

IBC

Iron Brigade Chronicles

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All clear

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Cover Photo

Staff Sgt. Bradley Beazer, Bulldog Troop, 2nd Squadron, 9th Cavalry, searches a house during a recent mission in CITY. Photo by Sgt. Zach Mott

The *Iron Brigade Chronicles* is published in the interest of the Soldiers, families and friends of the 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division. The *IBC* is an Army-funded newsletter authorized for members of the U.S. Army, under the provision of AR 360-1. Contents of the *IBC* are not necessarily the official views of, nor endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense or Department of the Army.

3rd HBCT Commander
Col. Brian D. Jones

3rd HBCT PAO
Maj. Michael Humphreys
michael.humphreys@us.army.mil

3rd HBCT PAO NCOIC
Staff Sgt. Sheryl L. Lawry
sheryl.lawry@us.army.mil

IBC Editor
Sgt. Zach Mott
zachary.mott@us.army.mil

IBC Staff Writer
Pfc. Paul J. Harris
paul.harris9@us.army.mil

3rd HBCT Broadcaster
Spc. Michael Cox
michael.coxjr@us.army.mil



Striker 6 sends



Col. Brian D. Jones

Strikers,

Ever so quietly, the 100 day anniversary of the 3d Heavy Brigade Combat Team's deployment passed by almost unnoticed. Not surprisingly, it passed as did every other day: with the steady professionalism of our dedicated Soldiers being exhibited from Ishaki to Mandali; and from Udaim to Narwhan. You continue to aggressively prosecute this fight along all lines of operations; in partnership with our Iraqi army and police allies, and in a selfless effort to build a better Iraq. The CSM and I are both extremely proud of your efforts.

Although I will never get used to publicly acknowledging the loss of any of our great Soldiers, it is fitting to recognize that our brigade suffered a tremendous loss with the deaths of SSG Curtis Howard, SGT Gordie Misner, and SPC Tim Wilwerth from a single powerful blast. This one hurt. Badly. Similarly, the tragic loss of CPL Dimitri Muscat shortly afterwards cannot be forgotten either. The pain in our hearts from the loss of these fine young men will be lessened by time; but it will never go away. Comrades-in-arms, friends, and family members will long remember their dedication, character, and sacrifice.

Events in country have moved swiftly since the Samarra mosque bombing and the criminal activity in Narwhan. The AIF and other external influences are trying everything in their power to bring about a sectarian conflict that will engulf the country. However, due to the steadiness of our Soldiers, and the responsive efforts of the ISF, we have calmed the citizenry and preserved the precarious balance that will allow the government to be seated and formed. However, we cannot relax as the forces aligned against a democratic Iraq will not allow it. We must continue to exhibit the same level of professionalism, restraint, aggressiveness, and compassion as we have shown to this point. By our example, we will show the Iraqi people that democracy produces the world's finest citizens and the world's best Soldiers.

I have spoken to a few groups of Soldiers recently, and my observations to this point boil down to two things: *First*, you need to be proud of what you are doing over here. Each of you has sacrificed a great deal in terms of comfort, family, and happiness. You have left the most advanced nation in the history of the world to serve here. You are remarkable people who have placed the needs of your countrymen above your own. This is both inspiring and humbling. I don't care what anybody else says: you are America's "Greatest Generation." *Second*, you need to treat each other like the "Band of Brothers" that you have become. Every time your buddy goes outside the wire there is a chance you may not see him or her again. Any time indirect fire hits our FOBs, the chance exists that you may not see your buddy afterwards. Treating each other with dignity and respect is no longer merely a "bumper sticker," it now has a meaning that only combat soldiers will ever appreciate fully.

Recent events in Iraq have made our job more challenging, but far from impossible. The sky is not falling, and Iraq is not burning. The people of Diyala and Southern Salah ad Din have shown great restraint and commitment to making peace work. With your help, they will succeed. Take care of each other!



Steadfast and Loyal!

Striker 6

List's List



Command Sgt. Maj.
David H. List

1. Heat Injuries: In the past few weeks, each day has gotten one degree warmer. Soon it will be extremely hot and this heat will be multiplied by the IBAS and other protective equipment we wear. Noncommissioned officers, some good points to remember are –

- * Monitor and enforce hydration
- * Monitor and enforce that your Soldiers are eating three meals a day
- * Execute random check; and battle buddies, check and protect each other
- * Know the common signs and symptoms of heat injuries

* Always remember a heat injury can be a life threatening condition. (For more information on heat injuries turn to page 11)

2. Inspections and Corrections: The 3rd HBCT has been on the ground for about four months now. Leaders and Soldiers are doing a great job. BUT! We cannot let our guard down in any area. This leads me to talk about inspections and corrections.

