

Duty **1** First!



- **A Day in the Big Red One**
- **Soldier Races at Heartland Park**
- **75th Fires Welcomes New Commander**

The Big Red One Creed

TEAMWORK is the foundation of the Big Red One. I shall never fail my team, for I maintain the standard. My conduct and self-discipline set the example for others to follow.

HONOR is what I stand for – an American Soldier on duty for my country. My loyalty is intense. I display care for my fellow Soldiers and my chain-of-command through courage, respect, integrity and compassion.

I have learned to **ENDURE** to thrive in adversity. The harsh reality of combat gives me the enthusiasm for realistic training. I am physically and mentally strong to meet the demanding situations my unit encounters.

We are one in the Big Red One. Our **BROTHERHOOD** gives us strength to fight on to any objective and accomplish the mission as our veterans have done before us. I live the legacy of my division.

READINESS is my priority. To be ready for any mission, anytime, anywhere. My business is first-class training and living high standards of care and equipment, weaponry and tactical and technical competence.

My **ORGANIZATION** is my strength. The BRO is bigger than any one individual. It gives me purpose, self-confidence, competitive spirit, intestinal fortitude and the desire to fight with all my heart.



Duty **1** First!

No Mission too Difficult. No Sacrifice too Great.

July 2009

www.riley.army.mil

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Commanding General **Danger 6**

Heavy Brigade Uses Soft Power

Maj. Gen. Vincent Brooks

When you think of a “heavy” brigade, usually Abrams tanks, Bradley Fighting Vehicles and heavy artillery power comes to mind. Training small groups of advisors isn’t typically on the task list. But for the past three years, our 1st Brigade has traded its big guns and heavy firepower for a different skill set – one of soft power.

Since 2006, Camp Funston has served as the sole location for training transition teams consisting of Army, Navy and Air Force personnel. These teams of about a dozen advisors train at Fort Riley for 60 days, then deploy for a year to Iraq or Afghanistan. In theater, these teams advise, teach, mentor and coach the host nation’s security forces.

While this training focuses on basic Soldiering skills such as knowing the ins and outs of weapons systems and combat lifesaver skills, transition team training also focuses on cultural awareness and going against the traditional Army mindset of “leading from the front.” Instead, they train deploying Soldiers to “lead from behind,” allowing their Iraqi and Afghan counterparts to take control of their own security and ultimately, their own destiny.


One of the challenges 1st Brigade has faced in the past three



years is the ever-changing battlefield. Insurgents are constantly adapting and changing their tactics. But the “Devil” Brigade has overcome that challenge by constantly adapting and changing its training tactics to defeat terrorism.

Devil Brigade Soldiers work around the clock on this no-fail mission; and because of their tremendous efforts and first-rate training, our 1st Brigade Soldiers can certainly take credit for the accomplishments of the teams they train. These teams play a key role to our success in Afghanistan and Iraq. As our troop numbers draw down in Iraq, these advisory roles become even more critical.

This training mission will transfer to Fort Polk, La., in September. As that transition happens, the Devils will begin returning to their core tasks as they build into a heavy brigade combat team.

The Soldiers of 1st Brigade deserve tremendous accolades for their yeoman’s work in one of our nation’s most critical military missions. They have set the standard high and continue to exceed it. They have proved that this mission is not too difficult. Their round-the-clock operations tell us there is no sacrifice too great. They have placed this key mission – their duty – first. 

Command Sergeant Major **Danger 7**

Big Red One Soldiers Impact History

Division Command Sgt. Maj. Jim Champagne

For the past 92 years, Big Red One Soldiers have had the opportunity to shape the history of many countries around the world.

In World War I, Sgt. Michael Ellis of the 28th Infantry Regiment undertook the most dangerous of missions – that of working in advance of the rest of his company to eliminate enemy machine gun nests. Ellis was later awarded a Congressional Medal of Honor for his actions. It is the courage of Big Red One Soldiers such as Ellis, who fought to restore peace in France, which lives on in stories told to the grandchildren of those who lived there.

During World War II, the division flexed its strength in the D-Day landings, and endured months of fighting during battles such as Hurtgen Forest and the Battle of the Bulge. Big Red One Soldiers forever changed the course of history for many European countries by their efforts during the two world wars.

Big Red One Soldiers were the first division element called to fight in Vietnam, where they not only battled an enemy, but also sought to bring aid programs to the people of South Vietnam. During Desert Storm, division Soldiers defended Kuwait from a brutal dictator.

That is our past.
Our present has been peacekeeping operations in Bosnia and



Kosovo; and counterinsurgency operations in the Horn of Africa, Iraq, and Afghanistan. Often, our Soldiers have paid dearly for our efforts to rid these areas of terrorists and protect peace; however, those sacrifices have purchased a new lease on life for the countries involved and for the people who call them home.

Each time Big Red One Soldiers have answered the call, they have changed the lives of thousands of people by making a safer, more peaceful way of life possible.

In this edition of the magazine, we highlight a day in the life of Big Red One Soldiers who work in the areas of explosive ordnance, supply, aviation and medical – only the beginning of the jobs routinely carried out by Big Red One Soldiers.

Today’s Soldiers shoulder many different responsibilities. The noncommissioned officers of the Big

Red One perform at their highest level ever, carrying out duties once considered those of a company commander or platoon leader. Command sergeants major and sergeants major easily perform the duties of field grade staff.

As always, we carry out those responsibilities with courage and honor. Very few people have the opportunity to alter history. Each of you who wear the Big Red One patch on your sleeve has that opportunity.

Now...get after it!

Duty First! 

Join in the activities during Victory Week July 27-31



FLAG FOOTBALL



TUG OF WAR



**BOXING,
WEIGHTLIFTING
AND COMBATIVES**



DODGEBALL



BASKETBALL



SOFTBALL



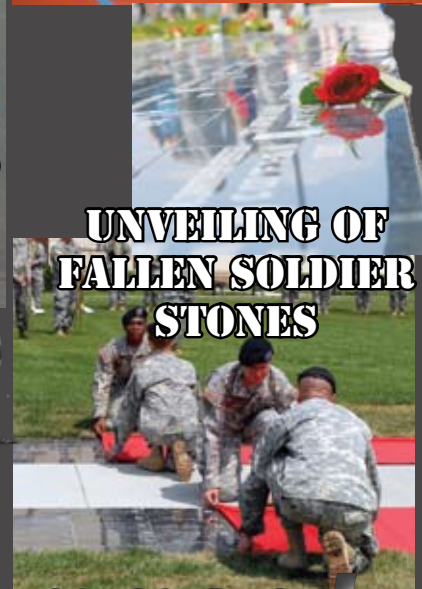
**10 MILE RUN AND
111 MILE RELAY**



VOLLEYBALL



**GOLF
AND
SOCCER**



**UNVEILING OF
FALLEN SOLDIER
STONES**

Contact your unit command

In The News

4 IBCT Soldiers Return from NTC



Soldiers in the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team returned to Fort Riley in mid-June following a 30-day rotation at the National Training Center, Fort Irwin, Calif.

During their time at NTC, Soldiers participated in numerous exercises and drilled in various components of full-spectrum operations, including combat patrols, combined operations and battle drills. The NTC rotation is the culmination of training in preparation for the brigade's upcoming deployment.

The "Dragon" Brigade, which has about 3,400 Soldiers is scheduled to deploy to Iraq from Fort Riley in late summer.

1 ID Welcomes New Chief of Staff

The 1st Infantry Division honored Col. Ricky Gibbs for his service as division chief of staff and welcomed incoming chief of staff, Col. Richard Piscal, with a Victory Honors ceremony June 5 in front of the 1st Infantry Division Headquarters Building at Fort Riley.

