

BLACK JACK

RUND UP

August 2009

**Military working dogs
give Soldiers run for
their money**



**Medical exercise bonds service mem-
bers, bandages wounds**

BOXER'S "SMOKE" THE COMPETITION

Soldiers, IP work together to save motorist

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Black Jack Round Up

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I'm sure everyone is excited to see the number of days before we go home will soon be in the double digits. We have worked very hard with our Iraqi partners, and those relationships are the most important contributions we can make. As Ramadan continues, I just want to remind each and every one of you to respect local customs, and remember to continue to conduct yourselves with dignity and respect, as I know you have. In the past two months, our Iraqi Security Force partners have been tested in maintaining security of their homes, and have still continued to be successful in disrupting insurgent activities.

With your consistent support and training, they will continue to develop their capabilities as we shift our focus to advising and working on improving public infrastructure



and economic development.

Our role has been a vital one in developing the community since we arrived, and businesses open regularly thanks to the micro-grants that we have been so effective in distributing.

The Soldiers of this Brigade are here at the beginning of a new era in Kirkuk province thanks to your commitment to our partners in the Iraqi Security Forces. As you have

earned their respect, always treat them with the respect they deserve.

Finally, don't forget to take the time to talk to your families. Thank them for their support and patience throughout this year. Without them, our jobs would be much harder, and I am sure they can't wait for your return.

Continue to get at it every day; and while the finish line may be in sight, make sure to keep one another motivated and focused on the work still left to be completed. NCOs and leaders need to keep those standards high; make sure to focus on training your junior Soldiers and officers to one day take over from you. With your continued dedication and hard work, these last months will fly by.

-God bless you all.

-Col. Ryan Gonsalves



Military working dogs give Soldiers a run for their money

Photos and story by Staff Sgt. Jason Douglas and Pfc. Justin Naylor

Four legs are better than two when trying to evade a military working dog.

No matter how fast the dozen or so Soldiers from 15th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, ran, they couldn't outrun Buli and Capka, a pair of German Shepherd military working dogs, during a demonstration on Forward Operating Base Warrior, Aug. 1.

Soldiers volunteered to don bite suits and were given a head start before the dogs were released.

Spc. Corey Jones, a Baltimore, Md., native and a water purification specialist with 15th BSB, sprinted with all his might, and although he made it farther than most, his run ended with him in the dirt and the dog still tugging on his arm.

"It was pretty rough," said Jones. "That dog's got a little bit of power."

"The suit helps neutralize it, but if you weren't wearing it [bite suit] that would be a wrap," he joked.

"I was surprised by the amount of power," said Spc. Stephen Price, a Spokane, Wash., native and a petroleum supply specialist with 15th BSB who observed the demonstration.

"They may look light," he said about the dogs. "But they will take you down."

Although watching Soldiers getting taken out by the dogs was probably the most entertaining part, it was not the sole goal of the demonstration.

"The goal of these demonstrations is to inform commanders and leaders about the type of support military working dogs can provide," said Tech. Sgt. Matt Troiano, a Dublin, Calif., native and Buli's handler. Troiano is a military policeman assigned to 3rd BCT, 25th Infantry Division, and attached to FOB Warrior.

"We do lots of raids, locate weapons caches, track spotters, and find improvised explosive devices buried underground," Troiano said. "Their nose is what saves lives."



1st Lt. John Reed attempts to evade Capka, a military working dog, during a demonstration at Forward Operating Base Warrior. The demonstration was not only to entertain Soldiers, but also to educate leaders on the capabilities of the military working dog.

The handlers started the demonstration by giving the Soldiers a class about the capabilities of the dogs, emphasizing their ability to find narcotics and explosives.

The Soldiers then followed the dogs through an area where the handlers had hidden narcotics and explosives and watched as the dogs sniffed them out one by one.

"We just hope to educate units, so when we go out with them they know what we can and can't do," said Sgt. Henry Rabbs, a Mendon, Mass., native and Capka's handler. "It makes running missions with them a lot easier."

