July saw the 2 Brigade Team cross the start line at 0600 hrs for Day 1 and cover a 43km loop north of Nijmegen crossing the river Waal over Waalbrug (Waal Bridge). This is the iconic arch bridge that was famously captured by

the US 82nd Airborne Division as part of Operation Market Garden during the Second World War. The route continued through the town of Elst, back over the Waal and finishing back "home" in Camp Humensoord.

Logistically, Military Personnel are supported at a series of designated rest stops located at approx. 15km intervals. These stops provide essentials like water refill, energy drinks, snacks, tea / coffee and toilet facilities and are a welcome chance to take boots off and rest tired feet. The rest stops are staffed by various Dutch military units who are deployed on the ground for the duration of the Marches, staying one step ahead of the marching teams as they go. Each night they occupy their designated rest stops along the following day's route and have everything set up by the time the various military teams start to filter through the next morning. Medical support is provided via Rode Kruis (Red Cross) volunteers in large medical tents at different points along the route. Thankfully none of our team required medical



attention, nonetheless, it was reassuring to see that support was available if any member of our team needed assistance.

Statistically, Day 2 sees the largest number of withdrawals for various reasons including, fatigue, injury, or a lack of training. Our team remained intact and followed a similar routine with an early start of 0530 hrs, a march away from the city and into the Dutch countryside to the small town of Wijchen to the west of Nijmegen completing a 38km loop and back once more to Camp Humensoord.

Day 3 is one of the toughest days of the Marches, 81 km covered and starting off with limited rest on tired feet knowing you're only at the halfway mark with 2 full marathons to go. Morale is essential to keeping spirits up and promoting a can-do attitude; there's a fantastic sense of camaraderie amongst military detachments as teams from different nationalities drive and encourage each other on throughout the course. Thursday is known as the day of the 7 hills and the route took our team southeast of Nijmegen to the town of Groesbeek and along the famous Groesbeek heights which overlook Nijmegen and would be familiar with any students of Operation Market Garden. Today, Groesbeek is widely known for its Canadian War Cemetery with 2,338 Canadian soldiers interred there at the end of the Second World War.

Crowds represent a further challenge faced during Day 3. Teams typically march at a consistent, steady pace and various route's part and re-join depending on the chosen distance. For approx 10km all four routes of the Vierdaagse (30km, 40km, 40km (Military), and 50km) combine to cover the 7 hills. This leads to congestion on the route as walkers slowly progress up each incline, others simply grind to a halt and stop in the middle of the road, adversely impacting the team's planned pace. Our Team did their best to press ahead and gathered a small following of walkers eager to keep to their planned timings. Time spent stalling in crowds eats into badly needed rest and recovery time back in the camp.

Day 4, Friday, presented a similar physical and mental challenge as the team prepared for its final day and faced into 45km of marching. It was the longest day of the March with our team setting off in a cool mist before dawn, ideal walking conditions and a vital window to make as much progress as possible before the energy sapping mid-day heat kicks in. On Friday the team really felt the presence of a new and much welcomed team member – the cheering crowds lining almost the entire route urging teams to keep going the whole way to the finish line. The Royal Dutch Airforce put on a fantastic display overhead with F16 fighting falcons, C130 Hercules and AH-64 Apache attack helicopters criss-crossing the route on its way south from Nijmegen as we crossed the Maas River via



the impressive John S. Thompson Bridge at Grave, also taken by 82nd Airborne Division during Operation Market Garden.

The route snaked its way through the towns of Grave and Beers, then crossed the river Meuse via pontoon bridge constructed at the town of Cuijk where the team stopped at their final military rest area before pressing on through the village of Mook for a final 10km to the Military finish line at Charlemagne on the outskirts of Nijmegen. There, both the team and individual participants were met by Colonel Sean Murphy, Deputy Military Representative to Brussels who presented the Vierdaagskruis (Cross of the Four Days) to each member of the team.

The team took a brief rest and departed for the final 5 km march into the city centre, thankfully this time minus the 10kg weight they had carried for the previous 163km. With cheering onlookers, the final 5km flew by marking the end of the team's 168km journey.

Objective achieved, our 2 Brigade team completed the 4 Daagse intact, and this would not have been possible without permission and support from GOC 2 Brigade, Brig Gen Tony Cudmore, Col Sean Murphy, Lt Col Gary Skinner (2 Bde HQ), Lt Col Tom Fox (OC 7 Inf Bn), Lt Col Frank Colclough (OC 27 Inf Bn), Comdt John Murphy (OC 2 Eng Gp), and Comdt John Moody (OC 2 BTC).



Vierdaagse website

If you are interested in finding out more about the 4 Daagse, please contact Lt Fergal FitzGerald 2 BTC via email fergal.fitzgerald@defenceforces.ie

HOMES FOR HEROES

CENTENARY OF THE KILLESTER GARDEN VILLAGE — IRISH WW1 EX-SERVICEMEN HOUSING ESTATE

BY ARMN AARON CRAMPTON
PHOTOS BY ARMN AARON CRAMPTON

100 years ago this year, the largest Irish WW1 ex-servicemen housing estate on the island of Ireland, the Killester Garden Village, was completed. It comprised of 247 bungalows and was the flagship estate for returning Irishmen from what some dubbed 'the war to end all wars'.



