

The Blue Beret

Volume 36 - March 2000



**Mr de Soto arrives
Staff members get together
Engineers never have a dull moment**



Published monthly by the Public Information Office of the United Nations Force in Cyprus, HQ UNFICYP, PO Box 21642, Nicosia, Cyprus
Tel: (02) 864550/864416/864408
Fax: (02) 864461
E-mail: blueberetcyprus@hotmail.com

Editorial Team

Charles Gaulkin
Maj Paul Kolken
Miriam Taylor

Photography

Contingent Photographers

Unit Press Officers

- Sector 1** Capt Luis Cormick
- Sector 2** Capt Neil Richardson
- Sector 4** Capt Andreas Vas
Capt Gregorij Hvastja
Capt Zsolt Hatos
- UNCIVPOL** Sgt Mark Yarrow
- UN Flt** 1/Lt Adrian Ferrari
- MFR** Capt Alberto Reyes
- FMPU** 1/Lt Yge ten Berg
- Civil Adm** Roger de Weever

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editorial

Since the creation of UNFICYP nearly four decades ago, the United Nations has mounted dozens of other peacekeeping operations -- many of them successful but others hampered by unclear mandates, inadequate resources or bureaucratic inefficiency. The "lessons learned" reports about the Rwanda and Srebrenica operations marked a new stage in UN efforts to avoid past mistakes. Now Secretary-General Kofi Annan has appointed a team of experts to carry out a major study of UN peace operations. One of the panel members is UNFICYP's former Chief of Mission, Dame Ann Hercus.

As the Secretary-General said in explaining the aims of the study: "It is partly question of being clear about what we are trying to do, what kind of forces we need to do it, what are the conditions in which different kinds of mission are appropriate, and what you do when circumstances change and you need to move from one kind of operation to another. What do you do, for instance, if the peace you are trying to keep breaks down and large numbers of civilians are in danger of being massacred?"

"And partly it is a question of getting the nuts and bolts right -- of having the right structure for the UN secretariat and proper planning and organization -- with clear lines of command, control, accountability and coordination."

UNFICYP military and civilian personnel, especially those who have had experience in UN operations elsewhere, will surely want to read the panel's report when it is completed this summer.

It is with deep regret that we announce the death of Pte Lee Joseph Harrison of the 1st Battalion, The Staffordshire Regiment. Pte Harrison, 20, was found dead with head wounds from his own semi automatic rifle at his Nicosia Green Line sentry post on Wednesday 15 March.



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Mr de Soto visits UNFICYP



Preparing the ground for meaningful negotiations

By Charles Gaulkin

It was a busy week for Alvaro de Soto, Secretary-General Kofi

Annan's Special Adviser on Cyprus, who visited the island for the first time from 29 February to 8 March.

Mr de Soto has been designated to take over as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Cyprus and UNFICYP's Chief of Mission later this year. His first visit to Cyprus was primarily a familiarisation visit, during which he saw places he had been reading about in UN documents, met many Greek and Turkish Cypriots, and got a close-up view of UNFICYP operations.

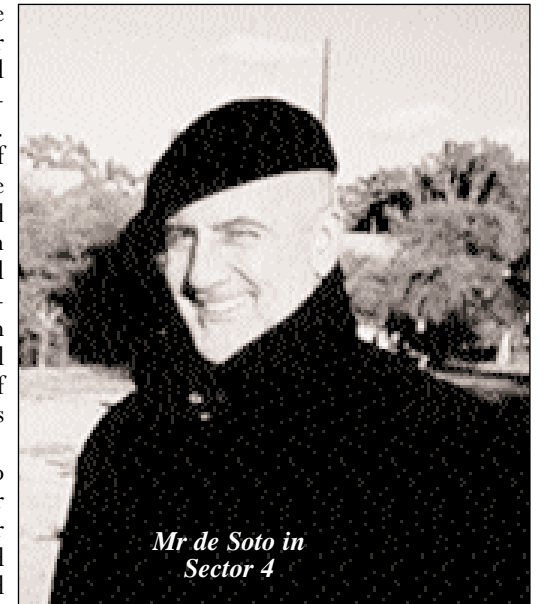
His visit gave him a "much deeper, broader understanding of the situation on the island," Mr de Soto said, before heading to Ankara and Athens with Chief of Mission James Holger. He expressed his appreciation to all sectors, units and HQ for helping him to learn more about UNFICYP and Cyprus.

Mr de Soto has been conducting the proximity talks which the Secretary-General opened in New York in December and in Geneva in February. The third round of talks, in which Mr de Soto will once again meet separately with the two leaders (Glaftos Clerides and Rauf Denktash), is scheduled to begin on 23 May in New York. In a press conference at the end of his visit, Mr de

Soto noted that the aim of the talks is to prepare the ground for meaningful negotiations that will lead to a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem. "This will require willingness of the parties to compromise," he said. "It will require continued support and encouragement from those actors on the international scene whom the Secretary-General views as his friends in conducting this process. It will require a certain amount of patience as well. And the Cypriots know about patience."

During his visit, Mr de Soto had a view of Cyprus from the air in several UNFICYP helicopter trips, over the buffer zone and between the UNPA and Pyla and Famagusta. He travelled to the Karpas peninsula, where he met with some of the 438 Greek Cypriots living there and saw the Apostolos Andreas monastery which is to be renovated in a project led by UNOPS (UN Office for Project Services). In Rizokarpasso, he went to the primary school and the local clinic, as well as to the Greek Cypriot cemetery. A crowd of TV and newspaper reporters and cameramen followed him, including 35 Greek Cypriot journalists.

In other familiarisation visits, he went to Pyla where he met the Greek and Turkish Cypriot mukhtars (and was briefed by UNCIVPOL), to the deserted town of Varosha (briefed by Sector



Mr de Soto in Sector 4

4), the Hala Sultan Tekke mosque in Larnaca (also to be improved under the UNOPS project), and for a walk along the Green Line in Nicosia (briefed by Sector 2). He attended the Austrian-Slovenian-Hungarian medal parade in Dherinia and went to San Martin Camp (Sector 1) for a visit with the Argentine Contingent.

Separate meetings with the two leaders were held on 6 March.

Prior to his appointment as Special Adviser on Cyprus, Mr de Soto had been Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs at the United Nations since 1 January 1995. In that capacity, he had responsibility for the Americas, Europe, Asia and the Pacific. He also supervised the Division for Palestinian Rights and the Decolonization Unit.

