

Postcards from Iraq

Combat Action Badge



Col. Michael Wolf, commander, Gulf Region North, pins the Combat Action Badge on Lt. Col. George Shepard, GRN, after professionally handling and surviving an improvised explosive device attack in Mosul.

COB Speicher, Iraq, May 17—Army Lt. Col. George “Thatch” Shepard, Jr., received the Combat Action Badge for personally being engaged by the enemy.

While traveling with a Security Escort Team (SET) in Mosul, Iraq, this week, the SET was subjected to a large explosion from underneath the vehicle in which Shepard was a passenger with two others. The vehicle was immediately filled with black smoke. The windows on Shepard’s side of the truck were blown out and there was small-arms fire outside, while the three passengers determined each other’s safety inside.

With the small arms fire continuing outside, the SET driver determined that the vehicle had lost power. The rear gun truck pushed Shepard’s vehicle through the kill zone, and across the city of Mosul, to the entry control point of FOB Diamondback.

After battle damage assessment to the vehicle, and counseling with the Trauma Surgeon at the Combat Support Hospital, Shepard and his two fellow officers were released for duty.

The Combat Action Badge was established in 2005 by former Army Chief of Staff Gen. Peter J. Schoomaker. It may be awarded to any Soldier—regardless of branch and military occupational specialty—performing assigned duties in an area where hostile fire pay or imminent danger pay is authorized; who is personally present and actively engaging or being engaged by the enemy; and performing satisfactorily in accordance with the prescribed rules of engagement.