Killester Remembrance Ceremony 2022, Royal British Legion Standard, Dublin Military Veterans Standard and the National Colours

Under the Irish Land (Provision for Sailors and Soldiers) Act of 1919 the British Government started to build housing for the Irish WW1 ex-servicemen in Ireland. The plans started for the Killester estate which was modelled off the 'Garden City' concept which comprised of low density, semi-rural housing with large gardens and communal spaces. Construction began in Killester in 1920 for 247 bungalow houses in this concept, while in the background the War of Independence was raging on. The Killester estate totalling 39 acres was broken down into three sections, The Demesne, Middle Third and Abbeyfield. It was intended that the estate be broke down into military hierarchy with Commissioned Officers in the Demesne, Non-Commissioned Officers in Middle Third and Soldiers and Sailors in the largest section of Abbeyfield; however the plan was scuppered when houses were swapped and allocated on a first come first served basis. The estate has its own train station built in 1923 which is now Killester DART Station. A bus company was also set up to serve the new community; ironically named 'Contemptible Bus Company Ltd' after the 'Old Contemptible's' who were the first British troops who landed in France in 1914. Some local small shops were set up in the estate as well as a Legion Hall built in 1932 which replaced an old Army Hut which stood on the green in Abbeyfield before the hall was built, this hut was burnt down in an arson attack in 1928. The



National Army Buglers in uniform attending the Armistice Day ceremony in Killester in 1923

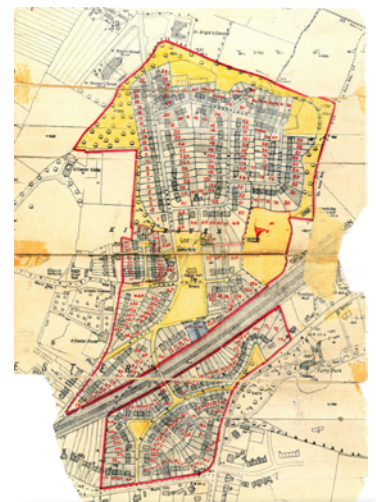
Legion Hall, which it is locally named, was a community centre for this military housing estate and served as a branch of the Royal British Legion who provided care and support to the ex-servicemen and families in Killester.

From 1930 onwards there was a demand for housing for Irish WW1 ex-servicemen and the original Killester Garden Village of 247 bungalows was expanded in the early 1930's with infill houses created and a new section to the estate added called The Orchard. These were two storey houses and built by the Irish Sailors and Soldiers Land Trust which was set up in 1924 who continued to build and maintain ex-servicemen's housing throughout the Irish Free State. The trust was made up of representatives from Dublin, Belfast and London. In 1924 a very unknown event to the general public occurred in Dublin with the first British Minister to visit the new Irish Free State visiting to meet the new Government. Mr F.O. Roberts was the British Minister of Pensions and a part of the visit was dedicated to visiting the Killester Garden Village and meeting and chatting to the Irish WW1 ex-servicemen and families living here. Mr Roberts was well received in Killester, his visit to meet the Government was to discuss pensions for the Irish WW1 ex-servicemen which in the end were paid to all.

The Killester Garden Village was well ahead of its time when built in the early 1920s as it was based on Ebenezer Howards 'Garden City Concept'. This concept was to create new suburban towns of semi-rural, low-density houses with large recreational spaces, with affordable housing. It's vision was a perfect blend of nature and city.

This concept was the perfect housing model for the Killester veterans as many of these ex-servicemen suffered with 'Shell-shock' from the battlefields which we now know as PTSD. Many of the veterans here in Killester also suffered with physical disabilities from the frontlines. The Killester Garden Village provided a unique place for the ex-servicemen and their families, being a quiet and peaceful area surrounded by nature, a nice environment compared to the trenches of the Somme or headlands of Gallipoli.

The Killester estate had a huge mix of ex-servicemen living here; some British Army, Royal Navy and Royal Flying Corps (later the Royal Air Force) – the majority of the Killester ex-servicemen were serving before WW1 and a handful had served in the Boer War! Interestingly enough one Killester



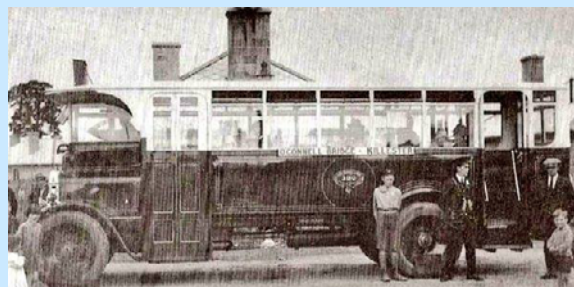
Map of the Killester Garden Village 1930s. C. Patrick H. Lynch



The ARP Corps in Killester during the Emergency



An example of one of the WW1 ex-servicemen houses, 90 Abbeyfield



The Contemptible's Bus Company Ltd in Killester (named after the Old Contemptible's of WW1)

ex-servicemen Alexander Walker was an Antarctic Explorer before the war serving onboard the Scotia on the Scottish expedition led by William Speirs Bruce. There was also about a dozen Killester ex-servicemen who joined the new National Army from 1922, one example was a Patrick Barrington who served with the Royal Dublin Fusiliers in WW1, then joined the National Army and was based at the Curragh Camp. There was also one Killester ex-serviceman who was a battle-hardened Regimental Sergeant Major Samuel Leech whom the National Army sought as an military advisor. Another Killester ex-servicemen Daniel McAuliffe was alleged to be in the IRA during the War of Independence and even assisted Sam Maguire in raiding British Army depots. Killester mainly remained unscathed during both the War of Independence and Civil War apart from one notable incident which was the killing of Anti-Treaty Volunteer Michael Neville by the National Army in 1922, near the Killester Graveyard, he was a native of Co Clare.

