

NATO SKYWATCH

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2 December 2005

Squadron 3 at Eagle Opera II Flexibility rescues CSAR exercise

By SMSgt. Johan Hijmenberg

The weather was not the most cooperative player during the Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) Exercise Eagle Opera from 7 to 11 November in Manching, South Germany. The Bavarian landscape showed fewer metres than are actually needed for an authorized take-off and landing of the E-3A aircraft. This required flexibility from the Squadron 3 detachment and the other participants.

Because of the fog, the mission execution demanded very great flexibility from the participants. With great interest they kept an eye on the weather forecasts. Coordination between the players at the different airfields and the Polygone Threat Range was crucial. Missions had to be postponed, and unfortunately one had to be cancelled. In spite of many hours of intensive planning, a training

opportunity had to be missed.

No matter what era, area, or situation was involved, rescue has always been of great human interest. Nowadays, be it a man trapped in a cave, a survivor drifting on a life raft in the ocean, or a lone pilot lost in enemy territory, rescue helpers are around to help the person in trouble. Every hour counts if that person is to survive, but he/she must first be found before help can be given.

Personnel recovery has become an increasingly important mission. The primary operational task of CSAR is to locate, communicate with, and recover downed aircrews and isolated personnel. This task can be broken into three sub-tasks. First, locate the survivor by visual or electronic search methods to pinpoint his/her location and permit recovery. Second, communicate with the survivor by radio or visual signalling to conduct authentication. Third, recover the

survivor to return him/her to friendly control and provide necessary medical assistance.

CSAR operations are dangerous and complicated. They normally take place in enemy territory or contested areas. Time is limited and knowledge of the situation is hard to obtain. The decision to conduct a search and rescue operation in unfriendly territory and under uncertain conditions is difficult.

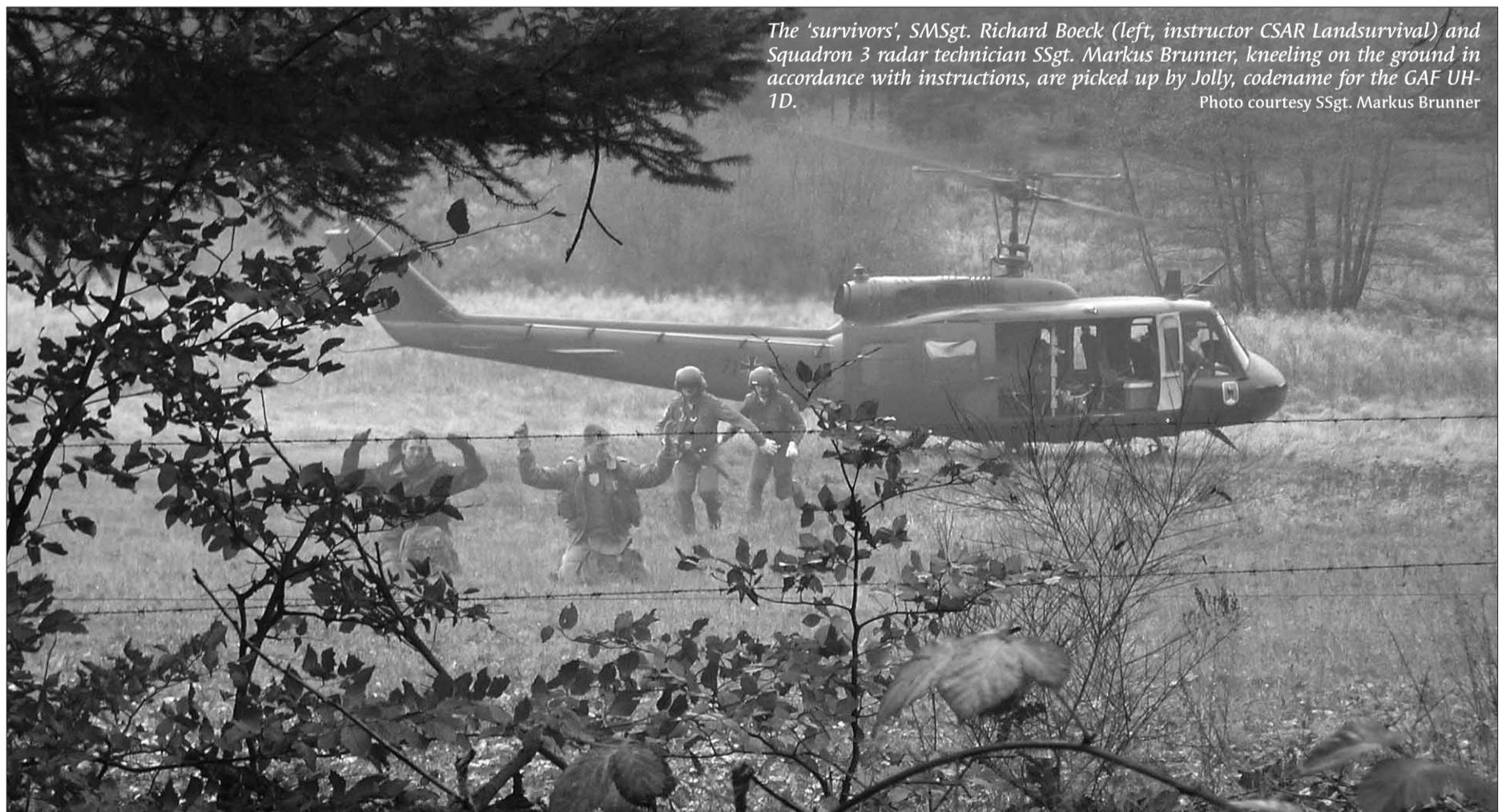
There are many ways to minimize risks to CSAR forces, but key among them are tailored assets, detailed coordination, and timely execution. Speed can make the difference between life and death. So it's critically important that such forces are highly trained in combat search and rescue.

