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November 24, 2008

## IA, U.S. Soldiers conduct aviation integration training

**SGT. RODNEY FOLIENTE**  
2ND BCT, 4TH INF. DIV.



CAMP ECHO – Iraqi Army and U.S. Soldiers began combined aviation integration training Nov. 15 at Camp Echo.

Soldiers from the 4th Battalion, 30th Brigade, 8th Iraqi Army Division, and 2nd Combined Arms Bn., 8th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Div. participated in the training.

The training helped equip the IA Soldiers with knowledge and experience to be more capable in a wider scope of missions, said 2nd Lt. Ala'a, Special Forces Company, 4th Bn., 8th IA Div.

He also added that his Soldiers liked training with the helicopters and that the training will benefit his battalion and the working relationship between the two countries' Soldiers.

The training primarily focused on boarding and dismounting the UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter in combat scenarios, but also covered some of the support capabilities of the Black Hawk and the AH-64 Apache helicopter.

"We're going over integration procedures with the air weapons teams and the (transport) elements and the best ways to use each asset," said Chief Warrant Officer Sam Bennett, 2nd BCT aviation officer. The next phase of the training will involve actual air lift and drop-off exercises at different locations.

"The training that we're doing is for the troops to get familiar with the UH-60 and the AH-64, (their) capabilities and what they can do for (the units)," said Chief Warrant Officer Edward DeGuisto, Co. A, 142nd Aviation Assault Bn., a New York Army National Guard unit.

He emphasized the importance of the Black Hawk for troop movement and the Apache for fire support. Troops rely heavily upon the air support of these aircraft in a combat theater.

"Most of them have been on Black Hawks before, but it's always good to have a review from time to time," said DeGuisto, who comes from LaGrange, N.Y. "It is a safe, secure way to get about the country; it's quicker and more direct."

In the first phase of the training, the Black Hawk was grounded, and the engines turned off. Soldiers reviewed verbal and nonverbal communications and practiced loading and off-loading in different mission scenarios.

The training gets the Soldiers more familiar with boarding and dismounting the Black Hawk quickly under different combat scenarios and levels of duress. The less time



Photo by Sgt. Rodney Foliente

**Iraqi Soldiers from 4th Bn., 30th Bde., 8th IA Div. lead the way dismounting from a Black Hawk during aviation integration training with 2-8 Inf. Regt. Soldiers at Camp Echo Nov. 15.**

the Soldiers take moving, the less potential for an enemy attack, said DeGuisto.

Amidst jokes, laughter and appreciation for the helicopters during down-time, the Iraqis and Americans conducted the training with professional determination and a growing cohesion.

"We're here to help (the Iraqis) and assist them to maintain their democracy," said Bennett, who comes from

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# AVIATION

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Havelock, N.C. For the long-term, “the training will show

them what they can expect when they get their own air assets, how they can better integrate them and what they can use their air assets for on the battlefield.”

Training together definitely benefitted the Soldiers on an individual and team level, said Staff Sgt. Henry Flores, scout, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2-8th Inf. Regt.

“We’re trying to integrate the IA into our day-to-day training so that for air insertion or any other (missions) we do, that the IA knows what we’re doing and we know what they’re thinking, we’re all on the same page and we’re all fighting the same fight,” said Flores.

“The more we get to work with them the better (we all) get along,” said Flores, adding that as they continue training and working together, the cultural and communication barriers dissolve into less tangible obstacles.

“When we’re outside the wire, we correct each other and help each other



Photo by Sgt. Rodney Foliante

**Soldiers from 4th Bn., 30th Bde., 8th IA Div. and HHC, 2-8 Inf. Regt. rush to security positions upon dismounting a Black Hawk during aviation integration training at Camp Echo Nov. 15.**

all the time, and we’re also learning from them,” said Flores, from Waco, Texas.

The relationship between Iraqi and U.S. Soldiers offers the IA a wider degree of training that yields greater ca-

pabilities for maintaining security in Qadisiya Province, said Ala’a.

“They are always supporting us and training us, and we thank them. I think the security in Diwaniya is good and will continue to get better,” he said.

