



The Old Ironsides Report



Friday, March 12, 2004

1-94 FA's 'Rocketeers' hone MLRS skills on Butler Range



A 1st Battalion, 94th Field Artillery Regiment, 1st Armored Division Multiple-Launch Rocket System launcher fires a reduced-range practice rocket at Butler Range.

Story, photo by Staff Sgt. Mark Bell, 372nd MPAD

BUTLER RANGE, Iraq –Butler Range near Baghdad had several loud visitors this week as the 1st Armored Division's "King of Battle" flexed its some of its biggest muscles during a three-day live-fire exercise.

The 1st Battalion, 94th Field Artillery Regiment, assigned to the 1st Armored Division Artillery Combat Team rolled its inventory of multiple-launch rocket system (MLRS) out to the massive firing range north of Baghdad to finalize their months of training.

The 1-94 FA is operating in southern Baghdad's Al Rashid District as a maneuver battalion patrolling several neighborhoods. The battalion has been deployed since April 2003 and is scheduled to return to Strasbourg, Germany, later this spring.

Their Butler Range mission was simple: practice crew skills needed to fire several dozen high-velocity training rockets, hit targets accurately and safely and officially qualify the unit's Soldiers as rocketeers.

However, this "simple" mission was complicated by a sandstorm.

With high winds creating powerful mini-sandstorms, the rocketeers from the "Deep Steel" battalion accomplished their mission in extreme desert conditions. Soldiers sent their rockets down range and on target within minutes of receiving the order to fire.

As walls of sand slowly moved through the training area, clear radio communications became paramount as the carrier and launcher vehicles received data from the fire direction center which was also blinded by flying sand.

"Fire at my command," the voice squawked on the tactical radios linking the launchers with FDC more than a kilometer away.

"Roger, fire at your command over," responded the crew chief from a Bravo Battery rocket launcher.

Moments after the command to fire, "Shot," and "Shot out," was heard – verifying the launching and visual tracking of the rocket as it accelerated into the desert sky.

"By the time the enemy hears the rocket launching, it's too late," said Sgt. 1st Class Jay Vanderford, battalion operations sergeant. "When they hear it launching from the distance, they already have the rocket on top of them."

With the combination of experienced forward observers, the latest high-tech electronic computers delivering accurate firing data to the launchers, the adverse weather conditions were only a small thought on the rocketeers' minds as they fired.

Vanderford said there were many hours of behind-the-scenes planning and training prior to arriving at Butler Range.

"Putting rockets on the target when called upon is why we are in the business we are in," Vanderford said. "Getting that confidence is what the live fire (exercise) is for and they can carry that confidence to the battlefield."

With the ability to annihilate an entire 1,000-meter square, the MLRS delivers an enormous battlefield multiplier to the commander, said Lt. Col. Shawn Malone, 1-94 FA commander.

"This MLRS battalion brings an awesome firepower to the division commander which allows him to readily reach out and touch targets deep in the battle space," Malone said.

Malone said the annual section-level live-fire qualifications give his rocketeers the edge over the enemy.

"It maintains our ability to stay proficient in an high-intensity conflict," he said.

Within minutes, a new fire mission was downloaded to computers inside the MLRS vehicles for the next mission.

Crew chiefs checked around their launch vehicle for safety hazards, gunners and drivers were quickly making final adjustments before rotating the rocket platform and making corrections to the rockets' elevations.

"It's a lot of fun," said Spc. Thomas Graham, 26, a four-year veteran of the MLRS. "The launcher shakes a little bit like a roller coaster, but it's best seeing another launcher firing."

Graham and fellow rocketeers were able to launch 72 rockets during day- and night-time fire missions.

For Spc. Jonathan Darm, 21, from San Antonio, Texas, firing his first rocket was well worth the wait.

"A lot of people said it's loud and violently shakes during the launch," Darm said.

"There's nothing much too it," he continued. There was a little shaking when the rocket fired and a little smell from the exhaust. It was a great experience."

NEWS...

Madrid Train Terror Blasts Kill 180

MADRID, Spain (AP) - Ten terrorist bombs tore through trains and stations along a commuter line at the height of Madrid's morning rush hour Thursday, killing more than 180 people and wounding more than 900 before this weekend's general elections. Officials blamed Basque separatists for the worst terror attack in Spanish history. "This is mass murder," said a somber Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar following an emergency cabinet meeting, vowing to hunt down the attackers and ruling out negotiations with the ETA separatist group.

