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pulse of the army

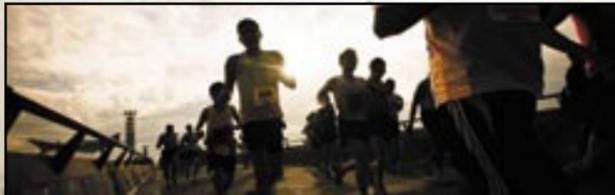
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COA Speaks



Our Army is constantly reviewing its current and future operational demands. As we operationalise our 3rd Generation Army, we seek to leverage on enhancing our capabilities through investments in cutting-edge equipment. Recently, this was demonstrated through the exercise highlight of the Advanced Combat Man System (ACMS), providing our soldiers a leap in networking capabilities and battlefield awareness; and the unveiling of the new pixelised uniform to enhance our soldiers' operational survivability.

Our Army puts equal emphasis on effective and efficient training methods and support facilities to hone our soldiers' combat skills, giving an edge to their combat survivability. This was demonstrated through the establishment of the Murai Urban Training Facility (MUTF), offering training realism, facilitating after-action reviews and long run doctrine development.

As our Army advances on our 3rd Generation Transformation efforts, I emphasise that it is our leaders and our people who will give us the decisive operational edge. Our leaders must lead the charge in motivating and engaging our soldiers, refining our training and developmental processes. This serves to equip our soldiers with the necessary skills to meet our vision as a World Class Army; Ready, Relevant and Decisive.

I am confident that our Army continues to adapt to the complex and evolving operational demands, while maintaining its high operational readiness. I therefore look forward to engaging you as we collectively advance towards our 3rd Generation Army.

Neol Kuan Horng

BG Lim and COL Ishak Take On New Challenges

Story by Lim Wei Zhong / Photography by Sebastian Ang



BG Lim (left) is confident that 6 Div will rise to upcoming challenges under the leadership of COL Ishak (right)

In a Change-of-Command Parade at Mandai Hill Camp on 23 August, COL Ishak bin Ismail took over from BG Lim Teck Yin as the new Commander 6th Singapore Division (6 Div). COL Ishak had recently relinquished his appointment as Assistant Chief of the General Staff (Training) and Deputy Commander, TRADOC while BG Lim has moved on to take up the appointment of Commander TRADOC and concurrently Director NS Affairs.

In his farewell speech, BG Lim said that it had been his honour and privilege to work with the 6 Div team. He summed up his year in 6 Div as an exciting time as they were working towards being a Combined Arms Division of excellence, and predicted that the next couple of years will be just as challenging. BG Lim is confident that the Cobra family would rise to the occasion under the leadership of COL Ishak.

Army News spoke to both Commanders on their previous experiences and visions for their new appointments.

BG Lim Teck Yin

Could you share with us your memorable moments and highlights as Commander 6th Division?

With 6 Div given the honour of driving the development and conduct of integrated, combined arms training for our brigades, it was indeed satisfying for me to be able to contribute to defining their required competencies and to work with my team and the various brigades to enhance the readiness of our forces. On top of our Division's operational training and administration requirements, our involvement in the successful organisation of the ASEAN Defence Senior Officials' Meeting and ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting also provided opportunities to showcase our organisational capabilities and for team building.

I was also very privileged to be able to work with many of our committed NS commanders to enhance their overall NS experience and performance, and encourage our NSmen to give of their best. I was very heartened by their performances during proficiency tests and evaluations and their turnout during mobilization exercises.

What are your plans and vision for TRADOC as its new commander?

TRADOC must provide leadership in the training and doctrine hub of the Army in order to achieve the vision of a "Learning Army", with "Thinking Soldiers". This is certainly an exciting time for us. Not only do we have to operationalise the first spiral of our training transformation but also look ahead to the second and third spiral so that we will be well placed with the capacity to ensure the force is ready. My immediate challenge is to consolidate the gains we have made in recent years in areas such as modelling and simulation, and in the evolved training institute structures, and translate the lessons that we have learned in the process to reap greater gains from invested resources. We also need to see how we can further enhance training development capabilities and learning infrastructure so as to enhance learning and provide ready access to professional materials. I see knowledge management and learning as key thrusts. We need to

energize the ground to contribute to these efforts and I believe that they will be excited about what is happening when they get a sense of the potential of various initiatives.

Can you also share with us your plans as Director NS Affairs?

In order to sustain a strong and operationally ready SAF, it is important that we understand our NSmen and their issues better. We must also open all channels of communication with them so that they understand MINDEF and SAF's key objectives, and what is expected of them. For example, with all the evolved schemes to support the NSman's efforts in his IPPT we need to understand how we will work together to ensure that IPPT participation and pass rates continue to increase. My main emphasis, with NSAD, is on ensuring that there is systematic follow-up of feedback, that we continue to deliver excellent service in NS administration, and provide support for training and the development of NS commanders. I have gotten to know many NSmen over the years, and now as Director NS Affairs, I am looking forward to working with these colleagues and new ones to enable NSmen to give their best.

How does your experience in your previous appointments help you as Director NS Affairs?

You cannot understand NS issues merely by reading about them in staff papers. I know from my experience that by and large, our NSmen are enthusiastic and keen to do a good job. Those that we select to higher appointment also have a strong sense of duty and professionalism. As Director NS Affairs, I would be expanding the scope of my engagement to ensure that the systems we put in place have their input and support so that our shared objectives are achieved. In particular, we will continue to examine how we can enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of In-Camp Training to ensure that their time is well spent. We should also strengthen the avenues by which the NS commanders can reach out to their soldiers and exercise their command responsibilities.

COL Ishak bin Ismail

Can you share with us your main highlights in your previous appointments as ACGS (Training) and Dy Commander TRADOC?

The main milestone was to put down in writing the training strategy for the 3rd Generation Army – putting in the key focus and understanding the organisation's resources in terms of training space. The most important thing is to find the right focus among the many competing demands. As the key driver in ensuring a high training standard, it was also important that I was able to meet up with people on the training ground and understand their considerations, limitations and concerns.

What kind of challenges do you foresee in your new appointment as Commander 6 Div?

People would be my first focus, because they are the ones who deliver the details. So if people issues are a challenge, then it is a challenge worth going down the road for. The other challenge is managing the tempo – in the Army sometimes we go too fast. We've got to manage this tempo so the people don't suffer on the ground. It is back to understanding clarity of outcomes. Once they know what exactly we're after, they can come up with an optimised training schedule to deliver exactly that.

What is your vision for your 6 Div?

To deliver the Combined Arms Division of excellence, leading and developing people. It is mission accomplishment, but doing it with people always.

Can you share with us something about your life outside work?

My first interest is of course family. I spend quite a lot of time with them. I also do a lot of reading, especially about leadership and organisational development, for example the Anatomy of Peace, which talks about how we develop ourselves internally. Maybe when I retire I'll write a book. One of the titles I want to write about is Breaking Out of the Comfort Zone, on how we can challenge our own mindsets. I also enjoy meeting and developing young people on the sidelines, especially younger officers who have just finished a course.

A New Era for SOL and SMP

Story by Hui Nai Xiang / Photography by Michael Thng



COA officiating the opening of the new facility

1 August marked a special day for both the School of Logistics (SOL) and School of Manpower Management (SMP) when their new facilities in Kranji Camp III were officially opened by the Chief of Army, MG Neo Kian Hong. The schools had recently moved from their respective previous premises in Seletar and Khatib Camp to this new location. In line with the Combat Service Support (CSS) transformation, the co-location symbolises the way forward in integrating the two schools into a CSS community and provides more efficient sharing of facilities and resources.



