

‘Monarchs’ football team shows appreciation for 1st Marine Division

Story and photos by
Pfc. Timothy J. Lenzo

Until recently, the NFL lock-out had put football on hold for the country, but for children living on Camp Pendleton, Paige Field House was their training camp, July 23.

This was the fifth year the Monarchs for Marines service organization, the coaching staff and students of Mater Dei High School, have come here to put together the M4M Football and Dance Camp

for 1st Marine Division.

Parents of players on the football team, including the parents of current University of Southern California starting quarterback Matt Barkley, had a vision of giving back to the Marine Corps.

On many occasions, the team has sold tickets to their football games and collected donations to support the Marines’ families.

They also give the high school students an opportunity to help out the families.

At times, the team has put their football gear aside to paint murals, improve facilities and install volleyball courts on base for the families to enjoy.

During 2007, M4M Football and Dance Camp was held on base for the first time.

“We wanted to come down and offer our services,” said Bruce Rollinson, the head football coach at Mater Dei High School. “It’s moved to a football practice, a football camp and then a host day barbecue for all the families.”

The children were grouped by age and given a student coach to run football drills.

The team’s connection with the Division started the first year of the camp. Since then, the Monarchs have been dedicating their football seasons to 1st Mar. Div. That year, the Marines presented the team with a special honor.

“The Marines came by and presented every player and every coach the medallion, the patch,” said Rollinson. “We opted to get their permission to wear it on our uniforms as a symbol of our unity with the 1st Marine Division.”

Wearing the Blue Diamond patch on their uniforms is something many of the players take seriously.



Attiyah Shakir, one of many children who came to this year’s youth football camp, catches a football thrown by his father, Master Sgt. Attiyah Shakir, information assurance chief, 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, at Paige Field, July 23. This was the 5th annual Monarchs for Marines youth football camp that Mater Dei High School has hosted.

“We represent the Marines here, and every time we come here it’s an honor to be here,” said Ricky Ortiz, a starting linebacker for the Monarchs. “I’m getting one on my letterman jacket, so it does mean a lot to me.”

The youth football camp is meant to be fun for the children who may have parents deployed or

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Children from all over Camp Pendleton run through football drills led by student athletes of Mater Dei High School during this year’s youth football camp at Paige Field, July 23. The objective of the camp is for the children to have fun while learning new football techniques.

Marine officer saves drowning Liberian soldier

Story and photos by
Pfc. Timothy J. Lenzo

It was supposed to be a normal day at the beach for 1st Lt. Scott A. Whipple, a platoon commander with Hotel Company, 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion, but his military training would soon be needed.

Whipple was attending a social function at a beach close to Edward Binyah Kesselly Military Compound, April 17, 2010, when two Marines spotted a drowning officer from the Liberian Army.

The Marines attempted to rescue him, but when their attempts failed, Whipple took action.

Whipple showed little regard for his own safety as he swam into strong rip currents toward the drowning and frantic officer.

“When I saw how far out we were, I was worried,” Whipple said. “But, I had to push the worry away and focus on the task at hand.”

Whipple said he was stressed, but remembered to stay calm in the situation, which helped the victim stay calm.

Whipple performed rescue swimming techniques he learned in training to pull the officer more than 200 meters through rough water.

“What I’m so proud of is the courageous action on his part,” said Maj. Gen. Ronald Bailey, the commanding general of 1st Marine Division. “He saved the soldier, pulled him to shore, and then executed medical procedures to save his life.”

Once Whipple reached shore, he



Major Gen. Ronald Bailey commanding general, 1st Marine Division, congratulates 1st Lt. Scott A. Whipple, platoon commander, Hotel Company, 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion, July 18. Whipple saved a Liberian officer from drowning while serving in support of Operation Onward Liberty in Liberia, April 17, 2010.

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MONARCHS

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preparing to deploy.

“Who knows what the youth are going through now with maybe a parent or both parents deployed,”



Eight-year-old Vincent Miller, makes a catch during a youth football camp at Paige Field, July 23. Miller was among many children from Camp Pendleton who enjoyed football drills along with food and games during the youth football camp held by Monarchs for Marines.

said Rollinson. “This is an opportunity for them to let go and have a great afternoon.”

The camp is also a great opportunity for the student athletes to have fun while giving back to the men and women who serve.

“If we can take a little bit of pressure off the families, off the parents, and allow our student athletes to work with the children, then it’s a win-win for both sides,” Rollinson said.

“It’s all about fun. That’s what you have to think about when you come out here and start helping,” Ortiz said.

The fun doesn’t end on the football field. There is a dance camp hosted by the school’s dance program, a barbecue and face painting for all the children.

For the student athletes and coaches, the day is a great way to show their appreciation and support for the service members of 1st Mar. Div.