American Citizen Charged With Spying

NEW YORK (AP) - An American citizen was arrested Thursday on charges she acted as an Iraqi spy before and after the U.S. invasion of Iraq, accepting \$10,000 for her work, prosecutors said Thursday. Susan Lindauer, 41, was arrested in her hometown of Takoma Park, Md., and was to appear in court later in the day in Baltimore, authorities in New York said.

Nichols' Lawyers: FBI Withheld Documents

WASHINGTON (AP) - Setting up a possible murder trial defense, Terry Nichols' lawyers say state and federal prosecutors did not provide them more than a dozen FBI documents that raise the possibility of additional accomplices in the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing. The documents, which were cited in a recent series of Associated Press stories, include two 1990s teletypes from then-FBI Director Louis Freeh's office citing possible connections between Timothy McVeigh and a gang of white supremacist bank robbers, the lawyers said.

Greenspan: Employment Will Begin to Grow

WASHINGTON (AP) - Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan said Thursday that "employment will begin to increase more quickly before long," and that erecting protective trade barriers was not the answer to the nation's current worries about the loss of jobs to foreign competition. Wading into an election-year issue, Greenspan told a House committee that current anxiety in America over the loss of U.S. jobs to low-wage countries was understandable, given the weak job growth the country has experienced since the 2001 recession and the two years of a jobless recovery since that time.

Thought for the day...

Seeing is Believing

The Italian sculptor Agostino d'Antonio worked diligently on a large piece of marble. Unable to produce his desired masterpiece, he lamented, "I can do nothing with it." Other sculptors also worked this difficult piece of marble to no avail. Michelangelo discovered the stone and visualized the possibilities in it.

His "I-can-make-it-happen" attitude resulted in one of the world's masterpieces, David.

Entertainment...

'American Idol' Picks 12 Finalists

LOS ANGELES (AP) -- Fox's "American Idol" is down to a dozen would-be superstars.

The star making game show announced the last four finalists Wednesday, setting two months of song-and-dance competition that will culminate in a new musical favorite in May.

The four "wild card" candidates included one selected by an audience vote: Jon Peter Lewis, a 24-year-old Idaho resident whose dance-happy rendition of an Elvis Presley song had voters rooting for him.

The other three finalists were picked by the show's judges.

Randy Jackson selected Jennifer Hudson, 22, a cruise line singer from Chicago whose voice has impressed the judges, even if her fashion sense hasn't. Paula Abdul tabbed Leah LaBelle, 17, of Seattle.

Cranky Simon Cowell chose George Huff, 23, a music education major who has performed in many churches in Louisiana.

The four join the already selected finalists, including Fantasia Barrino, 19, High Point, N.C.; Diana Degarmo, 16, Snellville, Ga.; Camile Velasco, 18, Haiku, Hawaii; and Matthew Rogers, 25, Rancho Cucamonga, Calif.

Other finalists are La Toya London, 24, Hawthorne, Calif.; Amy Adams, 24, Bakersfield, Calif.; Jasmine Trias, 17, Milliani, Hawaii, and John Stevens, 16, East Amherst, N.Y.

The group will perform March 16 in a two-hour live show, 8-10 p.m. EST. The top four finalists will be announced on May 5, with the series finale May 25-26.

More than 70,000 people turned out at "American Idol" tryouts nationwide for the third season, according to Fox.

Past "American Idol" winners include Kelly Clarkson and Ruben Studdard, who both had top 10 releases. But the biggest Idol is 2003 runner-up Clay Aiken.

Studdard returned to perform his latest recording Wednesday, and even made Cowell nostalgic.

"I will pay you to re-enter," Cowell told him.

Woman Thought \$1M Bill She Used Was Real

ATLANTA (AP) -- A woman who tried to use a fake \$1 million bill to buy \$1,675 worth of merchandise at Wal-Mart said it was all just a misunderstanding - she thought the bill was real.

The United States Treasury does not make \$1 million bills.

"You can't keep up with the U.S. Treasury," said Alice Pike, speaking from jail.

