

BLACK JACK ROUND UP



Black Jack 6 sends

Greetings to the entire Black Jack Team from sunny (and somewhat dusty) Iraq! Soldiers, Families and Friends of the Black Jack Brigade, we would like to thank each and every one of you for your continued support to our Soldiers as some of us quickly approach our third month deployed in support of Operation New Dawn. After arriving in May, we transitioned authority on June 13, 2011, and have continued our hard work. Our mission in Iraq is to conduct stability operations and security force assistance in two large provinces to support Iraq's continued development as a sovereign, stable, and self-reliant strategic partner committed to regional stability. All of our units have been working hard and doing a terrific job to support our mission.

Our first couple months in Iraq have been successful, yet very challenging for Black Jack Soldiers. All command teams have been throughout our area of operations and engaging key leaders in the local populace. As part of our transition mission, we continue to influence the Iraqi Security Forces to take more responsibility for essential security functions.

As part of this we recently



turned over two very important checkpoints to the Iraqi's. We have started many area sanitation and clean-up projects with the Iraqi's in our AO.

At the same time, it has been challenging as we lost two brothers in arms from 4th Squadron 9th Cavalry Regiment; Staff Sergeant Proctor and Private First Class Johnson. We felt this loss throughout our ranks, as I'm sure you felt the loss back home. Our unit ministry teams went to work immediately to give words of comfort and strength to our Soldiers.

We certainly value every member of the Black Jack team. If you are not yet a member of our facebook page we highly encourage everyone—Family, friends, and Soldiers—to join. It is a good way to keep track of what is going on within the Black Jack Brigade and maintain a common understanding of what is going on throughout Fort Hood, the 1CD and Black Jack. The link is <http://www.facebook.com/home.php#!/Black.Jack.Brigade.1CD>.

As always, I would like to stress the importance of communication between family and friends, both here in Iraq and back home. Our Soldiers need your support now more than ever. Families please understand that your Soldier may not be able to call home every day, but they will call and write as much as they possibly can. Soldiers never forget that our Families are an integral part of the Black Jack team. They are every bit as much a part of this deployment as those of us serving here in Iraq.

Thank you for everything you do every day. Army Strong! CAV Tough! BlackJack!

BJ6

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Black Knights receive combat patch

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CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq – On a day like any other in Iraq, the Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment “Black Knights”, 2nd Brigade Combat Team (Advise and Assist Brigade), 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division-North, crowded in a hot, dry conference room to celebrate a milestone event.

Ranging in age from 18 to well past 40, all the Soldiers now had something in common, an attribute that less than one percent of their fellow citizens can claim.

The Black Knights received a combat patch on their right shoulder designating them as combat veterans during a ceremony at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq, July 1.

The Black Knights deployed from Fort Hood, Texas, to Iraq in support of Operation New Dawn earlier this year.

The unit’s role in Iraq is to advise, train and assist their counterparts in the Iraqi Security Forces, to help allow U.S. Forces to leave an even more stable country when they withdraw, explained Lt. Col. Chip Daniels, the commander of the Black Knights.

“From this moment forward, you will have a (combat) patch and no one can take that away from you,” said Daniels to his Soldiers. “It’s what connects you to those who came before



U.S. Army Photo

Lt. Col. Chip Daniels, the commander of 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division-North, salutes his Soldiers after they receive combat patches during a ceremony on Contingency Operating Base Speicher, Iraq, July 1.

us.”

During the ceremony, Daniels addressed the formation and praised the commitment and positive attitudes the Black Knights have maintained during the deployment.

This ceremony also served to highlight to the Soldiers that Iraq is still a combat zone and that they must remain vigilant, said Daniels.

For the Soldiers who received their first combat patch, this ceremony was a significant event.

It was nice to be recognized as part of the less than one percent of my countrymen that is serving in combat, explained Spc. Nathan Smith, a Las Vegas native and a tanker with the Black Knights.

This battalion has a sto-

ried history and has had a lot of famous Soldiers serve in it, he continued.

Command Sgt. Maj. Patrick Lowery, the command sergeant major of the Black Knights, discussed his opinion of his unit’s history.

“Our Battalion is unique because of the leaders we have had in the past,” he said. “Serving in the unit that was once commanded by Robert E. Lee and George Patton is a story that we can all tell our grandkids about someday.”

At the end of the ceremony, Black Knight Soldiers had a new link to their past that they could wear on their shoulder, a combat patch that put them in the small percentage of Americans that will ever serve in a combat zone.

Iraqi soldiers test skills at live-fire event

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

Being able to work as a team in a combat situation can mean the difference between success and failure for a military unit.

Soldiers from the 5th Iraqi Army Division took part in a group live-fire event at Normandy Training Site, Iraq, June 26, which focused on the unit's ability to work together to meet an objective.

