

The BLACK



JACK

ROUND UP



Captain Saddam Mahmud 'Abbas Sab' Al Zuhayri, Commander, Light Battery, 18th Iraqi Army Brigade, watches 120 mm high-explosive mortar rounds impact targets through binoculars during mortar training at Contingency Operating Base Warhorse, Iraq, Sept. 18, 2011. See full story on page 7...

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Black Jack 6 sends

Greetings from Iraq!

The Black Jack Brigade continues to accomplish tremendous things in northern Iraq in support of OPERATION NEW DAWN. Every day, the dedication, professionalism, and competence of the Black Jack Soldiers is apparent to all those who operate with and are amongst our terrific Soldiers. As you know, we are operating with quite a bit of ambiguity as OPERATION NEW DAWN comes to an end. However, since we all value the importance of communication amongst the entire team it is important to share what information we have about the future. As always, what we know today is always subject to change.

Although we remain on 365-day deployment orders, all current indications suggest we will redeploy earlier than expected. We are currently moving select personnel and equipment to Kuwait as unit missions transition in Iraq. Political decisions at the highest levels are still pending that could affect US presence in Iraq into 2012. Parts of our team, the composition of which has not been fully determined, have operational requirements into January.

We believe right now that parts of the brigade will begin to redeploy at the end of November; however, we do not expect to complete redeployment until January.

Your Black Jack Soldiers understand the uncertainty of the situation and are taking these changes in stride. We trust you will do the same and certainly appreciate your patience as we work through the details of this process. As always, we will continue to keep you informed of the plan as it evolves.

Now for my favorite part...bragging about all of the terrific work of our Black Jack Soldiers!

HHC Brigade – The Dealers closed out an extremely busy September with Soldiers in multiple locations throughout Iraq and even another country (Kuwait)! Just when they moved the Brigade headquarters from FOB Warhorse to Joint Base Balad (JBB), they sent personnel to Kuwait to set up operations in preparation for follow-on brigade

missions. Spread across two provinces and now two countries, the Dealers are doing a fantastic job running the brigade headquarters, tracking operations, and maintaining accountability of all personnel and equipment – quite a challenging task indeed. We also had the opportunity to promote CW2 Ebinal, our Brigade Electronic Warfare Officer, to the rank of Chief Warrant Officer 3. Good action Dealers!

3-82 FA – LTC Cook, CSM Soto, and the Red Dragons received new neighbors this month as 4-9 CAV and HHC Brigade moved into JBB. Despite their relentless patrolling schedule outside of JBB, the Red Dragons also found time to conduct additional training with their Paladins. JBB is a large FOB compared to what we were used to at Warhorse, but no matter where you are in southern Salah ad Din province, you can hear the unmistakable sound of the Red Dragon thunder. It's been fun to watch the partnership between the Red Dragons and their Dark Horse teammates as they get after the mission set around JBB. The Red Dragons also hosted our last Kids Day where they brought children from the surrounding area onto JBB in order to play games, eat some great food, and enjoy the company of Black Jack Soldiers. Before the rumors start leaking, I cannot confirm whether I may or may not have been soundly beaten at Foosball by an 8-year old Iraqi girl. Good action Red Dragons!

1-5 CAV – LTC Daniels, CSM Lowery, the entire Black Knight family gave a fitting memorial tribute to SGT Altamirano this month, and CSM Maunakea and I were proud to be among the packed house of hundreds of Soldiers attending the ceremony at FOB Speicher. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family and friends back in Texas. LTC Ruth, 1LT Matus, and other Knights gave back to the community by visiting an orphanage and hospital where they gave out toys and school supplies to needy children. With their "Blues Platoon," the Knights were busy flying around all of northern Iraq as part of the air mobile quick reaction force. The Blues Platoon was recently used on a special mission



where 2LT Crissman, the Knight Chemical Officer, successfully destroyed a chemical munition in northern Iraq that was a vestige from the Iran-Iraq War. In addition to conducting patrols throughout northern Salah ad Din and engaging with leaders from the Iraqi Security Forces, the Black Knights have also begun initial preparations for transferring our base camp at the Bayji Oil Refinery to the Iraqi Security Forces and FOB Speicher to the government of Iraq. Good action Knights!

