

The Forces' favourite paper

Books
WWII
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● See p17



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DVDS up
for grabs

● See RnR



ROYAL AIR FORCE

Friday **July 24** 2020
No 1496 **70p**

RAF News



CAS on future air power and the cyber threat

See p14 to p15



Rugby Union
Charging to new levels



● Sport p26

Football
UKAF man's in gear now



● Sport p23

UK must win new info war



PRINCE CHARLES shares a joke with RAF new recruits after attending a Queen's Colour Squadron graduation parade at Cranwell. PHOTO: PA

Simon Mander

AIR CHIEFS have been urged to move from combat jets to cyber tech to beat tomorrow's enemies.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace urged the RAF to learn from recent Turkish and Russian campaigns in Syria and Ukraine ahead of the next Defence Review.

Speaking at the Air and Space Power Conference, delivered virtually due to Covid restrictions, the former Army officer said: "Today we're facing coronavirus, tomorrow it could be a high-level cyber strike."

"Our adversaries now wear many masks. They know we're dependent on information technology."

"They know globalisation makes us more vulnerable. So, there's a danger our competitors will use proxies and new technologies to outflank us."

He said lessons could be learned from Turkey, which used Bayraktar TB2 UAVs to destroy command and control nodes and two transport aircraft at the Libyan National Army-controlled Jufrah airfield in July. ● Cont p3





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“It is our duty to ensure our Armed Forces have the best conditions possible”



Chancellor Rishi Sunak announcing a £200m scheme to revamp Service homes **p5**

“Harlots brings 18th century London to life”

The BBC’s Sue Deeks on the period drama starring Lesley Manville **R’n’R p4-5**



“We have to be more professional, those in top jobs have to be accountable”

WO Tug Wilson on the shake-up within Service rugby union **p26**



ROYAL AIR FORCE

RAF News

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UK Forces cyber threat

● *continued from front*

The Erdogan regime has also deployed lightly-armed drones and smart ammunition in Syria to stop tanks, armoured cars and air defence systems.

According to reports, the Assad regime lost 3,000 soldiers, 151 tanks, eight helicopters, three drones, three fighter jets, eight aerial defence systems and one headquarters in the offensive.

“Even if only half of these claims are true the implications are game-changing,” said Mr Wallace.

According to defence analysts Russia used electronic warfare to jam communications, locate and target troops with artillery, turn Ukrainian tech against their own operators, and send out false GPS and texts to individual soldiers.

He said Britain needed to be as nimble as its rivals at using machine learning, artificial intelligence and quantum computing as he announced a £65 million contract for the first Protector aircraft to replace the Reaper platform.

“Our opponents are constantly seeking to go higher, faster and further.

“We know they’ve got thermobaric weapons. We know

FUTURE AIR POWER: The Tempest sixth-generation aircraft which will replace Typhoon is currently under development



they are developing hypersonic glide vehicles. We know UAVs and deep strike pose us a lethal threat.

“We know increasing numbers of actors have the ability to hit us with precision and at range,” he said.

He added Russia and China are developing offensive space weapons to hit satellites providing global communications, critical intelligence, surveillance, navigation and national infrastructure from mobile phones, to cashpoints, to the stock market.

“That’s why, in the future, what’s above you will be often more important than what’s in front of you,” said Mr Wallace.

“Hiding and finding will be at the centre of tomorrow’s battlefield. If you can be found, you can be killed.

“That requires a rebalancing from Industrial Age to Information Age capabilities – investing in cyber, space, electronic warfare, AI, robotics and autonomy – coupled with their integration with the best of what already exists.”

MoD confirms new pay deal

MILITARY PERSONNEL are to receive an inflation-busting two per cent pay rise this year.

The increase means starting salaries will rise by £545 for Officers, £634 for a Corporal and £400 for a newly-trained soldier, sailor or airman or woman.

Basic pay for other ranks on completion of initial training will now be £20,400 and the average salary for a Corporal will be £32,797.

Personnel will see the 2020/21 rise in their September pay packets, backdated to April 2020.

The award comes in addition to the non-contributory pension and access to incremental pay progression.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said: “Over the past three years, Service personnel have received pay rises totalling seven per cent which has helped Defence attract and retain the best people for the Armed Forces.”

This Week In History



1946

First UK ejection test

The UK’s first live ejection test is carried out by pilot Bernard Lynch, who fires a Martin-Baker seat fitted to a Meteor flying at 8,000ft at a speed of 320mph.

1981

Chinook arrives

18 Sqn is reformed at RAF Odiham in Hampshire as the first RAF heavy lift unit equipped with the Chinook HC1.



1995

Harrier deployed to Balkans

12 Harrier GR7s operated by 4 Sqn are deployed to Gioia del Colle in southern Italy on ground attack and reconnaissance missions against Serbian targets in Bosnia.

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



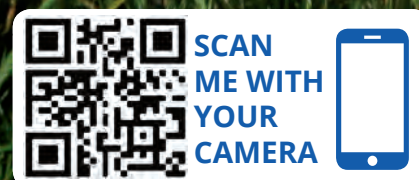
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Go with the bro

BROTHERS IN ARMS:
AC Jessie, left, with Charlie after his older brother's graduation parade. Below, combat training at Honington
PHOTO: SAC JAMES LEDGER

Vikki Quamina

Honington

AC JESSIE Fitch had his sights set on a career with the Royal Marines – now he's following in big bro Charlie's footsteps and training to be an RAF Gunner.

Charlie has just graduated after 20 tough weeks of combat training with the Regiment while Jessie has just started the course at Honington.

Charlie said: "Jessie wanted to join the Marines but I had a word with him and he soon changed his mind and followed me into the RAF."

Jessie, who turned 18 on the

same day his brother graduated, was able to join him to celebrate after Regiment chiefs relaxed the current rules on relatives attending the parade.

Charlie added: "The phase one training is a tough course and I'm proud to graduate. I've given him some advice about how to get through it."

"I told him that if he does what he's told when he's told to do it he'll do great."

"Mum was a bit worried when we both joined up but she and dad are now both proud as punch."

● See p19 for latest Gunners graduation news.



Forces families to get £200 million housing makeover

Staff Reporter

THOUSANDS OF Forces families' homes are to be revamped under a £200 million programme unveiled by Chancellor Rishi Sunak.

As part of the housing pledge 3,500 homes and single living quarters will be given a makeover which will include new kitchens and bathrooms.

New roofing will be installed to properties to reduce the risk of mould and damp along with new windows and doors to cut fuel bills and make military housing more environmentally friendly.

Families with young children will also benefit from new play areas, roads will be resurfaced and energy efficient street lighting will help modernise sites as part of the funding.

The Chancellor said: "Day in, day out, our Armed Forces make huge personal sacrifices for our country, and it is our

duty to ensure they have the best conditions possible.

"This news doesn't just mean Service homes across the country will be upgraded, but will see 2,000 jobs in sectors where they are needed the most, like plumbing and decorating."

The funding pledge follows a four-year, £530-million investment programme to upgrade Service family accommodation.

The MoD is currently carrying out pilot studies under the New Accommodation Model to enable Service personnel to buy and rent private sector property to increase choice and make the Forces more attractive to new recruits.

FUNDING PLEDGE:

Chancellor Rishi Sunak has announced an extra £200 million to upgrade Forces family accommodation



News bulletin



Wills Sea King up for adoption

LUCKY CHARM Twinkletoes and the Sea King flown by the Duke of Cambridge are up for adoption to raise funds for the RAF Museum.

The Adopt an Artefact scheme features more than 50 items from the venue's London and Cosford collections.

The pocket-sized Twinkletoes flew alongside Arthur Whitten Brown and Captain John Alcock on the first ever transatlantic flight in a Vickers Vimy, in 1919.

● Go to: rafmuseum.org.uk for more details





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News bulletin



FALL GUYS: RAF Falcons resume training at Brize Norton PHOTO: PAUL CROUCH

Chute-ing stars ease lockdown

THE RAF Falcons have resumed military parachute training at Brize Norton despite the cancellation of their 2020 display season due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

It's the first time the team have come together since they departed the USA in March following winter training in California.

Falcons commanding officer Flt Lt Chris Wilce said: "Display training is not the only reason for our existence."

"All team members have to train throughout the year to keep their skill set current, so they are ready for a posting to a military parachuting role after life as an RAF Falcon."

Monty dons Reds suit for 7th season



SEVEN UP: Wg Cdr David Montenegro

Simon Mander

AEROBATIC ACE Wg Cdr David Montenegro is about to start a record-breaking seventh season with the Red Arrows.

The airman joined the team in 2009 for three years as a display pilot. He returned after a five-year break flying in the Red 1 position for another three years and will now command the team for the remainder of the 2020 season.

The Reds are preparing to showcase their latest moves after being granted their licence to thrill at a shortened series of public events by air chiefs.

He said: "The team have done their absolute best to adapt and reach this important annual milestone."

Red One, Sqn Ldr Martin Pert, will lead the nine-aircraft formation and coordinates training. He added: "Regardless of the reduced number of shows, all of us look forward to streaming red, white

and blue up and down the country at some point this year. We've tried to ensure this year's display retains all the hallmarks of a Red Arrows performance – precision, dynamism and excitement.

"We've designed new manoeuvres such as the thrilling crossbow and the beautiful rolling heart, which have revitalised the display for a new audience."

Air Officer Commanding 22 Group, Air Vice-Marshal Warren James, granted approval qualifying the pilots to switch green coveralls for the famous red flying suits.

Training for the 56th season began last November and this year the team have performed high-profile flypasts over London to celebrate the 75th anniversary of VE Day, in Paris to acknowledge 80 years since De Gaulle's historic L'Appel speech, and over North Yorkshire to mark Armed Forces Day in June.

Formed in 1964, the Red Arrows have completed nearly 5,000 displays in 57 countries including Russia and, more recently, China.



Crash and learn

CRASH RECOVERY experts were put through their paces in a major exercise at RAF Wittering.

Details of two simulated incidents involving a jet and a helicopter at the Cambridgeshire base were kept secret to make training as realistic as possible.

