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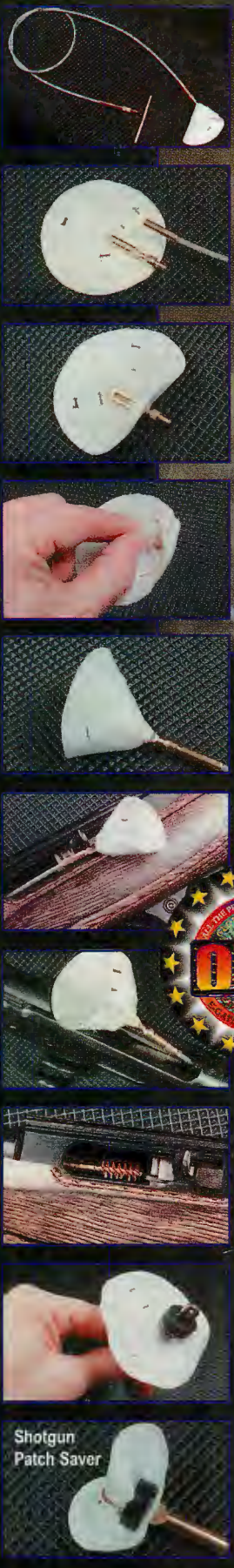
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SOLDIER OF FORTUNE MAGAZINE

Support the Troops!

MAY 2004 ✕ VOL. 29 NO. 5



On the Cover

Staff Sgt. Will Dean, of ODA 2025, B Co, 1st Bn, 20th SF, poses with his weapon of choice, an M79 grenade launcher, during a patrol inside Afghanistan with the ODA's Mobile Reaction Force (MRF) in search of al Qaeda fighters. See story, page 42.

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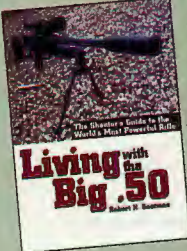
BY FRANK GRECO

Foreword by
John Plaster

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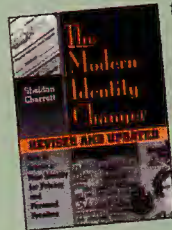
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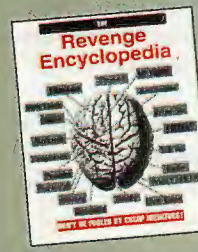
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COMMAND GUIDANCE

BY STEPHEN SHERMAN

Kerry And The Special Forces Officer

A turning point may have taken place in the Iowa Caucus when Special Forces Lieutenant James Rassmann came forward to thank John Kerry for saving his life in Vietnam. I don't know the extent to which this incident influenced the Caucus results, but the fact that Rassmann served in my unit and was pledging to vote for a Jane Fonda acolyte disturbed me.

Military service in Vietnam is an important credential to me. Perhaps as much as 90 percent of my generation (and, unfortunately, a still large number today) felt that such service to their country was beneath them and removed themselves from the manpower pool. That John Kerry served at all is a reason for a bond with fellow veterans; that his service earned him a Bronze Star for Valor ("for personal bravery") and a Silver Star ("for gallantry") is even more so.

Unfortunately, John Kerry, as I did, came back to Massachusetts (the one state that was carried by George McGovern in 1972). I left after a few months. He fell in with a questionable crowd. He joined the Vietnam Veterans Against the War and emceed the Winter Soldier Investigation (both of which were financed by Jane Fonda). Many of my fellow veterans agree that these protests led to more American deaths and the enslavement of the very people on whose behalf the protests were ostensibly being undertaken. Being a take-charge kind of guy, Kerry became a leader in the VVAW, and testified before



Stephen Sherman

Congress on the findings of the Investigation which he accepted at face value. B.G. Burkett's book, *Stolen Valor*, points out that Kerry liberally used phony veterans to testify to atrocities that they could not possibly have committed. (Even Kerry's Executive Director of the VVAW, Alfred Hubbard, claimed to be an Air

Force officer who was wounded in Vietnam, when in fact he was an enlisted man who had no assignment to Vietnam nor Purple Heart.) Kerry's experiences in Vietnam should have permitted him to see through claims that were almost as absurd as CNN's "Valley of Death" story about Special Forces using nerve gas to kill American POWs.

After Kerry's congressional testimony, he proceeded to throw what he then represented as his awards at the Capitol in protest. But as the Vietnam War diminished as a political issue, he left the VVAW which was a bit too radical for his political future and was ultimately elected as Senator from Massachusetts. After his awards were seen framed on his office wall, he claimed to have thrown away someone else's medals, so he can now "reclaim" the gallantry that he displayed in Vietnam.

Kerry hasn't given me any reason to trust his judgment. Today I consider him to be one of the two U.S. senators "from Hanoi." As co-chairman of the senate investigating committee, he quashed a revealing inquiry into the

Continued on page 81

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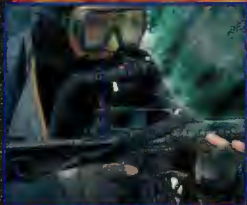
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Human Rights For Montagnards

You must understand that proponents of the Vietnam Human-rights legislation are desperate. If Kerry and McCain are honest in their objections, then they must present a plan to achieve the objectives of the bill. This is not a casual thing to the veterans who support that bill. Those of us who fought with the Montagnards of Vietnam have pledged "our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor" to these people, a people who died for us in far greater numbers than we died for them.

Consider this statistic: When I went to Vietnam in 1963 there were three million Montagnards and thirty million Vietnamese. Now there are 650,000 Montagnards and eighty million Vietnamese. If this is not genocide, please explain why it is not. If this is deserving of favored nation status from the United States, please explain to me how. If the Vietnamese treatment of the Montagnard people is more humane than Nazi treatment of the Jews, please explain to me how this is so.

Bear in mind, that the Montagnards are being treated as an inferior subspecies by the Vietnamese, very largely because they sided with America during the Vietnam War. If the words "loyalty" and "honor" have any meaning in American English, then we must help them.

And in case there is some niggling racist prejudice in the nether regions of your consciousness, let me point out that of

those few Montagnards (fewer than 10,000) who made it to the United States there are precisely zero on welfare, very few except children and housewives who are not working, and, of those, most are working more than one job.

When I first started working with these people, I found them wearing loincloths and hunting with crossbows. Of the ones in the U.S. there are three PhDs, one licensed commercial pilot, one millionaire (by working three jobs and investing wisely), and one published author.

These are a deserving people, and they are not getting what they deserve, from either the Vietnamese, or from Kerry, or from McCain.

Jim Morris
Major, USA (Ret.)

Argot Explained

In the February issue, a troop from the 400th CML DET said they were a "JB" team — a term no one in the unit could explain. We didn't know either, but threw it out to our eclectic readership, 'cause we knew they'd know. And they did:

The type coding of teams has been around since the 1950s. For example, FM8-5 *Medical Service Units Theater of Operation*, Oct 59, states in Chapter 14, "Army Medical Service Cellular Units," that in addition to TOE units with fixed strength, the field organization of the Army Medical Service includes cellular or specialist team units. These can be used to advantage in large theaters or bases at various types of installations in the performance of many missions.

A key item is that these units or teams perform functions where units of less than company size are required. They may be attached or assigned as required to fixed strength units or organized into composite units to perform functions under varying conditions.

In the Medical Service, Team KA was a surgical detachment; Team KB an orthopedic detachment, while Team KE was a neurosurgical detachment, etc.

Each branch of the Army was assigned blocks of letters and used these to determine size and function. There exists a manual of teams with an overall index listing all teams in the Army utilizing letter codes.

This system not only offers much operational flexibility but simplifies message traffic as the use of the team designator using the two letters pronounced or sent in the phonetic alphabet is far easier to use and to be understood than Medical Equipment Maintenance Detachment which is Team GC, as an example.

Hope this helps *armyabel*.

Regards,
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Thanks for GW Tactics Story

Hi, I am a Captain with an ... Army National Guard [unit] that will be going "over there" in the near future. Our unit passed around your February article "Guerrilla Tactics in Baghdad" by Ralph Johnson as a training aid.

It was very useful in helping summarize some of the problems we may encounter. (If you could withhold my name and email address, that would be great since I am sure "someone" in the chain of command probably wouldn't like that I wrote in.

Thanks,

Hey, we don't care if you read SOF under the blankets with a flashlight, as long as we can be of help.

Sarge, Help Yourself If It'll Help The Troops:

Is it possible to have an article emailed to me for use in my unit? It contained some great information relevant to our deployment here in Iraq. We're the 1058th Transportation Company located in Tikrit, Iraq. The article I'm interested in is "Guerrilla Tactics in Baghdad" by Ralph Johnson February 2004. I have one copy of the *Soldier Of Fortune* magazine, but cannot obtain enough to give the article to all the soldiers in my unit. Any help would be appreciated.

SSG Donna Fee
1058th Transportation Company
Donna.Fee@us.army.mil

SF NCO On Beretta M9

In response to John Farnam's article on the M9, I question some of the information he presents. While many of us in the military agree the M9 should not be the pistol of choice, it is mostly because of the 9x19mm round and not just the weapon itself. Unfortunately one pistol will not suffice to fill both roles as a concealed carry pistol and a back-up weapon for normal operation. We still have 1911s in the inventory, unfortunately it generally only holds 8 rounds, not enough for a combat-oriented pistol. If you want small and concealed, the pistol will not be as easy to use in quick-reaction failure drills. Also I have never been, or have I ever heard anyone ever tell a soldier not to load his weapon in a combat situation. Our M9s are locked and loaded, hammer decocked, and carried on "fire" in the holster. This is SOP taught at the extremely competent and effective Army shooting schools such as SFAUC, SFARTEC, and I am sure OTC. We do not carry pistols just because they are convenient, we carry them as back-up in case of failure of our primary weapons, convenience of carry is just an added benefit. Many of us would like to see the M9 replaced, perhaps by a SIG or HK in .40 S&W or .45 ACP, hopefully that day will come soon. This is just the opinion of one SF NCO, however Special Ops units represent the majority of pistol carrying soldiers in the Army, the vast majority of conventional line combat unit soldiers will never carry a pistol.

A Special Forces Weapons Sergeant

Continued on page 80

Tactical Accessory Systems



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ADVENTURE QUARTERMASTER

SOF's Man In The Sand

OUR Chief Contributing Foreign Correspondent, Rob Krott, is currently employed on a Force Protection contract in Iraq. SOF ensured he had some necessary gear before he shipped out in November. SureFire, EOtech, AFMO, BlackHawk Industries, SpecOps Brand, Otis, Arktis, KaBar Knives, Tactical Tailor, and DropZone Tactical all ponied-up gear for this deployment, or for previous "jobs." It was all gear Krott selected as the best for the job.

From top to bottom, Krott is outfitted with a NY Yankees ball cap [A]; a Drop Zone Tactical Recce Smock in Canadian Arid pattern [B]; Drop Zone Tactical BDU "OPS" pants [C]; rigger belt [D]; and BDU "OPS" shirt (Iraq Mission Pattern)[E]; all in desert tan. Worn underneath the smock is a RBR Level IV personal body armor with three-color desert camouflage tactical cover as issued by Krott's employer.

Undergarments are a desert tiger-stripe pattern t-shirt from Brigade Quartermaster [F]; a surplus British commando sweater; and a British Army OD *shemagh* (or "hadji" scarf as it's known in Iraq) [G]. Combat load-bearing equipment is a Tactical Tailor two-piece MAV in desert "coyote" color, carrying 12 loaded 30-round 5.56mm magazines and ancillary equipment [H], to include a Surefire M2 Centurion [I], a #1214 "black" KA-BAR Full-Size Fighting/Utility Knife with Kydex Sheath (1095 carbon steel blade, epoxy powder coated, partially serrated Kraton G handle) [J]; and a Mel Pardue-



NOT VISIBLE:
F, I, J, K, O, R, T, U

designed Benchmade folding knife [K]. Boots are standard issue U.S. GI desert boots from AFMO. Hellstorm gloves [L]; OD green pistol belt [M]; leg drop pistol holster in desert tan [N]; and additional 9mm magazine pouches [O] are all courtesy of BlackHawk Industries. The pistol carried 24/7 as a personal sidearm is a SIG-Sauer 226 9mm with tactical rail and night sights [P].

Rifle is M4-type 5.56mm carbine with telescoping stock outfitted with a BlackHawk tactical sling [Q]; a BlackHawk single-magazine pouch [R]; a SureFire M96 tactical weapons light [S]; an Otis pistol-grip cleaning kit [T]; and an EOtech model 552 night-vision-compatible holographic diffraction sight [U].

"Auxillary" weapon is captured Iraqi Army 7.62x39mm AKM.

Rob's Comments

"I'll never deploy anywhere again without an EOtech HDS. There's a 2nd Infantry Division sniper over here mounting one on his M21 and he's made several confirmed kills. It's an easy sight to use, is sub-MOA, and holds up well in the field. The Tactical Tailor MAV is a great rig. The Drop Zone Recce Smock is the Cadillac of field jackets: pockets, pockets, pockets. Hellstorm gloves are indispensable; I will wear these out and buy another set. The Drop Zone Tactical "OPS" uniform holds up better than any other clothing; issue BDUs would be reduced to rags by now. Otis cleaning kits are important for doing regular maintenance on weapons as sand and dust is a real problem. Other gear I use on a regular basis and consider indispensable: Steiner 7x50 military binoculars, Drop Zone fleece jacket (most valuable piece of clothing I own here), Tactical Tailor single magazine pouch, BlackHawk 5-mag 5.56 pouch and 4-mag 5.56 pouch, Arktis rain-shield jacket in OD green, SpecOps map case and a SpecOps ultimate butt-pack."

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Pilot error caused a USAF F-16 from the famed Thunderbirds to crash shortly after takeoff at an air show last fall at Mountain Home AFB, Idaho — and pilot excellence limited the damage to the plane, avoiding any loss of life. Realizing something was wrong, the pilot gave it maximum back stick and rolled slightly to port to ensure the aircraft would impact away from the crowd, then he ejected when the aircraft was 140 feet above the ground — less than a second before the plane augured in — sustaining only minor injuries. There was no other damage to military or civilian property.

According to the Accident Investigation Board report, the pilot misinterpreted the altitude required to complete the "Split S" maneuver, making his calculation based on incorrect data for the mean-sea-level altitude of the airfield. The pilot thus incorrectly climbed to 1670 feet above ground level, instead of the 2500 feet he needed, before initiating the pull-down to the Split S maneuver.

Maps For The Mean Streets

Maptech and LeadDog Consulting have introduced current and detailed maps on CD-ROM for the streets of Baghdad, plus major roads and highways, and for 17 major cities. If you're in-theater, this is an excellent tool to go with your laptop and GPS. Contact Maptech, Inc., Dept. SOF, 10 Industrial Way, Amesbury, MA 01913; phone: 888-839-5551; more details and system requirements available online at www.maptech.com.

Civilian Jobs, Iraq

KBR (Kellog Brown & Root) Government Operations, a division of Halliburton, provides innumerable services overseas, and has won many contracts in Iraq for infrastructure planning, operations, maintenance, transportation, security and other areas. They list more than 400 job specialties for which they are seeking qualified personnel. Check out their website at www.halliburton.com/careers/careers_kbr.jsp.

From History

In 1636 an exasperated General Court of the Massachusetts Bay Colony unanimously passed the following ordinance:

"Whereas many complaints have been made to this Court ... of the greatest neglect of all sorts of people of using the lawful and necessary means for their safety, especially in this time of so great danger from Indians, it is therefore ordered that no person shall travel above one mile from his dwelling without arms; upon pain of twelvence for every default."

It is interesting that unarmed people were scornfully referred to as "neglectful." Protecting oneself was not just a personal responsibility, it was a duty to the community, a community that needed the input of every able-bodied person. In fact, even years after the danger from hostile Indians was eliminated, there was no suggestion that this ordinance be repealed.

We can only wonder what it would be like to live in a world where personal responsibility was a matter of law. Americans living in that same place today are required to

Afghanistan: Helluva Helipad!



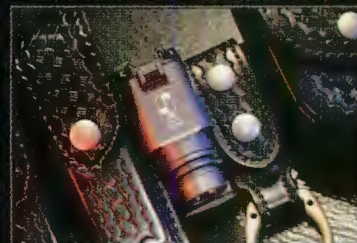
Chopper-Jock Larry Murphy, of the Pennsylvania National Guard (who in civvies flies as an EMS pilot for Keystone Helicopter Corp.), was caught by the camera in the middle of some very tricky flying, on ops to round-up suspects. Landing a Chinook on an outhouse? That has to be some kind of record.

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— John Farnam

John Kerry for president...

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Time Perspectives:

The Democrats complain on how long the war is lasting, but consider this:

- It took less time to take Iraq than it took Janet Reno to take the Branch Davidian compound in Waco, Texas. That was a 51-day operation!
- It took less time to find Saddam's sons in Iraq than it took Hillary Clinton to find the Rose Law Firm billing records in the White House.
- It took less time for the 3rd Infantry Division and the 1st Marine Division to destroy the Medina Republican Guard than it took Teddy Kennedy to sober up and call the police after his Oldsmobile sank at Chappaquiddick.
- It took less time to take Iraq than it took to count the votes in Florida!

10 Reasons Handguns Are Better Than Women

- #10. You can trade an old .44 for two new .22s.
- #9. You can keep one handgun on the road and another at home.
- #8. If you admire a man's handgun and tell him so, he'll let you try it out a few times.
- #7. Your primary handgun doesn't mind if you have a back-up.
- #6. Your handgun will stay with you even if you're out of ammo.
- #5. A handgun doesn't take up a lot of closet space.
- #4. Handguns function normally everyday of the month.
- #3. A handgun doesn't ask ... 'Do these new grips make me look fat?'
- #2. A handgun doesn't mind if you sleep after you use it.
- #1. You can buy a silencer for a handgun!

How Enron Worked The President

Investigators have ascertained that:

- Enron's chairman *did* meet with the President and Vice President in the Oval Office.
- Enron gave \$420,000 to the president's party over three years.
- Enron donated \$100,000 to the president's inauguration festivities.
- The Enron chairman stayed at the White House 11 times.
- The corporation had access to the administration at its highest levels and even enlisted the Commerce and State Departments to grease deals for it.
- The taxpayer-supported Export-Import Bank subsidized Enron for more than \$600 million in just one transaction.

This is scandalous, but do not look for it on the evening news, because the president under whom all this happened was not George Bush, it was *Bill Clinton!*

American Veteran Search

For the past six years Rich Palmeri and American Veteran Search have dedicated all their spare time to getting veterans — from all wars — back together. They recently celebrated their 6,000th reunion since going on-line Veterans Day 1998. And not just reunions where an old unit gets back together, but reunions such as a corpsman with a GI he carried to safety.

They're good at what they do. Check 'em out at:

Website address: www.VETERANSEARCH.com
<http://www.veteransearch.com/reunionspage126.htm>

e-mail address : Rich@VETERANSEARCH.com

(or) VetsSearch@AOL.COM

Cell Phone: 718-749-3410

Home phone: 718-352-6942

Cost-Benefit Ratios?

Some numbers (subject to updating):

- Soldiers killed in Iraq to date: 483
- Soldiers killed in Vietnam War (64-73): 58,200
- Soldiers killed in Persian Gulf War (90-91): 382
- Chicago murder rate in 2003: 599
- New York City murder rate in 2003: 546

Some calendar tallies on deployments

(subject to updating):

- Iraq (Bush): 8 months and counting
- Kosovo (Clinton): 4 years and counting
- Bosnia (Clinton): 8 years and counting
- Haiti (Clinton): 2 years
- Somalia (Clinton): 2 years
- Vietnam (Kennedy): 9+ years
- Korea (Truman): 50 years and counting
- Japan (Roosevelt): 57 years and counting
- Germany (Roosevelt): 57 years and counting

Navy Commander Lloyd Bucher

Retired Navy Cmdr. Lloyd "Pete" Bucher, captain of the intelligence-gathering ship *Pueblo* when it was captured off North Korea in 1968 and its crew held in brutal captivity for 11 months, has died in Poway, Calif., at the age of 76. ☒

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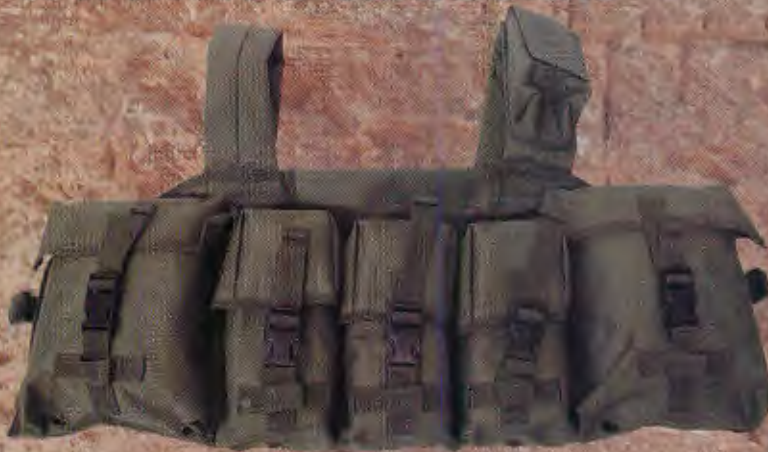
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NOAH'S ARK OPERATION

Flotilla 13 Captures 50 Tons Of Weapons And Explosives

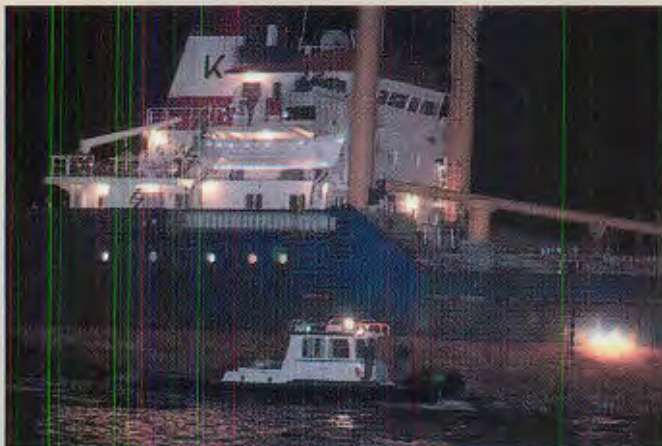
BY SAMUEL M. KATZ & STEVEN HARTOV

TO a shipload of arms smugglers and international terrorists, there is probably no worse nightmare than being raided on the high seas by Flotilla 13 — Israel's naval commandos. Yet in the midst of unbridled warfare between the Israelis and Palestinians, the captain and crew of the cargo vessel *Karine-A* should have expected no less.