4-9 CAV – Without a doubt, the Dark Horse team had the most austere living conditions of any battalion or squadron in the brigade at their old home at FOB Cobra. Not anymore. LTC Garcia, CSM Agueda, and their team are enjoying their new (some might say palatial) digs at JBB and getting after the enemy in southern Salah ad Din. They deserve it after conducting operations in two different Iraqi provinces and making the long trek from FOB Cobra in northern Diyala. As I mentioned above, the teamwork between the Red Dragons and the Dark Horse team has been absolutely phenomenal and I'm excited about what we can achieve during our final months at JBB. CSM Maunakea and I also attended Apache Troop's change of command as CPT Joshua Range handed the guidon over to CPT Mike Porges. Finally, CPT Darren Riley, made the entire Brigade

proud when he won the JBB Cross-fit competition, beating a highly competitive field comprised of representatives from the Army, Navy, and Air Force. Good action Dark Horse!

15th BSB – LTC Ruedi, CSM Reed, and the Gamblers have been instrumental in the success of the Black Jack Brigade as we've conducted full-spectrum operations while simultaneously transferring several different installations over to the Iraqi government. They have done an unbelievable job of forecasting, receiving, and distributing all classes of supply needed for the brigade to do its mission on a daily basis while removing equipment and vehicles from current installations we're trying to transition. I recently went on a tour of the many sustainment nodes located here at JBB and I was immediately reminded of how difficult it is to synchronize all of the parts and pieces required to sustain a combat brigade in Iraq that is conducting operations in multiple locations. It is quite a complicated mission, but the Gamblers are doing it very, very well. With most of our base contractors leaving Iraq, the Gamblers have even taken the lead in running one of the two DFACs here at JBB. It's great seeing the pride our Soldiers take in cooking and sustaining their fellow Black Jack Soldiers! Good action Gamblers!

2 STB – Like their Dark Horse teammates, the Spartans can likewise boast about conducting operations in multiple provinces. LTC Davey and CSM Traylor now have Soldiers in Diyala, Salah ad

Din, and Kirkuk. They have successfully and seamlessly taken over base operations at FOB Warrior in Kirkuk, a familiar place indeed for Black Jack Soldiers who served in there the last time 2/1 CAV was deployed to Iraq in 2009. At FOB Warhorse, the Spartans executed the final tasks needed to transition the base over to the Ministry of Youth and Sports, which was both a terrific team effort and a resounding transition success. The Iraqi government plans on using the athletic facilities at FOB Warhorse as a training site for world-class Iraqi athletes, so the next time you see an Iraqi athlete in the Olympics, he or she might've trained on the same gym equipment as your Spartans! At JBB, the UAS platoon and engineers have really gotten after the counter-IDF and IED missions in southern Salah ad Din which help protect the base and the surrounding communities. With his tenure as FOB Mayor having come to a close at Warhorse, CPT Matt Burgoon may want to run for office in Killeen when we return to Fort Hood! Good action Spartans!

1-8 CAV – The mighty Mustangs under LTC Sicoli and CSM Wood enjoyed their final days at the comfy confines of FOB Warhorse and just completed a tremendously successful tactical movement to Camp Buehring, Kuwait. The team completed additional mortar training in the middle of the month with their counterparts in the 5th Iraqi Army Division. And in case you haven't been paying attention to the Black Jack web-

page on Facebook (shame on you if you haven't!), then you're probably unaware FOB Warhorse is the place to be for high-profile visits by our Army's leadership. In a span of one week, the Mustangs enjoyed visits by GEN Lloyd Austin, Commander of United States Forces – Iraq, and Secretary John McHugh, Secretary of the Army. Not surprising, both leaders walked away extremely impressed with the hard work and dedication of the Mustangs in southern Diyala. As the Mustangs prepare to leave FOB Warhorse for follow-on missions elsewhere, we will still have a Black Jack presence in Diyala with our STT members, led by LTC Price, LTC Crosbie, and LTC Feeley, at FOB Morehead near the Diyala Operations Center. Additionally, the great work of LTC Sicoli and the entire Mustang team will be showcased on local Iraqi television in an upcoming interview with Mustang 6 and myself. Good action Mustangs!

Until next month, thank you for your loving support and for keeping the home fires burning until we complete the mission to our high Black Jack standard and return home. Thank you for what you do every day in support of the Black Jack team and our terrific Soldiers.

ARMY STRONG! CAV TOUGH!

BLACKJACK!

BLACKJACK 6

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Logistic Soldiers keep supply lines open



Specialist Preston Purnell, a Baltimore native, directs Spc. Clayton Vroon, a Nashville native, as he moves shipping containers at the central receiving and shipping point yard at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, Sept. 8. Both Soldiers are truck drivers with 15th Brigade Support Battalion.

*Story by Sgt. Justin Naylor
Photo by Sgt. Quentin Johnson
2/1 CAV (AAB) Public Affairs Office*

With the continued transition of U.S. bases throughout northern Iraq, the need for the timely movement of supplies and equipment to centralized locations has shown the value of well-trained logistics Soldiers.

