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ARMOUR

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The Evolving Battlefield Tactics in Ukraine



The Cavalry is back on the modern battlefield. Entire Russian regiments are implementing special motorized assault detachments equipped with motorbikes and ATVs. Forget helicopters and Air Assault units, if you need reinforcements ASAP just call in a squad of iron horses.

Like Russian war reporter (RIA Novosti war correspondent) Alexander Kharchenko said “We Are The Horde and the Horde is advancing”.

A Ukrainian commander told AFP (Agence France-Presse) earlier this month that Russian forces were employing unusual tactics to advance. Entire Russian regiments are implementing specialized motorized detachments equipped with off road motorbikes and ATVs. If you need resupplies or reinforcements urgently, just call in one of these specialized units. While Western sources are debunking this approach, the results of the advancing Russian Front westward is testimony to its success, especially on the open plains of Zaporizhia Oblast .

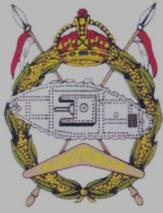
Russian “Storm detachments” equipped with motorbikes are increasingly being used in Ukraine. Why are they now being formed and how is this tactical evolution affecting the battlefield?

Ukrainian Lieutenant Mykhailo Hubitsky stated; “these vehicles helped Russian forces breach our positions”. It's not a surprise considering these motorized assaults are preceded by an intense artillery bombardment followed by multiple drone strikes. Once the enemy is pinned down in their dugouts, these bikes can easily cross some of the most rugged terrain within seconds as they zip by Ukrainian firing positions and all of a sudden they're on top of the enemy strongholds.

There is no argument that these missions are dangerous as they're the first ones to go into the Ukraine kill zones and that they're directly targeted by enemy artillery but their main threat is enemy FPV drones.

Inside this Issue

Evolving Battlefield Tactics in Ukraine	1
RAACA (NSW) Annual Dinner	2
Technical Notes & News	6
RSM Barlow Gravestone Project.	7



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ANNUAL DINNER INVITATION

IN CELEBRATION & REMEMBRANCE OF THE BATTLES OF BEERSHEBA AND CAMBRAI

DATE CHANGE TO Saturday 2ND November, 6.30pm for 7.00pm

at the Victoria Barracks Officers Mess, Paddington, Sydney

Colonel (Retd) Rob Shoebridge, President of the Royal Australian Armoured Corps Association (NSW), cordially invites all fellow Black Hats to the Annual Dinner of the Association in celebration and remembrance of the Battles of Beersheba and Cambrai in World War One.

Pre-dinner drinks from 1830hrs; **Dinner 1900hrs**
The dinner will be held at the Victoria Barracks Officers Mess, Paddington.

NOTE: Moore Park Road gate (southern side of barracks) is the authorised entry/exit point for all vehicles and pedestrians. Vehicle entry requires the driver to possess a pre-issued pass - **these are not available to on-occurrence visitors**. Pedestrians should arrive at Security Control located adjacent to the Moore Park Road gate NLT 1815hrs to be signed-in.

DRESS

Black Tie, Mess Kit (Army Dress Order 6B) Mess Dress white jacket, or Coat & Tie,
Miniatures may be worn

REPLY AND PAYMENT

RSVP NLT 24 OCT 24 by paying \$110 per head:
Electronic Funds Transfer to RAACA NSW,
BSB 833205, A/c No 20539747 indicating your Surname and the text 'Dinner payment'.

Alternately, you can pay by cheque to **RAACA NSW** and sent it to:

The Treasurer RAACA NSW, c/o LTCOL Andrew Hine, CSC
Training Branch, Headquarters Forces Command
Building 111, Locked Bag 7005,
LIVERPOOL NSW 1871

Guest of Honour is LTCOL (Retd) Neil James,
Executive Director of the Australian Defence Association



Neil James is Executive Director of the Australia Defence Association (ADA), the independent, non-partisan, community-based, national public-interest watchdog organisation for strategic security, defence and wider national security matters.

Most of the ADA's responsibilities involve research, consultation and advocacy. The latter includes both public activities and behind-the-scenes liaison and negotiation, especially concerning parliamentary, departmental and other public accountability mechanisms, defence capability development and strategic policy issues generally.

