



Spartan Chronicle

pointing out the weekly news from the 2nd BCT

Vol. 2, Issue 20

April 6, 2008



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Photo by Sgt. Luis Delgadillo

An explosive ordnance disposal team conducts a controlled detonation on munitions recovered by Soldiers of Battery B, 1st Battalion, 9th Field Artillery and 5th Battalion, 25th Brigade, 6th IA Division, early April 2 in Kutimiyah.



Busayefi CME held by 6-8 Cav.

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Iraqis show national pride

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Second Kalsu Idol crowned

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Informant leads Soldiers to multiple caches

Sgt. Luis Delgadillo
2nd BCT PAO

In the early morning of April 2, 2nd Brigade Combat Team Soldiers took weapons out of the hands of insurgents in Kutimiyah, north of Joint Security Site W-1.

Hours earlier, Iraqi Army Soldiers with 5th Battalion, 25th Brigade, 6th IA Division, questioned a suspected insurgent who said he had information on a weapons cache location.

“For the past couple of weeks the IA had been hearing about a guy who used to work with al-Qaeda and he stayed in the area and he didn’t flee like the rest did,” said Staff Sgt. Ronald Satterwhite, a section chief with Battery B, 1st Battalion, 9th Field Artillery. The man admitted to knowing the approximate location of buried weapons.

He needed his brother’s assistance - another known collaborator with al-Qaeda, according to IA Soldiers - to find the exact location.

The Soldiers of Battery B rolled out of the JSS, informant in tow, to pay his brother a visit.

Satterwhite, of Glenville, Ga., said he and his fellow Soldiers had been trying to speak with the brother for two weeks but were



Photos by Sgt. Luis Delgadillo

Capt. Richard R. Aaron, commander of Battery B, 1st Battalion, 9th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team supervises as his Soldiers count the contents of a weapons cache late April 1 in Kutimiyah, north of Joint Security Site W-1.

unable to find him each time they went to his residence. Tonight, fortune favored Battery B.

“We just got lucky, he immediately knew what we were going after ... it didn’t take too much talking to him to get him to take us to where they were,” Satterwhite said.

With both brothers assisting, it was a matter of minutes before the Soldiers were digging up the first of five caches.



An informant helps Soldiers uncover a weapons cache April 1.

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All editorial content of the Spartan Chronicle is prepared, edited, provided and approved by the 2nd BCT public affairs office.

2nd BCT PAO
Maj. James Brownlee
1st Lt. Kalen Smith
Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky
Sgt. Luis Delgadillo
Sgt. Jason Stadel
Sgt. Randall Townsend

At the first cache site, beside a road in the dirt wall of a canal, they found three separate weapons caches consisting of 45 rocket-propelled grenade warheads, 300 PKC heavy machine gun rounds, 37 mortar and projectile fuses, one DSHKA .50 caliber machine gun with 500 rounds of ammunition and an anti-personnel mine.

In a farm field adjacent to the road the informants also dug up a complete 81 mm mortar system.

While the Soldiers waited for an explosive ordnance disposal team to arrive they learned the informants knew of a few more weapons stashes.

Walking 500 meters to the south of the first cache site, the brothers stopped first in a farm field to pick up an RPG launcher, next at a farm house where they located machine gun ammunition, then at a culvert to dig up another 81 mm mortar tube and finally reached the last cache, a buried 55 gallon barrel containing a PKC machine gun and 2000 PKC machine gun rounds.

The Soldiers collected the additional weapons and returned to meet the EOD team who was already at the site of the first cache preparing the find for disposal.



Photos by Sgt. Luis Delgadillo

Above: Soldiers of Battery B, 1st Battalion, 9th Field Artillery Regiment consolidate the contents of a weapons cache late April 1 in Kutimiyah, north of Joint Security Site W-1. Soldiers of the battery and their Iraqi Army counterparts, also based at the JSS, were led to the cache by informants from Kutimiyah.

Below: Soldiers enjoy the fireworks as the munitions are destroyed.



Safety Alert - Tent safety

- Hot plates and microwaves pose a fire hazard and are not to be used.
- Make sure all lights and electrical devices are turned off when exiting the tent.
- Visually check electrical cords, outlets, and power strips for signs of overheating, arcing, and cut or frayed wires.