Five such Soldiers from 15th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, “Black Jack,” 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division-North, operate a central receiving and shipping point (CRSP) that is responsible for the movement of their brigade’s supplies and equipment both coming to and leaving Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

As bases transition throughout our brigade’s area of operation, the equipment on those bases has to be moved out to a centralized location, and this CRSP yard is responsible for receiving that equipment and either storing it or helping it move on to its

next location, explained Capt. Paul Schmidt, a supply operations officer with 15th BSB.

This particular CRSP yard was established a few months ago in response to the particular logistical needs of 2nd AAB, 1st Cav. Div.

The current receiving yards on Balad couldn’t handle the amount of equipment and containers our brigade was bringing in as it started to transition small bases within its AO, so we worked out a deal to start our own CRSP yard that would focus on handling our brigade’s needs, said Schmidt from Crown Point, Ind.

The CRSP yard has already helped make possible the timely transition of Contingency Operating Site Cobra, a small base in Salah ad-Din province.

“Without a doubt, it would not have been possible to transition Cobra on the timeline we had if it weren’t for this CRSP yard,” said Schmidt.

We received all of the equipment that our transportation convoys brought in from Cobra, and we got all of that equipment on its way to where it needed to be, continued Schmidt.

In addition to that, the yard also helped facilitate the movement of the brigade’s unmanned aerial surveillance platoon.

When the UAS platoon needed to start operating here, we were able to receive their equipment for them and quickly get it out to the location that they needed to set up at, said Spc. Damien Moore, a Findlay, Ohio, native and support operations Soldier with 15th BSB.

This enabled them to have their aerial surveillance equipment back up in the air as quickly as possible, giving Soldiers on the ground the eyes in the sky that they need to stay safe, he continued.

Although none of the Soldiers that operate the CRSP yard have ever worked on this type of mission before, being able to adapt quickly is part of their job.

“They’ve done wonderfully,” Staff Sgt. Charles Grant, the non-commissioned officer in-charge of the CRSP yard, said of his Soldiers. “They are competent Soldiers that know how to work in all aspects of their job,” said the Bronx, N.Y., native.

Whether receiving equipment, moving it for transportation or helping devise an organizational system for containers, my Soldiers are always up to the tasks at hand, he continued.

As the Black Jack Brigade continues to transition bases, the brigade’s CRSP yard will ensure every piece of equipment and container that passes through it gets to where it needs to go in a timely and organized manner.



Soldiers transition to new bases, adapt to new missions

Story and photo by Sgt. Justin Naylor
2/1 CAV (AAB) Public Affairs Office

Soldiers from 2nd Special Troops Battalion, "Spartans," 2nd Brigade Combat Team (Advise and Assist), "Black Jack," 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division-North, transferred responsibility for the internal operations of Forward Operating Base Warhorse in Diyala province, Iraq, to Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry, "Mustangs," 2/1 CAV (AAB), as the Spartans went on to take over responsibility for the internal functions of FOB Warrior in Kirkuk province.

The Spartan Battalion—originally slated to move to Kuwait—was instead given orders to conduct operations on Warrior, as an addition to the overall transition and reposture plan.

Due to this new mission, the Spartans accelerated the transfer of Warhorse operations to the Mustangs.

2nd STB conducted a thorough transition that brought the 1st Bn., 8th Cav. Regt., Soldiers up to speed on the inner-base operations of Warhorse, said the 2nd STB Operations Officer, Maj. Eddie Guerrero.

Mustang Soldiers took over the majority of operations in the Warhorse Mayor Cell, the medical clinic, base security, water and fuel distribution, as well as preparing the base for transfer to the Iraqi Ministry of Youth and Sports (IMoYS).

Initially, the Mustang Battalion focused on everything outside the wire and the Spartans everything inside, explained Capt. Matthew Burgoon, an Austin, Texas, native and the FOB Warhorse mayor.

When the 2nd STB went on to Warrior, the unit left a select group of essential Soldiers to help ease the transition with 1st Bn., 8th Cav. Regt., which is now conducting nearly all of the operations and preparations for the transfer of the base to the IMoYS, continued Burgoon.

Putting their transition plan into action, the Mustang troopers took over all Warhorse operations.

"(Our) Soldiers have excelled in every aspect of attacking the mission of Warhorse transition," said Capt. Patrick Merriss, the transition and reposture officer for 1st Bn., 8th Cav. Regt. Through little growing pains, the Mustang Battalion successfully picked up 100% of (Warhorse) support operations without degradation to internal or external security.