Rabbs is also a military policeman assigned to 3rd BCT, 25th



Tech Sgt. Matt Troiano (center) prepares Buli and Pvt. Jonathan Davis at Forward Operating Base Warrior. The demonstration was to not only entertain Soldiers but to educate leaders on the capabilities of the military working dog.

Inf. Div. and attached to FOB Warrior.

According to Rabs, generally, the dogs are called on missions not for their ability to attack, but for their ability to safely identify hidden explosives.

"To be able to say that a dog sniffed out an IED that could have killed 10 Soldiers is a great feeling," he said.

Buli and Capka are just two of six military working dogs assigned to this specific team at FOB Warrior, and regularly assist the units here.

"We go on quite an array of missions," said Rabs.

According to Troiano, when they are not on missions, the dogs and their handlers train most of the week and give demonstrations to Soldiers around the FOB.

"By educating leaders today on the capabilities of the dogs, they will be able to call on them for future deployments," said Troiano.

"The dogs love it; it's all a game to them," said Rabs.



Sgt. Henry Rabs demonstrate how the dogs can sniff out narcotics during a demonstration at Forward Operating Base Warrior. The demonstration was designed not only to entertain Soldiers, but to educate leaders on the capabilities of the military working dogs.

SOLDIERS TRAIN IRAQI POLICE ON CLOSE QUARTERS MARKSMANSHIP

Story by Staff Sgt. Jason Douglas
Photos by Spc. Canaan Radcliffe

The probability of confrontation between law enforcement and criminal elements in a city requires specific training. From hostage situations to a barricaded suspect, police need the skills necessary to resolve a myriad of emergencies, while protecting themselves and innocent bystanders.

Iraqi police from the Daquq, Iraq, police station located in Kirkuk province set out to develop those skills and learn valuable techniques during training provided by Soldiers from 4th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, Aug. 13.

"Today's mission was to train the Daquq IPs," explained 1st Lt. Daniel Braud, a Kingwood, Texas native and platoon leader with 4th Sqdn, 9th Cav. Regt. "We trained them on close quarters marksmanship."

Close quarters marksmanship instructs students on reflexive fire techniques, which involves proper stance, engaging targets, reloading, and other tasks.

According to Braud, 11 of the 14 IP being trained had never fired their personal weapons on their own before outside of the initial police training academy.

"They [IP] were new to the unit so this was a good day for them to get familiarized with their weapons," Braud said.

Part of that familiarization was to assist the IPs in becoming comfortable with bringing their weapons from the position they carry them to engaging targets between 10 to 25 meters away.

"Going from a rest position to working the weapon's safety and engaging targets will help the IP learn how their weapons function," Braud said.

Staff Sgt. Daniel Hepting, a Spokane, Wash., native, and a platoon sergeant with 4th Sqdn. 9th Cav. Regt., instructed the IP on proper stance and movement techniques to minimize injury during a conflict.

"I instructed them on the proper stance and how to hold their



An Iraqi Police officer from the Daquq Police Station, demonstrates proper firing stance during training provided by 4th Sqdn., 9th Cav. Regt., at a close quarters marksmanship range.



An Iraqi Police officer demonstrates correct firing techniques by shooting at close targets with his AK-47 during a close quarter's marksmanship range.



Staff Sgt. Daniel Hepting and 1st Lt. Daniel Braud discuss close quarter's marksmanship training their unit is conducting with Iraqi Police in Daquq, Iraq, August 13.



Iraqi Policemen from the Daquq IP Station rush to the range to practice their close quarter's marksmanship skills.

weapons, which involved coming up with a new technique because the AK-47 assault rifle has a different safety mechanism," Hepting said.

Part of the instruction also involved proper stance so when engaging a target, the IPs body faced forward, rather than sideways, which can lead to injury.

"[Facing forward] is important because the body armor is on the front of the body and is also more stable and reduces the chances of falling over," Hepting explained.

After several dry fire exercises, IP went through live fire stress shoot scenarios to demonstrate their new tactics.

"The stress shoot involved the IPs pulling up in one of their vehicles, disembarking, running to the firing line, and delivering live rounds downrange," Hepting explained.