The scenario was set up to test the Boscombe Down-based Joint Aircraft Recovery and Transportation Squadron, which retrieves crashed aircraft in the United Kingdom and overseas.

42 Expeditionary Support Wing Commander Dan Penter said: "This is the perfect moment for an exercise. Aircraft crashes can happen at any time and we have to be prepared to work in situations that demand special measures and different ways of working."

Aircraft wreckage was placed near Wittering's Vigo Wood training



WRECKING CREW: JARTS personnel, above and left, carry out aircraft recovery across the world

area to test personnel on recovering fixed wing and rotary aircraft.

Meanwhile other airmen adopted the roles of dog-walkers, agitated land owners and reporters.



ALWAYS DELIVER: Current members of 2MT at work and, inset, the squadron in days gone by

Wittering parks MT 80th birthday bash

PLANS TO mark the 80th anniversary of 2 Mechanical Transport Squadron have been parked because of coronavirus.

The unit, which delivers oxygen supplies across the UK, was formed in 1940 to ferry aircraft spares

and ammunition between stations during the Battle of Britain.

Since then it has served in most major UK military operations – most recently delivering Typhoon spares to the RAF's Baltic Air Policing Mission in Estonia.

New CO Sqn Ldr Dan Cook said: "What a week to arrive. The people here are dedicated and focused, and they have a real can-do attitude to their work. 2MT Sqn is an amazing place to be. It is not just about driving trucks."



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 **ROYAL
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Protector in £65m boost

Cash will fund 3 aircraft and control centres

DEFENCE CHIEFS have signed a £65m contract to build the UK's first three unmanned Protector aircraft.

The remotely piloted air system is set to enter service by mid-2024, replacing the RAF's Reaper fleet, and will be able to operate in Britain's civilian airspace.

Announcing the contract Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said: "Protector will provide vast global reach, meeting the UK's defence and security needs for decades to come, and provides another increase to the unmanned inventory for the Armed Forces.

"This aircraft will upgrade a whole range of lethal capabilities allowing us to control, protect and manage the battlespace from the air for hours on end."



PROTECTOR: Will also operate in civilian airspace

The cutting-edge aircraft, which can remain airborne for more than 40 hours, will be deployed in wide-ranging intelligence gathering, surveillance and frontline operations from its base at RAF Waddington, Lincolnshire.

The fleet will also have advanced anti-icing and lightning protection,

allowing it to operate in extreme weather conditions.

Protector also boasts enhanced data links and will carry the UK-made Brimstone missile and Paveway IV laser-guided bombs

The contract includes three ground control stations and other associated support equipment.

It also includes an option to build 13 more aircraft and four ground control stations, which will complete the current planned fleet of 16 aircraft, more than doubling the capability currently provided by Reaper.

Meeting stringent Nato and UK safety certification standards, the aircraft will be cleared to operate in civilian airspace supporting search and rescue and disaster response missions.

Sting in the tail as Typhoon and Hornet join Nation Day



FLYPAST: Hornet, top, and Typhoon, below. President Nauseda, right



BRITISH Typhoon and Spanish Hornet jets flew in formation over the Lithuanian capital Vilnius as part of the country's National Statehood Day.

The aircraft, on Nato Air Policing missions, made a diamond formation over the Presidential Palace as the national flag was raised and President Gitanas Nauseda led military personnel during a parade through the capital.

135 Expeditionary Air Wing commander, Wg Cdr Stu Gwinnutt, said: "It was a great honour to meet some of the people of Vilnius, who took real interest in our deployment.

"It was also satisfying to see Typhoons lead Spanish EF-18s in an impressive flypast, which demonstrates how closely we're working with our Nato partners."

Commanders of the RAF and Spanish Air Force detachments at Siauliai Air Base joined the local mayor in a working lunch following the relaxation of the Lithuanian coronavirus restrictions.

Wg Cdr Gwinnutt and Lt/Col Jesus Gutierrez Gallego were also joined by the Commander of the Nato Integration Unit in Lithuania, Col Jakob Larsen, from Denmark.

Lithuanian academics from a number of universities were also shown around a Typhoon fighter and briefed on the Nato mission.



PULL THE UDDER ONE: Cow, inset, is airlifted to safety by Puma from RAF Benson

Puma snares cow in high steaks rescue

THE STEAKS were high when the RAF was called in for an unusual rescue – saving a stranded cow.

The animal had got stuck at the bottom of Crammel Linn waterfall in Northumberland after escaping through a gate left open by visitors.

The 15-year-old Galloway, belonging to farmer Martin Smith, was airlifted to safety by an RAF Puma five days later.

An RAF Spadeadam spokesperson said: "We were asked to help rescue the cow by one of our tenant farmers on the military estate here.

"The animal got access to the river as visitors to the site had left a gate open. The recent rain had made the gorge banks treacherous and after Cumbria Fire and Rescue were unable to get her out safely, we turned to our colleagues

in the Joint Helicopter Command."

A crew from 28 Sqn at Benson on an exercise at nearby RAF Woodvale flew to the rescue and airlifted the 500kg animal to safety.

An RAF Benson spokesperson said: "The animal would have had to be destroyed if we were unable to lift it out of the area.

"The Fire Brigade would normally have been able to rescue it, but due to the influx of recent visitors to this beauty spot all the banks to the waterfall were muddy, and their equipment could not grip. "A local vet sedated the cow before she was lifted to safety."

Gp Capt Adam Wardrope, Benson's Station Commander, said: "Clearly, we don't specialise in lifting cows but supporting the local community is valuable training for our crews."

News

Long-range rescue for stricken Atlas

BREAKDOWN COVER: RAF engineers from the UK replace huge Atlas turbo prop engine; inset below, spec check at Mount Pleasant



Simon Mander

BRIZE-based ground crew flew more than 8,000 miles to repair an A400M from the Falklands that needed an engine change.

A team of five engineers flew into Mount Pleasant airport with tailored tooling equipment to replace one of the aircraft's four huge turboprop engines.

UK Airbus support centre in Oxfordshire.



head Gp Capt Chris Jones said: "Recovering an A400M that needs an engine change needs expertise and careful engineering."

"Team Atlas is a combined effort of RAF, Airbus and Flybe and the task has been a good test of joint organisational skills and communication."

The RAF operates a fleet of more than 20 of the long-range transporters from Brize Norton



RAF INTERCEPTORS: Typhoons scrambled after explosives alert on board civvy flight to the UK

Staff Reporter

A PAIR of RAF Typhoons were scrambled from Coningsby to intercept a civilian airliner heading to the UK following a security alert.

A Ryanair flight from Krakow to Dublin was forced to land at Stansted after unconfirmed reports that a note was discovered in a toilet claiming there were explosives on board.

An RAF spokesperson said:

"Two Typhoon fighter aircraft from Coningsby were launched to intercept a civilian aircraft."

"The aircraft was escorted safely to Stansted airport where it landed and our aircraft returned to base."

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United Kingdom
Special Forces



Forces farewell to Dame Vera



NATIONAL TREASURE: Dame Vera Lynn was honoured by UK Forces; above, BBMF Spitfire performs a flypast in honour of the singer dubbed 'The Forces' Sweetheart' during WWII



SPITFIRE FIGHTERS staged a flypast tribute at the funeral of 'Forces' Sweetheart' Dame Vera Lynn.

Military personnel carried her coffin and played the *Last Post* during the procession from the East Sussex village of Ditchling where she made her home, while others lined the route of her cortège to the crematorium chapel in Brighton where

there was a private ceremony.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said: "Dame Vera's inspirational work in support of our Armed Forces will never be forgotten."

"Her support helped to sustain the fortitude of British personnel deployed around the world and those waiting for them to return."

"We remember her life with fond memories, and all that she gave to our country in its time of need."

Poseidon debut Nato adventure



Simon Mander

POSEIDON SUB hunters have been honing their attack skills over the North Atlantic in their first multi-national training since arriving in the UK in February.

Lossiemouth-based 120 Sqn personnel joined ships, submarines and aircraft from six nations during Nato exercise Dynamic Mongoose.

Officer Commanding 120 Sqn Wg Cdr James Hanson said: "The exercise offers my crews a great opportunity to be tested against highly professional opposition."

"I know the crews have relished the chance to show what they can do with our extremely capable aircraft."

The training focused on ships and aircraft tracking nuclear-powered submarines in a 200 x 200

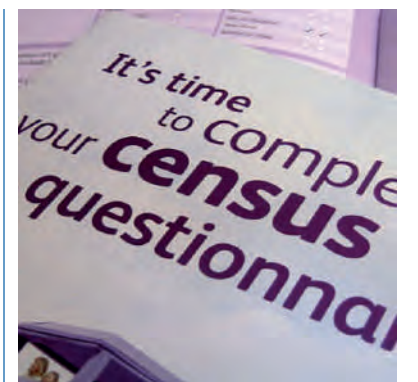
square nautical mile box of open ocean.

On one sortie, an RAF Poseidon launched simulated attacks within 10 minutes of taking over contact from a US Navy aircraft using its sophisticated sensor suite.

Nato Allied Maritime Command Vice-Admiral Keith Blount said: "Dynamic Mongoose will ensure

we remain prepared for operations in peace, crisis and conflict."

The RAF took delivery of their first P-8A at Kinloss Airfield in February. Two Poseidons will operate out of the Scottish base whilst runway works are undertaken at Lossiemouth.



2021 census to count vets in

A QUESTION on service in the Armed Forces will be included in the Census for the first time.

The 2021 Census will now ask whether someone has served in the UK military, following a campaign by the Royal British Legion and Poppyscotland.

The decision to pose the question will provide welfare groups with valuable information to ensure they can meet the needs of serving personnel, veterans and their families, charities say.

Royal British Legion director Charles Byrne said: "The decision will significantly improve our understanding of the Armed Forces community."

"It will ensure charities and service providers can deliver the best service possible to them when and where it is needed most."

"It will have a huge impact on Service personnel, veterans and their families well into the future, as the outcome will allow us to provide more effective care and support to those in need."