Mr Shanmugam is excited over the expanded capabilities offered by the new SOL facility.

For SOL, the new facilities have translated into increased capabilities. Mr Shanmugam, the course coordinator at SOL said, "Our previous premise in Seletar camp had less classrooms and bunk space. Whenever we needed resources such as vehicles for exercises, we had to get them from Kranji Camp. Now that we are in this new facility, we can work more effectively and efficiently."

Mr Shanmugam is also excited over the new possibilities offered by this new facility. He said, "Here we have more space

and the classrooms are also fitted with multimedia projectors that improve our teaching quality." The new facility includes syndicate rooms for students to hold discussions. For knowledge application, there is the Warlord Room in which they can engage in war games using table top models.

Hazel Fu, from the Training Section of SMP elaborated on the new facilities, "This new environment is pleasant. The computer labs are equipped with more Internet-enabled PCs which are integrated for greater interaction among the trainees. They are also equipped for war gaming. All these improved IT facilities will provide the students with a more positive outlook when they study here."

To promote greater interaction and learning, an open concept was adopted for the ground level of the new facility. An Administrative Officer at the School of Logistics, Ms Connie Quek, explained, "We hope to turn the various ground floor areas such



The Warlord room enables students to apply their knowledge through war games.

as the CSS library, courtyard and Soul Cafe into a bustling area for students to meet and discuss things in a more relaxed and informal setting."

The facility is designed to encourage active self learning. Ms Quek said, "We encourage our students to use our facilities such as the library not only for research but also for their own self learning in different areas." Internet connection points are provided throughout the whole school and this helps students in their research as they are able to access Internet using their laptops in places such as the Soul Cafe and their bunks.



OCT Chan Zheng Hao is enjoying his Logistics Officers Cadet Course at the new facilities

Already, students at the new premises have given their thumbs up. OCT Chan Zheng Hao who is doing the Logistics Officers Cadet Course enthused, "I think that the facility is fresh, new and pleasant".

The co-locating of the two schools go beyond the provision of more and better utilisation of training resources. Commanding Officer of SMP, LTC Lim Eng Seng, explained, "For the conduct of courses, SMP and SOL have also integrated the Advanced Manpower Operation Course (AM-POC) with the Advanced Logistics Course (ALOC) and currently, both schools are reviewing on further collaboration in basic courses. Such integration allows both schools to optimise our resources, share our best practices in instructional pedagogies while at the same time, provide valuable shared knowledge and experiences for the students."

Forging Ties at Exercise Tiger Balm

Story by Hui Nai Xiang / Photography by Eileen Tan



The exercise enables both armies to share and learn from each other's operational staff procedures and tactics

In a fast-changing security landscape, it is important to strengthen our ties with other defence forces through bilateral exercises. Such exercises also promote the exchange of operational knowledge and further raise our professionalism. An example is Exercise Tiger Balm, an annual exercise held with the United States Army from 8 July to 23 July at the Schofield Barracks in Wahiawa, Hawaii. The US Army was represented by the Oregon Army National Guard and our Army by HQ Armour and 4th Singapore Armour Brigade. Participants from both armies were able to expand on their knowledge of each

other's tactics and operational staff procedures, enabling them to work together better.

Besides strengthening interoperability and ties, our Army has benefited in terms of experience. LTA (NS) Eugene Heng from HQ Armour, explained, "It is important to learn first hand from foreign armies their real-life operations. There are good ideas and key learning points that we can pick up to enhance our Standards of Practice." CPT Lai Sei Meng from 42nd Battalion, Singapore Armoured Regiment who was attached to a US brigade commented, "Learning from our foreign counterparts gave us a different perspective. This is important because there are different approaches in tactics and handling various scenarios. The US sharing on their war experience was especially useful."

The American participants' experience has also been a positive one. LTC Rudolph Ligsay, Commander, 1-299 Cavalry said, "We can bond easily because there are a lot of similarities between both armies. There is much we can learn for example in the area of peacekeeping operations. The SAF participants are great to interact with because they worked hard and played hard." CPT Michael Min-Huang Lee from the Oregon National Guard said, "We were able to gain a better understanding of each other's culture and I was able to make many friends with the Singapore participants."

LEARN visits URA



On 28 July, more than 100 PRIDE activists from various MINDEF/SAF departments and units visited the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) as part of the Learning, Empowerment And Renewal (LEARN) Workshop jointly organised by Joint Services and the LEARN Secretariat. They learnt how URA fostered Productivity and Innovation to overcome the challenges in Singapore's urban planning. The Singapore Productivity Association was also invited to share on the latest initiatives to achieve Team Excellence. To energise and better equip PRIDE activists, a third LEARN workshop will be held in November or December.

AHM 08

A Run to Remember

Story by Chia Han Sheng / Photography by Wan Zhong Wei & Michael Thing



The Padang was filled with an excited buzz even before sunrise as thousands gathered on 24 August for the SAFRA Singapore Bay Run and Army Half Marathon (AHM). Now into its 17th year, the AHM is our Army's signature fitness event, demonstrating our strong fitness culture and encouraging both servicemen and the public to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Both competitive and non-competitive categories were available for the 21-km and 10-km routes, while the 6-km route was meant for those just out to enjoy themselves.

Across the Marina Barrage

A unique highlight of this year's 21-km route was the Marina Barrage. The run through the barrage at the three-quarter mark of the race was certainly refreshing as runners took in the fresh breeze and enjoyed the scenic sights of Singapore's skyline. The AHM is the first race to use the barrage, offering runners a new perspective of the city. The new route did not fail to impress, as 2SG Imran Ibrahim said, "I've been running the AHM for four years and this year's route has certainly been enhanced. The scenic view from the barrage was the highlight as it really refreshed me."

Minister for Defence Mr Teo Chee Hean, who participated in the run, explained the symbolism of the barrage. He said, "The barrage in a sense represents the new life of Singapore, it is a source of water and a source of recreation for all Singaporeans. It is a wonderful new facility for all of us." Executive Committee Chairman, BG Hugh Lim added, "We had the vision of creating a route that evolves as the city evolves. With Marina Bay becoming the new downtown of Singapore, it is appropriate that the AHM develops along with it."

The number of participants for this year's 21-km route reflects its growing popularity. BG Hugh Lim said, "The fitness culture in Singapore has taken root, and many more people are challenging themselves with events such as this. We are definitely happy to see this develop as part of the SAF's contribution to the fitness culture."



This year's AHM marks its debut run at the Marina Barrage

Kudos to All Winners!

A competitive run through the heart of a cosmopolitan, beautiful and ever changing city is what foreign army teams look forward to at the AHM each year. This year saw the participation of nine teams, including new comers from United States and New Zealand Armed Forces.

The team from the Indian Army took home first prize in the foreign army participation category. One of the participants, LTC Govind Choudhary who thoroughly enjoyed the race said, "The climate of Singapore is much better than India's which is

very hot. The route allowed for many refreshing points and the terrain that we ran on was smooth and well-laid. This is not the first time that we have won the competition and it feels great!" Congratulations also to the Commando Formation who finished first in the inter-formation competition.