“We’re honored as a football team and as Mater Dei High School to be here and be able to spend time with such great people,” Rollinson said.

Legion of Merit awarded for outstanding service



Brigadier Gen. Joseph Osterman, former commanding general of 1st Marine Division (Forward), shakes hands with Col. Robert Castellvi, chief of staff, I Marine Expeditionary Force and former 1st Mar. Div. (Fwd) chief of staff, during an awards ceremony, July 14. Castellvi received the Legion of Merit for his outstanding service during the Division’s last deployment to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

RESCUE

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placed the officer on his side to allow his lungs to empty of saltwater and prevent dry land drowning.

The Liberian officer soon regained consciousness and walked home under his own power.

Whipple was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Medal, July 18, for his actions, and has earned the praise of many Marines.

“He’s a tremendous example for all Marines to follow, regardless of rank,” said Lt. Col. Howard F. Hall, the commanding officer of 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion. “That is the essence of being a Marine right there -- putting aside your own personal safety to not just accomplish a mission, but to save another’s life.”

Whipple’s actions have instilled a sense of

pride within the battalion and have been a great example to the Marines he leads.

“You could tell from the reactions of the Marines in the battalion how proud they were when you could hear the cheers and the applause for his courageous actions,” Gen. Bailey said. “That’s the type of quality of officers and Marines that make up the Blue Diamond Division.”



Major Gen. Ronald Bailey, commanding general, 1st Marine Division, presents the Navy and Marine Corps Medal to 1st Lt. Scott A. Whipple, platoon commander, Hotel Company, 3rd Assault Amphibian Battalion, and wife Meera Whipple, July 18. Whipple received the award for saving an officer when he swam more than 400 meters in rough water from the shoreline to pull a drowning officer to safety.

Bronze Stars awarded



Major Gen. Ronald Bailey, commanding general, 1st Marine Division, awards Chief Warrant Officer 5 Gene Bridgman, gunner, 1st Mar. Div., and Master Gunnery Sgt. Charles Eckhoff, operations chief, 1st Mar. Div., with Bronze Stars during an awards ceremony, July 15. Bridgman and Eckhoff were awarded the Bronze Stars for their outstanding service during the Division’s yearlong deployment to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

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DIVISION TRAINING



Reservists rock Camp Pendleton

*Story and photos by
Lance Cpl. Tyler Reiriz*

Reservists rocked Camp Pendleton as they blasted the hillsides with artillery rounds late into the night.

The Marines and sailors of 5th Battalion, 14th Marine Regiment, came to Camp Pendleton to conduct their two weeks of annual training at Las Pulgas, July 14 to 28.

“We have all five batteries out here this year,” said Lt. Col. Mark Coast, battalion commander, 5th Bn., 14th Marines. “They have usually been out on deployments, so this is the first time they have all been together at one time in probably about 10 years.”

Members of the reserve battalion came to Camp Pendleton from across the country for the training. The unit has Marines from Hawaii and Washington D.C., who travel to their batteries each month to train. The batteries of 5th Bn., 14th Marines, are based in Colorado, Washington, and California.

The Marines conducted dozens of fire missions during exercises as individual batteries and in battalion-wide exercises. The reservists normally don't have the chance to fire their howitzers as a full battalion.

At the end of the week, each battery selected their most proficient gun crews to compete in a direct fire competition. The Marines then manually aimed their M777 lightweight 155mm howitzers directly at their targets and blasted away.

The Marines gathered to watch their comrades in the top gun crews compete to be named the best.

“It helps a lot,” said Lance Cpl. Zachary Crossland, a cannoneer from Oscar Battery. “People are competitive by nature. We strive to be the best, so a competition just makes us that much more hungry for it.”

The crews were judged on accuracy and following correct weapons procedures. At the end of the competi-



Marines from 5th Battalion, 14th Marine Regiment, load an M777 lightweight 155mm howitzer during annual training at Las Pulgas, July 22. Marines and sailors traveled to Camp Pendleton from as far as Hawaii and Washington D.C., to conduct training exercises as a complete battalion for the first time in nearly 10 years.

tion, the crew of gun three from Papa Battery won the competition and were declared ‘The deadliest gun’ of 5th Bn., 14th Marines.

After the competition, the Marines returned to their scheduled training to prepare themselves for their next

mission. The reservists went to the grenade range, gas chamber and rifle range.

“I love coming out here and leading the Marines,” said Coast. “We like to keep the Marines motivated and just keep them training and push on for the next mission that comes our way.”



A gun crew from 5th Battalion, 14th Marine Regiment, fires an M777 lightweight 155mm howitzer directly at a target during a competition between gun crews from each battery at Las Pulgas, July 22. The Marines and sailors from all five batteries came together for the first time in nearly 10 years to conduct annual training. In the past, deployments have prevented all five batteries from training as a complete battalion.