## Gracie Jiu-Jitsu Academy shares knowledge with Soldiers

SPC. TIFFANY EVANS  
MND-C



CAMP VICTORY, Iraq – Service members on the Victory Base Complex were treated to workshops by the Gracie Jiu-Jitsu Academy Nov. 14 through 20.

Basic Army Combatives incorporates the Gracie Jiu-Jitsu form, which made training with its founders an exciting opportunity. An opportunity

made possible by Maj. Gen. Michael Ferriter, Multi-National Corps – Iraq deputy commanding general, who met Rorion Gracie, one of the founders of the academy, in the 80’s.

Ferriter contacted Rorion to see if the academy would be willing to come to Iraq and teach its form of Jiu-Jitsu.

“When my father asked if I would be willing to go to Iraq, I jumped at the chance,” said Ryon Gracie, Los Angeles Gracie Jiu-Jitsu Academy

instructor and Rorion’s son. “I told him no matter what we have (to do) to go, we have to do whatever it takes to get there.”

Gracie starts the class showing different holds and breaks as another instructor participates as his partner. The instructor team also walks around the class helping the participants to ensure they are performing the moves

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### THE Mountain View

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# GRACIE

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correctly.

Students eagerly split up into teams and go through the moves. If they are having trouble, they are quick to wave down an instructor for more information.

Maj. Mathew Collins, of Fort Bragg, N.C., MNC-I analysis control element, escorted the instructors while they were here.

“I’m excited that they are here – I mean, if you are into mixed martial arts, you know who the Gracies are,” said Collins. “As a Soldier, this is a great augmentation to the combatives I’ve already learned.”

The Soldiers participating in the class had a lot to learn from the Gracie Academy instructors; yet, the teacher very often becomes the student in classes like these.

“Initially I would say it is a mutual exchange of experiences and knowledge that benefits everyone,” said Gui Valente, Gracie Jiu-Jitsu Academy Miami head instructor. “Our objective



Photo by Spc. Tiffany Evans

Ryron Gracie locks up Gui Valente and puts him in a chokehold during a Gracie Jiu-Jitsu class offered to service members Nov. 15 at the Sgt. 1st Class Paul R. Smith Fitness Center.

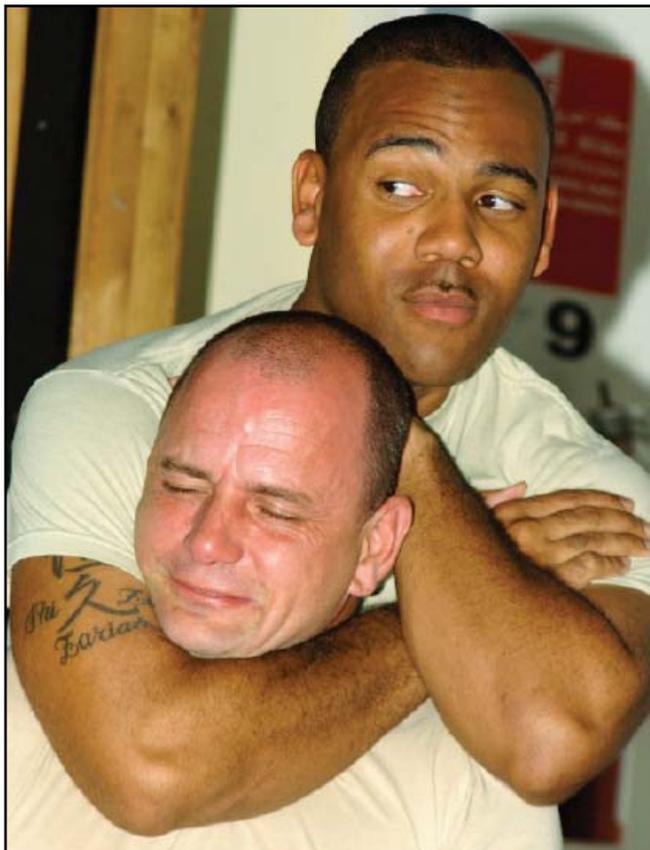


Photo by Spc. Tiffany Evans

Cpl. Patrick Bettis, Kansas City, Mo., puts Sgt. Cory Morris in a rear naked choke during a class given by the Gracie Jiu-Jitsu Academy Nov. 15. Both Soldiers are from Company C, 2nd Battalion, 44th Air Defense Artillery Regiment.

is to introduce the Gracie Jiu-Jitsu philosophy to as many troops possible; the practice of Gracie Jiu-Jitsu transcends the application of chokes, arm locks or strikes.”

