

Radars keep their eyes on the skies

By Staff Sgt. Mark Burrell
MND-B PAO

BAGHDAD — In Iraq, there are hundreds of aircraft in the sky every day; landing, taking off, and patrolling.

It’s the job of the sentinel radar teams assigned to Multi-National Division – Baghdad, operating in relative obscurity, to monitor and make sure the skies are safe.

At Forward Operating Base Hammer, on the far eastern outskirts of Baghdad, that team consists of three Soldiers from 26th Field Artillery Regiment, 17th Fires Brigade, who, on a rotating basis, keep track of the spinning radar.

“We keep track of helicopters and unmanned aerial vehicles...to make sure they don’t hit each other,” said Staff Sgt. Valentine Smith, a radar mechanic. “We’re kinda like aircraft controllers...there are a lot of birds flying around up there, a lot of them.”

The sophisticated radar system interlocks with other radars positioned throughout Baghdad to provide full coverage of aircraft, or birds, in the sky down to the smallest detail.

“The radar pings a bird and asks, ‘Are you friendly or not?’” said Smith, adding that it also describes the type of aircraft.

These Soldiers knew they were coming to Iraq to operate a radar system that none of them had previously worked on, but they have transitioned successfully.

“The hardest challenge

for me was the software, but between the three of us, we figure it out pretty well,” explained Smith, from Yonkers, N.Y.

Spc. Antoine Maines, a radar operator, worked on similar machines, but this was a first time for him with the radar.

“For me, the transition was a little easier because it’s the same thing, it just spins 360 degrees,” said Maines, from Rapids City, S.D., describing the rotating portable radar. “We just adapt and overcome.”

Before coming here, Soldiers went through a cursory two-week course on the system, giving them the confidence to operate the machinery and keep it running 24 hours a day.

“It’s weird, it keeps track of everything,” added Maines. “We know what we’re doing and the impact that we’re having, but the average Soldier doesn’t know...We are like the guys behind the curtain.”

In this case, the curtain is large camouflage netting concealing multiple generators and a complex radar control center that wouldn’t solicit a second glance from Soldiers.

The transition to this job has been the most extreme for field artillery meteorological crewmember Sgt. Leon Praxton.

“The biggest thing was just getting here to Iraq and us doing the job,” admitted Praxton.

“I just shadowed my non-



Photo by Staff Sgt. Mark Burrell

“It gets so dusty here, we have to work hard on keeping it clean,” said Sgt. Leon Praxton, a field artillery meteorological crewmember from Houston, while cleaning out the panels of the sentinel radar during his daily inspection of the machine at Forward Operating Base Hammer, Nov. 15, here, on the far eastern edge of Baghdad.

commissioned officer in charge when I first started working on it and that made for a smooth transition.”

For optimistic and flexible Soldiers like this sentinel radar crew, the shift was pretty painless, added Praxton.

“It’s different from our military occupational specialty, but it’s not hard to do,” explained Praxton, a native of

Houston. “If something goes wrong, that’s when it’s hard, but we have a lot of support from division...and we rely on our wits and instincts.”

Being able to track helicopters throughout Baghdad can have a serious effect on saving lives if an aircraft ever goes down and Praxton is proud to be able to help his fellow service members.

Aviators maintain weapons proficiency

*Photos by Chief Warrant Officer 2 Anthony Bailey
1st ACB, 1st Cav. Div.*

BAGHDAD—Producing a blast of smoke and fire, an AH-64D Apache attack helicopter pilot from 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, fires a 2.75 inch hydra aerial folding-fin rocket while conducting a gunnery on the outskirts of Baghdad.



Shell casings rain down as an AH-64D Apache attack helicopter pilot from 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, fires a 30 mm chain gun at a target while conducting a gunnery on the outskirts of Baghdad



Mavericks improve warrior skills

By Sgt. Jon Soles

MND-B PAO

BAGHDAD — A Soldier can't always depend on marksmanship to survive on the battlefield. Sometimes, a Soldier's only weapons are hands, feet and a warrior's determination.

Soldiers from the 1st Cavalry Division's Special Troops Battalion tested their ability to preserve themselves and their battle buddies without weapons, by engaging in Level I combatives certification to cap off a week of training on Camp Liberty, here, Nov. 13.

Two Soldiers faced each other in the middle of the mat, while the other Soldiers erupted into cheers of encouragement.

Spc. Larisa Neskovic, a medic from Jay, Fla., took the role of the enemy. First Lt. Aimee Feliz, a main supply platoon leader from Fairfax, Va., stepped up to fight alone and without a weapon.

Once the two touched fists to start the fight, Neskovic immediately began to pummel Feliz in the head. Feliz struggled to hold Neskovic in a clinch hold to stop the blows as their deep breaths became audible in the room. Once Feliz finally held Neskovic in one of the three clinch holds required for the course — the modified seatbelt, rear clench and under hooks clench — the match was over.