"Rarely is one battalion responsible for



Private 1st Class Nicholas Nowell, an Anderson, S.C., native and a combat engineer with 2nd Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team (Advise and Assist), "Black Jack," 1st Cavalry Division, scans the area for threats while manning a guard tower at Forward Operating Base Warhorse, Iraq, Sept. 19.

both inner operations and outer security of a forward operating base the size of Warhorse; but the Mustangs were up to the task," said Lt. Col. Michael Junot, the deputy commanding officer of 2/1 CAV (AAB).

Since taking over Warhorse's internal support requirements, the Mustangs continue to prepare the base for its transition to the Government of Iraq (GoI).

"The transfer of Warhorse is an important milestone in 2nd BCT's responsible drawdown in the Diyala province," said Merris. Once the transfer of Warhorse is complete, it will be the largest base transferred by Black Jack to the GoI.

Since taking the lead at Warhorse, the Mustang Battalion prepared to move millions of dollars worth of equipment and supplies in preparation for their transition to the IMoYS.

"Additionally as part of our continued partnership with the GoI we have transferred over 25 thousand pieces of equipment over to the Iraqi's," said Maj. Jeffrey Eberhart, the brigade S4 officer for the 2/1 CAV (AAB).

With the mission at Warhorse firmly in the hands of the Mustang Soldiers, the Spartan Battalion transitioned its troopers to their new mission at Warrior.

Basically, our battalion has been tasked with running the mayor cell, the operations

cell, the access control points and manning the internal police requirement for the base, said Guerrero, a Maina, Guam, native.

Guerrero explained that USF-I chose 2nd STB to take over the mission at Warrior because the Spartans had been manning a very similar mission at Warhorse with excellent results.

While at Warrior, the Spartans will be supporting not only other Army units, but also Air Force, Iraqi Security Forces and U.S. and foreign contractors.

Without our unit here, this base wouldn't have the support it needs to cover the critical areas that we fill, said Guerrero.

Although the Spartans are a Special Troop Battalion, which primarily consists of highly specialized and trained Soldiers, such as communication troops, engineers and military intelligence specialists, the Soldiers are adapting to whatever mission they are asked to perform while at this new base, said Guerrero. "They've responded to the call of duty and change of mission."

The Soldiers have pulled together as a team to take on the challenges of this mission and proven how adaptable U.S. Soldiers can be, said Guerrero.



Physical fitness while deployed: Soldiers offer tips for staying fit



Captain Darren Riley, a Salado, Texas, native and assistant operations officer with 4th Squadron, 9th U.S. Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division-North, lifts a barbell during a training routine at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, Sept. 18, 2011.

Story and photos by Sgt. Justin Naylor
2/1 CAV (AAB) Public Affairs Office

Physical fitness is essential to Army combat readiness. Whether a Soldier is conducting a foot patrol, searching a building, fixing the armor plating on a vehicle, or just wearing body armor, it all requires a certain level of physical strength and endurance, making physical fitness a priority while deployed.

Captain Darren Riley, assistant operations officer, and Sgt. Chad Wimberly, an infantryman, both with 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, "Black Jack," 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division-North, spend their fair share of time at the gym and have a few tips on staying fit.

"Having a good workout program while you are deployed is crucial," said Riley, a Salado, Texas, native and the winner of a recent base-wide functional fitness competition.

"We all have a responsibility to our team to be ready to execute our mission at any

time; staying physically fit is key to staying mission-ready."

While Soldiers might have different fitness goals, Riley felt there are certain key areas where all Soldiers can benefit.

"Soldiers should focus on functional movements to build strength and endurance to accomplish the things you do while out on missions - lunges to build your legs for those long dismounted patrols; pull-ups and bent-over rows to help build your back to support your posture while wearing heavy body armor; dead lifts to build your 'heavy lifting' muscles for picking up boxes and loading containers," explained Riley. "To build functional fitness, you should perform exercises that teach you to control and balance your own weight while you perform movements or lifts - not always laying on a bench or seated on a machine."

Riley also encouraged Soldiers to think about working out in pairs.

"Working out with others is a good way to challenge yourself with friendly competi-

tion," he said. "This also gives you the opportunity keep good form and technique, with a buddy watching over you."

Both Soldiers felt that having a plan before engaging in a workout is crucial.

"Research, have a battle buddy, and have a plan," said Wimberly, an Ephrata, Wash., native.

Don't walk into the gym and just look around or sit down and take up room; go there with an idea of what muscle groups you want to work out, what equipment you will need to use, and with the intent to train vigorously, continued Wimberly.

