

Magic beads: ‘normal procedure for abnormal situation’ saving life and limb at KAF

By Cpl. Keith Kluwe

109th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

KANDAHAR AIR FIELD, Afghanistan — Two Afghan children will most likely grow up with all their limbs intact thanks to a little creativity and ingenuity on the part of a doctor assigned to the 102nd Forward Surgical Team here.

Lt. Col. Robert Handy, an orthopedic surgeon assigned to the 102nd FST, mixed powdered antibiotics with medical cement and implanted the resulting antibiotic “beads” into the infected arm of a 12-year-old Afghan boy here. Handy also implanted a small block of the concoction into the equally infected leg of a 5-year-old Afghan girl.

“Because of the extent of the infections we decided to blast them both with high doses of antibiotics, so we opted to use antibiotic beads in the boy and a blank in the girl, in conjunction with intravenous antibiotics and surgery,” said Handy.

Handy is quick to point out that the



Cpl. Keith Kluwe

Lt. Col. Robert Handy, center, assisted by members of the 102nd Forward Surgical Team, implants an antibiotic block into the leg of a 5-year-old Afghan girl in the hopes of fighting an infection spread throughout her leg.

beads are not his invention, but a normal procedure for abnormal situations, such as large-scale infections.

“There are articles written about the procedure, but I don’t know if it is mass produced by a company,” said Handy,

an alumni of Temple University School of Medicine in Philadelphia, Pa. “They do make molds for them so you can make your own in the operating room using off the shelf antibiotics.”

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Afghan army puts its first unit on patrol

By Spc. Jim Wagner

109th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment (Kabul)

ORGUN-E, Afghanistan — The first operational unit in the Afghan National Army is making their presence known by patrolling local streets.

For many of the surrounding villages and towns in the Paktiki Province, the ANA patrols are the only contact between Afghanistan’s army and its local populace. The 3rd

BANA is Afghanistan’s first operational unit and officials said the community will hopefully accept the army as the future of the country’s peace in the region.

At first, villagers in the more remote areas were visibly nervous to see a platoon of soldiers unload and set up a defensive perimeter around the military convoy.

For more than 20 years, Afghanistan’s small towns have been caught between warring factions, from the Communists and mujadeen to the many tribal clashes with villagers appeasing all sides to stay alive, officials said.

The advent of Afghanistan’s first standing army in years

_____ see **PATROLS**, page 3

From the top —



Team — appreciate the great work by all in the Devil Task Force and all coalition members.

For the past 11 days we have been engaged in Operation Mongoose, because it is an ongoing operation I won't go into all the details but suffice it to say that it has been a tremendous success to date.

Elements from all three infantry task forces have been involved as well as Task Force Saber, Gun Devils and the Logistical Task Force.

The Adi Ghar mountain complex is very rugged terrain but the soldiers and pilots have done tremendously and have maintained a presence on both the ground and air. USSF elements in coordination with Task Force

Devil have conducted this operation and have gained a great appreciation for each other. Expect to see more coordination and execution of operations between all members in the future.

Task Force Blue Devils at the Forward Operating Base and Task Force Two Panther at Bagram have been engaged in several operations as well and continue to stay focused at the mission at hand.

Thanks to all that supported the Lt. Gen. McNeill visit and the Col. Roberson/Command Sgt. Maj. Turner visit. They all came away from their visit impressed with all at KAF.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to family members of those lost in the black hawk accident last week as well as to the space shuttle crew and family. All were doing what they enjoyed most and all paid the ultimate sacrifice in service to our great country.

Col. John F. Campbell
Task Force Devil Commander

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

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Off the record ...

What is the best gift to give for Valentine's Day?



"Love, because it's always good to love someone. Especially when you know you are loved."

Spc. Tenesha Wilson
Admin. Clerk
Co. C, 769th Eng. Bn.



"To be home to give my Mom a big hug and kiss."

Pvt. James Howen
Food Svc. Spc.
HHC, 2nd Bn. 504th PIR



"Me going home and spending her first Valentine's Day with my daughter, Madison."