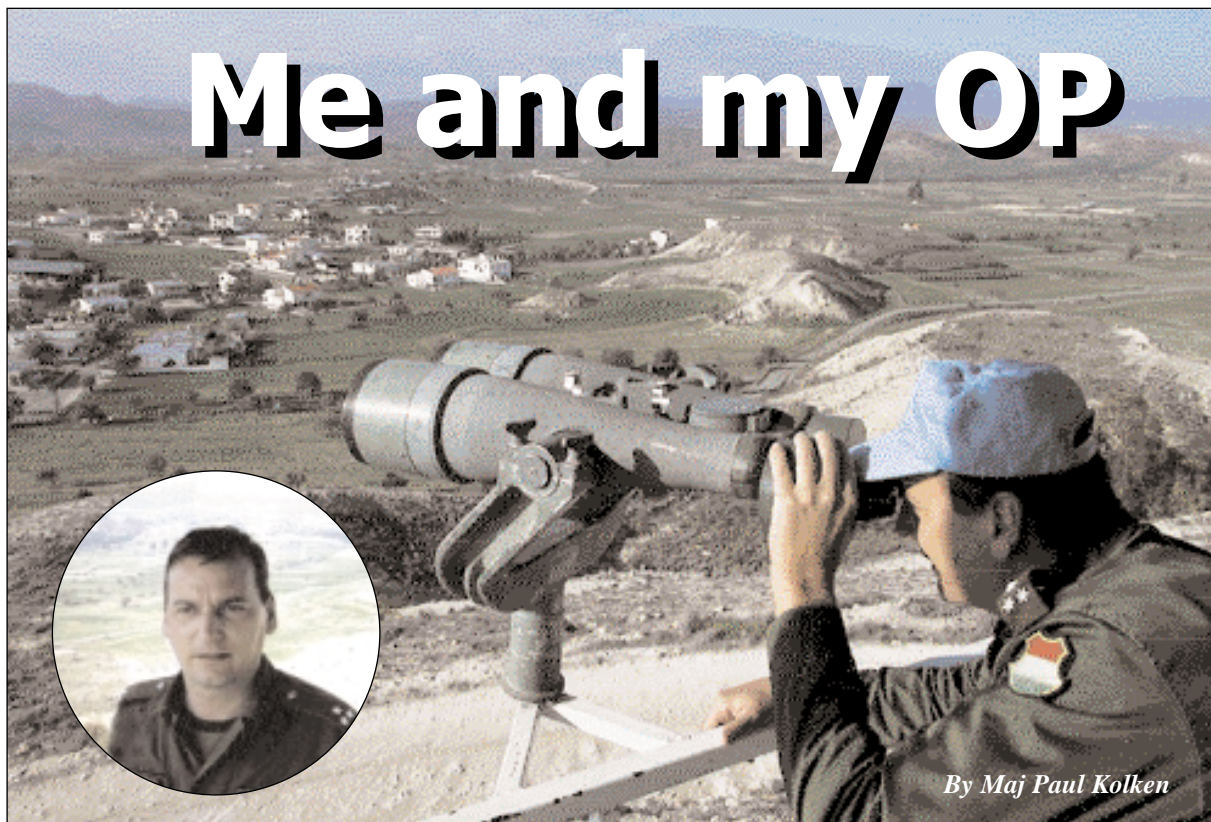
Mr de Soto joined the United Nations in 1982 as Special Assistant to Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar, and subsequently became the Secretary-General's Executive Assistant. He was promoted to Assistant Secretary-General in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General in 1988, and served as the Secretary-General's Personal Representative for the Central American Peace Process from 1989-1991. He conducted the negotiations that resulted in the January 1992 peace agreements in El Salvador.

Mr de Soto is on special leave from the Peruvian diplomatic service in which he holds the rank of Ambassador.



Mr de Soto meeting the press

Me and my OP



By Maj Paul Kolken

I am Master Corporal Zsolt Kelemen, from Kecskemét, a small village in the centre of Hungary. I am 36 years old. Apart from a shooting exercise in Poland, the army has never posted me outside Hungary. So this is my first mission abroad.

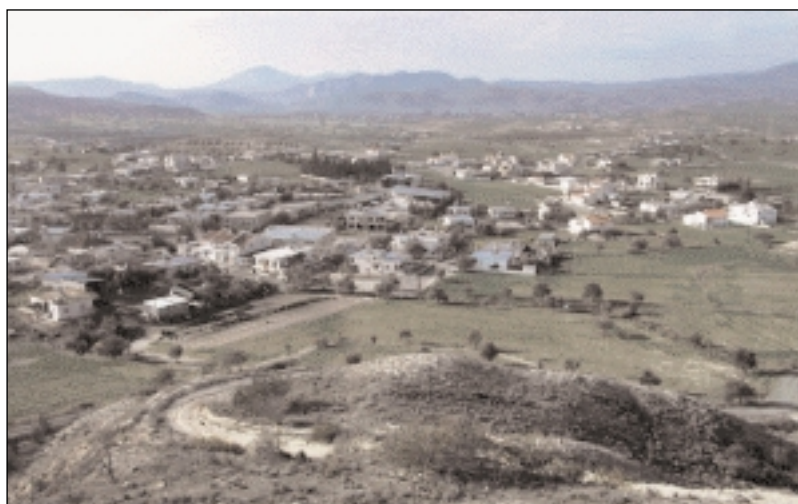
I am based at Camp Berger in Louroujina, a village northwest of Larnaca. The buffer zone bends around Louroujina. During the first part of my appointment with UNFICYP, I was a patrolman, located at patrol base 95. My platoon has one more patrol base, 92, and two observation posts, 91 and 96.

Since August 1999, I have been an observer at OP 96. To reach this OP, I have to drive along a very bad track which winds upwards. When the track is wet, it's too dan-

gerous to drive uphill. This means I have to walk, but I don't mind. It's good exercise.

My OP lies at about 260 metres above sea level. It's not the highest point in the vicinity. On top of this mountain there is the church of Saint Stavros, easily visible from the highway.

During my four-hour shift, I enjoy the fantastic view. To the west, I can see the Lymbia-Dali road, many fields, and the Larnaca-Nicosia highway. Whenever I see a convoy of more than four military vehicles on the highway, or more than two on the Lymbia-Dali road, I have to report this immediately. That's considered a 'move forward'. Other incidents I sometimes have to deal with are hunters intruding the buffer zone. To the south, I can see the village of Lymbia.



From OP 96, a bad track winds down the mountain towards Lymbia

In winter time, working conditions can be unpleasant at OP 96. Sometimes it is very cold, and when there is a strong wind blowing, the tower swings a bit. You need a strong stomach not to become sick.

