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LEOPARDS

ON THE PROWL

APS 08 : Envisioning The Future

Story by Choo Chee Chong / Photography by Sebastian Ang

The Army Planning Seminar (APS) held on 4 and 5 September at the CSS Lodge in Kranji Camp III was attended by senior officers from the Army Leadership Group (ALG), Warrant Officers and NSmen Key Appointment Holders. The focus of ALG discussions on the first day was on transforming the Army's business model and refining processes. It also included discussions on strategies involving careful investments in our manpower resources. The key findings were then presented to garner greater insights as the leadership built shared perspectives in charting the Army's future. Chief of Army MG Neo Kian Hong said in his opening address, "The APS is important in collecting perspectives from various Army leaders and sharing ideas for the way ahead."



Fruitful group discussions enabled APS participants to share and gain valuable insights on charting the Army's future

The active involvement of the APS participants enabled the Army Leadership to collectively determine the direction of our Army and how the Army could best overcome the new challenges arising from an increasingly complex operating environment and tightening resource landscape. Chief Commando Officer COL Lam Shiu Tong commented, "APS provides an opportunity to hear various concerns of senior commanders from the ALG. The group discussions are very useful for sharing and generating ideas." The APS was also useful in providing participants with a greater understanding of issues outside their immediate areas. COL Lam further shared, "The discussions triggered us to start thinking about key issues now, for example those on human resources, so that we can tackle them before they become a bigger challenge in the future."



Engagement with the our Army Leadership allowed MAJ (NS) Chan (right) to understand the key thrusts of our Army

Professionalism and Friendship at Ex SUMAN Warrior

Story and Photography by 40 SAR



Our participating troops at Ex SUMAN Warrior 08

For 14 days in September, the city of Christchurch in New Zealand was under siege, not physically but virtually. Servicemen from the 40th and 46th Battalions, Singapore Armoured Regiment 'battled' side by side with soldiers from the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and Malaysia in defending Christchurch from a fictitious enemy in a command post exer-

NSmen participants also found the APS extremely beneficial. MAJ (NS) Chan Kai Sum, Commanding Officer of 688th Singapore Infantry Regiment said, "The APS allowed us to understand the perspectives of the Army's senior management. It provided more clarity of our Army's objectives which enables us to execute plans and address issues at our level. Thus, we can better contribute to the Army community as NSmen. The APS also demonstrates our senior management's receptiveness towards contributed ideas from the ground. When good ideas are valued, shared and realised, they help to achieve the vision of the 3rd Generation Army."

After undertaking the serious business of charting our Army's future, our Army leaders had fun and a good workout, participating in Sports Chanbara - sword-fighting using foam swords. They also played Touch Rugby, in which the Army leadership displayed fighting spirit and teamwork as they put in their best effort.



Games like Sport Chanbara and Touch Rugby promote physical fitness and teamwork

To close the seminar with an external perspective, distinguished speakers from INSEAD and Deloitte were invited to share on innovation and Enterprise Risk Management (ERM), the latter being a framework to manage various organisational risks in the Army. In the subsequent group discussions, APS participants also shared their insights on the importance of innovation and ERM, concepts that will help us achieve our vision of a World Class Army.

cise. This was Exercise SUMAN Warrior 2008, the annual Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA) multilateral exercise.

The exercise involved planning Area Security Operations (ASO), and sharing by the participating armies on their experience in this field. Personal friendships were forged and strengthened as the participants gained a higher level of mutual understanding.

Delegation Commander and Commanding Officer 40 SAR, LTC Desmond Chua, felt that the exercise had been enriching for him and his team. He said, "The learning was not just from participating in the exercise but from cordial interactions with other armed forces. It has also increased the inter-operability of FPDA forces."

Under the FPDA of 1971, the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia and Singapore will consult and assist each other in the event of external aggression or threat of attack against Malaysia or Singapore.

2 PDF Cohesion Programme Produces Rich Results

Story and Photography by HQ 2 PDF

The NS battalions in 2nd People's Defence Force (2 PDF) are different from the others in the Army. These new NS units constitute commanders and men brought together from different NSF units. These individuals from different backgrounds and cultures face the special challenge of transforming themselves into a cohesive fighting unit within a short time.



Building stronger teamwork and communication skills for an effective fighting force

To tackle this, 2 PDF introduced a Command-wide programme in 2002 that has not only sped up the process of cohesion building but also resulted in a standardised and systematic approach that reflects both the Command culture and spirit. To ensure greater internal acceptance, the Command kick-started its cohesion programme with ten of its own NSmen who have the relevant experience in their civilian jobs. From this pioneer batch who went on to become the first Cohesion Facilitators (COFACs), the group has since grown in size and composition.

The primary responsibility of a COFAC is to facilitate workshops for the various battalions in PDF. Various workshops are offered to each battalion in its first three years of existence and these included Battalion Command Team Visioning, Company Team Building and Battalion Team Building. Officers Commanding are also briefed by COFACs so that they can play an active role. Each battalion will be assigned a team of two or three COFACs. As far as possible, they will remain with the battalion to ensure continuity and familiarity.

MAJ (NS) Shaw Swee Tat, Commanding Officer of 811th Battalion Singapore Infantry Regiment (811 SIR) has vouched for the programme's effectiveness for newly formed units. He said, "As we are all new to each other, the programme has given us a platform to go through the proper process of visioning and work out our goals and values. The facilitation skills of the COFACs are good and I would most definitely like to see the programme continued and improved in the years to come!"



Various workshop activities help the NSmen bond as one

LTA (NS) Prakesh, a senior COFAC, shared, "I strongly believe in the usefulness of the 2 PDF Cohesion Programme. The positive feedback received from various commanders and the tangible benefits reaped will certainly motivate me to continue to put in my best effort. I also feel that with some modifications, some of our programmes can certainly be extended to units outside 2PDF."

CSC: Preparing For Higher Challenges

Story by Ian Cheong / Photography by Sebastian Ang



The top Army graduate, MAJ Yeo receiving his award from Minister Teo

The 9-month Command and Staff Course (CSC) is the highest level of formal military education in Singapore that prepares officers for senior command and staff appointments in the SAF.

