



Military Despatches

Vol 59 May 2022

No thanks

Ten military roles
you did not want

The War in Ukraine

Is Russia in danger of losing?

Food, glorious food

Military ration packs from around the world

Kurt "Panzer" Meyer

Highly decorated SS-Brigadeführer
and convicted war criminal

For the military enthusiast



Click on any video below to view

Military Despatches

Paratrooper Wings Quiz

Paratrooper Wings Quiz

Most military paratroopers are awarded their jump wings after they have qualified.

In this quiz we show you 15 different wings and you tell us where they are from.

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Military Firearms Quiz

Military Firearms Quiz

This quiz is all about military firearms. We show you 15 firearms, you tell us what they are.

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Army Speak 101

The SADF had their own language. A mixture of English, Afrikaans, slang and techno-speak that few outside the military could hope to understand.

Most armies around the world also had their own slang terms. In this video we look at some of them.

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Elite Military Units Quiz

Most military forces have an elite unit or regiment or a special forces component. In this quiz we show you 15 and you tell us who they are and where they are from.

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Who said that?

Throughout history military leaders and politicians have had some interesting things to say about war. We give you 15 quotes, you tell us who made them.

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Military Despatches

New videos each week

We will be uploading new videos to our YouTube channel each week. So remember to bookmark the channel and keep an eye out for new content.

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Ten worst military roles

These are ten military roles in history that you did not want. Survival was often not an option.

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Petty Officer Owthu Sumayili from TS Tiburon is the 2021 Sea Cadet of the Year.

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The War in Ukraine

This month we're focusing on the War in Ukraine. We show you 15 weapons and ask what they are.

Please remember to subscribe to our channel.

Feel free to leave a comment, and share this video.



Editor's Sitrep

Can you believe that this is the last month of autumn. Next month we're back into winter again.

Winter means that the weather will probably get a lot colder. I somehow think that it also means that we will sit without power for extended periods of time.

We've already had our fair share of load shedding - a quaint way of saying "Everything is broken again." This week we had three power cuts in one day.

I'm so glad that I splashed out and bought a decent inverter. It means that when Eskom decides to turn off the power, I can at least use my two computer, carry on working, have access to the Internet, have fibre, have a few lights on, and even watch a bit of television when I need a break.

Yet not everyone can afford an inverter. This means that many hours of productivity is lost, costing people money.

I'm sure that many readers are closely following the War in Ukraine. The main problem with trying to keep up with what's going on is the information overload.

The mainstream media in South Africa doesn't seem to give

much information, but countless videos are uploaded to platforms such as YouTube and FaceBook every minute.

A lot of the information is sketchy at the least or downright false, and doesn't really give a clear indication as to what exactly is happening.

One thing is certain - the Russians have been taking alarmingly high casualties. Global Firepower, a website that ranks the military power of nations, had Russia as the second most powerful military in the world. Ukraine came in at number 22. I somehow feel that his ranking will soon change.

I'm fortunate in the fact that I have quite a few former colleagues that are actually on the ground in the Ukraine and I can at least get a slightly better picture of the situation.

Whatever the outcome of this war, it's a sad situation and one that could get even worse.

Enjoy the month, stay safe, stay healthy.

Until next time.

Matt

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SS-Brigadeführer, recipient of the Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross with Oak Leaves and Swords, Waffen-SS apologist, and convicted war criminal. This was Kurt Meyer.

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Fury

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10 Most dangerous military roles

These are ten military roles in history that you did not want.

Often the mere fact that you're in the military is dangerous enough. This is especially true during times of war.

People serve in the military for a variety of reasons. Many will do so because of patriotism and a sense of duty towards their country. Others see it as an adventure and a test of manhood.

Many serve because they don't have a choice in the matter and are conscripted or drafted into service. And there are others that consider it a career.

Those that serve in a combat role often face greater dangers than those that do not. Yet there are some combat roles that are more dangerous than others.

The strange thing with some of these roles is that people actually volunteered for them.

Here are ten dangerous combat roles in history, in no particular order.

Galley Rower

Before the invention of the steam engine, ships had two means of propulsion.

They would either rely on the free, but unreliable, wind, or on human sheer brute force.

Although sails could harness the power of the wind, a calm day could leave you drifting at the mercy of the sea. Human power, in the form of galley rowers, could always be relied on.

Contrary to popular belief, ancient galley rowers tended not to be slaves, but were instead free men who were well respected for their profession.

The work of the galley rower was skilled and required high levels of training and coordination between each rower.

In battle the lives of all on board were reliant on the talents of the men rowing the galley. So it made sense that ancient navies would be reluctant to place their lives in the hands of unskilled and unreliable slaves.

This would, however, change dramatically between the ancient world and the middle ages.

By the 1600s the size of galleys and galley fleets was becoming much larger. This meant that a greater number of rowers were needed. The supplies of skilled oarsmen could not keep up with the demand.

The era of the galley slave was born as navies manned their fleets with whichever unfortunate that they could seize.

This practice became especially common in France when the king ordered judges to sentence men to the galleys for their crimes instead of issuing the death penalty.

Criminals were usually given a ten year sentence to the galleys. Many regarded this as a death sentence because few would survive the battles to come, or the harsh conditions.

Chained to the benches where they worked, most spent their entire short existence confined to the rowing deck.

They were unable to wash or even go to the toilet. It was often said that with the right wind direction you could smell a galley long before you would see it.

Unable to move, the rowers would often develop sores on their body, caused by the friction of the chains as they rowed. These wounds would often become infected in the unsanitary conditions, resulting in even more deaths.

Even if the men survived these terrible conditions, they still had to contend with the greatest danger - battle on the open seas.

If a ship was sunk, the rowers, chained to their benches, would be dragged down to a watery grave.

Capture by the enemy may have seemed a good option, but it was not. They would either be put to death, or used as galley slaves by the enemy.

Tunnel Rats

From the 1940s during the Indochina War against the French colonial forces, the Viet Minh created an extensive network of underground tunnels and complexes.

These were later expanded by the Viet Cong during the Viet-



CLAUSTROPHOBIA: A tunnel rat prepares to enter a Viet Cong tunnel complex.

nam War. By the 1960s there were underground hospitals, training grounds, storage facilities, headquarters and even stages for political theatre. The Viet Cong, who were skilled at guerrilla warfare, might stay underground for several months at a time.

The Viet Cong would often emerge from the tunnels, launch a quick raid or ambush, then escape back into the tunnels before the might of the American war machine could be turned against them.

The tunnel complexes could stretch for hundred of kilometres, often linking villages and even provinces. This meant that the Viet Cong could move forces and equipment unseen and protected.

To combat this problem the US military tried flooding the tunnels, or using gas to kill or flush out those within. Yet the sheer size of the tunnels and

the use of simple, but highly effective water traps, meant that these attempts met with little success.

The tunnels were spread over several levels, with each level sealed by a watertight trap door. There were U-bends in tunnels on the same level and these would often be filled with water, preventing gas from spreading.

The Americans even tried sending dogs down into the tunnels, but they were quickly killed by the numerous traps lining the tight passageways.

It was decided that the only way to clear the tunnels was by sending in specialised soldiers to clear the tunnels of enemy, gather intelligence, and blow the tunnels up one by one.

Infantrymen, primarily from Australia, New Zealand and America, volunteered for the job and became known as 'tunnel rats'. Their motto was the Latin phrase "*Non Gratus Ro-*

dentum" - "not worth a rat".

The men had to be small and thin to stand any chance of making their way through the tight passageways.

Whenever troops discovered a tunnel entrance the area would first be checked for booby traps before a tunnel rat was sent in.

Armed with only a pistol, a bayonet and a flashlight, the tunnel rat would be lowered into the tunnel.

Many of them chose not to arm themselves with the standard issue .45 caliber pistol. Due to the confined space, they disliked the intense muzzle blast of the .45, which would often leave them temporarily deaf. The preferred pistols were 9x19 mm calibre, often with an improvised suppressor.

The tunnels were filled with dangers. Defending soldiers often manned holes on the sides of the tunnels through which spears could be thrust, impaling a crawling intruder.

There were dangerous creatures such as snakes, rats, spiders, scorpions and ants. Venomous snakes were placed inside a hollow bamboo tube that was attached to a tripwire. When tripped, the snake would fall onto the intruder.

Often the tunnel rats would operate in the dark so that they light of their torch did not give them away.

It was a job filled with stress as every centimetre of a tunnel could prove deadly. They would strain their senses, listening for the slightest sound such as a man breathing or try to smell

the sweat of a person close by.

Clearing a section of tunnel and setting up the explosives could take anywhere from a few minutes to several hours.

Many of the tunnel rats in Vietnam did not survive the war.

Later, similar teams were used by the Soviet Army during the Soviet war in Afghanistan, and the Israel Defence Forces.

Afghanistan has an extensive series of historic tunnels used for transporting water, the *kariz*, and during the 1979–1989 Soviet war in Afghanistan, such tunnels were used by Mujahideen fighters. The Soviet 40th Army had their own tunnel rats, who were tasked with flushing people out of the tunnels, then going through the tunnels to disarm booby traps and kill those who remained.

A similar Israeli team called SAMOOR (“Weasel”) is part of the *Yahalom* elite combat engineering unit.

World War I pilot

World War I was the first war where aircraft were used in combat. While many pilots would go on to survive the war, casualties among pilots were still very high.

There were numerous factors that contributed to the high attrition rate of pilots.

First of all, early aircraft were beset with technical problems. Engines would stall in a steep climb or tight turn. In a steep dive the wings could tear off. Machine guns would often jam during combat. There was no radio communication between

planes or to the ground.

Pilots would often have as little as ten hours flying time before being sent into combat. Some of them found it difficult enough to manage straight and level flight, let alone the twists and turns of a dogfight.

Many pilots, on both sides, were killed in aircraft accidents. In fact the life expectancy of a pilot during World War I was a mere 11 days.

One of the greatest dangers they faced was that of their aircraft catching fire. Most of the planes were made from wood and canvas and would often catch fire when hit.

While parachutes were available (they were issued to balloon observers) they were not issued to pilots.

If a pilot’s aircraft caught on fire they had three options. First of all they could ‘bail out’ of the burning aircraft and fall to their death. Secondly, they could remain with the aircraft and burn to death.

Or thirdly, as most pilots would carry a pistol with them, he would shoot himself in the head. Most opted for the last choice.

Ball turret gunner

From early 1943 until the end of World War II, the skies over Germany were not the safest place to be.

The US Army Air Forces and the Royal Air Force Bomber Command began the strategic bombing campaign of German cities. This was also known as area bombardment.

According to a British Air Staff paper, “The ultimate aim of an attack on a town area is to break the morale of the population which occupies it. To ensure this, we must achieve two things: first, we must make the town physically uninhabitable and, secondly, we must make the people conscious of constant personal danger. The immediate aim, is therefore, twofold, namely, to produce destruction and fear of death.”

The US Army Air Force carried out daylight raids over Germany, while the RAF bombed at night.

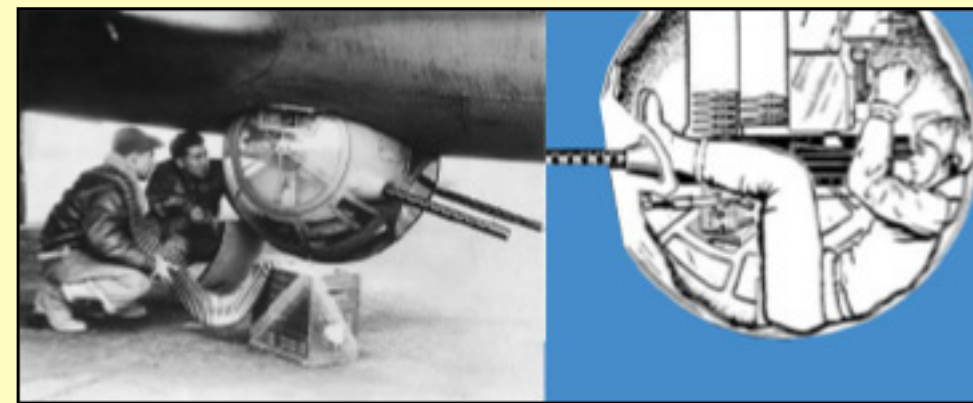
Besides facing heavy anti-aircraft fire, bomber crews also faced the danger of German Luftwaffe fighters. And many of these bombing missions were carried out without fighter escort.

It was only in 1944 that the introduction of the Lockheed P-38 Lightning, Republic P-47 Thunderbolt and the North American P-51 Mustang allowed Allied fighters to escort bombers all the way to their target.

Even bomber crews that managed to bail out after being shot down over Germany were not safe. There was the very real danger that, upon parachuting to the ground, they could be seized by angry German civilians and lynched from the nearest lamp-post.

German civilians referred to the bombers crews as *terrorflieger* (terror flyers).

The bombers used by the US Army Air Force were the Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress and the



CRAMPED CONDITIONS: Space inside the Sperry ball Turret was limited.

Consolidated B-24 Liberator.

The B-17 was armed with 13 12.7 mm M2 Browning machine guns, while the B-24 had 10. One thing they both had in common was a Sperry ball turret in the belly of the aircraft.

The Sperry ball turret was very small in order to reduce drag, and was typically operated by the smallest man of the crew. To enter the turret, the turret was moved until the guns were pointed straight down. The gunner placed his feet in the heel rests and occupied his cramped station.

He would put on a safety strap and close and lock the turret door. There was no room inside for a parachute, which was left in the cabin above the turret.

A common tactic of the German fighters was to come up under the bomber and take out the belly gunner first.

It was not uncommon for the turret door to jam shut in a damaged bomber, leaving the belly gunner unable to bail out.

Tail gunner

During the strategic bombing campaign against Germany,

being a tail gunner in a Vickers Wellington bomber or a Avro Lancaster bomber was not the most desirable job.

The RAF carried out their bombing missions at night. The tail gunner would spend many hours a night flying backwards in cramped, freezing and solitary conditions.

The life expectancy of a rear gunner, also known as ‘tail-end Charlie’, was desperately short; estimates vary but suggest that they could expect to be shot down, or killed, within two weeks, or up to five operations. According to Yorkshire Air Museum, 20,000 rear gunners lost their lives during World War II.

The primary role of the tail gunner was to defend his aircraft from enemy fighter attack from the rear, and to warn the pilot when to take evasive manoeuvres.

This meant flying in this confined, see-through turret, enveloped by the pitch-black sky and constantly revolving the turret to scan the eerie darkness for a shadow that could be an attacking night fighter.

German night fighter fa-

voured the tactic of attacking a British bomber from behind, and the tail gunner was usually their first target.

Flamethrower operator

The idea of setting your enemy on fire is nothing new and man has done his best to turn flame into a weapon for thousands of years.

From as early as the first century ‘Greek Fire’ was deployed in a flamethrower-type weapon on board naval ships in order to give the Byzantines a combat advantage.

In 900 AD the Chinese developed a piston-type flamethrower that used a substance similar to gasoline.

The modern flamethrower as we know it was first put to deadly use during the First and Second World Wars.

Able to produce a long stream of accurate flame, the weapon seemed an ideal solution to break the stalemate of trench warfare.

It could incinerate enemy soldiers sheltering in bunkers or trenches, or cause them to flee for their lives. The problem was that they could be gunned down before they were close enough to use the flamethrower.

During World War II the flamethrower was used to assault heavily defended enemy positions such as bunkers and pillboxes were the enemy sheltering inside could be burnt to death or flushed out by the intense flames.

Yet the flamethrower operators didn’t have things all their

own way. There were a variety of deadly risks of using flamethrowers in combat.

The equipment was heavy and made moving around a combat zone slower and therefore more dangerous.

The flamethrower also had a very short burn time and would use up fuel very quickly. If you missed your target you would now be faced by an enemy who would probably not be amused that you just tried to set him on fire.

The weapon was also very visible, making its operator a prime target for enemy fire, especially from snipers. Even if the bullet missed you, it could puncture the flamethrower tank, causing you and nearby soldiers to be engulfed in flames.

Another major problem was that the range of the flamethrower was far less than that of a rifle. In order to be used effectively, the operator would have to get close to their target. This gave the enemy time to pick them off.

It could also have a heavy psychological effect on the operator. The sight of men on fire, screaming in pain. The constant stream of charred bodies and the smell of burnt flesh, and knowing that you were the cause, could have a strong psychological effect on the operator.

That, combined with the constant danger, would often be enough to tip even a balanced individual over the edge.

At Iwo Jima flamethrower operators suffered a massive 92% casualty rate with the average



SAFE THIS TIME: A U-boat crew poses for the camera after returning from a patrol. Yet 75% of U-boat crew would not survive the war.

life expectancy to be just four minutes.

U-boat crewman

During World War I and World War II the Germans made excellent use of their U-boats (submarines).

In fact during World War II they came close to turning the entire tide of the war by denying Britain vital supplies during the Battle of the Atlantic.

To counter the threat of the U-boats, merchant ships began travelling in armed convoys.

An Escort Group consisted of several small warships organized and trained to operate together providing protection for trade convoys.

Escort groups were a World War II tactical innovation in anti-submarine warfare by the Royal Navy to combat the threat

of the *Kriegsmarine's* "wolf-pack" tactics.

Early escort groups often contained destroyers, sloops, naval trawlers and, later, corvettes of differing specifications lacking the ability to manoeuvre together as a flotilla of similar warships, but rigorously trained in anti-submarine tactics to use teamwork emphasizing the unique sensors, weapons, speed and turning radius of each ship.

The development of these 'escort groups' proved an effective means of defending shipping convoys through the Battle of the Atlantic.

The advancement of ASDIC, known as SONAR by the Americans, meant that escorts could detect submarines under water.

The men that commanded and crewed U-boats were volunteers and the selection pro-



BANZAI: A Japanese Kamikaze dives towards a US Navy ship, aiming to crash his aircraft into it.

cess was rigorous. They were a breed apart and wore their uniform with pride.

Yet the conditions they had to work and live under were harsh. They would often be at sea for months at a time, living and working in cramped conditions.

Fresh rations were consumed very quickly and for the remainder of the trip they would eat canned food. They could not shower and often were unable to wash clothes due to the limited amount of fresh water on board.

While they travelled on the surface as much as possible, when they were forced to dive the air would become stale very quickly.

The day was divided up into three eight-hour shifts. One shift was for sleeping, one for normal duties, and one for miscellaneous tasks. It was a routine that could quickly become monotonous.

Yet these conditions were nothing compared to coming under attack.

If they were detected by an escort ship they could expect to come under depth charge attack.

A depth charge attack could go on for hours until either the U-boat managed to escape, or they were sunk or forced to the surface.

If a depth charge exploded close enough to the U-boat it could damage the hull. The water pressure would then cause the hull to implode. Death would be quick as those inside were crushed.

The ballast tanks could also be damaged, forcing the U-boat to surface, where they would be at the mercy of the guns of the escort ships.

If the dive controls were damaged it could also cause the U-boat to sink to the bottom. If the water was deep enough the U-boat's hull would be crushed. If, however, the water was not deep enough to crush the hull, the U-boat could lie on the seabed, unable to surface. Eventually they would run out

of breathable air and the crew would die a slow death.

Statistics show that U-boat crew suffered a 75% casualty rate during World War II. In other words, three out of four of them did not survive the war.

SOE/OSS Operative

Early during World War II the British had been forced out of Europe. It was vital that they establish some sort of a presence, especially in France.

To this end the British established the Special Operations Executive (SOE). These men and women would be given training and then sent into occupied Europe, and sometimes even Germany.

Their tasks could include anything from spying on the enemy and gathering intelligence, to recruiting and training local resistance groups. They would also carry out acts of sabotage.

The work was both demanding and dangerous. The slightest slip-up could result in capture and execution.

If, for example, you were operating in France, it would not be enough to be merely able to speak French. You would have to be fluent and it would have to sound as if French was your first language.

Most of your identity documents, travel permits, and so on would be forgeries. If they were not up to date and spot on, you could easily be caught out.

Your cover story as to who you were and what you were doing there had to be perfect and stand up to any scrutiny.

You would also have to know if there were any curfews enforced in the area and any local regulations.

You needed to know the lay of the land and who the local contacts were.

Unfortunately most operatives dropped into occupied Europe were quickly captured by the ruthless but highly efficient German Gestapo.

Operatives captured were often tortured in the most horrific ways, interrogated, and usually executed. Because they were not wearing a uniform they were not entitled to be treated as prisoners of war, but as spies.

When the Americans entered the war they formed the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) and they worked closely with the SOE.

The SOE would later go on to become Britain's MI6 and the OSS would become the CIA.

Kamikaze pilot

This was one of those jobs where your survival rate was rated at around about zero percent. Not exactly a great recruitment slogan. Yet most Kamikaze pilots were volunteers.

Towards the end of World War II, things were not going well for the Japanese. The Americans were closing in and were about to launch an invasion of Okinawa, one of the homeland islands.

In desperation, the Japanese Imperial Army came up with a solution - Kamikaze (Divine Wind) attacks.

What this meant was that a pi-

lot would climb into his plane, fly out over the American fleet, put his plane into a steep dive, and deliberately crash it into a ship.

The planes were often loaded with explosives to make them more effective.

While these attacks were not always that successful (pilots would often miss the ships due to a lack of flight training) they did shock the Americans. In fact the Americans gave them the nickname of "Baka Bombs". Baka is the Japanese term for idiot.

Penal Battalion

For as long as there have been wars, criminals and undesirable elements have been viewed as useful but disposable cannon fodder.

They were viewed as ideal for dangerous or suicidal missions or tasks that were beneath regular soldiers.

Arranged into penal battalions, they faced a short life of misery and suffering, followed by an almost certain death on the front lines.

The Romans used penal legions and Napoleon used penal battalions. But it was during the Second World War that penal battalions were used extensively by both the German and Soviet armies.

Prior to the war the Germans had used soldiers that were considered disruptive to general morale but were otherwise worthy of service in specialised penal units.

However with the war turning

against them all sorts of prisoners, convicted soldiers and even hardened criminals were conscripted into the ranks in a desperate bid to stave off defeat.

Used to carry out the most dangerous and back breaking tasks, the doomed men were kept in line by officers and military police units along with the promise that should they serve with bravery they might be allowed to return to regular army units.

In reality they had little choice in the matter, for refusal to carry out the often suicidal missions would result in summary execution for the original sentence. For those men on death row this would mean a bullet to the back of the head or an appointment with the hangman's noose.

Once the condemned men arrived at their designated units they would be given the most dangerous tasks which could involve clearing minefields, attacking heavily defended positions to soften up the enemy for the real soldiers waiting behind them, or used as cannon fodder to defend a specific location where they would sacrifice their lives, allowing regular army units they time needed to retreat.

Among the penal battalions these missions were often known as "Reise in den Himmel" (Journey to Heaven) missions.

One of the most infamous penal units was the 36th Grenadier Division of the Waffen SS. The units was originally made up of convicted poachers and their



PSYCHOPATH: SS-Oberführer Oskar Dirlewanger.

skill was used to hunt and kill partisans on the Eastern Front.

Yet the unit grew and its ranks

were swelled by some of Germany's worst criminals and most insane men. The unit soon gained a reputation for extreme brutality towards civilians.

The unit fell under the command of SS-Oberführer Oskar Dirlewanger, a man with whom few could compete in cruelty. He was a convicted child molester and described as a psychopathic killer and an expert in extermination and a devotee of sadism and necrophilia.

The Soviets used about 430,000 men in penal battalions.

They were considered expendable and in an effort to install discipline and stop them

from retreating in battle, Stalin issued the infamous Order 227 in July 1942. It was also known as the "Not one step back" order. No unit was allowed to retreat and anyone that did could face immediate execution or transfer to a penal battalion.

The NKVD Secret Police that commanded the battalions considered them cannon fodder. The units would be sent to where the fighting was the thickest. They were kept under armed guard. When they went into action they were followed by troops known as 'Barrier guards'. They would set up machine guns and mow down anyone trying to retreat.

Memorable Order of Tin Hats

Click on the photograph below to take a virtual tour of Warrior's Gate and find out more about the Memorable Order of Tin Hats.

Virtual Tour

Warrior's Gate Virtual Tour

Take a virtual tour of Warrior's Gate, or find out more about the MOTH Order. Click on a thumbnail to view the video.

Photo gallery

History

Message from the Vice-Chairman

Ceremonial

Message from the custodian

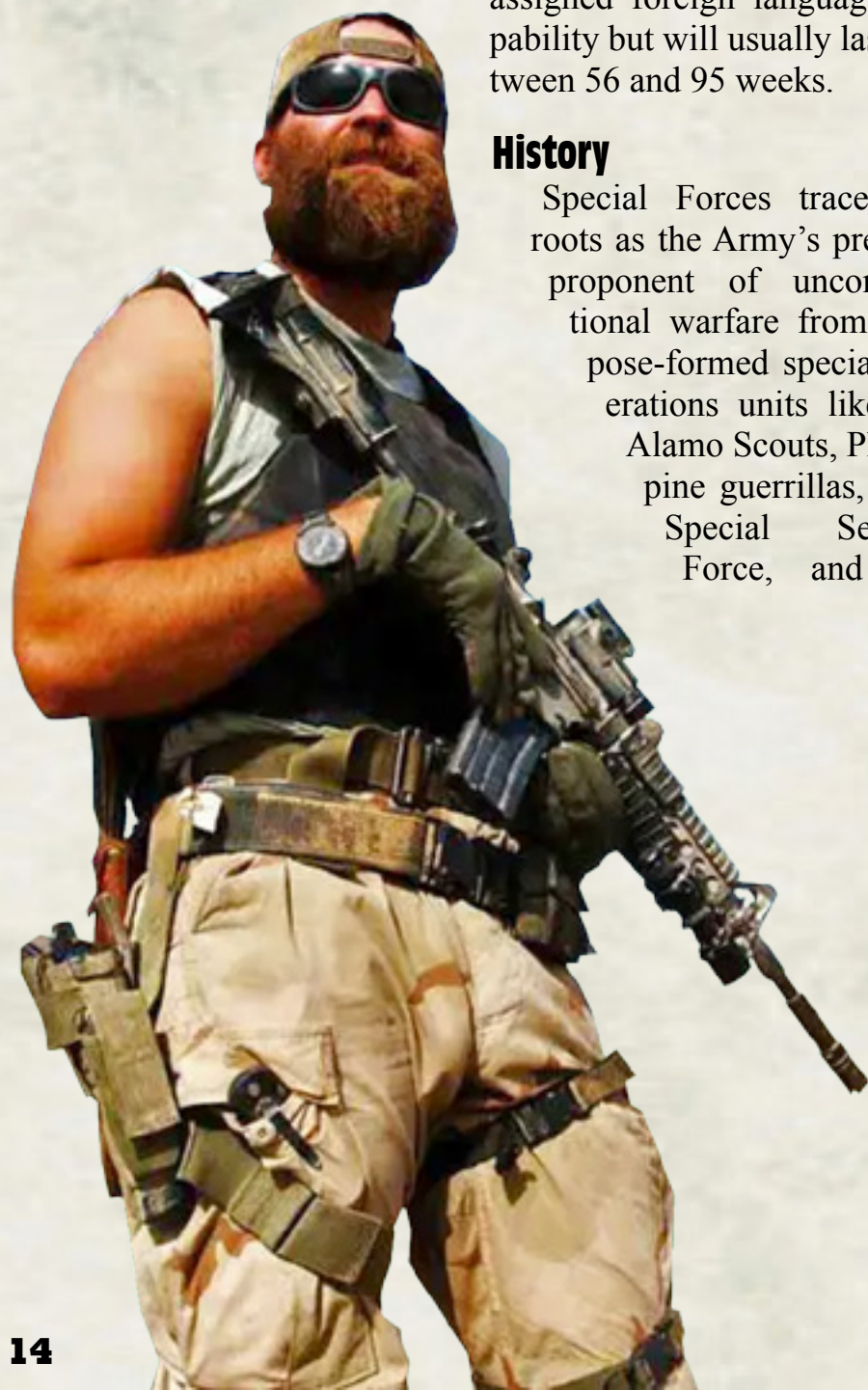
Message from the custodian

Special Force Training - Green Beret

In our fifth article on Special Forces selection and training, we look at the Green Beret.

The Special Forces Qualification Course (SFQC) or, informally, the Q Course is the initial formal training program for entry into the United States Army Special Forces.

Phase I of the Q Course is Special Forces Assessment and Selection (SFAS). Getting "Selected" at SFAS will enable a candidate to continue to the next of the four phases.



If a candidate successfully completes all phases they will graduate as a Special Forces qualified soldier and then, generally, be assigned to a 12-men Operational Detachment "A" (ODA), commonly known as an "A team."

The length of the Q Course changes depending on the applicant's primary job field within Special Forces and their assigned foreign language capability but will usually last between 56 and 95 weeks.

History

Special Forces traces its roots as the Army's premier proponent of unconventional warfare from purpose-formed special operations units like the Alamo Scouts, Philippine guerrillas, First Special Service Force, and the

Operational Groups (OGs) of the Office of Strategic Services (OSS).

Although the OSS was not an Army organization, many Army personnel were assigned to the OSS and later used their experiences to influence the forming of Special Forces.

During the Korean War, individuals such as former Philippine guerrilla commanders Col. Wendell Fertig and Lt. Col. Russell W. Volckmann used their wartime experience to formulate the doctrine of unconventional warfare that became the cornerstone of the Special Forces.

In 1951, Major General Robert A. McClure chose former OSS member Colonel Aaron Bank as Operations Branch Chief of the Special Operations Division of the Psychological Warfare Staff (OCPW) in the Pentagon.

In June 1952, the 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) was formed under Col. Aaron Bank, soon after the establishment of the Psychological Warfare School, which ultimately became today's John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Centre and School.[citation needed] The 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne) was split, with the cadre that kept the designation 10th SFG deployed to Bad Tölz, Germany, in September 1953.

The remaining cadre at Fort Bragg formed the 77th Special Forces Group, which in May

1960 was reorganized and designated as today's 7th Special Forces Group.

Since their establishment in 1952, Special Forces soldiers have operated in Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos, North Vietnam, Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Colombia, Panama, Haiti, Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo, 1st Gulf War, Afghanistan, Iraq, the Philippines, Syria, Yemen, Niger and, in an FID role, East Africa.

The Special Forces branch was established as a basic branch of the United States Army on 9 April 1987 by Department of the Army General Order No. 35.

Special Forces Preparation and Conditioning (SFPC) 2 Weeks 4 Days

This 19-day performance-oriented course includes physical conditioning, map reading and land navigation instruction; land-navigation practical exercises, and common-task training.

