

The Forces' favourite paper

Survivor of The Bloody Hundredth

● See page 17

Win!



Win tickets to see the Mosley show

● See R'n'R pp4-5

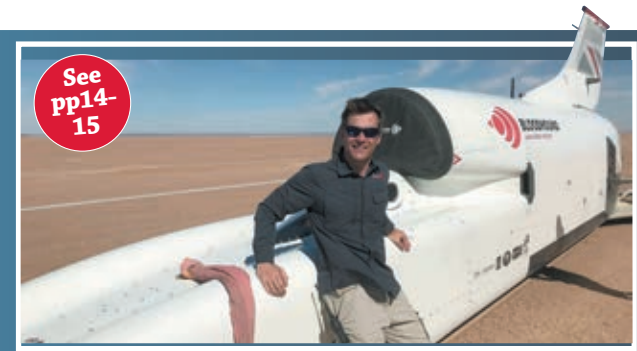


ROYAL AIR FORCE

Friday, December 1, 2023
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RAF News

Reservist's bid for land speed record



Hockey

Indoor IS champions



● See page 26

**Motorsport
RAF Eng in F1 call-up**



● See page 27

Boxing

Wakefield's a knockout



● See page 28

Space aces scope orbit junk threat



AIR FORCE snapper ASI Emily Muir scooped the People's Choice award in this year's photographic competition with her stunning shot of a Chinook hovering over Snowdonia during a training exercise. Her winning image 'Action Man' netted more than 18,000 votes in the online poll.

AIR FORCE space aces will be able to track thousands of pieces of junk and satellites in low earth orbit using a new telescope to be built on Cyprus.

Space Command teams will monitor objects more than 30,000km above the earth to safeguard UK commercial and military satellites and space assets from collisions.

UK technology company Spaceflux will build, maintain and routinely operate the new Nyx-Alpha system, tasked by UK Space Agency and Space Command analysts from RAF High Wycombe.

AVM Paul Godfrey said: "The ability to operate safely in space is growing increasingly challenging. That is why we're putting the UK at the forefront of global efforts to ensure a safe, secure and sustainable space environment."

"Building and operating this new sensor in Cyprus will enhance our ability to track objects, avoid collisions and protect the satellites we depend on for daily life."

"The procurement marks a significant development for both the UK Space Agency and UK Space Command."

"We are developing the capabilities the country needs and delivering value to the UK taxpayer."

BiteSize

“A lot of people stop me to chat, and I like that,”



TV health and diet expert Dr Michael Mosley See R'n'R pp4-5

“We have to be ready for the worst-case scenario,”



Air and Space chief AM Harv Smyth See p13

“It’s a great result in only my second proper bout,”



New Wakefield boxing champ ASI Poppy Tatum See page 28

UK signs Türkiye accord

THE UK and Türkiye have signed an agreement to work closely within the Nato alliance and to maintain support for Ukraine.

Defence Secretary Grant Shapps signed the accord on co-operation, with his Turkish counterpart, Minister of National Defense Yaşar Güler.

The blueprint document will provide the framework for closer working to enhance national, regional and international security, a MoD spokesman said.

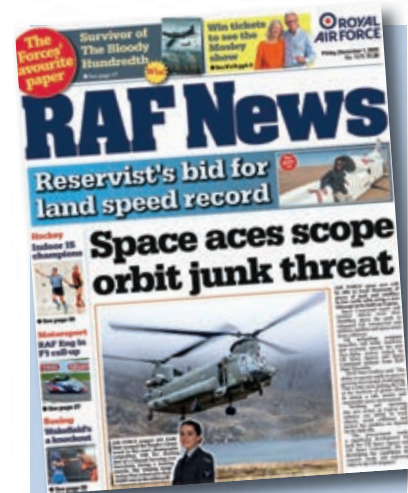
Britain and Türkiye will also pursue joint efforts to build stability in the Middle East and increase security in North Africa. The accord follows efforts by Türkiye’s Defence chiefs to allow the export of millions of tons of Ukrainian grain through Black Sea routes.

Mr Shapps said: “Türkiye stands at the crossroads of three continents and, at a time of such global instability, its influence cannot be underestimated.

“The agreement we’ve signed will see our relationship go from strength to strength and enhance our nations’ Defence and security co-operation.”



NATO SECURITY: UK Defence Secretary Grant Shapps (centre) with Turkish Defence chief Yaşar Güler



RAF News

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This Week In History



1958
Bloodhound debut

THE RAF’S first surface to air missile system, Bloodhound, enters operational service with 264 Sqn at North Coates.

1944
Nazi oil raid

MORE THAN 400 Lancasters and a dozen Mosquitos launch a major 500-mile bombing raid against synthetic oil production plants near Leipzig.



1990
Victors join Granby

A FOUR-STRONG fleet of 55 Sqn Victor tankers deploy from Marham to Muharraq in Bahrain on Operation Granby.

Extracts from *The Royal Air Force Day By Day* by Air Cdre Graham Pitchfork (The History Press)

RAF veteran takes on ambassador role



INDEPENDENT LIVING: Stacey in her adapted bungalow

Stacey's home and dry, thanks to Fund

Tracey Allen

A SPORTS-LOVING former RAF driver who had her leg amputated after a devastating injury has become an ambassador for the RAF Benevolent Fund after it bought and adapted a bungalow for her to live in independently.

Stacey Mitchell, now 30, who was based at RAF Odiham, sustained an overuse injury in her left leg during a run in 2016 and was left in excruciating pain. She now uses a wheelchair.

She said: "I had physio and during a rehabilitation course I was left in complete agony, tears were streaming down my face as I struggled to hold them back. I was later placed in an air cast boot (popularly known as a 'moon boot') for seven months."

The boot made the pain worse, triggering an irreversible, severe nerve condition meaning she couldn't use her left leg at all,



and Stacey was left in debilitating constant nerve pain – struggling to deal with daily life.

"I lost my independence, something many including myself have previously taken for granted. I was in so much pain – it was horrific, I merely existed," added the former SAC who joined the Air Force in 2013, aged 19.

Previously she had been fit and sporty and enjoyed playing netball, running and regular gym sessions.

After four years of the condition just getting worse she made the decision to have her leg amputated.

She said: "I had a conversation with my medical team. Either I could live with it as it was or have elective amputation. I couldn't imagine another minute in such pain and decided to go forward with a through knee amputation in the hope I would gain a better quality of life

and, one day, walk again."

Stacey had major surgery in 2018 and stayed at the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre at Headley Court in Surrey for a year and a half. She then moved back in with her parents but their home wasn't adapted to suit her needs and it was a struggle.

She said: "Before the RAF Benevolent Fund stepped in, things were difficult for me. I didn't go home until 18 months after my operation, and when I went back to my parents' house, it wasn't set up at all.

"I got in touch with the Fund to see if they could help, and they purchased a property for me and adapted it to my needs."

She added: "The support has been incredible in improving my quality of life – I didn't realise the impact.

"It's given me the independence I've been craving for so long and has allowed me to live my life again."

She is now an ambassador for the Benevolent Fund and her story is featured in the Telegraph's Christmas Charity Appeal, which has chosen the Fund as one of the four charities it is supporting for its 2023 campaign.



REHAB: Working hard at Headley Court after the amputation and in her RAF uniform, left



Royal Air Force
Benevolent Fund



THANK YOU

We'd like to thank everyone for their incredible support this year.

Without you donating via Service Day's Pay Giving, completing fundraising challenges, or signposting friends and colleagues who need our help, we wouldn't be able to provide essential support to other RAF serving personnel, veterans, and their families.

Whether it's tackling financial difficulties, providing access to counselling, or offering respite holidays, we've been able to help in so many ways and we'll continue to be here for you for as long as you need.

Your continued support is deeply appreciated, and we look forward to standing side by side with you in 2024. Thank you for being part of our RAF Family!

Find out how you can get involved and how we can support you: rafbf.org



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- ✓ FAMILY AND RELATIONSHIPS

- ✓ INDEPENDENT LIVING
- ✓ FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE





Gulf team nets award

Staff Reporter

AIR FORCE frontline fighters deployed to the Gulf have scooped a prestigious award from the Air Power and Space Association.

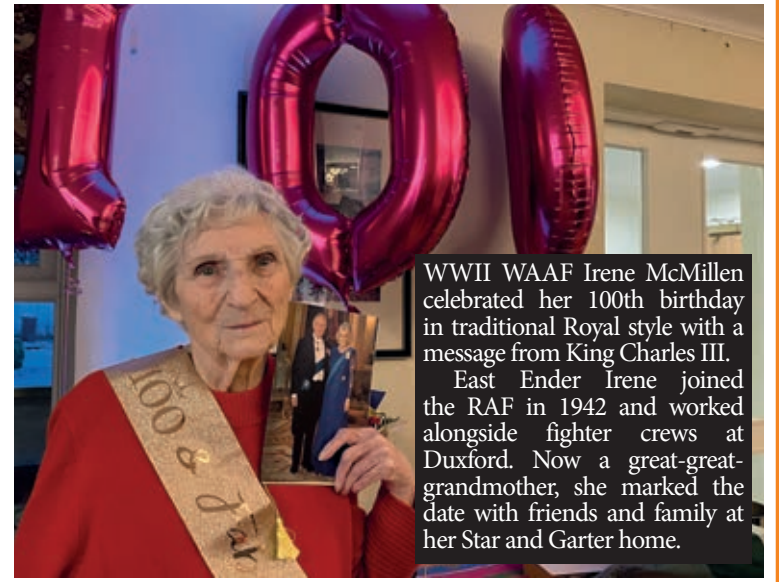
83 Expeditionary Air Group received the accolade for its ongoing role fighting Daesh in Iraq and Syria and supporting coalition operations across the Middle East.

Air Power and Space President AM Greg

Bagwell presented the award to outgoing 83 EAG chief Gp Capt Ian Diggle, who handed over command to Gp Capt Hannah Bishop last month.

Association president AM (Ret'd) Bagwell said: "83 EAG is helping secure Daesh's lasting defeat, and it is a prime example of the UK's effort over recent years to deliver world-class air power."

Gp Capt Bishop added: "I am delighted. This award recognises the outstanding work that they continue to do at this difficult time."



WWII WAAF Irene McMillen celebrated her 100th birthday in traditional Royal style with a message from King Charles III.

East Ender Irene joined the RAF in 1942 and worked alongside fighter crews at Duxford. Now a great-great-grandmother, she marked the date with friends and family at her Star and Garter home.

In Brief



APPEAL: Vulcan XH558 Christmas offer

Stocking thriller

VULCAN FANS can grab a Christmas treat by having their names etched onto the iconic Cold War aircraft's bomb doors.

The Vulcan to the Sky Trust is offering aviation enthusiasts a festive rate of £35 to raise funds to keep the project in the black.

A spokesman said: "We are bowled over by the support shown to the project and this latest appeal will help the team of volunteers to continue to keep XH558 well-maintained and looked after."



Royal reward

KING CHARLES III passed on a special message to Royal Star & Garter residents when he met nurses working for the charity.

His Majesty passed on his personal greeting when he met veterans' Star & Garter carers during a Buckingham Palace reception.

UK steps up Gaza aid

Staff Reporter

A RAF C-17 Globemaster landed in Egypt to deliver UK Aid as a temporary ceasefire between Israel and Hamas was implemented in Gaza.

The fourth UK aircraft carrying humanitarian aid landed in Al Arish, where supplies were unloaded ahead of road transport to the region.

The RAF flight carried 23 tonnes of humanitarian supplies, including 4,500 blankets and 4,500 sleeping mats, for distribution by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency.

Defence Secretary Grant Shapps said: "The RAF continues to deliver on the UK's commitment to helping those in need by operating flights into the region to provide urgent humanitarian support which will save civilian lives."

"The UK is driving international efforts to support the humanitarian response in Gaza, working closely alongside partners and Allies to de-escalate the situation."

Last month a Brize Norton-based crew flew in 21 tonnes of emergency medical supplies, water filters and solar-powered lights as Israel launched military reprisals following the Hamas terror attacks.



Vets' welfare reboot

Tracey Allen

THE GOVERNMENT has vowed to reboot veterans' welfare services following an independent review.

Welfare services for UK Armed Forces veterans are set to get a 'fresh start' after ministers accepted the findings of the study highlighting issues affecting Britain's former Forces fighters.

The review covered the Government's welfare provisions for veterans, support for those leaving the military, medical care and pensions and finances.

Veterans Minister Johnny Mercer said: "The review was commissioned so veterans know where to turn when accessing some of the services on offer."

"These changes will help veterans' services become more effective, efficient and clear – ultimately benefitting veterans across the UK."

"This is yet another step closer to making the UK the best country in the world to be a veteran."

The Veterans' Gateway is also to be improved to provide better access to government and charity support.