According to Hepting, the stress shoot raises their heart rate, places them in a stressful environment similar to one they might encounter one day, and gives them an opportunity to build confidence in their new abilities to handle that situation.

Despite having only a day to perform the training, the IPs found their footing.

"They [IPs] had it figured out by the end," Hepting said. "At first the IPs struggled but towards the completion of training, in my group of trainees, one of the IP even took charge and began directing other IPs."

The training completed with some long range shooting practice at targets from 100 to 150 meters away and plans for additional training in the future.

"We plan on coming back next week and training on larger caliber weapons, including sniper rifles," Hepting said.

SOLDIERS KEEP IT 'COOL' IN IRAQ

Photos and story by Pfc. Justin Naylor

Whether the air conditioner in your armored vehicle is broken, or your forklift just won't lift anymore, if

you're on Forward Operating Base Warrior, the mechanics at the ground support element section shop are the ones to see.

This specialized group of mechanics hails from different military occupational specialties, and together, they tackle the toughest jobs that the FOB has.

"We work on A/Cs, generators, forklifts, tankers and whatever else they bring to us," said Pfc. Emory Ramey, a Rome, Ga., native and quartermaster chemical repair specialist with 15th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division.

With the weather in Kirkuk often reaching above 110 degrees Fahrenheit, the Soldiers going out on missions are using their A/Cs harder than ever, and the GSE shop does their best to keep these A/Cs up and running.

"It's really important to keep the A/Cs in combat vehicles running because those Soldiers are going to get really hot without them," said Spc. Joe McGovern, a Gaylord, Mich., native and a quartermaster chemical repair specialist with the GSE shop.

"With your gear on, you've got to be at least 20 degrees hotter," said Ramey.

"A lot of people think the GSE shop only supports the brigade, but actually it supports everyone on and around the FOB," said Sgt. Falecia Mitchell, a Carrollton, Ala., native and



Pfc. Emory Ramey, a Rome, Ga., native and a quartermaster chemical repair specialist with 15th BSB, refills the air on the tire of a fork lift.

a supervisor in the shop. "We fix everyone's A/Cs.

"They are all very appreciative," she said of the people who drop off their trucks to have them fixed. "They love coming to our shop."

But this shop fixes more than just broken A/Cs; in fact, one of their most important missions is to keep tankers that supply fuel to U.S. Soldiers around the province operational.

"The tankers aren't going anywhere if they've got fuel leaks," said McGovern.

"This shop has to get them running as fast as possible so fuel can keep getting out to the Soldiers that need it," he continued.

Although not all Soldiers in this shop were trained to work on vehicles that carry potentially harmful chemicals, they have all worked closely together to learn these new skills from one another.

"All the Soldiers in this shop help out one another, even if they are trained as a different type of mechanic," Ramey continued. "We work together as one team. We are all pretty much cross-trained."

The GSE team is also responsible for keeping



Spc. Joe McGovern pumps hydraulic fluid to be added to a recently repaired forklift. McGovern is part of the GSE shop that is in charge of fixing specialized vehicles and equipment.



Pfc. Paul Hawver, a Milwaukee, Wis., native, tightens the bolts on a hydraulic fluid pump outside the GSE shop.

the forklifts that work around the FOB working.

"They'd be

junk without us," said McGovern. "There would be stuff leaking, the tires worn down, lights not working and the engine running poorly."

For many of Soldiers in this shop, this is their first deployment and it has been a great learning opportunity.

"I didn't know a lot about this stuff before I joined," said Pfc. Paul Hawver, a Milwaukee, Wis., native and a power generator mechanic with GSE.

Hawver had been working on cars for a long time, but is always learning.

"This is a step up from what I already knew," Hawver said.

"We couldn't keep our forklifts up and running like we do without them," said Staff Sgt. Duy Bui, a Tampa, Fla., native and a fuel specialist with 15th BSB.

"They do a very good job," he said with a smile after the GSE Soldiers told him his forklift was ready to return to work.