- Don't hang wet cloths or put other objects from interior wiring.
- Be sure of the voltage entering the tent - use a transformer if necessary and do not overload.
- Use of candles, or any other devices that burn with an open flame, or smolder, is not authorized.
- No smoking within 50 feet of tents.
- Station an inspected fire

- extinguisher by each door and do not block doors or aisles.
- Remember PASS:
 - Pull the pin
 - Aim the fire extinguisher at the base of the fire.
 - Squeeze the handle/trigger.
 - Sweep from side to side.
 - Inspect tents monthly to ensure compliance.



Photo by Sgt. Luis Delgadillo

School children of the Manahel Primary School are released from class March 30 at their makeshift school in Kutimiyah north of Joint Security Site W-1. A house with five rooms, near the destroyed school, is being used for class while community leaders decide on plans for a future school building. The students are temporarily using a nearby home to hold classes because al-Qaeda insurgents destroyed the previous school building. The homeowners will return in 2 months and the children will have no building to return to for the fall session.

Coalition Soldiers visit Kutimiyah school

Sgt. Luis Delgadillo
2nd BCT PAO

Many schools in the 2nd Brigade Combat Team's area of operation have been rebuilt through the efforts of Coalition forces.

There were a few schools though, such as the Manahel Primary School in Kutimiyah, which had eluded Coalition

assistance.

In the last two months, Soldiers at Joint Security Station W-1, south of Kutimiyah, have reached out to the untouched area. They have opened routes into the community and begun to assess the needs of residents who felt left out of reconstruction efforts.

"They felt isolated because

no one has been up there to start projects, but that's changing," said Capt. Richard Aaron, commander of Battery B, 1st Battalion, 9th Field Artillery.

A recent route clearance operation brought Soldiers into the community, changing that

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perception.

The condition Soldiers found the school in struck a chord with 1st Lt. Greg Highstrom, from Cedarburg, Wisc., a platoon leader with Battery B.

Residents said al-Qaeda insurgents used the school as a base of operations for conducting missions against Soldiers at JSS W-1. The insurgents destroyed the building when they left the area to prevent its use by Coalition forces.

Highstrom said students who attended class at the primary school are now studying in a house lent by a nearby land owner. In five rooms, each not more than 40 square meters in size, children attend school five days a week from 8 a.m. until noon.

The seven teachers helped move school desks into the temporary location; however, when the school year ends in two months, the owner of the house will return and the students will once again be without classrooms.



Photos by Sgt. Luis Delgadillo
First Lt. Greg Highstrom (right), from Cedarburg, Wisc., platoon leader with Battery B, 1st Battalion, 9th Field Artillery, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, speaks with students and a teacher of the Manahel Primary School in Kutimiyah March 30. Temporarily a nearby home is used to hold classes because al-Qaeda insurgents destroyed the previous school building.

The Ministry of Education, alerted to the situation facing the students, has put in a request for Government of Iraq funds to rebuild the school.

In northern Kutimiyah, the Tatwir School, which had also been damaged by insurgents, already has funding for reconstruction approved thanks to the Soldiers' efforts.

One of the biggest concerns for Manahel Primary School's teachers, in addition to rebuilding the destroyed school house, is rebuilding a bridge which leads to the main highway into Baghdad. The Highway connects the communities of Maderiyah and Kutimiyah.

Aaron, a native of Middleboro, Mass., said the bridge allow farmers of Kutimiyah easier access to markets where they sell their crops.

Though details of the project haven't been finalized, Aaron said people in both communities simply want life to return to normal.



Highstrom surveys the site of the destroyed Manahel Primary School in Kutimiyah March 30.

Adwaniyah opens middle school, health clinic

Sgt. Jason Stadel
2nd BCT PAO

Adwaniyah citizens who were once afraid to leave their homes because of al-Qaeda in Iraq, freely gathered March 26 to celebrate the grand opening of a middle school and a health clinic.

Much of the work was financed using Commander's Emergency Response Program funds. Coalition forces assisted in rebuilding the school and clinic with money but the Government of Iraq was the key to the projects' success.

The GoI has recognized the school and clinic and will keep teachers and medical professionals employed at each location.

One Soldier at Patrol Base Dolby, near Adwaniyah, is pleased to see the Iraqis taking charge of their community and said educating Iraq's children is essential.

