

SCIMITAR

Printed in the interest of Multi-National Force - Iraq



Pulling non-traditional duties, Page 4

Vol. 3, No. 43

Baghdad, Iraq

Nov. 11, 2005



U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Chad Watkins

U.S. Air Force Staff Sgts. Michael Miller and Sean Hannah perform the "overs" maneuver while practicing drill for the base honor guard at Balad Air Base, Iraq, Nov. 2. Miller is assigned to the 332nd Expeditionary Communications Squadron and Hannah to the 332nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron.

DoD announces next Operation Iraqi Freedom troop rotation

By Donna Miles
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld announced Monday the next major units to deploy to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. He emphasized that rotation planning remains flexible and will be based on conditions on the ground, not political

pressures or artificial timetables.

Today's announcement affects about 92,000 service-members — more than 65,000 from the active component and 26,000 from the Guard and Reserve — who will begin their scheduled rotation in mid-2006, according to Army Lt. Col. Barry Venable, a Defense Department spokesman.

Major units to deploy include:

- Division Headquarters and 3rd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, Schofield Barracks, Hawaii;

- 13th Corps Support Command, Fort Hood, Texas;
- 1st Brigade, 34th Infantry Division, Minnesota Army National Guard;
- 2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, Schweinfurt, Germany;
- 3rd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, Fort Lewis, Wash.;
- 3rd Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, N.C.;
- 2nd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, Fort Drum, N.Y.

See *ROTATION*, Page 2

Inside

What does Veterans Day mean to you as a veteran? Page 3

Injured female Marine returns to duty, re-enlists Page 5

Soldier dribbles both military and basketball careers Page 8

Operation Steel Curtain continues through third day

American Forces Press Service

CAMP BLUE DIAMOND, AR RAMADI, Iraq — Iraqi Army Soldiers and U.S. Marines, Sailors and Soldiers were in the third day of fighting along the Iraq-Syria border in the town of Husaybah, Iraq Monday.

The objectives of Operation Steel Curtain are to restore Iraqi sovereign control along the Iraq-Syrian border and destroy the al Qaeda in Iraq terrorists operating throughout the Qaim region, officials said.

Iraqi Army Soldiers shot and killed three terrorists dressed in women's clothing near the entrance to the safety zone established for displaced persons. The trio brandished weapons as they neared the checkpoint the Iraqi Soldiers were manning, but were unable to use them before being killed by the Soldiers. Iraqi Soldiers identified the terrorists as foreign fighters. The three terrorists were trying to hide among the women and children and gain access to the area for residents temporarily displaced.

Armed terrorists used a similar tactic at a police checkpoint Nov. 5 in the town of Buhriz, 35 miles north of Baghdad. While the terrorists posed as women, they killed six police officers and wounded many civilians.

Some Husaybah residents have sought safety from the fighting in a vacant housing district in Husaybah, where the Iraqi Army Soldiers established facilities for residents temporarily displaced by the operation.

"In addition to urban combat operations, the Iraqi Army Soldiers are supporting humanitarian assistance operations in the western part of the city, providing food and relief supplies for some 800 displaced civilians," Lt. Col. Christopher C. Starling, operations officer for Regimental Combat Team 2, said. "At a checkpoint [Nov. 6] outside the city, residents offered information to Iraqi Army Soldiers, leading to the capture of individuals and weapons caches."

Small groups of terrorists continue to attack Iraqi Soldiers and U.S. Marines clearing the city. This morning troops found the body of a dead terrorist in a school. The corpse was booby trapped with a hand grenade and set to explode when the body was moved. They also found a fully armed and functional rocket-propelled grenade launcher in the same classroom.

Officials have noted four incidents of al Qaeda in Iraq-led terrorists using mosques and at least one school to launch attacks on Iraqi Army Soldiers and Marines. Terrorists are using sensitive and critical infrastructure as protection from coalition and Iraqi Army counterattacks.

The combined force, 1,000 Iraqi Army Soldiers, including local Sunni Soldiers recruited from the Qaim region, and 2,500 U.S. Marines, Soldiers and Sailors are clearing the city house by house, discovering weapons caches, terrorist propaganda and improvised bombs. The arms, munitions, bomb-making material, artillery and mortar shells converted to homemade bombs found in these cache sites continue to validate suspicions that terrorists used Qaim as a safe haven, officials said.

"Iraqi Soldiers are fighting side by side with their (U.S.) Marine counterparts in the streets and on the rooftops," Starling said.

Iraqi Army units partnered with Marines from Regimental Combat Team 2 will provide a joint presence in Husaybah after the successful clearing of the city, officials said. Previous operations between Iraqi Army units integrated with U.S. Marines and Soldiers assigned to the 2nd Marine Division have established a persistent joint presence in the cities of Hit, Haditha, Barwana, Haqlaniyah, Sadah, Rawah, Amiriyah and Ferris.

Thirty-six terrorists are confirmed killed during the operation. There are no reports of civilian casualties.

The offensive is part of Operation Hunter, designed to deny al Qaeda the ability to operate in the Euphrates River Valley and to establish a permanent security presence along the Syrian border. (From a Multi-National Force - Iraq news release.)

101st unit takes over Baghdad sector

By Spc. George Welcome

2/101st Airborne Division Public Affairs

CAMP STRIKER, BAGHDAD — The 2nd Brigade Combat Team of the 101st Airborne Division formally took control of the southwestern Baghdad area of operations from the Georgia Army National Guard's 48th Brigade Combat Team Oct. 31.

The ceremony was ripe with symbolism as Brig. Gen. Stewart Rodeheaver, 48th BCT commander, and brigade Command Sgt. Maj. James Nelson cased the 48th's colors, which represents the end of their mission and responsibility for this area.

