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# Salerno soldiers deliver medical supplies, food to Khowst hospital

By Sgt. Ed Zink

109<sup>th</sup> Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SALERNO, Afghanistan (February 8) – Officials here are calling it the largest humanitarian mission in this area to date. The originator of the mission is calling it a small step in what he hopes will become a lot more.

A convoy of soldiers from Forward Operating Base, Salerno rolled into Khowst this morning in a surprise visit to deliver 5,340 humanitarian daily rations as well as 16 boxes of medical supplies, warm clothes and shoes to the Civilian Hospital of Khowst.

Soldiers from 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 504<sup>th</sup> Parachute Infantry Regiment, 450<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs and the 909<sup>th</sup> Forward Surgical Team here spent the better part of their Saturday morning unloading the supplies into the hospital and holding back the throngs of local people who gathered to watch.

The 100-bed hospital was built by the Germans in the 1920's and provides medical services to the 150,000 Afghans in the Khowst province. It is staffed by seven doctors, two of them female, and all of whom work with the barest of equipment and are rarely paid for their services, said Col. John Wassner, commander of the 909<sup>th</sup> FST.

Wassner originated the idea for the mission following two prior visits to the hospital. He said his team spoke with Dr. Noor Bashah, the minister of public health in the region and identi-

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Sgt. Ed Zink

**Sgt. John Ammermann, of the 450<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs Battalion, explains the contents of a humanitarian daily ration to Dr. Mohammad Wazir, an emergency assistance doctor at the Civilian Hospital of Khowst during the humanitarian aid mission there Feb. 8**

## KAF surgeons wage war on death

By Capt. Constantin Hertanu  
Romanian Public Affairs

KANDAHAR AIR FIELD — There are hot days in the Afghan winter, not only around Kandahar Air Field, but also within Charlie MED.Co.from KAF terminal.

The 102nd Forward Surgical Team is ready for action; whispered voices, hands performing a fascinating dance above a patient in an alert rhythm trying to bring back or keep life in a human body.

It looks like a ritual known only by them; handling skillfully and precisely all the medical instruments, syringes, vials, cables connected to electronic sources of life, concerned by human

mind in order to help people.

On the stretcher inside the emergency room, an approximately 40-year-old male, a local national, is fighting desperately between life and death. He suffered a car crash. In the struggle for life, held by the people dressed in scrubs it doesn't matter on which side you used to be. There are no more coalition forces members or hostiles in this fight for life.

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# From the top —



## Devil Seven

The past couple of weeks we have been pretty busy here at Kandahar. As a matter of fact all of our brothers and sisters at all of the fire bases have done a remarkable job. The people of Afghanistan are generally satisfied that America is here but make no mistake about it, there are those here that simply would do harm to the coalition forces. That is why each and every one of us here should remain in a high state of readiness. Readiness also includes taking care of each other. Recently we have had several negligent discharges that are to say the least disturbing to the commander and me. What is even more troubling to me is that some of these included leaders. Negligent discharges are unacceptable whenever they occur. Take a positive approach by ALWAYS treating a weapon as though it is loaded and there-

fore muzzle awareness will always be uppermost in your mind. Most of our discharges occur because soldiers fail to place the weapon on SAFE before going to the next step. Whether you are cleaning a weapon or doing a function check you always drop the magazine out FIRST before proceeding to the next step. Function checks in general are not required after cleaning a weapon so don't do them.

The next area of interest is our Post Exchange. Some of us visiting the PX have abused the return or refund privilege offered. Some of the merchandise purchased has been altered and returned with intent to commit fraud. If you buy a Play Station 11, remove the chip and return it to the PX claiming it was defective then you have committed fraud and possibly theft. This is punishable under the Uniformed Code Of Military Justice and you can bet the Commander will treat it as such.

Recently we published the Kandahar Camp Standards. Every individual living here is reminded to read it and comply. Finally I would like to say how very happy I am overall with how well the Devil team is doing. In my 29 short years in the Army I have never seen the Outstanding Teamwork we have here at KAF. It is a pleasure to serve along side all of you military and civilian alike. I am proud of all of you and all you do for making the Quality of life the very best here. Remember "America" is at War and you have a front row seat.

*Desert Devil Dispatch* falls under the supervision of Task Force Devil.

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## Off the record ...



*"Dale Earnheart Jr. because he has the best crew right now, and a good starting position."*

Spc. Abram Mear  
450th Civil Affairs Bn.