Marines from 5th Battalion, 14th Marine Regiment, reload an M777 lightweight 155mm howitzer during a direct fire artillery competition at Las Pulgas, July 22. The competition determined which battery from the battalion had ‘The deadliest gun.’ All five batteries from the regiment came together for annual training.



THE FRONTLINES



Afghan medic saves life using training

*Story and photos by
Cpl. Benjamin Crilly*

PATROL BASE ATUL, Sangin District, Helmand province, Afghanistan – The Afghan National Army foot patrol came to a halt as a shock wave engulfed the patrol. When the smoke cleared, Sgt. Wahid Zula had absorbed the majority of the blast and lay on the ground bleeding from the injuries he sustained.

Afghan National Army soldiers with the 4th Tolay, 2nd Kandak, Afghan National Army, hit an improvised explosive device crossing a bridge when returning to Patrol Base Atul in the Northern Sangin Green Zone, June 20.

“When we were patrolling, I heard the IED go off and about 30 seconds later everyone was saying that Zula was hit,” said Sgt. Farden Faryad, a medic for the 4th Tolay. “I saw him lying across the bridge screaming for everyone that he had been hit. I told the sweeper to sweep a path up to him and sweep 10 meters around him. Me and other soldiers carried him to a tree line.”



Seaman Javier M. Perez, the hospital corpsman for Advisor Team 3 with Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, demonstrates the proper application of a pressure dressing to an Afghan National Army soldier during a combat lifesaving class at Patrol Base Atul, Sangin, Afghanistan, July 21. ANA Sgt. Farden Faryad, a medic for the 4th Tolay used this type of pressure dressing and other techniques to save the life of ANA Sgt. Wahid Zula who absorbed the full blast of an improvised explosive device while their unit was patrolling in Sangin, June 20.

The ANA soldiers moved their casualty away from the threat of secondary IEDs. The nearby tree line offered easy access to an open field for the medical evacuation. Marines from Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 5th Marines Regiment, were deployed from Patrol Base Atul as the quick reaction force to aid the ANA and facilitate the evacuation for their ANA partners.

Farden did not wait idly by for the Marines to arrive.

“I did first aid in the trees. I put the tourniquets on his two legs. I dressed bandages on both of his hands. After that, I checked his whole body,” said Farden, a Kabul native who has served in Sangin for more than five years. “I was trying to save his life and did what Doc Perez (Seaman Javier Perez, a corpsman with 1st Bn., 5th Marines) taught me.”

Farden said he was proud to be able to treat his friend and did all he could to save Zula’s life. The danger to himself did not cross his mind.

“These guys are the first responders when something happens on patrol,” said Perez, from Kingwood, Texas. “With the double amputee on patrol, if Farden hadn’t been there to throw the tourniquets on, he would have died before we could have even gotten out there.”

By the time the Marines had arrived, Farden had stabilized his fellow sergeant and was monitoring his condition. Perez planned for the worst when they set out from Patrol Base Atul to respond to the strike.

“Being able to operate on their own tells me I am doing my job right,” said Perez. “I am putting the information in a way that they can understand it and apply it.”

“The bottom line is, I’m only here for seven months and the next advisor team could be moved to another location,” said Perez. “They are not always going to have Americans there to call for medical support to run in and patch the guys up.”

As the medical expert, Perez gives classes and uses hands-on training to teach the soldiers basic medical techniques that may one day be used to save the life of an ANA soldier or coalition service member during combat operations.

“The training that the ANA receive is considered basic combat life saving techniques,” said Chief Petty Officer Chad E. McFall, the senior medical department representative at Forward Operating Base Jackson. “When Afghan medics absorb all of



Sgt. Farden Faryad saved the life of a fellow Afghan soldier in Sangin, Afghanistan, June 20. Farden is a medic with the 4th Tolay, 2nd Kandak, 215th Corps, Afghan National Army and his unit is partnered with the 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, based in Sangin. “I was trying to save his life and did what Doc Perez taught me,” said Farden.

the knowledge, they will be able to provide basic care for their fellow soldiers such as controlling and stopping bleeding onscene to get the casualty to the higher echelon.”

Perez has been able to train three medics for the 4th Tolay and has trained all the Afghan soldiers at Patrol Base Atul in basic combat lifesaving skills, despite a language barrier and cultural differences.

“The success of Sgt. Farden is a milestone and enables Perez to see his success teaching the material,” said Raymond. “Soldiers leave the wire every day with the assurance that if something does happen to them, their medics have the ability to provide the necessary lifesaving care.”

The ultimate goal for the medical staff of 1st Bn., 5th Marines, is a partnered force fully trained to treat their own casualties independent of outside help.