So far we have found three Killester ex-servicemen awarded the Military Cross, one the Military Medal and a handful being awarded Distinguished Conduct Medals, Distinguished Service Medals and Meritorious Service Medals. We have also found a total of 38 different Service/Corps/Regiments represented. Of these, 10 different Irish units have been identified. A total of 70 men have been identified as serving with these Irish units.

12 of the Killester ex-servicemen had been Prisoners of Wars (POWs) during WW1 in German Camps, one ex-serviceman Thomas Croke was captured in 1914 by the Germans and only repatriated in 1919! He suffered with paranoia for the rest of his life in Killester. Another ex-serviceman was held captive at a camp on the Baltic Sea. The whole ideal of the Killester Garden Village was built purposely by its visionaries to aid in the recovery and wellbeing for these Irish WW1 ex-servicemen especially those who suffered with insanity, paranoia, schizophrenia, alcoholism and physical disabilities. The estate was an idyllic and peaceful place with a strong sense of community and common bond for these veterans and families to live and settle after the war although the effects of war was still carried with the ex-servicemen for many years after it ending in 1918.

Interestingly enough two of the wives of Killester ex-servicemen were Nurses in WW1, they worked in what was known as Voluntary Aid Detachments, so it was not only the men serving in WW1 but the women also!

The Killester Garden Village had its very own 'Officer In Charge' for the estate. Captain James De Lacy MC formerly of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers lived in 21 The Demesne and was the Superintendent of the estate; his roles included dealing with any issues in the estate be it maintenance, rent or family issues, being a link to the Irish Sailors and Soldiers Land Trust and he would help in any events in the estate like the British Minister visiting. He was awarded his Military Cross for gallantry when he was put in command of a Battalion when all senior officers were killed and he went forward to the enemy in harm's way killing three of the enemy.

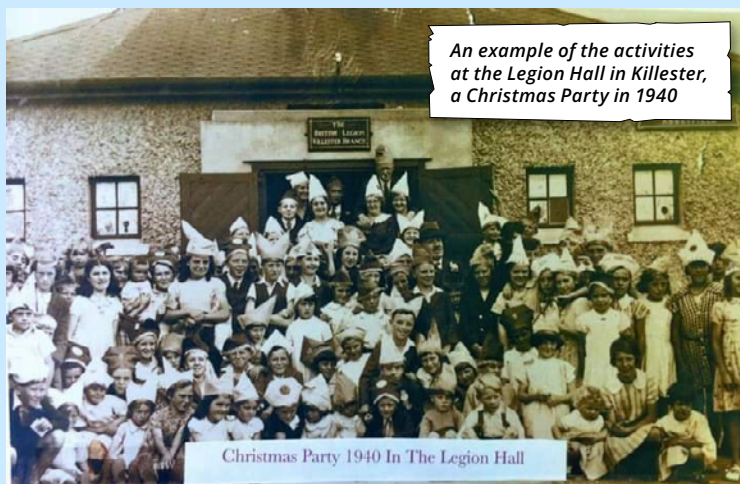
11th November 1923 saw the first Armistice Day ceremony take place in 1923 with a huge turnout by the Killester community. The ceremony took place on the greens at Abbeyfield and Middle Third in Killester with the ex-servicemen under the control of Sgt Major J. A. McBrien formerly of the Royal Irish Fusiliers who marched the men

onto parade, the officers fell in, including Capt De Lacy. The event included the Last Post, 1 minutes silence, Reveille and a speech by the guest speaker Major Bryan Cooper TD who served in WW1 and was then elected to Dáil Éireann as an Independent TD, his speech was quite emotive and resonates with today in some ways:

"For it is no small thing we have accomplished. Together with our Allies, we have broken the strength of the greatest military

power that the modern world has ever known – an Empire whose purpose was solely directed to securing supremacy in war.

And wherever the battle was fiercest, there was the Irish soldier to be found. Irishmen stood in the gap at Mons, Irishmen shattered the power of Turkey in Gallipoli and Palestine, Irishmen were foremost on the blood-drenched steeps of the Somme, and Irishmen North and South stood side by side victorious on the ridge of Messines.



An example of the activities at the Legion Hall in Killester, a Christmas Party in 1940

Christmas Party 1940 In The Legion Hall



Residents of Killester, veterans from the ONE, Royal British Legion and IUNVA with the Lord Mayor of Dublin at the Killester Remembrance Ceremony in 2022

Turn where you will, read what history you choose, no one can say that in the day of battle – Irishmen did less than their duty.

And now that the day of battle is past and we are in civilian clothes again, our duty is not at the end. We have come back to a world which was utterly changed, wherein the old landmarks have vanished, but the old orders stand. "Look to your front", "hold your head up", obey the orders of those in authority: above all, have courage. That is what Ireland needs to-day and if we are strong enough to do that we shall once again be rendering a supreme service to our country, and Ireland will have the cause to be proud of us not only as soldiers, but as citizens."

— **Major Bryan Cooper MC TD, Armistice Day, Killester 1923**

The event was also attended to by two National Army Buglers who played at the event in remembrance of the Killester veterans fallen comrades in WW1; all of this taking place with the Irish Civil War taking place in the background.