Inspections - NCO's at all levels need to conduct planned and on-the-spot inspections. Inspect your Soldiers' room. Make sure their fire extinguishers are full and in working condition. Check their fire alarm to see if the battery needs to be replaced or not. Make sure they are not living in squalor. Inspect and ensure your Soldiers are conducting PMCS on their equipment. Inspect your Soldiers' weapon. If they tell you they have cleaned it, open it up and see for yourself. Inspect and make sure your Soldiers have all their right gear: gloves, eye protection, weapon, a magazine, and their copy of the "Strikers" standards Card, ect... All these inspections will lead to corrections if Soldiers are not meeting standards.

Corrections - Corrections should happen every time an NCO or buddy sees a fellow Soldier doing the wrong thing. If you see a Soldier not wearing their eye pro, correct them. If you see a Soldier not wearing their gloves, correct them. If you see a Soldier driving too fast, stop that vehicle and correct the driver. The speed limit is only 5 MPH. If you see Soldiers wearing the subdued flag patch or some other tabs you know is not regulation – and they are not a member of Special Forces – correct them. (Note: Ranger, Special Forces, Sapper and the President's 100 are the only four authorized tabs. The Airborne tab is part of a unit insignia) The list goes on and on. NCOs each time you correct a Soldier you reinforces the standard.

Making corrections is not reserved for only NCOs. If you're a PVT and you see something out of place or not right, correct it. An example of this is if you come across a trash can that has been blown over – put it upright and place the trash back inside. NCO's if you see this PVT doing to right thing, go over and help him or her out and commend them on being proactive. NCO's here are four correction tips to remember and employ.

1. Correct the Soldier; **2.** Attack the performance, never the person; **3.** Give one correction at a time, do not dump everything on a Soldier all at once; **4.** Don't keep bringing a past correction up. When a correction is over, it's over

NCO's help Soldiers develop confidence, teamwork and pride in themselves and their equipment. Conducting inspections and corrections will do just that.

God bless the Soldiers and Families of the 3rd HBCT!

Striker 7

What you need to know before taking R&R

by Staff Sgt. Sheryl L. Lawry and Pfc. Paul J. Harris
3rd HBCT, 4th ID PAO

With mid-tour leaves now beginning, many questions have been circulating as to what Soldiers are permitted, how long mid-tour leave is, when exactly does leave start and do Soldiers still get paid their special duty pay while on break.

These and other questions were taken to the 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team's S-1 to alleviate confusion about the Rest and Recuperation program. On hand and ready to clear up any uncertainty was Staff Sgt. Sarah Jones, the brigade personnel noncommissioned officer in charge, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Band of Brothers. Here are the facts as she explained them.

What is the R & R program?

"The R & R program is a chance for Soldiers to get away from a stressful environment and go home and spend some time with their families. The program is fully-funded by the Army and Soldiers can leave here (Forward Operating Warhorse) and go anywhere they want to and it is paid for (round trip airfare only)."

To clarify even more, any Soldier at any FOB or camp in theater is provided this opportunity, not just Soldiers on FOB Warhorse.

Will the Army pay if a Soldier wants to go somewhere like Australia or Japan?

"The Army will fly you to the closest address that you put on your leave form as long as it's not a restricted area. All leave is based upon approval from a brigade commander."

For example, if you have a Soldier who wants to visit Mexico's Mayan ruin, Chichen Itza, the Army will pay for the cost of the flight getting the Soldier to the international airport nearest to the address submitted on the leave form. In the above

instance, the closest international airport to Chichen Itza is Cancun International Airport. Once at the Cancun Airport, the Soldier is responsible for ground transportation and trip costs accrued upon and after arriving. Tip: Use the address of the hotel you are staying at on your leave form.

When does my leave start, and can I go into the hole?

"Your leave does not start until you reach the United States or if you are going outside the continental U.S., it starts when you reach Frankfurt, Germany. You get 15 days for R&R. You can go into the hole for R&R, but that is based on command discretion. We do not encourage Soldiers to go into the hole. However, if you do, we will counsel you to let you know you may have to pay that remaining leave time back if you leave the Army before you accrue enough leave days."

