



In this month's edition of the TOP GUNS TIMES



Words from the Command, pg 2.



Comments from a Soldier, pg 5.



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Our life in pictures, Pages 10- 13

MIIT 3 and Iraqi Army Poised on the Tigris



SPC Forbis and an Iraqi Army Soldier stand side by side on a joint operation in South West Baghdad. See page 7.



Thank you, Americans Supporting Americans for everything you have done. See page 9.



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The month of April has arrived and with it the promise of spring and clear skies. We are also encouraged by the fact that we have reached—and indeed surpassed—the midpoint of our tour. We have accomplished so much in our first six months. It takes a unit with personnel that have the courage to provide selfless service to our nation to execute this mission. I am proud of the Top Guns and of the fact that our reputation of being a professional unit precedes us wherever we go.

I am especially proud of the men of MiTT 3 stationed at FOB Falcon. Their work is of critical importance to the success of OIF. The successful training of Iraqi Army Soldiers that can engage and destroy insurgent forces on their own is our ticket home. These men face danger daily; in spite of this, they remain steadfast in their mission and possess the quiet resolve of true professionals.

The gravity of their dangerous work was recalled during the mortar attack which nearly claimed SGT Redman's life. The incredible story of SGT Redman's heroic struggle to survive is only exceeded by his miraculous recovery. When word reached the unit that he was up and walking, Soldiers cheered and we all rejoiced as one family.

In a few short months we will enjoy a well-earned rest and the comforts of family and friends. But now is the time to gather our strength, maintain our focus, and persevere. Let us remain mission-oriented. By staying the course we will have the personal satisfaction and honor of knowing we did our best.

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SGT Jeffery S. Redman
Wounded in Action 14 MAR 06



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HHB "Hard Chargers"

Hello to all the Soldiers and loved ones within the Hard Charger Battery. We have stayed very busy this month with promotions and re-enlistments. I was truly honored to be a part of the ceremony and applaud each of their selfless contributions to our Battery and the "Top Guns."

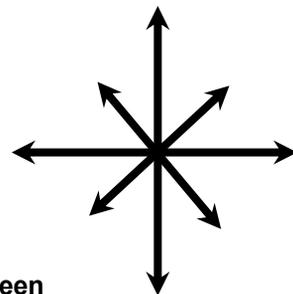
The Deputy Commanding General for the Multi National Command Iraq presented a coin to SFC Lanier and SPC Myers for their skilled work. SFC Lanier and SPC Myers helped MG Hahn by ensuring his Personal Security Detachment had communications. The "Hard Charger" Commo team has put in many long hours and built a name and reputation across the battlefield as the "go-to guys" for Commo-related Issues.

Unfortunately this month two "Hard Chargers, SGT Redman and PFC Henry, were Wounded in Action during Operation Glory Light and will be awarded Purple Hearts. SGT Redman was in charge of the survey section. When the Battalion Commander asked us to supply the MiTT with an NCO that could teach, train and mentor Iraqi Soldiers, SGT Redman was the obvious choice. PFC Henry was serving as the Communications NCO while SGT Jones was on leave.



The great news is, both Soldiers are doing well. PFC Henry has made a full recovery and SGT Redman is already walking on his way to a speedy recovery.

2 BCT
MILITARY
TRANSITION
TEAM (MiTT)
"Havoc"



The weather's been cooperative for most of our time as temperatures reached into the mid 80's. We have been training and preparing for the summertime heat that will reach daily temperatures in excess of 100 degrees. We have changed our daily work schedule to fewer hours as the heat will eventually force us to change, and you will hear no complaints from the Soldiers on the Command's proactiveness in the matter. The Soldiers are doing a terrific job and continue to strengthen the team and adapt to any mission set forth. The bonds that are built between Soldiers will last a lifetime and as time passes, you start looking forward to drinking from the same canteen cup and setting in the foxhole with your buddy.

I would like to thank all of our loved ones back home for your continued support of our Soldiers. A special note to the Redman Family as we keep the you in our prayers as he undergoes the recovery process. The Hard Charger Battery sends its condolences and prayers to CPT Jackson and his family for the untimely loss of his Grandmother.

