

# THE Dog Face Daily

Volume 1, Issue 132

August 31, 2007

*Serving Task Force Marne*

## Senior Soldier celebrates 26 years with 10k



Courtesy photo

Command Sgt. Maj. Keith Dawson runs in the monthly Camp Striker 10k to mark 26 years in the Army Aug. 25.

Pfc. MONICA K. SMITH  
3RD CAB PAO

BAGHDAD — Command Sgt. Maj. Keith Dawson is not one to go along with the crowd — he's usually out in front.

When he reached the milestone of 26 years in the Army Aug. 25, the top enlisted Soldier in 603rd Aviation Support Battalion celebrated that occasion by running in the monthly Camp Striker 10k race.

"When I saw the sign with the date (of the race) I thought, why not? Six-point-two miles at 26 years?" Dawson said.

Known to many in 3rd Combat Aviation Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, for his distinctively gravelly voice and a penchant for telling it like it is, Dawson has spent his 26 years in the Army focused on his job and not on what people think he should be doing.

Dawson's concern is taking care of the Soldiers and making sure their needs are met, said Lt. Col. William McGarrity, 603rd ASB commander. But he's not there to be a friend to everyone.

"He's very candid," McGarrity said. "I don't pay him to candy-coat it. He clearly thinks through what he has to do — he's not political."

McGarrity said Dawson is a well of information for the unit, from policies and procedures to how to handle morale issues. His job doesn't just stop with the enlisted Soldiers, though.

"Sometimes young officers may feel they can't talk to me about some things. There are some young officers who will come to him for guidance," McGarrity said.

Dawson said he never really thought about becoming a command sergeant major until around his 18th year

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## Hammer Brigade Infantryman inspires during recovery

Spc. BEN HUTTO  
3RD HBCT, 3RD INF. DIV.

FOB HAMMER — On May 8, an explosively-formed projectile struck a U.S. Army vehicle, killing two of the three Soldiers inside.

The gunner, Spc. Saul Martinez, 22, of Bloomington, Calif., an infantryman with Headquarters Troop, 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry

Division, was the only survivor.

"When we pulled up to the vehicle, it was one of the worst things I've ever seen in my whole life," said Staff Sgt. Michael Henderson, of Vidor, Texas, Martinez's section sergeant in HHT. "I thought for sure everyone in the vehicle was dead."

Henderson and Pfc. Stephanie McCulley, of Uniontown, Pa., a combat medic with HHT, immediately began

working to get Martinez cut out of the gunner's harness and get him stabilized.

"When I put my hand under his (Interceptor Body Armor vest), I was praying that he was breathing," McCulley said. "I was worried about a million things. I was trying to keep him talking so he wouldn't go unconscious again. In

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## RECOVERY: *Injured infantryman regains strength after amputation*

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the back of my mind, I was worried he would lose his legs, but I just focused on what I was doing.”

Henderson also kept talking to Martinez.

“He tried to give me a bracelet to give to his wife,” Henderson said. “I took it, but kept telling him that he could give it to her when he saw her. He just kept saying, ‘Make sure she gets it.’ I told him I would just to keep him talking. I knew if he went to sleep he might go into a coma and not ever wake up again.”

Martinez’s legs were both severely damaged, suffering multiple lacerations and shrapnel wounds. He was strapped to a backboard and taken by helicopter to the 28th Combat Support Hospital in Baghdad’s International Zone.

Martinez was heavily sedated for nine days after the incident while doctors removed one of his legs. He does not remember his stay in Baghdad or Germany, the two locations to which he was medically evacuated.

“I woke up and Sarah (his wife) was next to me at Walter Reed,” Martinez said. “The doctors told me I was on the verge of dying every hour of every day. They explained that they had to put me under so they could control my body. I was really close to not being here.”

Two days after waking up, Martinez was given the decision on whether to keep his other leg or have it amputated.

“Before I woke up, the doctors were trying to get Sarah to give them permission to amputate it, but she wanted me to make that decision,” he said. “Two days after I woke up, they explained that I would not be able to roll my heel, move my toes or walk on it. I told them I would rather be up walking with my wife on two fake legs than limping



Spc. Saul Martinez rides an arm bike at the No Limitations Festival for amputees and paraplegics, in Lake Tahoe, Calif., July 18.

through life on a peg leg. I think they were surprised, but it really wasn’t that hard a decision.”

