



Gunner's great responsibility

Photo by Spc. Luisito Brooks, 4th SBCT PAO, 2nd Inf. Div.

JOINT SECURITY STATION NASIR WA SALAM, Iraq – Pfc. Andrew Gault, a Spartanburg, S.C. native, screws on the barrel to .50 caliber machine gun before going on a patrol with the Iraq Army on Nov. 10 in Nasir Wa Salam.

Story by Spc. Luisito Brooks

BAGHDAD– As Spiderman learned early on, “With great power comes great responsibility.”

The same goes for vehicle gunners; the eyes, ears and muscle on a convoy.

It cannot be said enough how important the vehicle’s gunner is in a con-

voy and how important of a role they play in the safety and the success of any mission.

On a convoy, many of the vehicles have a gunner, usually equipped with either an M240 Bravo or an .50 caliber machine gun. Together, they offer the heaviest amount of fire-power in

the vehicle and provide 360-degrees of coverage.

They also have the best view.

Positioned at the top of the vehicle, the gunner is able to see and scan the area better than anyone.

“It is my job to see what happens near and around our vehicle and the entire convoy,” said

Sgt. 1st Class Terry Plunkett, a member of a Military Transitional Team assigned to 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, who sometimes serves as a gunner.

The gunners in each vehicle have different responsibilities, and each

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one is just as important as the other.

“The gunner in the lead vehicle has to be aware of what possible threats may come from the front, such as possible improvised explosive devices, and communicate that information with the driver and the entire convoy,” said Spc. Joe Duran, a Company B, 4th Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment, 4th Bde., 2nd Inf. Div. gunner.

“The gunner in the middle vehicles have pre-selected sectors of fire, to the left and the right of the convoy, to scan for possible threats,” said Duran, a native of Miami.

“The gunner in the trail vehicle has to understand that they are the biggest targets in the convoy,” said Sgt. Michael Rush, a B Co., 4th Bn., 9th Inf., 4th Bde., 2nd Inf. Div. gunner.

“We are responsible for traffic that comes up from behind and communicating with all of the vehicles what we see,” said Rush, a Lugoff, S.C.



Photo by Spc. Luisito Brooks, 4th SBCT PAO, 2nd Inf. Div.

(Top) CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – Pfc. Kaniesha Smith (left), a Concord, N.C. native, connects the straps of the safety harness. As the gunner, the straps will keep her secured to the vehicle in case of a vehicle roll over.

(Bottom) ABU GHRAIB, Iraq -- Spc. Jared Farris, a native of Mattoon, Ill., now a scout with Troop A, 2nd Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, operates a .50 caliber machine gun.



Photo by Pfc. Kimberly Hackbarth, 4th SBCT PAO, 2nd Inf. Div.

native.

The gunners in each vehicle need to be able to clearly communicate between all of the other gunners and vehicles.

“Communication is the key because we have to look out for one another,” said Rush.

Plunkett wholeheartedly agreed.

“The importance of a gunner cannot be underrated or underestimated,” he said. “Our lives are dependent on that Soldier to do their job.”

A gunner's weapon of choice:

- M240B Machine Gun
 - Caliber: 7.62 mm
 - Weight: 27.6 lbs
 - Range: 1800m (area target)
- MK19-3 40MM Grenade Machine Gun
 - Caliber: 40mm
 - Weight: 72.5lbs
 - Range: 2200m (area target)
- M249 Squad Automatic Weapon
 - Caliber: 5.56mm
 - Weight: 16.5 lbs
 - Rate of fire: 750 rounds per minute
- M2 Browning .50 Caliber Machine Gun
 - Caliber: 50mm
 - Weight: 83.78 lbs
 - Rate of fire: <400 rounds per minute

The thin blue line



Photo by Pfc. Kimberly Hackbarth, 4th SBCT PAO, 2nd Inf. Div.

An Iraqi Policeman mans his Type 67 machine gun, providing security from the gunner's turret of a police vehicle during a ribbon-cutting ceremony in Zaidon Market, Nov.12.

What's your favorite part about being a gunner?



"I like the fact that I provide security for everyone in the vehicle. Oh, and I get to use a really big weapon and I don't have to carry it around."

*-Sgt. William Baehr
native of St. Louis,
gunner/vehicle commander
PSD, HHC, Bde.*



"[I enjoy the] remote weapons station so I can get out of the heat and stay in the cold."

*-Staff Sgt. Michael Bucci
native of Chambersburg, Pa.,
gunner,
PSD, 2-1 Cav.*



"The diversity of my job. I don't just do one particular thing; I have a whole bunch of jobs."

*-Sgt. Jed Glover
native of Greenfield, Mass.,
gunner/vehicle commander,
PSD, HHC, Bde.*

RAIDER ROLL-UP...



Photo by Pfc. Kimberly Hackbarth, 4th SBCT PAO, 2nd Inf. Div.

Wednesday November 11, 2009

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq -- Col. John Norris, commander, 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, awards a Soldier with brigade Headquarters and Headquarters Company with a combat patch on Veterans' Day, Nov. 11. Units within the brigade all held their own patching ceremonies. Approximately 1,200 received their first combat patch.

Thursday November 12, 2009

BAGHDAD -- Spc. Andrew Nuemann (left), a Bemidji, Minn. native, shows off his drawing of Bruce Campbell, depicting the actor in his role as Ash, from the movie "Army of Darkness." "It is like looking in a mirror," said Campbell, during a visit to Joint Security Station Nasir Wa Salam, Iraq, Nov. 12.

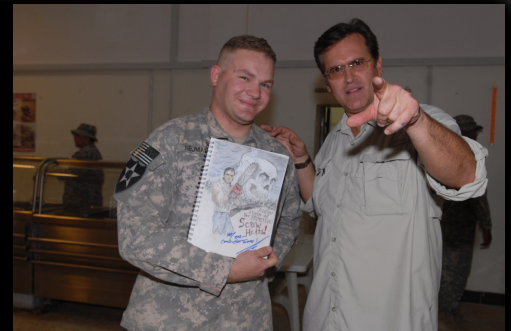


Photo by Spc. Luisito Brooks, 4th SBCT PAO, 2nd Inf. Div.

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Photo by Spc. Luisito Brooks, 4th SBCT PAO, 2nd Inf. Div.

Saturday November 14, 2009

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq -- Soldiers with 702nd Brigade Support Battalion train on how to load and transport a disabled Stryker using an attachment to an Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle. MRAPs are the most common vehicle found in Iraq and will help with recovering capabilities. Training took place in 702nd BSB's motorpool.

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