Exercise Eagle Opera provided such training. The scenario started on Monday with a conflict between 'Bavaria' and 'Pfalzia'. During the week

the scenario provided increasing difficulties: from air strikes in the beginning, when one aircraft was shot down by surface-to-air missiles, to the downing of several aircrew by manpads later in the week. In another situation Special Forces had to be extracted. All the situations required intervention by the CSAR forces.

When Jolly, codename for the GAF UH-1D's, entered the hostile area it was provided with Intelligence updates to enable it to avoid threats. "On this update we plan our routing to the survivor on the ground", said USAF exchange pilot Capt. Phillip Petro. He has joined the helicopter squadron at Landsberg, South Germany, for two-and-a-half years. "When we approach the area we coordinate with the A-10s how to retrieve the survivors. In this we rely on Sandy, the codename for the A-10s", he continued.

See CSAR on page 4



The 'survivors', SMSgt. Richard Boeck (left, instructor CSAR Landsurvival) and Squadron 3 radar technician SSgt. Markus Brunner, kneeling on the ground in accordance with instructions, are picked up by Jolly, codename for the GAF UH-1D.
Photo courtesy SSgt. Markus Brunner

**Next NATO Skywatch:
16 December
Submissions due by:
8 December**

Also in this issue:

**NMT OT & E, an extremely
challenging event**
See page 3.

**Christmas
Operating Hours**
See page 6.



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NATO Mid-Term

Test phase personnel in front of tail 453.
Photo Andrea Hohenforst



Operational flight test phase

By TSgt. Chris Rex and SSgt. James Crane

On 24 August this year, after spending more than five years at Boeing Field, the most advanced AWACS in the world, the NATO Mid-Term (NMT) retrofitted tail #453, returned to home station. This was the official beginning of the Operational Test and Evaluation (OT&E) phase, a critical milestone to greater operational capability for the Airborne Early Warning Force.

