

# DEMON



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Engine... Check.  
Maintaining Combat Power... Check.**

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"This represents the first time we're training the next generation of the new Iraqi pilots." -- BRIG. GEN. STEPHEN HOOG

# Briefing

**THE MOMENT**



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Troth



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On the cover: Photo by Spc. Michael Howard. Chief Warrant Officer 2 Joshua Locke, a CH-47 Chinook pilot with 2-1 GSAB, conducts preflight checks on his aircraft before an air assault mission April 6-7

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## U.S. Forces are working to rebuild Iraq's aviation program, and it just might be the biggest thing going. Why aviation is the invisible cornerstone of Iraqi progress

The U.S. has made revamping Iraq's decimated air force a top priority, and it is the best decision we've made. We have a difficult task before us.

Though the Iraqi air force was the envy of the Arab world in the early nineties, with more than 900 top-of-the-line aircraft, the IAF after the

invasion was a shell of its former self, with 28 aircraft and an average pilot age of 46. The effort to revamp the IAF is off to a strong start. The U.S. refurbished five UH-1 Hueys, and the Iraqis now have a force of more than 60 aircraft, more than half of which are helicopters.

Just as important, the U.S. is creating an initial flight training program under Air Force Brig. Gen. Stephen Hoog to ensure that the aging crop of Iraqi pilots will be replaced. Why is this so important? An increased aviation role in the Iraqi transition effort has paid great dividends for the overall security of Iraq. IED attacks are down significantly due to coverage provided by aviation brigades across Iraq.

For the Iraqis to continue this successful trend, it is essential that they have an air force capable of securing their skies. If the Iraqi government can continue the trend we've begun through donations and training programs, it should be clear skies and sunny days ahead for Iraq.

**It is essential that the Iraqis have the wherewithal to continue securing their skies**

BY SPC. MICHAEL HOWARD

Demon Team, your focus on the mission and dedication to excellence on the battlefield is impressive. Entering the eighth month of deployment, you continue to build an impressive list of accomplishments in Multi-National Division-North.

At the halfway point, our organization has reached an extraordinary level of competence. You are extremely good at what you do. The missions that you once found grueling and difficult are now routine; tasks and maintenance take less time due to repetition and extremely hard work. My challenge to you is not to let competence give way to complacency.

Ensure that you are continuing to follow standard operating procedures, checklists and regulations. There is no excuse for cutting corners.

You must continue to acclimate to the changing temperatures; leaders at all levels, continue to monitor your troops. Hydrate! Ensure that we don't allow the environment to take Soldiers out of the fight.

Since initiating combat operations, we continue to see positive results on the battlefield, and we are providing

**Make a Difference.** Team Demon has continued to sustain a blistering pace and has the ability to surge when necessary. Your sacrifices are making a positive impact on Iraq. **Col. Jessie O. Farrington speaks out on the heroic everyman and the everyman heroes**



Photo by Staff Sgt. Franklin Angelo

exceptional support to all of the Brigade Combat Teams. Our Strike packages are well-integrated and continue to target and capture insurgents. Our Attack Weapons Teams and Scout Weapons Teams remain lethal and serve

as a tremendous deterrent to the enemy. Our Iron Express missions safely move Soldiers and cargo throughout northern Iraq. This month we conducted more Air Assaults than any other month to date, and we are inserting Soldiers at the right place

and time to take the fight to the enemy. Above all, our maintainers continue to produce outstanding results. Continue your momentum and look for ways to accomplish this mission better.

We accomplish all of these feats on a daily basis by working together as a team. Continue to solve problems at the lowest level; your chain of command will ensure you are successful. Leaders, I expect you to be where it is most difficult and most dangerous.

Keep up the outstanding work. If we attack the remaining months in theater with the same focus and drive as we have the past eight, we will leave a fantastic legacy for Army Aviation Operations in Multi-National Division-North that you and our Army can be very proud of. No Mission Too Difficult; No Sacrifice Too Great. Duty First! Demons!

**Col. Jessie O. Farrington is the commander of the Combat Aviation Brigade**

**Standards and Discipline.** As the Combat Aviation Brigade team begins to hit its stride, leaders must make a good team better by encouraging and mentoring their Soldiers. **Command Sgt. Maj. Buddy Wallace speaks out on keeping Soldiers motivated and effective**

The CAB has reached the halfway point of our deployment and there have been many highlights. Our Soldiers and NCOs continue to stay on course. Throughout this deployment, I've been fortunate to be able to visit all of the battalions and our satellite outposts. I must say I have witnessed a significant growth in our Soldiers, more specifically, specialists and their front line leaders. In many cases these Soldiers can take charge in the absence of their leaders. There are many junior Soldiers doing more than is expected of them. It is these young Soldiers, who are taking the initiative to be more responsible, who will be our future NCOs.

It is the obligation and duty of senior and junior NCOs to develop and coach our young troops. I ask senior NCOs to continue to do an outstanding job preparing our junior enlisted members to function individually, as well as part of a team. In addition, I ask junior NCOs to



Photo by Staff Sgt. Franklin Angelo

provide specific guidance to Soldiers regarding the Enlisted Promotion System. I want junior leaders to counsel and address the individual concerns of Soldiers and give them a road map of what they need to do in order to continue their progres-

sion. We are a nation at war and we need NCOs that can lead Soldiers in combat.

Institutional knowledge, proper use of the evaluation systems and intense training on various platforms will assist us in this process. I want

NCOs both senior and junior to mentor their subordinates and make sure they are developing not only in their MOS skills but as leaders. Individual guidance, along with care and concern at all levels will provide a foundation to reinforce the process.

Having the necessary guidance is just the first step. Personal responsibility is just as important. Whether it is signing-up for correspondence courses or making sure that paperwork has been submitted for enrollment in a residence course, Soldiers must follow-up and follow through with their plans.

