



BATTLE SIGHT

Issue 9 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team

June 2009



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Public Affairs Guidance for dealing with the media

- Always check media ID and credentials. If none, suggest they contact 30th Brigade PAO, Capt. Richard Scoggins
- Never discuss troop locations and current or future plans.
- Everything you say is always on the RECORD with the media.
- Only discuss what you know and never speculate. Stay in your lane. If you do not know, say you do not know. NEVER lie to the media.
- Notify chain of command of media presence
- Be prepared by knowing three things you can say about yourself and three things you can say about your job.
- You do not have speak, grant interviews or answer all questions if you do not wish to and you can always end an interview.

Remember, if we do not tell the story, the media will be forced to write it on their own. We can be proud of what we are doing and the sacrifices our families are making. Let the world know that you are making a stand and what you are willing to defend.



COMMANDER'S COLUMN

Battle Sight, the official magazine of the 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, was first published in 2004 by Capt. Matthew J. Handley and Master Sgt. Michael P. Welsh during Old Hickory's first deployment to Iraq. Handley was the brigade public affairs officer, and Welsh was the public affairs NCOIC at that time

Captain Richard Scoggins and Sgt. Wayne Haley have taken the reigns of the Battle Sight and are continuing to bring the Soldiers of the 30th HBCT this high standard newsletter.

Scoggins and the 30th HBCT Public Affairs Team continues to strive at bringing the most accurate and entertaining product during this rotation of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The PAO team is always open to suggestion and ideas from its readers. Please feel free to send these to Sgt. Wayne D. Haley.

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Thank you again for your interest in the Battle Sight.

30th HBCT Public Affairs Team



On the cover: (Left) Captain Walter Hatfield, Charleston, and W.Va. Engineer Officer, 150th Armored Recon Squadron, and SSgt Zane Blackledge, Charleston, W.Vir, Personal Security Detail, 150th ARS, secures an undisclosed site for the Daughters of Iraq meeting on 12 June. The Organization is trying to renegotiate contracts due to the Coalition Forces pulling out of downtown Baghdad by July 1st.

(Top) Sergeant Daniel Brown, Ballard, W.Va, Personal Security Detail for 150th Armored Reconnaissance Squadron, secures the rooftop before a Daughters of Iraq meeting.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
30th HEAVY BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM
101 ARMORY ROAD
CLINTON, NORTH CAROLINA 28328

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

HBCT-CDR

29 JUNE 2009



TO THE SOLDIERS OF THE 30TH HBCT

Greetings to all of the soldiers of the 30th HBCT. We have all been in country now for almost two months. We are becoming acclimatized to our surroundings and the diverse areas of responsibility. I salute your hard work and dedication to this point and I know, together, we will work diligently to improve the lives of our Iraqi neighbors. I share the following thoughts with you.

First, I want to take a moment to pay tribute to the soldiers from our brigade who gave the ultimate sacrifice. MAJ Jason George, Staff SGT Paul Brooks, and 1LT Leevi Barnard will forever be in our memories. These Soldiers dedicated themselves to serving this brigade and our great nation. May your thoughts and prayers go out to their families.

As we begin this new journey, we need to focus on continuing to do things the right way. Our mission is to assist the Iraqi Government, show the importance of the Iraqi Security Forces to their communities and help to rebuild the civil infrastructure of this region so this country can be turned back over to its citizens. We must ensure that we are engaging the people; identifying and helping to solve problems in their neighborhoods; and that we work alongside our partners so that eventually, we can step back and they can take the lead.

Most importantly, let's focus on conducting our operations with professionalism and courtesy.

I am proud of what you are doing and I appreciate the sacrifice you and your families are making. As I stated before, let us remain focused, remain professional and be safe. Continue your hard work and soon we will return home to our families and loved ones.