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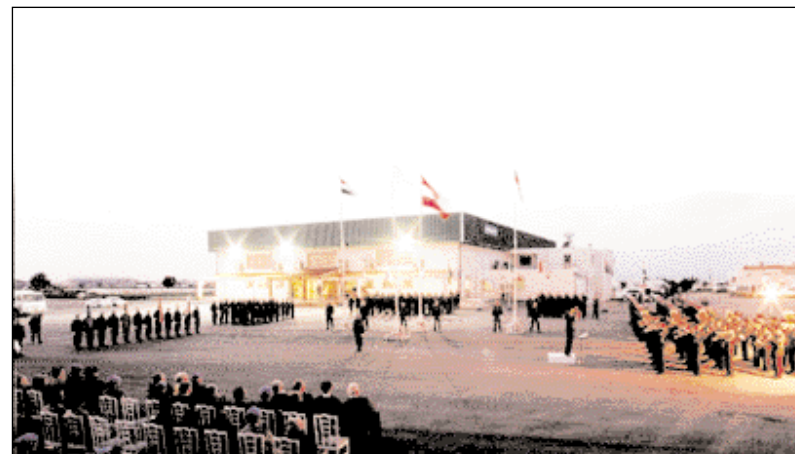


OP 96: swinging in the wind

After my shift I'm off for eight hours, before spending four more hours on my high position. Each month there are eight days when I'm not scheduled to observe. On such days, I like to go off on excursions and see a bit of Cyprus. I liked visiting Saint Hilarion Castle in the Kyrenia mountain range, and I also like hiking in the Cape Greco area.

In March, I will end my tour of duty, and will return to my wife and my two-year-old daughter.

167 decorated in Dherinia



It is traditional for Sector 4 to present the UN medal to their soldiers alternately north and south of the buffer zone. This time, on 3 March, the event took place at the "Zapion Palace" in Dherinia.



Maj Gen Rana decorating Sector 4 soldiers

There was a second reason for Sector 4 to hold a parade. Commanding Officer Lt Col Helmut Plieschnegger symbolically handed over the UN flag, as the sign of responsibility for more than 300 soldiers in Sector 4, through the hands of the UNFICYP Force Commander, Maj Gen Victory Rana, to Lt Col Günter Kienberger.

Special Adviser to the Secretary General, His Excellency Mr Alvaro de Soto, who was on a familiarisation visit to Cyprus for one week, joined the ceremony in Dherinia.

All in all, 80 Austrian, 62 Hungarian and 25 Slovenian sol-

diers, who had served their first six months within UNFICYP, were presented their medals by Chief of Mission Mr James Holger, Force Com-mander Maj Gen Victory Rana, Hungarian Brig Gen Tibor Nagy and the Commander of the Austrian International Training Centre, Brig Gen Günter Höfler. Their presentation was musically supported by the city band of Spittal/Drau from Austria.

The soldiers and the audience, some of whom were not dressed for an outdoor event, warmed up after the ceremony during the reception at the Zapion Palace hall, where they were treated to drinks, snacks and more Austrian music.



The City band of Spittal/Drau (Austria) performed not only at the medal parade, but also at the city square of Famagusta and during the "frühshoppen" in Camp Duke Leopold V.

Hungarians beat Austrians

Early in February, the Austrian Premier League soccer club, GAK Liebherr, spent a winter training camp in Ayia Napa to prepare for the second round of the league. The Austrian soldiers had an opportunity to visit and support the Austrian team during several training sessions.

It was also possible to have a closer look at and meet with the players and their famous trainer, Mr Augenthaler, who earned his credits years ago in German football.

On 9 February, GAK played MTK Budapest. For the Austrian and Hungarian soldiers of Sector 4, this was almost like a small national tournament within the Sector. The Hungarians beat the Austrians 4:0, which evens the score, since the Austrians were the winners of the military skills competition.

Lt Col Kienberger takes over command of Sector Four



Lt Col Günter Kienberger joined the Austrian Military Academy in 1976 and graduated in 1979. He

first served within the United Nations in 1983 as Officer in Command of the 2nd Company of the Austrian UNDOF Battalion.

In 1987, he acted as the ADC and Pers Officer with UNFICYP's Austrian Contingent. He then served as a military observer with UNAMIC/UNTAC (Cambodia) in 1991, and was the Contingent Commander of the Austrian Logistic Unit with IFOR (Bosnia) in 1995.

In Austria, he holds the post of head of the Mission Specific Training Section at the Austrian International Peace Support Command, and is therefore involved with all missions where Austrian soldiers carry out their service.

Lt Col Kienberger is married to Eveline, and they have two daughters.

The Staffords remember fallen comrades

Cpl Ian O'Connor plays the last post



The Staffords serving with UNFICYP in Nicosia held a wreath-laying ceremony at Wayne's Keep Cemetery in the buffer zone on 23 February in honour of the four members of the South Staffordshire Regiment who are buried there. Ptes R Banks, W H Ausprey, C K Hewitt and C A Ingram died while the Battalion was garrisoned in Cyprus between 1955 and 1957.

The South Staffordshire Regiment was posted to Nicosia in Sept 1955, and the enjoyment of Nicosia nightlife after service in the Egyptian desert was short-lived. Tensions soon increased, making it unsafe for soldiers to move around the city unless in armed parties. The civil police were unable to cope with the civil disturbances and small detachments of three soldiers led by an NCO were soon billeted at the isolated police outposts.

Most of the battalion's time in 1956 was spent in searches for wanted men, arms and ammunition and in numerous street disturbances in which the soldiers behaved with much steadiness and restraint. Although the primary role of the battalion was internal security, detached platoons and companies played their part in the large scale operations conducted outside of Nicosia. Towards the end of the year, the call on the soldiers was at such a peak that the Band and Drums was often used. Before leaving Cyprus, the South Staffords had a relief from their 18 months of static internal security duties and played a full part in two large scale operations in the Kyrenia Mountains and Troodos range.

In his farewell speech to the Battalion in February 1957, Sir John Harding, Governor and Commander in Chief, said: "When you return to the United Kingdom,

By Capt Neil Richardson

you can tell everyone you meet that you have carried out your task with honour and distinction, and that you have played a major part in restoring the forces of law and order in Cyprus."

43 years on, the Staffords are back in Cyprus and continue to promote the values of their predecessors along the buffer zone.



The Commanding Officer, Sector Two, lays a wreath at the grave of Pte Ingram, South Staffordshire Regt

UNFICYP in June 1993. The brass plaque commemorates the three officers and 25 other ranks who died while serving as a part of the contingent keeping the peace in Cyprus.



The MT cell at the CANCON memorial, after the renovation was completed

MT cell renovate Canadian memorial

By Capt Neil Richardson

Under the direction of Sgt Terry Smith, the MT cell took on the task of renovating the Canadian memorial outside Sector 2 Headquarters.

Clearly suffering from the elements, and in desperate need of a new coat of paint, the task was set and the MT set about collecting the necessary equipment. Work started with the paving being scrubbed clean of weeds and the brass plaque was removed before a new coat of paint was applied all round. With the brass plaque given vigorous elbow grease and a generous dose of Brasso, finally restored to its former glory, it was screwed back in place.

