

EOD team helps keep Bagram safe

Story by Sgt. Stephanie Hall
4th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan – Residents of Bagram Air Base live with a potentially deadly threat every day: mines and other unexploded ordnances.

“This area has been under war and war-like conditions for the past 30 years,” said Capt. Jeffery Ford, the company commander for the 797th Ordnance Company (Explosive Ordnance Disposal). The area around here “is probably the most heavily contaminated, ordnance-wise environment, in the world,” he said.

These threats can come in many forms and can be deceptive in their appearances, but units on Bagram are trained and ready to handle these threats to ensure a much safer environment for the inhabitants here, said Ford.

One such unit is the 797th Ordnance Co. This company of 16 personnel has two elements. The first element’s job is to dispose of UXO on and around Bagram. The second element, the quick reactionary force, has teams that are sent all over Afghanistan to stand ready to respond to UXO threats quickly.

The 797th Ordnance Co. has only been here a little over a month, but already they have seen a lot of action. “(Yesterday), we got a call that there was a possible explosive device over by the in-processing building,” said Capt. Jeffery Ford, the company commander for the 797th Ordnance Co. A team was sent out to investigate, and they found that the threat “was just a piece of scrap metal,” he said.

A team from the company’s QRF also displayed its skills when it was called to respond to a helicopter downed by mechani-



Photo by Sgt. William Conard, 797th Ordnance Company

A cache of unexploded ordnance which was accumulated over time is detonated by 797th EOD.

cal failure, said Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Borgerding, an EOD technician and team leader. The helicopter itself was recovered, but the munitions had to be destroyed by the QRF team. If the helicopter had been unrecoverable, it would be the QRF’s job to destroy the aircraft, he said.

Soldiers from the 797th Ordnance Co. agree that their job can be exciting at times, but it can also be very dangerous, said Ford. “We still have soldiers who get hurt, injured or killed all the time from UXO,” said Ford.

“Dealing with that kind of hazard requires more than just somebody who lets us have a

blasting cap and a block of explosives, then walk up to an item, place the explosives and basically blow it up,” said Ford. “You need people who if needed, can diffuse it to make it safe so it won’t explode. Then they can pick it up and safely carry it away.”

“Our job is to get rid of UXO,” said Ford. “We’re not out there to get rid of UXO just for the fun of it. The whole point of it is to get rid of UXO because it is a threat to people,” he said.

Borgerding said that as long as the threat remains, his team is confident and ready to respond.

World News (Compiled from CNN.com)



North Korea's nuclear stand has sparked tensions among its neighbors and Washington.

North Korea claims revives criticism of U.S. policy

WASHINGTON — The Bush administration says it is trying to confirm North Korea's claim it now has enough plutonium to make a half-dozen nuclear bombs. At the same time, it finds itself fending off critics who say its North Korean policy is ineffective.

North Korean officials told the U.S. State Department last week it had completed reprocessing spent fuel rods from a nuclear plant into plutonium. North Korean officials said in April the project involved 8,000 rods.

"Reprocessing is a serious concern and it's something that we will work to address," White House press secretary Scott McClellan told reporters Tuesday.

North Korea and the United States have been in a standoff since October when Washington said Pyongyang admitted to having a covert nuclear weapons program — a violation of a 1994 pact.

Democrats broaden criticism of administration on Iraq

WASHINGTON — The United States went to war against Iraq "under false pretenses," a leading Democratic senator charged Tuesday, as members of his party sharpened their critiques of the Bush administration's policy on Iraq.

In a scathing speech, Sen. Edward

Kennedy faulted both the administration's justification for its war and its handling of Iraq's reconstruction in the aftermath of Saddam Hussein's fall from power.

"They have undermined America's prestige and credibility in the world," Kennedy said in a speech delivered at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies.

Democrats broadened their criticism, moving beyond a singular focus on a disputed line about Iraq's nuclear ambitions in the president's January State of the Union address.

"The misleading statement about African uranium is not an isolated issue," said Michigan Sen. Carl Levin, the top Democrat on the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Levin said Bush's statement — in which he cited British intelligence — that Iraq was seeking to buy uranium from Africa was "but one of several questionable statement and exaggerations" in the buildup to war.



Studabaker and Pennington flew from Manchester to Paris.

Ex-Marine says missing British girl 'safe'

LONDON, England — A 31-year-old U.S. man, believed to have run off with a 12-year-old British girl, contacted his family and told them the girl is unharmed, his brother said Tuesday.

Former U.S. Marine Toby Studabaker — who is thought to have flown to France on Saturday with the girl, Shevaun Pennington — also said he had contacted the FBI in Detroit and wanted to turn himself in.