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UK honour for family who defied the Nazis



HEROIC: Helena with her letter of recognition for her family's role saving downed air crew, and with her parents Jan and Marianne. *Left, Polish fighters during the Warsaw uprising. Above, Halifax based in Brindisi in 1944*



AWARD: Mike McClelland (right) receives the Pooley Sword award

On the ball

A RECORD-BREAKING £130,000 was raised by aviation charity Aerobility at its annual Aviators Ball.

More than 95 unique aviation-themed items – including a D-Day flight in a Douglas C47 to a signed RAF Red Arrows flying suit – went under the hammer to support flying experiences for disabled aviators.

Members of the Red Arrows presented awards on the night, including the Pooley Aviator Sword to Aerobility's Aviator of the Year Mike McClelland.

Aerobility chief Mike Miller-Smith said: "Everyone at Aerobility has been blown away by the support we have received at the ball this year.

"We had a fantastic night, and all funds raised will go directly into helping people with disabilities to take to the skies and live their dreams. We are extremely grateful."

Stephanie Quayle

AIR CHIEFS have honoured the Polish family who saved two British airmen shot down during the Warsaw uprising as Partisans fought to regain control of the city from occupying Nazi forces in 1944.

Jan and Marianne Więcek sheltered two of the Allied crewmen in their barn for three months, facing brutal reprisals or execution.

The RAF Halifax bomber with a crew of seven was on a mission to supply an estimated 50,000 Polish fighters battling the German garrison as the Soviet military advanced on the city.

Four airmen managed to parachute from the stricken aircraft, including Sgt Alan Jolly of the Royal Air Force and Sgt Robert Peterson of the Royal Canadian Air Force, who landed in the nearby town of Tuchów.

The RAF crew was part of an Allied mission to support Polish forces from southern Italy after Stalin refused to sanction supply flights from Soviet airbases in Eastern Europe.

Sgt Jolly and Sgt Peterson were both hidden by the Więcek family from August to October, during brutal fighting with the well-equipped enemy which claimed the lives of an estimated 250,000 civilians and 15,000 members of the Polish resistance.

This month Air Chiefs presented the Więceks' daughter Helena, now aged 90, with a letter of appreciation during a ceremony at Tuchów town hall, attended by civic leaders and Rosemary Edmeads, the daughter of Sgt John Rae who died when Halifax JP 162 was shot down.

Defence Attaché Col Tom Blythe, from the British Embassy in Warsaw, presented the letter signed by AVM Simon Edwards at the event.

A spokesman for the RAF said: "This heart-



REFUGE: Sgt Jolly and Sgt Peterson

warming ceremony served as a testament to the enduring gratitude of the RAF and the British Embassy Warsaw, as they paid tribute to Helena and the Więcek family for their unwavering heroism and their willingness to risk their own lives to save the airmen."

Space at Defence Academy

THE OXFORDSHIRE-BASED Defence Academy will take on space training and education, Defence chiefs have confirmed.

The recently-formed UK Space academy is to relocate to the site as part of a UK Forces drive to develop its space force, a spokesman said.

The announcement was made by Air Vice-Marshal Paul Godfrey, Commander of UK Space Command, at the UK Space Conference in Belfast. He said: "Space skills are

critical to the UK's growing space sector. The UK Space Academy is already virtually preparing military personnel and MOD civil servants for their mission to protect and defend UK and Allied interests in space.

"Our new location at the Defence Academy in Oxfordshire will allow us to maximise our growth and inspire the UK's future space workforce alongside industry and academia, whilst also integrating with the Defence Cyber Academy, already located at Shrivenham."



Housing pledge

FORCES HOUSING is set for a £400 million facelift to improve accommodation across the Services.

The work modernising thousands of properties is underway and includes kitchen and bathroom refits to new doors, windows and roofs to improve thermal efficiency, the MOD said.

Defence contractors carrying out repair work are to increase staffing to cover urgent call-outs over the Christmas break, a spokesman added.

Celebrating Engineering Excellence with the Churchill Medal Awards 2023



WINNERS: The Royal Navy Team scooped the Churchill Medal Award at the IET annual ceremony. *Below, Celebrating with Sir Julian Young, (far right).*

THE ANNUAL Churchill Medal Award (CMA) ceremony was held at IET London: Savoy Place.

The Churchill Medal Award is an emblem of excellence in engineering and technical advancement, awarded annually for engineering and innovation in the Armed Forces and MoD on behalf of the Joint Professional Engineering Institutions (PEIs).

The award was first given in 1952 by the Society of Engineers as their most prestigious accolade.

This distinguished award pays honour to those who have made outstanding contributions to the realm of engineering and technology, particularly in support of military operations and readiness.

This year, there were a remarkable array of nominations, leading to the selection of five exceptionally deserving finalists. Our finalists have not only left an indelible mark in their respective domains but have also enriched the entire engineering world.

This year's Churchill Medal was won by HMS Audacious & C-Squadron DTXG Main Vent Repair Team, Submarine Service and Diving and Threat Exploitation Group, The Royal Navy.

HMS Audacious' unprecedented 11-month Mediterranean Deployment was in direct response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

They were tasked to repair the recurrent failures faced by the main vent operating



mechanisms inside partially flooded main ballast tanks as these defects significantly impacted Audacious' ability to safely conduct covert operations.

In addition to the environmental constraints, Audacious had to remain within a fixed readiness profile throughout, which meant the team had to be able to fully revert the system or complete the repair within a limited timeframe to enable sailing.

This tremendous technical challenge required significant adaptations to existing

processes and the generation of bespoke procedures. Similar repairs had only ever previously been attempted in a UK dry dock, with full access into the main ballast tanks for specialist technicians to work on the mechanisms. From arrival to completion of testing, the entire process was completed in 19 days.

In successfully conducting these highly complex operations underwater, the team ensured that Audacious remained in theatre delivering vital National Tasking for a further six months.

This year's exceptional finalists were:

- Staff Sergeant Charlie Pengilley, Corps of Royal Engineers, The British Army.
- High Risk Operations Cell, The Royal Air Force.
- 1710 NAS Data Exploitation Team - comprising a team of three from The Royal Navy, and one MoD Civil Servant within 1710 Naval Air Squadron.
- Lieutenant Commander Anthony Gilroy, The Royal Navy.

We congratulate all the finalists and the winning team and would like to thank all who attended this year's ceremony and contributed to the evening's success.

To see more about the Churchill Medal Award or if you'd like to find out about IET membership for the Armed Forces, please visit theiet.org/armed-forces.

The Churchill Medal is awarded jointly by the Institution of Engineering and Technology, Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology (IMarEST), the Royal Aeronautical Society (RAeS), the Institution of Mechanical Engineers (IMechE), the Institution of Royal Engineers (InstRE), the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE), the Society of Operations Engineers (SOE) and the British Computer Society (BCS).

The Institution of Engineering and Technology is registered as a Charity in England and Wales (No. 211014) and Scotland (No. SC038698), Futures Place, Kings Way, Stevenage, Hertfordshire, SG1 2UA, United Kingdom.

Gladiator joins NATO war drill

Combat test for Waddington's *Syn City*



PLUG IN AND PLAY: Pilot in Typhoon simulator takes part in training mission. *Inset above, monitoring military movements in the Battlespace Training Centre at Waddington*

Staff Reporter
Waddington

NATO WARFIGHTERS have joined forces in the first major test of Waddington's Gladiator synthetic training system.

Units from 20 nations across the Alliance staged real-time combat air drills, airborne intelligence gathering and command and control scenarios during the four-day exercise, dubbed Spartan Warrior.

The new facility, launched earlier this year, links training simulators worldwide, allowing large-scale combat training without real world airspace and environmental restrictions.

Wg Cdr Mark Still said: "Being able to support our partners across Nato in this exercise was truly fantastic.

"This scale of exercise is only made possible through the connection of participating nations and units operating

from distributed locations – what Gladiator is designed and built to do.

"It really does mark a step change in the UK's synthetic collective training capability."

Based at Waddington's Air Battlespace Training Centre, the Gladiator facility continues the UK military shift towards synthetic training to reduce training costs and meet the challenges of multi-dimensional warfare, cyber weapons and

space-based technology.

The system, believed to be the largest of its kind in Europe, is configured for frontline Typhoon and F-35 Lightning fighters, the Rivet Joint surveillance aircraft and the Joint Fires system and will be expanded to include other platforms as it develops.

The exercise is expected to lift networked virtual training capability in preparation for regular UK-based international exercises, a spokesman said.



RESEARCH: Sqn Ldr Handley after receiving his degree at Cambridge University

Camb on down

A RAF Regiment officer is helping UK Air chiefs combat the effects of climate change on military operations after landing a CAS Scholarship to Cambridge University.

Sqn Ldr Damien Handley received his degree after studying the effects of man-made climate change on military operations as part of his International Studies course.

He was selected for one of two places funded by the Tedder Fellowship, awarded annually by the Chief of the Air Staff.

He said: "I have been incredibly well-supported by the RAF in my personal and academic development and am extremely grateful for the opportunities afforded to me and others within the Service.

"The opportunity to study future Defence challenges at a globally renowned academic establishment has been a career highlight which has broadened my conceptual and professional horizons whilst enabling me to bring a wealth of critical thinking and analytical skills back into the security and resilience profession."



Sea dog days

THERAPY DOGS Ike and Sage were given permission to board HMS Prince of Wales as crews took a break from F-35 flight trials off the US coast.

The new canine recruits joined RAF and Navy personnel during a visit by military charity Mutts With A Mission, which provides animal companions to boost morale.

The doggy duo are currently stationed with Gerald R Ford and USS Wasp.

Vets Christmas crisis call

MORE THAN 80,000 of the UK's military veterans could spend Christmas alone, Forces charity chiefs are warning.

Help for Heroes staff are expecting a dramatic rise in the need for help over the festive period after calls to support staff soared by nearly 80 per cent last year.

The charity has released a short video calling on serving personnel and the public to get in touch with those who may be suffering from feelings of loneliness and isolation.

Beth Miles, Director of Marketing at Help for Heroes, said: "We are incredibly proud

to have created this impactful short Christmas film to lead our campaign this year.

"It is very personal to who we are as a charity and delivers an incredibly powerful message to support our veterans this holiday season.

"Our new Christmas ornament characters represent veterans from the RAF, Army and Navy. We hope they resonate with the public as well as our veteran community and we look forward to seeing them again in future campaigns."

● Go to: [youtube.com/watch?v=rJ2Bx_R-HmM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rJ2Bx_R-HmM)

CAMPAIGN: Charity video features Forces tree decorations to highlight loneliness in the vets community





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Protector takes off

UAV makes UK debut

at Waddington



THE RAF'S new unmanned Protector made its maiden flight in the UK as it took to the skies over Waddington.

31 Sqn pilots, who will remotely pilot the precision strike aircraft on operations worldwide from their Lincolnshire base, carried out circuits of the airfield as initial testing got underway.

The launch has been described as a 'milestone' in the Protector programme as the aircraft prepares to take over the surveillance and strike role currently performed on combat operations by the 15-year-old Reaper platform.

The first of 16 Protectors, which will take on land and maritime surveillance roles, counter terrorism and search and rescue missions, arrived at Waddington last month.

It will be also be certified to meet stringent Nato safety and certification standards allowing it to operate in the UK and European civilian airspace.

Programme director Gp Capt Al Rutledge said: "Achieving the first flight of Protector in UK airspace is a fitting milestone for this phase of testing,



representing an outstanding team effort. "We will now build on this success and look forward to the next test and evaluation phase as part of our preparations for in service date later next year."

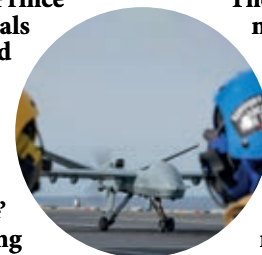
With a wingspan of 79ft, the uncrewed aircraft can operate at heights up to 40,000ft for more than 30 hours.

The phased arrival of 15 further aircraft from US based General Atomics will take place over the next two years.

Heavyweight Mojave carrier test

NAVY TEAMS on board the Prince of Wales launched the first trials of the largest UAV ever launched from a carrier outside the United States.

Weighing more than 1.5 tonnes fully laden and with a 17 metre wingspan, the aircraft, codenamed 'Mojave' performed take off and landing drills off the Eastern coast of America.



"The success of this trial heralds a new dawn in how we conduct maritime aviation and is another exciting step in the evolution of the Royal Navy's carrier strike group into a mixed crewed and uncrewed fighting force."

HMS Prince of Wales is now conducting intense training and trials activity with the US Marine Corps before returning home to Portsmouth next month.