IRAQI SOLDIERS LEARN VALUABLE LIFE SAVING SKILLS

Photos and story by Pfc. Justin Naylor

Iraqi army soldiers gathered around a simulated combat casualty as one of their own used newly acquired techniques to assist his breathing. Next to him, a U.S. Army medic sat and supervised, offering advice and assistance when needed.

The medic, Cpl. Jeremy Marriner, a San Francisco native with 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, gave IA soldiers from 3rd Battalion, 47th Iraqi Army Brigade, a hands-on lesson in lifesaving skills at their headquarters in Kirkuk province, Aug. 15.

According to Marriner, the goal of the training was to teach IA soldiers how to control bleeding and perform rescue breathing by using materials readily accessible to them.

Although Marriner hasn't given medical training with this unit in some time, he soon realized many of the IA soldiers had retained information from previous classes he had conducted.

"I was very surprised," he said, noting the last training was about six months ago. "I would have been surprised if they retained much of anything at all, and yet there were a couple of them that pretty much taught the class for me this time."

Marriner said the language barrier is his biggest challenge when teaching IA soldiers.

"There are a lot of things that don't really translate well from English to Arabic," explained Marriner. "When I see that one of the IA soldiers has a pretty good grasp on the tactics and the principles of what's being applied, and he can put it into his own words so his guys can understand it...it's a great deal of help."

One IA soldier in particular stood out as being an enthusiastic participant and assisted Marriner during the training.

"I tried to give any help I could," said Ibrahim Talib Khazal. "I learned new things; a lot of this is new training to me."

During the training, Ibrahim volunteered to have tourniquets and bandages applied to him so his fellow IA could watch and learn how to place them. He also demonstrated how to insert a nasal tube to assist breathing.

"Good medical help at the point of injury is a force multiplier," explained Marriner about the importance of this training. "They know if they get hit, their buddy can take care of them."

Marriner said it's a waste for a Soldier to lose his life to an injury that could have been treated on the scene, so he is planning to conduct more training with the 3rd Bn., 47th IA Bde. in the near future. Marriner hopes to teach them new things "so they can save their own lives."



Cpl. Jeremy Marriner assists Ibrahim Talib Khazal as he shows a class of Iraqi Army soldiers how to properly apply a tourniquet.

Soldiers, IP work together to save motorist

Photos & Story by Staff Sgt. Jason Douglas

U.S. Soldiers on patrol near the Iraqi village of Kalwr in Kirkuk province, Iraq, rushed to the aid of an Iraqi motorist during a vehicle rollover accident, August 9.

Soldiers from Company E, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, witnessed the Iraqi driver lose control of his vehicle approximately 300 meters in front of their Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle.

"The car lost control when it hit a patch of loose gravel on the road, causing the vehicle to run off onto the shoulder, hit a bunker, flip several times, and eject the driver from the sunroof," said 1st Lt. Bryan Riggs, a Stanton, Ky. native and platoon leader with 1st Bn. 8th Cav. Regt., who was in charge of the patrol and witnessed the accident.

Riggs and his Soldiers quickly secured the crash site to render assistance and determine the man's injuries, at the same time contacting Lt. Col.

Kiawa, the police chief of the nearby village of Kalwr.

The platoon's medic, Sgt. Allen Sheppard from Chowin, N.C., sprang into action to render aid to the injured driver.

"I determined that he [driver] had broken his leg, collar bone, and had a head injury," Sheppard said.

With assistance from the platoon sergeant, Sgt. 1st Class Bryon Clark, a Flemingsburg, Ky. native, who brought a combat lifesaver bag, stretcher, and neck brace, Sheppard was able to stabilize the injured man while waiting for help to arrive.

As a medic, Sheppard said it was his duty to perform first aid on injured Soldiers as well as civilians.

"I'm fortunate to have reached the casualty in time to treat him because he was in bad shape following the accident," Sheppard said. "I was just doing my job."

Riggs also used his interpreter to calm concerned citizens who began gathering near the crash site and had his Soldiers perform traffic control to divert other vehicles away from the accident.