Gracie hopes service members will understand there are different philosophies in fighting after these classes. His goal is to convey how Gracie Jiu-Jitsu and the Army Combatives Program can help service members find a great philosophy and mind set.

“Never expect to use strength or power to beat an opponent, but instead, expect to be outweighed and outsized,” Valente said.

Gracie Jiu-Jitsu shows that you can be smaller and still beat your opponent. As Rorion says, ‘Life’s a fight, be ready.’”

Practice of Gracie Jiu-Jitsu presents a valuable avenue for growth in many areas such as efficiency,

confidence, courage, loyalty, discipline and respect, said Gui.

“Over the last 50 years, three generations of the Valente family have learned Gracie Jiu-Jitsu directly from Grand Master Hélio Gracie, Ryron’s Grandfather,” said Valente. “Today, I can proudly say that my grandfather, my father and I have learned from the creator of Gracie Jiu-Jitsu.”

Valente and Gracie have spent a great deal of time together over the years. As childhood friends and now instructors for the Gracie Academy, they often see each other, though Gracie lives in California and Valente in Florida.

“We frequently travel to visit each other’s school and teach class together. In our high school days, when I still lived in Rio de Janeiro, Ryron used to come during the summer and spend weeks in my house.”

Gracie and Valente said coming to Iraq has been a valuable experience, and they plan to teach troops serving in Afghanistan.

“We would like to say that it has been a great opportunity and an honor to support the troops that help maintain our freedom. We are extremely grateful for their sacrifice and commitment to the United States of America,” said Valente and Gracie. “The opportunity to be here and witness the commitment and sacrifice of the troops is something that we will cherish for the rest of our lives.”

## Staff Section Round-up

### MND-C CELEBRATES NATIVE AMERICAN HISTORY WITH TRADITIONAL DANCE

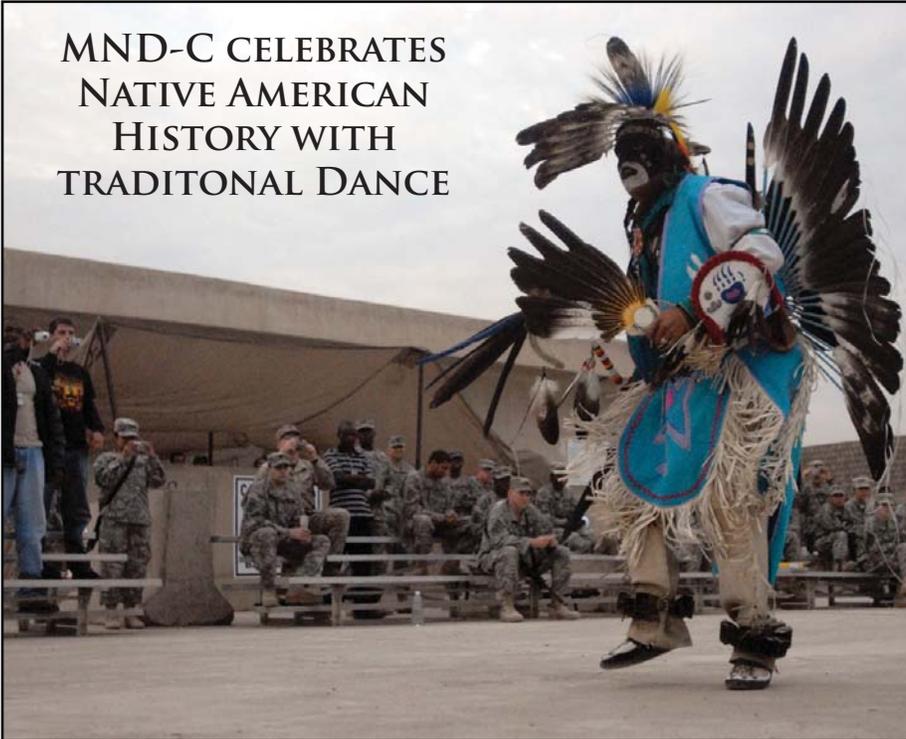


Photo by Spc. Josh LeCappelain

Cliff Martin, a native of Montana and a member of the Blackfoot tribe, performs a dance for service members and civilians on the Victory Base Complex during an event celebrating Native American Heritage Month Nov. 22 at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation Center 51 on Camp Victory.