Minister for Defence People and Veterans Johnny Mercer said: "Allowing veterans to identify themselves in the census is a key part in making Britain the best place in the world to be a veteran."

There are an estimated 2.4 million veterans in Britain.

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SAC Harry's on the move

Brize young gun joins dad John on first frontline tour

Meg Fairhurst

Akrotiri

SUPPORTING THE fight against terror across the Middle East is a family affair for an RAF father and son team of movers.

FS John Spanton, who joined up more than 30 years ago, is working alongside rookie 21-year-old SAC Harry, who has been posted to Akrotiri on his first four-month frontline tour from Brize Norton.

The duo are part of a 17-strong team of movers with 1 Air Mobility Wing delivering kit to UK forces targeting the Daesh terror group across Iraq and Syria.

John, 54, said: "It's great being able to watch Harry doing the job I have been doing for years."

"I joined up at 22 because the RAF gave me the chance to learn a trade

and it makes me proud to see how Harry is developing into a movements tradesman."

Harry added: "The best part of the job is the ever-changing work scenarios and I love the adventure training and sport."

The father-and-son team have had to work around Covid social distancing rules in the scorching Cyprus heat to deliver the goods to the UK frontline.

Squadron Warrant Officer Kev Skinner paid tribute to the Spantons. He said: "I've known John for more than 30 years and it's great to see young Harry keeping up the family connection with the RAF."

"During Harry's deployment the squadron has overcome a lot of challenges in the face of the coronavirus pandemic but the family can be justifiably proud of the combined contribution to the team effort."



FAMILY AFFAIR:

Harry and dad John Spanton
PHOTOS: SAC LAURA BULLAS

Forces families net £150 million funding pledge

Tracey Allen

EXTRA CHILD care is to be made available to Forces families later this year as part of a £150m scheme.

Breakfast clubs and after school activities to cover early starts and late finishes for military parents are expected to benefit up to 44,000 youngsters aged four to 11 years old nationally.

A pilot scheme begins in September at RAF High Wycombe and Halton with others to follow a launch in January.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said: "Service families are at the very heart of the Armed Forces community and it is vital that we provide them with the flexibility and freedom to bring up their children while they serve."

"I am determined to make the Armed Forces a more modern, inclusive and family-friendly employer to improve retention and encourage more talented women to pursue long and fulfilling careers in uniform."

Defence People and Veterans Minister Johnny Mercer



FAMILY FRIENDLY: Making life easier for military parents; below, Johnny Mercer

added: "Service life is hugely rewarding but it isn't without its challenges when it comes to juggling the demands of family life."

"Those who continue to do extraordinary work on behalf of the country must be recognised and rewarded, and I'm pleased we're continuing to honour our commitment to personnel so they receive the right support to care for loved ones."



NEW KIT ON THE BLOCK:

Fire-fighting vehicles in front of C-17 transporter at Brize Norton
PHOTO: STEVE LYMPANY

Fire-fighting kit upgrade for safety crews

Leanne King

BRIZE NORTON fire fighters have taken delivery of five high-spec tenders as part of a major safety upgrade at the Oxfordshire air transport station.

The new vehicles are equipped

with the latest kit to penetrate aircraft skins and quell flames before crews enter the cockpit and high-reach turrets which coat the underside of burning aircraft and escape slides with retardant foam allowing crews to operate at a safe distance.

Station fire officer WO Shail said: "The new vehicles will introduce new technology and significant advancement in tactics, techniques and procedures that will provide an improved output to the station and begin a new chapter for Air Force firefighters."

Feature Battle plan

Ready for launch of new 'info-war'



CAS: Future Combat Air System plan

UK DEFENCE must harness the power of artificial intelligence and space-based technology to maintain the edge against adversaries in the new age of info-war, Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Mike Wigston said.

Britain's top airman said RAF crews can no longer expect to have unrestricted access to the combat zone and face a growing threat from a new generation of sophisticated enemy air defence systems and cyber warriors.

Speaking at the Air and Space Power conference he said: "Our freedom to operate – in Iraq and Afghanistan for example – has been unchallenged because of control of the air; likewise, our undisturbed reliance on space.

"Our potential adversaries have watched us, and they have learnt. Sophisticated air defence missile systems, anti-satellite weapons, cyber, and potent long-range missiles are becoming more capable and proliferating to proxy states too.

"We can no longer assume unchallenged access to air and space, nor can we ignore the threat of air, ballistic and cruise missile attack at home, across Nato, or overseas."

"We can no longer assume unchallenged access to air and space"

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace has called on military chiefs to speed up the move from traditional air power to combat the growing threat from the cyber realm.

Top brass have been urged to be honest with politicians in the run-up to what has been billed as the biggest security shake-up since the Cold War.

The Integrated Defence Review has been restarted after being stopped in its tracks by the coronavirus pandemic in April.

Mr Wallace has urged Air Chiefs to paint a picture of the future battlespace up until the 2050s so the government can make the 'right decisions' about future combat air systems.

He said: "I'm not just looking to you to keep up the excellent delivery in operations, I also want you to provide me with excellent military advice.

"Don't try to second guess intentions from Head Office. Instead, give me a true perspective. Tell me what the options are and outline the alternatives.

"What's already clear to me is that we're no longer in the business of relying on one fighter, or on one type of aircraft that can do one thing.

"You will need to defend, police, control and command the battlespace. That requires multi-role capabilities."

He said further service

Future air power will rely on space and artificial intelligence, says CAS



F-35: Ready for ops from deck of the Queen Elizabeth Carrier



BEN WALLACE: Defence review

integration would be required along the lines of pairing the new Poseidon aircraft with the submarine service to disrupt Russian underwater activities.

But he also paid tribute to the RAF's contribution to countering Covid-19 by setting up helicopter hubs, delivering PPE, establishing airbridges and supplying medical reservists while maintaining operations worldwide.

"During Covid-19 our adversaries didn't have a ceasefire," he said.

"So, you were out there stopping the threats that most people don't

see; protecting the UK and Baltic airspace, supporting operations in Afghanistan, striking terrorists in the Middle East.

"The people of our Armed Forces have always been our greatest asset.

"But we must think about what comes next. The global picture has changed. Threats are coming from all different angles."

The race for hypersonic performance to dodge enemy missiles and sophisticated unmanned combat platforms supported by satellites are key to success in the battles of the future,

according to defence experts. At the heart of the RAF's effort to retain the edge in battle are cloud-based information systems Nexus, already undergoing trials, and Darkstar network, designed to deliver intelligence at light speed and in real time to air, ground and sea-based crews.

The RAF has also appointed its first Space Director, AVM Harv Smythe, and is developing a low earth constellation of small satellites to give the UK's new generation of war fighters instant access to battle-winning intelligence

The new Poseidon sub hunter, which entered service this year, has restored the RAF's maritime capability while the F-35

with its sophisticated suite of data gathering sensors is ready to conduct operations from the deck of the Queen Elizabeth Carrier.

Plans are also underway to expand 216X Sqn's operational trials of swarming drones to disrupt enemy defences from the decks of Britain's flagship carriers, ACM Winston revealed.

At the vanguard of the RAF's shift from traditional combat air power to sophisticated intelligence-based platforms are the prototype Tempest programme to eventually replace Typhoon and the Protector UAV,

which is expected to make its debut in 2025.

ACM Wigston added: "The next generation Royal Air Force must be able to defend the airspace around the UK and our allies in the face of sophisticated threats that are intensifying and proliferating. The replacement for Typhoon must be capable of operating, fighting and winning in that environment.

"The Future Combat Air System – combinations of highly-networked piloted aircraft and remotely-piloted and autonomous drones and weapons – is already generating

thousands of jobs across the UK, generating cutting-edge technology and attracting international partners.

"We unveiled Tempest at Farnborough in 2018. It was exciting then and it is even more exciting now, a truly national and international programme with the UK's world-leading defence aerospace industry at its heart."

Pilot training will increasingly move into the synthetic realm under the Gladiator programme, designed to enable Typhoon pilots to train with AWACS crews and UK and Allied ground forces.

Intelligence, integration and communication key to controlling battlespace



Tempest: Set to replace Typhoon



Poseidon: Sub-hunter

"The people of our Armed Forces have always been our greatest asset"



VIGILANT: Poseidon crew



Protector: Combat UAV



**Win top TV
drama on
DVD ● p5**

R'n'R

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**Rain man – Byrne back
on the road ● p5**



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Film review

Disappearance at Clifton Hill

Cert 15 – out now on digital download. On DVD August 3



LEADING ROLE: David Cronenberg impresses as eccentric town historian Walter Bell

IF SLOW-BURN, psychological thrillers which pay a fairly sizeable homage to David Cronenberg's sci-fi horror films are your thing, *Disappearance at Clifton Hill* is for you.

The film, which at more than two hours is overlong, is a well-crafted tale of skeletons in closets and ghosts of days past, while the ending will definitely have you going over the plot again and again.

Following the death of her mother, Abby West (Tuppence Middleton, *Downton Abbey*, *Fisherman's Friends*), returns to her hometown, Niagara Falls, to take over the dilapidated Rainbow Inn motel her family used to run.

Abby soon finds herself drawn back into a mystery of the One-Eyed Boy who she witnessed

We would give Tuppence for it

being kidnapped as a youngster. With the help of Cronenberg, who plays town historian and eccentric Walter Bell, and her sister Laure, (Hannah Gross, *Joker*), West begins to uncover the truth behind the missing boy, Alex Moulin, and

some of the town's less salubrious characters.

Director Albert Shin used the film's score to add to the atmosphere and guide the viewer, which, although a bit dated, works OK at the beginning. The use of old video

footage and still photographs to introduce characters and subplots tied to the past adds a kitsch twisted aesthetic, but it does smack of *Twin Peaks* and Cronenberg's works.

The homages are fine, and do not detract from the film, in fact they

are worth keeping an eye out for. They do show what Shin is aiming for and, in many cases, achieves for this, his second film.

Middleton is excellent as West, while Cronenberg's performance as Bell is both offbeat and intriguing.