Initially, it was hard news for many Soldiers back at FOB Hammer.

“I started crying,” McCulley said. “I felt terrible for him. It wasn’t until I talked to him that I felt better. He told me, ‘I made the decision to walk again. I can heal now.’ He helped me realize it was the best decision for him.”

Soon after his last surgery, Martinez was transferred to the Naval Medical Center in Balboa, Calif., to begin his physical therapy.

“The surgical therapy has been fantastic here,” he said. “We do therapy for

three hours a day, every day. They have worked really hard getting my core strong so I can have good balance. We do everything. Arm bikes, abdominal work, push-ups, dips, pull-ups are just a few things in a typical session. It’s a lot of fun.”

Lt. Col. Ryan J. Kuhn, of Clarks, Neb., deputy commander, 3rd HBCT, visited Martinez at the Naval Medical Center while on leave and was impressed with how far he had come.

“I had never visited wounded Soldiers before, and to be honest, I was somewhat nervous,” Kuhn said. “I did not know if they would be down or depressed. To my surprise and betterment, what I found was exactly the opposite. Martinez should be the role model for all of us as Soldiers. He was upbeat and excited. I sensed a great deal of strength and determination in him. He didn’t speak about himself at all. It was always about other people, like his wife or his fellow Soldiers.”

Spc. Andrew Ortman, of Baltimore, Md., who has served in the same platoon with Martinez since he came to 3rd HBCT, said Martinez’s wife, Sarah, has played a major role in his recovery.

“She has been there to support me with everything,” Martinez said. “She is 100 percent behind me with everything. With her, there is no way I was going to let my legs keep me from living my life. She means too much to me to quit now. If I didn’t have her, I couldn’t do this. She’s been a rock through all of this.”

With his work ethic and wife’s support, Martinez’s recovery has been remarkable. In four short months, he has started walking on his new legs.

When told about where he is in his recovery, Martinez’s platoon mates

**Continued on next page** —————

## THE Dog Face Daily

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were surprised and happy.

"I didn't think he would be walking in four months," Henderson said. "He was in really bad shape when we put him on that bird. I figured he would be recovering, but not walking. His determination has made that happen. I think that says a lot about him."

Kuhn said Martinez has more planned than just walking, however.

"He plans to remain on active duty and continue to serve his country any way possible," Kuhn said. "He wants to ensure young Soldiers that come into the Army understand the importance of training."

"He's a Soldier," McCulley said. "He's always been a Soldier. He still believes in what he does after everything he's been through."

Martinez has geared his rehabilitation for the express purpose of not only staying in, but coming back stronger.

"I want to come back to Kelley Hill (home of the 3rd HBCT)," he said. "I think I can still help the Army and do everything I could before. I want to be able to do my job and show everyone that everything is OK. If I could motivate one Soldier, I would be happy. There is life, no matter what happens. I was hurt doing something I was proud to do and I'm looking forward to coming back. I can be a better infantryman than I was before."

# OPERATIONS SECURITY TEAM



# OPERATIONS SECURITY TEAM

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**OPSEC TEAM**

**Protect Your Critical Information**

## DAWSON: Command sergeant major celebrates 26 years of service

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in the Army.

"For a lot of years I thought I'd never get this far in my career," he said.

He started out as a UH-1 Huey helicopter mechanic, but when he got to his first unit he was told they didn't have Hueys, only UH-60 Black Hawks. From that moment on he was a Black Hawk mechanic and crew chief.

At his 20-year mark, when he was eligible for retirement, Dawson kept going.

"I was still having too much fun at 20 years to call it a day," he said.

He said he's still having plenty of fun.

"I was supposed to retire April of this year," Dawson said. "But I came on this deployment instead of retiring because of the Soldiers."

Giving up the possibility of retirement to deploy to Iraq just because he cares for Soldiers does not surprise those that work with Dawson. McGarity showed up to the race and ran it with Dawson, along with several other 603rd ASB Soldiers, as a tribute to his right-hand man.

"He's my standard bearer," McGarity said. "He's my battle buddy."

Before the race Dawson's voice could be heard over all.

"I don't think there's anyone in my age group! Forty-five and older, woohoo!" he shouted.

At 52 minutes, 38 seconds, Dawson crossed the finish line.

"I'm kind of proud of (my finish time)," he said.

The run itself was a celebration of a command sergeant major who said he's still going strong.

