



THE ROYAL REGIMENT OF SCOTLAND

ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

EDITION 10: DEC 23 - FEB 24



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KING'S COLOUR



REGIMENTAL COLOUR



DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that The Royal Regiment of Scotland has amassed 339 Battle Honours?

Colours are incredibly important to any Army unit as they represent the fighting spirit of the regiment. As armies became trained and adopted set formations, each regiment's ability to keep its formation was potentially critical to its success. In the chaos of battle, not least due to the amount of smoke, dust and noise on a battlefield, soldiers needed to be able to determine the location of their regiment.

Both the King's Colour and Regimental Colour are emblazoned with Battle Honours with the Regimental Colour also showing five Honorary Distinctions. A Battle Honour is an award of a right by a government or sovereign to a military unit to emblazon the name of a battle or operation on its flags ("colours"), uniforms or other accessories where ornamentation is possible. The Honorary Distinctions were generally awarded to mark a particular campaign, such as the Sphinx for the Egypt campaign against Napoleon in 1804.

The King's Colour is based on the national flag with the Regiment's insignia placed in the centre. Only Battle Honours from the Great War and the Second World War are permitted to be emblazoned on the King's Colour and the Regiment has 43 such honours on the King's Colour.

Regimental Colours vary in design across the Infantry; for The Royal Regiment of Scotland, as a Royal Regiment, the background is dark blue, with the Regiment's name and cap badge in the centre and includes the Regiment's motto: Nemo me Impune Lacessit (No one assails me with impunity). The crown on the cap badge is the Scottish Crown and these items are surrounded by the Union Wreath. There are 44 Battle Honours on the Regimental Colour; all pre the Great War and post the Second World War.



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Lieutenant General Sir Nick Borton KCB DSO MBE



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2nd February 2024

Dear fellow officers, soldiers and veterans,

As I sit to write my final foreword to the Regimental Journal, I thought it better to pen a more personal letter to you all. In the coming weeks, I will retire from service and in doing so, pass on colonelcy of the Regiment to Major General Robin Lindsay. This Regiment and its antecedents have been my family, and in leaving a family, one cannot help but reflect with affection and deep sentiment. Having lived through the formation of The Royal Regiment of Scotland and watched it evolve, it has truly been one of my great honours in life to have represented it.

The Regiment has come a long way since its inception, and we are in a formidable position. It is now underpinned by a strong, coherent strategy which harnesses the collective horsepower of our talented officers who drive it forward. We are improving the mental and physical wellbeing of our people, training our soldiers better, doing more for veterans and ensuring we have a sustainable financial model for the future.

The pages that follow are a testament to a busy, happy regiment that remains at the forefront of Defence's operational main effort and our standing as the 'go-to' regiment for deployment remains stronger than ever. Take heart in knowing that our reputation as disciplined and fierce fighting soldiers precedes us. Know too that this reputation does not come unearned, and we must continue to display the utmost professionalism if we are to be the standard for others to follow. The geopolitical landscape is shifting, and agility and readiness is paramount. Never in my time has the world seemed more uncertain and we must be ready to face these challenges head on. I have no doubt that we are.



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I leave you with some parting guidance in a moment of reflection. I have come to learn that life in a SCOTS battalion is like no other. Remember that which defines us. Our traditions, family ethos, dress, pipes and drums, wicked humour and indomitable fighting spirit mark us out as unique. It is special - protect it at all costs. While maintaining a forward-looking mindset, we must cherish and continue to celebrate our long, deep-rooted history. Take pride in putting on the uniform of your forebears; under those streaming colours, noble deeds were done. From those who served before us, find strength in their tales of derring-do, for there have been many. Above all else, we must always put the Jock at the heart of all we do – we serve to lead them.

Thank you for all your hard work today, your comradeship over the years and the many, many laughs along the way. It has been an honour to serve shoulder to shoulder with you all and I will miss the Regiment dearly.