Pfc. Justin Bailey
Food Svc. Spc.
307th FSB



"Something simple, lingerie and chocolate."

Staff Sgt. Ralph Howard
Petroleum Supply NCO
Co. C, 769th Eng. Bn.

PATROLS *from page 1*

brings hope to many of these villagers, officials said. At the village Saheer, located on the top of one mountain range that can be reached only by a winding road with many switchbacks, townsfolk received their first visit from the ANA Jan. 21.

The platoon's commander asked for the village elder, and the trepidation slowly melted away as the two met and exchanged introductions. In the background, children ran out from alleyways and crowded close to catch a look at the new soldiers.

"When we first got there, I got the impression they were scared," said Senior Capt. Hazar Meir, acting commander of the 3rd Platoon, 2nd Company, 3rd BANA. "I said, 'I am your brother and am from the ANA. We are from your country.' After that, they were relieved to talk to us."

Besides introducing themselves to village elders throughout the province, 3rd BANA's mission was also to collect intelligence on the surroundings to ensure the



Spc. Jim Wagner

Afghan National Army soldiers patrol the town of Sorobi Marketplace. It's Afghanistan's first operational unit.

prosperity of the community. At every stop, the platoon commander asked for known mines and whether they've seen any bandits in the area.

Not everyone is as eager to see signs of a central government military force in their area, however. In the Sorobi Marketplace, a bazaar and rest area for travelers, located near the Pakistan border, citizens were a

bit more nervous about the ANA troops.

According to Amin Muhammad, an interpreter at Camp Harriman, the U.S. Army outpost outside of Orgun-E, the marketplace still houses a number of Taliban and Al Qaeda supporters. The people who live in the area, he said, are reserving judgment on the ANA until they see some positive steps.

BEADS *from page 1*

The boy was brought to Kandahar Air Field with pus draining from his elbow after being seen by a Special Forces medic in Deh Rawood. The medic found a scab on his elbow, lanced it, and because of the amount of pus that came out of the wound felt it would be best if the boy was treated in a hospital.

Handy said further evaluation of the boy showed the infection had actually spread to his chest wall, shoulder joint, through the growth plate on his humerus and basically enveloped his whole humerus bone from the shoulder to the elbow.

Multiple surgeries were required to "wash out the wound, clean out dead tissue and set the stage for healing," he added.

Because the infection was continuing to spread throughout the boy's body, Handy thinks the boy's life was in danger.

"Clearly if he didn't get to us, he probably would have been dead by now," Handy said.

Is the boy's arm saved?

"We're headed in the right direction, but it is really too soon to tell," said Handy. "If I can't completely cure him of the bone infection but he has a functional limb, to me that will be considered a save."

The little girl arrived at Kandahar Air Field Jan. 20 with a severe infection in her right leg. Her family took her to Pakistan for surgery previously, but the surgery did not cure her infection. Over the last six months, the girl's tibia bone be-

came infected and broke in the middle of the shaft. The bone would not heal because of the infection.

"Her prognosis was not good (without the surgery)," said Handy. "Left untreated, she probably would lose her leg."

During the surgery, Handy and his team removed dead bone and tissue, implanted the antibiotic block and closed the wound. The girl's leg will be in a cast for at least six weeks. Once the cast is removed, more antibiotics will probably be implanted, said Handy.

Treating patients like these two children, and the hundreds of other local patients that have come onto Kandahar Air Field for treatment is helping change the perception of the United States in the eyes of the locals, said Handy.

"Why we're here and why what we are doing is important can be summed up by what our patients are saying, and what they are going back and telling their villages," He said. "One 50-year-old gentleman said, 'Before I'd met any Americans, I just hated all Americans.'" "By the time he left here, he said he would like to 'carry us around on his head' because he was so happy with the treatment he got. He promised to go back to his village and tell everyone how good the Americans are."

The battle against the infection will be fought over a minimum of a few months in both cases, with more surgeries to take the "magic beads" out for good or to replace them with fresh ones, said Handy.

He and his Forward Surgical Team are scheduled to rotate back to the United States soon. The care of both children will be turned over to their replacements.