Shortly after the 48th's guidon was cased, Col. Todd Ebel, 2nd BCT, 101st Abn. Div. commander, and brigade Command Sgt. Maj. Brian Stall uncased the colors of the "Strike Brigade," symbolically accepting responsibility for the area and the support and security missions it entails.

In his remarks to the assembled troops, Rodeheaver expressed his pride in his Soldiers and in the job they have done while stationed here since June. He also wished the Soldiers of the 101st luck and thanked them for their professionalism during the transitional period.

Following the general's address, Ebel said, "This ceremony is not about us, but about Iraq and what we will give to Iraq."

He also emphasized the importance of 2/101's mission, which is "to help bring peace to people who have not enjoyed peace as we know it, in their history."

The colonel also praised the 48th for providing a smooth transition and wished them well on their next mission as the theater security force for all of Iraq.

Rotation

from Page 1

Individual services will announce smaller, supporting units to deploy for the upcoming rotation, officials announced.

In other deployment news, the 1st Infantry Division's 1st Brigade, based at Fort Riley, Kan., will not deploy before Dec. 31, officials said. Brigade Soldiers had planned to deploy in early December.

Force rotations ensure that the combatant commander has the forces needed to support Operation Iraqi Freedom while DoD continues to meet its worldwide commitments, Venable said. At the same time, rotation planning helps ensure a degree of predictability for troops, their families, their communities and, in the case of Guard and Reserve forces, their civilian employers, he said.

The upcoming rotation continues the Army's 12 months "boots-on-the-ground" policy goal for the more than 79,000 Soldiers affected and will not increase the mobi-

lization period for the reserve forces, Venable said.

More than 5,000 Marines to be affected will maintain their seven-month deployment cycle, he said.

The ultimate goal is for these forces, as part of Multi-National Force - Iraq, to help maintain the security environment until Iraq's security forces are capable of assuming full responsibility, Venable explained. Good progress is being made in that effort, he said, noting that more than 210,000 Iraqi Security Forces are now trained and equipped.

One Iraqi Army division, four brigades and 23 battalions currently have the operational lead in their areas, Venable said. Another division, nine brigades and about 50 battalions are expected to be ready to assume lead responsibility by January.

As they increase in numbers and capability, Iraq's security forces are demonstrating solid professional performance, Venable said. He cited their solid contribution to recent combat operations in Tal Afar and the western Euphrates River Valley and during the Oct. 15 constitutional referendum.



To learn more about Iraqi and Coalition successes, log on to: www.mnf-iraq.com and click on the logo to download this week's issue.

MNF-I Commanding General

Gen. George W. Casey Jr.

MNF-I PAO

Col. Dewey G. Ford

Combined Press Information Center Director

Lt. Col. Steven A. Boylan
steven.boylan@iraq.centcom.mil

Command Information Chief

Maj. Patricia C. Anderson
patricia.anderson@iraq.centcom.mil

Command Information NCOIC

Master Sgt. Michele R. Hammonds
michele.hammonds@iraq.centcom.mil



Editor.....Sgt. Misha King

misha.king@iraq.centcom.mil

Assistant Editor.....Spc. Ferdinand Thomas

ferdinand.thomas@iraq.centcom.mil

Staff.....Staff Sgt. Timothy B. Lawn

timothy.lawn@iraq.centcom.mil

The *Scimitar* is an authorized publication for members of the Department of Defense. Contents are not necessarily the official views of or endorsed by the U.S. Government or DoD. The editorial content is the responsibility of the Public Affairs Office of the Multi-National Force - Iraq. *Stars and Stripes* newspaper is not affiliated with MNF-I and acts only as a distributing source for the *Scimitar*. Questions and comments should be directed to the editor at scimitar@iraq.centcom.mil.

Scimitar welcomes columns, commentaries, articles and letters from readers. Send submissions to scimitar@iraq.centcom.mil

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

The *Scimitar* can also be viewed on the Web at http://www.mnf-iraq.com/publications_theater.htm

PERSPECTIVES

Veterans Day has a whole new meaning now

By Staff Sgt. David Green

Multi-National Force - Iraq Strategic Effects Directorate

I grew up in the Midwest, and I can confirm all your stereotypical notions of small town America are true. We have county fairs where everything, including pickles and Twinkies, is fried. We all turn out en masse for Fourth of July fireworks and Veterans Day parades. These memories are the things my childhood was built around.

I remember men in their special little embroidered maroon hats with things like "VFW Lodge 149," "Da Nang 1979," "Cho Son '52" or even "Normandy 1944" on them, marching down the center of town on Veterans Day. I remember my father, who was in the Army at the time, wearing his Class A uniform, and these men would flock around him and shake his hand. They would hug each other and pick up little kids. Their chest stuck out a little farther, their heads a little higher, and they had a little more pep in their step. This was their day.

Even though some of them were already in their 70s, the energy of these veterans never diminished as the day wore on. They gave speeches and were honored by mayors and congressmen. There were moments of silence for those that had passed on, either recently at home or on a foreign battlefield years before. These were the sad parts, and you would see grown men cry. Soon, however, they were all smiles again. They could be found late in the afternoon playing with the kids and grandkids in the

park, eating a plate of something fried or sharing some of their experiences with each other.

I would spend time talking to these men, and while they were always congenial, they often steered the conversation away from war to topics I found to be boring. They wanted to know my age, what kind of grades I was getting and how far I could throw a football. They seemed just as interested in me as I was in them. It was something I never understood — until now.

I have spent a year in a combat zone, and I'll be going home in a few weeks. I am officially one of "those men."

"For me, Veterans Day will never be about where I was, but instead, appreciating where I wasn't."