Prior to taking up his current position with the ADA in May 2003 Neil served (full-time) for over 31 years in the Australian army. He continued to serve part-time as an active reservist until April 2018 and celebrated his 45th anniversary serving with the ADF in January that year.

Neil's military experiences over four and a half decades spanned a wide range of regimental, intelligence, liaison, teaching, operational planning, operations research and historical research positions throughout Australia and overseas.

(Continued from page 1)

It is from video footage from these drones, both Russian and Ukrainian that we can analyze not only where and when the Russian army started using motorcycles but also their effectiveness and what we can expect of such units in the future. With these resources the battle field and can be analyzed ad nauseum. An example of this analysis can be seen from the History Legends website (<https://youtu.be/ybSx2Zu8TCQ?si=yU2mMDoGAQucVbzF>)



If we examine the Ukrainian 2023 summer counter offensive it can be shown that it failed partly due to very mobile Russian ATGM Crews moving on ATVs. They would dismount in tree lines and then ambush Ukrainian columns with their 9M133 Kornet ATGMs . However the first official combat use of motorcycles in Ukraine, with video evidence that's back this, is from the 9th of April 2024 where soldiers from the “Storm Detachment” of the 123rd Brigade of the LPR carried out an attack in the Siversk area north of Bakhmut. The battle started with a precise artillery barrage and drone swarms to pin down the Ukrainians. At the same time the motorcycle unit departed

Berestove at full speed to reach the Ukrainian forward positions some 5 km away.

This military operation was considered a success so in the weeks following this attack Russian units ramped up their use of motorcycle units. Russian war reporter Semyon Pegov (Pegov, 36, is a military journalist, blogger who runs the 'War Gonzo' channel) even did a piece stating how motorcycles have become the new horses of War.



The major advantage being they're harder for drones to intercept, they're less noisy and faster than armoured vehicles or SUVs. In one video clip (<https://youtu.be/ybSx2Zu8TCQ?si=yU2mMDoGAQucVbzF>) you can see how Ukrainian artillery fired a round of cluster munitions but the paratroopers on the ATVs were too fast and avoided a direct hit.

Near Chasiv Yar an assault motorcycle unit passed through an entire enemy artillery barrage unscathed. A couple days later the New York Times interviewed Ukrainian Lieutenant Mykhailo Hubitsky who described these assaults: “They moved quickly, scattered and swerved.

When we analyze motorcycle assault tactics on this part of the front it was in the open fields of Zaporizhzhia Oblast, especially on the flat and dry ground, where they were most effective. Clearly visible are the drones guiding the assaults.

Motorcycle units also played a huge role in the Battle of Staromaiorske, where on the 23rd of May a detachment of seven motorcyclists pushed right into the center of the village. This attack took the defender by surprise as suddenly the Ukrainians had the enemy at their rear. By the 10th of June most of Staromaiorske, was under Russian control.

On the second of July a squad comprising of both motorcycles and ATVs used the same tactics to capture an area north of Staromaiorske. The assault occurred so fast that the squad was in the Ukrainian trenches before the Ukrainians were able to respond. The Ukrainian soldiers simply fled from their positions. It was at this point that the Russian MOD acknowledged the effectiveness of this type of assault and began using it to overcome the stalemate of trench warfare.

Marines of the 40th Naval infantry Brigade used the same motorcycle assault tactics on the village of Urozhaine Donetsk Oblast on the other side of the river but on a larger scale. The battle was on a much larger scale, first a large bombardment using TOS 1A Thermobaric MRLS on Ukrainian positions to pin them down followed up by IFVs spearheading the attack along the main road.

(Continued on page 4)

Four IFVs made it intact into Urozhaine and disembarked their infantry component before going back to pick up the second batch of troops.

The Russians then unleashed a second squad to the rear of the Ukrainians. Once in place, multiple combat teams on motorcycles stormed the battlefield in 16-man squads. They flanked the village of Urozhaine at full speed up to the Ukrainian fortifications. The Russian assault squads dismounted and cleared the trenches of the enemy while other units cleared the buildings. Within an hour and a half the village was theirs. On the 13th of July the village of Urozhaine completely fell into Russian hands.