The goal is to prepare and condition 18X and REP-63 (National Guard) soldiers to attend Special Forces Assessment and Selection Course and the follow-on Special Forces Qualification Course.

Special Forces Assessment and Selection (SFAS)

A version of SFAS was introduced as a selection mechanism in the mid-1980s by the Commanding General of the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Centre and School at the time, Brigadier General James Guest.

Soldiers have two ways to volunteer to attend SFAS:

- As an existing soldier in the US Army with the Enlisted rank of E-3 (Private First Class) or higher, and for Officers the rank of O-2 (1st Lieutenant) promotable to O-3 (Captain), or existing O-3s.

- Initial Accession or IA, where an individual who has no prior military service or who separated from military service first attends Infantry One Station Unit Training (OSUT, the combination of Basic Combat Training and Advanced Individual Training), Airborne School, and a preparation course to prepare for SFAS. This program is commonly referred to as the "X-Ray Program", derived from "18X". The candidates in this program are known as "X-Rays". Active Duty and National Guard components offer Special Forces Initial Accession programs. The Active Duty program is referred to as the "18X Program" because of the Initial Entry Code on the assignment orders.

Training at SFAS

The first phase of the Special Forces Qualification Course is Special Forces Assessment and Selection (SFAS), consisting of twenty-four days of training at Camp Mackall.

SFAS includes numerous long-distance land navigation courses. All land navigation courses are conducted day and night under heavy loads of equipment, in varied weather conditions, and in rough hilly terrain.

Land navigation work is done

individually with no assistance from instructors or fellow students, and is accomplished within a time limit. Each land navigation course has its maximum time limit reduced as course moves along, and are upwards of 19 km each.

Instructors evaluate candidates by using obstacle course runs, team events including moving heavy loads such as telephone poles and old Jeep trucks through sand as a 12-man team, the Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT), a swim assessment, and numerous psychological exams such as IQ tests and the Defence Language Aptitude Battery (DLAB) test.

The final event is a road march of up to 51 km) known as "the Trek" or Long Range Individual Movement (LRIM).

Selection outcomes:

- Quitters are Voluntarily Withdrawn (VW) by the course cadre, and are generally designated NTR or Not-to-Return. This generally ends any opportunity to become a Special Forces soldier. Active Duty military candidates will be returned to their previous units, and IA 18X candidates will be re-trained into a new MOS based upon the needs of the Army.
- Medically dropped (and not subsequently medically discharged) are often permitted to "re-cycle", and attempt the course as soon as they are able.
- Candidates completing the course but who are "Boarded" and not selected ("Non-Select") are gener-

ally given the opportunity to attend selection again in twelve or twenty-four months.

After selection at SFAS, all Active Duty enlisted and IA 18X candidates will be briefed on:

- The five Special Forces Active Duty Groups
- The four Special Forces Military Occupational Specialties (MOS) initially open to them
- The languages spoken in each Special Forces Group.

Candidates complete a “wish list”. Enlisted candidates rank the available MOS (18B, 18C, 18D, 18E) in order of preference. Officer candidates will attend the 18A course.

Both enlisted and officer candidates list in order of preference the SF Groups in which they prefer to serve (1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th, 10th) and the languages in which they prefer to be trained.

Language selection is dependent on the Defence Language Aptitude Battery (DLAB) test scores of the candidate, as well as the SF Group to which they are assigned.

Different SF Groups focus on different areas of responsibility (AOR), which require different languages. A board assigns each enlisted and officer candidate their MOS, Group placement, and language.

The MOS, Group, and language a selected candidate is assigned is not guaranteed and is contingent upon the needs of the Special Forces community. Generally, 80% of selected candidates are awarded their primary choices.

Successful Active Duty candidates usually return to their previous units to await a slot in the Special Forces Qualification Course. Because an Initial Accession (IA) 18X candidate lacks a previous unit, they will normally enter the Q Course immediately.

All SF trainees must complete the United States Army Airborne School before beginning Phase 2 of the Q-Course.

Course Orientation and History: Phase I (7 weeks)

Course Description: Phase 1 of the SFQC is the SF Orientation Course, a seven-week introduction to SF. Dubbed the Orientation and History module, the course falls under the auspices of the 4th Battalion, 1st Special Warfare Training Group (Airborne). The course is separated into six modules:

Module A – Introduction to Unconventional Warfare

This module exposes the students to the overall learning objectives and outcomes of the SFQC, trains them in tactical guerrilla warfare, and provides them the operational and strategic context under which they will train for the remainder of the SFQC.

Under the supervision of the cadre in Robin Sage and mentorship of the “G” chiefs, the students are expected to complete this phase with a firm understanding of what will be expected of them throughout the remainder of the SFQC and the importance of unconventional warfare in the Special Forces mission.

Module B – Introduction to Special Forces



DE OPPRESSO LIBER: In the United States Army Special Forces, the motto is traditionally believed to mean “to free from oppression” or “to liberate the oppressed” in Latin

This module is intended to provide the soldiers an understanding of Special Forces, their history, organization, attributes, and core tasks relating to their mission.

Lessons include SFOD-A and SFOD-B numbering convention, command and control architecture, joint special-operations area, duties and responsibilities of each MOS, SF planning and organization, core mission and tasks, SOF physical fitness and nutrition.

The training prepares potential Special Forces soldiers for what is expected of them and the standards they must acquire to graduate the SFQC and be members of the Army Special Forces.

Module C – Airborne Operations and Refresher

This module allows soldiers to maintain their jump proficiency and prepare for the training they will encounter throughout the SFQC.

Module D – Special Forces Planning

This module provides the sol-



POLE PT: Students on selection get to grips with Pole PT. Does this bring back memories?

diers an understanding of the Special Forces Mission Planning process. The soldiers are given classes on the Military Decision Making Process followed by a practical exercise that reinforces the training.

Module E – Operational Culture and Regional Analysis

This instructional module gives students a foundation of the battle space including: operational culture and a systems’ analysis of an area.

The lessons include a view of that soldier’s cultural lenses, leading to an understanding of the perspective of others as well as the use of PMESII-PT system of regional analysis to deduce the capabilities, people and environment of a given area.

The Pineland Area Study will be used as the basis for analysis allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the training environment.

The acronym PMESII-PT refers to a form of environmental analysis to examine the aspects of political, military, economic,

social, information, infrastructure, physical environment, and time aspects of the military theatre.

Language and Culture: Phase II (18–25 weeks)

Phase 2 of the SFQC focuses on language and culture. During Phase 2, soldiers receive basic special-operations language training in the language assigned to them at the completion of Special Forces Assessment and Selection.

Languages are divided into four categories based on their degree of difficulty for native speakers of English. Soldiers assigned a Category I or II language will be enrolled in an eighteen-week language program, while soldiers assigned a Category III or IV language attend twenty-four weeks of language training.

Students receive instruction in three basic language skills: speaking, participatory listening, and reading (limited). An overview of physical[clarification needed] and social systems,

economics, politics and security, infrastructure, technology, culture, and regional studies forms the cultural component.

Language instruction focuses on functional application geared toward mission-related tasks, enhanced rapport building techniques, cultural mitigation strategies, interpreting, and control of interpreter methods. Also during Phase 2, a progressive physical training program prepares for Phase 3.

To complete Phase 2, soldiers achieve a minimum of 1/1 Listening and Speaking as measured by the two-skill Oral Proficiency Interview.

Small Unit Tactics & SERE: Phase III (13 weeks)

Small Unit Tactics is the third phase in the qualification course. The 13-week program provides soldiers in the SFQC the apprentice-level tactical combat skills required to successfully operate on an SF OD-A.

Students master these tactical skills: advanced marksmanship; small-unit tactics; SF common tasks; urban operations; mission analysis; advanced special operations level 1; sensitive-site exploitation; military-decision-making process.

At the end of Phase 3, soldiers enrol in SERE (Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape) Level C for training in support of the Code of Conduct.

Training includes survival field craft skills, techniques of evasion, resistance to exploitation, and resolution skills in all types of environments. Students participate in a survival

and evasion field-training exercise and in a resistance-training laboratory.

The course spans three weeks with three phases of instruction. The first phase lasts approximately ten days of academic instruction on the Code of Conduct and SERE techniques incorporating classroom training and hands-on field craft.

The second phase is a five-day field training exercise for students to practice their survival and evasion skills by procuring food and water, constructing evasion fires and shelters, and evading tracker dogs and aggressor forces over long distances.

The final phase takes place in the resistance-training laboratory (RTL) - students are tested on their individual and collective abilities to resist interrogation and exploitation, and properly apply the six articles of the Code of Conduct in a realistic captivity scenario.

MOS Training Phase IV (14–50 weeks)

The purpose of this phase is to train selected soldiers in the critical MOS, skill level tasks, and competencies required to perform the duties of a member of an SF ODA.

Candidates must have passed the SF Orientation Course, Language, SUT, and SERE before entering Phase IV training. Any variation from these prerequisites requires a waiver from the Commanding General, SWCS.

18A – Special Forces Detachment Officer

This phase is intended to train selected officers in the critical



KEEP GOING: A Canadian soldier participates in a timed march alongside US Army soldiers during the Special Forces Qualification Course. The John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center accepts students from allied nations.

branch tasks and competencies required to perform the duties of a detachment commander of a Special Forces ODA.

The course focuses on the operational spectrum of problem analysis and resolution design associated with SF core missions across the elements of national power spectrum. Duties and functional-area familiarization of the 18 series MOSs: communications, engineer, medical, weapons, intelligence; the military decision-making process; special-operations mission planning; adaptive thinking and leadership; special reconnaissance; direct action; unconventional warfare; foreign internal defense; counterinsurgency operations; military operations in urban terrain; interagency operations; warrior skills; Advanced Special Operations skills; OPFUND management; elements of national

power considerations; culture; in-depth core mission analysis; information operations, planning and conduct of ODA training; and three field-training exercises.

The Special Forces operational detachment commander is a captain with the 18A MOS award. This captain commands the detachment, and is responsible for everything the detachment does or fails to do.

The commander may command or advise an indigenous battalion combat force. The commander regularly meets abroad with the country team to include ambassadors, foreign ministers of defence, and foreign presidents.

The captain ensures their detachment is trained for combat anytime, anywhere, and in any environment. The commander ensures they and all their detachment members are cross-



HALO: Two instructors critique a Special Forces soldier at a HALO jump course at the Yuma Proving Grounds.

trained on all assigned equipment and duties.

18B – Weapons Sergeant

Weapons sergeants have a working knowledge with weapons systems found throughout the world.

They gain extensive knowledge about various types of small arms, submachine guns, machine guns, grenade launchers, forward-observer procedures, anti-tank missiles, and directing indirect-fire weapons (mortars and artillery).

They learn the capabilities and characteristics of U.S. and foreign air defence and anti-tank weapons systems, tactical training, and range fire as well as how to teach marksmanship and the employment of weapons to others.

Weapons sergeants employ conventional and unconventional tactics and techniques as tactical mission leaders. They can recruit, organize, train, and advise/command indigenous combat forces up to company size.

Course instruction includes direct- and indirect-fire systems and procedures: mortars, light/heavy weapons, sniper systems, anti-armour systems, forward observer and fire direction centre procedures, close air support; Warrior skills; combat-ives; plan and conduct training; field training exercise.

18C – Engineer Sergeant

Engineer Sergeants are experts in employing offensive and defensive combat engineer capabilities, including demolitions, landmines, explosives, and improvised munitions, construction, home-made explosives, reconnaissance, and target analysis.

Special Forces engineers know and understand advanced demolition skills for destroying targets with non-electric and electric firing systems, with U.S., foreign, and civilian demolition components.

Engineer sergeants plan, supervise, lead, perform, and instruct all aspects of combat engineering, demolition opera-

tions, and theatre-of operations construction engineering in either English or their target language. They can recruit, organize, train, and advise/command indigenous combat forces up to company size.

The course covers: basic military construction techniques and procedures; basic and intermediate demolitions; Special Forces Tactical Facilities, UXO/IED; target analysis/interdiction and mission planning; Warrior skills; combat-ives; plan and conduct training; and field-training exercises.

18D – Medical Sergeant

Medical sergeants specialize in trauma management, infectious diseases, cardiac life support, and surgical procedures, with a basic understanding of veterinary and dental medicine. General healthcare and emergency healthcare are stressed in training.

Medical sergeants provide emergency, routine, and long-term medical care for detachment members and associated allied members and host-nation personnel.

They establish field medical facilities to support unconventional-warfare operations. They provide veterinary care. They prepare the medical portion of area studies, briefbacks, and operation plans and orders.

Soldiers selected for MOS 18D attend 250 days of advanced medical training. Additionally, they spend two months on a trauma rotation in hospital emergency rooms. 18D trainees receive instruction involving lifelike human simulation models and Hollywood-type

make-up effects worn by fellow students to conduct training, within safe limits guided by cadre, to simulate potential casualties they may receive and treat while on the modern battlefield or in a potential clinical environment.

The medical-training phase includes a nationally accredited emergency medical technician paramedic program. They can recruit, organize, train, and advise or command indigenous combat forces up to company size.

18E – Communications Sergeant

The Special Forces communications sergeant learns U.S. communication systems as well as those systems globally. He incorporates this information and technology into his communications planning, and teaches it to the other members of his ODA.

Communications sergeants have a thorough grounding in communication basics, communications procedures, computer technology; assembly, and systems applications.

They understand communication theory - install, operate, and maintain radio systems across all bands. They are able to make communications in voice to data, and to read voice and data radio nets by using computer systems and networks.

Communications sergeants are experts in sending and receiving messages to link the SFODA with its command and control elements. They are familiar with antenna theory, radio wave propagation, and how

to teach it to others.

Communications sergeants prepare the communications portion of area studies, briefbacks, and operation plans and orders. They can recruit, organize, train, and advise/command indigenous combat forces up to company size.

The course provides training in computer applications, satellite radios, and satellite and antenna theory, and radio wave propagation. Soldiers learn to construct field-expedient antennas, employing communications procedures and techniques, and communicate throughout the HF, VHF, and UHF spectrums, culminating with a field training exercise.

The course develops a world-class SF Communicator capable of employing, accessing, and familiar with SF, joint, and inter-agency communications.

UW CULEX (Robin Sage): Phase V (4 weeks)

Since 1974, Robin Sage, the culmination exercise for the SFQC, has been the litmus test for soldiers striving to earn the coveted Green Beret. (Prior to 1974, similar exercises were held under the name Devil's Arrow, Swift Strike, and Guerrilla USA.)

During Robin Sage, held across 15 rural North Carolina counties, soldiers put all of the skills they learned throughout the SFQC to the test in an unconventional-warfare training exercise.

The exercise, broken into two phases, puts students on their first SFODA. The SFODA is trained, advised, and mentored throughout the exercise - from



HIT SONG: Staff Sergeant Barry Sadler, a Green Beret, had a hit song with 'Ballad Of The Green Berets'. The song reached Number One in a number of countries, including South Africa. Click on the link above to listen to the song.

mission receipt through planning and infiltration.

During the first week, the students are taught the necessary skills to survive and succeed in a UW environment using the small group instruction teaching method. The remaining three weeks focus on their planning and application during Robin Sage.

The students are placed into an environment of political instability characterized by armed conflict to force soldiers to exercise individual and collective problem-solving. A key to the success of the Robin Sage training is its real-world feel by the use of guerrilla forces.

The SFODA must assess the combat effectiveness of the G-forces, then trains them in basic individual tasks from each of the MOSs as well as collective tasks in basic small-unit tactics, while remaining responsive to asymmetrical challenges.

Just as language plays a key



ONE STEP AT A TIME: Practicing IED detection and clearing at the Hawthorne Army Depot.

role in all other phases of the pipeline, language skills will be put to the test during Robin Sage. During this training, the SFODA must demonstrate their knowledge of UW doctrine and operational techniques.

On the last day of isolation, the detachment presents their plan to the battalion command and staff. This plan explains the ways the commander intends to execute the mission.

The next day, the students make an airborne infiltration into the fictitious country of "Pineland". They contact guerrilla forces to initiate Robin Sage. Students accomplish their task of training, advising, and assisting the guerrillas.

The training educates the guerrillas in various specialties, including weapons, communications, medical, and demolitions. The training is designed to enable the guerrillas to begin liberating their country from oppression.

It is the last portion of the Special Forces Qualification Course before they receive their

"Green Berets".

Robin Sage involves approximately 100 Special Forces students, 100 counter-insurgent personnel (OPFOR), 200 guerrilla personnel, 40 auxiliary personnel, and 50 cadre.

The local communities of North Carolina also participate in the exercise by role-playing as citizens of Pineland. The exercise is conducted in approximately 50,000 square miles (130,000 km²) of North Carolina. Many of the OPFOR and guerrilla personnel are North Carolina residents and are paid for their participation.

The role of the guerrilla chief, "G-chief", is sometimes played by a retired Green Beret. During the summer Robin Sage exercises, Army ROTC cadets from The Citadel and cadets from the United States Military Academy act as guerrilla fighters.

Phase VI (1 Week): Graduation

Phase 6 is the final phase and consists of one week of out pro-

cessing, the Regimental First Formation where students don their green berets for the first time, and the graduation ceremony.

Further training

After successfully completing the Special Forces Qualification Course, Special Forces soldiers are then eligible for many advanced skills courses.

These include, but are not limited to, the Military Free Fall Parachutist Course (MFF) (this is now a requirement for all members of the Special Forces), the Combat Diver Qualification Course and the Special Forces Sniper Course (formerly known as the Special Operations Target Interdiction Course).

All Special Forces soldiers conduct real world, non-combat operations in order to maintain their skills. Special Forces Medical Sergeants (18D) often work in both military and civilian Emergency Rooms in between deployments.

Additionally, because one of the Special Forces soldier's primary mission is the instruction of other forces, they participate extensively in special operations training courses offered by other services and allied nations throughout their careers.



Ukraine: Is Russia losing?

Russia's military invasion of Ukraine is now more than a month old. It is a war that has already cost thousands of lives. Yet what exactly is the situation in Ukraine, and is Russia actually in danger of losing this war? By **Matt O'Brien**, **Ryan Murphy**, and **Matt Tennyson**.

In the February 2022 edition of Military Despatches, we made a prediction that Russia could launch a military invasion of Ukraine.

Twenty-four days after the article was published, our prediction became fact - Russia invaded Ukraine.

We were also bold enough to predict a possible conclusion of this invasion.

"On paper the Russians would seem to be obvious victors. They have overwhelming superiority

in manpower, armour, aircraft and helicopters. Their equipment is also far more modern than that of the Ukraine.

The Russian air power should easily see them achieving air superiority early in the war, thus putting Ukraine at a severe disadvantage.

Do not for one minute underestimate the Ukraine forces. They will make the Russians pay for every inch of ground and victory for the Russians could prove very costly."

Well we got the third part of that right. Russia has been made to pay for every inch of ground taken.

Yet we must admit that we were ever so wrong about the first two parts of that prediction.

First of all, the part of Russia

seeming to be the obvious victors.

And secondly, the bit about Russia quickly achieving air superiority.

At present, both of those predictions are looking a bit shaky. Far from being the obvious victors, many military analysts and experts are now questioning whether Russia could actually end up losing the war.

One thing, however, is certain - Russia has to date failed to gain air superiority. Truth be told, Russia has not achieved any of its main

military objectives since the start of the invasion.

The Russian invasion has lost its impetus and a series of setbacks has forced the Kremlin to reorganize its forces, raising serious questions about its military power.

Russian President Vladimir Putin's stated goals at the time were to prevent Ukraine from joining NATO, to demilitarize and to "de-Nazify" the neighbouring country.

A little over a month later, the Kremlin feels that the goals set out for phase one are being fulfilled "successfully." A new phase is allegedly about to begin, focusing on "liberating" the

Donbas region in south-eastern Ukraine.

But the facts, which include a series of setbacks leading to a significant withdrawal and reorganization of Russian troops, do not support this version of events. So what exactly is going on?

The Russian offensive has focused from the beginning on Ukraine's main cities, which are the centres of power.

In the first 24 hours of the invasion, Russia launched around 100 missiles against targets throughout Ukrainian territory.

Russia also began its ground invasion right away and along multiple axes: towards Kyiv, towards Kharkiv, from Crimea to the Donbas and towards Odessa.

Russia has been unable to capture Ukraine's main cities -



the capital Kyiv, Kharkiv, and Mykolaiv. Ukrainian forces are regaining ground in several parts of the country.

Russian troops are withdrawing from their positions on the northern front, and most particularly from their positions around Kyiv.

Analysts with the Institute for the Study of War (ISW) believe that Russian forces have abandoned their efforts to capture Kharkiv, the second-largest city in Ukraine and the target of an intense offensive since the beginning of the invasion.

Russian forces are still shelling the city, but seem to have given up on their attempts to encircle and control it.

Let's take a look at some of the factors that are in play. This will include the reasons for Russia's invasion; What has gone wrong and why; and possible outcomes of the war.

Why did Russia invade?

Throughout his reign, Vladimir Putin has been driven by a deep-seated resentment of Russia's post-Soviet decline and a burning desire to revive the country's superpower status.

Far from wishing to re-establish the USSR, he embraces traditional Russian nationalism and dreams of recreating the autocratic empire of the Czars.

Putin sees the collapse of the Soviet Union as "the demise of historical Russia" and has frequently complained that the post-Soviet settlement cut millions of Russians off from their motherland while robbing Russia of its rightful heartlands.

This sense of grievance has fuelled Putin's obsession with



FACE OFF: Russian President Vladimir Putin (left) and Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy.

Ukraine, a country whose entire existence has come to represent the alleged injustice of the post-1991 world order.

Putin is not the first Russian ruler to deny Ukraine's right to exist. On the contrary, Ukraine denial is a common thread running through Russian history that stretches back hundreds of years and remains widespread in today's Russia.

However, few have ever embraced this doctrine of denial as fervently as Putin, who has made clear that ending Ukrainian independence is a sacred mission which will define his place in history.

The current war is merely the latest and most dramatic stage in this long-term campaign. Putin's first bid to end Ukrainian independence came in 2004 and saw him personally visit Kyiv on the eve of the country's presidential election to campaign for the pro-Kremlin candidate.

This hubristic intervention backfired disastrously, enraging millions of otherwise apolitical Ukrainians and helping to spark mass pro-democracy protests that came to be known as the Orange Revolution.

Ukraine's embrace of democracy and historic turn towards the West in the years following the Orange Revolution infuriated Putin and further convinced him of the need to reassert Russian control over the country.

Haunted by the people power uprisings that swept through Central Europe in the late 1980s and triggered the disintegration of the Soviet Empire, he saw Ukraine's democratic awakening as a Western plot and a direct threat to his own authoritarian regime.

Putin has made no secret of his Ukraine obsession. Indeed, he has repeatedly sought to explain why he believes Ukrainian statehood is both an accident and a crime.

In a 7,000-word July 2021 essay entitled "On the Historical Unity of Russians and Ukrainians," Putin argued that Ukrainians were in fact Russians and dismissed the entire notion of a separate Ukrainian identity.

"I am confident that true sovereignty of Ukraine is possible only in partnership with Russia," he concluded.

In a series of lengthy anti-Ukrainian diatribes delivered

on the eve of the current war, Putin went even further, condemning the entire country as an illegitimate "Anti-Russia" that could no longer be tolerated.

When Putin made the decision to invade Ukraine, he had three main objectives - to remove Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy from power, to install a pro-Kremlin government in power, and to stop Ukraine from becoming a member of NATO.

What has gone wrong, and why?

When Russia invaded Ukraine, they did so on a large scale.

A shock force of between 150,000 and 190,000 Russian troops invaded Ukraine, organized into so-called BTG (Battalion Tactical Groups), the key operating unit of the Russian army.

These are formations equipped with about 50 armoured vehicles, designed to act with a high degree of autonomy and with great firepower.

The United States estimates that Russia has deployed around 100 BTGs in Ukraine, which according to the Pentagon represents 75% of the total number of units at the Kremlin's disposal.

Each BTG is modular and includes several companies with armoured vehicles and artillery batteries. A BTG will normally consist of the following elements.

Tanks

- One company of 10 tanks - T-80, T-72, T-90 or T-64.

Troop transport

- One company of 10 caterpillar-tread vehicles - BMP-1, BMP-2 or BMP-3.

- One or two companies of 10 troop transport vehicles - BTR-60, BTR-70 or BTR-80.
- Each vehicle carries seven soldiers - Approximately 210 soldiers.

Artillery

- Two or three batteries of six Mobile Howitzer self-propelled artillery systems - Ms-ta-SM2.
- One battery of six rocket launchers - MLRS B M-21, BM-27, B17 or TOS-1A.
- One or two anti-aircraft batteries - 2K22M1 Tunguska, or a mobile battery of surface-to-air missile system - 9K33 Osa.

Support and logistics

- Support vehicles such as trucks to transport troops, engineering equipment, radar, control systems, mortars, etc. - BREM-1.

There is no doubt that these are powerful military units. But they have been slowed down by numerous problems, including their own mistakes and the successes of the Ukrainian defence.

In tactical terms, Russia's decision to advance by road straight towards its main urban targets made troop movements highly predictable and exposed them to ambush.

Failures in equipment maintenance and logistics, and an often inadequate infantry protection of the flanks, aggravated their weakness.

Lessons from history

Given their numerical superiority, the Russia was bound to be able to make some inroads into Ukrainian territory.

Russia had seized control of notable chunks of Ukrainian territory by 9 March - especially in the south, where it controls the cities of Melitopol and Kherson.

But these advances were not necessarily the sole result of Russian battlefield supremacy.

Ukraine made the tactical decision to trade "space for time", to withdraw strategically rather than fight for every inch of Ukrainian land, fighting the Russians on the territory and at the time of their choosing.

It is the same tactic that the Russians used against the Nazi invaders in 1941. It is a lesson that Russia seems to have forgotten.

As the fighting continued, the nature of the Ukrainian choice became clearer. Instead of getting into pitched large-scale battles with Russians on open terrain, where Russia's numerical advantages would prove decisive, the Ukrainians instead decided to engage in a series of



smaller-scale clashes.

Ukrainian forces have bogged down Russian units in towns and smaller cities; street-to-street combat favours defenders who can use their superior knowledge of the city's geography to hide and conduct ambushes.

They have attacked isolated and exposed Russian units traveling on open roads, which make for easy targets. They have repeatedly raided poorly protected supply lines with an eye toward denying Russians necessary materials like fuel.

Another important lesson from history is that the further you advance, the longer your supply lines become.

It was a lesson that Napoleon learnt the hard way back in 1812 when he invaded Russia. Hitler was another that was taught this lesson when he invaded Russia in 1941.

Troops needed to be resupplied with both ammunition and food, equipment needs to be maintained or replaced, and casualties need to be evacuated.

Vehicles need fuel to continue any advance, they need to be maintained or repaired, injured crew members need to be replaced, and they need to be resupplied with ammunition.

To achieve any of the above there needs to be an unbroken supply line. And this is where the problem comes in. The longer the supply line, the easier it is to cut off.

It is something that Ukraine has been doing with great effect. The Internet is filled with images of Russian armoured vehicles parked on Ukrainian roads, seemingly out of fuel and unable to advance any further.



HEAVY LOSSES: To date the Russians have suffered heavy losses in both men and equipment.

Unacceptable losses

Russian casualties are taking their toll on the invasion. A recent US intelligence assessment found that Russia had lost over 10 percent of its initial invasion force due to a combination of factors like battlefield deaths, injuries, capture, illness, and desertion.

While it is difficult, if not impossible, to determine the actual casualty numbers, what is a fact is that the Russians have suffered heavy losses.

According to Ukraine, they have killed more than 19,000 Russians since the invasion began. The official line from Russia's defence ministry was that 498 of their troops had been killed.

According to Western intelligence sources the conservative estimate of Russian troops killed in action is more than 7,000.

What also needs to be taken into consideration is that these losses have been over a period of six weeks. This is greater than the number of American troops killed over 20 years in Iraq and

Afghanistan combined.

According to Pentagon officials, a 10 percent casualty rate, including dead and wounded, for a single unit renders it unable to carry out combat-related tasks.

With more than 150,000 Russian troops now involved in the war in Ukraine, Russian casualties, when including the estimated 14,000 to 21,000 injured, are near that level.

The war has also taken a heavy toll on Russian vehicles and equipment. Oryx, a military and intelligence blog which keeps a count of Russia's military losses in Ukraine based on photos from the war zone, says the Russian military has lost more than 2,000 armoured vehicles and 460 tanks.

Some of those tanks were abandoned because they ran out of fuel. That's a logistical failure. Some got stuck in the spring-time mud, because the high command invaded at the wrong time of year.

Many tanks have been abandoned because of bad driving.

Some have been driven off bridges. Others have been driven into ditches so that the tracks have come off. The ability of the troops to use their equipment has been lacking.

Moreover, the Ukrainian government itself has been issuing instructions about how to destroy Russian tanks, which is being used by civilians who are taking part in the war.

According to an Oryx report, half of the tanks that Russia lost were not destroyed or damaged by the enemy but captured or abandoned.

A major part of the success came due to the weapons provided by the western countries, including the United States.

The US supplied Ukraine with 2,000 anti-tank Javelin missiles when the conflict began and later sent 2,000 more.

The lightweight but lethal weapon has allowed the soldiers in Ukraine to inflict some serious damage to Russian tanks and artillery.

The missile automatically guides itself to the target after launch ("fire and forget" system), allowing the gunner to take cover and avoid counter-fire, or load a new missile.

It also has a gentler start, making it difficult for the enemy to see where it was launched from.

The Javelins explode at the top of the tank, where the armour is believed to be the weakest.

Another thing that should be concerning the Russians is the number of senior officers, including generals, that have been killed.

At least 16 senior Russian commanders have been killed in the field, including five named

colonels and four lieutenant colonels.

Seven Russian generals are believed to have been killed including three army commanders: Andrey Kolesnikov, of the 29th Combined Arms Army, Andrey Mordvichev, leading the 8th Army, and Yakov Rezantsev, general of Russia's 49th Combined Arms Army.

Many Russian generals are talking on unsecured phones and radios. In at least one instance the Ukrainians intercepted a general's call, geolocated it, and attacked his location, killing him and his staff.

While we were writing this article the Russian missile cruiser Moskva, Russia's flagship in its Black Sea fleet, sank as it was being towed to port in stormy weather.

The Russians claim that there was an explosion and fire aboard the Moskva and the ship was evacuated. Yet according to Ukraine, the Moskva was hit with a Ukrainian-made Neptune anti-ship missile.

Whatever the actual cause, it was another huge blow to the Russians.

No air superiority

One question that is on the lips of many defence analysts is, "Is the Russian Air Force actually capable of complex air operations?"