Rear Admiral James Parkin said:

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RAF News

Wokk 'n' Roll
40 years of RAF Chinook

Rugby Union
Six Nations
Six Jersey

Boris Defence bonanza fuels UK space race
£16.5bn to combat Russia & China 'Star Wars' threat

Simon Mander

RAF News

Win flight in a Tiger Moth to mark our anniversary

100

Star wars

Pilots track enemy forces from space with new satellite

RAF Space Access p16/17



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NATO first for UK rookie duo

A PAIR of rookie pilots have become the first Royal Air Force trainees to fly solo at Nato's flying training school on the Italian island of Sardinia.

The pair made their solo flights on the twin-engined Aermacchi T-346 Master at the International Flight Training School in Decimomannu, after completing basic training on the Texan T1 in the UK earlier this year.

Launched in 2020, the Nato Flight Training Europe High Visibility Project helped to link up and coordinate training between member states.

UK military training chief Air Cdre Ian Sharrocks said: "Access to alternate flying training systems across Europe, which NFTE membership gives us, not only enables us to address periodic fluctuations in demand but also delivers the flexibility for us to increase our support to Nato.

"Crucially, this will deliver greater resilience to the RAF frontline, UK Defence and all of our Nato partners."

Following solo flights on the T-346, the trainees are now flying air-to-air and air-to-ground combat training sorties ahead of postings to Typhoon or F-35 frontline Operational Conversion Units.

UK 'strike' tests Allied Top Guns



ACE IN THE PACK: Typhoons join French Rafale jets at Leeming during Exercise Atlantic Trident
PHOTOS: AS1 JAMIE LEDGER

BRITISH AND French air chiefs staged simulated attacks on UK air bases as Nato allies ramp up agile combat employment tactics to counter the growing threat from long-range enemy missiles.

RAF Typhoons, F-35s and French Rafales flew into Leeming in North Yorkshire during the exercise as F-35s staged take-off and landing refuelling drills from the Queen Elizabeth carrier.

Exercise Atlantic Trident is the latest combat training war game designed to test crews' ability to operate from isolated and remote locations to avoid detection from enemy forces.

RAF Air and Space Commander, Air Marshal Harv Smyth, said: "To ensure we are prepared for all scenarios, such as bases being denied or under threat, the RAF needs to be able to relocate our

capabilities from their home bases to other locations. We have to be ready for the worst case scenario, which might be the UK under threat and us having to fight from home.

"That includes being able to take capability from a home base and move somewhere else because that location is denied."

Typhoon and Rafale crews set up secure communications with HMS Queen Elizabeth and HMS Diamond to coordinate support from F-35s on board the UK's flagship carrier.

Lt Col Veuille, Commanding Officer of the French detachment, said: "We deployed here at very short notice, without any preparation.

"We hadn't planned how we were going to get here, where we'd be stationed or where our logistical support would be.

"This is now the new way of doing it, in order to face the peer

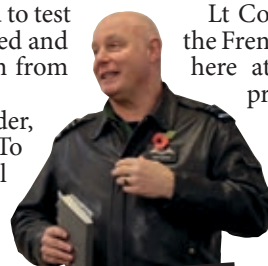


threats that we are having at the moment."

617 Sqn F-35 crews practised 'hot-pitting' on the Carrier - to refuel and simulate rearming with engines running. Jets remained airborne by being air-to-air refuelled by French MRTT, US KC135 and RAF Voyager aircraft.



FRONTLINE: F-35



AM HARV SMYTH

Bon Voyager

Staff Reporter
Akrotiri

A CYPRUS-BASED Voyager tanker has carried out an air-to-air refuelling drill with a French Air and Space Force A400M Atlas transporter.

Crews carried out multiple refuelling drills over the Eastern Mediterranean alongside French crews for the first time.

The 903 Expeditionary Air Wing Air Mobility Detachment

Commander in Cyprus, Sqn Ldr Mike Willers, said: "It is a great opportunity to carry out drills such as this sortie provided, with our French friends and Allies. Refuelling another nation's A400M is something that we do not often have the opportunity to do."

Voyager crews at Akrotiri are supporting Coalition missions against Daesh terrorists, conducting regular air-to-air refuelling sorties with UK Typhoons and partner fast jets.



TANKS A LOT: Voyager crew monitor French A400M during refuelling
PHOTO: AS1 TOMAS BARNARD

The hunt's on for

Eco world land speed bid needs new driver

TRIALS:
Bloodhound
in South
Africa in 2018



**RECORD
HOLDER:** Wg
Cdr Andy Green
set the current
world land
speed record
of 763mph
in the Thrust
SuperSonic Car
in 1997

Simon Williams

AFTER MORE than three years in financial limbo the Bloodhound supersonic car is back in the hunt for the world land speed record.

In a drive to kickstart the latest bid and attract new sponsors the British team is going green, hoping to finally overhaul the record set by RAF combat pilot Wg Cdr Andy Green in 1997 by ditching fossil fuels.

Launched more than 15 years ago by engineering maverick Richard Noble and RAF speed king Green to smash their own benchmark of 763mph, the Typhoon and

rocket powered hypercar was just 24 hours from bankruptcy and the scrapyards before UK engineering tycoon Ian Warhurst stepped in after a decade of misfires.

He dragged Bloodhound out of the workshop and onto the runway at RAF St Mawgan for its first run of 200mph in 2017, and later to the Hakskeen Pan – a 12-mile dry river bed in South Africa for testing, where the team hit more than 600mph.

The celebrations were short-lived as Covid hit and financial backers walked away. Now Warhurst has handed over the project to former RAF engineering ace Stuart Edmondson, who is back on the trail of new

financial backing for a net-zero record bid.

He's also recruiting a new driver capable of controlling a car at supersonic speeds after veteran 62-year-old wheel man Andy Green stepped down to take on a mentoring role for the rookie replacement.

Stuart, who served for 19 years and is still a Reservist, said: "Public attitudes have shifted. Bloodhound has to be relevant to succeed."

"It's an iconic British project about pushing engineering boundaries and to be relevant we have to embrace sustainability. If we continue trying to set a new record burning fossil fuel we have missed the point.

"I am using Bloodhound to go out there and prove you can still break records and push engineering boundaries in a sustainable way.

"Engineers and scientists will solve the problem but that is the world we are now in. Bloodhound can lead the way."

The team has ditched the original plans to use a hybrid



MENTOR:

for fresh Blood

“If we continue trying to set a new record while burning fossil fuel, we have missed the point”

Bloodhound engineering chief, RAF Reservist Stuart Edmondson



NET ZERO CHALLENGE: Stuart Edmondson



CAPITAL GAINS: Recruitment bid hits London



Wg Cdr Green

rocket alongside a Typhoon TJ200 engine in favour of a mono-propellant version using hydrogen peroxide attached to a catalyst to produce a high pressure flow of steam and oxygen.

They have also axed the original fuel delivery system using an 800hp Jaguar F1 racing engine to pump huge amounts of fuel needed to break the sound barrier,

replacing it with a battery powered unit from an electric car.

Bloodhound has also lowered its sights from the original target of more than 1,000mph to 850mph. “Richard Noble’s dream when he started the project was 1,050mph,” Stuart said.

“In theory the car has been modelled to reach that and it should be possible. Our focus right now is on setting a new world land speed record of between 800 and 850mph.

“Engineering success is all about incremental increases. At the moment 1,000mph is a crazy figure and that will be for phase II. We set a new record, we come back

and review our modelling and go back out.”

Bloodhound hit the road this month, touring the South East, stopping off in London and the RAF Museum at Hendon, to showcase its new green credentials and recruit sponsors with a commercial eye on the Net Zero cause.

They’ve also put out the call for a new driver to finally blast the team through the sound barrier and into the record books, laying to rest Wg Cdr Green’s stubbornly immovable record.

Stuart added: “Andy Green and Richard Noble is one of the greatest partnerships in land speed history.

“Andy is more than the driver. He has been integral to the design, development and testing. He recognises that we have come to the point where we have got to take a new approach with a new driver.

“It doesn’t have to be fast jet pilot. We need someone who has operated a vehicle at high speed and can show discipline under pressure in a high-tempo environment. It could be a car driver or an aerobatic pilot – someone who has lived and breathed that kind of environment.

“The world of land speed records and hyper cars is a male-dominated area – it would be fantastic to change that.”



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Did your great grandfather, grandmother, great uncle or other relative support 'the Few' during the Battle of Britain? Then this is your chance to commemorate their bravery, sacrifice or service as the RAF took on and defeated the Luftwaffe.

The Battle of Britain Memorial Trust's Blade of Honour project is laying commemorative tiles at the Memorial in honour of those who supported 'the Few' in the Battle (10 July - 31 October 1940) or one month either side of it.

Do you know someone who served?

Perhaps as -

- Air Raid Warden?
- Ground crew?
- Coastguard?
- Fireman?
- GPO?
- Royal Observer Corps?
- Or in some other way?



The grey granite tiles will be laid along the edge of one of the white propeller blades around the National Memorial to the Few and are expected to cost £495 each (inc VAT). This includes a deposit of £5 (inc VAT) which is required to register an interest via the website below and will be refunded if the nomination is ineligible.

For details see <https://www.battleofbritainmemorial.org/blade>

Surplus funds will be used to support the charity and work will only begin when the Trust has enough names to complete one whole blade.

Please help us remember 'the many' by nominating your own family hero.



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- Metrology Engineers & Technicians
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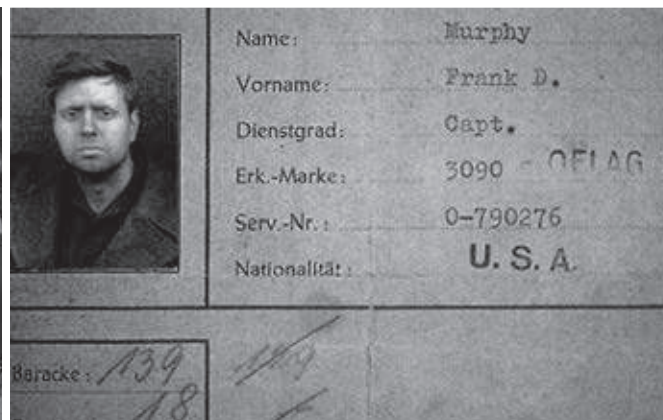


BAE SYSTEMS

Odds of returning from daytime bombing raids were **3/1 AGAINST**



WEEKS BEFORE CAPTURE: Frank (circled) and comrades talk to war reporters



POW: Frank's ID card for Stalag Luft III



BURYING HATCHET: Frank, right, meets Luftwaffe veterans in Germany in 1987

Tracey Allen

WORLD WAR II airman Frank Murphy survived a year and a half as a POW in the notorious Stalag Luft III after being shot out of his B-17 Flying Fortress. His bravery earned him the Prisoner of War Medal, the Purple Heart and the Air Medal.

His story, as told in his gripping memoir *Luck of the Draw* (eandtbooks.com), is featured in the new AppleTV+ mini-series *Masters of the Air* – based on the memoir of the same name by Donald L Miller – which starts streaming on January 26, 2024.

The series is executive produced by no less than Tom Hanks and Steven Spielberg and features a stellar cast including Austin Butler (*Elvis*), Barry Keogh (*Saltburn*) and the new Dr Who, Ncuti Gatwa. Jonas Moore (*Christmas Survival*) plays Capt Frank Murphy.

On August 17, 1942, American heavy bomber crews of the Eighth Air Force took off for combat in the hostile skies over occupied Europe. A staggering 4,300 B-17s and B-24s failed to return, almost 28,000 men were taken prisoner or interned in a neutral country and a further 26,000 lost their lives.

A *New York Times* bestseller, *Luck of the Draw* has been described as 'more than a war story'. Murphy, one of the few survivors from the 100th Bombardment Group (also known as The Bloody Hundredth), cheated death for 18 months after he was shot out of his B-17. In the book he shares the highs and lows of his internment in the infamous prison camp, later made famous by the 1963 war epic *The Great Escape*. The prisoners survived freezing conditions, near starvation and a forced march – the Long March – as the Russian Army approached. Murphy was liberated on April 29, 1945.

Hanks said: "In the pursuit of authenticity, of accurate history and undeniable courage, no words matter more than 'I was there'. Read *Luck of the Draw* and the life of Frank Murphy and ponder this: how did those boys do such things?"

Murphy flew 21 daylight combat missions – the odds of returning safely were three to one against. His daughter Elizabeth later said: "Dad never talked much about his experiences during the war. I only knew he had been a navigator; his plane had been shot out of the air

'Lucky' Frank survived 21 B-17 missions



MASTERS OF THE AIR: Scene from series executive produced by Tom Hanks, below

during an intense firefight and he had remnants of shrapnel in his left arm and shoulder, which sometimes flared up.

"Later, Dad would flesh out the story and describe how he parachuted for the first time on that day, October 10, 1943 and landed in a German farmer's field near Münster. The occupants quickly came to his aid and took him inside their house and held him till the German police came to arrest him.

"Dad did speak of the German family's kindness and that he gave a small boy a stick of chewing gum. My dad was on his 21st mission when his luck quite literally ran out. But he was one of the lucky

ones. Forty-six members of the 'Bloody Hundredth' were killed in that air battle, two of whom were members of his crew.