OLD HICKORY!
GREGORY A. LUSK
COL, IN
Commanding
"Always Ready—Stay and Fight"



OLD HICKORY BRIGADE TAKES COMMAND AT FOB FALCON

By Pfc. Kelly LeCompte
30th HBCT PAO, MND-B

Authority at Forward Operating Base Falcon, located at the southern edge of Baghdad, was transferred from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, to the 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, May 26.

This is the Old Hickory Brigade's second deployment to Iraq. It is the first National Guard brigade to twice deploy with its own area of operations.

"Soldiers and members of Old Hickory, our journeys to this point and place have been long and diverse," said Col. Gregory Lusk, commander of the 30th HBCT. "We are ready for what lays ahead. We are here for a reason; we are the right people, at the right place, and the right time." The ceremony began with honors to the nations. The Iraqi national anthem was played, then "The Star-Spangled Banner" was sung by Spc. Brian Taylor, of the 30th HBCT.

Following the anthems, Col. Pat White, commander of the 2nd BCT, addressed the crowd, which included Soldiers of Old Hickory, the Iron Brigade, and local Iraqi leaders, security forces and citizens.

White spoke of the significance of the ceremony and how it reflects the successes of his Soldiers and their partnerships with the Iraqi Army, National Police and local leaders, all of whom played a large part in the brigade's success.

"Over the past years, we have conducted these ceremonies to symbolize the changing of the guard for coalition forces, as well as our

continued commitment to peace and stability," said White. "Since April 2008, Soldiers of the Iron Brigade have accomplished every assigned mission I'd like to think we have helped made a difference."

He also spoke of his confidence in the ability of the 30th HBT to continue the mission.

"Over the past three weeks we have en-

Col. Gregory Lusk, (left) and Command Sgt. Maj. John Swart, (right), both of 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, Multi-Nation Division - Baghdad, unroll the brigade colors during the transfer of authority ceremony at Forward Operating Base Falcon, May 26. The 30th took over for the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Mary Phillips,
30th HBCT PAO, MND-B

deavored to share our knowledge and experience with Old Hickory,” White said. “Secure in knowing that they will do better and more, through partnership with the citizens of southern Baghdad.”

White then thanked Maj. Gen. Daniel Bolger, Multi-National Division-Baghdad commander; Brig. Gen. Fred Rudesheim, deputy commanding general for support of MND-B; and Division Command Sgt. Maj. Rory Malloy, for their support. White and Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Eyer encased the Iron Brigade’s colors following the speech. Lusk and Command Sgt. Maj. John Swart uncased Old Hickory’s colors immediately after, signifying the transfer of authority from the Iron Brigade to Old Hickory.

Encasing is a procedure of rolling the brigade’s flag and placing it in a sleeve. Old Hickory will display its uncased colors above the command

post throughout the deployment.

Lusk spoke to the Soldiers of the Iron Brigade thanking them for their support while Old Hickory Soldiers began operations.

“I cannot adequately express the gratitude to you and your Soldiers for the tremendous support and effort during this relief in place,” Lusk said. “Your brigade combat team has set the conditions for Old Hickory to continue the mission and be successful.”

Lusk also spoke directly to Bolger.

“We are ready to assume the mission,” Lusk said. “We have prepared long and hard for this moment. We are honored to serve with and be a part of the ‘First Team.’” The First Team refers to the 1st Cavalry Division’s nickname.

Addressing the Iraqi guests in attendance, Lusk assured them that the progress made so far will continue.

“The 30th Brigade will commit to working side-by-side, in partnership with you, in securing your families and continuing the progress you have started for your future generations,” Lusk said. “It is vital that we commit to each other to do whatever hard work is necessary in ensuring that the sacrifices of so many lives will not have been in vain.”

Lusk concluded his speech with a message to the brigade: “Soldiers of Old Hickory, it is now time to go in and execute.”

U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Mary Phillips,
30th HBCT PAO, MND-B



Brigade commander Col. Pat White, (left), Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Eyer, roll up their brigade’s colors during the transfer of authority ceremony at forward operating base falcon, May 26. White, and Eyer are both of 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, the brigade being replaced by the 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, Multi-National Division - Baghdad.