One of the greatest surprises from the initial phase of the Russian invasion of Ukraine has been the inability of the Russian Aerospace Forces (VKS) fighter and fighter-bomber fleets to establish air superiority, or to deploy significant combat power in support of the under-perform-

ing Russian ground forces.

An initial analysis of the possible reasons for this identified potential Russian difficulties with conducting SEAD (Suppression of Enemy Air Defence) missions against ground-based surface-to-air missile (SAM) batteries, a lack of precision-guided munitions and limited numbers of pilots with the requisite expertise to conduct precise strikes in support of initial ground operations due to low average VKS flying hours.

Russian fast jets have conducted only limited sorties in Ukrainian airspace, in singles or pairs, always at low altitudes and mostly at night to minimise losses from Ukrainian man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS) and ground fire.

A number of reasons have been forwarded as to why the VKS has been unable to achieve air superiority over Ukraine.

One potential argument is that the VKS fighter fleets are being held in reserve, potentially as a deterrent against direct intervention by NATO forces.

This is unlikely to be the case. If the VKS is capable of large-scale combat operations to rapidly establish air superiority over Ukraine, by not doing so, it is, in fact, weakening its potential deterrent value against NATO forces rather than preserving it.

The failure of the much-feared Russian Army to rapidly overwhelm the much smaller and poorly positioned Ukrainian forces, and its heavy losses of modern vehicles and personnel, have already seriously damaged international perceptions of Russia's conventional military power.

From a NATO deterrence standpoint, the Russian General Staff and the Kremlin have every incentive to employ their air power to maximum effect to re-establish some of this lost credibility.

Another argument has been that due to the relatively low proportion of the VKS fixed-wing fleet that can effectively employ precision-guided munitions, large-scale strikes with unguided bombs and rockets were being avoided due to a desire to avoid damaging critical infrastructure which Russia hopes to conquer and use, or from a desire to minimise Ukrainian civilian casualties.

This was a potentially valid assumption in the initial days of the invasion, when the Russian leadership was planning on a quick military victory.

However, as this possibility has rapidly faded and Russian forces have settled into a pattern of heavy artillery and cruise missile bombardments against multiple encircled cities – most notably Kharkiv and Mariupol – this theory no longer explains the lack of large-scale VKS strikes.

Another theory is that Russian commanders are less willing to risk suffering heavy losses to their expensive and prestigious fast jets, and so have held back the VKS due to low risk tolerance. This also does not make sense.

Russian ground forces have lost hundreds of modern tanks, armoured personnel carriers, short- and medium-range air-defence systems and thousands of troops including a disproportionate number of elite paratroopers



UNDER PERFORMING: With modern aircraft such as the Sukhoi Su-35S air-superiority fighter, the VKS should have been able to achieve air superiority with relative ease.

(VDV) and special forces in a week.

The Russian economy is being rapidly choked by crippling sanctions, and the Russian leadership has burned its carefully developed influence networks and alliances throughout Europe and the wider world.

In short, the Kremlin is risking everything – holding back the air force to avoid losses does not make sense in this context.

Russia has every incentive to establish air superiority, and on paper should be more than capable of doing so if it commits to combat operations in large, mixed formations to suppress and hunt down Ukrainian fighters and SAM systems.

Instead, the VKS continues to only operate in very small numbers and at low level to minimise the threat from the Ukrainian SAMs.

Down low, their situational awareness and combat effectiveness is limited, and they are well within range of the MANPADS such as Iгла and Stinger which Ukrainian forces already possess.

The numbers of MANPADS are also increasing, as numerous Western countries send supplies to beleaguered Ukrainian forces. To avoid additional losses to MANPADS, sorties continue to be primarily flown at night, which further limits the effectiveness of their mostly unguided air-to-ground weapons.

The question of morale

Many people still do not realise just how important morale is in the military. And nowhere is morale more important than on the battlefield.

By all accounts, morale in the Russian military is not that good.

The truth is that Russian morale was incredibly low even before the war broke out.

Many of the Russian soldiers are conscripts that have to serve three years in the military. One of the big problems with new recruits is what is known as the ‘Dedovchina System’.

Dedovchina is a Russian word meaning ‘grandfather’.

These are troops that have served for more than a year, similar to the SADF’s ‘Ou manne’.

It is common for them to bully, torture or even rape new conscripts. More often than not senior officers turn a blind-eye to this type of treatment.

Deaths from murder, suicide, starvation, medical negligence and normally avoidable diseases are also common among Russian conscripts.

This is exacerbated by other factors such as ethnic divisions, corruption and so on. This has led to high rates of abandoned or captured equipment, reports of sabotaged equipment, and large numbers of soldiers deserting, or simply camping out in the forest in an attempt to avoid combat.

Putin kept the Russian invasion plan a secret from everyone but his inner circle; before the invasion, Russian diplomats and propaganda outlets were mocking the West for suggesting it might happen.

The result is a Russian force that has little sense of what they’re fighting for or why, waging war against a country with which they have religious, ethnic, historical, and potentially even familial ties. That’s a blueprint for low morale.

The Ukrainians, by contrast, reportedly have high morale at present. They are defending their families, their homes and the country from what they see as an unprovoked invasion.

They have a charismatic leader, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who has made a personal stand in Kyiv.

High morale empowers units to take risks, adopt unpredictable tactics, and to endure hardships even when outnumbered.

The Ukrainian morale advantage is making a difference

on the battlefield and allowing them to impose significant casualties on Russian forces.

Possible outcomes of the war

War is unpredictable. Often sides that cannot lose do just that – lose the war. And those sides that don’t stand a chance end up surprising everyone – even themselves.

Any number of things, ranging from Russian reinforcements to greater deployment of its air force to the fall of besieged Mariupol, could give the Russian offensive new life.

But even if Russia begins to perform better on the battlefield, its initial objectives are looking increasingly out of reach. The inability to swiftly topple Kyiv, together with the strong resistance and rising nationalist sentiment among Ukrainians, makes it hard to imagine Russia successfully installing its own government in Kyiv.

This does not mean the Russian campaign will prove to be a total failure. Depending on how the rest of the military campaign goes, it is possible to imagine them extracting significant political concessions from Zelenskyy in ongoing peace negotiations.

By launching the invasion of Ukraine, Putin may have already crossed a line from which there is no going back. At this stage he still has popular support from most of the Russian population.

Putin’s personal attacks on Ukraine have been accompanied by years of relentless Kremlin propaganda designed to dehumanize Ukrainians. Since 2014, Russian TV audiences have been

spoon-fed a daily diet of grotesque lies depicting Ukrainians as the modern-day successors to Hitler’s Nazis.

This poisonous propaganda has paved the way for the war crimes which are now taking place in Ukraine. The Russian public has been primed to regard Ukraine as an intrinsic part of Russia and encouraged to view any Ukrainians who disagree as traitors or Nazis. The entire notion of Ukrainian identity has been demonized and equated with the most notorious criminals of world history.

The crimes against humanity witnessed during the first month of Russia’s invasion are just the beginning. By delegitimizing the Ukrainian state and dehumanizing Ukrainians, Putin has set the stage for a war of annihilation. Thousands of civilians have already been slaughtered in the carpet bombing of Ukrainian towns and cities. Residential buildings, schools, hospitals, and makeshift bomb shelters have all been deliberately targeted in what appears to be a Russian campaign to maximize civilian casualties.

As the war drags on, atrocities will only escalate. Russian troops groomed to view Ukrainians as less than human and radicalised by the deaths of comrades will become less and less inclined to differentiate between civilians and enemy combatants, while Ukraine’s refusal to surrender and the country’s continued resistance will be used to justify savage reprisals. All of the necessary elements are in place for war crimes comparable to the worst excesses of the totalitarian twentieth century.

2021 Sea Cadet of the year

By Petty Officer Owthu Sumayili, TS Tiburon.

My journey as a Sea Cadet started three years ago. I was fifteen years old and in Grade 9. My dreams were to become a lawyer or a doctor and I was dead set on making those dreams come true. I attended Sea Cadets like most because I was told to and like the good child I am I did.

I arrived wearing a pair of jeans, a white t-shirt and takkies and I had my hair in a half up, half down pony tail and in the first 15 minutes of being there I knew that I was in for a huge wake-up call and my half up, half down ponytail definitely wasn't going to cut it.

On the first day I found myself in a squad, standing at ease and listening to my team leader talk about a whole lot of stuff I had no idea about. I tried talking to my cousin who was in the squad with me and I was told to "Pipe down". I had no idea what that meant but my body did and I piped down. Just before stand easy, in my mind those dreams of being a lawyer or a doctor had gone out the window and I had no idea what Sea Cadets was about but in that very moment I knew that this is what I was meant to be doing with my life. I knew that TS TIBURON was where I belonged and that this was going to be the best time of my life!

As the years went on I worked my way up the ranks with my cousin and friends that I had

made at the unit and the friends who became like family to me. Lt Gouws was my lieutenant and a mom away from home because she treated us all like her kids and she pushed us to the best versions of ourselves. She taught me how to be a strong leader in a world that was meant for men, she taught me that it's all good and well to say girls can do anything a boy can do but you have to prove it. You have to prove that you belong and that you can get the job done.

I became a Leading Seaman and got dealt a hard hand and I had to step up. All the leadership skills and lessons that I had learnt from Lt. Gouws, from the camps I had been on in Cape Town, the lessons from all those men and women who facilitated the camps at Saldanha and Simons Town who taught me that in life and in the Navy you "Adapt, Improve, and Overcome" – Leading Seaman Voigt, ex TS WOLTEMADE Sea Cadet and now member of SA Navy.

In 2021 TS TIBURON welcomed a new Commanding Officer, SLt (SCC) Rajesh Sewpershad as Lt Gouws and her family had immigrated to Malta. It was a new and different challenge for me because I had never been in that situation, however I can gladly say that it has been an awesome experience having a new CO and dealing with the stress of covid.



Petty Officer
Owthu Sumayili

Since the new CO's arrival, our Training Ship is slowly being transformed and so too the lives of all the Sea Cadets.

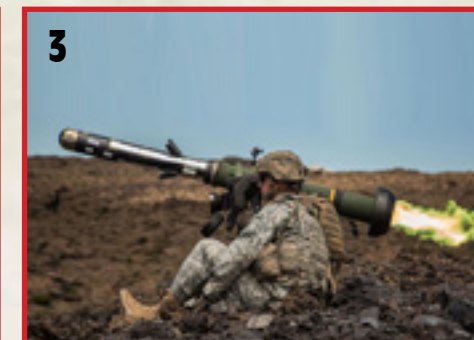
I am truly great full for the experience of being a Sea Cadet. It's an amazing feeling knowing that you are a part of something much bigger than yourself. I'm very happy to say that I came to cadets as an ordinary teenager and I'm leaving as a Petty Officer who has done courses with Grinrod Shipping, with multiple certificates from Sail Africa, sailed in sailing competitions, have been to the Naval units in Cape Town on three separate of occasions and who is the 2021 Cadet Of The Year.

It truly is an honour and very humbling for me to have been a member of the ship's company of one the best Sea Cadet units in the country – TS Tiburon has made me what I am today.



War in Ukraine

This month were focusing on the War in Ukraine. We show you images of 15 weapons or weapon systems, and you tell us what they are. Not an easy quiz, but an interesting one. You'll find the answers to the quiz on page 91.



Combat celebrities

Over the years hundreds of people that were celebrities or would go on to become celebrities served in the military. But how many of them actually fought in a war and saw combat?

Since World War I hundreds, if not thousands, of people that were celebrities or who would go on to become celebrities have served in the military.

Some of them were volunteers or who chose the military as a possible career. Others were conscripted into service.

Then there were those that were given an option, usually by a judge, "serve in the military or go to prison."

The list of those that volunteered includes the likes of Lawrence Tureaud (better known as the A-Team's Mr. T), the Golden Girl's Bea Arthur, Gene Hackman, Morgan Freeman, Chuck Norris, and Sean Connery.

Among those conscripted into the military were Arnold Schwarzenegger, Clint Eastwood, and Elvis Presley.

One of those given the choice between the military and prison was Jimi Hendrix. He ended up serving as a paratrooper with the 101st Airborne Division.

One of the things that all of the above have in common is that they never actually saw combat. They either served in peacetime or served in a non-combative role during a war.

Yet there are a number of celebrities that did go on to see combat. The list includes actors, writers and sportsmen. Here is a list of some of them that were combat veterans.



Audie Murphy

When Murphy originally joined the Army after the attack on Pearl Harbour, he was not a celebrity in the least.

In fact he lied about his age to volunteer. He was rejected by the Army, Navy and Marine Corps for being underweight.

He eventually managed to join the US Army and first saw action in the 1943 Allied invasion of Sicily.

He would go on to become one of the most decorated American combat soldiers of World War II. He received every military combat award for valour available from the U.S. Army, as well as French and Belgian awards for heroism.

Murphy received the Medal of Honour for valour that he demonstrated at the age of 19 for single-handedly holding off a company of German soldiers for an hour at the Colmar Pocket in France in January 1945, then leading a successful coun-

ter-attack while wounded and out of ammunition.

After the war, Murphy embarked on a 21-year acting career. He played himself in the 1955 autobiographical film *To Hell and Back*, based on his 1949 memoirs of the same name, but most of his roles were in westerns.

He made guest appearances on celebrity television shows and starred in the series *Whispering Smith*.

Murphy died in a plane crash in Virginia in 1971, shortly before his 46th birthday. He was interred with military honours at Arlington National Cemetery, where his grave is one of the most visited.



Ernest Hemingway

American novelist, short-story writer, journalist, and sportsman, Ernest Hemingway was awarded the 1954 Nobel Prize in Literature.

In World War I he was rejected by the US Army as a result of poor eyesight. He then volunteered for the Red Cross and became an ambulance driver in Italy.

On 8 July 1917, he was seriously wounded by mortar fire, only two months after joining the Red Cross. Despite his wounds, Hemingway assisted Italian soldiers to safety, for which he was decorated with the Italian Silver Medal of Military Valour.

During World War II Hemingway, still working as a conflict journalist, accompanied the troops to the Normandy Landings, but he was considered "precious cargo" and not allowed ashore. The landing craft came within sight of Omaha Beach before coming under enemy fire and turning back.

During World War II Hemingway, still working as a conflict journalist, accompanied the troops to the Normandy Landings, but he was considered "precious cargo" and not allowed ashore. The landing craft came within sight of Omaha Beach before coming under enemy fire and turning back.

Late in July, he attached himself to "the 22nd Infantry Regiment commanded by Col. Charles "Buck" Lanham, as it drove toward Paris", and Hemingway became de facto leader to a small band of village militia in Rambouillet outside of Paris.

In 1947, Hemingway was awarded a Bronze Star for his bravery during World War II.



Max Schmeling

Schmeling was a German boxer who was heavyweight champion of the world between 1930 and 1932.

Prior to World War II he had been living in America, but then returned to Germany.

During the war, Schmeling was drafted, where he served with the *Luftwaffe* (German Air Force) and was trained as a *Fallschirmjäger* (paratrooper).

He participated in the Battle of Crete in May 1941, where he was wounded in his right knee by mortar fire shrapnel during the first day of the battle.

After the war, Schmeling settled in Hamburg where in 1947, strapped for money, he embarked upon a moderately successful comeback in boxing, winning three of his five bouts with two point-defeats before re-entering retirement for good in October 1948.

After recovering, he was dismissed from active service after being deemed medically unfit for duty because of his injury.

In 1992, he was inducted into the International Boxing Hall

of Fame. He lived his remaining years as a wealthy man and avid boxing fan, dying on 2 February 2005, at the age of 99.



David Niven

British actor David Niven won the Academy Award for Best Actor for his performance as Major Pollock in *Separate Tables* in 1958.

After completing school he gained a place at the Royal Military College, Sandhurst. After Sandhurst, he joined the British Army and was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Highland Light Infantry.

He served in the British Army from 1930 to 1933 before leaving the service and moving to America to pursue a career in acting.

He was living in Hollywood when Britain declared war on Germany. The following day he returned to Britain and rejoined the British Army.

Niven was recommissioned as a lieutenant in the Rifle Brigade (Prince Consort's Own) on 25 February 1940, and was assigned to a motor training battalion.

He wanted something more exciting, however, and transferred to the Commandos. He was promoted to war-substantive captain on 18 August 1941.

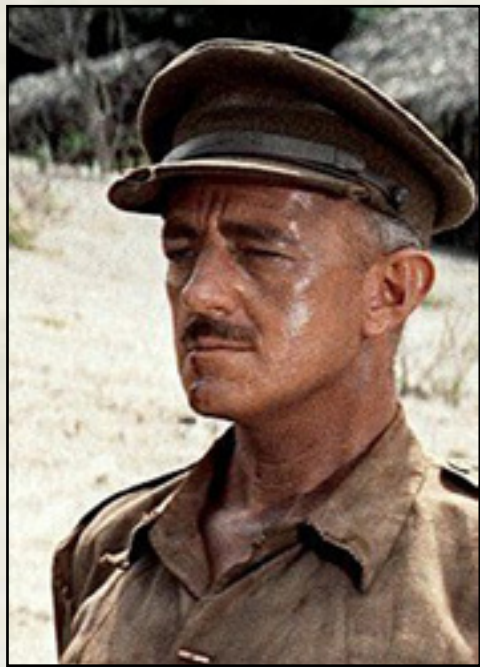
Because he was a well known actor, Niven also worked with the Army Film and Photographic Unit.

He took part in the Allied invasion of Normandy in June 1944, although he was sent to France several days after D-Day.

He served in "Phantom", a secret reconnaissance and signals unit which located and reported enemy positions, and kept rear commanders informed on changing battle lines.

He ended the war with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

After the war he spoke little about his experience in the war, despite public interest in celebrities in combat and a reputation for storytelling.



Alec Guinness

Sir Alec Guinness CH CBE was a British actor that starred in some of the most famous films of all time.

He won an Academy Award for his role as Colonel Nicholson in *The Bridge on the River Kwai* in 1957.

He also starred in such classics as *Great Expectations*, *Law-*

rence of Arabia, *Doctor Zhivago*, *A Passage to India*, and *Oliver Twist*.

Guinness's role as Obi-Wan Kenobi in the original *Star Wars* trilogy, beginning in 1977, brought him worldwide recognition to a new generation, as well as Academy Award and Golden Globe nominations.

Guinness served in the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve in the Second World War, initially as a seaman in 1941, before receiving a commission as a temporary Sub-lieutenant on 30 April 1942 and a promotion to Temporary Lieutenant the following year.

Guinness then commanded a Landing Craft Infantry at the Allied invasion of Sicily, and later ferried supplies and agents to the Yugoslav partisans in the eastern Mediterranean theatre.



Kirk Douglas

Born Issur Danielovitch, Kirk Douglas was an American actor, filmmaker, and father of actor Michael Douglas.

During his career, he appeared in more than 90 films and was known for his explosive acting style. He starred in 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea

and *Spartacus*.

In 1941, Douglas joined the United States Navy and served as a communication and gunnery officer abroad on the USS PC-1139 and specialized in anti-submarine warfare.

On 7 February 1943, Douglas and his crew were hunting a suspected Japanese submarine.

A shipmate was supposed to fire a depth charge marker but he mistakenly launched a live depth charge. It hit the waves, detonated and hurled PC-1139 into the air.

Tossed hard against his ship, Douglas suffered abdominal injuries. He was sent to recover in San Diego's Balboa Hospital, where physicians discovered he also had chronic amoebic dysentery.

Those medical maladies triggered the 1944 discharge of Lt. j.g. Douglas, two years before his cinema debut.



Tony Bennett

Anthony Dominick Benedetto, known professionally as Tony Bennett, is an American singer of traditional pop standards, big band, show tunes, and jazz.

Bennett has amassed numer-

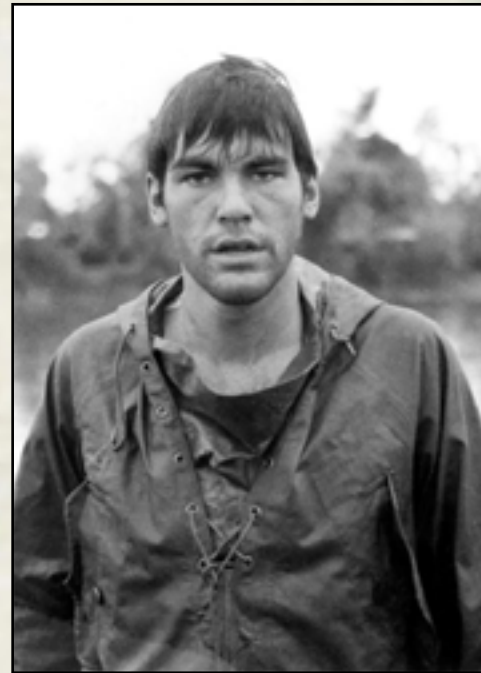
ous accolades throughout his career, including 19 Grammy Awards and two Primetime Emmy Awards. He has sold over 50 million records worldwide.

Bennett joined the war effort during its final stages in 1944. He was enlisted as an infantryman assigned to the 63rd Infantry Division, popularly referred to as the Blood and Fire Division.

The 63rd Division's role was to fill in for the heavy losses that were suffered on the front lines in France and Germany, and as such, many referred to this as the "front-row seat in hell."

After the war, Bennett went on to say that the experiences he endured during WWII led him to become a pacifist and focus his life on music and bringing joy to the world.

Despite not having received any military awards, Bennett is known for his role in liberating a German concentration camp.



Oliver Stone

American film director, producer, and screenwriter Oliver Stone has won no fewer than

nine Academy Awards, including a Best Picture and Best Director award for his Vietnam epic *Platoon*.

Stone joined the US Army in 1967, during the Vietnam War, and specifically requested combat duty when he enlisted.

Upon his enlistment, Stone was assigned to the Bravo Company's 2nd Platoon in their 3rd Battalion, 25th Infantry Division.

While participating in combat duty, Stone was injured on two separate occasions and was transferred in 1968 to the 1st Cavalry, a specialized Long Range Reconnaissance Platoon.

After 15 months of service, Stone was discharged and awarded the Purple Heart with an Oak Leaf Cluster that denoted two awards.

Additionally, he was awarded a Bronze Star with a V device because of his extraordinary acts of valour under fire and a Vietnam Service Medal, amongst others.



Jimmy Stewart

Known for his distinctive drawl and every-man screen persona, Jimmy Stewart has a film career that spanned 80

films from 1935 to 1991.

Stewart became the first major American movie star to enlist in the United States Army to fight in World War II.

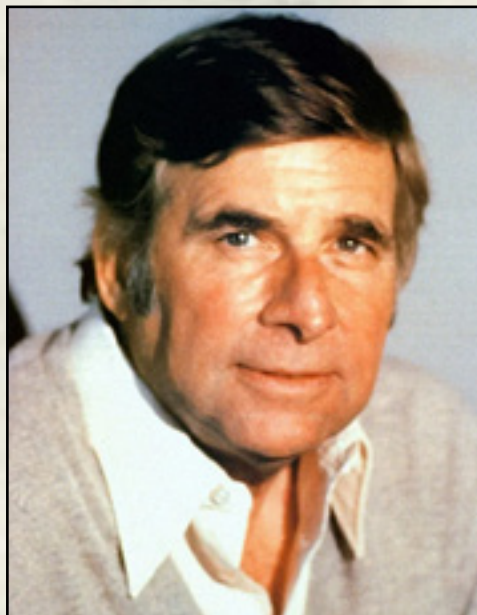
As a college graduate and an amateur pilot, Stewart was commissioned into the US Army Air Corps with the rank of second lieutenant.

He became a bomber pilot with the 703rd Bomb Squadron. Stewart began flying his B-24H in 1943. And during his service, he flew 20 combat missions, including to German air bases, chemical and oil plants, and ammunition bases.

When the war was over, Stewart joined the reserves list, and in 1959, he was promoted to Brigadier General, but his journey didn't end there. In 1966, Stewart embarked on another deployment and participated in one more combat flight during the North Vietnam War.

Stewart received the Air Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters after his service, the French Croix de Guerre with bronze palm, and a distinguished Flying Cross with two Oak Leaf Clusters.





Gene Roddenberry

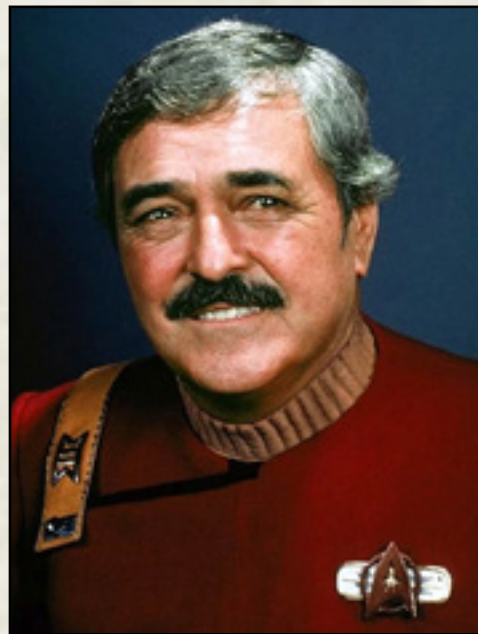
Eugene ‘Gene’ Roddenberry will always be remembered as the creator of Star Trek - a science-fiction television series that to this day still has a fanatical following.

After Pearl Harbour, Roddenberry decided to enlist. He was commissioned as a pilot in August 1942 and was posted by the Army to the Pacific Theatre of Operations.

Upon this posting, he joined the 394th Bomb Squadron, 5th Bombardment Group of the Thirteenth Air Force. During his time in the Air Force, Roddenberry flew an astonishing 89 combat missions, and during these flights, he would often be required to fly dangerous strike missions.

After achieving the rank of Captain, Roddenberry was awarded the Air Medal and the Flying Cross for his efforts in the war.

After the war he became a commercial pilot before making a career change and becoming a freelance writer.



James Doohan

On the subject of Star Trek, Canadian actor James Doohan played the memorable role of Montgomery ‘Scotty’ Scott, the Scottish Chief Engineer of the Starship Enterprise.

During World War II he was a lieutenant in the Canadian Royal Army. He served in the 14th Field Artillery Regiment in the 3rd Canadian Infantry Division.

While participating in the D-Day landings on 6 June 1944, Montgomery navigated a minefield with his fellow soldiers between command posts on Juno beach, and he was shot multiple times.

He took four bullets to one of his legs and one to his hand that resulted in him losing his middle finger. Additionally, another bullet hit his chest and would have been fatal if it was not for a silver cigarette case deflecting the bullet.

The shots actually came from a fellow soldier.

Montgomery received many military medals, including the France and Germany Star, Canadian Volunteer Service Medal, War Medal, and Defence Medal.



Mel Brooks

Arguably one of the best comedic writers of his time, actor Mel Brooks was also a significant figure during WWII; he was extraordinarily skilled at defusing German bombs.

Brooks joined the US Army in 1944 and served in the 1104th Engineer Combat Battalion. He would later say that being a combat engineer and being in combat were the two things he hated most in the world.

Brooks was involved in a unit that not only deactivated land mines but also escaped sniper fire, cleared blocked roads, and courageously braved shelling to build bridges.

Ever the comedian, Brooks reportedly once used a bull-horn to serenade nearby enemy troops and, for his efforts, received a round of applause.

After his service, Brooks became one of the most successful producers in the 1970s, which led to him receiving numerous awards, including a Grammy, Oscar, and Tony award.



Charles Bronson

Born Charles Dennis Buchinsky, Charles Bronson was the world’s No. 1 box office attraction in the early 1970s.

He starred in many memorable movies, including The Magnificent Seven, The Dirty Dozen, The Great Escape, Raid on Entebbe, and the Death Wish series of films.

Bronson enlisted in the US Army Air Forces as an aircraft gunner during WWII in 1943. Bronson started in the 760th Flexible Gunnery Training Squadron before being assigned in 1945 to the 39th Bombardment Group as a Superfortress aerial gunner.

During his military service, Bronson sustained multiple injuries while conducting combat missions against Japanese home islands. In total, he flew 25 missions, each one of them fraught with danger.

Due to the injuries he sustained during his time as a gunner, Bronson was awarded the distinguished Purple Heart.



Michael Cain

Born Maurice Joseph Micklewhite, Sir Michael Cain CBE has an acting career spanning more than 70 years, which has led to him being considered one of the best British actors in the 20th and 21st centuries.

Between 1952 and 1954, Cain was called up to do his national service, and served in the British Army’s Royal Fusiliers, first at the British Army of the Rhine Headquarters in Iserlohn, West Germany, and then on active service during the Korean War.

He had gone into Korea feeling sympathetic to communism, coming as he did from a poor family, but the experience left him permanently repelled due to the human-wave attacks practised by North Korea and China, which left him with the sense that their governments did not care about their citizens.

Cain has often recounted how nothing could have prepared him for the ordeals and experiences he faced during this time.

In the war, he was stationed on the front lines, and as such, he was exposed to extensive

combat and even participated in highly dangerous night time patrols that took him into no man’s land. During the war, he contracted malaria and was discharged in 1953.



James Garner

Born James Scott Bumgarner, James Garner starred in several television series over more than seven decades, and more than 50 movies.

Before beginning his acting career, James Garner served in the Oklahoma National Guard, the Merchant Marines, and the US Army. Upon joining the Korean War efforts, Garner was placed in the 5th Regimental Combat Team as a rifleman, and during his 14-month service, he was wounded twice.

The first injury he sustained was from a mortar round, which left shrapnel in his face and hand, and the second injury was a wound to the buttocks from a friendly fire event.

Contrary to popular belief, although Garner did indeed receive two Purple Hearts for his service in the Korean War, he only received the second one in 1983, 32 years after suffering his second injury.

The Six Day War - a few facts

On 5 June 1967, Israel launched a 'pre-emptive' strike against Egypt, Syria and Jordan. Less than a week later the war was over. In this article we look at a few facts about the Six Day War.

The Six-Day War, also known as the June War, the 1967 Arab–Israeli War or the Third Arab–Israeli War, was an armed conflict fought from 5 to 10 June 1967 between Israel and a coalition of Arab states primarily comprising Jordan, Syria and Egypt (then known as United Arab Republic).

Relations between Israel and its Arab-majority neighbouring states were not normalized after the First Arab–Israeli War ended with the signing of the 1949 Armistice Agreements.

In 1956, Israel invaded Egypt, triggering the Suez Crisis; among Israel's rationale for the invasion was its goal of forcing a reopening of the Straits of Tiran, which had been closed by Egypt for all Israeli shipping since 1950.

Israel was eventually forced to withdraw its troops from Egyptian territory under international pressure, but was guaranteed that the Straits would remain open.