Do I get my special duty pay while still on leave?

"Per Diem pay is not paid while you are on leave. All other combat pay is, provided you spend at least one day in country for that month you go on leave. The only way you would not receive it is if you do not come back."

On average how long does it take to get to the United States?

"It took me three days to get back (to the United States) on emergency leave, average (travel) times are dependant upon where you are going and if the flights are available or on time. You can stay in uniform when traveling back to the U.S. if you are on a military charter, but if you are on a civilian flight you will have to change clothes. You will be told in Kuwait if you need to change clothes or not. If you are single and traveling back to Fort Carson you can stay in the barracks if you want, proper prior planning will help in a smooth trip."

Soldiers going back to Fort Carson and needing to stay in the barracks must inform their chain of command of this need before their leave dates are confirmed.

In memory of ...

Staff Sgt.

Curtis T. Howard II

Alpha Company, 1-8 Combined

Arms Battalion,

4th Infantry Division

Spc.

Gordon F. Misner II

Alpha Company, 1-8 Combined

Arms Battalion,

4th Infantry Division

Pfc.

Thomas J. Wilwerth

Alpha Company, 1-8

Combined Arms Battalion,

4th Infantry Division

Gone, but not forgotten



Warhorse gathers, celebrates diversity

by Pfc. Paul J. Harris

IBC staff writer

Black history is American history — which makes it our history. Twenty years ago Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. championed that very notion by advocating for civil rights for all. Thirty-eight years later, for two consecutive nights, in a small theater on Forward Operating Base Warhorse, Soldiers of all races and nationalities celebrated African Americans who have contributed to American history.

The program entitled “Black History Month” was a mixture of spiritual readings, poems, gospel songs and personal stories shared by Soldiers. Lt. Col. Leonard Wells, commander, 3rd Special Troops Battalion, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Band of Brothers, spoke about his family and how his father rose above poverty and racial barriers in Louisiana to serve in the Army Band for 32 years.

“I wanted to illustrate, through personal example, that not long ago our Army judged us by the color of our skin,” Wells said. “And that thousands of African Americans before us paved the way so that all Soldiers, black, white, red and yellow could serve, side-by-side, together without prejudice or hate.”

Wells was referring to the famous executive order, #9981, signed by President Harry S. Truman officially ending segregation in the Army. He then reflected upon personal experiences growing up in the South.

“I never met Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., George Washington Carver or Rosa Parks,” Wells admitted. “But, I do know a

few folks who have personally endured segregation’s injustice. I grew up listening to the stories of how things were long ago in the Deep South. I was never forced to sit on the back of a bus, or the back or balcony of a theater. I’ve never used a colored-only water fountain or restroom. I can only imagine going into a department store and not being able to try on clothes. We, in this theater today, regardless of color, owe those who have a debt of gratitude. For we would not be here today enjoying the benefits of freedom were it not for their sacrifices, many with their lives. They are the real American heroes.”

Spc. Nova Robinson, cook, 3rd HBCT, 4th ID, sang renditions of the national anthem and the Negro National Anthem. She was happy to see a diverse mix of ethnicities in attendance for the program.

“Tonight there are white people, black people and Hispanics (in the audience). 40 years ago there is no way that you could have all these people in the same room together,” Robinson said.

Robinson was hopeful the Soldiers in attendance would leave the program remembering the contributions of all Soldiers, regardless of skin color, who have paved the way for today’s Army.

“We are proud of what we have been through, we want to celebrate where we have come to,” she said. “It was not just black people who brought about the civil rights movement. It is very important for today’s Army to remember the struggle that went on before so we can have the Army that we have today.”

An intended theme of the program was inclusiveness, developed by the program’s producer Staff Sgt. Trachell Harris, equal opportunity representative, 64th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd HBCT. It was also the first time the Iron Brigade held a production like Black History Month during a deployment.

Harris said his goal was to put on a cele-

bration of life; a celebration of people. To recognize the people and their efforts - their struggles - and to let them know there is hope.

“We have come a long way and we are going a long way,” Harris said.

He was also proud of the performances and speakers during the multi-night program.