Soldiers make first combat patrol in Iraq

Story by Sgt. Robert Jordan

Soldiers of Company B, 120th Combined Arms Battalion, 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, Multi-National Division-Baghdad, completed their first combat patrol recently.

The Soldiers replaced the 63rd Combined Arms Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Armored Division, at Forward Operation Base Mahmudiyah.

A platoon leader, 1st Lt. Matthew Mason, of Garner, N.C., gathered Soldiers of Company B for the day's mission brief at the unit's motor pool.

"The briefing gets everyone on the same page and clears up any confusion," said Mason.

Five hundred-pound Humvee doors slammed shut as the Soldiers prepared to ride out.

Radios in the vehicles chattered as crewmembers relayed information back and forth through the patrol. One member of the crew in each Humvee was a Soldier of 63rd CAB; acting as a guide for the 30th HBCT Soldiers.

"The previous Soldiers let us know about the area and the local population," said Mason. "We are the newcomers."

The patrol passes busy marketplaces, shops, flocks of sheep, hitchhikers and even a horse drawn cart along the multi-lane highway. Some vehicles honk as the patrol passes. Several children wave, but most Iraqis continue the business of the day.

The four vehicles arrived at the headquarters of Iraqi 3rd Battalion, noting a pile of weapons taken from the enemy.

Company B leaders met with their Iraqi counterparts and exchanged ideas on how best to cooperate in defeating terrorists in the region.

"Our guys know we are to help the Iraqi army as they take full charge," said Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Johnson, a platoon sergeant from Pembroke, N.C.

"They are our buddies," Mason said. "They like to get to know who they are working with."

Soon the Soldiers shook hands with their hosts and departed for the next part of the mission; traveling to a company of Iraqi soldiers at a nearby outpost.

The outpost covers a bridge across a stream feeding the Tigris and Euphrates watershed. Reeds and other plant growth cover the banks of the stream, with palm and other trees shading the compound.

"These Soldiers patrol, search for improvised explo-

sive devices and weapon caches," said Mason. "They take the fight to the terrorists."

U.S. gunners carefully watch for suspect vehicles and any signs of danger. All the Soldiers look out the windows for any possible threat against the Iraqi civilians lining the hundreds of shops in the district.

"It was exciting," Mason said. "All the years of training and classes are put to use."

Children wave and shout to the Soldiers as the vehicles pass. Nearly every shop has several customers inside, goods of every type line the streets, even melons the size of car tires.

"This area has a lot of money put into it from the U.S. and other sources. It is a whole lot better than the last time I was here with the brigade," said Johnson. "The people are a lot better off."

Returning to FOB Mahmudiyah, the Soldiers of B Co. conclude their first combat patrol since arriving in Iraq. This will be the beginning of many over the course of their deployment.



U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Robert Jordan, 30th HBCT PAO, MND-B

First Lt. Matthew Mason (right), a platoon leader with Company B, 120th Combined Arms Battalion, 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, Multi-National Division-Baghdad, briefs his Soldiers on the day's mission at the unit's motor pool on Forward Operating Base Mahmudiyah May 18. The unit completed their first combat patrol covering markets and neighborhoods near the FOB. Mason is from Garner, N.C.



Putting rounds on target

Story and Photo by Sgt. Robert Jordan

Soldiers of Battery A, 113th Field Artillery Battalion, 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, Multi-National Division—Baghdad, man an M109 Paladin self-propelled howitzer 24 hours a day at Forward Operating Base Mahmudiyah.

The cannon is ready to support U.S. and Iraqi soldiers by destroying the enemy with explosives, firing smoke to mask advances and illumination rounds that light up several square blocks at a time.

"Fire mission, fire mission, fire mission", a voice crackles over the radio. Soldiers rush aboard the 32-ton howitzer.