A peacekeeping contingent known as the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) was subsequently deployed along the Egypt–Israel border, but there was no demilitarization agreement between the two sides.

By June 1967, tensions in the region became dangerously heightened. Israel reiterated its

post-1956 position that another closure of the Straits of Tiran to Israeli shipping by Egypt would be a definite *casus belli*.

In May, Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser announced that the Straits of Tiran would again be closed to Israeli vessels, and subsequently mobilized the Egyptian military along the border with Israel, ejecting the UNEF.

Israeli intelligence informed the government that Egypt and Syria would probably launch an invasion within the next 48 hours. The Israeli government made the decision to launch a pre-emptive strike.

On 5 June, Israel launched a series of air-strikes against Egyptian airfields, initially claiming that it had been attacked by Egypt, but later stating that the air-strikes were pre-emptive. The question of

which side caused the war remains one of a number of controversies relating to the conflict.

Egyptian forces were caught by surprise, and nearly the entire Egyptian Air Force was destroyed on the ground, with few Israeli losses in the process, giving Israel the advantage of air supremacy.

Simultaneously, the Israeli military launched a ground offensive into the Egyptian-occupied Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula, which again caught the Egyptians by surprise.

After some initial resistance, Nasser ordered an evacuation of the Sinai Peninsula. The Israelis continued to pursue and inflict heavy losses on the retreating Egyptian forces, and conquered the entire Sinai Peninsula by the sixth day of the war.

Jordan had entered into a defence pact with Egypt a week before the war began; the agreement envisaged that in the event of a war, Jordan would not take an offensive role, but would attempt to tie down Israeli forces to prevent them from making any significant territorial gains.

Approximately an hour after the initial Israeli air attack,

the Egyptian commander of the Jordanian military received orders from Cairo to mount attacks against Israel.

In the initially confused situation, the Jordanians were falsely informed that Egypt had successfully repelled Israel's air raids.

Let's look at a few facts about the Six Day War.

Size did matter

Israel is very small geographically and; it's about one fifth the size of the Western Cape.

At the war's outset, the Israeli capital was well within range of enemy guns. Jordan's border east of Tel Aviv was so close that Arab artillerymen could easily see the city and the Mediterranean beyond.

Similarly, an Israeli soldier stationed along the Sinai could get in a car and drive home to Tel Aviv in two hours, while an Egyptian bomber taking off from Cairo could strike the Tel Aviv in less than half an hour.

David vs. Goliath

When war erupted in 1967,

Israel had a largely reservist army. The IDF could field just three regular force brigades consisting of roughly 50,000 troops. The additional 200,000 soldiers it would throw into battle were reservists.

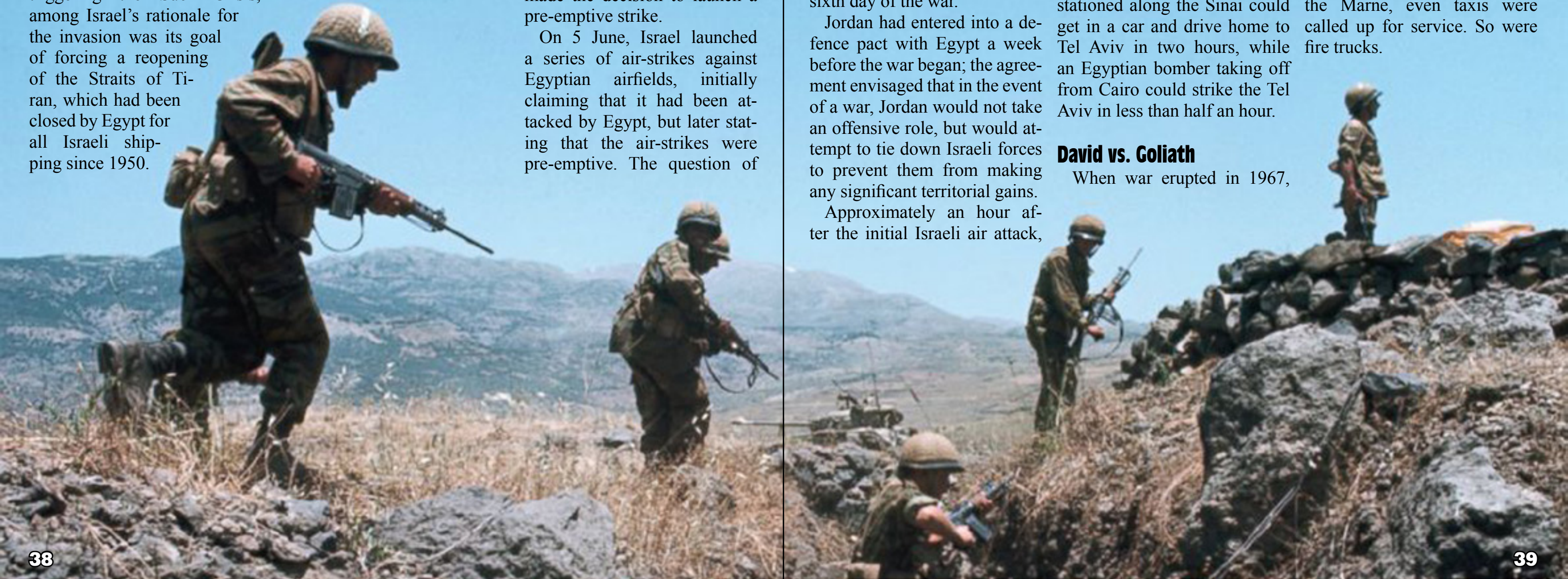
Egypt's army was 240,000 strong while Syria, Jordan and Iraq had a combined total of 307,000 men.

Israel had an ad hoc army

The Israeli army had precious few trucks or troop transports available. Commanders were forced to mobilize civilian vehicles at the war's outset.

The paratroop brigade that captured the Old City of Jerusalem was ferried to battle aboard school buses and tourist coaches.

And like the 1914 Battle of the Marne, even taxis were called up for service. So were fire trucks.



In fact, one of the great fears in Tel Aviv during the brief but savage war was how to put out fires if Egyptian bombers struck the city; virtually all the emergency vehicles had been commandeered by the army.

Shock and Awe War

During Operation Desert Storm in 1990, the American's described the operation as one of 'Shock and Awe'.

Yet the one of the original 'Shock and Awe' wars was the Six Day War.

The Six Day War opened with a dramatic pre-emptive air strike by Israel. In 1967, tensions between Tel Aviv and the Arab world, which had been simmering since the 1956 war, had reached a boiling point.

With enemy troops massing on its borders, Israel committed virtually all of its warplanes to an early morning attack on 11 Egyptian air bases. The sorties were devastating; most of Egypt's war planes never got off the ground.

Amazingly, Israel had no bombers to use in the attack. The all-or-nothing raid was carried out entirely by fighter planes.

The IDF followed up with a ground offensive into the Sinai

while simultaneously striking into Syrian and Jordanian territory in the north and east.

Within a week, Israel held driven the enemy from the Golan Heights and the West Bank and had secured vast new lands.

Air Superiority

The initial Israeli air strike would be against eight Egyptian airfields in Sinai, on the Suez Canal and around Cairo.

The timing of the attack was sheer genius. Military doctrine dictates that the best time for an attack is at first light. The Israeli air strike was planned for 08h45 Egyptian time.

The relative lateness of the hour was chosen for a number of reasons. First of all the Egyptians would be hit when they least expected it. By that time the early morning mist in the Nile Delta had lifted.

Most importantly, the Egyptian air patrols and radar surveillance had been stood down with the passing of the time for a classic dawn attack.

More over the change-over of watches within the Egyptian air command was taking place.

In another move that went against the norm, the Israelis chose not to make Arab radar stations their first priority.

To achieve surprise in the strikes against the airfields

around Cairo the Israelis flew deep into the Mediterranean before they turned to attack the air fields from the rear.

And it wasn't just a quick 'hit-and-run' strike either. The Israelis kept successive waves of attacking aircraft over the major targets until resistance was totally broken.

For 80 minutes the Israelis kept up a continuous attack on airfields housing the cutting edge of Egyptian air power. At the end of the first day's operation about 300 Arab aircraft had been destroyed with the Israelis losing only ten of their own.

As can be expected the Israeli intelligence was spot on and the target identification by the pilots was outstanding. Dummy installations and aircraft were ignored while the real targets were destroyed.

That the Israelis were able to keep waves of attacking aircraft over the target was due to careful calculation of flight times and an allowance of ten minutes time-over-target for each attacking wave before the next wave arrived to take over.

The world took notice

The speed and ferocity of the Israeli war effort astounded the world. Defense Minister Moshe Dayan's black eye patch became probably the most recognizable

symbol of the Israeli military in press and TV coverage of the Six Day War.

Dayan lost his eye in Lebanon not fighting Arabs, but Vichy French during World War Two.

In 1941, the 26 year old, former native of Ottoman Palestine was part of the Allied force that liberated Lebanon and Syria from the Axis.

The wound was inflicted when a bullet fired by a French sniper struck a pair of binoculars that Dayan was holding to his eyes.

Israel stood alone

Israel's putative allies - England, France, and the U.S. - sent no aid of any kind.

Right before the war, American President Lyndon B. Johnson warned: "Israel will not be alone unless it decides to go alone."

Then, when the war began, the State Department announced: "Our position is neutral in thought, word and deed."

Moreover, while the Arabs were falsely accusing the Unit-

ed States of airlifting supplies to Israel, Johnson imposed an arms embargo on the region.

By contrast, the Soviets were supplying massive amounts of arms to the Arabs. Simultaneously, the armies of Kuwait, Algeria, Saudi Arabia and Iraq were contributing troops and arms to the Egyptian, Syrian and Jordanian fronts.

France cut off all arms shipments to Israel.

Holy Moly

Israel's "Holy Warriors" weren't that religious. Although the Six Day War was fought on ground where three of the world's great religions intersect, a surprising number of combatants weren't all that overly devout.

In fact, when Israeli paratroopers captured the Wailing Wall on June 7, 1967, many of them were so untutored in their own faith that they did not even know how to pray.

A common scene at the wall that day was one soldier teaching another the proper way to

offer a Jewish prayer.

The Wailing Wall (or more accurately the "Western Wall") is not, as many people believe, a wall of Solomon's Temple, which was built around 900 B.C. It's a retaining wall of the mount on which the Great Temple once stood (the "Temple Mount.")

It was short but bloody

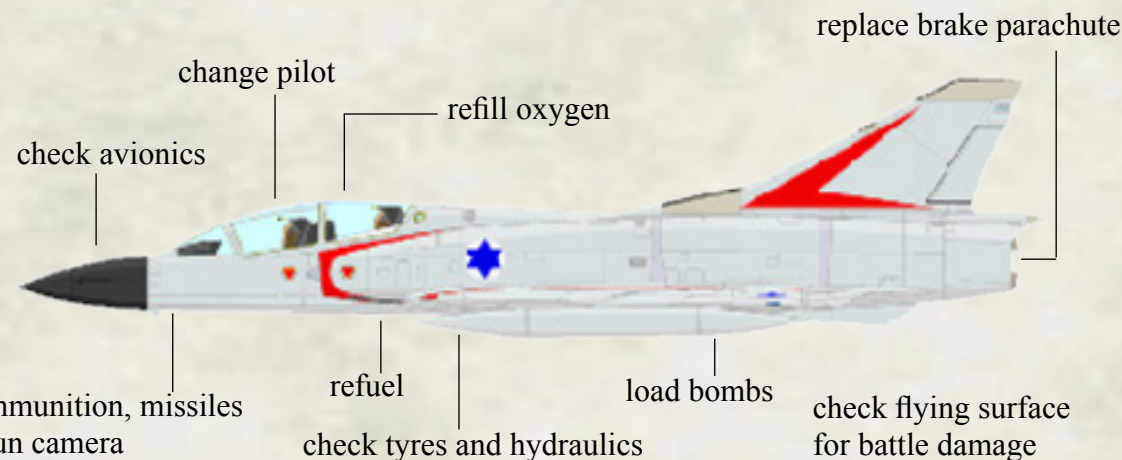
After six days of heavy fighting, Israeli casualties were between 776 and 983 killed; approximately 4,500 were wounded. Egypt suffered between 9,800 and 15,000 killed, wounded or MIA, 4,300 captured.

Estimates for Jordan are about 700 killed, 2,500 wounded. Syria lost a thousand killed. Total Arab states' losses: between 13,200 and 23,500 killed and more than 5,500 captured.

As many as 46 Israeli aircraft were destroyed in action out of about 240. The IDF also lost numerous tanks. The Arab states' tally was 452 planes and hundreds of tanks destroyed.

Turn-around procedure

It took a mere seven minutes for the Israelis to get an aircraft back into the air.





SOUTH AFRICAN AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION

SAAFA is an all-ranks Association formed to perpetuate a tradition of comradeship, knowing no distinction of rank, race, language, gender or creed, which has developed over the years among members of the South African Air Force.

Click on the logo above to visit the SAAFA website

Military Ration Packs

It has been said that you are what you eat. With this in mind, this month we take a look at military ration packs around the world.

Anyone that served in the old South African Defence Force and spent time on the border will surely remember the rat packs.

Rat Pack was short for Ration Pack and these were given to troops in the bush. A rat pack was supposed to feed a troop for a period of 24 hours. They were similar to the American Army C-Rats (Combat Rations).

If a troop, for instance, was going to spend four days out on patrol, he would be issued with four rat packs. They came in cardboard boxes and were numbered from one to five, the number on the box reflecting a particular combination of contents.

Up until the mid-1980s there were three tins per rat pack, however this was changed to two larger tins thereafter. This was because the vegetables were incorporated with the meat.

As soon as the rat packs had been distributed the trading would begin. Troops would have their individual preferences as to which rat pack they enjoyed most. It was not uncommon to hear comments such as, "Who wants to trade a number three for a number five?"

Troops would often add items to their rat packs and these included things such as curry powder, other spices, and a packet or two of instant soup.

Many would also discard items from their rat pack and the first to go was usually the much-hated 'Dog Biscuits'.

All food items were pre-cooked and they could be eaten cold, but it must be said that they tasted far better when heated. Also included were tea, coffee, and sugar. A tube of condensed milk was also to be found in the pack. Coffee or tea was mixed with sugar and mixed with water in your fire bucket, brought to the boil, and condensed milk was added.

A popular item in the rat pack was the cool drink and milkshake powder. These were mixed with water in plastic sachets that were nicknamed 'condoms' by the troops. The powder was poured into the sa-

chet, water was added, and it was shaken vigorously. Naturally these sachets would sometimes burst, leaving the poor troop covered in cool drink or milkshake.

Other food items would include instant porridge that was mixed with water, chewing gum, raisins, fruit bars, energy bars, glucose sweets, and a small tube of processed cheese. A box of matches and a strip of fuel tablets, known as Esbits, would complete the pack.

The Esbits were round tablets that, when lit, would burn for a considerable time. They were used to heat your food. I heard of at least one case where some dumb idiot thought that the Esbits were a type of sweet and he popped one into his mouth and



EATING IRONS: Not only were your dixies and fire bucket used to eat and drink from, they would also be used as pots for cooking.

began to suck on it. Needless to say he spent the next half an hour spitting and puking.

In the old rat packs, a small, flat tin opener was also included. One of the main problems with rat packs is that they would often have passed their expiry date. Not that this ever seemed to bother the SADF because they were issued anyway.

Troops didn't seem to complain too much because it was a case of 'eat what you're given or go hungry'.

Below is a list of the various items, including flavour and quantity, that were found in rat packs.

- Meat - Corned Beef Hash, Curried Fish, Steak & Onions, Vienna sausages & Baked Beans - 2 small tins.
- Vegetables - Diced Carrots, Mixed Vegetables, Peas - 1 small tin.
- Milkshake - Chocolate, Strawberry, Lime, Vanilla - 1 sachet
- Coffee - 2 sachets
- Tea - 1 sachet
- Cool drink powder - Cola, Lime, Naartjie, Orange - 2 sachets
- Porridge - Banana flavour - 1 sachet
- 'Dog' biscuits - 1 packet
- Processed Cheese - 1 tube
- Condensed Milk - 1 tube
- 'Super C' Glucose Sweets - Orange, Naartjie, Pineapple - 1 roll
- Fruit Bars - Various flavours - 2 bars
- Raisins - 1 packet
- Energy bar - Choc Nut,



FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD: The contents of a typical SADF Rat Pack.

- Mint, Rum & Raisin - 2 bars
- Chewing Gum - 3 pieces
- Sugar - 4 sachets
- Salt - 2 sachets
- Matches - 1 box
- 'Esbit Fuel Tablets - 1 strip

Naturally the SADF were not the only military organisation that used ration packs. Almost every nation that has a military force uses them.

Let's take a look at what you could expect to find in the ration packs of some other countries.

Argentina

The *Ración de Combate* (Individual) was introduced in 2003, consisting of a gray plastic-foil laminate pouch containing a mix of canned and dehydrated foods, plus minimal supplements, for one soldier for one day. All products in the RC are domestically produced,

commercially available items.

Each ration contains: canned meat, small can of meat spread, crackers, instant soup, cereal bar with fruit, a chocolate bar with nuts or caramels, instant coffee, orange juice powder, sugar, salt, a heating kit with disposable stove and alcohol-based fuel tablets, disposable butane lighter, resealable plastic bag, cooked rice and a pack of paper tissues.

- Menu #1 contains: corned beef, meat pate, crisp water crackers, and instant soup with fideo pasta.
- Menu #2 contains: roasted beef in gravy, meat pate, whole wheat crackers, and quick-cooking polenta in cheese sauce.

United States

American ration packs consisted of MREs (Meals, Ready-

to-Eat).

Each sealed plastic bag contains one entire precooked meal, with a number of supplements and accessories.

The original 12 menus have been expanded to 24 and now contain a variety of ethnic and special request items as well. Kosher/Halal and Vegetarian menus are also provided.

Each meal bag contains an 226 gram main course (packaged in a four-layer plastic and foil laminate retort pouch), 8 hard-tack crackers, some form of spread (cheese, peanut butter, or jam), a fruit-based beverage powder, some form of dessert (cake, candy, cookies, or fruit), and an accessory packet containing coffee or tea, creamer, sugar, salt, matches, a plastic spoon, and toilet paper. A chemical heater is packed with every meal.

The First Strike Ration (FSR) is a compact, eat-on-the-move ration to be used for no more than three days during initial periods of highly intense, highly mobile combat assaults.

A single FSR (24 hours food) is about 50% of the size and weight of three MREs. Each FSR provides 2,900 kcal (12,000 kJ) (15% protein, 53% carbohydrates, 34% fat), versus the 3,800 kcal (16,000 kJ) in three MREs, and has a two-year shelf life when stored at 28 °C.

An FSR is packed in a single trilaminate bag and contains filled pocket sandwiches, a pouch of tuna or chicken, two packets of ERGO high-energy drink mix, two high-energy



PERFORMANCE ENHANCER: The First Strike Ration (FSR) substantially reduces weight and load and is intended to enhance a consumer's physical performance, mental acuity, and mobility.

cereal bars (First Strike Bars), a dairy-based calcium-enriched dessert bar, two packets of beef jerky (similar to biltong) in BBQ or Teriyaki flavour, fortified apple sauce, nut and fruit mix, caffeinated gum, and an accessory pack containing a beverage mix, salt, matches, tissues, plastic spoon, and cleansing moist towelettes. The FSR comes in three menus:

Menu #1 contains: Italian pocket sandwich, chicken chunks pouch, tortillas & hot sauce, Cinnamon & brown sugar toaster pastry, peanut butter and crackers, lemon tea mix.

Menu #2 contains: Honey BBQ beef pocket sandwich, Albacore tuna pouch, tortillas & mayonnaise, lemon poppy-seed pound cake, cheese spread and crackers, instant coffee, non-dairy creamer and sugar.

Menu #3 contains: Ba-

con-cheddar pocket sandwich, pepperoni pocket sandwich, filled French Toast pocket sandwich, jalapeño cheese spread & wheat snack bread, apple cider mix.

Finland

When (during peacetime) conscript soldiers are not provided with meals cooked either in garrisons or attached field kitchens, they are provided with rations (colloquially known as *sissi* rations) packed in a clear plastic bag.

Several different menus exist, however all include foil packed crispbread, coffee and tea, sugar, chocolate, small tins of beef or pork, chewing gum, dry porridge, energy drink powder etc.

Soups and porridges that are meant to be mixed with water and cooked are usually prepared in Trangia-type portable stoves



GERMAN GRUB: The *Einmannpackung* provides two substantial meals to each soldier. The food is not only substantial, it tastes damn good as well.

that are shared by the pair in a fire and manoeuvre team, or in individual mess kits.

France

The French 24-hour combat ration, the RCIR (*ration de combat individuelle réchauffable*) comes in 14 menus packed in a small cardboard box.

Inside are two pre-cooked, ready-to-eat meal main courses packed in thin metal cans somewhat like oversized sardine tins, and an hors d'oeuvre in a more conventional can or tin.

Current main courses include items such as beef salad, tuna and potatoes, salmon with rice and vegetables, shepherd's pie, rabbit casserole, chili con carne, paella, veau marengo (veal), navarin d'agneau (lamb), poultry and spring vegetables, etc. Hors d'oeuvres include: salmon terrine, chicken liver, tuna

in sauce, fish terrine, duck mousse, etc.

Each meal box also contains a package of instant soup, hard crackers, cheese spread, chocolate, caramels or boiled sweets, instant café-au-lait, sugar, cocoa powder, matches, a disposable folding ration heater and fuel tablets, and water purifying tablets.

Germany

Germany uses the *Einmannpackung* (EPA) to provide two substantial meals to each soldier. Practice is to provide one hot cooked meal for the other meal whenever possible.

A heater or oven is not included since an Esbit cooker is part of each soldier's personal equipment. Enough food items are contained within the EPA to sustain the soldier for 24 hours.

Currently there are three

menus; each includes two meals out of a selection of 19 meals, with several heavy-duty foil trays containing items such as lentils with sausages, Yugoslav Sausage, Goulash, beef patties in tomato sauce, Italian pasta, or Tofu stir-fry. There are also three smaller foil "cans" of bread spreads such as cheese spread, liver-sausage, dried-meat sausage, or cheese spread with green peppers.

The meal box also includes: thinly sliced rye bread (170 g), hard crackers (1100 kcal), a foil can of fruit salad, instant cream of wheat, instant fruit juice powder, instant coffee, instant tea, powdered cream, a chocolate bar, sugar, salt, gum, jam, water purifying tablets, two plastic bags, matches, paper towels and a user guide.

Ireland

Ireland fields a 24-hour ration pack somewhat similar to that used by the British. It is packed in a large ziplock plastic bag and contains two pre-cooked main meals and items to be eaten throughout the day.

Included are: instant soup, ramen noodles, an oatmeal block, a high-energy protein bar, both brown and fruit biscuits, sweets, and a selection of beverage mixes. Breakfast (bacon and beans or sausage and beans) is packaged in a retort pouch while dinner (Beef Casserole, Irish Stew, Chicken Curry, or a vegetarian main course) comes in either a flat tin or microwaveable plastic tray. Desserts consist of a retort-pouched dessert (choc-

olate pudding, syrup pudding, fruit dumplings), a Kendal mint cake, and a roll of fruit lozenges.

Beverages include tea bags, instant coffee, hot cocoa, and a powdered isotonic drink mix. Also included are a pack of tissues, a small scouring pad, matches, water purification tablets, salt and pepper packets, sugar, dry cream powder, moist towelettes, and individual packets of foot powder.

Italy

Italy uses the *Razione Viv-eri Speciali da Combattimento*, consisting of a heavy duty brownish-green plastic bag with three thin white cardboard cartons inside (one for breakfast, one for lunch and one for dinner), each containing meal items plus accessories.

There are seven menus, called “modules”, identified by colors: yellow, red, grey, green, white, pink and blue.

Typically, breakfast consists of: a chocolate bar, fruit candy, crackers or sweet bread, instant coffee, sugar, and a tube of sweetened condensed milk. A lunch will have: two pull-ring cans with precooked foods (Tortellini al Ragù, Pasta e Fagioli, Wurstel, Tacchino in Gelatina, Insalata di Riso, etc.), a small can of fruit cocktail, a multivitamin tablet, energy and fiber tablets, instant coffee, sugar, and a plastic spoon wrapped with a napkin.

Dinner will consist of two more meal cans plus crackers, an energy bar, instant coffee,



RUSSIAN RATIONS: An IRP-P Russian Navy combat ration, with main courses, meat spreads, crackers and drinks.

and sugar. Accessories are: a folding stove, fuel tablets, water purification tablets, toothpick, matches, and three small disposable toothbrushes with pre-applied tooth powder.

Russian Federation

Since the turn of the Millennium Russia issues the Individual Food Rations (*Individual'nyi Ratsion Pitaniya* (IRP), a new self-contained ration, containing the whole daily food intake for an individual soldier in the field.

However, in its most frequent form it isn't dietary complete, and is intended only as a stop-gap measure to be issued until the normal supply lines (with their field kitchens) are established and the hot food delivery started, to be issued for no more than six days straight. Russian Ministry of defence doesn't strictly prescribe the contents of the ration, only some basic

packaging and inventory requirements, so every producer issues their own version.

Most commonly it is packaged into a sturdy plastic blister box (nicknamed “The Frog” in the field for its olive-green colour), or plastic-sealed cardboard box that contains five to six entrées in laminated foil cans or retort pouches, four to six pack of crackers or preserved bread, two to three dessert items in form of a spread or fruit bar, four beverage concentrate pouches, some seasoning (salt, pepper, sugar, ketchup), and various sundry items like sanitizing wipes/paper towels, spoons, can opener, four hexamine fuel tablets, folding heater, matches and water purifier tablets.

The types of entrées vary with the producer and the issued menu (of which there are usually 7 to 12), but the common set is based on a tradition-

al Russian outdoors men fare, is largely formed out of the commercially available canned food, and usually includes one portion of stewed beef or pork, two meat-with-vegetables dishes, like various porridges, stews or canned fish, and one or two spreads, such as liver pate, sausage stuffing or processed cheese.

Desserts may include fruit jams, chocolate and/or walnut spreads, chocolate bars, sweetened condensed milk, etc., but baked goods are usually avoided out of concerns about their shelf life.

Other variants may add canned speck and/or dried fish or exchange the hexamine tablets for the flameless heater.

United Kingdom

The British have a number of different types of ration packs. These include the 12 hour operational ration pack, 24 hour operational ration pack, 24 hour multi climate ration box, 24 hour jungle ration, cold climate ration, 10 man operational ration pack, and emergency flying rations.

12 hour operational ration pack

The 12 hour operational ration pack (ORP) is designed for patrolling for durations of 4–12 hours and for is suitable for remote guard posts, drivers and as a supplement to normal rations for where daily calorie expenditure is likely to exceed 6000 kcal (25,120 kJ)(for instance, troops undergoing arduous duties.)

The 12 hour ORP contains

a main meal packed in a retort pouch, a number of snack items, drink powders and a flameless ration heater (FRH). However it does not contain any hot beverage items.

There are 10 menu choices including one vegetarian.

14 hour operational ration pack

The 24 hour Operational Ration Pack, General Purpose is packed inside a small cardboard box, and each ration has enough retort-pouched and canned foods to feed one soldier for 24 hours.

Seven menus (plus vegetarian and religious variants) provide two precooked meals (Breakfast and Main Meal) plus a mid-day snack.

Example (Menu A) Breakfast: Hamburger and beans, Instant Porridge. All ration packs also contain Oatmeal Block, Fruit Biscuits, Biscuits Brown (a more compact alternative to bread), a sachet of instant soup and jam or yeast extract (a Marmite like spread) for a lunchtime snack, and chocolate (in the form of a specially made Yorkie bar which is flatter than civilian bars, or, more recently, a simple unbranded bar of milk chocolate), though this has been phased out with the introduction of the more recent multi-climate ration packs, and boiled sweets (hard candy) for snacking whilst on patrol, or in free time.

Main Meal: Instant soup, Chicken with Mushroom and Pasta, Treacle Pudding. Each pack also contains instant coffee, tea bags, creamer, sugar,

hot cocoa mix, beef/vegetable stock powder, lemon/orange powder or Lucozade electrolyte powder, matches, packet of tissues, chewing-gum, a small bottle of Tabasco sauce, and water purifying tablets. They sometimes also contain chicken and herb pâté. Also available are Kosher/Halal, Vegetarian, and Hindu/Sikh specific menus.

Regardless of their contents, these ration packs are referred to as Rat-Packs or Compo (short for Composite Rations) by the soldiers who eat them. In addition to containing the 24-hour ration, the outside of the cardboard box has a range card printed on its side for use by the soldier to record key features and their range from their position. Other variations designed for specific environments exist.

The rations are now being issued with a new folding cooker and fire-lighting fuel called FireDragon made in Wales by BCB International Ltd.\

24 hour jungle ration

The 24 Hour Jungle ration is based on the standard 24 Hour ration with additional supplements and a Flameless Ration Heater (FRH). The Jungle ration is designed for use by the special forces and other specialist units.

The 24 Hour Jungle Ration provides a minimum of 4500 kcals (18,840 kJ) a day.

Cold Climate Raion

The Cold Climate Ration (CCR) is a specialist and lightweight, high calorie 24 hour ration designed for use by troops

above the snow line or in the high Arctic. It comprises mainly dehydrated main meals with a range of snacks designed to be eaten on the go.

There are eight menu choices available. The cold climate ration provides a minimum of 5500 kcals (23,030 kJ) a day.

Israel

The Israeli “battle ration” (*Manat Krav*) is designed to be shared by four soldiers. It contains: 1 can of rice filled vine leaves, 8 small cans of tuna, canned olives, a can of sweet corn, a can of pickled cucumbers, 1 can of halva spread and 1 chocolate spread, a can of peanuts, fruit flavoured drink powder, and bread or matzoh crackers. There is also an “ambush pack” of candy and high-energy protein bars.

In 2008, Israel introduced a new field ration to supplement the traditional *Manat Krav*. Unlike previous rations, the new Battle Ration consists of individual, self-heating, ready-to-eat meals packed inside plastic-aluminium trays.

They are designed to be carried and used by infantry troops for up to 24 hours, until regular supply lines can be established. Ten menus are available, including chicken, turkey and kebab; each meal pack is supplemented with dry salami, dried fruit, tuna, halva, sweet roll, and preserved dinner rolls.

Australia

Australia currently supplies three different types of military

ration packs - Combat Ration One Man, Combat Ration Five Man and Patrol Ration One Man.