Gibbs served as division chief of staff since May 2008, and helped oversee the transformation of the division headquarters into a state-of-the-art, modular and deployable organization. Prior to that, Gibbs commanded the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Inf. Div., during its 15-month tour to Iraq from 2007 to 2008.

Piscal spent the past two years as commander of the United States Army Garrison, Fort Riley. He assumes chief of staff duties as the division headquarters prepares to deploy in support of Global War on Terrorism operations in Southwest Asia.



Col. Richard Piscal



Col. Ricky Gibbs

Magazine Explores a Day in the Life of 1ID Soldiers

With wars in two countries and numerous missions elsewhere around the world, the modern Soldier is asked to be proficient at a wide variety of tasks and skills. This increased flexibility among our nation's troops is what makes us successful in an intense environment that poses many unique challenges.

In this month's issue of Duty First! magazine, we have highlighted a day across the 1st Infantry Division. On May 19, our staff shadowed a Soldier in each brigade – a medic, a driver, a pilot, and members of a personal security detachment.

Each Soldier's day was very different. While some were here at Fort Riley, others were working at the National Training Center or deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan. Their day took them out on convoys, up in the air and out on an urban operations range.

It is amazing what is accomplished every day by Big Red One Soldiers. While their days may seem routine and ordinary to them, all those actions, skills and responsibilities together allow the 1st Inf. Div. to carry out extraordinary things.

While Soldiers work hard, they also play hard. In taking time to write about their daily jobs, we also looked at some of the recreational activities they enjoy. Things such as video games, combatives and physical fitness and street racing are activities that ease the stress of a long day.

I hope you enjoy reading about each of these unique Soldiers as well as the talents and skills they utilize on a daily basis. It is because of their willingness to use those abilities without fail or fatigue that we get to enjoy the fruits of our great nation.

*Anna Staatz
Editor*



1ST BDE

Medic Trains on Transition Team

By Gary Skidmore
Duty First!
Magazine

Cpl. Richard Woolard, 38, a member of the Virginia Army National Guard, Mechanicsville, Va., is at Fort Riley preparing for a year-long deployment to Iraq as a Transition Team member. He's the team medic.

Woolard and his team are in their final phases of training. One of the last training missions they must complete is day 3 of the Urban Operation, a situational training exercise scenario requiring the team to move in a mounted combat patrol and negotiate scenarios using interpreters, battle drills and combat life-saving skills.

07:45, MAY 19, CAMP FUNSTON

Woolard and the rest of the team are given a convoy safety briefing before they leave the parking lot where their three Humvees are parked.

During the briefing, speed limits and distances between vehicles are discussed.

Woolard is a medic and would normally not drive, but the team is short-handed. Their team leader is TDY, which means Woolard will have to drive.

08:15

Woolard is driving a cargo Humvee today. It's not the vehicle the team will drive in Iraq. This vehicle is not up-armored. It has a cloth top and an open rear area. The gunner mans an M240 machine gun and sits on the passenger bench when the convoy is rolling.

Team Tidewater, as they refer to themselves, have to link up with another team – Team Neptune – at the fire point on their

Camp Funston Forward Operating Base. Both teams are going through the same training and will convoy together to their link-up point at the Tactical Training Base, where they will meet with a situational Iraqi Army commander to discuss their missions.

08:40

Woolard and his team arrive at the TTB and are directed to a tent that will be used as a meeting and planning place for their upcoming mission. There are aerial photos of villages the team will visit today spread out on a table.

The Iraqi army commander and an interpreter enter the tent. The team gathers around the table for their planning session but first go through the customary introductions.

Tidewater's deputy team leader, a major, introduces everyone on the team, then himself. He asks the traditional questions of the commander: "How was your trip? Are you married? Do you have children?" The Iraqi commander asks the same of the major and then the planning session can begin.

09:00

Two villages are discussed during the planning session: Urban Clusters Two and Three. The Iraqi commander tells the team leaders that there may be a weapons cache at UC Two, but the mayor of the town would be better able to tell the teams where. The commander also worries there may be an insurgent in the village and warns the team to take precautions.

At the end of the session, the Iraqi commander asks if the team has their warrant for the search. Warrants are a relatively new requirement for Americans deployed to Iraq. Though Americans attempt to bring peace and improve the bonds between the two nations, warrants are now required as a sign of

respect for the law and the authority of the Iraqi government before they can search a village and every home or building in it. The team acquires one.

During the briefing, routes to each village are discussed, and since the Iraqi commander

wants to conduct the search with his own Soldiers, he asks that the American team leader accompany him and the rest of his team be placed around the village for security.

The focus of the planning session then turns to UC Three. The Iraqi commander knows there is an armed insurgent hiding out there. Through intelligence sources, he's identified which building the insurgent is located in and plans his search and security vehicle placement.

Woolard's vehicle is to be located on the outside perimeter of each village.

10:15

The convoy leaves the TTB for UC Two. The team leader and the Iraqi commander are in the lead vehicle. Woolard's vehicle is number two. There is a little tension in the air. No one really knows what to expect at the village. Everyone knows something will happen, but no one knows what. Woolard says this is the part he hates most. He feels responsible for each team member's health and fears one or more of them may be wounded or worse. Before leaving the TTB, he moves his medic bag closer to the tailgate of the Humvee so he can get to it faster.

10:30

The convoy arrives at UC Two. The Iraqi commander's vehicle goes straight into the middle of town, accompanied by his Soldiers. Woolard and the other trucks take up support positions outside of town at their predetermined points.

10:40

Woolard's worst fears are realized when a civilian pickup carrying Iraqi insurgents speeds through the village and fires randomly at the Soldiers. The gunner in Woolard's vehicle is wounded in the arm.

The medic flies into action by applying a pressure dressing and treatments for shock. The gunner says he's in good enough shape to continue the mission. Woolard makes the decision to not MEDEVAC him. At the same time, the Iraqi villagers begin to mill around the Soldiers, and the team leader makes the decision to leave the village as quickly as possible. The Iraqi soldiers have located and seized the cache of arms and leave the village as well. They depart for UC Three, the next village on the mission.

11:20

The convoy arrives at UC Three and immediately sets up their security perimeter.

Eyes scan the village because they know there is a bad guy in there and they can only suspect exactly where he is. The major calls for Woolard's vehicle commander to come to his location, leaving Woolard and the wounded gunner alone. Woolard is really nervous now. He keeps an eye on the gunner and at the same time keeps his weapon pointed into the village.

Then, gun shots ring out. A call comes across the radio asking for the medic to come to the center of town where one of the team has been wounded.

Woolard makes the decision to leave the gunner alone, grabs his bag and runs into the village where the wounded Soldier is laying.

The wound is to the leg. Woolard applies a tourniquet to stop the bleeding and moves the Soldier with the help of a team member and an Iraqi Soldier back to his vehicle. Woolard starts an IV, treats the Soldier for stress and prepares to move back to the FOB, away from danger.

12:10

The team arrives back at the TTB for their after action review. The observer/controller said overall the team did well on the exercise but notes several areas that need improvement. Woolard raises his concern with leaving a wounded Soldier to treat another Soldier in a hostile village. The OC acknowledges the issue and recommends next time Woolard is replaced at the vehicle before moving to the wounded in town. The OC also recommends everyone use the "battle buddy" plan and never travel as individuals.

13:00

The exercise is over. The convoy returns to Camp Funston and prepares for their graduation the next day.


Everyone on the team is taking a few days leave before deploying, except Woolard, who says he wants to take a 30-day leave when he returns from the deployment. 

Photo: Cpl. Robert Woolard keeps an eye on the village where his transition team is assisting the Iraqi army in locating an insurgent. (Duty First!/Skidmore)

1ST SB

EOD Soldier Takes On Urban Ops

By Tyler Abney
Duty First! Magazine

Spc. Kyle Maggart, 24, 774th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company, 84th EOD Battalion, 1st Sustainment Brigade, has been serving his country for the past five years.