Their misadventure had begun in the autumn of 2001, not long after the terrorist outrages of 11 September, and barely a year since the Palestinians had rejected the peace offers of Camp David and had begun hurling their homicide bombers at Israeli civilians. Israeli Naval Intelligence officers had gotten wind of "something afoot." Adel Moghrabi, Chief of Weapons Procurement for the Palestinian Authority, had been meeting with Iranian and Hezbollah agents regarding a purchase order. The discussions had also been attended by Juma'a Ghali and Fathi Ghazem, respectively the commander and deputy of *Shurta Bahariyya*, the Palestinian Naval Police. The PNP does not issue speeding tickets to water skiers — it is a 400-man naval unit comprised of boat captains, demolition divers and seagoing saboteurs.

In October, Israeli Intelligence watched closely as Moghrabi made his way to Lebanon and purchased a four-thousand-ton cargo vessel. Now flying the flag of Tonga, the *Karine-A* had sailed to Sudan and taken on a seemingly harmless cargo. But its crew had been switched in Africa for persons unknown, who then piloted the ship to Yemen. From there, it had sailed to the Iranian island of Qeshm. Under cover of night, an Iranian vessel had transferred 83 water-tight crates into the holds of the *Karine-A*.

To the Israelis, this effort bore all the earmarks of another recent attempt by the Palestinians to smuggle weapons




5 January 2002 — 1208 hours: The *Karine-A* is escorted into the IDF/Navy's Red Sea conduit at Eilat for inspection.

Boaz Mashkev/IDF Spokesman

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(left) Missile launchers, hermetically-wrapped, found on board the Karine-A by IDF naval officers. (center) Hundreds of thousands of rounds of 7.62mm ammunition, enough to maintain a guerrilla war

for a decade, removed from the cargo hold of the Karine-A. (right) The tools of war for the Jihad — brand new AK-47 assault rifles ordered by Arafat — for the continuation of the al-Aqsa Intifadah.

into the Gaza Strip. Back in May, Israeli gunboats had intercepted the *Santorini*, a smaller ship en route from Lebanon to the Palestinian Authority. The *Santorini* had contained Katyusha surface-to-surface rockets, SA-7 anti-aircraft missiles, RPG-7 anti-tank weapons and assorted mortars, shells, mines, AK-47 assault rifles and ammunition. The *Karine-A* was three times the size of the *Santorini*, and it was now sailing south again toward Yemen. From there, it would be a short trip up through the Red Sea, into the Suez Canal and on toward Gaza. The ship could drop its water-tight cargo anywhere in the Mediterranean and PNP boats could easily retrieve them. If the contents of the crates were as suspected, they could be used to kill hundreds of Israelis.

It was almost Christmas when the United States' special envoy, General Anthony Zinni, had finally brokered a ceasefire between the Israelis and Yasir Arafat. The Palestinian leader had agreed that no further efforts would be made to acquire weaponry, and the IDF had agreed to pullbacks from

the Territories. Israeli Intelligence expected that the *Karine-A* would be ordered by Arafat to stop. It was not.

“... Not One Crate ... Reaches Port ... Unless It's Our Port.”

Late in December, Israel Defense Forces Chief of Staff, Lieutenant-General Shaul Mofaz, secretly met with Prime Minister Ariel Sharon at his residence in Jerusalem. Mofaz was accompanied by the commanders of the Air Force and Navy. They laid their cards on the table. The *Karine-A* might be carrying nothing more than Game Boys and Barbie Dolls, but it wasn't likely.

“I don't care what's on board,” Sharon reportedly said. “Not one crate of it reaches port ... unless it's our port.”

It was Wednesday night, 2 January 2002, and Operation Noah's Ark was underway. The *Karine-A*'s position and identification had been confirmed by an IAF reconnaissance aircraft. She was steaming north again through the Red Sea, 500 kilometers from Israel's southern Port of Eilat. Israeli Navy “Dabur” patrol boats slipped from Eilat and sped southward. Israeli Air Force Sikorsky CH-53 heavy helicopters and UH-60 Black Hawks lifted off from the Negev Desert. On board the helicopters were three teams of Israel's elite, the naval commandos of Flotilla 13.

Chief of Staff Mofaz had cancelled a planned trip to Washington, ostensibly to monitor the ongoing ceasefire in Israel. But now he was aboard a Boeing 707 Command and Control aircraft, flying high above the Red Sea, along with the Navy's Commander-in-Chief Rear-Admiral Yedidia Ya'ari and the IDF Chief of Military Intelligence, Major-General Aharon Ze'evi. An umbrella of IAF F-15 Strike Eagles flew CAP overhead and after all of the assault helicopters had been refueled in mid-air, Mofaz gave “Operation Noah's Ark” the green light.

The choppers came in low over the water, just 2 kilometers south of the slowly lumbering *Karine-A*. Already-inflated Zodiac assault boats were dropped from the CH-53s into the black waters and the naval commandos fast-roped into the rubber boats from their Black Hawks. The commandos were well-armed, carrying M4 carbines and AK-47 assault rifles



IDF Spokesman

Himself a veteran of countless behind-enemy-lines operations, many still classified top-secret, IDF/Navy commander Rear-Admiral Yedidia Ya'ari leaves the Karine-A in Eilat harbor, glum-faced by the amount of ordnance the Palestinians attempted to smuggle in.

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(the signature weapon of this unit), as well as suppressed SIG-Sauer P226s, and wearing load-bearing vests stuffed with ammunition, flash-bangs and fragmentation grenades. Their shoulders were draped with coils of nylon ropes, caribiners and rubber-coated grappling hooks, and some of them actually gripped daggers in their teeth.

The vessel was running dark, its shallow well-deck slung low above the water. Palestinian Naval Police Colonel Omar Akawi was at the helm, along with one Hezbollah-trained member of "Fatah" and another crewman, but the rest of the Egyptian and Jordanian crew were asleep in their bunks below decks. The Israelis flanked the ship, came alongside and slithered up over the rails. A spearhead of five men charged the wheelhouse, while the remaining commandos sprinted silently across the decks and down into the bowels of the ship. Akawi was completely shocked as the black-clad Israelis burst onto his bridge and a Black Hawk roared in overhead, depositing yet another contingent of commandos onto his ship.

The ship captain and his cohorts threw up their hands. Below decks, the rest of the crew had already been flex-cuffed, some of them while they still slept. An Israeli officer trained his pistol on Akawi and spoke to him in fluent Arabic.

"This ship and its cargo are now the property of the Israeli Navy, *Hahm de l'Aallah!*"

The *Karine-A*, its crew and over fifty tons of weapons and explosives, had just been captured without firing a shot.

A Cut Above: Flotilla 13

Every nation, in its struggle to achieve independence, survive hostile attack or perform its duties in war, creates a generation of soldiers that for unknown reasons are a cut above the rest. They are smarter, tougher, and their dedication to their country, their missions and to each other is infrangible. They are the types of soldiers who will volunteer for a dangerous night mission deep into the enemy heartland, in order to sabotage a bridge, reconnoiter a secret installation or ambush a motorcade of enemy officers. The danger of their operations is the calling of their profession, the currency of their existence. These men are soldiers that can march more than a hundred kilometers without rest, and then can kill with speed and stealth. They are commandos, men who can be relied upon to perform the dirtiest and most dangerous special operations when, for reasons of political subtlety or military reality, large conventional formations cannot be deployed into battle. Every nation maintains its arsenal of these human special weapons: the United States has its Special Forces and SEALs, Great Britain has its much vaunted Special Air Service, and Russia has its Spetsnaz operators. Israel has its "Sayerot," its elite reconnaissance commando

units. And it also has Flotilla 13.

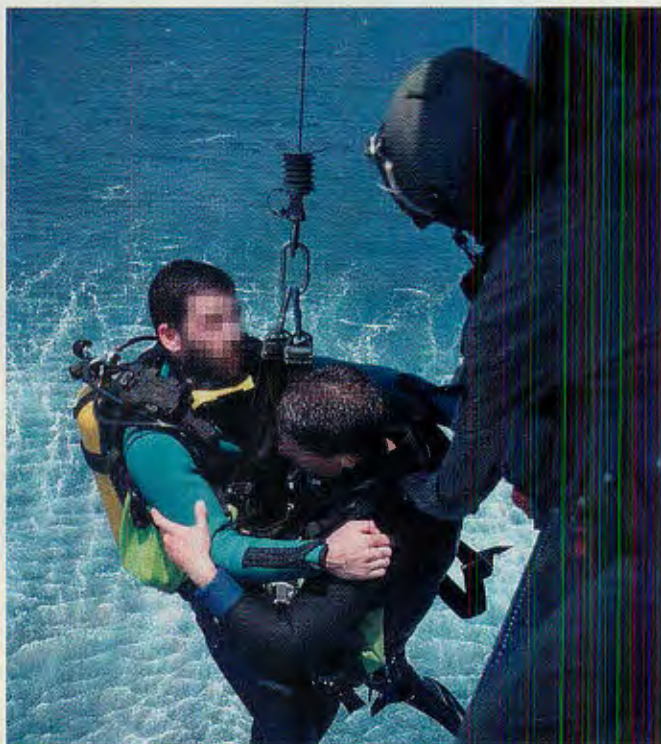
Flotilla 13 was born as a stepchild of the guerrilla forces created by pre-independence Israel's army, the *Haganah*; a strike force to be used first against the occupying British, and later against the Arab armies. It was also the byproduct of Britain's darkest hours during the Second World War, when the British rallied any and all allies for the fight against Hitler. In fact, the *Ha'Huliya Ha'Yamit* (or "Sea Section"), as it was known then, was formed along the lines of the British Special Boat Squadron (SBS). What the fledgling Israeli commandos lacked in skill and equipment, they made up for in innovativeness and courage. That reputation would carry them through fifty years and seven wars.

Following the withdrawal of British forces from Palestine and the subsequent war for Israel's independence, the Sea Section played a significant role in the struggle against both the irregular Palestinian forces, as well as the conventional Arab navies. There were operations in Italy to hijack a shipload of weapons heading for Syria, and several espionage missions mounted in the Arab ports of Beirut, Latakia, and Alexandria. At the height of the 1948 war, the Navy of the Israel Defense Forces (also known as the IDF/Navy) possessed two "naval commando" units: a "Frogman Unit," and a "Sabotage Unit," commanded by Yochai Ben-Nun. Trained by an Italian Navy "10th Flotilla" veteran, the Sabotage Unit deployed with Italian MTM explosive craft. The unit remained untested until 21 October 1948, when in one of the most spectacular operations of the war, they sank the flagship of King Farouk's Royal Egyptian Navy, the *RENS Emir Farouk*.

After the 1948 War, little was heard of the newly named Flotilla 13, as the role of specialized units was hotly debated. For nearly the next 20 years, Flotilla 13 existed under a veil of absolute secrecy and virtual inaction, even though recon-



IDF Spokesmen



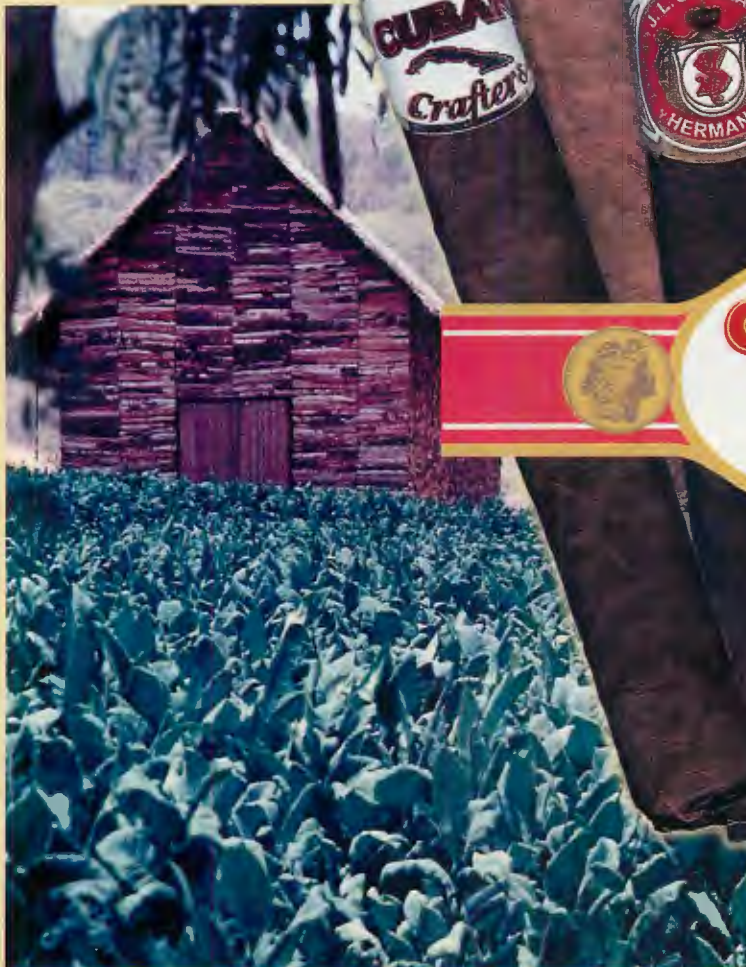
(left) A force of Rigid Hulled Inflatable Boats and Snunit fast-attack craft pushed through the choppy waters during a Red Sea training mission. (above) Preparing for the worst-case scenario in any mid-sea operation, Israel Air Force Para-rescue commandos train to pluck wounded naval commandos out of harm's way over the open seas.

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naissance and retaliatory outfits, such as Arik Sharon's Unit 101, were flourishing. Still, the fledgling IDF/Navy scraped its budget to send Flotilla 13 operators abroad for training stints with the British SBS; to train in Corsica with the French *Jaubert Commandos*; to combined exercises with the 6e REG DINOPS combat divers of the Foreign Legion as well as with the Italian *Commando Subacquei ed Incursori*.

In June of 1967, as Israel was convinced of her imminent destruction and made preparations for a preemptive strike against her Arab neighbors, the little-known flotilla was about to receive a once in a lifetime chance to prove its capabilities to the IDF and the nation. The plan was simple, daring, and vulnerable to Murphy's Law. Flotilla 13 would launch strikes against Egyptian naval facilities in Alexandria and Port Said, while Syrian shipping interests would be sabotaged in Latakia and Tartus. If successful, the attacks would cause the Arabs to think that an Israeli strike was imminent from the sea, resulting in troops being rushed from other fronts to guard coastal positions. The attack ended disastrously. Six operators were captured in Alexandria without the target being destroyed; a Flotilla 13 raid against Port Said also failed, as the frogmen were dispatched to an objective where no naval targets were deployed. Flotilla 13 attacks against the Syrian ports proved equally disastrous. As a result of the unit's poor showing,



IDF Spokesman

Israeli intelligence officials estimated that the haul on board the Karine-A could have dramatically propelled Arafat to escalate his al-Aqsa Intifadah into a war that the Palestinians could never win, but one that had the potential to drag the entire region into full-scale conflagration.

there were those in the IDF/Navy Command who demanded that the flotilla be disbanded. Inexplicably, the order was never signed. Instead, then IDF/Navy OC, Rear-Admiral Shlomoh Harel opted to hand the unit over to the one man whom he felt could save the force from extinction, Lieutenant-Commander Ze'ev Almog.

The 34-year-old Almog had served in the unit since 1954, and as an operator abandoned by a mother-ship during an abortive raid on Port Said during the Six-Day War, knew that the unit needed redefinition, rehabilitation and, most of all, operational experience. Many veteran officers and NCOs were forced out, and new conscripts, many of them

highly motivated individuals who, as part of their flotilla basic training, had fought with the paratroops in 1967, soon swelled the unit's ranks. Almog strayed from the General Staff's perception of the flotilla as being solely an underwater sabotage unit, and trained the force to become the best infantry fighters in the entire IDF. Demanding absolute dedication and discipline from his men, Almog also lobbied the General Staff for missions.

At the time, Israel was fighting a brutal war of attrition on all her frontiers — from the snows atop Mt. Hermon to the waters of the Red Sea. Flotilla 13's first mission, a raid on an Egyptian radar station in June 1969, was a rousing success. A month later, at the very hour when American astronauts

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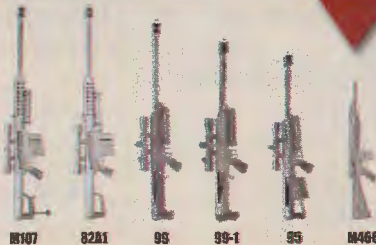
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But think about it... couldn't this have been the scenario?

You are surprised by two attackers. You've completely disabled the first and now have control of the second and are about to put him totally out of commission...

Possible? Of course. It's just that no one sees it this way. It's human nature. We shy from victory, from domination. It's the way most of us are built... unless you're a criminal...

Here's the problem: A thug comes up, places a knife to your throat and demands your wallet. Taking him at his word you give him the wallet. He then proceeds to stab you repeatedly leaving you in a pool of your own blood, astonished you've been stabbed.

What went wrong? Just this. You ASSUMED he only wanted the wallet. After all, why would anyone stab someone over a few measly bucks? **YOU** certainly wouldn't do that if you were robbing someone.

And that **IS** the problem. With thinking like that...

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See, nothing bothers him. Certainly not your morals. With a total disregard for society and it's rules, he has no regret whatsoever in cramming a blade into your gut... to get what he wants.

You stroll around thinking 15 years of martial arts training or that 6-week self-defense course or some reality fighting video gives you the edge you need against someone like this. Wake up!

You are hopelessly training techniques (then praying they work) against someone who isn't "training" for you. How many criminals in federal pens spent years sweating through JKD workouts before committing their crime? How many are Jujitsu experts?

Not a one! They excel at just one thing: doin' it. No training, no practice, no techniques. And certainly no "rules". So why squander years fooling yourself with something that only works "if everyone plays by the rules"?

These are the facts: 98% of us caught in an unavoidable violent attack (even those with years of training), would never consider doing "whatever it takes" to survive — like gouging our attacker's eyes — even if they were the only targets available, and... even if it was the **only means of saving our own life!**

Larkin trains you from the get-go how to kill, if necessary, to survive a life-or-death confrontation.

He doesn't advocate violence. TFT just demystifies it. He's often quoted...

"Violence Is Rarely The Answer. But When It Is... It's The Only Answer."

Look... others in Soldier of Fortune try to impress



Tim Larkin, creator of Target-Focus Training

you with how bad they are; their accomplishments in the "secret world" you aren't privy to; their guru status.

TFT isn't about that. **It's not about an individual, a personality... or a guru.**

It's about a system... one that's focused totally on you!

No bones about it: Larkin's record is impressive. He trains units from all the top echelons of federal law enforcement and military special operations groups. It's

not surprising since he comes from that world and is well known there. But everyone in Soldier of Fortune tries to claim this so you'll rarely hear him talk about it.

He's an awesome communicator and trainer, and is amazingly approachable for someone with his abilities and credentials. And he's trained 1,000's of CEOs and others in high-risk positions around the world — all very real people.

But why is this so important? Why is TFT being sought out in all these other arenas?

Because it works! Because you "get it" immediately. Not after weeks or months or even years of training... but **right now**... as soon as you experience it. And...

Not Only Is It Usable... Instantly... But Just Like Riding A Bicycle It Stays With You Forever... Even If You Never Practice It Again!

