

RAKKASAN REPORT

Volume 2 Issue 2

10 November 2005



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

Red Knights Help Ad Dujayl Rebuild

By Staff Sgt. Jesse Riggan
3rd BCT Public Affairs

FOB O’Ryan IRAQ (28 October, 2005) - It has been just over four years since 9/11 and the War on Terror began. Today, Saddam Hussein stands trial in Baghdad for crimes against humanity—namely those that occurred in Ad Dujayl, Iraq.

Between 1982 and 1983, Ad Dujayl was the site of a massacre that left uncountable widows whose husbands died at the hands of Saddam’s regime. Part of the town was leveled and the people were forbidden to rebuild there.

Almost thirteen years later the people of Ad Dujayl are hopeful for the future of their community. They are working hard with coalition forces to rebuild their city and create a safe and secure environment for their children.

Task Force 128 from the Wisconsin National Guard and K Troop, 3rd Squadron from the 278th Regimental Combat Team out of the Tennessee NG spent the last year working in the



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jesse C. Riggan
Citizens around Ad Dujayl watch intently as the Rakkasans begin patrolling their streets.

area to reduce the threat of Improvised Explosive Devices along the main road-
-See Rebuild Page 2

Contents

- Page 2 Editor’s Notes
- Page 3 3-320th takes control of FOB O’Ryan
- Page 4 Brothers on the Battlefield
- Page 5 Patrolling Iraq
- Page 6 1st Battalion is new command at FOB Summerall
- Page 7 Citizens of Ad Dujayl
- Page 8 Iraqi Army and US work together
- Page 9 Around the Brigade / Soldiers witnesses birth of twins from Iraq

RAK 7 Notes

Rakkasans and Air Assault! I’m honored to take this opportunity to share a few thoughts with all 3rd BCT Warriors, family members, and Golden Rakkasans. The completion of a 200-mile combat convoy that included over 400 Soldiers and more than 150 vehicles has finally positioned the Rakkasans in our area of operations. Thanks to Soldiers Soldiering and leaders leading, we completed this operation with total accountability of personnel and equipment – the kind of Soldiering you’d expect from Rakkasans.

The Rakkasan presence is already being felt across Iraq – we’re dominating the battlespace through aggressive, continuous patrolling, with Red Knights, Leader, and War leading the way. Everywhere there are Rakkasans, the Torii is visible!

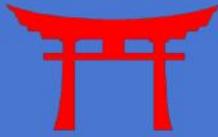
The second order effect of our actions has no doubt kept the enemy off balance. The 3rd STB continues the process of mentoring and teaching the Iraqi Army to eventually replace the coalition forces, drawing us that much closer to redeployment. The 626th BSB is providing unmatched support to every Rakkasan – while working around the clock to fortify every vehicle and increase the survivability of every Rakkasan. Job well done by all!

Despite the nature of a Soldier’s job and life, every Rakkasan continues to exercise his / her mind and body. I am very proud to be a Rakkasan, and I ask every Rakkasan out front and on the home front to stay plugged in! I’m confident that the mission will be accomplished

Lastly, I would like to thank everyone that lent a helping hand to the Rakkasans. I tip my Advanced Combat Helmet to these unsung heroes, heroes like the Rakkasan family members and Association, adopt a platoon, schools, and other organizations. To the Golden Rakkasans, I appreciate your continuous undying support as we move forward to the holidays.

My Ranger Buddy and I would like to leave you know with “No Desit Virtes” and Rakkasan!

Editors Notes



The 3 BCT Public Affairs Staff will travel throughout the BCT area of operation to focus on every Rakkasan Battalion.



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



Associated Press photojournalist Jacob Silberg covered 3/320th FA from 1 Nov to 7 Nov. Look for photos and stories of the Red Knight Rakkasans in your local news papers and magazines.

Next Issue

Units to be featured:

1-187 IN, 3-187 IN
3 STB, 626 BSB

Publication Date 30 Nov.

Rebuild

ways, train the local Iraqi Police and Iraqi Army and aid the government in building a productive and just civil infrastructure.

Their success can be seen all around the city as their children run along side Humvees giving the universal sign of coalition support "Thumbs Up." The local Government has been working diligently with the task force to meet the needs of the people and provide them with the freedom and security

they deserve.

Now the Red Knight Rakkasans of 3rd Battalion 320th Field Artillery Regiment have replaced the 128th and are wasting no time starting where they left off.

"We are here to form a partnership," Lt. Col James Inman, 3/320th FA commander, explained to the Mayor of Ad Dujayl in a Security Council meeting 27 Oct.