The crew takes their stations inside the nearly eight-foot diameter turret of the vehicle, which is dominated by the breech of the several-ton cannon suspended in

the center. Instantly the Soldiers begin preparing to fire.

Staff Sgt. Aaron Goodwin, of Lincolnton, N.C., the gun chief, confirms the mission and calls out the type of round and number bags of explosive powder needed to fire the shell to the target.

Pfc. David Laws, of Statesville, N.C., manhandles a nearly 100-pound high explosive shell into the back of the cannon from a rack bolted to the side of the

"Fire mission, Fire mission, Fire mission"

a voice crackles over the radio.

turret.

Spc. Jason Wenzel, of Lincolnton, places bags of powder by hand behind the shell and closes the breech.

Goodwin enters the coordinates of the target into the onboard computer and turret and cannon move in unison, aiming the weapon.

The driver, Pfc. Michael Thomas of Belmont, N.C., of revs the engine, providing the power needed for the tons of steel that are moving into aiming position.

"Prime," says Goodwin over the engine noise.

Laws takes the finger length primer used to ignite the powder behind the shell. He sets the primer in a small hole at the back of the cannon.

The crew braces against the walls, clear of the path of the cannon's recoil.

"Fire," Laws pulls the lanyard, turning his body away from the cannon.

Flames shoot out the front of the cannon as the round flies to its target many miles down range.

Everything moves, the cannon recoils three feet back inside the turret, the vehicle rolls several feet backwards. The crew is shaken and anything not bolted down is thrown about the turret in a haze of smoke and dust.

"End of mission," Goodwin says.



Pfc. David Laws of Battery A, 113th Field Artillery Battalion, 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, N.C. National Guard stands clear of the recoil while firing a high explosive 155 mm artillery at Forward Operating Base Mahmudiyah, Iraq.

A DIFFERENT POINT OF VIEW

June has been a busy month for the 150th Armored Reconnaissance Squadron. Most of these Soldiers are from West Virginia with a few peppered - in from all over the country. Missions are the primary focus but with the Iraq Forces taking the lead the hard working men and women are able to step out of the combat role and see a lighter side of Iraq. Here is a point of view that's a little softer.





"Cross fit or die!"

Story by Spc. Ruth McClary



U.S. Army Photos by Sgt. Robert Jordan, 30th HBCT PAO, MND-B

Seven Soldiers of Company A, 120th Combined Arms Battalion, 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, grunt and moan as they lift Humvee shock springs and tires to build strength and endurance for upcoming missions.

The 20-minute high intensity workout is called the Tabata, a variation of the fitness training the platoon performs three days a week.

The workout, established in 1996, is named for its creator, Dr. Izumi Tabata, of Tokyo. It incorporates timed, maximum intensity exercise in short bursts, followed by a resting period.

First Lt. Jason Hobson, of Arlington, Va., platoon leader with Company A, 120th Combined Arms Battalion, 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, Multi-National Division-Baghdad, strikes a 300-pound tire with a sledgehammer as part of a 20-minute Tabata CrossFit training at Forward Operating Base Mamudiyah.

"This is good combat training," said Sgt. Gavin Hutchins, a squad leader in 2nd platoon, of Jacksonville, N.C. "We are building up our bodies to carry ammunition cans and heavy supplies when we go out on missions."

In this workout, the Soldiers perform an exercise rotation for 20 seconds, and then rest for 20 seconds. They complete a five-exercise rotation at eight sets each.

Not only does the regimen prepare troops for the rigors of combat, as it mimics the movements of knocking down doors and removing debris during a mission, it's helping one Soldier become healthier.

"I came into this unit with high blood pressure," said Spc. Ronald Gardner, an infantry driver from Salisbury, N.C. "It was [at a high of] 154 ... now it's 115 over 70, so this workout is saving my life." Gardner has lost 40



Spc. Daniel Beck, a radio operator with Company A, 120th Combined Arms Battalion, 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, lifts two 45-pound Humvee springs as part of Tabata CrossFit training at Forward Operating Base Mahmudiyah.

pounds using this workout.