"The reason I'm still here is the Soldiers. I take care of the Soldiers, and the Soldiers take care of the mission," he said. "I'm still having fun."

## Safety Thought of the Day

### Humvee Automatic Fire Extinguisher System

#### Check all sensors daily:

- Two sensors are located in the crew compartment and one is located in the cargo area.
- Inspect for adequate AFES system pressure on both crew and cargo extinguishers.
- Inspect sensors for cleanliness.

- Ensure sensors are not blocked or covered by equipment.
- The AFES system is NMC if control module SYSTEM OK lamp indicates a flashing green light.
- Smoking in a vehicle with AFES installed may activate the sensor and cause the AFES to discharge.

## Headline Highlights

# Prosthetic skull; satellite navigation trouble

## Man loses top of his head

BERLIN (Reuters) — A German court has awarded 3,000 euros (\$4,100) in damages to a man who had to have the top of his skull replaced with plastic because of a faulty hospital fridge.

Doctors removed the top of the man's head and put it in cold storage while they operated on his brain, the court in the western city of Koblenz said Tuesday.

Because the refrigerator was defective, the section of skull was not kept cool enough and could not be reattached. Doctors replaced the bone with a plastic prosthesis.

The man sought compensation of at least 20,000 euros on the grounds that the prosthesis caused him headaches, affected his balance and made him unduly sensitive to the weather.

Following consultations with experts, the court found that the operation had caused the man's discomfort, not the loss of the top of his skull.

Compensation of 3,000 euros was "appropriate and sufficient," it said.

"The experts consulted by the court concluded the new skull roof was better than the original," a court spokesman said.

## French manager misses mark

BEIJING (Reuters) — A bad-tempered French manager of a factory in China overshot the mark at a meeting when he pulled out a pistol and shot the ceiling, state media said Wednesday.

The manager, referred to only as Pierre by the China Daily, became en-

raged over a Chinese woman colleague's refusal to approve an overtime payment for an assistant, the newspaper said.

It said he "fired at the ceiling in rage" at the factory in the booming southern Pearl River Delta.

"Several employees said the French manager was overbearing and moody and had a very bad temper," the newspaper said, quoting a reporter for the South Metropolis Daily, who said this was not the first time Pierre had drawn his pistol and fired.

Police were investigating.

"Any foreigner found in possession of a pistol is liable to be detained and fined, or even deported," the newspaper quoted a professor with Guangdong Police College as saying.

## Sat Navs untrustworthy

LONDON (Reuters) — Britain's first official road signs to warn drivers about the dangers of trusting their satellite navigation devices (satnavs) were introduced Tuesday in a Welsh village.

The signs, introduced by authorities in rural St. Hilary, in the Vale of Glamorgan, South Wales, to warn drivers about placing too much faith in the directional gadgets, could be brought in across the country if the trial is successful.

Problems were reported after foreign drivers found it difficult to understand phrases such as "unsuitable for heavy goods vehicles" but could understand pictorial notices, media reported.

The four signs have been introduced around one particular black spot in the village, where the electronic devices di-

rect truck drivers to a shortcut between the main M4 motorway and Cardiff airport.

The road is far too narrow for many to travel down, causing them to get stuck and sparking major traffic problems. More than a dozen large lorries had become stuck in the road in the past six months, according to traffic engineer Mark Simpson who came up with the idea for the signs.

"We have had a series of problems with drivers getting into trouble by trusting their satnavs and we needed to do something about it," Simpson was quoted in newspapers as saying.

"They can send drivers on the most direct routes which turn out to be narrow roads completely unsuitable for heavy and long trucks and lorries. Satnav can be a wonderful tool for drivers but it does have its dangers."

If successful, officials plan a national roll-out of the signs to combat what is seen as a growing problem for frustrated motorists, as recent figures show more than four million of Britain's 32 million drivers rely on satnavs.

Some have reported that software glitches have sent drivers down one-way streets or up impassable mountain tracks. One ambulance driver with a faulty satnav drove hundreds of miles in the wrong direction while transferring a patient from one hospital in Ilford east of London to another just 8 miles away.

A spokesman for the Welsh Assembly regional government said that officials would be "watching closely" the trial's results before deciding whether to expand the program.

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from Sudoku: The Original Brain Workout From Japan

**Solution to yesterday's puzzle:**

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

## ARABIC WORD OF THE DAY

Water

My