

SEP 2008

The Sustainment Times

FORWARD
Camp Taji, Iraq

IRAQI SECURITY FORCE STEP IT UP



Commander's Corner

Col. Kevin G. O'Connell, Commander

A HELPING HAND

Dear 1st Sustainment Brigade Soldiers and Families,

Our mission here to support all coalition forces and contractors in the greater Baghdad area continues to go extremely well. Additionally, we are doing more and more partnering with the Iraqi Security Forces, in order to assist them in becoming self-sufficient logistically. We have Logistics Training Advisory Teams (LTATs) at the Taji Location Command, Taji Level III Maintenance Activity, Rustamiyah Level III Maintenance Activity, and the General Transport Regiment at Taji.

Taji is the largest military base in the Middle East, where roughly 17,000 Iraqi Soldiers are based. It is also the logistics hub for the Iraqi Army, with the Taji National Supply Depot and Taji National Maintenance Depot. There are several schools and training facilities, like our TRADOC schools and National Training Center. Two Iraqi Divisions are stationed here. The Iraqi Air Force is also learning to fly helicopters here.

The Location Command is kind of like our Garrison Commands, responsible for basic life support such as sewer treatment, water distribution, electricity and fuel, trash removal, health care, food, ammunition, etc. The Level III Maintenance Activities are similar to our direct support maintenance companies, and they repair non-mission capable wheeled and tracked vehicles.

The General Transport Regiment is brand new, and just now being resourced with Soldiers, equipment, and training. Our LTATs are doing a fantastic job helping their Iraqi



counterparts get better every day. This is a critical time as they turn the corner with regard to logistics and take it to the next level with an improved supply and distribution network. Getting logistics "off the table" is one of the top priorities of the Multi-National Corps-Iraq Commanding General. On top of all this partnering, we are playing a big role for the 3d Expeditionary Sustainment Command, our higher headquarters, by helping to build sustainment capacity and economic growth in Iraqi civil institutions such as the Iraqi trucking network, railroad, and banking.

You quickly find out that the Iraqi Soldiers emulate our Soldiers and want to be like us. The partnering relationship gives them confidence that a military professional is standing beside them to help them improve. The results have been dramatic. The Iraqi Soldiers are very mechanically inclined and love to fix things.

The Iraqi Soldiers stationed at Taji and Rustamiyah don't have their Families with them. The majority of their Families live in the Baghdad area, and they can see them when they go on leave. We are grateful to all our Families for supporting us while we're deployed and helping each other at home.

Keep up the great teamwork with the Soldier or unit on your left and right, and the teamwork with your Iraqi counterpart as we continue the awesome job of supporting roughly 150,000 Soldiers and civilians, and as we help the Iraqis rebuild their Army.

Thanks for all you do every day and night.

With great admiration and respect,

Durable 6
Col. Kevin G. O'Connell
Commander, 1st Sustainment Brigade

CSM Time

CSM Frank G. Cardoza



CAMP TAJI'S FIRST AREEF "SERGEANT" GRADUATION

By Staff Sgt. James E. Brown Jr.

The air was filled with excitement and joy for the Soldiers who were beginning to form up for the first graduating class of the Areef "Sergeant" Course conducted by the Iraqi Army Non-Commissioned Officer Academy. Row by row, Soldiers of the Iraqi Army stood at the position of attention, faced right, and individually preceded to the stage to receive their respective graduation certificates.

This historic occasion put forth 23 Iraqi Army Soldiers of various occupational specialties to complete this experimental course that taught basic leadership skills and some Infantry techniques by U.S. Army advisors of various units within the 1st Sustainment Brigade. This is the first time that this course has been taught at Camp Taji and appears to have been a success.

"The course was mandated by the Iraqi Minister of Defense and designed to raise the level of confidence of the non-commissioned officer and the Iraq

Army, to give them the skills and the knowledge to train their fellow Soldiers," said Sgt. 1st Class Carl Miller, a native of Euless, Texas and senior advisor to the Iraqi Non-Commissioned Officer Academy and a Soldier assigned to the 1st Sustainment Brigade.

Command Sgt. Maj. Adel Abdul Jabbar Abdul Wahed of the Iraqi Ground Forces Command congratulated several Soldiers for the new accomplishment. Many of the students appeared to be very enthusiastic of the appearance of the top Non-Commissioned Officer of the Iraqi Army. After the ceremony concluded, many of the Iraqi Soldiers scrambled to talk to their Command Sergeant Major. **STF**

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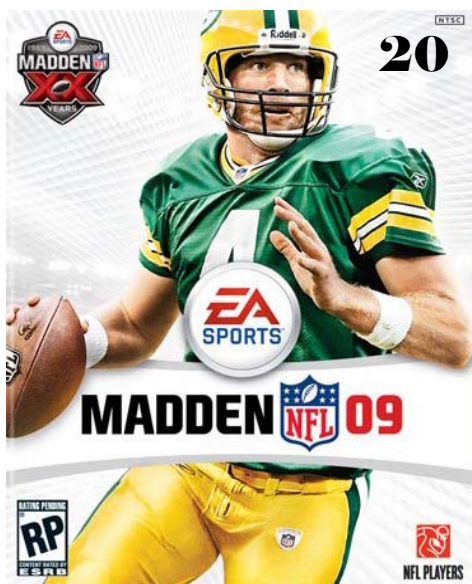


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Sgt. Jason Thompson takes a look inside the 20th Anniversary edition of the Madden franchise



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**1st Sustainment Brigade
Public Affairs Office**

**Commander:
Col. Kevin O'Connell**

**Command Sergeant Major:
Command Sgt. Maj. Frank Cardoza**

**Editor in Chief:
Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude**

**Staff Writers:
Spc. Andrea Merritt
Sgt. Jennifer Schweizer
Staff Sgt. James Brown**

**Assistant Editors:
Lt. Col. Christopher McCurry
Capt. Adam Smith**

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By Staff Sgt. James Brown

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Contact us at bryant.maude@iraq.centcom.mil

Cover photo by Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude.



