

IRON STRONG DAILY



Engineers bridge gap between old, new leadership styles

**Story and photos by
Pfc. Adam Carl Blazak
11th Public Affairs Detachment**

The 3rd Iraqi Army Division engineer regiment's noncommissioned officers began its first NCO development course at the division headquarters at Forward Operating Base Al Kisik.

The goal was to enhance leadership techniques for the Iraqi Army.

More than twenty NCOs

participated in the five-day training, which covered Army leadership, the history and role of NCOs, the IA Soldier, the NCO creed and combat orders.

"We're going to help develop the role of the NCOs," said Sgt. Maj. Henry J. Gerving, one of the lead instructors for the training.

"We're tightening the partnership with the 3rd Iraqi Army Division," added Gerving, a New Salem, N.D. native.

Furthering the relationship

between the IA and the U.S. Army was just one bonus of the training.

"This is a two-way learning situation," Gerving mentioned. "We're learning a lot about the IA's capabilities and limitations."

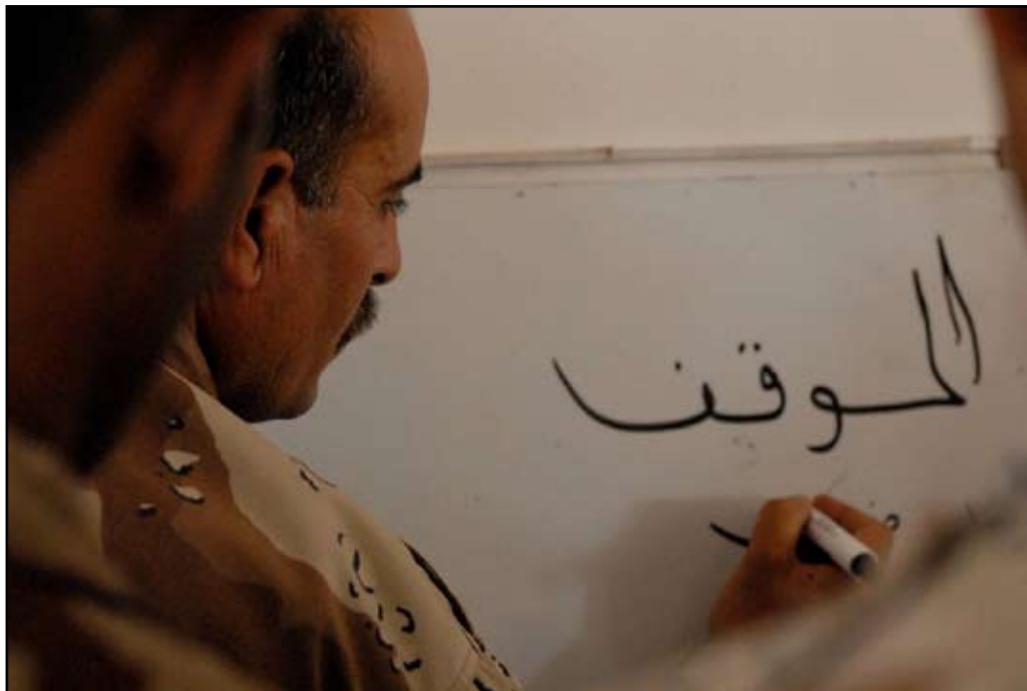
This training is important because it helps fill in the gaps between the NCO leadership styles of the old and new Iraqi Army, said Sgt. 1st Class Steve W. Laire, the course's lead instructor with Headquarters Support Company, 94th Engineer Battalion.

"In the old Iraqi Army there was oppression on Soldiers," said Sgt. 1st Class Abood Taraq Abood, a student with 3rd IA Engr. Regt. "Now, if NCOs respect their Soldiers, then the Soldiers will respect them back."

One definite hope is the NCOs leave this course with the knowledge of how to work through problems by applying the Soldier and NCO Creeds, added Laire, a Macon, Mo. native.

"It's important for my NCOs to become leaders," said Maj. Muhammed Shukr Ahmed, an officer in 3rd IA Div. Engr. Regt. "Though it will take time to develop their leadership."

"The training helped the NCOs with commanding their Soldiers," said Col. Jassim Mohammed



A senior Iraqi noncommissioned officer guides junior NCOs through a practical exercise during the first NCO development course introduced to the 3rd Iraqi Army Division engineer regiment non-commissioned officers. The goal of the course is to better leadership techniques. The five-day course was held on Forward Operating Base Al Kisik, Iraq.