Combat Ration One Man is a complete 24-hour ration pack that provides two substantial meals per day and a wide variety of drinks and snacks for the remainder of the day.

Most items, such as Beef Kai Si Ming, Dutch-style Beef with Vegetables, Beef with Spaghetti, Baked Beans, Sausages with Vegetables, or Chicken with pasta and vegetables, are packed in 250 gram sized plastic-foil retort pouches. Included with every meal pack is a pouch of instant rice or instant mashed potatoes, a fruit and grain bar, two envelopes of instant drink powder, some biscuits, an “Anzac Biscuit,” a chocolate bar, M&M’s, coffee, tea, sugar, crackers, cheese spread, jam, sweetened condensed milk, hard sweets, and Vegemite.

It is packed in a tough clear polyethylene bag and weighs around 1.5 – 1.7 kg. In practical use, these packs are “stripped” by removing and trading with other soldiers, those components that are unlikely to be consumed by the person carrying the pack.

This also reduces the weight of the packs, allowing more to be carried. There are eight menu choices, one of which is vegetarian. None of them are allergen free since Defence Force members are typically selected, among many other attributes, for their no known allergy status.



LUNCH TIME: A female IDF soldier of the Nachshol Reconnaissance Company, eating from a battle ration.

Combat Ration Five Man contains a similar array of components as the Combat Ration One Man. However, it is provided in a tough fibreboard carton rather than in individual unitised polyethylene bags. It is a group feeding solution, and it is impractical to use on an individual basis for main meals. There are a multiple of group-sized retort pouches – 500 gram as opposed to 250 gram, several of which are required to be heated in order to provide a complete meal. Examples include Beef & Blackbean Sauce, Chicken Satay. Common elements include rice and vegetables such as corn, potatoes and carrots. The accessories such as snacks are consumable and can be carried individually. There are five menu choices, and each Combat Ration Five Man

weighs around 10 kg.

Patrol Ration One Man is a complete 24-hour ration pack that contains freeze dried main meals, meaning that the total weight of each pack is reduced, however a correspondingly higher quantity of water must be carried in order to reconstitute the main meal. Otherwise, it is similar to the Combat Ration One Man. It is packed in tough clear polyethylene bags and is available in five menu choices.

India

Indian Armed Forces have a host of Meals Ready To Eat (MRE) including the One Man Combo Pack Ration, Mini Combo Pack, Survival Ration, a ration for marine commandos and Main Battle Tank (MBT) Rations. The shelf-life of the ration is 12 months. India has adopted retort processing technology for combat rations.

The MREs use pre-cooked thermostabilized entrées in a plastic-foil laminate retort pouch. The ration does not require cooking and the contents may be eaten cold, though warming is preferred. An entire day’s worth of food, plus accessory items, is packed inside a heavy-duty olive green plastic bag with pasted on label. The menu consists of several different Vegetarian and Non-Vegetarian products that cater to Indian tastes, such as sooji halwa, chapaties, tea mix, chicken biryani, chicken curry, mutton biryani, Mutton curry, Vegetable biryani, rajma curry,

dal fry, jeera rice, Dal makhani, vegetable pulav and mixed vegetable curry, alongside pickled hot seasoning, in small plastic pouches.

The One Man Combo Pack consists of early morning tea, breakfast, mid morning tea, lunch, evening tea, and dinner. The menus feature both dehydrated and ready-to-eat products, and include a folding stove and hexamine fuel tablets. The ration weighs 880 grams and provides 4,100 kcal (17,000 kJ). The Mini Combo Pack is a simplified version of the One Man Combo Pack, weighing 400 g and providing 1,520 kcal (6,400 kJ).

The survival ration consists of a soft bar and chikki. The daily survival ration per man consists of: Soft bar 100 g x 2, Chikki (sugar base) 50 g x 3, Chikki (Jaggery base) 50 g x 3. This provides around 2,400 kcal (10,000 kJ), which is 1,520 kcal (6,400 kJ) more than the normal survival ration used by most nations.

Japan

The Japan Self-Defense Forces utilize two types of combat rations, Type I combat ration and Type II combat ration.

The older Type I ration consists almost entirely of canned foods weighing a total of 780 g per meal; a normal three-day ration has up to 36 cans weighing more than 7 kilograms.

Eight menus are available, based around a 400 g can of rice and 2-3 smaller supplemental cans. Typical contents include:

rice (white rice, sekihan (rice with red beans), mixed rice with vegetables, or rice with mushrooms), a main meal can (chicken and vegetables, beef with vegetables, fish and vegetables, or hamburger patties), pickled vegetables (Takuan (yellow radish) or red cabbage) and sometimes a supplemental can (tuna in soy or beef in soy).

In the latest type I combat rations, cans have been replaced by retort pouches.

People’s Republic of China

The Chinese People’s Liberation Army has recently introduced a new set of rations consisting of pre-packaged single-person meals sealed in hard plastic retort pouches.

The Chinese military rations are of two types: Instant Meal Individual (three-item menu) and Self-Heating Individual (twelve-item menu). A typical Chinese breakfast ration contains roughly 1,000 kcal (4,200 kJ) and includes a compressed food packet, an energy bar, an egg roll with pork, pickled mustard tuber, and a powdered beverage pack.

Each Self-Heating package comes with an insulated flameless heater that is activated by water.



Kurt "Panzer" Meyer

SS-Brigadeführer, recipient of the Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross with Oak Leaves and Swords, Waffen-SS apologist, and convicted war criminal. This was Kurt Meyer.

Kurt Meyer was an SS commander and war criminal of Nazi Germany. He served in the Waffen-SS (the combat branch of the SS) and participated in the Battle of France, Operation Barbarossa, and other engagements during World War II.

Meyer commanded the 12th SS Panzer Division Hitlerjugend during the Allied invasion of Normandy, and was a recipient of the Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross with Oak Leaves and Swords.

After ordering the mass murder of civilians and prisoners of war (POWs) several times during the conflict, Meyer was convicted of war crimes for his role in the Ardenne Abbey massacre (the murder of Canadian POWs in Normandy).

He was sentenced to death, but the sentence was later commuted to life in prison. Meyer was one of the last German war criminals to be released from prison.

He became active in HIAG, a lobby group organised by former high-ranking Waffen-SS men, after his release.

Meyer was a leading Waffen-SS apologist and HIAG's most effective spokesperson, depicting most of the Waffen-SS as apolitical, recklessly brave fighters who were not involved in the crimes of the Nazi regime.

Early life

Born in 1910 in Jerxheim, Meyer came from a lower-class working family. His father, a miner, joined the German Army in 1914 and was an NCO in



World War I.

Meyer began a business apprenticeship after completing elementary school, but became unemployed in 1928 and was forced to work as a handyman before becoming a policeman in Mecklenburg-Schwerin the following year.

Politically active at an early age and a fanatical supporter of Nazism, Meyer joined the Hitler Youth when he was fifteen, became a full member of the Nazi Party in September 1930, and joined the SS in October 1931.

He was a guest at the marriage of Joseph Goebbels in December of that year. In May 1934, Meyer was transferred to the Leibstandarte SS Adolf Hitler (LSSAH).

With this unit (which later became part of the Waffen-SS, the combat branch of the SS),

Meyer took part in the annexation of Austria in 1938 and the 1939 occupation of Czechoslovakia.

Early World War II

At the outbreak of World War II, Meyer

participated in the invasion of Poland with the LSSAH, serving as commander for an anti-tank company (14. Panzerabwehrkompanie).

He was awarded the Iron Cross, Second Class, on 20 September 1939. In October, Meyer allegedly ordered the shooting of fifty Polish Jews as a reprisal near Modlin and court-martialled a platoon commander who refused to carry out his instructions.

He participated in the Battle of France and was awarded the Iron Cross, First Class.

Following the Battle of France, Meyer's company was reorganized into the LSSAH's reconnaissance battalion and he was promoted.

Benito Mussolini's unsuccessful invasion of Greece prompted Germany to invade Yugoslavia and Greece in April 1941.

During the invasion, the battalion came under fire from the Greek Army defending the Klisura Pass.

After heavy fighting, Meyer's troops broke through the defensive lines; with the road now open, the German forces drove through to the Kastoria area to cut off retreating Greek and British Commonwealth forces.

After the campaign, Meyer was awarded the Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross.

Eastern Front

The LSSAH Division (including Meyer and his battalion) participated in Operation Barbarossa, the invasion of the

Soviet Union, in June 1941 as part of Army Group South.

He and his unit quickly became infamous even among the LSSAH Division for mass-murdering civilians and destroying entire villages, such as when they murdered about 20 women, children, and old men at Rowno.

According to historian Jens Westemeier, Meyer was primarily responsible for the brutalization of the troops under his command.

His terror tactics were regarded with approval by the Waffen-SS command. In combat against the Red Army, Meyer and his unit also achieved some military successes, while suffering the heaviest casualties among the LSSAH's battalions.

He gained a reputation as an "audacious" leader during Operation Barbarossa, and was awarded the German Cross in Gold in 1942 while still with the LSSAH.

In early 1943, Meyer's reconnaissance battalion participated in the Third Battle of Kharkov. He reportedly ordered the destruction of a village during the fighting around Kharkov and the murder of all its inhabitants.

Different accounts of the events exist, though they share a general outline.

Meyer was awarded the Knight's Cross with Oak Leaves for a successful attack on the village of Yefremovka (Jefremowka) on 20 February 1943, where his forces took no prisoners and killed about 1,500 Soviet soldiers.

After the war, a former SS man described an incident which took place on Meyer's orders in Jefremowka in March 1943, following its occupation.

Billeted in the village, the eyewitness heard a pistol shot at 10:30 in the morning. He ran to the door and saw an SS commander who demanded to see the company commander.

When the latter arrived, the SS commander shouted: "On the orders of Meyer, this town is to be levelled to the ground, because this morning armed civilians attacked this locality." He then shot a 25-year-old woman who was cooking the German's lunch.

According to the testimony, the Waffen-SS men killed all the inhabitants of the village and set fire to their homes.

Ukrainian sources, including two surviving witnesses, reported that the killings took place on 17 February 1943. On 12 February, LSSAH troops had occupied two villages: Yefremovka and Semyonovka. Retreating Soviet forces had wounded two SS officers.

In retaliation, LSSAH troops killed 872 men, women and children five days later; about 240 were burned alive in the church in Yefremovka.

Russian sources reported that the massacre was perpetrated by the "Blowtorch Battalion", led by Jochen Peiper.

Meyer continued to serve in the LSSAH until the summer of 1943, when he was appointed commander of a regiment of the newly-activated, still-form-

ing SS Division Hitlerjugend stationed in France.

Battle of Normandy and Falaise pocket

The Allies launched Operation Neptune, the amphibious invasion of France and part of Operation Overlord, on 6 June 1944.

After much confusion, SS Division Hitlerjugend got moving at about 14:30; several units advanced towards one of the beaches on which the Allies had landed, until they were halted by naval and anti-tank fire and Allied air interdiction.

Meyer, confident that the Allied forces were “little fishes”, ordered his regiment to counter-attack. The attack led to heavy casualties.

The division was ordered to break through to the beach on 7 June, but Meyer instructed his regiment to take covering positions and await reinforcements.

By 22:00, Meyer had set up his command post in Ardenne Abbey. That evening, elements of the division under Meyer's command committed the Ardenne Abbey massacre.

Eleven Canadian prisoners of war, soldiers from the North Nova Scotia Highlanders and the 27th Armoured Regiment were shot in the back of the head.

On 14 June, divisional commander SS-Brigadeführer Fritz Witt was killed when a naval barrage hit his command post.

Meyer, the next-highest-ranking officer, was promoted to divisional commander; at 33 years of age, he was one of the war's youngest German divisional commanders.



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Kurt Meyer, Sepp Dietrich, and Max Wunshe discuss battle plans during the 3rd Battle of Kharkov.

According to historian Peter Lieb, Meyer's rise to division command was relatively typical for the Waffen-SS, as the latter desired individuals as commanders who were regarded as ruthless, brutal, and ready to serve at the front line.

By 4 July, the division had been reduced to a weak battle group; six days later, it retreated behind the Orne River. In just over a month of fighting, the division had more than a 60 per cent casualty rate.

The Canadian forces began their advance on Falaise, planning to meet up with the Americans with the goal of encircling and destroying most of the German forces in Normandy.

The Hitlerjugend division was holding the northern point of what became known as the Falaise pocket.

After several days of fighting Meyer's unit was reduced to about 1,500 men, whom he led in an attempt to break out of the pocket.

Meyer described the conditions in the pocket in his memoirs: “Concentrated in such a confined space, we offer unique targets for the enemy air power. Death shadows us at every step”.

Meyer was wounded during the fight with the 3rd Canadian Division, but escaped from the Falaise pocket with the division's rearguard. The remnants of the division joined the retreat across the Seine and into Belgium.

On 27 August, Meyer was awarded the Swords to the Knight's Cross with Oak Leaves and promoted to SS-Brigadeführer.

He led his retreating unit as far as the Meuse, where he and his headquarters were ambushed by an American armoured column on 6 September.

The division's staff fled into a nearby village, where Meyer and his driver hid in a barn. A farmer discovered them, and informed the Belgian resistance.

Meyer surrendered to local partisans, who handed him over to the Americans on 7 September.

Prisoner of War

After his surrender, Meyer was initially hospitalized due to injuries he received from his American guards during an altercation.

He was transferred to a POW camp near Compiègne in August and attempted to hide his SS affiliation, but his identity as a high-ranking SS officer was discovered in November.

Meyer was then interned at Trent Park in England, where his conversations with other high-ranking prisoners of war were covertly tape-recorded by British military intelligence.

He was frank about his Nazi-orientated political beliefs in these exchanges; Meyer had dedicated himself to its ideology, saying that a person “could only give his heart once in life”.

One interrogator described him as “the personification of National Socialism”. Throughout the recordings, Meyer and other SS men confirmed the German armed forces officers' view of them as ideological fanatics with an almost religious belief in Nazism, the Third Reich, and the messianic personality cult of Adolf Hitler.

In a taped January 1945 conversation, Meyer praised Hitler for having inspired a “tremendous awakening in the German people” and for reviving their self-confidence.

In a taped conversation the following month, he chided a demoralized Wehrmacht general: “I wish a lot of the officers

here could command my division, so that they might learn some inkling of self-sacrifice and fanaticism”.

According to the recordings, Meyer had not just paid lip service to Nazi ideology to further his military career; he saw himself as an ideological racial warrior with a duty to indoctrinate his men with the National Socialist creed.

Despite rigorous interrogations by British authorities, Meyer refused to admit any war crimes; his involvement in the Ardenne Abbey massacre was eventually revealed by imprisoned SS deserters.

War crimes trial

Meyer was held as a prisoner of war until December 1945, when he was tried for war crimes (the murder of unarmed Allied prisoners of war in Normandy) in the German town of Aurich.

Meyer's charges were:

1. Prior to 7 June 1944, Meyer had incited troops under his command to deny quarter to surrendering Allied soldiers.
2. On or around 7 June 1944, Meyer was responsible for his troops killing twenty-three prisoners of war at Buron and Authie.
3. On or around 8 June 1944, Meyer ordered his troops to kill seven prisoners of war at his headquarters at the Ab-baye Ardenne.
4. On or around 8 June 1944, Meyer was responsible for his troops killing seven prisoners of war, as above.
5. On or around 8 June 1944, Meyer was responsible for his troops killing eleven

prisoners of war, as above.

The third and fourth charges referred to the same event; the fourth charge was an alternative to the third, if the killings were found to be a war crime but he was found not to have ordered them.

The fifth charge was related to a separate group of prisoners; in this case, the prosecution did not allege that Meyer had directly ordered their deaths.

He was charged with responsibility for the deaths of twenty-three prisoners on 7 June, and eighteen more the following day. Meyer pleaded not guilty to all five charges.

A second charge sheet accusing him of responsibility for the deaths of seven Canadian prisoners of war in Mouen on 8 June 1944 was prepared; after the successful conclusion of the first trial, however, it was decided not to try the second set of charges.

No charges were laid against him for alleged previous war crimes in Poland or Ukraine; the Canadian court was constituted to deal only with crimes committed against Canadian nationals.

The court, the first major Canadian war-crimes trial, faced a number of problems before it could be convened.

Chief among them was the fact that since the accused was a general, he had to be tried by soldiers of equal rank; finding enough available Canadian generals was difficult.

The court as eventually constituted had four brigadiers – one, Ian Johnston, was a lawyer in civilian life – and was presided over by Major General H. W.

Foster, who had commanded the 7th Canadian Infantry Brigade in Normandy.

In accordance with eyewitness statements by German and Canadian soldiers and French civilians, Meyer was found guilty of the first, fourth and fifth charges and acquitted of the second and third; he was deemed responsible for inciting his troops to give no quarter to the enemy and for his troops' killing of eighteen prisoners at the Abbaye Ardenne, but not responsible for the killings of twenty-three at Buron and Aouthie.

Meyer was found responsible for the deaths at the Abbaye Ardenne, but acquitted of directly ordering the killings.

In Meyer's closing statement before sentencing, he did not ask for clemency but defended the record of his unit and the innocence of his soldiers: "By the Canadian Army I was treated as a soldier and ... the proceedings were fairly conducted".

Meyer's case is notable as one of the earliest applications of the legal concept of command responsibility - accountability in personal terms for the actions of subordinates in violating the laws of war.

The concept is now codified in the 1977 Additional Protocol I to the 1949 Geneva Conventions as well as the Canadian Crimes Against Humanity and War Crimes Act.

Although most observers expected a long imprisonment - the court had not found him guilty of directly ordering the murders, but tacitly condoning them - the court sentenced Meyer to death.



THE ACCUSED: Kurt Meyer, stands trial in December 1945 for war crimes. He was originally sentenced to death.

One of the judges, Brigadier Bell-Irving, later said that he believed a guilty sentence required the death penalty and that no lesser sentence was permissible.

The sentence was subject to confirmation by higher command; Meyer was originally willing to accept it, but was persuaded by his wife and his defence counsel to appeal.

The appeal was reviewed by Canadian headquarters and dismissed by Major-General Christopher Vokes, the official convening authority for the court, who said that he could not see a clear way to mitigate the sentence imposed by the court.

Shortly before the sentence was to be carried out, however, the prosecutor realised that the trial regulations contained a section requiring a final review

by "the senior combatant officer in the theatre" and no-one had completed such a review. The execution was postponed until it could be carried out.

The senior officer was the commander of Canadian forces in Europe: Christopher Vokes, who had dismissed Meyer's appeal. Vokes had second thoughts and began a series of meetings with senior officials to discuss how to proceed.

Vokes' main concern was the degree to which a commander should be held responsible for the actions of his men. The consensus which emerged from the discussions was that death was an appropriate sentence only when "the offence was conclusively shown to have resulted from the direct act of the commander or by his omission to act".

Vokes said "There isn't a

general or colonel on the Allied side that I know of who hasn't said, 'Well, this time we don't want any prisoners'".

Vokes had himself ordered the razing of Friesoythe, a German town, in 1945, and had ordered the shooting of two prisoners in 1943 before his divisional commander intervened.

Vokes commuted the sentence to life imprisonment, saying that he felt that Meyer's level of responsibility for the crimes did not warrant the death penalty.

After the reprieve, a Communist-run German newspaper reported that the Soviet Union was considering putting Meyer on trial for war crimes allegedly committed at Kharkov.

Nothing came of this, however, and Meyer was transported to Canada to begin his sentence in April 1946. He served five years at Dorchester Penitentiary in New Brunswick, where he worked in the library and learned English.

Meyer petitioned for clemency in late 1950, offering to serve in a Canadian or United Nations military force if released.

At the time, the new West German government was seeking the release of German war criminals incarcerated in Allied prisons and the Canadian and other western Allied governments were looking to gain West German support for NATO to oppose possible Soviet aggression in Europe.

The Canadian government was willing to let him return to a German prison, but not release him outright; he was transferred to a British military prison in Werl, West Germany, in 1951.

Meyer was released from prison on 7 September 1954, after the Canadian government reduced his sentence to fourteen years and shortened it further for good behaviour.

When he returned to Germany in 1951, he told a reporter that nationalism was past and that "a united Europe is now the only answer".

HIAG activities and death

Meyer became active in HIAG, the Waffen-SS lobby group formed in 1951 by former high-ranking Waffen-SS men including Paul Hausser, Felix Steiner and Herbert Gille, when he was released from prison. He was a leading Waffen-SS apologist.

Meyer announced at a 1957 HIAG rally that although he stood behind his old commanders, Hitler made many mistakes and it was time to look to the future rather than the past.

He said to about 8,000 ex-SS men at the 1957 HIAG convention in Karlsberg, Bavaria, "SS troops committed no crimes, except the massacre at Oradour, and that was the action of a single man".

According to Meyer, the Waffen-SS was "as much a regular army outfit as any other in the Wehrmacht".

Meyer's memoirs, *Grenadiere* (1957), were published as part of this campaign and were a glorification of the SS's part in the war and his role in it.

The book, detailing Meyer's exploits at the front, was an element of Waffen-SS rehabilitation efforts. He condemned the "inhuman suffering" to which Waffen-SS personnel had been

subjected "for crimes which they neither committed, nor were able to prevent".

Until his death, Meyer always remained a covert, steadfast adherent of Nazism.

Meyer experienced poor health later in life, with heart and kidney disease and requiring the use of a cane.

After a series of mild strokes, he died of a heart attack in Hagen, Westphalia, on 23 December 1961. Exactly 51 years after he was born.

Fifteen thousand people attended his funeral in Hagen, with a cushion-bearer carrying his medals in the cortège.

Awards

- Iron Cross (1939) 2nd Class (20 September 1939) and 1st Class (8 June 1940)
- German Cross in Gold on 8 February 1942 as SS-Sturm-bannführer in SS-Division "Adolf Hitler"
- Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross with Oak Leaves and Swords
- Knight's Cross on 18 May 1941 as SS-Sturm-bannführer and as commander of Aufklärungs-Abteilung "Leibstandarte SS Adolf Hitler".
- 195th Oak Leaves on 23 February 1943 as SS-Ober-sturm-bannführer and commander of the SS-Aufklärungs-Abteilung "Leibstandarte SS Adolf Hitler"
- 91st Swords on 27 August 1944 as SS-Standartenführer and commander of the SS Division Hitlerjugend

FGM-148 Javelin

Each month "Forged in Battle" looks at weapons, equipment or units that have been tried and tested on the battlefield. This month we look at the FGM-148 Javelin.

The FGM-148 Javelin, or Advanced Anti-Tank Weapon System-Medium (AAWS-M), is an American-made portable anti-tank missile system in service since 1996, and continuously upgraded. It replaced the M47 Dragon anti-tank missile in US service.

Its fire-and-forget design uses automatic infrared guidance that allows the user to seek cover immediately after launch, in contrast to wire-guided systems, like the system used by the Dragon,

which require a user to guide the weapon throughout the engagement.

The Javelin's high explosive anti-tank (HEAT) warhead can defeat modern tanks by top attack, hitting them from above, where their armour is thinnest, and is also useful against fortifications in a direct attack flight.

Overview

Javelin is a fire-and-forget missile with lock-on before launch and automatic self-guidance. The system takes a top-attack flight profile against armoured vehicles, attacking the usually thinner top armour, but can also make a direct attack, for use against buildings, targets too close for top attack, targets under obstruc-

tions and helicopters

It can reach a peak altitude of 150 metres in top-attack mode and 60 metres in direct-fire mode. Initial versions had a range of 2,000 metres, later increased to 2,500 metres.

It is equipped with an imaging infrared seeker. The tandem warhead is fitted with two shaped charges: a precursor warhead to detonate any explosive reactive armour and a primary warhead to penetrate base armour.

The missile is ejected from the launcher to a safe distance from the operator before the main

rocket motors ignite – a "soft launch arrangement".

This makes it harder to identify the launcher, though back-blast from the launch tube still poses a hazard to nearby personnel.

The firing team may move as soon as the "fire-and-forget" missile has been launched, or immediately prepare to fire on their next target.

The missile system is sometimes carried by two soldiers consisting of a gunner and an ammunition bearer, although one soldier can fire it.

While the gunner aims and fires the missile, the ammunition bearer scans for prospective targets, watches for threats like enemy vehicles or troops and ensures that personnel and obstacles are clear of the missile's launch back-blast.

Development

In 1983, the United States Army introduced its AAWS-M (Advanced Anti-Tank Weapon System—Medium) requirement and, in 1985, the AAWS-M was approved for development.

In August 1986, the proof-of-principle (POP) phase of development began, with a US\$30 million contract awarded for technical proof demonstrators: Ford Aerospace (laser-beam riding), Hughes Aircraft Missile System Group (imaging infrared combined with a fibre-optic cable link) and Texas Instruments (imaging infrared).

In late 1988, the POP phase ended and, in June 1989, the full-scale development contract was awarded to a joint venture of Texas Instruments and



Martin Marietta (now Raytheon and Lockheed Martin). The AAWS-M received the designation of FGM-148.

In April 1991, the first test-flight of the Javelin succeeded, and in March 1993, the first test-firing from the launcher succeeded.

In 1994, low levels of production were authorized, and the first Javelins were deployed with US Army units in 1996.

Components

The system consists of three main components: the Command Launch Unit, the Launch Tube Assembly and the missile itself.

Command Launch Unit

The gunner carries a reusable Command Launch Unit, more commonly referred to as a CLU (pronounced "clue"), which is the targeting component of the two-part system.

The CLU has three views which are used to find, target, and fire the missile and may also be used separately from the missile as a portable thermal sight.

Infantry are no longer required to stay in constant contact with armoured personnel carriers and tanks with thermal sights. This makes infantry personnel more flexible and able to perceive threats they would not otherwise be able to detect.

In 2006, a contract was awarded to Toyon Research Corporation to begin development of an upgrade to the CLU enabling the transmission of target image and GPS location data to other units.

Day field of view

The first view is a 4 × magnification day view. It is mainly



TANK KILLER: A Ukrainian soldier carries a Javelin anti-tank missile. They have been used against Russian armour with deadly effect.

used to scan areas in visible light during daylight operation. It is also used to scan following sunrise and sunset, when the thermal image is hard to focus due to the natural rapid heating and/or cooling of the Earth.

WFOV (wide field of view)

The second view is the 4 × magnification night view, and shows the gunner a thermal representation of the area viewed.

This is also the primary view used due to its ability to detect infrared radiation and find both troops and vehicles otherwise too well hidden to detect.

The screen shows a "green scale" view which can be adjusted in both contrast and brightness. The inside of the CLU is cooled by a small refrigeration unit attached to the sight.

This greatly increases the sensitivity of the thermal imaging capability since the temperature inside the sight is much lower than that of the objects it detects.

Due to the sensitivity this causes, the gunner is able to "focus"

the CLU to show a detailed image of the area being viewed by showing temperature differences of only a few degrees.

The gunner operates this view with the use of two hand stations similar to the control stick found in modern cockpits.

It is from this view that the gunner focuses the image and determines the area that gives the best heat signature on which to lock the missile.

NFOV (narrow field of view)

The third field of view is a 12 × thermal sight used to better identify the target vehicle. Once the CLU has been focused in WFOV, the gunner may switch to NFOV for target recognition before activating Seeker FOV.

Once the best target area is chosen, the gunner presses one of the two triggers and is automatically switched to the fourth view; the Seeker FOV, which is a 9 × magnification thermal view.

This process is similar to the automatic zoom feature on most modern cameras. This view is

also available along with the previously mentioned views, all of which may be accessed with the press of a button.

However, it is not as popular as a high magnification view takes longer to scan a wide area.

This view allows the gunner to further aim the missile and set the guidance system housed inside it. It is when in this view that information is passed from the CLU, through the connection electronics of the Launch Tube Assembly, and into the missile's guidance system.

If the gunner decides not to fire the missile immediately, they can cycle back to the other views without firing. When the gunner is comfortable with the target picture, they pull the second trigger and establish a "lock". The missile launches after a short delay.

Lightweight CLU

The US Army developed a new CLU as an improvement over the Block I version. The new CLU is 70 percent smaller, 40 percent lighter, and has a 50 percent battery life increase.

Features of the lightweight CLU are: a long-wave infrared (IR) thermographic camera; a high-definition display with improved resolution; integrated handgrips; a five megapixel colour camera; a laser point that can be seen visibly or through IR; a far target locator using GPS, a laser range finder, a heading sensor, and modernized electronics.

The LWCLU has also demonstrated the ability to fire an FIM-92 Stinger anti-aircraft missile, using its superior optics to identify and destroy small unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).

Launch Tube Assembly

Both the gunner and the ammunition bearer carry the Launch Tube Assembly, a disposable tube that houses the missile and protects the missile from harsh environments.

The tube has built-in electronics and a locking hinge system that makes attachment and detachment of the missile to and from the Command Launch Unit a quick and simple process.

Launch Tube Assembly Warhead

The Javelin missile's tandem warhead is a high explosive anti-tank (HEAT) type. This round utilizes an explosive shaped charge to create a stream of superplastically deformed metal formed from trumpet-shaped metallic liners.

The result is a narrow high velocity particle stream that can penetrate armour.

The Javelin counters the advent of explosive reactive armour (ERA). ERA boxes or tiles lying over a vehicle's main armour explode when struck by a warhead.

This explosion does not harm the vehicle's main armour, but causes steel panels to fly across the path of a HEAT round's narrow particle stream, disrupting its focus and leaving it unable to cut through the main armour.

The Javelin uses two shaped-charge warheads in tandem. The weak, smaller diameter HEAT precursor charge detonates the ERA, clearing the way for the much larger diameter HEAT warhead, which then penetrates the target's primary armour.

A two-layered molybdenum liner is used for the precursor and a copper liner for the main war-

head.

To protect the main charge from the explosive blast, shock, and debris caused by the impact of the missile's nose and the detonation of the precursor charge, a blast shield is used between the two charges.

This was the first composite material blast shield and the first that had a hole through the middle to provide a jet that is less diffuse.

A newer main charge liner produces a higher velocity jet. While making the warhead smaller, this change makes it more effective, leaving more room for propellant for the main rocket motor, and thus increasing the missile's range.

Electronic arming and fusing, called Electronic Safe Arming and Fire (ESAF), is present on the Javelin. The ESAF system enables the firing and arming process to proceed, while imposing a series of safety checks on the missile.

ESAF cues the launch motor after the trigger is pulled. When the missile reaches a key acceleration point (indicating that it has cleared the launch tube), the ESAF initiates a second arming signal to fire the flight motor.

After another check on missile conditions (target lock check), ESAF initiates final arming to enable the warheads for detonation upon target impact.