From that moment on, all across the whole front, more and more Russian units combined their regular mechanized assaults with motorbike raids. They would approach at full speed, drop their bikes and continuing the assault on foot.

One advantage that these Storm units offer is that if “Storm detachments” suffer casualties during an attack the commander of the unit can immediately send in motorcyclists as replacements and keep the momentum going.



The motorcycles are not only used for combat missions, in Krasnohorivka men from the 5th Separate Motorized Rifle Brigade (OPLT) of the DPR drove to the contact line to deliver supplies and ammunition. The motorbikes are able to carry two soldiers in full kit. Theoretically 80 to 90 kg of cargo can be carried, this translates into a lot of ammunition and supplies. Motorcycle units can move undetected and resupply friendly combat units that have infiltrated enemy positions. This can provide an army a tactical advantage.

So why didn't anyone think of using motorbikes in combat before, well from a historical perspective it's really not a new concept. Modern motorcycle units are the closest to what were termed dragoons in Medieval Times.

In the Napoleonic era in the French army dragoons were typically soldiers equipped with carbines and trained to fight on foot like regular infantry but capable of quick mobility on horseback. They evolved into Cavalry units (Light Horse) able to engage in both mounted and dismounted combat. Combining the speed of Cavalry with the tactical flexibility of infantry.

A big disadvantage was that once the man dismounted you needed to find a safe place in the rear to keep all the horses. Not an easy task in the middle of a battlefield. Using to motorbikes has lessened this problem.

The Russian armed forces have now standardized the training for motorcycle assault platoons, clearly demonstrating their importance on the modern Battlefield. Soldiers in the field are even coming up with new assault rifles specialized for motorcycle attacks. Drones are extensively used to support these tactics.

Motorcycle assaults are now being practiced by every Russian regiment. The task of the “Ghost Riders” is to be the first ones to get a foothold in the enemy position and to keep the enemy busy while the main contingent arrive and disembark from IFVs. The greatest weakness is that the soldiers have to leave their motorbikes just like the dragoons two centuries ago with their horses. The problem is that this clearly gives away their position to enemy drones.

Some Russian troops have found creative ways to protect themselves from these drones. Everything from adding a cage around the motorcycle to installing smoke dispensing grenades at the back to camouflage their movements. More seriously many units have taped electronic warfare equipment behind the motorcycle in an attempt to jam incoming drones.

In mid July to the Espanola Battalion near Chasiv Yar, used motorcycles to rush troops into Chasiv Yar. Their motorized assault unit was supposed to be equipped with electronic warfare systems. These systems can cover the entire frequency Spectrum within a radius of 400 to 500 meters and thus prevent FPV drone strikes. However the detachment OC forgot the EW systems. The Unit still carried out the operation. In the end the Units intense Motocross training paid off and they accomplished the mission with only three bikes completely written off and three others needing major repairs. The motorbikes are considered expendable, one time use, by the MOD.

WAR WIDOWS GUILD NAME CHANGE

Please be advised the NSW War Widows Guild has been re-branded and is now known as the Families of Veterans Guild (FOV Guild). Details are to be found on the following website: <https://familiesofveterans.org.au/>

Have a good look at the new website – it's well put together. By clicking on Contact scroll down to Contact your state or national network here button, that will take you to Australian War Widows Incorporated and all State/Territory contact details. (See also <https://warwidows.org.au/>)

Given the critical role the Guild does nationally and locally in supporting bereaved families of deceased veterans, it is vital that this info be disseminated as widely as possible.

For your info and action.

Regards,
Noel.

Noel Mc Laughlin
Chairman
RAAC Corporation

Vale

Bert Castellari

It is not with sadness that I let you know the passing of Bert Castellari last week. Bert lived his life to the fullest, a brain still sharp after 100 years. Bert was the last survivor of the World War 2 Regiment.

Bert was born on 27 December 1923, in his own words "People often remark on this, so close to the nominal birthday of Jesus Christ. Some even mention the proximity of Chairman Mao, who was born on the 26th of December."

