



## Emma wins bronze!

(19 Sept) Emma Zapletalová (SVK) of the Dukla Military Sports Centre Banská Bystrica took bronze for Slovakia in the 400m hurdles at the World Athletics Championships (WAC) Tokyo in a national record of 53.00sec.

Femke Bol (NLD) won gold with a world leading time of 51.54sec, improving on her own world performance of the year, ahead of Jasmine Jones (USA) in 52.08sec. Emma started in the least advantageous second lane without being in contact with her biggest competitors in the fight for precious medals, and she entered the final straight-away in fourth position only to overtake Anna Cockrell (USA) just before the finish line. She improved on her own national record by 0.18sec.

Emma won Team Slovakia's fifth medal in the WAC's history and the first medal since Matej Tóth's 2015 gold in the 50km Race Walk in Beijing. She finished 3rd in the first heat of the 400m hurdles and advanced to the finals with a quality time of 53.22sec, just 0.04sec behind her Slovak best.

Among other Dukla athletes at the WAC Tokyo, Daniela Le-decká ran in the last third heat of the 400m hurdles semifinals and placed 18th with a time of 54.94. Gabriela Gajanová placed 17th in the 800m event with a time of 1:59.16min.

## Our NDF family is growing

(16 Sept) Tue 16 Sept saw National Defence Forces (NDF) reservists passed out of basic military training (BMT). For the first time, the NDF training programme took place at 13 Mech Bn Levice. It was there that DPM and MINDEF Robert Kaliňák attended the Pass Out Parade to welcome the new reservists to the NDF community and recognise their best achievements.

## Slovak Military Aviation Day

(17 Sept) The SVK MOD and Armed Forces marked Slovak Military Aviation Day – which has been celebrated every year on 17 Sept since it was first established by the then Minister of Defence in 2009. The date was chosen to recognise the heroism of the Czechoslovak airmen who fought against the Nazis for the liberation of their homeland. On 17 Sept 1944, 21 Lavochkin La-5 FN fighter aircraft – flown by pilots of the 1st Czechoslovak Fighter Regiment in the USSR – landed on the Zolná field airstrip near Zvolen to operate in the rear of German Nazi forces in support of the Slovak National Uprising (SNP). After the suppression of the Uprising, the Regiment flew back to the Soviet Union on 27 Oct 1944.

## Colonel Vladimír Strmeň

(18 Sept) To mark SNP 81, Capt (Ret'd) Vladimír Strmeň (97), WW2 veteran and SNP soldier, was exceptionally promoted to the rank of Colonel. Despite his age, Vladimír Strmeň continues to engage with all generations by leading WW2 educational discussions and activities. He received the Colonel insignia at his home in Banská Bystrica on 18 Sept, in the presence of Padre 1Lt Tomáš Kunik of JOCOM Banská Bystrica.



## Officer Cadets take oath at Háj-Nicovô WW2 Cemetery

(19 Sept) Háj-Nicovô WW2 Cemetery played host to an Oath of Allegiance ceremony for 229 Officer Cadets of the SVK Military Academy Liptovský Mikuláš (AOS LM). In attendance were CHOD Gen Daniel Zmeko, DEPMINDEF Martin Vojtašovič, AOS COMDT Aurel Sabó, and other guests. 14 years on from last such ceremony in 2011, AOS LM has restored the tradition of hosting the Oath of Allegiance at a symbolic location for the SVK Forces – Háj-Nicovô WW2 Cemetery – the largest site of remembrance for Czechoslovak soldiers in Slovakia.



This year marks the first time that the five-week basic military training (BMT) programme for OCs took place at the Academy and Kamenica nad Cirochou Training Area. The change of the training location from 7 Trng Regt Martin to AOS LM means that the Academy can build more effective links between its academic and training environments.

DEPMINDEF Martin Vojtašovič highlighted the demands of the military profession and praised the determination of the newly graduated members of the Armed Forces, saying: "Slovakia is proud of you – you are the future of our Armed Forces – you are proof that courage and determination have not yet disappeared in our Nation."

AOS COMDT Aurel Sabó presented accolades to the OCs for their outstanding achievements in their training. OC Martin Mojžiš received the COMDT's Commendation and his name was entered into the Academy's Chronicle as the best Officer Cadet of the course. Capt Martin Kožiak, SSgt Michal Iliáš and Pte Filip Savko were named as best instructors and were presented the AOS 50th Anniversary Commemorative Medal.

- From 5 to 7 Sept, four SVK Army soldiers competed in the Adjutant Generals Combat Rifle/Pistol Championship Match (TAG Match) in Indiana, USA. Maj Matúš Fülöp (SVK) from 12 Mech Bn Nitra made it among the top 20 shooters.

- The 11th Slovenian Armed Forces Best Squad Competition took place in Slovenia's Postojna on 1-5 Sept, with 17 teams from seven countries taking part. The SVK Armed Forces were represented by nine members of 12 Mech Bn Nitra's Recce Pl, who earned a fourth-place finish overall.

- Sun 21 Sept saw the start of the 19th SVK RC Bishopric of the Forces and Armed Corps National Pilgrimage to Rome (ITA). Approximately 410 members of the Armed Forces and Armed Corps are taking part. Spiritual guidance is provided by Bishop František Rábek, who celebrated the Bishopric Opening Mass for the pilgrimage at St Sebastian's Cathedral in Bratislava.

- Delegates of the Vienna Document 2011 (VD-11) Delegation made an evaluation visit to the SVK Military Academy (AOS) Liptovský Mikuláš. VD-11 is designed to boost confidence- and security-building measures (CSBMs) in Europe. They inspected the AOS campus, including the Simulation Centre, Academic Library, Education Centre, and Residential Facilities. The programme included a demonstration of basic military training (BMT) and specialist physical training (SPT) for OCs and a display of new weapons systems and equipment in service with the SVK Armed Forces. According to the VD-11 evaluation visit's conclusions, the Academy demonstrated its readiness standards.