Lt. Col Burke pays a visit to an Iraqi Medical Clinic

General Transportation Regiment is one of the new missions for the 1-152 CAV

Story by Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude

Lt. Col. Robert Burke took over command and control of all the 1st Sustainment Brigade Logistics Training and Advisory Team's on Sept. 1. Although there will be many changes within his organization, the biggest change will be that it will give all the LTATs one higher headquarters to report to and synchronize their efforts.

"Previously, there was only one single point of contact at the Brigade level that provided assistance to the

teams, but now there is an entire battalion level staff and headquarters to assist, support, resource, and provide guidance to all of the teams as they provide mentorship and training assistance to their Iraqi Army counterparts," stated Burke, a Knightstown, Ind., native, and the commander of the 1st Squadron, 152nd Cavalry Regiment, an Indiana Army National Guard unit attached to the 1st SB.

"Now there is an entire battalion level staff and headquarters to assist."

One additional responsibility is the oversight of the newly created Iraqi General Transportation Regiment. The GTR is one of the last spokes in the supply wheel system that needs to be developed to complete the supply chain. Once the GTR is up and functioning as a transportation regiment, they will be able to logistically support and supply the Iraqi Army theater wide.

"I think of each brigade-sized unit in the Iraqi Army as something like an island; the GTR will be that which bridges together these islands into an inter-connected network," says Maj Lowell Howard, the support operations officer for the 1-152 CAV. "Without a national distribution system, an army is no different than those pre-Napoleonic forces that roamed the battlefield foraging for food and other resources."

Over the past few weeks, Burke has visited the Location Command Headquarters and some of its subordinate units, to include the Military Police Battalion, the Level II Medical facility, the ASP, the Level III Maintenance facility, the CIF Warehouse on Camp Taji, and the Rustamiyah Level III Maintenance facility.

"Overall, they are doing well, but there is always room for improvement," said Burke.

There are American solutions, and there are Iraqi solutions. What works for the Iraqis may not be acceptable to us. However, if they are satisfied with their solution sets, who are we to judge?" stated Howard. **STF**



New motor pool at the GTR



Brand new trucks at the GTR



New fuel point at the GTR



IRAQI TRUCK NETWORK

steers Iraqi economy on road to recovery

By Spc. Andrea Merritt

Since violence has declined throughout Iraq, Iraqis, with the help of Coalition Forces, are making history by seizing this opportunity to land on their feet economically through the means of transportation.

During the tyrannical reign of Saddam Hussein, Iraq always had a nationalized transportation network, where the trucks, rail, and cargo were government-owned.

Recently, 62 tribes and 68 sheikhs organized four private trucking companies, which, together, came to be known as the Iraqi Transportation Network.

Taking initiative, the sheikhs approached the military with a proposition for the ITN to haul their cargo throughout Iraq, guaranteeing safe shipment and taking financial responsibility in the event of loss or damage. It was an offer the military didn't refuse.

The sheikhs chose people from their tribes to drive for the companies. Once the sheikhs selected their drivers, the military conducted background checks. More than 100 drivers were chosen and 97 percent of them were approved for badging. None of the drivers have been rejected due to criminal backgrounds or insurgent activity.

"The sheikh of the town knows who's in need of money and who is poor. He tries to see who is a good person, not a thief and is somewhat educated, mature, and dependable. The sheikh finds out what needs to be transported and gets people to do it who are in need," said Khalef, one of the drivers. >>

»» The formation of the ITN is one of the first efforts in 30 to 40 years to build a private logistics company in the country. For now, the ITN moves low-value cargo for the military to and from different forward operating bases in Iraq.

“For Iraq, this particular form of a logistics network is a key enabler for the Iraqi economy, so we’re seeding it with military cargo to get this going,” said U.S. Navy Cmdr. Ken Titcomb, a Lakeville, Minn., native and the ITN action officer for Multi-National Forces – Iraq.

“The real goal is that after a couple of years, predominantly, their revenue comes from commercial services, not military. Hopefully it will end up driving a lot of jobs, and it’ll be a factor for economic prosperity in Iraq,” Titcomb said.

The ITN began operating in early May in the Al Anbar Province and Multi-National Forces – West area of operation. They successfully hauled different classes of supplies in areas like Fallujah, Al Asad, TQ, Ramadi, and Jordan.

Since the missions in MNF-West have proven successful, they plan to expand their services to Multi-National Division – Center by



September and to MND-North by October, which will triple the size of their network in the next couple of months.

“The ultimate goal is to have the network infrastructure clearly established at all points throughout Iraq, not only in the west or Baghdad-central area, but north and south, so there is full coverage throughout Iraq,” said Maj. Ira Baldwin, the 1st Sustainment Brigade support operations transportation officer.

The ITN conducted its second proof-of-principle mission July 15 at Victory Base Complex, where they transported containers from the base to TQ.

“This is our second proof-of-principle mission with the ITN at VBC. Now, we have been actively working out at MNF-West with the Marines since the beginning of May. At this point, they have delivered about 900 individual truck loads,” Titcomb added.

The ITN has moved cargo such as food, water, construction materials, wood, barriers, and containers on their own without any military escorts. To date, there have been no incidents or attacks resulting in the loss of cargo.

“With the truckers we have today, that made a difference of at least 20 Soldiers on the road,” Titcomb explained. “Every other convoy that moves through here has about 100 trucks and they run with security, private security, or military convoy security. This reduces the dependence on the military to get the cargo moved.”

As a guarantee of safe shipment, the ITN companies are held liable for the loss or damage of cargo. If anything comes up missing, they will have to pay for it, as well as risk losing the contract their companies have with the military.

In addition to providing jobs for Iraqis and reducing Soldier exposure on the roads, customer units see



other benefits to the service that the ITN provides.

“If they move the low-priority cargo, then we can take the priority cargo that must move in support of missions and combat operations,” said Baldwin, a Laurinburg, N.C., native.

“We can now focus more of our trucks on that specific aspect. We won’t have mission failure or delays in anything in that specific arena. We will be able to focus more military on military-specific operations,” added Baldwin.

“As the ITN continues to grow, the goal of a stable Iraqi economy becomes less of an idea and more of a reality. In the first two months of operation, the ITN generated more than \$2,000,000 in revenue. As they expand, it is estimated they will produce up to \$3,000,000 a month,” said Titcomb.