There are probably too many characters drawn into the mixing pot, while the lack of development in some scenes means they could have been edited out and the film shortened without any detriment. To counter that, Shin's use of slow shots, and the atmospheric backdrop of an out of season Niagara Falls, merely adds to the depth of this fascinating film.

Review by Daniel Abrahams

3 out of 5 roundels



TV

Harry Hill's World of TV

BBC Two



Harry on the box

WITH NO formal training the multi-award-winning Harry Hill will be taking the lid off a different genre of television each week in his new show for BBC Two, *Harry Hill's World of TV*.

The six-part series is said to be not just a hilarious lesson in TV history, but also a demonstration of what is required to make each of the main telly genres including: soaps, from 1954's *The Grove Family* through to *Crossroads*, *Coronation Street* and *EastEnders*; medical dramas, from *Dr Finlay's Casebook* to *Holby City* and *Casualty*; police dramas, from *Dixon of Dock Green* to *Z Cars*, *The Bill* and *Line of Duty*; home improvement shows,

from 1963's *Barry Bucknall's DIY* to *Changing Rooms* and *Grand Designs*; historical documentaries, from *Kenneth Clarke's Civilisation* to *Danny Dyer's Right Royal Family*; and cookery programmes, from Fanny Craddock to *Bake Off*.

Harry said: "It's about time someone blew the whistle on how these TV shows are put together and it looks like I'm the man for the job. Watching TV will never be the same again."

"I predict this series of programmes will be required viewing for all students of TV. We're talking TV landmark... jus' sayin'."

■ Harry Hill's World of TV is on BBC Two later this year.



Competition

DVDs Dazzler Media

Alien Outbreak, Cert 15 (UK trailer: youtu.be/PSuH9XaQv-s)
The Fanatic, Certificate 15 (UK trailer: youtu.be/8bjQyk0iOrg)

Win!

There's a Moose on the loose

SCREEN LEGEND John Travolta stars in *The Fanatic* as you've never seen him before – he plays Moose, a celebrity obsessed fan who feels slighted by his favourite movie star at an autograph convention.

He quickly embarks on an unhinged quest to get a response, leading to a home invasion and a very long night that changes both men irreparably.

This tense thriller is written and directed by Limp Bizkit frontman Fred Durst (*The Education of Charlie Banks*) and co-stars Devon Sawa (*Final Destination*) and Ana Golja (*Degrassi: Next Class*).

In a rural English town, two police officers begin their normal shift but soon realise something is wrong. With residents behaving strangely and horrific events unfolding before their eyes, they learn they are under attack from terrifying alien creatures and must fight to defend their town and community.

Katherine Drake and Ritchie Crane star in tense, sci-fi action movie *Alien Outbreak*, written and directed by award-winning VFX artist and filmmaker Neil Rowe (*Robot World*).

We have a copy of each title on DVD up for grabs. For your chance to win one, just send us the correct answer to this question:

Who wrote and directed The Fanatic?

Email your answer, marked Dazzler DVDs competition, to: competitions@rafnews.co.uk to arrive by August 7. Sorry, but we're currently unable to accept competition entries by post.

Please remember to state if you prefer to win a copy of *Alien Outbreak* or *The Fanatic* and include your postal address.





TV
Harlots
BBC Two

Beeb has a punt on ITV's Harlots

BROTHEL BIGWIGS:
Lydia (Manville), right, and Margaret (Morton), left



BBC TWO is to air all three series of the critically-acclaimed period drama *Harlots*, acquired by the Beeb from ITV Studios.

Samantha Morton (*Fantastic Beasts*, *Rillington Place*, *The Last Panthers*, *Minority Report*), Lesley Manville (*Mum*, *River*, *Maleficent*) and Jessica Brown Findlay (*The Outcast*, *Downton Abbey*) star in the series. Liv Tyler (*Gunpowder*, *Lord of the Rings*) joins the cast in series two and three.

Set against the backdrop of Georgian London, *Harlots* is described as a powerful drama offering a new take on the city's

most valuable commercial activity – sex. Inspired by the stories of real women, it follows Margaret Wells (Morton) and her daughters, as she struggles to reconcile her roles as mother and brothel owner.

When her business comes under attack from Lydia Quigley (Manville), a rival madam with a ruthless streak, Margaret must fight back, even if it means putting her family at risk. Brown Findlay stars as Charlotte, Margaret's eldest daughter and the city's most coveted courtesan, who begins to grapple with her position in both society and her immediate family.

BBC bigwig Sue Deeks said: "Aided by a truly magnificent cast, *Harlots* brings 18th century London to life with enormous style, wit, intelligence and humour.

"Viewers will become immersed in the gripping lives of businesswomen Margaret Wells and Lydia Quigley as they make their way in London's grimy, decadent world."

Harlots is written by playwright and screenwriter Moira Buffini (*Jane Eyre*, *Tamara Drewe*).

Series one and two will be aired on BBC 2 later this year. Series three will be broadcast at a later date.



Music
Ida Girls
Stars

Class act

Ida Girls are a voice for good

CLASSICAL-CROSSOVER group Ida Girls have released their new medley *Stars*, featuring songs from the long-running musical *Les Misérables*, in support of a cause close to their hearts.

All proceeds from downloads of the single on iTunes will go to Help Musicians. The charity looks after professional musicians of all genres at all stages of their careers.

The Ida Girls – Georgi Mottram, Wendy Carr, Jasmine Faulkner and Sarah Vaughan – originally created and performed *Stars* for a fundraising concert at Leicester's Haymarket Theatre.

The singers recorded their parts for the video individually during lockdown from their homes in Aberdeenshire, Jersey and London, and then produced the video in-house.

The video intersperses performances by Ida with photographs of much-loved theatre venues and concert halls, provided by charity The Theatres Trust, where musicians would normally be performing.

Georgi said: "Everyone is feeling the impact of coronavirus in some way, including musicians.



IDA GIRLS: *Les Mis Medley* release in aid of Help Musicians

Communities all over the UK have come together to raise money for the NHS and charities. Their generosity is humbling and it inspired us to give something back.

"We hope that by releasing *Stars* in aid of Help Musicians we can not only lift spirits but also raise funds for the charity's invaluable work."

The Ida Girls, who trained at some of the world's leading conservatoires, were Classic Brit Award nominees in 2018. They performed their sold-out show *Believe* at Jersey Opera House.

■ **Go to: idagirls.com for more information.**

The Big Event

Autumn TV

Fall on 4

Great expectations for new shows

CHANNEL 4 has revealed highlights of its autumn schedule, including new series fronted by artist Grayson Perry and comedian Tom Allen.

In Grayson Perry's *Big American Roadtrip* the award-winning artist and social commentator travels across the US on a custom-built motorbike he designed especially for the journey, to explore some of the biggest cultural and political fault-lines in the country.

As America gears up for a crucial presidential election, the nation seems to be growing ever more divided. Grayson spends time with people from very different walks of life, from farmers in Wisconsin to African-American businesspeople in Atlanta, to understand how Americans today view issues of identity, race, money and class – and what might be done to overcome the divisions in their country (and in our own).

The documentary is due to be broadcast in September.

Also that month, Sandi Toksvig hosts a two-part series, *The Write Offs*, exploring Britain's staggeringly low adult literacy rates. A group of adults, aged from 22 to 66, are offered a life-changing opportunity to overcome the one thing that has always held them back. The eight adults, all of whom lack the basic skills necessary for many everyday situations, have different personal motivations for wanting to improve their literacy.

Mentored by a team of experts, the group will face various extraordinary reading, writing and spelling challenges along the way in a quest to change their lives. Their efforts will culminate in an emotional final test held in front of an audience of family, friends and teachers as the contributors endeavour to shed the shame and lift the stigma around illiteracy.

On a lighter note, the much-loved *Great Canal Journeys* returns this autumn with two new intrepid explorers in the shape of good friends and former *Celebrity Gogglebox* co-stars Sheila Hancock and Gyles Brandreth. With Timothy West joining the pair in the first episode to show them the ropes, the four-part show follows the new skippers as they embark on a journey of Britain through its most famous canal routes.

In *Tom Allen Goes To Town* the eponymous comedian and presenter, who loves travelling around the UK – and as a Bromley boy it's small town Britain he particularly loves – champions one of those unsung places: Wakefield, West Yorkshire.

Spending a week

The five-part *Boys*, from BAFTA award-winner Russell T Davies, stars Years And Years frontman Olly Alexander.

It's 1981, the start of a new decade, and Ritchie (Alexander) Roscoe (Omari Douglas) and Colin (Callum Scott Howells) begin a new life in London.



PERRY: US roadtrip



FANNING: Catherine The Great

in 'Wakey' – a city, not a town – Tom stays with a local family while seeing the sights and meeting some of Wakefield's extraordinary characters, before putting on an end of week show to celebrate everything and everyone he's encountered.

Along the way, he takes in one of the world's biggest rhubarb crops, explores Wakefield's beautiful cathedral, visits one of the only drive-in fish and chip shops in the world and buys a round of the city's famous steak pies.

The station has also announced details of two new dramas for 2021.



ALEXANDER: Singer stars in '80s drama Boys

together, and soon share each other's adventures. But a new virus is on the rise, and soon their lives will be tested in ways they never imagined. As the decade passes, and they grow up in the shadow of AIDS, they're determined to live and love more fiercely than ever.

The top calibre cast also includes Keeley Hawes (*Bodyguard*, *The Durrells*), who plays Ritchie's mum Valerie; Shaun Dooley playing Ritchie's dad Clive; Neil Patrick Harris as Henry Coltrane; Stephen Fry as

MP Arthur Garrison; and Tracy Ann Oberman as Carol Carter.

The *Great* is a satirical, comedic drama about the rise of Catherine the Great from outsider to the longest-reigning female ruler in Russia's history. It's described as a modern love story that incorporates historical facts – occasionally.

The 10-part drama is the story of an idealistic, romantic young girl (Elle Fanning), who arrives in Russia for an arranged marriage to the mercurial Emperor Peter (Nicholas Hoult).