During 'The Emergency' in Killester the ex-servicemen and now their sons played a part in both supporting the Defence Forces or in supporting the Allied Forces. An Air Raid Precaution unit (ARP) and Local Defence Force (LDF) was set up during WW2 both serving to protect the community of Killester and surrounding areas in case of bombings or invasion. A story passed on from an elderly resident who remembers the unit jokingly said that the ARP unit in Killester was the best trained in Ireland due to them all being WW1 veterans!

Another factor of WW2 in Killester was that many of the original WW1 ex-servicemen and now their sons went onto serve and fight in the British Forces in support of the Allied Forces, tragically some of their sons did not return to Killester post WW2.

As the Killester Garden Village is in its centenary year 1923-2023, 100 years since the completion of this Great War

veterans housing estate which is a flagship and prime model of housing the Killester Garden Village Committee plans to mark the centenary with a Community Day on Saturday 26th August where we hope to launch the Killester Centenary Book which comprises of the first full and detailed history of all the original 247 WW1 ex-servicemen and families. This project is currently being researched by Michael Nugent and Nigel Henderson who are two WW1 researchers from Northern Ireland. Alongside this research and publication project our committee are currently engaging with Dublin City Council in an effort to create a small community garden at the green in Abbeyfield in the estate, this will be also mark the centenary in creating a public amenity for all in the community today and will have an interpretation signage showcasing our communities unique and often hidden history in Dublin.

I, Aaron Crampton, am the current Chairman of the Killester Garden Village Committee and founded the group a number of years ago. I am a 4th generation resident of Killester, as my Great Grandfather Sgt John Brophy was allocated a bungalow in Abbeyfield in 1928, he was formerly of the Highland Light Infantry and Royal Military Police, fought and survived both WW1 and WW2 and was in various battles throughout WW1 and also involved in Dunkirk in WW2. We now host an annual remembrance ceremony every November and have both Defence Forces and British Army veterans in attendance.

Our group wish to promote our community's unique military and social history, remembering and honouring the ex-servicemen/women of the Killester Garden Village, and promoting the efforts of peace and reconciliation and shared history of the Irish Soldier in WW1 as both communities North and South took part and sacrificed together.



You can find out more about us, the area and our project on Facebook, Twitter (Killester Garden Village Committee) and on [our website](#)

DEFENCE FORCES CAMOGIE RETURNS

BY CAPT CATHERINE BARRETT
PHOTOS BY CAPT BARRETT



Recent training session

After more than a 10 year hiatus, camogie is back up and running in the Defence Forces. The relaunch of the sport was marked with the

participation in the Chaplin's and Parson's cup, hosted in Galway in April where players from all over the country and all three services, both RDF and PDF joined the mens' hurling side for a tournament. Over 30 camogie players were involved in the inaugural event in Galway which was hosted at Liam Mellows Hurling Club. So far there has been great buy in from right across the Defence Forces, with nearly 70 players and facilitators involved.

The partnership with the men's hurling side is one of the most important aspects of the newly relaunched Defence Forces Camogie. Often once a new sport is started up, or in this case relaunched, the challenge can be ensuring that the sport can continue grow and develop without fizzling out. Coordination and cooperation with the men's hurling side, led by Comdt Stephen Molumphy, is key to ensuring that camogie can be relaunched in a sustainable manner, making prolonged continuity more viable by allowing for the pooling of resources and sharing expertise. It



DF Team performing warm up drills

also promotes positive, strong working relations between male and female players. While the sports are naturally played separately, the spirit of inclusion, respect and competition is promoted by allowing the male and female sides to work together. It is particularly appropriate and timely

given the gradual movement towards further integration of men's and women's Gaelic sports.

Also key to ensuring that Defence Forces Camogie can continue and grow is maintaining an inclusive and welcoming environment, and actively avoiding anything that resembles a clique or an exclusive closed group. Keeping the players and facilitators at the heart of all the activities and plans is important. The club is driven to promote an environment where everyone can put forward suggestions and ideas and drive initiatives.

Promoting and driving women's sport in the Defence Forces is vital. While women still account for a minority of the personnel that make up the organisation, at times it can be normal to work in an environment where you are only interacting with a very small number of other women in your day to day. Women's sport allows ladies to meet, to get to know each other and to network in an informal environment. It allows working



Team drills at a recent team session

relations to develop organically between members of the organisation who might not necessarily have had that opportunity to meet one another. Most of all though, it is a chance to get out, clear the head, develop physical fitness and have the craic with a great bunch of ladies from all over the country.

There are multiple fixtures and plans forecast for the near future and beyond. Training days, representative matches, 7 a side

DF Team picture from a recent match



tournaments, combined camps with the hurling side and potential international opportunities – both for travel and to host are being developed. New kit and equipment has also been purchased through the Defence Forces Fitness and Sports Policy Section.

Following the success of the recent training day held in the DFTC, with coaching provided by Comdt Andrew O'Shaughnessy, a joint hurling and camogie camp took place in Kilworth Camp in early September (see photos).

Participation in Defence Forces Camogie is open to all female personnel in the PDF and RDF. There is a wide spectrum of ability and experience amongst the players currently involved including some of the best players in the country and some returning to play for the first time in years as well as some first timers. The club was relaunched with the intention of catering as broadly as possible to all players; being able to field competitive teams to represent the Defence Forces and providing high end coaching whilst also bringing on the skills of new or returning players. We would encourage everyone who is interested to get involved, including those both male and female who might want to get involved and help out in a supporting capacity.

It has been a good start for Defence Forces Camogie, and so far there has been a bigger than expected buy in from players across the country as well as the formation of a talented and devoted management and selector team. We are looking forward to representing the Defence Forces in matches, working and training closely with the hurlers and generally growing and developing as a team while enjoying days out on the pitch with our friends and colleagues.



