



The Old Ironsides Report

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Ceremonies honor valor and sacrifices of IPS and FPS officers

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BAGHDAD, Iraq – Many Iraqi Police Service (IPS) officers and Facility Protection Service (FPS) officers were honored by commanders of the 1st Armored Division and a representative of the Ministry of the Interior Oct. 29 and 30 at the Iraqi Forum (Baghdad Convention Center).

The ceremony recognized those civil servants whose service went beyond the call of duty in the defense of their nation.

Awards were presented to IPS and FPS officers who had either exhibited valor or were wounded. Awards for officers who died in the line of duty were presented to family members.

The ceremony for police officers was held Oct. 29 and the ceremony for facility protection officers was held Oct. 30.

The two ceremonies included remarks by Brig. Gen. Martin E. Dempsey, commander of the 1st Armored Division (speaking at the IPS ceremony); Brig. Gen. Curtis M. Scaparrotti, assistant division commander for maneuver, 1st Armored Division (speaking at the FPS ceremony); and Imin Ibraheim, deputy minister of the interior.

Speaking at the ceremony for police officers, Dempsey said, "These men have risked their lives for a noble cause. They have shown commitment, professionalism, and dedication. These individuals sitting here before me are proof that things are getting better in Baghdad."

Maj. Lawrence Tubbs, action officer for the 1st Armored Division's attached civil affairs units, assisted in planning the ceremonies.

"This is a ceremony to honor those who displayed sacrifice or heroism in the line of duty," he said at the ceremony for the IPS officers. "Many IPS officers have been wounded or killed serving their country and protecting Iraqi people and facilities since the end of major fighting here in Iraq was over. Many others acted heroically and have set fine examples for all their colleagues."

Tubbs said 124 awardees were honored during the IPS ceremony, including 24 medals for valor and 79 medals for sacrifice. Twenty-one medals for sacrifice were awarded posthumously to IPS family members.

The FPS award ceremony, held in the same place, but on the following day, recognized 24 awardees for valor and 21 for sacrifice.

"The actions of the honorees here today range from engaging threats and stopping suspect civilian vehicles, to pursuing local Iraqi criminals after they (the guards or policemen) themselves were wounded," Tubbs said. "They have demonstrated actions that all Iraqi police can aspire to, and are examples to us all."

The awards given out were golden medals, each emblazoned with an imprinted map of the country of Iraq, with Arabic script reading, "It is an honor to serve country," Tubbs said.



Brig. Gen. Curtis M. Scaparrotti, assistant division commander for maneuver, 1st Armored Division, pins an award for sacrifice on Facility Protection Service officer Hussein Raef Mushir in Baghdad Oct. 30. Mushir was shot twice after reportedly foiling a coordinated attack on a protected site in Baghdad.

Dempsey pinned an award on each IPS officer honored, or, in the case of posthumous awards, presented an award to each family member, shaking each one's hand and thanking them for their service and sacrifice.

The following day, Scaparrotti presented awards at the ceremony for Facility Protection Service officers.

The nominations for the awards originated from the honorees' U.S. Army Military Police counterparts, who have been working closely with the IPS and FPS officers for the past several months.

"The sacrifices that these men made were made for all Iraq," said Ibraheim. "We will remember these, and the coalition soldiers with whom they serve, for the blood they have spilt is for all humanity."

Tubbs noted that the ceremony, although celebrating and honoring the heroic actions of these brave civil servants, was very emotional for the family members of IPS or FPS officers who were killed in action.

Dempsey, Scaparrotti, Ibraheim and others comforted and embraced several bereaved family members as they walked on stage to accept the medals.

This was the first ceremony of its kind in Iraq, said Tubbs, adding that the 1st Armored Division hopes that this will catch on across Iraq, showing civil servants that meritorious service to their country does not go unnoticed or unrewarded.

The Old Ironsides Report November 2, 2003

With California blazes going out or down, firefighters are sent home

LOS ANGELES, Nov. 1 — Thousands of weary firefighters who rushed into Southern California from across the state this week to battle raging wildfires got orders today to pack up and prepare to return home.

State and federal officials said the fires had largely burned themselves out or been corralled into manageable zones by midday Saturday, allowing officials to draw down the firefighting force.

At the peak of the blazes, more than 14,000 firefighters from across California and several other Western states were deployed over hundreds of miles in an arc around Los Angeles and into San Diego County as far south as the Mexican border.