NMT OT&E has been an extremely challenging event for many from the E-3A Component, Force Command, and NAPMA. Over 130 personnel directly participated in this rigorous testing.

The Ops Wing testers consisted of three crews from Squadron One, Training Wing, and the test division,

the so-called Bunker. They were deftly led by their Test Director, Lt. Col. Doug Kieser and successfully conducted all flight operations.

In all, these tireless operators flew 155 flight hours in a wide variety of missions and locations, including three major exercises. The test administration after flying was often as busy as the flying. Over 5,000 questions were answered, more than 350 pages of logs reported, and several hundred discrepancies were painstakingly documented. "Our crews did a fantastic job flying and testing. They worked incredibly long hours without complaint," stated Lt. Col. Kieser.

The Logistic Wing testers delivered without fail, they generated the 16 sorties without any cancellations. The maintainers were able to work through new systems and procedures,

late documentation changes, and a very aggressive flight schedule. Despite numerous issues, the logistics Test Director, Mr. Jos Meertens said, "Our newly trained technicians and the rest of the Logistics Wing are to be commended, it was a serious team effort get this mission completed."

These testers continue in this effort as numerous maintenance test events have been delayed. They hope to be done before Christmas.

For the Information Technology (IT) Wing software maintainers, NMT is a giant technical leap of some 30 years in software engineering. The software size and complexity has grown by a factor of more than ten compared to legacy. In addition, a number of Commercial Off The Shelf (COTS) products, like the operating system, are part of the new software system. This will better allow integration of new

hardware and software elements ensuring continuous improvement of the system.

"The level of expertise required to maintain the new system is significantly higher," said Lt. Col. Manfred Bode, the IT Wing Test Director. "There are still many challenges ahead of us, but we are working hard to get adequate technical training and tools to successfully overcome these obstacles."

The flying portion of OT&E is complete. However, there is still a considerable amount of work required to get all the details together for a final report to the nations. The Component testers are rushing to make sure this report is complete in early December. All of them realize they cannot be late, as the Christmas markets and Holiday break will not be delayed ... pass the Glühwein!



An official opening ceremony of the NATO Partnership for Peace project for the clearance of unexploded ordnance

NATO/PfP project to clear unexploded ordnance in Azerbaijan

in Azerbaijan was held in Baku on 18 November.

NATO Secretary General's Special Representative to the Caucasus and Central Asia, Mr Robert Simmons, and Azerbaijan's Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Abid Sharifov, took part in the proceedings.

Turkey is leading this project to clear approximately 600 hectares of contaminated land around the former Soviet military depots at Saloglu and the nearby towns of Agstafa and Poylu.

The aim of the project is to make the contaminated area safe for the local population.

The clearance work will be carried out in 16 months at a total cost of €1,16 million.

Azerbaijan, Australia, Finland, Luxembourg, Norway, Slovenia, Switzerland, Turkey, United States and United Nations Development Programme UNDP have provided funds to the project.



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CSAR

Continued from front page

As CSAR is one of the main missions for helicopter units, he described how important such exercises are. "This week we train a different mission each day, a different role is specified."

His unit has a lot of experience in search and rescue operations. "All year long the unit is on standby for civil rescue operations too. Side by side with the German 'Bergwacht' (the mountain rescue service) and the Bavarian Red Cross we are responsible for recovering lost and/or injured people in the Alps."

Recovering people from the Alps was not the task of GAF Capt. Stefan Huber, who flew with two ECR (Electronic Counter Reconnaissance) Tornados (Weasels) out of Lechfeld. Their task was the suppression of enemy air defences. At medium altitude, 20,000 feet, the two dual-seaters ensured the safety of the rescue assets. "We are carrying the High-speed Anti-Radiation Missile (HARM) to prevent radar-guided surface-to-air missiles from shooting the rescue assets down", he explained. But even when all the HARMs had been used, the Weasels stayed in theatre. "As long as we can stay on station, we function also as an Electronic Order of Battle asset. We pick up all hostile radar signals, which we notify to our allies."

