UNFICYP's Communications Team installing the Direct-Inward-Dialling System (DID)

Croatia's Flag Joins UNFICYP

The Blue Beret
April 2005
To date, the Force 860 Review downsizing exercise has proceeded smoothly with the recommended 30% reduction almost totally implemented. It awaits the military handover of community relations responsibilities (SCAT) to our civilian police component. This is expected to be finalized later in the year once police numbers permit.

Already, by concentrating our peacekeepers in fewer sector camps and patrol bases, we have streamlined command and control of the force, thus making more efficient use of our resources in the conduct of our mandated tasks.

The overhaul has been infrastructural as well as institutional. The Force remains a three-sector operation plus force headquarters and force troops. However, reducing the number of camps and re-equipping the remaining ones to handle the “re-centralized” peacekeepers does not happen overnight. Switching from staff- and maintenance-intensive static observations posts to a more mobile concept of monitoring is not an exercise in “pack and go”.

Since last November, we have been living through a major engineering feat as our stalwart engineers have systematically dismantled some 32 assets along the buffer zone, a reconfiguration that not once interfered with the day-to-day tasks of running the mission.

True, we have fewer camps and OPs. Yes, our numbers are smaller. But, the buffer zone remains as large as ever. There are still as many patrol tracks to maintain.

So, with every “downsizing”, there has to be an element of “up sizing”. As noted above (and on page 6), UNFICYP’s civilian police component is increasing its strength so that it can relieve the military of its SCAT duties.

The same applies to our engineering corps. To meet the new demands and to offset sectoral-level downsizing, our HQ Engineer Section has been “up sized” to platoon strength. As can be seen from their work profile on pages 4 and 5, they have delivered a complete package!

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Front Cover: Two Croatian Police officers join UNCI

UNCIVPOL, bringing the total count to 51

Back Cover: UNFICYP’s Communications Branch enhances dialling efficiency for the mission

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Editorial

Sometimes Change is a Good Thing

Now each UNFICYP telephone extension can be called directly from the outside world, rather than through our switchboard operator

W e have all seen the flurry of e-mail bulletin boards from Roy Joblin, UNFICYP’s Chief Communications Officer, detailing improvements to UNFICYP’s telephone system.

As he describes these to the Blue Beret team, he comforts us by explaining that “sometimes, change is for the better”. The biggest difference users will notice is that all UNFICYP four-digit telephone extension numbers are now in the 4000-4999 range (referred to below as 4xxx). This was done to take advantage of the direct-inward-dialing (DID) capabilities UNFICYP has installed which means “each telephone extension can be called directly, rather than having to go through UNFICYP’s switchboard operator, thus simplifying the ability to reach our staff”, explains Roy. Mobile phone users dialing from the north (including Turkcel and Telsim networks) can now make local calls to reach UNFICYP and need no longer make long distance connections, as was the case before the mission invested in the DID system.

UNFICYP’s electronic telephone directory on Lotus Notes explains these changes and provides detailed instructions on how to use this new system.

The month-long project was accomplished with the able assistance of Mr. Ya-Xiong Tong, a telephony expert on loan to UNFICYP from the UN mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

2 easy ways to connect directly with UNFICYP

Cyprus land lines
Dialing from the south: 22.61.4XXX
Dialing from the north: 601.4XXX

Cyprus mobile phones
South side: Cyta & Areeba 22.61.4XXX
North side: Turkcel & Telsim (0392) 601.4XXX

Often Change is a Good Thing
 Engineers Working - At Home and Abroad

UNFICYP Engineers’ “Camp Tatry” accommodating those who have been re-located

Following the recent decision to downsize UNFICYP in keeping with the Force 860 Review, 32 assets including observation posts (OPs), patrol bases (PBs), troop houses and camps along the buffer zone were dismantled. Personnel from these locations were either repatriated at rotation time or transferred to more central locations. HQ Engineers working with sector engineers drew up plans for the reorganisation of UNFICYP installations and, guided by the Logistic Operational Order, began sequentially downsizing the mission infrastructure. It is a tribute to the engineers’ skills and professionalism that this reconfiguration never interfered with the smooth running of the mission.