"His parents had no idea what had happened to him. They were only notified that he was missing in action. A few weeks later, they received a Western Union telegram, and learned he was a prisoner of war at Stalag Luft III in Sagan, Germany."

After the war, Frank had a long career as a lawyer for the Lockheed Corporation. Elizabeth added: "Over the years my dad largely kept his wartime memories to himself, rarely speaking of his harrowing experiences."

She revealed that the bestselling



WE HAVE copies of *Luck of the Draw* (rrp £25) to win. To be in with a chance of winning one, tell us:

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Who stars as Capt Frank Murphy in the AppleTV+ mini-series *Masters of the Air*?

Email your answer, marked Frank Murphy book competition, to: tracey.allen@rafnews.co.uk or post it to: RAF News, Room 68, HQ Air Command, High Wycombe HP14 4UE, to arrive by December 15.

novelist Len Deighton played a major part in her father finally writing his incredible wartime story.

She said: "My mother happened to be reading Len Deighton's historical novel *Goodbye Mickey Mouse* while they were on a flight to London. My mom recalls turning to my dad and telling him he needed to read it immediately, because it detailed the Allied invasion of Europe.

"Dad finished the book before the plane touched down and phoned the publisher from his hotel. He knew he had to get in touch with men he had flown with and was hoping Deighton could help. Deighton contacted Dad and told him veterans were holding 100th Bomb Group reunions. My father was shocked, as he had no idea these reunions existed. This was all the spark my dad needed. According to my mother, when he went to his first reunion, they said 'Frank, we've been looking for you for years. We thought you were dead!'"

Elizabeth added: "Writing *Luck*



RETURN TRIP: Frank in field near Münster he parachuted into after B-17 was shot down

of the Draw was a labour of love and took several years to complete. When his book was published, he gave me a copy and only then did I realise the depth of pain, isolation and sheer endurance and resilience he had needed to withstand the horrors of war. I found myself rereading page after page, as it seemed more like a movie than real life. Finally, Dad was ready to talk about his war experiences. It was like lifting a veil."



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Air power pioneer Prof Mason died on Remembrance Day

AIR VICE-MARSHAL Professor Tony Mason, who has died aged 91, held numerous posts in the RAF which led to him establishing a reputation as one of the foremost thinkers on Defence matters and the employment of air power.

During his National Service, he chose to remain in the RAF and was commissioned into the Education Branch in June 1956.

He first served on fighter stations before arriving at RAF Leuchars in Fife, the home of three fighter squadrons. It was there that he began his interest in the operational use of aircraft, and he took the opportunity to fly to better understand the employment of fighters. Three years later he left to serve in Cyprus, which offered opportunities to see the employment of aircraft in a different theatre.

King's College

In 1968 he took up a post at the RAF College Cranwell, where he was to be the specialist education officer to teach international affairs and strategic studies to the cadets. First, he had to attend King's College, London where he spent a year studying for an MA under Professor Michael Howard before returning to Cranwell.

In July 1969 he headed to the USA to take up a similar post at the USAF Academy at Colorado Springs. The posts at Cranwell and Colorado Springs offered many and varied opportunities in the academic world and to explore the use of air power by two pre-eminent air forces. Mason also greatly enjoyed the invigorating atmosphere of working with young potential officers. At Colorado he introduced the game of rugby and later in life was inducted into the US Rugby Hall of Fame.

On his return to the RAF, and attendance at the RAF Staff College, he served at the HQ of RAF Support Command at Andover as the senior education officer, where he was responsible for all aspects of training across many units.

In 1976, the then Chief of the Air Staff (ACM Sir Neil Cameron) created a new post to be known as the Director of Defence Studies (D Def S) to help provide a new



TEAM PLAYER: Rugby aficionado AVM Tony Mason is towed into retirement by Service sportsmen at RAF Innsworth in 1989

stimulus to air power thinking throughout the Air Force. Whilst tactical air operations and doctrine were constantly reviewed and developed in light of the threat, CAS believed that there was a need to stimulate and encourage officers to study at the intellectual level the characteristics and philosophy of air power, as it applied in the political and strategic arena. This would include reviewing previous campaigns and drawing lessons that remained relevant to current and future operations.

Mason, who served in the Education Branch as a Group Captain, was appointed to be the first Director located at the RAF Staff College at Bracknell. He took up his post in January 1977.

In the early stages, Mason had a difficult task. Not everyone saw the need for such an appointment, not least because of manpower cuts elsewhere, and others questioned the choice of an officer who

had no operational or front-line experience. That may have been so, but Mason possessed a powerful intellect and a great enthusiasm and knowledge for stimulating thought on air power issues, a topic he felt had been neglected both in and out of the Service.

During his five years in post, Mason steadily established his credentials with the RAF, not least amongst the operators, and with the academic world, but he won over the sceptics. Through his writings in RAF and academic publications and lectures to wide-ranging audiences, he encouraged an increasing number of intelligent young officers to think more widely about Defence and international issues and many of these men and women went on to fill important appointments.

He recognised that the experiences of wartime commanders held important lessons for the future conduct

of air power, and he established a programme of video recorded interviews with men such as Air Chief Marshal Sir Arthur Harris, Leonard Cheshire VC and those involved in more recent conflicts such as the Falkland's War. These recordings are used widely by today's future commanders.

Over the past 50 years, and based on the foundations laid by Mason, the post of D Def S has become recognised as a key appointment and grown to be one of the most important and influential posts in the RAF and in the wider Defence arena. It attracted some of the best brains in the RAF and many of Mason's successors went on to fill the most senior appointments.

In his honour, the Mason Fellowship was established earlier this year, which is open to all ranks who spend an academic year studying air power-related topics.

After his time as D Def S, he served in senior posts, first as

Director of Personnel (Ground) before being appointed as the Air Secretary. In these he was responsible for the career management and appointments of officers and airmen. He was the first non-aircrew officer to fill the appointment and, once again, he had to prove his credentials.

Napoleon

Mason gave particular attention to the selection and development of those who showed early potential to rise to the higher ranks. After a detailed study, he circulated a thoughtful paper to the senior Air Marshals indicating improvements to the system of recognising those with the ability to see beyond their own specialisation and experience. To illustrate his point, he quoted from Napoleon's comments on one of his generals: "He was only brave when confronted by the enemy, and then he was the bravest man in the world... but if he was placed in council, he was a poltroon with no judgement and was quite incapable of making a decision".

Mason retired from the RAF in April 1989. He was appointed CB (1988) and CBE (1981).

He continued his academic pursuits and was appointed an Honorary Professor at the University of Birmingham. He was a specialist adviser to the House of Commons Defence Committee between 2001 and 2006 and was a regular commentator on radio and television news programmes – often from his home in Cheltenham. He was awarded a doctorate by the University of Birmingham based on his publication of Centennial Appraisal.

He maintained close ties with the RAF, and the succeeding Directors of Defence Studies in particular. He regularly spoke at their conferences and was a key player in the Chief of the Air Staff's air power workshops. Mason also worked extensively with the Royal Aeronautical Society Air Power Group and was made an Honorary Fellow of the Society in 2006.

A kind, compassionate man, Mason supported many local and Service charities including the RAF Association. Fittingly, he passed away peacefully whilst viewing the Remembrance Day ceremony at the Cenotaph.



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NI chopper chief sole survivor of air crash

WING COMMANDER Patrick Cliff, who has died aged 88, commanded the helicopter force during the height of the Troubles in Northern Ireland. At the beginning of his RAF career, he had been the only survivor of an air crash that killed 16 of his colleagues.

He commenced his National Service in the RAF in January 1951 and extended his engagement to begin training as a navigator.

On January 6, 1954, the rugby team of the RAF Navigation School at Thorney Island had flown to the RAF Apprentice School at Halton to play a second-round match in the RAF Cup. After the game, the team travelled the short distance to RAF Bovingdon to fly back to their base near Portsmouth. Shortly after the Valetta aircraft took off, Cliff left to visit the toilet in the rear of the aircraft. Moments later, the Vickers Valetta training aircraft crashed in a blizzard on the Chiltern Hills above Aldbury, near Tring. Twelve young officers, a corporal and the crew of three were killed. Cliff was the sole survivor.

After recovering from his serious injuries, he gained admission to the RAF College Cranwell, where he rose to be an under officer and, excelling at sport, gained his colours for cricket, squash and rugby.

After receiving his wings in 1958, he trained as a fighter pilot before joining 56 Squadron at Waterbeach near Cambridge, where he flew the Hunter. In the steady reduction of fighter squadrons in the aftermath of the 1957 Sandys White Paper, he completed the flying instructor's course at the Central Flying School before taking up an appointment to train students on the Oxford University Air Squadron.

Having completed a period at the HQ Air Cadets, he converted to helicopters before joining 18 Squadron at Acklington, in Northumberland. The squadron frequently deployed to Germany to support the British Army before making a permanent move shortly after Cliff had finished his tour of duty.

In mid-1970 he assumed command of 78 Squadron flying Wessex helicopters from RAF Sharjah in the Persian Gulf. The squadron's role was to support the resident Army battalion based there, to provide limited support to the Trucial Oman Scouts (a British-funded paramilitary organisation), a search and rescue capability for the other squadrons based in Sharjah, and occasional support for the Sultan's Army in neighbouring Oman. Flying conditions were challenging, and occasionally hazardous, in the rugged and mountainous interior, exacerbated by frequent problems with the helicopter's two Gnome engines, which suffered from the effects of sand ingestion.

On his return from the Middle East, he served

on a staff tour before moving to RAF Gütersloh, the RAF's most easterly base in North Germany, and close to the Inner German Border. He flew the Wessex in support of No 1 (British) Corps in NATO's Northern Army Group, which involved many detachments operating from dispersed field sites transporting troops and essential equipment to forward units.

In October 1977, he was appointed to command the Support Helicopter Detachment Northern Island. He was the first officer to assume this command, which had previously been held by others on short duration detachments. He was to serve for just over two years.

Cliff faced demanding challenges in establishing the unit and in establishing the appropriate professional standards. He had to control the correct mixture of operational commitment and flight safety awareness in the demanding environment. He also had to embody a Royal Navy unit and support two different types of helicopters.

During his time, his unit flew some 6,000 operations totalling 15,000 hours. Much of the flying was undertaken through some of the worst weather experienced in Northern Ireland for almost 20 years. These tasks demanded the highest professional standards with the great majority flown in the difficult and dangerous border country of South Armagh, and Counties Down, Fermanagh and Tyrone.

At the end of his tour, Cliff was appointed OBE. The citation commented: "By the display of the utmost vigour and strength of character, combined with tact and outstanding leadership, Wing Commander Cliff overcame the difficulties which confronted him and welded together his force into a dynamic operational unit".

Following his tour in Northern Ireland, he joined the staff of HQ 38 Group providing operational support for the UK-based helicopter force.

After leaving the service in 1982, he and his wife ran a very successful hotel in Sussex, gaining several national awards. He died on October 19.

“By the display of the utmost vigour and strength of character, combined with tact and outstanding leadership, Wg Cdr Cliff overcame the difficulties which confronted him and welded together his force into a dynamic operational unit”

OBE citation



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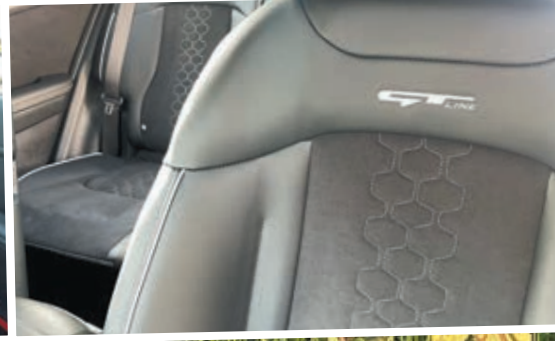
- Good value
- Smart interior
- Great warranty

Cons

- Smaller than for other markets
- Hybrid petrol engine sounds noisy
- Rivals have better rear-seat versatility
- Tight rear headroom

Verdict

It's not as engaging to drive as some rivals, but it does strike a fair balance between practicality and agility on the road. You get loads of kit as standard, especially on the 'GT Line' and it has one of the best interiors in its class. A good all-round family wagon.



KIA HAS always hit the perfect balance between SUV utility, well-judged dimensions and sporty good looks. This is why I'm a bit confused.

You see, despite getting it right for almost 30 years, someone at Kia has suddenly decided that Europe should get a smaller car than every other part of the world. Our version is therefore now only a five-seat crossover, rather than a proper SUV. Why? Your guess is, quite frankly, as good as mine.