CHRIS L. BURTON
1LT, FA
Executive Officer





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Date: APR 06
Service Battery "Side Winders"

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Alpha Battery "Rock Hard"



PFC Degaetano



PFC Degaetano



SPC Robinson



SPC Gilchrist

Now that March has passed, our sixth month deployed, I can truly say that we are on the downward slope towards redeployment. The hardest months are yet to come, however, as the summer temperatures heat up and as redeployment nears. There's no doubt that this deployment is severely testing us and our families. Despite this, I am confident that the Soldiers are willing and able to accept the challenge like they have already done for six months. Even though redeployment is always in the back of our minds, let me assure our families and friends back home that the "Sidewinders" are focused on completing the mission. The Soldiers and NCOs are consistently doing an outstanding job, giving 110% effort and completing the mission to exacting standards. 1SG Goetz and I are proud of each and every one of them.

March was another great month for reenlistments. Service battery currently leads the Battalion with a 250% reenlistment rate. This reflects great credit upon our dedicated Soldiers who want to continue in service to the nation. Special thanks goes out to the following Soldiers who reenlisted in March: SPC Norton, PFC Cross, PFC Degaetano, PFC Landrum, and PFC Robinson.

Additionally, congratulations to PFC Degaetano who was promoted this month.

Finally, I thank you all back home for your continued thoughts and prayers.

TOP GUNS! AIR ASSAULT!

MICHAEL TESS
CPT, OD
Commanding

Hello from Camp Victory. "Rock Hard" has had another busy month here in our new home away from home. We continue to work long hours, but have done a lot to improve our working conditions and quality of life. Well, we finally made it past the halfway point. The Soldiers in "Rock Hard" are staying busy and hopefully our remaining time will go quickly. The Battery continues to work hard at defending the camp and as the summer heat approaches, we have found a way to shorten our duty shifts from twelve hours to eight hours. The Battery is also in the process of acquiring some items and equipment that will help make the summer heat a little more bearable. The Ugandans are now fully integrated into our battery and have been a tremendous asset to our mission.

This month we promoted SGT Burney and look forward to watching him take on more responsibility in the Battery. We also recognized the outstanding performance and promising potential of SPC Makin during his promotion. The Battery was proud to witness one of its former officers, 1LT Cummings, get promoted to captain. He has become a valuable asset on the Battalion staff. SPC Alvarado was recognized for his hard work and excellent technical knowledge during our howitzer services last month. For his actions, he was awarded the Army Achievement Medal. "Rock Hard" Soldiers continue to excel and lead by example and from the front.

Thanks again for all your support. The Soldiers are receiving a lot of mail from back home and it's very much appreciated. We miss you all and can't wait to return home. Thanks for everything!!

Respectfully,
CPT Jeff Munn





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Bravo Battery "Bulls"

Comments of a Soldier

Greetings from lovely Camp Victory!

Things continue to go well here as we mark our halfway point. As difficult as it has been to be away from family and friends, it is still hard to believe that we have been over here for six months.

Our mission of manning the security towers of Camp Victory continues to be a challenging, yet rewarding task. Very recently we have adjusted the schedule to 8 hour shift, which I think all the men will agree, is a very welcome change.

Regardless of the hours required, the men of Bravo Battery continue to set the standard of excellence in the towers for other units to follow. 1SG Postler has recently completed his best Bob Vila impersonation and installed tower air conditioners, which in the coming months will be worth their weight in gold.

The men of the firing platoon continue to set the standard in artillery operations and improve their situation a little bit each day. They too, have recently installed the "blessed" air conditioners, which although it's still not a five star hotel, makes St. Mikes just a little bit better.

Also, of note this month, PFC Acevedo brought great credit upon himself and his unit, by winning the Battalion Soldier of the Month board. Considering the outstanding Soldiers who also attended the board, this is an outstanding honor and we are all very proud of him.

Thank you once again for all the mail and "goodies". Every day that we get mail is a good day. Know that you are in our thoughts and prayers and as we start down the long road to home. We look forward to seeing all of you that much more.

CPT Jim Sheridan



PFC Maloney-

What is the Military Transition Team (MiTT)?

- The MiTT is a group of people who were interested in working with the Iraqi Army, training them, showing them how it's done, and protecting the people of Iraq.

How is FOB Falcon?

- FOB Falcon is a very small FOB in comparison to the other FOBs. It lacks some things the bigger FOBs have (such as internet café), but we make up for what we don't have. That's pretty much the MiTT's way to pull together and make things work despite adversity.

What's so good about being on the MiTT?