### Facts about Native American Heritage

- No single federal or tribal criterion establishes a person's identity as an Indian. Tribal membership is determined by enrollment criteria of the tribe from which Indian blood may be derived. Generally, if linkage to an identified tribal member is far removed, one would not qualify for membership.
- There are more than 550 federally recognized tribes in the U.S., including 223 village groups in Alaska. "Federally" recognized means these tribes have a special, legal relationship with the U.S. government.
- In the U.S., there are only two kinds of reserved lands that are well-known: military and Indian. An Indian reservation is land reserved for a tribe when it relinquished its other land area to the U.S. through treaties. Today, some reservations have non-Indian residents and land owners.



## PAO WANTS TO KNOW



Will your section give Secret Santa gifts?  
 Will you light a Menorah or kinara?  
 Will you trim a Christmas tree?

How ever you are celebrating this holiday season in Iraq, we'd like to know. Please email Master Sgt. Stephen Opet at [stephen.opet@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:stephen.opet@iraq.centcom.mil) and tell us about your celebration.

We'll write about it, take pictures . . .  
 maybe even party with you!



**We want to talk** to the service member who has deployed the most.

If you think that could be you, email Spc. Josh Lecappelain at [joshua.lecappelain@iraq.centcom.mil](mailto:joshua.lecappelain@iraq.centcom.mil).

## Headline Round-up

### Sports News:

On Saturday, the Oklahoma Sooners ended the Texas Tech Red Raiders' winning streak. The fifth-ranked Sooners routed the second-ranked Red Raiders 65 – 21. There is now a three-way tie atop the Big 12: Tech, Oklahoma and the University of Texas. If the three finish in a tie, the BCS standings would determine which team plays No. 12 Missouri in the Big 12 championship game in Kansas City, Mo., Dec. 6.

### U.S. News:

A missing 17-year-old girl was found hiding in the closet of male middle school teacher near her Chicago home. The teacher, Eric Wood, 24, was arrested and charged with obstructing justice; he told police he didn't know where the missing girl was. Wood and the 17-year-old have supposedly been seeing each other since meeting at a car show in July.

### Odd News:

There are efforts underway to adopt pole dancing as an Olympic sport for the 2012 Olympics in London. Supporters started a petition to get the event included. Lizz Schofield, owner of a Utah dance studio where "Pole Fitness" is popular, said that pole dancing has nothing to do with stripping but more with grace, fluidity and strength.

### Entertainment News:

The Screen Actors Guild plans to ask its members to authorize a strike after the first contract talks in four months with Hollywood studios failed. Even with the help of a federal mediator, an agreement could not be made.

## NATIONAL AMERICAN INDIAN HERITAGE MONTH TRIVIA ANSWER

Saturday – The Indigenous American Indian Flute is an instrument with seven notes, represent the four primary directions, and the heavens, the Earth and the heart.

S				3	1			5
			4					
u	7			8				9
d	4			1		2	3	7
	2							
o		8	1				6	
k	9		2		3			5
	3			4	2			8
u		7						6

For the answer to today's puzzle, go to:



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WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART ABOUT THANKSGIVING BACK HOME?



Photo by Staff Sgt. Michel Sauret

"Family, of course, because I don't get to see them a lot. It's been a while since I had Thanksgiving dinner with the family," said Petty Officer 1st Class Bryce Calhoon, of San Diego, an information system technician with Navy Central Command.



Photo by Spc. Sophia R. Lopez

"Eating; it's my favorite hobby and watching football," said Sgt. Maj. Mark Martin, of Parsons, W.V., G-1 sergeant major, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 10th Mountain Division.