"They will eventually inherit this country," said 2nd Lt. Steven Kim, a platoon leader in Troop B, 6th Squadron, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division. "Giving the kids an education will help them learn how to make their



Photos by Sgt. Jason Stadel

Above: Col. Thair, 6th Battalion, 25th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division commander, meets with local leaders prior to the grand opening of an Adwaniyah middle school and health clinic March 26. Both the clinic and school are supported by the Government of Iraq.

Left: Thair and Sheik Madhir, Adwaniyah Sons of Iraq leader, cut a ribbon to open the Adwaniyah middle school March 26.

country better."

A Ministry of Health doctor said the clinic will offer Adwaniyah residents basic medical care such as preventive medicine, vaccinations, maternal care and treat minor dental problems and basic illnesses.

"We all want to do what we can to address

some of the medical needs in Adwaniyah," Dr. Saud Abdullah said. "This clinic will help Adwaniyah."

For major surgeries and traumas, residents will still need to go to hospitals in Mahmudiyah and Baghdad.

Happiness at improving their city was

apparent as citizens shook hands with U.S. and Iraqi Soldiers and GoI officials.

Kim said it was a good day for the troops. "You get to know the people," said the Los Angeles native. "I'm happy for them; it's good to see their community improve."



Photo by Sgt. Jason Stadel

Dr. Sam, an Iraqi doctor who works for Multi-National Corps – Iraq takes a Busayefi citizen's blood pressure during a combined medical engagement in Busayefi March 29.

6-8 Cav. Regt. holds first CME in Busayefi

Sgt. Jason Stadel
2nd BCT PAO

Working with Iraqi civilian and U.S. military medical personnel, Coalition forces in Busayefi hosted a combined medical engagement (CME) March 29.

“We just came into this area and we’re trying to build a relationship with the people,” said 2nd Lt. Josh Duke, medical platoon leader, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 6th Squadron, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team.

More than 260 Busayefi residents, including 115 children, were treated at the makeshift health clinic for aches, pains, rashes, nausea and other minor illnesses. They were seen by either one of the two U.S. Army doctors or one of the two Iraqi civilian doctors.

Busayefi is an area once dominated by al-Qaeda in Iraq; roads were littered with improvised explosive devices, which made travel to larger communities with medical facilities difficult.

In late December, Coalition and Iraqi Army forces began clearing the area of AQI and other extremists and started a Sons of Iraq program. Security in the area continues to improve with the SoI and Coalition presence.

It had been years since some of the residents had seen a doctor. One man said he hadn’t seen a doctor in 10 years, and was grateful for the medical aid.

“Not only do we try and help them with their illnesses, we also try and identify the overall health of the area,” said Duke, from Walhalla, S.C. “We can also

identify if there is a person in need of serious medical help.”

A medic from Company A, 415th Civil Affairs Battalion, currently attached to 2nd Brigade Combat Team, agreed with Duke.

“We can learn about the health and welfare of the children as well as the families and the area,” said Sgt. Charles Howell, from Louisville, Ky. “This also lets the people know that we do care about them.”

Howell said the first step in rebuilding Iraq is developing a strong relationship with the community. The CMEs are one way being used to strengthen ties between Coalition forces and local citizens.

“We’re all here for one common goal and that is to make Iraq better,” Howell said.

Battery B, 1-9 FA helps injured boy

Sgt. Luis Delgadillo
2nd BCT PAO

In rural Iraqi farming communities such as Maderiyah, even the most routine of injuries can become crippling if not treated properly.

Such could have been the case for one Iraqi boy who fell off his bicycle and broke his arm, if it were not for the intervention of Soldiers from Battery B, 1st Battalion 9th Field Artillery.

A member of the Sons of Iraq related to the boy, informed Soldiers of his injury March 29, as they conducted an SoI checkpoint-monitoring patrol east of Joint Security Site W-1.

“We drove down to his house and as it turned out he had just broken his arm,” said 1st Lt. Andrew Gibbons, platoon leader, 2nd Platoon, Battery B.

Gibbons, a native of McLean, Va., said the boy received treatment at a nearby clinic but when Staff Sgt. Justin G. Saunto, the battery’s senior combat medic, inspected the splint he concluded the boy’s arm, which was broken in two places, needed more than just a splint.

“They used a finger-splint as an arm splint, which doesn’t really work,” said Saunto, from Haslet, Mich. “I undressed it to look at it and noticed his humerus (upper arm bone) and his radius and ulna (forearm) were possibly broken.”