"He told us that Shevaun is fine and

that he had not touched or harmed her in any way," Leo Studabaker told CNN in an interview in Three Rivers, Michigan.

He said the girl had written a letter stating that she had not been harmed by Studabaker.

However, he added that his brother "wouldn't tell us where he was."

French authorities said Tuesday that Pennington had boarded a flight in Paris Saturday at 10:45 p.m. and arrived at Liverpool John Lennon Airport at 11:20 p.m. local time.



Pfc. Jessica Lynch was wounded in the attack on a 507th Maintenance Company convoy. Her rescue was videotaped.

Ex-POW Lynch to return home next week

WASHINGTON — Army Pfc. Jessica Lynch, the former Iraqi prisoner of war, plans to speak briefly to reporters for the first time next week and ride in a military motorcade in West Virginia upon her release from the hospital, a family spokesman said.

Lynch is expected to be released July 22 from Walter Reed Medical Center in Washington and will be flown by military helicopter to an undisclosed location in West Virginia, spokesman Randy Coleman said. She then will speak to reporters but does not plan to answer questions.

The 20-year-old, who can walk with a walker and is trying to use crutches, faces a lengthy rehabilitation from injuries she suffered in an ambush in Iraq in March, Coleman said.

Coleman said it was his understanding that "she's taking the initial steps in her military discharge."

Army PsyOps helps spread “Peace”

Story and photo by
Sgt. Greg Heath
4th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan – Since the fall of the Taliban, many Arabic publications within Afghanistan have reported on the vast changes and progress within Afghanistan’s social and political framework.

During this time, U.S.-led coalition forces have taken a leading role in the task of rebuilding and stabilizing the country, and in an effort to inform Afghani citizen of their intentions, 8th Psychological Operations Battalion, Combine Joint Task Force-180, were given the mission of creating a publication of their own.

The idea they came up with was an eight-page, free bi-weekly newspaper called *Peace*.

The newspaper is filled with news stories about changes within Afghanistan, along with stories about humanitarian assistance provided by coalition forces, and also helpful information for Afghani citizens, according to *Peace* editor Staff Sgt. Robbie Cynor, 8th PysOps Bn., CJTF-180.

“Our main purpose is to provide information,” Cynor said. “But we also want to try to help Afghans help themselves, to educate them, and to have them feel more comfortable and safer about their (new) government.”

Cynor pools most of his stories from vari-

ous Internet resources such as Afghan news websites, Yahoo news, and CNN news, to name a few.

Information inserts are also included in the publication covering topics such as Unexploded Ordnance awareness and information telling about the new Afghanistan National Army.

Each story within the publication is printed in three languages – English, and local languages Pashtu and Dari.

One interesting result of the multiple-language format, according to Cynor, is that some Afghani schools have begun using the publication as a reference for students learning English.

The newspaper’s biweekly printing run is 40,000 – 50,000 copies, and U.S. soldiers distribute it throughout populated areas of the

country.

Another important goal of creating the publication is to help stimulate the local economy.

For each bi-weekly printing, the Army pays approximately \$6,000 to a

printer operating out of Kabul. Eighteen issues have been printed so far.

Currently, stories selected for the paper are sent back to the U. S. at Fort Bragg, N.C., to have them translated by Army Arab Linguists.

Cynor’s latest goal is to hire local Afghani’s to translate the stories, but his expectations don’t stop there, he explained. “Ultimately we want to have everything done in country. Hopefully in the next couple of years we want them to take over the *Peace* completely.”

“Our main purpose is to provide information.”

– Staff Sgt. Robbie Cynor



A local Afghan holds a copy of the Army produced, Arab-language publication Peace, which helps inform the Afghan citizens of local news and efforts made by coalition forces to stabilize the country.

MWR; supporting troops on post

Story by Pfc. Kelly Hunt
4th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan – Troops may be stationed far from home, but personnel at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation center are doing their best to keep soldiers connected to home and entertained during their stay here.

With facilities such as the fitness center stocked with cardiovascular equipment and free weights, the civic center providing a basketball court, the main building supplying soldiers with internet and phone access, and the daily movie showings, MWR is doing its part to keep post personnel up to date and happy.

“I think MWR is really closely mission related and by having MWR here, it helps service members accomplish the task at hand,” said Andrew Solomon, a Georgia native living in Germany and Department of Defense Morale, Welfare and Recreation Coordinator for post.

Having access to home and to activities is a plus for troops during a deployment like this, said Pfc. Alicia Furst, 213th Area Support Group, PA.