Staff Sgt. David Green

While experiences vary, I now share a bond with other veterans that spans across time, place and age. I also now share an understanding with them; I understand why they hugged people, shook hands and played with kids.

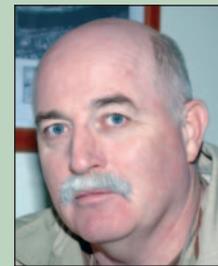
Being away from family and friends and seeing death all around only serves to make it more obvious how precious all the little things in life are. A little kid's laugh, a friend's hug and even a stranger's kind handshake all become that much more real and enjoyable. Seeing the very worst there is in life manages to make the very best better. Veterans Day for me will never be the same. I will forever have the option of wearing the little maroon hat that will say "Baghdad '05" and marching in that parade. I will get to smile with those that are there and cry for those that aren't. Veterans Day is a time for our nation to take time out and remember those who fought in her service. For me, it will be a time to remember the year I was away from all the things I love. For me, Veterans Day will never be about where I was, but instead, appreciating where I wasn't.

Scimitar Pulse

Has the significance of Veteran's Day changed for you now that you have served in Iraq? Why?

"I think it has enhanced my appreciation for the military; they are away from home and still keep up their professionalism."

Michael McLaughlin
Defense Contract Management Agency

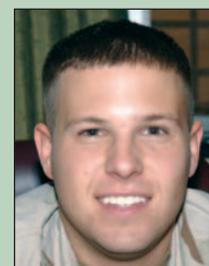


"Since I have been here, my views have changed, because I am separated from my family. I think about the sacrifice that I am making for my country."

Air Force Lt. Col. Jason Dudjak
Joint Area Support Group - Central

"I used to run the streets. Coming here has given me a realization of what service members go through and has made me want to change my life."

Luis Lanis
Kellogg Brown and Root



"I have always looked upon veterans as heroes. My views haven't really changed except I have more respect for them."

Army Pvt. Elbert Lyons
230th Finance Battalion

"I have a newfound respect for veterans. We are exposed to a little of the same spoils of war as the veterans of the earlier times, so I don't take it for granted anymore."

Marine Staff Sgt. Robert Hamlett
Multi-National Force - Iraq



"Veteran's Day has changed for me because I am in a combat zone. Seeing the role women are playing closer to the front lines is nothing short of amazing."

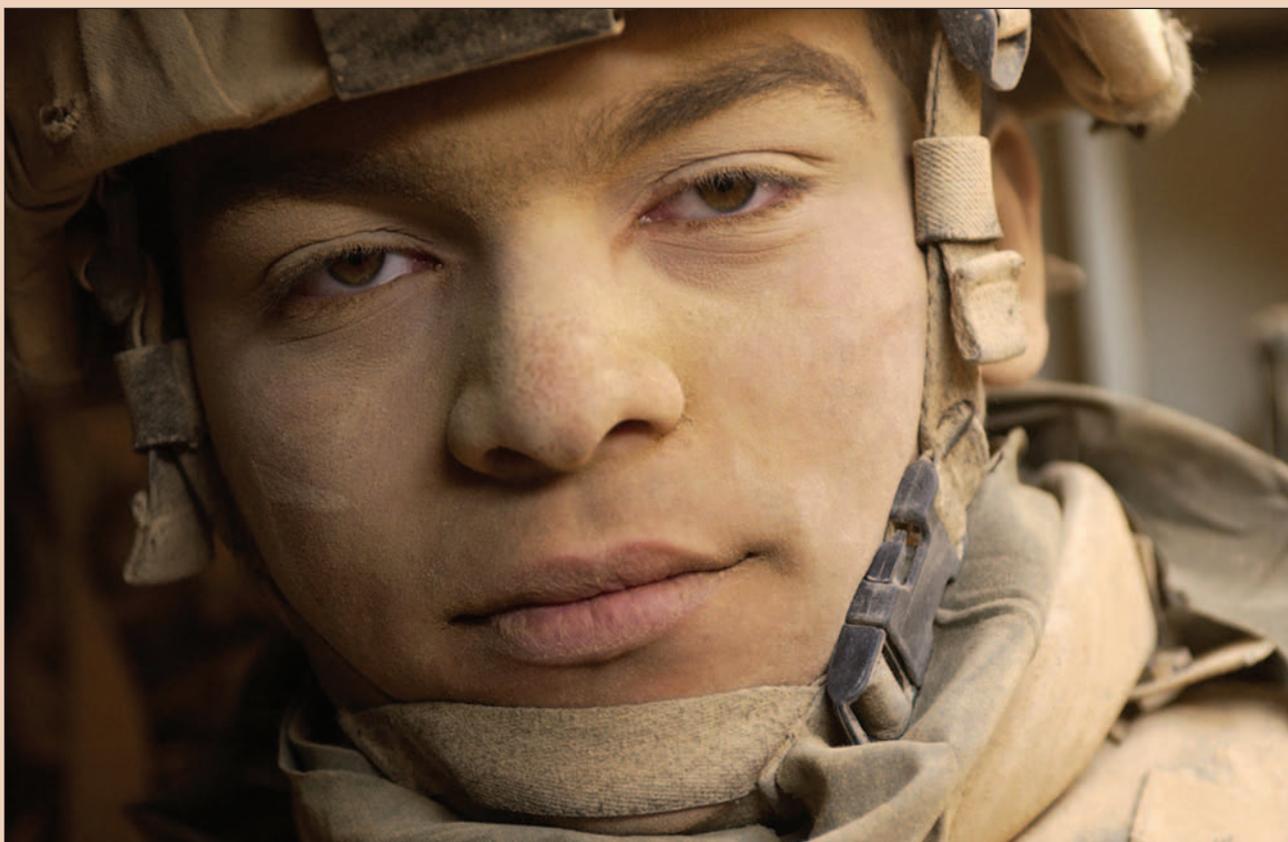
Army Maj. Heide Bronke
United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq

"I don't think veterans get enough respect for what they have done. I don't think the population actually recognizes us."

