



Riflemens' News

The Royal Green Jackets

1st January 2002

Issue No: 09

MESSAGE FROM THE REGIMENTAL COLONEL COMMANDANT RGJ

In my first message as the new Regimental Colonel Commandant in this ninth edition of Riflemens' News, I want to offer all our best wishes to my predecessor, General Pringle and thank him for all his hard work on behalf of the Regiment. The policies he has set for the Regiment will remain and I shall continue to capitalise on his success by building ever stronger ties that bind all of us together.

Our warmest congratulations go to all those who have won awards since the last issue. These are listed on the back page. We all wish 1 RGJ a safe return from Sierra Leone and know that they will cope well with further commitments in Northern Ireland this summer. We also look forward to the return of 2 RGJ to Warminster in March after so many years away in Germany, Bosnia and Kosovo.

A special thanks to all those involved with our Regimental Clubs and Associations. There is much work going on both to enhance the contribution each makes to the Regiment as a whole and also to increase the benefits their members enjoy. The first Regimental Durbar was very successful and I congratulate all those involved in it's preparation and planning. I hope this will be the start of something very spectacular which we should all support (NB 12-19 October 02!). Look out also for details of Last Out, First In, codename for our own battlefield tour to Calais and Normandy from 3 - 7 June.

I am immensely proud to be your Colonel Commandant and look for your continued support in maintaining and improving the Regiment during the coming years.

Stop Press: Many congratulations to Brigadier Parker on his promotion to Major General.

NEWS OF THE FUTURE

1 RGJ

Much has changed since the June edition. On return from Ex POND JUMP WEST in Canada, the Battalion was warned for deployment to Sierra Leone instead of fulfilling the role of Spearhead Land Element.

B Company Group was first to deploy to establish the

Military Reintegration Programme supervising training for ex combatants, primarily members of the rebel organisation and civil militias. A Company Group followed to provide the force protection for the British personnel committed to the International Monitoring and Advisory Training Team, with C Company Group relieving them before Christmas. This presented the

Battalion with an excellent opportunity to conduct operations Other Than War in the challenging environment of a war-torn Sierra Leone, having trained alongside the Parachute Regiment to acquire some of the specific skills such as use of vehicle-mounted .50 Calibre machine guns.

Within a month of the last Company returning from Sierra Leone, we begin training in

February for a 6 month tour as NIBAT 3 to reinforce 39 Inf Bde in Belfast. I Company will be committed to demanding surveillance operations throughout the tour, while the remainder of the Battalion will be deployed in Belfast during increased periods of tension. Training will include a sophisticated range package to Lydd and Hythe and a Battalion exercise at Stanford, together with numerous specialist courses and challenging training in the public order role.

Although the main focus will be on the Battalion's operational responsibilities in Northern Ireland, planning is underway to develop expertise in mountain operations amongst those based back in Weeton Barracks. A climbing wall is being built and a series of climbing courses and exercise scheduled to expand on the Mountain Cadre in Scotland last June and the Recce Platoon's training in Canada. The Battalion aims to establish itself as the centre of excellence for mountain training in the North of England and is establishing links with the local TA infantry battalion and its mountaineers for the Lake District. The challenges of training for urban operations in Northern Ireland and developing the mountain role certainly provide contrasting challenges for the future.

2 RGJ

You would be forgiven for thinking that the pace of Battalion Life would have dropped off since we returned to Germany from OP

PALATINE in Bosnia last September, but that has not been the case.

The focus has switched from peace support operations (for the time being), towards training for our new role in Warminster as the Land Warfare Training Centre Battle Group (LWTC BG) which we become on 15 April.

This phase of training began with a JNCO Cadre which passed off with style with GOC 1 (UK) Armd Div taking the salute with the remainder of the battalion looking on. Rfn (now Lcpl) **Boyd**, Recce Pl, won the Bankier Cane.

This training continues in the new year with all the Support Weapons cadres running, together with Recce, Sniper and a variety of Driving Cadres too. All these have to be fitted into our forecast prior to the Arms Plot move which starts in earnest in March.

At the same time Ex **WINTER WARRIOR** - a skiing adventurous exercise in Bavaria and Ex **TANZANITE** - a combined IS and adventure training expedition to Tanzania will be running as well.