Again in Bert's own words: "My father was Italian. My mother was English. We were post Great War migrants. Dad came ahead in 1923 to manage successfully 'The Ambassadors', a restaurant cum ball-room etc which was wiped out by the great depression. The rest of the family followed in 1924. I was six months old."

Bert began his civil career aged 15 in 1938 as a copy boy at the Sun newspaper, Sydney, changing to The Daily Mirror, before joining the army.

During the second world war Bert was the CO's loader/operator, at one point he was sent to Puckapunyal to do a course for driver/mechanics. It was a course for NCOs and above so he became a temporary, acting Lance Corporal (unpaid), and reverted to the rank of Trooper when rejoining the Lancers. After WW2 he returned to newspapers. In 1947 he joined the Daily Telegraph and later, the Sydney Morning Herald. He was a war correspondent for the Sydney Morning Herald during the Korean War.

In Canberra in the seventies he worked for the Canberra Times, followed by the Specialised Press Agency. He worked as press secretary to five ministers of the Hawke Government.

In recent years Bert has been in constant correspondence with the Regimental Association, and a valued financial contributor to the Association and Museum. Soon after his 100th birthday he got a Regimental visit, able to pose with the unit's youngest member alongside a cake. Colonel Shadbolt remarked at the sharpness of his mind.

Technical Notes & News

25th Anniversary of Australian Service in East Timor Star Ceremony

Friday 20 September marked 25 years since the arrival in Dili of the multinational peacekeeping force known as International Force for East Timor (INTERFET).

The ceremony was hosted by RSL NSW at the Hall of Memory, Anzac Memorial (Hyde Park South, Sydney), and payed respect to the more than 18,000 Australians who served in East Timor between 1999 and 2013, including the six Australians who paid the ultimate sacrifice whilst deployed, or as a result of their service.



Battle for Australia Commemoration 4 September 2024

The 2024 Battle for Australia Commemoration was at Martin Place. It was great to be able to gather again with our fellow citizens and mark that time in 1942-45 when our nation was threatened by foreign invasion.

The commemoration was notable for the Acknowledgement of Country speech by Lachlan Youll, the prayers by Geoffrey Usher, musical contributions by the Australian Army Band - Sydney and soloist, and the Sydney Women's Vocal Orchestra, the catafalque party provided by RAAF Richmond; and the rather good keynote address by Brigadier Phillip Bridie AM ADC. Our MC Dr Darren Mitchell OAM again excelled himself as did Junior Legatee Kelly Randall in reciting the ode.

Those who made it to the luncheon in the Fullerton Hotel enjoyed good company. A great commemoration, hope you will look for us when the Oration is published in February 2025 and we again commemorate the saviours of our nation in September 2025.

On a positive note, the Regiment's Honorary Colonel Phillip Bridie was recently the Keynote speaker at the Battle for Australia commemoration at the Cenotaph, Martin Place, Sydney on 4 September 2024. The inspiring speech did the Regiment proud.

Sincerely,

John Howells
Secretary
Royal New South Wales Lancers' Association



RSM Thomas Barlow, Queen's Dragoon Guards (QDG) Gravestone Project.

The Queen's Dragoon Guards is the 1/15 RNSWL's sister Regt. When I recently visited the HONCOL QDG, BRIG Alan Richmond, in England, he raised with me the story of Thomas Barlow, who was the RSM of 1st King's Dragoon Guards (QDG's predecessor Regt) at Waterloo. A fascinating tale. RSM Barlow was the genesis of one of the QDG's long standing traditions of the SGT's Mess inviting the Officers of the Regt to dine with them at Waterloo dinners.

Thomas relocated to Melbourne in 1849, was a Methodist minister, ran a school in Collingwood and was instrumental in having a bridge built over the Yarra at Johnstone Street. He died in 1858 and was buried in the Melbourne General Cemetery.

Unfortunately, RSM Barlow's grave is unmarked, and this project seeks to address this. QDG are doing the work and have one of their Alma Mata in Melbourne, Peter Jones, with whom I have been in contact. Peter has been in contact with RSM Barlow's family and has gained their support. Peter recently gave a well-received presentation to the Toorak Services Club, at which MAJ Benny Lönnborn was in attendance, about RSM Barlow.

