

Iraqis Take Over Training in Taji

By Cpl. Benjamin Cossel
122nd MPAD

CAMP TAJI, Iraq - For more than 300 of Iraq's newest Iraqi National Guard (ING) members, the long smiles and words of congratulations they shared amongst each other was for far more than their completion of a 13-day boot camp. With the graduating class of 04-07, Iraq took one step closer to its complete independence as multinational forces (MNF) transferred responsibility of the ING Academy to the command of the ING at ceremonies held here, Oct 7.

"Today is a historic moment in Iraq," said Brig. Gen. Michael Jones, the assistant division commander - maneuver for the 1st Cavalry Division, as he

addressed gathered dignitaries, MNF and ING Soldiers alike. "As we welcome these newest members of the Iraqi National Guard, we also transfer responsibility of this fine academy to Iraq."

Prior to the transfer, the academy fell under the control of the First Team's 39th Brigade Combat Team, though instructors for the academy came from all over the Division.

"The staff of instructors here come from all over the Division bringing a wealth of training experience along with them," said Sgt. 1st Class Steve Holcomb, ING coordinator, 39th BCT. "A few months ago the academy was transferred from its location at Butler Range, where the 1st BCT maintained con-



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Command Sgt. Maj. Neil Ciotola, the 1st Cavalry Division's top enlisted member, receives the guide-on from 1st Sgt. Joe Endicott (with back turned) during a ceremony to transfer responsibility of the Iraqi National Guard Academy located at Camp Taji Oct. 7.

trol of it, to Camp Taji, where we (the 39th BCT) assumed control."

Noting that there was

only so much that could be taught within 13 days, Holcomb explained that the

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By Spc. Erik LeDrew, 122nd MPAD

Sgt. Justin Selak, of the 641st Adjutant General Postal Company empties a newly arrived satchel of packages at the Camp Rustamiyah post office.

Lick It, Stick It, Send It, Now

By Spc. Erik LeDrew
122nd MPAD

CAMP RUSTAMIYAH, Baghdad, Iraq - Mail. Few things mean more to the deployed Soldier than that little snippet ... that little taste of home; from a place continents and oceans away, but always close to their heart.

The 19 Soldiers of the 641st Adjutant General (AG) Postal Company operating out of Camp Rustamiyah (formerly Camp Cuervo) are the guys responsible for trafficking mail to and from the troopers of the 1st Cavalry Division's 1st Brigade

Combat Team (BCT), operating in eastern Baghdad.

"We service all of the 1st BCT," said Rochester, N.Y. native Spc. Brian Saladin, a postal operations and supply clerk with the 641st.

"There are 41 units in the 1st BCT that we support," he added, "but we also carry the mail for the [Military Police unit that operates out of the base camp] and the [Kellogg, Brown and Root] employees."

The New York-based, Army Reserve unit starts its day at 6:00 a.m., unloading the newly arrived mail.

"A KBR truck will

arrive at oh-dark-thirty in the morning, and we'll begin downloading the mail at zero-six," said Staff Sgt. Louis Musilli, the postal unit's custodian of postal effects, which means that he is "basically the guy who signs for all of the stamps and money orders."

Musilli said the amount of mail the unit receives varies on an almost daily basis.

"When the brigade's mail arrives, it comes inside of tri-wall boxes," he said, "and a truck can carry twenty of these."

"On average, we get 20 tri-walls of mail," he contin-

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By Cpl. Benjamin Cossel, 122nd MPAD

Brig. Gen. Michael Jones, the 1st Cavalry Division's assistant division commander - maneuver, speaks during ceremonies held at Camp Taji, Oct 7 celebrating the graduation of Iraqi National Guard Class 04-07 as well as the transfer of responsibility of the ING Academy to the 40th ING Brigade.

Training the ING Future

Continued from Page 1 newly graduated troops still had more many more training days ahead of them.

"When an individual first signs up, they spend time with the ING battalion closest to their home," he said. "The process gets them adjusted to life in the military and after a few weeks they are assigned to the academy where they learn basic marksmanship, and fundamentals of drilling. After graduating, these Soldiers will return to their home battalion where they will be integrated into the battalion and taught to work within the unit."

As the final moments of the graduation ceremony

drew near, Command Sgt. Maj. Nasser, the senior enlisted member of the 307th ING Battalion, 40th ING Brigade, approached the podium. Each of the new National Guardsmen raised their right hand and repeated the words that swore them into the Iraq National Guard. But before they could be dismissed, one final piece of business was to take place.

Joining Nasser at the podium, Command Sgt. Maj. Neil Ciotola, the First Team's top noncommissioned officer, and 1st Sgt. Joe Endicott, the ING academy commandant, walked to the center of the parade field where the academy guide-on bearer met

them.