As we continue to prepare for upcoming missions, we need to remain focused on our objectives. Those involved in training, preparation and support need to do the best they can while ensuring they always do the right thing. I like to refer to the CAB as Team Demon. It will take a continued team effort to finish our 15-month tour and return home safely. I ask that NCOs and Soldiers work together during every phase of planning, coordinating and execution of each mission.

**Command Sgt. Maj. Buddy Wallace is the command sergeant major of the Combat Aviation Brigade**

**Patience.** Chaplain (Maj.) Suk Jong Lee talks about the meaning of patience and why it's important to wait for God. **The Combat Aviation Brigade chaplain speaks from the land of Jesus' birth**

Have you ever wished that you had enough patience to wait on God to work out the issues in your life? Have you had a personal experience that lack of patience made your life more difficult than it would have been had you waited patiently?

The Bible has a great example of how much trouble lack of patience can create in one's life. In the Book of Genesis, God promised Abraham great wealth and descendants when he was called out of his hometown to the foreign land which God was leading him and his family. As he settled in new places God was leading them, he indeed became prosperous and rich, but he and his wife didn't have any children.

Abraham was ready to accept that he might not have his own son and willing to pass down his inheritance to one of his servants when God reminded him again that he would be blessed with many descendants. But his wife Sarah had another plan to speed up God's plan for them. According to Genesis 16, Sarah told her husband, Abraham, to lie down with her maid servant, Hagar, to produce an heir. Something like a surrogate mother of today's world, I guess.

However, Sarah's plan didn't work out as smoothly as she planned it. Hagar did get pregnant, but that was the beginning



Photo by Spc. Michael Howard

**Waiting:** Chaplain (Maj.) Suk Jong Lee uses the example of the story of Abraham to explain the importance of patience

of the family's problem. As soon as Hagar found out she was with a child, she began to be disrespectful toward Sarah and Sarah didn't handle it well. Sarah, in turn, mistreated Hagar so much that Hagar ran away. Even before the child was born, Hagar became a source of headache and heartache not only for Sarah but also for Abraham. Hagar eventually came back and bore a son which Abraham named him Ishmael. Abraham was eighty-six years old.

But Ishmael was not the son God promised Abraham and Sarah. Ishmael continued to be the source of heartache and headache in Sarah's life even after she had her own son, Isaac, when Abraham was one hundred years old.

Sarah was determined to get Ishmael out of the lives of Abraham and Isaac. She succeeded in sending Ishmael and Hagar away from her family.

Can you imagine the dilemma Abraham was in, being caught between his first born child and his wife? If only they had waited on God for their heir to be born, they would have spared so much pain in their lives.

When we think God is working too slowly for us He may be waiting for us to be ready for the next phase of our lives. God may be training us to be prepared to handle the next challenges of our lives before we can reap the benefit of all God's blessings in our lives.

**Across Iraq.** 101st Soldiers put their heads together to bring a community together through their shared love for a sport. **Everything I needed to know I learned at basketball camp**

BY STAFF SGT. TONY M. LINDBACK

Radwaniyah area children were treated to something a little out of the ordinary when U.S. Soldiers at Patrol Base Lion's Den held a basketball camp, March 20-22.

Holding a basketball camp where Soldiers could teach teamwork, discipline and hard work, resulted from Staff Sgt. Christopher Dickerson and his company commander, Capt. Sean Morrow, putting their heads together.

Dickerson and Morrow wanted Company B, 2nd Battalion, 69th Armor Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault), to give back to the community and get the kids in the area together. Their idea won the support of many company Soldiers, some of whom, like Sgt. Dwight Williams, added ideas and manpower to make the camp a hit.

Williams, originally from Birmingham, Ala., has a brother who holds a basketball camp at home every summer.

"Being over here this time, I got to work with the Iraqi kids and I felt just like I was back at home," Williams said. "I was able to give back to the community."

Giving back to Radwaniyah has involved more than just teaching basketball. One sheikh said the security the Americans had established was the first gift to the community.

"Thanks to God, the Iraqi army



Photo by Staff Sgt. Tony M. Lindback

Sgt. Dwight Williams helps a small child get closer to the basket during the first day of a three-day basketball camp at Patrol Base Lion's Den

and the coalition forces, the security is very good," said Sheikh Hameed Shalal Al-Tharib, a local leader in Radwaniyah. "That makes a good situation where our kids can play soccer, or come here and learn basketball."

Williams said he felt the Iraqi children may have had a misunderstanding of why Americans are in Iraq and the basketball camp was one way to show them what kind of people Americans really are.

Eighteen children showed up for the first day of the three-day camp, 27 came on the second day and there were 47 by the last day.

"It's just like spreading the word back home; if one kid likes it, he's going to tell a friend and then he'll tell a friend," Williams said. "We

were just glad to have so many kids come out."

The children formed teams and played a championship game at the culmination of camp, allowing them to show off what they had learned. They were then treated to a cookout and given awards.

Twenty-five children got one more thing – their very own Quran.

"In my brother's camp (in Birmingham) we give out Bibles," Williams said. "Here, a lot of families don't have Qurans, so we gave out Qurans ... Giving out a Quran is letting them know, 'I respect your religion, just like I respect mine.'"

Local sheikhs happily brought the Qurans at Morrow's request.

