

RAKKASAN REPORT

Volume 2 Issue 1

10 October



The official publication of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault)

RAKKASANS RETURN TO IRAQ

By Maj. Tom Bryant
3rd BCT Public Affairs

Camp Caldwell, Iraq (October 9, 2005) – Soldiers from the 3rd Brigade Combat

Team, 187th Infantry Regiment, have completed the long trip from Ft. Campbell and are currently operating from various locations throughout Iraq.

The Rakkasans began their deployment on September 11, the 4th anniversary of the attack on America by Islamic extremists that launched the Global War on Terror.

For many Soldiers, the return to Iraq for Operation Iraqi Freedom marks their second deployment to the Middle East. For a few, this begins their third combat rotation since 2002.

Sgt. Timoteo Salinas, 22, from Kearney, Nebraska, considers it a point of pride that the Rakkasans

once again are leading the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) into ground combat.

“We’re a hell of a lot better trained and prepared this time,” said Salinas when asked to compare this deployment with his two previous combat tours. Salinas served as a SAW gunner in Company B, 3rd Battalion, 187th Infantry in Afghanistan, and as a sniper during OIF 1.

The Rakkasans were the only brigade from the 101st Airborne Division to deploy to Afghanistan for Operation Enduring Freedom. Rakkasan Soldiers served in Afghanistan from January to July 2002.

While the primary mission of the Rakkasans is to eliminate anti-Iraqi terrorists and



Photo by Spc. Matt Wrzesinski

See Page 2 Rakkasans Return

Contents

PAGE 2 EDITORS NOTES

PAGE 3 1-33 CAV. BRADLEY TRAINING

PAGE 4 PSD CONVOY TRAINING

PAGE 5 KUWAIT TO IRAQ IN PICTURES

PAGE 6 626 HETT TRAINING/
CHAPLAINS CORNER

PAGE 7 RAKKASAN IN THE SPOTLIGHT

RAK 6 NOTES

RAKKASAN!

After a year of training, a year of preparing, the Rakkasans are back in Iraq continuing the mission we began over 2 years ago. All of that training is paying off.

Right now, there are Rakkasans operating across this country from north of Tikrit to Baghdad, actively seeking to remove the enemies of liberty, train the Iraqi security forces, and move this country further down the road to a lasting freedom. It’s tough business, it’s dangerous – and it’s exactly the environment where Rakkasan troopers thrive.

Every Soldier here is counting on his buddy to the left and right, and I’m confident you’ll do the same thing. We’re a family, and families take care of one another. Don’t wait for someone to ask – if

you see a need, act. Our rear detachment is doing a solid job, and together with our family readiness groups they are doing yeoman’s work to keep every Rakkasan family informed.

Finally, I want to reinforce something you’ve heard already: do not believe the rumors and half-truths that you hear. We maintain constant contact with the rear detachment, and I will use this and other forums to keep the Rakkasan family informed. Use your FRG contacts and the rear detachment for accurate information. Our mission here will continue to evolve, but one thing will remain unchanged: no matter how harsh the conditions, no matter how demanding the task, our troopers will get the job done.

Continue to keep our Soldiers and the entire Rakkasan family in your prayers.

Editors Notes



The 3 BCT Public Affairs Staff will travel throughout the BCT area of operation to focus on every Rakkasan Battalion. The next issue will be published 30 Oct.

The Rakkasan Report can be viewed at www.divdshub.com under Military Publications. The website also features video stories from around Iraq.

MensHealth

Look for the next issue of Men's Health Magazine on news stands 20 Oct. featuring Rakkasan Soldiers including Cpl. Peter Springer 1/187 on the cover.

Next Issue

Units to be featured;

3-320 FA
1-187 IN

Publication Date 30 Oct

Rakkasans Return

criminals, the mission in Iraq has changed significantly since the Rakkasans were last here. Many Rakkasan Soldiers will serve on advisory teams responsible for training the new Iraqi Army and other security forces. Most 3rd BCT units will be partnered with an Iraqi Army unit for training and operations.



According to Sgt. Maj. Kevin Martin, Operations Sergeant Major for the Rakkasans, the biggest challenge that what they do is serious business. It's no longer training, it's for real.

"We will have to work to maintain aggressiveness and situational awareness and not fall into a lull since it's not a constant, direct action fight," said Martin.

Martin, a veteran of Afghanistan, is confident in the training and overall readiness of the 3rd BCT Soldiers, saying it's "a step above most conventional units."

"[Soldiers] realize that what they do is serious business. It's no longer training, it's for real."