The rotation exercises include carrying the springs, lifting and holding the larger springs, hitting a humvee tire with a sledge hammer, pulling the tire with straps and variations of push-ups.

The Soldiers said the humvee shock springs range from 30 to 45 pounds, and the tires weigh about 300 pounds each.

"The tires were given to us by the supply sergeant, and the rest of the stuff we got from the dump," said Hutchins.

The Soldiers began cross fit-

ness training in Kuwait. A certified instructor there told them about the Tabata program and then trained them to push it to the limit.

"If you got anything left after this workout, you are wrong," said Spc. Daniel Beck, the platoon sergeant's radio operator, of Elkin, N.C.

The Soldiers exercise on the basketball court at 3 p.m. The temperature is more than 100 degrees, with no covering or shade to help block the sun. A hint of breeze blows, but not enough to dry the sweat that

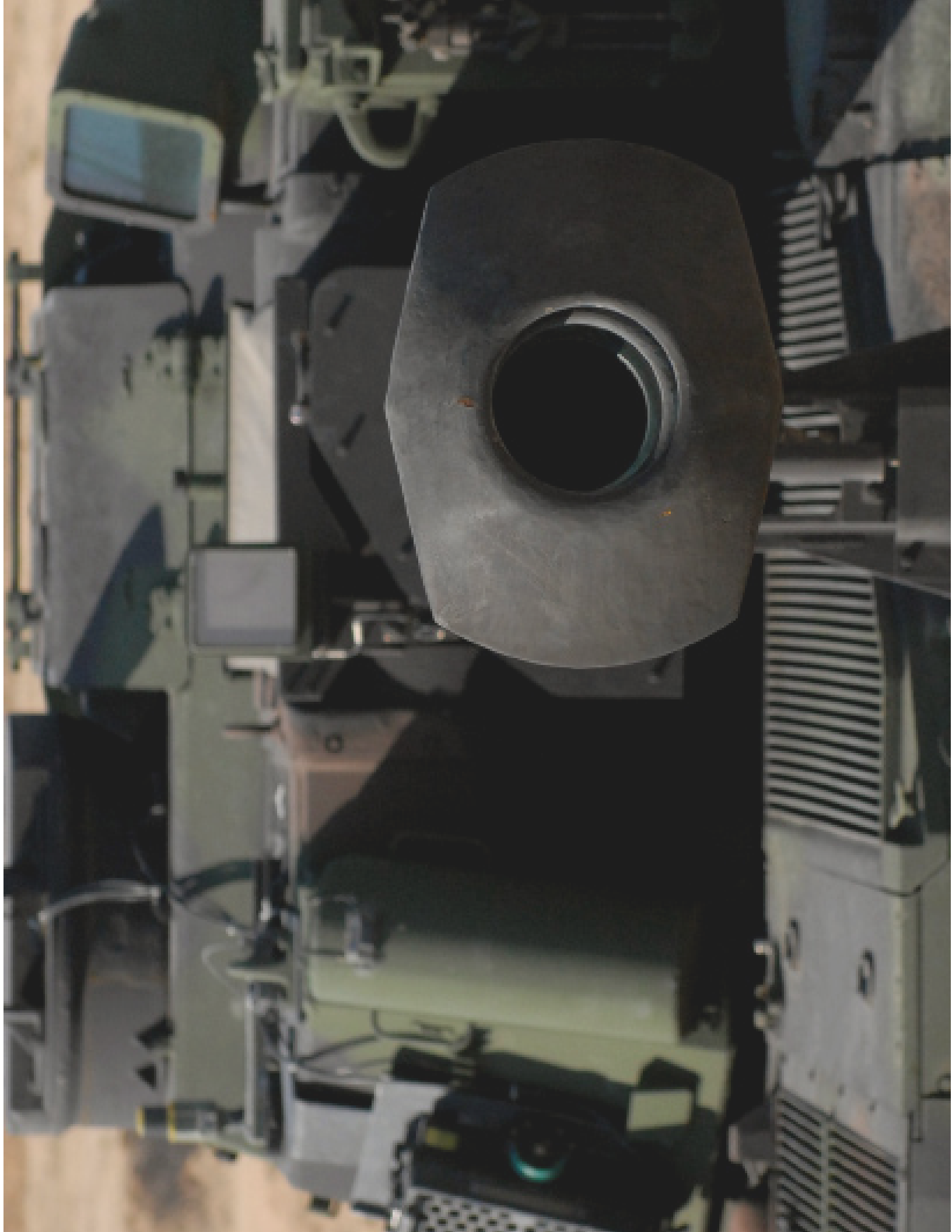
drenches all of them. The dirt from the springs migrates to the Soldiers hands, arms, and clothing. Yet, they keep holding on.

