



Albuquerque, NM
Silver Star Medal

When the platoon leader's element was attacked with machine-gun fire and rocket-propelled grenades, Brasher joined the group to pinpoint the enemy position, once again exposing himself to enemy fire.

Brasher then led a squad to clear a compound that put him and his soldiers in a better position to return fire. As he was directing the paratroopers, he spotted a Taliban fighter with a machine gun and opened fire. He led his squad over a mud wall in pursuit of the fleeing insurgent, killing two more gunmen as the squad rounded the corner. More insurgents were killed when the squad encountered a larger enemy force.

As the Taliban forces consolidated into a highly defensible compound with thick walls, Brasher spotted the enemy positions inside and began engaging them. One of the insurgent's bullets tore through his right forearm and bicep, which slowed him down -- but the injury didn't stop him. Brasher continued to fight and give instructions. In fact, the unit's medics had to force him to submit to medical care.

"SFC Brasher's fearless actions and dedication to mission accomplishment enabled Second Platoon to destroy over 20 well-trained Taliban fighters. His quick decisions and aggressive stance against the enemy saved the lives of his men," the medal citation reads.

For his gallantry in action with marked distinction, Army Maj. Gen. Curtis M. Scaparrotti, commander of the 82nd Airborne Division, presented Brasher with a Silver Star on Oct. 9 at the 82nd Airborne Division War Memorial Museum at Fort Bragg, N.C.

Sergeant First Class James Brasher

Army Sgt. 1st Class James Brasher's "daring acts of intrepidity and gallantry in the face of a numerically superior and determined force" have earned him a Silver Star, according to the medal citation

The courageous acts occurred Dec. 8, 2007, when Brasher was serving in Afghanistan as platoon sergeant for 2nd Platoon, Company A, 1st Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment. The company had been tasked to participate in Operation Mar Kararadad, during which Brasher repeatedly exposed himself to enemy fire to keep his soldiers out of danger.

The multinational mission to clear insurgents from the Taliban stronghold of Musa Qaleh began the night before, when the company landed by helicopter just outside the city. Under cover of darkness, the soldiers moved to occupy a hill overlooking the city.

At dawn, Company A started taking small-arms and heavy machine-gun fire from a small town at the base of the hill. Brasher and the 2nd Platoon leader decided the town, which was isolated from the rest of Musa Qaleh by a dry riverbed, should be cleared immediately.

As the soldiers began systematically clearing buildings, a Taliban fighter attacked the lead squad, which included Brasher. Brasher killed the gunman before he could kill or injure any paratroopers.

The squad began taking small-arms fire as it advanced to the next compound. Again, Brasher reacted, throwing fragmentation grenades toward the enemy position, which suppressed the attack and prevented the enemy from getting a fix on the soldiers' position.