The memorial was constructed on the departure of the Canadian Contingent from the military mission of

New civilian police on the beat

By Sgt Mark Yarrow

The latest contingents of Australian and Irish civilian police arrived in Cyprus on 14 February to replace those members of UNFICYP who, having finished their tours, were heading back to their home countries.

All new personnel are experienced police officers with knowledge gained in a number of areas of civilian policing including uniform duties, criminal investigations, surveillance, international operations, special branch, administration and internal investigations. Despite this, the new officers still needed to undergo four days of familiarisation training at the Ledra Palace Hotel to prepare them for their deployments to the various UNCIVPOL stations across Cyprus.

Now at their stations, the new members have been wholeheartedly throwing themselves into their UN duties, showing that they are more than capable of maintaining the same high standards displayed by the UNCIVPOL members they have replaced.



However, it's not "all work and no play", and these latest arrivals have been quick to show they want to be involved with UN social events too.

FPM visits UNIFIL

The Force Provost Marshal, Maj Richard Moore, recently carried out a liaison visit to UNIFIL in southern Lebanon. He was hosted by the FPM - Lt Col HS Dhindsa from the Indian Army.

The visit included detailed briefings from all the departments of the UNIFIL MP Company. The two police units are faced with many similar problems, and there was a useful exchange of information during the visit. It was no surprise to find that road traffic accidents feature high on the list of priorities for UNIFIL MPs, but with road conditions and driving standards far worse than in Cyprus, the number is surprisingly low.

The standard UNIFIL patrol vehicle is the Toyota Land Cruiser/Four-Runner, which is seen as near perfect for the task. Other equipment is very similar to that in UNFICYP.

During his visit, Maj Moore was admirably hosted by Indian officers at Indian House in Naqura for an evening



Maj Moore with members of Tyre Detachment, UNIFIL MP Coy

of delightful national cuisine and hospitality.

Other highlights of the trip were a brief visit across the border to Israel and also to Tyre MP detachment. The whole tour made it clear that providing police support to a UN force has many common considerations, even if the mission and political conditions are very different.

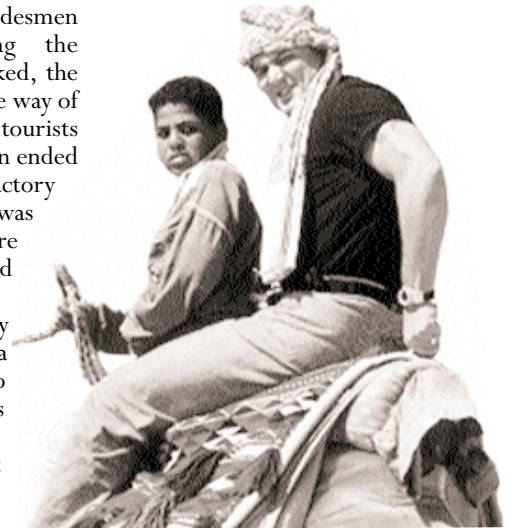
Getting away from it all

Members of the FMPU take their duties very seriously, so it's not surprising that they need to take a break every now and then. So, on 21 February, SSgt Praznik from SICON and WO2 Lechner from AUSCON took a two-day cruise to Egypt. An air-conditioned luxury liner with all facilities and - most importantly - a nightly international dance show added to the thrill of this event.

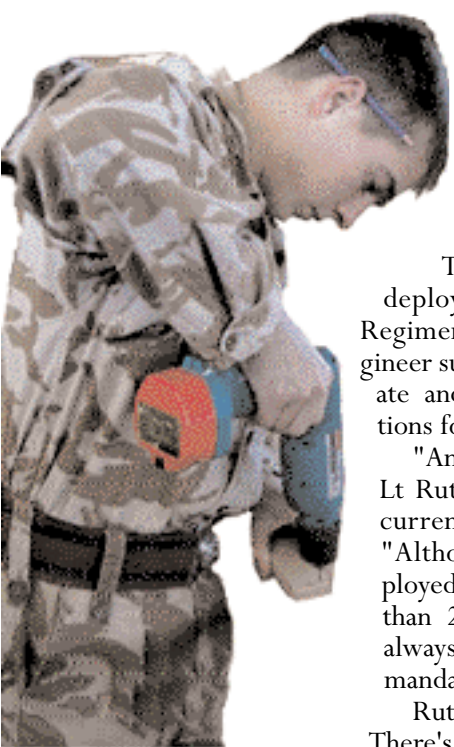
When the ship arrived at Port Said, Egypt awaited. First stop was Cairo to visit the world-famous museum with its treasures of antiquities, including the magnificent finds from the tomb of Tutankhamun and the other pharaohs. Visits to the pyramids and the mysterious sphinx followed.

Throughout the tour, tradesmen were constantly following the tourists. The faster you walked, the faster the price fell! This is the way of life in Egypt for everyone - tourists and locals alike. The excursion ended with a visit to the papyrus factory and a souvenir shop. Then it was back to the ship and departure for Limassol, leaving behind the ancient land of Cleopatra.

In summary, the two-day trip allows visitors to taste a different way of life and to take some great photographs to add to the collection. However, it certainly isn't long enough to fully appreciate the full beauty and magnificence of Egypt.



Off to the pyramids



Bricklayers, electricians, plumbers, carpenters. A military operation can't do without them. UNFICYP is no exception. In Sector Two, a detachment of 13 sappers deploys with every Roulement Regiment, tasked with providing engineer support to the unit in order to create and maintain safe working conditions for United Nations operations.

"And that's quite a challenge," says Lt Ruth Lloyd, the commander of the current engineer detachment. "Although UNFICYP has been deployed along the buffer zone for more than 25 years now, maintenance was always carried out with a six-monthly mandate period in mind."

Ruth hails from Ayrshire in Scotland. There's no hiding her accent when she

says: "The sappers on this tour returned from Bosnia only in March 99. Getting an opportunity to see the world is never a concern for sappers in 36 Engineer Regiment, the regiment supporting the Roulement Regiment. We frequently have sappers with KFOR in Kosovo, and we provide support to Kenya and Northern Ireland.

"With UNFICYP, my sappers have an excellent and valuable opportunity to gain experience in their artisan trades. Amongst others, the detachment holds electricians, plumbers, carpenters and bricklayers. Every sapper is also trained as a combat engineer, which provides skills in areas such as water supply and bridging. The sum total of all the trades and experience is a detachment of little more than a section of sappers which can tackle pretty much anything the men on the line can throw at it. Requests can be very diverse. A day on the line could involve anything from repairing a broken toilet to building

a complete extension to a platoon house."