"Do your research and find a good mentor to help you learn the proper exercise techniques," said Riley. "Before you start going hard - work on your technique and get your strength up, or you could risk injuring yourself; you don't want to do anything that will take you out of the fight."

Heavy workloads and mission requirements often detract from the amount of gym time a Soldier gets while deployed, but Soldiers shouldn't let this stop them from working out.

"Make it a priority," said Wimberly. Working, calling home to family and loved ones, and going to the gym should always be near the top of your priority list while deployed.

Even when a Soldier is

Captain Jacob Lopez, an assistant operations officer with 4th Squadron, 9th U.S. Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division-North, demonstrates a box jump during physical fitness training at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, Sept. 18.

deployed to a remote location that might not have a gym, there are still ways to stay fit.

"It does sometimes get difficult to maintain a thorough workout program while deployed based off of mission requirements and equipment - the good thing about push-ups, sit-ups and running is that you can do them almost anywhere or any time," said Riley.

"Learning a variety of body weight exercises will help you stay fit when you don't have a high speed gym to use. In addition to that, get creative with your equipment; using sand bags, ammo cans and...tires is a good replacement if you can't get to a gym."

Whatever a Soldier's job is while deployed, maintaining physical fitness standards is essential to mission readiness and ensures that Soldiers are able to accomplish any task put before them.

Riley concluded, "A healthy body is a healthy mind; staying physically fit will help keep you mentally sharp."



Cavalry Soldiers help Iraqi Army maximize mortar capabilities



Iraqi soldiers with the Light Battery, 18th Iraqi Army Brigade, watch live mortar fire by the Mortar Platoon with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division-North, at Contingency Operating Base, Iraq, Sept. 18, 2011.

Story by 2nd Lt. James McGregor

Photos by Pfc. Nikko Matos

2/1 CAV (AAB) Public Affairs Office

“Mustang” troopers of the 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division-North, combined with Iraqi Soldiers from the 5th Iraqi Army Division to conduct mortar registration, fires and observation training at Contingency Operating Base Warhorse, Iraq, Sept. 18.

Company fire support teams from throughout the battalion trained Iraqi mortar-men from the 18th Brigade’s Light Battery, and two Iraqi Security Forces platoons of the 5th IA Division, on U.S. Forces’ methods of conducting fire missions.

The training event, termed “Operation Mustang Thunder,” was primarily focused on achieving accuracy with indirect fire, under both day and night conditions.

The munitions used for the training included high explosive rounds, illumination rounds and infrared illumination rounds.

Captain William Moeller, battalion fire support officer for the Mustangs, said the combined training event was split into two main areas: mortar and observer training.

Among many other subjects, the mortar portion of training included: instruction in mortar survivability, position selection, fire direction center positioning, round handling,

the purpose of forward observers, and aim adjustments.

“Training on proper use of indirect fire can greatly enhance the 5th IA’s capability for external security,” explained Moeller. “Mortars can illuminate areas of suspected enemy activity, provide illumination for adjustment of high explosive rounds at night, harass enemy positions and direct friendly troops to attacks or patrol activities.

Illumination rounds can also be used to mark targets for attack with aviation assets, he continued.

Moeller added that this training was the culmination of months of work in southern Diyala province with ISF leaders, which helped to identify areas where training assistance would help build a solid foundation for external security.

The mortar training was especially useful for the IA mortar-men because they have 120mm mortar systems in their division arsenal, said Moeller.

Moeller felt the training the IA received from the mortar platoons helped provide them with an expanded understanding of the capabilities of their own equipment.

“The company fire support teams used this training opportunity to teach the IA maneuver units how this system works and why it is effective,” Moeller added. “This is important because observers are a great asset for the

maneuver commander. They can ensure that fire support is thoroughly integrated into the scheme of maneuver.”

Captain Saddam Mahmud ‘Abbas Sab’ Al Zuhayri, commander of the Light Battery, 18th IA Brigade, from Diyala, has spent 17 years in the IA and explained the importance of the training he and his Soldiers received. He said while there are many differences in U.S. and Iraqi mortar equipment and methods, most of the basic fundamental lessons learned are transferable to their own future training and execution.

“We use ranges and train on firing our mortars a lot, but this was the first time for us to see mortars used on vehicles, as we use ours on the ground,” explained Saddam. “We’re just seeing a different way to use these systems, to adjust, and how to use a fire direction center. I will give my Soldiers follow-up lectures on what we have learned here because a lot of these lessons are going to be useful to us. I will also expect my sergeants to explain how these systems work and to train...until they understand...how they can be useful when applied to our own training.”