Pike, 35, was arrested last week at the Wal-Mart. The bill was a novelty item that can be bought at gag shops. Pike told police she got it from her estranged husband, who is a coin collector.

Pike said she first tried to buy the merchandise with two Wal-Mart gift cards. But the cashier told her the cards only had a total value of \$2.32. That's when Pike says she pulled out the \$1 million bill.

"All I've got is this," Pike said she told the cashier.

"I wasn't trying to pass off the bill," she said. "That's ridiculous."

A police report says Pike tried to pay for the items with the fake bill and even asked for change.

Prosecutors must decide whether to prosecute Pike on charges of first-degree forgery.

Today in History...

March 12, 1930: GANDHI LEADS CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

(HISTORYCHANNEL.COM) On March 12, 1930, Indian independence leader Mohandas Gandhi begins a defiant march to the sea in protest of the British monopoly on salt, his boldest act of civil disobedience yet against British rule in India.

Britain's Salt Acts prohibited Indians from collecting or selling salt, a staple in the Indian diet. Citizens were forced to buy the vital mineral from the British, who, in addition to exercising a monopoly over the manufacture and sale of salt, also exerted a heavy salt tax. Although India's poor suffered most under the tax, Indians required salt. Defying the Salt Acts, Gandhi reasoned, would be an ingeniously simple way for many Indians to break a British law nonviolently. He declared resistance to British salt policies to be the unifying theme for his new campaign of *satyagraha*, or mass civil disobedience.

On March 12, Gandhi set out from Sabarmati with 78 followers on a 241-mile march to the coastal town of Dandi on the Arabian Sea. There, Gandhi and his supporters were to defy British policy by making salt from seawater. All along the way, Gandhi addressed large crowds, and with each passing day an increasing number of people joined the salt satyagraha. By the time they reached Dandi on April 5, Gandhi was at the head of a crowd of tens of thousands. Gandhi spoke and led prayers and early the next morning walked down to the sea to make salt.

He had planned to work the salt flats on the beach, encrusted with crystallized sea salt at every high tide, but the police had forestalled him by crushing the salt deposits into the mud. Nevertheless, Gandhi reached down and picked up a small lump of natural salt out of the mud--and British law had been defied. At Dandi, thousands more followed his lead, and in the coastal cities of Bombay and Karachi, Indian nationalists led crowds of citizens in making salt. Civil disobedience broke out all across India, soon involving millions of Indians, and British authorities arrested more than 60,000 people. Gandhi himself was arrested on May 5, but the satyagraha continued without him.

On May 21, the poet Sarojini Naidu led 2,500 marchers on the Dharasana Salt Works, some 150 miles north of Bombay. Several hundred British-led Indian policemen met them and viciously beat the peaceful demonstrators. The incident, recorded by American journalist Webb Miller, prompted an international outcry against British policy in India.

In January 1931, Gandhi was released from prison. He later met with Lord Irwin, the viceroy of India, and agreed to call off the satyagraha in exchange for an equal negotiating role at a London conference on India's future. In August, Gandhi traveled to the conference as the sole representative of the nationalist Indian National Congress. The meeting was a disappointment, but British leaders had acknowledged him as a force they could not suppress or ignore.

India's independence was finally granted in August 1947. Gandhi was assassinated by a Hindu extremist less than six months later.