We certainly are not going to pass up on any of the opportunities still available while we remain in Germany.

We are looking forward to the move to UK next year and to our first home posting since Dover in 1995. Now that the main recce of Warminster has taken place, everyone is in the picture as to what to expect. We are all going to have to hit the ground running with the companies picking up exercise commitments as soon as they arrive. However, as the majority of these involve exercises

on the Plain this has got to be something to look forward to, The burden of having to work on "the wagons" will not go away, but will reduce considerably. More low level conventional training will be carried out, to ensure that we provide the best possible enemy and exercising troops to the various training organisations we will be working to.

From the Rifleman's point of view life in Warminster will be a case of "work hard, play hard". Perhaps the best benefit of working on a fixed exercise programme is that block leave and leave weekends will be booked and firmed up in advance with a greater degree of certainty than has been the case here in Germany. With the majority of peoples homes not more than a few hours drive away this will really allow us to live life to the full.

LONDONS (RGJ)

F(RGJ) Coy will undertake the following programme in the first six months of 2002.

In January Capt **Rock** assumes command of the Company. The Officers and SNCOs have a Defence TEWT to contend with, the whole Company will participate in a Skill at Arms Meeting over a weekend while the London Regiment Officers Mess will be celebrating Burns Night.

February sees junior officer and company training together with the London Regiment CPX - **BIG MATCH 3**.

In March as well as company training there is to be a skiing expedition, The London District Courage Trophy and provision of a guard of Honour for the Lord Mayor of Westminster.

April is taken up with the

London District SAAM and Platoon Commanders weekend.

The Officers Mess Ball is in May, as is the London District Exercise - **EXECUTIVE STRETCH** and the National TA Open Day.

Although the six month period ends in June with The London Regiment Open Day and Exercise **BIG MATCH 4**, we eagerly look forward to Annual Camp in Germany in September.

G (RGJ) Company's season has been dominated by the Recce Platoon under Csgt Winton winning a silver medal in the 2001 Cambrian Patrol competition.

This was an excellent reward for the team's hard work and the training package devised by WO2 Comer.

We are entering the individual training period and aim to complete all ITDs by the end of January in order to concentrate on tactics for the battalion exercise in February. The Rifle platoons will be entering the Courage Trophy in March before we start the build up to Camp at Celle with 1 RRF in the autumn.

We look forward to seeing more of 2 RGJ when they move to Warminster!

Sgt Foster has joined us as Recce PSI, 2 Lt Edgar departed for FTRS with 2 PWRR for six months and Sgt Blondell also left on joining the London Fire Brigade but not before being presented with his VRSM.

RRV (RGJ)

The Royal Rifle Volunteers (RRV) was formed in 1999 following the Strategic

Defence Review.

The RRV brings together the previous Regiments of 6/7 PWRR, 2 RGBW and 5 RGJ (V) under the umbrella of a multi cap-badged TA Infantry Battalion. The present day battalion covers five counties (Hants (including the Isle of Wight), Berks, Oxon, Bucks and Wilts) and spans two Regional Brigades and two Reserve Forces and Cadets Associations (previously known as TAVRAs.)

For the first time there is an RGJ Commanding Officer. Battalion Headquarters is located in Reading with the two RGJ companies dominating the northern borders of the Battalion Area of Responsibility, from their locations in Oxford and Milton Keynes.

In A (RGJ) Coy the New year sees a major push for recruits in Oxford and an increased presence in High Wycombe.

The task in the latter area falls mainly on the shoulders of the Milan PI Comd - Capt Turner. We will be holding an Employers Support Event on 25 April to sell ourselves to the main employers of most of our soldiers, as well as trying to get other firms to support us.

National TA Day is to be held on 18th May when we will have a major presence in Oxford City centre. We also plan to hold events during April and June to maximise on the publicity.

Both A and E Coys will be making special efforts to recruit buglers to compliment the Waterloo Band. We plan a period of cooperation between to the 2 RGJ Coys to push

recruiting and PR in the two counties, with an eye very much on Aylesbury, where we were very strong before the Strategic Defence Review. The Signals Regiment that now occupies the TA Centre in Aylesbury does not seem able to fill the vacuum left by the old guard of 4 and 5 RGJ.