The course covers macro-level subjects such as the war-fighting doctrines of the Services, strategic communications and joint operations planning. This equips the students with the skills necessary for their future appointments. The 39th Graduation Ceremony was held on 10 September at the Istana, during which Minister for Defence Mr Teo Chee Hean presented certificates to 125 officers and special awards to the top three CSC students from the different services in the SAF.

Learning From Each Other

One of the enduring benefits of CSC is the opportunity for students to learn from their peers. This was highlighted by the top graduate from the Army, MAJ Yeo Soo Bin. He explained, "The course encouraged us to participate in peer learning, where we tapped on the different skills of our peers. I was lucky as my peers were all very willing to impart their knowledge and teach their various skills to the other students. The skills they taught me have helped me to broaden my knowledge base and skill sets, as I gained more perspectives behind the various processes in the SAF. I will definitely keep in contact with my peers to continue in my learning and I also believe that these friendships forged will help me in my future appointments."

Professional Accreditation for the Training Community

Story and Photography by HQ TRADOC

The 3rd Generation Army needs thinking soldiers who can cope with the challenges of the Information Age. To encourage the spirit of continuous learning, the Continuing Specialist Education (CSE) [Instructional] Programme was introduced in 2006 to help our instructors and Training Development personnel keep up with the latest in learning and teaching methodologies. With this, those in the training community must achieve a mandatory 40 hours of CSE learning per year.



The comprehensive modules in the CSE Programme provide many opportunities for group projects and presentations

A new milestone was reached in October with the launch of the CSE (Instructional) Accreditation Programme, which

enables our training personnel to progressively attain nationally recognised professional skill-based certificates throughout their career. Building on the existing CSE Programme, the Accreditation Programme offers learners with higher aspirations to achieve academic advancement at various levels. These include the Specialist Certificate, Specialist Diploma, Specialist Advanced Diploma, Specialist Postgraduate Diploma and even the Advanced Courses Programme leading to accreditation for Masters Degree in Educational Management.

Developed in partnership with the National Institute of Education (NIE) and Nanyang Technological University (NTU), this Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) initiative has several entry levels depending on the individual's work experience in related field and academic qualifications. For example, applicants with 'O' levels are eligible for the Specialist Diploma while the Specialist Postgraduate Diploma is meant for degree holders. To achieve the certification, applicants must successfully complete all the specified modules, most of which are of a few days duration and conducted full-time at NIE.

1WO Oliveira Edward, Assistant Training Co-ordinating Officer at the Specialist and Warrant Officer Institute (SWI), who attended some of the modules said, "I find the programme very useful and relevant to my job. It widened my knowledge and allowed me to understand more about the various ways of teaching to meet different needs of our people."

Interacting With Other Armies

Another feature of the CSC is the participation of international officers and to date, 155 of them from 23 countries have completed the course. This year's course had a total of 14 international students. Among the 14 students were LTC Wolfgang Paul Illner, the first graduate from Germany, and the first international lady officer, MAJ Hajah Wan Shahlimar from Brunei. The participation of these international officers allows the SAF to forge and strengthen ties with their foreign counterparts and also promotes mutual understanding about the different work processes. MAJ Yeo elaborated, "By understanding the rationale behind the different processes, we are able to appreciate why the SAF does things a certain way. The mutual learning will reveal the various capabilities of the different armed forces, thereby increasing our knowledge base."

A Personal Journey

Reflecting on his personal discovery journey, MAJ Yeo said, "I have managed to improve on my knowledge and skills and made many friends. Most of all, I now have a better understanding of myself, and am more aware of my strengths and weaknesses."

All Regular Officers, Warrant Officers and Specialists in the training community are eligible for the CSE (Instructional) Accreditation Programme. Interested personnel can visit the TRADOC Intranet website at http://hqtradoc.army.mindet/hqtradoc/CSE/CSE_Main.html or call MAJ Sim Seok Ling at 6410-5037 for more details.



1WO Oliveira Edward found the CSE Programme highly beneficial to his job

Preparing NSFs For Future Challenges

Story by Hui Nai Xiang / Photography by Michael Thng

On 29 August, the Control of Personnel Centre (CPC) and Centre for Management Development (CMD) in conjunction with the Pacific Asia Travel Association, Singapore Chapter



Mr Darren Ng believes that job prospects are bright in the travel industry for NSFs entering the workforce

(PATA), held a career seminar on the tourism industry at the Grand Cathay for 500 NSFs who were due to complete their full-time National Service.

The Guest-of-Honour present was Dr Lim Wee Kiak, Member of Parliament for Sembawang GRC. The seminar consisted of talks by experts from the various sectors in the tourism industry, including Singapore Tourism Board, Resorts World @ Sentosa and University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Singapore Campus. Mr Darren Ng, Chairman of the PATA Executive Committee said, "There are many opportunities available with projects such as the future integrated resort. We hope that the seminar we organised would attract ORD personnel to join the travel industry."

This seminar and other regular career talks have helped NSFs who are about to complete their full-time NS better plan for their future careers. CPL Gerald Lim, from CPC who was involved in organising this seminar, said "As NSFs, we often do not realise that the leadership skills, confidence and discipline instilled in us by the SAF are desirable traits that potential employers are

looking for. I believe that the NSFs will leave here today with new insights of the exciting opportunities available."



CPL Kieron Sng (left), CPL Gerald Lim (centre) and CPL Chong Ren Jie have gained valuable new insights on the opportunities in the tourism industry

MES Transforms to Meet Tomorrow's Challenges

Story by Ian Cheong / Photography by Sebastian Ang & Wan Zhong Wei

As the nature of military warfare has evolved over the years, our Army has likewise evolved to ensure that it stays relevant and effective. Its scope of operations has now expanded from conventional warfare to other forms of warfare, such as Operations Other Than War and Urban Warfare. To support these emerging new challenges, the whole Army has transformed to adapt to the changing landscape. In the realm of logistics, the Maintenance and Engineering Support (MES) Formation, has over the years been silently but steadily transforming to meet the expanded needs of the Army.