Full of enthusiasm she continues: "One thing I particularly like is working with people from other nationalities. Within days of arriving in Cyprus, we were involved in refurbishing a part of the patrol track, working alongside Argentinian engineers from Sector 1. Sappers are well used to dealing with other nationalities and armies, such is the nature of their role."



Engineers never have a dull moment

By Miriam Taylor

"Currently the detachment includes two engineers from the Royal Netherlands Army. The Dutch follow a very different training system from the Brits. Instead of training their lads in one particular field, they take one overall course and learn a little of everything; then they specialise later wherever they want. For example, Cpl Timmermans, a bricklayer by trade, is a carpenter in the army. We've enjoyed working with the Dutch, and we've learned a lot from each other. Now we're completely integrated. Having the facility of Dutch sappers as a point of contact with the Dutch Sector 2 West is such a great help. It's made a huge difference. And we already have invitations to Holland!"

Dutch Cpl Dennis Leemeijer confirms the satisfaction of working with other nationalities is mutual.

"There's a nice atmosphere in our group. I know Lt Lloyd takes good care of her personnel. If need be, she fights for us."

Right now, Dennis is replacing a ventilator in a toilet at Falcon's troop house.

"There's always a lot of work, especially when it has been raining. The electrical wiring in many places is very bad. At Ortona troop house it is terrible. The good thing is that I can gain experience in this field. My colleague, LCpl "Smudge" Smith, is a more highly trained electrician than I am and I've

learned a lot from him. At Ypenburg, we have rearranged the electrical lines to make sure that when a fuse blows after using a heater, the equipment in the Ops room will not be affected."

Three of Dennis' colleagues start their day in an office at Wolsley Barracks, which has been stripped to the ground.

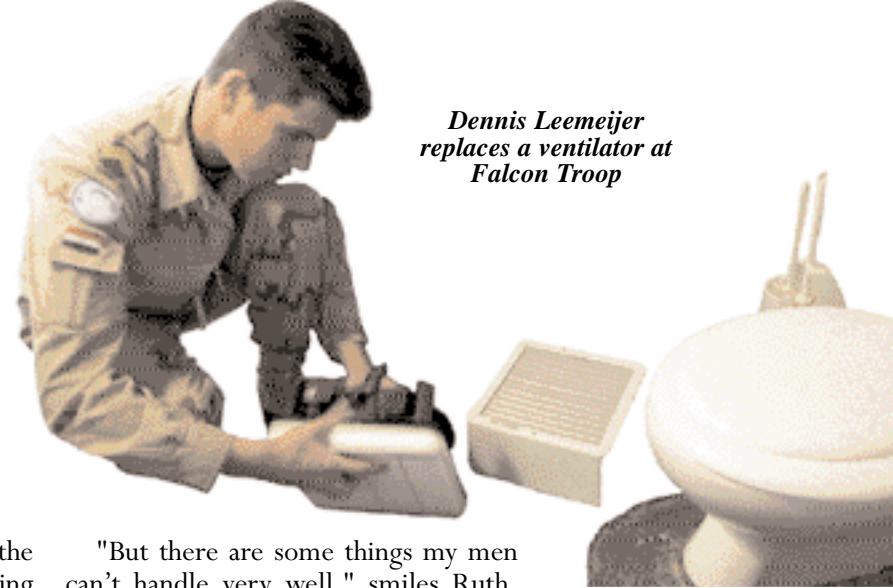
"I started this task yesterday," says Spr Craig Ramsbottom. "Together with Keith Stafford, I've taken off all the old plaster. Today we shall replaster this office, while Peter Leighton makes sure everything will be finished off nicely."

"Here in UNFICYP," Ruth says, "the boys are carrying out what I would call 'first aid'. In 1999, a water purification system was installed along the line. Since it was only completed last October, there is a number of teething problems we've had to face. The biggest problem is water, since there is strict rationing on the island, but at least the lads don't have to buy bottled water any longer.

"Another problem, as Dennis said, is the wiring. But next month, a specialist team will arrive from the UK who will rip out wiring at three locations, Maple House, Irish Bridge, and Ortona. Then they will be completely rewired with a new electrical system. Hopefully all the problems will then be rectified. Other OP upgrading will follow in the future."



The Force Engineer meets with the sector engineers once a week



Dennis Leemeijer replaces a ventilator at Falcon Troop

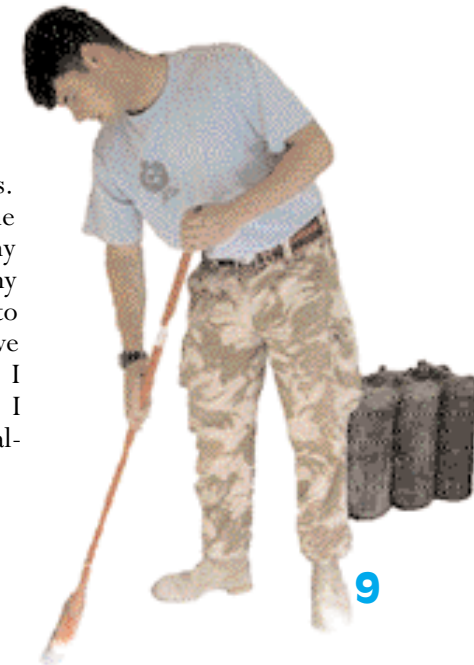
"But there are some things my men can't handle very well," smiles Ruth.

"It's an unwritten rule that whoever arrives first in the morning makes the coffee. So at the beginning of his tour, Paul Carter, one of the best carpenters we have, came in, put the coffee straight into the glass jar and poured water on top. That being wrong, he tried putting instant coffee into the filter and pouring water on top... He's now just about got it right."

"Our main challenge is that we're up against several constraints, money being the biggest one. Not always does the funding meet up to what needs to be done on the line. So we have to use a lot of initiative and maintain flexibility. Primarily we are under orders from CO Sector 2, but we also receive requests from the Force Engineer and Chief Engineer. They give us more long-term planning, while the short term requirements come from CO Sector 2. Having such a variety of skills with such a breadth of experience means we can overcome most problems.

"Luckily," says Ruth, "a tour in Cyprus isn't all work. My sappers look forward to the many adventure training opportunities that are available, as well as enjoying the many sights and attractions that the island has to offer. A deployment in December gives the lads a chance to go to the Troodos mountains for a spot of skiing, whilst also providing enough good weather in the latter stages of the tour to return to Maidstone with a good suntan to show off to the next detachment."

Ruth actually started off her working life in accountancy. But then, she adds: "I found I enjoyed doing something more tangible, if only in a small way. Even out here in Cyprus, we are providing a service to the guys to make life comfortable for them - whichever theatre you go to, you can see the fruits of your labour, and that's one of the reasons the engineers appealed to me. I also enjoy working with other nationalities very much and I've got used to dealing with other armies. For me, that's one of the attractions. I've met many interesting people. After my Cyprus tour, I will travel to Australia to visit contacts I've made since joining the army. I basically signed up because I thought it would be a challenge - and I was right!"