He re-splinted the boy’s fractured arm while Gibbons conferred with Battery B Commander Capt. Richard Aaron.

“He needed a cast, otherwise he



Photo by Sgt. Luis Delgadillo

Spec. Ian C. Loud, from Hanford, Calif., a combat medic with Battery B, 1st Battalion, 9th Field Artillery, visits with the family of a boy who broke his arm riding his bike March 31 east of Joint Security Site W-1. The boy and his family were escorted by Soldiers of the battery past Iraqi Army checkpoints to the outskirts of Baghdad where they sought further medical treatment.

would not have been able to use his arm for the rest of his life,” Saunto said.

The boy’s family told Gibbons that they would take him to an Iraqi medical facility in Fallujah.

With the recent rise in violence in Baghdad, Gibbons knew the curfew, imposed by the Government of Iraq, would make it dangerous for travel.

On eerily quiet roads, Gibbons, Saunto and the rest of the Soldiers of 2nd Platoon escorted the family, driving north to the intersection of two of Baghdad’s busiest highways commonly referred to as ‘the mixing bowl.’

Three days later the family returned to their farmhouse safely, the boy’s arm wound tightly in a fresh plaster cast.

“He needed a cast, otherwise he would not have been able to use his arm for the rest of his life.”

- Staff Sgt. Justin G. Saunto
Battery B, 1-9 FA senior medic

During a recent visit, medics Battery B found the family in good spirits and checked the boy’s plaster cast, making minor adjustments to his sling.

Soldiers reassured the family of their willingness to help them with any further complications.

As Coalition forces work to rid Maderiyah and its neighboring communities of al-Qaeda insurgents they simultaneously earn the confidence of the residents.

FEATURE



Photo by Capt. Mark Battjes

A child plays on a slide as his mother and siblings sit on a nearby bench. The park, in the Jamia neighborhood of Baghdad, was restored by Abd-al Qadr, a local businessman. He acted on his own initiative to clean up the park, which was once a dumping ground for trash.

Iraqis show self-motivation with improvements

Capt. Mark Battjes
1st Battalion, 64th Armor Regiment

Children play on swings, slides and bouncing horses as their mothers keep an eye on them. The women chat as they sit on benches idling away a warm, sunny, spring day. They talk and laugh seemingly without a care in the world. This idyllic place could be found anywhere in America and it would not attract any special attention.

But in the Jamia neighborhood of Baghdad, the park is indeed a special place.

The park or gazino, as it is called in Arabic, is just off the main street of Shar Ar Rabe'a, which cuts through this war scarred neighborhood. The site was once a dumping ground for trash and the remnants of cars used as bombs that were exploded on Shar Ar Rabe'a. That is until Abd-al Qadr, a local

businessman set about to clean up the park.

What makes this unique is Qadr took the initiative on his own to restore the park.

For many months, American leaders and diplomats have been stating that as Iraqis stand up, Coalition forces can begin to stand down.

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While much of the focus has been on military operations, the restoration of the communities is also very important. Such pride in making his community better was what inspired Qadr to act.

Qadr hired a small crew of workers to remove the trash and debris, apply fresh coats of paint to the playground equipment and repair the damaged kebab stand that is the gazino's primary source of income.

Qadr said "business is good" as he lays out the hookah pipes, which will entice the men to bring their children to the park. He smiles as he envisions fixing the lights and keeping the gazino open well after dark.

The women and children at the park barely acknowledge the presence of the American patrol who visits. They are used to them walking the streets and barely give a second glance. For the American Soldiers out on patrol it is a sign of hope.

Another concerned Iraqi citizen working to create a more beautiful place for his family and others is from Arab Jabour. Despite living in a rural environment as opposed to the city like Qadr, the same commitment to improving Iraq is present.

The painter's name is Yahia. With black, green, red and white paint, the Arab Jabour resident has shown his patriotism to Iraq by painting the colors his county's flag at Sons of Iraq checkpoints and other structures in the Arab Jabour area.

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Courtesy photos

Above: A Sons of Iraq checkpoint is painted in the national colors of Iraq, adding a bit of beauty and community pride to the residents of Minari village. The tower was painted by a local man, Yahia, who is also painting other checkpoints in and around the village.