The live fire was the culminating event for the Iraqi soldiers after an almost month-long training rotation at the Kirkush Military Training Base, Iraq, said Lt. Col. Richard Kirk, the officer in-charge of the security forces assistance cell for the 2/1 Cav.(AAB).

The IA soldiers began training for this event by focusing on basic concepts such as marksmanship and individual movement drills, explained Capt. Sa'ad, an officer serving with the 5th IA div.

The training was broken down into individual elements, allowing the soldiers to become proficient in each necessary skill before moving on, continued Sa'ad.

The soldiers then built on the basic skills and used them to conduct advanced tactics such as unit movement and coordinated attacks using infantry, mortars and mounted elements, he continued.

"It's very comprehensive," said Sa'ad of the training. "It's covers the whole spectrum of operations."

For the culminating event, soldiers used the skills they had learned during their training to conduct a company-size attack on a simulated Iraqi terrorist cell.

Soldiers operating mortars provided supporting fire to help weaken enemy locations before infantry elements moved in and raided the site.



An Iraqi army officer talks to his soldiers about their role in the culminating training event at the Normandy Training Site, Iraq, June 26. This is the last event of a nearly month-long training rotation for soldiers from the 5th Iraqi Army Division.

"This event is about putting everything they've learned in the training together," said Sa'ad.

"This is their chance to break away from the training cadre and prove themselves," said Kirk, a Columbus, Ohio, native and a 29-year Army veteran.

The culminating event allows them to bring together all the smaller tasks they've been practicing in the last three weeks and demonstrate them at full speed and in a live-fire scenario, explained Kirk.

For the junior leaders involved in the event, it was also an opportunity to build confidence in their ability to work together and accomplish a goal in a battlefield scenario, said Kirk.

The group of IA soldiers that participated in this training are only

a small percentage of the total number that have gone through the training rotations since the inception of the training in January, explained Kirk.

The goal is for every battalion of the 5th IA div. to go through this training, Kirk said.

"You definitely see a lot of improvement in the soldiers after they've gone through the training," said Sa'ad.

For the soldiers that participated, the culminating event was an opportunity to use the soldiering skills they had learned during their training rotation while working as a team to accomplish an objective.

'Black Jack' squadron transfers checkpoint authority

Sgt. Quentin Johnson
2nd Brigade Combat Team
(Advise and Assist Brigade)
Public Affairs
1st Cavalry Division, U.S.
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FORWARD OPERATING BASE COBRA, Iraq – Combined checkpoints (CCPs) throughout Northern Diyala have been maintained as trilateral effort between the U.S. Army, Iraqi Army and Kurdish Peshmerga forces for more than a year.

On 30 June that trilateral posture transitioned to bilateral for two checkpoints when authority was transferred from the U.S. Army to the Iraqi Army and Kurdish forces.

Troop's A. and B., 4th Squadron, 9th U.S. Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division-North, Iraq, conducted the transfers at two separate CCPs they are responsible for as part of Operation New Dawn.

This transition gives control of the CCPs and their property to the Iraqi Army and Kurdish forces, said 1st Lt. Dominic Fazioli, for Troop B., 4th Sqdn., 9th U.S. Cav. Regt.

The main objectives of these CCPs is to build host nation force capacity, disrupt illegal activities and movement, and build cooperative relations between



Capt. Matthew Jung (right), commander, Troop B., 4th Squadron, 9th U.S. Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division-North, Iraq, prepares to hand over the keys to Iraqi officers from the 4th Battalion, 4th Brigade, 1st Iraqi army division, during the transfer of authority a checkpoint in Northern Diyala province June 30. The connexs contain equipment and supplies for the checkpoint.

Iraqi and Kurdish forces within Diyala province, said Fazioli.

Those cooperative relationships were enhanced at each CCP as Soldiers from the 4th Sqdn., 9th U.S. Cav. Regt., assisted and advised Iraqi and Kurdish soldiers as they conducted common military tasks, said Capt. Joshua Range, commander, Troop A.

Range further explained, "During our time at the checkpoints, we trained IA and Peshmerga on map reading, weapons proficiency and medical skills."

Assisting the local forces has been easy because they train almost everyday, he said.

According to Range, the training has also made the transition of the checkpoints from U.S. to IA and Peshmerga forces easier because it helped build and

strengthen relationships between the two groups.

"The soldiers (IA and Kurdish) get along fine," he said.

"They (IA and Kurdish soldiers) are able to work together," said Capt. Matthew Jung, commander, Troop B.

Working together is a step forward for both the IA and Kurdish forces, said one IA officer during the transfer of authority meeting.

"Groups are always ready to separate the IA and Peshmerga forces," said the Iraqi officer, "but we must keep the unity."