Hoping for love and sunshine, she finds instead a dangerous, depraved, backward world that she resolves to change. All she has to do is kill her husband, beat the church, baffle the military and get the court onside. The cast includes Phoebe Fox, Adam Godley, Gwilym Lee, Charity Wakefield and Douglas Hodge.



TOKSVIG: Write Offs



Competition

Gangs of London (18)

Dazzler Media (UK trailer: youtube.com/frTfXFeKeN4)



Win!

The dark side of the capital

FRESH FROM stunning TV audiences, *Gangs of London* makes its way to Blu-ray, DVD and digital platforms from July 27, taking viewers back for an immersive journey into the hidden heart of the capital.

Created by award-winning filmmakers Gareth Evans and Matt Flannery of *The Raid* film franchise, the series' stars include Joe Cole (*Peaky Blinders*), Sope Dirisu (*Humans*), Colm Meaney (*Layer Cake*), Michelle Fairley (*Game of Thrones*) and Lucian Msamati (*His Dark Materials*).

Set in the heart of one of the world's most dynamic and multicultural cities, *Gangs of London* tells the story of a city torn apart by the turbulent power struggles of the international gangs that control it, and the sudden power vacuum that's created when the head of London's most powerful crime family is assassinated.

For 20 years, Finn Wallace (Meaney, pictured right) was the most powerful criminal in London. Billions of pounds flowed through his organisation each year, but now he's dead and nobody knows who ordered the hit.

With rivals everywhere, it's up to the impulsive Sean Wallace (Cole), with the



NOT A HOLY JOE: There's nothing saintly about mobster Sean Wallace (Joe Cole)

help of the Dumani family, to take his father's place. If the situation wasn't dangerous enough, Sean's assumption of power causes ripples in the world of international crime.

Now, the one man who might be able to help him and become his ally is Elliot Finch (Dirisu) who, up until now, has been a lowlife chancer with a mysterious interest in the Wallace family. But as the wind of fate blows, Elliot finds himself transported to the inner circle of the

largest criminal organisation in London.

The three-disc set includes all nine episodes with new extras and one lucky reader could win a copy on DVD.

To be in with a chance, simply answer this question correctly:

Who created Gangs of London?

Email your answer, marked Gangs of London DVD competition, to: competitions@rafnews.co.uk to arrive by August 7. Please remember to include your full postal address with your entry. Entrants must be over 18.



Theatre Comedy
Jason Byrne

New dates

Tour's on back-Byrner



BYRNE: Covid has rained on his parade

FOLLOWING THE closure of all UK theatres due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, comedian Jason Byrne has announced that his 2020 UK tour has been rescheduled for autumn next year. Details of how to exchange tickets will follow in the coming weeks.

Jason said: "I'm absolutely gutted that I've had to reschedule my new Audience Precipitation UK tour until next year.

"I was really looking forward to getting back on the road and seeing you all, but I'll be back next year with all the fun. See you on the other side."

The rescheduled dates now kick off in Norwich on September 14, 2021, and culminate in Dunfermline on November 26.

Expect the Irish comedian, dubbed 'the king of live comedy' by *The Times*, to invite – or drag – people up onto the stage and make a 'holy show of them', as they'd say in Ireland.

Jason's TV credits include: *Live at the Apollo*, *The Royal Variety Performance*, *The John Bishop Show*, *Father Figure*, *Ireland's Got Talent* and *Wild Things*.

■ **Go to: jasonbyrne.ie for details of the rescheduled tour dates.**





Your Announcements

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

Death

LAURIE ROBERT WO (Ret'd) 5032428 83, died unexpectedly on July 1 in Peterborough City Hospital. He was born on January 20, 1937 in Perth, Scotland. He is survived by his wife Helen Laurie, five children and their families. Bob worked as a supplier in the RAF from 1962-1988 notably RAF Seletar 63-65, JHQ Rheindahlen 69-72. RAF Wittering 77-79, 431MU RAF Bruggen 80-83 and HQ Support Command RAF Brampton where he retired in 1988. He then worked as a civilian at RAF Church Fenton, Finningley and Fylingdales for Airwork Ltd, Short Brothers and SERCO. He finally retired from RAF Fylingdales in 1998 settling in Whittlesey near Peterborough.



WO Robert Laurie

Reunions

SINGAPORE Armed Forces Reunion. Were you seconded from the RAF to the SAF at RAF Tengah between 1971-75? If so please contact Peter Priscott for a 50th anniversary reunion in August 2021. Email: peterpriscott@aol.com or call: 01842 878554.

237 OCU. Due to the coronavirus outbreak, the eighth annual 237 OCU Groundcrew Reunion will

now be held on Saturday, September 5 from noon at The Compleat Angler, 120 Prince of Wales Road, Norwich, NR1 1NS. Ex-237 OCU members of all trades and any era welcome. Just turn up and join in. For more information, please search for 237 OCU on Facebook, email me at: 237OCU@gmail.com or contact Si Roberts at 1 Manor Gardens, Carnoustie, Angus, DD7 6HY or please call: 07546 400085.

158 Squadron Bomber Command. The 158 Association is very active and we want to contact any veteran or relative of a veteran. We are planning a reunion and memorial service for autumn 2020. Please contact: KevB@silenicus.com.

RAF Bawdsey Reunion Association. Due to the coronavirus pandemic we have, regrettably, had to cancel the annual reunion lunch planned for Saturday, June 6. Those who have booked a place and paid their fee will have their money refunded. We have provisionally planned the next reunion for Saturday, June 5, 2021 and look forward to seeing our friends again then. In the meantime we wish you all a safe and healthy time during this unprecedented period. If you have any queries please email: doreen.bawdseyreunion@btinternet.com or you can call: 07513 301 723.

COASTAL Command Officers' Reunion, October 10, 2020. Please contact Ray Curtis, call: 01264 735349 or email: hjn3@btinternet.com

ASSOCIATION RAF Women Officers Annual Reunion. All RAF Women Officers are invited to attend the Annual Reunion Lunch at the RAF Club on Saturday, October 10. We meet for pre-lunch drinks from 11.30

followed by lunch. All will be made very welcome, especially new members of the Association. For further details about the lunch or the Association of RAF Women Officers, please contact Sue Arnold on: 07740 865685 or email: suearnold474@gmail.com.

THE RAF Locking 119/219/404 Apprentice Entries 50th Anniversary Reunion will be held on October 23 and 24. An informal evening on October 23 will allow ex-apprentices to gather before the formal dinner on October 24. The formal event will take place in the ballroom of the Weston-super-Mare Winter Gardens, BS23 1AJ, for all RAF Locking 119/219/404 Entry Apprentices and wives/partners. For further details please contact Barry Cox at: barrycox124@hotmail.com.

Cranwell memories

THIS year is the centenary of the RAF College Cranwell, pictured below, and it is in the process of collecting memories from people who may have lived or worked there in any capacity. If you would like to share your stories and memories please email: crn-sce-generalenquiries@mod.gov.uk or write to: Media and Communications Office, RAF College Cranwell, Sleaford, Lincolnshire, NG34 8HB.



Museum appeal

BENTLEY Priory Museum is seeking volunteers for project 'Defending Britain

Seeking crew's family

READER PAT Vinycomb is trying to trace the descendants of her father Sqn Ldr Stanley Booker's crew, whose 10 Squadron Halifax 111 MZ630 was shot down over St Andre De L'Eure, France on June 3, 1944.

Pat said: "The aircraft crashed at Marilly, two of the crew were killed and are buried in the local cemetery. "The villagers of St Illiers L'Eveque, near St Andre De L'Eure, were active members of the French Resistance and many sheltered RAF and Allied aircrew as they evaded capture by the SS/Gestapo."

She said a memorial event to celebrate the rest of the crew's liberation and the role of the RAF in gaining their freedom from Nazi occupation was originally planned for VE Day 75 but had to be postponed due to the Covid-19 crisis.

She added: "The plan is to have a ceremony at the graves of Fg Off Alexander Murray and WO John Williams, then a special plaque to the

downed Halifax crew will be unveiled at the village war memorial."

Along with pilot Fg Off Murray, wireless operator WO Williams, and Pat's father, navigator Fg Off Stanley Booker, the crew were flight engineer Sgt John Osselton from Staines, Surrey, rear gunner Sgt Terrance Gould from Caerphilly, air gunner Sgt Clifford Hallett from Chard, Somerset and bomb aimer Sgt Ernest 'Snooky' Stokes from Catford, London.

Stanley Booker, now 98, was 22 when the Halifax crashed. It was flying from RAF Melbourne to Trappes in France following a successful bombing raid on marshalling and railway yards.

Pat, who is currently editing her father's autobiography, said: "He was given shelter by the local resistance but was betrayed in Paris to the Gestapo and experienced several brutal interrogations, incarcerated in Fresnes Prison and finally



SURVIVOR: Fg Off Stanley Booker, aged 22

dispatched by cattle truck to Buchenwald Concentration camp. He was one of the 168 Allied Airmen illegally imprisoned in Buchenwald.

"Eventually interned in Stalag Luft 3, Sagan, he was force marched to Leukewald near Berlin, held hostage by the Russians then released and returned to UK in May 1944."

● Please email Pat on: patvinycomb@gmail.com if you can help.

from Nazi & Nuclear Threat' to record and share the memories of RAF and WAAF personnel who worked in the top secret bunker at RAF Bentley Priory, focusing on the Battle of Britain in 1940 and the Cold War from 1945 to 1991.

The project will include a temporary and permanent exhibition, resources for schools and family activities during school holidays. Volunteers are needed to support research, carry out oral history interviews and co-curate the temporary exhibition. Initially these tasks can be carried out remotely. Please email the Museum at: collectionsproject@bentleypriorymuseum.org.uk if interested.

■ The museum is keen to hear from anyone who worked in the bunker, or has any memories or photographs of it they would like to share.

Spitfire 10K

THE annual Spitfire 10K organised by the RAF Museums in London and Cosford on August 29 and 30 is now a virtual event. Go to: rafmuseum.org.uk for details.



