

The Daily Roar

VOL. 1, NO. 36

MULTI-NATIONAL DIVISION – BAGHDAD

JANUARY 29, 2008

Battle flag flies in Iraq again

By: Spc. Aaron L. Rosencrans
2nd Stryker BCT PAO, 25th Inf. Div.

TAJI, Iraq — The tattered, yet proud American battle flag once again made its way from Hawaii and patrolled the streets of Iraq Jan. 22, to honor the fallen Soldiers who served with it.

Rather than appearing in combat, the battle flag was shared with the Iraqi Army on a humanitarian mission and a mounted patrol in the vicinity of Taji, Iraq.

Soldiers from the 2nd Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team, “Warrior,” 25th Infantry Division, brought the flag with them to a new medical clinic outside Taji, where the Iraqi Army delivers medical supplies and furniture.

The birth of the tradition behind the flag started in 1967, when Vietnam War veteran, Allen Hoe bought the flag from a local shop, outside a U.S. military base in Chu Lai, Vietnam. The then 21-year-old carried the flag with him as he and his unit fought through the jungles of Vietnam.

In 1968, on Mother’s Day, Hoe’s unit lost their team leader, Lt. Frederick Ransbottom, among several other Soldiers during a battle. The surviving members of Hoe’s unit asked him to hold onto the flag until Ransbottom’s body was recovered.

More than three years ago, 1st Lt. Nainoa Hoe, son of Allen Hoe, shared his father’s story of the battle flag with his non-commissioned officers, who then asked if they could carry the flag in Mosul, to honor his father’s lieutenant, who was still missing in action at the time, Allen Hoe said.

He agreed and sent the flag to his son in Iraq, who carried it until he was shot by a sniper.

“Nainoa and his men carried the flag with them for a couple months,” Allan Hoe said. “(Nainoa) was carrying the flag with him when he was killed in January 2005.”

Three years after the death of Nainoa Hoe, to honor his son, Allen Hoe entrusted the flag to San Bernardino, Calif. native, Lt. Col Thomas H. Mackey, commander, of the 2nd Squadron, 14th Cav. Regt., 2nd SBCT, 25th Inf. Div., for his unit’s 15-month deployment to Iraq this year.

“I asked Allan, as a family friend, if we could take the flag with us on this deployment, and carry it for a couple months in memory of his son, and also to pass the legacy of this flag onto my Soldiers,” said Mackey.

The flag with his unit represents more than just honoring the memory of only one person, said Mackey.

The battle flag seems to have become somewhat of a blood line for the 25th Infantry Division.

Crow explained the flag has become more than a tradition in the Hoe family, but a symbol of pride for all warriors in the brotherhood of arms.

The battle flag will be patrolling the streets around the Taji area with Crow and his unit for the next couple weeks.



By: Spc. Aaron L. Rosencrans 2nd Stryker BCT PAO, 25th Inf. Div.
From left to right: San Bernardino, Calif. native, Lt. Col Thomas H. Mackey, commander, of the 2nd Squadron, 14th Cavalry Regt., 2nd Stryker BCT, “Warrior,” 25th Inf. Divi., Leavenworth, Kansas native Capt. Nathaniel Crow, commander, Troop B, 2nd Squadron, 14th Cav. Regt., 2nd Stryker BCT, “Warrior,” 25th Infantry Division, Green Bay, Wis. native, Capt. Joseph Dumas and Rochester, N.Y. native, 1st Lt. Michael Kaness, display the Hoe Battle Flag during a patrol Jan. 22. They hold the flag in reverse to symbolize the way Soldiers wear the flag on their right shoulder.



by Spc. Elliot Valdez 2nd Stryker BCT PAO, 25th Inf. Div.

Blue moon

MUSHADA, Iraq –A full moon shines on Spc. Scott Hathaway, a native of Norwich, N.Y., who serves with 2nd Stryker BCT, 25th Inf. Div., as he talks on his radio while pulling rooftop security Jan. 20.



