



# Victory Weekly



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telling the Camp Victory story

July 19, 2005

## Aussie major digs up sport from down under

**Pfc. Matthew Clifton**

MNC-I PAO

When most people think of rugby they might think of Australia, but they probably don't know what a "maul," "scrum" or "try" is.

By organizing and starting a weekly game at Camp Liberty, one Australian major is teaching people a maul is where one or more players are in contact with the ball; a scrum is a way to avoid a tackle; and a try is how to score.

After hearing a British officer mention that there used to be a regular rugby game at Camp Victory, Australian Maj. Andrew "Vargs" Varga,

coalition logistics officer, Resources and Sustainment, Multi-National Force - Iraq, took it upon himself to revive the game at Camp Liberty and extend an open invitation to whomever wanted to play.

When Varga decided to breathe life back into the Victory game, he ran into a couple of problems, one of which was finding a playing field. He tried to book the softball field at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Center on Victory but was unsuccessful because the field couldn't be reserved at the same time every week, he explained.

"We didn't have anywhere to play, so we decid-

ed to make our own field," Varga said. "It was a difficult task because there aren't too many places around here that are unoccupied and big enough to hold a rugby field."

After a long search of camps Victory and Liberty, he found a spot that was unoccupied, big enough and flat enough. The plot of land was on Liberty, and it seemed as if he would get his field, but not without a little more work and effort, Varga said.

He and a small group of equally devoted rugby players built their field by rigging a discarded piece of fencing to a Humvee to produce a makeshift rake. They proceeded to till and form the piece of land until they had a field worthy of hosting multiple games of rugby on a weekly basis, Varga said.

"We just took the fence and tied it to the back of our vehicle," Varga said. "It might not have been the most professional method, but it did the trick."

The players have affectionately named their new field the "Dust Bowl" and have played many games in the three months of its existence, Varga said.

It was very important to Varga that the game be made available to anyone and everyone who wanted to play. Games are played every Sunday at 6 p.m., and he is happy to see it is a good time for all who come, he said.

Rugby is normally a full-contact sport played in two halves, but Varga has made a few changes to the game in order to comply with safety and to make sure the new players can grasp the concept without too many problems, he said.



photos by Pfc. Matthew Clifton/MNC-I PAO

A player weaves through opposing defenders while trying to score during a recent intramural rugby game at a makeshift field nicknamed the "Dust Bowl" at Camp Liberty.

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### Iraqi army rank structure

(Editor's note: The red stripe on the lieutenant colonel rank is worn by lieutenant colonels and above who are serving as staff officers.)

Mulaazem 2nd Lieutenant	Mulaazem Awwal 1st Lieutenant	Naqeeb Captain	Raaed Major	Muqaddam Lieutenant Colonel	Aaqeed Colonel	Aameed Brigadier General	Liwaal Major General	Fareeq Lieutenant General	Fareeq Awwal General
Jundi Awwal Private First Class	Naeb Aareef Corporal	Aareef Sergeant	Aareef Awwal Sergeant First Class	Wakeel Master Sergeant	Wakeel Awwal Sergeant Major	Muahal Warrant Officer	Muahal Awwal Chief Warrant Officer	Muahal Awwal Chief Warrant Officer	Muahal Awwal Chief Warrant Officer

## Preventive Points

Tips from Multi-National Corps -  
Iraq's Force Health Protection

### SAND, WIND, AND DUST

As everyone that has been in Iraq more than a day knows, severe sandstorms and dust storms are common throughout the region. The combination of heat, sand, wind and dust can cause health problems if you do not protect yourself. Without proper protection, damage can easily occur to your skin, eyes, nose, throat and lungs.

Here are some tips to help you avoid health problems:

- Moisturize your skin with lotion and protect your exposed skin with sunscreen.
- Wear gloves to protect your hands.
- Protect your lips with lip balm.
- Shield your face with a balaclava, neck gaiter or other cloth materials to protect yourself from blowing dust and sand.
- Shield your eyes with goggles. Wear tinted lenses during daylight hours.
- If you require prescription glasses, carry an extra pair of glasses with you and use tinted lenses with UV Protection during daylight hours.
- Do not wear contact lenses; AR 40-63 prohibits contact lens use during a military deployment.
- Carry artificial tear drops to use if you get something in your eyes or your eyes feel dry.
- Coat your nostrils with a small amount of petroleum jelly to minimize drying of your mucous membranes.
- Wash your face and eyelids several times each day.
- Take a shower or at least a sponge bath every day using an approved water source.