Marine Pfc. Edward Burrell
Anti-Terrorism Battalion



The modern Veteran



U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Andy Dunaway

Spc. Lionel Lare, 4/14th Cavalry from Fort Wainwright, Alaska, is covered by dust and sand from the drive from Command Outpost Rawah to a new location to provide an overwatch while Army and Marines look for weapons cache and people opposing Coalition Forces east of the Syrian border by the Euphrates River recently.

Airmen perform non-traditional mission with Soldiers

Story and photos by Capt. Michael G. Johnson
386th Air Expeditionary Wing Public Affairs

CAMP BUCCA, UMM QASAR, Iraq — The camp has the look and feel of many Army bases with one exception: the majority of the force protection presence are Airmen — including the two security forces squadron commanders.



Staff Sgt. Kevin Range, a 586th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron security forces member, sorts winter jackets for detainees in the Theater Internment Facility.

Traditionally an Army function here, Airmen are providing perimeter defense, convoy and area security and security for the Theater Internment Facility.

“The mission of the 586th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron is to conduct base defense and force protection operations in support of the TIF,” said Lt. Col. David Briar, 586th ESFS commander. “I’m continually impressed by the resilience and the dedication and professionalism of the Airmen and Soldiers assigned to this squadron, especially in the wake of the Sept. 28 attack that claimed the lives of one Airman and one Soldier.”

Airman 1st Class Elizabeth Jacobson and Army Sgt. Steve Morin were killed when an improvised explosive device detonated, overturning their vehicle.

“In the wake of that tragic loss, I asked the squadron to step up,” Briar said. “Yes, this is a time of mourning, but we need to press on. We need to have faith that we’re going to get through this. We’re going to be able to move on, and they’ve done that. They’ve done that extremely well.”

Within two weeks of the incident, the 586th provided convoy escorts for election officials, escorting them to Camp Bucca so detainees could vote during Iraq’s constitution referendum.

“That mission was successfully completed with a high level of motivation and perfect execution,” Briar said. “That kind of professionalism impresses and inspires me.”

Maj. David Lynch, commander of the 587th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, is just as proud of his Airmen who serve as TIF guards for detainee operations.

“They’re just great troops — truly motivated professionals,” Lynch said. “They recognize the importance of what they’re doing, and they’re making history.”

“This is a very unique mission,” said Tech. Sgt. Jeff Tynan, 587th security forces member. “Normally we guard aircraft and airfields. Now we’re staring at people who could be responsible for killing Americans. [Regardless,] we treat them with dignity



Airman 1st Class Samuel Hicks, a 586th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron member, scans the roadside and horizon from the gun turret of his vehicle.

and respect, but are always mindful of whom they are.”

Airmen working in a joint capacity at an Army base also means adjusting to new ways of doing business and learning the language.

“The guys are all learning to speak Army,” Lynch said. “They don’t really see a difference between a Soldier and an Airman. We are one team, one fight.”

“We’ve learned a lot from these [Army] guys,” said Tech. Sgt. Robert D. Rose, a security forces member with the 586th ESFS. “We learn from them and hopefully, we teach them something.”

“I think it helps the Airmen and Soldiers achieve a better understanding of each other and understand more of what each service brings to the fight in terms of joint war-fighting,” Briar said. “There are some things that they do really well; there are some things the Air Force does really well, and we can learn from each other. So I think that’s one of the best benefits of working so closely together.”

Military police customs specialists help insure safe redeployment

Story and photo by
Pfc. Joshua R. Ford
Multi-National Corps - Iraq
Public Affairs

CAMP VICTORY, BAGHDAD — Last year, \$170 billion worth of U.S. crops were destroyed due to foreign insects, bacteria and diseases found in the soil.

How did these foreign species get to the U.S.? It could be someone decided to stow away a souvenir and bring it back home. That is one of the many reasons why there is a customs office.

The customs process ensures a safe redeployment, the safety of U.S. citizens and to protect the U.S. by not letting in foreign species, said 1st Lt. Ross M. Kurtz, Multi-National Corps - Iraq Provost Marshall Office’s law and order officer in charge.

“Customs monitor what an individual can or can’t take back to his or her original location from Iraq,” Kurtz said.

Units must schedule customs inspections and be inspected before redeploying.

The inspection request is then tasked to a military police brigade in the requesting unit’s area of operation, said Sgt. 1st Class Scott Lease, 313th MP Bde. customs program manager.

Before MPs start the process, the requesting unit’s command should perform a pre-inspection. This makes the process shorter and easier for both the unit being searched



Navy Petty Officer Jeremy Johnson and Amber, who make up a K-9 unit in the XVIII Military Police Brigade, sniff out packages for illegal items.

and the MPs, Kurtz added.

When the MPs arrive, they brief the outgoing unit on what they can and cannot take back. The unit then has the opportunity to ask questions and is given a 15-minute amnesty period before the search, Lease said.

“During the amnesty period, people are allowed to go through their belongings and take any questionable or illegal items to the

amnesty point,” Lease added.

Some of the illegal items on the list include firearms, switch blades, explosives, controlled substances, artifacts, soil and counterfeit currency.

“Chains of command have been ‘squaring away’ their units prior to us inspecting them, so we really don’t have a problem with finding illegal items,” added Lease.

After the briefing and the amnesty period, a K-9 unit and MPs inspect the outgoing baggage and equipment to make sure nobody has hidden any illegal items and all equipment and personal belongings are free of dirt, mud and sand, said Kurtz.