“(It was) very inspirational to see Lt. Col. Wells speak on behalf of his father’s struggles. When (Command) Sgt. Maj. Lopez spoke it was interesting to see and hear how people (as a society) grow,” expressed Harris. “There are a lot of people that are making an effort for our progression in life period. I am happy it turned out the way it did.”

Command Sgt. Maj. Rigoberto Lopez is the command sergeant major for the 64th BSB, 3rd HBCT. He spoke during the first night on the significance of why Black History Month is celebrated in the month of February and how it has evolved from “Negro History Week” beginning in 1926.

“The month of February is significant and recognized in African American history for the birthdays of great African American pioneers and institutions,” Lopez said. “These include the birthdays of Frederick Douglass, W.E.B. DuBois, Langston Hughes, Eubie Blake, NAACP and the first Pan African Congress.”

“I believe strongly that Black History Month should be the reaffirmation of struggle and determination to change attitudes and heighten the understanding of the African experience,” Lopez said. “I have to say, people, this society has come a long way for the better. God didn’t create us to hate each other, but to love one another.”

With the foundation laid by the likes of King, Parks and Carver, Wells put the culmination of the second evening’s celebration into perspective.

“Let us not forget. Let’s make them proud by continuing to build upon their foundation,” Wells said. “We still have a lot of work to do. We all know our work is not done.

“Together, all of us can make a difference. Make a difference in our families. Make a difference in our Army. Make a difference in our society. Like my school motto (The United States Military Academy at West Point) states – ‘there is no task too great’.”



Photo by Pfc. Paul J. Harris

The gospel choir sings spiritual songs for the enjoyment of Soldiers during the “Black History Month” program at Faulkenburg Theater on Forward Operating Base Warhorse.



Photos by Sgt. Zach Mott

ABOVE: After stopping a suspicious vehicle, Sgt. Bradley Beazer, a truck commander from Bulldog Troop, 2nd Squadron, 9th Cavalry, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, provides security as other members of his patrol question one of the vehicle's occupants behind him.

RIGHT: Pfc. Christopher Gipson, a gunner from Bulldog Troop, 2nd Squadron, 9th Cavalry, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, conducts a pre-combat check on one of his sights.

"The constant presence, from what I feel, is the more time you're out there, they see you, they're not going to place IEDs or they're not going to fire their mortars"

-- Sgt. Herman Herrera, Bulldog Troop, 2nd Squadron, 9th Cavalry

by Sgt. Zach Mott
IBC editor

Leaving the gates of Logistical Support A 2nd Squadron, 9th Cavalry was prepared to route clearance. But, as the Humvee patrol entered Hishma, a pick-up truck sped away — leading to apprehension.

When the white vehicle did not stop and suspicious enough to warrant stopping, questioned searching the vehicle.

"We got a lot of off the wall stories from Sgt. Herman Herrera, the Troop's NBC NCO occupants of the truck.

Although the patrol found nothing suspicious any of the three occupants, some information

"We questioned them, got pictures, names sent them on their way," Herrera said.

This information could prove useful for later if of these individuals be involved in other situations

Following this unexpected detour, the patrol mission: clearing an often-used alternate supply



Staff Sgt. Christopher Knight, center, and Sgt. Herman Herrera, both from Bulldog Troop, 2nd Squadron, 9th Cavalry, speak with one of the men from a suspicious vehicle with the assistance of an interpreter.

Bulldogs

homp

insurgency

lott
 area Anaconda, Bulldog Troop,
 conduct a routine mission of
 entered the town of Abu
 ng to a short-lived chase and
 yield to the patrol, it became
 tioning the occupants and
 all three of the males,” said
) who helped question the
 sious inside the vehicle or on
 n was gathered.
 s, where they lived and then
 ater patrol or unit should any
 picious activity.
 rol continued the scheduled
 ply route and preventing addi-

tional improvised explosive devices from being emplaced.
 “The constant presence, from what I feel, is the more time you’re out there, they see you, they’re not going to place IEDs or they’re not going to fire their mortars,” Herrera said.
 In addition to traversing the roads, Bulldog Troop emplaced an anti-IED tool of their own. A three-member dismount team scanned the road in the event that anti Iraqi forces were working outside the eyes of the moving patrol.
 “The goal was to ... prevent IEDs being emplaced and see if we noticed anybody with suspicious activity,” said Sgt. Bradley Beazer, the dismount team chief, Bulldog Troop, 2nd Squadron, 9th Cavalry, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Band of Brothers.
 “Depending on where it’s at and how far we are from (explosive ordnance disposal), if we can take care of it, we will put fire onto the people that are trying to plant IEDs or we’ll call the other trucks up to maneuver onto the insurgents.”
 As the mission wound down, and another group prepared to patrol the area, this group of Soldiers felt confident their presence is making a difference in protection their fellow Soldiers as well as Iraqi citizens.
 “The more time we have out there the better,” Herrera said. “(I think) it’s very successful ... we’re doing a good job”