Your Announcements

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SOUTH COAST RETREAT: Princess Marina House has had to shut its doors permanently

Respite home closes

PRINCESS MARINA House, the RAF Benevolent Fund's care and respite centre, is to close permanently the charity has announced.

Lawrie Haynes, the Fund's chair of trustees, said: "Before Covid-19, our research told us the number of veterans and their partners likely to visit Princess Marina House would decline, bringing the centre's long-term viability to the board's attention, though no decisions about its future had been made. Covid-19 has sadly exacerbated this issue and we now face funding an empty building which is unable to provide the vital support that veterans need right now."

The centre, on England's south coast, near Worthing, had to shut its doors in March due

to the coronavirus pandemic.

Mr Haynes added: "Many of our guests in higher risk groups may not have felt comfortable returning to Princess Marina House at all in the near future, despite the safety measures in place."

He said: "We will be exploring alternative support options for veterans in the Sussex area. We have a duty to our beneficiaries and supporters to spend their donations effectively and look for ways to make the biggest impact on the welfare of our beneficiaries with those funds now when there is a need."

"We have not made this decision lightly and we are well aware of the impact the closure could have on our staff and our regular guests."

A window of opportunity

THE BATTLE of Britain Memorial Flight and The Battle of Britain Mini Flight have teamed up with Scampton Church to raise £2,200 to involve 200 children in an arts project about remembrance when

they return to school in the autumn.

Local minister Rev Sue Deacon said: "Many children have no concept of the sacrifices made by previous generations which enable them to live in a free and democratic country, but this project will help to address that while enabling them to develop something tangible for their community."

Following a talk by Sqn Ldr Mark Discombe, Officer Commanding the BBMF, and Ray Bainborough, the chairman of the Lincolnshire Lancaster Association, and under the guidance of Claire Williamson, the RAF commemorative window designer, the children will design and make a glazed tile each which will represent their understanding of 'remembrance', said project coordinator Joe Bartrop.

He added: "The tiles will be joined together to make six framed collages; one of which will be given to each school, village pub The Dambusters Inn RAF Scampton, The Red Arrows and Scampton Church.

"A selection of tiles will



ARTS PROJECT: Sqn Ldr Mark Discombe, above, a sketch of the window design by artist Claire Williamson, below, left

be displayed at a VE75 Remembrance Service at Scampton Church on November 8 and then, hopefully, again at the RAF Scampton Heritage Centre on November 11, when all 200 children, staff, parents and carers will take part in a remembrance service in the 617 Squadron hangar. Security clearance is yet to be authorised and subject to any further Covid restrictions."

■ Go to: scamptonchurch.org for more information and to donate to the crowdfunding campaign for the RAF commemorative stained-glass window.



United Kingdom Special Forces



Tribute in marble

A MEMORIAL to the Bomber Command Pathfinder Force (above), made from three tons of black marble, has been sited at the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas in Staffordshire.

The eye-catching monument was designed by former Chf Tech John Clifford, senior curator of the Pathfinder Collection at RAF Wyton's Heritage Centre, and his friend Carl Thomas, and approved by the Heritage Centre's volunteers.

Mr Clifford said: "The memorial was engraved and painted by Mark Oliver, proprietor of Fenland Stoneworks Ltd in Yaxley, Peterborough, and his team.

"I am in discussion with RAF Wyton's padre, Sqn Ldr Dawn Colley, about arranging a dedication ceremony at some point in the future."

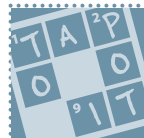
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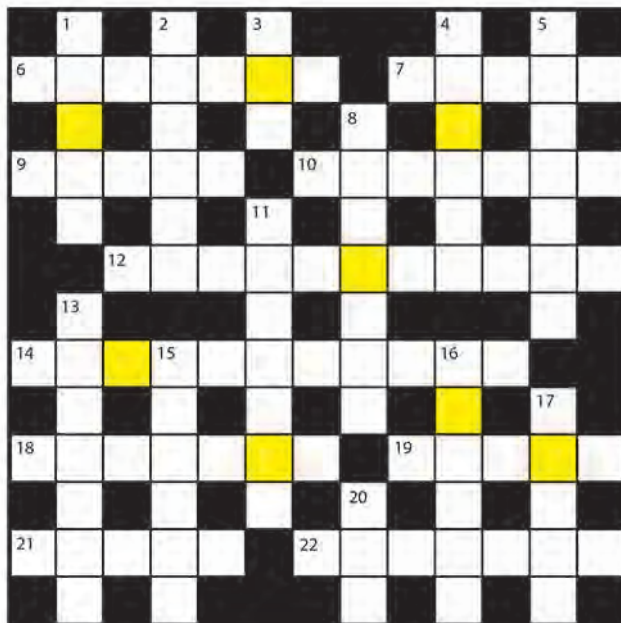


Crossword

No. 278

Solve the crossword, then rearrange the eight letters in yellow squares to find an RAF aircraft

Due to the coronavirus pandemic we are currently unable to accept Crossword and Su Doku entries by post, so for the time being, please complete them just for fun. We will resume sending prizes for winning entries as soon as possible



Across

6. United Arab Emirates gift causes exhaustion (7)
7. Bad French volunteers on island (5)
9. Bond character takes a sailor to Gulf country (5)
10. Helicopter favoured by Poseidon? (3,4)
12. Turbulent cities rebel against VIPs (11)
14. That is after passing entry to station (11)
18. Rugby position for Russian fighter (7)
19. Colour for putting on (5)
21. Granny misses point and becomes furious (5)
22. Bomber went to Royal Navy difficulty (7)

Down

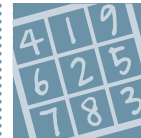
1. Lettuce, say, for South African chap (5)
2. Illusory French fighter? (6)
3. See 20 Down
4. It's used to make a sporting smash (6)
5. Airport used by Ollie's pal (7)
8. Newspaperman in brush with romantic setting (7)
11. His cards are red and yellow (7)
13. Young bird goes pointlessly to Heather (7)
15. Point of access for RAF aircraft (6)
16. Hornet buzzing around seat of power (6)
17. Psyched up about a heartless devilry (5)
20. And 3 Down. Ace picture (3,3)

Solution to Crossword No. 276:

Across – 6. Colonel 7. Cadet 9. Bambi 10. Lockjaw 12. Storm Petrel 14. Globemaster 18. Paveway 19. Smart 21. Vista 22. Chinook

Down – 1. Royal 2. Combat 3. Few 4. Packet 5. Relaxed 8. Compost 11. Tramcar 13. Albania 15. Breath 16. Ermine 17. Groom 20. The

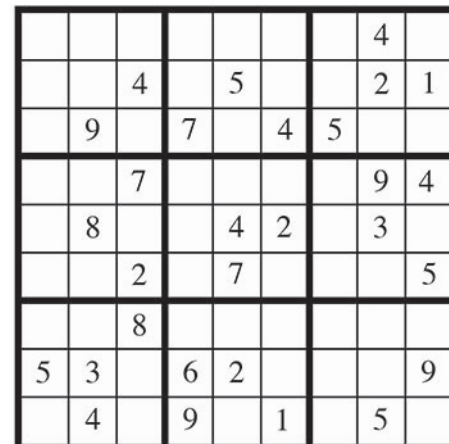
RAF word – Aircrew



Su Doku

No. 288

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.



Solution to Su Doku No: 287

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



Music

Declan McKenna

New releases and European tour

ALBUM:
Zeros



Hero's Zeros



DECLAN MCKENNA has launched his new single *Daniel, You're Still A Child*, from his forthcoming second album and announced a UK/European spring headline tour.

The new album, *Zeros*, recorded in Nashville, is released on August 21 through Columbia Records.

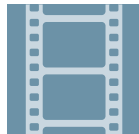
The 21-year-old singer-songwriter said: "You know, *Daniel, You're Still A Child* because he's lost in the aftermath, whether it's lost in the sauce, stoned, lost

in some existential fear or lost his way in some VR game.

"Daniel is this kid who has so much to prove, he has so much in him but he's just continually being led astray because the world's telling him that he's not 'normal'."

McKenna will tour across the UK and Europe from March 2021 taking in 22 shows including dates in Cambridge, Bristol, Cardiff, London, Paris, Amsterdam and Berlin.

■ Go to: declanmckenna.net for more information.



Film review

Spy Intervention

Digital download on iTunes and Apple TV from July 27

High
spy

Spy romp fails to take off

EVER WONDERED why screen spies like James Bond don't fall in love? Slick new movie *Spy Intervention* has that as its premise, but is that enough to thrill audiences?

We meet young American super spy Corey Gage – (Drew Van Acker, *Titans*, *Pretty Little Liars*) as he is attempting to capture bad guy Doyle Egan – (Max Silvestri, *Big Mouth*, *Medical Police*). The slick scene sees him scaling rooftops guided by his own personal Q-type character, Smuts, played by Blake Anderson (*Game Over Man*, *Workaholics*).

During the operation he bumps into Pam, played by Poppy Delevingne of *Pirate Radio* and *Kingsman: The Golden Circle* fame, and falls head over heels in love. He subsequently messes up the mission and puts down his licence to kill, before picking up a kitchen apron.

Touching on films such as the aforementioned *Kingsman*, this movie is a more adult version of *Stormbreaker* and Agent Cody Banks with *Pink Panther*-style graphics and soundtrack.

Spy Intervention then sees Gage take up domestic living while his former spy colleagues try to persuade him back into the fold,



JET SET:
Spy Gage

hence the intervention bit.

Cue scenes of hilarity and drama as Gage battles both sides of his conscience, maintaining a normal life working in a cardboard factory, under the moniker of Cardboard Corey, and a thrill-a-minute one as a super spy. Well, not exactly. The film spends the first hour softly

stepping through a one joke skit, that of Gage at home and work with a wife who continually tells him about dinner parties that they never seem to have. It then attempts to become an action film as Gage grows bored of

domestic life and sets out to save the world.

The issue is that spy films need action – they also need a reason for the bad guy to be bad and the good guy to want to catch him. *Spy Intervention* does not have either and as such falls short. It simply becomes a funny-in-places romp.