“It (MWR) really is good thing (for troops to have available to them),” said Furst. “If (troops) didn’t have (MWR) they would probably be bumming.”

It’s also the social aspect that MWR has to offer that improves the morale of troops, said Furst. “It gives you something to do and people to chat with,” Furst said. “It brings people together.”

Additions are already in the making to improve the living conditions on post. The fitness center will be adding new equipment very and steps have already been taken to organize Rest and Relaxation trips outside of post including trips to K2 and Qatar, said Solomon.

For more information on events and happenings from MWR stop by the MWR facility or visit the MWR website.

Bagram Air Base MWR presents

1530Z at the MWR building:

“2 Fast 2 Furious.” Set in Miami, Officer O’Conner, stripped of his badge, is recruited to infiltrate the Miami street racing circuit in an effort to redeem himself.

Tomorrow’s movie will be “The Italian Job.”



Local weather

TWO-DAY REGIONAL WEATHER FORECAST:

	<i>Today</i>	<i>Thursday</i>
Bagram:	<i>Dusty</i> H: 97F L: 64F	<i>Mostly Clear</i> H: 97F L: 64F
Kandahar:	<i>Dusty</i> H: 109F L: 77F	<i>Dusty</i> H: 109F L: 79F
Kabul:	<i>Scattered Showers</i> H: 93F L: 57F	<i>Haze</i> H: 93F L: 57F
Uzbekistan:	<i>Sunny</i> H: 103F L: 68F	<i>Sunny</i> H: 106F L: 69F

Weather forecast courtesy of the Bagram Combat Weather Team

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Coalition Sports Zone

(Compiled from *ESPN.com*)

Nesterovic Spurs' replacement for Robinson

ESPN — The San Antonio Spurs have found their replacement for retired center David Robinson.



Nesterovic

Free-agent center Rasho Nesterovic will sign a six-year contract estimated at \$45 million with the Spurs, agent Bill Duffy told *ESPN.com*'s Marc Stein on Tuesday.

Rasho Nesterovic narrowed his wish list down to two teams (Minnesota and San Antonio) and one long shot (New York). The defending champion Spurs, with two-time MVP Tim Duncan, won out.

"Rasho has a great fondness for Gregg Popovich," Duffy told *ESPN.com*. "This is a great opportunity to join a championship-caliber organization."

The Spurs, struggling to make use of their \$15 million-plus in salary-cap space despite winning their second NBA title in franchise history last month, had been pursuing Nesterovic aggressively since missing out on Jason Kidd, Alonzo Mourning and P.J. Brown. The Spurs were also in talks with Indiana's Brad Miller.

Nesterovic already has a seven-year offer on the table worth more than \$50 million from the Wolves, who desperately wanted to keep Nesterovic alongside Kevin Garnett on their front line. Minnesota was also hoping to add power forward Juwan Howard, but the Orlando Sentinel reported in Monday's editions that Howard has picked the Magic over the Wolves.

Cowboys innovative showman dies

DALLAS — Tex Schramm, the innovative showman who helped build the Dallas Cowboys into "America's Team" and was instrumental in the NFL's evolution and popularity, died Tuesday.

He was 83.

Schramm's son-in-law, Greg Court, told The Associated Press that the former Cowboys president and general manager died at his Dallas home.

"The NFL family has lost one of its giants," NFL commissioner Paul Tagliabue said. "Tex Schramm was one of the visionary leaders in sports history — a thinker, doer, innovator and winner with few equals."

Schramm hired Tom Landry as the Cowboys' first coach and was with the team for the first 29 seasons. He left in 1989, two months after Jerry Jones bought the club and fired Landry. Two years later, he was elected to the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

Without playing a down, Schramm did as much as anyone to shape today's NFL.

"I truly believe he had as much, or more to do with the success

of professional football as anyone who has ever been connected with the league," said Don Shula, the league's winningest coach and Schramm's longtime colleague on the powerful competition committee.

Free agents benefit from cap increase

ESPN — The NBA salary cap will jump from \$40.5 million to \$43.8 million for the 2003-2004 season, *ESPN*'s David Aldridge reports, a financial bonanza for signed veteran players and free agents.

For example, Jermaine O'Neal, who re-signed with the Indiana Pacers for \$122 million, now goes to \$126 million. And Nets star Jason Kidd's salary jumps \$4 million to \$103 million. The mid-level exception for veteran players such as Gary Payton rises to \$4.91 million.

The new figure also aids teams like Miami and Utah, which lost big-name stars to free agency but will now have significant cap room to sign players.

Players received almost 65 percent of basketball-related income before they gave 10 percent of their salaries as a result of the escrow tax. After the escrow tax payments, the players received 59.5 percent of basketball related income.