Securing compound keeps visitors safe

by Sgt. Zach Mott
IBC editor

In the midst of a bustling city, cars buzzing around and people gathered on street corners, security is a prime concern. Because of the sheer number of people around a location this creates an unknown number of possible anti-Iraqi forces.

While the leadership of Company B, 1-8 Combined Arms Battalion, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Band of Brothers, was attending a sheik council meeting in Balad, Iraq, other members of the patrol were busy controlling the area from the ground and on the rooftop.

“It’s real important. If the same vehicles are circling throughout the area, they can identify it right away,” said Staff Sgt. James DeWolfe, headquarters platoon sergeant, Co. B, 1-8 CAB.

DeWolfe’s team blocks off the entry and exit points of the compound and is strategically placed elsewhere to scan the city for suspicious activity and possible sniper target positions. One thing the team takes special note of is what things are out of place or not the

way they normally are.

“You can spot different patterns and you can tell what’s usually here,” DeWolfe said. “If it’s out of place, we’re a little more on edge”

While inside the meeting, Capt. Keven Beattie, commander of Co. B, said the extra security provides him with peace of mind while inside the compound.

“Initially, we go in I have elements clear the building — they look behind the curtains, underneath the chairs, behind the desks — they make sure there’s no explosives or anybody trying to assassinate any coalition forces that are in there,” he said.

If the situation outside the meeting became hostile, Beattie would know almost immediately and be able to react accordingly.

“They can radio me, or whoever else is with me, early so if there is a situation, an armed man coming in or whatever, we can increase our security posture and possibly get out before they attempt to do anything,” Beattie said.

Tension at this meeting was high because of a recent insurgent attack that killed 11 people in Balad. But, the meeting was conducting peacefully and Beattie and his team left the meeting the same way they arrived — together.



Photo by Sgt. Zach Mott

Soldiers from Company B, 1-8 Combined Arms Battalion, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Band of Brothers, patrol the rooftops during a sheik council meeting.



64th BSB protects brigade *'Bloodlines'*

by Pfc. Paul J. Harris

IBC staff writer

With horns blazing, the patrol makes its way through a traffic jam in Diyala Province on its way to Logistical Support Area Anaconda. It is imperative they do not slow down for any reason.

It is the job of Companies A and B, 64th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Band of Brothers, to get needed supplies to and from LSA Anaconda or Forward Operating Base Normandy.

Without daily supply runs the brigade would shut down like a bad heart attack. Logistical patrols are vital missions to protect the bloodline of the brigade.

To insure 3rd HBCT functions properly, Capt. Adam Morgan, field ordering officer, 3rd HBCT, 4th ID, and his S-4 staff meticulously plan and forecast how much supplies are needed for the brigade to operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. After the supply totals are calculated, the "right hand" of the S-4, support operations for 64th BSB takes over to execute those plans, Morgan said.

Getting supplies from point A to point B usually means putting a vehicle patrol together because air transportation is too unreliable due to weather and other factors, said Staff Sgt. Joshua Marron, transportation NCOIC, 64th BSB. Marron puts together the logistical patrols that funnel the supplies and passengers to the different FOBs throughout the brigade's area of responsibility.

Once a log patrol is scheduled, the responsibility of safe guarding those supplies to their intended destination falls upon the Soldiers of Companies A and B of the 64th BSB. Supply runs are dangerous and are often fertile ground for insurgent attacks. The threat of improvised explosive devices planted in the roads is one of the many obstacles the security teams must face. In December, Co. B under the direction of 1st Lt. Amanda Slack, Second Platoon leader, 64th BSB encountered its first IED on its first logistical patrol leaving FOB Warhorse.

"We were all a little edgy because we knew this route was bad to begin with. The crew that I was with had only done one (patrol) from Kuwait to here, we were all pretty inexperienced," Slack said.