1st Lt. Azad Azed-Sallh, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Regional Guard Brigade, Kurdish Peshmerga forces,

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Black Jack Soldiers celebrate day with local children

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

Children from throughout the Salah-ad-Din province was greeted with smiling faces as they arrived at Joint Base Balad, Iraq June 25.

Soldiers from the 3rd Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division-North, other 2nd AAB Soldiers, airmen and sailors participated in the monthly Iraqi Kids' Day event at JBB.

Children were chaperoned by adults from their local villages to enjoy various games, food and crafts provided by various units on JBB, said 2nd Lt. Andrew Roberts, with the 3rd Bn., 82nd FA Regt.

Many of the days food and events included: Soccer, basketball, a zip line, constructing friendship bracelets, dancing, popcorn and kabobs, said Sgt. Lawren Massey, broadcaster for the 2nd AAB.

Ensuring that the children were the center of attention and catering to their happiness was the main focus of the day, explained Roberts.

"We are inviting kids into Joint Base Balad, where we are going to play with them ... show the little kids that we're really here to help them out, to work with them," he said.

Helping the children see the personal side of the Army they can make a greater impact



A Soldier from the 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division-North, plays soccer with an Iraqi child during the Iraqi Kids' Day at Joint Base Balad, Iraq June 25.

on Iraq people, added Roberts. It can also lead to better communication with not only the Iraqi children but their parents as well.

To ensure a wider channel of communication between the Iraqi people and the U.S. Army, Roberts said each month they try to invite children from different areas within the province.

"We try to pick children from different areas so it's not the same children getting preferential treatment," he said.

In addition to choosing different children each month, the units do their best to look back on what has been done so improvements to the Kids' Day

can take place, according to Roberts.

Speaking of the event, Roberts said "Let us see if we (3rd Bn., 82nd FA Regt.) can add something ... let us see if we can make it better."

Better is what they did, as all servicemembers and volunteers enjoy time with the children and ended the day safely.

Roberts said anyone wanting to volunteer as a mentor for Iraq Kids' Day must attend a short brief and have a cheerful, willing attitude towards children.

Mayor's cell keeps base operational



Sgt. Jennifer Peterson, a native of Miami, and Pfc. Juan Patrick, from Dallas, both communication specialists with 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, fill out orders for work requests at the Mayor's Cell on Contingency Operating Base Warhorse, Iraq, June 20. Soldiers at the Mayor's Cell help fill out and facilitate the completion of nearly 200 work orders each week.

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

Keeping a base running smoothly in a deployed environment presents a variety of challenges.

From having water delivered to troop living quarters to coordinating contractors to fix air conditioners in offices throughout the base, there are numerous jobs big and small conducted regularly to ensure units on base remain operational.

Filling this role on Contingency Operating Base Warhorse is the Mayor's Cell, comprised of nearly a dozen soldiers from 2nd Brigade

Combat Team (Advise and Assist Brigade), "Black Jack," 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division-North, deployed in support of Operation New Dawn.

The Mayor's Cell is responsible for numerous base functions including facilitating living accommodations for visitors, acting as intermediaries between units and contracting agencies, coordinating work for local national employees, and filling out work requests for soldiers and units, said Staff Sgt. Sherrod Nevels, an automated logistical specialist who currently fills the role of Mayor's Cell non-commissioned officer in charge.

The Mayor's Cell is also responsible for 65 to 70 local national workers who work on the base every day, explained Nevels, a Tampa, Fla., native.

Local nationals help keep the base clean, pick up excess scrap metal and wood, and also help clear out and shut down unused buildings and tents, he added.

The Mayor's Cell also helps fill out and facilitate the completion of nearly 200 work orders per week.

Between 70 and 90 people walk through the Mayor's Cell doors every day in need of

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Medic plays versatile role at clinic



Spc. Kathy Hysong, a Baker City, Ore., native, and a medic with 15th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, U.S. Division – North, manually provides oxygen to a simulated patient during an exercise conducted at the Troop Medical Clinic on Contingency Operating Base Warhorse, Iraq, June 6, 2011. Hysong serves as a healthcare specialist and is also a member of the evacuation platoon.

Photos by 1st Lt. Tiara Walz

*Story by 2nd Lt. Alyson Randall
2/1 CAV (AAB) Public Affairs Office*

Whether treating a soldier with a cold or helping save the life of a wounded warrior, there is always something to keep a medic busy while deployed.

A typical day for Spc. Kathy Hysong begins with patient care during sick call hours at the Troop Medical Clinic at Contingency Operating Base Warhorse, Iraq. The remainder of her day is dedicated to preparing for any medical evacuations.