A Natural Transformation

For Chief Maintenance Engineering Officer (CMEO), COL Hung Ching Pien, the transformation of MES was a natural response to the change in the security landscape and nature of warfare. He explained, "Ever since the events of 9/11, the transnational terrorist threat has become more real for the Army. Since the Army's role has changed, the supporting force's role has to change accordingly."

Keeping this in mind, MES underwent a comprehensive transformation in various areas, from the upgrading of personnel, to improving working processes and introducing new equipment. COL Hung felt that the transformation was critical for MES to support the 3rd Generation Army. He said, "Since the environment, equipment and tasking have all undergone significant change, we could not just keep to the present without any adaptation."



COL Hung believes that the MES transformation was necessary to adapt to the changes in the 3rd Generation Army

Refining Work Processes

In today's context, processes that were once appropriate can become obsolete if they are not enhanced or changed. The Forward Maintenance System (FMS) implemented in 2005 is an example of galvanising previous maintenance processes to meet new demand. It works on the premise of bringing the "service to the customer". Previously, a malfunctioning vehicle had to be sent to the Army Maintenance Base (AMB). With the FMS, AMB personnel are sent to repair the vehicle at its unit.



Under the FMS, maintenance of vehicles is expediently conducted in the unit by AMS personnel

CPT Admern Chee, one of the Officers Commanding of 6 AMB, explained, "With the FMS, we are able to provide direct maintenance at the unit itself. Previously our technicians were deployed at the units to conduct only the Fit For Firing (FFF) checks. Now they are better utilised as they can also repair the equipment on the ground and at the same time, conduct the FFF checks. This makes the processes much more efficient."

The benefits from the FMS are more than just in efficiency. CPT Chee further explained, "Besides the efficient and strong logistical support that units now enjoy, they also have a clear working structure and channel through which they can communicate their needs and this direct support accelerates the entire maintenance process."



An AMS technician working hard to keep the BIONIX in tip-top condition

Equipping for Operational Readiness

The expanded role of MES meant that the formation had to further its cooperation with its various partners in the defence eco-system, such as Singapore Technologies (ST) Electronics and ST Kinetics. The partnerships have yielded many benefits and new equipment has been developed to increase our efficiency and heighten our operational readiness. One example is the recently unveiled Modular Spares Storage System, or MS³.

The MS³ has allowed the formation to improve upon its previous methods of transporting stores, and reflects the deliberate and meticulous thought process put in. It is made up of 64 compartments which can each carry up to 100 kilogrammes of stores. The compartments are configurable to suit different sizes of stores through the foldable legs within the modules.

With the MS³, the previous method of loading up equipment of any shape and size into the vehicle is replaced by a more organised method of storage. CPT Nelson Chia, one of the Depot Commanders (33 Forward Maintenance Depot) of 3 AMB, revealed, "The compartmentalisation not only achieves time savings in loading and unloading of the stores, but also helps us to quickly locate the required items. I am sure that once we fully equip the Army with the MS³, any operation that the Army undertakes will be made much more effective and efficient."

Engaging Its People

In any transformation, people must adapt to the change to ensure success. This is no exception in MES and many initiatives have been put in place. Such initiatives include collaborations with Nanyang Technological University (NTU) and Nanyang Polytechnic (NYP) for skills training, depot visits by commanders and dialogue sessions.

Arising from the transformation, the technology utilised by MES has evolved from mechanics to mechatronics. To keep pace with this, the collaboration with NTU and NYP equips the personnel with the necessary skill sets. MAJ Jason Kwek, Head Vocation Approving Authority, Plans Branch in HQ MES, shared some insights about the course, "All our personnel go for the re-profiling courses at NTU or NYP where they learn new terms and principles. This will give them the qualifications to use the different technologies and ensure that their skill sets are relevant to their jobs."

To reinforce the engagement of every MES personnel, various dialogue sessions and depot visits are scheduled for COL Hung and his team to interact with the personnel on the ground. Such engagement is important as explained by MWO Lim Seng Hin, Formation Sergeant Major of MES, "As our role changes, we have to take the deliberate step to ensure that our people know about their new roles and find out the concerns from the ground. By letting them know the changes, and allaying any concerns, personnel are willing to concentrate and focus on their job."



CMEO engaging ground personnel on the MES transformation



The MS³ heightens operational readiness, due to the more organised method of storage



In large-scale operations, the importance of MES can be seen in the repair and recovery of various equipment in the field

Validation of the Transformation

The fruits of the MES transformation were tested in the earlier part of the year during the Army's involvement in the search for the escaped JI fugitive, Mas Selamat bin Kastari. A large-scale security operation inevitably had to draw deeply on the resources of MES, with many technicians deployed on the ground to maintain and repair the various equipment. MAJ Ignatius Tham, S3 of 6 AMB, remarked, "The complexity really showed us that we are logisticians in totality – that we not only had to fulfil our main role of supporting the Army operation well, but also manage any challenges along the way."

The urgency of supporting the operation made the MES community appreciate the challenges involved and understand their

work as logisticians better. MAJ Tham elaborated, "Through this, we reviewed and renewed our individual mental models and way of working. Going back to the basics reinforced our belief in the importance of supporting the ground forces. In that respect, the operation validated our operational skills and core competencies in supporting the 3rd Generation Army."

Reflecting on the involvement of MES in the operation, COL Hung commented, "Supporting the frontline operations really brought to life the motto of 'One Mind, One Heart, One CSS'. We were reminded that regardless of our vocation, we are ultimately still soldiers."

Sports Science Boosts Ranger Training

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



MMI uses the Electromyographic Assessment to accurately assess the Ranger Trainees' back muscle strength

14 August this year will always be remembered by 20 trainees who graduated from the 35th Ranger Course. They have very good reason to stand tall and proud because enduring 65 days of intense and arduous training had earned them the prestigious “Ranger” title – an honour that is held by only a small select group in our Army. Recognising the importance of this Army’s elite combat course, the Commando Training Institute (CTI) has constantly sought ways to improve its training and enhance soldier performance. One major enhancement this year was the introduction of a musculo-skeletal evaluation and strengthening programme for all trainees, developed together with the Army Medical Services (AMS).