A closer relationship with our affiliated County Cadet Forces is also planned to encourage the older Cadets to join the TA or Regular Army. We hope to be taking some Cadets on selected training weekends and to give presentations to others in Cadet locations.

Our new OC - Maj Griffin is already busy overhauling the Company, putting new initiatives in place to boost attendance and trying to make the training more interesting. The problem we have isn't recruiting it is retention for more than a year or so.

Capt Collyns has moved to Oxford as Coy 2IC with Lt Griffin now taking over from Lt Leavers as platoon commander. Capt Roper continues to work on recruiting and PR as well as doing the odd exercise as QM.

We say farewell to SPSI WO2 Logan who has worked hard for A Coy and say hello to WO2 Peacock who replaces him.

On the training front we will continue to provide a variety on infantry skills weekends with a view to preparing the Company for deployment to the Ukraine in September. It is hope that we can take as many members of the Company as possible with us.

A(RGJ) Coy continues to

approach all tasks with good spirit and enthusiasm, working for the good of the Regiment.

E (RGJ) Coy will be as busy as ever over the coming six months. An initial focus for the Company will be the forthcoming TA Day in the spring.

This will be the culmination of a concentrated recruiting drive to enable the Company to field a second full rifle platoon. It will provide an excellent focus for our continuing efforts to reinforce the Green Jacket footprint in the Milton Keynes area.

In parallel we will be focusing on the exciting prospect of deployment to the Ukraine in August. This 2 week OTX will see the whole of the RRV conducting company level training and live firing as well as cultural/friendship visits with local units.

We continue to provide a stream of manpower for FTRS deployments in the coming months. LCpl **Johnson** our medic will be deploying to Kenya on exercise with the Highlanders, having only recently returned from Ex SAIF SAREEA. Also WO2 (CSM) **Ryan** and Sgt **Ansell** will be going to Sierra Leone for six weeks.

All in all E Company have a challenging and varied time ahead in 2002, which will provide valuable in terms of recruitment, retention and capability.

ITC CATTERICK

The knowledge that ATRs will no longer train infantry

recruits seems to be known to us all. Future recruits will complete a CIC single course aimed at reducing wastage rates (currently 35 per cent) and costs.

Although the instructors realise that this will mean a lot more work and extra duties they all know that the end product will be better. Training a soldier from week 1 enables the trainers to get to know his limits and abilities and allows then to develop his confidence and skills accordingly.

Initially it will be a hectic time here at Catterick, as currently we do not have enough bed spaces. Platoons will be forced to move around ITC as courses pass out and accommodation becomes available, only to move again into new blocks at the start of the next course. If statistics are correct, things should be sorted out after five years, as by then they Army should be up to strength and the intake of trainees can be reduced!

We are sure that the standards here will remain the same if not higher and that the traditions and ethos of the Light Division will be kept alive by the dedicated NCOs and Officers of ITC (C), who remain an island of green in a sea of red.

ATR WINCHESTER

Discussion over the past few years regarding infantry training has resulted in a decision that Phase 1 and 2 will be reintegrated at ITC Catterick.

This means that by August 2002 no more Light Division

recruits will train at Winchester.

This transition has a number of implications, not least in respect to the scaling of E posts in and around training establishments. It is planned to leave some infantry instructors at ATRs to act as the "infantry glue" and thereby help maintain training standards in phase establishment.

Perhaps the saddest result is the further erosion of connections between the Regiment and the City of Winchester. That said it is likely the the Light Div Band will remain at ATR Winchester and that reunions and association get together will still carry on at Sir John Moore Barracks.

HONOURS AND AWARDS

Armed Forces Operational Awards List No 16

MBE

WO2 RE Heys

1 RGJ

QCVS

Lt Col JIS Plastow MBE

1 RGJ

Cpl JPB Becker

1 RGJ

MSM

WO2 AS Watson

AFCO Wrexham

RGJ POCKET DIARIES
Diaries are available at £3 each. Send your order with payment to RGJ Association, Peninsula Barracks, Winchester, Hants SO23 8TS