The desert climate of Iraq can be severe, but if you apply proper protective measures, health problems can be prevented.

If you notice a problem starting with your skin, eyes, nose, throat or lungs, visit your medic before it gets worse.

Remember your health is your responsibility. Be proactive.

# Iraqi air base, legacy name lives on

**Capt. David Small**  
CENTAF PAO

What's in a name? In the case of Ali Base, years of history.

Ali Base is located near the city of An Nasiriyah and is the main airfield in southern Iraq from which Iraqi, Coalition and U.S. airmen operate. Until January, Coalition forces called the base Tallil. Now, all use the name Ali Base.

"Our Iraqi partners have always referred to this installation as Ali Base," said Col. Dennis Diggett, former 407th Air Expeditionary Group commander at the base.

## RUGBY

"We play four 15-minute quarters," Varga said. "The game is usually played in halves, but with all of the running involved most people are too out of breath at the end of the quarters to complain that the quarters weren't long enough."

The offense can either run with the ball or pass, but the ball can only be thrown in a backward motion. When the offense gets the ball to the end zone, the player with the ball has to force the ball to the ground and maintain contact. This scoring effort is called a "try," Varga said.

A try is worth five points in a normal game of rugby, but Varga only counts them as one point when playing on Liberty, he said.

"The defense must make six tackles before they can gain possession of the ball," Varga said. "In normal rugby they would be actual tackles, but in this game it is simply a one-handed touch."

The defense may also gain possession if the offense drops the ball either while passing or running, Varga added.

The games are played with seven players to a team, and if more than 14 people attend, the game must be played with substitutions, Varga said.

Players substitute when they get tired, but if someone scores a try they automatically come out," Varga said. "That way everyone gets a chance to play and people who need a rest get one."

"There are some regulars who come out on a weekly basis, but there are also a lot of new players who come because they have heard about the game and are curious to learn about it," said Lt. Col. Gerry Omerod, chief logistics officer, Resource and Sustainment, MNF-I. "Most of the people who play say they like to come out as often as possible, but with the hectic schedule of being deployed, it is hard to find the time."

Omerod works with Varga and has been playing the game every week since it started. He never played rugby before he came to Iraq, but thought it was easy to pick up on the concept, he said.

"It appears that sometime after Operation Desert Storm in the early 1990s, Ali Base was incorrectly labeled 'Tallil' on Department of Defense maps," said Lt. Gen. Walter E. Buchanan III, U.S. Central Command Air Forces commander. "It's a bit of a mystery. We don't know why that was done."

The discrepancy came to light in January at a joint ceremony where Iraqi and Coalition forces stood up the 23rd Squadron, the new Iraqi air force's C-130 Hercules unit there.

"As part of the 23rd Squadron activation ceremony, Maj. Gen. Kamal Abdul Satar

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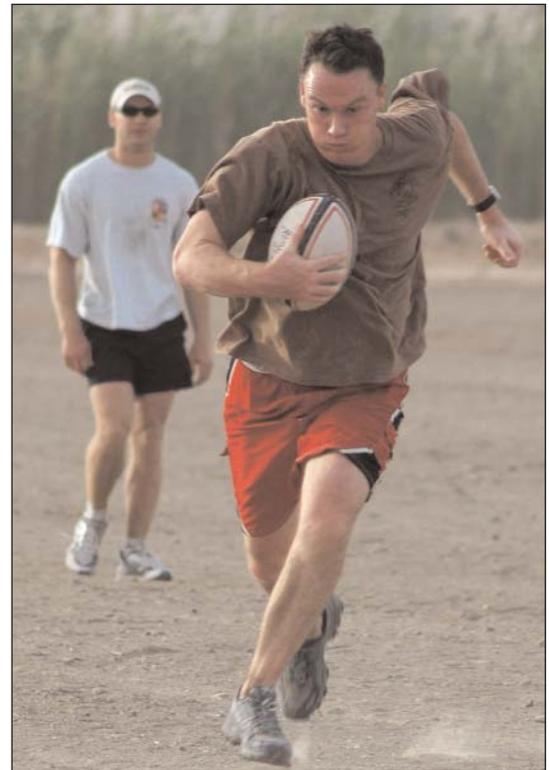


photo by Pfc. Matthew Clifton/MNC-I PAO

**A player scrambles past opposing defenders in an attempt to score a point during a recent intramural rugby game at a makeshift field nicknamed the "Dust Bowl" at Camp Liberty.**