The Kalwr police arrived shortly thereafter to begin an accident investigation and evacuated the driver in an IP vehicle to Kirkuk General Hospital, in Kirkuk city, where reportedly the man survived.

According to Riggs, while tragic, this accident was significant to U.S. forces and Iraqi Police because it displayed how

effectively the two countries worked together.

"The Soldiers [U.S. Soldiers]... worked side-by-side with their IP counterparts to save a man's life, and their ability to function as a whole was absolutely critical in this operation," Riggs said.



Sgt. Allen Sheppard (left) renders aid to an Iraqi driver injured during a rollover accident near Kalwr village. The driver, although badly injured, made it through the accident thanks to help from Sheppard and the IPs.

“Hydration locations” keep Soldiers refreshed

Photos and story by Pfc. Justin Naylor

It takes 864,000 bottles of water a month to keep Soldiers on Forward Operating Base Warrior, Kirkuk, Iraq, hydrated, and during the peak summer season that number nearly doubles.

This staggering amount of water is delivered around the FOB by a single platoon of Soldiers from Company A, 15th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division.

According to Sgt. 1st Class Baulino Morales, a Edinburg, Texas, native and the fuel and water platoon sergeant in Co. A, the water supports nearly 5,000 Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and civilians on the installation, and also goes to bases in the surrounding area.

Morales also said in Iraq, it is often un-

safe for non-nationals who do not have proper immunities to drink from local water sources, making bottled water essential.

"The bottled water [we deliver] is guaranteed to be contamination free," said Morales.

"Soldiers don't have to think twice about the quality of the water they are consuming and can focus on performing their mission," he continued.

With so many units working on Warrior, bottled water must be delivered to several locations around the FOB.

"When people call us and say they need water...we come running," said Morales.

"We make sure water is convenient and accessible for them," said Spc. Shawn Horton, an Orlando, Fla., native and a petroleum supply specialist with Co. A.



Pfc. Shane Peters (right), an Albuquerque, N.M., native, watches as Sgt. David Perez, an El Paso, Texas, native, unloads water to deliver to various points around Forward Operating Base Warrior. The water deliveries take place nearly every day around the FOB and supports nearly all the Soldiers here.

This platoon tries to make it as easy as possible for people on the go to be able to find the water they need, he continued. "They need water...to do everyday operations. People need to stay hydrated."

"With the weather as hot as it is, the challenge for this platoon is getting water to everywhere it needs to go before the last drop runs out," said Moralez.

Unlike some jobs, these Soldiers get to see the positive results of what they do on an everyday basis.

"We get a lot of 'thank yous,'" said Horton. "Even if we don't get a thank you, we know we are appreciated because the water gets drank."

"It is nice for someone to be there at all times to provide water without people having to go around looking for it," said Sgt. Vanee Ngirkiklang, a gun truck operator with Co. B, 15th BSB.

With the weather not expected to cool down any time soon, the water delivery platoon will have its hands full keeping the residents of this FOB hydrated.



Spc. Shawn Horton, an Orlando, Fla., native, stops traffic while a fellow Soldier delivers water on Forward Operating Base Warrior. Bottled water is the primary source of drinkable water on the FOB and these Soldiers are busy delivering it nearly every day.



Sgt. David Perez, an El Paso, Texas, native, delivers pallets of water to an area easily accessible to Soldiers on the go on Forward Operating Base Warrior. Perez is part of a team of Soldiers that delivers water nearly every day under the Iraqi heat to ensure that Soldiers stay properly hydrated.

Medical exercise bonds service members, bandages wounds

Photos and story by Pfc. Justin Naylor

The scene was dire as ambulances arrived at the blast site. Wounded Soldiers and Airmen scattered the ground covered in “blood” and dirt. Emergency responders desperately sought out the most severely injured and to begin triage prior to rushing them to an emergency room.

This “life and death” situation was the start of a mass casualty exercise August 7 on Forward Operating Base Warrior, Kirkuk, Iraq, designed to test and hone the skills of medical personnel from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division and the 506th Air Expeditionary Group, who might one day face a real-life situation similar to this.