Player of the Day

The Player of the Day Award is presented to Pfc. Catherine O'Neil for performance of duties as a Paralegal Specialist. O'Neil's outstanding performance is displayed in the smooth processing of legal actions throughout the Multi-National Division-Baghdad sector. O'Neil's dedication to duty and the three pillars of success make her today's 4th Inf. Div. Player of the Day.

Baghdad Three Day Weather Forecast

Tuesday
Partly cloudy
HI: 60F/16C
LO: 50F/10C



Wednesday
Chance of rain
HI: 59F/15C
LO: 46F/8C



Thursday
Chance of rain
HI: 50F/10C
LO: 39F/4C



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10th Mountain Div. welcomes brothers in arms

Spc. Grant T. Okubo

4th IBCT PAO, 10th Mtn. Div.

FORWARD OPERATING BASE RUSTAMIYAH, Iraq—Field Artillery Soldiers from 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division put out welcome mats and greeted their Iraqi Army counterparts to Forward Operating Base Rustamiyah for a tour and luncheon, Jan.20.

Lt. Col. Dennis Yates, Chesterfield, N.J., native and commander, 5th Battalion, 25th Field Artillery, along with his staff met with the leaders of the Iraqi Army (IA) operating in Zafaraniya, including Iraqi Col. Ahmed Ebrahim Bedor, battalion commander, 1st Battalion, 4th Brigade, 1st Iraqi Army Division.

The leaders met for lunch to discuss and coordinate plans for operations for the next 60 to 90 days that will help bring peace to the people of Zafaraniya, said Maj. Steve Smith, Covington, Ky., native and Military Transition Team advisor attached to the IA's 1st Bn., 4th Bde., 1st Div. Smith explained the goal set for the meeting was identify the most influential sheikhs in the area, who are actively involved with local government officials.

Yates said Bedor and his battalion are responsible for military operations through half of Zafaraniya, while 5th Bn., 25th FA runs the other half. Therefore, having coordinating operations discussions is very important, stated Yates. Also Bedor's battalion is the only Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) unit in Baghdad that has their own battle space, so that is another reason why coordination with them is very important, he explained.

"The second reason we met was to just build a sense of trust," said Yates. "We tend to visit them in their house, so to speak, their headquarters building all the time, but never return the favor.

"I wanted to bring them here to build a stronger team by showing them around and giving them a good meal," continued Yates.

Yates wanted to know IA officials' opinions about what they believe Coalition Forces should be doing, he explained. Additionally, Yates wanted to find out what IA leaders believe is the best way to include Iraqi Police (IP) in their security triangle. He sought the best way to gain support of local sheikhs and families for 5-25 initiatives.

The opportunity to meet and break bread with IA officials proved to be beneficial for 5-25's leadership.

"It was a great first step in building a relationship between the two (units) and comparing information, tactics and techniques," said Smith.

"The Iraqi culture is very relationship driven, and you get a sense (of that) during a meeting or during a meal with them. Even though you don't speak the same language," said Yates. "The more they open up and the more they speak and the less that you speak, you know the meeting is

going well, and I think you can tell that here today."

Yates continued, saying discussions they had during the meeting will affect the future of Zafaraniya and its people.

"We're going to take this to the next step in the future," promised Yates. The battalion plans to work on bringing IP into the fold, especially because they are a very important piece for the security of Iraq. Police are the first line of defense, just as they are in the United States. This increases the importance of their role in this (initiative), said Yates. The police are always the first on the scene, and 5th Bn., 25th FA is here to back them up, he exclaimed.

Yates acknowledges the contributions the IP have been making in Zafaraniya. "They're putting their lives on the line just as much (as), if not more than, anybody else ... so we want to make sure they're included in the team as well," stated Yates.

Yates explained his forces want to focus on reconciliation by establishing relations with key leadership in the local government. Yates expressed his desire to work with these government leaders to come up with ways to get both Shia and Sunni families and leaders to work together for the betterment of Zafaraniya.



by Spc. Grant T. Okubo, 4th IBCT PAO, 10th Mtn. Div

Leaders of 5th Battalion, 25th Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division and 1st Battalion, 4th Brigade, 1st Iraqi Army Division stand near an M119 howitzer as they tour Forward Operating Base Rustamiyah, Jan.20.