3/320th will be an integral part of Ad Dujayl and the surrounding areas moving toward an effective government. They will continue leading military operations in the

independent of coalition forces in Ad Dujayl. However, they still rely on them for training and higher echelon planning. "Iraq will be a sovereign nation after the elections. We will begin to disengage as Iraqis take charge," said Inman, "but we will remain one hundred percent committed to our role in this process."

Since the war began and Saddam was removed, the people of Ad Dujayl have begun to elect their own government. Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police are patrolling their streets apprehending insurgents, and well on the way to living under their own sovereign government.

"The people here are peaceful," said Sheikh Jassim, Sheikh of Kazragi, the largest tribe in Ad Dujayl. "They live simple lives and look forward to the elections and the day we can govern ourselves independently." A red torii symbol is at the end of the paragraph.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jesse Riggins
Lt. Col. James Inman talks to citizens of Ad Dujayl about their living conditions.

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. Items and comments may be emailed to jesse.charles.riggins@us.army.mil.

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

O’Ryan Becomes Red Knight Territory



Photos By Spc. Matt Wrzesinski

FOB O’Ryan, Iraq (2 November, 2005) - The Red Knight Rakkasans replaced Task Force 128 from the Wisconsin National Guard 30 Oct. at Forward Operating Base O’Ryan.

The move was made official by the ceremony held on the 30th but the process began a month ago when 3 Battalion 320th Field Artillery Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, arrived at FOB O’Ryan.

Key leaders and Soldiers began ride-along missions with TF 128 soon after their arrival.

Missions in the area consist primarily of route clearance for improvised explosive devices, intelligence gathering and capturing individuals suspected of supporting terrorist activities. These are mission typically carried out by infantry units, but the Soldiers of 3/320th FA have risen to the challenge.



Brothers on and off the Battlefield

By Maj. Tom Bryant
3rd BCT Public Affairs

Forward Operating Base Summerall, Iraq (28 October 2005) – An infantry company is a family – Soldiers live, eat, train, fight, laugh, and survive together every day. The bond between men that's forged in battle is rock-hard.

For four Soldiers in Company A, 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, that bond has been in place for over 20 years.

Sergeant Mitchell Burns and Corporal Michael Burns, brothers originally from Tioga, LA, are deployed to Iraq for the second time with the Rakkasans. For Sergeant Jason Milanowski and Private First Class Aaron Milanowski, from Grand Rapids, MI, this marks their first deployment together. Both sets of brothers are Infantrymen with the Rakkasans.

According to Sgt. Burns, having a family member with you in the same unit has its advantages and disadvantages.

“You tend to worry a lot more when you know your brother is out on a mission,” said Sgt. Burns. “Then again, when he gets a package, I get a package.”

Sgt. Milanowski, 27, a squad leader in 3rd platoon, agreed that having his brother here presents unique challenges.

“If I see his team leader doing something I don't necessarily agree with, it's hard for me not to go over and step in,” Milanowski said.

All four brothers share the competitive spirit you'd expect to find among siblings.

“We fought every day, a couple times a day growing up,” said Cpl.

Burns. “We're much closer now – I can't remember the last time we fought.”



Sgt. Burns was quick to add, “I *always* have to do better than my brother.”

Pvt. First Class Milanowski, a 20-year old Assistant Machine Gunner in 1st Platoon, said his brother's service was definitely a factor in his decision to

join the Army.

“After [the terrorist attacks on] 9/11, I had an opinion on the war and decided to do something about it,” Milanowski said.

Though their parents are “nervous” about their sons' presence in Iraq, both the Burns and Milanowski brothers say their families are glad they can keep an eye on one another while deployed.

During their first tour in Iraq together, Sgt. Burns was involved in an IED attack. Cpl. Burns was serving in a different location at the time, and was unaware of his brother's situation.

“It took three days for me to find out he was OK,” said Cpl. Burns. “That's nerve-wracking.”

When asked about the greatest benefit of having your brother in the same company, Sgt. Burns summed it up best.

“After a long day, or when I'm a little down, I can walk 50 feet down the road and talk to my brother – and I'm home.”



Photo by Maj. Tom Bryant

Rakkasans (from left) Sgt. Mitchell Burns, Cpl. Michael Burns, Sgt. Jason Milanowski and Pfc. Aaron Milanowski, A Company, 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment.,

Another Day, Another Patrol

By Spc. Matt Wrzesinski
3rd BCT Public Affairs

Forward Operating Base O'Ryan Iraq (28 October 2005) - All the hours of hard training are finally paying off now that we've reached Iraq. The missions are real. Patrols are an everyday facet of life.

No patrol is like any other except for the fact that you must always expect the unexpected. This is what we trained for throughout the past year.