“Being a corpsman with an advisor team is a rewarding job,” said Raymond. “I hope that our efforts here and future unit’s efforts are going to be one of the key factors to the ANA taking over, our pulling out of here, and hopefully never having to come back.”

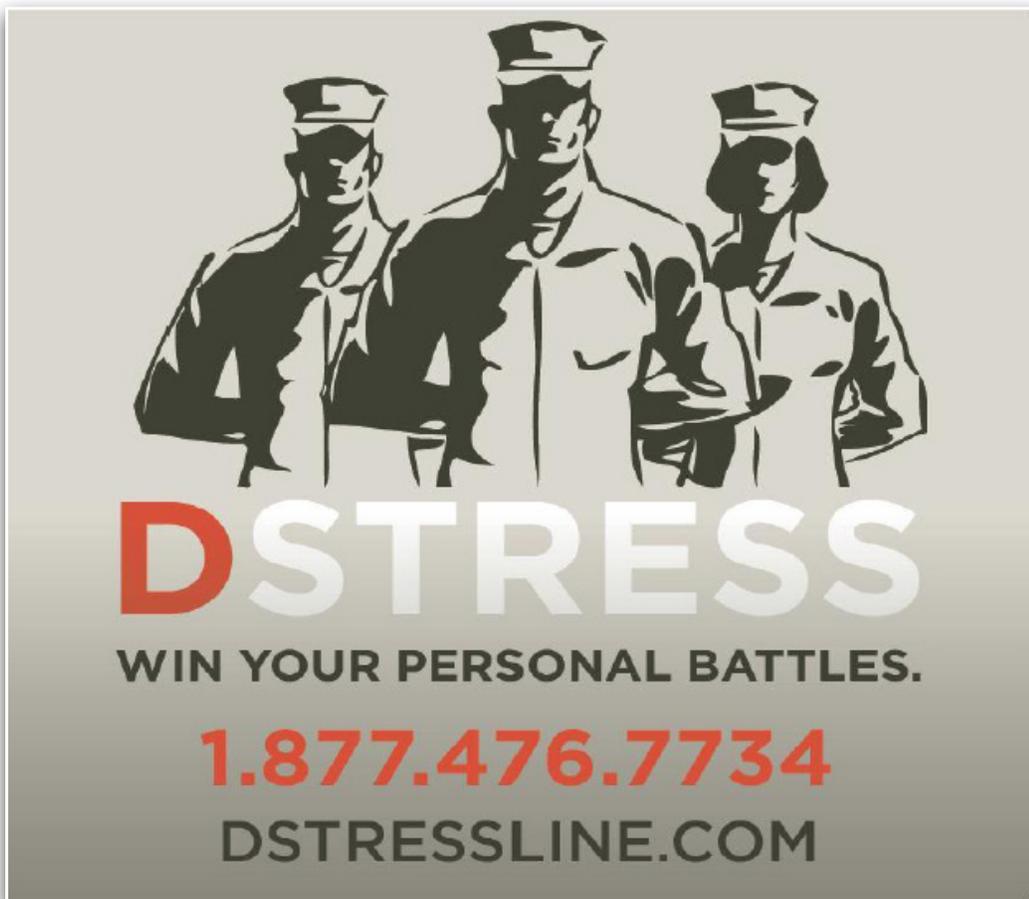
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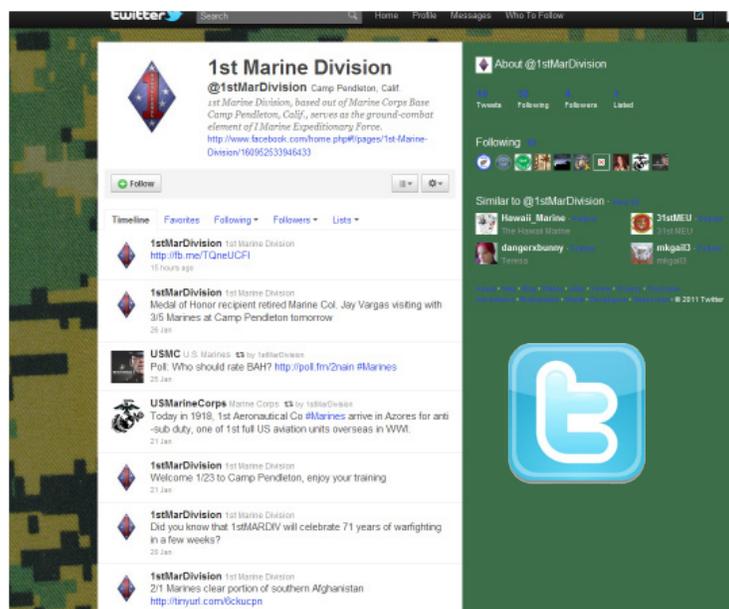


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