*"Rusty Wallace because he's about due. It's been a while. I think he has a chance."*

Staff Sgt. Mark Williams  
527 Combat Engineers



*"Having been to Daytona for spring break, the important thing is not who wins, it's just being there."*

Capt. Jay Thoman  
HHC, 504th PIR



*"Dale Earnheart Jr. because he is the best."*

Pfc. Nathaniel Ward  
50th Signal Company

## Who will win the Daytona 500 on Sunday?



Sgt. Ed Zink



Sgt. Ed Zink

Left, Dr. (Col.) John Wassner, commander of the 909<sup>th</sup> Forward Surgical Team, and Dr. Faizulla Shah, a medical doctor with the Civilian Hospital of Khowst, use an operating table as a makeshift desk to go over the daily surgery schedule during a tour of the hospital. Above, Spc. Jay Gerson of the 450<sup>th</sup> Civil Affairs Battalion, passes boxes of medical supplies to Pfc. Joshua Borden, a soldier with Company C, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 504<sup>th</sup> Parachute Infantry Regiment, during the humanitarian assistance mission to the Civilian Hospital of Khowst, Feb. 8.

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fied some of the needs of the hospital. On his second visit Wassner performed surgery to repair a hernia on an elderly Afghan man.

“I think that primarily our mission over here is to show the Afghan people that we are not the enemy. We are here to help them and make Afghanistan a safer place for them while we are trying to root out the terrorists who have taken up residence here,” said Wassner. “One of the ways I think we can do that is to provide better health care for this country. By doing this we show the Afghan people that we’re not the ‘Evil Empire.’”

The convoy left for the hospital in the early morning hours just as the sun was coming up and was kept secret from the hospital for security reasons. The whole thing came as quite a surprise to the staff and patients.

“We are very happy and desire that every week we have this kind of visit because this way the relationship between us will be further strengthened,” said Dr. Anayetullah, a pediatric doctor at the hospital. “This kind of assistance has a good effect on the treatment of our people and also our people will be assured and certain that the American people really want to help our people in every kind of process.”

The visit to the hospital included another tour of the facilities for Wassner, his newest staff of surgeons and Lt. Col. Richard Clarke, commander of 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn., 504<sup>th</sup> PIR.

The clothing and shoes were donated by family members of the 909<sup>th</sup> FST from Fort Sheridan, Ill.,

and the food and medical supplies, including two boxes of antibiotics, were coordinated through the civil affairs team, who are involved in every humanitarian mission.

“When we come in here we emphasize ... that we’re here to help them help themselves,” said Sgt. John Ammermann, a member of the CA team. “The biggest thing we reinforce is that the children are their future and education is important.”

Wassner said the doctors at the hospital are very eager to learn from American doctors and have accepted medical books and requested other medical supplies and teaching materials. However, he added, current situations in the area make that very hard to do.

“It’s very difficult for us to reach out and provide a helping hand to these people because even though we are here, the enemy is still here also,” said Wassner. “Al Qaeda elements are still just across the border in Pakistan and there are Afghans here who still look at Americans as the enemy and that’s really an unfortunate thing. But, we are making every effort we can and we are starting out with some small steps and I hope that as peace comes to the country we can begin to do a lot more for these unfortunate people.”

## **SURGEONS** from page 1

No more flesh and blood enemy or possible target for them right now. Their only enemies are death and time. These people are fighting time to defeat death. That’s why they have invented golden hour and 15-platinum minutes. These terms represents moments which already

gained near life: heart beats, eyes watching sunrise, lips able to say love, flower or simply can smile. They don’t succeed all the time in this battle, but they never give up.

These are the wizards from the terminal ... the undeclared time fighters against death.

# DEVIL SPORTS \_\_\_\_\_ (Compiled from ESPN.com)

## Passing at premium in qualifying races

Associated Press

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. — Two races down, and two to go for Junior.

Dale Earnhardt Jr., who came into Speedweeks as the favorite for Sunday's Daytona 500, raced to an overpowering victory Thursday in a 125-mile qualifier.

That followed an impressive win Saturday night in the non-points Bud Shootout.

Now, all that's left are Saturday's Koolerz 300 Busch Series race and, of course, the Daytona 500, NASCAR's biggest event.

"I want to win the Busch race and the Cup race," Earnhardt said. "I want to compete in anything I'm competing in. I'm a terrible loser. I was disappointed not to win the pole, especially losing to Jeff Green, who wasn't somebody you expected to win."

Green nipped Earnhardt for the top qualifying position in the 500 with a lap that was 0.058-second faster. That relegated Earnhardt to the outside of Sunday's front row.

Robby Gordon won the opener of the twin 125-mile qualifiers Thursday, holding off Green, his Richard Childress Racing teammate who is Sunday's pole-winner.

After watching Junior hold off his Dale Earnhardt Inc. teammate Michael

Waltrip in the nightcap, Gordon was not intimidated.

"I heard Junior say that he hopes he can sweep this deal," the former CART Champ Car star said. "My goal is that he doesn't sweep the deal."

"He and Michael have been real strong in restrictor plate races. RCR has a great history at restrictor plate races, as well, and I'm going to do everything I can to give Richard his second Daytona 500 victory."