The programme used the latest in sports medicine to identify weak portions in each trainee’s body frame. If trainees are not adequately prepared, these weak portions will be susceptible to injury during the Ranger Course’s rigorous training. Physiotherapists from the Military Medicine Institute (MMI) studied injuries sustained by past Ranger Trainees and noted that back, foot, ankle and muscle strains are the most common. The screening and strengthening programme thus focussed on these critical areas.

Ranger Trainees are certainly heartened to know that the very same sports medicine technology that they enjoy is similar to that used in top sporting arenas such as the English Premier League which is well known for its physically robust game. This technology includes the Balance Assessment Device and Electromyographic Assessment that measure the balance and muscle fatigue of trainees. This scientific data enables physiotherapists

to successfully pre-empt injuries specific to the trainee and better advise them on how to strengthen those weaker areas. Head Physiotherapist from HQ AMS, Jasmine Wong, elaborated, “Our sports medicine evaluation uses state of the art technology to maximise the performance and potential of our elite soldiers. With the evaluation and training programme we are able



CPT Tan was grateful for the confidence boost provided by the evaluation and strengthening programme

to minimize attrition and maximise learning opportunities.”

The programme proved to be greatly beneficial for the latest batch of Ranger Trainees. Following up on their physiotherapist’s advice to strengthen specific portions of their bodies, the results really paid off during their actual training. Ranger Course Graduate, CPT Tan Yong Meng from the Army Officer Management Centre shared, “Through the evaluation, I found out that

my hamstrings were generally weaker compared to the rest of my muscle groups and thus focussed on weight training for that area. Knowing that there was this added level of preparation assured me that I was physically ready and mentally prepared to take up the rigorous training ahead.”

Duty To Protect

Story by Ian Cheong / Photography by Lim Wei Zhong

As a defender of our country, every soldier has a duty to protect his people. CPL Tay Jun Long, a rigger in the 3rd Transport Battalion (3 TPT Bn), holds strongly to this belief, even to the extent of risking his life. This was best demonstrated when he valiantly assisted in foiling an attempted robbery on 25 July. His courageous act in helping a total stranger is indeed selfless and is a strong example for others to emulate.

CPL Tay was returning home after being granted a half-day off when he heard a commotion. As this broke the usual tranquillity of his neighbourhood, he sensed something amiss. Upon further investigation, he discovered two young teenagers tugging at the wallet of an elderly man. Instinctively, on seeing the elderly man in need of help, he headed straight towards them. He recounted, “The thought of running away did not enter my mind, so I just ran towards them and shouted for them to stop.”



CPL Tay appreciated his time in the Army, as it imbued in him a sense of courage and righteousness

Crediting his time in the Army for inculcating in him with the civic-mindedness and the courage to stand up for what is right, CPL Tay explained, “Being in green gives you a sense of duty. You can’t wear green and run away when you encounter such an incident.” This stems from his positive experience during National Service, in which he underwent rigorous training as a rigger. “Having experienced all the tough times with my friends

and seeing my commanders demonstrate good leadership, it instilled a sense of pride in me, that I was a soldier playing my part in defending my nation. Therefore, I knew I had to intervene to protect the man.” His exemplary attitude towards National Service was affirmed by his Officer Commanding, CPT Luo Wee Phing, who added, “CPL Tay is a very hardworking soldier, who performs above expectations, without a single complaint.”

Though CPL Tay is not a commander, he still firmly upholds the core value of leadership. “I may not be an officer or a sergeant, but I can lead in my own way. I can lead by displaying my civic-mindedness,” he said. CPT Luo also observed the understated humility displayed by CPL Tay, recalling, “He did not tell anyone of this incident until we were notified. And even when we were notified, he insisted that it was not that big a deal”

Reflecting on his full-time National Service which he will complete by year end, CPL Tay could only find the positives, “My time in the Army has helped me strengthen myself mentally. Even though it was two long years, I felt that my work was very rewarding, especially after we see the fruits of our hard labour. Most of all, wearing the Army uniform has naturally cultivated in me a strong sense of righteousness and courage.”



The vigilance of (from left) 2WO Tok, 2LT Liew, LTA (NS) Ng, CPL (NS) Ng, LCP Azmi and LCP Eezaffi ensured that the immigrants were safely apprehended

four men. The men did not struggle and were compliant to instructions. Upon arrival, the police confirmed that the four men were illegal immigrants and took them into custody.

According to 2LT Liew, “Everyone played a part in managing the situation, even though we were tired. The drivers and medic helped to detain the four men, while 2WO Tok guided the police to our location. The security of our servicemen and equipment in the area was foremost in my mind as we could not have these four men wandering around in the training area.”

In light of the current security environment, this episode highlighted the importance of applying our training to real-life situations.

Grooming Our Army Leaders

Story by Tham Wei Yang / Photographs contributed by Nanyang Fellows Programme

The challenges of modern warfare require commanders who can easily adapt and innovate. Our Army needs commanders who are able to learn and adapt from the best practices. To achieve this, one approach is to leverage on recognised and relevant academic programmes, such as the prestigious Nanyang Fellows Programme (NFP). In 2008, three Army officers completed the NFP under the SAF Postgraduate Scholarship (General Development) with outstanding results. They are Commander 4th Singapore Armoured Brigade, LTC Lim Tien Hock, Commander 3rd Singapore Infantry Brigade, LTC Desmond Tan, Head Future Doctrine Branch, HQTRADOC, LTC Ong Kah Kuang. All of them received the Dean’s award and LTC Lim was also awarded the Lim Chong Yah’s medal.

Extremely selective with only 20 to 30 students per cohort, the one-year programme encompasses a Masters of Business Administration (MBA) course with the Nanyang Business School, including a Leadership Seminar Series, and four weeks’ study at Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s Sloan School of Management.