Below: Sol members man the tower painted by Yahia. While the contribution of the men, who guard the road from insurgents is vital, so to are the contributions of men like Yahia, who help instill community and national pride in their fellow Iraqis.





Photos by Capt. Mark Battjes

A child plays on a slide in a Jamia neighborhood of Baghdad park as his mother watches. The park was restored by Abd-al Qadr, a local businessman, who acted on his own initiative to restore the park.

Yahia was asked by Capt. Neil Hollenbeck, commander, Company A, 1st Battalion, 30th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division to paint a large concrete tower that was being used as a checkpoint by SoIs. He was asked to turn the tower into a giant Iraqi flag.

Two days after the request was made Yahia had painted not only the tower but many concrete barriers near the tower as well. The SoIs and citizens were happy to see the beautification improvements made to their area.

“By painting the barriers and towers, the community has been more receptive and more accepting of the force protection measures

in their areas,” said 1st Lt. Ismail Khan, fire support officer, Company A 1-30th Inf.

Hollenbeck said the SoIs manning a checkpoint that is resembles a symbol of the Government of Iraq will help to strengthen ties between the GoI and the SoIs.

“Our intent was to create a visible linkage between the SoIs and the GoI,” said Hollenbeck from Louisville, Ky. “The universal symbol of the GoI and the universal symbol of the SoI is the Iraq flag.”

Since painting the checkpoint, Yahia was asked to paint the rest of the checkpoints and also community buildings in the nearby



Besides restoring the Jamia park, Qadr's project is helping businesses in the park, such as this smoke shop.

Minari village.

Although the two projects may seem minor in scope, the ramifications and national pride they instill cannot be measured. ** Additional reporting by 1-30th Inf. Reg. Unit Public Affairs representative.*