The military’s downsizing process began in November 2004 with the dismantling, relocation and, in certain instances, re-assembling of accommodations along the buffer zone. All OPs have now been removed with the exception of those retained as PBs. Certain camps have increased in size and have been refurbished to accommodate those who have been relocated. Assets were removed from all closed-down locations for return to UNFICYP’s warehouse or to the HQ Engineer Stores for reuse elsewhere. The re-allocation project was completed on 31 January 2005.

While all this was going on, last December, HQ Engineers were charged with construction of the new Engineer Camp in the UNPA. UNFICYP’s HQ Engineering Section comprises 16 soldiers from Slovakia. Given the 860 Review’s engineering downsize of Sectors 1, 2 and 4, HQ Engineer Section was “upsized” to platoon strength, giving it 37 personnel and leaving five line engineers per sector to deal with maintenance and repair tasks. HQ Engineers now occupy “Camp Tatry”, a 25-container accommodation block in the UNPA named after the highest mountain range in Slovakia.

Force Engineer Maj. Marian Mjartan, in charge of the component of the 860 Review involving engineers, said: “With projects this large, we usually expect some difficulties or delays during the process. Much to my surprise, the whole plan ran very smoothly and without problems. The weather during the winter months was ideal since the limited rainfall caused fewer delays along the patrol tracks or in the camps, thereby lessening our normal workload and allowing us to concentrate on the project in hand.

There is still much work ahead for the engineer platoon. One major project is the conversion of Roca Camp’s obsolete, run-down buildings to another “container village”, complete with a brand-new prefabricated kitchen, guaranteed to be the best kitchen in the mission when finished! In addition, there are plans to improve UN Flight’s facilities along the buffer zone including resurfacing helipads, installation of a new lighting system for night flying, and construction of a new control tower.

In the months ahead, several culverts will be constructed in Sector 1’s mountainous terrain to divert the heavy winter rainfall responsible for the frequent destruction of patrol tracks and causing extremely hazardous driving conditions.

Maj. Mjartan wishes to offer a “big thank you” to all those who contributed many long working hours, over and above what was expected, to ensure completion of the downsizing task. Special mention should be made of the excellent assistance of 1/Lt. Tomas Takacs, who was promoted on 22 April to the rank of Captain! Well done engineers!

A major exercise like the UNFICYP downsizing is a perfect example of the mission’s integrated engineering approach. This requires close cooperation between civilian and military engineers. Long before the military “muscle” of the engineering force took to the field, the team headed by Chief Engineer Paul Kilmartin and Force Engineer Maj. Marian Mjartan spent weeks poring over blueprints and making field trips the length and breadth of the buffer zone as they put the finishing touches to the relocation masterplan.

Paul was not present throughout, however. DPKO, knowing a good engineer when they see one, seized the opportunity to grab him and exploit his professional skills to good effect in the set-up of the Sudan Mission (UNAMIS) for a month. Paul flew to Khartoum, surveyed mission sites in the Malakal/Juba area and helped realise some of the blueprints for housing incoming blue berets.

Well done engineers!

Esprit de Engineering Corps!

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Hail and Farewell - UNCIVPOL Medal Parade

R espectably, the death of Pope John Paul II, UNCIVPOL held its medal parade for the 81st UNCIVPOL officers. The ceremony was attended by Chief of Mission Zbigniew Vrtaric, the Chief of Mission, Sen. Insp. Nenad Tuskanac and Capt. Vera Mustil. Speaking from the perspective of a military officer, Trevor Clarke welcomed the “new enthusiasts” brought to UNCIVPOL’s policing task by the new contingents. He noted how the role of the police in UNCIFYP differs from the recognition as the police officers are often the first contact for the community.

Croatia joins UNCIVPOL

T he number of police contingents serving in the mission grew to five with the arrival of two Croatian police officers on 14 April 2005. Ch. Insp. Mladen Vitaric joined HQ UNCIFYP as UN Liaison Officer, Police (UNLOP) based in Operations Branch at UNIFCYP HQ. He serves as liaison between UNCIFYP and the Cyprus Police (CYPOL) as well as liaising with Turkish Cypriot Police Element (TCP) on operational matters. His colleague, Sen. Insp. Nenad Tuskanac, joins UNCIVPOL’s Dhermyia team.