Flying in theatre also was GAF Capt. Joachim Kaschke, Stuka, with his Interdiction Strike Tornados. When tasked, they bombed the hostile SAM sites. Normally flying out of Nörvenich, they flew this week out of Lechfeld. "Lechfeld is closer", he explained, "It gives us the opportunity to attend the face-to-face debriefings at Manching. Direct contact with all participants provides more info about all the used assets, instead of having the contact running via phone or fax."

An exercise planner and coordinator was Squadron's 3 fighter allocator Capt. Dirk Wenzel. Following the first coordination phone calls in February, the exercise planning started at the beginning of August. "Exercises of this kind do not usually exist in Europe", he said. "Almost every flying unit has certain CSAR expertise, but training in such a composition doesn't often occur. Of course exercises like the Tactical Leadership Programme and Clean Hunter provide CSAR training, but they are not, like Eagle Opera, totally focused on CSAR."

The first aerial rescue

The first known aerial rescue occurred in 1870, thirty-three years before the Wright Brothers flew their plane at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. It happened in Paris during the Franco-Prussian War.

To escape the bombardment of Bismarck's guns, the French used observation balloons to evacuate by airlift 160 wounded soldiers who otherwise would have died or been captured by advancing troops.

The same principle of moving injured men out of harm's way remains a key consideration in modern warfare.



The CSAR participants plan their mission.

Photos SMSgt. Johan Hijmenberg

Together with Squadron 3 colleagues he manned the Joint Search and Rescue Cell, being responsible for the progress of the exercise. Not only in the planning centre on the ground, in the air as well. Capt. Wenzel: "As we have to react to changes during the mission we have a second passive control officer present during the flight who mans the exercise coordination cell in flight."

An important role in the whole CSAR operation was assigned to Sandy, the A-10s, and also the Tornado IDS. "As Rescue Mission Commanders", explained Capt. Wenzel, "they are the coordination point, responsible for the planning and execution of the mission." They always fly with two A-10s/IDS and their tasks are divided.

Capt. Wenzel: "Sandy 1 looks for contact with the survivor. After finding him/her, Sandy 1 deals with the authentication, verifying that the person on the ground is our friend. For this there are several possibilities that are laid down before the mission starts. Sandy 1 also gives instructions to the survivor. Sandy 2 deals with the coordination and employment of the other rescue assets, and also provides updates of the scenario and threat level."

Threats during the exercise were provided by surface-to-air missile units on the ground. Various units such as SA-6 and 8, HAWK, Russian ZSU-23 and hand-shouldered missiles brought an extra dimension, especially for the passive control officers who had to localise the systems.

Another important role was assigned to the surveillance section. Capt. Wenzel: "As the helicopter flies at low altitude it often disappears from the scope, due to the valleys. The operator has to sense how the helicopter is continuing its flight. With his knowledge of the ground map and the helicopter's assumed speed, he still can track the helicopter. This task requires experienced operators."



The final coordination is done by phone by exercise planner and coordinator Squadron 3 fighter allocator Capt. Dirk Wenzel.

The weapons section had various roles. First, they controlled the defenders of the rescue assets against the airborne threat, MiG-23B up to MiG-29S, both represented by the GAF F-4ICE out of Neuburg. Second, as airborne mission commanders, they controlled the frequencies and ensured the timely flow of all the resources the CSAR needed.

"The main goal is to pick up the survivor", said Capt. Wenzel. Squadron 3 members assisted by CSAR instructors from the European CSAR Survivor School played the survivors. Dropped in the field in south-western Germany (Polygon aerial), they had to wait for the rescue team. Capt. Wenzel: "The survivors have to react in a certain way when the CSAR arrives in theatre. Before the exercise the people involved received training at the Squadron. Not only how to use the equipment, but also how to inform the rescue assets about the situation on the ground. Despite the training and assistance it

was found that survivors, even in a training situation, forgot several items that were critical for their rescue or for preventing danger to the rescue team. This was also one of the lessons learned. In future it will be worthwhile to spend more time at the E-3A Component in training how to act in combat search and rescue situations."