On the order "Post!" Endicott took the guide-on, passed it to Ciotola who then passed it to Nasser, the new commandant. With Nasser returning the guide-on to its bearer, the academy officially transferred hands.

While noting that responsibility for day-to-day operations would be in the hands of the Iraqi National Guard, Holcomb said that multinational forces would still be on hand to help out.

"With the transfer of responsibility, we're stepping back," he said. "We will maintain a level of oversight, but we will only get directly involved when asked."

Soldiers Go Postal in Eastern Baghdad

Continued from Page 1 ued, "but we've had as many as sixty tri-walls of mail, or three truckloads."

After unloading the mail truck--or trucks--the unit then sorts the mail.

"We sort all mail down to the company level," Saladin said.

"After it's all sorted, it's usually up to the brigade's different [forward operating bases] to send a ... convoy to pick up their mail," Musilli added.

Receiving incoming mail is only half of the job for these postal Soldiers.

"There are two components [to] our unit," Saladin explained "Receiving and sorting incoming mail [is] one, and the other is handling outgoing mail from the Soldiers."

The unit has a post office at Camp Rustamiyah, open from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., where Soldiers can come and mail out letters and packages.

However, since coming all of the way to the camp isn't exactly convenient for the great majority of the Soldiers who live at the two other base camps in eastern Baghdad -- Camps Hope and Patriot--the 641st does what they call "rodeos."

"A rodeo is where a few of us will go to another[forward operating base] every couple of weeks for three or four days at a time and set-up a make-shift post office so that the Soldiers there

can send mail out," said Buffalo, N.Y. native Sgt. Justin Selak, an operations sergeant with the unit.

"We rotate everybody through that job, so it doesn't fall on just a few people," Musilli added.

The 641st will continue to deliver the mail in eastern Baghdad until February next year. Not that they're counting the days.

"The magic date we've been told is Feb. 21," Musilli said.

Useful Iraqi Words/Phrases

How do I get there?

kayf aSil hunaaq

Monday

High: 98
Low: 72



Tuesday

High: 96
Low: 70



Wednesday

High: 98
Low: 68



Weather information provided by 1CD Staff Weather Office (SWO)

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News Notes

Rare Hornets Sting Arkansas

FAYETTEVILLE, Ark. (AP) - Entomologists at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville say a rare breed of hornet known as the European hornet is breeding for the first time in northwest Arkansas. Jeffrey Barnes, curator of the Arthropod Museum at the university, said he has been collecting stories from people who have seen the rare hornet, which can grow up to 1 1/2 inches long, much larger than the more common yellow jacket breed. "People working in orchards have been getting dive-bombed by these things," Barnes said. "In the past couple of weeks, I've gotten dozens of interesting stories."

Stewart Cupcake T's Make Splash

CHARLESTON, W. Va. (AP) - Dallas-based B.A. Hobo Co. has created two designs based on the Alderson Federal Prison Camp, where Martha Stewart will serve five months for lying to federal investigators about a stock sale. Stewart is to report to the women's prison Friday. One shirt's slogan reads, "Camp Cupcake: Where there is no cherry on top." The shirt also lists "activities" at the prison - "decorative license plate making" and "good cellkeeping." The other shirt's slogan is "Camp Cupcake."



The Pine Bluff Commercial

Watson Chapel Junior High School principal Becca Davis kisses Annie, an 8-month-old pig, at the school's football field in Pine Bluff, Ark., on Thursday during a pep rally. Davis kissed the pig to fulfill a promise made to students about raising their benchmark test scores.

Time for Kicks at Ark. State Fair

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (Democrat-Gazette) - Corn dogs and a spin on the Tilt-a-Whirl will still cost Arkansas State Fairgoers a few bucks, but fun-seekers with empty pockets can have some thrills for free.

Organizers are offering free concerts, midway attractions and entertainment at this year's Arkansas State Fair, which opens today and runs through Oct. 17.

For the price of gate admission fairgoers can take in a performance by '80s rock 'n' roll hair band Night Ranger, witness the Great Cats of the World or dodge flying hunks of wood at the Paul Bunyan Lumberjack Show.

There's also a free clown show, discount admission on certain days, a petting zoo and toothpaste at the Colgate Children's Theater.

But fair organizers are banking on the old idea that

there's no such thing as a free lunch.

"We're hoping that while they're there, they'll ride the carnival rides and eat good fair food," said Jim Pledger, the Arkansas State Fair's general manager. "Everybody needs a corn dog every once and a while."

Now in its 65th year, the Arkansas State Fair exists in a competitive market for thrill-seekers, unlike decades past when families flocked to the fairgrounds to show livestock, sample pies and ride the Ferris wheel.

Today, Arkansans are more likely to take a road trip to Six Flags Over Texas and Disney World in Florida.