After the inspection, the equipment is blocked and sealed, Lease said. Blocking a mobile storage unit makes sure that items do not shift during the ride home, Lease said.

Sealing is the final step. During this step, an MP places a signed form on the inside and outside of the storage unit and a lock on each door.

If the serial number on the forms and the locks do not match when the mobile storage unit gets back to the U.S., it will be shipped back to where it came from and inspected again.

“Once we look at it and it’s in the blocked and sealed mobile storage unit, that’s it. It’s sealed, and we’re shipping it,” said Sgt. 1st Class Carl N. Church, 313th Customs Inspection noncommissioned officer in charge.

Col. Arnaldo Claudio, Multi-National Corps - Iraq Provost marshal, has made customs a high priority, both to keep service members and civilians safe and get inspections done in Iraq rather than Kuwait.

“We are not doing this to get people in trouble,” Kurtz said. “We are doing this to follow General Order 1A and insure the safety of others.”

Call of duty: Injured Marine receives Purple Heart, takes final oath of reenlistment

Story and photo by Cpl. James D. Hamel
2nd Marine Aircraft Wing

ALASAD, Iraq — Gunnery Sgt. Rose M. Noel, the Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 26 electronic countermeasures repair center noncommissioned officer in charge, is the ultimate family person. One of her families is in the United States and includes her children and mother. Her other family is the Marine Corps, and more specifically, her fellow Marines in MALS-26.

Something happened Aug. 27, threatening to take her away from both families permanently. After returning from a brief vacation in Qatar, Noel was on her way to draw a weapon from the armory. She was almost there when an indirect fire round impacted near her.

"I immediately thought, 'This is going to ruin my day,'" she said. "I knew I had been hit by something, but I thought it was debris that had been kicked up. I went straight to the armory and said I had been struck by IDF."

The armorer on duty immediately knew Noel's injury was very serious. He radioed for a vehicle to transport her to the hospital. Meanwhile, he gave her a green T-shirt to slow the bleeding.

When she got to the hospital, everyone had taken cover in the basement, and it seemed deserted. After calmly asserting her need for help, someone came to administer medical attention. Her last memory was in an al Asad hospital room, preparing to fly to Balad, Iraq.

As Noel lay unconscious in a hospital, the MALS-26 sergeant major prayed at her bedside. Minutes later, Clemons and another Marine from the squadron loaded Noel into a helicopter for the flight to Balad, where she would receive further care.

The doctors in Balad planned to send Noel to Germany, and then back the United States. With a 1 1/2 inch piece of shrapnel

lodged in her cheek, the doctors wanted to remove it surgically, wire her mouth shut and end her deployment prematurely. But the 17-year Marine Corps veteran would not have it. As the doctors found out, sending her home was about as possible as wiring her mouth shut.

"From what I understand, I was very belligerent about wanting to return to my Marines," she said. "My jaw was broken, but I never shut up."

Though the opportunity to cut a year-long combat tour would be enticing to some, it never crossed Noel's mind.

"The Rosie in me would have wanted to go home, but the [Gunnery Sgt.] Noel wanted to return to her Marines," she said. "I think the [gunnery sergeant] in me kicked in as soon as the IDF hit."

The doctors were forced to relent and sent Noel back to her work. She did get a trip home — a scheduled two-week leave period — where one of her sons commented on the "coolness" of her battle scar. Noel became one of the few female service members to receive the Purple Heart, the nation's oldest military award, Oct. 29.

Despite the level of award, Noel asked for a subdued ceremony that included her final re-enlistment. Her only desire was for a large crowd of Marines to be present, not for her fame, but so they could see a living reminder of the danger they face.

"Not a whole lot of MALS Marines are wounded in action," she said. "I think this makes it more real, and for them, it's a good experience."

After presenting her the award, Brig. Gen. Robert E. Milstead



Gunnery Sgt. Rose M. Noel raises her right hand to take the Oath of Enlistment administered by Brig. Gen. Robert E. Milstead Jr., 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing (Fwd) commanding general.

Jr. referenced her two families and told the Marines assembled they should draw inspiration from Noel's continued service despite personal injury.

As for Noel, she is just happy to get back to work and finish the job she came to do. "Each day is a gift," she said. "Of course everyone wants to get home, but I want it to be on my own terms, not the insurgents'. I'm here. I'm back in the fight. That's what [gunnery sergeants] do. That's what Marines do."

Bosnian, Serbian, Croat EOD experts help clean up Iraq

Story and photos by
Staff Sgt. Timothy B. Lawn
Scimitar Staff

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq — A multinational platoon of Bosnians, Serbians and Croats jumped out of U.S. Marine seven-ton troop trucks. These former enemies are now allies and members of a unique multi national platoon of explosive ordinance disposal experts stationed in Iraq.

"At the beginning there was some difficulties," said Maj. Musa Stjepan. "Now, I am more than pleased; there has

been a lot of effort put into this unit."

Stjepan, a Croat, was assigned as acting commander in January of the platoon with 12 representatives from each country: Bosnia, Serbia and Croatia. These unit members are on a six-month deployment, and they have been operating together in Iraq since December 2004.

On the way to a destroyed munitions warehouse, Stjepan explained the unit comprises specialists and experts in the explosive ordinance field. During the war, the warehouse facility was targeted; the majority of the stored munitions were destroyed, yet the facility and grounds were littered with unexploded bombs,

rockets, grenades and ammo of all caliber.

The platoon's mission was to clean up this destroyed ammunition storage warehouse on Camp Fallujah. The men finished clearing the grounds around the warehouse, but the interior rubble concealed the rest. As the men gingerly picked their way through the rubble looking for unstable and potentially dangerous munitions, Stjepan said the unit can be used any time, anywhere for this type of mission.