On guard

By WO2
Jack
Kennelly

What is close combat? Some people may think that it's like martial arts. But it isn't. Close combat is a fight under a distance of 30m, with hand grenades, rifles, bayonets and man against man. That means you have to fight with your weapon when you're not able to shoot with it, and these are the main techniques of the Austrian system. The Austrian Army teaches this practice to all conscripts of fighting units. It is a very important part of their training, and it's the reason we need close quarter combat basic trainers.

A course to train soldiers in close combat techniques and to qualify them as close combat basic instructors was run in the UNPA between 9 and 18 Feb. It was planned and run by WO2 Niegl (MFR) who is a close combat instructor. The course was initially planned for soldiers from the Austrian contingent, however three places were allocated to soldiers from the MFR. One Dutch, one Argentinian and one British JNCO took part.

The course consisted of a number of days of teaching and of practical lessons. Various methods of attack and defence, both with and without weapons, were taught. In addition, the students learned how to teach these techniques safely and correctly to others.

The final day consisted of both written and



Give and take a bit

practical tests. The practical test involved a close quarter battle (CQB) lane and a two-minute full contact free fight with your opponent.

All students successfully passed the course with only minor bumps, bruises and one broken nose. WO2 Niegl was pleased with the outcome, and enjoyed teaching the Austrian system of close combat to a multinational class.

Integration in peacekeeping missions

By Capt Alberto Reyes

For a few years now, the HQ Mobile Force Reserve company has been a mix of countries, cultures and customs - with the members having many things in common, yet many differences. Differences in thinking, in dress, in mode of behaviour, in eating habits, all of which makes the MFR an excellent place (and I personally think the best) in UNFICYP to develop and improve our knowledge of each other. It isn't strange to hear a Hungarian saying: "hola" or "buen dia", or to see an Argentinian, a Brit and a Dutchman chatting in Spanish, English and Dutch - with a lot of gestures and body language.

As second-in-command of a unit in a multinational force, this has been an excellent opportunity for me to improve my skills of command as well as thinking, speaking and writing in another language. This

could appear difficult, but all members of the MFR are well aware of the chain of command. In addition, every platoon and section commander handles the official language of his unit, so it isn't as difficult as it could be.

For me, the relationships I have built are priceless. As comrades, we have all worked as hard and efficiently as possible, and I hope that the friends I have made will remain my friends for a long time.



Taking a 'mate' break

Mr Fix It

By Capt Luis Cormick

If there's a problem with the heating system, a broken boiler, a damaged window pane, a burst pipe, a wall which needs painting or whatever, who's responsible? There are constantly problems arising in the working and living quarters of Sector 1, and, of course, there are those designated to help sort these matters out. They are the members of the engineer's section in HQ Company. We invariably don't even notice them - until something goes wrong.

In Headquarters Sector 1, WOIII Pablo Galeazzi is the man in charge. On a regular basis, he visits every installation and building, looking for possible failures and problems. He's also the person who receives complaints from all of us who live in San Martín Camp when something isn't working properly.

Although his duties can sometimes be tedious, he always has a big smile on his face and is ready to help everyone who needs him. But what really surprises us all is his unfailing ability to fix almost anything.

He never has Saturdays or Sundays off, and his work never finishes. Every time he thinks he's free, a new problem appears and he's off again.

Pablo says: "I was born in 1963 in Buenos Aires. I joined the NCO Army Academy in 1982 and became a corporal in the mechanical engineer's branch in 1984. I specialised in mountain climbing and I'm the proud holder of the "Silver Condor".

"This is my second peacekeeping mission. I was first posted to the former Yugoslavia where I was a member of the Argentine Battalion in UNPROFOR. I am married with six children."



And what can I do for you?

Of course, Pablo doesn't work alone. There is a six-man team working together, but it is he who sets the example. The efforts of this team, which are carried out in a quick, efficient and tireless manner, are much appreciated by all personnel in Sector 1.

As Pablo says, "We live by the engineer's slogan. *If we don't have the materials, we acquire or buy them. If they don't exist, we simply invent them.*"

El señor repara tuti

Hay problemas con la calefacción! ... Quién va a reparar la caldera? ... Esta ventana está rota! ... Fíjese esa gotera por ahí! ... Hay que pintar esta pared! Estos y muchos otros problemas suceden en un cuartel y, por supuesto, siempre hay gente que está a cargo de estas tareas y dispuesta a resolver todo tipo de problema. Ellos son los integrantes de la Compañía Comando. Su trabajo es silencioso y generalmente nadie lo nota hasta que algo falla.

En nuestro Cuartel General tenemos la figura del Intendente del Cuartel, actualmente asumida por el Sargento Ayudante Galeazzi. El tiene la permanente responsabilidad de recorrer cada instalación y edificio buscando posibles fallas y problemas, más recibir las quejas de todos los que habitamos Campo San Martín cuando algo no funciona bien.

Aunque su tarea no sea del todo agradable, él siempre tiene una gran sonrisa y está dispuesto a ayudar a cualquiera que lo necesite. Pero lo que realmente sorprende es su habilidad para reparar todo tipo de cosas.

El no tiene ni sábados ni domingos. El nunca termina, porque cuando cree que lo hizo, un nuevo problema aparece y tiene que comenzar de nuevo.

El nos cuenta: "Nací en Buenos Aires en 1963. Ingresé a la Escuela de Suboficiales en 1982 y egresé como Cabo del Arma de Ingeniero Mecánico en 1984. Poseo la especialidad de montaña y ostento orgulloso el Cóndor Plateado que me identifica como montañés. Esta es mi segunda misión en una Fuerza de Mantenimiento de Paz de las UN. Primeramente formé parte del BEA en la ex Yugoslavia. Estoy casado y tengo 6 hijos".

Por supuesto que él no trabaja sólo. Existe un gran equipo que trabaja mancomunadamente a su alrededor y al cual conduce con el ejemplo. Con estas líneas sólo queremos reconocer el esfuerzo silencioso y cotidiano trabajo de esta gente que se esmera en mejorar nuestras condiciones de vida, siempre siguiendo el lema de los Ingenieros Mecánicos: "Si no hay, se consigue of se compra. Si no existe, se inventa."

Local staff get together

"We should do this more often"



As we all know, the majority of UNFICYP is composed of military people, but not much gets said about the locally employed civilians who make up just under 200 of the workforce. Mainly Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots, they work not only in the Headquarters area, but also in the eastern and western parts of the buffer zone.