Exterior

Regardless, the new Sportage has an aggressive nose, featuring crisp, upright daytime running lights and an instantly recognisable grille. At the rear, it shares some of the bonkers styling that makes the EV6 stand out so keenly, with similar creases and sharp angles. The profile is as sporty as ever, with sleek window lines that run towards chunky rear haunches. Black and chrome inserts here and there draw the eye to Kia's distinctive

'Opposites United' styling. Sharp 18-in alloy wheels complete the look.

Interior

The cabin is clean and uncluttered, with well laid out controls that are easy to find. The digital instrument display gives you info such as range, economy and other driving assistance. It's clear to read with sharp graphics and good contrast for daytime use. The display joins seamlessly with the central infotainment system, creating a long, curved sci-fi style dash that stretches halfway across the car.

Plenty of seat and steering adjustment makes getting comfortable in the Sportage easy, while the seats grip you in place well when cornering. Features like the in-seat charging points are useful touches too.

Elsewhere there's plenty of squishy plastics and metallic-effect finishes to give the cabin a premium feel. There's enough space, front and

back, and a reasonably generous boot.

On The Road

Our test car was the Sportage Hybrid Electric Vehicle, front wheel drive, in 'GT-Line' trim. This drivetrain pairs a 1.6-litre turbo petrol engine with a six-speed auto gearbox, a small battery and an electric motor. The result is a respectable 226bhp and 258lb ft of torque.

The stats are 0-60mph in 7.7 seconds, a top speed of 120mph and fuel economy of 49.6mpg on a combined cycle. Not bad for this class.

Through the bends it's not what you might call 'sharp' but the lack of steering feedback is unlikely to worry most SUV buyers. It does however ride well and evens out most rough roads.



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HARD TO BEAR: Bristol were just too good for military side

PHOTO: ALLIGIN

Battling displays end in defeat

ALL GUTS but sadly no glory for the UKAF men's and women's teams as they lost their Remembrance match clashes despite battling displays.

Playing Bristol Bears at Premiership Gloucester's Kingsholm Stadium, the women boasted seven RAF players in the squad, with vice-captain Flt Lt Lucy Nye integral to the military side's opening score, setting up LH Rose Dixon to score out wide for 38-5.

The Service side ended the game's scoring as RAF star Cpl Olivia Proctor touched down. 38-10 to Bristol.

The men's game went the way of the host Polish Defence Forces with a kick in the dying seconds

for 17-14. The match at Gdynia's Narodowy Stadium celebrated both Armistice Day and Polish Independence Day, with the dynamic duo of Flt Lt Davie Manning (captain) and FS Justin Coleman (head coach) again taking charge of the team.

The evenly matched game saw the hosts take the lead before scores from Army star Cpl Epeli Kotobalavu and the boot of AET Jordan Gott levelled things at 7-7 to close out the first half.

Gott converted again to level things in the second after POAET Ben Chambers had touched down. A yellow for Gott then left UKAF with 14 men in the closing stages and the hosts pounced to take the spoils.

Female Service stars celebrate as England and Scotland claim WXV championships

Daniel Abrahams

RAF WOMEN'S rugby union stars gave it a one-two to walk away double champions for their respective nations at the inaugural WXV tournament.

Fg Offs Sara Bonar, Amy Cokayne and Carys Williams-Morris were selected for the three-league tournament, with Cokayne celebrating winning WXV1 with England in New Zealand and Bonar WXV2 with Scotland in South Africa.

Williams-Morris' Wales side finished sixth, running Australia to just six points in their closing game.

Bonar touched down the penultimate try in Scotland's final 38-7 win over Japan to take the title.

Cokayne, who struggled with an injury throughout the tournament, was returned to the bench for the final 33-12 win over New Zealand.

She said: "The WXV is a great concept that provides opportunities for the top 18 international sides to have meaningful competition every year, something normally reserved for World Cup years.

"To play New Zealand again in Auckland and get the win over the

Black Ferns was great; however, it will take a World Cup win to truly take away the pain of last year's loss.

"It was a frustrating time for me as I suffered a couple of calf reoccurring injuries that kept me side-lined. I'm back with Leicester Tigers now and fully concentrating on my rehab to get back fit again as soon as possible."

Bonar said: "I'm so proud of the Scotland girls, we had great preparation going into the tournament and came away with the trophy, the first time Scotland has lifted silverware since 2001.

"We are growing in depth and have serious talent coming through the squad; watch this space."

Rugby balls of fire

A CLUBHOUSE fire at Witney RFC saw the first U23s Inter-Services rugby union match called off.

The game between the RAF and the Navy was cancelled an hour before kick-off after the blaze cut power to floodlights. Players, staff and supporters were all evacuated safely.

The rescheduled fixture is yet to be confirmed.

SQUASH

Inters success

SERVICE SQUASH took away the men's and Masters titles from this year's Inter-Services at HMS Temeraire, Portsmouth, narrowly missing out in the U25s.

Defending champion AS1(T) Oscar Hill, seeded 5th, won the men's, while Sqn Ldr Michael Hallet lost in the semis.

Flt Lt George Webster won the masters final, while AS1 Travis Harrison lost in the final of the U25s event.



MOTORSPORT

Class acts at Anglesey rally

IT WAS a fitting Remembrance race day to end the season as the Service's rally drivers produced impressive top-10 finishes at Anglesey.

The RAF fielded three cars, with car seven's team in the Mk 3 Mazda MX5 of Cpl Oliver Waind, Cpl Lloyd Huggins, AS1(T) Alexander Smith and Neil Huggins coming ninth in class.

Car 18's team of Flt Lt Fraser Gillan, Flt Lt Chris Pawley, Sgt Ian Cooper and AS1(T) Emma Ockendon came 5th in class in their BMW 116, while car 19's Flt Lt Coral Hoban, AS1(T) James Flint, AS1(T) Gemma Barnsdale and AS1 Adam Stanbury were ninth in class,



also in the BMW 116.

The Clubsport Trophy race saw a first in class for Chf Tech David Russell in his BMW E36, with Cpl

Lloyd Huggins also first in class, in his Lotus Exige.

Sgt Duncan Steele, in his Fiesta ST150, was third in class.

Would you like to see your sport featured in RAF News? Send a short report (max 300 words) and a couple of photographs (attached jpegs) to: Sports@rafnews.co.uk

Sport

ANGLING

Our ray of sunshine

Anglers have a point to prove against Army

THE RAF'S shore anglers rallied to victory at this year's Inter-Services Championships at HMS Raleigh, also hooking four out of seven UKAF qualification places up for grabs.

Team member Sgt Joe Roberts (*inset*) said: "This year's IS event had the great setting of HMS Raleigh, Cornwall, which provided us with a great win, beating the Army into second place and Royal Navy into third. There were good scores throughout for the RAF and a great team effort to take home the win."

"It was great for me to be able to



finish second overall individually, with Cpl Ant Beckham in third. Chf Techs Mal Hore and Andy Ogilvie placed fifth and seventh respectively, giving the Air Force four anglers in the top seven that automatically qualify for UKAF next February."



FIFTH OVERALL: Chf Tech Mal Hore proudly holds aloft one of his catches – a small-eyed ray

The two days of action started with an afternoon session at Tregantle Beach, which saw a RAF one, two, three as WO Daz Rose (Wittering) stormed to victory in Zone One, with Beckham (Worthy Down) winning Zone Two and Roberts (Cosford) Three.

In poor conditions the RAF

anglers ended the day with 100 points, the Navy second with 113 and Army third with 116.

Slapton Sands hosted the second day, which was held in improved conditions, meaning fishing was smoother, and the day and competition went down to just one point after the Army rallied.

Hore (Wittering) came home runner up in Zone Two, with Roberts again topping out in Zone Three.

The final scores were RAF – 231, Army – 232 and Navy – 272.

● The UKAF event is due to take place in Newcastle on February 16-17, 2024.

HOCKEY

Women are champs again

Daniel Abrahams

THE RAF men's hockey stars suffered a 6-5 defeat at the hands of the Army in the Inter-Services Indoor Championships at Aldershot.

It was left to the ladies to lead the way, retaining their IS crown.

The men went into the clash as favourites, after convincingly beating the Navy 9-0, but were soon facing a big opening half deficit.

A comeback in the second period brought the score back to 5-5, only for the Army to snatch victory in the dying seconds of the match.

RAF Hockey Association Chair, Wg Cdr Sharon Eveleigh-Hall, said: "The indoor, as always, is a great start to the season. We were disappointed to not retain the men's title, especially to lose with only seconds to go. However, all still looks good for the outdoor, where I know the team will come back stronger as they look to achieve their seventh consecutive outdoor title."

"The Women's team is building on last year's incredibly successful season (both indoor and outdoor champions) with a fantastic pair of results."

"They were expertly captained by ASI Alex Naughalty and ASI Rebecca Douglas, who was scoring for fun. They would both be first to



INDOOR QUEENS: RAF Ladies retain title

PHOTO: ANDREW FOSKER/ALLIGIN

agree that this was a real full-squad performance to achieve the win.

"The future is looking very bright for the women's set-up and across the sport as a whole, the sponsorship we receive from Royal British Legion and GRC Ltd, as well as our additional sponsors Forces Mutual, Inzpire and the Central Fund, is a cornerstone of this."

The RAF men's and ladies' masters, making their debut tournament bow, and U25 sides all lost all their matches.

Following the setbacks, the RAF women mounted their title defence with a 7-1 victory against the Navy.

And Douglas scored a hat-trick of goals to help trounce the Army 6-2, with skipper Naughalty sealing the deal with a brilliant strike.

Naughalty, who also captained Buckingham Ladies Hockey Club when they won the National Indoor Hockey Super Sixes event a few years ago, will be playing for Buckingham again next February when they represent England Hockey in the European Indoor Club Championships in Turkey.

The outdoor championships are due to take place in March 2024.

● Follow RAF Hockey on Instagram @rafhockey.



WINNERS: The Brize Mustangs

Brize retain indoor crown

IT WAS the precursor to the Tri-Service Indoor Hockey Cup and IS Championships, but the indoor stations tournament was no second fiddle event, as winners Brize Mustangs would attest.

More than 70 players were in action, making up eight teams competing to be this year's champions.

And what a start the event had with some hotly-contested matches, with Brize, Boulmer, STRATCOM and MRM/CON winning through to the business end and the semi-final showdowns.

The first clash saw MRM/CON and Boulmer play out a fast and furious game, with hardly anything between the sides, who smashed home four goals each before Boulmer netted again, booking

their place in the final 5-4.

The second match saw Brize facing off against the mixed team under the name of STRATCOM. It was the mixed team who scored first, but Brize held their nerve, keeping STRATCOM to just the one goal as they netted four times to reach the final.

Looking to retain the trophy, Brize set up against Boulmer in a game which saw a high level of play and goals early on.

Sitting at one apiece, Brize stepped things up a gear. Their powerful front line proved too much for Boulmer, who conceded three more goals to lose 4-1.

Brize now progress to the Tri-service Indoor tournament at Aldershot to face off against the Army and Navy's best units.

MOTORSPORTS

The Formula for success



RAF Engineers to help speed kings step up

Daniel Abrahams

FORMULA 2 sidecar champions Cpl Robert Atkinson and Sgt Mark Middleton have returned home for inspiration... teaming up with RAF Engineering for the coming season.

After five years of racing at F2 level, the duo reclaimed the British sidecar championship they first won last year, and soon after taking the chequered flag at Brands Hatch announced their plans for 2024.

Middleton said: "We are excited to announce a new partnership with RAF Engineering, who are supporting with paddock infrastructure and vital equipment to compete at the next level in our discipline, F1.

"This comes alongside continued loyal support from Artic Facilities Management, soon to be Mecsia Group, who are entering their third year of sponsorship with us, only in 2024 rebranded as a group of six companies that span the UK."

The team – whose season was nothing if not eventful, with rider swaps to keep things running and a short taster of the Isle of Man TT road race, abandoned after two laps due to an accident – will also be unveiling a new bike.

And next season's efforts will



TRAILER-BLAZERS: Double F2 British Sidecar Champions Mark Middleton (left) and Rob Atkinson are preparing to make the move to F1 racing next season. Top left, pair in action

also be screened on the Eurosport TV channel.

Middleton added: "A lot of conversation took place with RAF Motorsport Association, and it was decided that the Isle of Man TT was not something we would pursue in 2024, instead, with the backing of loyal and new sponsors,

the team would step up to Formula 1 sidecars – a support race for the best domestic bike championship in Europe: The British Superbike Championship (BSB), shown fortnightly on Eurosport.

"So, we cannot thank RAF Motorsport

Association, Central Fund, RAF Brize Norton PEd Flight, Artic Facilities Management, Atlantic Aviation Group and all our supporters enough."

● Follow RAF side car on Facebook @ RAFF2SIDECAR.



BMX

Bolstered bike squad starts to make its mark on UK & international stage

SERVICE BMX is on a high after national and international success in both track and freestyle.

The 2023 team was bolstered by the arrival of Cpl Chris Taylor and Flt Lt Chris Leary.