The Dayton, Ohio, native joined the Army because he thought it would be fun and most of the men in his family were service members at one time or another.

06:30, MAY 19, CUSTER HILL

Maggart arrives with the rest of his unit to begin his Tuesday. For the first time in 21 days, he wouldn't be hitting the range for a demolition or field training exercise. Today, urban operations are the name of the game. Maggart and the rest of the Soldiers from 774th will put their military operations on urban terrain skills to the test by clearing rooms, setting perimeters and eliminating the enemy at one of the urban clusters on Fort Riley.

As the day begins, Maggart, once an artillery and infantryman, goes through a course taught by a member of his unit on how to successfully stack-up outside, breach and clear a building.

09:00

The unit heads to the training area. Maggart said he re-classed to EOD because he had gotten "tired of jumping out of airplanes."

The urban cluster the team will use today is approximately 100 yards long by 40 yards wide and comprised of several connexes stacked on top of one another to simulate buildings. Windows and balconies were created in the boxes to give the Soldiers the impression that they are in a village in Iraq or Afghanistan.

09:30

Maggart helps the other Soldiers from his unit unload weapons, ammunition and water for the day's training. The weapons and ammunition however, were not that of standard military issue. Instead, paintball markers replaced the M4 while green, red and orange paintballs were used for ammo. Several wooden crates were filled with air canisters and mock AK-47s.

With all the gear on the ground, the unit broke into two teams of six and was told to find separate connexes on opposite ends



Photos: Duty First!/Abney

Spc. Kyle Maggart makes a final check of one of the unit's Humvees. Soldiers had to do an inspection of vehicles they would take to the field the next day.

of the soon-to-be battle ground. Once inside the box, Maggart changed out of his army combat uniform and into a desert combat uniform and paintball mask then discussed strategy for taking the field with his team.

Five orange flags and five green flags were placed throughout the cluster with the idea of teams capturing each flag and returning them to their respective starting points.

Maggart suggested splitting into groups of two or three and scattering around the field. At the shout of "go," Maggart and his teammates raced out of their connex and began finding secure positions throughout the cluster. Each team used the training they earlier received to provide cover for one another while moving from building to building.

Between each iteration, Maggart and his team would return to their connex, do a quick review of why things did or didn't work and devise another strategy for success.



12:30

By noon, the unit had gone through six or seven iterations. A variety meals ready to eat provided a much needed boost of energy. Maggart sat in the shade of one of the connexes joking with the rest of his unit about who had killed who and which strategies worked and which didn't.

By 1:15 p.m., everyone was ready to get back on the field. Since the margin of victory by one team over the other was so lopsided in the first round, teams were redrawn and a few of the rules changed.

Maggart said it was nice to use paintball as a way to have a good time, while at the same time getting something out of it in terms of combat training.

14:15

On arrival back at the company headquarters, Maggart assisted in unloading gear and began performing after-action checks and services on vehicles. He moved about

the Humvee, ensuring everything was in working order. Wheels were checked and vehicles serviced.

15:30

Near mid-afternoon, the day was beginning to slow down, but one more task was at hand. Members of the 774th shot an "EOD" recruiting poster. Several members of the unit dressed in full battle gear and a bomb suit posed in front of one of the unit's vehicles, with weapons and the robots used to assist with deactivating explosives.

16:15

The final 45 minutes of the day were dedicated to cleaning the company headquarters, making one last check of the storage bay and vehicles for the next day's mission. Maggart helped straighten up the headquarters' entryway by picking up gear and sweeping the floor.

At 5 p.m., the unit met one more time to discuss the next day's events and then Maggart made his way home to eat dinner.

1ST CAB

Pilot Chooses Aviation For Challenge

By Anna Staatz
Duty First! Magazine

1st Lt. Sarah McNair didn't have a Family history that drew her to the Army and really, she didn't plan on an aviation job. Growing up in an affluent suburb of Philadelphia, she decided she didn't want to "skate by" and take the regular route to college. So she headed to West Point.

"My dad was kind of like... 'you want to do what?' when I first told him, but they've been very supportive of me and my sister," McNair said. Her younger sister followed McNair's choice and also opted for West Point, graduating in May.

"I wanted to join the Army because I wanted something challenging and character building," McNair Co. A., 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 1st Combat Aviation Brigade said.

She chose aviation because it was one of the more challenging branches available to women who join the Army.

"About 10 percent of my class went aviation," McNair said.



"I wanted to do it because I thought it would be interesting and a good challenge."

06:30, MAY 19, KING FIELD HOUSE

This morning's physical training takes a break from the usual with a class at King Field House. The hour-long class is a combination of Pilates and yoga, punctuated with some good-natured teasing as the Soldiers in McNair's unit work out some muscles that don't get used too often.

08:45, MARSHALL ARMY AIRFIELD

After a shower and quick breakfast, McNair heads to her office. The first item on the agenda is a production control meeting. During the meeting, each company talks about what aircraft will have flights that day and what aircraft are receiving maintenance.

09:15

McNair slips out of the meeting early to meet with Chief Warrant Officer 3 Morgan Fouliard and go over the afternoon's flight procedures. Today, McNair and Fouliard, along with Sgt. James Shively, crew chief, will fly an instrument flight to Topeka. There, they will meet up with Lt. Col. Christopher Prather, battalion commander, for a return flight.

10:15

Flight plans reviewed, McNair heads to a company training meeting. During the meeting, upcoming training, classes and sergeants time responsibilities are reviewed.

10:45

McNair heads out to the Black Hawk she'll be flying for a pre-flight inspection. Working with Fouliard and Shively, McNair checks the aircraft for any problems. In between checks, she talks about how she and her husband, a Black Hawk pilot for 3rd Assault Helicopter Bn., 1st Aviation Regt., met while at West Point. Both came to Fort Riley at the same time and deployed to the CAB mid-way through the unit's deployment. Once a pre-flight check is done and the necessary flight briefings reviewed, McNair heads back to her office for lunch.

"Everyone be back by noon or so," Fouliard says. "That way we can take our time with things."

12:15

McNair slides into the cockpit and begins pre-departure procedures and radio checks. Today, she and Fouliard will be dealing with a strong tail wind as they fly, and they talk out the best way to liftoff from the airfield.

13:00

With McNair at the controls, the Black Hawk lifts off from Marshall Army Airfield. It isn't a long flight to the Topeka Municipal Billard Airport – about 35 minutes before the crew touches down. The crew then settles in to wait for Prather, who took off a few minutes after McNair and Fouliard and is flying to Emporia before heading to Topeka.

15:00

Prather arrives at the small airport and the crews visit briefly while his helicopter is refueled. Back in the cockpit, McNair jumps out quickly when a wasp flies out of the control panel.

"I had a traumatic bee incident when I was a child," she

laughed. Once the wasp is killed, the crew climbs back in and starts the engines.

16:00

Both helicopters lift off from Topeka and start back to Fort Riley. This time, Fouliard is at the controls and McNair reads off navigational checkpoints along their flight path.

When they touch down at Fort Riley, the crew does a "hot seat" switch with another crew who is waiting to clock some flight hours. On most flights, she would power down the helicopter and go through some post-flight checks, but this time she, Fouliard and Shively leave the aircraft running and jump out with their gear.

16:45

McNair stashes her flight helmet and equipment in her locker. She spends a little bit of time finishing up on tasks before heading home, which is in Manhattan. McNair said she's unsure if she will stay in aviation, even though she enjoys it.

"I'd like to go to medical school, so if the Army will put me through that, then that's what I'll do," she said.