# Where eagles dare

The Fighting Eagles of 2-1 GSAB coordinate and execute a flawless air assault. Here's what happens once the Eagles have landed

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SPC. MICHAEL HOWARD

**Flash of brilliance** Illuminated by a flare, Spc. Jonathan M. Gieser, a CH-47 Chinook crew chief with 2-1 GSAB, sits at his M249 Squad Automatic Weapon at the ramp of a Chinook during a joint air assault mission April 6-7

**F**or something planned so painstakingly, the execution of one of the Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division's air assaults unfolds in a flash. Literally. AH-64 Apaches drop out of nowhere and fill the sky with illumination rockets. Seconds later, multiple Chinooks land and dark waves of troops pour out of their backs. The Apaches fire a second round of illumination as teams of American and Iraqi Special Forces rush through the buildings, often capturing their targets before they even have a chance to recover from their shock. When the mission is complete, the Chinooks rematerialize, swallow up the troops, and fade into the night. To the layman, it may seem like planning and coordinating such an aerial blitzkrieg would be a monumental task. It is.

The air assault began at 5 p.m., April 6. The Chinook pilots, just leaving their final brief, turn around and update their crew chiefs, who were busy preflighting the bird.

Chinook guys have a hard time of it these days. Less than 10 percent of the brigade's aircraft are Chinooks. Problem is, ground commanders want to deliver massive combat power to their target, and the Chinook is the only helicopter that can do it. Think 30 troops to a Black Hawk's 10. With few birds and a lot of requests, air assaults are pretty routine for the pilots of 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment, said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Joshua Locke, one of the CH-47 pilots who participated in the mission.

At 7:30 p.m., the pilots get the word and lift into the air. They test-fire their weapons at a range nearby. With that accomplished, it's off to Forward Operating Base



**Giving the Greenlight**  
*A U.S. Special Forces Soldier performs a last minute inspection of an Iraqi Special Operation Forces Soldier*

**Pit Stop Fuelers at Forward Operating Base Warrior**  
*rush to refuel 2-1 GSAB Chinooks*



**Santa Monica**  
For more photos of Operation Santa Monica, go to [www.dvidshub.net/units/CAB-1id](http://www.dvidshub.net/units/CAB-1id)

Warrior to refuel. With lights off, NVG equipped fuelers rush the bird and fill the tanks with enough petrol to last the mission. The birds are up and flying again inside of 15 minutes.

Night is a Chinook pilot's best friend. If insurgents hit a Chinook it would be catastrophic, so the pilots do everything in their power to make sure that doesn't happen. To minimize the risk to pilots and passengers alike, "we use every available asset. Number one, we use the cloak of darkness. Number two, we do extensive route planning to ensure we avoid any areas where they may have an advantage," said Locke, "We also use escorts to defend us from attacks. We have the Longbows who stay with us for these deep infiltrations, or any scout weapons teams that might be there. So we have quite a few factors working in our favor."

Flying in darkness requires the use of night vision goggles, which in turn requires a highly trained and skilled pilot. Flying with NVG's brings up a spate of difficulties which only an experienced pilot can overcome. "Number one, your depth perception is off. Number two, your apparent rate of closure and ground speed are in error because you have no peripheral vision," said Locke.

Just before 11 p.m., the Chinooks arrive at a remote Iraqi base, FOB Gabe. As they land at the base, a group of U.S. Army Special Forces Soldiers and Iraqi Special Operation Forces Soldiers are waiting in the darkness.

The Americans have spent months training with the Iraqi SFO. The payoff is almost at hand. The troops practice rushing onto and off the aircraft, first with lights, and then without. The American SF

**AIR ASSAULTS**

**By the numbers**

**45000**

Square miles the CAB is responsible for securing

**131**

Air assaults conducted since October 1st

**10**

Number of Soldiers a Black Hawk is capable of putting on a target

**30**

Number of Soldiers a Chinook is capable of putting on a target

are equipped with NVGs, the Iraqis only with head mounted flashlights. They will be highly dependent on the illumination rounds that will come from the Apaches overhead. As the Chinooks approach the LZ, the tension in the air is palpable among Americans and Iraqis alike.

The Chinook begins a rapid descent, and the ramp at the rear closes partway to minimize the dust the rotors kick up. The Chinook touches the ground lightly, a textbook landing. The ramp falls, and the SF Soldiers rush out. Within 30 seconds, the aircraft is airborne again, and moving toward FOB Warrior.

At this point, the forces part ways. An air assault is a bit more complex than the casual observer might imagine. Long before the infantry-laden Chinooks arrive with



their gun-toting payloads, Apaches, a 2-man attack and reconnaissance helicopter with state of the art surveillance equipment, are hovering high above the village, so high that the Iraqis can't see or hear them at all. They provide real-time data to mission control in the rear, who in turn feeds the real-time information to the Chinook pilots as they approach the LZ.

When the Chinooks drop their payload, they return to a nearby

**The Wait**

*American Special Forces and Iraqi Special Operation Forces Soldiers wait together aboard a 2-1 GSAB CH-47 Chinook for their drop off*

**Souvenir**

*An Iraqi Special Operation Forces Soldier activates his chem-lights moments before landing during a 2-1 GSAB air assault mission in northern Iraq*

base, where they wait until they are needed for extraction.

The Apaches stay overhead for the remainder of the mission, providing a feed of the mission for the CABs tactical operations center, and standing by in case the ground forces need direct air support.

Downtime is cut short when the pilots receive the call from the ground commander: The SF have finished early, the mission is complete, and they are ready for

extraction. On the whole, it's good news for the crew. Sure, dinner is cut short, but this means they are getting home at 3 a.m. instead of 5.

Ten minutes later, the chow is nowhere to be seen, the rotors are turning, the lights are off as the crew lifts off the helipad and speeds toward the extraction point.

The Chinook arrives, the Apaches fire the illumination rockets and the Chinook touches down, a little harder this time. The SF rush

**Refuel**

*Spc. Jonathan M. Gieser, a CH-47 Chinook crew chief with 2-1 GSAB sits on the ramp of a Chinook during a 2-1 air assault mission*

aboard the Chinook, high value targets alive and in hand.