When the missile strikes the target, ESAF enables the tandem warhead function (provide appropriate time between the detonation of the precursor charge and the detonation of the main charge).

Though the Javelin's tandem HEAT warhead has proven ef-

ficient at destroying tanks, most threats it was employed against in Iraq and Afghanistan were weapon crews and teams, buildings, and lightly armoured and unarmoured vehicles.

To make the Javelin more useful in these scenarios, the Aviation and Missile Research, Development, and Engineering Centre developed a multi-purpose warhead (MPWH) for the FGM-148F.

While it is still lethal against tanks, the new warhead has a naturally fragmenting steel warhead case that doubles the effectiveness against personnel due to enhanced fragmentation.

The MPWH does not add weight or cost and has a lighter composite missile mid-body to enable drop-in replacement to existing Javelin tubes.

The Javelin F-model was planned to begin deliveries in early 2020, the improved missile design, along with new lighter CLU with an improved target tracker, entered production in May 2020.

Propulsion

Most rocket launchers require a large clear area behind the gunner to prevent injury from backblast. To address this shortcoming without increasing recoil to an unacceptable level, the Javelin system uses a soft launch mechanism.

A launch motor using conventional rocket propellant ejects the missile from the launcher, but stops burning before the missile clears the tube. The flight motor is ignited after a delay to allow sufficient clearance from the operator.

To save weight, the two motors are integrated with a burst disc

between them. It is designed to tolerate the pressure of the launch motor from one side, but to easily rupture from the other when the flight motor ignites.

The motors use a common nozzle, with the flight motor's exhaust flowing through the expended launch motor.

Because the launch motor casing remains in place, an unusual annular (ring-shaped) igniter is used to start it. A normal igniter would be blown out of the back of the missile when the flight motor ignited and could injure the operator.

Since the launch motor uses a standard NATO propellant, the presence of lead beta-resorcinol as a burn rate modifier causes an amount of lead and lead oxide to be present in the exhaust; gunners are asked to hold their breath after firing for their safety.

In the event that the launch motor malfunctions and the launch tube is over pressurized - for example, if the rocket gets stuck - the Javelin missile includes a pressure release system to prevent the launcher from exploding.

The launch motor is held in place by a set of shear pins, which fracture if the pressure rises too high, and allow the motor to be pushed out of the back of the tube.

Seeker

As a fire-and-forget missile, after launch the missile has to be able to track and destroy its target without assistance from the gunner. This is done by coupling an on-board imaging IR system (separate from CLU imaging system) with an on-board tracking system.

The gunner uses the CLU's IR system to find and identify the target, then switches to the missile's independent IR system to set a track box around the target and establish a lock. The gunner places brackets around the image for locking.

The seeker stays focused on the target's image, continuing to track it as the target moves or the missile's flight path alters, or attack angles change. The seeker consists of three main components: focal plane array image sensor, cooling and calibration, and stabilization.

Focal plane array (FPA)

The seeker assembly is encased in a dome that is transparent to long-wave infrared radiation. The IR radiation passes through the dome and then through lenses that focus the energy.

The IR energy is reflected by mirrors on to the FPA. The seeker is a two-dimensional staring FPA of 64×64 MerCad (HgCdTe) detector elements. The FPA processes the signals from the detectors and relays a signal to the missile's tracker.

The staring array is a photo-voltaic device where the incident photons stimulate electrons and are stored, pixel by pixel, in readout integrated circuits attached at the rear of the detector. These electrons are converted to voltages that are multiplexed out of the ROIC on a frame-by-frame basis.

Cooling/calibration

To function effectively, the FPA must be cooled and calibrated. In other applications, a CLU's IR detectors are cooled using a Dewar flask and a closed-cycle

Stirling engine, but there is insufficient space in the missile for a similar solution.

Prior to launch, a cooler mounted on the outside of the launch tube activates the electrical systems in the missile and supplies cold gas from a Joule-Thomson expander to the missile detector assembly while the missile is still in the launch tube.

When the missile is fired, this external connection is broken and coolant gas is supplied internally by an on-board argon gas bottle. The gas is held in a small bottle at high pressure and contains enough coolant for the duration of the flight of approximately 19 seconds.

The seeker is calibrated using a chopper wheel. This device is a fan of six blades: five black blades with low IR emissivity and one semi-reflective blade.

These blades spin in front of the seeker optics in a synchronized fashion such that the FPA is continually provided with points of reference in addition to viewing the scene.

These reference points allow the FPA to reduce noise introduced by response variations in the detector elements.

Stabilization

The platform on which the seeker is mounted must be stabilized with respect to the motion of the missile body and the seeker must be moved to stay aligned with the target. The stabilization system must cope with rapid acceleration, up/down and lateral movements.

This is done by a gimbal system, accelerometers, spinning-mass gyros (or MEMS), and motors to drive changes in position of the

platform. The system is basically an autopilot. Information from the gyros is fed to the guidance electronics which drive a torque motor attached to the seeker platform to keep the seeker aligned with the target.

The wires that connect the seeker with the rest of the missile are carefully designed to avoid inducing motion or drag on the seeker platform.

Combat history

The Javelin was used by the US Army, the US Marine Corps and the Australian Special Forces in the 2003 invasion of Iraq on Iraqi Type 69 and Lion of Babylon tanks.

During the Battle of Debeca Pass, a platoon of US special forces soldiers equipped with Javelins destroyed two T-55 tanks, eight armoured personnel carriers, and four troop trucks.

The Javelin had enough range, power, and accuracy for dismounted infantry to counter standoff engagement tactics employed by enemy weapons.

With good locks, the missile is most effective against vehicles, caves, fortified positions, and individual personnel. If enemy forces were inside a cave, a Javelin fired into the mouth of the cave would destroy it from the inside, which was not possible from the outside using heavy mortars.

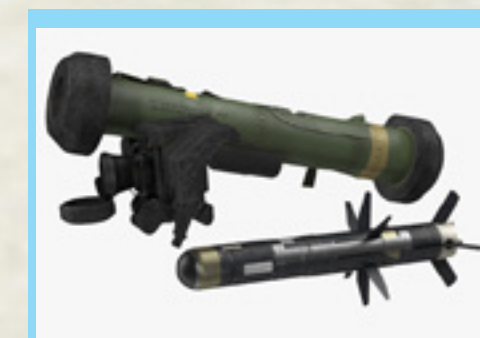
The psychological effect of the sound of a Javelin firing sometimes caused insurgents to disengage and flee their position.

Even when not firing, the Javelin's CLU was commonly used as a man-portable surveillance system.

During the 2022 Russian inva-

sion of Ukraine, NATO provided thousands of Javelins to Ukraine, where they proved highly effective. Javelins have been responsible for a part of the thousands of armoured vehicles Ukraine has destroyed, captured or damaged.

On 18 March, the Pentagon claimed out of 112 Javelins fired by the Ukrainians since the start of the war, 100 missiles had hit their target.



FGM-148 Javelin

- **Manufacturer:** Raytheon & Lockheed Martin
- **Weight:** 22.3 kg, ready to fire
- **Length:** 1.1 metres (missile)
- **Calibre:** 127 mm
- **Effective firing range:** Original CLU: 2,500 metres; Lightweight CLU: 4,000 metres; From vehicle: 4,750 m metres
- **Sights:** Optical sight & thermal imaging
- **Warhead:** Tandem-charge HEAT
- **Warhead weight:** 8.4 kg
- **Detonation mechanism:** Contact fuse

The Americans called it 'The Mog' - Mogadishu, the capital of Somalia. In October a raid planned to capture key members of Mohamed Farrah Aidid militia went horribly wrong. The subsequent battle become known as 'Black Hawk Down'.

The Battle of Mogadishu took place on 3 and 4 October 1993 in Mogadishu, Somalia. It was fought between forces of the United States - supported by UNOSOM II (United Nations Operation in Somalia II) - and Somali militiamen loyal to the self-proclaimed president-to-be Mohamed Farrah Aidid, who had support from armed fighters.

The battle was part of Operation Gothic Serpent and is also referred to as the First Battle of Mogadishu, to distinguish it amongst the nine major Battles of Mogadishu during the decades-long Somali Civil War.

The battle resulted in the loss of 21 US/UN troops, including 19 American, 82 wounded, and one captured. The Somali's lost between 2,000 and 4,000 militia and volunteers.

Background

Task Force Ranger was created in August 1993, and deployed to Somalia. It consisted of various elite special operations units from Army, Air Force and Navy special services: U.S. Army Rangers from Bravo Company, 3rd Battalion 75th Ranger Regiment; C Squadron, 1st Special Forces Operational Detachment-Delta (1st SFOD-D), better known as "Delta Force"; helicopters flown by 1st Battalion, 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment; Air Force Combat Controllers; Air Force Pararescuemen; and Navy SEALs.

As a multi-disciplinary joint special forces operation, Task Force Ranger reported to Joint Special Operations Command, led by Major General William F. Garrison.

On 3 October 1993, Task Force Ranger began an operation that involved traveling from their compound on the city's outskirts to the center with the aim of capturing the leaders of the Habr Gidr clan, led by Mohamed Farrah Aidid. The assault force consisted of nineteen aircraft, twelve vehicles (including nine Humvees), and 160 men. The operation was intended to last no

longer than one hour.

The plan

On Sunday 3 October 1993, Task Force Ranger, U.S. special operations forces composed mainly of Bravo Company 3rd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, 1st Special Forces Operational Detachment-Delta (better known as "Delta Force") operators, and the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne) ("The Night Stalkers"), attempted to capture Aidid's foreign minister Omar Salad Elmi and his top political advisor, Mohamed Hassan Awale.

The plan was that Delta operators would assault the target building (using MH-6 Little Bird helicopters) and secure the targets inside the building while four Ranger chinks (sticks or sections) would fast rope down from hovering MH-60L Black Hawk helicopters.

The Rangers would then create a four-corner defensive perimeter around the target building to isolate it and ensure that no enemy could get in or out, while a column of nine HM-MWVs and three M939 five-ton trucks would arrive at the building to take the entire assault team and their prisoners back to base. The entire operation was estimated to take no longer than 30 minutes.

The ground-extraction convoy was supposed to reach the

captive targets a few minutes after the operation's beginning, but it ran into delays.

Somali citizens and local militia formed barricades along Mogadishu's streets with rocks, wreckage, rubbish and burning tires, blocking the convoy from reaching the Rangers and their captives.

Aidid militiamen with megaphones were shouting, "*Kasoo-baxa guryaha oo iska celsa cadowga!*" ("Come out and defend your homes!").

The raid

At 15:42, the MH-6 assault Little Birds carrying the Delta operators hit the target, the wave of dust becoming so bad that one was forced to go around again and land out of position.

Next, the two Black Hawks carrying the second Delta assault team led by DELTA officer Capt Austin "Scott" Miller came into position and dropped their teams as the four Ranger chinks prepared to rope onto the four corners surrounding the target building.

Chalk Four being carried by Black Hawk callsign Super 67, piloted by CW3 Jeff Niklaus, was accidentally put a block north of their intended point. Declining the pilot's offer to move them back down due to

the time it would take to do so, leaving the helicopter too exposed, Chalk Four intended to move down to the planned position, but intense ground fire prevented them from doing so.

The ground convoy arrived ten minutes later near the Olympic Hotel and waited for Delta and Rangers to complete their mission (target building).

During the operation's first moments, Ranger PFC Todd Blackburn, from Chalk Four, fell while fast-roping from his Black Hawk Super 67 while it was hovering 21 metres above the streets. Blackburn suffered an injury to his head and back of his neck and required evacuation by Sgt Jeff Struecker's column of three Humvees.

While taking PFC Todd Blackburn back to base, Sgt Dominick Pilla, assigned to Sgt Struecker's Humvee, was killed instantly when a bullet struck his head.

When Sgt Struecker's Humvee column reached the base and safety, all three vehicles were riddled with bullet holes and were smoking.

Black Hawk down

At about 16:20, one of the Black Hawk helicopters, callsign Super 61 piloted by CW3

Cliff "Elvis" Wolcott and CW3 Donovan "Bull" Briley, was shot down by an RPG. Both pilots were killed in the resulting crash and two of the crew chiefs were severely wounded. S/Sgt Daniel Busch and Sgt Jim Smith, both Delta snipers, survived the crash and began defending the site.

An MH-6, callsign Star 41 and piloted by CW3 Karl Maier and CW5 Keith Jones, landed nearby and Jones left the helicopter and carried Busch to the safety of the helicopter while Maier provided cover fire from the Little Bird's cockpit, repeatedly denying orders to lift off while his co-pilot was not in the Bird. He nearly hit Chalk One's Lt DiTomasso arriving with Rangers and Delta operators to secure the site. Jones and Maier evacuated S/Sgt Busch and Sgt Smith, though SSG Busch later died of his injuries, having been shot four times while defending the crash site.

A Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) team, led by Delta Operator Capt Bill J. Coultrup and Air Force Pararescueman Master Sgt Scott C. Fales, were able to fast rope down to Super 61's crash site despite an RPG hit that crippled their helicopter, Super 68, piloted by CW3



Dan Jollota.

Despite the damage, Super 68 did make it back to base. The CSAR team found both the pilots dead and two wounded inside the crashed helicopter. Under intense fire, the team moved the wounded men to a nearby collection point, where they built a makeshift shelter using Kevlar armour plates salvaged from Super 61's wreckage.

There was confusion between the ground convoy and the assault team. The assault team and the ground convoy waited for 20 minutes to receive their orders to move out. Both units were under the mistaken impression that they were to be first contacted by the other.

Another Black Hawk down

During the wait, a second Black Hawk helicopter, callsign Super 64 and piloted by CW3 Michael Durant, was shot down by an RPG-7 at around 16:40.

Most of the assault team went to the first crash site for a rescue operation. Upon reaching the site, about 90 Rangers and Delta Force operators found themselves under heavy fire. Despite air support, the assault team was effectively trapped for the night. With a growing number of wounded needing shelter, they occupied several nearby houses and confined the occupants for the battle's duration. Outside, a stiff breeze stirred up blinding, brown clouds of dust.

At the second crash site, two Delta snipers, Master Sgt Gary Gordon and SFC Randy Shughart, were inserted by Black Hawk Super 62 - piloted by CW3 Mike Goffena.

Their first two requests to be



TECHNICAL: One of the challenges faced by the Americans in Mogadishu was the Somali 'Technical'. These are Toyota pickups armed with anything from a 106 recoilless rifle to 12,7 mm heavy machine guns.

inserted were denied, but they were finally granted permission upon their third request. They inflicted heavy casualties on the approaching Somali mob.

Super 62 had kept up their fire support for Master Sgt Gordon and SFC Shughart, but an RPG struck Super 62. Despite the damage, Super 62 managed to land at New Port safely. When Master Sgt Gordon was eventually killed, SFC Shughart picked up Gordon's CAR-15 and gave it to Super 64 pilot CW3 Michael Durant.

SFC Shughart went back around the helicopter's nose and held off the mob for about 10 more minutes before he was killed.

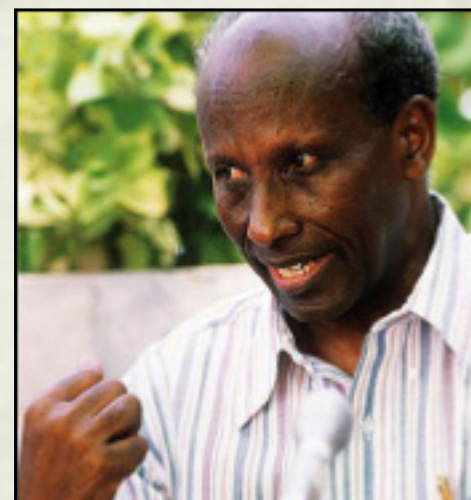
The Somalis then overran the crash site and killed all but Durant. He was nearly beaten to death, but was saved when members of Aidid's militia came to take him prisoner. For their actions, Master Sgt Gordon and SFC Shughart were posthu-

mously awarded the Medal of Honour, the first awarded since the Vietnam War.

Repeated attempts by the Somalis to mass forces and overrun the American positions in a series of firefights near the first crash site were neutralized by aggressive small arms fire and by strafing runs and rocket attacks from AH-6J Little Bird helicopter gunships of the Nightstalkers, the only air unit equipped and trained for night fighting.

Relief column

A relief convoy with elements from the Task Force 2-14 Infantry, 10th Mountain Division, accompanied by Malaysian and Pakistani U.N. forces, arrived at the first crash site at around 02:00. No contingency planning or coordination with U.N. forces had been arranged prior to the operation; consequently, the recovery of the surrounded American troops was signifi-



Mohamed Farrah Aidid

cantly complicated and delayed.

Determined to protect all of the rescue convoy's members, General Garrison made sure that the convoy would roll out in force. When the convoy finally pushed into the city, it consisted of more than 100 U.N. vehicles including Malaysian forces' German-made Condor APCs, four Pakistani tanks (M48s), American Humvees and several M939 five-ton flatbed trucks.

This two-mile-long column was supported by several other Black Hawks and Cobra assault helicopters stationed with the 10th Mountain Division. Meanwhile, Task Force Ranger's "Little Birds" continued their defense of Super 61's downed crew and rescuers.

The American assault force sustained heavy casualties, including several killed, and a Malaysian soldier died when an RPG hit his Condor vehicle. Seven Malaysians and two Pakistanis were wounded. The battle was over by 06:30 on Monday, 4 October. U.S. forces were finally evacuated to the U.N. base by the armored convoy.

While leaving the crash site, a group of Rangers and Delta operators led by S/Sgt John R.

Dycus realised that there was no room left in the vehicles for them and were forced to depart the city on foot to a rendezvous point on National Street. This has been commonly referred to as the "Mogadishu Mile".

In all, 19 U.S. soldiers were killed in action during the battle or shortly after, and another 73 were wounded in action. The Malaysian forces lost one soldier and had seven injured, while the Pakistanis also lost one soldier and suffered two injured. Somali casualties were heavy, with estimates of fatalities ranging from 315 to over 2,000 combatants. The Somali casualties were a mixture of militiamen and local civilians. Somali civilians suffered heavy casualties due to the dense urban character of that portion of Mogadishu.

On 6 October, a mortar round fell on the U.S. compound, making Delta Operator SFC Matthew L. Rierson the 19th U.S. soldier killed in the battle while injuring another twelve. That same day, a team on special mission to Durant's Super 64 helicopter had two wounded.

Two weeks after the battle, General Garrison officially accepted responsibility.

In a handwritten letter to President Clinton, Garrison took full responsibility for the battle's outcome. He wrote that Task Force Ranger had adequate intelligence for the mission and that their objective (capturing targets from the Olympic Hotel) was met.

Aftermath

After the battle, the bodies of several of the conflict's US

casualties (Black Hawk Super 64's crewmembers and their defenders, Delta Force soldiers Master Sgt Gordon and SFC Shughart) were dragged through Mogadishu's streets by crowds of local civilians and SNA forces.

Through negotiation and threats to the Habr Gidr clan leaders by Special Envoy for Somalia, Robert B. Oakley, all the bodies were eventually recovered. The bodies were returned in poor condition, one with a severed head.

Michael Durant was released after 11 days of captivity. On the beach near the base, a memorial was held for those who were killed in combat.

A total of two Medals of Honour, seven Silver Stars, and 11 Bronze Stars were awarded to those that took part in the battle.

At the time the battle was the bloodiest involving U.S. troops since the Vietnam War, and it remained so until the Second Battle of Fallujah in 2004.

On 25 March 1994 the United States withdrew all of their troops from Somalia. Just over a year later, on 28 March 1995, the United Nations also withdrew from Somalia.

On 24 July 1996, Mohamed Farrah Aidid was wounded during a firefight between his militia and forces loyal to former Aidid allies, Ali Mahdi Muhammad and Osman Ali Atto.

He suffered a fatal heart attack on 1 August 1996, either during or after surgery to treat his wounds. The following day, General Garrison retired.



During war, there are no good or bad decisions; there is only survival. **Matt O' Brien** tries to keep a group of survivors alive in his own inept way.

Partisans 1941 involves controlling a group of Russian resistance fighters dedicated to being a thorn in Hitler's side while his armies sweep across the Soviet Union during Operation Barbarossa. From your base situated deep in the forest, your ragtag band embarks on a series of increasingly daring raids against the Wehrmacht's occupation and infrastructure.

The core is similar to most other real-time tactics games. Each mission sees you pick several of your partisans to complete an objective in a large, openly explorable map, before safely exfiltrating back to your camp.

These maps are swarming with guards that range from *Polizei* - a militia of Russian citizens working for the Germans - to crack SS soldiers whose machine-guns can rip up your squad quicker than a bribe going into a politician's pocket.

The sweeping vision cones of guards, and the complex arrangement of their posts and patrols, makes every step your squad takes fraught with danger.

Hence, the meat of the game involves evading, tricking, and ambushing these patrols, carefully picking them apart as you

inch closer to your goal.

Your partisans start off with next to nothing, a single knife and a handful of rocks you can use to distract guards.

Soon enough, though, you'll have scavenged a wide range of equipment and abilities that'll help you get the upper hand, from guns and grenades to mines and trip-wires that can take out entire squads with careful placement.

One of my favourite partisan 'gadgets' is a simple bottle filled with water. When placed on the ground, bottles attract the attention of thirsty guards hoping for a free swig of schnapps, making them useful for pulling guards out of their patrol patterns. Then you can take care of him silently.

Alongside equipment, your partisans also have unique skills and abilities. Each of your partisans have special abilities.

Commander Zorin, for example, is the game's close combat expert, able to quietly dispatch enemies with a well-aimed knife-throw.

14 year old Sanek, meanwhile, can 'disguise' himself (which means pulling down his cap and shuffling around in a definitely-not-suspicious way) and distract guards by talking to them.

Later on you'll unlock snipers, explosives experts, and even a thief whose special ability is something called "Rib-knife".

While being undetected is the best way to accomplish a mission, being detected doesn't necessarily mean mission failure.

Combat is as much a part of the game as stealth. It's advisable to soften up guard patrols and encampments with stealth before engaging them head on, but most missions can be played pretty aggressively on both easy and normal difficulty.

It's equally possible to defend yourself when things go awry, shifting your partisans into cover, using abilities like suppressing fire to keep the Germans at bay, and using grenades to flush them out so your riflemen can pick them off.

This isn't to say partisans is easy, even on the easiest difficulty. But it's always worth seeing how things will play out, how you can turn what seems like a bad situation to your advantage.

After each mission, your partisans return to their forest camp, where a resource management mini-game awaits. You need to find food and resources to keep the camp running, while



also sending your partisans on autonomous side-missions for varying rewards.

The way weapons and equipment carry over from mission to mission is another neat touch, encouraging you to weigh your options and ensure every bullet counts.

Each mission becomes more ambitious, starting with convoy assaults and rescuing civilians from Nazi death squads, then evolving into blow up bridges and assassinating local leaders.

On each mission you get to choose a team of three partisans. Picking the right team for the mission is crucial. So is the planning and tactics you are going to use.

Each team members has a special ability. Commander Zorin is the leader of the partisan group. Zorin is in his element when playing stealthily, killing quickly, looting, and carrying bodies more efficiently than most characters.

Sanek Is the disguise artist.

He can walk into areas without raising suspicion and he is good at looting.

Belozerova is quick and is lethal with her knife. She also specialises in submachine guns and pistols.

Fetisov is a sergeant in the Soviet Army. He is good in a fire-fight and uses grenades, heavy weapons and SMGs to deadly effect.

Morozov is a thief and can carry more loot than anyone else. He also has the ability to lure a guard away from their patrol routine.

Nikitin was an officer in the Red Army. He can silently kill, swiftly carry, and efficiently loot his way through most any map.

Valya serves as the team's sniper, medic, and lure expert in Partisans 1941. She can sprint quickly, moving from cover to cover and harassing enemies at extreme range.

Trofim, an elderly trapper, is one of the worst characters to

bring on missions where stealth is paramount. Once he levels up though, he's pretty handy. He can spot mines at a good distance.

If you enjoy planning and using solid tactics, then you will enjoy Partisans 1941.



Publisher - Daedalic Entertainment

Genre - RTS

Score - 8/10

Price - R39.80 (on Steam)



Movie Review

Fury

Released: 2014
Running time: 135 minutes
Directed by: David Ayer

Fury is a 2014 American war film written and directed by David Ayer. The film portrays US tank crews fighting in Germany during the final weeks of the European theatre of World War II.

In Nazi Germany in early April 1945, the Allies meet fanatical Waffen-SS resistance. Don "Wardaddy" Collier (Brad Pitt), a battle-hardened US Army Staff sergeant in the 2nd Armoured Division, commands a Sherman tank nicknamed Fury and its veteran crew: gunner Boyd "Bible" Swan (Shia LaBeouf), loader Grady "Coon-Ass" Travis (Jon Bernthal), driver Trini "Gordo" Garcia (Michael Peña), and bow gunner "Red", all of whom have fought together since the North African campaign.

Red is killed and replaced by private Norman Ellison (Logan Lerman), a young clerk with no combat experience.

As Fury moves deeper into Germany, Norman's inexperience becomes dangerous: He spots but fails to shoot a team of Hitler Youth who ambush the platoon leader's tank with a Panzerfaust, killing its entire crew.

Later, Norman hesitates under fire during a skirmish and as a result, Don finds a captured German soldier and gives Norman his M1917 Revolver, ordering him to execute the prisoner.

When he refuses, Don wrestles the revolver into his hand

and forces him to pull the trigger, killing the prisoner and traumatizing Norman.

After the platoon captures a small town, Don and Norman search an apartment and encounter a frightened woman, Irma, and her younger cousin, Emma. Don pays them for a meal and hot water while Norman and Emma bond.

At Don's urging, Norman and Emma go into the bedroom for sex. Later, as the four sit down to eat, the rest of the crew drunkenly barges in. They harass the women and bully Norman until Don puts a stop to it.

As the crew returns to the tank, German artillery hits the town, killing Irma and Emma.

The platoon receives orders to capture and hold a crossroads to protect the division's rear. En route, they are ambushed by a Tiger I tank, which manages to destroy three American tanks. Fury destroys the Tiger by outmanoeuvring it.

Unable to notify his superiors because the radio has been damaged, Don decides they must complete their mission rather than risk going back. Upon arriving at the crossroads, Fury is immobilized by a Teller mine.

Don sends Norman to scout a nearby hill, from which he sees a large number of Waffen-SS approaching.

Don decides to stay, informing the others they are permitted to

leave if they wish. Norman volunteers to stay with Don and the rest of the crew decides to fight as well. The men disguise Fury to appear destroyed and hide inside.

As the German near the tank, the crew opens fire. They inflict heavy casualties on the unsuspecting Germans.

What follows is a furious fire-fight. Will Don Collier or any of the crew manage to survive a fight which they cannot hope to win? You'll have to see the movie to find out.

Not the best World War II movie I've ever watched, but not the worst by a long shot.



Click on the poster to watch a trailer of the film.

Eagle Strike!

This is the story of an audacious, airborne assault, on 4 May 1978, on a SWAPO fortified base containing its military headquarters, logistical support, reserves and training facilities.

The assault was supported by a very strong air strike by bombers and fighters as well as by air transport to drop the paratroopers into battle in one of the major, post World War paratroops, 250kms deep behind enemy lines, swarm of helicopters to extract the paratroopers back to safety, this execution of the whole intricate operation through a joint HQ deployed in the field.

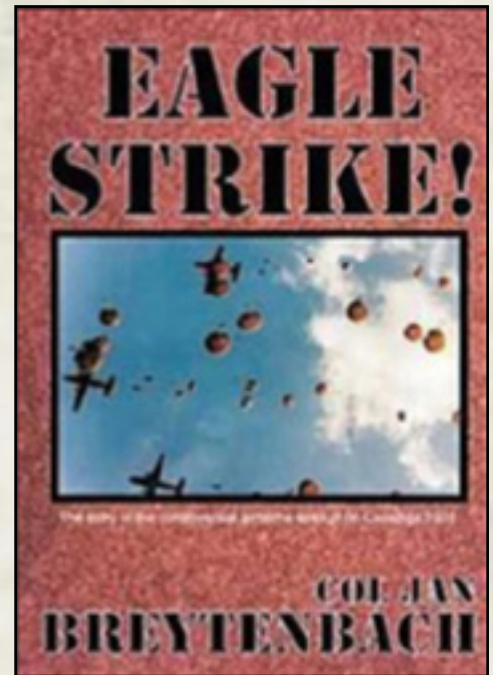
Unfortunately the subsequent uproar in the international media, based on allegations that this assault was a brutal attack on a

refugee camp, did much to detract from the incredible victory the SADF had claimed.

Was it a refugee camp, a SWAPO HQ and strategic military establishment, or a mixture of both.

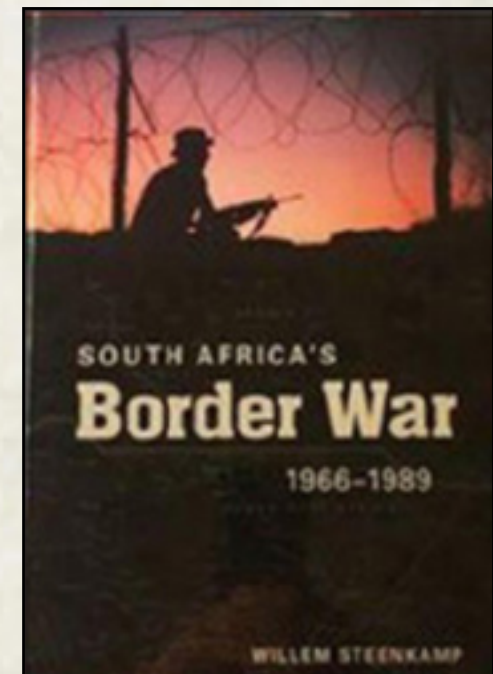
This is the only personal account ever written by somebody on the SADF side who 'was actually there' and who was the commander of the paratroopers.

It also brings to light much more than this brief outline, especially the dangerous nature of the whole enterprise through personal experiences, by paratroopers and air crews, and how and why it nearly became the most disastrous undertaking of the whole 'bush war' era through uncalled for meddling by an outsider who should not have been there.