- I'm extremely grateful to be one of the lowest ranking members of the MiTT. One: I like the amount of hands on experience our top heavy team has to offer. Two: The missions are planned out right in front of my eyes. I see everything on paper before we do it. And to top it all off, I get to add my say to the missions.

How is it working with the Iraqi Army?

- There is huge English to Arabic barrier that you have to overcome, but as time passes you find it's very easy to communicate with your hands; and of course, they learn some English and you pick up some Arabic. I would go so far as saying at times it's been easier to convey my message to them, then to other US Soldiers.



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The Word on the Street

What you have ordered over the internet since you have been deployed?



HHB:

PFC Adam Garland:
The things that I have ordered from the internet have been DVD's such as Brave Heart, King Kong, and Domino. I also bought supplements for weight lifting



Alpha Battery:

PFC Andrew Paquette:
I'd have to say the most unusual thing I have ordered here in Iraq would have to be a stuffed Husky that reminded me of my dog Cole.



Bravo Battery:

PFC Brian D'Andrea:
ordered a weekend getaway spa package for my wife .



Service Battery:

PFC Chris Degaetano:
I ordered a limited edition of Final Fantasy 7 movie/game pack from Amazon.COM

Scenery of Iraq



Al Husaniyah Mosque- Baghdad, Iraq



Sunset in Mahmudiya, Iraq



Adwaniyah, Iraq





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Operation Baghdad Square



1LT Canizares



CPT Kreger



SFC Hayes



3/1/6 IA finished off the month of March with a strong statement that they are one step closer to assuming control of their nation's defense. Early in the morning of 31 March, two platoons from Delta Company, 3rd Battalion composed the main effort of an air assault into a small village along the Tigris,

known to those involved in the mission as OBJ Iron. With the support of Attack Aviation and a U.S. outer cordon, the Iraqi Soldiers entered, cleared, and searched approximately 20 buildings, and then transitioned into exploitation operations, searching the adjacent farms, orchards, and palm groves. They found two of the more eclectic and unique caches yet discovered in this AO. The enemy stash consisted of machine guns, mortar rounds, hand grenades, and distinctive IED and VBIED making materials that provided new insight about AIF tactics, techniques, and procedures.

The Iraqi Army's preparation for and execution of the operation was perhaps more important than the resulting success of the mission. With less than 24 hours' notice, Delta Company conducted troop leading procedures that included a very detailed rehearsal and thorough pre-combat inspections and checks. During the mission, Iraqi Officers carried out platoon level command and control, dynamic breaches, tactical questioning, and PZ reconnaissance and security for an air exfiltration.

Although this unit is by no means trained according to any U.S. Army Standard, 3rd Battalion continues to improve every day. Deliberate missions such as Operation Baghdad Square, afford MiTT advisors a great opportunity to develop the Soldiers and leaders during the planning and rehearsals as well as allow the company and platoon level leaders to take charge of their unit with little American influence. Seeing a mission where the Iraqi Army operates as an independent unit, and successfully takes the fight to the enemy, getting weapons and explosives off of the street is truly seeing progress towards a withdrawal of American Soldiers from Iraq.





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Promotions and Reenlistment:

SVC- PFC Robinson's



SVC- PFC Cross's Reenlistment



HHB- SPC Sanchez



HHB- SPC Sorrell's Reenlistment

March Reup:

Congratulations to the following Soldiers:

- HHB
- SSG McCale
- SGT Lledo
- CPL Hamilton
- SPC Padilla
- SPC Bush
- SPC Delgado
- SPC Sorrell

- Alpha
- SSG Mitchell
- SGT Altvater
- SPC Woody

- Bravo
- SGT Mentiply
- SGT Olsen

- Service
- SPC Norton
- PFC Cross
- PFC Robinson
- PFC Landrum
- PFC Degaetano

The Top Guns thank you for your service and for making this Army stronger.

April Promotions

Congratulations to the following for getting promoted this month:

- HHB
- CPT Cummings
- SSG Lyon
- SGT Stidd
- SGT Rainey
- SGT Lledo
- SPC Butler
- SPC Kirschner
- SPC Sanchez
- SPC Larocco

- Alpha
- SGT Burney
- SPC Makin

- Bravo
- SPC Howard
- PFC Bruno

HHB- SPC Padilla's Reenlistment



SVC- PFC Landrum



Alpha- SPC Gatson



SVC- PFC Degaetano



HHB- CPT Cummings' promotion





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Visions of hope



The Top Guns and the villages of Al Furat, Iraqi Family Village and Air Port Village thank the towns of Lake Side Park, Taylor Mill, and Villa Hills, KY. These are only a few of the many Iraqi children that you have affected by your contributions.