Here's why: the key lies in the fact this is the only system based **totally** on the PRINCIPLES (not techniques) that determine the outcome of any physical confrontation. Combine these with three supporting methodologies that form the foundation of every fighting system on the planet and you have a **complete system** usable by ANYone for handling ANY violent confrontation. With this information you can look at anything out there... including your own training... and know immediately if it's worth keeping.

"It was the most effective days of training in hand-to-hand and hand-to-weapon that I or anyone else had ever experienced." Brian (last name withheld), US Border Patrol, S Carolina

Last year Larkin trained over 600 CEO's in Europe. This year he'll spend 57 consecutive days training others in England, the Far East and Asia, and India. These folks are eating his stuff up because TFT principles and methodology are as effective in the 'combative' world of business as they are in a truly lethal fight, and for the exact same reason... **RESULTS.**

Think about this: If these people can get this much from his material, **imagine how much more you can learn**... a dedicated reader of Soldier of Fortune magazine who is really into finding and applying a system that is quickly learned and deadly effective. If all these folks are **seeking him out**, shouldn't you be too?

Look, Larkin is swamped and realizes he can't begin to reach everyone. While he'd love to have you as a member of his organization and to take part in his live training, he realistically understands few will be able to do this. Bootcamps run \$1,500.00, international events start at \$9,500.00, and personal training for small 2- to 4-person sessions is \$10,000.00 and more.

That's why, in a daring move with potentially serious ramifications, he's released a new WEAPONS-focused

version of his TFT system that shows you how to defeat a violent criminal in a **WORSE-than-worst-case scenario**. After seeing his program... a life-or-death confrontation in a dark alley is a piece of cake.

Not only does this new series take you inside the criminal mind, it goes way beyond... showing you how and why you must first learn to USE a weapon... if you ever hope to defeat a criminal using it against you! Highly unconventional and extremely controversial it teaches you how to get your focus off the weapon... and onto defeating the REAL threat.

Some foolishly feel this stuff is too violent, totally ignorant of the fact you don't always have to push it to the levels shown on these tapes.

It's Very Easy To Ramp This Down To Fit A Lesser Situation But It's Impossible To Ramp Up And Kill Someone If You've Never Trained For It!

Some will be shocked, dismayed, offended and **outraged that anyone would dare show this stuff**. They'll raise a stink... and do everything possible to get this yanked. But better you see this on video than experience it first-hand on the street!

Everything you'll see here is vintage TFT. You learn to hurt someone very quickly (every sequence shows killing movements right from the start). There's no size, speed or quickness required. Anyone can learn this because it's based on principles not some guru's skills.

Guys that have been in the trenches for years are blown away by the simple brutality and effectiveness of this system and the competence of Larkin's instructors, including their knowledge of anatomy and how to inflict trauma on the human body.

Each averages 10 years of training and surprisingly most aren't "jocks". Many have **advanced degrees**; five hold PhD's! His advisory board includes two medical doctors who assure everything you see about inflicting trauma on the human body is totally accurate.

"With this system: 1) You will learn what Larkin says you will learn, and 2) The course is exactly as advertised — intense, targeted, focused training designed to produce immediate results." Mark D. Fabiani, Crisis Mgt Consultant, La Jolla, CA

Let's cut to the chase: this program is extremely controversial and NOT for everyone. If you'd never consider killing someone threatening your life or if you're hoping to see lots of useless predetermined techniques or cool setup moves — you can stop reading here. This is **only** for those who want to learn to defeat a criminal in a life-or-death situation.

Listen. I understand you may find this hard to believe. That's how I felt too until I saw the videos. Unfortunately there's not room here to adequately describe the **shocking reality of what Larkin has created for you**. That's why he's not asking for a penny of your money now. Instead he'll spend his own cash to put a 17-page Special Report into your hands that will **prove everything you've just read** and explain why this program is so DIFFERENT from anything you've seen before.

All you need to do to get his **FREE** report is pick up the phone and call **888-811-9347**. There's a short message and then you can leave your name and address so the report can be mailed to you. It's voicemail so you can call **24-hours a day, 7 days a week** and no one will hassle you.

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were first setting boots on the moon, Almog led the flotilla on its greatest operation to date — the assault on Green Island in the Gulf of Suez.

Green Island was a fortress that directed anti-aircraft fire throughout the area, hindering Israeli Air Force (IAF) operations. More importantly, it was deemed by the Egyptians as impregnable; Lieutenant-Commander Almog wanted to hit the target for that very reason.

The operation, the first-time operators would actually swim to their target and then deploy tactically as an assault force, was considered a "mission impossible." But the attack, mounted together with commandos from *Sayeret Mat'kal*, the army's top Special Forces unit, proved to be an operation that sent shock waves through the Egyptian High Command. Nearly 25 years after the Flotilla 13 operators emerged from the blackened waters of the Gulf of Suez firing their Uzi sub-machine guns, the assault on Green Island is still considered to be the classic operation of naval special warfare — studied religiously by officers embarking on tactical courses with the SEAL Teams at Coronado, Calif., or Little Creek, Va., the SBS at Poole, by Germany's KSK at Eckernfoerde and by virtually all other naval special warfare units in the world today.

Over the next 20 years, Flotilla 13's role as one of the IDF's premier special operations units was reinforced by audacious missions throughout the region. Flotilla 13 spearheaded counter-terrorist forays against Palestinian training bases in southern Lebanon, as well as against terrorist targets in Beirut and Tripoli. During the 1973 War, Flotilla 13 virtually held Egypt's Red Sea Fleet at bay with attacks on its home port by launching a series of daring high-profile commando raids against missile and patrol boat bases; in one raid, Flotilla 13 operators destroyed an Egyptian Navy missile

boat with one round from a 66mm LAW rocket.

Flotilla 13 operations have been at the forefront of Israel's war against terrorism — from Limassol to Tunis, according to foreign reports. In its offensive operations against terrorist targets in Lebanon, Flotilla 13 was the tactical spearhead of the IDF/Navy in bringing about a complete containment of terrorist infiltration along the Israeli coast. From 1979 to present, Flotilla 13 has routinely raided Palestinian — and Hezbollah — terrorist targets along the coast — ambushing convoys, executing direct-action operations and raiding arms caches and training facilities. Some of the operations have gathered invaluable intelligence on the terrorists and their use of Lebanon as a major hub of operations against Israel — and the West. Some of the operations have succeeded with a very heavy price. On the night of 4 September 1997, 11 Flotilla 13 operators were KIA in a Hezbollah ambush as the unit conducted a raid on a terrorist stronghold in southern Lebanon.

Since the time of its rebirth, there hasn't been a mission that Flotilla 13 has not been entrusted with carrying out — anytime, anywhere.

Flotilla 13's Reputation Untarnished

Israel's current war against Palestinian terrorists and their fanatical supporters is a nasty affair. With civilians being killed on both sides of the green line in a war that showed no mercy, the IDF's elite units risked demoralization by this bloody slugfest. Yet the raid on the *Karine-A* proved once more that the ultra-professionalism of the country's very best has not been dulled. Naturally, Yasir Arafat vociferously denied that he had anything to do with the ship's cache, and

Continued on page 77

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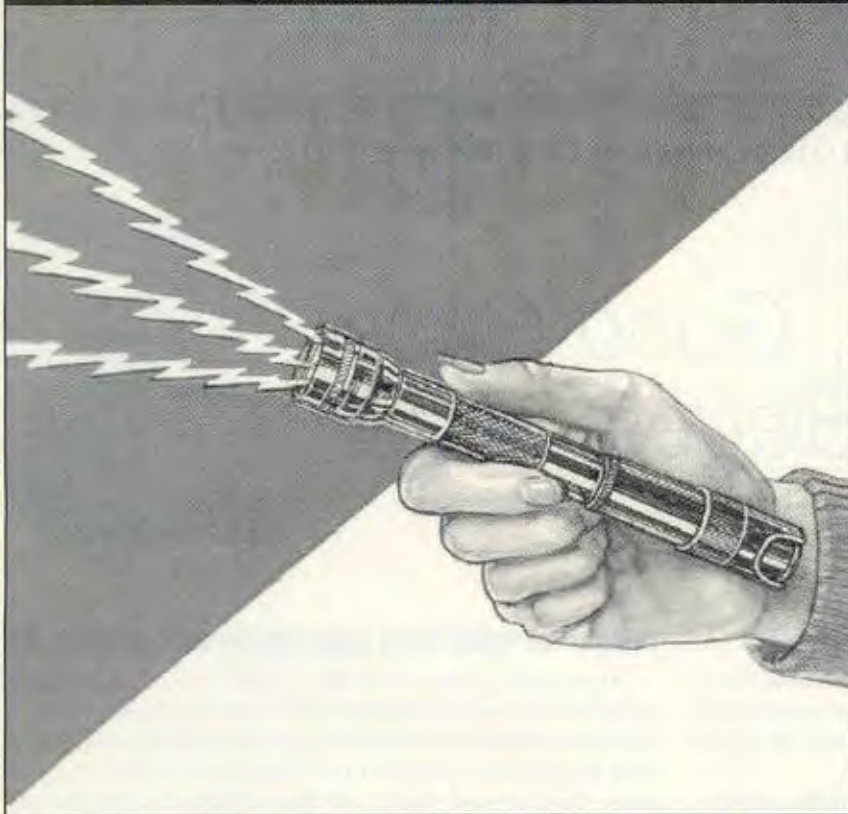


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Observations On New CCW students, By Instructor In Midwest

"We've had our state CCW law since last year, and now, every time there is a local axe murder, throngs descend upon us the very next day for state-mandated training. I'm sure it is that way nationwide.

It is indeed lamentable to see so many students, new to the art, bringing cheap, tinny guns. It is a sure sign of hesitant, minimal commitment. Three chintzy pistols I see far more than I would like are the Hi-Point (an absolute piece of junk) the Tokarev and Makarov, both from Eastern Europe. The last two are marginally functional, but rude, crude, full of sharp edges and corners, underpowered, and awkward. These same people, of course, also bring cheap ammunition, most of it foreign crap. Lots of stoppages. Wolf is the worst of the lot, and I've finally banned it from the range.

On the other side of the ledger, enlightened students take our advice and bring Glocks, SIGs, and H&Ks, good holsters and accessories, and take the time to locate normal-capacity magazines, wisely shunning "Clinton clips" that now come with these pistols. They also bring, shoot, and carry good, domestic, high-performance ammunition. However, they then naively think one magazine is enough and fail to carry a spare. I explain to them that a spare magazine is like a spare tire. You hope you never need it, but when you do, you really do!

Other autoloaders we see a lot of are Springfield XD's and Rugers. These choices are usually driven by price, but both of these guns work well. Ruger autoloaders are user-hostile, but positively functional. XD's work fine too, but they come from the factory "pre-sharpened!" SA needs to round off the sharp edges and corners in order to make this otherwise good pistol comfortable to carry.

The state-mandated course of fire is, of course, a joke, but we get through it."

Comment: Motivated students are a great joy. Under-motivated, indecisive students are the greatest challenge. Both need to be trained, the latter category most of all. We instructors need to concentrate on inspiring our students, not impressing them.

On Blades And Pistols, From A Friend Who Instructs Defensive Tactics

"It has been pointed out that grapplers (wrestlers) make an art out of closing distance, clinching and wrestling. It's a smart game plan, because eliminating distance greatly diminishes an opponent's ability to effectively retrieve and employ guns. Punches and kicks are also diminished in potency when bodies are in contact.

The nemesis for grapplers is a blade. Even when bodies are in contact, an opponent can efficiently retrieve and use a blade on a grappler, even a good one. Conversely, pistols are less likely to be retrieved and used effectively in the clinch.

The point is this: Most mugging suspects are basically wrestlers. They grab arms, heads, hair, and torsos and then wrestle their victims to the ground. Not surprisingly, they customarily select victims over whom they have a significant size and strength advantage and whom they are able to approach closely without being noticed.

Against such an attack a potential victim may be able to use a blade more effectively than a pistol, at least initially. An attacker is less likely to notice a blade in the victim's hand than he would a gun. Even after the attacker has been made (painfully) aware of the fact that his victim has a blade, disarming him or her is nearly impossible. Levering a pistol out of someone's hand is much easier. A gun is only dangerous in one direction!

When parties separate, a pistol comes into its own, and a blade diminishes in usefulness. We need to think of a blade as something we can use quickly to get the attacker off of us and out of physical contact. When we have thus separated from him and gained distance, we can then use our pistol to prevent him from closing the distance once more.

The best use for a blade is when you have one (concealed), and your attacker doesn't know it, until it is employed. When it is employed, he will probably be more than happy to separate, after which you can default to your pistol."

Comment: Something we all need to think about and practice! ☒

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by Frank Sherrill

I was the total skeptic. Not only had I lifted weights for years, but after 21 years in the martial arts and several more in the military, I thought I'd seen it all. So I just didn't believe Matt Furey when he said you can get kick-butt fit with bodyweight calisthenics, that I figured I went through in bootcamp. Besides, I could bench 400 and squat 625. So there's no way I was going to fall for a routine that I figured I already knew. Been there, done that!

But I couldn't shake this feeling that Furey might be right. I had read about the Great Gama of India, a wrestler who followed this program and was unbeaten in 5,000 matches. In terms of size and strength, he was amazing. He was 5'7" and 260 pounds of streaming steel. And that was in the early 1900's - long before steroids.

I had heard that Bruce Lee did the exercises Furey teaches, too. And we all know about Lee's incredible ripped, lean, muscular look. Not to mention how lightning fast and fluid he was.

I had heard that Herschel Walker, a Heisman Trophy winner and All-Pro Running back did 500 pushups and situps each day. So that made me think even more.

And then the final straw was when I started to read all the testimonials that Furey had collected from fellow military (I have included several of them in this article).

And then, of course, there is Furey, the author of *Combat Conditioning* and the man GRAPPLING magazine dubbed "The King of Catch Wrestling." Furey has been featured in major martial arts magazines around the world, has been on the cover of several - and is certainly no slouch when it comes to having and using functional strength. He was a world champion in Shuai-chiao kung fu and a national collegiate champion wrestler. Something told me he had to be telling the truth.

I figured the only way I would ever know for sure would be to get the program and use it. I told myself that if what I was reading was nothing but marketing hype - I would not only be angry - but I would let everyone in the world know about it.

So I bought Furey's *Combat Conditioning* book and read it. In the book he challenges the readers with a test. 100 Hindu squats, followed by 50 Hindu pushups, then a one-minute back bridge.

Figuring this would be easy, I got started. At 40 Hindu squats my thighs were blitzed. It took about 90 seconds; not long compared to my squat routine at the gym.

Next, I tried the Hindu pushups. Funny thing is my legs were still shaking. I dipped down and pushed back. At 15 my arms were throbbing. This couldn't be. No way. I could bench like there's no tomorrow and this exercise was naking me. I gave up at 27 reps. This took about 1.5 minutes, so my workout had only been 2.5 minutes long.

Then the bridge. After three unsuccessful attempts of ten seconds, I gave up. The next day my legs, chest and arms were sore, but in a good way. I thought my legs got 10 times more work with weights, but I was wrong.

Over the course of three months my body changed big time. In fact, I've made a list of 12 of the most amazing benefits that I and thousands of others all over the world have gotten from the *Combat Conditioning* program. I'm betting these are important to you, too:

1. I blow-torched off my excess body fat so quickly that I could eat more than I normally did and still look better than ever.
2. I packed and chiseled functional muscle onto my legs, chest and back that I've never had before, even from weights.
3. I simultaneously doubled my strength and flexibility - and did so without needing separate workouts for each.
4. I quadrupled my endurance inside of 30 days. Just think how much this helped my sparring. No matter what, I NEVER get tired.
5. The chronic back and shoulder pain I had from years of heavy squats, deadlifts and bench pressing went away within a couple weeks. And much of that pain had been with me for nearly 10 years. It's GONE now.

6. I sleep like a log. Eight hours of deep sleep is no longer a goal. It's automatic. As soon as I hit the rack I'm out like a light.
7. My self-confidence knows no bounds. Especially when I got compliments from people who hardly paid attention to me before. I honestly believe there is nothing I cannot do. I'm on top of the world.
8. I can train anywhere. I don't need more than a few square feet of carpet or pavement and I'm all set. I have absolutely no excuses and my body is loving me for it. I don't need any equipment. Just my own bodyweight.
9. I get a kick-butt workout done in 15 minutes or less. Sure, I could do more - but I've gotten incredible results with this amount - so why ruin a good thing?
10. I've turned back the clock. My friends tell me I look 5 - 10 years younger. Awesome!
11. I have an explosive type of strength that weights couldn't give me. My movements are super fast even when I'm just screwing around.
12. My muscles are like a pliable and powerful tiger - ready to pounce on prey in a heartbeat.

So there you have it. The 12 reasons why *Combat Conditioning* is the best fitness program on the planet. But forget about me.

Take a look at what some others in the military have to say about this program:

Matt, I am a US Marine stationed overseas. I am also a wrestler/judo/ka and the Marine who developed the Marine Corps Martial Arts Program. I use your courses regularly. I like your no-nonsense approach. Particularly as I get older, bodyweight exercises are quick, flexible, all-encompassing and convenient. Keep up the good work!

Lt Colonel George Bristol - USMC

Mr. Furey,

We have been applying the principle of 'mastering your own body weight' to our football program and have been pleased. A 12 - 1 championship season last year was our reward. Thank you sir.

**Bonner Cummings
Yosemite, CA**

Dear Matt,

When I got your book, I changed my whole way of thinking about how one should train for Combatives. I am now totally off the weights, and, to tell you the truth, I have never felt better or been more flexible in my life. I feel great and have lost no size, strength, or muscle mass... as a result I scored the maximum number of points on the Army Physical Fitness test. HOOAH! You are doing great things, and I and the U.S. Army Officer Candidate School owe you a lot.

**TREAT'EM ROUGH!
CPT Judd D. Mahfouz -
Infantry**

Dear Mr. Furey,

*Let me say I have benefited a lot from both your *Combat Conditioning* and *Combat Abs* book. I am a Marine stationed on Okinawa, Japan and I do a lot of kickboxing and NHB fighting on the side. Your exercises have given me a tremendous advantage and combined with my other routines (shadowboxing, sparring, bagwork, wind sprints, and grappling drills) have gotten me into the best shape of my life.*

**LCpl Sandor Devenyi -
United States Marine Corps**



Matt Furey, author of the best-selling *Combat Conditioning*.

Dear Matt,

*Being a U.S. Marine in a field unit, I spend much of my time in Physical Training, and I'll admit, I thought that I was in peak physical condition. 2 months ago I began your *Combat Conditioning* program and quickly realized that I had been missing something. While platoon PT consists of mostly running and incorporates some bodyweight exercises (i.e. pushups, pull-ups, crunches) I had been spending the bulk of my personal training time in the weight room, lifting heavy. It embarrassed me the first time I tried to do a reverse pushup and couldn't. I haven't set foot in the weight room in the last 2 months. My 3 mile run time has dropped to below 18 minutes, I've lost a good 10 lbs and my body fat has dropped 4%. You can see the difference and God knows, I can feel the difference. I've introduced the rest of my squad to your program. Thanks for helping us kick ass and take names in a hellish and unforgiving manner.*

**D "Bubba" Byng - LCPL, USMC
"Golf" Co, MCS Battalion**

Matt Furey's *Combat Conditioning: Functional Exercises for Fitness & Combat Sports* has 48 super effective bodyweight exercises along with seven different programs that will get you into kick-butt shape fast. Be one of the first 25 people to order and you'll receive 3 free **Special Reports** on how to eliminate knee, back and shoulder pain.

Your total investment in this no nonsense book is only \$29.95 plus \$6 S&H U.S. (foreign orders add \$12). Order online at www.mattfurey.com. Or pick up the phone right now and call 1 813 994 8267 to order.

You can also send a money order to Matt Furey Enterprises, Inc., 10339 Birdwatch Drive, Tampa, FL, 33647.

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SCF 09/03

How To Sink A Ship

The Awesome Power Of The Submarine Launched MARK-48 Torpedo

Text & Photos courtesy of the Maritime Headquarters and DSTO Australia

Photos by PO Scott Connolly and AB Stuart Farrow

On 14 June 1999, the Australian Collins'-class submarine, HMAS Farncomb, fired a Mark-48 war-shot torpedo at the 28-year-old former Destroyer Escort Torrens.

The firing was part of the Collins' class trial's requirements and was designed to validate the submarine's combat system. The submerged Farncomb fired the Mark-48 torpedo at the stationary hulk of the 2,700-ton Destroyer Escort from over the horizon. The plume of water and fragments shot some 150 meters skyward as the blast of the torpedo cut the ship in two. The stern section sank rapidly after the torpedo hit, the bow section remained afloat but sank sometime later.

The torpedo warhead contains explosive power equivalent to approximately 1,200 pounds of TNT. This explosive power is maximized when the warhead detonates below the keel of the target ship, as opposed to striking it directly. When the detonation occurs below the keel, the resulting pressure wave of the explosion "lifts" the ship and can break its keel in the process. As the ship "settles" it is then seemingly hit by a second detonation as the explosion itself rips through the area of the blast. This combined effect often breaks smaller targets in half and can severely disable larger vessels.