Learning and Applying the Best

The MBA is often deemed more relevant to the corporate sector rather than the Army. But its wide ranging focus on many subjects such as accounting, finance, supply chain management, and project management in fact armed its graduates with a host of competencies that are highly applicable. As LTC Lim rightly pointed out, “The Nanyang Fellows Programme focuses strongly on leadership, and the Army is a leadership-centric organisation.”

LTC Ong commented, “Many of the management skills and knowledge that I learn in the programme are applicable in any organisation. It is a matter of contextualising and applying it.” LTC Tan further observed, “There is so much knowledge in the corporate world that can be tapped upon for military application. In fact, in some areas, the SAF is ahead in adapting and innovating for our needs, such as in leadership, strategic planning, finance, logistics, HR management.”

Apart from honing their organisational skills and knowledge, NFP participants also enjoyed highly beneficial exposure to different cultures. Nanyang Fellows come from various Asian countries and working backgrounds. In an age of globalisation



LTC Tan is proud of the SAF’s proactive approach in learning and adopting external best practices

and increasing international military cooperation, this was immediately appreciated by our participants. LTC Ong commented, “It was a good opportunity to learn and appreciate the many cultural differences. This has also enhanced my understanding of non-military organisations.”

Challenges of Full-time Studies



Strong family bonds have helped LTC Ong to cope with the pressures of work and study

Studying full-time in the tightly packed NFP is a challenge as most MBA courses last two years. Fortunately for our three Nanyang Fellows, their Army experiences proved invaluable.

LTC Tan, who was “excited” to be a full-time student again, revealed, “Self-discipline and time management were needed to complete a lot of reading and course work. For this, the Army has equipped me well to deal with the academic rigour.”

There is a crucial difference between undergraduate and post-graduate life: family. The Army’s strong support for work-life balance has enabled our participants to go through the one year without being overwhelmed by study and family commitments. LTC Ong shared, “In the military, we have always been proactive in planning ahead to balance work and family commitments. Therefore, I was able to make the most of this experience. I am appreciative of my understanding wife and strong family support.”

Spirit of Continuous Learning

The strong performance of our three Nanyang Fellows certainly exemplified the spirit of continuous learning. For example, LTC Lim previously attended the Sandhurst Military Academy under the Military Training Award and achieved an outstanding performance as the cohort’s top overseas cadet. He has also attended other courses, including the Malaysian Armed Forces Staff College Course in May 2004, when he was awarded the Top Overseas Student award. LTC Lim is grateful for these opportunities and he encourages those in similar situation to “take the chance to switch gears and expand their mental horizons.”



LTC Lim encourages all servicemen to broaden their horizons through continuous learning

Reflections of an NSman

LTA (NS) Lim Guan Ming is a Platoon Commander in 685 Guards. Presently a Senior Account Manager at Formul8, an advertising firm, he shares with Army News his candid reflections on his in camp experiences.

“I am mostly done with NS training for the year but due to the lack of fitness of 90% of the battalion my Commanding Officer has decided to hold interim route marches on Saturdays with Full Battle Order so that the guys can be up to scratch with fitness for next year. This is so that we won’t have situations during missions when I ask the platoon to attack and I find myself alone under enemy fire and the rest of the guys 30 metres behind.

NS training again was full of laughs. Every NStraining, I get to brush up a bit more on my Hokkien. Although I still cannot speak it, I am able to discern more of what is being said.

I managed to squeeze in a long-run through three different camps. I was also able to explore every path and road and see where it led me. I noticed that Army camps actually have beautiful trees. Trees line the road and offer shade and provide a vision of serenity. There was one road which had tall umbrella trees with long extended branches coloured in moss of green and bronze that sheltered the entire road on both sides. As I ran down, I felt that the trees were giving me a salute. I felt recharged from receiving the good earthy vibes.

During the last portion of the run it started raining and the loud hailers went off to signal the halt of training due to inclem-

ent weather but I kept on running. It was around sunset where the sun was dipping through the last bit of dispersing clouds and the rays gave an ethereal glow to the sky. The tarmac was giving off some steam from the rain cooling the roads and it was at this point I once again felt the feeling of total freedom and space. Running without a care, the only limitations were the boundaries of the camp. At one point when the flag lowering trumpet started I had to stop at attention and face the flag. I chuckled at the moment as I was drenched in sweat and rain while I was getting bemused and approving looks from officers and the others just thought I was crazy.

I am now known as the ‘siao on’ officer in camp which is alright because I like to ‘chiong’ and in a way I feel that it is important to have good fitness particularly in the eyes of guys whom you are leading into battle. If they see you slouching, looking tired and exhausted, they may feel that it is alright for them to be that way too. I guess it is about leading by example.

It looks like NS training does serve some good for reflection and also learning a thing or two. It was embarrassing to have my platoon all wiped out but as the Army Training Evaluation Centre (ATEC) Commander so candidly shared, he too had his whole company wiped out. It is all about lessons learned. At the same time, there is camaraderie between my platoon, fellow officers, and my Amateur Asian Athletes team mates. During the Team Time Trial, we covered for each other and pushed each other, and made sacrifices to go that extra mile. I love that feeling.”



LTA (NS) Lim Guan Ming

6 SIR Re-lives the Spartan Spirit in Greece

Story by Ian Cheong / Photography by 6 SIR

“The team wanted to do something which was not only challenging, but also close to the hearts of the Spartan family.” This comment by Battalion 2IC of 6th Battalion Singapore Infantry Regiment (6 SIR), MAJ Adrian Koh, summed up the 2-week Greece expedition that 6 SIR had embarked on in July. The expedition was conducted under the SAF Adventure Training Award which aims to expose our servicemen to outdoor pursuits so that they can develop various qualities such as leadership, discipline and team spirit.

The Spartan team, led by MAJ Koh, included five other members, namely CPT Jeffery Sea, CPT Sia Lian Huat, 1WO Lim Seng, 1WO Selvaraj and SSG Lim Chee Keong. MAJ Koh further elaborated, “It was not only an expedition, but also a dis-



covery trip as the Spartans sought to relive the Spartan Spirit in Greece, a land renowned for its rich history.”