The only win for Childress so far in the 500 came in 1998, when Dale Earnhardt, who won six of his seven championships with RCR, took the checkered flag in his 17th try.

The elder Earnhardt, killed in a crash during the 2001 Daytona 500, was considered the best driver at Daytona International Speedway and Talladega Superspeedway, NASCAR's biggest and



Junior won last week's Shootout, then Thursday's 125.

fastest tracks and the only tracks at which the sanctioning body requires carburetor restrictor plates to slow the cars by sapping horsepower.

NASCAR is requiring smaller gas tanks this week, to try to break up the big, dangerous packs of cars common to plate racing. The small tanks added a pit stop to Thursday's races, and both were eventful.

In the second race, Kurt Busch came in too fast, smoking the tires while slowing below the 55 mph pit road speed limit. Busch sped past Harvick's Chevy on the outside and suddenly turned right in front of him. Harvick hit Busch's Ford and spun it around.

Busch slid into his jackman, who was treated at the track hospital and released.

Thursday's races determined positions 3-30, with positions 31-36 reverting to speeds from Monday's time trials and the final seven spots going to drivers based on last year's car-owner points.

Kevin Harvick turns Kurt Busch's No. 97 Ford in the second of two 125-mile qualifying races for the Daytona 500 on Thursday.



**You might be Airborne if ...** Every time you see someone with a cast on their leg you say "Should've kept your feet and knees together" — **Chris Silvas (from partrooper.net)**

## Sports Cont. (Compiled from ESPN.com)

### Strange to head back to Germany

BERLIN — Iraq national soccer team coach Bernd Stange planned to leave the country Thursday because of the possibility of war.

Stange, the former East Germany coach, signed a four-year contract on Nov. 11 to coach both the national team and Olympic team, limited primarily to players under 23.

The German Foreign Ministry said Thursday it issued a warning to about 20 of its citizens to leave Iraq.

### Fog, Rain Dull Tiger's Spotlight

Tiger Woods got in only nine holes in his 2003 debut Thursday, shooting a 1-under 35 before the first round of the Buick Invitational was suspended due to rain. Fog delayed Woods' tee time four hours earlier in the day.

### Earnhardt, take two

Dale Earnhardt Jr added to the Earnhardt legacy Thursday by winning a 125-mile qualifying race — making him the man to beat at Sunday's Daytona 500.

### Victory keeps Deacons in first place in ACC

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. (AP) — It took six years and 15 tries for Wake Forest to finally beat Duke — and then it took two overtimes.

Vytas Danelius scored 20 points and matched a career high with 14 rebounds as the Demon Deacons (No. 17 ESPN/USA Today, No. 15 AP) snapped a 14-game losing streak to the Blue Devils with a 94-80 win Thursday night.

### Second-longest skid in D-1 history now history

PULLMAN, Wash. — Tears glistened in coach Sherri Murrell's eyes as her Washington State team ended a 45-game losing streak — the second longest in Division I women's history — with a 67-64 victory over California on Thursday night.

Murrell, 0-21 in her first season with the Cougars, had inherited a team that hadn't won a game since beating Gonzaga on Nov. 29, 2001.

### Flyers erase blank stare in comeback win

ST. LOUIS (AP) — After being shut out in consecutive games by the Minnesota Wild, the floodgates opened for the Philadelphia Flyers.

Michal Handzus scored on a rebound at 2:02 of overtime as the suddenly potent Flyers rallied from a three-goal deficit to beat the St. Louis Blues 4-3 on Thursday night. Philadelphia had scored only seven goals in its previous eight games, being blanked four times.

"You know, this is good stuff," coach Ken Hitchcock said. "Our guys just hung around and stayed with it."

## NEWS BRIEFS

### Sources: FBI watching al Qaeda-trained men

WASHINGTON (CNN) — Two dozen men living in the United States, who are believed to have trained in al Qaeda camps in Afghanistan, have been under surveillance by the FBI for months, government officials told CNN.

The men allegedly have talked about suicide bombings, the sources tell CNN. They are in New York, New Jersey and some cities in the western United States, the sources said.

### Japan ready for N. Korea attack

TOKYO, Japan — Japan has warned it would attack North Korea if it had evidence Pyongyang was preparing to launch ballistic missiles, Defense Minister Shigeru Ishiba has said.

Ishiba's statement is expected to send shockwaves across East Asia, and marks a dramatic escalation in the crisis over North Korea's nuclear program.

"It is too late if [a missile] flies towards Japan," Ishiba told Reuters in an interview on Thursday.

### NASA: puncture may be to blame

JOHNSON SPACE CENTER, Texas (CNN) — NASA engineers said they are convinced Columbia's left wheel well was punctured, allowing super heated gas to leak into the wing during the shuttle's last minutes of flight.

A preliminary analysis, made public Thursday afternoon, has determined that the temperature inside the wheel well was too hot for it to have been caused by one missing tile.