The Mark-48 torpedo used in this test is a variation of the MK-48 ADCAP (Advanced Capability) torpedo developed for the United States Navy.





HOW MANY MORE COPS WILL DIE...

...BEFORE CONGRESS TAKES ACTION?

It seems like common sense...qualified off duty and retired cops should be allowed to carry concealed firearms nationwide – to protect themselves and to provide homeland security, 24/7-- at no cost to the taxpayer.

But some politicians have a problem with common sense – and now they've got a problem with the Law Enforcement Alliance of America (LEAA).

LEAA co-authored H.R. 218, the *Law Enforcement Officer's Safety Act*, long before "Homeland Security" was a buzzword on Capitol Hill. LEAA's always been a leader in real issues of homeland security – from arming off duty cops, to arming pilots and fighting for other common sense homeland security measures like Right-To-Carry laws allowing honest citizens to carry concealed firearms.

We take the fight to Capitol Hill, on TV and in newspapers and magazines across the country. LEAA is the only organization made up of pro-second amendment law enforcement officers AND citizens standing together to fight against threats to homeland security – foreign and domestic.

We take a sledge hammer to gun grabber lies about law enforcement and gun control – telling the real story, straight from real officers on the street.

Soldier of Fortune's Lt.Col. Robert K. Brown is proud to be a Member of LEAA and so should you! Please join our effort before one more officer falls.

Join LEAA Today!

You can join or contribute online at
www.leea.org or call 800-766-8578

The Law Enforcement Alliance of America
7700 Leesburg Pike, Suite 421, Falls Church, VA 22043



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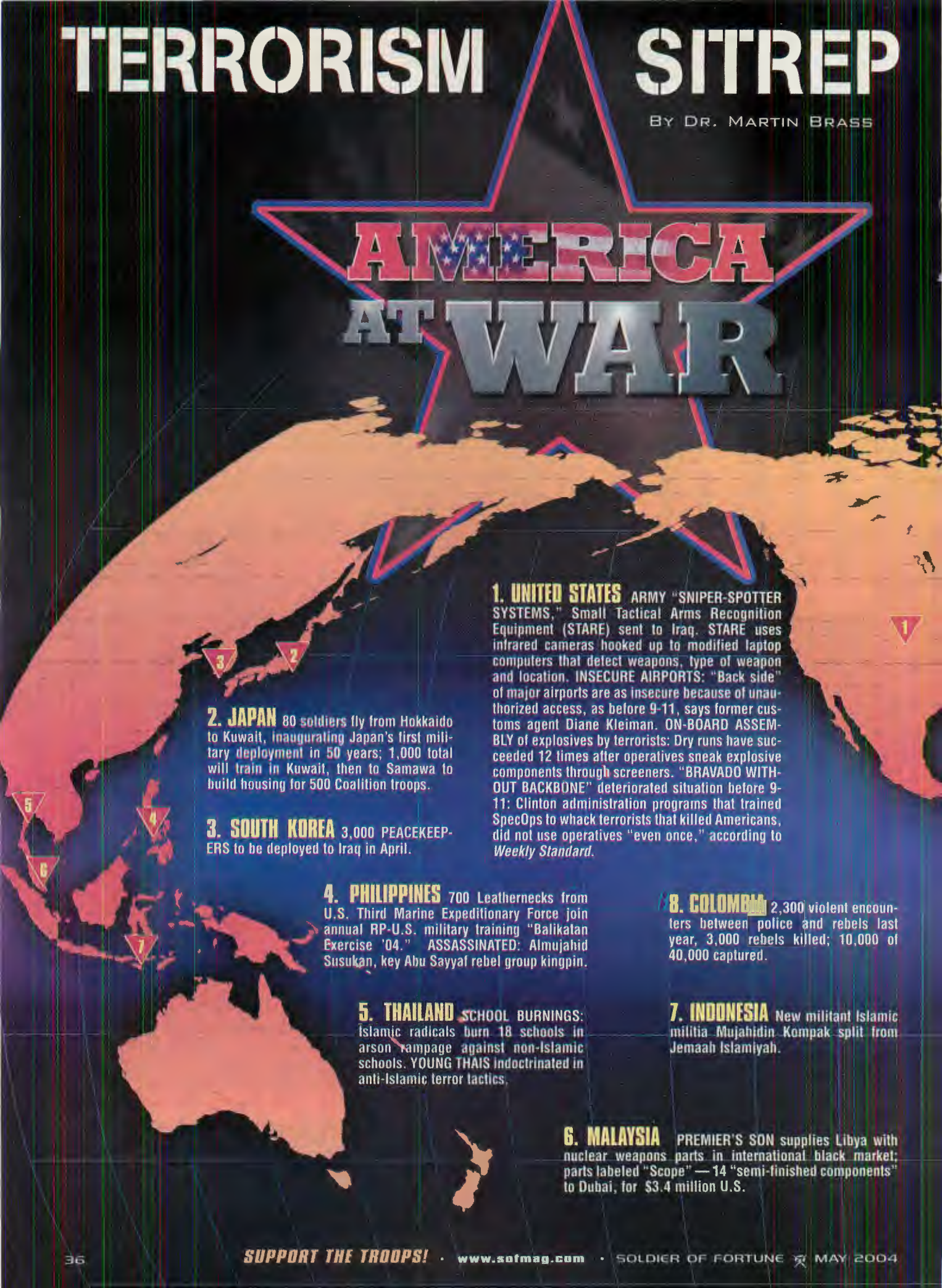
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BY DR. MARTIN BRASS

AMERICA AT WAR



1. UNITED STATES ARMY "SNIPER-SPOTTER SYSTEMS," Small Tactical Arms Recognition Equipment (STARE) sent to Iraq. STARE uses infrared cameras hooked up to modified laptop computers that detect weapons, type of weapon and location. **INSECURE AIRPORTS:** "Back side" of major airports are as insecure because of unauthorized access, as before 9-11, says former customs agent Diane Kleiman. **ON-BOARD ASSEMBLY** of explosives by terrorists: Dry runs have succeeded 12 times after operatives sneak explosive components through screeners. **"BRAVADO WITHOUT BACKBONE"** deteriorated situation before 9-11: Clinton administration programs that trained SpecOps to whack terrorists that killed Americans, did not use operatives "even once," according to *Weekly Standard*.

2. JAPAN 80 soldiers fly from Hokkaido to Kuwait, inaugurating Japan's first military deployment in 50 years; 1,000 total will train in Kuwait, then to Samawa to build housing for 500 Coalition troops.

3. SOUTH KOREA 3,000 PEACEKEEPERS to be deployed to Iraq in April.

4. PHILIPPINES 700 Leathernecks from U.S. Third Marine Expeditionary Force join annual RP-U.S. military training "Balikatan Exercise '04." **ASSASSINATED:** Almujaheed Susukan, key Abu Sayyaf rebel group kingpin.

5. THAILAND **SCHOOL BURNINGS:** Islamic radicals burn 18 schools in arson rampage against non-Islamic schools. **YOUNG THAIS** indoctrinated in anti-Islamic terror tactics.

8. COLOMBIA 2,300 violent encounters between police and rebels last year, 3,000 rebels killed; 10,000 of 40,000 captured.

7. INDONESIA New militant Islamic militia Mujahidin Kompak split from Jemaah Islamiyah.

6. MALAYSIA **PREMIER'S SON** supplies Libya with nuclear weapons parts in international black market; parts labeled "Scope" — 14 "semi-finished components" to Dubai, for \$3.4 million U.S.

9. RUSSIA Russian spy agency accused of assassinating former Chechen separatist president Zelimkhan Yandarbiyev via car bomb, in Qatar. **SUBWAY SUICIDE BOMBER** kills 39.

10. BOSNIA "WHITE AL QAEDAS" blonde, blue-eyed Bosnian Muslim recruits trained for suicide-bombing, in attempts to change terrorist profile.

11. GREAT BRITAIN **BRITISH AIR MOLE** al Qaeda operative working as pilot for British Air, behind flight cancellations (Daily Mirror): all British pilots to U. S. to be screened.

12. EGYPT **GOVERNMENT NEWSPAPER** editorial justifies suicide bombings, even if children killed.

13. ISRAEL Hamas establishes military force to take over West Bank and Gaza Strip from Palestinian Authority, reports *Geostrategy's Direct Global Intelligence* news service.

16. IRAQ **CHANGING OF THE GUARD** as al Qaeda uses young, educated leaders, suspected behind wave of attacks in Iraq, Saudi, and Russia, including 37-year-old Abu Musab Zarqawi, main suspect in Baghdad, and Moscow subway, suicide bombings. **MOHAMMAD'S ARMY**, alias **FAROUC BRIGADES**, control nearly two dozen al Qaeda cells in Sunni triangle, Kurd and Shi'ite areas, according to *Geostrategy's Direct Global Intelligence* news service. **IRAQIS TARGETED** in bombings because foreigners have high quality security forces. **PKK KURDISH WORKERS PARTY** listed as terrorists by U.S. State Department, now targeted by coalition forces. **TRIBAL INFIGHTING** among Shias: Al Sistani, major Mullah of Shias, target of attempted assassination by rival. **CAPTURED**: Hassan Gul, on Iranian border, suspected in 9-11.

17. AFGHANISTAN Needs assistance to help combat opium trade say U.S. officials — "largest and most valuable cash crop" has re-emerged as world's leading supplier of opium, morphine and heroin, according to Robert Charles, Asst. Sec. for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement. Plan to train 50,000 Afghan Police (Border, Highway and National) by INL, working with Italy. U.S. SpecOps sent in prep for major ops in spring.

MEDITERRANEAN **OPERATION ACTIVE ENDEAVOR** run by Canadian Frigates. Comprising 12 navies, mission intercepts vessels suspected of transporting al Qaeda operatives from Pakistan and Afghanistan to Arabia, eight European countries.

14. LEBANON Saddam's second wife, Samira, and their only surviving son said to flee to Lebanon, with \$7 million in cash and trunk of gold bars, before war. Found by Mossad, given name of "Hadija," contacted Saddam from Internet café in Lebanon — Saddam captured when she requested more money.

15. NEPAL 8,000 dead since 1996; 8,400 U.S. M16 rifles sent, with U.S. advisers. Civil war threatens to make Nepal "failed state" and haven for international terrorists. **MAOIST COMMUNIST PARTY OF NEPAL (CPNM)** placed on U.S. State Department "Watch List;" **SECURITY OPS** organized along Nepal-India common border.

18. NIGERIA **ISLAMIC REBELLION** squashed, after five bloody days of battle.

BOMBS AWAY

Armor/Air Force Liaison Pounds Iraqis — Rattles Cav

Last month, the men of Crazy Horse Troop continued their fighting march northward against overwhelming numbers, engaging everything in sight and leaving a path of destruction in their wake. When we left them, the intrepid team of Johnson and Broadhead had more than a hundred Iraqi dismounts firing at them as they tried to get Johnson's Bradley back on the road so they could clear the area for a B-1B airstrike that was on the way.

The Iraqi soldiers had moved to less than a hundred meters of Sergeant First Class Broadhead and me. We could hear the hail of AK rounds as they flew through the air, snapping all around us, but we had to make our move and hook up the tow cable to my Bradley. This meant that we had to step out of our covered position (the back of

my Bradley) and into the path of one very pissed-off Iraqi Infantry Brigade. As soon as we stepped out in the open, the volume of fire we were receiving picked up 50-fold. It sounded like it was raining on a hot tin roof as rounds hit the side of my Bradley and Broadhead's tank. It was as dark as it could get. The only light we had came from a burning truck some 400 meters away.

We had to do everything by touch. To make matters worse, Broadhead could not walk and had to hold onto something to help him stand up: His injured knee was the size of a basketball. Working like a couple of car repo guys, we finally got my Bradley hooked up. The 68-ton M1A1 main battle tank backed up and pulled my Bradley back up on its tracks and onto the road. I unhooked the tow cable and Broadhead headed back down the road to the safety of the Crazy Horse side of the bridge. At last I was in my beast "The Carnivore" and now I could put some hurt on the bastards who had been firing up Broadhead and me on the ground. I had to back up to the bridge, to make sure I didn't get hit in the rear. I told Sergeant Soprano, my gunner, to "Kill everything! Keep their heads down! Keep them right there till the bombs hit!"

I was only 400 meters away when the first bomb slammed into the Iraqi positions. It rocked my world. I lost power in the turret, and all I could see were little white spots. I dropped down inside my turret and held on, as seven more 2,000-pounders fell right on top of

one very unhappy Infantry Brigade. My turret power came back on just in time. Without my turret power, I could not have talked to my driver, who was still backing up and heading for the canal. I stopped the Bradley just as it had knocked off part of the bridge-support rail. The night was almost over. We had fought an Infantry Brigade — two companies of BMPs — with only three Bradleys and two M1 tanks. Staff Sergeant John J. Williams had taken on 40 T-72 tanks with one Bradley and One M1. The only outside help we had were the two B-1B bombers: Needless to say, we needed those bombers. They kept us from being overrun. But the Bradley and M1 proved without a doubt how powerful and deadly they are.



BY SERGEANT FIRST CLASS
DILLARD J. JOHNSON

PHOTOS COURTESY STAFF
SERGEANT JOHN J. WILLIAMS

Fighting To The Last Round

The rest of the night we watched a few Iraqis (15 or 20 soldiers) who had somehow made it though the bombing, move out of the area. We could see they were walking away with no weapons, so we let them walk off into the night. My Bradley was in bad shape. I had lost another antenna and two of my road wheels had holes in them from RPG hits. My driver's periscope was destroyed and two of the "Carnivore's" armor plates for the track shoes had been blown-off, and I had no ammo left on my Bradley at all: Zero. None. *Nada*. As soon as it was light I could see some of Staff Sgt. Huges' boys coming up the road with ammo and fuel for us. Once again, Support Platoon was there right on time.

Daylight at last. We owned the night, but we looked forward to daylight. It was the only time you could get some rest. Sure, we got shot at in the day time, too, but there's nothing like darkness to make someone do something stupid, like bring a rifle to a tank fight. Staff Sgt.

William's Bradley, "Casanova," was doing better than Carnivore but not by much. He had one radio out and his night-sight was going in and out. He could only run it for three hours then he would have to turn it off for half an hour before it would work again. When I asked him why he named his Bradley "Casanova" he said, "the same reason you named yours 'Carnivore.' It fits your personality. You're a rough guy, and me, I just love the ladies."

It took almost two hours to get my Bradley ready to fight again. I got a full-up load of ammo minus the TOWs. My launcher had been hit by an RPG in As Samawah, and I had not had time to get it repaired yet. With my weapons loaded and wiped down with a light coat of 15-40 motor oil to keep them firing fast, I just sat down to eat an MRE when my radio came to life, jerking me out of a dead-man's sleep. It was Sgt. 1st Class Broadhead, calling to let me know that we had bad guys moving in and around some house, out to our front. I told him "Roger! Watch my move and I'll go kill 'em!" I looked around in my vehicle. Everyone was out cold. I looked at my Timex watch that had taken a beating and still was ticking; I had opened up the MRE and fallen asleep for four hours. It felt like I had just lain down. I knew my guys needed to rest, so I only got Sperry up and had him drive up the road so I could fire up the Iraqi soldiers that were still hanging around. We moved up and stopped in the middle of the destroyed trucks. I saw two Iraqi soldiers running down a bank to a ditch. I took them out with the coax machine gun.

Crew of the Casanova examines a T-72 main battle tank they took out with a Bradley.





(above) T-72 killed by 25mm fire from Bradley, and (above, right) shows typical catastrophic hull failure, turret separation.

(right) Spc. Peacore examines yet another T-72 taken out by 25mm fire from Williams' Bradley — this time the turret landed upside down next to tank.

(background) Sergeant John J. Williams takes out another T-72 with 25mm fire, as the David-and-Goliath routine continues.

(below) Iraqi jeep almost escaped the Casanova's deadly fire.



Taking a Knife To A Gun Fight: Sometimes A Good Idea

The coax woke up Soprano. He told me he wanted the gun. The next hour we killed 10 more bad guys and started moving back to the bridge. We saw three soldiers run into the house closest to the bridge. Soprano put 10 rounds of 25 mike-mike HE in it, then I took him and Sully to go in and make sure we got them. Sully went in first, then Soprano and I. A guy ran out a hole that the HE had put in the wall. Soprano shot him in the face with my pistol. The other two were dead, so I had Soprano and Sully look out back for any more bad guys, while I checked

the two dead guys for documents. The first guy had an M1911 .45 pistol on him. I lay down my AK and picked up the .45 to check if it was loaded and it was — what a nice find. Then I saw a guy stepping out from behind some wood piled up on the floor: He had an AK-47, but I got the drop on him. I pulled the trigger. The hammer fell and nothing happened. We looked at each other. I hit him in the face with the pistol and he dropped his AK. I pulled out the faithful Buck hunting knife I had carried turkey and deer hunting in Kentucky, and all through Desert Storm, and stuck him under his arm and in the chest to get him off me. He fell up against the wall and died there — like so many other Iraqi soldiers who could have surrendered — for nothing.

It was time to go back to the bridge. I was numb from what I had done and seen, and the lack of sleep had me making mistakes that could have gotten me or my crew killed. We needed a break, and soon.

Less than an hour later, the CO called and told us we were to be replaced by another unit today. Man, were we happy. The unit that had come up to replace us still had gun covers on their .50 cal's. I looked over at Broadhead and he just smiled at me. They would find out the hard way what they had gotten themselves into. The enemy would be back as soon as it got dark. At last the CO said we would get some rest. We were moving to Objective Rams. It was northwest of Najaf, a short move, only one hour and we would be there.

Rams was a flat field in the middle of nowhere, but it was safe, and 2nd BCT (Brigade Combat Team) would be pulling over watch for us, so we could fix our broken stuff, and rest. I walked over to shoot the bull with the First Sergeant and found that his .50 cal. had not functioned. We had moved out on the attack without test firing anything, no weapons at all. After a little work and one big hammer, we got it working.



For lighter work — such as no-knock searches — Williams used an M203 40mm round.

Charge To Baghdad

We then moved north and sat in blocking position. There was a tank brigade still out there, somewhere, and we needed to find it. The only thing we found was an AA gun site with five 57mm guns. Broadhead ran over them with his tank. Then we got the word: We were going to Baghdad. It was 3 April.

We moved behind the 2nd BCT till we got to the other side of the Eupharates. I had crossed that river three times already. The BCT would move east and I would lead Crazy Horse west. Being in the front was not where I wanted to be this day. I knew that the Iraqis would have tanks guarding Baghdad and the road was only big enough for one vehicle at a time. I knew I had to be on my A game or one 125mm T-72 round would stop the whole troop. That round would have to have hit me in the front of my Bradley, and I was not going to let my crew go out that way.

I moved as slow as I could, to make sure that my gunner could get a good look ahead of us. Our first contact came from a Toyota truck with six or seven guys in it. Soprano fired the main gun at it. The first round landed just in front of it. The next three rounds landed in the cab. The small truck was now smoldering ruins. Onward we headed, still looking, still fighting an enemy that was now turning into a ghost. Next to the road, I came upon an Iraqi fighting position. More often than not, the soldiers in them would be trying to get an RPG shot off at us. I told my gunner and dismount to shoot anything that looked like a fighting position. Dusk was approaching. We still had a long way to go and this meant I would have to pick up the pace.

Moving faster meant it would be harder for me to find any ambushes that lay in wait for us, but it was move faster now, or try to at night. The last thing anyone wanted was another ambush alley. We were almost there — less than 2 miles to

Continued on page 72



All Kinds Of R & R (Yeah, Riight)

We had been standing so long our feet and knees had swollen up and it was hard to walk. We lay around and I got to change my socks for the first time since the start of the war. Staff Sgt. (P) Todd Young and Specialist Ryan Hellman came over from S-3 to see how we were doing. Young was the Squadron Master Gunner. He had brought over some more batteries and Hellman gave me another matching unit to fix my radios. No one talked about what had happened to my crew of kids — now they were men beyond their years. Sergeant Michael Soprano no longer looked like a 16-year-old, smiling after his first kiss. The lack of sleep, food, rest and the stress of being under fire had made him look like a 35-year-old man. The fact that he had already killed more men than anyone else had or would in the 3rd Infantry Division, was taking a toll on him.

Specialist Jason Sperry had been accustomed to sitting by himself in his driver's hatch. He would be changed forever. Specialist Michael Sullivan had come into his own: The-once meek Sully had found who he was; what it meant to be a soldier, a combat killer, and that he was good at what he did. I felt like I was 50 years old. Captain Stephen Balog, the unit Chaplain, came by to see us at Rams. He was not just our chaplain — he was also our friend. Chappy was a straight-forward man who everyone liked to hang out with. Seeing Chappy there gave us hope that we all would come out of this OK.

We moved out and set up in an over watch position at the town of Karbala. Sitting back in the sand was not what we wanted to be doing, but we were here to make sure that the Iraqi army could not get into the rear of the Division. It was there we got the call that we had a brigade-size element moving on us. So we charged the enemy in the true spirit of Cav: We had three troops on-line, heading at the bad guys in full force.