The exercise simulated an indirect fire attack on the FOB, causing injuries to 20 individuals, said Lt. Col. Kimberly Wenner, a Gig Harbor, Wash., native and the 2nd BCT surgeon.

With so many patients, beds in the Air Force emergency room soon filled up, and

U.S. Army Soldiers set up temporary treatment areas in tents outside.

“The goal today was...to determine how we as the Army and Air Force work together to take care of more casualties than we have the resources to do,” she said.

The Army and Air Force were responsible for filling different roles during the exercise, but both worked hand-in-hand to ensure patients got the best treatment as quickly as possible.

“2-1 CAV., basically, has the material and equipment to go out during an indirect fire attack, assess casualties and bring them back in armored ambulances, and our medics are trained to do on-the-ground care and triage of Soldiers or injured people,” said Wenner.

The Air Force Emergency Medical Station has the capability to treat trauma patients and perform life-saving surgery, which is a capability that the Army lacks on FOB Warrior, she said.

In situations like this mass casualty event, the Army brings patients to the Air



Airmen and an Army crew chief transport a patient from a helicopter during a mass casualty training event on Forward Operating Base Warrior. The patients assigned the most severe injuries were taken for a brief flight to simulate them being transported to other bases for extensive treatment.

Force clinic and acts as a back-up mechanism for them if they become overwhelmed, said Wenner.

"It was pretty quick, they got me on the truck and over here fast," said Airmen 1st Class Greg Weiss, a Fort Lauderdale, Fla., native acting as a patient suffering from abdominal injuries. "I feel much more confident if something like this were to happen knowing these guys are here to treat me. I think they did a good job."

For the medical personnel treating the "injured" patients, this training was an opportunity to practice their life-saving skills in a realistic scenario.

This event was good for refreshing peoples' memories and helping make sure they know what to do in a combat situation, said Pfc. Josabeth Garcia, a Burnet, Texas, native and a medic with Company C, 15th Brigade Support Battalion, 2nd BCT. "You want to make it [training] as real as possible."

And Garcia was impressed by how well her fellow medics responded to the situation.

Seeing the Soldiers and Airmen taking care of the casualties was a real confidence builder, it showed how well they can handle a situation like this, she said.

"We often do things a little different, we have different systems, different methods,"

Maj. Gregory Strop, a Vacaville, Calif., native and the general and trauma surgeon for FOB Warrior, said of the Army and Air Force.

"Mass casualty training events are meant to overwhelm the resources you have, so you end up needing your brethren to help

out and share their resources," he continued.

"This is the only way we can really, sort of, test our capabilities and our training," said Wenner. "From these exercises we can see if there are any shortfalls, and we can train during the times we are not so busy to make sure we are prepared if anything bad does happen."

The event culminated with the arrival of a medical helicopter, which picked up the most severely "injured" patients.

For the current Army and Air Force personnel deployed to FOB Warrior, this was their first time taking part in such a large-scale training event here, said Staff Sgt. Han Parker, a San Anto-

nio native and 2nd BCT sergeant.

Although another event between the Army and Air Force of this scale might not happen for a while, according to Parker, the Army will be conducting future training scenarios to further improve their medical response skills.



Army personnel load a "wounded" Soldier into an armored ambulance before bringing the patient to an Air Force medical clinic on Forward Operating Base Warrior during a mass casualty training event. The event simulated 20 Soldiers sustaining injuries during an indirect fire attack, and took coordinated effort between the Air Force and Army to successfully treat patients.



Casualties with wounds ranging from broken arms to skull injuries lined the curb during a mass casualty training event on Forward Operating Base Warrior. Armored medical ambulances arrived to pick up the patients and brought them to an Air Force medical clinic until it was too full, and were then brought to Army personnel who had set up treatment tents outside.

Signal troops keep lines of communication open

Photos and story by Pfc. Justin Naylor

Thousands of Soldiers operate out of Forward Operating Base Warrior, Kirkuk, Iraq, at any given time. These Soldiers are constantly on the move conducting patrols, engaging in key leader meetings, training, and performing combined missions with their Iraqi counterparts.