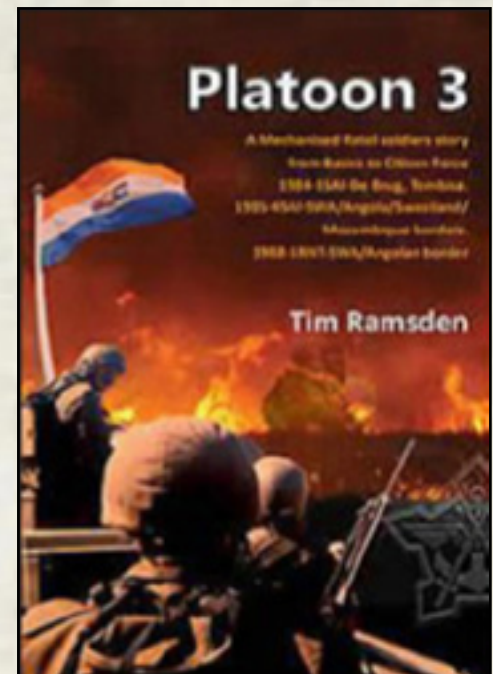


This book is a must for those interested in the South African Border War.

Softcover, 640 pages
Cost: R800



Border War 1966 - 1989
R425



Platoon 3
R330



The Saints
R480

All books are available from [Bush War Books](#)

Some of the significant military events that happened in May. Highlighted in blue are the names of those members of the South African Defence Force (SADF) that lost their lives during the month of May.

1 May

- **1915** - A German U-boat sinks the American tanker 'Gulflight', three killed.
- **1936** - Emperor Haile Selassie leaves Ethiopia as the Italians rout his army.
- **1941** - German assault on Tobruk.
- **1947** - Vice Adm Roscoe Hillenkoeter becomes 1st CIA director.
- **1960** - An American U-2 spy plane was shot down over Sverdlovsk in central Russia on the eve of a summit meeting between President Dwight D. Eisenhower and Soviet Russia's Premier Nikita Khrushchev. The pilot, CIA agent Francis Gary Powers, survived the crash, and was tried, convicted and sentenced to 10 years in prison by a Russian court.
- **1962** - First French underground nuclear blast, in the Sahara.
- **1982** - Two members from Infantry School were killed in a private motor vehicle accident between Edenburg and Bloemfontein while on weekend pass. The casualties were: Rifleman Marnes van Jaarsveld (18). Rifleman Jurgen Swaak (18).
- **1982** - Rifleman Hans Jurie Storm from 1 Parachute Battalion was killed in a private motor vehicle accident near Bloemfontein while on weekend pass. He was 19.

- **1984** - Corporal Johannes Gerhardus Terblanche from 1 SAI was killed instantly when his Ratel Infantry Fighting Vehicle overturned during exercises at the De Brug Training Area. He was 20.

2 May

- **1863** - Stonewall Jackson is wounded by his own men at Chancellorsville, he dies on 10 May.
- **1943** - Japanese aircraft bomb Darwin, Australia.
- **1945** - Berlin formally surrenders to the Red Army.
- **1945** - German forces in Italy surrender.
- **1982** - Falklands War: British sub HMS 'Conqueror' sinks Argentine light cruiser 'General Belgrano', 323 members of the crew are killed.
- **1982** - Rifleman Karel Titus from the South African Cape Corps was killed when he was knocked down and run over by a civilian vehicle while carrying road block duties at Eersterivier. He was 29.
- **1982** - Captain Leon van Wyk from 1 Parachute Battalion was Killed in Action east of Otavi during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 26.
- **1984** - Special Warrant Officer Benyamen Joseph from the SWA Police Counter-In-

surgency Wing: Ops K Division (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 37.

- **1985** - Rifleman Piet Defransa from 201 Battalion SWATF was killed in a military vehicle accident. He was 21.
- **1987** - Three members from 5 Reconnaissance Regiment were Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces at Otchinjau in Southern Angola during Ops Bauwer. They were: Corporal Augusta Fernando (26). Corporal Martin Nyamhunga (24). Corporal Obadiah Malose Sebata (25).
- **1988** - A self-confessed SA spy of the security police in the ANC, Olivia Forsyth, who was held prisoner at ANC Quatro prison camp for seven months and spent another fifteen months under ANC guard in Luanda, evades her guards and takes refuge in the British embassy in Luanda.
- **1990** - Two members from the Cape Regiment were accidentally killed when their Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in Mpumalanga. They were: Corporal Andrew Afrika (23). Rifleman Jan Geduld (36).
- **1990** - Lieutenant Mike Schillings from Group 17

was killed in military vehicle accident at Vereeniging. He was 22.

- **2011** - U.S. Special Operations Forces killed Osama bin Laden during a raid on his secret compound in Abbottabad, Pakistan.

3 May

- **1846** - The Mexican Army invades Texas.
- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: A battle takes place between the British forces under Lord Roberts and the Boers under Gen. De la Rey at Brandfort OFS. De la Rey retreats at nightfall.
- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: General Lord Roberts departs from Bloemfontein and begins the 'March to Pretoria' with almost 44,000 men, 18,000 horses, and 1,200 field-guns. He leaves to the strains of "We are marching to Pretoria" which is heard for the first time.
- **1941** - US supply ships finally reach the British Middle East army at the Suez Canal.



Osama bin Laden

- **1943** - US 1st Armoured Division captures Mateur, Tunisia.
- **1945** - British troops liberate Rangoon from the Japanese.
- **1945** - Polish 10th Armoured Brigade captures Wilhelms-hafen.
- **1945** - RAF sinks several German prison-ships in Lubeck Bay. About 7,500 are killed.
- **1946** - The Allied Military Tribunal in Tokyo begins war crimes trials.
- **1961** - Defence legislation is amended to enable use of the armed forces for the suppression of internal disorder and reorganise the police so as to co-ordinate its command headquarters with that of the military.
- **1969** - Lieutenant Andre Weilbach from 4 Squadron was killed when his AT-6 Harvard failed to recover from a spin and crashed near Hartebeespoorteddam during a routine general flying training sortie. He was 25.
- **1976** - Two members of the Kempton Park Commando were killed in a military vehicle accident in Pretoria. They were: Lance Corporal Johannes Petrus Hendrik Barnard (20). Rifleman Lawrence William Custard (24).
- **1978** - Three thousand members of the Congolese National Liberation Front

(FNLC) invade Zaire's Shaba Province from Angola.

- **1979** - Captain Gabriel Johannes Jacobus Basson from 4 SAI accidentally drowned when his boat struck an underwater obstruction and he was thrown overboard by the impact. He was 28.
- **1982** - Falklands War: Argentine Exocet missile sinks HMS 'Sheffield'.
- **1987** - Corporal Cornelius Johannes Du Toit from Regiment Bloemspruit died from a gunshot wound resulting from an accidental discharge of a fellow soldier's rifle while at Fouriesburg. He was 24.
- **1988** - Representatives of South Africa, United States, Angola and Cuba meet in London (3-4 May) in search of a solution to the Angolan war and independence for Namibia.

4 May

- **1860** - The Orange Free State signs a peace treaty with Moshesh at Wittebergen, near Winburg, after the first Basuto war.
- **1902** - General Smuts, on his way to the national delegation at Vereeniging to start peace negotiations, meets with General Lord Kitchener at Kroonstad, OFS.
- **1916** - Germany abandons unrestricted submarine warfare, at the "request" of the US.
- **1945** - German troops in the Netherlands, Denmark, and Norway surrender.

- **1965** - Units of the SADF are now being equipped with a rifle made completely in South Africa. It is the R1-7.62 mm rifle, developed from the Belgian FN rifle, with improvements.
- **1970** - At Kent State University, four students were killed by National Guardsmen who opened fire on a crowd of 1,000 students protesting President Richard Nixon's decision to invade Cambodia.
- **1978** - South African airborne attack on a South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) military base at the former town of Cassinga, Angola. Conducted as one of the three major actions of Operation Reindeer during the South African Border War, it was the South African Army's first major air assault.
- **1978** - Four members from 2 and 3 Parachute Battalion were Killed in Action during Operation Reindeer and the subsequent assault on Cassinga in Southern Angola. The casualties were: Rifleman Edward James Backhouse (22). Rifleman Martin Kaplan (25). Rifleman Jacob Conrad De Waal (23). Rifleman Andries Petrus Human (29) was reported Missing in Action after jumping from the aircraft at Cassinga. It was later learnt that he had landed in the river and drowned.
- **1978** - Corporal Terence Michael Bridgeman, an Eland

- 90 Armoured Car Crew Commander from 2 Special Service Battalion "D" Squadron Walvis Bay, was Killed in Action. He was 19.
- **1978** - Corporal Herbert Charles Truebody, an Eland 90 Armoured Car Crew Commander from 2 Special Service Battalion "D" Squadron Walvis Bay, was Killed in Action when his Eland 90 armoured car was hit by a Soviet 82mm B10 recoilless anti-tank rocket. He was 19.
- **1981** - Signaller Ronald Christo van Hamersveld from 2 Signal Regiment was killed in Military Vehicle Accident in Pretoria. He was 21.
- **1982** - Special Sergeant N. Tamunila from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops K Division (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 32.
- **1983** - Lance Corporal Gerhardus Daniel Blignaut from 6 SAI was Killed in Action after suffering fatal gunshot wounds when his patrol walked into a SWAPO/PLAN ambush. He was 21.
- **1988** - Six members from 101 Battalion SWATF were Killed in Action during a contact with a numerically superior enemy force at Donguena, North of Calueque in Southern Angola. Private Papenfus from the

Technical Service Corps was captured during this encounter and later taken to Cuba. He was released a few years later. The casualties were: Lance Corporal Hendrik Jacobus Venter (20). Lance Corporal F. Petrus (22). Rifleman L. Haifiku (24). Rifleman H. Haimbodi (22). Rifleman W. Robert (23). Rifleman J. Petrus (20).

5 May

- **1821** - France's Napoleon Bonaparte dies in exile on the island of St. Helena.
- **1941** - Emperor Haile Selassie returns to Addis Ababa.
- **1942** - US begins rationing sugar during WW II.
- **1942** - A combined British military and naval force land on Madagascar and by the afternoon the town of Diego Suarez is captured.
- **1945** - Okinawa: 131 Kamikaze sink 17 ships.
- **1945** - German troops in the Netherlands surrender to the Allies.
- **1965** - First large US ground units arrive in South Vietnam.
- **1969** - P.W. Botha, the Minister of Defence, announces that an air-to-air projectile has been perfected by South Africa.
- **1977** - Rifleman Hendrik Johannes Jordaan from Regiment Westelike Provinsie was Killed in Action when he detonated a landmine while on patrol in the Jati Strip. He was 21.
- **1977** - Willem Johannes Pi-

etersen drowned while on Observation Post duties on the Kavango River. He was 20.

- **1980** - Rifleman Simon Kapuna from (35 Battalion) 101 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Southern Angola. He was 24.
- **1980** - Two members of 8 SAI were Killed in Action after suffering multiple shrapnel wounds when their TB came under attack from SWAPO/PLAN insurgents using mortars and RPG-7 Anti-Tank Rockets. The casualties were: Rifleman Derek van den Berg (21). Rifleman Andre Johannes Redelinghuys (20).
- **1987** - Lance Corporal Rodney Abraham Scott from Group 39 was killed in a motor vehicle accident at Barkley East. He was 21.
- **2000** - Sierra Leone rebels seize peacekeepers from Zambia, raising to more



Claude Choules

than 300 the number of UN personnel they are believed to be holding captive and dealing another blow to UN peacekeeping efforts in Africa.

- **2011** - Claude Stanley Choules dies in Australia at the age of 110. He was the last combat veteran of World War I and also the last veteran to have served in both World Wars.

6 May

- **1906** - British troops kill over sixty Zulus during a punitive expedition near Durban, Natal.
- **1915** - Gallipoli: Allies attack Cape Hellas.
- **1942** - Corregidor and the Philippines surrender to the Japanese
- **1943** - Allied forces on their way to Tunis wipe out German 15th Panzer Division.
- **1945** - Axis Sally makes her last broadcast.
- **1955** - West Germany joins NATO.
- **1962** - USS 'Ethan Allen' (SSBN-608) fires the first nuclear warhead from a submerged submarine.
- **1976** - Two crew members from 27 Squadron were Reported Missing when their Piaggio P166S Albatross disappeared south of Dassen Island while returning from a long range West Coast Sea Patrol. The crew have no known grave and re-

main unaccounted for. They were: Major Raymond Hall Carter (52). Captain Gideon Machiel Albertus Rossouw (25).

- **1978** - South Africa is condemned by the United States of America for its recent raid into Angola (Operation Reindeer).
- **1982** - Lieutenant Raymond Roderick Hughes from 6 Squadron was killed near Port Elizabeth while approaching to land in Atlas MB326M Impala Mk I while returning from a routine training flight. He was 25.
- **1983** - Rifleman Louis Smit from Regiment Westelike Provinsie suffered a fatal heart attack and died while on a foot patrol in the Operational Area. He was 25.
- **1991** - Gunner Phillipus Andries van der Merwe from 25 Field Regiment was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned at Batavia. He was 18.
- **1992** - Rifleman Ralph Jeffrey Steyn from 3 SAI was killed at Imbali Township near Pietermaritzburg when his Buffel Troop Carrier suffered brake failure and overturned. He was 22.

7 May

- **1915** - The British passenger ship Lusitania was torpedoed by a German submarine off the coast of Ireland, losing 1,198 of its 1,924 passengers, including 114 Americans. The attack hastened neutral America's entry into

- World War I.
- **1937** - Germany's Condor Legion arrives in Spain to help the Nationalists.
- **1939** - Germany and Italy announce a military and political alliance known as the Rome-Berlin Axis.
- **1942** - World War II: East Africa. Naval bases on Madagascar are surrendered to the British by Vichy forces.
- **1943** - World War II: Final Allied Offensive, Tunisia. General Sir Harold Alexander's 18th Army Group captures Bizerte and Tunis. All that remains of the German force is General Gustav von Vaerst's 5th Panzer Army on the Cape Bon peninsula.
- **1945** - World War II: Germany signs an unconditional surrender at Allied headquarters in Rheims, France, to take effect the following day, ending the European conflict of World War II.
- **1946** - British Prime Minister, Clement Attlee, announces plans to withdraw British troops from Egypt, dependent upon agreement for a military alliance for the protection of the Suez Canal.
- **1954** - The French Indochina War ended with the fall of Dien Bien Phu, in a stunning victory by the Vietnamese over French colonial forces in northern Vietnam. The country was then divided in half at the 17th parallel, with South Vietnam created in 1955.
- **1982** - Corporal Hercules Petrus Bester from 5 SAI

- was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents at Tsumeb. He was 20.
- **1982** - Private Barry Andre van Tonder from the Technical Service Corps was accidentally electrocuted at Lohatla and could not be revived. He was 22.
- **1983** - Two members from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops K Division (Koevoet) were Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. They were: Special Warrant Officer Lebeus Vilho (36). Constable Nico Johannes Swiegers (22).
- **1984** - Special Sergeant Filupus Matheus from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops K Division (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 28.
- **1985** - Gunner Conrad Heathcote from 10 Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment collapsed and died after suffering a fatal heart attack during Junior Leaders Course at Youngsfield. He was 24.
- **1985** - Rifleman A.H. Ambrosius from 101 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents near the Cut-Line. He was 19.
- **1987** - Rifleman Christo-

- pher George Docherty from 7 SAI was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned at Barberton. He was 23.
- **1997** - Former Defence Minister Magnus Malan takes full responsibility for secret apartheid raids into neighbouring countries but says they were all state-sanctioned and legal.
- **2000** - Rebels in Sierra Leone use civilians as shields while fighting UN forces.

8 May

- **1902** - A combined force of British soldiers and armed Blacks attempts to surround General C.H. Muller's commando, commanded in his absence by Col. Trichardt, near Belfast. The attackers are repulsed.
- **1940** - The Cape Corps, consisting of Cape Coloured men, is reformed under Col. C.N. Hoy.
- **1941** - Royal Navy captures 'U-110', with an intact Enigma machine.
- **1942** - During World War II in the Pacific, the Battle of the Coral Sea began in which Japan would suffer its first defeat of the war.
- **1943** - World War II: Final Allied Offensive, Tunisia. Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham, Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean Fleet launches Operation 'Retribution', to prevent Axis forces from evacuating North Africa.
- **1945** - A second German sur-

- render ceremony was held in Berlin. Soviet Russia's leader Josef Stalin had refused to recognize the German surrender document signed a day earlier at Reims.
- **1950** - General Douglas MacArthur is appointed commander of the United Nations (UN) forces in Korea, including South Africans.
- **1952** - US conducts the first H-Bomb test at Eniwetok Atoll.
- **1966** - WO1 Louis Matthys Jakobus Pienaar from the Artillery School was killed when his Landrover was involved in a head-on collision with a civilian vehicle near Heidelberg. He was 45.
- **1980** - Rifleman Simon Kanunu from 35 Battalion (Later 202 Battalion) SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 22.
- **1980** - Two members of 36 Battalion (Later 203 Battalion)



Joseph Stalin

9 May

- **1936** - Five days after Italy captured the Ethiopian capital of Addis Ababa, Mussolini annexes Ethiopia and announces that Abyssinia is now part of the Italian Empire.
- **1945** - Czechoslovakia liberated from Nazi occupation.

- ion) SWATF were Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. They were: Rifleman Kumsa Ntamshe (22). Rifleman David Twi (20).
- **1981** - Two members from 2 SAI were Killed in action in a landmine explosion in Northern Owamboland. They were: Lance Corporal Johannes Petrus Botha (19). Rifleman Johannes Willem Hanekom (22).
- **1985** - Rifleman Petrus Johannes Theron from the Germiston Commando was killed in a head-on collision between two Buffel Troop Carriers in the Kathlehong Township. He was 26.
- **1985** - Special Constable Linus Abraham from the South West Africa Police Counter Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 24.

10 May

- **1857** - Sepoy uprising at Meerut initiates the Indian Mutiny.
- **1918** - Royal Navy commando raid on Ostend: HMS 'Vindictive' is sunk to block the Harbour.
- **1940** - British form the Home Guard (Dad's Army).
- **1940** - Germany invades France, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg.
- **1940** - Kurt Student becomes the first general to make

combat parachute jump, over Rotterdam.

- **1940** - Luftwaffe bombs Freiburg, Germany, by mistake; Goebbles blames the RAF.
- **1940** - Winston S. Churchill becomes Prime Minister of the UK.
- **1941** - Rudolf Hess, Adolph Hitler's deputy, parachutes into Scotland.
- **1946** - Italy's former colonies in North Africa are to be placed under UN control.
- **1956** - France sends 50,000 reservists to Algeria.
- **1968** - Vietnam War: Paris peace talks begin, as does the Battle of Hamburger Hill.
- **1983** - Four members from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) were Killed in Action during fierce engagement with a numerically superior force of SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. They were: Sergeant A. Willem (27). Special Constable U. Maundu (25). Special Constable T. Mben-dura (28). Special Constable J. Musaso (24).

11 May

- **1862** - To prevent its capture by Union forces advancing in Virginia, the Confederate Ironclad Merrimac was destroyed by the Confederate Navy.
- **1914** - Taza, Morocco, is occupied by French troops.
- **1915** - World War I: The force of the Union of South

Africa enters Windhoek, capital of South West Africa.

- **1943** - World War II: Final Allied Offensive, Tunisia. General Gustav von Vaerst's 5th Panzer Army finally surrenders on the Cape Bon peninsula, Tunisia.
- **1943** - RMS 'Queen Mary' arrives at New York with Winston Churchill and the British Chiefs of Staff, en route to Washington, as well as 5,000 Afrika Korps veterans bound for POW camps, and the 300 troops guarding them.
- **1955** - Israeli raid on Gaza.
- **1960** - Israeli agents capture Adolf Eichmann in Buenos Aires.
- **1966** - Lieutenant Ian Pieter Roos from 1 Squadron was killed when his Canadair CL13B Sabre crashed near Waterkloof during a routine general flying training flight. He was 21.
- **1978** - Private Pieter Benade from 84 Technical Stores Depot was killed in a military motor vehicle accident at Grahamstown. He was 20.
- **1982** - Rifleman Jaques Samuae Du Preez from the Army Intelligence Corps was Killed in Action during an attack on the "Kanjimi Marenga" school where he was serving as a teacher. He was 19.
- **1982** - Corporal Don Stoffel Olyn from 911 Battalion SWATF was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned during a patrol in the Etosha Pan. He was 18.

- **1985** - Corporal Mark Anthony Pond from 905 Special Services Company was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Southern Angola.
- **1986** - Three members from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops K Division (Koevoet) were Killed in Action during a fierce contact with heavily armed PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland when their Z5S Casspir was hit by a Soviet RPG-7 Anti-Tank Rocket. The casualties were: Constable Ignatius Francois van Zyl (25). Special Constable Simeon Shindele (25). Special Constable Simon Toivo (24).

12 May

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Lord Roberts enters Kroonstad. President M.T. Steyn proclaims Heilbron in the Orange Free State as his new capital.
- **1941** - Urgent supplies, including tanks and aircraft arrive at the Egyptian port of Alexandria with the convoy, code-named 'Tiger'. General Wavell can now prepare for operation 'Brevity', and the push against Rommel's forces on the Egypt-Libya border.
- **1949** - Soviet Russia lifted its blockade of Berlin.
- **1973**- 2nd Lieutenant Jacobus Petrus Kolver from 6 Squadron was killed when his AT-6 Harvard spun into

the ground near the Sundays River during a routine general flying training flight. He was 21.

- **1975** - Trooper Pieter Gabriel Eybers from 2 Special Service Battalion was accidentally killed when he fell out of a patrol observation post in the Operational Area. He was 20.
- **1980** - Rifleman Cornelius Johannes Nortje from 1 SAI attached to 61 Mech Battalion was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned in Northern Owamboland. He was 19.
- **1982** - Lance Corporal Michael Simon Ngoma from 5 Reconnaissance Regiment died from gunshot wounds accidentally sustained. He was 24.
- **1983** - Rifleman Frank Paul Couvelis from 912 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action in Southern Angola when his convoy was ambushed by a numerically superior enemy force.



Kurt Student

- **1988** - Rifleman Dean Anthony Lones from Regiment Dan Pienaar was killed in a military vehicle accident at Hazyview near White River. He was 25.
 - **2000** - Ignoring international pleas to end their two-year border conflict, Ethiopia and Eritrea return to open war with fighting reported on three fronts.
- 13 May**
- **1940** - Churchill promises "blood, toil, tears, and sweat."
 - **1940** - Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands flees to England to avoid capture by the Germans.
 - **1943** - World War II: The Italian commander-in-chief in Tunisia surrenders a day after his German counterpart, with the Allies holding some 250,000 prisoners of war.
 - **1946** - US sentences 58 Mauthausen concentration camp guards to death.
 - **1964** - Rifleman Paul Jacobus Krogh from 1 Parachute Battalion was accidentally shot dead by a fellow soldier in the Barracks in Tempe, Bloemfontein. He was 20.
 - **1981** - Rifleman Mike Williams from the South African Intelligence Corps was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident, at Madimbo. He was 21.

- **1988** - Foreign Affairs Minister Pik Botha and Defence Minister Magnus Malan hold talks in Brazzaville, Congo, with an Angolan delegation headed by Minister of Justice Fernando van Dunem.

14 May

- **1942** - During World War II, an Act of Congress allowed women to enlist for non-combat duties in the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps (WAAC), the Women Appointed for Voluntary Emergency Service (WAVES), Women's Auxiliary Ferrying Squadron (WAFS), and Semper Paratus Always Ready Service (SPARS), the Women's Reserve of the Marine Corp.
- **1943** - Japanese submarine sinks Australian hospital ship 'Centaur' off Brisbane, 268 of 332 persons aboard die; wreck is found in 2009, with the Red Cross still prominent on her sides.
- **1976** - 2nd Lieutenant Lionel John Kidson from 6 SAI was critically injured when his Unimog vehicle overturned on the "Wit Pad", close to Eenhana. He and the other injured were airlifted to the Grootfontein Hospital where he died during the night. He was 19.
- **1978** - Communist-backed Katangan gendarmes, who had been living in neighbouring Angola, invade the region around Kolwezi in southern Zaire. Zairian troops are sent into quell the

violence.

- **1980** - Three members from 8 SAI were killed after receiving multiple shrapnel wounds in an accidental M26 hand grenade explosion at Okalongo in Northern Owamboland. They were: Lance Corporal Andre David Naude (21). Rifleman Frederick Engelbrecht (18). Rifleman Willem Johannes Landman (20).
- **1982** - Rifleman Andre Jodt from the South West Africa Territory Force Gymnasium was killed in a military vehicle accident. He was 29.
- **1986** - Staff Sergeant Jan Carl Bergh from the Soutpansberg Commando was killed in a private vehicle accident while on his way to the Unit Headquarters after being called up for duty during the state of emergency. He was 42.
- **1987** - Rifleman L. Emmanuel from 201 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 24.

15 May

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: General Buller and Lord Dundonald enter Dundee. Lyttelton's division captures Glencoe.
- **1902** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Vereeniging conference begins. The sixty Boer representatives elect General C.F. Beyers as chairman.
- **1940** - German troops occu-

py Amsterdam as the Dutch Army surrenders.

- **1941** - World War II: Operation 'Brevity'. British forces regain Halfaya Pass and capture the towns of Sollum and Capuzzo on the Egypt-Libya border.
- **1944** - Eisenhower & Montgomery brief George VI & Churchill on the D-Day plan.
- **1957** - First British A-bomb explosion, Christmas Island, the Pacific.
- **1973** - Private Harry Cornelius Theron from 1 Maintenance Unit was accidentally shot dead by a fellow soldier at the 1 Maintenance Unit weapons store while they were in the process of cleaning and checking firearms. He was 18.
- **1980** - Rifleman Glen Andrew Paul from 8 SAI was critically wounded after receiving multiple shrapnel wounds in an accidental hand grenade explosion at Okalongo in Northern Owamboland on 14 May 1980, he unfortunately succumbed to his wounds on 15 May 1980. He was 20.
- **1981** - Rifleman Willie Elefante from 201 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN Insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 22.
- **1984** - Rifleman Malekudu Johannes Nkada from 113 Battalion was killed when his Buffel Troop Carrier overturned while on patrol near Messina. He was 23.

- **1985** - Special Constable K. Tjindunda from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 27.
- **1986** - Lance Corporal Isaac Londo from 101 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action in a landmine explosion in Northern Owamboland. He was 26.

16 May

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: A 'flying' column that has sped its way straight from Kimberley (reinforced further by Canadian troops) comes to the aid of Mafeking who is under siege by Boer forces.
- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: General Hunter occupies Christiana, the first ZAR town to be captured.
- **1941** - World War II: North Africa. Believing that previous day's advance by British forces into Sollum and Fort Capuzzo was the start of an attack on Tobruk, General Rommel attacks and forces the British back to Halfaya Pass.
- **1943** - German troops destroy the main synagogue of Warsaw.
- **1964** - Six members of the SADF were killed when their Military Vehicle was involved in a head-on collision with a Military Recovery vehicle while return-

ing from a sports event at Uniondale. The casualties were: Staff Sergeant Abraham Carel Prinsloo (30). Sergeant Johannes Hendrik August Agenbach (22). Corporal Pieter Johannes Kotze (22). Trooper Izak Sybrand Visagie (20). Bombardier Johannes Adrianas Du Toit (21). Rifleman Johannes Frederick Wepener (18).

- **1981** - WO II Isak Philipus Venter from North West Command Headquarters was accidentally killed at Stilfontein when he was knocked down by a civilian vehicle during the Republic Day preparation festivities. He was 47.
- **1981** - Rifleman Benjamin Buys from 16 Maintenance Unit was killed when his private motor vehicle overturned at Grootfontein. It appears that he had fallen asleep behind the wheel. He was 20.
- **1997** - Mobutu Sese Seko, who has ruled Zaire for more



Mobutu Sese Seko

than 30 years, looting it of billions of dollars, flees the capital city as rebel forces advance. The rebels enter the city the next day and Laurent Kabila declares himself head of state.

17 May

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: After 216 days Boer forces abandon the siege of Mafeking and Colonel Mahon's relief column enters the town.
- **1940** - Germans capture Brussels.
- **1941** - World War II: North Africa. Rommel is instructed by Berlin to leave Tobruk to the Italians and concentrate his *Deutsches Afrika Korps* on the fight along the Egypt-Libya border.
- **1943** - Operation Chastise: RAF 617 Squadron ("The Dam Busters") destroys the Ruhr Valley dams.
- **1981** - Signaler Albert Peter Jordaan from the Army Signals Training Centre at Heidelberg was killed in a private motor vehicle accident between Heidelberg and Grootvlei, on the N3. He was travelling home on weekend pass after standing guard duty the whole night. He was 18.
- **1987** - USS 'Stark' (FFG-31) hit by Iraqi missiles, 37 sailors die.
- **1988** - Former information officer of the SADF, Brig-

adier J. Bosman, reveals in Parliament that one third of the 3 000 troops involved in SA's operation in south-east Angola are not White. In addition 65% to 70% of the soldiers in the operational area were 'people of colour'.

- **1989** - A military coup fails to remove Mengistu Haile Mariam as president of Ethiopia.
- **1991** - Rifleman Antonio Joao Sampaio from 32 Battalion was Killed in Action after being struck in the neck by an AK-47 bullet fired from an unknown gunman while he was on patrol in Tokoza Township. He was 34.

18 May

- **1804** - Napoleon Bonaparte became Emperor of France, snatching the crown from the hands of Pope Pius VII during the actual coronation ceremony, and then crowning himself.
- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Boer negotiators, Generals Botha, De Wet, De la Rey, Smuts and Hertzog attend peace talks in Pretoria with Lord Milner and Lord Kitchener. They are still asking for a continued independence of the former republics.
- **1941** - World War II: East Africa. The 5th Indian Division, part of General William Platt's Northern Force, takes Amba Alagi after eighteen days of fighting. The Italian commander, Duke d'Aosta, is the last one to leave the

fortress.

- **1944** - The Polish II Corps storms Monte Cassino.
- **1967** - UN agrees to Egyptian demand to withdraw UN forces from Gaza Strip.
- **1973** - Staff Sergeant Kevin Everitt Potgieter from 1 Parachute Battalion was killed in a parachute accident at Tempe. He was 27.
- **1980** - Four members from 41 Battalion were Killed in Action during a contact with a numerically superior force of SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. The casualties were: Rifleman Hendrik Balie (21). Rifleman Dawid Goliath (29). Rifleman Vincent Sekopomashe (25). Rifleman Joseph Tjipuna (22).
- **1982** - Rifleman Likambo Zecks Maxwell from 701 Battalion SWATF was killed after suffering multiple shrapnel wounds in an accidental mortar bomb explosion at Nkongo Base. He was 21.
- **1994** - Military observers returning to the Rwandan countryside report ethnic killings of at least 200,000.
- **1997** - Rebels led by Laurent Kabila take control of Kinshasa, capital of Zaire now the Democratic Republic of the Congo, after overrunning the country in seven months.
- **1999** - Sierra Leone's government and the country's rebels agree to a cease-fire to end seven years of savage fighting.
- **2000** - The UN Security

Council unanimously approves an arms embargo against Ethiopia and Eritrea following the latest flare-up in their two-year border war.