All though each patrol is different they all share a common goal; complete the mission and bring back all the troops.

Although trained for the situation, I still didn't know what to expect as I went out on my first patrol. It was a routine mission. Our objective was to move to a nearby village just outside Ad Dujayl, Iraq and search

several houses for anything that could be used in terrorist activities in the Area.

As we rolled out the gate I locked and loaded my weapon and kept my eyes on the side of the road for anything suspicious. After traveling out the gate a few times this becomes second nature.

We pulled up to the first set of

houses and I popped out staying behind the platoon leader as we entered the house. I followed the Soldiers as they checked each room. With every room we entered it seemed more children appeared.

They were not scared nor were any of the adults. They seemed more than willing to help show us their homes. The first house didn't have anything out of the ordinary so we moved on to the next.

The second house had a little more action than the first. As we entered the house the owner forewarned us of the two Ak-47s and flack

vest that we were going to find. He also had more than the 130 round magazine of ammo that is allowed. We took the weapons and ammo due the excessive amount. It seemed different to me to see a weapon and ammo in every house but to the villagers it's normal. Besides that the house was clear so we moved across the canal to the next set of houses.

The next house moved smoothly and so did the next after that. Nothing more than the allowed one weapon and one magazine of ammo were found. This seemed like the trend until reaching the third house.

This house stuck out more than the others as we entered through the front door. It was definitely cleaner and didn't have the same musty aroma as the others. New furniture and new appliances filled the house. As we started to leave the house, another search of a certain room seemed in order, so a few Soldiers and I searched it. We found money stashed throughout the room. Although not a crime to have money, -See Rebuild Page 6



Photo by Spc. Matt Wrzesinski
Iraqi children watch as Soldiers patrol their neighborhood.



Photo by Spc. Matt Wrzesinski
Pvt. Credo Amouvik (left) and Cpl. Shawn Arthur, Bravo Battery, 3-320th Field Artillery, 187th Infantry Regiment, watch as an Iraqi civilian unlocks a cabinet for them to search during a patrol October 28.

PATROL



was still suspicious. Our suspicion rose with these people as we moved to the house behind them.

When we asked for a key to enter they refused, so we made our own way in. The house looked inhabited although we were assured that the owners had moved out. We left the area soon after that with suspicion of the village but nothing concrete.

After leaving the village we patrolled the area some more eventually pulling into the next village. Before we entered the first house an order came over the radio. We had to check out an area where mortar rounds were suspected of being fired from.

We arrived at the coordinate and quickly realized the area was clear so we moved back toward the FOB as our patrol shift wound down.

Another patrol ended as we entered the gate. I cleared my weapon and popped the chambered round into my hand. As I put the bullet back in my magazine I thought to myself the next mission might not be as smooth as this one. So as I go back to my bunk after the patrol I keep that in mind because I know in the next couple of days I'll be out again on another patrol. 

Leader Rakkasans Take Control in Bayji

By Pfc. Kenia Kraus
3rd BCT Public Affairs

Forward Operating Base Summerall, Iraq (October 29, 2005) – With a gentle breeze lifting the colors of both regiments as Soldiers stood shoulder to shoulder, the official Transfer of Authority for operations in the Bayji area took place between 1st Battalion, 103rd Armor Regiment and the Rakkasans of 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment.

Col. Mark McKnight, commander of 1st BCT, 3rd Infantry Division, presided at the ceremony. Leaders from both Task Force Band of Brothers and the Iraqi Army were present for the event.

Maj. Timothy Blaine, commander of Task Force Dragoons, recounted the long journey his Soldiers have traveled since arriving in the Salah ah Din province in January 2005. They have participated in landmark historical events such as the first democratic elections on Iraqi soil in January to the Constitutional referendum held a few weeks ago.

During his speech, Col. McKnight congratulated Dragoon Soldiers for

the contributions made to the cities surrounding FOB Summerall. “The recent success of the constitution referendum is only a small indicator of the indelible mark you and the Iraqi Security Forces have left” said McKnight.

Major Timothy Blaine, Commander of Task Force Dragoons, elaborated by congratulating his troops for making the province of Salah ah Din a safer place for coalition forces and Iraqi citizens.

“The Task Force also managed 24 projects worth over 1.9 million dollars in order to improve the infrastructure and the quality of life for the proud Iraqi people” said Blaine.

Lt. Col. Randy George, commander of Task Force Leader Rakkasans, thanked the Dragoons “for passing a year’s worth of knowledge in just 3 weeks.” He also introduced comrades in arms of the 1st Battalion of the 4th Iraqi Army Division who were present at the ceremony in a formation alongside companies from the 187th and the 103rd.