Coordination between the different military entities on the FOB is essential to accomplish these missions but, none of this is possible without a way to communicate.

On FOB Warrior, much of this communication is handled by a Joint Network Node (JNN), which is setup, monitored and maintained by Soldiers from 2nd Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division.

According to Staff Sgt. Herbert Wilson, a Spring Hill, Fla., native and the JNN section sergeant, the JNN is responsible for providing for all secret communication lines, non-secret communication lines, and voice and data communication on the FOB.

“Specific to 2nd BCT, everything goes through our JNN,” he explained.

The 12 person shop that operates the JNN is comprised of three separate military occupational specialties, all of which work together to keep the equipment running



Pfc. Preston Hassinger, a Tacoma, Wash., native and a multi-channel transmission system operator and maintainer, climbs the ladder to get access to a piece of equipment used for communication on Forward Operating Base Warrior. Hassinger, along with other members of the JNN section, are responsible for maintaining, monitoring and performing maintenance on 2nd BCT's vital communications equipment.

24 hours a day.

“They run regular reports, monitor the system, and perform general maintenance on the equipment and generators,” Wilson said of his Soldiers.

“It’s very important,” said Pvt. Larry Holloway, a Joshua Tree, Calif., native and a JNN operator with 2 STB. “You’ve got to have communication to do anything in the Army, without communication, nothing gets done.”

For the Soldiers that operate the JNN, this deployment has been a chance to learn a little about one another’s various jobs.

“We cross-train,” Holloway said. “We all work together. Not one of us is the most important.”

This deployment has also provided an opportunity to apply the skills they learned during their advanced individual training into practice.



Pvt. Larry Holloway performs maintenance on equipment that supports the JNN on Forward Operating Base Warrior. The JNN is a vital part of secret and non-secret military communications on the FOB, and JNN crew is responsible for its maintenance and supervision.



Sgt. Shana Shelby performs minor maintenance on some signal equipment on Forward Operating Base Warrior. The JNN section is responsible for keeping up the system that keeps communication running for 2nd BCT on the FOB.

“It’s finally not in a schoolhouse; I am in the real world doing my job,” said Holloway. “It’s everything I expected it to be.”

“They do very well considering the obstacles they have to face,” said Sgt. Shana Shelby, a New Orleans native and a JNN operator with 2 STB.

The Soldiers are constantly battered by the heat, and so is the equipment, which makes it necessary to be ready to perform maintenance at any time, explained Shelby.

“At the slip of a moment, we have to be prepared to make it happen,” Shelby joked..

BOXERS "SMOKE" THE COMPETITION ON FOB WARRIOR

PHOTOS AND STORY BY PFC JUSTIN NAYLOR

The bell rang as the two fighters lunged forward at one another. Back and forth they went, sidestepping across the ring as each landed blow after blow on the other. With each solid hit, the crowd cheered, and when the fight finally came to a close, whispers raced through the crowd about who would be chosen as the victor.

This scene played over and over again on Forward Operating Base Warrior August 29, as a group of Soldiers, Airmen and Civilians fought to be crowned the champions of the "FOB Warrior Boxing Smoker."

The event was put on by 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, with support from the local Moral, Welfare and Recreation center and various donors.

"The crowd was so excited before and after the fights were over," said Sgt. 1st Class Armando Rivera, a Brownsville, Texas, native and one of the coaches for the event. "The crowd said it was one of the best boxing events they have ever attended."

For one Soldier, Pvt. James Dameron, an infantryman with 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd BCT, and the champion of the middle weight class, the fight was an opportunity for his company to come see him in action.

"It felt good to have all the people out there supporting me," said Dameron. "I had half the people in my company out there with me."

Dameron, like many of the other fighters, spent weeks practicing before the event.

"I trained with the group of fighters about five or ten times," said Dameron. "I also practiced a lot on my own to prepare for the fight."