At the last minute, we saw camels. Lots of wild camels: JSTAR had mistaken the camels for infantry.



Staff Sgt. Williams, Spc. Peacore and the Casanova pose with captured RPG — the ubiquitous anti-armor weapon that just didn't quite get the job done for the Iraqis.

Busting A Taliban Bomb-Making Cell



TEXT & PHOTOS BY PAUL AVALLONE

For the past five months SOF has detailed ODA 2025's raids on weapons caches and heroin-processing labs, as well as the team's non-combat role winning hearts and minds. The ODA's adventures continue now, as the team learns there's a Taliban bomb-making cell in town ... with the ODA the target.

We'd gotten intel from a local source that a Taliban cell had come into the city, three, four — maybe a dozen men — and they had made some improvised bombs. Propane tanks rigged with explosives, the word was ... meant for us.

Similar to barbecue tanks in the States, except a little smaller and painted shiny red, blue, gold or green, and used

With SF In Afghanistan



extensively in the place of stoves for cooking, these tanks were to be first strapped to the backs of bicycles, the usual method of delivering them. Then the bikes would be casually left on the alley on which we lived, and when we came or went in our Toyota Tacoma 4WD pickups, they would be detonated by remote radio signal. Ten to 12 guys split between three Tacomas ... it would make for a bad day for SF.

It was just after dawn, and we had about a third of our 90-plus MRF (our Mobile Reaction Force and pronounced

"muri" — our personal Afghan militia) lingering with us outside one of their two compounds in and around our Tacomas and their Toyota Hilux diesel pickups. We were waiting for the last piece of intel: The cell's location.

Our MRF were a collection of the better soldiers culled from the various local generals/warlords' armies. (Generals, warlords — they're one in the same.) We paid our guys well (double or triple the average Afghan monthly income), fed them three meals a day, equipped them



from clothes to weapons to crates of ammo, and trained them as our muscle.

It was our 30-odd MRF and us, and the two audacious Norwegian documentary filmmakers who'd showed up in town a couple of days earlier and had gotten the local kingpin warlord, General Hazarat Ali, the Eastern Corps commander with whom we worked, to give them permission to go wherever and film whatever they wanted. They had Ali's blessings, and we, consequently, were powerless to run them off or shoot them.

It was light by now, later than we liked to hit places. Much better to catch people still sleeping. The element of surprise was evaporating with each minute. Our team sergeant, Terry, and one of our medics, Laval, were in a confab with an Afghan man whom I did not recognize. The source.

Intel-gathering with sources was Laval's gig, and no one did it better. A former sergeant in 5th Special Forces Group, Laval had left active duty, transferring to the Guard to pursue a normal life with his wife and two kids, moving the family from Fort Campbell, Kentucky, to West Texas, where he was the foreman on a huge cattle ranch when we were activated after 9/11. With so much CenCom/Mideast experience under his belt from his time in 5th Group, Laval had taken to the Afghan culture upon setting foot in the country and had developed a network of sources that was unrivaled.

That ain't bragging — it's fact. During our seven months in Afghanistan, our team uncovered and captured more arms caches, in numbers and tonnage, and snatched more Taliban/al Qaeda operatives and busted up more opium/heroin rings than any of the other SF teams. Hands down. And it wasn't because we were braver than the other guys. Or smarter. Or tougher. It was because we had better intel; intel *not* from CIA, NSA or DIA sources or satellite imagery or radio intercepts; rather, *human* intel from ground-level sources. Afghans. Average-Mohammed everyday Afghans. Laval's network.

His name was becoming legend among special ops in country, as much from our successes as from the CIA spooks, Delta boys and SEAL operatives who came in and out of our area and wound up spreading the word. We'd even heard rumors to the effect that Laval's name had been mentioned in briefings more than once in the Office of the Secretary of Defense. And even in the White House.

"... Careers Aren't Made By Approving Risky Operations That Go South."

No matter. Right now team leader Captain Jim was on the satellite radio with our command base up in Uzbekistan, appraising them of the situation, but careful to make it all sound quite routine and not dangerous. The intel had come in quickly and we had not submitted to higher a detailed written conop (Concept of Operation), and if the brass thought the potential for casualties too high, they'd order us off. Nowadays, careers aren't made by approving risky operations that go south.

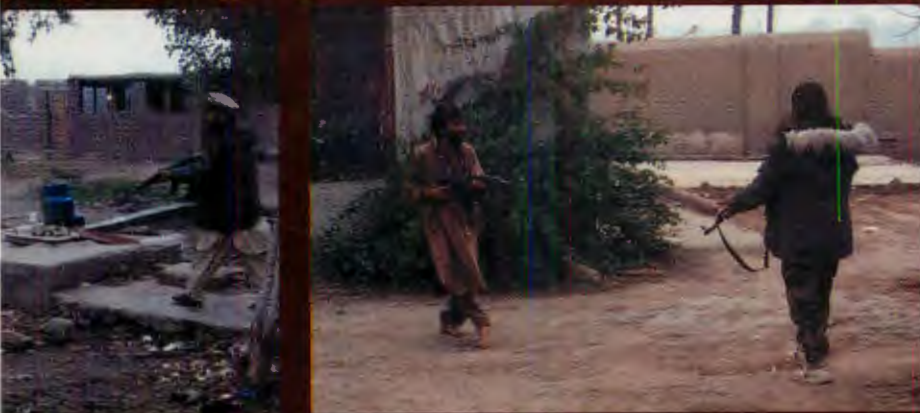
At the same time, our Air Force Tac-P attached to the ODA at the time, Chief Harris, was on his satellite radio with his liaison at the Combined Joint Special Ops Task Force (CJSOTF) at Bagram Air Base north of Kabul, finding out what close air support was available just in case we hit some heavy resistance. With our M-4s, Beretta 9mms, Tacoma-mounted M-240 machine guns and our MRF with their AKs, PKs and RPGs, we could put out plenty of firepower ourselves. But there was nothing like knowing you have F-15s and A-10s at your beck-and-call, to come screaming out of the sky with their overwhelming weaponry, blasting absolute terror into the hearts of the enemy.

For the SF teams on the ground the Tac-P's had become indispensable. Their radios were better than ours for talking to aircraft, they knew the lingo and procedures better, and the pilots liked having one of their Air Force own on the ground. Plus, the Tac-P presence freed up one of our guys from being glued to the radio.

Suddenly, there was a buzz among us, "We've got the location." "Where?" Laval's source had come through. "Over there." Just on the other side of the MRF compound. The walled compound behind. Within sight. Not more than a quarter-mile straight-line distance. "Damn ... !"

"Think they've seen us?" someone asked. If they were looking, they couldn't miss 50 armed men hanging around a formation of gunned-up Toyota pickups. "Yeah," someone suggested, "but what says they know we're here for them?" It was a hope more than a question.

It didn't matter, we had to take them down, surprise or no surprise. If the bombs were still there, they could be moved



(from far left) Surprised by the early-morning raid, the suspect exits the house in his barefeet, only to be met by MRF squad leader Sefuidin. Refusing to put down his weapon, the suspect backs away. MRF squad leader Sefuidin approaches the suspect in a Mexican standoff with the guns of the ODA and MRF trained on the him. Suspect still refuses to drop his weapon. Defying the MRF and ignoring the (off camera) aimed guns of the ODA, the suspect backs away toward the rooms behind him into which he will eventually step, disappearing.



Sergeants 1st Class Laval and Deke train their M-4 rifles on the (off camera) suspect as he disappears in the rooms along the edge of the compound.

(from left) As a second suspect exits the house, MRF squad leader Sefuidin, not willing to tolerate a second man getting away, directly and physically confronts the suspect. The photo does not show it, but Sefuidin has grabbed the 2nd suspect's AK by the muzzle and now is about to bring his own AK down on the suspect's head, hitting him with the end of the AK magazine. Having clobbered the suspect on the skull, Sefuidin yanks the suspect's AK right from his hand, muzzle first. Staff Sergeant Dean wrestles the second suspect to the ground while MRF come to his aid and Captain Brian reaches behind his back for flexcuffs.



within minutes. No, they would be moved, without doubt. We had no choice — we had to strike now, no delay.

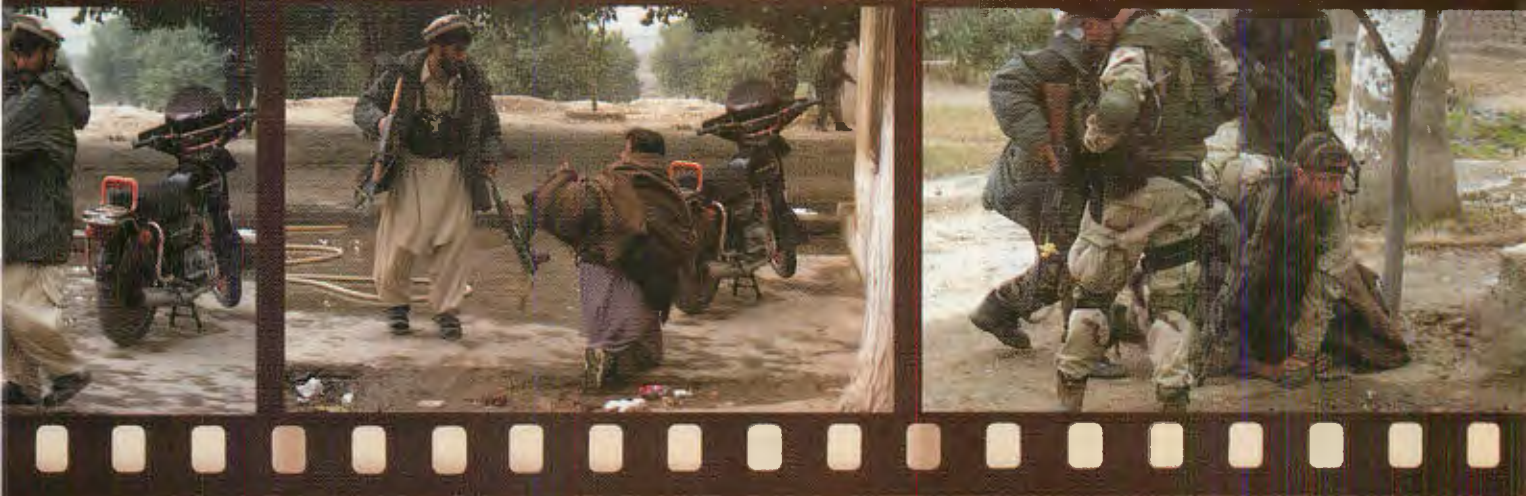
A plan was quickly drawn up. No diagrams, no sand tables. What could we draw? We had no idea what was inside the compound. It was big, we could tell — about the size of a football field. Above, behind the walls one could see trees, lots of them. There was no time to put eyes-on and get the lay of the target. What was the layout inside, who knows? How many separate little houses and rooms in there, who knows?

How many men, who knows? Where would the bombs be, who knows? What kind of resistance would we meet, who knows? Would there be women and children whom we'd have to be careful not to harm? Who knows?

All we knew, the source said that the entrance was down the cross street ahead. So, we'd mount-up — MRFs and our gunners manning the PKs and our M-240s on the back of the pickups. Two MRF trucks in the lead and the rest interspersed with ours, we'd speed to the cross street then down it, and the



Staff Sgt. Dean maintains his weight on the suspect, still aiming at the potential threat from inside the house, as a MRF flexcuffs the suspect. Note the blood on the suspect from where Sefuidin slammed the magazine of his AK on the suspect's head.



two lead MRF trucks would swing into security positions at the near and far corners of the compound on the street and act as blocking positions. Our demolition guys, Chuck and Deke, would be in our lead truck, first to the entrance that was most likely twin 12-foot-tall iron gates chained shut, and they would blow them open with shape charges.

"You got radio contact with CAS?" Captain Jim asked Chief Harris of the close air support. He did.

"Where do you want us?" Rob asked. "Want us to play the message?" Rob was the sergeant of the three-man Tactical Psyop Team (TPT) permanently attached to our ODA while in country. Reservists from the Atlanta, Georgia area, Rob, Jason and Travis were more than happy to be away from the conventional structure of their unit, living and working hand-in-hand with an actual SF team in a combat zone. They had mounted two big loudspeakers atop their Toyota Surf 4-Runner and could play messages or music recorded on their MP-3 players. If we were hitting a target mounted, we'd have TPT repeatedly blast one of several messages that basically said in the native language, Pashtu, "Attention, attention! We are American and Afghan forces. Set down your weapons. Have the women and children gather in the center of the compound."

"Got Your Body Armor With You?"

TPT were to be the last vehicle this morning, just ahead of the Norwegians in their Land Cruiser. As soon as the gates were to be blown, we'd all storm in on foot and the TPT would start the message blasting. "Drop your weapons. You will not be harmed." As it happened, when things would quickly start to go wrong this day, TPT would prove to be more than just mere disc jockeys.

Terry and Captain Jim got the MRF squad leaders together and through our interpreters ("terps") Gulbarhar and Fahreed laid out the complete plan.

"Got your body armor with you?" team sergeant Terry asked me. "In the truck." "Maybe you oughta get it on," he advised. I hated the body armor. It's cumbersome, bulky and heavy. Our MRF didn't have body armor or helmets. Our terps either. We didn't have the extras to give them, and I doubt that they'd use them if we had. It's a pride, macho thing.

Actually, the odds on a daily basis of getting shot at were slim, maybe just five percent. And the chances of them actu-

ally hitting you if they did shoot, the majority being lousy shots, was maybe five percent. Five percent of five percent, I'd take those odds, especially since, with the extensive vehicular movement required to cover our huge province, our greatest everyday danger was landmines and IEDs, from which the body armor provided little or no protection. I had taken to never wearing the stuff, but right now Captain Jim gave me a look — you know, saying, please get your armor on. If I got shot in the chest or back it would be his ass fried for not making me wear it. I put it on.

The helmets, now, that was a different story. All of us had taken to not wearing them. Period. Screw the directives coming down saying we had to. The helmets are uncomfortable, they don't really protect that much and, most importantly, they just don't look cool. It was baseball caps all around. Combine that with the fact that the conventional troops — 82nd, 10th Mountain and 101st — followed directives and wore their helmets all the time, and, though none were in our area at the time, they had been earlier in the war, the populace didn't like them. Not them or their Humvees, or their clean-shaved faces and high-and-tight haircuts. Nor that they operated coldly, as an occupying force. The locals referred to the conventional soldiers simply as, in Pashtu, "the helmeted ones." Frowning. We were a small team whose survival depended upon its ability to blend in and build rapport with the populace, and the last thing we wanted to be referred to was "helmeted ones."

We let our hair grow and beards, ignoring dictates from the conventional general commanding the Afghan theater. We wore Afghan scarves that doubled as dust masks for the hours and hours of driving on the dirt roads and rutted paths of the rural countryside. We wore DCUs or the woodland-green BDUs (like our MRF) and sometimes jeans. Laval and anyone joining him on a clandestine meeting or recon wore the local garb — what we called "hajji-flage" — the pajama-like pants and long shirt, down to the cheap shoes, and a wrap blanket in the cold. ("Hajji" — pronounced há-gee — is the formal first name given an Afghan man who has visited Mecca, and GIs use it as a catch-all moniker for all Afghans.)

Regardless of the command orders, SF guys were going to

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THE GUNS OF BAGHDAD

Everyone Goes Armed In The Wild, Wild Middle East

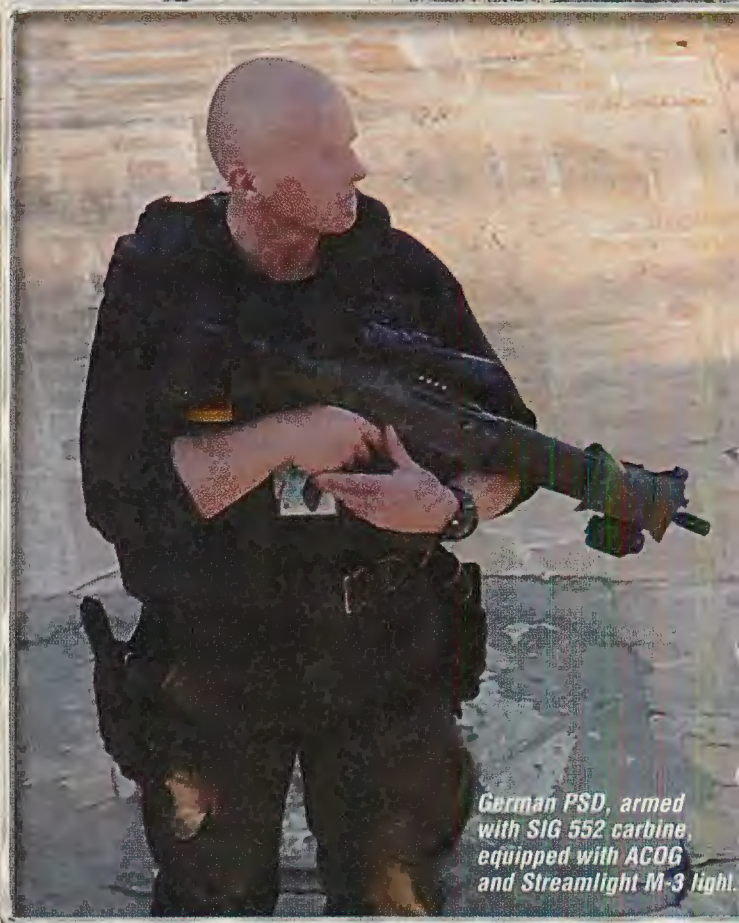
TEXT & PHOTOS BY TERRY D. BRYSON

Gunfire erupted in the neighborhood, numerous shots from AKs. Long bursts were heard several blocks away. Helicopters were flying low overhead, dogs were howling in the distance, and Arabic chanting over the loudspeaker reminded me that Ramadan was in full swing. All that was missing was a baby crying. Welcome to Baghdad.

I was, on the rooftop of a dilapidated building after dark, less than 200 meters from the Tigris River. I was on a personal security detail (PSD), well armed with a Glock Model 17 9mm with three spare magazines, and a Bushmaster HBAR Sniper Rifle with 10 30-round magazines. The rifle was equipped with a Leupold Vari-X III 3.5-10 X 40mm M1 scope. The scope has a mil-dot reticle and the reticle can be illuminated for dark or low-light use. This is an excellent scope for this type of mission. There were several of my comrades on the street below armed with G17s and M4s. Approximately 25 Iraqi PSDs were heavily armed with AKs, guarding their principal. Our principal came for his meeting and shortly thereafter we returned to the palace, the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) Headquarters in Baghdad.

Almost daily, our PSD was out and about with our principal. Numerous times we traveled to different parts of Iraq. No matter where you went, it was the same: Guns were everywhere. Being a gun enthusiast, I was in heaven (the possibility of getting shot aside).

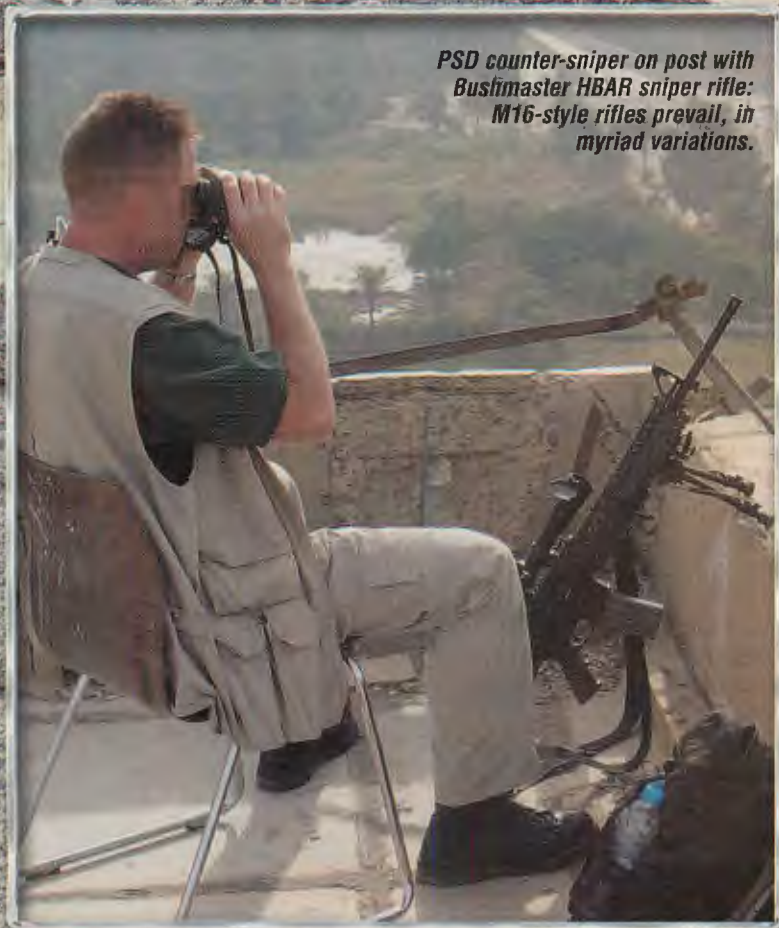
Our office was located in the presidential palace in Baghdad at the CPA Headquarters. Numerous PSDs were stationed there or nearby. At one time or another, all PSDs came into the palace. I was interested to see what individual



German PSD, armed with SIG 552 carbine, equipped with ACOG and Streamlight M-3 light.