Such matches went on for an hour, with male and female Soldiers all going against each other, regardless of the size difference. Soldiers who demonstrated proficiency in the three clench holds were awarded the Level I certificate.

Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Haynes, teaches unarmed combatives up to Level III for DSTB troops.

"What we try to bring out in these Soldiers is confidence and

the warrior ethos," said Haynes. "I feel pretty confident that they can encounter the enemy on the battlefield and totally finish the fight."

Haynes said Level I focuses on 13 core moves and proficiency is determined by the ability to perform the three clenches. Level I certification requires 40 hours of instruction spread out over a week. Soldiers who earn their Level I certification may advance to Level II.

Capt. Seth Gould, who runs the unarmed combatives program, said hand-to-hand fighting is intended to be a contingency in case a Soldier has to fight an enemy alone, or without a weapon. It is intended to preserve a Soldier on the battlefield until reinforcements arrive.

"The guy that wins the fight is the guy whose buddy shows up first, and in the Army, your buddy is never far away," said

Gould, a native of Covington, Ga.

Soldiers who earned their Level I certification said the training reminded them of the Army Warrior Ethos. Not giving up was the key to staying alive, said Sgt. Orianna Martinez, a supply sergeant from Rutherfordton, N.C.

"I'm going to do everything I can to keep the opponent from taking me down," said Martinez. "I feel like quitting is selfish. You can't just give up."

Martinez said a realistic aspect of the training was that opponents of diverse sizes and shapes were matched against each other. In a real combat situation, a Soldier would not get to pick the attacker.

"It's not the size or the fact that I'm a female that matters," said Martinez. "I'm a Soldier; I'm a warrior."

Spc. Orlando Garza, a cook from Beeville, Texas, accepted his certificate with blood on his face from the fighting. He said lessons he learned in combatives will help him as a Soldier.

"I learned that a warrior never quits," said Garza. "I'm more confident in myself and it will make me a better Soldier."

In addition to teaching fighting skills, the class also helps prepare Soldiers for the violence of hand-to-hand combat.

"It teaches them not to be afraid," said Gould. "You don't want to see a Soldier get hit in the face the first time in combat."

Regardless of military occupational specialty, Soldiers are warriors first and must possess the fighting skills to survive and defeat the enemy on the battlefield. The sweat and blood that was shed in the intense week-long unarmed combatives training may one day mean the difference between life and death for a warrior.



Photo by Sgt. Jon Soles

Spc. Larisa Neskovic (left), of Jay, Fla., punches at the head of 1st Lt. Aimee Feliz of Fairfax, Va., as she closes in during Level I unarmed combatives, here, Nov. 13.

On This Day In History

November 17, 2003 Washington, D.C., sniper John Muhammad convicted

On this day in 2003, ex-soldier John Muhammad is found guilty of one of a series of sniper shootings that terrorized the metropolitan Washington, D.C., area and dominated national headlines in October 2002. Police charged that Muhammad and his 17-year-old accomplice, Lee Boyd Malvo, killed 10 people and wounded three others during a three-week killing spree. After just over six hours of deliberation, a jury convicted Muhammad of the October 9, 2002, shooting of Dean Meyers while he pumped gas at a Sunoco station in Manassas, Virginia.

The first of the "Beltway sniper" attacks occurred on October 2, 2002, when five people died after being shot at long range over a 15-hour span in suburban Montgomery County, Maryland. Sniper-style shootings continued over the next three weeks—at gas stations and in parking lots within Washington, D.C.'s Beltway area and along Interstate 95 in Virginia. Local residents, frightened by the seemingly random nature of the shootings, which crossed racial, gender, and socioeconomic lines, crouched behind their cars while pumping gas and avoided outdoor activities. Schools held recess indoors and sports teams cancelled outdoor practices. The killers left a series of cryptic clues at crime scenes including tarot cards and notes and even called the police hotline, apparently trying to engage investigators in a dialogue.

The attacks came to an end when police arrested Muhammad and Malvo at a rest area off a Maryland highway. Their car, a dark blue Chevrolet Caprice, had been rigged with a hole in the trunk through which the shooter could fire a gun without being seen.

FAMOUS FEATS OF CHUCK NORRIS



DID YOU KNOW?