Photos from left: 1st Lt. Sarah McNair participates in a pilates-yoga class during physical training; meets with Chief Warrant Officer 3 Morgan Fouliard to go over flight plans; checks the blades on a helicopter during a pre-flight inspection (top left); listens in on a pre-flight briefing with Fouliard and Sgt. James Shively; returns to Fort Riley as a second aircraft behind Lt. Col. Christopher Prather; checks navigational points for Fouliard on the return flight; lifts off from Marshall Army Airfield. (Duty First!/Staatz)



2ND HBCT

“Dagger Soldier Leads Squad Outside The Wire”

By **Sgt. Brian Tierce**
2nd HBCT Public Affairs

Staff Sgt. Galo Roman deployed from Fort Riley in October 2008 along with the rest of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team.

Roman is the squad leader for the brigade command sergeant major’s personal security detachment and is tasked with ensuring the CSM can safely traverse the battlefield and visit with Soldiers on a daily basis. Roman is currently serving his fourth deployment since the start of the Global War on Terrorism and has already been accepted into Drill Sergeant School following his redeployment from Iraq.

07:30, MAY 19, CAMP LIBERTY

Roman starts his day on Camp Liberty, a sprawling military base, which is a part of the Victory base complex where he works. The day is already mapped out for Roman and his Soldiers, following a meeting the night before with Command Sgt. Maj. Donald Battle.

“We try to make it a point not to surprise the Soldiers or the units when we come to visit, we make a plan and then we execute the following day,” Roman said.

On this day, the visit will be to see progress being made on expanding Joint Security Station Nasser wa Salaam in the Abu Ghraib district west of Baghdad. The Dagger Brigade assumed responsibility for the area following the departure of the 2nd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, and in an instant tripled the size of their operational environment.

“At first when we heard we would have to expand that far west, we didn’t know what to expect, but after a few trips, we were already getting acquainted with our new routes and all the scenery offered by the farm land west of the big city.”

09:00

Roman heads out to the vehicles to ensure his Soldiers are performing the required pre-mission checks to get the vehicles ready.

“These vehicles aren’t just going from point A to point B,” Roman said. “We are traversing a combat zone where anything could happen and the vehicles and Soldiers need to be operating at their peak performance to ensure we accomplish the mission of transporting Dagger 7 to each destination safely.”



Staff Sgt. Galo Roman, of New York, checks a Soldier's weapon prior to leaving the wire on a mission to the Abu Ghraib district west of Baghdad.

10:00

When Battle gears up and heads out of the brigade’s tactical operations center, it is time for Roman to conduct the mission brief to the Soldiers. Everything is discussed, from the planned route to escalation of force procedures and beyond.

“We leave no stone unturned with our mission briefs,” said Roman. “Before each and every mission, we brief like it is our first, so we never lose that sense of urgency or get complacent. There is too much at risk to let our situational awareness take a break for even a second.”

10:30

With the vehicles loaded and on the move, the convoy heads out of Camp Liberty and onto a military supply route. This specific route recently experienced a rather large explosion and the first matter of business is take a look at the site and engage local Iraqi civilians to see what information they might have about the event.

“One of the things we do on missions is speak with Iraqi

citizens about the events taking place around them,” Roman said. “We show them that we care and we are working to make things better. Once Battle has an idea of what can be done to better protect the populace, he can pass that information along to the brigade commander who can direct support to those in need.”

11:30

Once the Soldiers had taken a look at the site and spoken with a few citizens, it’s back to the vehicles and on with the mission. The drive to their destination does not take to much longer and the Soldier arrive in time to get lunch. Their mission to transport Dagger 7 is complete, but the mission for the senior enlisted leader in the brigade begins when he arrives at the JSS.

“CSM Battle’s mission is to take care of Soldiers,” Roman said. “When we visit the JSS’s, he gets a feel for what the Soldiers’ needs are and gives guidance to the senior leaders in the subordinate units.”

13:00

Once Battle completes his visit to the joint security station, the Soldiers of the PSD snap back into action and begin the process of moving back to Camp Liberty. Though the Soldiers have made the trip numerous times, they know each time is

different and presents its own challenges.

“The situation is always evolving here in Iraq, every time there is an attack we have to analyze and make a determination of how to react and work to prevent being targeted,” Roman said. “We have been successful so far and we hope to keep up the good work.”

14:15

After arriving back at Camp Liberty, clearing weapons and dropping off Dagger 7, Roman and his Soldiers conduct a last round of vehicle maintenance to prepare the vehicles for the next day’s task.

“Once we finish a mission, we begin planning for the next,” Roman said. “We roll out almost every day, so it is a non-stop process of working with the vehicles and Soldiers to keep them all mission ready.”

17:00

To finish off a hard day’s work, Roman and a group of Soldiers from his squad head to the gym to take care of staying in top physical shape.

“Physical fitness is as important – or more important – than anything we do,” Roman said. “Staying in shape keeps the Soldiers’ mission ready and it just makes you feel better overall. At least, it makes me feel better.”



Staff Sgt. Galo Roman of New York walks near the Abu Ghraib market while Command Sgt. Maj. Donald Battle engages local citizens about a recent explosion.

2 HBCT PAO/Tierce

3

RD IBCT

PSD Soldier Patrols, Escorts In Afghanistan

By Anna Staats
Duty First! Magazine

Pfc. Bryan Smitke, 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, joined the Army in 2008 because he wanted to serve his country. The 31-year-old Duluth, Minn., native went to school to become a paramedic and firefighter, but a slumping job market led him to follow the footsteps of his other Family members and join the Army.

"I joined out of a sense of service to my country," Smitke said. "And secondly, it is somewhat of a Family tradition. My grandfather, father, two brothers and several cousins all currently serve or have served in their lifetime."

Smitke is a member of the battalion commander's personal security detachment. While he enlisted as a mortarman, he ended up on the PSD after the unit decided they needed someone able to use the mortar system if needed.

05:00, MAY 19, FOB BLESSING, AFGHANISTAN

Smitke is up early and heads to the gym for physical training. Once that's done, he eats a quick breakfast.

07:00

Smitke helps to prepare vehicles for today's convoy. Lt. Col. Brett Jenkinson, battalion commander, is going to Abad.

08:30

After a convoy brief, Smitke and the rest of the PSD start their patrol, heading south down the Pesh River Road. Smitke said he enjoys being on the PSD.

"I really couldn't ask for a better group of guys to serve with," he said. "The majority of the time, we go with Lt. Col. Jenkinson to do battlefield circulation or go to different meetings in our area of operations."

Smitke notes that often, the unit escorts Jenkinson through "hot" areas. All of the members of the PSD have had heavy crew-served weapons training, as well as dismount training.

09:15

The unit has been on the road for about 45 minutes when they encounter small arms and rocket-propelled grenade fire. The Soldiers return fire, and call for artillery support. Smitke

"I was really shocked when I saw the living conditions of the people here. It's almost like time forgot this area of the world. Most people don't have indoor plumbing, water or electricity – all the things we as Americans take for granted."

—Pfc. Bryan Smitke

estimated that there were three to five enemy forces firing from a cave in the mountain side. The contact lasts about an hour before the unit continues on to Abad.

10:45

Once they arrive in Abad, Jenkinson has meetings to attend. Smitke and his fellow Soldiers clean and check their weapons from the contact earlier and check over the trucks and weapons systems to make sure there is no significant damage and everything is working properly. Once that's complete, it's time for lunch.

"I was really shocked when I saw the living conditions of the people here," Smitke said. "It's almost like time forgot this area of the world. Most people don't have indoor plumbing, water or electricity – all the things we as Americans take for granted. Also, the majority of the buildings are made of straw and mud. Seeing that really made me appreciate where and how I live."

12:30


Smitke is back in his truck, getting ready to leave. About 13:00, the unit starts back to Forward Operating Base Blessing. This time, the trip is uneventful and the Soldiers arrive back around 14:30.