“It is a growing entity. If you look at the Iraqi Transportation Network, it’s not just trucks on the road,” Baldwin stated. “Iraqis have done this before ... this is why we are taking baby steps to build the Iraqis back up, so they can do this in a flawless manner. Eventually, they will get there.” **STF**



TAJI LEVEL III MAINTENANCE CELEBRATES SUCCESS

By Staff Sgt. Bryant Maude

The temperatures swelled into the triple digits as Iraqi maintenance troops stood tall and proud next to one of the 150-plus vehicles on parade near the Taji Level III Wheeled Vehicle Maintenance Facility on Aug 26.

The vehicles and mechanics were part of a ceremony held to highlight their recent achievements. The guest of honor was Staff Gen. Nasier Abadi, the Iraqi Army Deputy Chief of Staff, and others from the Iraqi Army and Coalition Forces.

A passage from the Holy Qur'an was read and a moment of silence for prayer was observed and then the

guest speaker took the podium and praised the hard work of the officers and Soldiers of the Level III facility.

"We have done a great job fixing a lot of vehicles during this campaign, so congratulations," stated Brig. Gen. Muniem, the Electrical and Mechanical Engineering Officer, and key note speaker for the event. "They are very professional and work very hard to support the Iraqi Army and our country."

"We have done a great job fixing a lot of vehicles during this campaign so congratulations."

In April of 2008, a small group of officers and Soldiers of the Special Troops Battalion, 1st Sustainment Brigade started working with their Iraqi counterparts. So this event was exciting for them to see as well.

"It's exciting. This is a ceremony that highlights the Iraqi's ability to do Level III maintenance and the Iraqi Army took over the Level III Track and the Level III Wheeled facility officially 1 June. So from June to now, they have managed to repair 150 wheeled vehicles and 25 tracked vehicles," said Capt. Timothy Weiser, the Iraqi Security Force Cell officer in charge. "This averages out to about twenty vehicles a week which is great." >>

» “This represents change for the Iraqi Army,” commented Chief Warrant Officer Keith Hammitt, the maintenance advisor to Col. Mohommad, the commander of the Level III Maintenance facility. “This is a result of their own hard work and sacrifice.”

“This averages out to about twenty vehicles a week which is great.”

After the talk, Nasier was escorted on the field where he cut the ceremonial ribbon and then had an opportunity to walk the grounds, meet the mechanics, shake their hands, and get some feedback on how they are doing.

At one point, the Soldiers broke out in song and dance as the general and his entourage clapped

General and his entourage clapped along. Everyone appeared to be having fun.

Before the celebration was over, several Soldiers were presented with awards by Staff Gen. Nasier Abadi. Each Soldier and officer saluted the General, shook his hand, and accepted their award with pride.

“Through this effort we are able to ensure the country is more secure,” concluded Muniem. **STF**





Iraqi Army Troop Medical and Dental Clinic gets it done

By Staff Sgt. James Brown

The doors opened up early at the Iraqi Army Troop Medical and Dental Clinic, but not until the clinic workers completed the daily task of picking up all the trash around the facility and conducting their daily vehicle maintenance. By then, Iraqi Army Soldiers stationed on Taji started to trickle in - sick call slips in hand - to be seen by one of the military nurses for various medical reasons.

“On average, they see 60 to 70 patients a day,” said 1st Sgt. Timothy Baker, a native of Liberty, Ind., and a logistics training advisory team member of Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1st Squadron, 152nd Cavalry Regiment, 1st Sustainment Brigade. “They have a very nice facility here, and they do very good work.”

When asked what exactly he advises on, Baker said, “The main thing that our team is focusing on is helping the Iraqi Army with their logistics piece; supply requisition,

obtaining equipment, vehicle maintenance, those kinds of things, but I also get to participate with training on medical classes.”

“They have a very nice facility here, and they do very good work.”

Like any other military medical treatment facility, Iraqi Soldiers enter, check in, and take a seat in the waiting room. One-by-one, they are called in to get their vital signs read and have their names entered into the medical database. Then, they are either treated on the spot or referred to the emergency department on the other side of the building.

When you enter the emergency department, you see the Iraqi Army nurses treating fellow Iraqi Soldiers with everything from intravenous injections, to electrocardiograms, to x-rays.

These Soldiers within the facility possess very critical and much needed skills that the Iraqi Army is in short supply of. For example, 1st Lt. Bahaa is the second dentist in the Iraqi Army, and sees approximately 10 to 15 Soldiers a day. Their needs range from fillings, tooth reconstruction, cleaning, and various emergency cases. “I am very proud to serve in the Iraqi Army,” said Bahaa.

Another part of the clinic, the Mortuary Affairs Department, just moved into a newly built facility next door where they can facilitate up to 56 bodies, if needed, on any given day. What makes this so significant is that this specific department is the first one to be built in Iraq and serves the entire region. Their mortuary affairs department also operates a “Wounded Warriors” type program that takes care of Iraqi Soldiers wounded or injured in combat.

The Iraqi Army Soldiers of the Troop Medical and Dental Clinics prove on a daily basis that they are committed and ready for the challenges that lie ahead. They do their jobs and they do them very well. **STF**



Dr. Bahaa

Iraqi Army VIPs visit C&E

By Staff Sgt. James Brown

A contingent of Iraqi Army Generals from the Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Defense paid a visit to the 1st Sustainment Brigade's communication and equipment repair facilities here on Aug 24.

They were interested in learning the differences between the 1st SB facility and the Iraqi version on the other side of Taji.

Soldiers with the 1st Squadron, 152nd Cavalry Regiment, 1st SB gave the Iraqi Generals a tour of the facility where they were able to witness how the U.S. Army personnel operated their facility and what procedures they used in order to repair critical electronic equipment.

After learning and comparing as much as they could from the U.S. Army personnel, the Iraqi Army Generals made their way to the Iraqi side of the base to the



Iraqi dignitaries visit 1SB facility

newly transitioned Ministry of Defense mandated radio repair facility. This facility is under the command of Brig. Gen. Mohammad, the Directorate General of Communications.