IA teams up with 2-320 FAR for safer Iraq

**Story and photos by
Staff Sgt. Tim Sander
Expeditionary Times staff**

The massive blades of the CH-47 Chinook helicopter were churning through the hot, night air, throwing dust and rocks from the barren field into the Soldiers' faces as it lifted into the dark sky, leaving them behind with only their weapons and Iraqi counterparts to keep them safe.

As the dust began to settle, the U.S. Soldiers of 2nd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, and Iraqi Soldiers of 3rd Battalion, 17th Brigade, started moving, using the dim, green glow of their night-vision goggles to navigate through the rugged terrain and into their target village.

The purpose of the mission was to conduct a joint air assault with Iraqi Security Forces to deny the enemy freedom of movement while searching for weapon caches, said Seattle native Sgt. 1st Class Peter E. Bjorklund, noncommissioned officer in charge of 2nd platoon, 2-320th FAR. A secondary goal of the operation was to provide the IA with valuable training in night-time air assault missions.

According to Sgt. Maj. Robert Levis, the operations sergeant major of 2-320th FAR, another benefit of the joint mission was that it built confidence between the local Iraqi citizens and the IA.

"The local citizens ... saw Iraqi Soldiers, U.S. Soldiers and Airmen descend on their village from the sky as one team fighting the insurgency

to secure Iraq," said Levis, a native of Clarksville, Tenn.

Capt. Rob Pratt, the commander of Bravo Battery, 2-320th, said the results of missions like this are beginning to emerge as local Iraqi citizens are increasingly providing the ISF with valuable information that leads to a safer Iraq.

"The overall perception of the population right now is 'Hey, the IA is taking ownership,'" said Pratt, a native of Moorefield, W. Va. One of the goals of Coalition Forces, said Pratt, is to aid and reinforce that.

In addition to the valuable experience the IA gained from the mission, Levis said the night-time air assault served other purposes as well.

"The air assault alone will motivate any Soldier; and to do it at night, under night vision, really adds to (the IA Soldiers') capabilities," he said.

Since 2-320th FAR, more commonly known as Task Force "Balls of the Eagle," arrived in Iraq last September, their main priorities have been securing the population and aiding the development of ISF.

"Task Force 'Balls of the Eagle,' in conjunction with the military transition team, is conducting joint patrols on a weekly basis to identify any shortcomings and to prepare the Iraqi Army to take the lead in this fight," said Levis.

And according to Levis, these efforts have paid off, "We have reduced the enemy threat to the people of Iraq and personnel living on the local bases immensely and continue to provide economic stability and assistance to the local government daily."



U.S. Soldiers of 2nd Battalion, 320th Field Artillery Regiment, and Iraqi Soldiers of 3rd Battalion, 17th Brigade, prepare to load onto a CH-47 Chinook helicopter for a joint air assault mission.

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SoI put down guns, pick up pencils



Richard Bell, Provincial Reconstruction Team Leader in the Salah ad Din Province, along with Dr. Ali Ahbdualah Mohammed, director of the Tikrit Industrial School examine some of the projects that the school's students have created over the course of their class.

**Story and photos by
Spc. Ryan Elliott
14th Public Affairs Detachment**

Two hundred and thirty eight former Sons of Iraq graduated from Tikrit Industrial School.

The students were taking part in the Joint Technical Education and Re-Integration Program.

“JTERP’s purpose is to give the SoI the opportunity to get technical, vocational skills so that they can get a job in the private sector,” said Cpt. Ray Ades, Officer in Charge of the governance section, Provincial Reconstruction Team.

As the security situation improves former Sons of Iraq are finding it necessary to seek out new jobs in the emerging commercial sector of the Iraqi economy.

The students are being re-trained in different vocations such as carpentry, masonry, electronics, welding mechanics



Sgt. Michael Velasquez of the 426 BSB, 101st Airborne Division, examines a display designed by a former Son of Iraq going through the J-TERP program, at the Tikrit Industrial School

and car mechanics, said Richard Bell Team Leader, Salah ad Din province, Provincial Reconstruction Team.

“I consider this pilot course to be very successful and I’m eager to see where it goes” said Ades.