The first seeds of inspiration were sown during a battalion cohesion activity, when the battalion watched the film ‘300’ together. The film gave them the desire to explore Greece. Upon further research, they were also motivated to retrace the steps of the first marathon. Their months of research and planning came to fruition when they were awarded the Adventure Training Award in May. The Greek expedition saw the team cover 610 kilometres of cycling and 42 kilometres of running all within the span of 10 days. The team cycled for eight days, had a day’s rest, before embarking on the marathon run from Marathon to Athens.

The expedition proved to be demanding both physically and mentally and naturally, there were many instances when the team had to overcome the fatigue. The mountainous and uneven terrain proved to be a major challenge for the team and accounted partially for their fatigue. CPT Sia commented, “It was a memorable experience having to tackle terrain where the ground has a five to ten degree incline spanning a few kilometres. It was very tiring.” The weather was also another factor for the fatigue. 1WO Lim aptly described the weather, “I never realised that Greece could be so hot. The temperature hit 41 degrees Celsius for prolonged periods.”

Despite the fatigue, the team pressed on and managed to complete the entire route, all 652 kilometres of it. “There were many

instances where we wanted to give up, but we knew we had to complete the expedition. We could not disappoint those rooting for us at home,” said MAJ Koh. 1WO Lim added, “When I was cycling up the slope, my mind told me that regardless of the pain, I would never give up. I knew I had to endure the planned distance.” As the team battled on, strong bonds were forged. MAJ Koh reflected, “It was the collective completion of the expedition, where as a team we lived up to the core value of fighting spirit and at the same time, strengthened our unit’s identity.”

The team experienced an overwhelming sense of satisfaction after completing such a feat. MAJ Koh shared, “We were the first in the SAF to conquer the Greece challenge. This is indeed a fitting milestone for our Battalion’s 40th Anniversary.”



Challenging Physical and Mental Limits at AVIVA 70.3 Ironman

Story by Ian Cheong / Photography by Sebastian Ang & Lim Wei Zhong



East Coast Park was abuzz with excitement and anticipation on 7 September as the participants of the AVIVA Singapore Ironman 70.3 Triathlon dismounted from their bicycles, having cycled 90 kilometres and swum 1.9 kilometres earlier. Their mental and physical challenge continued as they set out on the third leg – a 21.1-kilometre run. Each was resolute in their goal of completing the race they had set out to do. With the finish line as the supreme motivation, they simply could not let fatigue triumph over their months of gruelling training and preparation. Passing the finish line would enable each to truly claim the label of an “Ironman”. Army News was at East Coast Park to find out more from our Singapore Armed Forces Sports Associations (SAFSA) participants.

For many of our SAFSA participants, the AVIVA event was the first time that they were participating in an Ironman Triathlon. Though they were physically very fit even before signing up, each needed to increase their level of fitness to meet the grueling demands of the race. This came with personal sacrifices.

For MAJ Wong Pui Pin, S3 of the 42nd Battalion Singapore Armoured Regiment (42 SAR), training was done on early week-end mornings at 5am, meaning that he had to sacrifice some of his personal rest time. 2LT Shaun Phoon, Instructor of Foxtrot Wing in OCS, woke up especially early twice a week to cycle to work, clocking in 60 kilometres per session. Yet, even though the training was difficult, our SAFSA participants were highly motivated to complete the race. MAJ Yee Kok Meng from HQ 9th Division / Infantry explained, “I had interests in biking, swimming and running as individual sports. Thus, I made the natural progression to combine all three into an endurance challenge. This was in line with my belief of challenging my personal mental and physical limits.”



Life After Work: Kayaking

Story by Ian Cheong / Photography by Lim Wei Zhong

LCP Tay Zi Qiang, from MP Command, first took up kayaking in 2002, at the young age of 13. Today, he is a passionate national kayaker who has represented Singapore in numerous international competitions. Besides LCP Tay, there are many other servicemen who share his love for the sport. As part of the national team, they train diligently at MacRitchie Reservoir five times a week, usually on weekday evenings and twice on Saturdays. Their regime is highly rigorous. A typical session will have on average, six to eight kilometres of continuous kayaking and an additional 30 minutes of strength training at the gymnasium.

Yet, even though their training may be gruelling, LCP Tay was effusive about the health benefits. LCP Tay explained, “Kayaking makes one physically stronger, fitter and healthier. I used to have frequent asthma attacks, but ever since I picked up kayaking, I don’t suffer from asthmatic attacks that frequently anymore.” The health benefits are just one of the numerous benefits that kayaking can bring. LCP Tay further elaborated,

“MacRitchie is away from the hustle and bustle of city life. During training, the fresh air and tranquil surroundings envelop you, and you cannot help but feel peaceful after a long day of work.”

Even so, his passion for the sport comes with a high price. Juggling work and sport is a tall order for LCP Tay. In many instances, he had to forgo other leisure activities such as social outings or watching television programmes. Yet, his dedication to kayaking has not changed. This is in no small part due to the satisfaction he gains from the sport. LCP Tay waxed lyrical about his passion, “Racing is a great thrill, as you see yourself reaping the fruits of your hard work. The satisfaction after seeing your training come to fruition is immense.”

For those who are keen to take up kayaking, LCP Tay had these words of encouragement, “You should go for the 1-star kayaking course first, get your basics and foundations correct. Then train harder if you really have the passion. For recreation, you could embark on expeditions around Pasir Ris and Ubin.

Soaking in the atmosphere, in itself, is an unforgettable experience”

For further information, please access the Singapore Canoeing Federation website at www.scf.org.sg



Customs and Traditions

Development of Combat Arms

Story by Tham Wei Yang / Photography by Sebastian Ang

Previously, we explained the origins of the Company and Regiment. Next we will examine how Combat Arms and Support Services have evolved in the modern army. Over the next two issues, we will take a brief look at the history behind some of the different Arms and Services.