Nemo me Impune Lacebit

Nick Barton



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CONGRATULATIONS

We would like to congratulate the following on selection for promotion to Lieutenant Colonel:

Acting Lt Col JA Thompson
Maj RJ Colquhoun MBE
Maj AR Gill
Maj AJ Phillips MC
Maj RJ Coppard

THE LATE IAN MCLACHLAN



Young Ian McLachlan

The family of the late Ian McLachlan have donated the £824 from the retiring collection at his funeral to the SCOTS Regimental Trust. Ian joined the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders on 20th April 1954 based at Stirling Castle. He served in the Suez and in Berlin. As the Commanding Officer's driver

in Berlin, he would take the Commanding Officer to Spandau Prison where Rudolf Hess was imprisoned which was part of the Commanding Officer's routine duties. Ian transferred to the Army Reserve on 19th April 1957 before being discharged on 19th April 1961.

His Certificate of Service records Ian as a very good driver, reasonably skilled painter and loyal and well-behaved man who had a pleasant personality and tidy appearance. On leaving the Army and taking heed of words from his Certificate of Service, Ian established Ian McLachlan & Son, Painters & Decorators in Kirkcudbright which his son Tom runs to this day. Ian had previously donated to the Regiment over the years through his business.

Ian was well known and liked by the people of Kirkcudbright and the surrounding areas, also by his customers. He was regarded as a kind and generous man and the retiring collection reflects his standing in his community.



Ian at the A and SH museum, Stirling Castle in 2022



ATLANTIC ROW WO2 ROADNIGHT

On the 22nd of December 2023, WO2 Roadnight and the rest of his four-man team, comprising of two civilians and one veteran, set off from La Gomera, in the Canary Islands, as part of the 2023 fleet of the 'World's Toughest Row - Atlantic'. The aim was to row across the Atlantic Ocean and dock in English harbour Antigua.

Once the team emerged from the shelter of the Island of La Gomera they found themselves in extreme conditions and spent a week battling winds of up to 30 Knots with 30-40ft waves. The team were as prepared as they could be but faced conditions that they had not experienced before. Very quickly the team were almost capsized, breaking their spare oars and causing significant damage to one of the rowing gates. They also suffered a man overboard as they moved around the boat; fortunately, he was clipped on! The incident was not shared with the safety team or family until later as there was still a long way to go!

However, the damages sustained meant they were unable to operate the third rowing position and had to row with only two of the three rowing positions being staffed. The team quickly adapted and went into a shift pattern which saw them row two hours on and two hours off, which they maintained for the duration. During their rest periods they had to clean themselves with fresh water, eat, and tend the

salt sores that were developing from time spent on the wet seat and blisters on their hands.

After the first week the weather calmed down, and with the team settled into life on the boat, they began to make steady progress. Highlights of the adventure were seeing a pod of whales, a thresher shark, and a blue marlin, which followed the boat (or more accurately the tuna hiding behind the dagger board). Lows were being hit by flying fish, which struck indiscriminately, without warning in the dark, and absolutely stank, especially if you couldn't locate where it ended up for a few days.

After 40 days, 3 hours and 31 minutes the team arrived safely in Antigua, on the 22nd of January 2024, with experiences and friendships that will last a lifetime. The whole project took three years to complete, with arguably the largest challenge being securing funding from corporate sponsors to get to the start line.

It is with gratitude to the Regiment that I write this, as without their support I would not have been able to complete the project. The team took on the challenge to raise money for Rock2Recovery and The Sailors Society. Both fantastic organisations do work in the mental health space at a time where the impact of untreated mental health issues are felt across the services and wider civilian sectors.





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SCOTS
Veterans



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Leafyard access for you and your family

Leafyard continues to support our regimental family with access to free Leafyard gift tokens.

The app has been rigorously tested and shown to improve mental performance in an army-wide pilot – including a successful rollout in our very own 4SCOTS.

The following testimony is from a member of our SCOTS community:

“What I liked most about Leafyard was the science – the easy to understand delivery and the strategies that can be put in place to help yourself.

The main difference I noticed in myself after using Leafyard was a more positive / optimistic attitude. Less doom and more brighter thoughts. It has enabled me to overcome the darkness and given me more control over my thoughts. I am now less gloomy and able to look ahead. I'd recommend giving it a try.”

Visit www.leafyard.com/scots to request access for you and your family – please allow 24h for your token to arrive in your email.