Mohammad shared with his guests all that his shop had to offer and exactly what they accomplished on a daily basis. "Ministry of

Defense has a lack of repair technicians available, but with the limited availability and the help of the Coalition Forces, they still are able to achieve their goals," said Brig. Gen. Mohammad.

A large number of electronic hand-held radios, that his personnel fixed, were stacked on a shelf – tagged with completed work orders. Iraqi Army Soldiers sat in their individual work stations, expertly trouble shooting electronic circuit boards. They used volt meters to check the continuity of each circuit to determine if it was still operational or not. A second group of Soldiers replaced worn out or damaged circuit boards.

The group of generals seemed genuinely impressed with the professionalism and abilities the Iraqi Army Soldiers possessed.

The amount of jobs completed on a daily basis and the expertise they demonstrated on each task indicates an ever more capable Iraqi Army. **STF**



Iraqi soldiers work to achieve their goal



An Iraqi Soldier pays close attention to instructions

Iraqi Army mechanics display thirst for knowledge

Story by Sgt. Aaron LeBlanc

As part of a nation-wide push to improve the logistics capabilities of the Iraqi Army, Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 165th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion have initiated a program aimed at improving the technical savvy of Iraqi Army mechanics of the 6th Motorized Truck Regiment, or 6th

MTR. The 165th, a Louisiana Army National Guard Unit out of Bossier City, La., is currently deployed to Iraq under the 1st Sustainment Brigade in support of Multi-National Division – Baghdad.

Staff Sgt. Christopher Beal, a native of Bossier City, La. and the head mechanic with the 165th, explained that the biggest challenge facing the mechanics of the 6th

MTR is the hard time they have procuring replacement parts. “Part of the problem,” explained Beal “is that they have trucks from Germany, trucks from the U.S., trucks from Italy, from the U.K., from Russia, and from any number of other places. It’s great that everyone’s giving them equipment, but now they need replacement parts for vehicles from all over the world.” >>

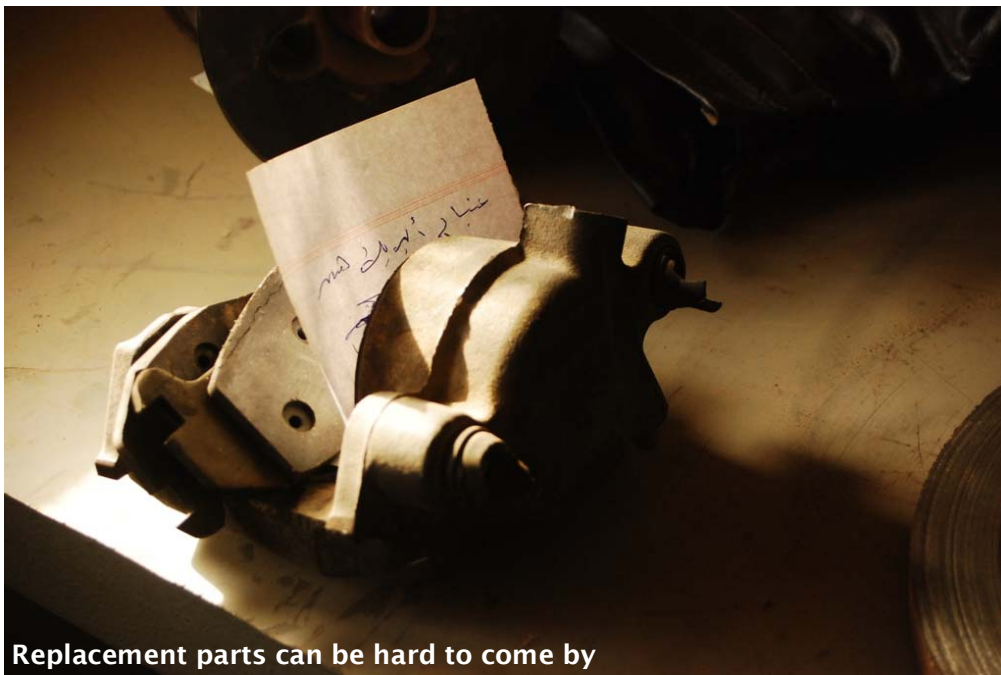


Checking the transmission

» “They’ve also had a hard time getting their hands on instruction manuals printed in Arabic for U.S.-manufactured Humvees and German-manufactured five-tons,” explained Beal. Prior to the current predicament faced by mechanics in the Iraqi Army, there simply was not much demand for Arabic Humvee manuals.

In the past, the lack of manuals meant that Iraqi mechanics repairing unfamiliar equipment operated by trial and error. It also meant that ordering replacement parts was problematic at best. Without parts numbers by which to reference needed components, the Iraqi mechanics instead had to rely on a general written description of the part. “For example,” Beal said, “German five-ton, valve on right side of engine.’ So the guy at the parts warehouse boxes up a valve – any valve that happens to be in stock from the right side of the engine – and sends it.”

These are examples of problems that the 165th is helping to correct. Not only have they provided the 6th MTR with several much-needed Arabic repair manuals, the 165th CSSB’s mechanics are working closely with their counterparts in the 6th MTR to encourage a more aggressive approach to maintenance.



Replacement parts can be hard to come by

“Part of the problem ... they have trucks from Germany, trucks from the U.S., trucks from Italy, from the U.K., from Russia, and from any number of other places. It’s great that everyone’s giving them equipment, but now they need replacement parts for vehicles from all over the world.”

“They have good mechanics,” said Beal, who has worked as a mechanic for his entire professional career. “And some of them are very good. But they’ve never been taught to conduct what we call ‘preventive maintenance.’ That’s what we’re focusing on training them to do. Instead of waiting for something to break, we’re teaching them to maintain what they have in order to keep it from breaking in the first place.”

Beal went on to explain that often, the Iraqi mechanics aggregate to the biggest possible cause of a problem. Rather than first checking the starter on a truck that won’t start, they might assume instead that the entire engine is in need of replacement. This is another situation that the 165th’s mechanics are working hard to improve, and they are achieving small victories every day.