About three hours into the patrol an IED exploded near the truck traveling behind Slack. It blew up the tire underneath the driver and some shrapnel had penetrated the radiator, disabling the vehicle.

"I had never heard an IED before, my initial reaction was 'what was that loud noise?,'" Slack said.

After the initial shock of the blast Slack and her crew made sure everyone was OK, exited the blast area and began to pull security around the vehicles. By the time Slack had radioed command, her crew had expeditiously hooked up the disabled vehicle and was ready to move. She was pleased with the way her team had reacted and attributed it to the long hours of patrol training 64th BSB underwent at Fort Carson, Colo., before deploying to Iraq.

"That was one of the biggest things we trained on was how to react to IED, how to recover a vehicle that has been hit by an IED, what do you do when you get hit by an IED. We did not even think about it, we just did it," Slack said.

The IED explosion had a sobering effect on Slack and her team.

"It was good that nobody got hurt, but it was also like 'no (expletive) we are in Iraq, we could get hit by IEDs,' it was definitely a reality check. But it was also a confidence booster because the guys were like 'OK, we know how to react to this, we are trained for this and we proved ourselves today'. All the training paid off," she said.

Another obstacle the security teams tackle is trying to keep the convoy moving smoothly. The Iraqis and foreign nationals who drive the refrigerator trucks have their own style of driving which can be a cause of concern from time to time, said Sgt. David Riddle, patrol team leader, Co. B, 64th BSB, 3rd HBCT.

"When the weather is bad, there is a high chance for those trucks rolling over. If they do roll over we have to stop, pull security, get a tow truck to come out and bring it in for maintenance," Riddle said.

Just getting the patrol through the congestion of traffic can be a mission unto itself. It can be quite difficult to communicate with the local commuters that a patrol needs to get through, otherwise the patrol runs the risk of becoming a sitting duck for insurgent attacks.

"When we come up to an area where there is a big traffic jam, we start beeping our horn and our turret gunner beeps his air horn real loud to let them know they need to move out of the way," Riddle said. "We will give them a moment to get out of the way, but we cannot stop for any reason. For the safety of the convoy we have to push through."

After dropping supplies off, the combat logistical patrol only has a few moments to grab something to eat before loading up with more supplies and heading out on the road for the return home. Riddle does not seem to mind the time crunch, he is aware of the importance he and his team play in the mission.

"If we were not protecting the vehicles, the (refrigerated) trucks would be fish in a barrel. Insurgents could steal our supplies and get a hold of our personal mail which could present a security risk to our families back home," Riddle said. "You could say we are protecting the bloodline of the brigade."



Photo by Pfc. Christopher Willner, Company B, 64th Brigade Support Battalion
Soldiers of Company B, 64th Brigade Support Battalion, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Band of Brothers, provide security for a logistical patrol as it makes its way to Forward Operating Base Warhorse.

Silver Lions' Scouts stumble upon cache

by Sgt. Zach Mott
IBC editor

Changes in the ordinary cause unease among members of the 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Band of Brothers.

These Soldiers have been taught to look for changes to the familiar and become more alert when these variances are spotted.

"Every guy I have is an outstanding troop," said Sgt. 1st Class Michael Greer, platoon leader for the Scout

Platoon, Company A, 1-68 CAB. "We teach them to look for something that just doesn't feel right or look right and then we'll go from there. That's basically how we found the cache."

The cache began innocently enough with five, rusted machine guns believed to be left over from the Iraq-Iran War that ended in 1988. But, these machine guns were only the tip of the iceberg.

The platoon — comprised

mainly of scouts and engineers — used metal detectors and old-fashioned muscle power to unearth several mortars, mortar tubes, improvised explosive device materials and documents believed to be target lists that included Forward Operating Base Gabe and other high-level targets in Diyala Province.

"After we found it, it made me feel like that's one IED that might (not) hit a U.S. convoy and that made me feel good," said Sgt. Adam Keefer, a Scout Platoon engineer.

While some Soldiers scoured the open field listening for pings on the detectors and others were digging where the pings were heard, those who remained in the Humvees scanned the surrounding area waiting for the former owners of the cache to return.

"They had been there recently this was probably a site they used," said Spc. Michael Russo, an engineer for the Scout Platoon. "So, we needed to keep them out of there because they could be coming back any time to get their goods."

While providing security the urge to watch the massive amount of munitions being found was compelling.