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MORTAR BATTLE CAMP



Our Pinzgauer platforms in a hide to avoid detection from EF drones

In February 2024, the 2 SCOTS Mortar Platoon began their Mortar Battle Camp on Sennybridge training area, Wales. 2 SCOTS is in a busy Operational period supporting multiple Op INTERFLEXs and preparing to deploy on Op SHADER and FIRIC. Therefore, it was fantastic to get the whole platoon together to conduct some training.

Split over 4 weeks, we had a number of focuses; make sure we were ready to deploy on Op FIRIC, train in new soldiers who have recently joined the platoon, and innovate our SOPs in order to learn from the war in Ukraine.

The war in Ukraine has completely upended how the Mortar Platoon operates, after years of operating in FOBs in Afghanistan, we must now be agile and destructive at speed. With Russia having huge amounts

of counter battery technology, we have been trying to reduce the time it takes for us to bring in accurate fire to support the Battlegroup. We spent a week in the rural setting testing new SOP's and were able to get the time it takes to set up, fire and move down to record time. This was a significant step forward. Furthermore, we tested how we could use communication apps to call in fire missions. Whilst this could be slower than traditional green comms, we would be harder to find in the electromagnetic spectrum, another method of increasing our survivability. Whilst all these innovations are great in practice, we then needed to test them on a live range, something we did in the final weeks. The lessons we have learnt has made us a more capable force, our ability to survive and bring in lethal fire at speed has become our key objective.

The final 2 weeks saw us live firing. This is every Jocks favourite moment, feeling the ground shudder and watching as our bombs blow up a pig vehicle from the last century. This was the first time the platoon has been able to live fire from the urban environment. Cellini village is the only urban live fire facility in the UK and a key resource for us. With 55% of the world's population living in an urban environment of some type, it is key we learn how to fight from it! Furthermore, for our final 2 days we were joined by 5 SCOTS. This was the first time since 2019 that the platoon has integrated with an infantry company, and it added significant realism to our training. Hopefully 5 SCOTS enjoyed it as much as we did!



Live firing from Cellini village in support of 5 SCOTS



ENDEX after a long few weeks, a fantastic effort by all the Jocks



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BALAKLAVA COMPANY ON EX APOLLO SABRE



Balaklava Company in the partner force German Flektarn uniform

On the 14th of January Balaklava Company deployed to Salisbury plain on Exercise Apollo Sabre for four weeks. Our role for the duration was partner force to the Ranger Regiment task groups, supporting them throughout each Battalion's nine-day rotation. The aim of the exercise was to test a company from each Ranger Battalion on how they can operate deep inside enemy territory with a capable home nation partner force. The Ranger task groups, alongside Balaklava Company, would plan and execute a mixture of conventional and unconventional operations in a variety of environments. With a free reign enemy, facilitated by 2 RIFLES, and a range of assets at their disposal, the exercise was effective in simulating a contemporary operating environment and thus challenges the British Army may face. Balaklava Company once

again proved our ability to adapt to challenging scenarios, maintaining a high standard, and supporting the task groups, contributing to the successful execution of the exercise.



2PI conducting a night time hostage rescue

It was a unique opportunity for the Company to not only work alongside

the Ranger Regiment, but also attachments from the United States and Romania. Whilst on the exercise, a variety of operations were conducted, such as anti-tank ambushes, urban defence missions, and raids. All phases of the exercise had elements of human terrain that needed to be considered, from oppressed civilian populations to political hostages, adding to the complexity of the scenarios. A particular highlight was conducting a night time raid on a large compound to rescue a civilian hostage alongside the American ODA attachment, who were very impressed with the competence and professionalism shown by Balaklava Company. It was noted by the directing staff that Balaklava Company's balance of controlled aggression and composure throughout the exercise was an example to all exercising troops.



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The exercise struck the right balance for the Company in terms of supporting the task groups and hitting training objectives. During rare occasions where it was not required to support the exercise, the opportunity was taken to make use of the training facilities at our disposal, and the highly qualified NCOs within the Company. As can be seen in the photograph, the Company conducted urban training in Imber village, facilitated by urban instructors Cpl Sheerin, and LCpl McLeod. Having access to training facilities, then conducting missions with the task groups enabled the Company's rapid progression in skills and drills, as well as team cohesion.