SPORTS & GAMES

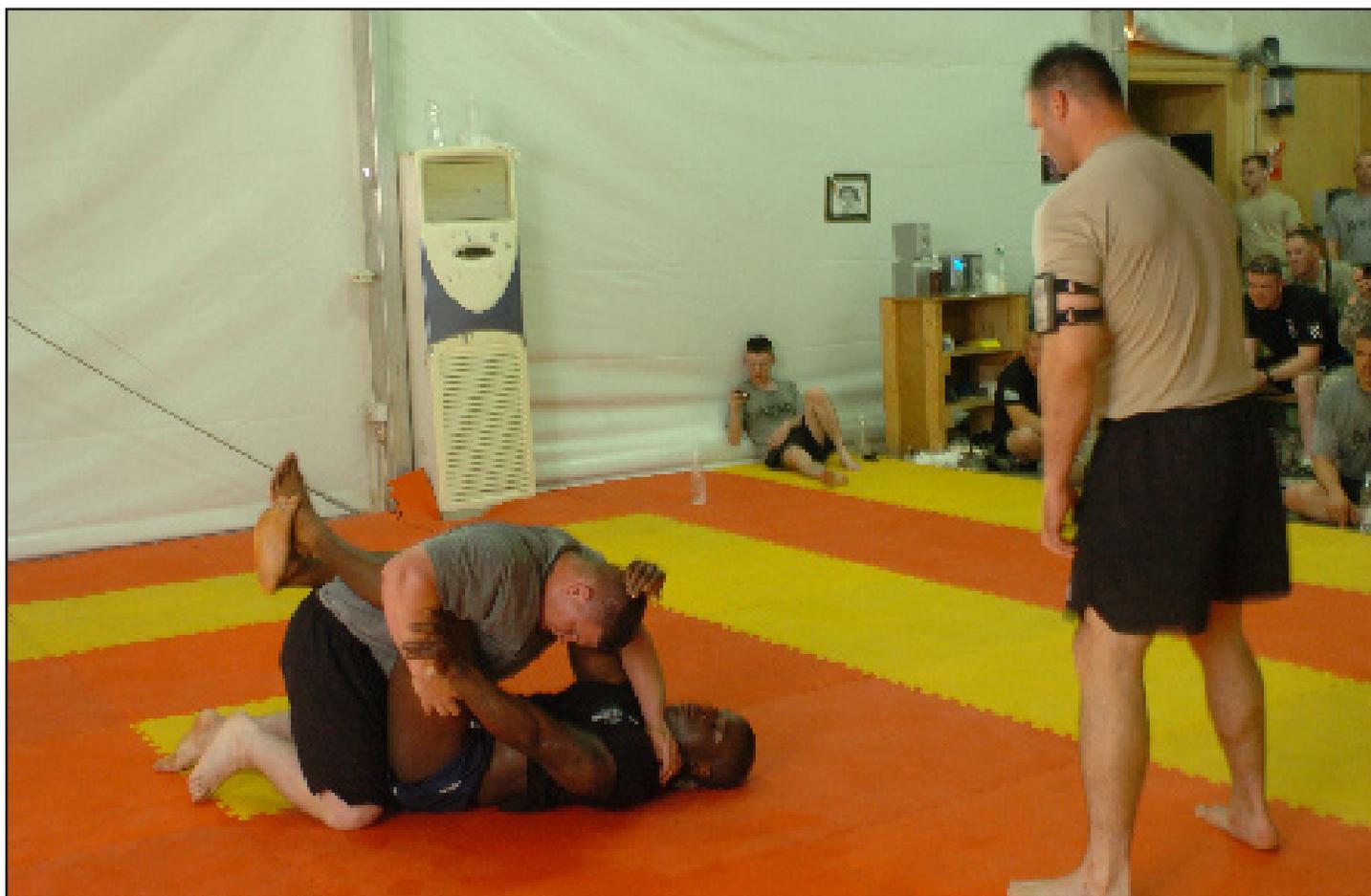


Photo by Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky

Spc. Leonard VonBerndt, a fueller with Company A, 26th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, (on top) fights to gain better positioning on Staff Sgt. Leonard Moses, an Air Force dog handler out of Dover Air Force Base, Del. VonBerndt tries to put an arm bar submission on his opponent during a March 30 submission tournament at Forward Operating Base Kalsu. Moses ended up winning the heavyweight bracket of the tournament, besting 9 other competitors in the 200 – 275-pound weight class. Eleven other Soldiers competed in the 130 – 199-pound class.

Wrestling takes down deployment woes

Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky
2nd BCT PAO

You don't talk about fight club, but word is getting out after the success of the submission wrestling tournament held on Forward Operating Base Kalsu March 30.

The tournament was the brainchild of Sgt. Alex Lapinsky and Staff

Sgt. Boyd Robinson, both military policemen with the 153rd Military Police Company, Delaware National Guard, Delaware City, Del.

“It gives Soldiers something else to do,” said Lapinsky, a native of Magnolia, Del., who served as a referee and headmaster for the event. “It lets them train as they

may have to fight and it is in line with Army combatives.”

Like the Army combatives program, Soldiers fought each other from a standing position, utilizing a variety of throws, takedowns and techniques to ground their opponent where joint locks, chokes and other submissions were

common game. However, unlike Army combatives and other forms of mixed martial arts, no striking was allowed.

“Safety first; I'm more concerned about everyone getting back to work safely than anything else,” said Lapinsky, whose 15 years in jiu-

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jitsu allowed him to keep a close eye on the combatants and stop any potential dangers.

The twenty Soldiers who competed were divided into separate weight classes. Although there were initially five weight classes, due to the small size of the competition field, weight classes were combined into two classes: the 130 – 199-pound class and the 200 – 275-pound class.

While it created a few weight mismatches, especially in the lighter division, in which 11 competed, the weight did not slow the competition one bit, as all competitors, regardless of size, had one thing in common: guts.

“It takes a lot of courage to come out, sign up not knowing what may happen,” Lapinsky said.

Many entered unaware of who they may fight. The competition was mixed up even more due to the initial weight class reshuffling, Lapinsky said. Because of this competitors were able to gain a realistic assessment of their skills and gain



Photo by Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky

Staff Sgt. Leonard Moses, an Air Force dog handler out of Dover Air Force base, Del., tries to put an arm bar submission on Spc. Leonard VonBerndt, a fueler with Company A, 26th brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, during a March 30 submission tournament at Forward Operating Base Kalsu.

a sense of confidence in what works for them.

For Spc. Leonard VonBerndt, a fueler with Company A, 26th Brigade Support Battalion, the assessment showed that despite a knee injury suffered while wrestling for the all Army-wrestling team, his

skills were still there.

