

Adhamiyah Firefight: One Insurgent Killed, Three Captured

By Sgt. Mike Pryor
2-82 Abn. Div. Public Affairs

BAGHDAD - What started as a routine patrol turned into a shootout that left one insurgent dead and three others in custody after an intense, 20-minute gun battle on the streets of Baghdad's Adhamiyah District June 16.

Soldiers from Company C, 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment were on a mounted patrol when they began receiving small arms fire from a small group of ski mask-wearing insurgents on a rooftop. The Soldiers returned fire and

the insurgents fled. A wild chase through the city streets followed as the Soldiers attempted to cut off the insurgents' escape route.

As they rounded a corner, the Soldiers were engaged by a larger group of insurgents firing rocket-propelled grenades. Again the Soldiers returned fire, forcing several of the insurgents to seek cover in a walled courtyard on a side street. Clouds of dust and smoke filled the narrow street



(Photo by Sgt. Mike Pryor, 2-82 Abn. Public Affairs)

A cloud of smoke and dust envelopes Staff Sgt. Michael Mullahy, of Batavia, Ill. seconds after he fired an AT4 rocket launcher at an insurgent position during a firefight in Baghdad's Adhamiyah District June 16.

See **Firefight** Page 2



(Photo by Maj. Sean J. Ryan, 2-2 Inf. Public Affairs Officer)

Gates Tours Joint Security Station

Gen. David H. Petraeus, commanding general of Multi-National Force - Iraq, discusses security issues with Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates during a trip to the Al Mada'in Joint Security Station in the Zafaraniyah area of the Karadah District in eastern Baghdad June 16.

Baghdad in Brief

Dragons Find Rockets

BAGHDAD - Multi-National Division-Baghdad Soldiers and aviation assets discovered six rockets in a school yard in the Rashid District of the Iraqi capital June 17.

At approximately 3 p.m., aircrews from the 4th Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment spotted suspicious looking objects in a school yard while investigating an area suspected as the point of origin for rocket fire against the International Zone in southern Baghdad.

Thirty minutes later, Soldiers from Company A, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, assigned to the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, arrived at the scene and found six Iranian-made 107mm rockets.

Gunfire Shatters Calm of Routine Adhamiyah Patrol

Firefight

From Page 1

as volleys of fire went back and forth. The exchange continued until Pfc. Ismel Sanchez, of Greensboro, N.C. lobbed a grenade over the wall, silencing the insurgents' guns.

When the Soldiers moved inside to clear the courtyard, they found three insurgents, one mortally wounded. Another

insurgent who was attempting to hide in the house next door was quickly identified and detained.

While the Soldiers were still securing the area, several insurgents armed with RPGs appeared at the end of the street and began firing at the U.S. vehicles. The turret gunner in the lead truck laid down suppressive fire, but his 7.62 mm ammunition was no match for the brick wall the insurgents were using as

"They were firing at us from behind cover, so I took away their cover."

**Staff Sgt. Michael Mullahy
Co. C, 1-26 Infantry Regiment**

cover. While Sgt. Jake Richardson of St. Johns, Ariz. kept the insurgents' heads down with his M203 grenade launcher, Staff Sgt. Michael Mullahy of Batavia, Ill. retrieved an AT4 rocket launcher from one of the trucks. Placing himself directly in the line of fire, Mullahy sighted the AT4 and fired, leveling the wall and forcing the insurgents to retreat.

"They were firing at us from behind cover, so I took away their cover," Mullahy said.

Mullahy's shot ended the engagement. Once the area was secured, the suspects were loaded into vehicles and transported back to the company's base for further questioning.

When they returned, the Soldiers who had been in contact were greeted with a warrior's cheer from those who stayed back. Richardson summed up the engagement in one sentence for a friend who asked him what happened.

"It was a cute little fight that turned real sour for the bad guys," he said. There were no U.S. Soldiers injured during the engagement.



(Photo by Sgt. Mike Pryor, 2-82 Abn. Div. Public Affairs)

(From left) Sgt. Jake Richardson, of St. Johns, Ariz., 1st Lt. Travis Atwood, of Abilene Texas, and Staff Sgt. Michael Mullahy, of Batavia, Ill., take cover while Mullahy prepares to fire an AT4 rocket launcher at an insurgent firing position during a firefight in Baghdad's Adhamiyah District June 16.