Chaplain's Corner

RAKKASAN! There seems to be no end in sight at the beginning of every deployment, and if three prior deployments have taught me anything it is how much I despise having several thousand miles between me and my family and friends. But this time apart has also brought some lasting, worthwhile lessons for a better life. Having been away from my family, I am more appreciative of their love and just how great a gift every day with them is. No matter how many deployments, I will have many more days with them. How much better those days will be after some time apart. My wife, Donnella, agrees that the time apart deepened our love for each other. Something great came because of the challenge of being apart for so long. While I would never want to be deployed, I would never trade the deeper love that grew out of those past deployments.

While the truth above gives me strength to face the challenging days ahead, nothing gives me more confidence than God's faithfulness.

His word is true when it says, "You have made the Lord your defender, the Most High your protector, and so no disaster will strike you, no violence will come near your home," Psalms 91:9-10.

I say, "Bring on that deployment!"

By Chaplain Maj. Douglas Prentace

3rd BCT Public Affairs Staff

The Rakkasan Report is an official publication of the 3rd Brigade Combat Team. It is published monthly by the 3rd BCT Public Affairs Office. Contents of the Rakkasan Report are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the US Government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army, or Fort Campbell, Ky.

We welcome the submission of news items, articles, and photographs. Submissions should be made to the 3rd BCT Public Affairs Office, Bldg. 6760 A Shau Valley Rd., Ft. Campbell. Items may be emailed to jesse.charles.riggin@us.army.mil.

- BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM COMMANDER.....COL Michael Steele
PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER.....MAJ Tom Bryant
PUBLIC AFFAIRS NCOIC.....SSG Jesse Riggin
PRINT JOURNALIST.....SPC Matt Wrzesinski
BROADCAST JOURNALIST.....PFC Kenia Kraus

1-33 Cavalry Mounts Up in Iraq

By Spc. Matt Wrzesinski
3rd BCT Public Affairs

Camp Caldwell, Iraq (October 9, 2005) – Over the past year the Rakkasans trained throughout the country in preparation for this deployment. They are combat ready but the training continues.

Rakkasans of 1st Squadron, 33rd Cavalry conducted M2-A2 Bradley training Thursday during their stay at Camp Caldwell, Iraq. The training was

aimed at familiarizing Soldiers with the Bradley and its weapon systems.

The Bradley is a new asset to the Rakkasans. Soldiers who had

experience with the vehicle prior to the deployment helped familiarize other Soldiers with its capabilities.

“It gives us more firepower,” said Staff Sgt. Gary Frisbee, Company B, 1-33, “along with a more stable platform to work from than the Humvee.”

This was another chance for B

Company to rehearse missions and ensure that everything will run smoothly throughout their deployment to Iraq according to Frisbee.

The training at Camp Caldwell gave the Soldiers a real feel for the battlefield that could not be duplicated at Ft. Campbell.

“This is the field we are going

to play on,” said 1st Lt. William Biggs, B Company, 1-33 Cav., “You don’t have to imagine how it’s going to be because this is it.”

The Bradleys are an incredible asset to the unit. Its capabilities and general appearance will help the Rakkasans maintain physical and psychological superiority in their areas of operation.

“It boosts the Soldier’s morale,” said Biggs, “by giving them a better sense of security.”

The “Iron Rakkasans” of B Company are confident in their prior training and ability to accomplish any mission that falls on them.

“We’re so well trained,” said Frisbee, “the only thing we’re worried about is where to put our Torriis.”



Photo by Spc. Matt Wrzesinski
Soldiers hone their skills on the M2-A2 weapon system.



Photo by Spc. Matt Wrzesinski
Staff Sgt. Cameron Lowman, B Company, 1st Squadron, 33rd Cavalry guides the M2-A2 Bradley through the rough desert terrain at a live-fire range in Camp Caldwell, Iraq in preparation for upcoming missions.



Photo by Spc. Matt Wrzesinski
Pfc. Jacob Anderton (L) takes driving instructions from Staff Sgt. Gary Frisbee (C) and Sgt. William Rodriguez, B, 1-33.

CONVOY TRAINING

RAKKASANS CAPITALIZE ON OPPORTUNITY TO TRAIN IN THE DESERT OF KUWAIT



Photos by Spc. Matt Wrzesinski

Soldiers from the 3rd BCT Personal Security Detachment, led by Staff Sgt. Erik Alderin, conducted live-fire convoy training at Camp Beuhring, Kuwait 27 Sep. The platoon size element rehearsed every aspect of convoy operations from basic movement formations to worst-case scenarios such as damaged vehicles and multiple casualties.