The eclectic Coalition of the Willing has brought to Baghdad an eclectic assortment of PSDs and their indigenous weapons. Here, author on rooftop over watch with with Italian PSD armed with Beretta AR-70 rifle, Armani suit.



PSD counter-sniper on post with Bushmaster HBAR sniper rifle: M16-style rifles prevail, in myriad variations.

weapons were being carried by the PSDs, and by the various military personnel.

Handguns

As one would expect, the most prolific handgun seen was the Beretta M9 (M92). They were carried in every imaginable manner and holster. Most of the pistols showed evidence of hard use. Many of the backstraps were completely bare of finish, giving the appearance of stainless steel. These pistols were carried in the issued Bianchi M12 holster, attached to body armor, drop-leg holsters, (predominately Safariland) and countless different shoulder holsters. Many of the shoulder holsters were black nylon (Michaels of Oregon) and quite a few were of brown leather of unknown make. All of the MPs were carrying M9s, as were the U.S. Marines FAST Company (Fleet Anti-Terrorism Security Team) guards at the gates.

Quite a few M11s (SIG P228) were seen, predominantly carried by U.S. Army (CID) Criminal Investigative Command, U. S. Navy (NCIS) Naval Criminal Investigative Service, and U. S. Air Force (OSI) Office of Special Investigations. These pistols are prized by their owners and are primarily carried in strong-side concealment-type holsters. A few

P226s were seen being carried by U. S. Navy SEALs in plain clothes. No SEALs were seen in uniform.

I am a big M1911 fan and I was curious to see if any were being carried. I saw one being carried by a gentleman in plain clothes whom I assumed to be a FBI Agent. There is a large FBI contingent in Iraq. A one-star general was seen carrying a M1911 in a hip-holster, with two Wilson Rogers magazines in an open-top magazine pouch. My kind of guy. Four FBI HRT (Hostage Rescue Team) Operators were seen carrying Para Ordnance P-14s in drop-leg holsters. Two young operators were observed carrying what appeared to be World War II U. S. Military M1911A1s cocked and locked in Blade Tech holsters. They were wearing nondescript U. S. Military desert fatigues with no unit insignias or rank.

Glock handguns were carried by more PSDs than any other pistol. G17s, G19s, and G26s were seen. All Glocks were in 9mm. To my knowledge none were seen in any other caliber. The Iraqi Police are reportedly going to be issued Glock pistols in the future.

British Military personnel were carrying Browning High Powers. The High Powers observed were all in 9mm. Some of the Iraqi PSDs were also carrying Brownings. One Iraqi had his High Power taken away from him for safekeeping by one of our PSDs while attending an event. At the end of the event, the weapon was returned unloaded to the Iraqi. He quickly proceeded to load the weapon and attempted to lower the hammer on a live round. How did that work? Not too good: He had a negligent discharge in the courtyard.

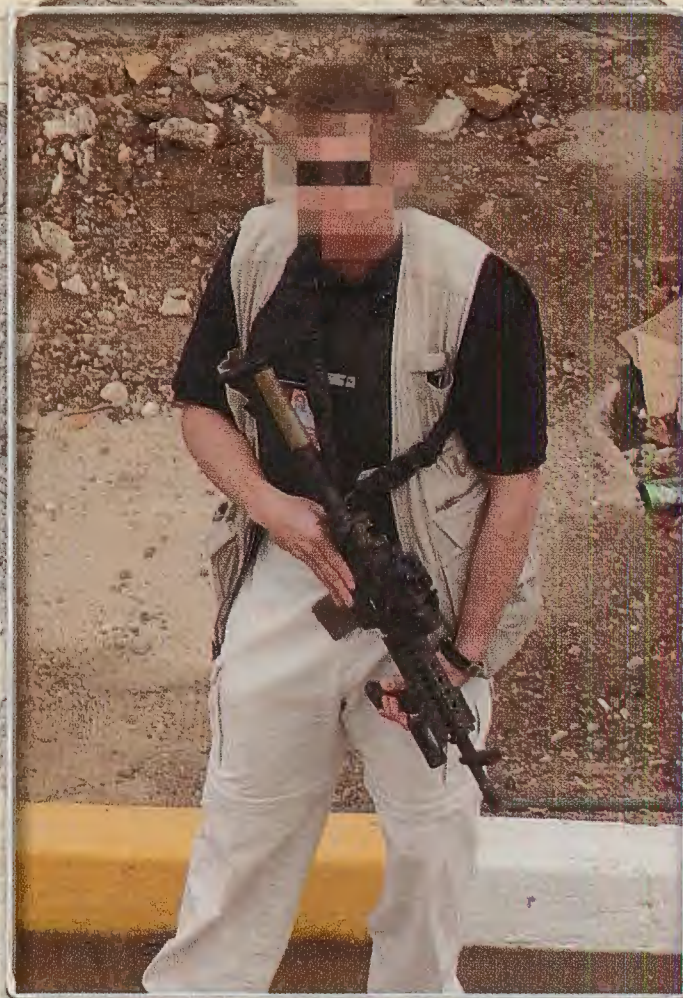
Very few Iraqis were seen with handguns. The Beretta M951 (most were probably Helwans) was carried more than any other handgun. The M951 is a 9mm caliber weapon. The Beretta M84 .380 ACP was also seen, with several being carried by American PSDs. A few revolvers were observed being carried by Iraqis.

Rifles

The M16 series reigns supreme in Baghdad. They were in all configurations, with 11.5, 14.5, 16.1 and full-size 20-inch barrels. I even spotted two M16A1s. I have no clue as to which ammunition was being issued for these rifles. Troops from El Salvador were seen carrying 11.5-inch Commandos in Babylon. Numerous PSDs at the palace were carrying 11.5 carbines. In my opinion this is the optimum barrel length for PSD operations. It is light and much handier in tight corridors, in and out of vehicles, and during aircraft operations. Most operators think it is cool to hang everything imaginable on these weapons. But flashlights, lasers, spare magazine carriers, tactical slings, and night vision devices can turn a small compact carbine into a very heavy package.

My carbine was a Bushmaster with a 14.5-inch barrel. It sported an ACOG scope with illuminated reticle, and an Atilla 200 PAC-2 Acquired Tactical Illuminator laser aimer. This device was a must for night operations. The PAC-2 was only visible when viewed through night-vision goggles such as the AN/PVS 21 N.V.G.s that I was issued. I also used the A.R.M.S. carbine handguard that free floats the barrel and has numerous accessory rails. I was very fond of the dual-point rifle sling scrounged from a British Enfield L85 (very similar to the excellent MP5 sling). These accessories were mandatory for my mission requirements. I carried a Streamlight M3 flashlight attached to my Glock. This light was compatible with the forearm on my carbine, although I never felt the need to attach it.

Most M16s were Colts, but quite a few were Bushmasters.



(above) PSD operator armed with Commando-length M16, with Aimpoint sight and Streamlight M-3 light. (below) U.S. Army MP with M4 carbine and Browning M2 .50-caliber HMG watches an Baghdad street.





(left) MP on escort duty is armed with ubiquitous M249 SAW. (below) PSD team armed with M4 carbine and collapsible-stocked, suppressed M16, both equipped with Aimpoints, and M249 Para model.



to be used with night-vision goggles. A large number of the M16A2s and M4s were equipped with the vertical pistol grip mounted on the front handguard. These seem to be very popular. I never have understood the attraction.

Iraqi PSDs and police officers carried AK-47s and variants. I once watched five Iraqi police officers directing traffic at a busy intersection: All five were armed with AK-47s. I have never seen police officers get so much respect in an intersection. Approximately one third of all the AK-47s were being carried with the butt stock removed. Most rifles were AK-47s but many AKMs were observed.

Only a handful of AK-74s were being carried and only one Krinkov was observed. The AK-47s and AKMs were 7.62X39mm and the

AK-74s and Krinkov were 5.45X39mm. Most weapons were carried

with the selector on full-auto and their finger

inside the trigger guard — obviously not a NRA-approved handling technique. All of these weapons appeared to be in very good condition. Of the weapons carried with folding stocks, virtually all of these were the under-folding stock with only a few of the side folders observed. U.S. military personnel were also carrying AK-47s in small numbers. I do not know if there is a shortage of M16s or these weapons are being carried for a specific mission requirement, or just to be different.

An Italian PSD member carried a Beretta AR-70 select-fire rifle with a folding stock. This gentleman was wearing an Armani suit and was definitely the best-dressed PSD in Baghdad. The AR-70 is in 5.56mm. His colleagues were armed with MP5s.

The Enfield L85A1 was carried by the

British troops. Virtually all L85s observed were equipped with the four-power Susat optical sight. No PSDs were carrying this weapon as they are only available to the military. Numerous heavy-barrel L86s were being used as a convoy support weapon. The L86 has a longer, heavier barrel and is issued with a bipod. Both weapons follow the same bull-pup design, and are magazine fed 5.56mm-caliber ammo.

Heckler and Koch were well represented in Baghdad. A number of G3s were being carried by PSDs. The G3 is a full-size battle rifle in 7.62mm (.308) caliber. The Ghurkas from Nepal have a large presence in Iraq and particularly around the CPA headquarters, employed by private security firms. The Ghurkas were well armed with G3s and M16A2s. All of the G3s were wearing green furniture and were issued with retractable stocks.

One British PSD was equipped with a G3Km, a short 12-

Some of the Bushmasters were semi-auto only. M4s were everywhere. The M4 is a 14.5-inch barreled M16 with an enlarged handguard and side sling attachment point. All MPs were carrying M4s, many with M203 grenade launchers attached. Most were equipped with Aimpoint M68 scopes. These scopes were well worn, but were given high marks by the troops. I was surprised to see so many weapons without a rear iron sight installed. I used the Aimpoints myself and was very pleased with this scope. This is an excellent close-quarters quick-target-acquisition sight. Many M4s had fixed carrying-handles and no optics.

Speaking of optics, numerous red-dot type scopes were seen being carried by PSDs and the military. Aimpoints, EOTechs, ACOGS, Elcans, and various night-vision sights were observed mounted on machine guns.

Full size M16A2s were in abundance. Many of these rifles were flat top versions with the carrying handle removed and were equipped with Aimpoints and IR laser sighting devices

Continued on page 71

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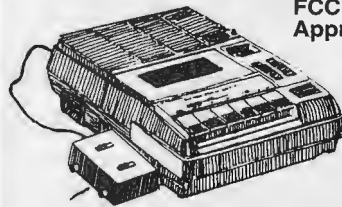
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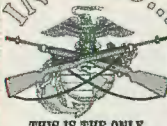
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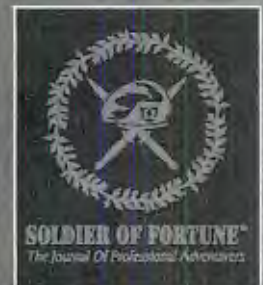


#T010
SOF SOG
color ink
on 2-sided
black 100%
cotton tee
M-L-XL \$15 ea
XXL-XXXL \$17

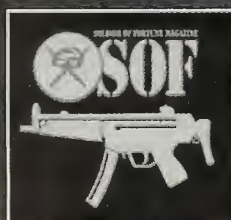


#T008 (green)

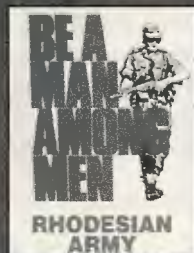
SOF, The Journal Of Professional Adventurers.
Heavyweight 100% cotton with subtle left chest logo.
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XXL-XXXL \$17 ea



#T009 (blue)



#T001
MP5 black 50/50 T-shirt
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M-L-XL \$15 ea;
XXL-XXXL \$17 ea



#T002
Rhodesian Army
white 100% cotton tee
M-L-XL \$15 ea
XXL-XXXL \$17 ea

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#T014 "Let's Roll"	XXL XXXL	Ⓢ	\$17.00	
#T010 SOF SOG 2-sided	M L XL	Ⓢ	\$15.00	
#T010 SOF SOG 2-sided	XXL XXXL	Ⓢ	\$17.00	
#T008 SOF Covert Ops (green)	M L XL	Ⓢ	\$15.00	
#T008 SOF Covert Ops (green)	XXL-XXXL	Ⓢ	\$17.00	
#T009 SOF Covert Ops (blue)	M L XL	Ⓢ	\$15.00	
#T009 SOF Covert Ops (blue)	XXL-XXXL	Ⓢ	\$17.00	
#T001 MP5 Shirt	M L XL	Ⓢ	\$15.00	
#T001 MP5 Shirt	XXL XXXL	Ⓢ	\$17.00	
#T002 Rhodesian Army Shirt	M L XL	Ⓢ	\$15.00	
#T002 Rhodesian Army Shirt	XXL XXXL	Ⓢ	\$17.00	

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USMC SNIPER: GUNNERY SERGEANT Carlos N. Hathcock

MS Would Take The Man — But Not The Legend

PART I

BY LANCE M. BACON

It's been five years since complications from multiple sclerosis claimed the life of retired Marine Gunnery Sergeant Carlos Hathcock. Nearly 25 years have passed since the famed sniper was medically retired from the Marine Corps. And it's been 35 years since he scored the last of his 93 confirmed kills in Vietnam.

Yet Hathcock's legend is as strong as ever. Indeed, it has taken on a life of its own.

The sniper range at Camp Lejeune, N.C., is named in Hathcock's honor. The annual Carlos Hathcock Award is presented to the Marine who does the most to promote marksmanship.

His legacy is alive at Marine Corps Base, Quantico, Va. — the "crossroads of the Corps" where Hathcock was a found-

ing member of the Scout/Sniper School. There, modern snipers eagerly tell of the time they met the legendary Marine, and describe how his timeless tactics were proven effective once again in Afghanistan and Iraq.

And Hathcock's name remains synonymous with the Marine mantra "One shot, one kill."

Ironically, Hathcock never cared much for the idea of being a Marine legend.

"I just had a job to do, and I don't really care for being a legend to tell you the truth," Hathcock said in a 1996 interview. "I am no legend — I was simply a Marine doing his job."

That humility was no charade. During a break for lunch at one of his favorite diners, Hathcock shared kind words with many patrons who, like Hathcock, frequented the restaurant on nearly a daily basis. To them, he was Carlos — a good friend with a dry wit and gentle smile. Many of his fellow customers were Vietnam vets who were familiar with stories of a deadly sniper known as "The White Feather." But none of them knew the famed marksman sat among them. And that's exactly how Carlos liked it.

"I didn't do anything more important than these men," Hathcock said, pointing a bony trigger finger in their direction. "Some of these guys went through hell over there, and they deserve of the attention you're giving me today."

But in doing his job, whether as a distinguished marksman, national shooting champion or one of Vietnam's deadliest snipers, Hathcock scored a number of remarkable shots that to this day leave many marksmen in awe. Even more inspiring is the humble, yet professional, attitude with which he approached each shot. Inside that attitude resides the essence of Carlos Hathcock — and the quintessential spirit of the sniper.

"Every shot I took was my greatest shot," Hathcock said, refusing to pick one as his greatest. "Every shot I took, whether it was in a match or as a sniper, had to be the very best shot I could make it."

That attitude is what made his every shot renowned, even heroic.

That attitude is what made Carlos Hathcock a legend.

The Making Of A Legend

Sergeant Carlos Hathcock and two sniper students settled into position shortly before sunrise. The valley they overlooked was no ordinary classroom. The Marines were in I Corps, whose area of operations spanned from the 17th parallel to the Central Highland's northern ridges of Vietnam. The area was thick with vegetation, and even thicker with Viet Cong and North Vietnamese forces.



courtesy USMC

Gunnery Sergeant Carlos Hathcock, ca. 1966, with his modified Remington 700 and scope. With \$30,000 on his head, Hathcock dropped an enemy soldier from 2,500 yards using a tripod-mounted .50-cal. machine gun converted to single-shot operation.

Shooting For Supper

The students grew uncomfortable under the steady pounding of heavy raindrops. Hathcock paid the rain little attention. His eyes were locked on a flock of white birds that danced across a distant sky. He marveled at their beautiful flight, and embraced this rare moment of serenity.

Hathcock and his students were well concealed by the time daylight pierced the dense jungle. With quiet patience the Marines meticulously scanned the area for enemy activity; their ears strained to capture the slightest sound. It proved to be a long wait. The area held little activity aside from a handful of farmers cultivating their crops. The heat became an uncomfortable blanket as the day progressed, which made the mission even more unbearable. It was shaping up to be another wasted day — the product of bad intel, or an overly cautious commander, perhaps. Whatever the cause, the students saw no reason to stay.

But Hathcock saw plenty.

In the distance, a Vietnamese man dressed in a khaki shirt and black shorts repeatedly stepped in and out of a small hut. His actions seemed odd, even anxious. Hathcock's curiosity piqued, the patient sniper watched and waited. And waited. And waited. He ignored the student's urges to depart. He was oblivious to the escalating heat. Hathcock watched, and he waited.

His wait paid off.

The skinny man emerged from the hut later that afternoon with a white canvas bag. Carefully scanning his surroundings, the man reached back into the hut and took hold of an SKS rifle. In doing so, he unknowingly sealed his fate.

Hathcock dropped the soldier with one shot from his .30-06 rifle. As his two students provided cover, the sniper made his way to the hut to recover the rifle and do a quick recon. As he grabbed the SKS, which he possessed for the rest of his life, a feather caught Hathcock's eye. It was a white feather, fallen from one of the birds he had watched earlier that day. The same birds that gracefully had soared above this war-torn land, and brought the sniper a moment of much appreciated tranquility. Hathcock took the feather in his steady, camouflaged hand and carefully secured it in his bush hat. He offered the fallen enemy one more cursory glance then turned and disappeared into the jungle.

As the feather had found its place in Hathcock's bush hat — and his heart — it also found a place in Marine Corps history. That feather also was prevalent in the enemy's mind. A North Vietnamese Army division general in the region had received many reports of deadly sniper activity and a new sniper school based at Hill 55. The general would hear much about one sniper in particular, the deadliest sniper, whom the NVA and VC came to know as "Long Tra'ng" — "The White Feather." A White Feather sighting would evoke near-paralyzing fear in the enemy, and fury in their commanders who were unable to stop the Marine sniper.

But the White Feather legend is one that began years before that morning. More than a decade prior, in a stretch of woods near Little Rock, Ark., a boy carrying a J.C. Higgins .22 caliber rifle cast the first molds of a Marine legend.

A young Carlos Hathcock learned the art of marksmanship during his formative years — not as a sport or hobby, but as a way to provide food for the family.

"I would go out and shoot something to eat — a squirrel or a rabbit — bring it home to my grandma, who would skin it and put it in the pot," Hathcock said in the 1996 interview. "That's where I learned how not to waste shots; we didn't have much money to buy bullets."

Those countless hours also taught Hathcock what he referred to as "the wood side."

"I stalked many turtles and other little critters out there in Arkansas bush," he said. "I learned the woods and the things in the woods — what would hurt you and what wouldn't, and what you had to do to not be hurt by critters in the woods."

When he was not hunting dinner or stalking those Arkansas critters, Hathcock would grab an old Mauser rifle his father had brought back from World War II and carefully comb the woods, dreaming that he was alongside "Sgt. John Stryker," in *The Sands of Iwo Jima* clearing the treacherous island. A sly smile crept across Hathcock's face as he recalled the many heroic missions when he accompanied Stryker, but he offered no apologies for his youthful imagination. "Every boy needs a hero," Hathcock said. "Can't really think of a better one than 'Sgt. Stryker.'"

By his 12th birthday, Hathcock's vivid adventures and necessary hunts had teamed to create an accomplished woodsman and marksman. To mark his early steps into manhood, his mother

and grandmother bought him a Remington 12-gauge shotgun. The gift was a show of trust in his responsibility, and offered him the ability to hunt game birds. The ecstatic youngster stepped out nearly every day with his new shotgun resting smartly upon his shoulder, but Hathcock soon found himself unable to adapt to the shell's spread.

"I killed lots of rocks, lots of stumps and lots of tree tops, but that's about it," he said. "I'd go out half a day with the shotgun, get nothing, then go back, get my .22 and get some groceries."

Hathcock wasn't disappointed by his inability to master the shotgun. On the contrary, he considered it a crucial lesson: Stick with what you know, and do it well.

The young marksman continued to provide for his family by way of his rifle until 20 May 1959. On that, his 17th birthday, Hathcock fulfilled a life-long dream and enlisted in the Marine Corps. That morning he said good-bye to his family in Little Rock; that evening, Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., said hello to him.