The aspiration would be to unveil the gravestone in 2025 - the 210th anniversary of the battle of Waterloo, with a suitable ceremony (18 June 1815 was the date of the battle). I suspect there will be some media interest in the event.

QDG are in the process of setting up a website about RSM Barlow which will also seek donations. I am attending the Project Meetings.

So, what am I seeking:

Firstly, to inform you of RSM Barlow, the project and background. At the appropriate time, publicise the story including project website details (when they are provided) in the RAACA NSW newsletter & relevant communications means. Note the date location of the Gravestone Unveiling, being Melbourne General Cemetery, 18 Jun 25.

Some of the RAACA members may chose to donate some money to the cause, once the details are published, noting we suspect there won't been too much issue here.

Separately I have informed 4/19 PWLH & Association, 1/15 RNSWL & Association and RAACA Vic.

Happy to take questions.

Regards,

Brigadier Phillip Bridie, AM, ADC
Honorary Colonel
1st / 15th Royal New South Wales Lancers
Patron
Royal NSW Lancers' Association & NSW Lancers Memorial Museum

Retiring Vice President RAACA (NSW) Bob Ferrari OAM confirming Honorary Life Membership of the RAACA (NSW) to retiring President COL Rob Shoebridge (Retd) at the recent AGM of the Association.



Lest we Forget We regret to advise the passing of the following members

Mr.		D.J	Richards	3/9 SA Mtd Rifles
Mr.	Harold	H.J	Dunn	3/9 SA Mtd Rifles
Mrs	Gwen	G	Balsillie	Widow
Mr.	Max	M	Thomas	1 AR
Mr.	John	J.W	Jennings	Orange Sub- Branch
Mr.	Bert	B	Castellari	1 Armd Regiment (AIF).

Vale

235162 Major General B.W. 'Hori' Howard AO MC ESM – 3RAR

I have been advised of the loss of one of our Tribal Elders. Major General B.W. 'Hori' Howard AO MC ESM died in Canberra on 16 May 2024.

I'm sure you will share with me sending our deepest sympathy and condolences to his son Mick, his Family and the wider Howard Family.

Rest in Peace Hori your Duty has been done.

JP.

Australian Army seeks light vehicles for its littoral ambitions

By Gordon Arthur

MELBOURNE, Australia — As Australia's military adjusts to recommendations contained in last year's Strategic Defence Review, there is a demand for lighter vehicles better suited operations in coastal areas.

First out of the gate in what could be a shopping spree for such rides was manufacturer Polaris, announcing earlier in September that the company had won a contract for DAGOR light vehicles.

The A\$22 million (US\$14.6 million) deal entails "several variants in support of joint missions worldwide," with an undisclosed quantity to be delivered within two years, Polaris said in a statement. Cannell said: "We're proud to provide this capability for Australian personnel. The DAGOR all-terrain vehicle will allow teams to move faster, carry more and significantly reduce combat fatigue by navigating complex terrain otherwise covered on foot."



At Land Forces 2024 in Melbourne, held Sept. 11-13, Polaris also exhibited an MRZR-A vehicle, a bare-bones, ultra-light ride that comes in variants with seats for two or four occupants, according to the company's website.

Brigadier Doug Pashley, commander of the Australian Army's Darwin-based 1st Brigade, told Defense News about the formation's metamorphosis from a mechanized, heavy brigade. "As part of our transition to a littoral brigade, we're experimenting with a lot of mobility options," he said. That includes Supacat HMT Extenda vehicles ordinarily utilized by special forces, since "they're probably a bit more regionally relevant than some of the heavier stuff that we've had in the past year," Pashley said.

The brigade is also toying with lighter vehicles like the Polaris MRZR. "We're really lucky we can draw lessons from other forces that have been leading the way in terms of developing littoral capabilities, both the U.S. Marine Corps and the Royal Marines," Pashley explained. "Both have procured some light mobility vehicles, so we're keen to leverage lessons from them."