



The Old Ironsides Report



Wednesday, December 03, 2003

Civil affairs unit trains for new Baghdad environment

Story and photo by Sgt. Mark S. Rickert, 372nd MPAD

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Soldiers with the 354th Civil Affairs Brigade, an Army Reserve unit from Riverdale, Md., geared up in full battle-rattle, experienced a new type of convoy operations training, Nov. 28.

The training consisted of six stations; each focusing on situations involving the Humvee. The training took some older safety tactics and combat techniques and combines them with new techniques derived from real-world experience in Baghdad.

According to Sgt. Ronald P. Ehlers, the convoy-operations training sergeant with the 354th Civil Affairs Brigade, the unit has increased its awareness and has adapted to changes after eight months of real combat situations in Iraq.

“We’ve taken some basic patrol concepts and added our own experiences,” said Ehlers. “Before the war, we didn’t really have a concept of improvised explosive devices until we got here. So, through time and experience, we’ve gathered new information, and now we are disseminating that information. That’s what the new training plan reflects.”

The civil affairs soldiers have learned some of these new techniques the hard way. Situations, such as driving a convoy through the large and crowded city of Baghdad, have required the soldiers to take a long, hard look at how they operate.

“We’ve had to adapt to urban, inner city driving,” said Ehlers. “We’ve developed new techniques to move a patrol through the city, while creating strategies for making U-turns or driving beneath overpasses.”

The brigade also added improvised armor to their vehicles after finding a local Iraqi



Maj. Henry C. Norcom, a civil affairs officer with the 354th Civil Affairs Brigade, an Army Reserve unit from Riverdale, Md., assumes a defensive posture behind his Humvee during training in Baghdad.

manufacturer who could put steel doors on the Humvees and a steel box-like structure in the back for additional safety. This, however, also changed the way soldiers get in and out of the vehicle.

“The biggest changes come from adapting,” said Ehlers. “When we put armor on the vehicles, we had to learn how to get in and out of those vehicles as fast as possible. That’s not an easy task when you’re wearing a lot of gear, and the exits have all changed.”

“This is enhanced training,” said Maj. LeGrand Langford, the deputy brigade supply officer (S4). “We’ve gotten better with our experiences. When the threat level goes up, you have to enhance the training. We have to stay one step ahead of the enemy.”

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News...

Iraqi: U.S. Kills or Captures 'Big Fish'

KIRKUK, Iraq (AP) - U.S. troops have captured or killed a "big fish" in a large military operation in Kirkuk, a member of Iraq's Governing Council said Tuesday. Other officials said Saddam Hussein's top former deputy Izzat Ibrahim al-Douri was the target. The U.S. military, however, could not confirm the reports. The Americans have pointed to al-Douri - the top Iraqi fugitive after Saddam - as a coordinator of the insurgency against U.S. forces, and last week offered a \$10 million reward for information leading to his arrest.

Court Gives Police Victory in Waiting Time

WASHINGTON (AP) - In a victory for law officers, the Supreme Court ruled unanimously Tuesday that it was constitutional for police to wait 20 seconds before knocking down the door of a drug suspect. LaShawn Banks was taking a shower when masked and heavily armed officers broke into his Las Vegas apartment in 1998 looking for drugs.

Ohio Panel Probing Videotaped Beating

CINCINNATI (AP) - Police appeared to follow procedure when attempting to subdue a black man who later died, and "it's obvious one of the officers was assaulted" before the taped beating began, Police Chief Thomas Streicher said Tuesday. Nathaniel Jones, 41, died at a hospital shortly after being taken into custody Sunday outside a fast food restaurant. The 350-pound man was struck repeatedly with nightsticks in a confrontation captured by a video camera mounted on a police car.

Man Arrested in Missing N.D. Student Case

CROOKSTON, Minn. (AP) - A man described by authorities as a predatory sex offender was arrested and charged with kidnapping in the disappearance of a college student who may have been abducted last month while talking on her cell phone. The girl's family said the arrest gave them new hope that she would be found.