"All of us are professionals — to us, it is just a regular job to do," said Master Sgt. Elvir Korajlic as he supervised his troops shoveling earth and uncovering ammunition. Elvir is a Bosnian Soldier and a Muslim from the village of Zewica.

Korajlic described the importance of the mission. "There is a humanitarian aspect in all of this," he said. "Soldiers and civilians can get killed from all the unexploded ordinance and mines."

Many of them have lots of experience clearing unexploded ordinance and mines. Some of the men have been working in the EOD field since 1997. Their own experiences with war have hardened them, and it motivates them to help rid the country of explosive ordinance. Some of the Bosnian countryside is still littered with mines, booby traps and explosives.

These Bosnians, Serbians and Croats may have been former enemies, but now they all are proud members of a multinational platoon of explosive ordinance disposal experts who take their job very seriously. They may be different in language, ethnicity, religion and country, but their tastes, desires, and dreams are very much the same: to leave Iraq a better place, return home to their families and "maybe have a cold glass of beer," said a Bosnian captain, whose name is withheld for security reasons.



A truck was partially destroyed and its load of munitions damaged after the warehouse it was parked next to was attacked.



A team of multinational EOD experts gingerly pick their way through a destroyed warehouse complex looking for unexploded munitions.

Coalition Corner

... highlighting countries
serving with MNF-Iraq



Ukraine

Local name: *Ukrayina*

Ukraine is located in Eastern Europe and bordering the Black Sea, Moldova, Romania, Hungary, Slovakia, Poland, Belarus and Russia. Size-wise, it is slightly smaller than Texas. Almost 49 million people live here and speak Ukrainian, the official language. However, some Russian is spoken throughout various regions. Ukraine has a republic government, and the Hryvnia is the nation's official currency. Although it is not a member of NATO, Ukraine is a member of NATO's Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council.

Ukraine is full of history and culture. Kiev, the capital, was founded in the 5th century as the hub for Ukraine, Russia and Belarus — all three descending from the Slavic super-state Kievan Rus in the 9th to the 11th centuries. Kiev's biggest attraction is the St. Sophia Cathedral, which contains amazing mosaics and frescoes and is the city's oldest standing church. The geologically breathtaking Kamyanets-Podilsky, which was built around the 11th century, is one of the oldest Ukrainian towns and is a rock island carved by a sharp loop in the Smotrych River. A gorgeous nine-towered stone fortress dating back to the 16th century sits at one end of a bridge that connects the town to the mainland. Odessa is home to the famous 19th century Opera and Ballet Theatre, which is renowned for its mixture of baroque and renaissance architecture.

Ukraine holds rank in the food world, having several world-renowned dishes recognized distinctly as Ukrainian. One of these flavorful foods is borshch, a vegetable soup made from a rich meat stock with beets as the main ingredient. It can have as many as 20 ingredients, varying by region, and is usually served with pampushki, soft bread rolls dipped in savory crushed garlic and oil. Another famous Ukrainian dish is varenyky — dumplings, which depending on the stuffing, are served as an entrée, appetizer, in soup or as a dessert. The most common varenyky stuffing is mashed potatoes with caramelized onions or cheese. Other popular foods include deruny, potato pancakes; and holubsti, cabbage rolls stuffed with meat.

Delicious food is not the only thing that makes Ukraine world-renowned; several world-famous people claim Ukrainian heritage. Sergey Korolev, inventor of the Sputnik, which was the first satellite sent into space. Korolev was born and lived in Ukraine. Igor Sikorsky, also Ukrainian born and raised, invented the first successful helicopter around 1910. Actress Milla Jovovich, who starred in "Joan of Arc" and "The Fifth Element" was born in Ukraine and later moved to America.

Ukraine — yet another piece of the Multi-National Force - Iraq puzzle, dedicated to rebuilding Iraq.



References: www.cia.gov, www.lonelyplanet.com, <http://europa.eu.int>, www.nato.int, www.wumag.kiev.ua, <http://pages.prodigy.net>, www.uazone.net, <http://inventors.about.com>, www2.uwindsor.ca.

Coalition Corner is compiled by Sgt. Misha King, editor, scimitar@iraq.centcom.mil.

CHAPLAIN'S TALK

Do you remember this amazing American veteran?

By Chaplain (Lt. Col.)
Scott Ofsdahl
Multi-National Force - Iraq
Plans and Operations Chaplain

He was born in Missouri on September 13, 1860. His biography in the New York Times states that he came from a humble home. His father, with nine children to support, worked a variety of odd jobs. Nothing came easy for our hero during his growing up years. He entered the military service on a fluke after he graduated from high school. He planned to be a lawyer when he saw an exam for admittance to West Point being announced. He took the exam and won the appointment by a single point. He graduated from West Point in 1886.

In 1898 he was appointed to the rank of captain and transferred to active command when the Spanish-American War broke out. Soon after, this veteran transferred again to the Philippines where his successes won him the attention of President Theodore Roosevelt. His future assignments included time as the attaché in Tokyo where he played a part in the Russo-Japanese War. This young captain never left the eye of President Roosevelt.

Over the years, our young captain became an old captain. He

served as a captain in the U.S. Army from 1889 to 1906 — 17 long years. Finally, President Roosevelt decided to take action.

Our star veteran suffered embarrassment in Manchuria where he associated with European observers, colonels and generals of his own age. But he, in his forties, was only a captain. The Department of the Army explained to President Roosevelt that they couldn't promote our star performer from captain to major. It was impossible: President Roosevelt could appoint any man, military or civilian, to the rank of brigadier general or higher. But he couldn't promote a captain to the rank of major. So he went beyond the impossible: President Roosevelt sent our hero's brigadier general nomination to the Senate on September 15, 1906. That's right, after 17 years as a captain in the U.S. Army, our hero was promoted to brigadier general!