Infantry

The word ‘infantry’ originated from the Latin word for ‘youth’, and at first referred to disorganised and indisciplined bands of foot soldiers who were too poor to buy the equipment needed to join the cavalry. It was only used to describe organised ground troops in the French and Spanish armies circa 1579. Today, it is a standard term in military history for foot soldiers.

The infantry at its inception was a collection of commoners who had only undergone the most rudimentary training. Infantry warfare was conducted by having the commander shout commands as the fighting was going on. Over time, better equipment and training meant that infantrymen could be organised into formations and taught to execute tactical manoeuvres in the midst of battle.

Further developments in infantry warfare included the decentralisation of command,



encouraged by better communications technology and weapons. The use of high explosive and rapid fire weapons made it necessary to disperse infantry units over a wider area for survivability. Infantrymen could be organised into heavily-armed formations to withstand direct assaults, or small mobile units for greater manoeuvrability and tactical flexibility. The optimal deployment of modern infantry requires balancing the competing factors of mobility, armament, and protection.

Even with today’s emphasis on air power and highly advanced and sophisticated weapons, the role and importance of the infantry has not been diminished. For example, the infantry is required to occupy and hold positions and enter terrain which a tank cannot access.



NSmen Matters : Exit Control

NSmen are required to notify Ministry of Defence (MINDEF) Notification Centre (MNC) if they are travelling overseas for more than 24 hours and less than six months. If they are travelling overseas for six months or more, they must apply for an Exit Permit (EP). Those who travel overseas with a valid EP need not make further notification to MNC.

MINDEF Notification Centre (MNC)

NSmen who are required to notify MINDEF of their overseas trips (of more than 24 hours and less than six months) must do so via the MNC, which is manned 24 hours daily, including weekends and public holidays. They can notify MINDEF via NS Portal (www.ns.sg) or call NS Call Centre (1800 3676767 / 1800-eNSNSNS).

NSmen must furnish the following information for their trip notification: NRIC, Date of Birth, Country of Visit, Departure Date, Return Date, Telephone or Fax Number (local or overseas), Email address (optional)

Alternatively, they can also SMS to 36767, fax to 68537894 or mail to 5 Ang Mo Kio St 62, NCS Hub, Singapore 569141. Upon successful notification, a 4-Digit Acknowledgement Code will be issued to the NSmen, which they should keep for any future verification.

For those who need to make frequent trips to the same destination, they could make a one-time notification to cover a period of not more than one month via the various notification means available.

For example, if an NSman is making three trips to China between 1 to 31 December 2008, he will only need to make a notification covering the period 1 to 31 December 2008.

All NSmen are to note that notification of overseas trips will not be taken as proof of their absence from Singapore and thereby exempt them from mobilisation. They will only be excused from mobilisation when documentary proofs are produced to substantiate their absence. Similarly, notification of overseas trips does not automatically excuse them from NS activities such as IPPT, ICT, and any other NS call-ups. They are still required to submit their request to be deferred from ICT via MyDeferment at NS Portal.

Exit Permit (EP)

Exit Permit (EP) applications may be made through the NS Portal at www.ns.sg. In their application, NSmen must declare the reason and duration of their overseas trips and that they have not been scheduled for NS training within six months from the date of application. Upon confirmation, NSmen will be issued with an e-EP. Whenever required, NSmen must be able to furnish documentary proof e.g. employer’s letter or deferment approval to substantiate their declaration.

If the NSmen are scheduled for NS training, they are to submit their request to be deferred from ICT via MyDeferment at NS Portal before applying for an EP. They may be disrupted

Cavalry/Armour

The Cavalry, soldiers who fought on horseback, is the second oldest of the Combat Arms and precursor to the Armour formation. Although fighting on horseback had many advantages to fighting on foot, it was only with the introduction of stirrups that the Cavalry came to prominence. Stirrups are loops on either side of the horse saddle for the rider’s feet. The exact date of its invention is unknown, but earlier versions already appeared as early as 500 B.C. With stirrups, the rider was more stable on horseback, able to lean in different directions, and had both hands free to handle his weapon, making him a much more dangerous opponent.

Armoured warfare evolved from the need to give an army the manoeuvrability that cavalry provided in earlier times. The earliest tanks first appeared during World War I as a means to end the stalemate imposed by trench warfare. The early tanks were unreliable and there was resistance to their adoption, partly because of the prestige accorded to the cavalry. It was not until World War II that the tank (and armoured warfare in general) was vindicated and recognised to be a crucial element of an army, replacing the traditional combination of man and stallion.

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ARMY NEWS (Suggestions and Feedback)

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Quiz Of The Month - SEP / OCT

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

Q: How far away can our Leopard 2A4 MBT accurately engage enemy targets?
Closing Date : 30 November 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 judges’ decision is final. Please send us your entries via mail or email us at armynews@starnet.gov.sg.
5. Prizes not collected within a month of notification will be forfeited.

AUG / SEP Quiz

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

A: Advanced Man Combat System (ACMS)

AUG / SEP Winners

1) LCP YIP ZI BIN NRIC: 50000531H
2) LTA (NS) CHIA SZE BOON NRIC: 50000082B
3) 3SG CHUA CHEONG NRIC: 50000925I
4) CPT (NS) TAN KONG BING NRIC: 50000868H
5) RECTANTIONG HIAN NRIC: 50000211C

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

An Innovative Army

A Creative Solution for More Effective Training

Story by Ian Cheong / Photography by Lim Wei Zhong & Sebastian Ang



“With a creative and perceptive mindset, many everyday objects and processes have the potential for adaptation or improvisation to make our work more efficient and effective. The Army, with its wide range of operations and processes, is a fertile ground for such innovative spirit to achieve greater efficiency and safety in everything that we do.

With this innovative spirit, we will be able to effect many positive changes to our Army, especially in the aspects of operational readiness, training proficiency, safety and cost. This will enable us to fulfil our vision of a World-Class 3rd Generation Army that constantly changes itself to meet new challenges.”