Safety Tip:

SENIOR OCCUPANT RESPONSIBILITIES

- ✓ ENSURE DRIVER IS LICENSED
- ✓ PROPER SPEEDS ARE FOLLOWED
- ✓ SEATBELTS ARE WORN
- ✓ KEVLAR HELMETS ARE WORN, CHIN STRAP SECURED
- ✓ ENSURE DRIVERS MAINTAINS SAFE INTERVALS
- ✓ ASSIST DRIVER AS GROUND GUIDE IF REQUIRED
- ✓ ENSURE DRIVER IS ALERT

SENIOR OCCUPANTS CAN BE SUBJECT TO DISCIPLINARY ACTION AND HELD LIABLE FOR DAMAGES.

Entertainment...

Mick Jagger to Get Knighthood From Queen

LONDON (AP) -- After months of uncertainty, Mick Jagger has managed to fit Queen Elizabeth II into his busy schedule.

The Rolling Stones star said Tuesday that he will go to Buckingham Palace on Dec. 12 to accept his knighthood.

After difficulties caused by his touring schedule, Jagger was initially slated to be knighted on Dec. 10, the same date as rugby star Jonny Wilkinson will be made a Member of the Order of the British Empire, or MBE. But Jagger did not want to distract attention away from the man who led England to the rugby World Cup title last month.

"Mick is delighted that a date has been agreed for the investiture after spending over a year touring the world with the Rolling Stones," a Jagger spokesman said.

"He would also like to express his gratitude to Buckingham Palace for their understanding of his other commitments over the last 18 months."

The spokesman said the singer's 90-year-old father Joe will be joining him for the big day.

The Stones have played 114 shows worldwide over the past 15 months.

In other news...

Australian Sells Bottled Water for Dogs

CANBERRA, Australia (AP) -- An Australian launched the latest accessory for pampered pooches Tuesday - bottled water in flavors like chicken and corn, liver and bacon, or beef.

The purified Dog Plus K-9 water went on sale in pet stores at \$2.10 for 1.3 pint plastic bottle.

Larkey plans a similar line of drinks for cats, in roast chicken and pork flavors early next year.

People can safely drink it as well, he said, but it probably won't be a hit with humans.

Each bottle contains half a dog's recommended daily intake of vitamins B1, B3, B5, B6 and C.

Chaplain's Thought for the day... **"Using Our Strengths"**

A visitor was being shown around a leper colony in India. At noon a gong sounded for the midday meal. People came from all parts of the compound to the dining hall. Two young men, one riding on the other's back, were pretending to be horse and rider and were having loads of fun.

As it turns out, the man who carried his friend was blind, while the man being carried was lame. The one who couldn't see could use his feet; the one who couldn't walk used his eyes. Together, they found great joy in helping each other.

Imagine if we worked like that- each soldier using his or her strength to make up for another's weakness. All of us have weaknesses, but we also have strengths. A lengthy deployment may bring out strengths you didn't know you had. If we put those new-found strengths to good use, we can get each other through this deployment.

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Dear Soldier,

I am writing to say that I think of you every day. When I arise in the morning, I check the news to see how you are doing. I check again throughout the day, and again before I fall into bed at night. My thoughts and my prayers are with you. I pray that God will give you wisdom to know what to do, insight, favor with the Iraqi people, strength of will and purpose, humility and success.

I worry a lot about your morale. I want you to know that my family supports you with all of our hearts. We believe you are engaged in difficult but worthy task.

The news we hear in America is mixed. We hear much about the daily attacks and IEDs. We also hear, less frequently and with less enthusiasm on the part of the media, about the many good things you are accomplishing: schools being rebuilt, people being reunited with their loves ones after years of separation under Saddam's oppression, and much more. 60 Minutes recently aired a special that bright out much of the good and heroism that you all have displayed. They told the story the way it really is, and for that I am truly thankful.

