Panther leaders pass the torch

3rd BCT Paratroopers redeploy from Operation Inherent Resolve

Paratroopers give it all they have during competition

Medics train 'All the Way' to be division's best

Fury Paratroopers team up to ensure CALFX success

Parting Shots: Airborne Operation

Fort Bragg remembers 9/11
3rd BCT redeploy from Operation Inherent Resolve

BY SGT. ANTHONY HEWITT
3RD BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Col. Curtis Buzzard and Command Sgt. Maj. Daniel Gustafson, commander and chief for 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, led the redeployment of 82nd Airborne Division to Fort Bragg, N.C., with more than 300 Paratroopers assigned to 3rd BCT, Sept. 21.

The Paratroopers completed a nine-month tour in support of Combined Joint Forces Land Component Command - Iraq during Operation Inherent Resolve.

In Iraq, Task Force Panther provided Security Force Advise and Assist Teams across multiple Iraqi Army echelons and locations, and the unit's Paratroopers worked with its partner nations to help train more than 12,000 Iraqi Security Forces.

"What was unique about us was not only were we there to train the Iraqi Army and advise them but we were the utility infielder that did anything else that was required, from flying [aerial reconnaissance] to providing logistics," Buzzard said.

Buzzard said his Paratroopers helped stand up multiple IA units that went on to have successes on the battlefield, namely during the Ramadi counterattack.

Upon completion of the mission, Paratroopers returned home to cheering crowds holding handmade signs and supporters proudly waving miniature American flags.

"It's an overwhelming feeling of emotion all at once seeing my family again," said Sgt. 1st Class Brandon Coronado, a platoon sergeant assigned to Alpha Troop, 5th Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment. "We [feel] a true sense of accomplishment; we went above and beyond to succeed."
Paratroopers assigned to 5th Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division conducted a team training competition in the morning hours of Sept. 2 at Fort Bragg.

The cavalry scouts of 3rd BCT are taking the initiative to stay sharp and focused as their forward unit continues its building partner capacity and advise and assist mission with the Iraqi Security Forces in Iraq.

2nd Lt. Benjamin Robinson, assistant planner of training for 5th Sqdrn., 73rd Cav. Regt., said he combined physical training, skill level one tasks and occupation-specific tasks to create a healthy and educational competition.

Each troop planned different stations of reconnaissance tasks that were supervised by the noncommissioned officers, said Robinson.

Stations included providing medical care while under fire, land navigation, assemble communications equipment and report, along with identifying target objects with binoculars.

The noncommissioned officers added stress to the Paratroopers' tasks by incorporating physical training within the tasks and between stations.

"The objective was to test the Soldiers’ knowledge and actions, ensuring that these Paratroopers know what to do in strenuous situations," said Sgt. Jacob Thompson, a Paratrooper assigned to Bravo Troop, 5th Sqdrn., 73rd Cav. Regt.

As the sun rose, sweat drenched the Paratrooper's uniforms and grassy dirt was stuck to the competitor's hands and faces; each team continued without hesitation to execute their technical and physical duties.

"Teamwork is extremely important, if one person fails the whole thing could go wrong," said Pfc. Hunter Gerlitzky, a Paratrooper assigned to Alpha Troop, 5th Sqdrn., 73rd Cav. Regt. "I tried my hardest and gave everything I could."
The lights go out and a room immediately becomes dark inside the Taylor-Sandri Medical Training Center on Fort Bragg. Airborne medics begin assessing and treating a casualty in a simulated environment equipped with fog machines, speakers, strobe lights, and radio communications.


The medics have been training extensively both physically and academically since July 7, said Sgt. Maj. Carl Youngs, chief medical noncommissioned officer for the 82nd Abn. Div.