Although Eagle Opera was an exercise, the weather situation already turned it into a 'real' operation. The fog showed no mercy. Missions had to be postponed. Add-on briefings had to be given by telephone instead of face-to-face. Even in the middle of the week the E-3A aircraft had to divert back to Geilenkirchen and flew the next missions out of the main operating base. Due to the flexibility of all the participants only one mission had to be cancelled completely.

"This was a scenario that we could also expect in a real combat search and rescue operation", said Capt. Wenzel. Another lesson learned.

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The legend of Saint Nicholas Who is knocking on the door?

By A1C Daniel Houben

Don't be surprised if you see a bishop in your village the next few days ... it is Sinterklaas (Saint Nicholas). The night of 5 December is one of the best nights for the children in the Tri-border countries. Families in the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany sit together in their living rooms, singing Saint Nicholas songs.

Suddenly somebody knocks on the door. All the kids run with excitement to the door because they know there's a man standing in front of the door - looking like a bishop with a golden shepherd's staff in his hand - with a lot of packages with presents for them ... but only for the well behaved ones.

Before they get the parcels from Saint Nicholas, he tells them the bad things they have done in the past year, which is written down in his big golden book. Saint Nicholas is accompanied by 'Black Peters' who are carrying the big bags filled with presents. Saint Nicholas can't carry the bags alone; there are too many children who want presents.

The legend of Saint Nicholas goes back to the 4th century. Nicholas was the bishop of Myra, a city in Turkey. There he was known as a very helpful and peaceful man.

It is said that he helped three men who were going to be decapitated by order of a bribed governor. He said that

he wanted to be decapitated instead of them, but nobody did anything to Nicholas and the men were set free.

Another time he helped three young women who wanted to be married, but their father didn't have enough money. Every night Nicholas threw a little bag of gold into the house, so

However, according to the Dutch tradition he comes from Spain. Possibly it has something to do with the fact that he is the patron saint of sailors. It could also explain why he is always accompanied by 'Black Peters', because the Moors dominated Spain for a several hundred years. The

children on the eve of his feast day, 6 December. Every year he and his 'Black Peters' visit the children to punish the bad ones and to give a lot of presents to the good ones. The worst punishment is to be taken to Spain by 'Black Peter' in his big bag out of which the good children get their presents, sweets, chocolate, etc. Instead of presents you can get the 'roede' (rod), too.

Some weeks before the birthday of Saint Nicholas, he and his helpers arrive from Spain by steamboat. From the arrival till his birthday the children put their shoes in front of the fireplace and hope that Nicholas and his helpers will have some sweets, or little presents for them. During this period they sing special Nicholas songs, too.

Most children believe in the existence of Saint Nicholas until the age of 6 or 7. The parents often put something into the shoes of the children, often with a special Saint Nicholas rhyme. The kids look forward to it every morning.

Then, on the eve of his feast day, he visits all the children. After knocking on the door he gives presents to the kids. And if Saint Nicholas has too much work, Black Peter will ring the doorbell and leave a basket full of presents on the steps.

Early in the morning when they have visited everyone, Saint Nicholas and Black Peter return to Spain, to come back the next year.

*What does Saint Nicholas look like?
He looks like a bishop, with a golden shepherd's staff in his hand, and sometimes he has a big, old, golden book.*



that every day one of the women could marry.

Saint Nicholas lived from 271 A.D. to 6 December 343 A.D., according to some sources. His relics were taken to Bari, Italy, in 1087, but it is unclear why this was done.

other explanation for the 'Black Peter' is the fact that he had to come down the chimney so often.