Team picture from a recent match



Cpl Fran Fitzhenry giving his pre match talk

DF Sports & Clubs Update

FOR REGULAR UPDATES ON ANY OF THESE CLUBS, PLEASE LOG ONTO THE CONNECT APP



Golf: 2 Bde winning team of the DF matchplay, from L-R Cpl Simon Hogan, Pte Lee Scanlon, Comdt Elaine Guinan, Cpl Richard Finn, Comdt Dave Farragher, Sgt Brendan Healy, Pte Padraig Kelly. 1 Bde beat the DFTC and 2 Bde beat the AC in the semi-finals played in the morning and 2 Bde won the final in afternoon.



Golf: Cpl Jenifer Kingston intermediate category winner



Golf: Sgt Martin Drohan (Retd) veteran winner



Golf: Comdt Regina Foley winner of the junior category being presented with her prize by GOC DFTC Brig Gen McGuinness



Golf: Cpl Richard Finn senior category winner



Rowing: DF team competing at a recent event



Rowing: DF rowing teams early morning sessions



Sailing: Recent DF basic sailing course

GAA: Participants at the recent DF Ladies Football Competition



GAA: Cpl Dawn Hannon captain of the DFTC/NS combined team receiving the Cup from Comdt Ronan Carberry 2 i/c 1 Inf Bn



Soccer: Players proudly with the Tri Colour



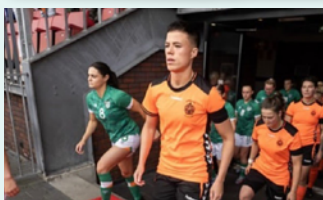
Soccer: DF women's soccer team at the recent world games



Soccer: Players celebrating after scoring a goal



Soccer: 2/Lt Eimear Nolan looking focused on the match ahead



Soccer: Sgt Kim Turner a true veteran of the DF women's soccer team



DF HURLING & CAMOGIE

The DF Ladies Gaelic Football recently held their annual Inter-Bde Competition at Liam Mellows GAA pitch in Galway. Following some competitive football the DFTC/NS combined team emerged victorious, with an inspiring performance from their Captain Cpl Dawn Hannon. As usual, the competition served as an excellent day out, with quality football, social interaction and comradery to the fore.

Rugby: Pte Caoimhe Molloy has also being selected for the Leinster Squad for the upcoming Vodafone Women's Interprovincial Championship



Rugby: Lt Meabh O'Brien has being selected for the Leinster Squad for the upcoming Vodafone Women's Interprovincial Championship



Rugby: Tom Sheehan with the silky skills of a back trapped in a forward's body

The DF Championships was recently hosted by the DFTC in Mount Wolesey Golf Club over two days on the 12/13 June. The course was presented in great condition and proved a challenge to all who played over a very enjoyable two days. The DF Matchplay was held in the Royal Curragh Golf Club on the 28th June. 1 Bde beat the DFTC and 2 Bde beat the AC in the semi-finals which was played in the morning and 2 Bde won the final in afternoon. See our pictures for some of the results.

KARATE

Gnr Sean Corbett, 1 BAR, recently represented Ireland at the 14th SKIF World Championships in Győr, Hungary. A member of Tora Kan Karate Club in Ballyporeen, Tipperary, Gnr Corbett has practiced karate for 11 years. The holder of a 1st degree black belt, Gnr Corbett won the senior men's all weight national title in 2018. He has previously represented Ireland at this elite international sporting level, placing 3rd in the 65kg weight class at the 2019 Grand Prix 2.



Karate: Gnr Corbett lands a blow in a recent match

His training regime is physically and mentally demanding, especially once coupled with the busy nature of military service. 1 BAR has sought to support Gnr Corbett at the unit level as much as possible. Gnr Corbett's participation and success at this international sport event reflects positively upon the unit and the broader organisation.

Clay Pigeon Shooting: Clay pigeon shoot held by the Air Corps



100 YEARS OF BASKETBALL IN THE DEFENCE FORCES, 1923-2023

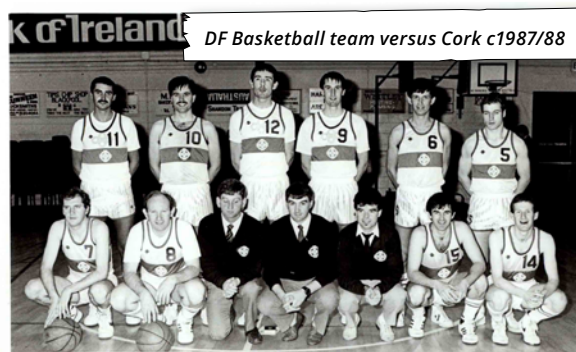
BY LT COL PADRAIC KENNEDY

The history of the first years of basketball in Ireland is captured in the December 1978 issue of *An Cosantóir* (see *From the Archives* on P. 34-35). This article captured some of the key basketball events and figures for the period from 1923 - 1978 and was a great opportunity to keep the memory alive of the contributions of a small number of individuals who set the scene for the sport of basketball in Ireland. Many in the sport of basketball are familiar with the name of James Naismith who is credited with the creation of basketball in the US in 1891. Closer to home however, 100 years ago this year Sgt Major Michael Doogan introduced basketball in Ireland with little known about him among the wider basketball community. Sgt Major Doogan is mentioned briefly in Irish Basketball history but little detail is openly available on his contribution to basketball and sport in general including his role in the promotion of sport in Dublin's Vocational schools.