Since the 165th CSSB’s current push to improve the mechanical skills of their Iraqi counterparts started last month, the 6th’s mechanics have displayed an earnest thirst for knowledge, and an ability soak up valuable lessons at a rapid pace. “In the beginning, they might have asked us to fix a problem for them. Now they’re asking us for the tools to help themselves,” Beal said. **STF**



Checking for fluid leaks



The Mayor of Taji cuts the ribbon

GRAND OPENING

one more sign of progress in Iraq

Story by Staff Sgt. James Brown

Down to the last few minutes, employees were still scurrying around, bringing in goods, stocking shelves, and making sure everything was just right, for their shop was about to celebrate its grand opening.

The guest of honor, Maj. David Stapp, a native of McCaskill, Ark., and the Mayor Cell Operations Officer, with Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 1-206th Field Artillery, and Ziyadnabeel the Co-owner of Ala'a Dian Souvenir and Gift Shop, led off with the festivities with the ribbon cutting ceremony. With one snip of the scissors, the ribbon floated to the ground and bright cheerful faces were seen all around. Ala'a Dian Souvenir and Gift Shop was now officially open for business.

Everyone then proceeded inside while Stapp was presented a plaque of Iraq and an Iraqi flag from Ziyadnabeel. Immediately following the presentation of gifts, they moved to the cake cutting ceremony. In

which there was more than enough for everyone in attendance.

"My job here is to provide good benefits and low prices to facilitate the life of the Soldiers here in Iraq. We hope that they are going to help us rebuild Iraq and to establish a new country after what happened in

2003. You are welcome in Iraq, and we are helping you as much as you are helping us," said Ziyadnabeel.

Spc. David Rodgers, a native of Dardanelle, Ark., and a gunner for the Bravo Battery, 1-206th Field Artillery, 165th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 1st Sustainment Brigade, said "I like it because it is closer to where we are at, and we can get more people over here. I like the people. It's a real good opportunity because the others are so far away and it's hot out there, no one wants to go out. This one is closer and makes it a lot easier on the Soldiers."

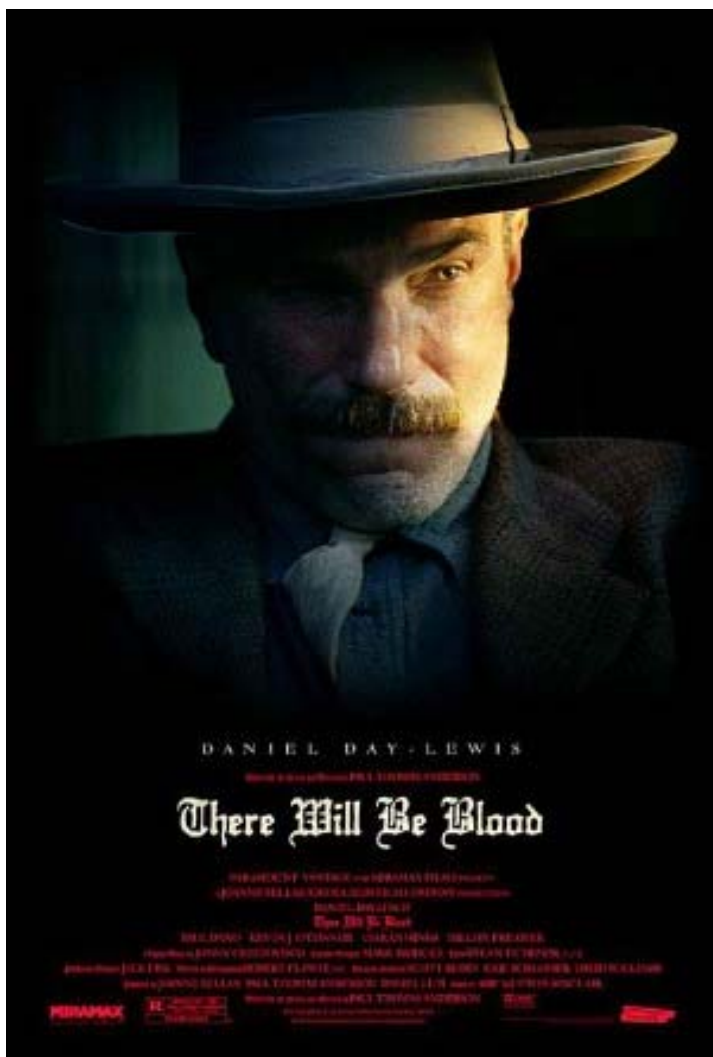
"I think it's great, a good opportunity to get some of the cultural gifts," said 2nd Lt. Eva Weatherley, a native of Des Arc, Ark., the Assistant Operations Officer for the Mayor Cell, as she browsed around to see what the shop had to offer.

The newly opened shop, sponsored in part by the 1st Sustainment Brigade, is located on Irish and 26th Street. It carries a variety of items from authentic Iraqi souvenirs & gifts, hand tools and small hardware, electronics, refrigerators, DVD/CD players, a general contracting office for building projects, tobacco products, watches, and a whole lot more. **STF**



Lots of merchandise to choose from

Tap a rich vein: *There Will Be Blood*



I purchased a copy of *There Will Be Blood*, based on some buzz I recall hearing a year ago about the film, and I'm glad I did. The acting was truly first class and the cinematography spectacular. I decided, after watching it three times, to go back and read some of the early reviews—here is one I'd like to share with you. It was written by Bob Grimm.

Get ready for otherworldly greatness if you head into a theater for *There Will Be Blood*, 2007's best film, only now arriving in our area. Daniel Day Lewis' blistering, devilish performance is the greatest of his accomplished career, and director Paul Thomas Anderson has made a second masterpiece to go alongside *Magnolia*. The movie is an instant classic.

Based very loosely on Upton Sinclair's novel "Oil," the film depicts the rise of fictional oil baron Daniel Plainview (Lewis) and his crazed lonely man's destiny. The Lewis performance never falters, and Anderson's direction is impeccable. Tension mounts scene after scene until an explosive finale smacks you over the

head. This is a film capable of taking the wind right out of you ... in a good way.