Arkansas State Fair organizers are well aware of the competition they face, hence this year's bounty of free events, Pledger said.

"By making some changes, we hope we can attract more people," Pledger said.



Democrat-Gazette

Richard McGee, with Glen's-We Draw the Line, a cleaning service from Little Rock, pressure-washes a canopy Thursday afternoon while setting up for the Arkansas State Fair.

Besides free concerts and entertainment, fair organizers have another idea about what might lure big crowds back to the midway.

The answer: Lawn-mower races, monster trucks and a demolition derby.

"It's just keeping up with the times," said Mason Ellenberger, fair director.

Red Sox on Way to ALCS

BOSTON (AP) - The frat house full of fools will play for a pennant for the second year in a row.

David Ortiz's 10th-inning homer gave the Boston Red Sox an 8-6 victory over the Anaheim Angels on Friday, completing a three-game sweep that sent them into the AL championship series.

The Red Sox have three days to sleep off their celebration while the hated New York Yankees play the Minnesota Twins for the right to meet Boston.

"We'll need a few days after tonight," said outfielder Johnny Damon, who proclaimed the team a band of "idiots" trying to rewrite the record book and ignore Boston's miserable baseball history. "It could have been different, but now we get to relax for a couple of days."

Damon got three hits,



A waster paper basket does little to protect Boston Red Sox's Pedro Martinez from being doused in the Boston clubhouse Friday.

Ortiz had four and Boston rode starter Bronson Arroyo to a five-run lead after six innings. But Vladimir Guerrero hit a grand slam off Mike Timlin to tie it 6-all in the seventh and send the game to extra innings.

"There are a lot of guys in this clubhouse who thought, 'Hey, this might be

an easier ride than we thought,'" outfielder Gabe Kapler said. "But we have a lot of guys who are comfortable biting their nails."

With the sweep - just the second in their postseason history - the Red Sox have three days off before starting the ALCS on the road Tuesday night.

Recollections of a Traditional Kick Off

DALLAS (Dallas Morning News) - It's been three-quarters of a century, but Horace Neilson is still gloating.

"Texas won it 21-nothing," said the 85-year-old with a twinge of pride in his voice and a distinct emphasis on his last word.

Neilson is, of course, talking about the first in a long string of Texas-Oklahoma football games that have drawn contentious Sooner and Longhorn fans to the neutral grounds of Fair Park for the last 75 years. It is a story that Mr. Neilson - one of, perhaps, only a few people alive who remembers the 1929 game that started the fierce rivalry at the State Fair of Texas - likes to tell, retell and tell again.



Dallas Morning News
Horace Neilson, 85, went to the 1929 game. The cane he uses today was bought by his dad at the State Fair that year.

The 75th anniversary game was Friday at the Cotton Bowl in Fair Park. Thousands of college football fans were in Dallas to cheer, boo, drink and dine during Texas-OU weekend. Neilson is sure the game will be exciting - they all are, he says - but it will never beat the thrill of the first for him.

Because of ailing health, Neilson has not been to a Red River Shootout game for about a decade, though he never misses it on TV. He said he's worried that the aging Cotton Bowl - built a year after the 1929 contest - won't keep the game for another 75 years.

"It would really be a shame for them to lose it, but unless they build a new stadium, they will," he said. "They have such big stadiums in Austin and Norman [Okl.] that they fill up. The schools aren't going to throw money away."

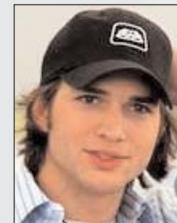
And the idea of losing the game to the proposed Dallas Cowboys stadium in Arlington?

"That's a bunch of bull, to put it shortly," Neilson said.

In Brief

3 More Seasons of 'Punk'd' to Air

NEW YORK (AP) - A warning to celebrities: You're not in the clear just yet. "Punk'd," hosted by Ashton Kutcher, will



continue for three more seasons, MTV spokesman David French confirmed

Wednesday. In past episodes Nick Lachey thought his wife, Jessica Simpson, had allowed her hillbilly relatives to move their trailer onto his mansion estate, and Justin Timberlake was moved to panic when he thought all his belongings had been seized because he owed \$900,000 in back taxes.

Santana will Start for Twins

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) - Johan Santana is ready to start against the New York Yankees on short rest. The left-hander told Minnesota Twins pitching coach Rick Anderson on Friday that his arm felt fine, which was all manager Ron Gardenhire needed to hear. Santana, who threw seven shutout innings in Minnesota's Game 1 victory Tuesday, will oppose New York's Javier Vazquez in Game 4 of the first-round AL playoff series Saturday afternoon. "You've got to throw your best at them, and if he wants the ball, that's good enough for us," Gardenhire said Friday before Game 3.