A wide variety of people show up every week to play. Omerod said he thinks it is because most people have heard of rugby but haven't actually played it.

"We don't keep track of the score when we play, and sometimes a person might end up playing for both teams during the course of the game because of the way we substitute," Varga said. "Playing this game is really more about having a good time than competing against each other, and I haven't seen anybody leave the field who would say they didn't have a load of fun."

# Operation provides Iraqi school with scarce commodities

**Senior Airman Chawntain Sloan**  
MNC-I PAO

Paper and pencils may just be typical office supplies to many Americans, but for teachers and school children in Iraq, they are like buried treasure.

Children from Al Assa Primary School gathered with eager anticipation of receiving new pens and pencils during a school supply exchange recently in Kadamiyah, Iraq.

Operation Pencil Drop provided the Iraqi school with three much-needed boxes of supplies that also included colored pencils, markers, lined and blank writing paper, col-

ored construction paper and spiral writing notebooks.

Aside from the writing utensils given to the children for their immediate use, Lt. Col. Daniel Le Page, Multi-National Corps - Iraq chief of elections, presented the school's headmaster the remainder of supplies that were donated by Memorial School in his hometown of East Hampton, Conn.

"I initially approached my daughter's teacher, Mary Jane Traska, and told her I would be willing to do a class pen pal exchange," said Le Page. "Because of the position I am in at work, I was unable to make that happen, but the class still wanted to connect with the Iraqi children."

"I spoke to Lt. Col. Le Page's wife, Joann, and asked if we could send the school children in Iraq some school supplies," said Traska, a second grade teacher at Memorial School. "Lt. Col. Le Page thought it was a great idea, and made plans to coordinate with an Iraqi school."

While Le Page worked with Civil Affairs Team Alpha from the 3rd Infantry Division to find a school in need, Traska rallied the support of teachers, students and families of the second- and third-grade classes at Memorial School.

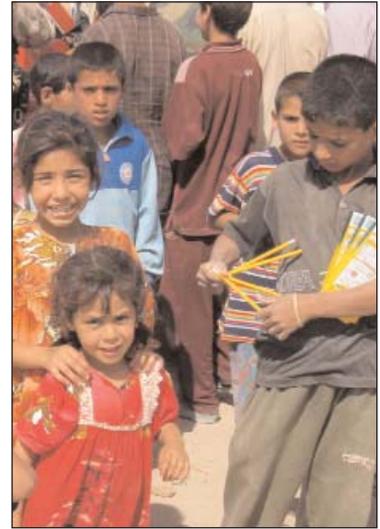
"Coordinating the move out to the field was the most challenging aspect," said Le Page. "In this area, you just don't get in a car and drive down the street.

"It took close coordination with Maj. Carrie Acree, the CATA team leader from the infantry division that has responsibility north and west of Baghdad."

After six weeks of gathering supplies, Traska shipped the supplies along with a letter and group picture from her class.

"The children helped me compile a letter and four questions to ask the children at the school in Iraq. For example, my class wanted to know, 'What kinds of games do you play? What do you study in school?'" said Traska.

Because it was the last week of school in Iraq, and a response from the Al Assa Primary school students was unlikely, Le Page documented



**Children from the Al Assa Primary School in Kadamiyah, Iraq, proudly displayed the new pencils they received during a recent school supply exchange.**



**Lt. Col. Daniel Le Page, chief of elections, Civil Affairs Operations, Multi-National Corps - Iraq, is greeted by the children from the Al Assa Primary School in Kadamiyah, Iraq, during a recent school-exchange operation.**

courtesy photos by Lt. Col Phil Andrews

the visit and sent a video and pictures to the Memorial School students.