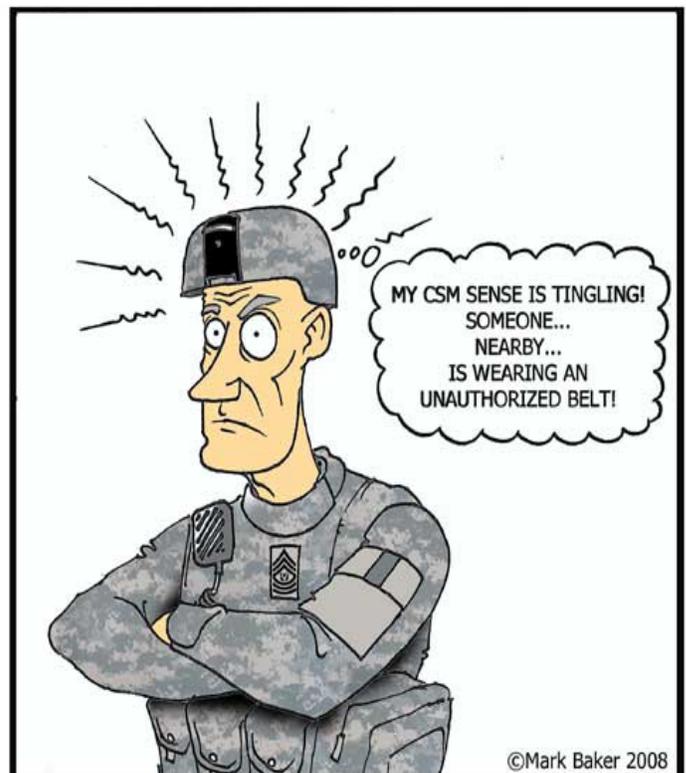
In honor of Chuck Norris, all McDonald's in Texas have an even larger size than the super-size. When ordering, just ask to be Chucksized.

MND-B Pic of the day!



Photo by Spc. Luisito Brooks, 4th SBCT, 2nd Inf. Div

BAGHDAD – Lt. Col. Mark Bieger (center left), the 4th Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment commander, stands with Spc. Peter Jank, a Chicago, Ill. native, while Bruce Campbell and Jeffrey Donovan, cast members from the television show "Burn Notice", hold the U.S. flag, Nov. 12, at Joint Security Station Nasir Wa Salam, Iraq. Bieger reenlisted Jank while the two actors assisted



News Bulletin

Effective Tuesday 17NOV09, the DSTB aid station will be changing hours from 0700-1800 hrs. The only exception is the days that we will be giving flu shots. Sick Call still remains: Monday-Fridays 0800-1000 hrs and 1300-1400 hrs, Saturdays 0800-1000 hrs, and Sundays 1330-1430 hrs.

Iraq 3-Day Weather Report



Today
60° F | 51° F



Tomorrow
62° F | 46° F



Thursday
65° F | 48° F

TRIVIA TIME!!

Extremely popular in the 1990's, he is the only athlete to have played in both a Super Bowl game and a World Series game. Who is he?

Last Issue's Answer: Wyoming

Cav Round-Up radio newscast available

MND-B PAO

BAGHDAD — The Cav Round-Up is a three-minute radio newscast from Baghdad covering military units and events across Multi-National Division — Baghdad.

Today's Cav Round-Up # 199 was produced by SGT Ashley Anderson, MND-B Public Affairs Office.

This newscast includes the fol-

lowing stories:

1. Soldiers of the 1479th Civil Affairs Company are bringing three Iraqi female schools back to life. Story from the field by SGT Stephanie Logue, MND-B Public Affairs Office.

The school opening strengthens the bonds between Soldiers and Iraqis.

2. 1st Air Cavalry Brigade Sol-

diers are saying thanks to supporters from home. Interview with CPT Lucas Kennedy, A Company, 4th Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment, 1 ACB.

The gifts are personalized.

NIPR LINK: Cav Round-Up

SIPR LINK: Cav Round-Up

Check out more news at the 1st Cavalry Division's homepage:

www.hood.army.mil/1stcavdiv/

Trigger's Teasers

		8		3		5	4	
3			4		7	9		
4	1				8			2
	4	3	5		2		6	
5								8
	6		3		9	4	1	
1			8				2	7
		5	6		3			4
	2	9		7		8		

The objective of the game is to fill all the blank squares in a game with the correct numbers. There are three very simple constraints to follow: **Every row of 9 numbers must include all digits 1 through 9 in any order. Every column of 9 numbers must include all digits 1 through 9 in any order. Every 3 by 3 subsection of the 9 by 9 square must include all digits 1 through 9.**

Every Sudoku game begins with a number of squares already filled in, and the difficulty of each game is largely a function of how many squares are filled in. The more squares that are known, the easier it is to figure out which numbers go in the open squares. As you fill in squares correctly, options for the remaining squares are narrowed and it becomes easier to fill them in.

Yesterday's Answers

6	1	5	7	2	4	8	3	9
4	8	7	3	9	5	1	6	2
9	2	3	1	8	6	5	7	4
5	9	8	4	3	2	7	1	6
1	3	6	8	7	9	2	4	5
2	7	4	6	5	1	9	8	3
8	4	9	5	1	3	6	2	7
7	6	2	9	4	8	3	5	1
3	5	1	2	6	7	4	9	8



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The **Daily Charge** welcomes columns, commentaries, articles, letters and photos from readers.

Submissions should be sent to the Public Affairs NCOIC nicholas.conner@mnd-b.army.mil and include author's name, rank, unit and contact information. The **Daily Charge** reserves the right to edit submissions selected for the paper.

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