Hysong, a healthcare specialist with Company C, 15th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team (Advise and Assist Brigade), 1st Cavalry

Division, U.S. Division – North, plays a versatile role as a medic assigned to the evacuation platoon.

“We typically work in the clinic during sick call,” she said, “but we always have to be ready to do an evacuation if necessary.”

Staying active is important for the medics who evacuate patients.

An evacuation platoon soldier’s job often involves loading patients wearing full combat gear into vehicles and providing patient care while en route to a larger facility.

En route care is the most important part of an evacuation medic’s job, said Hysong, a na-

tive of Baker City, Ore.

“I am responsible for keeping the patient [stabilized] from our level of care to the next,” she said.

“Patient care during evacuations is just as important as the treatment they receive in the clinic,” said Staff Sgt. Shirlee Burton, evacuation platoon non-commissioned officer in charge. “Without that en route care, the patient may die.”

Hysong spends a large portion of her day with her fellow evacuation platoon members preparing for evacuation emergencies.

Training for combat is very

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agreed.

During his time at the checkpoints over the last year he has seen relationships between IA and Peshmerga soldiers continue to improve.

As long as local IA and Kurdish leaders continue to work together and talk about any issue that arises, the checkpoints will continue to be successful, said Range.

"I know that (cooperation) will continue in the future," said Jung.

As for any operational or strategic changes to the way the checkpoints are ran now, all will remain the same said Azed-Sallh.

"It's (checkpoint operations) a good program," said Azed-Sallh. "We (Kurdish and IA forces) will use the same style as the U.S."

According to Jung, more checkpoints are scheduled to transfer completely from to Iraqi forces by the end of the year.



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help, whether it is filling out a work order to have a light bulb fixed outside their room, or requesting pallets of water to be dropped off at an office.

There is always something, said Sgt. Jennifer Peterson, a Miami native and communication specialist with 2/1 CAV (AAB).

"It's a very high operational tempo," she said.

For Peterson, one of the biggest surprises of working at the Mayor's Cell is seeing how well her soldiers work together to ensure the base remains operational.

"They've done wonderfully," said Peterson.

"There is never a dull moment," said Pfc. Juan Patrick, communication specialist with 2/1 CAV (AAB).

Patrick, currently on his second deployment, works daily as an escort for local national workers.

Patrick said this position helps him experience an unfamiliar people and culture.

"This is my first time working with local nationals," he said. "This isn't something every communication soldier gets to experience. I have a lot of fun," Patrick explained.

Whether the job is large or small, soldiers of 2/1 CAV (AAB) rely on the Mayor's Cell daily to get any number of tasks done, which helps keep soldiers at COB Warhorse mission-ready.

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important, said Burton. "If you haven't trained to standard and if you make a mistake, people's lives are in danger."

Burton has already noticed improvements in Hysong's performance because of the training.

"She has improved tremendously," said Burton. "Actually doing real-life medical evacuations has made her realize the importance of her job and the training that is required."

Although being part of an evacuation platoon is a large responsibility for a young medic, Hysong said her job helps keep soldiers alive.



Chaplain's Corner

A "Special Edition"...

by Maj. Donald Ehrke
Brigade Chaplain

"Yet I am not alone, for My Father is with me" (John 16: 32).

Norman Rockwell, best known as an illustrator for The Saturday Evening Post, created images that portrayed an encouraging human existence. Rockwell's "ideal" didn't necessarily correlate with perfection; instead, Rockwell produced artwork that inspires us and convinces us that something noble rests within the common man. Traditional family values are presented as worthy expressions of American principles; everyday occurrences as the cornerstone of our nation's decency.

Each of us probably has a Norman Rockwell image of our life back home. "Back home" is actually far from perfect - it usually involves plenty of tasks and obligations that we we're not fond of. Nevertheless, while away from those we love, we recall only the idyllic forms of our life in the United States. We remember our spouses as more attractive, our children as better behaved, and our chores as more bearable when we're away.

Today we find ourselves many miles from loved ones, missing all of the understated charms of "back home." Although our homes remain in our minds, there is another tradition



that we are keeping that, while not perfect, is an expression of American honor and decency. We are following a long line of Soldiers who have spent time away from their families, supporting the cause of their nation's freedom. Soldiers at Valley Forge longed for home during the difficult winter of 1777, they did the same during the Civil War after the Battle of Fredericksburg, and they repeated the sentiment during D-Day in 1944. All yearned for

home but stayed in the fight because they recognized that they were sacrificing for home and all that they held dear.

God was with all of these "Soldiers past" and He's with us now - and He's with our families, creating an unbroken bond between us and the past and the present. The sacrifices you're making today are for your future years yet to come.

Warrior Tribute

2nd Advise and Assist Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division
remembers our fallen Brothers



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

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



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