The team from the Indian Army attributed their success to hard work and consistent training

NSmen Excel

"The AHM plays an important role in developing a fitness culture amongst NSmen" said LTA (NS) Gan Ling Xin. His team from 6th Singapore Division came in first in the NS Inter-Unit 10-km category. The run also gave LTA(NS) Gan an opportunity to meet his old friends again. He said, "Of course we wanted to do well in the competition, but more importantly the event allowed me to catch up with my NS buddies again!"



Running buddies; LTA(NS) Gan (second from left) was glad for the opportunity to meet up with old friends

Medical Support Saves Lives

Story by Chia Han Sheng / Photography by Chia Han Sheng and Michael Thing

Each year, the Army Medical Service (AMS) provides a strong medical system to support the 70 000 Singapore Bay Run and Army Half Marathon (AHM) participants throughout the race route. The 23 doctors, 128 medics and 17 ambulances deployed were ready to respond to any medical emergency. "We aim to deliver a professional standard of care and ensure that our medical assistance is up to speed" said Deputy Chief Army Medical Officer (DY CARMO) LTC (DR) Chua Wei Chong prior to the race. To achieve this, training of our medical personnel began months before the actual event. Such training coupled with the latest medical technology ensured that medical support for the race was of the highest level.

Training for Greater Proficiency

Prior to the AHM, medical officers underwent refresher courses in Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) at Tan Tock Seng Hospital (TTSH), while medics were re-certified in the use of the Automated External Defibrillator. Conditions such as cardiac arrest and heat stroke were simulated on mannequins, enabling medical officers to be trained with a high degree of realism. Dr Kenneth Heng, an instructor from TTSH, was pleased with medical officers' course performance. He said, "They were very enthusiastic, motivated and performed very well during the various scenarios. I am confident that they will respond effectively in an emergency."



Our Medical Officers practising their skills on a mannequin

One additional initiative this year was the inclusion of a multi-disciplinary team of Army medical specialists, which included an anaesthetist, an emergency physician and a trauma surgeon.

MAJ (DR) Pang Hee Nee, the medical planner for this year's AHM said, "We recognised from previous years that most of the runners who require medical help were at the end point. So we enhanced the end-point medical post with the specialists and state-of-the-art life-saving equipment."

Leveraging on Cutting Edge Medical Technology



LTC (DR) Chua (centre) helmed the resuscitation bay, ensuring that adequate care was administered to casualties

Besides equipping our people with the necessary skills, the Army Medical Services also leveraged on the latest technology to ensure the highest standards of patient care. One important feature of this year's medical support was the SAF custom-built mobile Body Cooling Unit (BCU). Runners suffering from heat injuries were placed in the BCU, where micro water droplets were sprayed on their bodies by special nozzles. Air flow generated by large fans then evaporated the droplets quickly, reducing the casualty's body temperature rapidly.

The effectiveness of our robust medical support was succinctly summed up by LTC (DR) Chua who said, "With adequate pre-deployment training, the right equipment and the right people, the team functioned well even when it had to deal with three serious casualties simultaneously. While the AHM was not free of medical incidents, we are proud to have made the difference in the critical cases, potentially saving two lives with no serious complications."

Robust Preparations Prove Effective

One such casualty was Mr Marcus Woodhouse. With a core body temperature of 41.7 degrees Celsius and a drastically low blood pressure, Mr Woodhouse was in critical condition when he collapsed just 500 metres before the finishing line of the Army Half Marathon. What followed was a series of swift medical responses, where Mr Woodhouse was treated by LTC (DR) Chua, MAJ (DR) Nicholas Chua and medics who leveraged on the latest medical technology to stabilise his condition. Once stabilised, Mr Woodhouse was evacuated to Singapore General Hospital (SGH) where he subsequently made a full recovery.



Mr and Mrs Woodhouse were very grateful for our Army's effective medical response

"I can't thank the Army guys enough, there's no way you can repay someone for saving your life" said Mr Woodhouse after his near-death episode. His wife, Mrs Chaylee Woodhouse who is a seasoned marathon runner said that she has never seen such extensive medical support for a race. She elaborated, "In most of the races that I've taken part in, there is usually only one medical point with basic facilities. The Army's preparation certainly paid off for us and we can't be any more grateful for it."

AHM Charity Drive

Doing Our Part For The Needy

Photography by Wan Zhong Wei

Even as participants were preparing to tackle the challenges of the gruelling runs, the spirit of generosity towards those in need was not forgotten. In conjunction with the AHM, a Charity Drive was held and when it concluded on 10 July, a total amount of \$455,932.13 had been raised.

During the AHM prize presentation ceremony, Chief of Army MG Neo Kian Hong presented this year's AHM Charity Drive collection to representatives of the recipients which are the Community Chest of Singapore, SAF Benevolent Fund and the President's Challenge. As the AHM continues to grow, it is no doubt that our servicemen will continue to donate generously in the years to come.



The Annual AHM charity drive reflects the caring nature of our servicemen towards those in need

Urban Operations

You See, I Shoot

Story by Lim Wei Zhong / Photography by Lim Wei Zhong, Wan Zhong Wei & Sebastian Ang / Diagram by Sebastian Ang

In our 3rd Generation Army, calling for support fire is as simple as ordering a pizza on the telephone, according to Commander 9th Singapore Division/Chief Infantry Officer, BG Chan Chun Sing. He said, "You don't know where the call is routed through, which outlet it is made in and who is delivering it. But you know that it will come in 30 minutes." Similarly for our Army's networked operations, "you don't know if the bomb will come from the artillery, Air Force or Navy. You say, this is where I want it, these are the effects I want."

This concept of collaborative engagement, where individual soldiers utilise real-time communications networks to draw on the sense-and-shoot capabilities of the entire SAF, was showcased at the recent urban operations exercise on 5 September.

A combined arms exercise, it required various forces such as the Motorised Infantry, Apache Attack Helicopters and Engineers to fight in close cooperation. The exercise was held at the new Murai Urban Training Facility, which provides a highly realistic environment for urban operations training.

The exercise also saw the introduction of the Advanced Combat Man System (ACMS), enhanced protection gear and new combat uniform. The ACMS is a set of equipment which serves to plug the individual soldier into the wider SAF network. As our infantry operate in 7-man sections, the Section Commander and the two Team Leaders under him will be equipped with the ACMS. With the ACMS, each section can send and receive information instantly, to and from other friendly forces.

While the ACMS enhances situational awareness and the ability to call for superior firepower, the Integrated Body Armour increases the survivability of the soldier. The bullet-proof vest and the enhanced protection helmet will give our soldiers more confidence in close-quarter firefights, which are more frequent in urban operations. There is also a special lever which will quickly jettison the armour if the soldier needs to swim across a river.

In a short photo-essay, Army News brings you a few exercise scenarios which showcased collaborative engagement, through the advanced networking abilities of the ACMS.

Scenario 1 Detecting and Destroying Enemy Reinforcements



The Bird Eye mini Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) is launched at the start of the operation to provide continuous intelligence updates



The Anti-Tank squad prepares to fire upon the enemy reinforcements



The Mortar team inside the M113 vehicle receives the coordinates of the enemy reinforcements and prepares to fire on them

Scenario 2 Calling for Support Fire



A team of soldiers comes under heavy fire. Subsequently, the Section Commander uses the ACMS to request for fire support



The sniper section receives the target locations through the ACMS and helps to take out the enemy



Other sections also add suppressive fire for greater effectiveness. Here, a soldier uses the Round-Corner Firing System to target the enemy without exposing himself to danger

THE NETWORKED SOLDIER ADVANCED COMBAT MAN SYSTEM



COMMUNICATION KEYPAD. This allows soldiers to send text messages, SMS-style, while still keeping an eye out for the enemy. It has hotkeys like 'On-Contact' and 'Call-for-Medic' which facilitate requests for assistance at the push of a button.