Kuwait to Iraq



Top Left: 3 BCT's Equipment is downloaded from ships and transported to Camp Buehring, Kuwait

Top Right: Rakkasans reenlisting in Kuwait.

Center: Soldiers travel to Camp Anaconda, Iraq on C-130's.

Bottom Left: A CH-47 is prepared to transport Rakkasans to Camp Caldwell, Iraq.

Bottom Right: B Troop 1-33 Cav. test-fire M2-A2 Bradley armored vehicles on ranges at Camp Caldwell, Iraq.

ASSURGAM!



Photo by Pfc. Kenia Kraus



Photo by Pfc. Kenia Kraus



Photo by Spc. Matt Wrzesinski

Camp Caldwell, Iraq (October 9, 2005) – Rakkasans of Company A, 626th Brigade Support Battalion (Assurgam) 187 Infantry Regiment, teamed up with the 278th Regimental Support Squadron (Tennessee National Guard) to train on the M-1070 Heavy Equipment Truck Transport 10 Oct.

The HETT vehicle can haul anything from a Humvee to a helicopter.

These vehicles will assist the Rakkasans in transporting equipment and maintain a high level of combat readiness throughout their area of operation .



Photo by Spc. Matt Wrzesinski



Photo by Spc. Matt Wrzesinski

True Story, True Soldier

By Pfc. Kenia Kraus
3rd BCT Public Affairs

Camp Caldwell, Iraq (October 9, 2005) –One day in 1987, nineteen year old Patrick Walker entered a mall for an ordinary day of shopping. Standing amidst the busy rumble of commerce stood an Army Recruiter searching for the next private to fill the ranks. What started as a conversation with the recruiter about educational goals turned into a military career that has spanned over 18 years and 10 overseas deployments.

Sgt. 1st Class Patrick Walker, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, hails from the “Motor City” Detroit, MI. He is presently on his second tour to Iraq in Operation Iraqi Freedom as the Rakkasans’ Food Service Operations Sergeant. If you run into him, he is proud to express himself in his customary friendly fashion and boast “This is my 10th deployment.”

Walker’s deployment journal begins in 1988 during Operation Provide Comfort in Turkey and takes him to Desert Storm, Desert Shield in Saudi Arabia, on to Hungary, Slovbrod in Croatia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, two tours in Bosnia, and now his second tour in Iraq. Walker has deployed with several types of units including Engineers, Signal, Cavalry, Military Police, and now the Rakkasans.

Having traversed several combat zones and witnessed everything from the war against ethnic cleansing in Kosovo to the War on Terror in Iraq, Walker has a keen appreciation for the civil liberties that Americans hold paramount.



“The people in third-world countries have their lives dictated to them,” said Walker.

“In Kosovo and Bosnia, I saw the dead stacked alongside the roads,” Walker explains. “As an American, this sight would be unbelievable but its daily living conditions for the people of those countries.”

While serving in war torn countries Walker continued to pursue his educational goals. He earned his Associates degree in Logistics Management while overseas through online and classroom courses. In 2000 he finished his credits and received his Bachelors degree in the United States.

“The Army had instructors come out to a lot of different areas and set up classrooms,” said Walker. “I completed a lot of my classes in Bosnia.”

As many senior Non-Commissioned and Commissioned Officers can attest, there are per-

sonal relationships and dreams that come second to the mission.

“At one point, I was planning to ETS to play European [basket]ball, but I couldn’t get a release so I stayed in and reenlisted,” explains Walker “God has a course of life for everyone, and this is the one He’s chosen for me.”

It is the Army’s selfless service tenet that makes committing to it more than a career choice. It is a life-altering decision. For the servicemembers that remain and endure long periods of time away from loved ones, there is a great amount of sacrifice for them and their families.

“My youngest daughter just turned 11, and I’ve seen maybe three of her birthdays. It’s hard if you’re not totally committed,” confides Walker.

Walker explains returning from a deployment can seem like returning from a trip to the moon.

“It’s a culture shock, when you come back and the family has moved on without you,” says Walker.

Through family separation and the horrors and glories of combat, a true soldier will buck-up and drive on.

“On two occasions at the airport during flights home, I’ve had children come up to me and say ‘Thank you mister,’” and it is those moments that make it all worthwhile according to Walker.

Walker’s advice to all the new soldiers deployed to combat zones today is this: “Keep faith in God, pray a lot and God will see you through any hard times – and don’t become complacent.”