



PRESS RELEASE

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CADETS' MORALE REMAINS HIGH DESPITE THE WEATHER

The man responsible for taking 30 army cadets to UK is the Officer Commanding the unit, Captain Alan Montegriffo, ex-Royal Gibraltar Regiment. 'The unit is pretty much fully-recruited,' said Alan. 'Although we are always looking to recruit more girls to join – and, of course, we are always looking for new instructors. It isn't essential for instructors to have a military background so there may be people in Gibraltar who might be willing to become a civilian instructor with the cadets.'

To be successful, an instructor must be happy to work in all weathers, certainly when the cadets are on annual camp in UK. On the day that the cadets carried out their Section Attacks and their Ambushes, the rain stopped for a while – to be replaced by heavy hailstorms. For many of the cadets it was the first time that they had seen hailstones like the ones they saw on Holcombe Moor where peat bogs rapidly turned into fast-moving streams.

Sixteen-year old Cadet Corporal Julian Tosso has been in the unit for 4 years and this is his third annual camp but he has never seen weather like this before. 'The first year we had snow and last year it was cold but sunny. But this year it seems just to have been rain, hail, rain, hail, with some gale force winds thrown in as well!'

Julian is looking to join the Royal Gibraltar Regiment as a Regular in September of this year. 'It's all I've ever wanted to do,' he says. As a Cadet Corporal, Julian has extra responsibilities, of one which is to inspect the junior cadets' rooms every morning. This morning, one dormitory was not up to standard so the cadets from that room will need to prepare it for a second inspection this evening.

'The cadet unit has given me discipline,' says Julian 'and it has given me an insight into military life as well as teaching me some real life-skills. I couldn't even iron a shirt before I joined the cadets!'

Most of the cadets at Holcombe Moor are on their first exercise. Like many of them, Julian Devera joined the unit in January 2014. 'I joined the unit to give myself some discipline and because I wanted to do something a bit different,' says Julian. 'I used to be lazy at home but now I do chores and I help around the house.' Julian is hoping to join the Royal Gibraltar Regiment and expects to start his basic training at Harrogate in September. 'My family have supported me, even though it wouldn't have been their first choice of job for me.'

Another cadet who joined the unit in January 2014 is Yassin Benyoussef. 'Everything is good about this camp..... apart from the inspections! I really enjoyed the obstacle course and the patrols,' said Yassin. 'It's my first time away from home but it's good fun. Every cadet has a different personality and that's what makes it so interesting.'

Jordan McGrail was persuaded to join the unit by his cousin and some friends. 'They said it was a good club so I thought I'd give it a shot. It has been as good as they said and I'm making friends of different ages.'



One day Jordan hopes to be an officer in the Regular Army. 'But I know I'll need some good academic qualifications to do that. My Mum is encouraging me because she knows that the cadet unit is giving me lots of new skills.'

These young cadets are busy preparing to go back out on to the Moor to learn more military drills. The weather will be cold, wet and miserable and yet they are all looking forward to every minute of it. Later in the week they will be kayaking and abseiling before, finally, they get some relaxation and a trip into Manchester.

'My Mum is really proud of me for doing this,' said one young cadet. Many other people would be just as proud of him as his Mum.

'There have been the usual administrative difficulties involved in running on an exercise like this,' said Captain Montegriffo. 'But the cadets have been excellent. Despite the atrocious weather, morale has always been high and everyone seems to be enjoying it. These boys gain a lot from this camp and I'm grateful to the Government for all their support and for funding the unit throughout the year.'