First Lieutenant Adam Coste, platoon leader with HHC, 1st Bn., 8th Cav. Regt., added his take on how the differences were highlighted and used to advance the training with his platoon and their Iraqi counterparts.

See MORTAR pg. 11



Infantry Soldiers share marksmanship knowledge with Iraqi soldiers



Soldiers from the Company B, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, trains an Iraqi soldier on close-quarters movement during a week of marksmanship training at an Iraqi military post near Contingency Operating Base, Speicher, Iraq, Aug. 18. The Iraqi soldiers learned basic, close-quarters, and advanced marksmanship techniques and how to enter and clear a room in an urban environment.

*Story and Photos by Spc. Crystal Hudson
2/1 CAV (AAB) Public Affairs Office*

Soldiers from Company B, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, trained 25 Iraqi Army soldiers in basic, advanced and close-quarters marksmanship skills at an Iraqi military post near Contingency Operating Base, Speicher, August 14-18, in support of Operation New Dawn.

The five-day training culminated with students conducting “battle drill six,” which simulated entering and clearing a room in an urban environment.

“The main focus coming out here was to train the Iraqis,” said Staff Sgt. John Walker Murphy, squad leader with Company B from Dallas. “We are making sure that these guys have a good basis and foundation... so that they can go take that back to their units and utilize what we have taught them.”

Three Iraqi units participated in the

class, which included soldiers from the 4th IA Commando Battalion, the Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Division, and the Field Engineer Regiment.

“Thank God for everything that they are doing for us. It is very useful for our soldiers,” said Iraqi Army 2nd Lt. Hathem Hamid Khalaf, platoon leader for the 4th IA Commando Battalion.

The Iraqi leadership took an active role in training their soldiers along with the infantrymen.

“The Iraqi Army wants to learn. They want to train,” said 1st Lt. Christian

Staff Sgt. Joshua Moody, from Killeen, Texas, and a squad leader with Company B, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, trains an Iraqi soldier on marksmanship techniques at an Iraqi military post near Contingency Operating Base, Speicher, Iraq, Aug. 16. The Iraqi soldiers learned basic, close-quarters, and advanced marksmanship techniques and how to enter and clear a room in an urban environment.

White, platoon leader with Company B. “They don’t always have the resources to do so, which seems to be the biggest issue. We are able to provide that for them, good quality training that they can take back to their units. The hope is that they continue to train.”

Soldiers used their training to teach the Iraqi soldiers how to use their issued weapon, the AK-47.

“The guys have a base understanding of how to zero and qualify. It has just been a long time since they have been able to get the ammunition to do so,” said White, a native of Newington, Conn.

Once the training is complete, the soldiers will be certified as marksmanship trainers.

“The 4th Iraqi Army Division has the mission of securing a lot of the pipelines in Salah ad-Din province. A lot of their (soldiers) are dedicated to fixed site security,” said Lt. Col. Barry Daniels, 1st Bn., 5th Cav. Regt. commander and Palmyra, Pa., native.

All of the training was important and necessary, including entering and clearing a room in an urban environment, he added.

“We are training them on the tasks that they will need to conduct those missions if they have to go in an urban area and assault an urban objective and apprehend (violent extremists),” said Daniels.

The Iraqi soldiers culminated their week of marksmanship and close-quarters training with a graduation ceremony.

“Overall, I think (the training) increases their capability, and anytime we can better partner with our Iraqi partners helps us all in the future in creating an enduring relationship with the nation of Iraq,” Daniels said.



Warriors dash for fitness



Story and photos by Sgt. Justin Naylor
2/1 CAV (AAB) Public Affairs Office

Tired Soldiers sit in pairs, panting and covered in a fine layer of dust that's already turning to mud as it mixes with their sweat. Having just completed a timed physical endurance course, they wait eagerly to see if they were faster than their buddies coming after them. Even though each team wanted to win, you couldn't tell by the way they cheered the guys still on the course.

Groups of Soldiers with the 3rd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, "Black Jack," 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division-North, at the Samarra Joint Coordination Center, Iraq, participated in a Warrior Dash competition Sept. 30, that pitted them against their comrades to see who could complete the course the fastest.

The Warrior Dash is a physical fitness event run in buddy teams that tests Soldiers' muscular strength and endurance, explained Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Schuerger, a platoon sergeant at the base who helped coordinate the event.

The dash consisted of 13 separate events that utilized the small amount of space and the limited equipment on the SJCC.

During the competition, Soldiers had to lift weights, carry a simulated casualty, move sandbags, and lift their body weight, along with other exercises.