UNCIVPOL visits CYPOL

O n 29 March 2005, a group of UNCIVPOL staff led by Senior Police Adviser Carla Van Maris visited the Headquarters of the Cyprus Police (CYPOL). In a first for the UNFICYP mission, UNCIVPOL officers were given a tour of the Police Academy, the Police Museum and the various laboratories that make up the criminal services branch. The Director of Studies at the Police Academy Mr. Miriante gave UNCIVPOL an overview of the training provided to CYPOL members. He also explained CYPOL’s system of specialist schools for officers, for sergeants and constables, for Foreign Languages and the Research Office which covers legal and other police issues.

SCAT and UNCIVPOL on Resupply Duties

A supply run, first established since the 3rd Vienna Agreement in 1973 to help Greek Cypriots living in the Karpas, continues to this day to meet the social assistance needs of the community there. The weekly delivery of food, gas and medicine is distributed to Greek Cypriot villagers in the Karpas peninsula under the banner of the Red Cross and the United Nations. A group of UNCIPOL’s military Sector Civil Affairs Team (SCAT) personnel and UNCIVPOL officers are tasked with the transport of goods to the Karpas region. Sgt. Raymond Howe and I are based at the UNCIVPOL Famagusta station. Several months ago, we joined the Sector 4 SCAT-UNCIVPOL team and we have been finding the experience more rewarding with each trip.

On a routine day, the journey into the Karpas starts at 06:00 hrs in Nicosia where the SCAT-UNCIVPOL team and a Sector 4 Karpas Liaison Officer meet to load supplies from the (Government) Stores Department. Once loaded, the convoy weaves through the sleeping city of Nicosia before passing through the Ledra crossing and making its way to the Famagusta highway.

First stop is the small village of Leonarioso, sitting atop a plateau and home to a Greek Cypriot couple, before continuing on its way to Agia Trias along a newly sealed road. We come to a stop and are greeted by a much larger gathering who had been sitting in front of the Agia Trias Community Building. Over the spot checks, they are quick to move and organise themselves to receive the incoming supplies. A member of the community climbs up into the rear of the lead food truck and commences to hold out the names while handing out the bundles. A momentary confusion unfolds as people scramble toward the truck, yet after decades of practice, the process comes to order with military efficiency. Medicine previously ordered is handed over to the community spokesperson for distribution. Empty gas bottles, along with any medical prescriptions, are collected for preparation by the Red Cross for delivery on the next visit.

The convoy moves on to Agios Andronikos, home to a Sector 4 Karpas Liaison Officer meeting. A group of UNFICYP’s military Sector Civil Affairs officers are based at the UNCIVPOL Famagusta station. Several months ago, we joined the Sector 4 SCAT-UNCIVPOL team and we have been finding the experience more rewarding with each trip.

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The Cultural Heritage of Cyprus - Part XXX

The Walls of Famagusta

At some time during their reign in Cyprus, the Byzantines, who administered the island from 330 to 1191, founded Famagusta adjacent to the island's only natural harbour. To protect it from the enemy, they built a castle on the shoreline.

While the castle did not survive the test of time, later fortifications did. Today, inside the port town of Famagusta, lies old Famagusta in all its mediaeval glory, its defensive walls, castle, bastions, towers and gates running along a perimeter of 3.5 kilometres.

The History

Famagusta lay shrouded in obscurity until Cyprus became a Frankish Kingdom, when Guy de Lusignan (1192-1194), founder of the royal dynasty, fortified the town. In 1211, an unimpressed Bishop William of Oldenburg found his fortifications inadequate; however, Martoni, a French notary who visited Famagusta in 1394, rated the city's fortifications the best he had ever seen. Amalric de Lusignan was the man responsible for completing Famagusta's fortifications — ironically, a task begun by his brother King Henry II (1285-1324), against whom Oldenburg found his fortifications inadequate; however, Martoni, a dynastic, fortified the town. In 1211, an unimpressed Bishop William of Oldenburg found his fortifications inadequate; however, Martoni, a French notary who visited Famagusta in 1394, rated the city's fortifications the best he had ever seen. Amalric de Lusignan was the man responsible for completing Famagusta's fortifications — ironically, a task begun by his brother King Henry II (1285-1324), against whom Oldenburg found his fortifications inadequate; however, Martoni, a

The Walls

The mean height and width of the walls is 15 metres and 4 metres respectively. The length of the walls is:
- Western side, between the Ravelin and Martinengo Bastions, 750 metres;
- Eastern side, between Diamantino Bastion and the Arsenal, 650 metres;
- Northern side, between the Arsenal and the Sea Gate, 600 metres;
- Southern side, between the Sea Gate and the Ravelin Bastion, 800 metres.