"I think it went very smoothly. We had a perfect takeoff, perfect landing, we made it to the pickup zone, we rehearsed the infiltration and exfiltration. We were

able to take off from there, make it to the landing zone without incident, everything went smoothly, no problems with the aircraft, no problems with people getting off," said Spc. Jonathan M. Gieser, CH-47 Crew chief who participated in the mission, "I understand that the mission went there, they moved through the town ahead of schedule, captured their targets, and reboarded the aircraft without incident. It was a perfect night."

## JOINT OPERATIONS

### Spc. Jonathan M. Gieser, CH-47 flight engineer

#### WHAT HE SAID

*I think it went very smoothly. We had a perfect takeoff, perfect landing, we made it to the pickup zone. [Special Forces] captured their targets, and reboarded the aircraft without incident. It was a perfect night.*

#### WHAT HE DID

As Flight Engineer, Gieser took his position in the chalk's lead aircraft and provided precious information to the crew throughout the entirety of Operation Santa Monica.



### Chief Warrant officer 2 Joshua Locke, CH-47 pilot

#### WHAT HE SAID

*It takes practice, because when you're landing in an unimproved area, you get dust, sticks, rocks and more flying around and it's easy to get a false sense of where the ground is. It takes all of us.*

#### WHAT HE DID

Locke piloted the lead CH-47 Chinook during the operation. Locke met with the ground commander, helped draft the dropoff plan, and then dropped the ground forces off exactly on target.

# Anatomy of an air assault

### Spc. Kip V. Whitt, CH-47 crew chief

#### WHAT HE SAID

*It was fantastic. We did everything we were supposed to do. Planning was key, we briefed and rebriefed before the mission, we cross all our t's and dot all our i's before we take off, every time.*

#### WHAT HE DID

As a crew chief, Whitt coordinated and rehearsed with ground forces to ensure a smooth boarding and deplaning and helped provide information for pilots and crew.



### Sgt. Michael B. Byrd, CH-47 door gunner

#### WHAT HE SAID

*We have to be aware of what is going on around us at all times, situational awareness whether in the air or on the ground. We all have to pitch in and help the pilots, to know where we are going and to get in and out safely.*

#### WHAT HE DID

As a CH-47 Chinook door gunner, Byrd provided valuable cover for the ground forces while they deplaned and later reboarded the aircraft.

-REPORTING FROM SPC. MICHAEL HOWARD





# The right moves

There's no such thing as a free lunch, but throughout northern Iraq, free rides are fair game, thanks in part to 2-1 GSAB's Chinooks and the CAB's Future Operations section

BY SPC. MICHAEL HOWARD



Ten million dollars worth of rockets wouldn't do much for the Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division if they were sitting in Connecticut. A state of the art UAV is no help if it's in Kuwait. No matter how top-of-the-line your equipment, it's no good to anyone if it's in the wrong place at the wrong time.

That's why the CAB's future operations section exists -- to make sure that all of the CAB's assets are in the right place at the right time. "Future operations plans and coordinates all future missions, all upcoming air assaults, anything having anything to do with movement of equipment and troops," said Staff Sgt. Jonathan D. Witham,

the future operations non-commissioned officer in charge.

Most of the battalions and companies think on a current date basis, said Whitam. "They think about today when we're thinking about two days from now. We plan ahead, so when everyone catches up to us on that date, we're already done."

The CAB's future operations section, known as FUOPS, consists of Chief Warrant Officer 4 Terry Zimmerman, the outgoing NCOIC Sgt 1st Class Karl Utter, and the incoming NCOIC, Witham.

Possibly the best known service the future operations team provides is facilitating air travel across northern Iraq for Coalition Forces throughout the MND-N theater of

### In Shadows

A 2-1 crew chief waits in Kirkuk for a shipment to arrive and be loaded aboard his Chinook

Photos by Spc. Michael Howard



Clockwise from top left:

### Downtime

Spc. Bradley Beal of HHC CAB waits for a flight

### Liftoff

A forklift carries a pallet of rockets to a CH-47 Chinook

### Work through the night

2-1 GSAB Soldiers load a pallet of rockets onto a CH-47 Chinook

### Pandora's Bag

A 2-1 GSAB door gunner searches his bag for equipment

### Moonset

A 2-1 GSAB door gunner covers his sector of fire





**Bright eyes** A 2-1 GSAB door gunner keeps his eyes peeled for danger on a LOGCAP April 14



**Light in the tunnel** 2-1 GSAB Soldiers load a pallet of rockets onto a CH-47 Chinook

Photos by Spc. Michael Howard

operations.

“Every day, FUOPS calls G-3 air, who produces a list of the air movements they need to happen. FUOPS plans out and coordinates those movements with our battalions,” said Utter. The FUOPS team informs the battalion battle captains if their flights are overbooked. If there is available space, “we will see who else we can book since it is safer than driving,” said Utter.

The other major service FUOPS provides, air assaults, may be slightly less appreciated, at least for their victims. In an air assault, CH-47 Chinooks and UH-60 Black Hawks land in an area and quickly insert troops into a strategically important area, gaining the troops the element of surprise. The workings behind an air assault are complex, though.

“An air assault takes a lot,” said Utter, “You have to make sure the request doesn’t exceed the number of aircraft we have available.” Aviation battalions don’t have all of their aircraft available at once. Each helicopter must go through scheduled maintenance to keep them airworthy.

“Once we make sure we have enough airframes, we still have to get rockets and parts for aircraft on the ground,” added Witham.

