

The Daily Roar

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Squadron takes on new mission, name

4th IBCT, 10th Mtn Div. PAO

FORWARD OPERATING BASE LOYALTY, Iraq – The 3rd Squadron, 89th Cavalry Regiment officially assumed command-and-control responsibility for their operational environment in eastern Baghdad during a transfer-of-authority ceremony here, Dec. 26.

The ‘Cross Functional Team Slugger,’ relieved 3rd Squadron, 61st Cavalry Regiment, CFT Destroyer, whose standard has flown over their headquarters on Forward Operating base Loyalty for the past 15 months.

As the late afternoon sun was setting on Baghdad, and on the Destroyer’s rotation, their commander and command sergeant major, Lt. Col. James Phillips and Command Sgt. Maj. Javier Briseno, lowered their squadron standard. Lt. Col. Craig Collier, from Flint, Mich., and Command Sgt. Maj. Emmitt Maunakea, squadron commander and command sergeant major, then raised the Slugger standard.

Passing of responsibility from one cavalry unit to another symbolizes continued stability and security inherent in the arrival of the cavalry, according to a transfer of authority order published during the ceremony.

Since arriving in Baghdad, 3rd Squadron, 89th Cav. leaders and Soldiers have been ‘learning the ropes’ of their new operations area from 61st Cav. Soldiers, explained Collier. “Now it’s our turn,” he said.

The majority of Slugger Soldiers have served in Iraq recently, claimed Collier, including himself in that category. For some of them, this will be their second or third tour of one year or longer, he said. However, Collier has noticed situations in Iraq are different this time around.

“The Iraqi National Police, local police and Iraqi Army units are much better equipped and manned,” said Collier. “I asked one Iraqi ‘shurta’ (policeman) on patrol with us why he joined. ‘For my country,’ he unhesitatingly replied.

“He had body armor, a clean rifle that he carried properly, and a new uniform that matched his comrades in the patrol,” continued Collier. “His team looked far more professional than any of the Iraqi Security Forces I saw in 2006.”

Even with all of this progress, Collier said there is still a lot of work to do.

“Children and adults wave at us as we pass. In our sector, government clean-up projects are improving the streets,” said Collier. “The ubiquitous garbage, improving but spotty government services and less-frequent, but persistent, attacks remind us that we’ve still got a long way to go, but the improvement from a year ago is real.”

Collier said Phillips reminded him they have been deployed together before during a Christmas holiday, as lieutenants in the same infantry

battalion while in Panama for Operation Just Cause in 1989. Collier also reflected upon what his squadron has done to prepare for the mission at hand.

“Since receiving our orders last May, we began to get ready for this mission,” said Collier. “Our training included individual tasks such as marksmanship and combat-life-saving techniques as well as collective tasks like react to an improvised explosive device.”

As a combat unit, 3rd Squadron, 89th Cav.’s deployment training emphasized physical fitness, with events



by Sgt. Maj. Ronald Semerena

Lt. Craig Collier and Command Sgt. Maj. Emmitt Maunakea, raise their standard during a transfer-of-authority ceremony on Forward Operating Base Loyalty.



Combat Medic places mission first

by Pfc. Samantha Schutz, 4th Inf. Div. PAO

CAMP STRIKER, Iraq – A native of Port Angeles, Wash., Staff Sgt. Craig Sotebeer, an emergency care medic with the Medical Troop, Regimental Support Squadron, 2nd Stryker Regiment, inspects the contents of his combat lifesaver bag at the 2nd SCR Troop Medical Center in preparation for a convoy mission Dec. 28. Since combat medics are always on call in case of emergency, Sotebeer checks his equipment and vehicles daily.

Baghdad Three Day Weather Forecast

Tuesday
Partly cloudy
HI: 62F/17C
LO: 44F/7C



Wednesday
Partly Cloudy
HI: 64F/18C
LO: 42F/6C



Thursday
Partly Cloudy
HI: 64F/18C
LO: 50F/10C




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Brigade recovery team right in the rain

by **Spc. Nathaniel Smith**

4th IBCT PAO

BAGHDAD – In the world of sports, analogies are frequently made between the games played and battle. What the witty sportscasters and writers don't take into account is a glaring difference.

Combat operations don't get called on account of rain or poor field conditions.

With that thought in mind, the vehicle recovery team of the 610th Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division trained for Baghdad's upcoming rainy season at Forward Operating Base Falcon, Dec. 27.

The event consisted of pulling an M88 recovery vehicle stuck in mud past its tracks to stable ground where the 70-ton vehicle was again fully operable, but the task had to be accomplished safely as well as effectively.

Spc. David Waiter, a welder on the crew from 610th BSB's Company B, said while the training wasn't performed under easy conditions, he still enjoyed the event.

"I like getting out in the mud. Even though it's cold, I like it; it's fun," the Houston native said. "It's not easy, but it's not going to be easy work whenever you try to do it."

The Soldiers had to wade out in knee-deep cold water, and sometimes partially submerge themselves to hook up the disabled vehicle. Waiter added that the heavy equipment used, such as the 140-pound snatchblock, which is used to hook the recovery vehicle to its cargo, does not make their lives any easier.

"It's a workout to use," he said.

Master Sgt. Richard Carullo, the 610th BSB support operations noncommissioned officer-in-charge from Orlando, Fla., said due to the Soldiers taking on additional missions while deployed, the training was vital to Task Force Dragon's success.



by Spc. Nathaniel Smith, 4th IBCT PAO

Sgt. Michael Reynolds, a light-wheel mechanic from Company B from Florence, Ky., assesses the link-up on an M88 recovery vehicle during a training exercise at Forward Operating Base Falcon, Dec. 27.

"This is not our normal mission; we're a light infantry brigade. We're not normally assigned M88's or HETs (Heavy Equipment Transports)," Carullo said. "We picked this mission up in theater, and having picked it up in theater, we haven't had the opportunity to train. We felt it was important because of the time of year, and because of the rainy season coming on, we needed to train Soldiers before they had to go into sector to recover vehicles stuck in the mud."

Despite having the extra challenge of adapting to an entirely new set of obstacles while conducting daily operations in a combat zone, Waiter said he takes everything in stride because all Soldiers face their own set of trials.

"We do what we have to do just like anybody else. We have our mission, they have theirs. To me, we're all on the same level," he said. "We all have our own missions; we all do our own thing."

Soldiers 'learning the ropes' of new operations area

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such as road marches in body armor and one and a half hour physical training sessions, explained Collier. Their collective training culminated with a graduate-level exercise with Arabic-speaking role players and aggressive enemy, he said.

"For two weeks we fought a well-organized and tenacious enemy while providing economic assistance to locals and training indigenous security forces; tasks we knew

we'd face in Iraq," said Collier. "Sometimes we won battles, sometimes we lost them, but we learned from our mistakes and tried to avoid repeating them."

The Slugger Soldier's preparations for deploying to Iraq also included weapons qualifications, immunizations, uniform and equipment issuance – including improved body armor, and updates of the latest enemy techniques and counter measures, said Collier.

Formerly known as "Saber," 3-89 Cav. adopted the name "Slugger" because 3rd Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, from the 82nd Airborne Division already had the Saber call sign, said Collier. Therefore, 3-89 Cav. decided to be named Slugger, following the lineage of 899th Cavalry, he said. The M36B1 "Slugger" was a World War II armored fighting vehicle first used in 1944 and was developed to stop German Panther and Tiger tanks at long range.