VonBerndt, a native of Twin Falls, Idaho, has been wrestling for more than 12 years, and used those skills to take down his competition en route to the heavyweight championship match against Staff Sgt. Leonard Moses, an Air Force dog handler out of Dover Air Force base, Del.

“I thought I could do it,” VonBerndt said of his decision to try. “I was a good wrestler in high school.”

Those skills caused quite a challenge for Moses, a jiu-jitsu practitioner, who was dominating the competition up to that point. The two challenged each other, drawing a plethora of oohs and ahhs from the crowd as momentum shifted back and forth. In the end, however, Moses, from Norfolk, Va., managed to catch VonBerndt in a submission hold

“It takes a lot of courage to come out, sign up not knowing what may happen.”

- Sgt. Alex Lapinsky

153rd MP Company, Delaware National Guard

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and claim victory, a hard fought victory he acknowledged after the match.

The lightweights also had their share of excitement.

In the end, Robinson, another high school wrestler, walked away king of the under 200 pound hill. For Robinson, who entered only to have fun, winning was just a bonus.

“It was all for fun, it didn’t matter if I won,” the Portsmouth Va. native said. “It was a good day. You didn’t think about where we’re at (in Iraq).”

The fun shown on the combatants faces, win or lose, will hopefully spark more interest in future events, Robinson said.

“Hopefully this may get some people interested in training,” he explained.

Robinson, Moses and several other Soldiers all train together in the evenings on their techniques.

For Sugar Land, Texas native Spc. Michael McDonald, such a spark was created. He said he entered the tournament on the dares and taunts of his fellow Soldiers serving on Command Sgt. Maj. Gabriel Berhane’s personnel security detachment.

“My only training



Photo by Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky

Sgt. Alex Lapinsky (standing) watches as Staff Sgt. Boyd Robinson, both military policemen with the 153rd Military Police Company, Delaware National Guard, Delaware City, Del., fights out from under his opponent during a March 30 submission tournament at Forward Operating Base Kalsu.

“It is probably the most physical sport there is. It’s one on one. You win or lose as an individual.”

- Staff Sgt. Boyd Robinson

153rd MP Company, Delaware National Guard

was messing around with the other guys,” he said. Although he went 1 for 2 in the competition, he hopes that despite the loss the win showed the other guys that he is “not so easy to take down.”

He said the tournament made him interested in jiu-jitsu training, which he said will only make taking him down even harder. “It can be a hobby,” Lapinsky said of such training.

Even if another tournament doesn’t occur (Lapinsky is undecided about whether or not he will be able to host another) it should not deter Soldiers from going to the mats and working out. All competitors agreed the competition was a great cardio and muscular workout. Training in combatives and other martial arts also teaches Soldiers flexibility and endurance,

Lapinsky added.

“It is probably the most physical sport there is,” Robinson said. “It’s one on one. You win or lose as an individual.”

Although an individual sport, the tournament was a team effort. Besides Robinson and Lapinsky, the gym staff, the Morale Welfare and Recreation department and the Kalsu Mayor cell all helped.

Lapinsky also gave a shout out to the Soldiers who competed, without them, and their interest, such an event would have never got off the ground.

“I appreciate everyone who showed up,” he said. “This is not something you can do by yourself.”



Photos by Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky

Capt. Christee Cuttino, Staff Sgt. Donnell Raby, Capt. Connie Quinlan, all Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 703rd Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, and Pfc. Jessica Faamu, Company B, 26th BSB, 2nd BCT, (clockwise from upper left) were the final four competitors in the second Kalsu Idol. The competition came to a close April 2 after six weeks of competition.

From final four Kalsu crowns new idol

Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky
2nd BCT PAO

After six weeks of eliminations, the title of Kalsu Idol was finally bestowed on Capt. Connie Quinlan April 2 in the Forward Operating Base Kalsu dining facility.

The night began with the final four, Quinlan, Pfc. Jessica Faamu, Staff Sgt. Donnell Raby, and Capt. Christee Cuttino waiting to see who would be eliminated before the show based on their March 30

performance. With the cut of Raby, the final three became an all female affair.

Although all three were guaranteed a prize – 1st place received an iPod Nano with a wall and car charger, 2nd place received a Samsung digital camera, and 3rd place a Nintendo DS – the placement counted on one final performance.

Each competitor sang a song of her choice in an attempt to sway

the judges and crowd into the performer’s corner.

“I chose what I thought I could sing well,” said Quinlan, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 703rd Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division.