SGT MAJOR MICHAEL DOOGAN

Sgt Major Doogan was a Dubliner from 5 Hendrick Street in Dublin who originally enlisted in the Royal Dublin Fusiliers. Doogan's World War 1 service was as a young Sgt Major with the 107th Rifles who fought in the Battle of Messines Ridge as a reconnaissance officer. He transferred to the National Army on 7th July 1922 where he began the promotion of the sport of basketball in Ireland. Sgt Major Doogan held the position in Charge of the Army Physical Training School from 1924 (having also been attached to the British Army Gymnastics staff from the Royal Dublin Fusiliers). He was responsible for the establishment of military physical training courses, displays and credited with introducing basketball to Ireland so it was no surprise that he was to be recommended in 1928 to assist the City of Dublin Technical Schools, following a request by General Mulcahy in his capacity as Minister for Local Government. Sgt Major Doogan was to lead this venture for sport in the vocational schools and make recommendations for equipment and subsequent physical training instruction. He served nearly 40 years with the Vocational Schools retiring in 1968 at 75 years of age. Described in the history of physical education in the Dublin City Vocational schools as "the first and greatest old soldier was M.J. Doogan, a Royal Dublin Fusilier who transferred to the Irish Army and introduced physical training to the technical schools".

A keen sportsman that took part in and promoted a wide range of sports including basketball, boxing, hockey,



DF Basketball team versus Cork c1987/88

hurling, gymnastics, camogie, football and tennis, Sgt Major Doogan would start a long history of participation by the Army in providing the necessary leadership and management for sports to thrive in the Vocational Schools.

The contribution of Defence Forces Physical Training Instructors (PTI) to basketball in the Vocational schools would continue throughout

the remainder of the century with the role of Sean Treacy (RIP), former PTI in the Army School of Music (ASM) and international basketball referee, and later as a PE teacher in Inchicore on Emmet Road, Dublin. Another notable senior Irish Referee is ex Sgt Paul Dempsey, who was also a member of the ASM. Paul remains active in Basketball Ireland and is currently a F.I.B.A. national referee instructor for the last number of years. Other referees at the National level included Aidan Kavanagh and Paddy Flood from the ASM. Paul Dempsey describes the influence of basketball: "when one joined the Army School of Music, it felt like we were given a musical instrument in one hand and a basketball in the other, both became a passion and for me, that passion has never left but instead led me to transition from the Defence Forces into basketball on a full time basis. I'll always be grateful for the opportunity basketball in the Defence Forces has given me"

I recall hearing that the reason the sport become popular in the Defence Forces was as a second sport for boxers but also as a non-contact sport for musicians. Anyone who has played basketball in the Defence Forces will know that the sport was often a more physical game than its civilian version, which was sometimes closer to full contact field sports such as Rugby. The wisdom of musicians playing a sport long associated with broken fingers is also questionable. The sport also attracted many volunteers and supporters who set up many of today's main and oldest clubs and governing bodies across Ireland.

Members of Women's DFTC Team and 2 Bde Team during annual 2022 Defence Forces Championship



VOLUNTEERISM WITHIN THE DEFENCE FORCES

To mention a few is to omit many but some stand out for the duration of outstanding commitment and dedication to the sport. The Defence Forces has and continues to make a significant contribution in both playing and the important leadership and administration of the sport to ensure that it can continue to thrive. Company Sergeant Billy Coffey is one such person who continued this role of volunteerism in Cork Basketball over four decades. A former member of the Band in Collins Barracks, Billy gave over 40 years to Cork Basketball. Sadly Billy passed away in 2021 and was lauded for his selfless and immense contribution to the sport. "For the majority of us involved in basketball he was a guardian of the sport on so many levels and he held everybody to high standards as it was all about accountability and doing your business correctly just as he did during his lifetime". It was fitting that a National U18 tournament is now named after him in his memory. The Defence Forces over the years has seen so many great contributions from where it all began with Sgt Major Doogan, the first President of the sport Colonel Byrne,

and the 1948 Olympic Team of which the majority were from the Army and some great players across many generations such as Simon Kennedy, Gordon and Paul Fitzgerald as examples. In more recent times, retired members Sgt Major Fergus McMahon, Cpl Joe O'Meara, Capt Mick Hickey played a central role in keeping the sport alive as well as the many serving personnel including Brigadier General Brendan McGuinness, Jayne Lawlor, Dave McKnight, Gemma Fagan and Gordon Fitzgerald. The



The Defence Forces Championship Cup is one of the oldest in the country dating back to 1928 when the 5th Brigade were the victors

contribution of many former and current members of the Defence Forces continues with many involved in playing, coaching, officiating, committees and managing to keep the sport as successful as it is.

WOMEN'S COMPETITION

The Women's competition plays a central role in the sport in the Defence Forces and one of the few sports which has its competitions held at the same time as the Men's competition. Prior to the separation of the competitions, the competition included players from both men and women across the organisation. The introduction of the ladies game to Ireland appears to be not long after the sport itself was introduced when the "Women's basketball on the Curragh had its formal opening on the 14th Inst. when the first match was played at the Garrison Gymnasium" as referenced in the Leinster Leader on 5th February 1927. For many years there was no separate Women's competition although they successfully competed in many DF Basketball Championships. This was to change as pace gathered in the early 2000's with teams set up by Jayne Lawlor in the Curragh and Sharon McManus in the South restarting the Women's competition with the first Inter Brigade game only a few months later. Thanks also to



Team picture from Ballincollig gym

Gemma Fagan who would help grow the number of teams and the first Defence Forces Women's competition started officially in 2004 increasing quickly into a nine team competition including the Reserve Defence Forces. Alongside the men's competition, the Women's game would also play an annual challenge match against An Garda Síochána up until recent years.