Standout moments for their oddity are two dance scenes. The first may be a live action homage or send-up of the old James Bond opening title sequences, the second is just a group dance sequence in a spy film – just think about that and how odd it sounds.

Review by Daniel Abrahams
3 out of 5 roundels



GLAM: Corey
and love Pam



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By Tracey Allen

Feature

The magic of Merlin



VISIONARY: Charles Rolls, 1905

The engine that helped Britain to victory in Second World War



INNOVATORS: Spitfire designer Reginald Mitchell, left, and fellow engineer Henry Royce, of Rolls-Royce

K5054: Spitfire prototype designed by RJ Mitchell and first flown in 1936

AUTHOR GRAHAM HOYLAND states that the Rolls-Royce Merlin engine 'turned the tide of the war during the Battle of Britain, and then Merlin-engined bombers destroyed the Nazi war machine'.

In his book *Merlin: The Power Behind the Spitfire, Mosquito and Lancaster* (published by William Collins) he tells the extraordinary story of the development of the remarkable Rolls-Royce aero engine that powered these iconic World War II fighter aircraft.

Hoyland said: "The Second World War above all others was decided through air power: all the decisive campaigns were won or lost by piston-engined fighters and bombers. The winner would be the side that could build the most powerful and reliable aero engines."

"Eighty years ago, the distinctive roar of Derby-built Merlins was heard over the fields of southern England during the summer of 1940 as 'The Few' fought hordes of German aircraft during the Battle of Britain. Without such a powerful and reliable power unit at such a crucial time Britain would have lost the battle for the skies and the war could well have been won by the Axis powers."

He revealed: "It nearly didn't happen. At the last minute a wealthy benefactress, Lady Lucy Houston, had to provide the funds for the Rolls-Royce 'R' racing engine that sired the Merlin."

In response to the economic depression of 1929, the British government refused to support the 1931 Schneider

Trophy air race, so it was only thanks to a generous gift from Lady Houston that the Supermarine S6B could afford to enter – and it won the race.

The S6B was to be developed into the Spitfire and, said Hoyland, its engine helped the birth of the Rolls-Royce Merlin.

Lady Houston also financed an expedition in 1933 to attempt high-altitude flights over Mount Everest, which were successful.

Hoyland said: "Through her sponsorship of the Schneider Trophy and the Mount Everest flights she encouraged the development of enormously powerful aero engines, high-speed airframes and high-altitude aviation, all soon to be crucial in the approaching war on Germany."

He added: "Lady Lucy Houston was a visionary, as was Charles Rolls. Both of them in their different ways saw the future."

He said: "Once the revolution of the motor car was channelled into the evolutionary progress of his Silver Ghost he [Rolls] switched his attention to aeroplanes, and he planned to build an aero engine. His prophecies for the future of the aeroplane were accurate, including the techniques of aerial bombing, which was the eventual reason for the Merlin engine... Rolls was the golden boy of both motoring and aviation."

"Without Rolls the Rolls-Royce Merlin probably would never have been built, and maybe the Battle of Britain never won."



BENEFACTOR: Lady Lucy Houston



Win the book

WE HAVE copies of *Merlin* by Graham Hoyland (rrp £20, hardback) to win. For your chance to own one, simply send us the correct answer to the following question:

Which WWII fighter aircraft were powered by the Rolls-Royce aero engine?

Email your answer, marked Merlin book competition, to: competitions@rafnews.co.uk to arrive by August 7. Sorry, but we are currently unable to accept competition entries by post.

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Gunners go the distance

Covid-safe graduation ceremony live-streamed for families

THE RAF Regiment has held its third graduation ceremony under coronavirus social distancing rules at Honington.

The event was live-streamed to families unable to attend in person.

Officer Commanding Training Wing, Wing Commander Stephen Turner, said: "Occasions like this are usually marked with a ceremony though this graduation is deliberately a more sombre event, owing to Covid mitigation measures.

"I am delighted to welcome friends and family to share in the occasion virtually.

"Our newest Gunners should feel justifiably proud of their achievement and the contributions they will make in

the coming weeks and months in support of the nation's priorities."

Trainees were also unable to take the customary break and head home during the intensive 20-week course due to lockdown rules.

Station Commander Gp Capt Matt Radnall said: "To reduce the risk of spreading Covid-19, this is necessarily a muted celebration, but still acknowledges the tremendous effort each individual has invested to earn the right to wear RAF Regiment mudguards on their shoulders.

"Whilst our graduates have not been able to celebrate with friends and family in person, I am very pleased that we have been able to live-stream the ceremony."



SOCIALLY-DISTANCED: The new Gunners line up at RAF Honington, above and inset below

PHOTOS: SAC JAMES LEDGER



TOP GUNS: The trainees on attack drills

Prize winners

- Frank Sylvester Trophy for best all-round Gunner: **LAC Walker**
- The RAF Regt Association Trophy for Drill and Deportment: **LAC Thresh**
- WO Ramsey Physical Development Cup: **LAC Stephens**
- LAC Beard Recruits' Trophy for most inspirational Gunner: **LAC Stephens**
- SAC Luders Champion Shot Trophy: **LAC Webster**
- Cpl Bradfield Trophy for best instructor: **Cpl Ralfe**

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Space aces

Challenges are out of this world for Air Force crews

THE RAF team who tracked SpaceX astronauts Robert Behnken and Douglas Hurley as they launched from Cape Canaveral and docked with the International Space Station still have their eyes on the skies as the mission nears the halfway mark.

The RAF space rangers at the UK Space Operations Centre at Air Command and the remote Fylingdales early warning radar site in North Yorkshire monitor thousands of military and commercial satellites orbiting the earth.

They are also on guard against the growing threat posed by space junk to ensure the ISS is protected from debris in low earth orbit.

Space Duty Officer Fg Off Joanna Parker said: "We are part of a coalition of Space Operations Centres that also include Canada, Australia and the USA.

"We share time-sensitive space domain awareness information through

the Combined Space Operations Centre at Vandenberg Air Force Base, California."

The main threat to astronauts Behnken and Hurley and the ISS came from a Russian Fregat rocket body which had fragmented creating a large debris field.

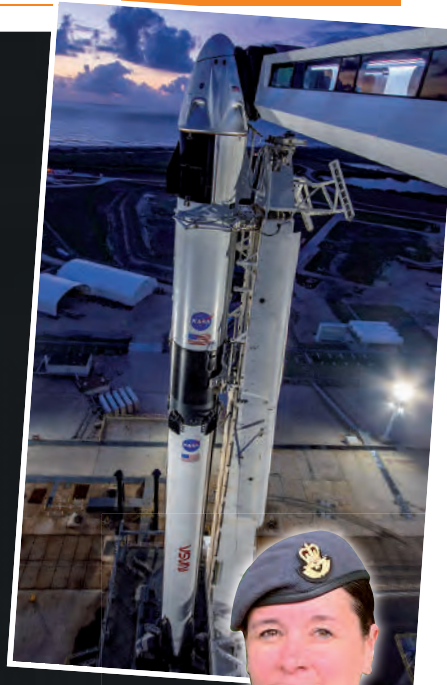
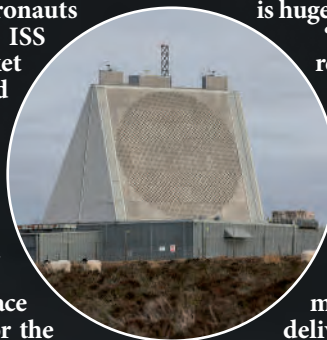
Crews at RAF Fylingdales monitored and tracked the launch of the Falcon 9 rocket and the orbit of the Crew Dragon capsule as it approached the International Space Station.

Flt Lt Tom Berzins was Space Duty Officer at the UK SpOC for the launch: "It is a very exciting time to be in space operations

right now and to know that I played a role in this new era of space launch technology is hugely motivating," he said.

"We were ready to assist where required and look forward to supporting future missions."

Wg Cdr Vaughan Arnall added "The UK SpOC and Fylingdales played a small but essential role in the launch. The event demonstrates how international collaborative and burden sharing makes even the most complex tasks achievable and deliverable in a safe and efficient manner."



AD ASTRA: Right, Space Ops officer Fg Off Parker, above, Space X Falcon 9 prepares for launch from Cape Canaveral, inset left, Fylingdales radar installation

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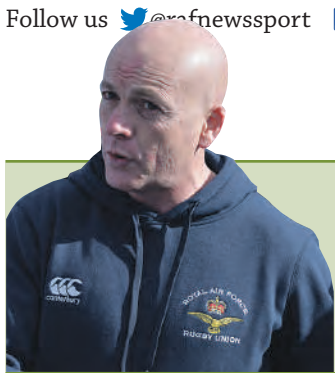
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Sport

5 pages of **RAF Sport** starts here

● **Wilson's way to stronger Union: P26**

FOOTBALL

Pierce of the action

New UKAF boss puts plan into action and steels staff for challenge ahead

Daniel Abrahams
HQ Air Command

AS HE passes the 150-day mark in the top football coaching post in the Services, FS Dyfan Pierce claims it's simply business as usual.

The 39-year-old replaced FS Nick de Long this March as UKAF head coach following six years in the assistant role.

Pierce boasted a hugely impressive record in Service football, before going on to form part of the most successful management duo in the UK Armed Forces game. So, the same attitude has simply been applied since he took the head coach hot seat.

He said: "There have been plenty of unknowns to deal with, so yes it's been a strange start to things. We had the annual fixture versus the Irish Defence Force in May. Although disappointing, the priority was safety, so we made an early call to postpone before going into the final preparing phase.

"It's been Skype meetings and WhatsApp messages with all the staff in post, with one or two additions and alterations coming in September when we hopefully return."

Pierce has confirmed the team will be provisionally planning to play warm-up matches against the University of South Wales in Cardiff at the end of September, with IDF at HMS Temeraire, Portsmouth in October (FAI dependent). Temeraire remains the team's base for both training and fixtures.