Hutchins said the platoon has lost 100 pounds as a group since they began working out in Kuwait, about a month ago.

"These guys are going to be strong in a short period of time," said Hutchins.

As the sweat pours down his face he shouts,

"Cross fit or die!"



July 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 I forgot day	3	4 Independence Day
5	6	7	8 Video Games Day	9	10	11
12	13 Embrace your Geekness Day	14 Iraq's Republic Day	15	16	17	18 National Ice Cream Day
19 Pecan Pie Day	20 Ugly Truck Day	21	22 Cow Appreciation Day	23	24	25
26 All or Nothing Day	27	28	29 National Cheesecake Day	30	31 Mutts Day	

113th Field Artillery on Patrol

Soldiers of Battery A and B 113th FA searched for weapons caches, interacted with locals and partnered with the Iraqi Army, while on patrol South of Baghdad recently. Even though patrols go out daily, the men of Battery A and B are always ready for what new mission may come their way.

Photos by Sgt. Mary Phillips.





Opposite page: top left, Pfc. Michael Wood; top right, Sgt. Jonathan Hinson; bottom, Staff Sgt. Brian Dawson

This page: top left, Spc. Danny Wooten; top right, Spc. Kyle Setzer; bottom, Sgt. Laurence Cameron





Warriors being diplomats

Story by Pfc. Kelly Lecompte

They're called grunts and ground pounders, but modern war fighters must be able to serve as warriors, mediators, instructors and even diplomats as they embark on operations that change not only daily, but sometimes even mid-mission.

It's a constant balancing act, but infantrymen of Company B, 252nd Combined Arms Battalion, 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, are doing just that.

A recent night mission in southern Baghdad's Saydiyah neighborhood began as a joint patrol with Iraqi army soldiers of 2nd Commando. Although the aim was to let the Iraqis practice taking the lead on such missions, the neighborhood residents focused their spotlight on the Americans.

As they walked the streets, U.S. Soldiers were greeted by Iraqi civilians like celebrities. Children ran to shake their hands and give them high fives, and people waved and smiled as the patrol moved through.

Company B Soldiers said they get that reaction a lot. "There was one kid following me the other night," said Sgt. Dustin Butcher of Wilson, N.C. "Then there were three, then five, then a whole crowd. It was exponential."

"Kids especially will flock to you in a skinny minute if you're not careful," said Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Mooring, of Pine Level, N.C., a platoon sergeant with B Co.

Even though the Soldiers had to remain sharply guarded and ready to respond in a flash, they smiled and greeted the citizens. They're ready to be warriors, but had to act the part of public figures.

Only a few minutes into the patrol, however, the Soldiers got a call on the radio to change the mission.

A report of an explosive cache had come in, and the Soldiers had to pick up the brigade's explosives ordnance disposal team and take them to investigate.

"Coalition activity takes precedence," said Sgt. Olin Wilkinson, of Greenville, N.C. "If we're doing anything else and we get a call to support them, we go."

National police found the cache and Iraqi Gen. Fasil had requested American support to document the find and brag about his policemen's work.