The movie opens with a brutal sequence void of dialogue with Plainview prospecting for silver and snapping his ankle. He graduates from precious metals to oil, gobbling up land and making false promises to many American townfolk. Plainview's greedy ambitions are coupled with his strange, muted brand of love for his partner and adopted young son H.W., played by the extraordinary actor Dillon Freasier.

Poisonous greed is represented on two fronts: Plainview's insatiable quest to drain the planet for his own personal wealth and the equally evil financial aspirations of his nemesis, an insane young preacher named Eli (Paul Dano). While Plainview saps the Earth for capitalistic gain, Eli preys on souls to further the spread of his maniacal doctrine.

The way these two characters clash is positively frightening, with Lewis and Dano relishing every moment. It's one of the greater character wars in a movie that I've ever seen, and that's no exaggeration. When Plainview is essentially blackmailed into participating in a baptism, his hatred toward Eli is so palpable the screen almost catches fire.

**“Give me the blood Eli,
give me the blood!”**

Dano also portrays Eli's brother, Paul, who alerts Plainview to oil on his family's land. Anderson and Dano do some wonderfully strange stuff with the two roles (I often wondered if Paul was just one of nutty Eli's personalities.) As Daniel's mysterious long lost brother, Kevin J. O'Connor—who has often played comic sidekicks in the past—reinvents his acting >>





» career as a man of questionable integrity.

This is a film that many will love, but it's going to have its share of haters. It's the very definition of character study, and if you should make the decision not to care about the lives of its characters early on, you are going to be in for a long ride. This is a movie you must give yourself over to in order to enjoy it. While I will always argue its virtues, I find it difficult to really argue with anybody who didn't like it. It isn't for everyone.

The soundtrack by Radiohead guitarist Jonny Greenwood is landmark movie music making, perfectly complementing the performance and visuals. As for those visuals, Anderson and his crew (filming in some of the same Texas locales as *No Country For Old Men*) have come up with something authentic and beautiful.

There are single moments that burn into the brain. When Plainview goes for an ocean swim after being overcome by anger and doubt, the look on his face will make you want to hide under your movie seat. And I loved the moment where Plainview, sitting on a train with an infant H.W., allows the child to grab at his mustache. There's something both sweet and alarming about it.

This film is one to be remembered. As for Lewis, his performance is one of history's best, a hateful character who can't help but retain our attention and at least a portion of our sympathies. It's an achievement

comparable to De Niro's in *Raging Bull* or Brando's in *The Godfather*.

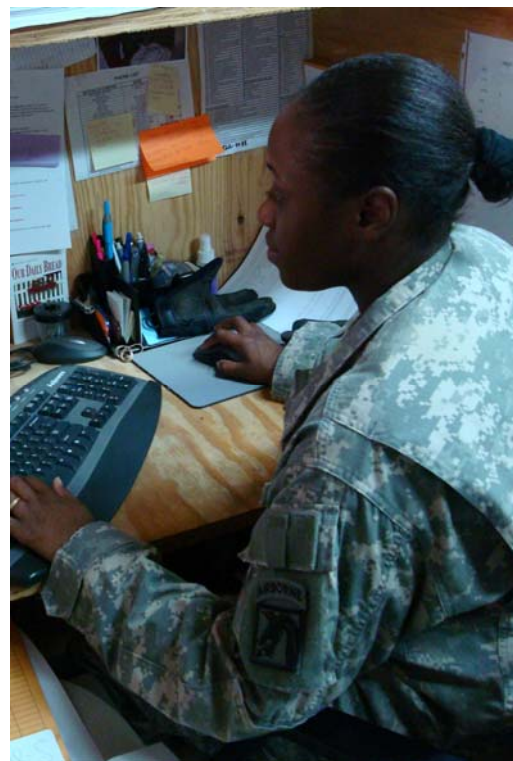
I'll go one step further and say it's actually better.

STF



AROUND THE BRIGADE







Review



PlayStation 2

MADDEN 09

20th anniversary edition

By Sgt. Jason Thompson
MND-B PAO



Games

Here it is folks, the time of year that we have all been waiting for – the start of the NFL football season and coincidentally the awakening of “Madden Nation.”

Madden 09 marks the 20th anniversary of this already popular franchise dating back to 1989. With this latest edition, EA Sports placed a large emphasis on the accessibility of the core Madden game play, now offering different play styles and a user-defined difficulty setting known as My Skill to go along with revamped production values.

When you first boot up *Madden 09*, you'll be presented with the Madden Test, which is four drills that gauge your Madden IQ. The results are used to establish your My Skill difficulty level, which then continually changes based on your continued performance.

It's a clever mechanic in theory and one that actually does work for the most part. My only complaint is that My Skill can't separate the game's ineptness with the actual skill of your players shining through.

What that means is that it takes you gaining 150 yards per game with your halfback as a sign of weakness in the Artificial Intelligence. No matter who your running back is, you'll face a tougher and tougher rushing defense if you continue to excel. It sort of puts a stop to any serious MVP candidates you might have on your team. But, if you do notice that things are getting a bit too difficult, there are several handy dandy sliders that let you manipulate rules and finite details with



regard to each of the different areas of football.

So while My Skill might not work exactly how it's intended, users still have the ability to create their own customized set of difficulty settings, if they so desire.

Play styles are another addition that, unlike My Skill, works to perfection. Players of varying football knowledge can choose styles that change the complexity of the game. The easiest level handles everything except for hiking, running, and the act of throwing; everything else is handled by the AI. The hardest level puts everything in the hands of the player for a true football experience.

Play styles were designed to simplify the game for newbies, and in that regard, they're a success. Their importance shines through to an even greater extent when a new player lines up against a pro. Madden now has handicapping which can skew the game in one direction in a hurry if you stack things enough.

But, no true Madden fan really gives a darn about how EA Sports is making Madden easier for the less-than-important player, who has never picked up the game. Sadly, core changes to the tried and true Madden formula aren't a main focus for this year's release. There have been some additions – slide protection, >>



» formation subs on the fly, bluffing play art, and rivalry games – that football junkies will surely appreciate. Where *Madden* will impress followers of the sport is its attention to finite details. For instance, receiving animations have been tuned to add the ability of players' arms and hands reacting independently from the rest of the animation. This results in much fewer instances of the ball slamming into your receiver's head while his hands were only six inches away.