The legendary gifts of Saint Nicholas are the cause for giving presents to

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New Year's Eve Party

The Frisbee Club is holding its traditional New Year's Eve Party on 31 December from 2000 to 0300 with hot and cold buffet, free party favours, free drinks all night long and free Freixinet at midnight. The Band 'Silver Cats' will perform live music all evening.

Special free bus transportation from 0100 to 0300 between Frisbee Club and Officers' Club, Teveren, Geilenkirchen train station, and Niederheid.



Reservations through the Frisbee Club Manager's office. Ticket price members €45, guests €55. As of 5 December, 1100, the tickets are on sale.

Christmas Operating Hours will be published in a separate flyer in due course. IDH, Officers', Frisbee and Sentry Clubs now on the BASS LAN System. Menu information under Public Folders/Base Support Wing/Services Squadron/Clubs or IDH. Also, check out the Services Squadron web page for programme information and upcoming events.

E-3A Component Clubs

Sunday brunch will alternate between Officers'/Frisbee Clubs. Members from both clubs are eligible to attend. Regular prices brunch: Members €9.20, guests €10.70; lunch: Members €6.10, guests €7.65; children 4-12 years half price. Reservations should be made NLT 1200 on the Friday before. Club cards are required. For additional information, please contact the Officers' Club, ext.4990, or the Frisbee Club, ext.4994.

- 4 Santa Claus brunch at the Officers' Club. Frisbee Club closed.
- 11 Family brunch at the Officers' Club. Frisbee Club closed.
- 18 Sunday lunch at the Frisbee Club. Officers' Club closed.

Officers' Club (SWPO/4990)

Operating hours bar Monday-Friday 1100-2300; restaurant Monday-Friday 1130-1330; Sunday 1100-1400 (alternating with the Frisbee Club). Reservations are required for Sunday brunch by 1200 on the Friday before. Club cards required when using the Frisbee Club (ext. 4994).

Lunch at the Officers' Club: Monday-Thursday A la Carte menu served; Monday and Wednesday A vegetarian special also available; Friday Buffet Style Lunch.

Throughout the month membership appreciation; one time each month for each Officers' Club member, buy one drink of your choice and get an equivalent drink of your choice free of charge; Club cards required.

Tuesdays 1700-1800 Happy Hour, free snacks available; Fridays 1600-1800 Happy Hour, free snacks available.

- 31 New Year's Eve Ball with live music from 'Royal Flush' (tickets required). Tickets available from the Manager's Office. Watch for special flyer.

MWA INFORMATION December

Special Notes: The Officers' Club has rooms available for your conferences, meetings, presentations or Commanders' Call. Make your reservations now.

Officers' Club Participation in Frisbee Club Events: During Frisbee Club opening hours, Officers' Club members are eligible to utilise the Frisbee Club for breakfast, dinner and Sunday brunch (on an alternating basis between the Frisbee and Officers' Clubs). Club cards required when Officers' Club members are using the Frisbee Club.

Cancellations for Officers' Club events will be accepted up to two days prior to the event on ext. 4990. After this time, a cancellation fee of €5 per person must be charged for non-excused absences. Also, visit the Officers' Club Web Page on the Component Information Portal, through Base Support Wing, Services Squadron, Clubs, for the latest information.

Frisbee Club (SWPN/4994)

Make a reservation today at the Frisbee Grill and enjoy the cosy atmosphere and good food.

Remember - the Frisbee Club is open for breakfast and dinner to all Frisbee and Officers' Club members (club cards required).

Throughout the month Happy Hour Monday-Thursday 1700-1800, Friday with free snacks 1700-1900.

Monday Nights Steak Night in the Frisbee Grill during normal restaurant times. Open for steak dinners only. Normal sized steak €6 and Large steak €8.

- 13 BINGO/SKAT.
- 15 International Wives' Club Christmas Dinner.
- 31 New Year's Eve Party (ticket required). Watch for special flyer.

