

# The Daily Roar

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MULTI-NATIONAL DIVISION -- BAGHDAD

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## MRAP training precedes fielding

by Sgt. Zach Mott  
3rd BCT, 4th ID PAO

CAMP TAJI, Iraq -- More than 1,600 Improvised Explosive Devices detonated on 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division patrols in Iraq from December 2005 to November 2006 according to the official brigade tally.

In efforts to prevent deaths and injuries caused by IEDs the military added armor, both to personnel and vehicles, lawmakers in the United States urged Defense Department officials to make a change. The Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle is the result of that push.

The sheer size of an MRAP is nearly enough to scare an IED into submission. The MRAP stands nearly 20 feet tall.

Striker Soldiers participated in a week-long training course devoted to teaching them the necessities of the MRAP prior to conducting missions in the new vehicle. In the past, the 3rd BCT's vehicle fleet consisted of Humvees, Light Medium Tactical Vehicles and various tracked vehicles. This added behemoth required specialized training for its future operators.

"I think it's a pretty nice little vehicle. Just the way it's set up and some of the capabilities; it's really nice," said Sgt. Jonathan McNemar, a gunner with Company B, 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 68th Armor Regiment, who is on his third trip to Iraq with the 3rd BCT.

McNemar has witnessed first-hand the advancement of troop transportation in Iraq. During his first trip, from March 2003 to March 2004, most of the Humvees were 'soft skin,' or un-armored. During his second tour, from November 2005 to November 2006, vehicles that went outside the wire were required to be up-armored. Now, MRAPs fill the next evolutionary step.

"Each time it gets better as it goes along," the Spencer, W.Va., native said.

Striker Soldiers will be some of the first in Iraq to field test the new vehicles. Although, prior to being sent to combat each MRAP is put through rigorous tests stateside at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md. All vehicles must pass this

testing prior to being issued to troops, said Derrick Crockford, the lead field service representative at Camp Taji from DynCorp International.

Crockford said the concept behind the MRAP is simple: protect the war fighter.

"It basically involves putting more protection around the Soldier within the vehicle," the Baton Rouge, La., native said. "That being said, it puts them at a better advantage against IEDs, (vehicle borne) IEDs, rocket-propelled grenades, mines, that kind of thing."

After a week of classroom-style learning, Soldiers of the Striker Brigade are eager to put the rubber of the MRAP tires on the roads of Iraq.

"They're a smooth ride," said Cambridge, Mass., native Pfc. James Fleming, a driver from Company D, 1st CAB, 68th AR. "They're pretty nice. It's pretty much like driving a Humvee just swollen up."

With that eagerness also comes an appreciation for the added protection an MRAP is said to provide.

"I think with the safety capabilities upgraded on it I think it's going to (mean) less patients (for us) as more units get these vehicles," said Spc. Jennifer Ward, a medic from Company C, 64th Brigade Support Battalion, and King, N.C., native.



by Sgt. Zach Mott 3rd BCT, 4th ID PAO

MRAP vehicles such as this one will begin being fielded to units within the 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division soon.



2nd SBCT, 25th ID PAO

## Warrior Strykers start rolling in Iraq

Penscola Fl. native Spc. Chase, Stryker driver, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, Schofield Barracks, Hawaii monitors radio traffic from the driver's compartment of his Stryker vehicle Dec. 27 at Camp Taji, Iraq. Two Battalions of the Warrior Brigade arrived at Camp Taji late December.

## Baghdad Three Day Weather Forecast

**Tuesday**  
Partly cloudy  
HI: 50F/10C  
LO: 33F/1C



**Wednesday**  
Partly cloudy  
HI: 50F/10C  
LO: 32F/0C



**Thursday**  
Partly cloudy  
HI: 51F/11C  
LO: 33F/1C




# The Daily Roar

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# Iraqi Army celebrates birthday on Taji



by Staff Sgt. Jon Cupp, 1st BCT, 1st Cav. Div. PAO

CAMP TAJI, Iraq -- Sgt. Abass Naser, a tanker with the 2nd Brigade, 9th Iraqi Army Division (Mechanized) recites poetry at Camp Taji, Iraq Jan. 6 during an observance commemorating the establishment of the Iraqi Army 87 years ago. Naser said the observance meant a lot to him and that serving in the IA is something that should be supported by "every Iraqi citizen who loves his country." The traditional date for the Iraqi Army's activation is Jan. 6, 1921 when King Faisal (bin Hussein) I established the first "true" Iraqi Army battalion.



by Staff Sgt. Jon Cupp, 1st BCT, 1st Cav. Div. PAO

Joining Soldiers from the 29 Military Transition Team and Iraqi troops from the 2nd Brigade, 9th Iraqi Army Division (Mechanized), Hudson, Ohio native Col. Todd McCaffrey (left), commander, 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, and Col. Paul E. Funk II (far right), commander, 1st "Ironhorse" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, who hails from Roundup, Mont. attend a ceremony at Camp Taji.



by Staff Sgt. Jon Cupp, 1st BCT, 1st Cav. Div. PAO

Iraqi Army troops from the 2nd Brigade, 9th Iraqi Army Division (Mechanized) light candles on a cake at Camp Taji in observance of the establishment of the first Iraqi Army battalion. The brigade commander for the 2nd Bde., 9th IA Div. (Mech) joined with his troops during a cake cutting ceremony.