3PI conducting urban training in Imber village

To round off what had been a challenging, but rewarding, four weeks, the Company conducted a two day exercise, further demonstrating our ability to operate at a high standard at all times. It was an excellent opportunity to nail down SOPs and gel as a team, especially for those new to the Company, prior to deploying on more exercises throughout the year. A fast paced last couple of days included FIWAF, recce patrols, and raids. This was the culmination of an intense exercise, and upon completion the Jocks enjoyed a well earned break following their return to Redford Barracks.

Before we were to depart Salisbury training area, CO 1 Ranger Lt Col Colquhoun, who was responsible for running Ex Apollo Sabre, addressed Balaklava Company. He thanked the Company for their efforts in supporting the exercise, noting the positive feedback from both the directing staff and the exercising troops. Lt Col Colquhoun took the opportunity to recognise two individuals who had performed to an exceptional standard throughout the exercise. LCpl Jennison from 3 PI, and Pve Thompson from 2PI were awarded a COs coin. A well-deserved reward for the individuals and the Company as a whole.



1 PI conducting FIWAF training, with members from 2PI acting as enemy



Balaklava Company being addressed by CO 1 Ranger Lt Col Colquhoun, before receiving two COs coins for high performance throughout the exercise



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4 SCOTS SUPPORT COMPANY

4 SCOTS' Support Company have spent January and February 2024 on the ISTAR GUNFIGHTER and ISTAR MARKSMAN series of live fire ranges, at facilities across Northeast England. This package involved the 'standard' live fire progression, from individual right up to section attacks, as well as a focus on moving targets, CBRN shoots, and qualifying on section weapon systems.

Throughout the package the team have also prepared for the Battalion Live Fire Camp in late February and March, with a welcomed return to a focus on practical and theory training on the Heavy Machinegun, in advance of the upcoming Platform Weapons Operator course. This PWO course is a first for the Company and will allow us to hit our start state for assuming Extremely High Readiness in Jul 24.

One notable absence from the range package however is the Sniper Platoon's Hldr Erasito, who has been released to participate in Exercise RACING ICE 2, after his success in ice sports in 2023. As we write, he is currently representing not just the Regiment, but the Army in at the Inter-Service competition in Switzerland.



Hldr Erasito Ex RACING ICE



MEMENTOES FROM THE LAST BRITISH BASE IN KABUL



The union flag flown over the last British Army base in Kabul is one of the latest items to enter the Museum collection.

The flag was flown over Camp Qargha, the last British Army-owned base in Afghanistan of which the main compound served as a facility for the Afghan National Army's Officer Training Academy. Since opening in 2009 the base housed a number of British units including 2 SCOTS in 2015-16 and 4 SCOTS in 2020. The flag was removed and brought 'home' by a member of B Company 4 SCOTS following the completion of their Op TORAL 10 tour in November 2020. In a complex tour which spanned global restrictions due to the Covid-19 pandemic and a tumultuous political landscape, B Company was tasked

with closing the base at Camp Qargha alongside their regular security duties.

In an account from CQMS (now WO2) Robert Ritchie, he noted how his Company anticipated a difficult tour as they flew out in April 2020; due to the pandemic they were required to isolate and move out in small cohorts to minimise contamination risks, and many of these rules were maintained on base. However, this difficulty was increased on arrival, when they were notified of the intention to close the base by the end of their tour. There began an interesting logistical challenge to 'declutter' a well-established base, maintain Covid-19 procedures and carry out security for the ANA mentors as the primary aim of the deployment. The

continued power struggle between ISIS and the Taliban also made for a dangerous tour.

In the weeks leading up to the closure of Camp Qargha, Robert estimates that around 40 trips were made to Hamid Karzai Airport in the west of the city to ferry more than a decade's worth of equipment from the base.

An official closing ceremony was held in the last weeks which featured all members of B Company, as well as dignitaries and ANA Officers. The two youngest members of the Company, Highlanders Dow and Cairns, had the privilege of lowering the flag (pictured). On their final day in camp, Robert's patrol was last to leave the camp with the remaining trucks of equipment. Almost on impulse, he removed the union flag and stowed it away in his daysack knowing that this significant moment in regimental history should be preserved for years to come.



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7 SCOTS UPDATE

New team

7 SCOTS Command team goes from strength to strength. In November we welcomed 2Lt Hall, who will take over as Platoon Commander, Charlie Company, and will Command Elgin Platoon and 2Lt Toms who will also take post as Platoon Commander in Charlie Company, but this time in Inverness. Becoming a leader in the reserves provides as much challenge and reward as that of a regular.