HEAD-MOUNTED DISPLAY. This displays digital maps and satellite images of the terrain, buildings and even locations of friendly and enemy troops to provide the commander with better situational awareness. The transparent display panel allows the user to maintain vision of his surrounding.



PORTABLE COMPUTER. The brain of the system. The current prototype weighs about 3kg, but future versions will be lighter.



"The best function I've found is the call for medic. When you are wounded, you will just shout your heart out and hope that people hear your voice and find your location. But with this system, the medic knows exactly where you are and can respond quickly."

1SG Mohd Hidayat,
Section Commander

ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT



Section Commanders will also be equipped with a camera mounted on a special SAR 21 rifle. It takes snapshots of targets, which can be sent to friendly units to request for support fire. It also allows the Section Commander to aim the weapon around a corner without exposing himself to danger.

PROTECTING OUR SOLDIERS INTEGRATED BODY ARMOUR



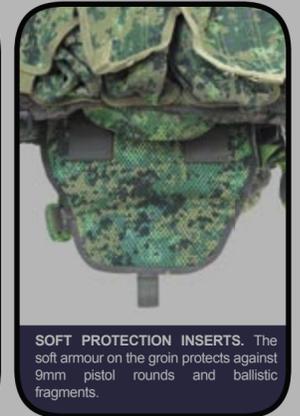
SOFT PROTECTION INSERTS. The soft armour on the neck protects against 9mm pistol rounds and ballistic fragments.



ARMURED HARD PLATE. Worn on the chest and back, this can stop up to 7.62mm General Purpose Machine Gun rounds. It can be jettisoned quickly if the soldier is required to swim.



IBA VEST. The vest will serve as the Load Bearing Vest (LBV), reducing the need to don two layers of vests, as required previously. The use of mesh material aids heat dissipation and reduces weight.

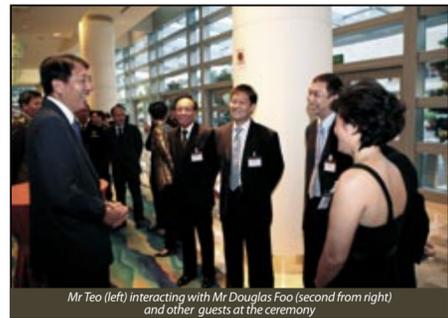


SOFT PROTECTION INSERTS. The soft armour on the groin protects against 9mm pistol rounds and ballistic fragments.

Recognising Companies' Contributions to Total Defence

Story by Lim Wei Zhong / Photography by Wan Zhong Wei

In a ceremony on 30 July at the Pan Pacific Hotel, 244 companies were recognised for their exemplary contributions to Total Defence. Many of them had either shown strong support for their NSmen employees to attend In-Camp Training, or given outstanding cooperation in resource requisitioning exercises. Minister for Defence, Mr Teo Chee Hean gave out 10 prestigious Minister for Defence Awards, while Minister of State for Defence, Associate Professor Koo Tsai Kee presented 72 Distinguished Defence Partner Awards and 162 Meritorious Defence Partner Awards.



Mr Teo (left) interacting with Mr Douglas Foo (second from right) and other guests at the ceremony

One of the Minister for Defence Award winners was Apex-Pal International Ltd, which owns Sakae Sushi and other Food and Beverage brands. Chief Executive Officer Mr Douglas Foo believes that the benefits of National Service go beyond national security and economic stability. He said, "The skills and values

learned and the discipline instilled in camp will be put to good use when the NSman returns to his workplace. For example, teamwork is key in the Army and this will benefit the company which is critical in running a restaurant. Besides, In-Camp Trainings are good networking opportunities that can help the business to grow further."

Mr Foo himself is also appreciative of his NS experience, "Back then when I started working, the only leadership training I had was in Officer Cadet School. As a Platoon Commander, you learn to manage many people. NS is also useful as it teaches you to associate with and talk to different kinds of people – an essential skill in the hospitality business."



The two NS buddies felt that their company's fitness initiatives had helped them to pass their IPPT

One of the Meritorious Defence Partner Award winners was Advantech Company Singapore Pte Ltd. Its Senior Sales Engineer Tan Pheng Hong commented, "We are very honoured

as this is our first time winning the award. Our company is a small one with just over 30 people, so we cope with NS commitments through a buddy system. When someone has to go for In-Camp Training, his buddy will cover for him." Another employee, Senior Customer Service Engineer Richard Fu was pleased with the benefits from the company's Total Defence-linked initiatives. He said, "They give us vouchers for passing the Individual Physical Proficiency Test (IPPT), such as \$40 for Gold. The company also sponsors our membership at a gym inside the business park, and organises frequent sports activities. This motivates us to perform even better." It is no surprise that both Mr Tan and Mr Fu passed their IPPT this year!

In his address, Mr Teo emphasised the continued importance of Total Defence as a powerful deterrent in a changing world. He said, "Singaporeans have come to see Total Defence in a wider context – as a useful and relevant framework for a comprehensive and integrated response to deal with a wide spectrum of security threats and challenges, even those of a non-military nature, such as SARS."

Mr Teo also encouraged the award winners to keep up their good work, "As employers and businessmen who have contributed significantly to keeping our military defence strong, you play a pivotal role in encouraging and inspiring other individuals and organisations to do their part as well. You need not limit yourselves to the military aspect of Total Defence. The policies and programmes you implement to improve economic productivity and competitiveness, for instance, or just simply to show concern for your employees' welfare contribute to building a strong economy and a cohesive society."

NSman's Change of Heart

Story by Lim Wei Zhong / Photography by Wan Zhong Wei

While serving his full-time National Service, Mr Willie Goh was charged over negligence issues and demoted from CPL to LCP. Not exactly a promising start to his military service for the nation. However, his NS experience took a 180 degree turn after he was posted to 596th Battalion, Singapore Infantry Regiment (596 SIR). Since then, he has served NS positively for the past five years. Army News interviewed Mr Goh to learn more about his story.

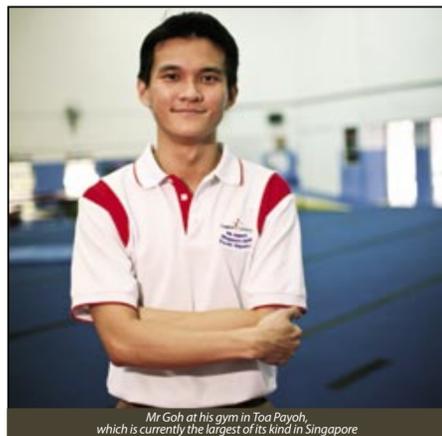
From Mr Goh's sharing, it was apparent that the strong team spirit of 596 SIR had been a positive influence on him. Upon posting in as a 84mm Recoilless Rifle Operator in Bravo Company, he "didn't really care and was very reluctant to do anything." He shared, "I was wrong in initially thinking that NSmen are 'bo chap'. Everyone gave each other respect, and they welcomed me and treated me like an equal. As we got closer, we became good friends."

Through their In-Camp Trainings, Individual Physical Proficiency Test and outfield assessments, the men of 596 SIR ex-

celled and won the Best NS Infantry/Guards Unit Award for 9th Division. On the unit's good performance, Mr Goh said, "There is a cohesive mentality, where everybody is willing to work hard. When you see your fellow men doing their job, you will be motivated to put in your best too."