- COL Ngien Hoon Ping,
Commander, CSSCOM

One recent innovation exemplifying this spirit is the Wireless Monitoring System, designed by a team with the moniker ‘Fire Force G’ from HQ Armour. Gaining inspiration from the connectivity of the Internet router, this innovation won the team a Gold award at the National Innovation and Quality Circle Convention (NIQCC) held on 4 September.

All It Takes Is A Spark

The Wireless Monitoring System had a humble beginning. It was mooted over light-hearted banter during lunch when some instructors were sharing on the various limitations faced during training. This soon evolved into a 3-month long journey that finally culminated in the implementation of the device into Armour operations for safer and more efficient training in Armour Training Institute.

When implemented, it will bring manifold benefits for our Armour soldiers with the swift, effective and safe training. ‘Fire Force G’ adapted the concept of connectivity that the internet router provides, contextualised it, and then designed the Wireless Monitoring System. Army News takes you on a discovery journey to find out more about the benefits the Wireless Monitoring System will bring.

Enhancing Training Proficiencies

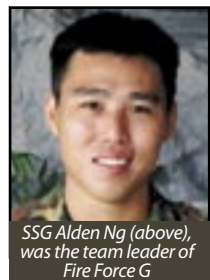
With the introduction of the Wireless Monitoring System, training at Armour Institute has been enhanced. This was made possible thanks to the ingenious feature of being able to view the external images outside the vehicle by all parties involved in the live-firing. Not only is the trainee able to view these images on his display screen in the turret, the conducting officer can also observe the same images on a separate display screen and ascertain whether the trainee is adopting the correct techniques. Thus, any improper techniques are immediately corrected before the round is fired, instead of previously waiting until the round was fired before correcting the trainee. The trainees are now able to achieve higher proficiency with lesser rounds. Training safety is also enhanced as the correct techniques are used.

Peer-Learning

The Wireless Monitoring System has also brought about closer peer-learning as the other trainees can also view the same images being transmitted and learn from their peers’ actions. This will enable them to avoid making the same mistakes when it is their time to fire. CPL Chen Hong Jie, a trainee, found the peer-learning highly beneficial. He said, “Watching my peers execute the various drills gave me a better understanding of the different techniques. I can thus learn faster and more effectively. This gives me more confidence when it is my turn to fire.”

Cost and Time Savings

‘Fire Force G’ has recognised the potential of the Wireless Monitoring System for wider application and is now looking into introducing it to other Armour units. One reason for this development is the great potential for cost and time savings. SSG Alden Ng, the team leader, revealed, “With this system, we save at least 80 minutes per live-firing session and at least \$330 per trainee. The cost savings add up to two million dollars over two years, and this is just for the Training Institute alone!”

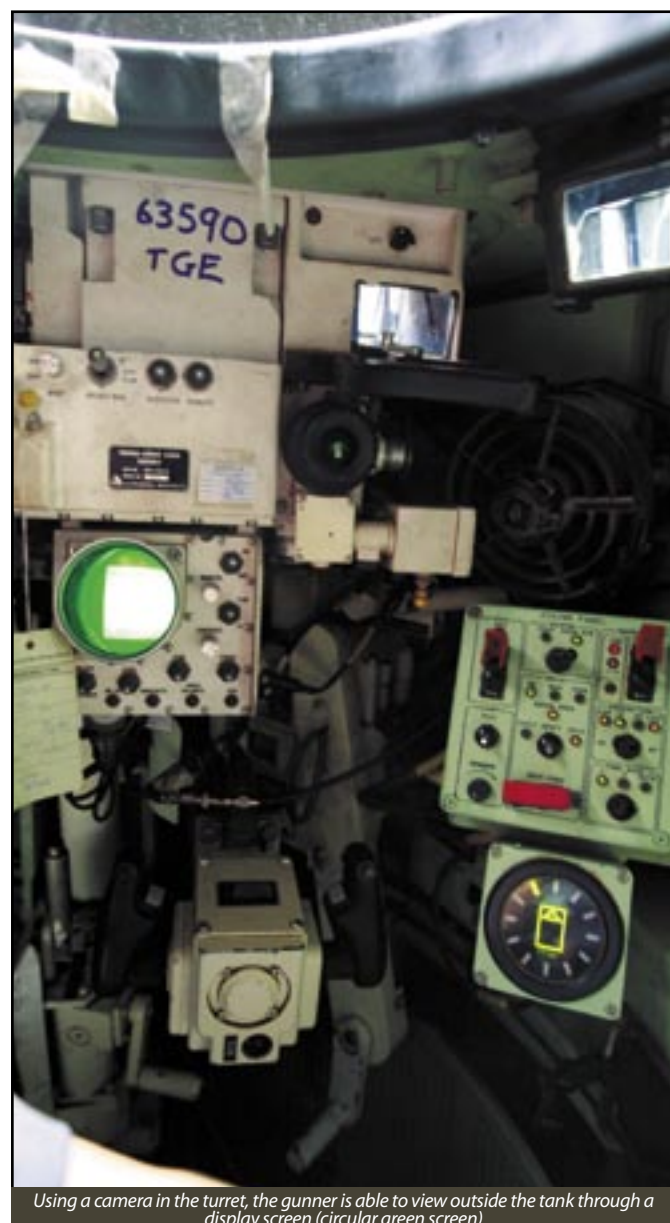


SSG Alden Ng (above),
was the team leader of
Fire Force G

The satisfaction from completing this project is really immense.”

Reaching New Heights

Indeed, with a perceptive and creative mind, many innovations can be made to improve our Army. The Wireless Monitoring System, with its savings in cost and time, and its enhancement to training proficiencies, is a fine testament of our Army’s innovative spirit.



Using a camera in the turret, the gunner is able to view outside the tank through a display screen (circular green screen)

Using the Wireless Monitoring System to Improve Live-Firing

- With the Wireless Monitoring System, images taken from a camera mounted on the gun are fed to the trainee via a display screen in the turret itself.

- The conducting or supervising officers in the observation tower are fed the same image via the Wireless Monitoring System. Thus, they can immediately correct the techniques of the trainees.

- Peer-learning is enhanced as the other trainees can view the techniques of the trainee in the turret from another location.