"I spoke to many of the Iraqi children during the course of the day, and I sent a letter that answered some of the questions posed by the class," said Le Page.

While the letter answered their questions, Traska said the video and pictures spoke to her and the children on a whole different level.

"Viewing the video and pictures was a tremendously emotional experience for me," said Traska. "To view the beautiful children,

See **OPERATION**, Page 4

## AIR BASE

Al-Barazenchi, chief of staff of the Iraqi air force, unveiled a new sign saying Ali Base. We learned then that the base had always been Ali," Buchanan said. "In fact, we learned that General Kamal himself had even been the Ali Base commander during part of the Iran-Iraq War."

Buchanan said he looks on that day as a milestone in the cooperation between the U.S. Air Force and the new Iraqi air force.

"It was a great day for our partnership. We assisted Iraq by giving them three C-130s and committing to training Iraqi pilots, navigators and (maintainers) so they can in turn work to secure stability for their own country," the general said. "I thought it was a great sign of our mutual respect that General Kamal and his staff were willing to tell us about our oversight."

Buchanan then directed airmen to call the base Ali.

Because Tallil was never its official name, there was no need to take any official act to rename it Ali Base, CENTAF officials said. Coordination is under way with the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency to incorporate the revision into future charts and maps.

"Ali Base has a history that is important to the local Iraqi community, and as Coalition partners it is important we respect that," Buchanan said.

Built in the 1970s and serving as the busiest military airfield during Iraq's war with Iran in the 1980s, it is now home to the 407th Air Expeditionary Group, the Iraqi air force's 23rd Squadron, and the U.S. Army's Logistics Support Areas Cedar and Adder.

When the 1991 Gulf War occurred, the airfield was heavily bombed and virtually destroyed. Ultimately, the base became off limits to Iraqi forces while U.S. and British patrols enforced the no-fly zone over southern Iraq.

Service members having rotations with Ali Base as an endpoint can expect some confusion concerning the name change, officials said. No money will be spent to correct institutional discrepancies between the two names, having erred in calling it Tallil for so long, CENTAF officials said.

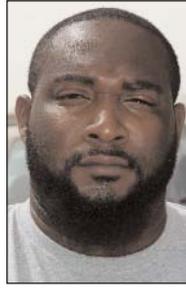
Some of these institutional discrepancies include e-mail on the global address list, administrative codes, phone books and directories. Many of these things have already been corrected here, but may be slow to change throughout the rest of the military.

## Voices of Victory: What do you look forward to during R & R?



"I am going shopping in a real mall."

Staff Sgt. Teresa Parham,  
administrations NCO,  
Joint Chiefs of Staff,  
Multi-National Force - Iraq



"I look forward to relaxing with my family."

Aundrey Barnes,  
outside point cable technician,  
ITT



"Eating (at) Pappadeaux's, swimming and relaxing."

Chrystal Smith,  
outside point cable technician,  
ITT

### Operating Hours

#### Coalition Cafe

Breakfast 5:30 - 8:30 a.m.  
Lunch 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
Dinner 5:30 - 8 p.m.  
Midnight Dining 11 p.m. - 1 a.m.

#### Sports Oasis

Breakfast 5:30 - 8:30 a.m.  
Lunch 11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.  
Dinner 5:30 - 9 p.m.

#### Shopette

Open 24 Hours

#### Camp Liberty Post Exchange

Everyday 8 a.m. - 10 p.m.

#### Fitness Center

Open 24 Hours

#### Chapel

##### Sunday:

Protestant Service 7 a.m. and 8:45 a.m.  
Catholic Mass 10:30 a.m.  
Gospel Service Noon  
Mormon (LDS) 2 p.m.  
Episcopal 4 p.m.  
Full Life Service 6 p.m.

##### Saturday:

7th Day Adventist 11 a.m.  
Catholic Mass 8 p.m.

#### Mini-Chapel (Bldg. 2)

##### Friday:

Jewish Service 6:30 p.m.

#### Post Office

Monday - Friday 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Saturday 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
Sunday 1 - 5 p.m.