CPT (NS) Oh Poh Teck, Officer Commanding Bravo Company, commented on Mr Goh's training attitude, "Willie adapted very well in the company and is able to work with the rest of the soldiers. He has a positive attitude, is always 'on the ball' and never fails to carry out his task. His 'can-do' attitude serves as a motivation to others."

Today, Mr Goh manages Prime Gymnastics Club, which with 700 students is the largest such club in Singapore. He is also a committee member of Singapore Gymnastics, the national sporting authority. Mr Goh has greatly enjoyed his time in 596 SIR, which changed his perception of the Army. In his words, "My experience in 596 SIR has certainly boosted my confidence in our defence capabilities!"



Mr Goh at his gym in Toa Payoh, which is currently the largest of its kind in Singapore

Ever Vigilant

Story by Choo Chee Chong / Photography by Michael Thing



LCP Zaidi diligently ensures that security is not compromised

10 July was just like any other working day at SAF Ferry Terminal (SFT) for LCP Zaidi, a Regimental Police (RP). On that

day, he was on duty at the guardroom manning the pass exchange counter. Among the people that he served was one PTE Ong (not his real name) who needed to endorse his medical certificate in Pulau Tekong Medical Centre but had forgotten to bring his camp pass. He was accompanied by a civilian, wearing a BMTC camp pass and claiming to be a 3SG there.

Although changing security passes was a fairly routine job for LCP Zaidi, he did not let his guard down for a moment while on duty. His training and security instinct immediately kicked in upon noticing that the civilian had long hair. Besides wanting to take disciplinary action against him for this, he was also suspicious of his identity and decided to investigate further by requesting to examine his pass.

LCP Zaidi immediately noticed that the face photograph in the pass did not resemble the pass holder. He detained both of them without hesitation and alerted the Sergeant Major of Pulau Tekong Service Support Unit, 1WO Roslan. Further investiga-

tion revealed that PTE Ong had actually colluded with his civilian friend to aid his unauthorised entry into the camp.

Sharing his experience with Army News, LCP Zaidi said, "In this case, it is his untidiness and long hair which immediately triggered my suspicions. My training as a RP has taught me to be alert at all times, every single second. In this age of increased threats, we need to be extra vigilant. We have to do what we are trained to do and not just go through the motion. If not, unauthorised personnel with malicious intent can access the camp and jeopardise our security."

1WO Roslan further added, "We do not take anything for granted and have a proper system of security checks in place. I am proud of my security personnel who have done a good job to ensure that our protected areas are secured and safe." LCP Zaidi's vigilance is another timely reminder to all servicemen that they have an important role to play in ensuring our security and safety.

Professional Accreditation for SIOs

Story by Ian Cheong / Photography by Michael Thing

The Certified Systems Engineering Professional (CSEP) certification benchmarks an engineers' proficiency and competency against the regional standard. Two Systems Integration Officers (SIOs), LTC Liong Yuen Ming from G5 Army and LTC Kong Kam Yean from HQ 9th Singapore Division/ Infantry, did our Army proud when they were accredited as full-fledged CSEPs on 28 August. To meet the programme's stringent standards, they had to pass a 2-week long course in addition to possessing other requirements, such as significant engineering experience.

Being CSEP accredited affirms their competency to manage large scale complex systems, a task familiar to many of our SIOs. Chief SIO, COL Ng Kok Wan is confident that with the proficiency and immense work experience of our SIOs, many more will be CSEP accredited in time to come. He said, "All our SIOs have the qualities to match up to the CSEP Programme, I am sure that whoever we send will certainly pass".

Army News caught up with LTC Liong and LTC Kong to find out more.

How has your Army work experience enabled you to excel in this CSEP Programme?

LTC Liong: My post-graduate education in Defence Technology and previous experience as a Weapon Staff Officer (WSO) have given me good groundings to appreciate the CSEP course better. The knowledge in defence systems as well as weapon systems development are important for me to gain a deeper understanding of system-of-systems. My current post as a Programme Executive has further elevated my ability to apply what I have learnt to contribute towards our Army's endeavour in building

an integrated fighting capability.

LTC Kong: As part of the capability development community as well as a user of weapon systems, I have the unique opportunity to understand the complete life cycle of each piece of equipment used. This involvement requires many phases, including acquisition, designing new weapon systems, planning for their introduction, operationalising them, maintenance and eventually retirement. These require us to be exposed to different engineering domains, such as mechanical, electronic, software, human factor engineering, safety engineering, system integration and operationalisation planning. This enabled us to see across various engineering domains in a complex system design and enhance our appreciation on the need to work at a system level. This has certainly paid off in our efforts to achieve the CSEP accreditation.



COL Ng (right) believes that there will be more CSEP accredited SIOs like LTC Liong (centre) and LTC Kong (left)

Versatile Trolley Paves The Way!

Story by Ian Cheong / Photography by Wan Zhong Wei

The tedious and slow task of moving and setting up stores will soon be a thing of the past, if our Spartans from 6th Battalion Singapore Infantry Regiment (6 SIR) had their way. Their new Versatile Trolley, which was crowned Innovation Champion during this year's Army PRIDE Day, is one creative solution that will speedily set up stores for quick deployment in operations. Led by then-RSM 1WO Lim Seng, the team spent six months coming up with a working model. The trolley now aids the battalion immensely in their setting up of Protective Walls (PROWs). This is particularly important for 6 SIR in its Protection of Installations (POI) duties. Using this trolley, PROW construction time has been halved from its original five hours.

Affectionately dubbed the 'karang guni trolley' by the project team, this light metal contraption has three wheels on each side, set up in a triangular fashion. This enables the trolley to negotiate uneven terrain and even up staircases. Furthermore, its frame can be configured to carry stores of different shapes and sizes. In the past, each soldier could only hand-carry two sandbags, while logs and coils of concertina wire required two soldiers. With the Versatile Trolley, one soldier can transport six coils of concertina wire, six sandbags or five logs. This readily reduces the set-up time for the setting up of our operations. The trolley can also be used for other stores such as fire extinguishers, road signs and portable road blocks. All these contribute to 6 SIR's operational



The Versatile Trolley has the ability to manoeuvre up a staircase



readiness, as their Local Quick Reaction Forces (LQRF) and Crisis Management (CM) teams can be efficiently deployed from point to point.



With the trolley, one soldier can move six concertina wires

1WO Lim explained how the team came up with the concept behind the triangular wheels. He said, "I was watching a robotics programme that had a robot going up the stairs on three wheels. I was inspired to utilise and further adapt this idea for my battalion." MSG Wong Teck Wee, CSM of Support and Development, elaborated on the ability of the trolley to transport different stores. He said, "As a POI Battalion, we spend a long time setting up the PROWs. The trolley we used then did not help us at all as it was not durable, too small and too cumbersome. We needed a trolley that could overcome these problems." This motivated the team and within six months, the new trolley was launched.

Sharing on the team's innovative spirit, 1WO Lim revealed, "We should always keep an open mind, have a sense of adventure, and possess the mindset that no idea is a bad idea. Then we must dare to take up the challenge and not be afraid to fail!"

Our Army's innovative spirit continues to burn bright. Watch out for more innovation features in Army News!