Keeping COB Soldiers healthy

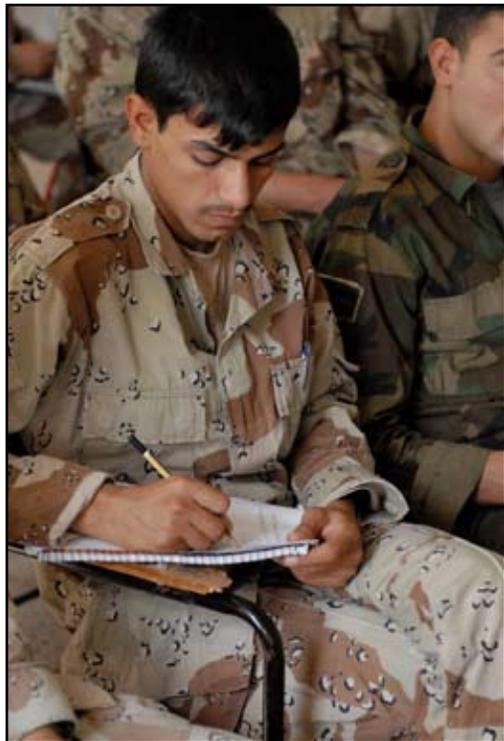


(ABOVE) Many Soldiers in Contingency Operating Base Speicher gather at the Main Gym for the Health and Wellness Fair. The event, sponsored by 345th Combat Support Hospital, provided Soldiers with a large variety of information such as women’s health, sports nutrition and combat stress control. They also offered hypertension, diabetes and cholesterol screenings.

(BELOW) Maj. Clara Moses, officer in charge of surgery at the 345th Combat Support Hospital, demonstrates to a crowd of Soldiers how to prevent infection by using proper hand washing during the Health and Wellness Fair that took place at the Main Gym in Contingency Operating Base Speicher. There, they covered everything from combat stress control to sports nutrition.



(ABOVE) Soldiers test their strength during the sit-up competition to win exciting prizes at the Health and Wellness Fair, which took place at the Main Gym in Contingency Operating Base Speicher. Soldiers were able to enjoy various things like massage therapy and a vast amount of information given by the 345th Combat Support Hospital.

Leadership from Page 1

An Iraqi noncommissioned officer takes notes during a leadership lecture held on Forward Operating Base Al Kisik. The 3rd Iraqi Army Division engineer regiment noncommissioned officers, with the instruction of leaders from the U.S. Army 94th Engineer Company, learned various leadership techniques during a week-long course.

Khalid, the commander of 3rd IA Div. Engr. Regiment.

“We depend on NCOs as platoon leaders,” Ahmed mentioned. “They are the ones

who will be out on missions.”

With a new army giving NCOs more responsibility and authority, Iraqi Soldiers are keen on learning from leadership styles, which have proven to work in past events.

“Their NCO history has been broken,” Laire said. “But the years of history we have in our NCO corps can benefit them.”

“This training is very important,” said Cpl. Muhammed Khalaf Dakheel, a student with 3rd IA Engr. Regt. “After each lecture, I review the material, which was taught. I have more confidence in the NCO Creed and Soldier’s Creed.”

Throughout the course, junior NCOs worked hand-in-hand with their higher ranking sergeants to provide examples of leadership and work through scenarios.

“The senior NCOs in the class are building a band with the junior NCOs,” Laire added.

“The junior NCOs giving more respect to senior NCOs shows we



Col. Jassim Mohammed Khalid, the commander of 3rd IA Division Engineer Regiment watches his noncommissioned officers as they take an examination based on army leadership. The test is a tool, which evaluates the NCOs after a week-long leadership course on Forward Operating Base Al Kisik.

had success,” Laire mentioned.

A wide range of leadership styles and concepts were introduced to the NCOs who were eager to learn better techniques to better themselves as leaders.

“We made the course material relevant to their situation,” Laire said.

“The best thing taught in the class was the development of the NCOS and counseling Soldiers on a regular basis,” Abood noted. “Junior NCOS need to respect themselves more to become better leaders.”

Iraqi, 3d ACR senior NCOs discuss Soldier training

Story and photo by Multi-National Division North PAO

The top noncommissioned officers-in-charge in the Iraqi army in western Ninewah Province and 1st Squadron, 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment, met to discuss training and daily unit operations during a conference.

The event, hosted by Command Sgt. Maj. Jonathan Hunt, the senior NCO for Tiger Squadron, 3d ACR, focused on bringing the senior leaders together to discuss various

issues the IA is having, talk about different tactics, techniques and procedures and share ideas with each other.

This was also a chance to spend time together and build camaraderie and trust in the NCO corps of both armies, Hunt said.

During the conference, the leaders also toured several of the squadron’s staff sections and shops such as maintenance, medical and the motorpool to see how Coalition Forces conducted daily business. They also took a tour of the Iraqi Warrior Leader Course and met the soldiers while they conducted training.

Command Sgt. Maj. Roger Blackwood,



Command Sgt. Maj. Roger Blackwood, Multi-National Division – North and 1st Armored Division command sergeant major, meets an Iraqi soldier at the Iraqi Warrior Leader Course.