There has been many alongside Sgt Major Doogan since the early days including Capt Horgan of the Special Infantry Corps to the first President Colonel Joe Byrne of the Amateur Basketball Association of Ireland. The Defence Forces has and continues to play a similar role in the success of the sport over many decades from top international referees, players, managers, administrators and officials providing the back bone to many clubs and organisations across the country. Some of note who made significant contributions to the sport in the Defence Forces and also to their local clubs include RSM Jerry Dineen, Col Brendan O'Shea, Sgt Dessie O'Reilly, Sgt Denis Earley, Comdt Dermot Sherriff, Sgt Paddy Mulalley, Sgt Joe Dempsey to name a few. The Defence Forces has in more recent years also had players, coaches and referees at National Level including Conor Gallagher, Julian O'Keefe and Kevin Donohue. Apologies for any omissions of names, which is no reflection on their contribution but rather a reflection of my time involved with Defence Forces basketball. Recent events such as the pandemic have proved challenging for the both the men's and women's game in the Defence Forces but it is hoped that we can continue a long tradition of volunteerism and get the sport back up and running again with competitions including a previous annual fixture with An Garda Síochána. It is great to see so many ex members of the Defence Forces remain involved in the administration of the sport long after they left the organisation. I would like to thank the many past and present members of the Defence Forces who have grown the sport of basketball for over 100 years and who continue to give their time freely for the sport within their communities. We can be proud of the role that our predecessors played in the sport acting as the vanguard for basketball in Ireland. This early and continued contribution throughout 100 years has given hundreds of thousands of people the opportunity to play the sport of basketball. I hope that this short article is a small reminder and recognition of their contribution to the sport of basketball in the past and for those that continue to contribute of which there are too many to mention.

ABOUT SGT MAJOR DOOGAN

About Sgt Major Michael J Doogan, born 03 July 1893, served with the Royal Dublin Fusiliers prior to joining the National Army and was awarded the British War Medal and Victory Medal. Following his service in the British Army in the rank of Acting Warrant Officer Class 2 he was attached to the Army Gymnastic Staff. Sgt Major Doogan enlisted in the National Army on 17 July 1922 serving until he was discharged on 16 May 1940 with 9.5 years full time and nearly 8.5 years in the Reserve including service with the 7 Inf Bn, 2 Bn Regiment of Dublin and the 6th Reserve Battalion.



Picture of Sgt Maj Michael Doogan

Army Basketball — 1928-1978. The Golden Jubilee

Sgt. Billy Norton

BASKETBALL originated in Springfield, Massachussettes, U.S.A. in 1893 - when Prof. James Naismith is said to have thought out the details of the game in one night. Basketball spread so rapidly that within a few months it was known in Europe, Japan and China. In 1917 U.S. troops introduced Basketball into many countries. This year's All-Army Basketball Championship was held in Athlone and was won by the Air Corps. It commemorates the foundation of Army Basketball 50 years ago. The game of Basketball however was first introduced to the Army in 1923 by 29 years old Dubliner Sgt/Major Michael Doogan, Depot Bn. Curragh Command, who later became the first P.T. instructor in the National Army. The rules of the game were laid down by Sgt/Major Doogan and Capt. V. Horgan, Special Inf Corps, for some time it was regarded as a "Pansy" pastime, it was not long however before it attained the status of a "Game" in the Army, and Basketball has retained its hold on the affections of the Troops ever since. In 1924 the growth of the game in the Curragh was rapid, every Unit had one or more teams playing friendly matches, organisation followed quickly, Leagues and Championships becoming a regular feature of the sporting life in the Camp. The same year (1924) two Championships were organised - one for officers and one for other ranks. The ball used for the matches from 1928 to the mid 1940's was an ordinary football, size 5 While catching on rapidly in the Curragh it was some time before Basketball spread throughout the Army. One of the Units in Cork which quickly took to the game, and became highly proficient at it, was the Band of the 10th Inf Bn of the Cork Command, and it is a remarkable feature that right up to the present time the Bands have been among its leading exponents. Basketball however, was not accorded Army Championship status until 1928, and to the 5th Infantry Brigade, Eastern Command fell the honour of being the first All-Army Basketball Champions, beating the 1st Brigade, Curragh Command in the final. Two players who played on the winning team excelled in other sports were, Cpl. Paddy Henley and Pte. Tommy Morgan, Army boxing champions of the late 1920's.

The following year (1929) it was won by the 6th Inf Brigade, Eastern Command. From 1930 to 1940 it was played on an Inter-Unit basis. Under the old rules body contact and hand slapping, reminiscent of Gaelic Football tactics, were the order of the day. In 1930, an Army selection played and beat an American training Ship team in Portobello Bks., the ships Officers expressed surprise at the



The 1st Western Command Basketball Team to win the All-Army - 1941. Back Row - Left to Right: Cpl. T. O'Connor; Pte. Peter Molloy and Pte. D. Sherriffe. Front Row: Cpl. P. McMahon; Pte. D. Reddin; Lt. B. Kealy; Col. J. McAlister; Sgt. B. Jackson; Pte. L. Keegan and Sgt/Major T. McFadden.

knowledge displayed by a team in a Country where Basketball was little known.