Being responsible for all troop

**‘You know that many people are alive, and their parents are happy, because you got them to a place safely.’**

---SGT 1ST CLASS KARL UTTER, OUTGOING FUTURE OPERATIONS NCOIC



Photos by Spc. Michael Howard

**Next day or sooner or the delivery’s free** Sgt. Jaime Reyes helps load boxes of supplies onto a CH-47 Chinook

movements and air assaults, as well as having to plan them out in advance gives the FUOPS team a strategic overview that most Soldiers don’t have.

“We deal with the battalion battle captains on a daily basis so we have to know what they’re projecting as far as their aircraft availability.”

We know what’s coming up, and we know how we’re going to accomplish the mission, because we see how much we have available for it as a brigade.”

In the FUOPS business, flexibility is a must, because nothing is set in stone.

“You might plan something and have a great plan that you worked 20 hours on and come to find out that your next day is bad weather, and all those people still have to be moved.

So you have to find a way to move the 500 people tomorrow,

and the 500 people today,” said Utter, “If you have four days straight of bad weather, it’s a pain, and people don’t like to hear, ‘hey, you have to wait on the ground for two more days before I can get you home.’”

Despite the challenges, Utter said he liked the job and will miss it as he transitions into a first sergeant position.

“We get a good response, and almost everyone we deal with, they’re just as happy as can be because they know we’re going to go out of our way to help them. It feels good because you know that the biggest threat out here is IEDs.

And for me, and the same for Witham and Zimmerman, is you know that many people are alive, and their parents are as happy as can be, because you got them to a place safely rather than them having to get into a vehicle and be exposed to IEDs.”

# A moment's notice

The 2-1 medics are always on call and on edge, keeping a constant aerial vigil over the U.S. servicemembers, Coalition Forces, and Iraqi citizens alike

STORY AND PHOTO BY SGT. PATRICK LAIR

Shortly after breakfast on a Saturday morning at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, members of Company C, 2nd Battalion, 1st Combat Aviation Brigade, spread out across their airfield to pick up rocks and debris. Then a call comes over the radio.

"Medevac! Medevac! Medevac!" Two flight crews hurry to grab their gear before racing onto the airfield and boarding their helicopters. Within minutes the UH-60 Black Hawks are airborne and enroute to someone in northern Iraq who needs medical attention.

Charley Company is an air ambulance unit tasked with transporting injured people from the field to the hospital and in between hospitals for Multi-National Division-North.

"We just get the call and we go," said 1st Lt. Geoffrey Hulsey, medevac team leader. "We head out just as fast as we can."

On this particular day, the Soldiers dropped into a remote point in the desert to take an Iraqi army Soldier with stomach pains into a hospital. Then they transported three patients at the COB Speicher hospital to the one at Logistical Support Area Anaconda. A short time later they field another request.

"We take everyone. We take



U.S. military, coalition forces, local nationals, Iraqi army, Iraqi police," Hulsey said. "When they call you they need you, and we're there to help them out."

Since beginning their deploy-

**Into the Breach** Chief Warrant Officer 3 Larry Karmine races to his UH-60 Black Hawk medevac helicopter after receiving a call for medevac support in a rural area of northern Iraq on April 5

ment in September 2007, Charley Company Soldiers have flown almost daily missions in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The unit, based out of Fort Riley, Kan., is currently serving on its fourth

deployment since 2003.

Spc. James Tillery, a crew chief, is on his third deployment with the unit. He served with the 82nd Medical Company at Balad in OIF II and then at al Asad in western Iraq with the U.S. Marine Corps.

As crew chief his job is to fly along on the missions to deal with mechanical problems that might arise.

"We fix anything that goes wrong except for major maintenance," he said. "I like fixing things and flying with the guys."

Another essential component of the crew is the flight medic. Spc. Stacey Dill has been a medic for four years. One of the challenges of her job, she said, is working in the confined area of the helicopter. However, she likes what she does.

One memorable mission for her was the night she was flying to Balad in conditions with a visibility of one and a half miles. All of a sudden, the helicopter was spotlighted and then shot at from the ground.

"It happened really fast and it was a surprise," she said with a smile. "But now I can say I've been shot at."

While she's accompanied many medical transports, Dill said she's still waiting to do her first POI, which is short for point of injury. POIs are instances when the helicopters must pick up an injured person directly from the field, as opposed to a hospital.

These missions are the result of 9-line medevac requests, which most deployed Soldiers have been taught to send up in case of a medical emergency.

**'We take everyone, U.S. military, coalition forces, local nationals, Iraqi army. When they call you they need you, and we're here to help.'**

---1ST LT. GEOFFREY HULSEY, MEDEVAC TEAM LEADER

Sgt. Amanda Smith, operations non-commissioned officer-in-charge at Charley Co., is the one who fields those calls.

"They'll tell us how many people they have; U.S. military, DOD civilian, Iraqi army," she said, sitting before a panel of radios and phone lines. "Then we have 15 minutes to get out for urgent patients."

She said the air ambulance service is essential to helping other Soldiers complete their missions.

"If we don't do our job right, then they can't do their jobs right," she said.

On the right shoulders of their flight suits, Charley Company Soldiers wear a patch which along with their logo has the words "Dust Off" stitched in bold letters.

The "Dust Off" creed is also posted at the front door of their TOC. The creed defines the slogan in a number of ways, finishing with four lines that speak volumes:

"... Dust Off is always being ready.

"Dust Off is never saying no.

"Dust Off is 82 patients in 24 hours.

Dust Off is 4,000 patients in six months."

601st ASB

# FULL SERVICE

When troops on the ground need the help of attack helicopters, it is essential those aircraft spend as little time away from the fight as possible. These “pit-stops” come courtesy of the highly trained 601st fuelers manning the Guardian FARP

BY SGT. ROGER JARAMILLO

The 601st Aviation Support Battalion Forward Area Refueling Point provides fuel and ammunition to the Combat Aviation Brigade to fight the Global War on Terrorism. They have developed a close knit group of Soldiers because of the demand of our mission, and each section contributes in their area of expertise whenever it is needed.