Having survived the island, Hathcock was assigned as a machine gunner in Company E, 2nd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment. He and the battalion, known as "The Magnificent Bastards," traveled the Far East during the next two years. But Hathcock's love for marksmanship eventually brought him to the ranks of the Hawaii Marine Rifle Team. Soon after, he claimed the Pacific Division Rifle Championship.



Retired Gunnery Sgt. Carlos Hathcock stands with a Marine sniper on the Camp Lejeune range named in his honor. This photo was taken less than one year before Hathcock passed away.

It was also during this tour that Hathcock met a young captain by the name of E.J. Land. The two had no idea the pages of Marine Corps history lay before them — they were doing everything they could to stay competitive on the tough shooting team.

Shot With Carlos On Marine Corps Team For Two Years.

"[Hathcock] was good, but he wasn't the top shooter, nor was I," said Land, who now serves as Secretary of the National Rifle Association of America. "We were the wannabes trying to climb up the ladder."

The next rung on Hathcock's ladder was not the type of assignment that makes a marksman jump for joy. He reported to Marine Corps Air Station, Cherry Point, N.C., and quickly learned that an air station seated in the Carolina pocosin had little need for a machine-gunner. What the base did have, however, was a rifle range that was home to the All-Marine Champion Cherry Point Shooting Team — a team that had heard of Hathcock's orders and eagerly awaited the arrival of the Pacific rifle champion.

Cherry Point wasn't going to be too bad, after all. It had a great shooting team, the locals reminded Hathcock of his native Arkansas ... and there was a beautiful bank teller by the name of Josephine Bryan Winstead who eventually stole Hathcock's heart.

The two met one January afternoon on a blind date arranged by a fellow Marine. Hathcock was sporting the only pair of civilian clothes he owned when he and Josephine met. Despite their initial impressions falling well below love at first sight, their feelings quickly grew — and Hathcock's gunny took notice. The brazen staff NCOIC advised Hathcock to quell any ideas of marriage, but it was too late to change the shooter's mind.

"I chose to not hear what he was saying," Hathcock said of the gunny's orders. It was not a policy Hathcock would recommend others to follow, he said. The chuckle that followed suggested the gunny was none too happy to have been ignored, but Hathcock figured his bride-to-be was worth any problems he might face. The shooter had not always followed the line — Hathcock had been busted to private twice before, once for hitting a lieutenant and once for Unauthorized Absence (though he quickly pointed out that he had checked-out with the Duty Noncommissioned Officer). But Jo had set him straight, and those turbulent days were now behind him. Confident he would soon pin on corporal, Hathcock married Jo on 10 Nov 1962, while earning only \$50 every two weeks.

Fewer than three years later, Hathcock ventured to Camp Perry, Ohio, for the National Shooting Championships. Now a corporal, a father and a member of the Marine Corps Rifle Team, he became a Distinguished Marksman on 25 August 1965. Hathcock took a shot at pistol shooting during that time, but found it didn't work.

"I will not tune in to two things at once; I have a one-track mind, and I'll stick with that," he said.

That focus and commitment resulted in his being a finalist in the 1,000-Yard National High-Power Rifle Championship the day after becoming distinguished. Of the 2,600 marksmen who began the elimination tournament,

only 20 lay on the firing line that August afternoon. By the day's end, one of them would claim The Wimbledon Cup — the trophy bestowed on the country's best shooter.

Hathcock repeatedly hit the 36-inch bull's-eye as his shooting partner, Capt. E.J. Land, and his teammates looked on. Eventually the competition had dwindled to three competitors, including Sgt. Danny Sanchez, a fellow member of the Marine Corps Rifle Team, and Hathcock.

The pressure intensified with each shot. The stoic faces conceded that the smallest mistake would destroy any chance of claiming the coveted title. Each shot had to be perfect. Each shot was, for many rounds. Then, as the trio readied for another shot, a substantial change in the wind's direction caused Hathcock to re-calculate. He squeezed the trigger just as his three-minute time limit ended. When the targets reappeared, only Hathcock's boasted a shot in the black. Only Hathcock had correctly compensated for the wind. Only Hathcock would walk away from the firing line as the national champion.

The following fall, Hathcock put the comfort of competition matches behind him. Things were heating up in a faraway land called Vietnam, and the national shooting champion was soon on his way. Hathcock was assigned to be a military policeman near Chu Lai, a job for which the newly promoted sergeant had little care or interest.

An old friend provided a ticket out in October 1966. Land, Hathcock's former shooting partner, was determined to prove the worth of a sniper contingency within the Marine Corps. The captain had been given the green light to transform his ideas into results, and he set out to assemble Marines

who were not only exceptional marksman, but also accomplished woodsmen — men who were at one with nature, and could use it to their advantage. At the top of that list was Sgt. Carlos N. Hathcock.

With his team assembled, Land was assigned to Hill 55 in I Corps. The area was deep in "Indian Country," and provided the snipers quite the bountiful hunting ground. But beyond showing their value as marksmen, the snipers were also creating a sniper school, where they could handpick and train their colleagues in the art of sniping.

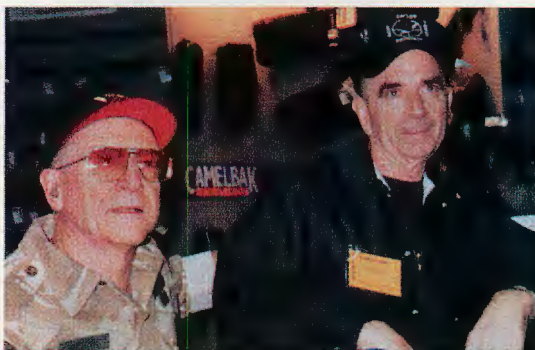
The Legend Grows Among Friends — And Enemies

Establishing a sniper school in Vietnam offered many advantages for Sgt. Carlos N. Hathcock. Primarily, it meant that he would be back behind the trigger, utilizing his marksmanship skills instead of performing military police duties in Chu Lai.

Unknown to Hathcock at the time, the sniper school would also be a doorway through which he would pass into Marine Corps history.

The school's benefits were twofold for Land. First, it would be a prime vehicle in his effort to prove a trained marksman's worth to combat operations, and second, it would allow his instructors to choose and personally train the Marines who would operate with them or under their command.

The Marines at Hill 55 were more than happy to host this unique crew. The area received fairly effective sniper fire 30 to 40 times each day. Upon arrival, the snipers' were first tasked with a little on-the-job training, as Land describes it, and the enemy shots were reduced to a couple a day.



SOF Editor and Publisher Bob Brown with USMC sniper legend Carlos Hathcock during SOF's 1997 Convention in Las Vegas. Despite his crippling disease, Carlos greeted many old — and new — friends.

Tom Reisinger/SOF Files

Eventually, they diminished to one every couple of weeks.

To ensure continued success, and that this success would extend far beyond Hill 55, Land's crew sought specific Marines — men who were accomplished marksmen, well disciplined, possessed exceptional field skills, were in top physical condition and had a good working knowledge of Marine Corps operations. It is the same criteria that remain necessary in the sniper community to this day.

"[Hathcock] really set the tone for snipers in the Marine Corps," said Gunnery Sgt. Robert Reidsma, Staff NCOIC of Scout Sniper Instructor School in Quantico. "Not only with field and marksmanship skills but with his personality — the patience, the humility, the discipline. That's what it takes to be a sniper, and Carlos Hathcock was the best."

"... Shooting Comes Last."

Sgt. Dagan Vanoosten agrees. A sniper of six years who most recently saw action in Iraq as part of 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, Vanoosten says he's amazed at the determination and discipline Hathcock harnessed.

"He could hear things in his mind, smell things in the dirt," Vanoosten said. "He was part of the environment."

It was a talent Hathcock took to heart. As he liked to say, "sniping isn't just shooting; shooting comes last."

Students at Hill 55 quickly learned why natural ability and operational knowledge was so vital. Each Marine repeatedly ventured into the bush to conduct actual sniping missions with an instructor. In addition to instructing, Hill 55 snipers also supported countless operations. As a result, Hathcock found himself spending the majority of his time in the bug-infested jungle. Sometimes alone, sometimes with a spotter, he would remain in the bush for days at a time, eating John Wayne crackers and peanut butter and keeping his movements to a painstaking minimum.

Land points to such missions as good examples of how snipers should be employed — offensively, first and foremost.

Reidsma, a 17-year Marine vet, describes snipers in such missions as tactical surgeons who eliminate the cancers that plague the battlefield.

Hathcock saw the missions as the chance to save Marine lives.

"It's a man, a rifle and a bullet ... you have to cultivate the mentality of the man behind the rifle to do the job. I didn't feel anything; I just had a job to do," he said of sniping the enemy. "We were surrounded by bad guys, and they had no sense of humor. They were going to take out my fellow Marines, so I dumped them."

Hathcock grew quite adept at demoralizing enemy soldiers. They heard of how "Long Tra'ng" had pinned down and nearly wiped out an entire company 20 kilometers northwest of DaNang. They heard of how he crossed 1,500 yards of open terrain over a four-day period, completely unseen, to kill an NVA general at his guarded headquarters. They heard of how he waited at the flanks of search-and-destroy missions to halt any enemy soldiers who broke free from the fighting.

And if the types of missions he accomplished didn't strike fear into the soldiers, his accuracy did. Tales quickly spread of how the Marine sniper took out a French collaborator/interrogator deep behind enemy lines. And then there's the famous, even ultimate, shot Hathcock made in Duc Pho. He used a tripod-mounted .50-caliber machine gun that had been converted to single-shot operation and bore an Unertl scope. That was the weapon he used to snipe an enemy soldier at 2,500 yards — an astonishing 1.42 miles. Such shots sent fear through the ranks — especially the offi-

cer ranks — which White Feather was known to snipe first in order to sever enemy leadership.

The manner in which Hathcock pulled off this remarkable shot is legendary in its own right. It was the combination of his fieldcraft and a process he referred to as "going in the bubble" — a feat that fascinated Land.

"Carlos used to say, 'In the bubble, you're not hot, you're not cold, you're not hungry, you're not sick, you're not tired ... you're totally focused,'" Land recalled. "Shooting wasn't the thing that made him the outstanding sniper that he was. It was his ability to totally integrate himself into the environment. Every breeze, every leaf, every insect, every bird, every smell — everything meant something to him. Carlos was able to look at an area and know *exactly* what was going on in that area.

"It was his field craft that made him as good as he was — made him the best."

While he didn't recognize any as his definitive shot, Hathcock admitted that killing "Apache" was his most rewarding mission. "Apache" was the code name given to a *female* Viet Cong who led numerous ambushes against Marines, and routinely tortured captured Americans so their screams would echo in the valley for all their brothers-in-arms to hear.

Yet each successful sniping mission bore a new level of hatred for Hathcock by the NVA commanders. They wanted him dead, and they made their want well known. The NVA had put an \$8 bounty on every sniper, but the price for White Feather was a little more enticing. The person who brought Hathcock back, dead or alive, would receive \$30,000 — a reward equal to the pay a middle-class city worker would earn in three years.

The bounty affected Hathcock quite differently than his adversaries had hoped. Instead of striking fear in the fighter, Hathcock grasped the bounty as a challenge of sorts. While acknowledging he was by no means invincible, Hathcock was confident that he could outmaneuver and outshoot his foe. He respected the enemy, but openly warned that the harder they hunted him, the harder he would get.

The result was a magnificent war within a war in which countless snipers made their way to Hill 55 to rip White Feather from his flight. Entire sniper platoons filled the terrain that had taken a blood oath not to return without Hathcock's scalp and trademark feather. One sniper, however, stood out among his peers; one considered the best by many of his fellow countrymen.

The NVA sniper picked a position from which he routinely would shoot Marines atop Hill 55. It was a poor tactic for a sniper, but Hathcock recognized that the enemy was trying to draw him from the hill. Hathcock quickly obliged. A strategic game of cat and mouse ensued when Hathcock chose to pursue the enemy sniper. He took with him Lance Corporal John Roland Burke — a Marine Hathcock considered to be the best spotter in country, and one with whom he had formed an impenetrable bond as a friend and sniping partner.

The NVA and Marine snipers stalked and baited each other throughout the day as sniper/counter-sniper tactics reached new levels. In the final maneuver, the two snipers practically had traded hide positions. In doing so, Hathcock and Burke looked upon the area they had just left. There he saw it — a small flash of light, a reflection in the sun. If it wasn't the enemy sniper, a shot by Hathcock would give his position away. But without pondering possible scenarios, Hathcock put the rifle in his shoulder and the crosshairs on the reflection. A moment later, the enemy sniper's lifeless body fell back from

Continued on page 78

THE SIG P226R

*A Classic Pistol Now Available
In Two Calibers — With an
M1913 Accessory Rail*

TEXT & PHOTOS BY
GARY PAUL JOHNSTON

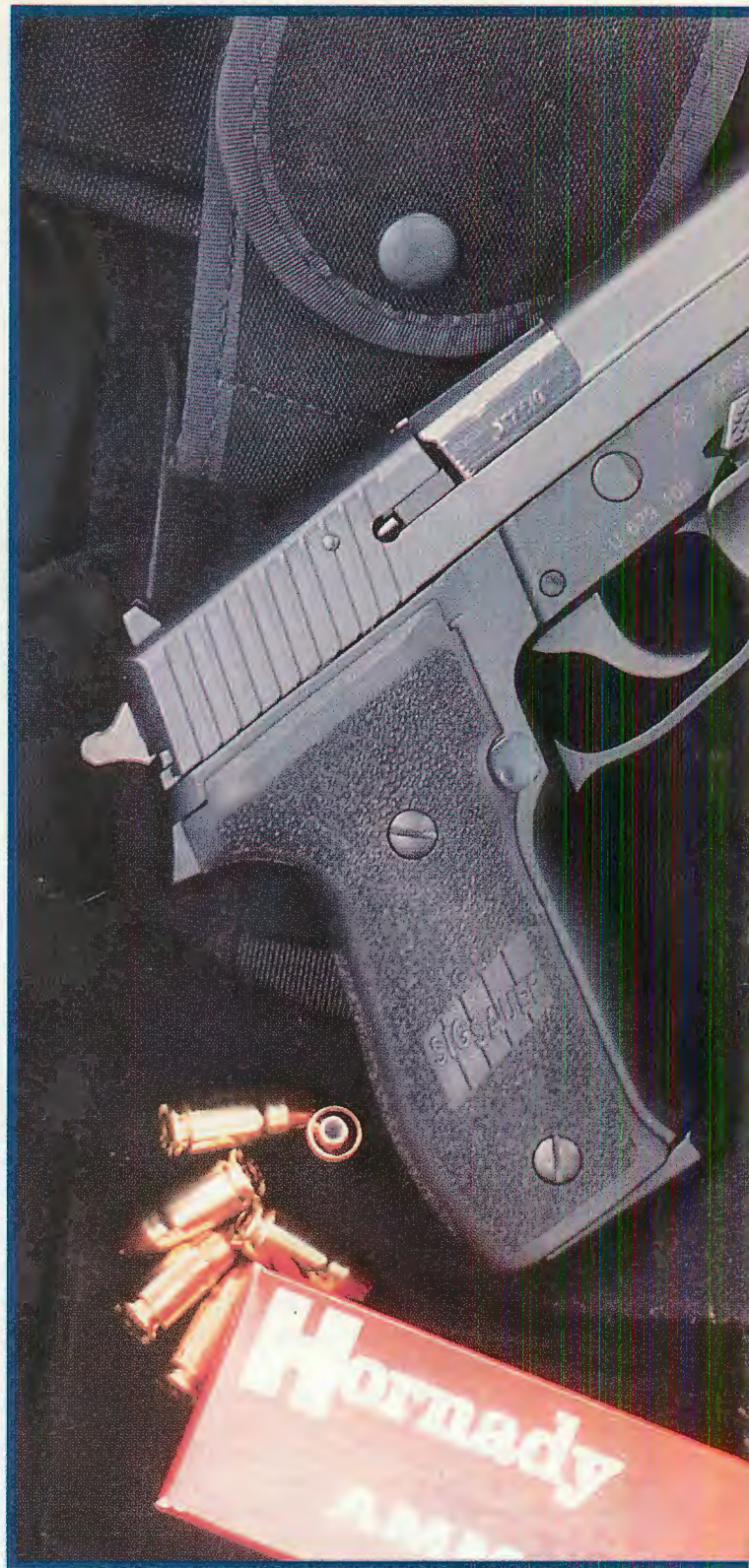
M

aking its debut two decades ago in 9x19mm NATO caliber, the SIG P226 was one of the members of the modern family of “transition” pistols that fires the first shot by double action, and successive shots by single action.

Referring to the action of the trigger, the term “double action” describes the system of first bringing the hammer to the cocked position and then releasing it to fire the pistol, hence double action. When the trigger’s only function is to release the hammer, the operation is single action. The SIG P226 successfully combined these two systems into a modern semi-automatic handgun for military, law-enforcement, and personal-protection use by private citizens.

Employing a host of state-of-the-art innovations, the SIG P226 comes with modern hi-viz sights (including optional tritium-powered night sights), more than 2” of wide slide-retraction grooves, a proven exterior extractor, and a high-capacity frame made from lightweight aircraft-quality alloy. With an optimal grip angle, the P226 also uses the improved Browning short-recoil system that SIG invented. While the original Browning short-recoil system, with its linked barrel, still works fine, SIG simplified it by omitting the link and using a camming system to lock and unlock the barrel from the slide. In addition, instead of multiple, circular locking lugs in the barrel and slide, SIG merely locked the front of the chamber against the front of the ejection port, greatly simplifying the system.

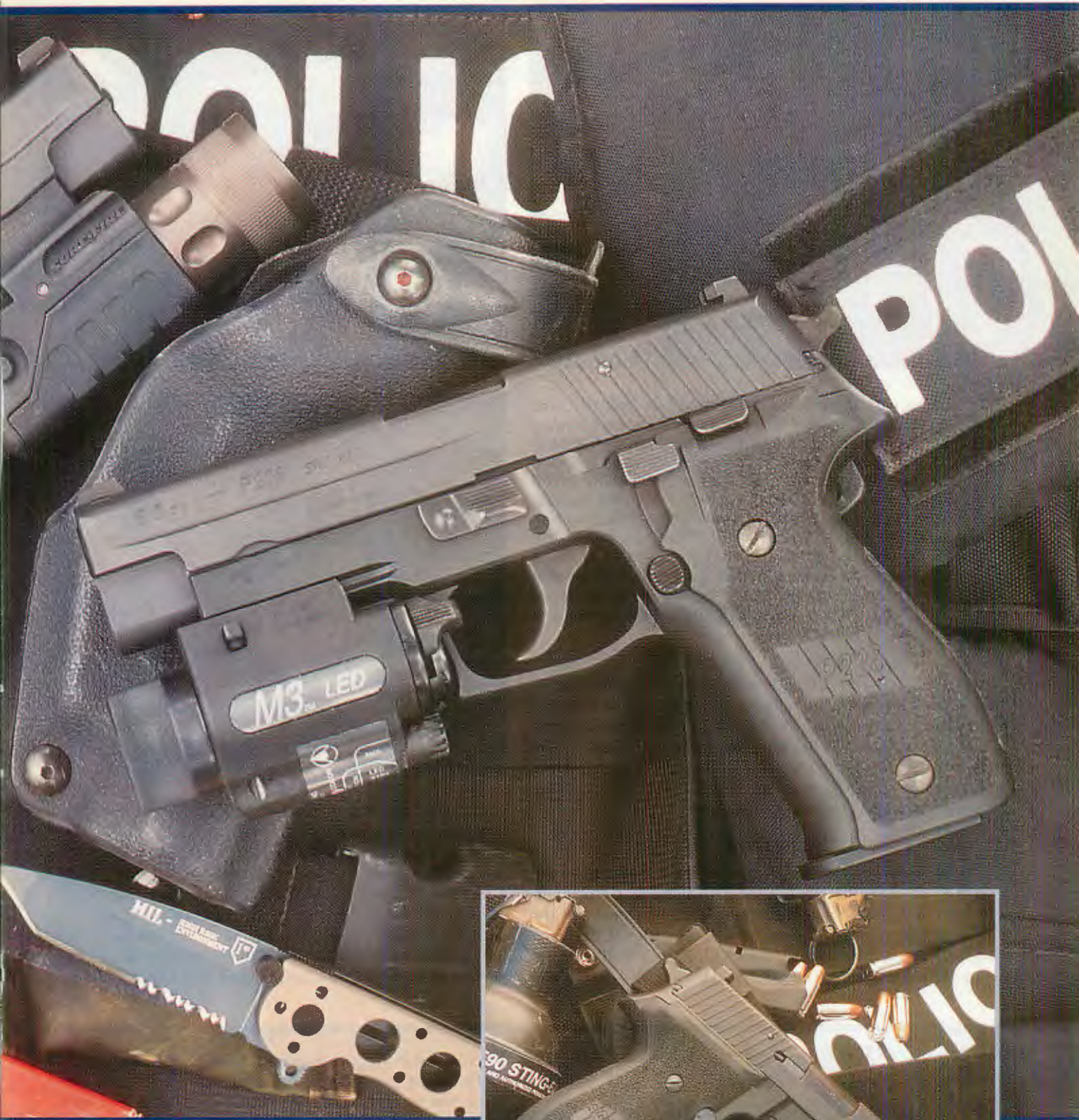
Using a matte blue-black carbon-steel slide, the P226 has a matching hard-anodized matte-black alloy frame. With hor-



izontal 30 lines per inch (LPI) grooves on the front strap, the P226 remains well gripped during recoil, and the pistol’s backstrap is covered by its wraparound grip that provides excellent contour for a comfortable hold in spite of the gun’s wide-body, hi-cap magazine.