“They are brothers in the fight against the insurgency and we are

proud to serve alongside them,” said George. George also said he looked forward to working with the Iraqi Police as they continued developing a professional force.

“We all look forward to working with the Iraqi Security Forces to make Bayji a beacon of prosperity in Northern Iraq,” said George.



Photo by Pfc. Kenia Kraus

Lt. Col. Randy George, commander, 1st Battalion, 187th Infantry Regiment, takes command of FOB Summerall, in a ceremony October 29th.

Ad Dujayl Looks to the Future



Photo By Jacob Silberberg, Associated Press



Photo By Spc. Matt Wrzesinski



Photo By Staff Sgt. Jesse C. Riggin



Photo By Staff Sgt. Jesse C. Riggin



Photo By: Spc. Matt Wrzesinski



Photo By: Staff Sgt. Jesse C. Riggin



Photo By: Staff Sgt. Jesse C. Riggin

Iraqi Army and US Strive for a Free Iraq

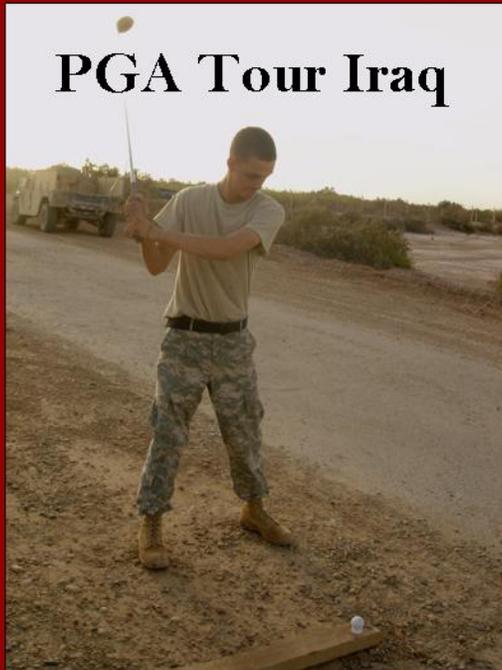


AROUND THE FOB

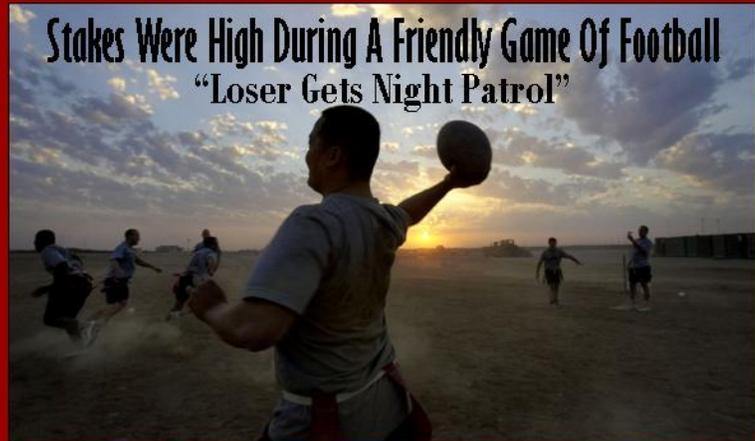
The Rakkasans are known for their willingness to adapt and overcome any situation. Soldiers from 3/320th take it one step further whether it is a make-shift washer and dryer or a 2X6 golf tee. The Red Knights will find a way.



O'RYAN LAUNDRY SERVICE



PGA Tour Iraq



Stakes Were High During A Friendly Game Of Football
"Loser Gets Night Patrol"

Internet Puts Soldier in the Delivery Room

By Spc. Matt Wrzesinski
3rd BCT Public Affairs

Forward Operating Base O'Ryan Iraq (5 November 2005) - Witnessing a child birth is a once in a lifetime thing, but for Soldiers in Iraq it can be almost impossible to witness this event.

Even though many miles away Cpl. Jesse Dyer, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 3rd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery, 187th Infantry Regiment, was able to witness the birth of his twins Nathaniel Allan and Ashlee Faye.



When the public relations team from First Health of the Carolinas Moore Regional Hospital in Pinehurst, NC. found out that Dyer was going to be in Iraq while his wife was going to give birth, they came

up with a plan for him to witness this special event. The hospital went out and bought a web cam for the delivery room. This was the first time the hospital had broadcasted a birth via web cam.

Dyer was ecstatic that he was able to view the birth of his children and forever feels in debt to the hospital.

"I was just amazed that they would go to such extent to make this happen," said Dyer, "If there was anything I could do to repay them for what they've done for me and my family I'd do it in a heartbeat."