Christmas team building and Highland band engagement

Prior to Christmas the Highland band took the opportunity to participate in some community engagement, this time, showing the "older team" some camaraderie in providing musical entertainment to help celebrate the festive season. All involved had a great time and enjoyed the experience.



Prior to Christmas, the battalion took the opportunity to get together in Inverness and conduct some team building Command tasks. This also involved a Christmas lunch and some mandated road safety/health training. The opportunity to continue with the Command tasks continued into the evening with the Padre demonstrating how to lead a human chain created with balloons!



Coy Range weekend pre Bn shooting competition

The Bn shooting competition took place in February. All sub-units took the opportunity to conduct some range work prior to the competition, to ensure the correct start states were achieved and to ensure each of the Companies 'best shots' were identified to represent at the competition.



Bn shooting competition

Fort George ranges provided the setting for this year's shooting competition, with soldiers from as far as Stornoway to Dumbarton, coming together to show their best. Part of the competition was Close Quarter Marksmanship (CQM) that included firing from the left shoulder, use of pistol, firing at pace, and short-range opportune targets. The overall winning Company this year was C Coy, with the newest and youngest member of the team collecting the prize.





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Coy Trg weekend

With Lt Hall now in post, C Company, Elgin Platoon, took the opportunity to conduct some battle planning. This saw members go through the stages: analysis, developing a plan, and delivery, using the good old tried and tested tradition of model creation, to paint the picture.



HQ Company took the opportunity to ensure they remain complaint with Individual Training Requirements (ITRs) by conducting a Soldier's conditioning review. Here the CO leading from the front in the dead lift.



7 SCOTS Pipes and Drums

With 7 SCOTS now having a new Pipe Major and Drum Major in post, the band got together for their inaugural training weekend in Perth. This was basically to set the conditions for the regeneration of the band. The success of the regeneration of the Pipe band is by no short measure down to the efforts of the new Pipe and Drum Major.



Look forward

7 SCOTS has had an exciting past three months with the Bn shooting competition providing focus for our training. We now focus on our annual deployment exercise to Germany in June. In preparation for this we will continue to conduct battle planning, using virtual methods, and we will continue to hone our drills in our essential skills: Shoot, Move, Communicate and Medicate.



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EXERCISE BRAITHREAN ARCHITECT – FEB 24



B Coy, 4 SCOTS, deployed to Cornwall to conduct joint CQB training with Kilo Coy, 42 Cdo, Royal Marines

In the early hours of 05 Feb 24, Braithrean Company arrived, somewhat apprehensively, at Tregantle Fort, in the Antony peninsular in Cornwall. A long way from home, the howling winds coming off the Atlantic did nothing to detract from the imposing nature of the Napoleonic era fort that would be home to the Company for the forth coming week. Following some of B Company's exploits trench clearing in Thetford before Christmas, we identified that our

Close Quarter Battle skills (CQB) could do with some more practice. With most urban training facilities in the UK perennially booked, Tregantle and Scraesden Forts were identified as both somewhere different and somewhere interesting to achieve the intent. Upon reaching out to Kilo Coy, 42 Commando, with who 4 SCOTS send our designated Royal Marine exchange officer to and being based not far from training area, it also appeared they were looking for something to do

during the week! An opportunity was spied as 42 Cdo are The Royal Navy's boarding specialist and operational experts in CQB. Who better to learn from and train with?

After a few hours rest in Tregantle, which unlike Scraesden has windows, lighting and albeit cold, running water, a troop from Kilo Coy spent the next couple of days taking the Company through CQB skills from first principles. Despite having spent the week prior to deploying running through CQB skills in a misappropriated building barracks in Bourlon Barracks, everyone learnt something new. At one point, the Jocks were so eager to carry on practicing once the Royal Marines had left, they had to be told to go to bed! The culmination of this part of the exercise was force-on-force using simunition. This brought consequences for not executing the skills properly!