The Land or Limassol Gate serves as the main entrance, since it is also the only entrance to the city by land. Excluding the castle on the Citadel, this is the oldest construction of the fortifications, although the bridge and the entrance are of a later date. In 1544, a very strong Bastion with a ravelin was built to protect the Land Gate.

Originally, there were two other land entrances to the area, which, to this day, can still be seen walled up on the "curtain" walls. [A curtain wall is the wall that separates bastions.] One is between the Campasanto and Andruzi Bastions. The other, slightly bigger, lies between the Diamantino Bastion and the Signoria (Signory) Tower.

The British took over Cyprus, they filled in the moat with earthworks. As the former moat stands now, it offers a pleasant walk in all seasons.

The Blue Beret

April 2005 - The Blue Beret

Martinengo Bastion

Sea Gate

Land or Limassol Gate

Ravelin or Limassol Bastion

The Blue Beret

April 2005 - The Blue Beret
Introducing Sector 2’s Newcomers

Lt. Col. Neil Marshall took over as Sector 2 Commander on 5 April. He was commissioned from the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst into the Royal Regiment of Artillery in August 1985. His formative years were spent with 39 Heavy and 19 Field Regiment Royal Artillery, after which he returned to Sandhurst as an instructor. He then joined 7th Parachute Regiment Royal Horse Artillery, and it was whilst there that he conducted his previous tour with UNFICYP in 1994.

After attending Staff College between 1997-98 he held a post within the Army Directorate of Manning. Later, in 2000, he assumed command of The Chestnut Troop within 1st Regiment Royal Horse Artillery and deployed on operations to Bosnia. Lt. Col. Marshall was promoted to his present rank in 2002 and appointed to Land Command, where he oversaw the UK Land Forces deployment to Iraq, a key role which was recognised through the award of an OBE. In June 2004 he was deployed to Iraq where he was based at the multi-national Force Headquarters in Baghdad, working in Information Operations.

Lt Col. Marshall assumed command of 1st Regiment Royal Horse Artillery in November 2004 and has now deployed his Regiment to Sector 2. Married to Trudy, they have two sons, Harry (12) and Tristan (11). His hobbies include skiing and cross-country running.

Horse Gunners arrive in Sector 2

1st Regiment Royal Horse Artillery (1 RHA) took over from 26th Regiment Royal Artillery in Sector 2 on 5 April and are due to stay with UNFICYP until October. The Regiment is normally based in Tidworth, south west England, where a large proportion have remained due to the Force 80 reduction. 1 RHA returned from a very demanding six-month tour in Bajra, Iraq, in late October and now find themselves in very different circumstances facing the unique challenges of service as UN peacekeepers.

The Regiment – the senior in the Royal Regiment of Artillery, The Gunners – is steeped in history. The Batteries that make up 1 RHA can trace back as far as 1793 and have been involved in almost every major conflict in which the British Army has participated, going back to the Battle of Waterloo. They are now equipped with 155mm AS 90 self-propelled howitzers, a far cry from the horse-drawn guns used when they were formed.

New Sector 2 Civil Affairs Team Hit the Ground Running

Sector 2’s new SCAT team is now well settled and its members have already found their roles much more intricate than first expected. The first Long North Wind Patrol has been completed – a marvellous experience and an absolute pleasure to deliver humanitarian aid to Maronite communities living in the north. In addition, the team hosted its first large bi-communal event, an international Akido seminar with over 100 delegates. Apart from those from Cyprus, there were participants from the world over. It’s not every day you see people from these countries being flung around on an Akido mat by one another! The new SCAT unit looks forward to the remainder of its stay in Cyprus.

New OC MFR

On 5 April, Maj. James Phillips RA of 10 (Assaye) Battery Royal Artillery assumed command of the Mobile Force Reserve (MFR) at HQ UNFICYP. The MFR is a multinational Mechanised Infantry Company equipped with TACTICA Armoured Personnel Carriers (APC). As the Force Commander’s reserve, the MFR is on constant standby to deploy throughout the UNFICYP Area of Operations (AO). Divided into three infantry platoons and an APC platoon, the Company consists of soldiers from Argentina, Hungary, Slovakia and the United Kingdom.