"It was pretty tough sometimes because you want to look back and check out all that action going on back there, all the stuff they're finding," said Pfc. Anthony Chicoine, one of the Scout Platoon's scouts. "We were right in the center of the whole perimeter."

Knowing the area was secured, those on the ground became more diligent in their search for more items in the cache.

"I dug up a lot of the rounds that we found the first time," said Pfc. Thomas Carpenter, one of the Scout Platoon's scouts. "Once we went up to where the mound was, we started digging up and realizing there were refrigerators full of stuff. Then we realized there was more too it that what we thought."

It was important to have a medic on-hand in case one of the many munitions Soldiers' were handling accidentally exploded.

"There was some pretty dangerous, older explosives ... stuff that could have gone off in somebody's hands," said Pfc. Matthew Roberts, the medic for Company A, 1-68 CAB. "As soon as we roll out, you have to go over everything that you would do in any possible scenario so that when you get out there it's quick, it's lightning. You don't even have to think about what you need to do, you just do it."

Although there are still more munitions out there, finding a cache as large as this helps at least slow the anti-Iraqi forces that target Coalition Forces.

"We kind of like to feel we made a dent," said Staff Sgt. Matthew Nicodemus, Scout Platoon sergeant.



Some of the items found in a cache near the town of Abu Allah Muhammed, Iraq, are displayed shortly after they were unearthed.



Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Michael Greer, Company A, 1-68 Combined Arms Battalion

Shortly after finding the first part of a cache, members of Company A, 1-68 Combined Arms Battalion, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Band of Brothers, dig up part of the load while others provide security around the site.



An enemy you forget about - the Heat

by Spc. Lee Elder

133d Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Spring is almost here and summer will soon follow, and with it will come temperatures soaring greater than 100 degrees. It's not too early to start gearing up for Iraq's steamy spring and summer temperatures.

Soldiers are often most susceptible to heat-related injuries between the months of March and June simply because they don't suspect they are at risk.

"Every year the risk of becoming a heat casualty poses a significant threat to Soldiers," said Brig. Gen. Michael B. Cates, who heads the Army's preventive medicine functional proponent. "Heat injuries and illness continue to remain a significant health problem in the Army." Heat injuries range from sunburn to heat stroke. Each is preventable.

Cates made his comments in a memorandum released last year. The same memo said 11 Soldiers died from heat-related injuries during the period from 2003-2004. During the same timeframe, 2,676 Soldiers suffered heat-related injuries. Of those figures, 2,150 suffered from heat exhaustion while 526 suffered a more serious heat stroke. All total, 294 Soldiers required hospitalization.

The Army has devised the HEAT acronym to identify heat hazards to Soldiers. Leaders at all levels can use these factors to determine the risks to their Soldiers and plan appropriately. They are:

High heat category. This is especially critical when the ambient temperature is more than 75 degrees;

Exertion level of training;

Acclimatization. Have the Soldiers had the recommended 7-14 days to get used to their current climate.; and

Time. This includes the length of heat exposure and recovery time.

Leaders also must know their Soldiers and know which ones are more vulnerable to heat-related injuries. These include Soldiers who are overweight or physically unfit, those who are on medications and those who have been on sick call in recent days even if it is for a seemingly unrelated illness or injury.

The Soldiers' age, in particular, if he or she is older than 40 is another factor. Soldiers who have suffered a heat-related illness in the past should also be identified since they are a prime candidate for a recurring attack. They should be visibly marked with a tape or a cord on their uniform.

Heat should be a major factor when planning training or missions. Leaders may try to plan events in the morning when it is cooler and look for areas in or close to shaded areas and may want to make adjustments to the uniform to provide some relief from the heat.

A hydration schedule should also be developed.

However, it is important that Soldiers don't consume more than 1 1/2 quarts of water per hour and no more than 12 quarts in a day. These steps ensure that Soldiers don't suffer from over hydration or water intoxication. Signs of this condition are confusion, vomiting and weakness.

While sports drinks can be useful as a supplement to water, they should never be a replacement. Despite these products' many claims, water is still the drink of choice for those who want to avoid a heat-related injury. It is also important that leaders ensure Soldiers eat during meal breaks. On very hot days, table salt may be added to meals. However, salt tablets are not recommended.

Heat cramps are caused by an excessive loss of body salt. These cramps are normally felt in stomach, leg and arm muscles.

Heat exhaustion symptoms include dizziness or fainting; heavy sweating; muscle cramps; cold or clammy skin; and headaches.

