

# BLUE BERET



## SECTOR TWO BRING A TOUCH OF THE HIGHLANDS TO UNFICYP

On Saturday 21st November 2015, members of UNFICYP from across Cyprus came together to take part in Highland Games hosted by Sector 2. The Royal Scots Borderers, 1st Battalion, the Royal Regiment of Scotland, hoped to show their Scottish heritage through a day of sporting events, displays from the Pipes and Drums and the traditional Scottish fayre, Haggis.

Games and sports have been part of Scottish culture for centuries. Some believe the roots of the Highland Games date as far back as the 11th century, when King Malcolm III called a foot race to the summit of Craig Choinnich, near Braemar, in the hopes of finding the fastest runner in the land to become his personal courier.

The modern format of the Highland Games has been celebrated around Scotland since the 1800s, regularly drawing crowds of thousands. Amongst the most historic is the Braemar Gathering, which is still regularly attended by the reigning monarch and other members of the British Royal Family. Highland Games, however can take place wherever there are Scots.

The Pipes and Drums of 1 SCOTS kicked off the day's festivities with a rousing rendition of Scottish music, and the games were officially opened by Lt Col Nick Wight-Boycott, the Highland Games Chieftain, who delighted the crowd with a blood curdling history of Highland Games.

The Highland Games was very much a family friendly event, with activities for children, a Scottish food stall and a Scottish

regimental gift shop as well as a bar which kept the spectators and competitors suitably refreshed! All proceeds from the bar went to charity, with over €400 raised for UNICEF and ABF, the Soldiers' charity.

The Games saw many of the same events that have come to characterise Highland Games internationally. The "heavy" events included the Caber Toss, Tug o' War and Shot Put while the "lighter" events included the 100 metre sprint and 10 km run as well as UNFICYP favourites such as 6-a-side football.

The games, as ever, saw fierce but friendly competition between the teams from Sectors 1, 2 and 4 as well as UNPOL, FMPU and HQ UNFICYP. Some of the closest competition was witnessed in the Gun Run, which saw teams disassemble and assemble a "gun", carry it back and forth across a hundred metre distance and assemble it again. Sector 4 once again were victorious in the football tournament, whilst Sector 2 won the 10km run and HQ team grasp the rope tightly and won the Tug o' War.

The UNFICYP Highland Games were a great success, with Sector 2 securing the trophy as overall winners whilst sharing some of our national and regimental traditions with the other nationalities in UNFICYP. Capt Nick Bowler, who organised the games on behalf of 1 SCOTS said, "I would like to thank all who took part for their efforts in making it a great day of sport, and all spectators for their unwavering support and making the Highland Games a truly memorable occasion."



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