BAGHDAD INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM 1



REDEPLOYMENT PRAYER BREAKFAST

WHERE: NORTH END OF BOB HOPE DFAC
WHEN: 0700, 18 MARCH
SPEAKER: BG CURTIS SCAPAROTTI

The Old Ironsides Report

March 12, 2004

myafn.net TV SCHEDULES: FRIDAY, MARCH 12, 2004				As of: Thursday, March 11, 2004 8:42:36 PM		
Start Time	SPORTS	ATLANTIC	SPECTRUM	PACIFIC	NEWS	Start Time
00:00		HEADLINE NEWS	KEN BURNS' HISTORY OF JAZZ - A MASTERPIECE BY MIDNIGHT	TODAY		00:00
00:30	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - BIG TEN CHAMPIONSHIP FIRST ROUND: PENN STATE VS NORTHWESTERN	TONIGHT SHOW WITH JAY LENO (TVPG):			AIR FORCE TV NEWS	00:30
01:00			JOAN OF ARC (TVPG): - (PT. 2)		LESTER HOLT LIVE	01:00
01:30		THE LATE SHOW WITH DAVID LETTERMAN (TVPG):				01:30
02:00				SESAME STREET	HEADLINE NEWS	02:00
02:30		ACCESS HOLLYWOOD			NBC NIGHTLY NEWS	02:30
03:00	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - BIG EAST CHAMPIONSHIP QUARTERFINALS: TBD VS UCINN	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - ACC CHAMPIONSHIP FIRST ROUND: CLEMSON VS VIRGINIA	ROCKET POWER (TVY): - REGGIE'S PEN IS MIGHTIER/ KAYAKS AMOK	LITTLE BILL (TVY7): - THE TREASURE HUNT	ABC WORLD NEWS TONIGHT	03:00
03:30			THE FAIRLY ODDPARENTS (TVY): - SPACED OUT/ TRANSPARENTS	WHEEL OF FORTUNE (TVG):	CBS EVENING NEWS	03:30
04:00			THE SIMPSONS (TVPG): - LISA'S SUBSTITUTE	THE DR. PHIL SHOW (TVPG):	COUNTDOWN WITH KEITH OLBERMANN	04:00
04:30			THE COSBY SHOW (TVG): - DENISE'S DECISION			04:30
05:00	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - BIG XII CHAMPIONSHIP FIRST ROUND: TEXAS A&M VS MISSOURI	SPORTSCENTER	CHARMED (TVPG): - NECROMANCING THE STONE	THE OPRAH WINFREY SHOW (TVPG):	HANNITY & COLMES	05:00
05:30		PARDON THE INTERRUPTION				05:30
06:00		ESPNEWS	BOSTON PUBLIC (TV14): - CHAPTER TWO	NBC NIGHTLY NEWS	THE NEWSHOUR	06:00
06:30		ESPNEWS		WORLD'S LARGEST CONCERT		06:30
07:00		HEADLINE NEWS	NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SPECIALS (TVPG): - RAISING THE HUNLEY	ACCESS HOLLYWOOD	BET NIGHTLY NEWS	07:00
07:25				GUIDING LIGHT (TV14):		07:25
07:30	COLLEGE GAMENIGHT	ESPNEWS			NIGHTLY BUSINESS REPORT	07:30
08:00	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - MWC CHAMPIONSHIP QUARTERFINALS: NEW MEXICO VS UNLV	HEADLINE NEWS	WALKING WITH DINOSAURS - TIME OF THE TITANS		LARRY KING LIVE	08:00
08:13				GENERAL HOSPITAL (TV14):		08:13
08:30		HEADLINE NEWS	WALKING WITH PREHISTORIC BEASTS (TVG): - WHALE KILLER			08:30
09:00		SESAME STREET	BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER (TV14): - SPIRAL	HOUSE OF MOUSE (TVY): - UNPLUGGED CLUB	NEWSNIGHT WITH AARON BROWN	09:00
09:30				ALL GROWN UP (TVY): - THIEF ENCOUNTER		09:30
10:00	SPORTSCENTER	LITTLE BILL (TVY7): - THE TREASURE HUNT	IRON CHEF (TVPG): - SQUID/CHEN VS TETSUTOSHI SHIMAZU	KIM POSSIBLE (TVY7): - MONKEY NINJAS IN SPACE	PAULA ZAHN NOW	10:00
10:30		WHEEL OF FORTUNE (TVG):		MY LIFE AS A TEENAGE ROBOT (TVY7): - RETURN OF THE RAGGEDY ANDROID/THE BOY WHO CRIED "ROBOT"		10:30