The medics, whom are detached from their units, are on a special, organized and rigorous schedule each day, Youngs continued. The initial phase of the training began with attending and graduating the Fort Bragg Pre-Ranger Course. FBPRC is a physically and mentally demanding two-week course that familiarizes Paratroopers with small-unit tactics and puts students in graded leadership positions. After that the medics began a training regimen developed by Youngs emulating tasks and obstacles the medics will encounter in the division competition. The schedule has included land navigation, casualty movement, rope bridges, obstacle courses, long classroom hours and trauma training with simulated effects.

“We'll train within ourselves and create scenarios for each other using strobe lights and limited visibility,” said Sanchez, a Paratrooper assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 5th Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment, 3rd BCT. “We'll go into a scenario not knowing what to expect—sometimes involving up to three patients—and give the assessment and treat them as fast as possible.”

In addition to the training Youngs scheduled for the medics, the team has also received support from the Taylor-Sandri instructors in advanced cardiac life support, loading casualties into a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter and equipment operations in an medical evacuation aircraft.

“We have dedicated instructors that are teaching us new things that pertain to our job and will help us in this competition,” said Sanchez.

Sanchez said the group has developed camaraderie and professionalism among one other during their strenuous schedule.

“Respecting one another -- even though we're competitors -- is the culture we've developed.”

--Sgt. Roberto Sanchez
In the distance is the sound of an incoming OH-58 Kiowa helicopter. The noise of the rotary blades gets louder as the aircraft crests above a tree line near an open field. The helicopter pilots acquire a target and launch two rockets, blasting the field to demonstrate the helicopter’s lethal capabilities.

Paratroopers assigned to Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, look on from Observation Post 13 as the destruction unfolds during their unit’s combined arms live fire training exercise at Fort Bragg, Sept. 17.

During the training, Paratroopers equipped with M4 rifles, M240B machine guns, M320 grenade launchers, AT-4 anti-tank weapons and mobile 60mm mortar launchers took their training to the next level by teaming up with two OH-58 Kiowa helicopters, artillerymen firing 120 and 105mm howitzers and an attachment of Paratroopers operating humvees equipped with heavy weapons.

The platoons moved through rough terrain, dispersing into assignments such as machine guns teams supporting overwatch, maneuver assault elements, obstacle breaching teams, room clearing teams, and medical evacuation teams.

The event is the culmination of many months of hard work, said Sgt. Michael Greismer, a weapons squad leader assigned to A Co.

Greismer said the training began at the individual Soldier level, transitioned to the team level and progressed to completing a platoon-level live fire exercise. The current exercise, a CALFX, brought all the platoons together to work as a company.

The best part about the training was watching the Paratroopers grow professionally, Greismer continued. He said it’s reassuring to see young leaders call out commands, give sectors of fire and execute everything they have been trained to perform.

The training will continue for the Paratroopers as they are slated to support the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Abn. Div. during an upcoming rotation at the Joint Readiness Training Center in Fort Polk, Louisiana.

“Tlhe progress from the last six to eight months has been absolutely astounding, especially from the junior leaders within the organization,” said Capt. Kyle Frazer, commander of A Co. “After this we refine the training we’ve learned and apply that at JRTC so we can provide a fully capable company of lethal and effective combat power.”

Story and photos by Sgt. Anthony Hewitt
Paratroopers assigned to Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division conduct a combined arms live fire exercise at Fort Bragg, Sept. 17, 2015. (U.S. Army photos by Sgt. Anthony Hewitt/Released)
Calendar of Events

OCTOBER

2
TRAINING HOLIDAY

9-12
COLUMBUS DAY HOLIDAY

NOVEMBER

6
PAY DAY ACTIVITIES

13-15
CORPS TRAINING HOLIDAY

26-29
THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

DECEMBER

4
PAY DAY ACTIVITIES

25-28
CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY

Parting Shots: Airborne Operation

Jumpmasters assigned to 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division prepare Paratroopers for a jump at Fort Bragg, N.C., Sept. 1, 2015. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Anthony Hewitt/Released)
3RD BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM
82ND AIRBORNE DIVISION
“H-MINUS!”