Following two days of instruction from Royals, it was now B Coy's turn to give something back. 42 Cdo only do boarding and don't get to practice the 'green skills' that are required on their version of the Brecon courses. Therefore, B Coy ran a section attack lane, overlooking the stunning Tregantle range complex. The Company were dropped off in a DZ by No 18 Sqn, RAF. As the first section stepped off (having managed to manoeuvre the local farmer's prize herd of cows out of the way, which had been spooked by the CH-47), the weather once again rolled in off the Atlantic to add to the complexity of the steep cliff top hills



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upon which the enemy had decided to locate itself. Upon completing the attack, the section then had to complete, at best effort, the mile back into Tregantle. The OC may or may not have found this route when navigational challenged on a run the day before!

The last phase of the weeklong exercise was the recce and raid onto Scaesden Fort. Alpha Company had very kindly supplied 2 Platoon for the week and at their Platoon Commander's request, occupied Scaesden as enemy. Scaesden is different to Tregantle in that it is entirely a training area and has

kilometres of tunnels and near vertical staircases linking three 'parades' – all of which house abandoned gun batteries and casemates. In the dead of night, the assaulting forces (two platoons of B Coy and a troop of Royal Marines) managed to infiltrate the fort. Silently the assaulting force managed the break-in, into one of the tunnels. 6 Platoon then managed to sneak up 400 steps into the heavily defended gate house, managing to capture and neutralise the GPMG gun emplacement that was covering the main gate, all without firing a shot. This then allowed the Royal Marines

to breach the gate house with minimal casualties. From this point on, 6 Platoon and the RM troop simultaneously assaulted round the fort, leaving 7 Platoon to conduct the close-in tunnel fighting. Just before dawn, the code word "PLYMOUTH" was given on the net; all enemy accounted for. It marked the end of a very successful and very enjoyable week spent exchanging skills with a partner force, one which The Royal Regiment of Scotland shares an antecedent link with.

SUBSCRIBERCRM

RHQ SCOTS have recently acquired a new contact management solution call SubscriberCRM. It promises to deliver a wide range of integrated functionality including contact management and event management. SubscriberCRM can be integrated with our website and will easily allow us to conduct online event registration, online subscription payments and online joining. In the near future, this new system will allow us to provide on-line facilities for members to access their personal details held by RHQ SCOTS to make modifications and even book and pay for events.





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YOUNG OFFICER INDUCTION JAN 24

The Regiment would like to welcome the most recent additions to the SCOTS Officer family.

2Lt Harvey Bever – 2 SCOTS
2Lt Struan Gillespie – 3 SCOTS
2Lt James Roswell – 3 SCOTS
2Lt Benjamin Richards – 4 SCOTS
2Lt Thomas Stephens – 4 SCOTS
2Lt Laura Donovan – 5 SCOTS
2Lt Lewis Turnbull – 5 SCOTS



SAVE THE DATES

2024

- SCOTS Rally
 - Fri 22 Mar Black Hackle Dinner, New Club, Edinburgh
 - Sat 23 Mar SCOTS Association Dinner, Murrayfield Stadium, Edinburgh
 - Sun 24 Mar Muster, March and Remember, Edinburgh Castle / Canongate Kirk, Edinburgh
- Sat 11 + Sun 12 May Bestowing the Freedom of Aberdeenshire (Peterhead, Alford and Laurencekirk)
- Sat 8 Jun Bestowing the Freedom of Moray (Elgin)
- Thu 20 Jun SCOTS Association Golf Championships, Alyth, Blairgowrie
- Sat 13 Jul Bestowing the Freedom of North Lanarkshire, Motherwell
- Sat 7 Sep Bestowing the Freedom of the Western Isles, Stornoway
- Sat 14 Sep SCOTS Association Race Day, Musselburgh Racecourse,
- Sat 9 Nov The Lord Mayor's Show, London
- Sun 10 Nov Remembrance Sunday, Edinburgh + London
- Sat 30 Nov The Royal Regiment of Scotland St Andrew's Ball, Edinburgh

2025

- SCOTS Rally
 - Fri 21 Mar Black Hackle Officer's Dinner Night, Royal Scot Club, Edinburgh
 - Sat 22 Mar SCOTS Association Annual Dinner, Edinburgh
 - Sun 23 Mar Muster, March and Remember, Edinburgh Castle / Canongate Kirk
- Thu 19 Jun SCOTS Association Golf Championships, Location TBC



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