Needless to say, the appointment caused a stir in the War Department but the nomination stood. Do you still not know his name? His leadership, personal courage and devotion to troops won for him the affection of a nation. His name is John J. "Black Jack" Pershing, the



Chaplain Ofsdahl

overall American Commander in Europe during World War I. Following the war, he served as Army Chief of Staff. And now you know the rest of the story!

Most of our Coalition countries celebrate some version of

Veterans Day. It is an opportunity to remember all of our friends and comrades who served under arms in the great conflicts of the past 100 years. It is important for all of us to remember those who fell in battle and those who, while they did not die, offered their bodies, minds, hearts and energies to fighting for a better world. It is a simple but very important thing that we pause to remember and pray. We remember our long past and our most recent comrades who paid the ultimate price for our freedoms. Their parents, brothers and sisters also paid the price of war. We honor them best by keeping faith with them and by holding high the torch that they can no longer carry.

They shall not grow old as we who are left grow old.

Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.

At the going down of the sun and in the morning,

We will remember them.

NEWS IN BRIEF

101st Airborne Soldiers find large weapons cache

BAGHDAD — Soldiers from 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division discovered a large weapons cache during combat operations south of Baghdad International Airport Nov. 4.

Members of Company D, 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment discovered the cache around 8 p.m.

The search revealed more weapons and munitions in a total of 18 caches before concluding at 5 p.m. Nov. 5. Three terror suspects were detained for further questioning.

An explosives ordnance disposal team later destroyed the cache through controlled detonation procedures. (By Maj. Frank Garcia, 2/101st Airborne Division Public Affairs.)

Stripes.com hosts free holiday messages

WASHINGTON — Stars and Stripes, the daily newspaper of the U.S. military, started hosting a free holiday

message posting service online at Stripes.com Nov. 1.

Many of the messages submitted online by the early deadline of Nov. 28 will appear in the Dec. 17 edition of Stars and Stripes (selected on a "first come, first served" basis). All messages submitted by Dec. 9 will be published online at Stripes.com beginning on Dec. 18.

"Stars and Stripes has a mission of service to our military and their families," said Margaret Irish, director of marketing. "Helping them exchange messages — for fun and for free — is an important part of celebrating the holidays."

To send a free message, visitors may go to Stripes.com and click on the Holiday Messages button, any time from Nov. 1 to Dec. 9.

Stars and Stripes is equipped to publish only those messages received online and in English. Every effort will be made to print all the messages received for Middle East, Europe and Pacific recipients, but Stars and Stripes also reserves the right to limit the number of messages actually published based on the space available.

STARS AND STRIPES
Your Hometown Newspaper

Tell us why your crib is "game deficient" — you could win FREE stuff: games, accessories, maybe even a console!

Win Stuff!!!

Visit www.stripes.com and click on "Tales from the Crib" to participate!

Double dribble: Soldier finds time for both basketball, military

By Spc. Michael R. Noggle
Coalition Forces Land Component
Command Public Affairs

CAMP ARIFJAN, Kuwait — When Col. Kenneth Clark, Coalition Forces Land Component Command C-1 (Forward) director of personnel and human resources, faced the decision to choose between his love for basketball and his love for the Army, the answer was easy — he opted for both.

Now Clark devotes his time and services to the war in Iraq and officiating for the National Collegiate Athletic Association.

From his childhood days to his time spent as a first lieutenant at Fort Hood, Texas, Clark was always involved in some type of sport competition, especially on the hardwood in the gym.

At the post-level leagues at Hood, Clark was at the top of his game. He won the post championship in 1984 and again the following year, while being named the best player



Courtesy photo

Clark has a discussion with one of his partners, Gene Steratore, after calling a technical foul during a game at the Atlantic 10 Tournament in March 2005.

on his team. However, as he gained rank, Clark said he knew that committing to a team and his job would be difficult.

One day he was in the gym, Clark said a colonel and sergeant major saw him playing with his team.

“They told us we couldn’t be out here playing ball with the Soldiers all the time, because the more senior I became in rank, the harder it would be to come out here all the time,” he said. So they mentioned the idea of becoming a referee and making a little extra money as well. Clark was enticed.

“I went to the clinics and the camps that summer,” he said. “I would ref the younger kids’ games ... as well as the summer league games. I didn’t know what I was doing, but I became interested.”

In 1986, Clark went to Korea and officiated the post-level games and belonged to the Department of Defense High School Association. It was then that Clark was recognized for his talent by Leslie Speight, a former college basketball and football official who is now with the National Football League.

“Les was very encouraging about my going to the NCAA basketball camps, but I was stalling because I was happy doing high school,” Clark said. “It took some time, but one day in 1989, I told him I would do it. When I got there, I didn’t realize what I had been missing.”

Out of the 67 participants, Clark rated number one overall. He received his first college conference assignment with the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Conference in 1989.

In 1992, after bouncing around with a few minor college conferences, Clark

attended the Division-1, Atlantic-10 Conference referee tryouts supervised by Mickey Crowley, Atlantic-10 officials’ supervisor.

“Mickey pulled me off to the side during the tryout sessions and told me I didn’t have a lot of years or experience but wanted to give me an opportunity,” Clark said. “At this point he was a little hesitant because I hadn’t had the college experience except for working for the smaller conferences, and I was still a junior referee and still doing high school. But he made the decision and put me on the court.”