Multi-National Division – North and 1st Armored Division command sergeant major, also attended the event as a special guest.

NEW YORK



(NEW YORK DAILY NEWS) The remorseless killer of a Pace University student almost left his victim unharmed - but made a split-second decision on his way out the door to strangle the teen, prosecutors charged Wednesday.

Jeromie Cancel, who giggled throughout his arraignment Wednesday, grabbed Kevin Pravia's laptop, BlackBerry phone and iPod after the intoxicated student passed out early Saturday, according to court papers.

Cancel, 22, was steps from leaving the W. 15th St. pad when he spun around and wrapped a TV power cord around Pravia's neck, prosecutors said. Gasping for air, Pravia woke up and tried to resist, but Cancel punched him in the face.

Cancel then calmly stuffed a plastic bag down Pravia's throat and put his hand over the student's nose, prosecutors said. Pravia, 19, stopped breathing within moments. Cancel then sat near the corpse to watch the gory film "Saw," leaving the apartment hours later.

Cancel fidgeted and laughed in Manhattan Criminal Court even as he was ordered held without bail. A drifter with several prior arrests in Florida, Cancel was charged with first-degree murder and ordered to take his psychotropic drugs.

He told cops he met Pravia after the drunken student approached him in Union Square Park to buy drugs.

Police let Pravia's roommate, Josephine Madonna, and three friends into the apartment last night to collect some personal

items.

Seconds after they entered the building, a gray-blue sedan pulled up and Cancel's father, Jesus Soto, emerged with a bunch of flowers. He placed the bouquet at a makeshift memorial outside the building and quickly left. A card with the flowers read, "To Kevin's family: Our condolences. Jesus Soto (and) Annette Laureano."

When the young women emerged a short time later, Madonna declined to answer questions about Pravia, saying only, "He was wonderful."

LOUISIANA

(NEW YORK TIMES) With thousands of residents stacked up at entrances to this city, impatient to return home after evacuating for Hurricane Gustav, Mayor C. Ray Nagin shifted course Wednesday morning and ordered an immediate lifting of barriers blocking their entry.

Citizens began trickling back to hot, dank homes on the emptied streets by Wednesday afternoon, as the city — and much of the state — was still mostly without electric power. Despite angry blasts from Gov. Bobby Jindal and even a plea from President Bush, utility officials gave no word on when electricity would be restored. But some residents said they had no choice but return, the intense heat and humidity notwithstanding.

The return had been scheduled for early Thursday, but Mr. Nagin's unexpected action was forced by a slow-moving humanitarian crisis, as residents, many of modest means in this poor city, reported running out of money to sustain a prolonged evacuation.

They said they were sleeping in their cars, at rest stops and by the side of the road. Many were going hungry. In addition, the experience after Hurricane Katrina, when thousands were forced to stay away for months, had made them leery of being kept from their city for long.

Traffic was reported bumper-to-bumper for miles on the Interstate highways leading to the hobbled city, testimony to the immense clamor to return home after a storm that proved far less damaging than had been feared.

As soon as word got out over the radio that Mr. Nagin had backed down and opened the gates a day early, residents said they packed up, got in their cars and headed home.

"It was just expensive, the whole hotel deal," said Trevor Chase, a waiter at the Creole restaurant Dooky Chase, as he stood next to his car on Painters Street in the Gentilly section. "We'd rather be without power."

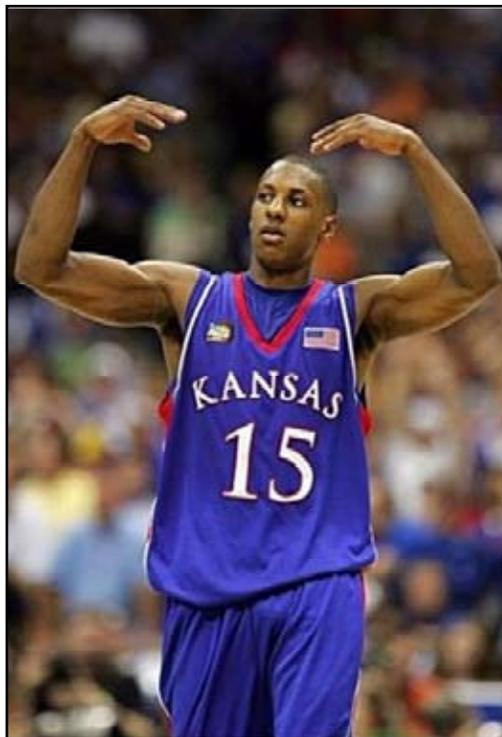
Mr. Chase had been in Baton Rouge for four days with his three children. "We can't afford to be out like that," he said. The financial strain had "caused a little stress on the family," he added.

