

Capt Antoine Labranche (second from left) and his mountaineering group fly the 438 Tactical Helicopter Squadron colours on Mount Eiger.



PHOTO: Capt. Antoine Labranche

# CAF pilot CONQUERS NEW PEAKS

Canadian Armed Forces members are known to be proud of their jobs, but one CH-146 Griffon pilot is taking this notion to new heights.

Captain Antoine Labranche, a pilot with 438 Tactical Helicopter Squadron (438 Tac Hel Sqn) and seasoned mountaineer, has just conquered three legendary peaks in Europe: Mont Blanc in France, the Matterhorn in Italy, and the Eiger in Switzerland.

"I want to make use of this trip to carry the 438 Tac Hel Sqn colours to these three peaks," said Capt Labranche, before setting out on his climbing feat. "To me, the image of the squadron colours

on these legendary mountains represents the step the unit has taken in changing its leadership and assuming new duties."

Capt Labranche's squadron recently surmounted its own challenges in taking on two new flights and a new commanding officer. These changes went ahead thanks to considerable effort and adaption in both knowledge and personnel training.

Capt Labranche, who grew up in Stanbridge-East, Que., does not hesitate to point out the relationship between his conquest of the three peaks and his career as a pilot.

"The mental and physical abilities needed to conduct operations and climb mountains characterize both the vision of the Royal Canadian Air Force and my mountaineering activities. One passion feeds the other."

As far as staying in shape is concerned, Capt Labranche adapts his fitness exercises to the summits to be reached. Cardiovascular training always has an important place in his physical activity regimen both in garrison and on deployment, even if this means taking his morning jog in a former Cold War facility in Greenland, as he did during Operation NEVUS 16.

Capt Labranche's expedition in the Alps does not mark the end of his climbing experiences. He is already planning to conquer Alpamayo and Huascarán in Peru, and Illimani, Huayna Potosi, and Sajama in Bolivia. ♦

# 22 PUSH UPS from RMCC



PHOTO: CFB Kingston

Royal Military College of Canada held a campus-wide 22 Push-up Challenge on the parade square September 9. The social media movement was originally designed to bring awareness to the average number of 22 American veterans who commit suicide every day, and to get people to think about mental health amongst international veterans, first responders, and members of the military.

## FAQ ASK THE EXPERT IN-LINE SKATING IS A GOOD ALTERNATIVE TO RUNNING

**Q:** I have been running regularly for over 20 years and I now find that if I run more than two days in a row my hips get sore. I am considering in-line skating several days a week to see if this reduces the impact on my body. My problem is that in-line skating looks almost effortless and I am concerned that while it may be better for my ageing joints, it will offer little in terms of fitness benefits. How do running and in-line skating compare in terms of fitness benefits?

—Jonathon

**A:** Dear Jonathon, Congratulations on leading by example in terms of your long-term commitment to living an active lifestyle. Whether you are trying to reduce the impact load on your body or just looking to change up your training routine, research shows in-line skating has a lot to offer in terms of fitness benefits. Let's compare in-line skating and running using five criteria:

- **Calories burned** – Studies show rollerblading at a steady pace will burn approximately 528 calories/hour while running at a comfortable pace burns approximately 720 calories/hour. Skating faster, skating uphill, and doing intervals can increase your calorie burning to over 900 calories/hour. Not too shabby!
- **Aerobic fitness** – Running provides greater aerobic fitness gains than in-line skating. This is because you can coast on in-line skates, but you can't coast while running. In-line skating has been shown, however, to be better for aerobic fitness development than cycling.
- **Muscle building** – The body motion required to in-line skate provides a more complete muscle building workout than running and if you swing your arms vigorously the benefits are even greater. In-line skating truly can provide a great lower body, core, and upper body workout.
- **Impact** – In-line skating subjects your body to 50 per cent less impact force than running. This is a significant benefit especially for people who are ageing and have some wear and tear on their knees, hips, and backs.
- **Core strengthening** – In-line skating requires more balance and coordination than running, and this will definitely help strengthen your core musculature.

The bottom line is that in-line skating is an excellent lower impact exercise alternative. Regardless of how skilled you are, remember to wear a helmet when you do this sport, and other protective equipment such as knee and elbow pads if you are not experienced. Have fun cruising on the trails. Exercise is medicine!



For more information on taking control of your health and well-being, please visit Strengthening the Forces at [forces.gc.ca](http://forces.gc.ca), under the CAF Community tab, Health Services.

KEEPING THE DEFENCE TEAM HEALTHY