**Arabic Phrase
of the Day**
haay shaku?

Defined:
What's going on?

Iraq 3-Day Weather Report



Today

**High: 113
Low: 82**



Tomorrow

**High: 113
Low: 83**



Wednesday

**High: 114
Low: 83**

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Rashid Sheiks Meet, Discuss Peace, Progress

By Sgt. 1st Class Robert Timmons
4-1 Inf. Div. Public Affairs

BAGHDAD - More than 60 Sheiks from across the Al-Rashid District met June 13 at the District Council Hall to discuss the way ahead at the founding Conference of Sheiks.

The meeting, which 67 sheiks, both Sunni and Shia, was called by Sheik Faisel Karem Jabour Al Saadi, the Al Rashid District Council Sheik Council Chairman and by Sabeeh Al-Ka'abi, the District Council chairman. It was viewed by Coalition Forces as a first step into bringing tribal leaders into the transition process in southern Baghdad.

Besides security issues, the meeting also covered the negative impacts of sectarian violence and the status of essential services. During the meeting, the attendees agreed to meet again and to have a better mix of Sunni and Shia sheiks present.

Col. Ricky D. Gibbs, the commander of the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division whose units patrol the district, who was invited to speak at the meeting. He asked the tribal leaders to take the lead in their own security.

"The violence in Baghdad and the Rashid District is crushing the people of Iraq," said the Harker Heights, Texas native. "I foresee a great nation with all



(Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Robert Timmons, 4-1 Inf. Div. PA)

Sabeeh Al-Ka'abi, the Rashid District Council chairman, speaks to some sheiks during an intermission at the founding Conference of Sheiks in the Al Rashid District June 13.

people living together in peace. To get there, we all have to work together."

While presenting his remarks, Gibbs highlighted the gains made in the Anbar and Diyala provinces against al-Qaeda and other terrorists by Iraqis working in conjunction with Coalition Forces.

"The people in Anbar, Diyala and other areas of Baghdad are showing their courage by standing up to terrorists and improving the stability of their provinces," he said. "Together, you can do this."

After asking how his Dragon Brigade could assist, Gibbs said he couldn't stop the violence without the influence the

sheiks have over their tribes.

"I sat with Maj. Gen. Abdul Ameer (deputy commander of the Iraqi Karkh Command and the 6th Iraqi Army Division commander), one of the Iraqi Army's great leaders recently and he said that it is the people who must rise against the terrorists and criminals who are harming Iraq."

Gibbs told the tribal leaders that more than \$110 million has been spent on rebuilding Iraqi infrastructure and highlighted the Doura Market and the district's own advisory council as examples of success.

"The market is a shining star for all the world to see," he said. "It shows the Iraqi strength and resolve to push past the violence and reject terrorism."

He also asked for the sheiks' help in speeding up reconstruction efforts by "ensuring the workers on the projects are from your neighborhoods and keeping the contractors working."

Besides Col. Gibbs, Iraqi Brig. Gen. Salam, Omar Jabouri, Amar Al-Moamrai, Iraqi Col. Mahdy Jassim and Sheik Faisel spoke during the conference.

"I have been to Iraq three times," Gibbs said during his remarks. "The next time I come, I would like to bring my family here on vacation to spend time with your families and the wonderful citizens of Iraq."



Searching in the Dark

Los Angeles native Pfc. Gilberto Rojas, an infantryman with Company C, 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment, searches for suspicious material inside the home of a suspected bomb-maker following a raid in Baghdad's Adhamiyah District June 5.

(Photo by Sgt. Mike Pryor, 2-82 Abn. Div. Public Affairs)

Father, Son Leave Boot Imprints Together in Iraq

Spc. Karly Cooper
15th SB, Public Affairs

CAMP TAJI, Iraq - Some boys dream about someday growing up and following in their father's footsteps. Some let the dream die, while others make it a reality. Few get a chance to say they went to combat and served together.

Spc. Jason Donaldson, administrative assistant with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 15th Brigade Troops Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), is currently on his second deployment on Camp Taji, since joining the Army in 2004.

"I haven't seen my father since 2004 so it's great getting a chance to get to see him," said Jason.

1st Sgt. Leonard Donaldson, with Charlie Medical Company, 215th

Brigade Support Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division, resides at forward operating base Camp Warhorse. He works as a combat medic, assisting in frontline trauma care in the battlefield.

"It's different having my son here with me, when he first got here I was concerned about him going outside the gate," said Leonard.

Deployment is nothing new to him either. He has been deployed a total of three times. The first deployment landed him in Kuwait during Operation Iraqi Freedom 03-04. He worked with the Headquarters and Headquarters Company 421st Medical Brigade.

"My first deployment was something new to me so I gained a lot of experience on each deployment," he said.

His second deployment took him to Camp Speicher with Alpha Company 557th Medical Company Ground



(Photo by Spc. Karly Cooper, 15th SB, PAO)

Spc. Jason Donaldson (left) administration assistant, currently on his second deployment to Camp Taji, and his father 1st Sgt. Leonard Donaldson (right) a combat medic who resides at forward operating base Camp Warhorse.

Ambulance, 30th Medical Brigade for a year.

Working as a combat medic his entire military career,

he has had the opportunity of traveling and seeing many parts of the United States as well. He has been stationed at Fort Bragg, N.C., Fort Ord, Calif., Fort Gordon, Ga., Landstuhl, Germany, Sinai, Egypt, and is currently on his tour at Fort Hood, Texas.

"I was able to stay at my son's house and help take care of the baby while he was deployed and then I was deployed 30 days later," he said.

Spc. Donaldson has a wife and two small children at home. He was able to go home around the time his second baby was due.

"It is different being over here with my father because I haven't seen him in so long," said Spc. Donaldson.

The long duration of deployment certainly tends to be a lonely haul but not so much when you have a family member close by.

Married Soldiers Renew Their Vows, Army Vows

By Sgt. 1st Class Robert Timmons
4-1 Inf. Div. Public Affairs

BAGHDAD - Being in a combat zone can bring Soldiers feelings of loneliness, isolation and fear. Whether married or single, these feelings create a cocoon of feelings that the Soldier may never break out of.

Some married Soldiers have the luxury of deploying with their spouses; reducing the stress levels. For Spc. Vanessa and Pfc. Norris Johnson, who renewed their Army vows during a reenlistment ceremony June 8 at Forward Operating Base Falcon, the Army is a good way to stay together.

"It can be stressful we rarely see each other," Vanessa, 20, a logistical specialist with Company B, 610th Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Inf. Div. "We both work different hours and live in different buildings."

The San Antonio native admitted

though it is easier for her.

"When I am stressed out I can talk to him," she said. "I can trust him because I know he won't say anything - he knows me, he knows my family. It's not the same when you go to your fellow Soldiers because they don't understand you. There are definitely times when he takes all the stress off me."

For the couple being nearer to each other and to home was a large part of their decision to reenlist for six more years.

"We wanted to stay in for a long time," said Norris, 21, a truck driver with Co. D, 610th BSB. "We are looking forward to being closer to home."

The Johnsons, who met while at Fort Riley, Kan., and wed Dec. 1, 2006, reenlisted to be stationed together at Fort Polk, La.

"I like my (military occupational specialty) and my unit," said the native of Baton Rouge, La.

Col. Ricky D. Gibbs, the 4th IBCT, 1st



(Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Robert Timmons, 4-1 Inf. Div. PA)

Spc. Vanessa Johnson and her husband Pfc. Norris Johnson reenlist for six years during a ceremony at Forward Operating Base Falcon June 8.

Inf. Div. commander, administered the oath during the ceremony because of a conversation Norris had with him.

"I was at the dining facility when I had dinner with him," he said, "when he said, 'If you reenlist for more than five years, I will reenlist you.' We gave him six."

The reenlistment ceremony took place immediately following an awards ceremony.

A Force Not to be Reckoned With

**By Spc. Nathan Hoskins
1st ACB, 1st Cav. Div. Public Affairs**

CAMPTAJI, Iraq - With so many aircraft crossing the skies over Baghdad, it comes as no surprise that there is a quick reactionary force trained to rapidly employ in case of an emergency landing or crash.

That is where the Division Rapid Reaction Force comes into play.

"Though (the DRRF) are primarily employed for downed aircraft, they have a variety of other missions. They react to incidences within the (Multi-National Division - Baghdad's area of operations) in which other troops cannot respond in less than an hour," said Lake Arrowhead, Calif., native Capt. Jay King, an AH-64D Apache helicopter pilot and commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division.

But the Soldiers who make up the DRRF don't come to Iraq with the know-how concerning these situations, they get the training when they link up with the 1st ACB, he said.

Every time a new group of Soldiers comes in to take over the mission as the DRRF, King has to ensure that they get the proper training that will enable them to best do their new job, he said.

The training is very thorough. The Soldiers of Battery C, 1st Battalion, 37th Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, are learning the ins and outs of each helicopter in 1st ACB's inventory, said Rigby, Iowa, native 1st Lt. Burke Manwaring, a platoon leader for 1-37th.

"They are familiarized with all of the Air Cavalry Brigade's assets, including the AH-64 (Apache), the UH-60 (Black Hawk) and the CH-47 (Chinook)," said King.

The familiarization portion includes knowing the best way to extract pilots from the different aircraft and how to shut each of those aircraft down, said Manwaring.

The DRRF team also learns how to use the Apache attack helicopter to their benefit during their training, King said.

"They are versed on the employment of attack aviation, to include academics

and a practical exercise," he said.

"(The Apache) is an amazing aircraft; it's a good asset. I'm glad their on our team," said Manwaring.

Because in most instances the Soldiers will be flown into the crash site on UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters, the Soldiers of 1-37th go through what is called cold load training, King said.

Cold load, or static load, training is practicing air assaults - getting on and off a Black Hawk or Chinook as quickly as possible - while the aircraft is sitting on the flight line not running, he said.

The air assault is one of the major skills taught to the Soldiers who will be a DRRF member, said King.

"They're supposed to come trained in all infantry tactics; we train them in the air assault tactics. The things that are unique to air assault operations (are) what we train them in," he said.

"This is our second time doing static load training so we've got it down pretty well, we're just getting the speed and efficiency up," Manwaring said. "The faster we are at this, the quicker (the pilots) can get off the objective and we can do our business."

After getting familiarized with each aircraft and then becoming proficient in getting in and out of a Black Hawk, the Troops had one last training exercise in which they'll put all of their new training to use - the Mission Readiness Exercise, said King.

"(The Soldiers) have a mission readiness exercise where they actually air assault on to an objective," said King.

"Very few of us have actually been on a combat air assault mission," said Manwaring. "We've been doing raids and things like that for a year. Now, instead of jumping out of a Humvee we're jumping out of a helicopter."

During this part of the MRE the DRRF responded to a simulated downed aircraft, said King.

During the MRE, Soldiers of 1-37th kept in constant communication with the Apache helicopter crews, he said.

While the ground Soldiers were working their mission, they had Apaches



(Photos by Spc. Nathan Hoskins, 1st ACB Public Affairs)

Tucson, Ariz., native Spc. Jeffery O'Haver, a medic for Battery C, 1st Battalion, 37th Field Artillery Regiment, checks for injuries during a recovery exercise.

circling overhead, ready to help them out.

"Attack aviation is critical support to the DRRF mission," said King.

"Talking to the (Apache) pilots on the radio is the easiest part. They just want to hear the layman's perspective of what's going on ... that's been refreshing," said Manwaring.

After air assaulting in to the general area of the downed aircraft, the DRRF quickly set up a perimeter and focused on extracting the pilots to provide medical care.

Once the MRE was complete, the Soldiers critiqued themselves, which will enable them to perform better in the next training mission and for a real event, said King.

The DRRF Soldiers also had to do a training exercise in the black of night to ensure they were able to air assault wearing their night vision equipment, he said.

Once this platoon finishes up their brief rotation through the DRRF, another platoon will replace them and go through similar training, said King.

"We don't just get infantrymen, we also get artillerymen and mortarmen ... so we're teaching a large demographic, across the Army, to be air assault capable," he said.