Running and juking have also been improved beyond the branching animations from *Madden 08*. Breaking out of a tackle is now more under user control. A tackle animation will begin, but if you hit a face button or flick the right stick, you could break free. If not, at least you'll get the satisfaction of seeing your player's body strain to escape.

With all of the small enhancements and little additions to the gameplay, there's no question that *Madden 09* is the best pure football game I've ever gotten my hands on. Still, it isn't perfect. There are instances, mainly during kickoffs, when animations seem to glide along at an unnaturally quick rate.

Then there's the fact that the AI still doesn't know how to properly maneuver its players. It often runs out of bounds for no reason, even on the toughest difficulty setting. It's something that's slightly annoying but doesn't happen enough to ruin the experience by any stretch of the imagination.

As with every edition of *Madden*, the designers tried to add in a "cool new feature" that otherwise completely missed the spot. In *Madden 09*, that is the Rewind feature.

While it can be turned off (or limited to 1, 3, 5 or unlimited number of uses), Rewind gives players a mulligan for the previous play. It isn't used at all during online multiplayer but can be used offline. Having a friend sitting next to you and having one of your touchdowns taken away is gut-wrenching to say the least.

I can see where the developers were trying to go with this, but I think it takes away from the competitiveness of the game where you can retract mistakes without penalty.

Game modes in *Madden 09* are represented by the classic stable of Superstar, Exhibition, and Franchise modes, all of which remain unchanged from what you've become accustomed.

The new trinkets and doodads on the presentation side wouldn't amount to much if the graphics engine looked like *Ugly Betty*. Luckily, that isn't the case. Aside from new, more dramatic lighting and player models that now actually look like NFL players, there's a new camera angle that does a much better job of keeping the action in front of you while delivering a greater sense of size with relation to the stadium and crowd.

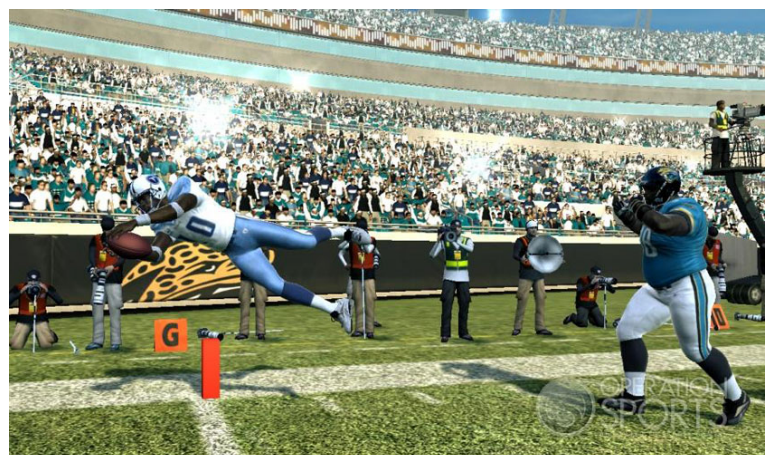
The grass looks pristine, as do the smooth edges on players with aliasing only creeping in on the intricate facemasks and player models on the newly populated sidelines. For as good as everything looks on the outside, it's the inner workings that drive the animation that really sell the visual appeal.

Players move with extreme fluidity, almost too much so at times. There are still moments when oddities pop up, but most of the time you'll be wishing your favorite players could pull off some of these moves at your command in reality.

Madden 09 could easily be swept under the rug by the casual onlooker as being, "just another release." And, for the most part, it is, but that doesn't make it any less worthy of your cash.

Madden 09 is the most loyal translation of America's favorite sport I've ever seen. It looks great, plays great, and despite its few moments of inaccuracies, is still one of the best sports games in memory.

I give *Madden 09* four out of five stars. **STF**





A few of the many Iraqi workers hired by the Golden Company

SHOW THEM THE \$\$

By 1st Lt. Melissa Schneider

In the 1996 smash hit *Jerry Maguire*, Cuba Gooding Jr. made famous the phrase “Show me the money” and would later go on to win an Oscar for best supporting actor as the disgruntled wide receiver Rod Tidwell. While I’m not anticipating

winning an Oscar any time soon, my job as the 553rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion’s support operations officer is to manage the Battalion’s funds and “show Iraqi contractors the money.”

Management of the Battalion’s money, whether it be through contracting or the field ordering officer funds, is arguably the most

critical component in ensuring mission requirements are met; not only at our level, but also on a much larger scale in supporting the Iraqi economy.

With that said, I decided recently to pay a visit to several of our vendors to get a firsthand look at their operation.

My first stop was at the American Service Center. The ASC was one of the first companies to start operations after the war in Iraq began and their “whatever it takes” motto has proved itself as they continue to provide quick support to meet the short suspenses imposed on them by our Battalion.

While I’m not anticipating winning an Oscar any time soon, my job as the 553rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion’s support operations officer is to manage the Battalion’s funds and “show Iraqi contractors the money.”

“ASC employs about 20 Iraqis,” stated Mr. Fernandez, the general manager for ACS.

Moreover, since ASC is a construction and trading company, an increasing number of local nationals are being employed to fulfill the demanding transportation and material handling requirements.

“The U.S. Army is helping to improve Iraq,” said Mr. Donal, a native of India and the director of operations for ACS. “They are integrating the locals in the workforce... as well as, giving freedom and justice to the people.” >>



A Soldier enters the Golden Company store

» On a more quantifiable scale, the 553rd CSSB, 1st Sustainment Brigade, has spent more than \$46,000 with ASC since arriving in March 2008, and a significant portion of that money finds its way back into Iraqi hands.

The Golden Company, located in West Liberty, is another company the 553rd CSSB relies on to purchase needed materials to meet mission requirements. Established in 2002, the Golden Company is owned by an Iraqi, named Mahmood Nassrallah, who began serving the Coalition Forces in 2003 and employs over 60 Iraqis.

Over the past three months, the 553rd CSSB has spent more than \$21,000 at the Golden Company and according to one of the managers there, all of the money goes to support the local population both directly and indirectly.