Soldiers from the MFR are trained as a high readiness crowd control force, able to deploy throughout the AO in support of operations as directed by the Force Commander. The MFR also provides security for the UNPA as well as performing a variety of duties including providing ceremonial honour guards for official visits to HQ UNFICYP.

Pre-deployment training has ensured that all MFR soldiers are fully versed in their various roles, and this training continues under the direction of Capt. Filippi (ARGCON). Continuation training includes firefighting and helicopter familiarity with UN Flight, as well as both rural and urban crowd control drills.

10 (Assaye) Battery

One (Assaye) Battery was originally formed in 1755 as a Light Brigade of the Royal Horse Artillery, and fought under the Duke of Wellington in India, where it won its honour title “ASSAYE”.

Since the Second World War, the battery has been in the Air Defence role, initially with 3.7 inch guns. It was one of the first units to be equipped with guided weapons – the Thunderbird missile. The battery moved to Thorny Island, near Portsmouth, on the south coast of England in 1993 to become part of the British Contingent of the Mobile Force Reserve (MFR) at HQ UNFICYP.

10 (Assaye) Battery is currently equipped with the self-propelled High Velocity Missile system (HVM), Being part of a Royal Artillery Regiment, our secondary role is to work as dismounted or mechanised infantrymen. It is in this capacity that we have deployed as part of the British Contingent of Sector 2; 1st Regiment Royal Horse Artillery, as the Mobile Force Reserve.

Sector 2 Visits Officer

Capt. Foss-Smith is enthusiastic about Cyprus, its culinary delights and an excellent standard of tailoring offered second to none. He lists amongst his lifetime achievements victory in the Durham University pizza-eating contest, demolishing a 14-inch pizza in an astonishing 2 minutes 36 seconds.

He is married to Nicky, who plans to visit him in Cyprus to ensure he is eating properly! He is looking forward to another six months of service with UNFICYP – you will no doubt see him on a Green Line tour soon!
Continuously adapting to the changing needs in the world of peacekeeping. Field Service staff are always ready to relocate to different troubled spots. The Blue Beret congratulates these staff members on completing their Eastern Mediterranean assignments and wishes them luck in their future endeavours.

Sonia Dohman
MINUSTAH -
Sadio Kanté, Zemanovic, Capt. Stefan
Haiti
reassigned to
MPIO
Haiti
Håkan Malström
Mediterranean assignments and wishes them luck in their future endeavours.

NEW FACES...

Capt. Stefan Zemanovic from Trencin
reassigned to
MINUSTAH -
Haiti
Sudan
Raul Farfan
reassigned to
UNMIS
Sudan
Klaus Höchtl
reassigned to
UNMIS
Sudan
Early morning on 30 March, after a long and tiring journey, the first rotation of troops of the ATF 25 arrived in Cyprus to serve with the UNFICYP peacekeeping mission. Our predecessors, ATF 24, anxiously awaited our arrival so they could hand over their duties and then be free to set their mind to returning home and joining their families!

Even though there are a few among us who have previously served in Cyprus, the majority are new. We therefore assumed our duties with expectation, curiosity and even a bit of astonishment… with regards to culture, history, religion and language. In short, a completely different environment was awaiting us, but we are “tough cookies” and we shall soon adapt to it all!

ARGCON is a “Joint and Combined Contingent”. Active duty personnel come from the Argentinian Army, Navy, and Air Force. Since the beginning, it has also incorporated soldiers from other South American countries, including a platoon from Paraguay, one from Chile, another one from Peru, with officers and ratings from Bolivia, Brazil and Uruguay.

As a Communication Officer, French rational Ms. Sadio Kanté is working with Mick Raine in establishing the communication plan of the EU-funded UNDP (PFF) de-mining programme, otherwise known as the Mine Action Cell. She enjoys cooking, diving and sewing. Touareg art is her particular passion.

Originally from Mali, Sadio has lived in Africa and Europe. Along the way, she developed a sensibility to the vast contemporary social, economic, and cultural issues found on each continent. Her interest in media has resulted in assignments at various film festivals including Cannes. Sadio still remembers the famous film festival and the standing ovation given there for the African film “Kini and Adam” directed by Idrissa Ouedrago. She also experienced the glitz of Monaco while on staff with the Press Office of the World Music Awards. On the way to a show venue, “a wonderful 1950s Mercedes came to flashing cameras. Sadio was a star, even if for just a brief moment!”