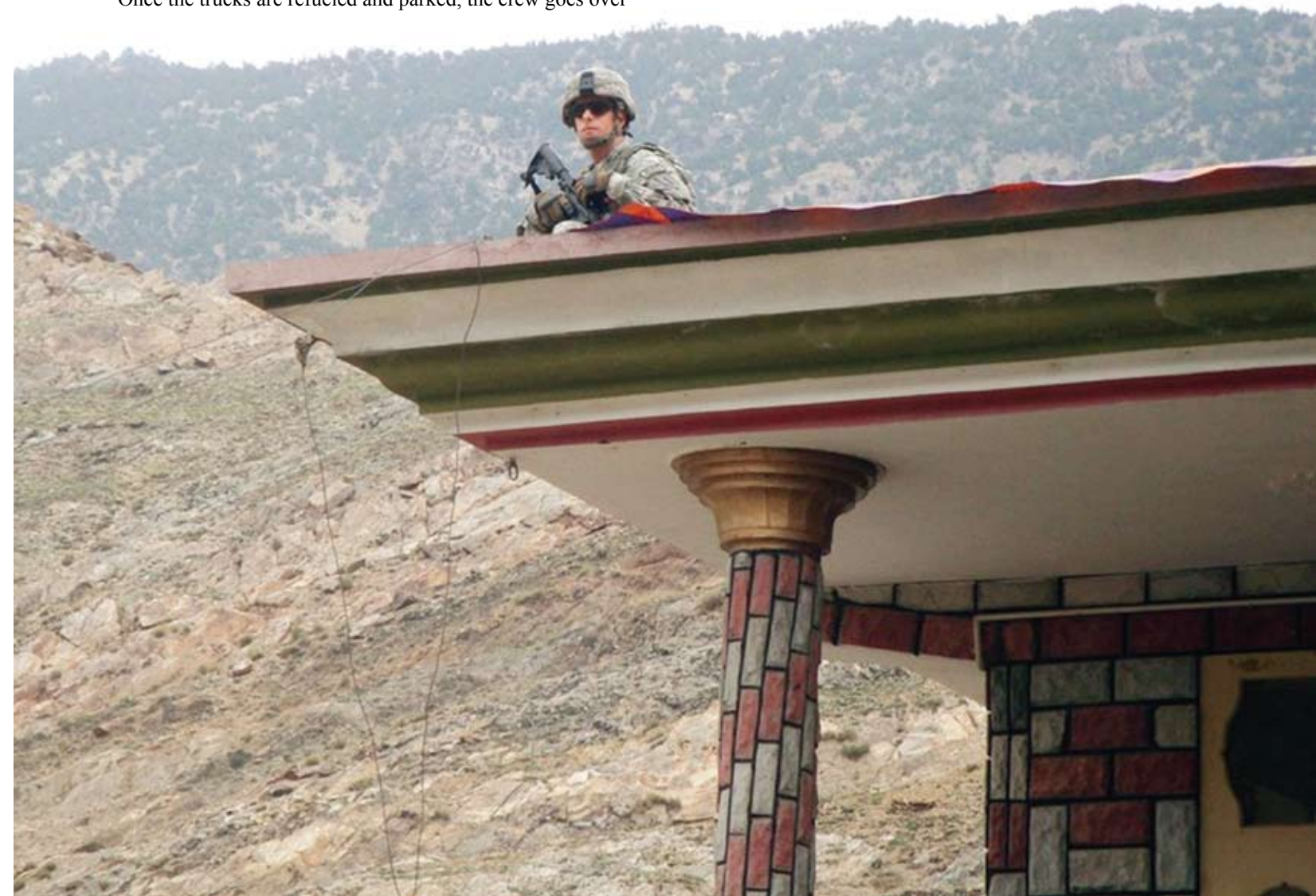
14:45

Once the trucks are refueled and parked, the crew goes over

them one more time and then locks them up for the night.

Smitke's duty day is complete about 15:30. He spends his evening watching movies with his platoon and chatting with his wife and 7 year-old daughter via computer.

"They are my world and the reason above all that I do what I do," Smitke said. "I want them to be safe and if I can shield them from the bad in this world by doing this, then I will." 



Pfc. Bryan Smitke, 1st Bn., 26th Inf. Regt., 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, posts security along a street in Afghanistan. Courtesy Photo

4TH IBCT

Hard Work Means Early Promotion

By *Spc. Shantelle J. Campbell*
4 IBCT PAO

FORT IRWIN, Calif. – Two and a half years ago, Pfc. Jared Blankenship, now a truck driver and driver for his first sergeant with Company A, 701st Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, was staring into a computer screen, “updating his resume.” Unknowingly, this simple act led Blankenship to the military.

With only 17 months in the Army, Blankenship has already gone through the month-long Warrior Leader Course at Fort Sill, Okla., and made the Commandant’s List. A significant accomplishment considering WLC is typically reserved for the Army’s newest noncommissioned officers.

07:00, MAY 19, NATIONAL TRAINING CENTER

Inside the sleep tent of A Co., 701st BSB, Blankenship is already sweaty from his morning run around the dusty, sandy and rocky plains of the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif. At first glance, one would think that the Rockford, N.Y., native’s seemingly boyish facial features meant he could be no more than 18 years old, but he is 30 and married, with a 2-year-old son named Jack.

07:45

After he finishes sweeping and making sure he has all of his gear, Blankenship heads to the motor pool to check on the status of his first sergeant’s vehicle. Along the way, he talks about the three years of college and his job with a mortgage lending company which was life before the Army.

“I had an attitude problem before I came in,” Blankenship said. I didn’t want to join (the military) until I had that under control, so I did other things.”

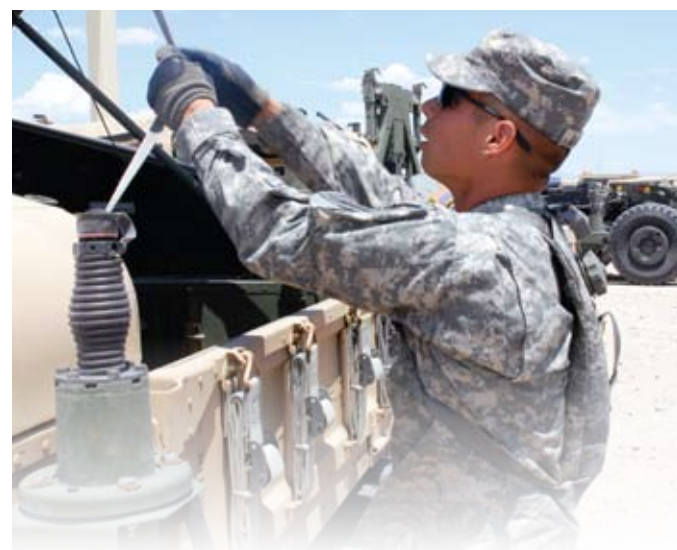
08:00

Blankenship arrives at the motor pool and locates his vehicle. He checks on the Soldier who was operating the vehicle, then exits the motor pool and finds a place to sit so that he could eat the cheeseburger and Twizzlers he bought from one of the many food trucks at NTC.

As he ate his burger, Blankenship admitted his weaknesses, strengths and his concern about his impending promotion



Pfc. Jared M. Blankenship, a truck driver with Company A, 701st Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, inspects the trailer hitch during a pre-maintenance check and service of his Humvee at the National Training Center.



Pfc. Jared M. Blankenship, a truck driver with Company A, 701st Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, makes sure every door and hood of his Humvee functions properly during a pre-maintenance check and service.



Photos by 4IBCT PAO/Campbell

Pfc. Jared M. Blankenship, a truck driver with Company A, 701st Brigade Support Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, unloads boxes during a detail on May 19.

to corporal.