“All vendors that the Golden Company uses are in Baghdad and nearby suburbs,” stated Nassrallah.

The 553rd CSSB also works closely with the Sana Beirut Company. The Sana Beirut Company was established in 2002 in Baghdad and currently employs over 100 Iraqis. I spoke to Mr. Ziad Al-Windawi, the managing director for the company and also a local of Iraq. He explained that the

Iraqis are provided a good working environment where they are afforded healthcare and insurance.

“Since the United States military has taken control of Baghdad, the salaries of the Iraqi

workers have increased from \$10 to \$50 per day, while working less hours within the Sana Beirut Company,” explained Al-Windawi.

Additionally, the Sana Beirut Company has recently contracted for 130 more Iraqi local nationals to work on the Victory Base Complex.

Although loop holes do exist, and Iraqis may not always get their fair share, companies such as ASC, Golden, and Sana Beirut have improved the income and quality of life for many Iraqis. Furthermore, local Iraqis and businessmen such as Mr. Nassrallah and Mr. Al-Windawi support the Coalition Forces and their efforts to improve the country of Iraq. Through joint projects between Iraqi businesses and the US military, the 553rd CSSB is truly showing Iraqis the money. **STF**



Numerous hardware goods line the shelves of the Golden Company



Iraqi maintenance technicians improve their skills at Rustimayah facility

RUSTIMAYAH LTAT POWERS UP

From recycled batteries to repaired carburetors, fuel pumps, and brakes the Iraqi maintenance Soldiers are getting better at their craft

Story by Staff Sgt. James Brown

There was no dearth of activity inside the Level III maintenance facility in Rustimayah; Iraqi Army maintenance technicians were busy changing tires, repairing carburetors, fixing fuel pumps, doing body repairs, and even welding - a big turnaround compared to a year ago.

"I think the biggest impact that we have had is just to be able to teach them certain maintenance procedures, such as balancing tires, repairing alternators, checking

"Instead of ordering all new parts and just putting all new parts out we are getting them into the process of thinking about trying to make the part last longer, recondition it to save them time and money."

engines, and testing them," stated Chief Warrant Officer Norman May, a native of Walters, Okla., with the 168th Brigade Support Battalion.

"Instead of ordering all new parts and just putting all new parts out, we are getting them into the process of thinking about trying to make the part last longer, recondition it to save them time and money."

The battery shop has been the biggest highlight of the entire Level III maintenance facility when it comes to saving money. The few simple techniques they taught have saved the Iraqi government thousands of dollars every year as they simultaneously increased the number of batteries available in the supply system. >>

» “Once a battery was dead, they would take the metal out of the batteries and use it for welding while

“The battery shop (now) recharges and shows them how to care for and maintain their batteries... how to put in the acid, distilled water, rebuild, and recharge their batteries.”

throwing away the remainder of the battery into the trash,” said Chief Warrant Officer Simone Clarke, a

native of Bergenfield, N.J., and Logistics Training Advisory Team member, with the 168th BSB. “The battery shop (now) recharges and shows them how to care for and maintain their batteries... how to put in the acid, distilled water, rebuild, and recharge their batteries.”

The LTAT in Rustimayah is now part of a larger effort under the command and control of the 1st Squadron, 152nd Cavalry Regiment, 1st Sustainment Brigade, and it’s members will continue to train their Iraqi counterparts to high standards; making sure each job is done correctly, so that they can one day work themselves out of a job here in Iraq. **STF**



Chief Clarke with 168th BSB



Lt. Col Burke visits the battery shop on Rustamiyah



Chaplain's Thoughts

Chaplain Terrence E. Hayes, Brigade Chaplain

OPERATION FRIENDSHIP



By Maj. Terrence Hayes

Most people like to help, especially when it comes to helping others a little less fortunate. A number of individuals and organizations in the States had that opportunity recently when 300 packets of donated hygiene items like soap, shampoo, toothbrushes, and combs were passed out to Iraqi Soldiers training at the Taji National Training Center.

A small group of volunteers from the First Sustainment Brigade assembled at the Argonne Chapel and worked for two hours assembling packets of supplies for distribution. The bags were loaded and delivered by Chaplain (MAJ) Terry Hayes, his chaplain assistant, Sgt. Michael Theubet, and several volunteers from the Brigade.

The first stop was the Iraqi NCO Academy, where a group of 100 Iraqi and Kurdish Soldiers waited. The second leg of the humanitarian mission was the Level III maintenance shop led by Col. Mohammed. Mohammed said the gifts, "show how the U.S. Army cares about our Soldiers, and it encourages our Soldiers to do their very best."

The half day outreach concluded in the office of General Sabah, commander of Taji Location Command, where the Americans were treated to delicious Chai tea.

Another 60 Iraqi Soldiers presented themselves in the general's office for a gift bag and handshake from the Iraqis and the Americans.

"The gifts, 'show how the U.S. Army cares about our soldiers and it encourages our soldiers to do their very best'. "

General Sabah also expressed his willingness to help the First Sustainment Brigade in an upcoming fall project to give large amounts of school supplies to Iraqi children around Taji. The morning passed quickly and the afternoon heat arrived, but there was a feeling of 'having helped' at the end of the day.

STF



Iraqi Soldiers are pleased with the gifts

A SOLDIER REMEMBERED



SGT KENDALE BLAINE CARNEY

503RD MAINTENANCE COMPANY

23 APRIL 1980 - 16 AUGUST 2008

ON AUGUST 20, 2008, HUNDREDS OF SOLDIERS FILLED THE CAFETERIA ON PAD 21, AT CAMP LIBERTY, IRAQ, TO PAY TRIBUTE TO A FELLOW SOLDIER SGT KENDALE CARNEY. LTC KOLLER, THE COMMANDER OF THE 553RD COMBAT SUSTAINMENT SUPPORT BATTALION, SAID "SHE WOULD BE REMEMBERED AS A SOLDIER WHO TRULY CARED FOR OTHERS." SGT CARNEY IS SURVIVED BY HER MOTHER, MS. LINDA CARNEY, OF BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA.