



Warrior Wavefront

exercise pacific warrior 2008

Fort Hunter Liggett, California



Today's high: 96°

Tomorrow's high: 97°

June 11, 2008

Medical unit prepares for the fight

By Pfc. Daniel Haun
300th MPAD

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SCHOONOVER, Calif. – “Hand over hand; shove them in,” Staff Sgt. Paul R. Buettner said.

Buettner, a crew chief with Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 168th Aviation Regiment from Mather, Calif., wasn't talking about loading ordinary cargo.

His audience Monday was a group of medics with the 369th Combat Support Hospital from San Juan, Puerto Rico, who were practicing loading wounded patients for evacuation on a Blackhawk helicopter.

One small misstep or lack of attention would jar the litter and potentially injure the patient more. Buettner used repeated rehearsals to prepare the trainees for the stress of litter carries with the rotor blades revolving at break-neck speeds above them.

“When we start turning the rotor blades it's going to be really loud, so you're going to have to yell loud or use hand signals,” he said.



Photos by Pfc. Daniel Haun

Soldiers from the 369th Combat Support Hospital in San Juan, Puerto Rico, conduct litter carry drills under the watchful eye of Staff Sgt. Paul R. Buettner at Forward Operating Base Schoonover.

“If you do not have eye protection, when we land turn your back to be away from it. As soon as we land we're going to go flat pitch and take some of the rotor wash out.”

The dust and debris are another hazard to the patient.

“At first you may want to look away, (but) be cognizant of

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Photos by Sgt. Karl Johnson

Explosions, protest action sparks quick reaction

Soldiers from the 275th Combat Service Support Battalion and the 379th Engineering Battalion react to a simulated attack and protest during Exercise Pacific Warrior at Forward Operating Base Ward Monday. The Soldiers, whose units are from Missoula, Mont., were serving as the base Quick Reaction Force during the exercise. After several minutes of direct and indirect fire, along with

constant heckling and rock throwing by more than a half-dozen shouting protesters, the Soldiers were able to subdue the enemy forces and gain control of the unruly crowd.



Medical unit

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dust. It's important, whoever your patient is, to try and cover them and somehow shield them from all the dust that's coming," said Buettner.

Debris flew through the air like shrapnel; Soldiers crouched under the rotor blades as they transported the litter hand over hand into the chopper as instructed.

The hatch closed and the patient was secured. The chopper hovered, piercing the cloudless sky. After a series of banking maneuvers the chopper returned for further drills. The dust later settled, along with the adrenaline of the Soldiers.

The medics said they appreciated the hands-on approach to the exercise.

"It's my first real-life action training; it was exciting," said Spc. Yaritza Lopez, a medic. "I've never had a helicopter in front of me before."

Lopez, who has not yet been deployed, said she wanted to be ready, and hands-on training is the perfect prescription.

"I've learned here what I'm going to see over there, that way I'm not going to be surprised," she said.



Photo by Spc. Bryan Randolph

Defense, defense, defense

Soldiers from the 800th Military Police Brigade from Long Island, New York and the 961st Quartermaster Company out of McAllen, Texas, react to sniper fire during a base defense exercise on Forward Operating Base 8J Monday. The attack "killed" one of the defenders before the base Quick Reaction Force could respond and suppress the enemy. Training called for a suicide bomber attack and artillery fire against the base later in the day.

Soldier on the Street

By Spc. Maria Reynolds, Pfc. Daniel Haun and Pvt. Laura Johnson

What is the best thing about your military specialty?



Staff Sgt. Yabronda A. Battles
Chemical operations specialist
326th Chemical Company
Huntsville, Ala.

It's always different. We get to work in different environments. I like the versatility and we get all the cool equipment first.



Spc. James P. Allen
Wheel vehicle mechanic
475th Trailer Transfer Point Det.
Louisville, Ky.

It's awesome because we get to play with big toys and the job is not too stressful.



Staff Sgt. Robert C Skean
Utilities equipment repairer
786th Quartermaster Co.
Colorado Springs, Colo.

With this military occupational specialty you can get a good civilian job when you're a reservist or even when you're done with active duty.



Cpl. Robert E McBride
Military police officer
428th Military Police Det.
Syracuse, Ind.

When you're a military policeman there is a proud feeling. You get to work around a lot of other military occupational specialties and it's definitely high-speed.

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