What can I say to encourage you? I know you must want to come home. I certainly would in your place. My own daughter, a specialist with the 3rd ID, returned from Fallujah recently, having been there since the first days of the war. I am thankful to have her back home, so I know how your loved ones must feel. Yet even while she was in Iraq I never ceased to be proud of her and to believe in her mission, so I took to God my prayers for her protection, and placed her in his hands. For those of you who want nothing more than to return home swiftly, I understand, and I pray that God will open that door for you. But for those of you whose sense of mission demands that you stay the course and complete the task, I pray a special blessing upon you every day. You face a daily challenge mentally, emotionally, physically and spiritually. I pray that God will give you grace equal to your commitment.

With my heartfelt thanks,

Eric Robinson
An American

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myafn.net TV SCHEDULES: WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 03, 2003					As of: Tuesday, December 02, 2003 9:44:56 PM	
Start Time	SPORTS	ATLANTIC	SPECTRUM	PACIFIC	NEWS	Start Time
00:00	ESPNEWS	HEADLINE NEWS	CLOSE ENCOUNTERS/THIRD KIND	TODAY		00:00
00:30	ESPNEWS	TONIGHT SHOW WITH JAY LENO			AIR FORCE TV NEWS	00:30
01:00	AROUND THE HORN				LESTER HOLT LIVE	01:00
01:30	PARDON THE INTERRUPTION	THE LATE SHOW WITH DAVID LETTERMAN				01:30
02:00	SPORTSCENTER			SESAME STREET	HEADLINE NEWS	02:00
02:30		A ACCESS HOLLYWOOD	WHOSE LINE IS IT ANYWAY		NBC NIGHTLY NEWS	02:30
03:00	NFL LIVE	COLLEGE BASKETBALL - A CC/BIG TEN CHALLENGE INDIANA @ WAKE FOREST	RUGRATS : - PARTNERS IN CRIME	BOB THE BUILDER	ABC WORLD NEWS TONIGHT	03:00
03:30	COLLEGE BASKETBALL - A CC/BIG TEN CHALLENGE NC STATE @ MICHIGAN		SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS : - SOMETHING SMELLS / BOSSY BOOTS	WHEEL OF FORTUNE	CBS EVENING NEWS	03:30
04:00			THE SIMPSONS : - LISA THE TREE HUGGER	THE DR. PHIL SHOW	THE NEWSHOUR	04:00
04:30			HOME IMPROVEMENT : - TAYLOR GOT GAME			04:30
05:00		COLLEGE BASKETBALL - A CC/BIG TEN CHALLENGE ILLINOIS VS NORTH CAROLINA	STAR TREK: NEXT GENERATION : - MAN OF THE PEOPLE	THE OPRAH WINFREY SHOW : - TOM CRUISE	HANNITY & COLMES	05:00
05:30	COLLEGE BASKETBALL - A CC/BIG TEN CHALLENGE WISCONSIN @ MARYLAND					05:30
06:00			WHO WANTS TO MARRY MY DAD?	NBC NIGHTLY NEWS	THE NEWS WITH BRIAN WILLIAMS	06:00
06:30				JUDGE JUDY		06:30
07:00		HEADLINE NEWS	MAIL CALL	ACCESS HOLLYWOOD	BET NIGHTLY NEWS	07:00
07:25				GUIDING LIGHT		07:25
07:30	ESPNEWS	ESPNEWS	SURVIVING WEST POINT		NIGHTLY BUSINESS REPORT	07:30
08:00	MOTORCYCLE RACING - FIM SPEEDWAY GRAND PRIX (SWEDEN)	HEADLINE NEWS	SUICIDE MISSIONS : - AIR RESCUE		LARRY KING LIVE	08:00