DEVIL SPORTS _____ (Compiled from ESPN.com)

Nets may be better off without Mutombo

By Frank Hughes
Special to ESPN.com

If I were to guess today, I'd have to predict that the New Jersey Nets are the team from the Eastern Conference going back to the NBA Finals.

The Nets are incredibly talented, incredibly deep and, the most important item of all, they have the experience of going to the Finals last season.

The Indiana Pacers are probably the best team, based strictly on their roster, but it is going to be very difficult for Jermaine O'Neal and Ron Artest to hold it together in the pressure of a postseason run for the first time in their careers.

The Nets now know what it takes, and on top of that, they have power forward Kenyon Martin playing out of his head. I know the coaches who vote for the All-Star team are supposed to do it based on their opinions and not their own agendas, but for the love of God, didn't they know, for their own good, that leaving My Favorite Martin off the team was going to set him off.

As Martin said the other night after going for a career-high-tying 35 points and 12 rebounds against Seattle, he's going out to destroy everybody, and he doesn't care who it is. Just ask Kenny Anderson, who nearly had his arm ripped out of its socket while wrestling Grand Kenyon for a loose ball.

But the problem with making these predictions this early is that a great deal can change between now and the 82nd game of the season — and with the Nets, it is going to.

You see, while the Nets are playing as well as anybody in the East right now,

putting together one of the best records in the league, they still face the spectre of Dikembe Mutombo returning from a wrist injury. And while that would be a



The Nets' offense is working just fine without Dikembe Mutombo.

welcome panacea for a team like the Sonics or Miami or the Knicks, who desperately crave a post presence like Mutombo, in all honesty he does not fit in well with the Nets.

The Nets are a team whose success is predicated on point guard Jason Kidd — who, by the way, is having an even better season this year than he did last year when he was routinely mentioned as an MVP candidate — pushing the ball up the court and finding Martin or Richard Jefferson or Kerry Kittles filling the lanes on either side of him.

Their half-court sets seem to work best

either when Martin gets the ball in the post or when they run motion and get open jumpers or backdoor cuts. When Mutombo returns, his plodding, limited offense not only brings the rest of the players to an abrupt halt, it also makes them angry that what once was a fluid offense now is a stagnant mess.

"We are not as good offensively because early in the season he was not familiar with our offense," Nets coach Byron Scott said. Therein lies the problem — and the reason that anybody guessing the Nets will return to the Finals may have flawed thinking.

When asked what his plan was for Mutombo's return, Scott said he was going to bring Mutombo back "gradually."

"That's all I can tell you. Gradually," Scott added. "I can't throw him back in there right away. He has to work himself back in."

But Scott also said he ultimately plans to start Mutombo again after his gradual return because he thinks the Nets are better defensively with Mutombo in the game. "It is not going to reflect in the numbers because the numbers tell a different story, but I think we are a better defensive team with Dikembe than without him," Scott said. "And that is the reason we got Deke here — it's to solidify that center position for us and give us a force down the middle. I think he was doing that for us."

So it seems the Nets' postseason could come down to this question:

Mutombo?

Or Kidd?

Frank Hughes, who covers the NBA for the Tacoma (Wash.) News-Tribune, is a regular contributor to ESPN.com

You might be Airborne if ... your kids think "check canopy!" comes after the number four — RayLewis (from Paratrooper.net)

Sports Cont. (Compiled from ESPN.com)

James must miss one more regular-season game

AKRON, Ohio — LeBron James was cleared to play Wednesday by a judge who temporarily blocked a state ruling that stripped the high school basketball star of his eligibility.

James, expected to be the No. 1 pick in the NBA draft, can rejoin his team but must sit out one more game this season, Summit County Judge James Williams ruled.

St. Vincent-St. Mary was allowed to decide what game James will miss, and it picked the one on Feb. 23, four days after the hearing when Williams will grant a permanent injunction or go to trial.

RJR may follow Union 76 out of sport

R.J. Reynolds and NASCAR recently announced this year's Winston Cup point fund will be a record \$17 million. What they didn't say was that whoever snares the \$4,250,000 for first place in 2003 may also be the final Winston Cup champion.