Recognising Sporting Excellence

Story by Chia Han Sheng / Photography by Chia Han Sheng & Michael Thng



PTE Ho trains intensively during tournament season

The SAF's top athletes and teams were honoured during the annual Singapore Armed Forces Sports Association (SAFSA) Awards held on 29 July at SAFRA Mount Faber. SAFSA aims to nurture a healthy sports culture by encouraging participation in sports. Doing our Army proud are winners of this year's awards for Best Sportsman, Best Coach and Most Improved Formation.

Best Sportsman Award: PTE Jason Ho

PTE Jason Ho is no stranger to sporting excellence. As a National table-tennis player, he helped Singapore clinch the team gold in the 2007 SEA Games. PTE Ho has represented the SAF well in various local competitions such as the National "A" and "B". When the tournament season is around the corner, training becomes very intensive with many hours spent sparring, running or at the gym. He added, "I am proud to represent the SAF and am glad to be honoured for my contributions."

To be a top athlete requires not only physical endurance, but mental and emotional strength. PTE Ho elaborated, "Table-tennis has taught me to be disciplined in all I do. During a match, I need to be very focused and fight on even if the odds are against me. My sports exposure to discipline has also helped me adapt well to the regimentation of Army life at the 30th Battalion, Singapore Combat Engineers."

Best Coach Award: Mr Victor Sim

Despite his illustrious record of leading the SAF to eight Inter-Ministry badminton titles, Mr Sim remains humble about his achievements. He said, "It is ultimately about the team which makes sacrifices to train after work and on weekends. For me, I became a coach on top of my regular appointment at the Army Logistics Training Institute because I love the game." He added, "Our teams often come together to socialise. Sports definitely builds identity and pride among the formations and players."

Most Improved Formation: Armour

To promote a healthy sports culture across the SAF, the SAF-SA awards are also given to formations that show improvement in the Inter-Formation Competition over the years. This year's winner is the Armour Formation, which has risen in overall standings from 13th, to 10th, to 6th position over the past three years. Armour Formation's Deputy Sports Officer, CPT Francis Lee said, "Sports is very important to us as it brings people together. We are fortunate to have our people readily coming forward to volunteer their skills each time we recruit players and I am glad their positive attitude and efforts are being recognised."

Kudos to all award winners!



Mr Sim is passionate about coaching the SAFSA team

Ultra Ironman: Pushing Their Limits

Story by Army Fitness Centre / Photographs by LTC Jack Lau

For the average person, completing a 42.2-kilometre marathon is already a challenging feat. Now imagine running thrice that distance, immediately after having swum 11.4 km and cycled 540 km. The participant has to battle sleep deprivation, cold winds and hours of unending racing. Welcome to the daunting realm of the Ultra Ironman Triathlon, which was held from 25 to 27 July in Lensahn, Germany. Completing such a feat is not for the faint hearted as Commandos LTC Jack Lau and CPT Leon Cheng would testify. They completed the race with a timing of 54 hours 25 minutes and 57 hours 15 minutes respectively, making them the second and third Singaporeans to complete an Ultra Ironman Triathlon.

"In the first 24 hours I slept for 10 minutes. The lack of sleep, coupled with cold night temperatures created the hardest conditions during the race. Cycling and running with wet clothes under such conditions were definitely not easy" recounted LTC Lau. This reflected the intense demands placed on both partici-

pants as they battled hard against physical and mental fatigue. For LTC Lau, giving up was never an option during the event. He explained, "In our commando training, we learn to complete a task despite being deprived of comfort. During the race, I had to draw on that experience and know that my military training has given me an advantage."

On top of their military training, LTC Lau and CPT Cheng started their own progressive training in November 2007, clocking up to 100 km of running and 300 km of cycling each week. They also took part in two overseas Ironman competitions and an Ultra-marathon race to enhance their preparation for such an arduous event. Despite the extensive preparations, one must still be prepared for the unexpected. LTC Lau elaborated, "For such a long race, there are too many unknown factors and too many things that could go wrong for us to be fully certain of completing it. We just had to train hard and rely on our perseverance to pull us through."



LTC Lau (left)'s extensive preparation and ability to pace effectively were key to success

Tailoring Combat Fitness for the 3rd Generation Army

Story by Chia Han Sheng / Photography by Wan Zhong Wei

The theme "Vocation-Centric Combat Fitness: The Road Ahead" for the inaugural Army Fitness Seminar held on 12 August said it all. The seminar emphasised the importance of implementing fitness training specific to each Formation as our Army raises the bar on its fitness systems. Commanders were encouraged to leverage on contextualised training regimes developed by the Army Fitness Centre (AFC) to enhance their soldiers' combat fitness.

The seminar also showcased how our Army's robust fitness training system uses the latest scientific methods to ensure that



COA visiting stations showcasing various physical training equipment

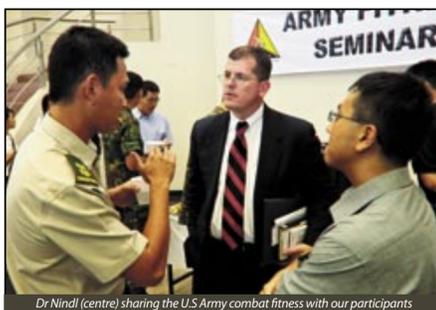
our soldiers train effectively and safely. Chief of Army (COA) MG Neo Kian Hong, who was the Guest-of-Honour, reiterated the importance of communicating our Army's fitness system to soldiers on the ground and the public. He said, "What we do is state-of-the-art, now we need to be able to explain it."

In his presentation, Commanding Officer, Army Fitness Centre LTC Shang Kok Keong explained why the combat fitness demands vary from formation to formation. He cited the example of soldiers from the Armour Formation who require a higher degree of core strength for the lifting and loading of heavy shells compared to soldiers from other formations. Today, specific training which focuses more on developing such muscular strength is being implemented to ensure that our soldiers achieve an optimal level of fitness to perform their operational roles effectively.

LTC Shang also explained that the Individual Physical Proficiency Test (IPPT) and Standard Obstacle Course (SOC) will remain as core requirements of our Army's Fitness System as they effectively measure our soldiers' physical and combat fitness.

Also present at the seminar were guest speakers from the US Army and Singapore Sports Council who shared their experience in fitness training. Dr Bradley Nindl from the US Army

Research Institute of Environmental Medicine shared the scientific studies which the US Army uses to evaluate their training methods. Such studies are important as the use of more advanced and specific training methods have proven effective in reducing training injuries. 2WO Muruga Das from the School of Infantry Specialist found the sharing highly educational. He said, "Our Army's fitness training has evolved over the years. The systematic and scientific training that we have now both reduces the occurrence of injuries and builds confidence amongst our soldiers. This is the right approach as we train our soldiers for the 3rd Generation Army."



Dr Nindl (centre) sharing the US Army combat fitness with our participants

Customs and Traditions

Evolution of the Modern Army

Story by Tham Wei Yang / Photography by Sebastian Ang

As our Army transforms to become part of the 3rd Generation SAF, it is useful to know how the military has evolved over the ages. This will enable us to better understand and appreciate the continual transformation of our Army. Over the next several issues, we will bring you a mini-series that looks at how various areas of the army have been shaped over time.

Origin of the Company

The first companies appeared during the 14th century, together with the increasing usage of firearms on the battlefield. These were commercial entities made up of mercenaries. Recruitment and equipping was funded by wealthy investors, who were ranked according to the size of their investment. They reaped profits from plunder and the ransom of wealthy prisoners. The companies varied in strength from tens to hundreds, and even thousands, and the symbol of their corporate existence was their flags or colours.