"We worked out different muscle groups," said Spc. Keldrick Shinholster, an artilleryman working at the base. "You get a full-body workout; it's good, good physical training."

Since arriving at the SJCC in June, the Soldiers there have been working out on a regular basis, physically preparing themselves for the quarterly Warrior Dash competitions.

"We work out daily," said Shinholster, a Gordon, Ga., native. "Every-



Private First Class Justin Mouser, a Jackson, Mo., native and artilleryman, throws a medicine ball while Spc. Phil Gengler, a Burton, Mich., native and gunner, both with 3rd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, "Black Jack," 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division-North, observes as part of a Warrior Dash physical fitness competition at Samarra Joint Coordination Center Sept. 30, 2011.

body wants to be the best; everybody gives 110 percent."

"One of our main focuses out here is functional fitness," said Schuerger, a Santa Clarita, Calif., native.

When conducting physical training, Schuerger chooses exercises that will prepare his Soldiers for tasks they might be called to do in a combat zone, such as carry heavy equipment, lifting a wounded battle buddy, or moving quickly in battle.

"If you know you can pick your buddy up and carry him across the base, you know you can carry him out of a firefight," continued Schuerger.

Schuerger and his partner, his platoon leader, went on to win the competition, giving his Soldiers all

Specialist Keldrick Shinholster, a Gordon, Ga., native and artilleryman with 3rd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, "Black Jack," 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division-North, carries sand bags as part of Warrior Dash physical fitness competition at Samarra Joint Coordination Center, Sept. 30, 2011.

the more reason to train harder for the next competition.

"We'll keep doing what we're doing, preparing ourselves for next time," said Shinholster. "The goal is to be number one."





Communications troops keep Soldiers 'in the loop'



Specialist Jared Berman, signal support systems specialist with 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, "Black Jack," 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division-North, strips a phone wire as he prepares to fix it at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, Sept. 24, 2011.

*Story and photos by Sgt. Justin Naylor
2/1 CAV (AAB) Public Affairs Office*

While on mission, Soldiers constantly update their headquarters as events take place. Commanders, planners and support Soldiers rely on radio, phone and Internet networks to receive these updates and respond to them, ensuring they are able to advise and assist Soldiers on the ground.

The 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, "Black Jack," 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division-North, relies heavily on its communications shop—known as S6—to keep networks up, radios operating and phones ringing, so that information is never more than a phone call away.

All the information we get from troops on the ground, unmanned aerial vehicles, helicopters and fixed wing aircraft comes to us over the communication networks that are set up by the S6 at the brigade tactical operations center, said the Black Jack Brigade's chief of operations, Maj. Thomas Jones, a Killeen, Texas, native.

Our S6 shop sets up communications

equipment and maintains it, which gives us the communications assets we need to talk with Soldiers on the ground, along with the assets that support them. We also rely on this equipment to receive guidance from our higher headquarters and to disseminate information and orders to our subordinate units. "This is a hub of information, and we need to be able to pass information to the right people at the right time," he continued.

No matter how far Soldiers are from their headquarters, S6 personnel ensure that Soldiers can always communicate back to it.

"We maintain tactical communication across the battlefield," said Spc. Jared Berman, signal support systems specialists with the Black Jack Brigade.

Berman's specific job is to maintain and repair radio systems that allow for communications between vehicles on mission and the brigade headquarters.

Radio communications allows for Soldiers in different vehicles along a convoy to stay in touch with one another and to relay pertinent information to their leaders, explained Berman, a Midlothian, Texas, native. "That way the command stays informed."

Modern war zones also rely heavily on phone and email communication to keep operations running smoothly.

"Just about everything that happens communications wise—email, video teleconference, voice traffic—goes through our network," said Staff Sgt. Matthew Garcia, a nodal operations systems noncommissioned officer with 2nd BCT.

"We tie everything on the (contingency) operating bases together," continued the Riverside, Calif., native.

From tactical communications in the field, to communications security at the headquarters, to Internet and phones in offices, all of it goes through S6, said Master Sgt. Stephen Peterson, an Axtell, Kan., native, and the brigade S6 non-commissioned officer in-charge. "We are the backbone of the entire daily operations of the brigade."

Because of the need for constant com-

Specialist Rachel Bohman, a Lawson, Miss., native and satellite communications specialist with 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, "Black Jack," 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division-North, maintains an antenna at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, Sept. 24, 2011.

munication, the S6 shop is required to man 24-hour operations.

"We don't have the ability to shut down and close the doors at anytime of the day," said Peterson.