ESPN.com has learned that R.J. Reynolds is seriously looking at ending its long and rich association with the stock car world after 33 years.

Devils extend point streak to club-record 14 games

WASHINGTON (AP) — Good defense beat good offense in a battle of division leaders.

And, by the way, the team with the good defense wants some credit for scoring a little bit, too.

John Madden got three goals — two on fast breaks and one on an empty-netter — plus an assist as the New Jersey Devils beat the Washington Capitals 4-1 Wednesday night.

Rhodes hired as Seahawks' defensive coordinator

Seattle Seahawks coach Mike Holmgren filled a key staff vacancy on Wednesday, hiring much-respected Ray Rhodes as defensive coordinator, in a move that has been rumored for more than a week.

Rhodes, 52, resigned last month as Denver Broncos defensive coordinator. He replaces Steve Sidwell, who was part of a far-reaching defensive staff purge by Holmgren following the 2002 season.

Williams cruises in return to court

PARIS — Serena Williams easily won her first match since capturing the Australian Open, beating Myriam Casanova 6-0, 6-4 Wednesday to reach the Gaz de France quarterfinals.

Williams, who won her fourth straight Grand Slam title in Australia less than two weeks ago, defeated her Swiss opponent in 59 minutes. The 17-year-old Casanova is ranked 53rd. "To win a match just after winning a Slam is tough. It's even tougher after winning four (Slams)," Williams told Reuters.

The top-ranked Williams ended the match with an ace, her 12th of the match.

NEWS BRIEFS

NASA downplays foam theory

Feb. 6 — NASA backed away Wednesday from the idea that Columbia was critically damaged shortly after launch by a piece of flying foam from the shuttle's external fuel tank. Insisting that "there's got to be another reason," shuttle program manager Ron Dittmore said investigators were using "reverse engineering" to track down the source of rising temperatures in the minutes before Columbia broke up during its re-entry.

N. Korea warns of preemptive strike

Feb. 6 — North Korea could launch pre-emptive strikes against U.S. forces rather than wait for an American attack after a war with Iraq, a spokesman for the communist state told a British daily newspaper. The statement comes amid rising tensions over a nuclear crisis on the Korean peninsula.

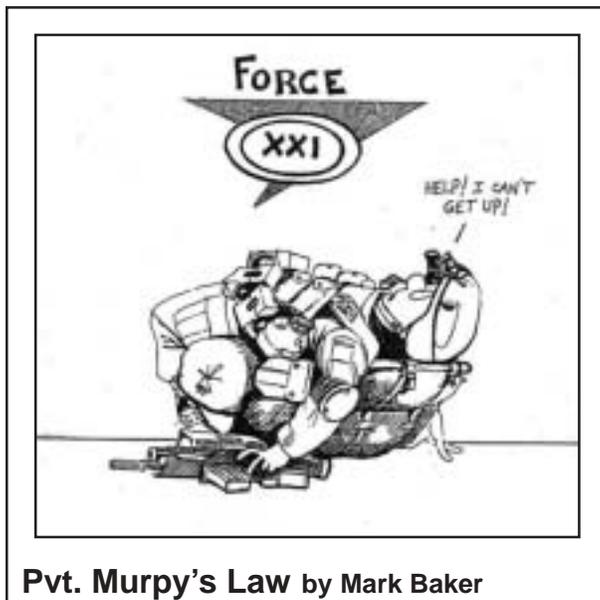
Anti-terror police arrest 7 in Britain

LONDON, Feb. 6 — British police said they arrested seven people on Thursday in the latest of a series of counter-terrorism raids around the country.

The six men and one woman were arrested in London, Manchester, Edinburgh and Glasgow, in an operation that police said was linked to the arrest of seven North African men in Edinburgh and London in December.

U.S. ordered to freeze executions

THE HAGUE, Feb 5 — The United States must temporarily stay the executions of three Mexican citizens on death rows in Texas and Oklahoma, the World Court ruled Wednesday.



Pvt. Murphy's Law by Mark Baker