When UKAF training does resume, Pierce has already provisionally planned two short training days with half squad groups of 12 working together for shorter periods, ensuring they follow government guidelines issued by the Football Association.

It is currently proposed the famous old Royal Navy sports ground will be hosting the Kentish Cup in October, with further confirmation if the historic European competition will go ahead, in the next couple of months.

He said: "We wanted to host the tournament's 100th year anniversary in 2021, but due to the level of lockdown the French Forces imposed, they were unable to host so we now host for 2020."



NEW MAN AT THE TOP: FS Dyfan Pierce, with CI Daryl White, left, casts a watchful eye over the UKAF team in Holland in December last year; below, the UKAF team celebrate winning the Kentish Cup again
PHOTOS: SAC Connor Tiernay ACSSU

Buoyed by the latest FA missives regarding the start of grassroots football, which has seen clubs being allowed to train, but not fully compete, Pierce said: "September is being mentioned for the restart of matches. We have numerous lads currently training with their league clubs: Cpl Alex Woodhouse at Sporting Khalsa, Sgt Mike Atkinson – North Leigh FC, Cpl Dave Webb, Nantwich Town, to name a few. We've been in contact with the players over the lockdown keeping them updated and aware of our intentions.

"They're a great group of players who understand the fitness and technical requirements needed for when they return.

"We base our entire ethic on

trust and I am comfortable with the lads taking responsibility for their fitness."

He added: "So, things are bubbling along nicely, we're hoping we will be back training and playing soon enough."

The trust Pierce mentioned has led to one appointment, that of Cpl Daryl White to assistant coach.

Pierce said: "He was our performance analyst for 3-4 years, who took on further coaching responsibilities last season. His outstanding contribution has been a massive addition to our success for the last six years. With his coaching experience, knowledge and dedication, he is the perfect fit."

■ Follow UKAF football on Twitter @UKArmedForcesFC.



Sled heads get pulling to win

Session sees stars battle heat during drills at Waddington

Daniel Abrahams
HQ Air Command

PUSH CAME to shove last week for the Service's bobsledders as they held training sessions at RAF Waddington.

The association, which would normally be holding its team selection trials and testing new athletes at this time of year, has had to halt all activities, so held an impromptu session instead.

Organiser Cpl John Stanbridge, a New Zealand and RAF slider, said: "Training during this time for athletes has been difficult due to the closure of gyms. We have had some team members purchasing equipment and building squat racks and benches in their back gardens to train and some even pushing cars to simulate a sled.

"I recently purchased, using my Central Fund grant, a push sled to help my personal training as development pilot for New Zealand after spending a season as a brakeman last year – a perfect training tool for myself and the

RAF team. We currently have three athletes performing at international level, it important that we utilise these athletes in a bid to resecure the Inter-Service men's and overall titles."

On the day the athletes were split into two groups of six and maintained social distancing, while all equipment was wiped and sanitised before and after use.

The day featured coaching from GB Olympian Cpl John Baines and Jamaica pilot L/Cpl Shanwayne Stephens.

Two areas athletes are able to practise off the bobsleigh track are push starts and sprinting techniques.

Flt Lt Hatty Thompson, part of the IS women's winning team in March, said: "The event was a great success. It was fantastic to meet up with friends from the Inter-Services and new athletes.

"Cpl Stanbridge and Cpl Baines did an excellent job coming up with a socially-distanced training programme, including some bobsleigh specific warm-up



FLYING START: Cpl Lewis Prentice, SAC Alex Cortes-Tankard, Cpl Neil Hudson and Flt Lt Harriet Thompson get sprinting; below, push sled training



drills, sprint training and push techniques. Seeing the team for the first time since March meant the morale was high and we all had a great time."

Stanbridge added: "The hope is that if this event is successful it is something I would like to run more frequently.

"It has proved to be a real hit with everyone, so buoyed by that this will allow us to develop the squad in preparation for the 2020/2021 Inter-Service Championships as well as to track the progress of athletes throughout the off season."

Follow RAF bobsleigh on Twitter @RAFBobsleigh



POWER GAME: Flt Lt Hatty Thompson during some weight pulling with L/Cpl Stephens



ADD ASTRO TO MAKE TRAINING: Above, Jamaican and RAF bobsleigh star L/Cpl Shanwayne Stephens with a dummy sled; left, event organiser Cpl John Stanbridge shows his pulling power



SET GO: Cpl Lewis Prentice, SAC Alex Cortes-Tankard, Cpl Neil Hudson and L/Cpl Shanwayne Stephens perform sprint training intervals



TRAINING CAMP: More sprints

FOOTBALL

Jennings to be the man for all seasons for RAF Regiment



MEN IN CHARGE: Jennings (right) with his Army and Navy counterparts

Continued from page 27:

"and a potential tour to Cyprus in 2021. So, it's a really exciting time across the board."

Sqn Ldr Mark Bowden, chairman of RAF Regiment Football, said: "The appointment of Sgt Dave Jennings was an easy one to make.

"Alongside Sgt Tom Morton and Sgt Jimmy Humphreys, Sgt Jennings has played a vital role in the re-emergence of the RAF Regiment

"He's got a genuine love for the game and is developing into a very good coach"

Football Team. In his role as coach, he has had a lot of influence over the development of the players.

"He has a great mixture of experience, motivation and being an engaging coach to work with; I'm sure he will continue in the same vein in this new role."

Follow RAF Regiment football on Twitter @RAFRRegimentFC



Sport

RUGBY UNION

Union trades old for new

Landmark recruitment drive aims to shape the future with more professional, winning attitude



FUTURE PAST: Main, WO Tug Wilson shows the score as the RAF men's team defeated the Army at Aldershot in 2015 with former team captain Flt Lt Stu Philpott facing; above right, tearful players show what the historic victory meant; below, L/Cpl Dan Johnson and Cpl Alex Stanley charge down a kick during the victory over the French earlier this year



Daniel Abrahams HQ Air Command

WO TUG Wilson is driving the most dynamic and professional recruitment overhaul in Service rugby union history, in a bid to build a winning future.

The Deputy Director of Rugby is unapologetic about the cut-throat new way of working, which is guaranteed to shake up the sport.

He said: "We have to be more professional across the board. Those in the top posts have to be accountable, they have to have targets and they have to produce results. We are basing this all on the professional game and clubs – it is the only way."

Without a senior men's IS win in two years, and an U23 IS win since 2005, Wilson (pictured right) feels now is the perfect time to shake things up and look long-term.

"Sgt Justin Coleman has just been appointed RAFRU head coach [RAF News 1476]. He has come through the system and we know what he is about, what he has done in the past, and what he has to work on," said Wilson.

"All tenures now have time limits on them, for

Justin it's three years. After that time, there will be a review, to support the review we are introducing KPIs [Key Performance Indicators] for the first time, to drive which direction we take at that point."

To back this Wilson has overseen the installation of an RAFRU Operations Board, to support all plans and ideas for the Service game, along with a 'trigger point' calendar running throughout the year.

"We had to put things into order. Now there is a chance for everyone, and they can see a clear pathway to the top posts. It builds aspiration and competition," he said.

"What we ideally want is people to have earned their spurs and worked their way through our system,

"We had no forwards coach for RAF men's, once Justin moved up, so we need that filled. All of these posts need places filled underneath, and that's what we are setting about doing."

"Cpl Bedwin Davies has gone through from head coach of the RAF Academy to the backs coach of the first team, so he is the perfect choice for that post. Other posts currently being advertised included the RAF Academy head coach and team manager, U23s Strength and Conditioning coach and Sevens team manager posts. The women's team manager has also been finalised."

Wilson said: "We have FS Michelle Crolla remaining in the role for another year to assist the handover to the new incumbent. We have good candidates for all of the posts advertised, which is a great sign."

The new plan helps avoid a boom and bust



approach. Wilson added: "We cannot have another 25-year wait for the men's Seniors to win, which is what we suffered until 2015. We won it well recently (men's 2018, women's in 2019), and have been

close in recent times, but we cannot allow things to drop off again, none of those involved want that to happen."

Follow RAF rugby union on Twitter @RAFRugbyUnion.

Sport**Union charges towards future**

● Sport P26

**Bob crews set the pace for victory**

● Sport P24-25

**Pierce in our time – UKAF man talks tough**

● Sport P23

**FOOTBALL**

Sgt Dave's all the rave for Regt

New assistant coach is all set to shine in debut role



Daniel Abrahams
HQ Air Command

A COMBAT Cup victory is the first thing being spied by new RAF Regiment football team assistant manager Sgt Dave Jennings.

The appointment of Jennings, who has been one of the team's building blocks since its reformation in 2016, is a natural progression for its set-up, with him replacing

Sgt James Humphreys – who has moved into a position within the Service's Men's Development Side.

Team manager FS Tom Morton said: "Since we reformed the team, Dave was there for me off the pitch, he was in the background working hard, doing a lot of the unfashionable stuff. He was also continuing his own personal coaching journey.

"He's got a genuine love for the



NEW BALL GAME: *Main*, action from a RAF Regiment clash earlier this season, *left*, Sgt Dave Jennings sporting his RAF Regiment tie at Aldershot Military Stadium

game and is developing into a very good coach. He was the natural choice for the assistant manager position, and I am looking forward to continuing our relationship and can't wait to get back in the technical area. I'll be pleased to have him on my shoulder."

The Regiment team was disbanded during the opening stages of Op Telic due to service commitments, meaning fixtures

could not be fulfilled.

Jennings, 42, boasts a UEFA B coaching qualification and is also the RAF's only dedicated FA Affiliate tutor, delivers Level 1 and 2 coaching courses for the RAF FA and coaches grassroots at Cranwell Junior football club and at elite level at Lincoln City Elite development centre.

He said: "The team is in a good place at the moment. The manager

has engineered an excellent run of form in the past couple of season, beating teams like Icarus, Thetford Town and the Army Infantry convincingly. Our next endeavour is the annual Combat Cup competition, which the Regiment will host, between the Army Infantry, Royal Marines and the RAF Regiment football team, before a busy season of fixtures."

Continued on page 24:

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