19 May

- **1931** - "Pocket Battleship" 'Deutschland' launched in Germany.
- **1935** - T. E. Lawrence, better known as 'Lawrence of Arabia', is killed in a motorcycle accident at the age of 46.
- **1940** - Charles De Gaulle's 4th Armoured Division counter-attacks the Germans at Péronne.
- **1951** - UN begins counter offensive in Korea.
- **1958** - The North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) is established.
- **1967** - US bombs Hanoi.
- **1978** - Rifleman Adriaan Adolf Jonker from the Midlands Commando died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained as a result of an accidental discharge of a fellow soldiers rifle while he was serving in the Operational Area. He was 24.
- **1983** - Lance Corporal Colin Watson Kindness from 4 SAI, attached to 61 Mechanised Battalion Group died from a gunshot wound accidentally sustained as a result of an accidental discharge of a fellow soldiers rifle while the platoon was 'Falling In' during musketry training. He was 22.
- **1986** - South African troops

carry out raids in Botswana, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, killing three people.

- **1987** - Rifleman John Barnard from Regiment Bloemspruit was killed in a military vehicle accident at Van Stakensrus. He was 25.
- **1996** - French troops move into downtown Bangui, Central African Republic, to help quell an army uprising.
- **1998** - The name of the military base, Voortrekkerhoogte is officially changed to Thaba Tshwane.

20 May

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: A squadron of Colonel E.C. Bethune, under Captain Geoff, runs into a well-placed ambush under Commandant Blignaut at Scheepers Nek, ten km south west of Vryheid. The British lose twenty-seven killed, twenty-five wounded, eleven taken prisoner and twenty-nine horses killed. The Boers capture a machine gun and twenty-six horses, while losing one burgher killed, one wounded and one captured by the British.
- **1902** - US military occupation of Cuba (since June of 1898) ends.
- **1940** - German tanks reach the Channel.
- **1940** - World War II: The 1st SA Infantry Brigade is called up for continuous training, to be followed by other units, including the SA Artillery Corps, Engineer Corps and the newly formed Tank

Corps.

- **1942** - Japanese submarine-borne aircraft reconnoiter Durban, South Africa.
- **1970** - Two members from Flying Training School Langebaanweg were killed when their Atlas MB326M Impala Mk I flipped over on the runway during a landing at Air Force Base Langebaanweg. They were: Major Gabriel Hendrik van Dyk (31). Captain Phillip Spencer Weyer (25).
- **1979** - Special Constable Petrus Mabashe from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 26.
- **1981** - Three members of the SADF were Killed in Action while on a vehicle patrol from Okankolo northeast along the Odilla River bed. The casualties were: 2nd Lieutenant Stephen

Soloman Hansen (19). Sapper Jan Hendrik Smith (19). Sapper Anthonie Christoffel Strydom (19).

- **1982** - Corporal Brian Gerald Peterson from 701 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 19.
- **1983** - A powerful car bomb placed by MK Operatives exploded outside the Air Force Headquarters building in Church Street during the afternoon rush-hour period killing seven members of the SADF and 10 civilians. Another 197 SADF personnel and civilians were wounded in the explosion that also killed the two MK Operatives who had placed the bomb. The SADF casualties were: Colonel Stefanus Sebastiaan Walters (43). Commandant Johan de Villiers (47). Commandant Izak Johannes Henning (60). Captain Rian Hendrik Liebenberg (26). Flight Sergeant Jacob Johannes Ras (38). Corporal Anton Nel (22). Airman Wayne Lawrence Kirtley (19).
- **1983** - Rifleman John Philip Olivier from Regiment Groot Karoo was Killed in Action near Mupa. He was 24.
- **1987** - Chief Petty Officer Jan Johannes Barend Mostert was killed in a military vehi-

cle accident at Nelspoort. He was returning from Simons-town after collecting sports equipment when his vehicle overturned. He was 38.

- **1987** - Private Clifton Brian Kilian from 97 Ammunition Depot was killed in a military vehicle accident at Mokerong. He was 19.
- **1988** - Rifleman Motsemoholo Joseph Mpembe from 5 Reconnaissance Regiment was killed in a parachuting accident at Kenilworth. He was 23.
- **1988** - Rifleman Andre Petrus Prinsloo from 16 Maintenance Unit was killed in a military vehicle accident 10km South of Windhoek. He was 21.
- **1998** - Ethiopia and Eritrea amass thousands of troops along their border, ready to fight over a 640-square km triangle of disputed land.

21 May

- **1902** - Second Anglo-Boer War: The proposed peace proposals agreed on by a commission of five, Botha, De la Rey, De Wet and Hertzog, with Kitchener and Milner, are received in London.
- **1941** - SS 'Robin Moore' is sunk off Brazil, first U-boat kill of an American ship in World War II.
- **1944** - World War II: Allied forces break through the Hitler Line in Italy.
- **1951** - USSR announces it will sell arms to Egypt.
- **1956** - US explodes the first air-dropped hydrogen bomb,



T E Lawrence

- Bikini Atoll
- **1974** - The British Prime Minister, Harold Wilson, states in the House of Commons that the export license for a Westland Wasp helicopter to South Africa will be revoked.
- **1976** - Private Adriaan Johannes van der Merwe from the 4th Provost Company, South African Corps of Military Police was killed in Military Vehicle Accident at Grootfontein. He was 19.
- **1978** - French and Belgian paratroopers who were flown into Kolwezi, Zaire's main copper producing town, to rescue the 3,000 White residents, have discovered over 150 bodies lying in the town's main streets. Most have been badly mutilated. Communist-backed Katangese gendarmes, who had invaded the region earlier this month, are blamed. Zairian troops, who had been sent in a week ago, appear to have joined with the Katangese gendarmes, getting high on drugs and going on the murder spree.
- **1980** - Fifteen members from 32 Battalion were Killed in Action during heavy close-quarter fighting against a vastly numerically superior enemy force of FAPLA troops and PLAN insurgents during an engagement to neutralise an enemy base complex at Savate in Southern Angola during Operation Tiro a Tiro. The casualties were: Captain An-

- dre Erasmus (28). Lieutenant Charl de Jongh Muller (23). 2nd Lieutenant Timothy Simmons Patrick (18). 2nd Lieutenant Johannes Mattheus Heyns Muller (19). Corporal Eduard Coetzee Engelbrecht (19). Lance Corporal Andrew Jeremy Falkus (20). Lance Corporal Joao Kaumba (21). Rifleman Rodrigues Alberto (27). Rifleman Benedito Albino (25). Rifleman Sebastiao Angelo (22). Rifleman Manuel Augusto (26). Rifleman Antonio Caliango (31). Rifleman Abel Livingue (23). Rifleman Casto Marcelino (24). Rifleman Joaquim Matamba (22).
- **1985** - Three members of the Air Force Base Waterkloof Fire Section were Killed in Action after being called to assist the Pretoria Fire Department in extinguishing a massive fire at the SASOL Bulk Storage Depot in Pretoria West after Soviet SPM limpet mines planted by MK Operatives had exploded and damaged some of the large fuel storage tanks. The casualties were: Sergeant Wynand Jacobus Hawkins (30). Corporal Donald Graham Clench (22). Airman Michael Sydney Knoetze (23).
- **1985** - A SADF unit is ambushed at the Cabinda oil refinery in Angola and Special Forces Captain Wynand du Toit is taken captive.
- **1985** - Two members from 4 Reconnaissance Regiment

- were Killed in Action during a Reconnaissance Operation in Cabinda Province of Northern Angola. Captain Wynand du Toit is captured. The casualties were: Corporal Rowland Ridgard Liebenberg (25). Corporal Louis Pieter van Breda (25).
- **1985** - Three members from 101 Battalion SWATF were killed when their Caspir Vehicle overturned at Ondangwa. They were: Rifleman J Kandjii (27). Rifleman M Domingos (26). Rifleman J Felosiano (25).
- **1986** - Rifleman Gabriel Gerhardus Malan from 7 SAI was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident at Kwandebele. He was 19.
- **1986** - Corporal D Mauriocu from 5 Reconnaissance Regiment was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola. He was 24.

22 May

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: USA President McKinley says he will not intervene in the war in South Africa despite direct requests by Boer representatives visiting the White House.
- **1915** - Italy declares war on Austria-Hungary.
- **1941** - World War II: East Africa. Caught between a pincer movement of the 11th and 12th African Divisions, the Abyssinian town of Soddu is captured. It was the penultimate point of resistance to the Allied campaign in

- East Africa; only Gondar, to the north, still remains under Italian control.
- **1941** - British troops take Baghdad, deposing pro-Nazi Iraqi regime.
- **1942** - Mexico declares war on Nazi Germany and Japan.
- **1945** - The Allies dissolve the "Dönitz Government," and abolish German sovereignty.
- **1945** - After being captured by the British, Heinrich Himmler commits suicide. He was 44.
- **1960** - Israel announces the capture of Nazi Adolf Eichmann in Argentina.
- **1965** - Minister of Defence Jim Fouché announces that R12m. has been spent on the defence radar screen in the Transvaal.
- **1969** - Trooper Hendrik Erlank Pieterse from 84 Technical Stores Depot was killed in a military vehicle accident. He was 19.
- **1983** - Rifleman Johannes Engelbrecht from the Infantry School was critically injured in a private motor



Kat Liebenberg

- vehicle accident near Colesburg and later succumbed to his injuries in the Universitas Hospital, Bloemfontein. He was 22.
- **1985** - Major Jan Pen Wesels from 85 Combat Flying School was killed when his Dassault Mirage IID2Z crashed near Pietersburg. He was 36.
- **1994** - Rwandan rebels seize the key government army barracks in Kigali, removing the biggest obstacle in their drive to capture the capital.

23 May

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: British troops arrive at the Renoster River only to find that the Boers have destroyed the bridge.
- **1966** - The Fort Klapperkop military museum, Pretoria, mainly illustrating the period from the Great Trek to 1902, is opened by President C.R. Swart.
- **1979** - Two members from 5 Reconnaissance Regiment were Killed in Action at Shona Mutamanjamba in Southern Angola while carrying out reconnaissance mission to locate a suspected SWAPO/PLAN Base in the area. The casualties were: Captain Johannes Cornelius van Wyk HC (27). Corporal Johan Kloosterziel (22).
- **1983** - Rifleman Coenraad Jacobus Bezuidenhout from Regiment De La Rey was

- killed instantly when a Soviet PG-7 Anti-Tank Rocket was accidentally detonated inside their Buffel Troop Carrier while travelling on the Oshakati-Oshikuku road. He was 24.
- **1983** - 2nd Lieutenant Jacobus Edward Visser from 202 Battalion SWATF was killed in a motor cycle accident at Rundu. He was 23.
- **1983** - In response to a car bomb attack in Pretoria on 20 May, the South African Air Force bombs ANC bases in a Maputo suburb, Mozambique, killing six.
- **1998** - General Andreas "Kat" Liebenberg, ex-chief of the SA defence force, dies of cancer in Pretoria.

24 May

- **1870** - Jan Christian Smuts, who was to become the Union of South Africa's second prime minister, is born on the farm Bovenplaats near Riebeeck West in the Cape.
- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Britain annexes the Orange Free State. Lord Roberts changes the name to Orange River Colony.
- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Colonel Robert Baden-Powell occupies Zeerust.
- **1902** - Second Anglo-Boer War: British General Sir Ian Hamilton attends General Jan Christiaan Smuts' birthday party: "I sat between Botha and De la Ray. On Botha's right was De Wet, on De la Ray's left sat Smuts.

I had the most enchanting evening, and never wish to eat my dinner in better company.”

- **1916** - Britain introduces conscription.
- **1916** - Germans capture Ft. Douaumont, Verdun, from the French.
- **1921** - The British Legion, now the Royal British Legion, is formed by Great War veterans.
- **1941** - Battle of the Denmark Straits: the 'Bismarck' sinks HMS 'Hood', 1,416 are killed. There are only three survivors.
- **1979** - Private Albertus Mundy from 16 Maintenance Unit was killed in a military vehicle accident at Grootfontein. He was 21.
- **1991** - Corporal Revis Omie Khoza from the Kruger Park Commando was killed after he was attacked and trampled to death by an enraged buffalo while on patrol in the Kruger National Park. He was 35.

25 May

- **1857** - In an attempt to unite the two Boer republics, the commandoes of the Free State and Transvaal (Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek) confront each other at the Renoster River, but an armed clash is averted through mediation of Paul Kruger and others.
- **1940** - German troops reach the Channel near Boulogne.
- **1977** - US raises concern over the presence of Cuban

military advisers in Ethiopia.

- **1977** - Sergeant William Henry Bernard Gildenhuys HC (Posthumous) from the Cape Town Highlanders was killed after suffering multiple shrapnel wounds while detached to Alpha Company, 1 Parachute Battalion for special duties. He was 28.
- **1981** - Special Warrant Officer Antonio Chiwale from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN Insurgents in Northern Owamboland.
- **1982** - Rifleman Daniel de Klerk from 4 SAI was Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents. He was 19.
- **1982** - Private Wayne Peter Lourens from 86 Technical Stores Depot went for dental treatment in Bloemfontein. After receiving a dental injection, he suddenly lapsed into a coma and was rushed to hospital where he later died. He was 21.
- **1982** - Three members from 202 Battalion SWATF were Killed in Action during a contact with enemy Forces in Southern Angola. They were: Rifleman G. Muronga (24). Rifleman A.H. Kudumo (25). Rifleman L. Kudumo (26).
- **1983** - Sergeant Alberto Costa from the South West Africa Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops-K Division (Koevoet) was Killed

in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN Insurgents in Northern Owamboland. He was 25.

- **1984** - Rifleman Craig Rudolph Olivier from the Durban Light Infantry died in 1 Military Hospital after being critically injured in a military vehicle accident. He was 22.
- **1987** - Two members from 111 Battalion were killed in a military vehicle accident on the Carolina Road approximately 30 km from Amsterdam. They were: Rifleman Menzie Albert Moyo (22). Rifleman Passport Johannes Zulu (21).
- **1994** - The UN arms embargo on South Africa is finally lifted following the election of Nelson Mandela as president of the government of National Unity.
- **1997** - Rebels topple the government of Sierra Leone in a violent coup.

26 May

- **1940** - The Dunkirk evacuation began in order to save the British Expeditionary Force trapped by advancing German armies on the northern coast of France. Boats and vessels of all shapes and sizes ferried 200,000 British and 140,000 French and Belgian soldiers across the English Channel by 2 June.
- **1940** - The Crown detains British Fascist Oswald Moseley.
- **1942** - North Africa: Rommel attacks the Gazala Line.

- **1967** - Egyptian premier Gamal Abdel Nasser vows to destroy Israel if war is provoked.
- **1971** - Eleven SAAF members, nine from 21 Squadron and two from 24 Squadron were killed when a formation of three Hawker Siddeley Mercurius HS125 aircraft flew into the side of Devil's Peak during an aircraft formation practice rehearsal for the Republic Day 10th Anniversary celebrations in Cape Town. The casualties were: Major Michael Christiaan de Graaff Genis (37). Captain Daniel du Plessis Lombard (37). Commandant Lourens Adrian Francois Henning (40). Major George Johannes Euvrad (32). Major Nico Beetge (31). Captain Gerald Nicol Snyman (27). Major Herwie Herman Albert Cornelius Lamoral (37). Major Willem Abram Prinsloo (37). Corporal Reiner Nicolaas Grobler (24). Lance Corporal Eugene Hayes (22). Private



Oswald Moseley

Gerhardus Hermanus Waserman (21).

- **1972** - US-USSR sign SALT I (Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty).
- **1973** - Rifleman Jeffrey Gerald Holm from 1 Parachute Battalion was killed in a military vehicle accident, in Eastern Caprivi. Jeffrey was the first SADF soldier to die on service in the Border area after the SADF took over the border area protection role from the South African Police. He was 19.
- **1977** - Rifleman Charles Henry Janse van Noordwyk from 3 SAI was killed after suffering multiple shrapnel wounds in an accidental hand grenade explosion at Potchefstroom. He was 18.
- **1977** - The Shaba War in Zaire comes to an end.
- **1980** - Rifleman Johannes Stephanus van der Merwe from Sector 10 Headquarters was killed when he was struck by a bullet resulting from an accidental discharge of a fellow soldiers rifle while serving at Oshakati. He was 20.
- **1986** - Rifleman Ivan Conradie from the South African Cape Corps, attached to Sector 10 Headquarters, was killed in a military vehicle accident at Oshakati. He was 21.
- **1987** - Corporal Willem Johannes Gysberg Venter from Northern Transvaal Com-

mand was killed in a military motor cycle accident at Cullinan. He was 21.

- **1989** - WO1 Roland Stanley Sheppard from South West Africa Medical Command was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident on the Tsumeb-Ondangwa Road. He was 50.
- **1991** - South African Air Force pioneer Major-General Ken van der Spuy, veteran of both world wars and holder of fourteen decorations from several countries, dies at the age of 99.

27 May

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: General Lord Roberts crosses the Vaal River and occupies the town of Vereeniging.
- **1918** - Battle of the Aisne: Allies begin pressing back the Germans.
- **1941** - World War II: North Africa. General Erwin Rommel, now reinforced with the 15th Panzer Division, recaptures Halfaya Pass.
- **1941** - The Royal Navy sinks the 'Bismarck'.
- **1956** - The Casbah area of Algiers is sealed off as French troops search for weapons caches.
- **1969** - Two members of 28 Squadron were killed instantly when the private motorcycle they were riding crashed at the notorious "Death Bend" in Johannesburg. They were: Air Sergeant Terence McKelvin (24). Air Mechanic Anthony

- Edward Dwyer (20).
- **1980** - RENAMO denies in Lisbon that the movement is receiving assistance or supplies from South Africa.
- **1981** - Rifleman Terence Rodney le Roux from 5 SAI was Killed in Action while on patrol from Etale base close to the Charlie pipeline. He was 22.
- **1990** - Signaller Alan Vernon Campbell from 2 Signal Regiment was killed in a military vehicle accident on the Pietersburg Highway. He was 21.

28 May

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: The annexation of the Orange Free State is announced by Lord Roberts, and back-dated to coincide with the Queen's birthday on 24 May.
- **1924** - A serious peacetime air force accident takes place when a 20-lb bomb falls from a military DH9 bomber, which was damaged during a forced landing at Kuruman. The bomb explodes among a crowd of spectators, killing three and injuring thirty-nine.
- **1940** - King Leopold III surrenders Belgium to the Germans.
- **1940** - Norway: Anglo-French forces capture Narvik.
- **1941** - World War II: General Jan Smuts, premier of SA, becomes a field marshal of the British army.
- **1942** - World War II: North

- Africa. Colonel General Erwin Rommel begins his third offensive to push the British back into Egypt: Operation 'Venezia'.
- **1970** - Private Bartholomeus Stephanus Diedericks from the Technical Service Corps was killed in a military vehicle accident. He was 18.
- **1978** - Candidate Officer Stephanus Rudolph Strydom from the Infantry School Instructor Group was killed after being struck by a bullet resulting from an accidental discharge of a fellow soldier's rifle while at Grootfontein. He was 20.
- **1979** - Special Warrant Officer David Gabriel from the SWA Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops K Division (Koevoet) was driving from Ondangwa to Oshakati and gave a lift to a man who, unknown to him, was a member of SWAPO/PLAN. Halfway to Oshakati Warrant Gabriel stopped alongside the road to relieve himself, leaving his FN rifle in the vehicle with the passenger. The SWAPO/PLAN passenger took the rifle and shot him dead before successfully making his escape. He was 36.
- **1980** - The first 55 women graduate from the U.S. Naval Academy.
- **1983** - Lance Corporal Frank Pieter Leendert van der Bijl from 101 Field Workshops was killed after he accidentally fell under the wheels of a moving Samil truck. He was 20.

- **1984** - Signaller Daniel Hendrik Klue from the South African Corps of Signals was killed in a military vehicle accident at Olifantshoek. He was 19.
- **1985** - Lieutenant Michael Robert Borthwick from the Personnel Services Corps was killed in a Military Vehicle Accident on the Pietersburg Highway. He was 27.
- **1985** - Two members from the SWA Police Counter-Insurgency Wing: Ops K Division (Koevoet) were Killed in Action during a contact with SWAPO/PLAN insurgents in Northern Owamboland. They were: Constable Johannes Jurgens Vos (20). Special Constable Frans Bajiyu (24).
- **1986** - Trooper Johann Pretorius from 1 Special Service Battalion was Killed in Action when his armoured car detonated a landmine near the Cut-line. He was 21.
- **1991** - Ethiopian rebels seize Addis Ababa.

29 May

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: General Louis Botha visits Johannesburg two days before British occupation and asks the residents not to resist and not to destroy the gold mines.
- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: The Battle of Klipriviersberg or Doornkop starts.
- **1945** - Okinawa: the 5th Marines storm Shuri Castle.
- **1981** - Lieutenant Jeremy

- John van der Wath from 42 Squadron was killed instantly while flying Atlas AM3C Bosbok, Serial No. 958. The aircraft crashed near Eenhana while flying low level ration drops over a shona. He was 20.
- **1981** - Lieutenant Immo Klaus Kruger from 32 Battalion was killed after suffering multiple shrapnel wounds in an accidental hand grenade explosion in the 32 Battalion training area. He flung himself onto the hand grenade to protect those around him. He was 25.
- **1982** - Lance Corporal Adam Cecil Lennox from 5 Reconnaissance Regiment died at Phalaborwa as a result of an accidentally self-inflicted gunshot wound to the head while playing with a privately owned revolver. He was 18.
- **1983** - Rifleman Noreneus Philipus from 101 Battalion SWATF was Killed in Action during a contact with

- SWAPO/PLAN insurgents near the Cut-Line. He was 23.
- **1984** - WO1 Willem de Ruyter Genis from Northern Logistics Command was killed in a military vehicle accident at Grootfontein. He was 48.
- **1990** - Private Charl de Villiers from the Technical Service Corps was accidentally killed in Pretoria when his Ratel overturned on the road in front of Special Forces Headquarters. He was 19.
- **1998** - Accepting a seventeen-gun salute, outgoing South African National Defence Force (SANDF) chief, General Georg Meiring, formally hands over command of the SANDF to Lt Gen. Sipiwe Nyanda in the sports stadium in Thaba Tshwane, Pretoria.

30 May

- **1815** - The British troopship Arniston is wrecked on the rocks at Waenhuiskrans (later called Arniston). 372 of the 378 people on board are drowned.
- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Lady Edward (Violet) Cecil writes to Lord Salisbury on the conditions in Bloemfontein: "Far more people have been killed in our hospitals than by Boer bullets... Men are dying by the hundreds who could easily be saved."



Georg Meiring

- **1902** - Second Anglo-Boer War: The officially reported camp population of the White concentration camps is 116,572 and the deaths for May are 196.
- **1902** - Second Anglo-Boer War: The officially reported Black concentration camp population in the sixty-six Black camps reach 115,700. 523 deaths are recorded for May. The total recorded deaths are calculated at a minimum of 14,154 (more than 1 in 10). 81% of the fatalities are children.
- **1941** - The Luftwaffe bombs Dublin.
- **1942** - First Allied air raid on Cologne.
- **1942** - World War II: East Africa. Japanese submarines shell Sydney and Diego Suarez naval bases on Madagascar.
- **1966** - 300 US airplanes bomb North Vietnam.
- **1967** - Egypt's President Gamal Abdel Nasser and Jordan's King Hussein sign a mutual defence treaty, prompting Israel to strike pre-emptively a week later, starting the Six-Day War.
- **1970** - 2nd Lieutenant Johannes Jacobus Theron from 4 Artillery Regiment was killed in a military vehicle accident at Messina. He was 19.
- **1974** - South Africa tells Britain that unless the Wasp helicopter is delivered, the Simonstown Agreement on naval cooperation will have to be reviewed.

- **1982** - Spain becomes the 16th member of NATO.
- **1997** - US Marines evacuate 900 civilians from Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone, wracked by looting and violence after a military coup.
- **2003** - The UN Security Council votes unanimously to send a peacekeeping force to Congo's north-eastern Ituri province. The European Union approves the force to restore order and security in a region plagued by violence among ethnic militias.

31 May

- **1900** - Second Anglo-Boer War: British troops under Lord Roberts enter Johannesburg as the Boers withdraw to Pretoria. The British flag is hoisted in Johannesburg.
- **1901** - Second Anglo-Boer War: At Vlakfontein (the present day Derby), General Kemp attacks Brigadier-General Dixon and captures the field guns. Dixon launches a counter-attack and Kemp withdraws.
- **1902** - Second Anglo-Boer War: Boer delegates at the Vereeniging national delegation agree fifty-four to six to accept the British proposals for peace. Representatives of both sides at Melrose House, Pretoria, sign the Treaty of Vereeniging.
- **1915** - Zeppelin 'LZ-38' makes the first airship raid on London, dropping 1.5 tons of bombs, killing seven people
- **1916** - The Battle of Jutland: The British Grand Fleet wins a strategic victory over the German High Sea Fleet, which never goes to sea again.
- **1937** - German ships bombard Almeria, Spain, retaliating for an accidental air attack on a German warship.
- **1943** - World War II: North Africa. Charles de Gaulle and Henri Honoré Giraud set up the Committee of National Liberation in Algiers to represent France until the end of the war.
- **1962** - Adolf Eichmann, war criminal, is hanged in Israel at the age of 55.
- **1966** - The Republic of South Africa celebrates its fifth anniversary with a massive military demonstration in Pretoria. A crowd of more than 500,000 sees nearly 20,000 troops and 200 aircraft take part in the proceedings.
- **1966** - Brigadier Jan Harmse Burger SM OBE from 16 Combat Group collapsed and died after suffering a fatal heart attack while attending a Parade at Voortrekkerhoogte. He was 49.
- **1977** - Salisbury announces that Rhodesian troops have captured and occupied the town of Mapai, 100 km inside Mozambique.
- **1978** - Lance Corporal Yvan Mark L'Hoest from 1 SAI Died of Wounds in 1 Military Hospital after suffering

- multiple shrapnel wounds in an accidental hand grenade explosion in Northern Owamboland. He was 20.
- **1982** - Corporal Mario Jose from 32 Battalion was Killed in Action during a contact with enemy forces in Southern Angola. He was 26.
- **1984** - Rifleman Kevin James Morrow from Regiment Port Natal was killed in a military vehicle accident on the road to Ondangwa. He was 29.
- **1991** - The civil war in Angola ends officially after seventeen years, though fighting still occurs occasionally.

Adolf Eichmann



The Sunday Breakfast Zone



Catch Military Despatches editor Matt Tennyson every Sunday morning from 09h00 to 12h00 on the 'Sunday Breakfast Zone' on Zone Radio. Bringing you the best music of the 60s, 70s and 80s.

On Sunday morning at 09h30 you can catch the Retro Top 20 and listen to the Top 20 hit singles on the South African charts for a particular week or even a particular year.

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Springbok



The SA Legion is a national organisation, part of a world-wide family that addresses the needs of ex-service personnel and their dependents by way of housing, pensions, employment and general welfare. It is apolitical, non-sectarian, non-racial, non-sexist and non-partisan.

The Springbok is the official journal of the South African Legion. Read the December 2021 issue of Springbok by clicking on the cover to the left.



War in Ukraine

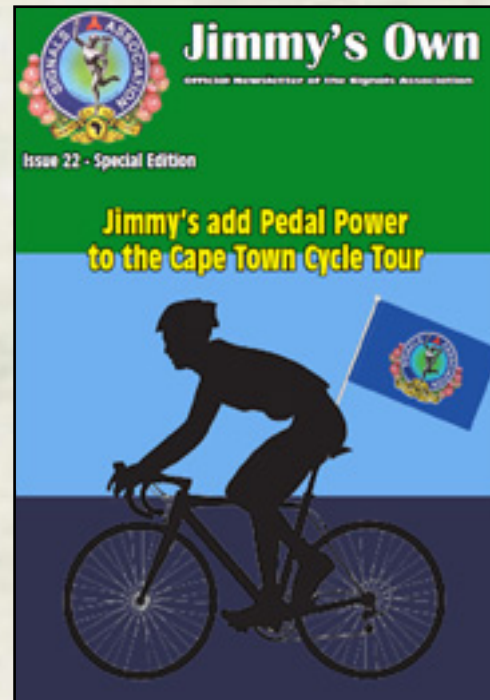
1. Fort-224 submachine gun. The Ukraine version of the Israeli IWI Tavor.
2. AK-74.
3. Javelin missile.
4. BMP-3.
5. PP-2000.
6. 9K38 Iгла.
7. T-80 tank.
8. 2S1 Gvozdika SPG.
9. BM-21 Grad.
10. BTR-60.
11. Sukhoi Su-34.
12. AN-94.
13. RPG-22.
14. FIM-92 Stinger.
15. 9K22 Tunguska.



Useful links

Every month we feature a few useful links to military websites, newsletters and online magazines. Stuff that we think our readers will appreciate.

Here are two of our favourites. The first one is Nongqai, the unofficial police newsletter for veterans of the former South African Police Force and for those interested in Police History. The second is Jimmy's Own, the official newsletter of the South African Signals Association. Click on the magazine covers to go to the respective websites.



Military Despatches Website

For the past few months we have had a problem updating the website. For some reason the changes are not being uploaded to the website.

We have spent hours and hours, working with our website hosting company and their technical staff trying to resolve the issue. The eventual conclusion - eish.

Finally, after almost a year of trying everything possible, we have managed to get the sight up and running again. This is a relief to us because many of our overseas readers access the site via the Military Despatches website.

So now you can click [here](#) and visit the main site and have access to all the special features.

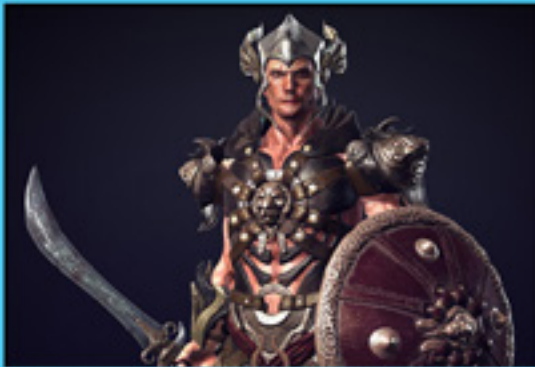
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