The development of the mercenary system was spurred on by the intense economic rivalry among the early Italian trading republics such as Venice and Milan. These city-states hired mercenaries to protect their interests, creating additional demand for the services of English and Swiss fighters. It is for this reason that many military terms are derived from the Italians.

Origin of the Regiment

Companies eventually began to consolidate



Our soldiers today are disciplined and loyal to Singapore, a far cry from their early predecessors who fought for monetary gains

into larger and better organised groups under the rule of a single Officer who was called the 'Colonel'. In essence, they were entering a contract and agreeing to be subject to the Colonel's regiment or regulations. Such a group of companies came to be referred to simply as a 'regiment', giving rise to the more common meaning of the term today for a military unit. Regiments were usually named after their Colonel, although by the 18th century they began to be identified by numbers.

A Colonel was often away from the regiment, and thus needed a second-in-command, a Lieutenant-Colonel, to take charge in his absence. The term 'lieutenant' refers to a deputy. Next in superiority after the Lieutenant-Colonel was an officer who took on the approximate duties of a Chief of Staff. He carried the title of 'Sergeant Major', which is not equivalent to the present Sergeant Major appointment held by warrant officers. We will address this apparent incongruity in a later part of this series.

NSmen Matters

Deferment

Upon notification of their NS training, NSmen are expected to make the necessary arrangements to attend the training as scheduled; especially when advance notification of six months has been given to them. If they face difficulties and need to defer their training, they may apply for deferment.

Deferment means postponing the training to another date. NSmen who are granted deferment must attend re-scheduled training, known as Make-Up Training (MUT). As far as possible, the MUT will be scheduled within the same work year. The Unit Commanding Officer (CO) will grant deferment based on the merits of each application. He has a set of criteria to guide him so as to ensure consistency and flexibility in granting deferment. Deferment is strongly discouraged to ensure that a unit's operational readiness is not compromised. As notification is given six months in advance for NSmen to make alternative work arrangements, work commitments are therefore NOT considered as valid reasons for deferment.

Deferment and Exit Permit

NSmen who are expected to be overseas for

more than six months and have been called up for NS training must apply for deferment first. Once their deferment is approved, they have to apply for an Exit Permit (EP).

The same process applies if the NSman is expected to be overseas for more than one year. Once his EP is approved, he will be automatically granted disruption from NS related activities till his EP expires.

Applying for Deferment in NS Portal

NSmen applying for deferment must login to MyDeferment via the NS portal www.NS.sg and apply online. Relevant information provided by their employers or other sources can be attached as supporting documents in their applications.

The deferment criteria include:

- New business
- Job seekers/ New employment
- Examination grounds
- Religious grounds
- Medical reasons
- Compassionate grounds, e.g family reasons

Passing On The Baton		
APPOINTMENT	INCOMING	OUTGOING
CO/MD ITI	LTC LEE YONG HENG	COL LIM CHWEE KUONG
CO 2 SIG BN	MAJ LEE CHER CHYE	LTC ANDY ONG KIAN WOEI
CO 41 SAR	MAJ YEW CHEE LEUNG	LTC DAVID CHUA
CO 46 SAR	MAJ LIM LIT LAM	LTC ALFRED FOX
CO/HD TPT CEN (NORTH/)	MAJ LAU HUI BOON	LTC TAY YONG MENG
1 SAF TPT BN		
AETC RSM	1WO CHEW LIT CHEE	1WO LAM KIM FAI
1 ADF RSM	1WO SANJEE SINGH S/O SARAINA	1WO FRANCIS TOH



Apply for deferment via MyDeferment on the NS portal

Quiz Of The Month - AUG / SEP

Send us the correct answer and win a pair of Golden Village movie tickets. There will be 5 winners!

Q: Name the new system which allows our soldiers to track the locations of friendly and enemy forces.

Closing Date : 25 October 2008

Answer: Rank / Name:
Unit: E-mail:
NRIC: Contact No:

1. This contest is open to all Army personnel except the executive staff of Army News Section.
2. Each person is allowed one entry.
3. Prizes are not exchangeable for cash. Winners can either collect their prizes from Army News or arrange for mail delivery.
4. The Judge's decision is final. Please send us your entries via mail or email us at armynews@starmet.gov.sg.
5. Prizes not collected within a month of notification will be forfeited.

JUL / AUG Quiz

Q: Which gun was used for the 21-gun salute at NDP?

A: The 25-pouder

Winners are to contact Army News at 67682206 for collection of prizes.

JUL / AUG Winners

- 1) 2LT HOO CHONG ZENG NRIC: S000064J
- 2) PTE SHAKTHI VIKRAM NRIC: S0000227C
- 3) LTA (NS) ROYSTON TEO TECK MENG NRIC: S0000962F
- 4) 3SG (NS) MUHAMMAD FARHAN NRIC: S0000548B
- 5) LTA (NS) HONG ZIGUI NRIC: S0000678C

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Progressive and Lasting Training for Obese Recruits

Story by Ian Cheong / Photography by Wan Zhong Wei & Michael Thng

Obese recruits encounter many challenges when they undergo physical exertion. This is partially due to their joints being unable to withstand the impact when they undergo strenuous activities such as running and jumping. Upon enlisting into Basic Military Training Centre (BMTC) for their Basic Military Training (BMT), they risk exacerbating this as the physical training is now an integral part of their daily routines. This can lead to injuries and strains during training. 1SG Josh Loh, the fitness specialist for BMTC School One's fitness programme, explained, "When these recruits start running, the impact is great, often resulting in three or four times more weight on their legs. As such, we have designed a specific obese fitness programme so that they will be able to progressively improve their joint muscles."

Exercising does not only impact the joints but other parts of the body as well. To overcome and manage this, the BMTC Fitness Centre has a specially designed fitness regime for these recruits. This training programme has many objectives. The first is to minimise the physical strain on the recruits during training. The second is to aid the recruits in their weight loss. The third objective aims to promote a healthy lifestyle to the recruits so that they can maintain their exercise routine.

This training programme is progressive in nature, meaning that the recruits start off with static physical exercises that they can cope with before moving on to exercises with higher intensity. 1SG Loh elaborated, "When they walk, the impact is close to nothing. Yet by walking they are able to exercise their cardiovascular system as well as losing weight. Thus, we aim to condition them first before they undergo any significant training." The progressive training programme has many components, ranging from aqua training, brisk walking to circuit training. Army News visited BMTC to find out more about the progressive training.

Aqua Training

Aqua training comprises of aqua jogging for the mild obese to aqua aerobics and games for the extreme obese.



Recruits capable of swimming strap on floats to ensure that they do not touch the pool floor

Comparing aqua training to land based exercises 1SG Loh said, "Aqua training is very essential for these recruits as due to their weight, the impact from land based activities can severely

injure their knees. This impact is cushioned when they are in the water." Besides reducing the risk of injuries, aqua training also benefits the recruits' cardiovascular system. Due to the water's compression on the body, their lungs and heart will have to work harder to circulate blood through the body. On top of this, training in the water means that their body temperature would be cooler than during land trainings, thus reducing the risk of heat injuries.



Fitness specialists work closely with lifeguards to ensure safe training for the recruits

REC Lim Ke Hong from Eagle Company recounted a typical session at the pool, "We compete with each other to see who finishes first. We bond more with our platoon mates while having fun in the water." Also glad for the aqua training was REC Razali bin Mohammed Shariff. He said, "Aqua jogging is like playing and exercising at the same time. It's more comfortable and it still helps us lose weight!" In fact, the aqua training for obese recruits has evolved over the years, as more fun elements such as jumping jacks, water aerobics and ball games are added to the usual jogging routine.