As small bases transition and units consolidate at larger areas, communications personnel are usually amongst the first to arrive to help set up networks and equipment to facilitate a smooth transition.

"You can't go into any position without communications," said Peterson.

Peterson said at one point his S6 shop was running operations at three different locations as the Black Jack Brigade prepared to leave Contingency Operating Base Warhorse for Joint Base Balad, with S6 personnel operating at both bases. The third group was setting up communications networks in Kuwait for the brigade's eventual move there.

Long before the main group of Soldiers arrives at a base, S6 personnel are there setting up and preparing so that the unit can move right in and be fully operational as quickly as possible, said Peterson.

No matter where we go or when, S6 personnel are there providing the communication networks we need, said Jones. "S6 is the technical fiber that integrates all the cells together...they've been crucial to mission success."

Even as Black Jack Soldiers continue to transition bases and move around Iraq and Kuwait, the S6 shop ensures that communications are reliable between units and that commanders can give guidance with just a phone call.



The Chaplain's Corner

“Let your gentleness be evident to all” (Philippians 4: 5).

According to a survey, the leading complaint husbands hold against their wife is that she has a “bad temper.” Before men commence groaning about their very difficult wife, we should remember that the leading complaint women have against their husband is “bad temper.” It appears as though we’re struggling to control our emotions. Husbands and wives who – by oath – are pledged to love and honor one another are instead opting for disrespect and irrationality. It’s ruining otherwise solid relationships.

Anger is a common sensation many of us experience regularly, perhaps even daily. It can stem from many things – anger can

MORTAR, cont’d from pg. 7 —

“Iraqis tend to use their mortar systems solely in the application known as ‘direct lay,’ in which they must have eyes on the enemy and witness the impact of the round,” explained Coste. “From there, they will bracket the rounds in on the target.”

In the American system, we can utilize the direct lay method but, more importantly, as witnessed in our live fire, we utilize forward observers to assist with targeting. This allows us to utilize our mortar systems to their fullest potential at longer ranges, he continued.

Coste also added that while the training was highly beneficial to the participating Iraqi Soldiers, he believes it was also a positive training experience for his own Soldiers.

This was the fifth live fire that our platoon

be the outcome of hurt, embarrassment, miscommunication, shame, guilt and more. Virtually any negative experience can trigger anger; it’s little wonder that couples – whose lives interact with great intensity and intimacy – exchange angry words. Despite their love, couples simply have more opportunities to share negative experiences. We hurt the ones we love.

The remedy for anger is forgiveness. But before we can reach forgiveness we must first experience gratitude. It’s easier to forgive someone we’re grateful for.

When we’re angry we lose sight of the good qualities of the other person; we vilify them and assume the worst possible motives. Rarely are our angry

conducted on Warhorse, but it was definitely the most important in the context of our battalion commander’s intent, said Coste. “This is because we were fortunate enough to include a group of 12 Iraqi Soldiers ... allowing us to build upon a common thread which links both

Captain Saddam Mahmud ‘Abbas Sab’ Al Zuhayri, commander, Light Battery, 18th Iraqi Army Brigade, learns how to properly handle a 120mm high-explosive mortar round from Soldiers with 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division-North, at Contingency Operating Base Warhorse, Iraq, Sept. 18, 2011.



**Maj. Donald Ehrke
Brigade Chaplain**

assumptions in the vicinity of reality; our anger leads to over-reaction.

Our colleagues, friends, family, and especially spouses are gifts from God. Our Lord doesn’t offer inferior products; unwarranted anger therefore ultimately becomes ingratitude directed against Him.

Forgiveness and gratitude toward others are means of thanking God who has been so generous towards us, and no bad temper can survive a heavy dose of thankfulness.

the American Army and the Iraqi army.”

“Having the Iraqis at our live fire added a dimension of cultural interaction as well as better training for my Soldiers, as they had to demonstrate mastery of our skills before they could teach the Iraqis, said Coste. “Overall, this



Honoring our fallen



Staff Sgt. Russell Proctor
Charlie Trp., 4th Sqdn., 9th
U.S. Cav. Regt.
November 1985 - June 2011



Spc. Dylan Johnson
Charlie Trp., 4th Sqdn., 9th
U.S. Cav. Regt.
November 1990 - June 2011



Sgt. Bryan Beard
Delta Trp., 4th Sqdn.,
9th U.S. Cav. Regt.
July 1977-June 2011



Sgt. Estevan Altamirano
Delta Co., 1st Bn., 5th
Cav. Regt.
July 1981 - September
2011

With memories of you in our hearts and your families in our prayers, your sacrifice will never be forgotten.