“I’m a little nervous, honestly,” he said. “I didn’t know that I was getting promoted straight to corporal. There are a lot of [specialists] in my company and most of them have already deployed. Then here is a [private first class] who hasn’t deployed, going straight to a corporal who will out-rank them. You have to approach that carefully, because you don’t want to offend anyone.”

08:47

Along with being the first sergeant’s driver, Blankenship is also the company’s public affairs representative. After finishing his burger, he heads to his unit’s headquarters trailer to join the rest of the battalion’s public affairs representatives for a trip to public affairs for media awareness training.

11:33

After the training, Blankenship walks over to a water buffalo and fills his Camelbak. Then, he heads to Burger King for lunch.

12:36

Once he is done with lunch, Blankenship walks back to his tent, taking sips from his Camelbak as he takes heed of the rising temperatures and the very dry heat.

Inside his tent, the coolness provided by the air conditioners is pleasant. But, after sitting on his cot for a while, Blankenship makes a call, then heads back to the motor pool to check on the status of his vehicle and

perform pre-operation checks and a service inspection.

14:00

Blankenship makes his third trip to the motor pool, except this time his mission is different. His Canon Powershot camera accompanies him, so he can practice his picture-taking skills. When he finishes taking pictures of Soldiers in the motor pool, Blankenship goes back to his tent and wanders around, taking random pictures of fellow Soldiers.

14:46

Blankenship is called by his platoon leader to help with moving equipment.

“I have a lot of respect for my company and they have a lot of respect for me,” said Blankenship. “You look at these Diligent Challenges that we do and then Dragon Week, no company in my battalion had as many people do as many events as we did. And, it wasn’t because our leadership made us, it was because we just decided to get out there and do it ... that’s why I love my company because they have good spirit, camaraderie and they try.”

16:38

Blankenship bids farewell as he walks into his tent to change out of his Army Combat Uniform and into his physical training uniform to go on another run.

“I feel alive when I run,” he said. “It kind of helps with the stresses of the day, and it’s like closure for that day ... it’s my motivator and my wake up plan.”

1 ID Soldiers Use Video Games To Ease Tension

By Tyler Abney
Duty First! Magazine

While the average person's work day is eight hours, a Soldier's day is not done until the mission is complete. Long days are simply part of the job, but in the off time, Soldiers need to find a way to escape the routine.

Some Soldiers fish and others ride motorcycles, but Sgt. Cody



Harding, Division Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, 1st Infantry Division and Spc. Clint Whitfield, DHHB, Operations Company, 1st Inf. Div., turn to video games for a relaxing evening or weekend afternoon.

"The reason for me is to break up the monotony of the everyday," Whitfield said. "I have a wife and two kids and coming here [work] every day.

It's something where you can detox pretty much. It's something to relax and beat the everyday stress."

Whitfield said he's been playing since he was old enough to hold the controller and remembers starting out on his brother's Atari playing Pong.

"It was right when Nintendo was first starting to come out," Whitfield said. "They were like three or 400 bucks. He would pull out his Atari and I just remember playing on that for hours."

Over the years, Whitfield said he's played every gaming system, but is currently hooked on the Call of Duty series on Xbox 360. Whitfield blames that on being stationed at Fort Riley. When Whitfield found out he had become part of the Big Red One, he purchased Call of Duty 2: Big Red One.

Whitfield said he enjoys the series because of the versatility it holds in being able to play online or against the computer. Whitfield described himself as a noncompetitive person and only plays to relax.


"I'm not very competitive," Whitfield said. "I do it just for the fun. I deal with so much stress and work, especially with two kids at home that I don't want something where I am tense. I just want something that I can actually kick back and have fun with."

While Whitfield sticks mainly to role-playing games, Harding said he enjoys a variety of gaming systems and genres to explore differences in manufacturers.

"They make a good escape and a decent way to pass time," Harding said. "It's interesting to see how different studios make different games. I play way too much for my own good. Not that it gets in the way of the job, but it's a bit of time."

Harding said he became a game enthusiast at an early age when his dad brought home a Commodore 64 gaming system and eventually advanced to the Nintendo.

Like Whitfield, Harding said he plays online, but prefers playing solo.

"It's interesting to see the 'gamer' culture from the outside," Harding said. "Before, you had groups of friends crowding around a big screen for a Fight Night or a football game, and you still do. Now, you have the same groups crowding around Halo or Call of Duty. It's just friends getting together to have fun." 



Photos by Duty First/Staatz

FAST CARS AND FREEDOM

By Anna Staats
Duty First! Magazine

Maj. Steve Gerber has a love for cars and speed that takes him to the track not quite as often as he'd like.

Gerber has been in the Army 12 years. He served first on the enlisted side as a medic before being accepted at the West Point Preparatory Academy and receiving a commission. Currently a company commander at the Warrior Transition Battalion, the newly promoted major will be on one of the last transition teams to deploy out of Camp Funston.

Gerber went to Heartland Park in April to participate in the Porsche Club high performance driving event and hopes to make it to the track a few more times before deploying. HPDE races are the Porsche Club races, which are timed and have a



Maj. Steve Gerber checks the engine before hitting the track at Heartland Park Raceway.

set amount of laps. HPDE races have different "levels." Beginning drivers are assigned an instructor to ride with them and offer advice and assistance. As a driver becomes more advanced, they race in the higher run groups. While HPDE heats have a set time length for cars to race laps, individual times are not kept. Gerber said all drivers are competitive.

"They tell you it's not a race exactly," Gerber said. "But you end up with a bunch of Type A personalities who want to go fast. We all know who's doing well and who's not."

Gerber and his 2002 Corvette first raced in 2007.

"When I bought it, I wanted to get into some kind of road racing," Gerber said. "I started looking online and I found Heartland Park."

Gerber has to balance his race wants with the practicality of cost and the fact that his Corvette is not just for racing – he drives it to work every day. "I'd love to do this more, but it can get expensive," Gerber said. "The entrance fee was \$325. Once you start adding in the




cost of parts, tires and stuff like that, it gets pricey."

Gerber's three-day event in April saw him in one of the most advanced groups he has ever participated in.

"It was really gratifying in a way to be recognized as someone who's safe and respectful, but can still hang with the more experienced drivers and cars," he said.

While in the garage working on his car before a heat, Gerber said sometimes people don't get his interest in racing.

"To me, if you have a fast car, who wouldn't want the chance to get out there and at least try?" he said. "I don't think there's any normal, red-blooded male out there who doesn't like the competition, plus the speed and excitement." 

Duty First! Magazine/Staatz

Maj. Steve Gerber (in the red Corvette) speeds down the straightaway at Heartland Park.

Tap Out or Pass Out

By Tyler Abney
Duty First! Magazine

Few things draw a crowd like a good fight. May 4-5, King Field House at Fort Riley packed out quickly as Soldiers from the 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team faced off with each other during the combatives and boxing portions of Dragon Week.

Dragon Week featured a wide range of competitions in everything from combatives to stress shoots and ruck marches, all designed to showcase the physical abilities of "Dragon" Brigade Soldiers.

Red mats for the combatives tournament covered one half of the gymnasium floor as Soldiers donning Army Combat Uniforms and ear phones moved about trying to stay loose for their upcoming match. Fans shouted words of encouragement to members of their respective units and thundering "OH's!" rattled the gym every time a fighter was slammed to the mat.

The competition had four weight classes, 164 and under, 165 to 184 pounds, 185 to 204 and 205 and over. The two-day, single elimination tournament featured Soldiers using grappling and submission skills on the first day and a combination of the two, plus open hand slaps on the second. For a Soldier to advance to the second day they had to finish the first in the final four of their weight class.