11:00	BALLROOM BOXING - HEAVYWEIGHTS: HASIM "ROCK" RAHMAN VS AL "ICE" COLE	THE DR. PHIL SHOW (TVPG):	ROCKET POWER (TVY): - REGGIE'S PEN IS MIGHTIER/ KAYAKS AMOK	JEOPARDY! (TVG):	NIGHTLINE	11:00
11:30			THE FAIRLY ODDPARENTS (TVY): - SPACED OUT/ TRANSPARENTS	HEADLINE NEWS	HEADLINE NEWS	11:30
11:46		THE OPRAH WINFREY SHOW (TVPG):				11:46
11:52				PACIFIC REPORT		11:52
12:00			THE SIMPSONS (TVPG): - LISA'S SUBSTITUTE	ESPNEWS	HARDBALL WITH CHRIS MATTHEWS	12:00
12:30			THE COSBY SHOW (TVG): - DENISE'S DECISION	HEADLINE NEWS		12:30
12:35		GUIDING LIGHT (TV14):				12:35
12:52				PACIFIC REPORT		12:52
13:00			CHARMED (TVPG): - NECROMANCING THE STONE	THE SIMPSONS (TVPG): - TODAY, I AM A KLOWN	THE O'REILLY FACTOR	13:00
13:17		GENERAL HOSPITAL (TV14):				13:17
13:30				THAT 70'S SHOW (TVPG): - TRAMPLED UNDER FOOT		13:30
14:00	NBA - DALLAS MAVERICKS @ SACRAMENTO KINGS	HEADLINE NEWS	BOSTON PUBLIC (TV14): - CHAPTER TWO	SURVIVOR: ALL-STARS (TVPG):	PRIMETIME	14:00
14:30		WORLD'S LARGEST CONCERT				14:30
15:00		TODAY	NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SPECIALS (TVPG): - RAISING THE HUNLEY	24 (TV14): - DAY 2: 5:00 A.M. - 6:00 A.M.	GOOD MORNING AMERICA	15:00
16:00			WALKING WITH DINOSAURS - TIME OF THE TITANS	HEADLINE NEWS		16:00
16:22				PACIFIC REPORT		16:22
16:30	INSIDE THE NBA		WALKING WITH PREHISTORIC BEASTS (TVG): - WHALE KILLER	TONIGHT SHOW WITH JAY LENO (TVPG):		16:30
17:00	SPORTSCENTER	HOUSE OF MOUSE (TVY): - UNPLUGGED CLUB	BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER (TV14): - SPIRAL		HEADLINE NEWS	17:00
17:30		ALL GROWN UP (TVY): - THIEF ENCOUNTER		THE LATE SHOW WITH DAVID LETTERMAN (TVPG):	CHANNEL ONE	17:30
17:45					ABC WORLD NEWS THIS MORNING	17:45
18:00	COLLEGE GAMENIGHT	KIM POSSIBLE (TVY7): - MONKEY NINJAS IN SPACE	IRON CHEF (TVPG): - SQUID/CHEN VS TETSUTOSHI SHIMAZU		THE EARLY SHOW	18:00
18:30	PARDON THE INTERRUPTION	MY LIFE AS A TEENAGE ROBOT (TVY7): - RETURN OF THE RAGGEDY ANDROID/THE BOY WHO CRIED "ROBOT"		ACCESS HOLLYWOOD		18:30
19:00	SPORTSCENTER	JEOPARDY! (TVG):	ROCKET POWER (TVY): - REGGIE'S PEN IS MIGHTIER/ KAYAKS AMOK	FOOLS RUSH IN		19:00
19:30		HEADLINE NEWS	THE FAIRLY ODDPARENTS (TVY): - SPACED OUT/ TRANSPARENTS			19:30
20:00	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - ACC CHAMPIONSHIP QUARTERFINALS: TBD VS DUKE	ESPNEWS	THE SIMPSONS (TVPG): - LISA'S SUBSTITUTE		FOX NEWS LIVE	20:00
20:30		HEADLINE NEWS	THE COSBY SHOW (TVG): - DENISE'S DECISION			20:30
21:00		THE SIMPSONS (TVPG): - TODAY, I AM A KLOWN	CHARMED (TVPG): - NECROMANCING THE STONE	WINCHELL	PRIMETIME	21:00
21:30		THAT 70'S SHOW (TVPG): - TRAMPLED UNDER FOOT				21:30
22:00	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - ACC CHAMPIONSHIP QUARTERFINALS: NORTH CAROLINA VS GEORGIA TECH	SURVIVOR: ALL-STARS (TVPG):	BOSTON PUBLIC (TV14): - CHAPTER TWO		FOX NEWS LIVE	22:00
23:00		24 (TV14): - DAY 2: 5:00 A.M. - 6:00 A.M.	NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SPECIALS (TVPG): - RAISING THE HUNLEY	TODAY	HEADLINE NEWS	23:00
23:30					INSIDE POLITICS	23:30