With just under seven thousand total aircraft fueled, the Guardian FARP has issued over one million

gallons of JP-8. Though less than half of the deployment is over, the crew at the Guardian FARP once thought the milestone of reaching one million gallons of fuel pumped would not be obtained until the tail end of the deployment.

Now their new goal is two, maybe even three million gallons of fuel pumped safely. When asked what he thought of achieving such a milestone, Spc. Marcos Camacho stated that “It’s good. It means the pilots are doing their job at keeping us safe and the area safe.”

Many Soldiers, platoons and units have encountered the 3/5 Renegades of A Company, 601st ASB in action on a daily basis.

The Renegades work two 12-hour shifts to ensure that the vehicles and aircraft of this brigade, and other coalition aircraft, are re-armed and refueled in a timely and safe fashion. The Renegades are more than just a hard working and cohesive group; they’ve grown into a family. Upon arriving at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, the Renegade Platoon

has hit the ground running. After conducting the relief in place, there was much to improve at the FARP, and at the Ammunition Transfer Holding Point. These challenges didn’t deter them as they continued to improve the work environment and complete the mission. The improvements, though better, are still far from over.

So far the Guardian FARP has relocated two fuel points for safer access for CH-47 Chinooks, and various fixed wing aircraft.

A second Gator which is a six-

**Open 24/7**  
*The 601st ASB fuelers at COB Speicher are ready to provide fueling and arnament service at any time on any day*

wheeled ATV, allow the fueler teams to drive to the distant fuel points saving mission time for the aircraft. Walkways have been installed for easier access to the other six refueling points. This access allows the Renegades a more stable platform to maneuver to their points.

The office areas are now larger than what the Renegades received upon arrival. With the relocatable offices installed at the FARP, Ground Distribution Point, and the ATHP, the 3/5 Platoon received in-

Photo by Spc. Michael Howard



ternet and AFN to pass time when they find a precious few moments between fill-ups.

The Soldiers at the Guardian FARP displayed a keen sense of competence and dedication during their recent FARP Operation Refresher Training. They went to great lengths in the preparation of the classes, the making of the training videos and even drawing up training aids that were needed for the class. The videos explained the standards on how to properly refuel the AH-64 Apache and the CH-47 Chinook. Not only did they meet the standards on how to perform these tasks quickly and efficiently, but they also kept safety their number one priority by using the crawl-walk-run method of training.

Members of the 3/5 platoons of Headquarters Company, 1st Attack Reconnaissance Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment, 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment, and 3rd Assault Helicopter Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment attended these three day classes. These classes may have been refresher training for the most part, but it has also given some of the Soldiers a chance to refuel their first OH-58 Kiowa.

The Petroleum Quality Analysis System or portable laboratory mounted in the back of a vehicle is now on a stable concrete ground

**'It's good. It means the pilots are doing their job at keeping us safe and the area safe'**

--- SPC. MARCOS CAMACHO, FUELER, CO B, 601ST ASB

### More than a fill-up

*Spc. Martin C. Berend and Sgt. Gary A. Ruiz, both fuelers and armers with the 601st ASB at the Guardian FARP in COB Speicher, clean out rocket tubes on an AH-64 Apache before loading up a fresh batch of rockets*

that allows for better testing of the fuel samples. The PQAS has contributed in testing over 1,000 Filter Effectiveness Samples. They check to see if the equipment's samples meet the required on-grade fuel specifications within 24 hours of sample turn-in.

The Distribution side of the FARP is the back-breaker of the platoon so far. They have kept up their original pace in fixing the minor faults on the vehicles.

It is a vital task to have all vehicles fully mission capable. The Distribution Team's stellar job has allowed 3/5 to have 100% fully mission capable vehicles for the first time in 16 months.

Other than vehicle maintenance, the Distribution Team transfers diesel, MOGAS and JP-8 from the fuel farm to the FARP. The Tank and Pump Unit is used to refuel the Non Tactical Vehicles, and the all terrain vehicles that operate on COB Speicher.

The ATHP has also made numerous improvements. They moved the ammunition to a brand new holding area which provides better lighting and level ground. Their new office is completely furnished with desks, counters, and shelves that their carpenter, Staff Sgt. Richard Moss, built.

Moss is now on a new project of building a deck outside of ATHP's office. Further improving the ATHP, Schiel and Pfc. Michael-Taylor helped the Explosion Ordnance Division train the Iraqi EOD on how to command detonate all of the old and unusable ammunition.

Still conducting Air Mission Requests, the ATHP supplies 1st Squadron, 6th Cavalry Regiment and 4th Squadron, 6th Cavalry Regiment with the requested ammunition. So far they have supplied bases such as Forward Operating Base Warrior in Kirkuk, FOB Diamondback in Mosul, and FOB Sykes in Tal Afar. The ATHP has conducted over 80 AMR's since the beginning of the deployment. Schiel has been assigned to nearly half of the ATHP's AMR's. Schiel stated, "I've been on those routes so many times that when we hit turbulence, I know what mountain range we are over."

The mission at Brassfield Mora in Samara, Iraq, is a two point jump FARP. Currently the mission has fueled over 120,000 gallons of JP-8 and 1200 brigade aircraft.

"I like it because everything is close by," said Spc. Sourivon Sathahone. "The gym, post Exchange, Dining Facility, internet, and the FARP are all within walking distance." Having everything within walking distance is a major plus for everyone that is given the mission at Brassfield Mora. "I never got used to all of the tower warning shots and EOD command detonating of all the Improvised Explosive Devices. You don't hear all that here on COB Speicher," said Sourivon.