Her choice, “Because the Night” by Patti Smith, was a good choice, according to Master Sgt. Q.P.

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Bean, 4th BCT communications non-commissioned officer in charge and one of the three contest judges. Bean, of Ozark, Ala., said Quinlan's consistency in her song selection and ability to deliver were what influenced him to choose her for the top slot.

Fellow judge 1st Sgt. Richard Henson, HHC, 2nd BCT, from Memphis, Tenn., agreed, he added that Quinlan also exhibited great energy and charisma in exciting the crowd and drawing them into her songs.

The ability to draw in the crowd was a big factor in each competitor's success. Audience voting counted equally with the judges' votes.

After the ballots were cast, Quinlan emerged on top, followed by Faamu, Company B, 26th BSB, 2nd BCT and Cuttino, HHC, 703rd BSB, respectively. Even after the contest was officially over, the trio continued to entertain the fans, drawing a loud laugh as they exchanged their prizes amongst themselves.

"I already have a nano and a



Photos by Sgt. Kevin Stabinsky

Capt. Connie Quinlan, 703rd Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Brigade Combat Team, Pfc. Jessica Faamu, Company B, 26th BSB, 2nd BCT, and Capt. Christee Cuttino HHC 703rd BSB, all 3rd Infantry Division (left to right) exchange prizes after the announcement of the winners April 2 in the Kalsu Idol final. Quinlan, who won 1st place, swapped her prize for a GameBoy DS. Cuttino ended up with 2nd place Faamu's prize, a Samsung digital camera, and Faamu walked away with the iPod Nano. More importantly, the three said they all walked away with what they wanted.

digital camera," Quinlan said. "Capt. Cuttino worked it all out," she added of the switch.

In the end, Quinlan, who won 1st place, ended up with 3rd place Cuttino's prize, a Nintendo DS. Cuttino ended up with 2nd place Faamu's prize, a Samsung digital

camera, and Faamu walked away with the top prize, a iPod Nano. More importantly, the three said they all walked away with what they wanted.

The three also earned a pair of speakers in addition to their unique prize.

For Quinlan, she also left with something more.

Quinlan, a Jacksonville, Fla. native, said she was always too scared to enter talent shows or competitions, relying on the privacy of her living room, car or shower to sing. However, by entering the contest, she said she was finally able to face her fears, much to the delight of the audience she entertained for weeks.

"I figured if you can't face your fears here where can you," she said.



A fan takes a picture of the final three contestants as they wait for the announcement of the winner April 2.

Word on the street

“Did you play any April Fool’s Day pranks this year? If so, what was it?”



“No. I was smart enough not to.”

Capt. William Egeler
2nd BDE S2 ISR OIC



“We pulled pranks on our NCOIC all day. We made posters of him, walked around in bandages and told him a female was pregnant.”

Sgt. Christian Stephenson
2nd BDE finance



“I fooled a bunch of people in the S2 and command group (said a high value target was captured).”

Capt. Andrew Feitt
2nd BDE SIGINT OIC



April FOB Kalsu MWR Calendar



SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
Unless otherwise stated, all events begin at 1930. Times and events are subject to change. Special events are in <i>red italics</i> .				3 Pool Chess	4 Basketball Spades Movie night	5 Texas Hold'em Hip-hop music night
6 <i>Talent show @ MWR, 9 p.m.</i> Halo 2: 2 vs 2	7 Ping Pong Dominoes	8 Foosball Darts Spades	9 Basketball Strongman comp.	10 Pool Chess	11 Basketball Spades Movie night	12 Texas Hold'em Hip-hop music night
13 Halo 2: 2 vs 2	14 Ping Pong Dominoes	15 Monopoly Darts Spades	16 Basketball Bench press comp.	17 Pool Chess	18 Basketball Spades Movie night	19 Texas Hold'em Hip-hop music night
20 <i>Talent show @ MWR, 9 p.m.</i> Halo 2: 2 vs 2	21 Ping Pong Dominoes	22 Foosball Darts Spades	23 Basketball Max Bench press comp.	24 Pool Chess	25 Basketball Spades Movie night	26 Texas Hold'em Hip-hop music night
27 Halo 2: 2 vs 2	28 Ping Pong Dominoes	29 Risk Darts Spades	30 Basketball Deadlift comp.			