Spc. Raymond Moungey

Standing over six-feet tall, Spc. Raymond Moungey, 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry Regiment, began competing while at basic training. An ex-football player and wrestler, Moungey is no stranger to contact sports, so participating in a combatives tournament comes as second nature.

The barrel-chested fighter competes in the heavyweight division and possesses a combination of strength and speed which allows him to out-manuever and out-man his opponent. Upon his arrival to Fort Riley, Moungey enrolled in and passed both the level one and level two combatives courses, making him eligible to take the level three course and eventually become an instructor.

As the tournament began, several fighters went through their pre-fight routine of stretching and psyching themselves up. Not Moungey. Sitting calmly, he kept his eyes focused forward as if envisioning the fight before it happened. Eventually, his bout was called. Almost lethargically, he rose to his feet and went to work on his opponent.

A three-year combatives veteran, this isn't Moungey's first tournament. In fact, it's a relatively minor stage to ones he's previously competed on. Besides participating in a prior Dragon Week, he took part in two post-wide tournaments at Fort Riley in addition to the All-Army tournament in 2006.

Moungey made it through the first day of the tournament unscathed, but lost his first match on day two and took third

place. While winning the tournament would have been nice, Moungey said he doesn't find total success in victory. Instead, he views the competition within the sport to be more valuable.

"If I know the guy I'm fighting is really good, it's an adrenaline rush and hypes me up because I know it's somebody who will compete against me," Moungey said. "If I'm going against a guy who just joined the Army, like a private that doesn't really know that much, I try to finish it quick, but also help teach them. Even in tournaments, when I'm fighting, I'll whisper in their ear to help them out so they can learn."

Learning the ropes of combatives and preparing properly is crucial to success in the sport. Moungey said he spent approximately 20 hours per week in the combatives center tuning up for the tournament.

While Moungey's prior wrestling skills do help, he said he altars his fighting style depending on the style of his competition.

"Being a heavyweight is a challenge because you get guys that have technique that can go the distance or you get heavier guys that just lay on you. When you get to the lower end of the weight class where I'm at, you get the guys with more technique and quickness."

Spc. Brandon Currie

While Moungey may have been an experienced combatives fighter, Spc. Brandon Currie, 1st Bn., 28th Inf. Regt., was trying his hand at the sport for the first time. From Cocoa Beach, Fla., Currie wrestled all four years of high school and was the

189-pound state champion his senior year.

"It's something I've been interested in forever," he said. "When I was wrestling I was interested in MMA [mixed martial arts]. I loved watching it on TV and have wanted to do something like this since I joined the Army."

Currie fought in the 185 to 204-pound class, winning his first match by points and losing his second by submission. He did not advance to the second day of the contest, but said his wrestling background helped him be competitive.

"I'm a really good wrestler," Currie said. "I've got really good takedowns, so it would be silly not to use it."

Like Moungey, Currie took a 30-hour combatives course to prepare for the tournament, but also used cross-fit exercises to get into fighting shape.

"It's a blend of cardio, weight lifting and body weight exercises," Currie said. "It's a really short work out. I don't really have anybody to train the grappling with, so I just try to make sure my endurance is where it needs to be. I'd do PT in the morning then get off work and do PT again."

Currie's wrestling skills and extra work paid off in the fact that he didn't get too winded, but having only a week to prepare for his first tournament made him vulnerable to fighters with more experience.

"It was fun," Currie said. "The first guy, I could not get to tap and the second guy obviously got me to tap. I don't think I would have lasted ten seconds with out it [a wrestling background]."



Spc. Brandon Currie, 1st Bn., 28th Inf. Regt., maneuvers on top of his opponent during the Dragon Week combatives tournament at King Field House.



Spc. Raymond Moungey, 2nd Bn., 16th Inf. Regt., maneuvers for control during the Dragon Week combatives tournament.



Spc. Raymond Moungey, 2nd Bn., 16th Inf. Regt., puts his opponent in a hold at the Dragon Week combatives tournament at King Field House.



Spc. Brandon Currie, 1st Bn., 28th Inf. Regt., locks in a choke hold during the Dragon Week combatives tournament at King Field House.

History Of The Big Red One Desert Storm

Compiled by Gary Skidmore
Duty First! Magazine

The 1st Infantry Division was put on alert for deployment to Saudi Arabia on Nov. 8, 1990, after Iraq's Saddam Hussein attacked Kuwait and tried to annex the country. The division deployed more than 12,000 Soldiers and 7,000 pieces of equipment over the next two months.

Just after midnight on Jan. 17, 1991, President George Bush gave the order for U.S. troops to lead an international coalition in an attack on Hussein's army.

General Norman Schwarzkopf led "Operation Desert Storm," which began with a massive bombing of Hussein's armies in Iraq and Kuwait.

On the morning of Feb. 24, 1991, under the command of now retired Maj. Gen. Thomas G. Rhame, the Big Red One spearheaded the armored attack into Iraq by creating the all-important breach into Iraqi defenses. The breach enabled VII Corps units to smash into Iraq.

"I really wanted the Big Red One to do the breach," said retired Lt. Gen. Tommy Franks, VII Corps commanding general. "I knew they had done a lot of work at the National Training Center, practicing breach procedures.

"It was a tough mission," said Franks. "It was a tough mission on three counts: one, the actual breach operation – clearing 24 lanes for the passage, and then passing the 1st British Armored Division through them. Secondly, the logistics of the Corps to pass through, and then third, it turns out the 1st Cavalry Division passed through the breach as well. It was a tough, complex mission. It required a lot of rehearsal, some new techniques developed and a lot of coordination."

The massive amount of men and equipment which were prepared for the charge was incredible.

"I remember that night before we lit the sky up. We went through the berm and I saw the largest tank transfer since World War II. We passed the British through," said retired Chap. (Lt. Col.) John Cottingham, 1st Inf. Div. chaplain.

The division broke through enemy defensive lines, decimated the Iraqi 26th Inf. Div. and took more than 2,500 prisoners. By passing British 1st Armored Division through, it allowed

the momentum of the coalition force's attack to continue. The division then followed and drove to the east deep into enemy territory.


Continuing its attack, the division collided with the Tawalakana Division, Republican Guard and the 37th Brigade of the 12th Iraqi Tank Division. On the night of Feb. 26, the Big Red One destroyed both units. Enemy losses included more than 40 tanks and 40 infantry fighting vehicles.

Following the Battle of Norfolk, the division raced ahead to cut off the Iraqi lines of retreat from Kuwait City. BRO elements destroyed scores of enemy vehicles and took thousands of prisoners as they advanced.

By 8 p.m., Feb. 27, the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, had seized the main highway leading north out of Kuwait, barring the Iraqis' escape. By the next morning, the rest of the division had taken up positions along the highway and fully secured it.

At 8 a.m., Feb. 28, the war was over when a cease-fire was called. The Big Red One had fought through 260 kilometers of enemy-held territory in 100 hours, destroying 550 enemy tanks, 480 armored personnel carriers, and taking 11,400 prisoners. Eighteen of the division's Soldiers were killed in the war.

The division earned three campaign streamers for its colors: Defense of Saudi Arabia, Liberation and Defense of Kuwait and Cease Fire.

On Mar. 3, negotiations were held between coalition forces and Iraqi leaders to cement the cease-fire agreements. The division secured the site of the agreements at Safwan airfield. Following this, the division prepared for its return home, and on May 10, the Big Red One unfurled its colors back home at Fort Riley, signifying its return home. 



"Duke" Brigade Returns Home

By Anna Staatz
Duty First! Magazine

In a deployment that has been a testament to the flexibility of the modern Soldier, members of the 3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team spent 12 months working with and training Afghan Security Forces while building and establishing infrastructure in four provinces.

The "Duke" Brigade is currently redeploying to Fort Hood, Texas, from Afghanistan and will soon restation to Fort Knox, Ky.