Sgt Matt Haywood made three National A grade finals and Flt Lt Chris Leary, racing the first year at this level, finished the season

ranked eighth in the 30-39 Cruiser class and 10th in the British Championships.

Sixth overall at National level was the result for Off Cdt Pete Watson, who secured two podium and three final slots.

UAS rider Off Cdt Taylor-Lei Mohan (pictured) had fourth and fifth-place finishes in European

Final A races as she completed her final year of university. She also came fifth in the 2023 World Championships in Glasgow.

On the Freestyle side, AS1(T) Jon Anderton sits ninth overall with two rounds remaining of the National Championships.

● Follow RAF BMX on Instagram @bmx_raf.

Would you like to see your sport featured in RAF News? Send a short report (max 300 words) and a couple of photographs (attached jpegs) to: Sports@rafnews.co.uk

4 pages of the best of RAF Sports action

BOXING

Vilson outguns 'em

Victory for reality 'star' Uwagboe



HARD DAY'S KNIGHT: AS1 Harry Warwick (right) gets the better of AS1 Connor Knight in over-92kg bout PHOTO: CPL CONNOR TIERNEY

Daniel Abrahams

THIS YEAR'S Lord Wakefield RAF Novice Boxing Championships at Cranwell was hailed the best for two decades.

After the night of action over 12 bouts, association chairman Sqn Ldr Andy Parker said: "The talent on show was arguably the best I have seen in 20 years of RAF Boxing."

Milestone successes on the night went to Poppy Tatum, *see right*, with the Major Station Trophy won by Odiham, its first in the competition's history.

The bout of the night saw AS1 Jake Nicoll (Brize Norton) and Cpl Carl Harper (Akrotiri) produce a display of true grit, with Nicoll crowned Class C under-86kg champion.

Bout number eight was a Class C under-92kg contest between AS2 Callum Bingham (Waddington) and AS1 Owen Bridgman (Odiham). A forceful display from Bingham earned him the title.

Bout number nine between AS1(T) Connor Knight (Brize) and

AS1 Harry Warwick (Odiham) saw Warwick take the Class C over-92kg Championship, while bout 10 saw a step up in experience with the Class B under-63.5kg title between AS1 Adam Davidson (Wittering) and AS1 Jack Mathias (Odiham) going the way of Mathias.

The penultimate bout saw the star of Channel 4's *Top Guns: Inside the RAF*, AS1 Vilson Uwagboe (Lossiemouth), beat AS1 Ryan

Mills (Odiham) to the Class B under-67kg title.

While AS1 Jak Harrison (Leeming) had a hard-fought win over AS2 Andrew Cutting (Odiham) in the Class B under-75kg bout.

Earlier Cpl Joe Gartland (Wittering) won against AS1 Nathan Campbell (Odiham) in the Class A under-60kg, while AS1 Rais Howitt (Brize) lost to AS1(T)

Jack Andrew (Coningsby) in the Class A under-67kg title.

The Class C under-71kg Champion title went to AR Travas Stocks over AS1 Cole Parker, while the Class C under-75kg belt saw AS1 Jerome Smith (Wittering) defeat AS1 Ben Watson (Coningsby), before Coningsby's AS1 Lewis Denton-Fray beat AS2 Regan Thomas (Waddington) in the Class C under-80kg contest.



WINNER: Uwagboe



TATUM: Rising RAF boxing star

Memorable Poppy day for Gunner

AS1 POPPY Tatum became the first female RAF Regt Gunner to win a Lord Wakefield title in only her second competitive fight.

The 51 Squadron RAF Regiment boxer, who took up the sport last year, beat Fg Off Jess Benjelloun (Halton) to take the Class C under-70kg title.

Her win also meant that 51 Sqn scooped the coveted RAF Regiment Cup at the Championships.

Tatum said: "It's a great honour to have won a Lord Wakefield title."

"It was a hard fight and a very bruising encounter, but I was really happy with the result given that it's only my second competitive bout."

Shawbury steps up as Service boxing rings the changes



BRIZE FIGHTER: AS1 Jake Nicoll (right) had a tough night
PHOTOS: DAVE GRANGER



AR TRAVAS STOCKS: Unanimous points win

SERVICE BOXING made its inaugural bow at Shawbury as the perfect curtain raiser to the Lord Wakefields.

The night saw RAF Boxing and Army fighters take on opponents from local West Midlands clubs, supported by RAFBA

and Army BA officials. The station was represented by AR Travas Stocks (RAF Cosford) and AS1 Huw Harries (TSW) on the four-bout night.

Taking on Rohit Klare from Firewalker ABC, Stocks secured a unanimous win, while

Adrian Lungu (Market Drayton ABC) lost by a split decision to Harries.

AS1 Jake Nicoll (Brize) was stopped by Owen Thomson of Shrewsbury School of Boxing, while L/Cpl Leon Moulds defeated Ehsan Mubariz from Shrewsbury School of Boxing.

Announcements

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Puzzles
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R'n'R



**Drs in the house –
win tour tickets**

See
pages
4-5

Royal Air Force Festival of Music

www.rafmusic.org.uk



Lincoln Cathedral

7.30pm Saturday 11 May 2024

RAF Music Charitable Trust

20th Anniversary Concert

Compere: Melvyn Prior

Royal Hall, Harrogate

7.30pm Friday 28 June 2024

Royal Auxiliary Air Force

Centenary Concert

Compere: Howard Leader



Watersmeet, Rickmansworth

Royal Air Force Squadronaires

7.30pm Friday 15 March 2024

CAST, Doncaster

Band of the Royal Air Force College

7.30pm Thursday 19 September 2024

Palace Theatre, Newark

Band of the Royal Air Force College

7.30pm Friday 20 September 2024

Playhouse Theatre, Weston super Mare

Central Band of the Royal Air Force

7.30pm Friday 27 September 2024

Assembly Hall, Worthing

Band of the Royal Air Force Regiment

3.00pm Saturday 28 September 2024

West Road Concert Hall, Cambridge

Central Band of the Royal Air Force

7.30pm Friday 4 October 2024

Martin-ique

The Florida county that rivals Caribbean beauty



MAGICAL:
Tree canopy on
County Road 714



SPECIAL: Sunrise paddleboarding

SPECTACULAR: Deserted coastline

POSTCARD
PRETTY: Martin
County beach

THE NEXT in our series of Florida travel features starts with a rainstorm of monsoon proportions and a 140-mile road trip. The frenzy of Orlando and the heavy interstate traffic that followed had faded by the time I reached the world-famous destination of Cocoa Beach. Now I was finally on the A1A coast road, heading south from Cape Canaveral to Martin and everything felt right with the world. I love road trips like this.

I took the time to soak up the coastal beauty before arriving, early afternoon, on the unspoiled haven of Hutchinson Island. Even with dark clouds still on the horizon, I couldn't help falling in love with this place instantly.

Location

White sand beaches stretch out into the lapping turquoise waters of the Atlantic. Crystal clear and so warm that it feels like getting into a bath, I've rarely wanted to dive straight in more. This is the Treasure Coast of South Florida, Caribbean perfect and largely unspoiled. You won't find sprawling cities here, just friendly little coastal towns like Jensen Beach and Stewart.

With small businesses and quaint streets, Stuart is the perfect place to explore and it's little wonder that it was recently voted America's Happiest Seaside Town

Small-town charm, world-class fishing and almost every aquatic sport can be found right here.

Martin has more than 22 miles of uncrowded beaches and over 100,000 acres of sprawling parks. It's also home to the most biodiverse lagoon ecosystem in the Northern Hemisphere and marks the start of the Florida Coral Reef Tract, which extends through the Florida Keys.

If you hate crowds and want a truly authentic Florida experience, this is for you. Just... you know, keep it quiet!

Stay

Hutchinson Shores Resort & Spa is the first new hotel to be built on Hutchinson Island in almost two decades. Situated right on the beach, it offers guests unrivalled ocean views and the highest standards of service.

Resort amenities include valet parking, a signature spa, ocean front dining, sun loungers on the beach and two outdoor swimming pools. It's the perfect spot to unwind in the Florida sunshine. The pools are open around the clock too, so even insomnia is fun on Hutchinson Island.

With 178 marine inspired rooms, Hutchinson Shores offers truly classy accommodation. We stayed in a King room, with an ocean front view. These rooms cover a spacious floor plan of 320 sq ft and come

with that all-important balcony.

Down Sides

It's not cheap. Our room will set you back around \$560 per night in January 2024. The only other slight gripe is that there's no night room service. This is not normally a biggy but, as everything else shuts in the area around midnight, it does mean that you could end up going hungry if you're a late arrival.

Eat

It goes without saying that the hotel offers excellent scoff but you can't miss visiting the local towns. Drive up to Port Salerno and dine at one of the many great restaurants, where fresh seafood is the specialty. The Fysh Bar & Grill, Shrimper's Grill and Raw Bar are top spots. Alternatively, head for Jensen Beach, which is even closer, to catch some live music at the New Orleans-inspired Crawdaddy's, or Mulligan's. For breakfast, Jan's Place is a must.

Relax

Take a sunset sail aboard the Resolute with the Treasure Coast Sailing Adventures crew. Meet at the Sailor's Return restaurant in the Sunset Bay Marina, Stuart for a truly serene sailing experience with stunning sunset views.

Enjoy a Sound Healing session at the Elliott Museum with the immensely talented Deena Rahill. This ancient healing practice uses sound

and resonance to reduce anxiety and reboot the nervous system.

Martin County's new, award-winning ecotourism program, Explore Natural Martin, is another relaxation must. Developed in partnership with Leave No Trace, this Nature Walk takes you through the picturesque woodland at Allapattah Flats Wildlife Management Area. The scenery changes around you as you stroll along through a variety of ecosystems, from wetlands to pine flatwoods, and you'll likely get to see some amazing wildlife in its natural habitat. At one point a huge tortoise lumbered out of the undergrowth and made its way to its burrow. An amazing experience.

Adventure

From adrenaline watersports to places to explore, you're spoilt for choice. The Florida Oceanographic Coastal Centre is worth a visit. It covers a whopping 57 acres and there are nature trails, a 750,000-gallon Game Fish Lagoon, Sea Star Touch Tank and much more.

The Elliott Museum is a petrol head's paradise, featuring a dynamic collection of antique cars and vintage boats. It also has one of the largest collections of autographed baseball memorabilia outside the Baseball Hall of Fame.

If you want something with a few more chills, embark on the Port Salerno Ghost Tour with

local historian and author Patrick S. Mesmer and his wife Tricia. They are the experts on all things paranormal in this part of the world, providing riveting walks around the spots where spooks still lurk in the shadows.

You can't come all this way without visiting the House of Refuge, Martin County's quintessential attraction. It's the county's oldest building, dating back to 1876, and the only surviving structure of its kind. It's one of the most popular spots for photos in Martin and makes a stunning shot, day or night.

Finally, I'm going to end as I began, with a road trip. The Martin Grade Scenic Highway (County Road 714) is completely shaded by an intertwined canopy of century-old oak trees that form a stunning green tunnel, flanked by massive gnarled trunks. With beams of golden sunlight bursting through the foliage here and there, this other-worldly road is a road trip you won't want to miss. Trust me.

Tim Morris

Visit

- visitflorida.com
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- opalcollection.com/hutchinson-shores
- soundvibration.net
- facebook.com/portsalerno-ghosttours



UB40: UK reggae pioneers

Do you Pine for jazz? Then get in early for Cheltenham

CHELTHENHAM JAZZ Festival is offering audiences a sneak peak of their 2024 programme, releasing tickets for six of the acts that will star in the six-day event in the spring.

Set to headline the Festival's Big Top in May 2024 are singer-songwriter Jack Savoretti, pop reggae royalty UB40 and electronica pioneers Morcheeba.

Superstar saxophonist and former Jazz Warrior Courtney Pine and Grammy-winning singer-songwriter Dee Dee Bridgewater will also make the trip to Cheltenham. And West African dance legends Orchestra Baobab will perform in a double-headline show with Afro Jazz innovators Nubiyán Twist.