Sentry Club (SWPJ/4997)

There will be a carpet sale in the Sentry Club Q+Q Room from Saturday, 19 November until Sunday, 4 December. 'John, the Clock Man' will be in the Q+Q Room 0900-1700, 8-9 Dec.

- 5 'Fioretto' Pralines (700 g) + 'Lindt' Christmas Chocolate (900 g) now available in the Souvenir Shop priced €5,50 per bag.

In addition to the daily special, the Sentry Club will also offer a weekend special which will include a soup or dessert as well as the main course. The weekend special will be advertised in the Sentry Club and also on the Component information web page.

Do you need support for conferences or meetings? The Sentry Club can assist with coffee, soft drinks, half Brötchen or freshly prepared muffins. For more information, please contact the Sentry Club management.

Take advantage of the Sentry Club off sale operation. We can provide Warsteiner Beer in 30 ltr and 50 ltr containers, various soft drinks in 1 ltr bottles and tables, benches and other items to help in organising your party. Please be sure to order in advance as certain items (like tables, benches, beer wagons, etc.) must be ordered from the supplier.

Visit the Souvenir Shop – new items have arrived in time for Christmas shopping. *Additional information on any of the above can be obtained from the Sentry Club Manager, ext. 4996.*

Sports Department (SWPT/4946)

- 14 Coaches' meeting for Indoor Soccer League at 1400 in the Q+Q Room of the Sentry Club.

International Pre-school (SWPS/4957)

- 16 Christmas Train Ride with SANTA and Christmas Party (parents welcome).
- 22 Dec-3 Jan Christmas break.
- 4 Jan Back to school. *We would like to wish all out customers a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.* Places are still available for afternoon programmes only. For more information call the school on ext. 4957.

Thrift Shop (SWPG/4919)

Tuesdays+Thursdays operating hours 1000-1400.

International Library (SWPL/4956)

Monday-Friday operating hours 1100-1600. *Christmas selection of books, CDs and DVDs available.*

International Youth Activities (SWPY/4954/5)

Registration and further information at the IYA Office in Bldg 95, ext 4954/5, opening hours Mon-Fri, 0815-1300.

Christmas Party

On Wednesday, 7 December, 1500 to 1730 the IYA is offering a Christmas Party for all international Component children at the E-3A Component Officers Club. An adult must accompany children under the age of 6; parents of older children are also very welcome to attend. Play seasonal games, win a prize at the wheel of fortune, enjoy seasonal refreshments, and meet Santa – he even has a little gift for you. Bring your camera: children and families can have their photo taken with Santa at no cost. During the party the winners of the Christmas Colouring Contest will receive their awards. There is no fee. Please call ext. 4954/5 to sign up. Children enrolled in the December IYA Afternoon Club are automatically registered.

Advent Break Programme

From 19 to 23 December the IYA is organizing a weekly session for children aged 6 and older with activities from 0930 to 1630. The children can be dropped off at 0800, and picked up no later than 1730. The programme offers fun games, arts & crafts, sports, free play, special projects and movies. Cost is €63 for one child, €126 for two children, and €157,50 for three or more children, including field trip to Kinderstad Indoor Playpark and Taurus Adventure World, Europe's biggest laser arena, on Wednesday and lunch on Friday.

Trip to Kinderstad Indoor Playpark and Taurus Laser Arena

On 21 December the IYA is offering a trip for ages 6 and older to Kinderstad Indoor Playpark and Taurus Adventure World, Europe's biggest laser arena, which offers a thrilling adventure in five mazes divided over three levels in an open arena packed with high tech gadgets. The bus departs at 0900 and gets back at about 1730. Cost is €27 per child, chaperones go free.

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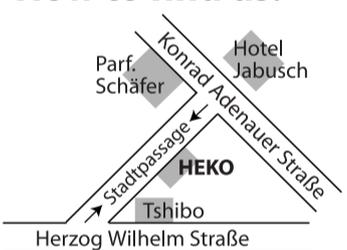
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