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Sadio Kanté
Communication Officer

Capt. Jozef Kascak was born in
Presov, Slovakia, on 3 April 1968. He attended the military grammar school in Opava, Czech Republic, and then the Military Academy in Liptovsky Mikulas, Slovakia. He graduated from university with a degree in anti-aircraft defence in 1990. His first position was in AA brigade in Pizen, the Czech Republic, as platoon leader.

Then he moved to Kosice, Soviet Republic, as the officer responsible for processing of RL information. He has been working for the military police for the last 11 years as an investigator, and was also responsible for force safety in different barracks.

In the course of his studies, Jozef has attended the Police Academy in Bratislava and a defence operational planning course in the Netherlands.

Last year, he served as an MP officer with the peacekeeping mission KFOR, Kosovo. Jozef is married to Anna. They have two children, Renata, 11, and Eduard, 8. He enjoys sports, particularly playing ice-hockey.

As a Communication Officer, French rational Ms. Sadio Kanté is working with Mick Raine in establishing the communication plan of the EU-funded UNDP (PFF) de-mining programme, otherwise known as the Mine Action Cell. She enjoys cooking, diving and sewing. Touareg art is her particular passion.

Originally from Mali, Sadio has lived in Africa and Europe. Along the way, she developed a sensibility to the vast contemporary social, economic, and cultural issues found on each continent. Her interest in media has resulted in assignments at various film festivals including Cannes. Sadio still remembers the famous film festival and the standing ovation given there for the African film “Kini and Adam” directed by Idrissa Ouedrago. She also experienced the glitz of Monaco while on staff with the Press Office of the World Music Awards. On the way to a show venue, “a wonderful 1950s Mercedes came to flashing cameras. Sadio was a star, even if for just a brief moment!”

LEA
New Faces...

A sector 1 received visits by the Vice Chiefs of Staff of the Argentinian Armed Forces, as well the Defence Attaché to the Argentinian Embassy in Israel. After having met with the Chief of Mission and Argentinian soldiers of MFR, FMPIU and HQ in the UNPA, the visitors landed at Camp San Martin’s heliport on 1 April. They were greeted by an honour parade and CO Sector 1, Lt. Col. Federico Sidders, who welcomed the group comprising Gen. Perez Vovard (Army), Adm. Galarza (Navy), Brig. Blanco (Air Force) and Col. Locatelli (Defence Attaché).

During their brief stay, the visitors went to PBs 03, 08, 18 and 32 in order to see first-hand the soldiers at work. The final stop was for a visit to Camp Roca.

The Argentinia-based group departed on a flight shared with the first rotation of troops homeward-bound. The officials were well satisfied at having observed the Argentinian personnel at work and proud of the contingent’s achievements while serving with UNFICYP.

Sector 1
UN Flight

On 31 March, UN Flight received a visit from the Argentinian Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff, Brig. Eduardo Ernesto Bianco, and his Army and Navy counterparts.

They were given a tour of the UN Flight facilities and flown over the territory patrolled by the Argentinian Contingent. At the end of the visit, the military officials congratulated the staff on the excellent state of the aircrafts as well as for their impeccable work in the mission.

UN Flight also received Ms. Leslie Harrison from the department of Air Safety in UNHQ NY. Her task was to inspect the development of UN Flight’s terrestrial and aerial activities from a security perspective. Her

Lt. Col. Fabián Raña and Lt. Col. Osvaldo Albanesi with Ms. Harrison
Opening of the Dolphin Swimming Pool

Force Commander Maj. Gen. Hebert Figoli presided over the official opening of the Dolphin Swimming Pool for the 2005 season on 25 March. Members of the committee even braved the chilly weather and jumped in! It has to be said that it is a wonderful facility for all United Nations members in Nicosia to enjoy. Parents can relax while children splash about in the shallow waters under the shade of a large awning. Get a great workout in one of several lanes reserved for the use by fitness swimmers. Refreshments, including a variety of snacks and hot or cold drinks, at reasonable prices are available at the pool-side kiosk.

All personnel, military, police and civilian, are invited to take out memberships. Because it is a self-funded pool, a small fee is required. Daily tickets can be obtained on entry to the pool, or you can take advantage of our monthly memberships sold at reduced rates. These can be purchased from Sarah Staples in the HIVE, or from Property Manager Maj. Fred Reid in the Property Management Office 3656reid@armymail.mod.uk. It is an excellent facility on your doorstep. Be sure to take advantage of it!