"One of the things that I say to



Spc. Lucas Salinas, a Killeen, Texas, native and a Bradley mechanic with 4th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, takes a right hook from Sgt. Paul Gambrell, a military working dog handler with the 506 Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, during FOB Warrior's "Boxing Smoker".



Staff Sgt. Yamil Villafane, a Caguas, Puerto Rico, native and a member of the personal security detachment for 2nd Special Troops Battalion, assists Jorge Goana, a civilian working on Forward Operating Base Warrior, during a rest period in between bouts during the FOB's "Boxing Smoker".

the fighters during training is 'train hard, fight hard,'" said Rivera.

The event consisted of 12 fights from various weight classes, with the winner of each being crowned champion.

This was the largest boxing event held on the FOB since 2 BCT arrived here in January.

"[This was] the biggest crowd there has ever been, compared to prior events," explained Rivera.

"The turnout was great," said Rivera. "My fighters maintained composure and referred back to the fundamentals during fights."

"The fighters did a really good job," said Staff Sgt. Stanley Waters, a Fort Worth native and a food service specialist with 2nd BCT.

The show was really professional, they even brought emergency medical responders to make sure no one was hurt, he continued.

After the success of this event, more boxing events are being planned.

"It's a great moral booster," said Waters. It is really nice to see service members leading events for other service member's entertainment, rather than having to bring in guests to do it.

"The crowd congratulated me on such a big turnout, and also on the amount of skill the fighters exhibited," said Rivera.

Following the last fight, the winners of each weight class were awarded certificates attesting to their victory by Col. Ryan Gonsalves, the commander of 2 BCT.

"Thanks to the boxers; they gave their hearts out tonight," he said to the crowd.



Spc. Eleele Masalosalo, an American Samoa native and a signal support systems specialist with the brigade, eyes his opponent, SGT Antonio Pena, a San Antonio, Texas, native and a scout with 4th Sqdn., 9th Cav. Regt., during the Forward Operating Base Warrior "Boxing Smoker."



Col. Ryan Gonsalves, the commander of 2nd BCT, awards Pvt. James Dameron for being named the champ of the middle weight class during the Forward Operating Base Warrior "Boxing Smoker." Dameron was also awarded a pair of black boxing gloves for winning the "best fight of the night."



**SP5 EDGAR LEE
McWETHY JR.**

**Company, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment
21 Jun 1967
Posthumous Award**

Rank and organization: Specialist Fifth Class, U.S. Army, Company B, 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile). Place and date: Binh Dinh province, Republic of Vietnam, 21 June 1967. Entered service at: Denver, Colo. Born: 22 November 1944, Leadville, Colo. Citation: For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. Serving as a medical aidman with Company B, SPC5 McWethy accompanied his platoon to the site of a downed helicopter. Shortly after the platoon established a defensive perimeter around the aircraft, a large enemy force attacked the position from 3 sides with a heavy volume of automatic weapons fire and grenades. The platoon leader and his radio operator were wounded almost immediately, and SPC5 McWethy rushed across the fire-swept area to their assistance. Although he could not help the mortally wounded radio operator, SPC5 McWethy's timely first aid enabled the platoon leader to retain command during this critical period. Hearing a call for aid, SPC5 McWethy started across the open toward the injured men, but was wounded in the head and knocked to the ground. He regained his feet and continued on but was hit again, this time in the leg. Struggling onward despite his wounds, he gained the side of his comrades and treated their injuries. Observing another fallen rifleman lying in an exposed position raked by enemy fire, SPC5 McWethy moved toward him without hesitation. Although the enemy fire wounded him a third time, SPC5 McWethy reached his fallen companion. Though weakened and in extreme pain, SPC5 McWethy gave the wounded man artificial respiration but suffered a fourth and fatal wound. Through his indomitable courage, complete disregard for his safety, and demonstrated concern for his fellow soldiers, SPC5 McWethy inspired the members of his platoon and contributed in great measure to their successful defense of the position and the ultimate rout of the enemy force. SPC5 McWethy's profound sense of duty, bravery, and his willingness to accept extraordinary risks in order to help the men of his unit are characteristic of the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself and the U.S. Army.