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Our Life in Pictures Cont.



MITT 3- 1LT Canizares training at a range



MiTT 3- SFC Hayes



HHB- CPT Petersen, CPT Cummings & CPT Clark



SVC- Howitzer Maintenance



SVC- 1SG Goetz using fork lift



MITT- CPT Kreger





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Our Life in Pictures Cont.



The Peltier Brothers. PV2 Bradley (Alpha) and SGT Bruce Peltier (Bravo)



PFC Wood and PV2 Au at the ECP



SVC – SSG Snow and SGT Norkett working on a bolt extraction



SVC – SPC HRPCHA on mounted patrol

THE HEART OF THE BATTALION



PFC Barriero working at Division Eagle First Responder



Our heroes: PFC Daniels and SPC Griffin Page 11.



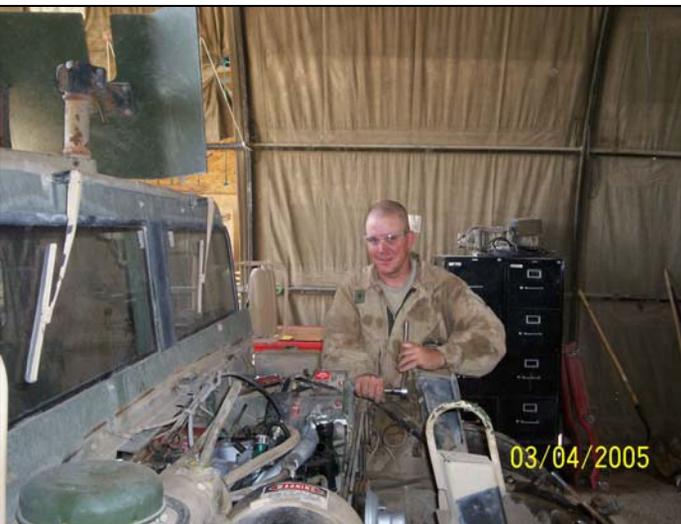
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Our Life in Pictures Cont.



SVC –SPC Petersen working on a HMMWV Engine



MiTT 3 – SPC Herren on a Blackhawk



Bulls Firing platoon doing a counter fire mission

Chaplain's Corner

Well, we've made it to the peak of the mountain and the downhill slide lies before us. Therefore, it is my hope and prayer that each and every one of us will maintain our strength and positive outlook. I know it's hard to be separated from the people and activities we love, but let us draw strength from each other and the fact that our current situation is only temporary. I am honored to be your chaplain and want you all to know that I take great pride in being a Top Gun. We have grown both as a team and as individuals. I am inspired daily by the words I hear and acts of service I see coming from Top Gun Soldiers. Our standards have, and continue to set us apart. Keep driving on and before you know it we'll all be home. Paul teaches us how we are to act in Galatians 6:9 by saying, "And do not grow weary in well doing, for in due season we shall reap if we faint not."

Holy Smoke Out

Page 12.



MiTT 3 – SPC Forbis





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CPT Kreger
MSG Williams
1LT Canizares
SFC Hayes
SFC Kruse
SSG Hopkins
SSG Powell

MiTT 3 at Radwaniyah, (Lion's Den)

SSG Angell
SSG Sutton
SGT Jones
SPC Herren
SPC Forbis
SPC Baier
PFC Maloney



The TOP GUNS miss you SGT Redman and we hope to see you back in action Soon! Your speedy recovery inspires us daily.

This internal newsletter contains official information, and complies with the provisions of AR 25-30 for dissemination to Family Readiness Group internal newsletters. Individuals concerned have given their consent (under the provisions of AR 340-21, The Army Act Program) for newsletter to be published. All addresses are cautioned that personal information (Home Address/ Home Telephone Numbers, etc.) Included in the attached newsletter must be protected with AR 340-21 (The Army Privacy Act Program). Unauthorized disclosure of information is also prohibited without consent.

RAFAEL TORRES JR.
LTC, FA
Commanding