To date, these civilians have been represented by a committee named ULESO - the UNFICYP Local Establishment Staff Organisation. In July 1995, the United Nations in New York took over from the British Bases the employment and administration of the UNFICYP local workforce. Since then, yearly elections of ULESO's committee of nine have been held, and the committee in turn has done its best to speak for and act on behalf of the majority of employees, particularly regarding the issues of working hours and downsizing.

It was the decision of the committee to organise an evening of entertainment for all civilian colleagues - both members and non-members of ULESO - at the Makedonitissa Palace Restaurant. So, on Friday 3 March,

Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots got together on this rare occasion and spent an evening in each other's company. The Turkish Cypriots, who were escorted to the restaurant by a member of UNCIVPOL, arrived without problem and by 8:30 pm, everyone was sitting down to a very acceptable meal.

A band was provided which played local music and which, judging by the lack of space on the dance floor, was very popular! Sally Kyriakides, from the ISS Budget Unit, said: "This event was a good opportunity for the local staff who work together, cooperate together and, sadly, share the fear of downsizing, to socialise together. Unfortunately, it's not easy for the two communities to spend an evening in each other's company - this was the perfect occasion."

Houssien Boz, the signwriter in the UNFICYP Workshops, commented: "The Turkish Cypriots had a wonderful time. We had no trouble passing through our checkpoint, or later returning home. We really enjoyed spending an evening with the people we work with during the day. We should definitely do this more often."

The evening was arranged with two specific objectives in mind. The first was to bring colleagues together in a spirit of togetherness.

The second was no less important. According to ULESO's constitution, the committee must consist of at least nine members, or seven if nine are not available. Unfortunately, during the last elections, an insufficient number of names was submitted. So unless more colleagues are willing to come forward and volunteer to keep ULESO alive, the committee will have no option but to dissolve, thus rendering many colleagues with no representation to the civilian administration.

Ingy Said, from the Personnel Section, added: "I was personally very touched by the way both communities joined in everything together and shared their laughter and fun. I also greatly appreciated the efforts of both the Staff Committee and the Civil Affairs Branch to make this event a very special occasion."

There is absolutely no doubt that the whole event was a success. It is yet to be seen whether the staff will succeed in forming a new committee.



Life can be hard for partners of soldiers and international staff who have only just arrived in Cyprus. Once the shipment is unpacked, the children go to school and the spouse goes to work, there is a huge gap, an ear-deafening silence. No job any more, no friends yet, only strangers around. Strangers, speaking another language. The new start can be hard.

Some partners, having already had such an experience, try to help others build their new social circle. The coffee mornings, which usually take place every second Wednesday, are the first meeting point for newly arrived, the starting point of new friendships, and hopefully the end of hidden loneliness.

Dutch Rina Viets, one of the driving forces behind the U.Network @UNPA's organised coffee mornings, has just made some coffee, fresh and hot. At this very moment she's in the NAAFI, buying some milk before the first guests arrive.

The two connecting rooms in the HIVE look uncomfortable and cold. But not for long. Soon German Helgard Adams, the second driving force, walks in with potted plants, flowers, candles and essence. She starts rearranging the chairs, covers the tables with cloths, lights the candles and also sweet

smelling burners.

Rina returns and fills the various thermos flasks with tea or coffee. Several fruit juices are also available. Shortly after 10am, Sudanese Mona de Weever enters, carrying home-made cakes. It has become a custom that each of the regulars takes turns. Mona serves those present, and puts the remaining cakes on the table.

Gradually, more women arrive. Croatian Nivis Pezer is the focal point when she carries her young baby in. But Nivis brings another guest: Shirley Elferink from Israel. This is her first visit to the coffee morning.

"It has been four months since we arrived in Cyprus," says Shirley. "Apart from Nivis, whose husband works in the personnel office, I don't know



coffee morning should act like a market place, where people can meet and arrange to visit each other or to deploy initiatives."

Rina joins in and gives some examples of recent activities.

"At the end of last year, we spent some lovely hours on a boat trip. Only weeks ago we were kindly invited to Sector 4 and were informed about their work. Now we have an invitation to visit San Martin Camp. This way, we meet other people and widen our social circle. Helping to organise these events is important for me. Before I moved to Cyprus, I had a busy job. It was hard to get used to life without daily commitments. I'm glad I've found some sort of a challenge again."

You are welcome! Would you like to attend our meetings?

We advertise them in "Flash", UNFICYP's advertisement leaflet.

Make sure your partner brings it home every two weeks.

anybody. I sometimes feel so lonely. I'm hoping to meet more people here and make friends."

According to Helgard Adams, the newly arrived tend to stick with their own nationality. "Probably also because of

language problems. When you are part of a large contingent, it's easier than when you are the only one from a particular country. In my view, this



U.Network@UNPA

5 legs to run S2W

Nine teams took part in a 20km 5-man relay run at Bengal Troop on Saturday 26 February. The route passed through Sector 2 West, the area of responsibility of the organizing unit, and finished at the Ledra Palace hotel.

After a short brief and a long wait, the event started at about 10.15am. To increase their chances of a good ranking, the MFR entered two international teams and got off to a good start. LCpl Bert Ruiters performed well, and was the first to hand over his stick.

Maj Andrew Williams, who took over, set off well, but had some mental problems when he was overtaken by one of the youngsters. His tongue slipped: "S@*! Is he going fast or what?" Still, he managed to hold on to a

good 4th position in the field. He was very happy to hand over the stick to the third runner.

The third (hard) leg led from Morphou Gate to concession road. It just seemed like there was no end to that road. Remarks like "How far to Foxtrot?" and "Where's the next relief point?" were heard all over. Sgt Maj Gerrit van het Riet from the LPH team didn't seem to have too much trouble here. He struck hard, leaving his direct MFR opponent far behind him.

The last leg took runners from Falcon to Ledra. Many little curves through the old Nicosia embassy district, where every now and then Opfors could be heard encouraging the runners, made this the best leg to run. Sgt Maj Arwin Dubbel-



By Lt Niels Roelen and Sgt Paul Derry

The first runners of the participating teams (UNCIVPOL, HQ UNFICYP, MFR-a, MFR-b, S2W-a, S2W-b, S2E-a, S2E-b, and Ledra) start off at Bengal troop

dam improved on his personal best time on the last leg, being chased by some wild dogs. Unfortunately this wasn't enough to move him up in the final ranking.

Cpl Dunn, from the S2E-a

team, anchored with the fifth leg in 10 minutes 35 seconds, sealing victory. Private "what's in the name" Walker ran his heart out to cross the finish line, with the LPH team chasing him 300 metres down the track.

sports

British soldiers play the pro's of Hungarian

By Cpl Steve Hack

The words of CSgt Dugmore echoed: "Be at RAF Akroitiiri at 1400hrs Tuesday 15 Feb, for the Combined Services football - and don't be late".