Gerald Hill, a construction worker, standing outside his modest cottage on Spain Street, said he too ran out of money for a motel. He had evacuated to Hattiesburg, Miss. Besides, he said, the motel "had roaches all over."

Despite the mayor's statements, Mr. Hill said, there was no reason not to come home. Mr. Nagin "was talking about 'too much debris.' I don't see no debris," said Mr. Hill, looking up and down the mostly clear street.



BASKETBALL



(NEW YORK TIMES) Two rookies attending an N.B.A. seminar that teaches players how to avoid trouble were sent home on the event's first day for violating the program's rules.

Mario Chalmers and Darrell Arthur, who were teammates at Kansas, were dismissed Wednesday from the annual rookie transition program, a three-day event at a resort in Rye Brook, N.Y. They will have to enroll in the program again next year and may be subject to further discipline.

The rookie seminar is held annually and is mandatory for first-year players. The program includes lectures on money management and officiating, as well as drug use, gambling and groupies.

According to two people with direct knowledge of the situation, Chalmers and Arthur had women in their hotel rooms Tuesday night, a violation of the program's rules. Both people — a league official and a business associate of one of the players — spoke on condition of anonymity because the league considers this a private matter. It is extremely rare for rookies to be kicked out of the orientation program. The last player to be sent home was Ron Artest in 1999.

The N.B.A. confirmed that Chalmers and Arthur had been dismissed, but declined to offer a specific explanation, other than to say they violated the rules.

"They will be appropriately sanctioned and will have to do the program next year," said Tim Frank, the N.B.A.'s vice president for basketball communications. "We'll continue to review the situation."

Chalmers and Arthur turned professional after helping Kansas win the national championship in April. Chalmers was drafted in the second round by the Minnesota Timberwolves, then traded to Miami. Arthur was drafted late in the first round by New Orleans, then traded to two other teams before landing with the Memphis Grizzlies. Spokesmen for the Heat and the Grizzlies confirmed that the players had been kicked out of the program and could be subject to further sanctions.

BASEBALL

(ASSOCIATED PRESS) Blake DeWitt and Angel Berroa hit back-to-back homers in the fourth inning to put Los Angeles ahead for good, and the Dodgers beat the San Diego Padres 6-4 on Wednesday night to complete a sweep of the three-game series.

The win was the Dodgers' fifth straight following a season-long eight-game losing streak, and left them 1 1/2 games behind NL West-leading Arizona entering a three-game series between the teams beginning Friday night at Dodger Stadium. Dan Haren (14-7) pitches for the Diamondbacks in the opener against Derek Lowe (11-11).

Both teams are off Thursday before meeting for the final time this season. The Diamondbacks have an 8-7 record against the Dodgers, but lost two of three to Los Angeles in Arizona last weekend.

Casey Blake, hitting cleanup for the first time since being acquired from Cleveland on July 26, homered for the Dodgers, who have scored 33 runs in the last five games after scoring only 15 in the previous eight.

Hiroki Kuroda (8-10) won despite allowing 10 hits and four runs in 5 1-3 innings with one walk and four strikeouts. He gave up 26 hits and 10 earned runs in 39 1-3 innings over his previous six starts.

Jonathan Broxton, the fifth Dodgers pitcher, worked a perfect ninth for his 12th save in 14 chances since taking over the closer's role.

Rookie Chase Headley had three hits and Josh Bard drove in three runs for the

Padres, who have lost 11 of 16.

The Dodgers took a 1-0 lead off Wade LeBlanc (0-1) in the third when Berroa doubled and scored on a one-out single by Russell Martin. LeBlanc avoided further damage by pitching out of a bases-loaded jam.

The Padres went ahead 3-1 in the fourth on a leadoff homer by Kevin Kouzmanoff, his 20th, and a two-out, two-run double by Bard.

The Dodgers scored four times in their half for a 5-3 lead on a two-run homer by DeWitt, a solo shot by Berroa and an RBI single by Blake. Berroa's homer was his first since Sept. 25, 2006, when he was playing for Kansas City, prompting his teammates to give him the silent treatment when he arrived in the dugout before offering congratulations. Then, the fans urged him out of the dugout for a curtain call.

The Padres drew within one run and chased Kuroda in the sixth, scoring on Bard's RBI single.

San Diego threatened in the seventh before Cory Wade struck out Will Venable with runners at first and third to end the inning. Blake homered off Mike Adams in the bottom half to complete the scoring.

LeBlanc, a 24-year-old left-hander making his big-league debut, allowed eight hits and five runs in four innings.