At one point, a dozen fires were burning out of control, fed by hot Santa Ana winds and fueled by hundreds of thousands of acres of drought-stricken trees and shrubs. Together, the blazes have killed 20 people, destroyed more than 3,300 homes and burned about 750,000 acres. More than 100,000 residents were evacuated and several thousand still remain in shelters.

Some residents of the San Bernardino Mountain areas of Lake Arrowhead and Big Bear were told today that they would not be allowed to return home for several days because many areas still lacked power and roads were treacherous from snow and ice on Friday night.

But it appeared on Saturday that the worst had passed.

"The weather has been very, very good to us over the last 24 hours," said Mike McGroarty, deputy chief for fire operations at the State Office of Emergency Services. "The fires have pretty much slowed and some fires have stopped."

Rain fell on much of the region on Friday and several inches of snow dropped on fire-scorched areas of the San Bernardino Mountains, east of Los Angeles. Mr. McGroarty said the break in the weather prompted the demobilization of fire crews, many of whom would be heading home in the next several days.

Panther system stalking Windows

Even though fewer than 5 percent of computer buyers opt for the Macintosh line of PCs, this latest evolution of the Mac operating system should make some--and, maybe, a lot--of Microsoft's customers consider a switch.

Starting with Panther's predecessor, dubbed Jaguar, Apple Computer Inc. has -- with help from Microsoft itself -- created a computing environment that keeps users compatible with the Windows world and lets them do their stuff on the elegantly designed Mac line of laptops and desktops.

The first and most lasting impression of using Mac OS 10.3 is its tasteful and sophisticated design and extreme ease of use.

Panther bristles with enhancements to Jaguar, adding such perks as a fax sending-and-receiving module that allows one-click faxing through a phone modem.

Apple calls its method of displaying files and folders the Finder. This time the Finder finds itself beefed up considerably with Expose, a feature that quickly opens any running application just by moving the cursor over its icon.

SPORTS

Ramirez Goes Unclaimed

The Los Angeles Times

Manny Ramirez was not claimed on waivers before Friday's deadline, leaving the outfielder and his \$101.5 million contract with the Boston Red Sox.

Red Sox General Manager Theo Epstein and owner John Henry declined to comment on Ramirez, citing a baseball rule against discussing whether players were put on waivers.

The only comment available from the Red Sox was that there was no announcement to make, spokesman Kevin Shea said after the 1 p.m. EDT deadline passed. If Ramirez had been claimed, that news could have been released immediately.

There is still the chance that the Red Sox could trade Ramirez, if they are willing to absorb some of his salary.

Ramirez is one of the best hitters in baseball, but his salary — the second highest in baseball — scared away potential takers when he was put on irrevocable waivers on Wednesday.

He led the American League with a .427 on-base percentage and 28 intentional walks. He also had 37 homers and 104 RBIs.

Sosa staying with Chicago Cubs

Sammy Sosa turned down a chance to pursue free agency, announcing that he is keeping the last two seasons of his four-year contract with the Chicago Cubs. He will earn \$33 million over the remainder of the deal.

This Day in History **2 November 1947**

Howard Hughes flew the Spruce Goose

From HistoryChannel.com

The Hughes Flying Boat--the largest aircraft ever built--was piloted by designer Howard Hughes on its first and only flight. Built with laminated birch and spruce, the massive wooden aircraft had a wingspan longer than a football field and was designed to carry more than 700 men to battle.

Howard Hughes was a successful Hollywood movie producer when he founded the Hughes Aircraft Company in 1932. He personally tested cutting-edge aircraft of his own design and in 1937 broke the transcontinental flight-time record. In 1938, he flew around the world in a record three days, 19 hours, and 14 minutes.

Following the U.S. entrance into World War II in 1941, the U.S. government commissioned the Hughes Aircraft Company to build a large flying boat capable of carrying men and materials over long distances. The concept for what would become the "Spruce Goose" was originally conceived by the industrialist Henry Kaiser, but Kaiser dropped out of the project early, leaving Hughes and his small team to make the H-4 a reality. Because of wartime restrictions on steel, Hughes decided to build his aircraft out of wood laminated with plastic and covered with fabric. Although it was constructed mainly of birch, the use of spruce (along with its white-gray color) would later earn the aircraft the nickname Spruce Goose. It had a wingspan of 320 feet and was powered by eight giant propeller engines.

Despite its successful maiden flight, the Spruce Goose never went into production, primarily because critics alleged that its wooden framework was insufficient to support its weight during long flights.