In February, 1930, the Dublin, Cork and Curragh district leagues were formed. One of the most outstanding teams of the 1930's was the 5th Inf Bn team who were the All-Army Champions in 1934/35/37/38/39 and 1940. In winning their first title, the 5th Bn were beaten by the A.S.M. but lodged an objection, won it and went on to beat Ordnance Service in the final, this was the first time an objection was lodged in Army Basketball. One of the all time great players of the 1930's was Athlone born Pte. Dick Dowling, a member of the famous Army Metro Gaelic Football team. He won seven All-Army Basketball medals, six with the 5th Bn and one with the 6th Brigade in 1929. Pte. Dowling would have more than held his own with the best in any era. The Army School of Music won their first title 42 years ago (1936) by beating the 5th Bn in the Semi-Finals and the Air Corps in the final by 15 to 11, scores were called goals in those early days. Many great players of bygone years learned the game in the School of Music and have given Ireland some of the best Internationals. Well known soccer players who played in the then Free-State League played in that 1936 final and were Lt. Louis Kennelly, Bohemians and Cpl. "Bobby" Brown, Drumcondra, for Air Corps and for A.S.M. were Cpl. Dan O'Reilly, St. James Gate and B/M Tom Donnelly, who played in goal for Brideville. The

December, 1978

367



Sgt/Major M. J. Doogan - Curragh Command 1923.

1936 final also saw for the first time the introduction of substitutes, one from each team was allowed to play. In 1937 Army teams played exhibition games for the Technical Schools at the Independent Sports Ground, Cabra, and so the Army had the honour of spreading the game in the Metropolitan Area. The first known civilian club to be formed in this Country was called Donnybrook Rovers. Officials who did great work for Army Basketball in the 1930's, and deserve to be recalled were Capt. V. Horgan, Air Corps, Sgt. P. Ruffley, Depot Bn Curragh, and Sgt. W. Bernadrine, Military Police Corps. The 1940's saw a steady increase in attendances at matches, as well as an ever-rising number of clubs throughout the Army.

Army Basketball continued to prosper and by the early 1950's the hard work of those who had launched Basketball back in 1923 was bearing fruit. The National Association was formed on the 16th November, 1945, in Jury's Hotel. The first President and Founding Member was the late Col. Joe Byrne. In 1946 the International Amateur Federation Rules were adopted by the Irish governing body. As a result of coaching by an American Army N.C.O. Staff Sgt. Harry Quinn, who was engaged to coach selected Army personnel in March of 1946, the standard of play improved amazingly. The first game under the new rules was played in June of the same year, between the U.S. Forces in Europe and an Army selection Cpl. Turlough O'Connor who won his first all-Army medal with A.S.M. in 1936, and his last with Western Command in 1949, was the outstanding player scoring 30 Pts. He was one of the most brilliant players of the era. Another man who played on that team was the soccer star of the Pte. Con Martin. 1947 saw Western Command win the All-Army title under the new rules. The most far-reaching event of all in the history of Army Basketball was the 1948 Olympic Games at Harringay Arena, London, when no fewer than 12 members were selected to represent Ireland, Cpl.



All-Army Basketball Championship Final 1936 A.S.M. v Air Corps. The winners A.S.M. are in white.

Christy Walsh, Arty Corps who played in all the matches, was the outstanding player on the Irish team. Such was his artistry that he was not passed-over once in any single year. Cpl. Walsh made 28 appearances in International Competitions.

Officials who have rendered sterling service to Army Basketball in the 1940's were Comdt. D. McCormack, A.S.P.C. Capt. (now Col. retd), P. J. Dempsey, the former Adjutant-General and Sgt. Christy Cleary A.S.P.C. Into the 1950's the Army continued to hold dominance in Basketball, Sgt. Mitzi Quinn, 2nd F.A. Regt was elected Hon. Sec. of the I.A.B.A. and he was known as Mr. Basketball and was responsible for the growth of the game all over the Country in the 1950's. The Golden Era of Army Basketball was when we had such great teams as A.S.M. unbeaten in the 1950 season, and Western Command who were All-Ireland Inter-Country and All-Ireland Blitz Champions in the 1955/56 season. Basketball greats during that period were, Sgt. C. Walsh, Arty Corps, B/M P. Shannon A.S.M., Tpr. N. Nugent 2 Mot. Sqn., B/M Jimmy Murphy A.S.M. and the two Air Corps. men A/M Jim Kavanagh and A/M John Boyle.

The Basketball cup, one of the most coveted trophies in Army Sporting circles, was first presented in 1934 to Pte. R. Dowling Captain of the 5 Inf. Bn. It has gone to Western Command 17 times, first 1941. Next, with 11 titles, is Eastern Command. Southern Command has only won the title once, in 1961. The Curragh Command had to wait 40 years before capturing the title in 1968. Air Corps. have won it 7 times, the Naval Service first competed in 1951, but so far have failed to win the Championship.

Basketball continues to hold its place in Army sports. Championship Games have provided some stirring and memorable matches down through the years and coloured the history of Army Basketball with headline making achievements.

Basketball in Ireland owes a lot to the Army, who popularised it throughout the Country. The man who started it all, Sgt./Major Michael Doogan who died in a Dublin hospital seven years ago at the ripe old age of 84 years, carved a special niche for himself in the history of the Army Athletic Association when he introduced Basketball into the Army 55 years ago.

Only those brave enough
to fail...



...Succeed

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