Col. John Spiszer, Duke commander, determined early in the brigade's deployment that the priority projects for the unit would be roads, schools, agriculture, infrastructure and power. Roads were of primary importance, said Maj. Skip Masterson, brigade S-9, noting that in Afghanistan, no roads often means no schools, clinics, bazaars, or interaction between


villages. Near the end of its deployment, the Duke brigade had about 450 kilometers of roads under construction, in addition to completing construction on new schools, health care clinics, wells and power plants. Masterson said while the progress meant success, true achievement couldn't be measured with construction projects.

"The legacy that Task Force Duke will leave for the proud population of this area is the opportunity to live a full life that is free from tyranny, and has an improved quality of life, expanded educational opportunities for their children, and the potential for full realization of a national identity in their lifetimes."

**– Maj. Skip Masterson, S-9,
"Duke" Brigade**

"The legacy that Task Force Duke will leave for the proud population of this area is the opportunity to live a full life that is free from tyranny, and has an improved quality of life, expanded educational opportunities for their children, and the potential for full realization of a national identity in their lifetimes," Masterson said.

Soldiers in 3rd IBCB also worked side-by-side with Afghan Security Forces, assisting with both training and combat operations.

The brigade is expected to be completely redeployed by the end of July. 



An Afghan National Police member treats a simulated gunshot wound to the chest of Spc. Alan Bunting, 527th Military Police Company, May 10.



3IBCT PAO/Hopkins
Army Sgt. Levi Bradstream, an infantryman with pulls security as Spc. Anthony Janda comes up an ancient trail over a mountain in Afghanistan's northeastern province of Kunar April 10.

Honoring D-Day's Heroes



By 1st Inf. Div. Public Affairs

The 65th Anniversary of the D-Day landings was celebrated June 6 at the Eisenhower Center in Abilene.

The day started with a parade. The 1st Infantry Division was represented with Maj. Gen. Vincent Brooks, commanding general of the 1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley and Division Command Sergeant Major Jim Champagne leading the 1st Infantry Division Band and elements of the 1st Combat Aviation Brigade and 1st Sustainment Brigade.

The Eisenhower Center grounds were filled with re-enactors representing Soldiers from the World War II era and a static display of equipment used by the Soldiers of the Big Red One.

Photos: Duty First!/Skidmore



By The 1st Division Museum

The First Division Museum at Cantigny Park in Wheaton, Ill., commemorated the 65th anniversary of D-Day on June 6 by holding ceremonies to honor those who made the historic assault that day as well as all World War II veterans. Approximately 495 World War II veterans attended, of whom 107 were D-Day veterans. More than 6,100 people came to the special events that day, which included a memorial service and the commemoration service where the museum also dedicated its recently acquired rare World War II Landing Craft, Vehicle and Personnel (LCVP). Also known as a "Higgins boat" after its designer, Andrew Higgins, Cantigny's LCVP is the same type used to deliver soldiers onto the beach in Normandy on D-Day in 1944. About 22,000 LCVPs were manufactured during World War II but only a dozen or fewer still exist.

Active-duty 1st Infantry Division Soldiers from Fort Riley also participated in the June 6 events. The Soldiers arrived aboard three different military helicopters and some served as the color guard for the day's events. Park visitors were able to meet the troops and see the aircraft up close. Historic vehicles from the First Division Museum's collection were displayed as well. Retired Brig. Gen. Dave Grange, former Danger Six, was the guest speaker.

The First Division Museum is part of the Cantigny First Division Foundation, which honors and remembers the Big Red One.

Photos courtesy of the 1st Division Museum at Cantigny



1st Infantry Division at War

1st Infantry Division

Oldest continuously serving division in the United States Army. More than 7,000 Soldiers from two brigades are deployed.

Primarily located in Fort Riley, Kan.; training responsibility extends to four other states: Kentucky, Oklahoma, Missouri and Texas.

The Division modularized in fall 2008. Preparing for deployment in early 2010.

1st Brigade, Fort Riley
Trains transition teams. So far, more than 11,000 servicemembers have trained and deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan and more than 1,800 have redeployed. Transition Teams live and work with Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and the Afghan National Army (ANA). The brigade is scheduled to begin in late 2009.

3rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), Iraq
Provides theater logistics command and control for the theater commander supporting the Army Forces (ARFOR) and Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) mission. Deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in May 2008.

75th Fires Brigade, Fort Sill
Integrates attached ground and air maneuver forces and on order functions as a maneuver headquarters in support of full spectrum operations. Subordinate battalions currently deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa.

1st Combat Aviation Brigade Combat Team, Fort Riley
Completed a 15 month deployment to Iraq and redeployed to Fort Riley, Kan. in December 2008.

1st Sustainment Brigade, Fort Riley
Provides logistic, human resource and financial management support. The brigade redeployed to Fort Riley, Kan., in December 2008.

4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Fort Riley
Currently resetting at Fort Riley, Kan., the brigade is training for a second deployment to Iraq. The brigade is scheduled to deploy in late summer 2009.

3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Afghanistan
Deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in June 2008. The deployment is scheduled to last 12 months, during which Soldiers will conduct counterinsurgency and stability operations.

2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, Iraq
The brigade departed Fort Riley, Kan., in October 2008 on a scheduled 12-month deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

4th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, Fort Leonard Wood
The 4th MEB has unique staff is composed of engineer, military police, and chemical cells and organically has a brigade support battalion and a signal company. The brigade was activated at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., in October 2008.

75TH FIRES Command Changes Hands

By Sgt. David Chapman
75th Fires Brigade PAO

FORT SILL, Okla. – Command of the 75th Fires Brigade was handed off to Col. Joseph Harrington during a change of command ceremony May 19 at post polo grounds Fort Sill, Okla.

Guest speaker Maj. Gen. Vincent K. Brooks, commanding general of the 1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley, expressed his thanks to the outgoing commander and his family.

“Over the past few years Dominic and Helen Pompelia have provided superior guidance, leadership, compassion and care for the Soldiers and families of the 75th Fires Brigade,” Brooks said. “Dom, I congratulate you and Helen both. I also congratulate your headquarters and your units for handling such complex challenges with such professionalism. You have absolutely made an impact here at Fort Sill and everywhere our Army has boots on the ground. We thank you for your service, dedication and your care for the families of this brigade.”

Brooks welcomed Harrington and his family to the command with some words of wisdom.

“My challenge to you is cherish every day of command. While you are leading these valiant Soldiers and families to new and greater heights, know that we at the Big Red One are always in reach, always in range and always at your service,” Brooks said.

Pompelia shared his thanks and appreciation with those in attendance for the members of the brigade during his time in command.

“I want to especially thank all the Soldiers on the field today. Thank you for not only what you are doing today, but for every day you are in the Army. I fully realize that each of you has choices and you chose to be here in service to our nation,” Pompelia said. “The fact that you have chosen to be part of our Army speaks volumes about your patriotism, dedication and desire to serve our nation. Simply stated, you are our nation’s greatest resource.”

Harrington said he looked forward to being a part of the unit, noting that it had been in good hands before he got to it.

“I want to publicly thank Col. Dom Pompelia and his lovely wife, Helen. It’s obvious the Soldiers of the 75th were in good hands under your leadership, and your gracious professionalism during our transition has been superb,” Harrington said. “I am honored and humbled by the opportunity to lead the Soldiers of the 75th and I look forward to being part of the Big Red One and Fort Sill teams.”



75th Fires Brigade PAO/Chapman

Maj. Gen. Vincent Brooks, commander of the 1st Infantry Division and Fort Riley, accepts the 75th Fires Brigade colors from Col. Dominic Pompelia Jr., outgoing 75th Fires Brigade commander May 19 during a change of command ceremony at the Fort Sill polo grounds.

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