Though the Renegades' new goal may be to reach the 3 million gallon fuel mark safely, their original one still remains; returning home with everybody that they came with.



Photo by Spc. Michael Howard

# Laying down the law

When an AQI attack turned a routine air assault into a fight for survival, quick reactions and heavy training gave CAB pilots and gunners the edge

BY SGT. 1ST CLASS JEFF TROTH

The mission was simple – drop off Coalition Forces at a northern Iraq village and pick them up a few hours later after they finished their mission. This routine air insertion quickly changed for the crew members of the nine helicopters when insurgents trying to escape fired on them.

“It was a multi-ship mission including three different airframes, Black Hawks, Kiowas, and Chinooks,” said Spc. Kenneth Steinmetz, a crew chief with 3rd Assault Helicopter Battalion, 1st Aviation Regiment. “We took a bunch of MPs (Military Police) and a contingent of Iraqi Police to an area where there was the possibility of militant forces in that area.”

The MPs were from the 56th MP Company and the IP included members of Iraqi SWAT. The area was the village of Musahareef, a suspected safe haven for Al-Qaeda in Iraq, also known as AQI.

The mission was simple. Two OH-58 Kiowa Warriors provided aerial surveillance. Six UH-60



**Extraction** U.S. and Iraqi Soldiers disembark from a CH-47 Chinook at Contingency Operating Base Speicher after an air assault mission in northern Iraq. Six Black Hawks, belonging to 3rd Assault Helicopter Battalion, 1st Aviation



**Preflight** UH-60 Black Hawks get ready to head out to pick up U.S. and Iraqi Soldiers after an air assault mission. Six Black Hawks, belonging to 3-1 AA and a Chinook belonging to 2-1 GSAB, transported troops to the village where the mission occurred

**Mission Accomplished** A UH-60 Black Hawk and a CH-47 Chinook return to COB Speicher with U.S. and Iraqi Soldiers after an air assault mission



Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Troth



**Rehearsal** Soldiers from the 56th Military Police Company, prepare to conduct “cold load training” to prepare them and Iraqi S.W.A.T. for an upcoming air assault into the western desert of the Salah ad Din province, April 12

**Execution** A group of Iraqi S.W.A.T. watch as a CH-47 Chinook takes off during an air assault in the Western Desert of the Salah ad Din province April 12



Black Hawks and a CH-47 Chinook transported the Coalition Forces from Contingency Operating Base Speicher to Musahareef where they was a suspected insurgent camp. The mission and role of the helicopter crews, all belonging to Combat Aviation Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, quickly changed during the infiltration phase.

“On the infil it was noticed that we had heavily armed AQI entering two vehicles,” said Sgt. Timothy Wright, a crew chief with 3-1 AA. “They had AK-47s, bandoleers and chest plates on. They entered two pickups and fled to the south.”

The Kiowa Warrior pilots moved in to stop the vehicles. As they fired a Hellfire at one truck, the occupants in the second truck opened fire on them. The missile hit the bed of the first truck, stopping it from escaping.

“As the (Kiowas) were going after the second vehicle they called us to check the first vehicle and its occupants,” said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Richard Livingston. “When we moved in we were engaged along our left side.

“We figured out who was shooting at us, we picked out our targets and engaged them we returned fire and moved to engage them from another location.”

With the commotion of taking fire from the insurgents and the Black Hawk door gunners returning fire, Simmons said that there was an “eerie calm” over the radio. “A lot of the extra chatter disappeared and you only heard what was pertinent.”

What was pertinent at that time was to know if the air crew is ok and where the insurgents are.

“The aircraft is a pretty durable aircraft, it will sustain a lot of damage and still fly,” said Wright. “The

big part when we take fire is to reassure each other that none of us has been hit.”

Wright said because of the adrenaline pumping in your system you must physically check your limbs and the rest of your body to see if you have taken a round.

Once this quick check is done each crewmember has their own assigned task to deal with those firing at them and their helicopter.

“Mr. (Chief Warrant Officer 3 Lyndle) Ratliff focused on flying the aircraft, and I was able to focus outside the aircraft and find the individuals,” said Livingston. “I started calling out the targets for the gunners. I was able to walk the gunners onto their targets.

“The gunners were outstanding. I was thoroughly impressed with how they fell back on their training in a stressful situation. That is what it came down to, we fell back on what we knew we had to do, and that is what got us through it safely.”

To ensure everyone knew what to do to keep themselves, the Coalition Forces on the ground, and their aircraft safe, the air crews went over procedures to take in case there was hostile fire.

“I gave (Spc. Terren) Blake a pep talk before hand and it worked out well. I told him, when it starts happening you need to tuck your knees, and maintain a low profile,”

**‘When we started shooting, I was engaging and ... our training kicked in.’**

---SGT. TIMOTHY WRIGHT, BLACK HAWK CREW CHIEF

said Wright. “When we started shooting, I was engaging and Blake did what he had to do – our training kicked in. I am really proud of Blake, this was his first air assault and he did great.”

Wright added that although it was him and Blake manning the guns they could not have done their job as well as they did if not for the pilots. Ratliff’s ability to put the helicopter in the correct position allowed them to return fire effectively.

After eliminating any threat from the insurgents who had been in the first vehicle, the Black Hawk crew was called over to assist with those running from the second vehicle, which the Kiowa had also disabled.

“Pretty much the exact same situation happened. They engaged us we engaged back,” said Livingston.

But the situation wasn’t the same, this time the rounds going through their aircraft hit something and a warning light came on.

“At that point we knew we had a mechanical problem and called in the other two Black Hawks to relieve us and we headed back to Speicher,” said Livingston.