- The Gendarme Corps has announced that its training courses are now up and running at full capacity. Additional training courses will be available next year, with the dates still to be confirmed. Meanwhile, those interested may be placed on a waiting list as substitutes in the ILIAS system until such time as a vacancy occurs in the 2025 Gendarme Corps Training Courses Schedule.

- Eight students from the Brno-based University of Defence (UNOB) completed the Basic Air Traffic Controllers Course at the SVK Military Academy in Liptovský Mikuláš. In a synthetic environment housing a suite of simulators, they practised receiving Air Traffic Control (ATC), Approach Control (AC) and Visual Control (VC) services.

- Airmen of 81 WG Sliac completed instructional and practical Specialist Physical Training (SPT) sessions. The focus was on foot marches across various mountainous terrain types, overcoming obstacles, military climbing, the basics of belaying, team climbing, and climbing in adverse weather conditions. As well as rehearsing first aid, the training reinforced strength and endurance in the form of long-distance heavy load carrying.

- To consolidate the practical skills of soldiers to serve as Chiefs of the Mobilisation Points under the Mobilisation Force Replenishment (MFR) process, 7 Trng Regt Martin played host to the Chiefs of Mobilisation Points Course, delivered by instructors from MFR Section Poprad and MFR Unit Poprad. The Material Asset Takeover Group rehearsed the process of receiving material assets at a reception point.

- This year, Trenčín Aircraft Repair Company (LOTN) and the Aviation Faculty of the Technical University of Košice (TUKE) selected a talented student who underwent LOTN's Summer Internship Programme, with a focus on integrating drone systems into aircraft – an area that is fundamentally changing today's view of combat, recon and rescue operations.

- An eighth Gen M. R. Štefánik Bench of Honour was installed on Sninský Hill at Kamenica nad Cirochou Training Area to mark 902 Engr Bn Michalovce's 25th birthday.

- 30 pilgrims from the Slovak Air Force's parishes, spiritually led by SVK AF Dean Maj Pavel Lukáč and Staff Chaplain Lt Jozef Komecký, attended the National Pilgrimage to Our Lady of Seven Sorrows – Patron Saint of Slovakia – in Šaštín.

- The UN VETERAN SLOVAKIA Civic Association and 91 Engr Regt Sered organised the 13th "Colonel Štefan Ivan" Memorial Mini Soccer Tournament 2025 at the football stadium in Sered. It was an all-play-all tournament to win the SVK Army Commander's Trophy. 91 Engr Regt Sered defended its last year's title and was the overall winner – with Topoľčany Garrison, AFK Vodra, and 905 Specialist Combat Support Centre Nováky finishing in 2nd, 3rd and 4th places, respectively.

## K9 handlers' workshop

(18 Sept) Bringing together Slovakia's top canine handlers from 5 SOF Regt Žilina, Military Police, National Police, Financial Police, and Prison & Court Guard, an intensive skills development workshop for service dog handlers took place at 5 SOF Regt Žilina. The handler-dog teams were practising scent work and intruder apprehension work – which saw the arms explosive search (AES) dogs pick up scent and locate weapons and explosives and the patrol dogs jump off a power boat and out of a helicopter and apprehend intruders. Throughout the training, they fostered a strong team spirit in handling the toughest of tasks considered essential to security operations.



## Specialist marksmanship training

(17 Sept) Led by instructors of TC Lešť and attended by soldiers of 21 Sp Arty Bn Michalovce and 54 MLRS Bn Rožňava, specialist marksmanship skills training in the use of short and long firearms or the Phase 1 Firearms Instructor Training Course titled "GRADUATE" took place at Rožňava Garrison training ground in Gemerská Hôrka.

Designed for soldiers to lead live firing marksmanship training in their units as firearms instructors, this course provides basic training in teaching others how to handle firearms safely and properly and how to shoot fast and accurately from the ČZ P-09 and the vz. 58 – the standard issue pistol and assault rifle of the Slovak Armed Forces – at short and medium distances. During the week-long training, trainees practised individual shooting skills, threat response, multiple target engagement, as well as clearing weapon malfunctions. The training took place under difficult conditions – under physical exertion and stressful situations.

The course graduates also mastered the basic principles of Live Firing Marksmanship Training Management – with the best graduates earning a recommendation to attend the Phase 2 Firearms Instructor Training Course.

## "Amazonians" at Central Military Hospital Ružomberok

(18 Sept) In addition to top-notch healthcare services, the Central Military Hospital - Teaching Hospital Ružomberok has long focused on health promotion and support for patients and their families. Its cooperation with the civic associations dedicated to ill-health prevention and assistance to people in difficult life situations comes as an important part of this effort. The hospital has since last year been forging cooperation with a new partner – the Amazonians Civic Association (ACA) – which supports women with breast cancer. Joint activities went ahead throughout this summer.

"We are not indifferent to their fates," Silvia Simová, Hospital Head Nurse, emphasised. Similarly, Lenka Palcová, Head of the Hospital Science, Research & Education Dept, praised the Amazonians' determination and strength: "Listening to their life stories and tireless activities has made us think about how we can help them."

The hospital staff have committed to cooperating with the ACA, including through their psychologist Capt Jana Celuchová and social worker Iveta Slanicaiová. Other hospital experts from various fields are also planning to join this effort. Recently, Senior Medic SSgt Jakub Otakar Hrabák led a first aid workshop for the ACA members under the new partnership.