Circuit Training



Circuit training integrates physical training with fun, giving a light-hearted atmosphere during training

Circuit training is another activity solely for the obese recruits. It is aimed at exposing the recruits to a different form of training while developing their strength and endurance. There are four circuits designed so that the recruits will not find the training monotonous. One circuit even serves a dual purpose of integrating field proficiencies with running, where the recruits execute

field drills at different stations. 1SG Loh expounded, "We incorporate as much movement as possible to make exercising fun for them. This will change their mindset as they have a sense of excitement when they exercise. By enjoying the workout, they will be motivated to keep fit even after their stint in BMTC."

This was echoed by CPT Ikhwan, Officer Commanding, Eagle Company, "Circuit training helps them to build up their confidence as we set down a different target for each training. When they meet the target, the recruits' confidence will be boosted significantly, instilling in them some pride in their physical abilities."

REC Hong Jun Xiang from Eagle Company is one such beneficiary of the training, even believing that the training will improve his soldiering competencies. He said, "It is very useful as it helps us build up our stamina, strength and field proficiencies. It gives me the confidence for the upcoming field camp as I now know that when I need to run during field camp, I have the ability to do so."

Promoting A Healthy Lifestyle

Ultimately, progressive training does not only aim to enable recruits to lose weight during BMT. It goes beyond that, influencing the recruits to maintain a healthy lifestyle, regardless of their subsequent vocations. CPT Ikhwan, who has overseen the graduation of three batches of recruits, is a firm proponent of this. He said, "By injecting a light-hearted environment in our training, we encourage them to exercise, and we hope that they are ingrained with the mindset of keeping fit even after they leave BMTC or when they finish their National Service."

His belief has certainly rubbed off on his men. REC Lim Ke Hong, who lost an amazing 18 kilogrammes during the first three months of his 6-month BMT enthused, "My family often comments that they find it difficult to recognise me after my weight loss. I am definitely going to continue with my training after I leave BMTC. Seeing my PT kit full of sweat makes me very happy as I know that I am keeping myself fit and healthy. I must maintain this lifestyle after I have put in so much effort to lose weight."



Under the watchful eye of the commanders, safety is not compromised

Mastering Our Environment

Today, our soldiers need to perform in a wide spectrum of operations, such as counter-terrorism, urban operations, humanitarian and disaster relief, and combined arms warfare. This will often mean moving through a variety of terrain. For example, a mission could involve heli-rappelling into a jungle clearing, taking cover behind low shrubbery and breaking into a second-floor window to rescue hostages.



Today our soldiers are required to fight in mixed terrain

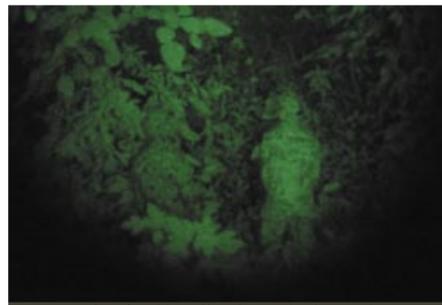
macro and micro patterns thereby prolonging detection and providing better survivability not only in the jungle, but also in a mixed-terrain environment. Chief of Staff, HQ 9th Singapore Division/Infantry, COL Tan Chor Kiat explained, "In the current context, there is no way we can avoid fighting in an urban environment. In such terrain, the soldier is going to get shot at a lot more often, and at a much shorter distance. The survivability of the soldier is thus of top priority to us – in terms of cover and concealment."



The camouflage effect of the new uniform at short (left) and long (right) distances

"Looks like an old-school MS-DOS computer game with low-resolution graphics!" is how several servicemen described the pixelised micro pattern. This computer-generated pattern consists of many small squares, or pixels, in four different colours. They break up the boundary lines of the old macro pattern and thus confuse the human eye, making it harder to detect and target the soldier.

The four colours of the pixels were chosen based on an environmental survey of over a hundred locations in Singapore. Additionally, the uniform is chemically treated with special dyes to ensure that it still generates a pixelised pattern in the near infra-red spectrum. This reduces detection through near infra-red based devices like Night Vision Goggles, allowing our forces to operate stealthily at night.



When infra-red devices like Night-Vision Goggles are used, the new pixelised uniform (left) is harder to pick up than the old uniform (right)

A Pixel-Perfect Pattern

The current combat uniform, known as the No.4 uniform to servicemen, uses a 'macro pattern' of large shapes in green, brown and black colours. This helps the soldier to blend into a jungle environment and prolongs detection at far visual ranges such as at 100 metres. However, this macro pattern is less effective at short distances like 20 metres, as the distinct shapes can still be made out by the eye.

To achieve better concealment at short distances, a new 'micro pattern' was adopted. This involves the use of pixels to break up boundary lines and to generate a quivering effect. Viewed at longer distances, the pixelised camouflage works just like the traditional camouflage. The new uniform now incorporates both

Lighter and Cooler

To increase comfort and operational effectiveness, the new uniform is made of lighter and more breathable material, without compromising toughness. This will help to dissipate the heat generated by the new gadgets used by our soldiers, such as the Advanced Combat Man System (explained in this issue's Cover Story). Also, the new material absorbs perspiration faster and dries quickly if drenched by rain.

CPL Bryan Lee from the 3rd Battalion, Singapore Infantry Regiment commented, "It's a lot cooler and lighter so it helps us

to work better in the field and even in camp. It also dries faster. It'll be more comfortable and allow us to do our duties more effectively. I guess the new look will take some time to get used to, but because of the improvements and comfort level, it's definitely good!"

Functional Features

The new uniform is designed to complement the soldier's Personal Equipment. Certain buttons have been removed to ensure that the body armour and field pack do not cause discomfort, and the elbow and knee guards can be better secured. There are additional pockets for use when the body armour covers the chest pockets. For a closer look, see next page for the diagram.

Implementation

The new uniform will be phased in over three years. From January 2009 onwards, all new recruits will receive it. At the same time, all active personnel will trade in their old uniforms for new ones. NSmen will get their new uniform over a period of three years.

To facilitate the replacement process, servicemen are required to complete an e-sizing exercise at www.NS.sg. They will also specify the badges and name tag required, which will be pre-sewn.

Did you know?



Through the years: (from left) The new pixelised uniform, current camouflage uniform and old Temasek Green uniform

The current camouflage uniform was introduced in 1983, replacing the Temasek Green uniform.

NEW SAF COMBAT UNIFORM



Vocation and confidence badges for clear and consistent image projection

Mandarin collar provides comfort and protection from abrasion

Velcro allows fast and easy access to pockets

Shoulder epaulette holder removed for greater comfort

Adjustable elbow guards fastening-slits increase comfort

Seamless back design allows unrestricted upward stretching of arms

Shirt can be folded up as a triangular bandage to secure injured elbow until medical aid arrives

New epaulette position for easy identification

Buttons and velcro combination relieves stress points on chest when body armour is worn

Inward buttoning system reduces entanglement during removal of external objects like Load Bearing Vest

Additional inner material reduces abrasion to groin region

Internal pouch within side pocket enables easy storage of small accessories

Adjustable velcro knee guard holder offers comfort and ease of movement

Pleats provide comfort when side pockets are filled, slant design facilitate access even in sitting position