Charity Breakfast

Anoyira 10km Road Race

The small village of Anoyira, famous for its “pastelli” (sweets), wine and olive oil, located midway between Limassol and Paphos, some 12km north of the coastal highway, hosted the now annual “Anoyira Ten” as part of its annual Anoyira Festival on Sunday 10 April. The Anoyira Ten is not just a 10km road race. It is part of a village festival of both cultural and social activities that appeal to the whole family. The challenging course, between the villages of Anoyira and Pachna, is open to anyone. Serious runners, fun runners, joggers, walkers, walkers, ramblers, even dog walkers and pram pushers, can complete the 10km (6.2 miles) in less than two and a half hours. A nominal fee was charged for all participants who received a T-shirt and a medal, and the money collected was donated to the village fund.

At the start of the event, there was music and folk dancing with plenty of food and drink stands as well as locally produced fare on sale. A super fun day was had by all.

Volleyball – Sector 4

Volleyball was a popular sport in Sector 4 during the month of April. The first of inter-sector tournament games with teams from the UNPA was held on 16 April. Teams from Camp General Stefánik, HQ Cyr Sector 4 and two teams from the Hungarian Contingent took part. All players enjoyed the excellent spirit that prevailed during the matches, nevertheless the name of the game was to win... and the mixed team from the UNPA were the victors.

Preparations for the London Marathon began in September 2004 when I, along with 150,000 runners from the world over, submitted applications to this mega event. In December, an envelope arrived. Half expecting another negative reply after so many attempts year after year, I had finally managed to gain access. At long last, I had been accepted!

With 26.4 miles or 42 kilometres to cover, I had four months to train before 17 April. This was my daunting objective. New training shoes were purchased and a running programme began. I did all my training in the UNPA, initially concentrating on improving my speed but later increasing my distances to develop stamina and strength.

Finally, the time arrived to head for London. Flying home for the race filled me with excitement. I suddenly became aware that an abnormally large proportion of people at the station were also dressed in running gear. The sheer magnitude of the event struck me as I stood there on the platform with so many runners. Thousands of people flooded the station and kept filling the trains as they pulled in every two minutes. The ride to Blackheath was only 17 minutes long, but the walk to the Blue Start line felt like it took ages as a rush of anxiety mixed with excitement about the race took hold of me for the first time.

Unusual for the UK, the weather was fine with clear blue skies and warm sunshine. The atmosphere in the starting queue was electric. Helicopters circled above, the Tannoy announcements and the throng of people, runners and spectators, all added to the spectacle. Too far away from the starting line to have heard the starter’s pistol go off, I was amazed it took me a full 16 minutes to shuffle across the starting gate before finally getting on my way to achieving the 25th London Marathon.

The butterflies in my stomach began to subside as I focused on establishing a running rhythm. Too fast and I would hit “the wall” – too slow and I would astound myself. Pace is everything in exist after 24 miles, I was amazed with seeing the ‘20 to go’ sign. Finally, 4:14. I had completed the London Marathon. an impressive accomplishment! The support was immense and it reminded me that people are generous and kind. I did not run for a charity, but I did run for a little girl who lives in Cyprus, a little girl whose circumstance is so-called “wall” was that everybody cut- tioned me about? I figured I was probably running too slow for an obstacle like that. Past the Tower of London, through the Embankment and the 24-mile point where “Big Ben” loomed in the far distance, I was tired, my feet were sore and I desperately wanted to finish. Eventually I rounded the corner into Parliament Square and headed toward Buckingham Palace. That meant that I had only 1.5 miles left before reaching the finish. My fatigue sub-sidred and I was propelled along to the rear of thousands of cheering supporters. People were everywhere; hanging from lamp posts, traffic lights, in windows, on road barriers.

The finish line was finally mine in 4:14. I had completed the London Marathon, an incredible accomplishment!

The support was immense and it reminded me that people are generous and kind. I did not run for a charity, but I did run for a little girl who lives in Cyprus, a little girl whose circumstance provided me with both inspiration and motivation.

Maj. Chris Fraser

Nathaniel, Benjamin, Ellis, Naomi and Rebecca, representatives from the Nicosia Youth Club.

Meet the London Marathon Experience

The Blue Beret

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