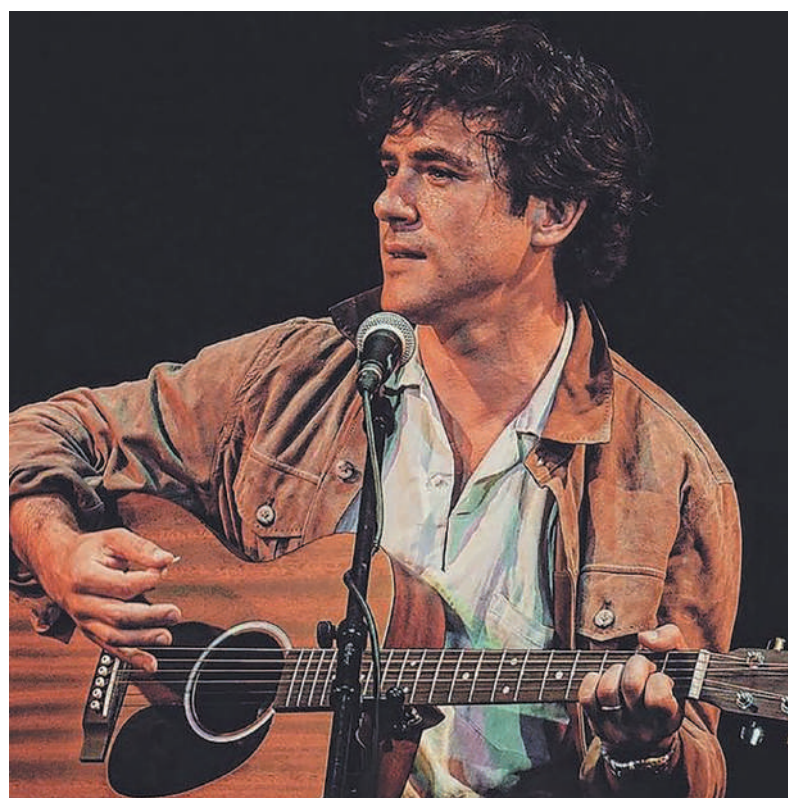
"This first release of tickets for our exciting 2024 programme reflects the Festival's long-standing commitment to celebrating the influences of jazz across all musical genres," said Ian George, the festival's head of programming.

"We celebrate all the genres that have jazz in their DNA by bringing the best of contemporary UK, US and European jazz to our Festival Village and across the town of Cheltenham."

He added: "The breadth of jazz's influence is unique. From pop to soul, blues to world music, we are always so spoiled for fantastic musicians at Cheltenham. From orchestras and big bands to club sessions and late-night jams, the festival runs the gamut of the music – as this line-up proves."

Savoretti, who has appeared at Cheltenham once before, said he was excited to return to a festival he believes has a unique character.

He added: "Cheltenham is one of those festivals you always want to play, our first



TOP NAMES: Jack Savoretti, who has appeared at the festival before, and Courtney Pine, below



show there was incredible and I look forward to returning next year."

Morcheeba's Skye Edwards said: "We're looking forward to performing at Cheltenham. It has such a great reputation for having an eclectic mix of bands and genres. There's a place for new talent alongside the established names, which makes this a very vibrant festival for everyone."

The full programme will be revealed in February.

● **Go to: [cheltenhamfestivals.com/jazz](https://www.cheltenhamfestivals.com/jazz) for tickets and more details about the early announcement shows.**

The doctors will see you no In sickn & in hea

DR MICHAEL MOSLEY is used to strangers coming up to him in the street and telling him how he has changed their lives for the better.

And the author of international bestsellers such as the *Fast Diet* series, whose award-winning TV shows include *Trust Me I'm A Doctor*, says he is happy to help.

"A lot of people stop me to chat and I like that. They recognise me from my books or from TV and tell me they did the 5:2 or the Fast 800 Diet as they were overweight, depressed, had high blood pressure or type 2 diabetes – whatever it might be – and they want me to know they've lost a lot of weight and it's really turned their lives around. It's rewarding to hear," he said.

Michael is no stranger to the stage having toured in 2019 with his hit show *Trust Fast Health* which saw him explode common health myths and offer insights into the workings of the human body.

Now he and his GP wife Dr Clare Bailey are looking forward to their first joint UK theatre tour with their new stage show *Eat (Well), Sleep (Better) and Live (Longer!)*. It kicks off at the Stafford Gatehouse Theatre on February 12 and runs until February 29, concluding at Bournemouth Pavilion.

The show comes with a warning – that it could seriously improve your health. It promises to be 'highly interactive' and full of fascinating facts about what we can all do to help maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Cooking

Michael said: "Touring with Clare will be great – I always get a little bit nervous before doing a live show, although I do like doing them, so it will be nice to be on the tour with my wife."

"We will try to make the shows as fun, enjoyable, and interactive as we possibly can. Clare's going to be doing some live cooking demonstrations – they could be a little bit dangerous as you never quite know how they're going to turn out."

Healthy eating has never been a hotter topic – with Chris van Tulleken's recent book *Ultra Processed People* hitting headlines and shooting to the top of the *Sunday Times* bestsellers list. It lifts the lid on the harm the predominance of ultra-processed food (UPF) is wreaking in today's diets.

Michael said: "Mental and physical health problems are on the rise – that seems to be pretty much worldwide. We know these problems are obviously linked to financial pressure and also, as rates of obesity continue to rise, our consumption of UPF goes up and we eat junk food when we're a bit depressed – so they kind of feed on each other."

"We are seeing rising obesity rates, particularly of childhood obesity and in turn this leads to higher blood pressure, type 2 diabetes and increasing rates of depression and anxiety, particularly in the young, which I think is strongly related to what people are eating."

After studying Philosophy, Politics and Economics at Oxford, he became an investment banker before retraining as a doctor at London's Royal Free Hospital. Realising this wasn't really for him, he joined the BBC as a trainee assistant producer and over the next 25 years has made numerous science and history documentaries for the channel,

Did you know...

- Drinking beetroot juice brings your blood pressure down and increases your physical performance by making your blood vessels expand.
- Slow, deep breathing switches on your parasympathetic nervous system, slowing your heart, calming you down and making it easier to fall asleep.
- One of the main reasons middle aged women put on weight is because they are not eating enough protein; protein is the single biggest driver of hunger and current recommended protein levels are way too low, particularly for menopausal women.
- You get fitter and burn more calories when walking downstairs than walking up.
- One of the reasons dancing makes us feel so good is because it leads to the release of cannabis-like substances in our blood.
- Drinking red wine can protect your heart, reduce your risk of diabetes and give your gut health a boost.



Edited by Tracey Allen

ow. Health guru couple to tour together

ness alth

NEXT:
Michael
and wife
Clare are
hitting
the road
with a
new show



first behind the camera and more recently as a presenter.

His chart-topping podcast *Just One Thing* – available on BBC Sounds – explores simple ways to improve your mood that don't involve strenuous exercise, from listening to music to walking backwards.

In our increasingly busy lives, which one particular thing would we recommend we do if we can?

He explained: "Going out for a brisk early morning walk is a very good thing to do, particularly into green spaces because you get the benefit of early morning light which helps to reset your internal clock and will help you sleep better. You have the benefits of exercise and also spending time in nature, and you've delayed when you have your first morning coffee. There's some interesting research that says it's best to drink your first coffee of the day about an hour after you wake up rather than knocking it back first thing."

Clare has been a GP for more than 30 years, and has a particular interest in promoting diet and lifestyle changes for weight loss, reducing blood sugars, and reversing type 2 diabetes. Having seen the benefit in patients coming off medication, feeling fitter and healthier, as well as experiencing improvements in other related metabolic conditions such as non-alcoholic fatty liver disease, hypertension, arthritis and other inflammatory conditions, she is passionate about making these more available, she said. Her new book the *Fast 800 Treats Recipe Book* will be available to buy exclusively on the tour, then out in the wider world on April 25.

Kimchi

She said: "The book features healthy and delicious snacks including brownies, cupcakes and crumbles that have all been specially created so that they're high in protein and won't send your blood sugars soaring."

The couple are enthusiastic about cooking food from scratch, and are strong advocates for the benefits of fermented food.

Michael said: "We make our own sauerkraut and kimchi. I enjoy the process – it's super-cheap, really healthy and great fun to do. You just need cabbage, salt, some spices, onion and a bit of time. On the tour I'll be talking about some of the health benefits of herbs and spices and why you should add more to your food."

Tracey Allen

Win tickets to their show

WE HAVE a pair of tickets to win to see the Eat (Well), Sleep (Better), Live (Longer!) tour, at a venue of the winner's choice.

For your chance to win this fantastic prize, tell us: What is the name of Dr Michael Mosley's chart-topping podcast?

Email your answer, marked Dr Michael Mosley tour competition, to: tracey.allen@rafnews.co.uk or post it to: RAF News, Room 68, Lancaster Building, HQ Air Command, High Wycombe, HP14 4UE, to arrive by December 15. Please state on your entry which venue on the tour you wish to attend. Go to: eatsleeplivetour.co.uk for full tour details.



**GAYNOR
FAYE
DIRECTING
DEBUT**

The Syndicate is Faye's tribute to late mother Kay

BASED ON the hit BBC One drama that ran for four series, the world premiere of Kay Mellor's final stage play, *The Syndicate*, tours the UK for 15 weeks from April to July next year.

TV and stage star Gaynor Faye (*Emmerdale*, *Calendar Girls*), Kay's daughter, makes her directorial debut, bringing her late mother's stage adaptation of the comedy drama to life. Kay (*below*) passed away in 2022.

The cast features boy band The Wanted's Max George in his stage acting debut, *Emmerdale*'s Samantha Giles and *Coronation Street*'s Brooke Vincent.

The Syndicate tells the story of five supermarket workers whose lottery syndicate numbers come in, just as their jobs and livelihoods are under threat.

Will a share of the jackpot make their dreams come true or their nightmares a reality?

What's certain is the win of a lifetime will change the syndicate members' lives, loves

and relationships forever.

The Syndicate follows Kay's hugely successful TV-to-stage adaptations of *Fat Friends* – *The Musical* and *Band of Gold*.

Gaynor said: "It is extremely special to be a part of this new theatrical version of *The Syndicate* and one which my mum was really excited to stage.

"Having acted in the last series on TV, when she asked me to assist her on directing the show – I jumped at it. Now, it has become my first solo directing role and whilst I am so sad not to be doing it with her, I am also very proud and excited to bring mum's vision to the fore.

"With a fabulous creative team and, of course, an incredible script, we're going to reach for the stars and make mum's wish come true – bringing another Kay Mellor classic to theatres across the country."

The Syndicate tours the length of the UK, visiting venues including Leeds, Kay and Gaynor's home town.

Go to: syndicatetheplay.com for tour details.





Your Announcements

You can email photos for announcements on this page to: tracey.allen@rafnews.co.uk

Death

PACK David, 208 Sqn, 1962-64 in Aden, died peacefully at home on November 15, aged 82.



David and Marjorie Pack on their wedding day

Reunion

RAF TG11 Reunion – calling all ex T/phonist/TPO/Teleg/TCO/TCC/WOP Spec/TRC personnel in the former Trade Group 11, also any contemporary comms trades that superseded any of the above. All are welcome at the forthcoming TG11 reunion in March 2024.

Venue is the Marriott Delta Hotels Nottingham Belfry, Mellors Way, off Woodhouse Way, Nottingham NG8 6PY, Friday, March 22 to Sunday, March 24. Please find further details at: tg11association.com where, if not already a member of the association, there is a facility to become one (just click on the register motif at the top of the website page).

Associations

THE next quarterly social lunch of the National Service Association (Royal Air Force) Southend Group will be on Wednesday, December 6 at the Castle, Hadleigh, Essex. All RAF veterans and

guests are invited. Details and bookings from Area Organiser Ron Spack: 01268 779697.

The RAF Association Beccles and Southwold Area Branch will be holding their Annual Christmas Lunch on Saturday, December 9, at the Three Horseshoes Inn, Beccles, Suffolk, commencing with a Meet and Greet at noon and lunch at 1pm.

A welcome from the Branch President will be followed by a short address from the Mayor of Beccles and will precede the start. All Branch members, Royal Air Force veterans and serving personnel are welcome to attend with a guest.

A copy of the menu is available on the Branch website at: rafabecclandsouthwold.wordpress.com and the terms of payment are by card or cash on the day.

For reservations and any special dietary needs, please call Shelagh Wells on: 01502 476601.

There is plentiful free parking available. Further information available from President Brian Vousden on: 01502 711519 or email: lancaster457@btinternet.com.

6 Squadron will celebrate its 110th anniversary on January 31, 2024. To commemorate the event, the Sqn Association, in concert with the squadron, will be holding a dinner at the Queen's Hotel, Farnborough, on Friday, February 2, 2024. Given a numbers limitation of 130 diners, we currently anticipate the event being 'stag' but that might change to a guest night closer to the time if take-up is less than anticipated.

Whilst still at the formative stage, likely details are as follows: three-course meal – approx. £60 including arrival drink, half bottle of wine with dinner and a glass of port; room rates – £99

including VAT and breakfast, based on a maximum of two people sharing.

The Association Committee has kindly agreed that Association Members will get a subsidy of £10 per head. If you are not already an Association Member, you can join by contacting: 6sqnassociation@gmail.com. Expressions of interest should be made to Clive Mitchell at: clive.mitchell163@mod.gov.uk. Please let Clive know if you would like to attend and bring a guest, should that opportunity arise.