Armstrong knows he can make up time in Friday's time trial.

Protesters bring Lance, others to stop

MARSEILLE, France — Crashes, fatigue and sweltering heat are the usual perils. Lance Armstrong was presented with a new hazard Tuesday at the Tour de France — street protests.

The disruption cost him and other riders precious time, but his

AL takes it all, home-field advantage for World Series

CHICAGO — Hank Blalock's team is going nowhere. Thanks to him, though, a lot of his AL teammates have a much better chance to go all the way.

In an All-Star Game that clearly meant more than a mere exhibition, Blalock connected for a two-run, pinch-hit homer off Eric Gagne in the eighth inning that rallied the Americans over the NL 7-6 Tuesday night.

On a night when the teams turned serious and strategy took over, Blalock's unlikely shot gave the AL champion home-field advantage in the World Series. Blalock and the Texas Rangers are stuck in last place, but Jason Giambi, Ichiro Suzuki and several other stars surely owe him.



Edgar Martinez had a scary moment in the second when his helmet was cracked by a fastball from Jason Schmidt.

The NL was supposed to have the home-field edge this season.

Yet after last season's disastrous 7-7 tie in 11 innings, baseball decided to juice up the All-Star Game by attaching more meaning.

Come Oct. 18 — Game 1 of the World Series — fans everywhere will see exactly how much



Hank Blalock's homer was the difference for the AL

this outcome meant.

Of the last eight Series to go to Game 7, the home team has won every one.

Giambi and Garret Anderson also homered as the AL posted its sixth straight victory — not counting the tie — and matched its longest winning streak ever.

Now, for the first time since Detroit hosted the opener in 1934 and 1935, the Series will start in the same league in consecutive years.

And the NL has no one to blame except itself.

Andruw Jones' two-run, pinch-hit double and solo homer gave the Nationals a 5-1 lead before Anderson hit a two-run homer in the sixth.

SPORTS, from Page 5

overall lead was safe on a day when organizers said temperatures soared to 115 along the 136-mile route.

"It's definitely the hottest Tour that most of us can remember," said Armstrong, who is trying to match Miguel Indurain's record of five straight Tour wins. "We've always had hot days but never so many in a row."

Armstrong was stuck in a pack of riders briefly blocked by demonstrators, and he completed the 10th stage in a group that finished more than 20 minutes behind.

Armstrong, riding one day after he skidded off course to avoid a fallen rival, was in 45th place in the ride to this port city.

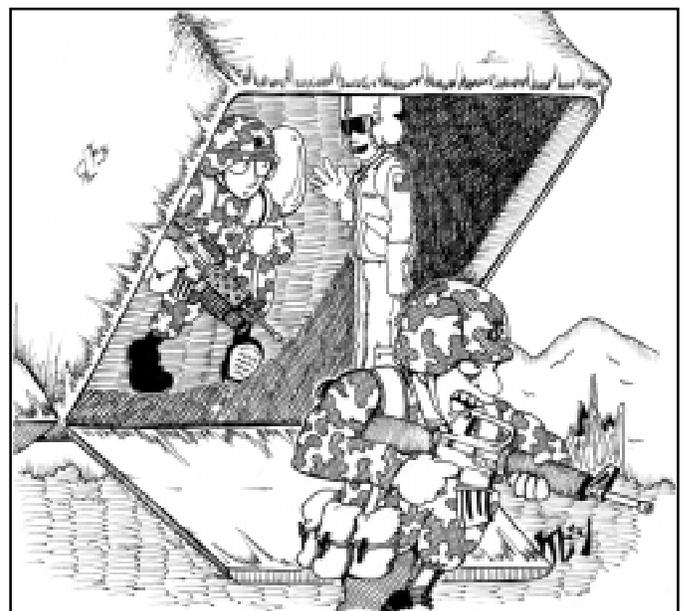
Alexandre Vinokourov, a Kazak rider for Team Telekom, remained second overall, 21 seconds behind the Texan.

Recording the same time as Armstrong on Tuesday were Vinokourov (53rd place), Mayo (42nd), 1997 winner Jan Ullrich (34th) and Hamilton (36th).

The protest forced riders to stop after supporters of radical farmer Jose Bove ran into the road and blocked cyclists near Pourrieres, about 91 miles into the race.

Tour officials ruled the protest was a "normal race incident," meaning riders would have to suffer the consequences of the demonstration. However, Armstrong's main rivals got caught in the pack as well, so his overall lead was not affected. In all, the pack lost about 90 seconds.

"Thank you for choosing Marine Air, please fly with us again."



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By Kevin Kilgore

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