LCpl Adam Hunter and myself had been selected to play in the Combined Services football team that was to play a touring Hungarian team.

Soon after arriving at RAF Akroitiiri, we met the other members of the team. The Sovereign Base Area sent three infantrymen, eight tumble-dryers (RAF), and none other than Nigel 'Frenchy' Saunders. The remaining team members were also from Sector 2, Pte Craig Walker and Pte Matty Hall, the smallest man in the battalion, let alone the MFR.

Soon after, we met the opposition, Zalaegerszeg, a professional team on tour having won their national first division and with three Cypriot teams already added

to their roll of honour. Could we be the first to beat them? I think not.

Their training, fitness, skill and ball to feet put us to the test. If Andy Gray had been watching, those lines he draws on the screen would have looked like the 'Spaghetti Junction'. It was a re-enactment of Newcastle beating Manchester United. Within 30 minutes we were 4-0 down. It would have been more, if not for the solid defending of Hunter, Walker and a keeper called the Cat.

In the second half, we set out with more purpose, and I even had a shot come off the post. With heavy rain and a final score of 6-0, it was a hard fought for experience and enjoyable game. The Hungarian team was very appreciative of our performance, and many a phrase of 'good' and 'OK' accompanied a congratulatory slap on the back.

Pafos marathon

By Lt Richard Hoy

More than 500 runners gathered in the picturesque harbour of Pafos to take part in the second Pafos marathon on Sunday 27 February. Runners had come from far and wide to join in one of the four races - the full marathon, the half marathon, the 10km race and the 4km fun run. Many flew in for the occasion, one gentleman from the USA, and a large number of UN personnel had also entered.

The course followed the coastal road to the north-west of the town, climbing and descending a number of ridges. Many could consider the course to be quite demoralizing because whichever race you entered, you knew that where you arrived, you would have to turn round and head back the way you came. However at the end of the day, you still had to cover the distance.

The organisation was extremely good with much needed drink stations by the side of the course every 3 km. There was also encouragement from passers-by, who were spending their Sunday morning far more wisely having a gentle stroll.

I could not honestly say that everyone who entered the event enjoyed it at the time. I can personally think of far more pleasant times in my life than



Cpl Barratt of 1 Staffords finishing the marathon in 3 hrs, 30 mins and 49 secs. He was running for UNRRATT team who were raising money for Jay Taylor from Staffordshire who had his limbs amputated to save him from meningitis. If anyone would like to donate to this good cause, they can contact the UNRRATT team at 0474 4802.

the last 15km of the marathon. However, enjoyment doesn't necessarily have to be experienced with laughter - it can also come indirectly from an event with self satisfaction - and the knowledge that there will not be another Pafos marathon for at least another year.

Sector 2 football competition

By CSgt W Dugmore



The 5-a-side football league within Sector 2 is now in full swing with all locations fielding at least one team. Started in mid January, the last game will be played at the end of April with one of the 12 participating teams taking the title.

Each team has carefully chosen a name such as the Ledra Bruisers, the Falcon Smarties, the Tweedies Tornadoes and the Bongo Boys. The league started off with the Ledra Bruisers challenging the Wolsley Wanderers. CSgt 'Billy' Billings was the first to be on the score sheet for the Bruisers, who were the eventual winners by 4 goals to 2.

Since this first match, there has

been a constant stream of hotly contested games on the 5-a-side court at the front of the Ledra Palace with a few notable scores. Tweedies Tornadoes notched up 22 goals to Paul Goodwin's Pranksters 2. Despite a few games being a little one-sided, many finished off with only a goal to separate winner from loser.

At the time of writing, the Tweedies Tornadoes are top of the league, although the Anzio troopers are in third position with three games in hand. Top goal scorer is Pte Craig Walker of the Tweedies Tornadoes with a healthy 38 to his credit, with Cpl Dave Tweed competing for the golden boot with 33 goals. With eight weeks of the 'season' left, Paul Goodwin's Pranksters still have time to lift themselves from the bottom of the table.

Hangar volleyball against NG

UN Flight invited a National Guard team for a game of volleyball on 24 February.

Liaison Officer to the National Guard, Lt Col David

Griffin, escorted the visitors to the hangar, where the first game of the best of five started at 16.30 hrs.

Lt Adrianos Ferrari acted as the impartial referee, a role

not hard to play for an impartial peacekeeper.

UN Flight gained advantage immediately, but against the well-trained team of the National Guard, this could

not be maintained. Finally, the score was 3 games for the National Guard against 1 for UN Flight.

The best part of the match was the fraternization in the Bandidos, where team tactics were discussed, presents exchanged and fluid reserves topped up.

Adventurous training

By Capt Greg Bayliss

Since last January, members of the 1 Staffords group in Sector 2 have been able to visit the UNRRATT team in Dhekelia for a spot of adventurous training. The soldiers spend anything from 24 hours to a week participating in activities such as rock climbing, dinghy sailing, skiing and even have the chance of parachuting.

The team, six instructors, an admin SNCO and the OC, operate from the Dhekelia Garrison, and have a small fleet of vehicles and accommodation to facilitate its daily activities. Only a 45-minute drive from the line, visitors instantly appreciate

its worth. The first activity all undertake is the UNRRATT swim test. Although a little chilly through January and February, all individuals must demonstrate their ability to swim for safety reasons, and not for the instructors amusement, as many would believe.

Weather conditions so far have not been ideally suited to novice water sports and, as such, the leading activity has been skiing. WO2 Bernhard and Cpl Fenn have produced some fantastic results with individuals who have never skied before, some now promising themselves ski holidays post operation.

Staying dry has also been a priority for the rock climbing instructors. Day trips are run to Cape Greco with various climbs of differing ability being set up for novices to experienced climbers. On route back to the UNRRATT camp, a quick stop allows all to throw themselves over the edge for a spot of cliff jumping. SSgt Dave McColl, discovering the thrill of the jump, was soon after chased from the waves by a local resident who stole his flip flops: what little sense of adventure the Octopus must have.

During inclement conditions, the soldiers have been able to amuse themselves in a number of other activities such as go karting, hotel swimming pools, health spas and even the Garrison gymnasium. In the first four weeks the team opened its gates for business, over 145 soldiers have attended the activities.

These figures are rapidly rising, and with the onset of the better weather, the water sports gurus, WO2 Bernhard, CSgt Tyler and Cpl Barratt, will pass on their expertise to those who wish to sail and windsurf - as well as getting a tan!



Off-duty personnel prepare to set up their climbs

sports



Following the disasters in Mozambique, the force chaplains organised an emergency appeal within UNFICYP to help the people caught in the grip of the catastrophe. With more money coming in, the appeal has so far raised over CP1,000. Many thanks to everyone who helped and contributed.