RAF Armourers past and present. RAF Association's Armourers Branch aims to provide welfare support and comradeship for all who have served or currently serve as an RAF Armourer. Please see: rafaarmourers.co.uk or you can contact the committee via: plumbersrest@outlook.com.

RAF Physical Training Instructors Association holds an annual Dinner and AGM over a weekend plus locally organised events. Contact RAFPTIA Honorary Secretary Denise Street-Brown on: ptisec@outlook.com for membership enquiries.

IF you trained as an RAF Administrative Apprentice (or are related to one) we would be delighted to welcome you to the RAFAA Association. Please see: rafadappassn.org; or contact the Membership Secretary on: 07866 085834 or the Chairman on: 01933 443673.

RAF Catering WOs' and Seniors' Association (RAF CWO & SA): all serving or retired TG19 Warrant Officers or Flight Sergeants and all former Catering Branch Officers are invited to join the RAF CWO & SA. We meet twice yearly. Please email: davescott10@hotmail.co.uk.



ON COURSE: The trainees with Air Cdre Rich Jacob (front row, centre)

Shawbury grads in control

THE FIRST students to complete training on a new air traffic management system have graduated at RAF Shawbury.

The latest Joint Air Traffic Control Course saw 13 students train for six months on simulators which replicate new equipment being rolled out across the Defence estate under Programme Marshall, a £1.9 billion programme to upgrade and support the MOD's terminal Air Traffic Management capability at airfields in the UK and overseas.

To commemorate the event, a new simulator complex was formally opened at the Defence College of Air and Space Operations by Air Cdre Rich Jacob (Senior Responsible Owner), Michael Stoller (Chief Executive Officer Aquila Air Traffic Management Services) and Dr Simon Dakin

(Director Integrated Battlespace, Defence Equipment and Support).

Air Cdre Jacob said: "Today marks another significant milestone for Programme Marshall, ensuring that those going through the Air Traffic course at RAF Shawbury are best prepared for the controlling demands of the front line by training on the latest equipment."

The investment in Military Air Traffic equipment is designed to ensure safe and resilient flying operations for both military and civilian aircraft operating around and in and out of government aerodromes.

This will see new equipment installed across more than 60 MOD sites in the UK and overseas by 2024, including Cyprus and Gibraltar.

See RAF Bands on stage

RAF SHAWBURY presents a Christmas Carol Concert at St Chad's Church, Shrewsbury, featuring The Band of the Royal Air Force Regiment, on December 5.

Tickets are free but registration is essential through Eventbrite (eventbrite.com). Arrival is from 6.30pm to be seated by 7pm. Please bring an electronic copy of your tickets for the evening. All proceeds from the collection will support RAF Shawbury and St Chad's Church charities. Go to: raf.mod.uk/display-teams/raf-music-services/live-dates/ for more information.

And on December 15,



IN TUNE: The French Horn section of The Band of the RAF Regiment

The Royal Air Force Music Services Association presents in concert at The Winston Churchill Theatre, Ruislip.

Esprit De Corps with The Band of the Royal Air Force Regiment and The Central Band of the Royal Air Force

● Go to: hillingdontheatres.uk for more information and booking details.

How to use our service

There is no charge for conventionally-worded **birth, engagement, marriage, anniversary, death, in memoriam seeking and reunion** notices. For commercial small ads contact Edwin Rodrigues on: 07482 571535. We cannot, under any circumstances, take announcements over the telephone. They can be sent by email to: tracey.allen@rafnews.co.uk. Please note that due to the coronavirus pandemic we are currently unable to accept notices submitted by post.

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Christmas Appeal for RAF charity

THE RAF Benevolent Fund has been chosen for the Telegraph's Christmas Charity Appeal.

The Appeal has been running for more than

100 years, and started in its current format in 1986. It has raised close to £30 million for charities since its launch, including £852,000 for Covid charities.

The Appeal was launched last month and will run until the end of January 2024.

● Go to: telegraph.co.uk to donate online.



Your Announcements

You can email photos for announcements on this page to: tracey.allen@rafnews.co.uk



Dan in Bomber tour

TV PRESENTER, author and historian, aka 'the history guy,' Dan Snow made a special visit to RAF High Wycombe recently.

He was given a guided tour of the Sir Arthur 'Bomber' Harris room at the Buckinghamshire station by historian Dave Brown.

And being able to sit at 'Bomber' Harris's desk was a highlight of the tour, Dan revealed.

He said: "Two things hit me first. The slightly darker

wood, which takes you back to an earlier age when wood was used as a furnishing. And also, the extraordinary smell that tells you you are entering such a wonderful historic space... the smell of paper, maps and wood.

"You can close your eyes and know you are walking into an RAF office from 80 years ago. The desk is astonishing - the size of desk you imagine you would need if you were a man with his responsibility. It feels like a time capsule."

Chefs taste Akrotiri life

Staff Reporter

RESERVISTS FROM 611 Sqn RAuxAF got a taste of RAF life on Cyprus when they deployed to Akrotiri for up to five weeks on Exercise Broaden Horizon.

The 25 Woodvale-based reservists worked alongside full-time RAF personnel supporting operations in the region for stints ranging from a week to a month.

The reservists included specialists from a variety of roles such as chefs, fitness instructors and engineers.

They got stuck in with all aspects of their professions: Intelligence Analysts delivered weekly briefings to Akrotiri's Station Commander and Physical Training Instructors ran circuit training classes and fitness tests in the station gym.

611 Sqn's WO Mathison, who led the exercise, said: "Preparing for this exercise takes a lot of planning but it's worth it when I see all the



HOT WORK: Chefs at Akrotiri on Exercise Broaden Horizon

reservists getting a wealth of experience and fulfilment out here.

"They throw themselves into the experience, learn as much as they can, deliver excellence and leave a brilliant impression of the work that reservists do to deliver output for the

Royal Air Force. Working at Akrotiri not only gives them a change of scene and working environment to their UK learning but gives them the experience of a deployment."

AS1 Anthony Morris, a chef who deployed to the island for a month, added:

"I've had an absolutely fantastic time. I've cooked for everything from 20 to 200 people, made 1,500 canapes for a VIP event and worked alongside regulars and other reservists."

● **Go to:** raf.mod/uk for more information about 611 Sqn.

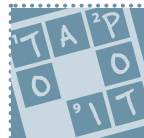
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Prize Crossword

No. 352

Solve the crossword, then rearrange the 10 letters in yellow squares to find an RAF word

Across

- 7. Festival celebrating eastern flower (6)
- 8. **And 12 Across.** Red Arrows manoeuvre to clone wheel (6,4)
- 10. It has no effect on Poland pilot with bad smell (7)
- 11. Tree falls on the French weapon (5)
- 12. **See 8 Across**
- 13. In our time Henman comes back to own up (5)
- 17. For example, June finds my French triumph heartless (5)
- 18. Revoke United Nations Party (4)
- 22. Some heart-throb: amazing leader (5)
- 23. Rebuke regarding evidence (7)
- 24. **And 25 Across.** We harken thru disorder to find classic plane (6,6)
- 25. **See 24 Across**

Down

- 1. RAF planes receiving benefits? (7)
- 2. Attack on a sailor, we hear (7)
- 3. It's uniform, either way (5)
- 4. RAF attack on arid Iran endless, perhaps (3,4)
- 5. Steffi, the first to work hard (5)
- 6. Father watches – we hear – chips (5)
- 9. 31 Squadron takes first prize leading lights (9)
- 14. Six balls disrupted by gay tanker (7)
- 15. Our teen confused on way (2,5)
- 16. Airshow lettuce for dinner originally (7)
- 19. Coffee outside Morocco like tea (5)
- 20. Islamic ruling for all the women arriving first (5)
- 21. Talk at length then shoot (5)

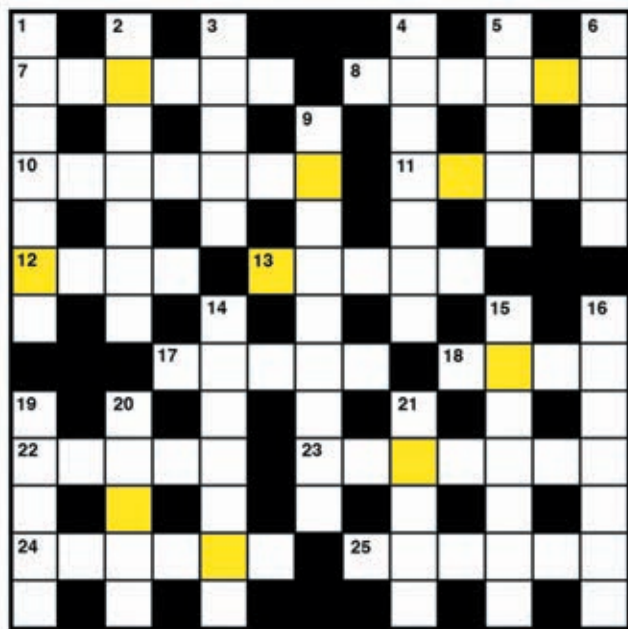
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RAF word Crossword No. 352

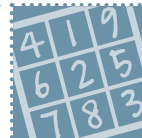
The winners of our Prize Crossword and Prize Su Doku puzzles will receive a recent top aviation title – please send your entries to the address printed in the adjacent Su Doku panel, to arrive by December 15.

Prize Crossword No. 350 winner is: Mrs J Allison, Lincoln.



Solution to Crossword No 351:

Across – 1. Saga 8. Chocoholic 9. Attended 10. Fawn 12. Vulcan 14. Regale 15. Airman 17. Titbit 18. Shoo 19. Campaign 21. Helicopter 22. Acne
Down – 2. Amateurish 3. Ache 4. Wooden 5. Wonder 6. Dogfight 7. Icon 11. Wellington 13. Cambodia 16. Nachos 17. Tomato 18. Soho 20. Aura
Aircraft – Sopwith Camel



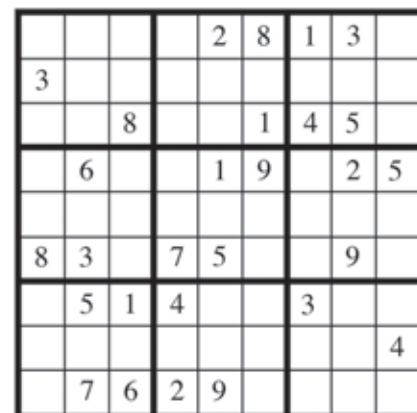
Prize Su Doku

No. 362

Fill in all the squares in the grid so that each row, each column and each 3x3 square contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

Solutions should be sent in a sealed envelope marked 'Su Doku' with the number in the top left-hand corner to RAF News, Room 68, Lancaster Building, HQ Air Command, High Wycombe, Bucks, HP14 4UE, to arrive by December 15.

The winner of Su Doku No: 360 is: Christopher Read, Newbury.



Solution to Su Doku No: 361

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



Film Review

Saltburn (15)

In cinemas now

Drinking in the good life with riotous results

OLIVER QUICK (Barry Keoghan, *Dunkirk*, *The Banshees of Inisherin*) is a Scouser on a scholarship at Oxford, a real Norman-no-mates, until he is taken under the wing of the effortlessly charismatic and ever popular Felix (Jacob Elordi), in Emerald Fennell's hilariously quippy *Saltburn*.

The title is taken from Felix's family home, a gargantuan manor where Oliver has been invited to stay for the summer on account of not wanting to return to the squalor of his mum's place in Preston. Now he is on the other end of the spectrum, black tie to every dinner and with house servants available at every beck and call.

Getting a true taste of how the other half live, Oliver must learn to ingratiate himself without overstepping the line.

Elordi, who stars as Elvis in Coppola's *Priscilla* – out early next year – gives an equally magnetic performance as carefree toff Felix. The light that everyone revolves around, he will

become Oliver's object of obsession, sparking a *Talented Mr Ripley*-style infatuation that has him drinking his bathwater.

Also in the estate are Felix's family: father Sir James (Richard E Grant, *The Lesson*), obliviously airy mother Elsbeth (a scene-stealing Rosmund Pike, *Gone Girl*), nymphet sister Venetia (Alison Oliver, *Conversations With Friends*) and American cousin Farleigh (Archie Madekwe, *Midsommar*), who is particularly cagey now that gate-crasher Oliver is making himself cosy.

Keoghan is perfect in this role, his past performances lending themselves to concretise his place as an outsider with an unnerving command.

Saltburn is dynamic and fun, but most importantly it is funny, with the ultra-wealthy snobs constantly proving themselves alien, dishing out zingers from their ivory tower. Observing from afar at school initially, the pace builds and builds until it becomes uproariously far-fetched, but it never ceases to be entertaining.

RAF News rating 5/5 Review by Sam Cooney



JEALOUSY: Well-to-do American cousin Farleigh (Madekwe) is wary of Scouser Oliver (Keoghan, left)



GOOD TIME GIRL: Venetia (Oliver)

ELSBETH: Pike