08:13				GENERAL HOSPITAL		08:13
08:30		HEADLINE NEWS				08:30
09:00	NFL TOTAL ACCESS	SESAME STREET	GROSS ANATOMY	BABY LOONEY TUNES : - SCHOOL DAZE	NEWSNIGHT WITH AARON BROWN	09:00
09:30				I SPY		09:30
10:00	SPORTSCENTER	BOB THE BUILDER		A WALK IN YOUR SHOES	PAULA ZAHN NOW	10:00
10:30		WHEEL OF FORTUNE		LIBERTY'S KIDS (EPS 14-26)		10:30
11:00	NHL - SAN JOSE SHARKS @ CALGARY FLAMES	THE OPRAH WINFREY SHOW : - TOM CRUISE	RUGRATS : - PARTNERS IN CRIME	JEOPARDY!	NIGHTLINE	11:00
11:30			SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS : - SOMETHING SMELLS / BOSSY BOOTS	HEADLINE NEWS	HEADLINE NEWS	11:30
11:52				PACIFIC REPORT		11:52
12:00		A ACCESS HOLLYWOOD	THE SIMPSONS : - LISA THE TREE HUGGER	ESPNEWS	HARDBALL WITH CHRIS MATTHEWS	12:00
12:25		GUIDING LIGHT				12:25
12:30			HOME IMPROVEMENT : - TAYLOR GOT GAME	HEADLINE NEWS		12:30
12:52				PACIFIC REPORT		12:52
13:00			STAR TREK: NEXT GENERATION : - MAN OF THE PEOPLE	THE PARKERS : - SIGN OF SHAQ	THE O'REILLY FACTOR	13:00
13:13		GENERAL HOSPITAL				13:13
13:30	NFL LIVE			CEDRIC THE ENTERTAINER : - EPISODE 14		13:30
14:00	SPORTSCENTER	HEADLINE NEWS	WHO WANTS TO MARRY MY DAD?	PRIMETIME SPECIAL EDITION:	48 HOURS	14:00
14:30		JUDGE JUDY				14:30
15:00	NHL - LOS ANGELES KINGS @ ST. LOUIS BLUES	TODAY	MAIL CALL	THE VICTORIA'S SECRET FASHION SHOW	GOOD MORNING AMERICA	15:00
15:30			SURVIVING WEST POINT			15:30
16:00			SUICIDE MISSIONS : - AIR RESCUE	HEADLINE NEWS		16:00
16:22				PACIFIC REPORT		16:22
16:30				TONIGHT SHOW WITH JAY LENO		16:30
17:00		BABY LOONEY TUNES : - SCHOOL DAZE	GROSS ANATOMY		HEADLINE NEWS	17:00
17:30	SPORTSCENTER	I SPY		THE LATE SHOW WITH DAVID LETTERMAN	CHANNEL ONE	17:30
17:45					WORLD NEWS THIS MORNING	17:45
18:00		A WALK IN YOUR SHOES			THE EARLY SHOW	18:00
18:30	NFL LIVE	LIBERTY'S KIDS (EPS 14-26)		ACCESS HOLLYWOOD		18:30
19:00	SPORTSCENTER	JEOPARDY!	RUGRATS : - PARTNERS IN CRIME	MUTINY ON THE BOUNTY		19:00
19:30		HEADLINE NEWS	SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS : - SOMETHING SMELLS / BOSSY BOOTS			19:30
20:00	COLLEGE BASKETBALL - A CC/BIG TEN CHALLENGE INDIANA @ WAKE FOREST	ESPNEWS	THE SIMPSONS : - LISA THE TREE HUGGER		FOX NEWS LIVE	20:00
20:30		HEADLINE NEWS	HOME IMPROVEMENT : - TAYLOR GOT GAME			20:30
21:00		THE PARKERS : - SIGN OF SHAQ	STAR TREK: NEXT GENERATION : - MAN OF THE PEOPLE		48 HOURS	21:00
21:30		CEDRIC THE ENTERTAINER : - EPISODE 14		THE FIREBALL		21:30
22:00	ESPNEWS	PRIMETIME SPECIAL EDITION:	WHO WANTS TO MARRY MY DAD?		FOX NEWS LIVE	22:00
22:30	COLLEGE BASKETBALL - A CC/BIG TEN CHALLENGE ILLINOIS VS NORTH CAROLINA					22:30
23:00		THE VICTORIA'S SECRET FASHION SHOW	MAIL CALL	HEADLINE NEWS	HEADLINE NEWS	23:00
23:30			SURVIVING WEST POINT	ESPNEWS	INSIDE POLITICS	23:30