“En route we started diagnosing the battle damage we had taken,” said Wright. “We had taken several hits to our helicopter, one of which was to our hydraulic lines that run up the tail pylon.”

“We went through all the proper steps and assessed that we were still flying and continued back to Speicher,” said Livingston.

“Overall the outcome was better than expected,” said Wright. “We came out of there with damage to the aircraft, ok, that is battle damage – it happens. The important thing is all four of us survived, the enemy was eliminated and the mission was accomplished.”

# 1 ID: A Formidable Foe

The Big Red One earns a reputation as the most fearsome of American divisions, but it comes at a terrible price

BY SPC. MICHAEL HOWARD

After their victory in Cantigny, the 1st Infantry Division was selected to lead Field Marshal Ferdinand Foch's counterattack on Soissons. Early on the morning of July 18, 1918, the attack began. By 8 a.m., the division had advanced a mile into the German defenses. By the 22nd, the division had cut the Chateau-Thierry road and forced the Germans to retreat from the town of Soissons. The 1st Infantry Division suffered more than 7,000 casualties during the offensive.

The division's heavy losses were not in vain, as so much of the fighting in the trenches of World War I had been. The Soissons

offensive permanently wrested the initiative from the German army. On the evening of July 22, the 15th Scottish Division relieved the division's infantry and machine gun units. The Artillery brigade stayed in position two more days to support the Scots. After their relief, the Soldiers marched 11 kilometers to meet trucks for the trip back to Dammartin before its movement to Lorraine July 28, where it was needed to occupy a quiet sector northeast of Toul.

The Allies' defeat of the German army in France in July 1918 did not end the war. It did, however, firmly shift the initiative

to the Western Powers. On Aug. 8, the British Fourth Army launched an offensive east of Amiens, spearheaded by over 450 tanks and supported by 1,900 French and British airplanes.

The Allies surprised the German Second Army and captured 16,000 men and 20 guns in several hours. On Aug. 9, the French Third Army joined the offensive, capturing Montdidier and the large German supply center near that town. Although the offensive ran out of steam as the Germans rushed reserves to the sector, the impact of the attack shattered what remained of Gen. Eric Ludendorff's and

**Skeleton** *The once beautiful village of Soissons was a hollow shell of its former self*

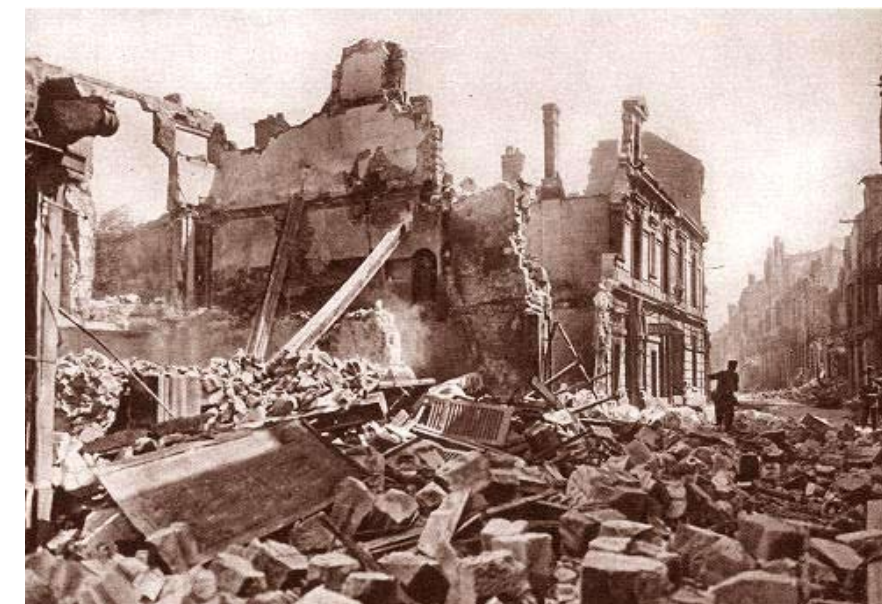
the German High Command's faith that they could win the war. Ludendorff called it the black day of the German army.

The strength of the German armies in the west fell from 5.1 million men in March 1918 to 4.2 million in August. The Germans needed 200,000 men per month to replenish their losses, but only a total of 300,000 were available for the year to augment the 70,000 men returning from the hospitals each month. As a result, German divisions were understrength and many of the weakest were disbanded to fill other units.

Further, the continued hammering by the Allies prevented the Germans from resting their divisions adequately, decreasing morale and efficiency.

In September the division participated in the Saint Mihiel offensive. It was the U.S. First Army's first major operation.

The attack began on Sept. 11 and by the 13th the division, advancing northward, met the 26th Infantry



**Solitude** *A lone Soldier patrols the remains of Soissons*

Division at Hattonchatel and closed the salient.

With little time to rest, the 1st was assigned to take part in the Meuse-Argonne offensive, where it was involved in the brutal fighting until November.

At 11 a.m. on Nov. 11, 1918, when the guns finally fell silent, the 1st Infantry Division had earned a reputation as the most formidable

American unit.

Five members of the division were awarded the Medal of Honor and its flags were decorated with six campaign streamers.

Such a reputation, however, had come at a heavy price. The division suffered more than 22,000 casualties during the war – the second highest casualty rate of any American division.



*FRESNES-EN-WOEVRE, IN THE ST. MIHIEL SECTOR WHERE TERRIFIC FIGHTING TOOK PLACE.*



# INTEGRITY

Do what's right, legally and morally.

*"Whenever you do a thing, act as if  
all the world is watching."*

*— Thomas Jefferson*

  
U.S. ARMY  
CALL TO DUTY  
BOOTS ON THE GROUND



U.S. ARMY

1

ARMY STRONG.

## ARMY VALUES