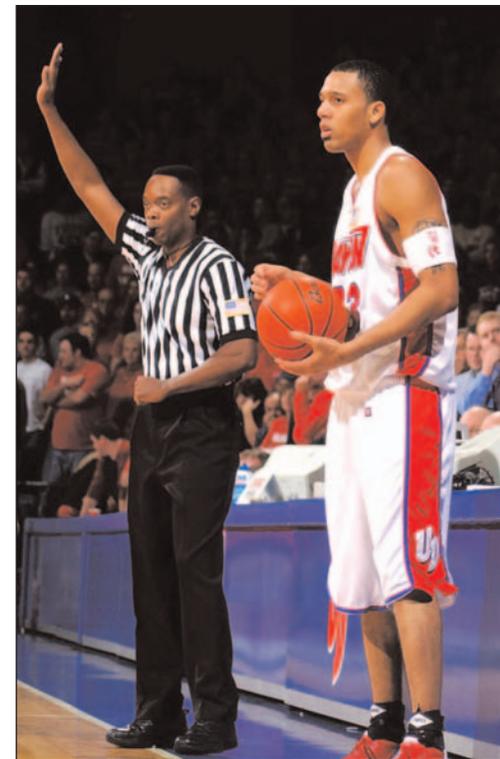
After the camp was completed, Clark was a certified referee in the Atlantic-10. His first major basketball game was an exhibition game with Temple University in Philadelphia versus an international team from Lithuania.

“As a junior referee they give you the exhibition games, because if you blow it, then no one is going to care,” Clark said. “Mickey came to the game and saw me at the end. He said, ‘You’ll be hearing from me again,’ and he ended up giving me more games that season. After that I started moving up.”

Clark started getting recognition from other major conferences such as the Metro Atlantic Athletic Conference, Big East, Ivy League and Patriot League. He officiated Allen Iverson, Ray Allen and Ron Artest as well as other current National Basketball Association players.

Clark explained to his supervisors that the Army’s mission always came first, but they understood and coordinated his leave dates and training schedule around the basketball season.

“There have been times I went overseas and had to skip the season,” Clark added. “But every year I came back, the league put



Courtesy photo

Kenneth Clark watches #23 Brooks Hall, Dayton Flyers’ leading scorer, throws in the basketball.

me back on the officiating rosters; and every time I called and told them I had to cancel a game, they understood.”

Once he returns from this deployment next spring, Clark plans to spend time with his family and friends during the summer and then get ready 2006-2007 season.

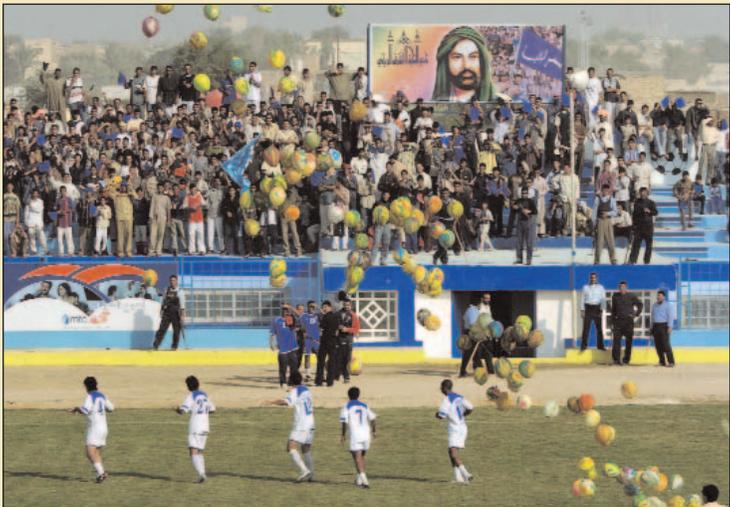
“I tell everyone today not to let anyone tell you that you can’t accomplish anything you want to do in life,” Clark explained. “I realize the Army is my career ... but I love basketball.”

Soldiers renovate Najaf stadium, opens with tied game

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class
Kevin W. Reeves
155th Brigade Combat Team
Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE DUKE, AN NAJAF, Iraq

— An Najaf’s soccer stadium was renovated as a project of the

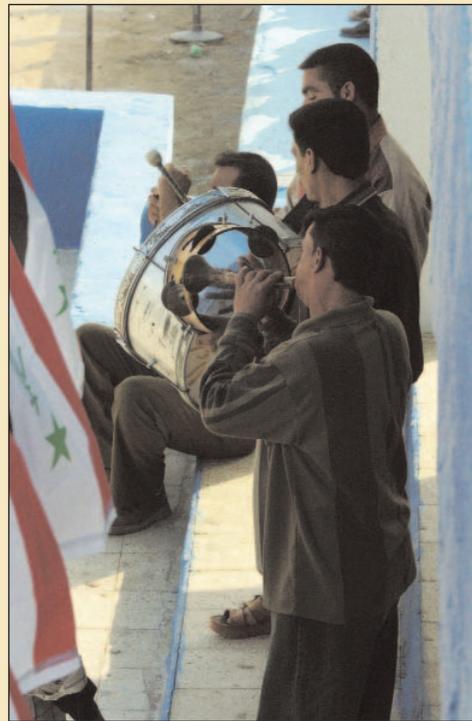


Soccer fans watch and cheer as balloons are released before the opening game in Najaf’s newly rebuilt stadium.

155th Brigade Combat Team, a National Guard unit from Mississippi. Task Force 198th Armor has control of the area and planning of operations and projects in the area.

Soccer is a major sport in Iraq. Like that of football in America, the fans will come from miles around

for a good game. The fans did come. They came out by the thousands to see the opening game between the Najaf team and a team from Baghdad Oct. 31. They were not disappointed as the game was packed with intense playing and great action.



Soccer fans at the new Najaf soccer stadium are treated to some local music played by a small group of men before the opening game.

The game ended in a one to one tie with no incidents of violence.

Verify your
surroundings.



Anything could
contain an IED.



STAY ALIVE