Heat stroke symptoms include rapid heartbeat; nausea, confusion or delirium; warm and dry skin (because the body is no longer able to sweat); fever of greater than 104 degrees; severe headaches; seizure or muscle twitching; and unconsciousness that can lead to death.

Any Soldier experiencing these symptoms must seek medical attention immediately. While the arid Middle Eastern climate is a challenge, the Army deems most heat-related injuries as preventable. Leaders must ensure that every precaution is taken to ensure the heat doesn't inflict a heavy toll on their Soldiers.

Leaders at all levels must take care of their Soldiers. They are a leaders' responsibility especially when the heat is on.

For more information, visit <http://www.usariem.army.mil/nutri/nuadhot.htm>



Complacency kills. Do every TLPs, PCCs and PCIs before every mission like it is your first.

If you look up complacency in the dictionary it read unawareness of actual dangers or deficiencies. When going on a mission for the first time most Soldiers check and recheck their equipment before leaving the FOB. As the brigade enters its fourth month of deployment, the urge to slack-off can be strong.

1st. Lt. Michael Freeland, platoon leader for the command security detachment, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, Task Force Band of Brothers strongly cautions Soldiers to fight these urges.

“If you get complacent and you don’t do your checks you can endanger the lives of your Soldiers, yourself, and the person you are supposed to be protecting,” Freeland said.

That is why FAR #3 is so important to remember.

TLP is Troop Leading Procedure: Freeland frequently leaves FOB Warhorse and has a routine series of checks before embarking on a mission. The night before he gets an intel update, a rout assessment and possible area of concern for patrol. This is to insure no adjustments are to be made to the mission plan. The day of the mission his squad shows up one hour before the start time. It is to ensure the squad does radio checks, equipment checks, test fires, makes sure batteries are fully loaded for the night vision goggles and the vehicles are up and running with no deficiencies.

PCC is Pre Combat Checks: Normally a squad leader will go over all the checks made by his squad to make sure everything is up to speed and to get ready for the PCI check.

PCI is Pre Combat Inspection: Freeland said he will go and do spot checks on his squad leaders. He might look at a particular aspect of a radio, a machine gun or a vehicle. After these spot checks are completed he decides then if the platoon is fit to move outside of the FOB.

What can go wrong, will go wrong, is not necessarily true if you remember to do your pre mission checks like it is the first time leaving the FOB and avoid complacency.

In an article by Dennis Bratcher, he says: “The season of Lent has not been well observed in much of evangelical Christianity, largely because it was associated with "high church" liturgical worship that some churches were eager to reject. Many of the churches that had originally rejected more formal and deliberate liturgy are now recovering aspects of a larger Christian tradition as a means to refocus on spirituality in a culture that is increasingly secular.”



Dennis Bratcher goes on to say that Lent originated in the fourth century of the church. The season of Lent spans 40 weekdays beginning on Ash Wednesday and climaxing during Holy Week with Holy Thursday (Maundy Thursday), Good Friday, and concluding Saturday before Easter.

Lent is a season of soul-searching and repentance. Ken Collins says “It is a season for reflection and taking stock. Lent originated in the very earliest days of the Church as a preparatory time for Easter, when the faithful rededicated themselves and when converts were instructed in the faith and prepared for baptism. By observing the forty days of Lent, the individual Christian imitates Jesus’ withdrawal into the wilderness for forty days.”

It is important to see Lent for what it should be; it is to be a time marked by prayer, fasting, and offerings for the needy. Christian churches that observe Lent focus on it as a time of prayer, repenting for failures and sin as a way to focus on the need for God’s grace. Mr. Bratcher ends by saying “It is really a preparation to celebrate God’s marvelous redemption at Easter, and the resurrected life that we live, and hope for, as Christians.”

Random Thoughts

Photo share -- show off your view of Iraq here



Photo by Sgt. Kenneth Sargent

Pacesetters of the 3rd Battalion, 29th Field Artillery received “combat patches” during a ceremony Feb. 21 at Logistical Support Area Anaconda.



Photo by Terry Moore

A tank from Destroyer Company, 1-68 Combined Arms Battalion is lit by the night sky.

To see your photos here, e-mail them to: zachary.mott@us.army.mil. Photos can be anything from a promotion to everyday life on the FOB. Please include as much information about the pictures as possible.