#### Golby Troop Medical Clinic

##### Sick Call Hours:

Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - noon  
Saturday & Sunday 9 a.m. - noon

##### Dental Sick call:

Monday - Friday 7:30 - 10:30 a.m.  
Saturday 9 - 10:30 a.m.

##### Mental Health Clinic:

Monday - Friday 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
Saturday 9 a.m. - noon

##### Post Deployment Health Briefings:

Monday - Friday 1 p.m.

##### Pharmacy:

Over the counter prescription refills  
Monday - Friday 7:30 a.m. - noon  
Saturday & Sunday 9 a.m. - noon

## OPERATION

townspeople, officials and Soldiers all participating in the delivery of the school supplies was touching and made me cry with happiness. The children said, 'Look how happy they are!' and 'They wear the same type of clothing and ride bicycles like we do!'"

The project may have been a huge undertaking, but both Le Page and Traska contend that the overall support they received on both ends made it a success.

"So many people were involved in this project -- the second- and third-grade children at Memorial

School and their teachers, the parents of the second- and third-grade students, our PTA at Memorial School, Dr. Fitzsimmons, our principal, the whole group of individuals in Iraq, especially Lt Col. Le Page who was so kind and dedicated to the delivery of these school supplies with the help of his friend, Lt. Col. Phil Andrews, who provided us with the pictures and video of our new friends in Iraq," said Traska. "All this experience has brought our worlds a little closer to each other. It had a tremendous impact on all our lives."

### GT Improvement

Soldiers interested in raising their General Technical scores in order to re-enlist will be able to attend a three-week GT Improvement course Monday - Friday from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. at Building 17 on Camp Victory. The start date has yet to be determined.

For more information, contact Chief Warrant Officer Tammi Morrison at [tammi.morrison@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:tammi.morrison@iraq.centcom.mil) or contact Capt. Carlos Worthy at [carlos.worthy@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:carlos.worthy@iraq.centcom.mil)

**Minimize your exposure to IEDs**  
**Confirm from as far away as possible.**



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IEDs KILL

### Victory MWR Events July 19 - July 25

**Today:** Spades at 8 p.m. at Bldg. 124; Nine-ball at 8 p.m. at Bldg. 51; Classes at the Gym: Tae-Kwon-Do from 6 - 7 p.m.; Fencing from 7:30 - 9 p.m.

**Wednesday:** Spoken Word at 7 p.m. at Bldg. 124; Spades at 8 p.m. at Bldg. 51; Classes at the Gym: Aerobics from 5 - 6:30 a.m. and from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.; Boxing from 8 - 9 p.m.

**Thursday:** Country night at 7 p.m. at Bldg. 124; Ping Pong at 8 p.m. at Bldg. 51; Classes at the Gym: Tae-Kwon-Do from 6 - 7 p.m.; Kajukenbo from 9 - 10:30 p.m.; Ping Pong Tournament at 8 p.m.

**Friday:** Halo at 8 p.m. at Bldg. 124; Latin night at 7 p.m. at Bldg. 51; Classes at the Gym: Aerobics from 5 - 6:30 a.m. and from 6:30 -

7:30 p.m.; Bench press competition at 7 p.m.; Fencing from 7:30 - 9 p.m.

**Saturday:** Hip-hop night at 7 p.m. at Bldg. 124; Dominoes at 2 p.m. at Bldg. 51; Classes at the Gym: Tae-Kwon-Do from 6 - 7 p.m.; Boxing from 8 - 9 p.m.

**Sunday:** Ping Pong at 8 p.m. at Bldg. 124; Eight-ball Tournament at 3 p.m. and Chess at 8 p.m. at Bldg. 51; Classes at the Gym: Fencing from 7:30 - 9 p.m.; Kajukenbo from 9 - 10:30 p.m.

**Monday:** Dominoes at 8 p.m. at Bldg. 124; Halo at 8 p.m. at Bldg. 51; Classes at the Gym: Aerobics 5 - 6:30 a.m. and from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.; Boxing from 8 - 9 p.m.

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Victory Weekly welcomes columns, commentaries, articles and letters from our readers. Send submissions or comments to [michael.carden@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:michael.carden@iraq.centcom.mil),

We reserve the right to edit for security, accuracy, propriety, policy, clarity and space.