Company Soldiers changed gears from patrolling the streets to sharing dinner and investing in a little face time with Fasil and his policemen, an important part

in maintaining a strong working relationship with the Iraqis.

"Anywhere, we are ready," Fasil said to the Soldiers. "We are family."

The next morning, a different group of Company B Soldiers went out on another joint patrol with the Iraqis to verify completion of a coalition-funded street light project.

The American Soldiers usually put Iraqis in the lead.

"We'll follow," said Staff Sgt. Michael Gallagher, of Holly Springs, N.C. "We'll let them take the lead and we'll be their muscle."

But since it was the first time the U.S. Soldiers had worked with this particular group of IPs, the Americans led the patrol instead.

This mission revolved less around diplomacy and making friends, and more around providing security and training the Iraqi policemen.

"IPs haven't realized yet that they can take the lead," said Mooring. "They want to do it and once they see you've got security, they get confident and will start working."

Mooring said missions with the Iraqis help build the locals' respect for the police.

The Soldiers patrolled through a marketplace in the Saydiyah district. Though maintaining security was their primary concern, they balanced protection and politeness with market goers; remaining watchful but seeming relaxed.

Mooring said the locals pay attention to the Soldiers' behavior, and sometimes even try to reassure them if the Soldiers seem too guarded.

"If they see you with your weapon up too much, they'll come ask you, 'Do you feel safe?'" Mooring said.

Mooring also said Soldiers must be able to read the people.

"We can tell from the people if it's a bad neighborhood," Mooring said. "It's a tell-tale sign when the locals aren't nearly as friendly towards us."

First Lt. Bruce Riggins, a platoon leader in B Co., said his Soldiers have to be sharp and able to think on their feet.

"The battle field is ever changing," said Riggins, of King, N.C. "The enemy is smart. Soldiers have to pay attention and look at everything around them and process everything at once."

Groundhog Day in Iraq

By Fighting Father Phil
June 2009

Everyone calls it Groundhog Day here. You know, as in the movie, where everyday is the same as the day before, until the main character finally learns his life's lesson—stop manipulating people and start loving them, instead.

What's an average day in Iraq like? Hot, dusty, and long—the work day never ends. During the past several months the daily grind has been broken up as we've moved from one training site to another. Now, that we're finally here, though, the grind has set in—it's Ground Hog Day. I bet it's the same for families back home, as well.

When every day is the same, small things make a big difference. Letters, phone calls, and packages, all make our lives more bearable in Iraq and at home. When these things don't come or don't come on time, we worry. Is my family alright? Is my Soldier safe? Do people care? These are the questions that drive us to distraction and are part of the inner fight that goes on inside our hearts and souls.

Our hearts and souls are worth fighting for, but the fight does not take place in the physical realm. Letters, phone calls and packages are ever so important. Use these and other physical means to stay in touch. But there will come a day when a phone call is delayed because of a busy work schedule, or the mail is late, or someone you love just loses track of time because it's so easy to lose track when the days run together and everything looks the same. On days like these—Groundhog Day—the fight runs deeper to the spiritual realm.


Spiritual fights require spiritual weapons. In one of his letters, the Apostle Paul provides an equipment list for just such a fight. Check out Philippians 6: 10-18, but here's an abbreviated list. Truth and right living help us to stand firm on our feet. Faith in God serves as a shield to ward off the arrows of an unseen and evil enemy. Saving grace from God serves as a protective helmet and the word of God is a Spiritual sword, our only offensive weapon. Together with prayer this spiritual equipment allows us to fight and win the hardest battle there is—the one on the inside.

Fight the good fight.

Phillip Glick
Brigade Chaplain



TO REMEMBER WITH HONOR



*National Guard
1st Lt. Leevi Barnard
Army Reserve
Maj. Jason George
Sgt. Paul Brooks
were remembered during a
memorial service at
Forward Operating Base Falcon
on the southern edge of Baghdad,
May 29, 2009*