The .357 SIG

More than a decade after the P226 made its debut in 9mm, the pistol was introduced in a brand-new caliber, the .357 SIG. Taking the .40 S&W case and necking it down to .357



With its integral M1913 ("Picatinny") rail, SIGArms' new P226R can mount any tactical weapon light. The 9mm and .357 SIG pistols here are equipped with Insight Technologies' new M3-LED Tactical Illuminator and SureFire's Nylatron. The P226R fits perfectly in Safariland's 6400 Series SIG P226 Tactical Holster. (inset) Here the 9mm P226R is seen with the Insight M3-LED Tactical Illuminator, and a light-mount tactical holster from Michael's of Oregon.



(above, left) If deployed without a light mounted, the P226R can effectively be used with a hand-held tactical light such as SureFire's new A-2 Aviator. Here the P226R is also equipped with a set of LaserGrips that have their own ambidextrous pressure switch. (above, right) The P226R can also use the 60-lumen SureFire Nytron Tactical Weapon Light seen mounted on the .357 SIG P225R's rail. (right) The SIG P226R can also be used with both a light and laser sight. Here the .357 SIG pistol (top) is equipped with a SureFire Nytron Tactical Weapon Light along with a set of LaserGrips, while the 9mm P226R has an Insight M-3 LED light and a LaserMax installed with its switch in the slide-stop lever.



caliber, SIG created a brand- new high-performance bottle-neck pistol cartridge. Combining the capacity of the .40-caliber case with the lighter, 124-grain .357-caliber bullet, produced a round that is flat-shooting and effective out to 100 yards. As such, the .357 SIG has been adopted by a number of law-enforcement agencies, and .357 SIG-caliber pistols are currently standard issue to Sky Marshals.

The P226R

After nearly two decades of success, a new variation of the 9mm P226 made its debut at the IWA Show in Germany in March 2002, and although the pistol retains essentially the same designation as its predecessor, the letter R has been added. This signifies that the new P226R has a "rail" integral with its frame. The new P226R also has a stainless-steel slide.

As welcomed as a stainless-steel P226 slide is, the integral accessory rail is most exciting. Forged as part of the dust-cover portion of the frame forward of the trigger guard, this rail is machined to the exact specifications of the M1913 ("Picatinny") rail now universally in service with the U.S. Military. Theoretically, this means that any accessory with such a mounting system will fit on the P226's new rail. In actuality, such mounts include tactical lights made to M1913 specs such as those from Insite Technologies, SureFire, and others.

New SIG Model 1911 Rail Gun

As we went to press with the SIG P226R (rail) pistols, we got the official word that the company's new 1911 variant was ready to be introduced. Not only that, but we received photos of both the blue and stainless steel versions of the gun.

Having known about the new SIG 1911 since March 2003, I agreed to refrain from sounding the word on the gun during its development, but the result certainly appears to have been worth the wait. Unlike any other clone of the Colt 1911 pistol, the new SIG stands out with familiar SIGnature characteristics that immediately identify it. These include the notably tapered slide and cocking

serrations that are SIG trademarks, but that's not all.

Following the current trend in autopistols, the SIG 1911, like its new P226R, P229R, and P220R, comes with an integral M1913-type frame rail. This rail accommodates tactical weapon lights such as those offered by SureFire and Insite Technologies. The new SIG 1911 also incorporates a number of new innovations including a slide-mounted disabling safety switch.

Offered in both matte blue and stainless steel, the new SIG 1911 comes with genuine Novak LoMount sights, beavertail-type grip safety, extended thumb safety, match-grade barrel, external extractor, and a host of other custom-grade features as standard. Look for my complete report on the new SIG 1911 soon.

—G.P.J.



TEST FIRING RESULTS: ACCURACY

9mm CARTRIDGE	Muzzle Vel	Small Group	Large Group	Average
Black Hills 124-gr. JHP +P	1,098 fps	2.88 in.	3.24 in.	3.02 in.
Cor-Bon 115-gr. JHP +P	1,305 fps	3.11 in.	3.31 in.	3.23 in.
Federal 135-gr. Pers. Def.	1,048 fps	2.97 in.	3.16 in.	3.09 in.

.357 SIG CARTRIDGE	Muzzle Vel	Small Group	Large Group	Average
Hornady 124-gr. JHP	1,348 fps	2.47 in.	2.98 in.	2.78 in.
COR-BON 125-gr. JHP	1,427 fps	2.71 in.	3.06 in.	2.89 in.

Five 5-Shot Hand-Held 25-Yard Groups Using ProChrono LE. Elve: 7000 ft., Temp: 92F, Humid: 44%

(above) The .357 SIG is a high-velocity cartridge, and produces a high-velocity slide speed. Here the camera catches the hammer falling and firing the round, and the slide just beginning its reward movement. As Gil Angelotti fires the new SIG P226R at 200 yards offhand, bullets impacted about 6 inches low at 100 yards and about 4 feet low at 200 yards.

Consisting of a main groove on each side of the frame, the P226's M1913 rail has three cross-grooves for locking the accessory of choice, depending on its length. The pistol will thus accommodate a variety of lights, and will also be compatible with a number of tactical holsters with these lights mounted. Although a number of holsters for these combinations are still in development, examples from Safariland, Michaels of Oregon, and others are already available.

A .357 SIG-Caliber P226R

In late July 2003, SIGARMS surprised the market with a new version of the P226R in .357 SIG caliber. Although the introduction of this new variant of SIG's first rail gun should have been expected, I received my sample without any notification that it even existed. For those who are enthusiasts of the P226 in this caliber, the new version with the integral frame rail will be most welcomed. As with the 9x19mm P226R, the frame rail takes up virtually no additional space, and the pistol fits in all standard P226 holsters I have tested to date.

Lights And Lasers

On the P226's M1913 rail we tested tactical pistol lights from both SureFire and Insight Technologies with excellent results. One of these lights was SureFire's Nyltron Tactical Pistol Light. Providing 60 lumens of blinding white light, it comes in one locking configuration that may require fitting to one's pistol. I adapted my sample to the P226R in about 15 minutes. By the time you read this, SureFire's new

SIG-P226R

SPECIFICATIONS

Caliber:	9x19mm and .357 SIG
Velocity:	1,200 fps to 1,270 fps.
Type of Fire:	Double- and single-action, semi-automatic.
Barrel Length:	4-1/2 in.
Overall Length:	7.7 in.
Weight:	31.7 oz.
Feed Device:	10-round magazine
Safety:	Decocking lever and firing-pin block
Sights:	Combat sights drift adjustable for windage, Integral M1913 rail for mounting a tactical light
Grips:	Black synthetic
Finish:	Matte blue slide; black anodized frame

The Newest From SIG

Following suit with SIG's introduction of its new P226R and P220R (rail) pistols, the company has also come out with its popular P229 .40 S&W caliber pistol incorporating a rail. Called the P229R-40, this new variation of the ever-popular SIG P229 also has an integral frame rail for a tactical handgun light. However, as exciting as these new pistols are, they aren't all that's new from SIG, by any means.

Revolutionary New Double-Action-Only

While waiting for a sample of the new P229R-40 pistol, I attended the 20th Annual National Tactical Officers Association (NTOA) World Tactical Competition in Denver, Colorado at the end of September, 2003. This grand event included a large vendor's show where SIGARMS had a major presence. In addition to many other SIGARMS' law-enforcement firearms, was a sample of the new P229R-40 pistol, and as interested as I was in it, SIGARMS' L.E. & Military Sales Representatives, Gary Walker and Brad Bradinini, directed me to another P229R pistol that was being shown for the very first time. In fact, it was one of only two such pistols in existence.

This was SIGARMS' brand-new P229-40-DAK, a new DAO version of the pistol. After checking the pistol's chamber, I dry fired it one time and looked up with my mouth obviously agape. Gary laughed and told me my reaction was exactly like everyone else who had handled the pistol.

This double-action system is like no other you have ever dreamed of on any SIGARMS pistol and, although it looks the same, it is far superior to SIG's conventional DAO system that has been available for years. In fact, it is like almost no other double-action you have seen on any pistol. Called the "K" (after the designer), this DAO (DAK) system incorporates a brand-new double-action mechanism. The trigger pull is totally smooth and extremely light. Starting out at only 6 pounds, it ends up at 5.5 pounds just before let-off, and you can stroke it quickly or slowly for precision shots at extended ranges.

With a double-strike capability, the hammer is preset for a shorter pull under normal slide operation. Consisting of just a rounded nub, the hammer cannot be cocked, nor does it need to be. Initially offered in the P229, the DAK system is now also available in the SIG P226. Although not originally intended, rumor now has it that the DAK system will also be offered in the SIG .45 ACP-caliber P220R pistol. Much like a finely tuned double-action revolver, the super-smooth DAK is all that most could ever need or want in a SIG pistol. —G.P.J.

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Tactical Pistol Light will be available. I recently saw a pre-production sample of this light, and it is outstanding.

The other tactical light we tested was Insight's new M3-LED Tactical Illuminator. Housing a bright-lumen white light under the pistol, this model combines an LED light source directly beneath the light, and gives the operator the option of light, or an LED to provide a navigational/utilitarian light source. The LED light is available in red, white, blue, green, UV and IR. The M3-LED mounts instantly on the SIG P226R's rail, and detaches just as fast.

Recently announced by Crimson Trace were its new LaserGrips for the SIG P226. A state-of-the-art laser sight, this one is housed inside a set of grips that is a close copy of the factory grips on the P226. Easy to install, the new LaserGrips fit to perfection and are just as slim as those the pistol comes with. Typical of LaserGrips, these house the laser diode at the top of the right grip panel, and position the laser at about 7 o'clock, roughly 1 inch from the center of the bore. Using two camera-type batteries, the grips are connected by an electrical wire, with the left panel housing the pressure switch. Ergonomically positioned below the magazine release, this switch is naturally operated by either hand for right or left handed operators. A master ON-OFF switch is located in the butt of the left grip.

Using a totally different approach, LaserMax houses its laser sight within a special precision replacement of the recoil spring guide. Positioning the

laser diode directly under the bore, this laser is activated by a special, fully machined replacement of the SIG's takedown lever. Using a cross-bolt ON/OFF switch within the new takedown lever, the switch can be pushed from either side to turn the laser on and off. Unique in laser sights, LaserMax uses a pulsating beam. Impossible to lose sight of, the pulsating dot is also highly intimidating to adversaries, and prolongs the life of the battery. In fact, LaserMax recommends that the battery be replaced only once a year. The LaserMax laser sight allows the grips of choice to be used on the pistol. We tested the new SIG P226 with both laser sights and found them to perform flawlessly.

Using Laser Sights

Often misunderstood, a laser sight can be a valuable tool for personal protection in all but bright sunlight. When instructing with lasers, I teach bringing the gun up to about point shoulder, or slightly below eye level. In doing so, the bright red dot should be seen, but if not, the pistol is simply brought all the way up to use its open sights. However, assuming that the laser is working, you will find that in addition to seeing it, you will be able to see much more of the surroundings from point shoulder, including an adversary's hands. With this shallow angle of triangulation you will also be able to make very fast target acquisition and accurate hits, even in low light that makes open sights difficult to see.



The new P226's M1913 rail has three positions to accommodate a variety of tactical lights. The rail is so subtle that the pistol will fit in most conventional P226 holsters.



(from left to right) The 9mm Parabellum, .40 S&W, and the cartridge they spawned — the .357 SIG that is hundreds of feet per second (fps) faster than either.

While I have strong personal preferences, tactical lights and laser sights aren't necessarily for everyone, and they're not inexpensive. However, even if you never decide to add a tactical light or laser sight to your new P226R, the pistol will prove a wise investment, as its M1913 accessory rail remains unobtrusive, and will fit into almost all holsters made for the P226. Be that as it may, I predict that any owner of this new pistol will soon begin searching for a tactical light system for it.

Shots Fired

In testing our sample 9mm SIG P226R, we fired a variety of factory-loaded 9mm ammunition through the pistol, with no malfunctions of any kind experienced. In the accuracy department using single action, the pistol produced 5-shot groups hovering around 3-3.5 inches at 25 yards, hand-held from a rest. Although fairly crisp, the pistol's single-action trigger pull ran about 6 pounds. While substantially heavier, the gun's double action pull had a smooth takeup, and 5-shot double-action groups were only slightly larger at the same distance.

Our sample .357 SIG-caliber P226R performed almost identically with its 9mm sibling, but with a somewhat louder muzzle report, and slightly more recoil. Like the 9mm version, no malfunctions were experienced, and accuracy was excellent with offhand hits on torso-sized targets fairly easy at 100 yards.

Often overlooked is the fact that 9mm bullets made a quantum leap in performance at the same time as those of the .45 ACP and the .40 S&W cartridge (the latter introduced at the same time). Although the 9mm's increase in performance was drastically overshadowed

by the introduction of the .40 S&W, it is much greater today than it was 20 years ago, and the .357 SIG round benefited by the same technology. Today the effectiveness of the .45 ACP, .40 S&W, .357 SIG, and 9mm are very close, even though the .357 SIG has greater range than the others.

Magazine Capacity

As with other high-capacity autopistols, the ridiculous magazine-ban limits law-abiding citizens (who never have backup) to purchasing magazines holding only 10 rounds, while law enforcement officers (who usually have backup) can have magazines holding up to 15 rounds of 9mm ammunition and 12 rounds of .357 SIG. Nevertheless, with proper training, such as is provided by the SIG Academy, you should be able to handle most situations to protect you and your family with 10 rounds of either caliber. Nevertheless, let's hope that the magazine ban is allowed to sunset.

If you want a lightweight, high-capacity 9mm or .357 SIG caliber auto-pistol that is on the cutting edge of 21st Century technology, check out the new SIG P226R with its integral M1913-style rail: If you like the P226, you'll love the new P226R. For more information, contact SIGARMS, Dept. SOF, Corporate Park, Exeter, NH 03833; phone: 603-772-2303; fax: 603-772-9082. ✖

CONTACT SHEET

Crimson Trace Lasers, Dept. SOF
8089 Southwest Cirrus Dr.
Beaverton, OR 97008
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3 Technology Dr.
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THE RIGID FRAME M16



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The A.R.M.S. S.I.R System on a CQB version of the M4 Carbine with Aimpoint Comp M Red Dot Sight and SureFire M900A Millennium Tactical Light mounted. (inset) A 5.56mm link falls free from the rifle as Jay Jackson touches-off a round of 5.56mm ammunition from the test rifle.

TEXT & PHOTOS BY
GARY PAUL JOHNSTON

When small-arms designer L. James Sullivan, of the original ArmaLite Corporation, designed the AR-15 for Eugene Stoner, the rifle, like its predecessor, Stoner's AR-10, had a steel barrel extension bolted into a short section of the aluminum receiver. The only thing that hung from the lightweight barrel was a set of lightweight handguards, and an occasional bayonet. It was a happy solution ... for a while.

After going through wrinkles and growing pains, the M16, as it was soon type-classified by the military, began to live a life of its own. However, this existence was one that had never been conceived by Stoner or Sullivan, and it surely

must have raised the eyebrows of both men. Whether or not either of them expressed concern is unknown, but this uncharted territory consisted of shortening barrels and recoil springs, moving the gas block, and equipping the gun with a semi-retractable buttstock.

The most questionable modification to the M16 was the moving of the gas-block closer to the receiver from its original, carefully worked out location. Moving the gas-block closer to the chamber on any rifle changes the pressure curve, almost always for the worse, because it subjects the mechanism to significantly more heat if not gas pressure, neither of which are friendly to the rifle. With the source points of heat being just ahead of the chamber and at the gas port, bringing these two closer together can only create new problems in performance. To balance the operation, the size of the gas port usually has to be adjusted, the recoil spring and buffer go back to the drawing board, and the problem of chamber-sticking often rears its ugly head.

When fired, the cartridge case expands tightly against the chamber, and does not contract, or loosen sufficiently to be extracted until the pressure drops. Usually, this occurs as the bullet leaves the barrel. Because it feeds gas to operate the mechanism, the position of the gas port in relation to the pressure curve within the barrel is of great importance in the timing of the opening of the bolt and the extraction process.

When the relocation of the gas block causes more pressure to act upon the shorter operation, it results in the breech opening sooner than normal. The result is often that the still-swollen case refuses to budge, causing the extractor of the moving bolt to slip over the rim, leaving the case in the chamber. The fact that the case returns to a smaller size a millisecond later, and would literally fall out of the open chamber from gravity, does not help the problem. Making things worse is that the bolt instantly picks up another round on its return forward and tries to push it into the still-blocked chamber.

A solution to the sticking problem may lie in lubricated ammunition, a plated chamber to increase lubricity, or a fluted chamber to float the case on gas, in order to prevent sticking. In the case of the M16, a stronger extractor spring, or another part to assist it seems to solve the sticking/extrac-



Johnston tested a special version of the Rigid Frame System with a belt-feed mechanism.

tion problem on the short versions of the M16, but it does nothing for the problem of heat.

If the shortening of the M16 didn't disturb Sullivan and Stoner, increasing the weight of the barrel, or hanging things from it surely must have worried them. More weight on the barrel translates to more leverage pulling down on that short section of the aluminum receiver, and compounding this is that aluminum melts at about half the temperature

required to melt steel. When an M16 barrel is heated to, say 600 or 700 degrees, much of this heat travels into the front of the aluminum receiver ring, and when excessive and repetitive heat combines with excessive weight, the barrel can and has drooped in the softened-and-stretched receiver ring. This creates a whole new set of problems, including failure of the bolt to lock, and bolt breakage. A 40mm grenade launcher hung from the barrel only makes matters worse.

In addition to extensive firing and the position of the gas block, things that can compound the problems of heat buildup in the M16 are the heat shields inside of the handguards that limit heat dissipation, and any metal that contacts the barrel, especially in the area of the gas block. Tests done in measuring heat along the barrel after shooting it with, and without, various types of handguards have shown a dramatic difference in temperatures. In such tests, after firing only six 30-round magazines on full automatic, M4 Carbine barrels have burst between the gas block and the chamber.

The Rigid Frame System

Recognizing the problems of heat and barrel weight as far back as the mid-1980s, Mr. Richard Swan, of A.R.M.S., Inc., set out to deal with them. While the source of heat could not be eliminated, its build-up and the problem of excess barrel weight were another matter. Swan's solution was what he called his Rigid Frame (RF) System. Eliminating the carrying handle from the upper receiver, Swan mounted a 7075/T6 aluminum alloy sleeve, or rail onto the receiver that extended forward to a sightless gas block where a collar surrounded, but did not touch the block. To the bottom of the collar was rigidly attached a lower rail extension.

At the front of the receiver, the sleeve extended down



Here the RF System's gull-wing-style handguards are seen in the open position.



The Colt M16 belt-feed is seen here with its major components removed. Note the operating-cam groove in the bolt carrier.

either side to meet and attach to the bottom rail extension. Integral with this portion were two AA battery compartments. Built into the upper front and rear of the RF System on either side was a hinge system on which was mounted two modified short, round handguards, one on each side to form the forend. Held by spring-loaded détentes on the bottom, these handguards could be swung out, and up, in "gull-wing" fashion to access the barrel and gas tube for cleaning.

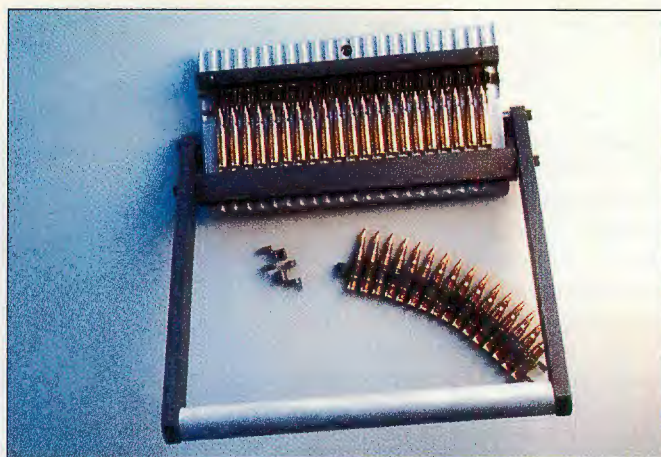
Housed in the rear of the RF System was a peep aperture rear sight and at the front a standard M16 front sight with numerous mounting capabilities along the top and bottom rails. In the front was a socket provision for a visible and/or I.R. laser designator that was powered by the two AA batteries. This integral laser also allowed for automatic boresighting for optics and an advanced realistic M.I.L.E.S. training provision. A folding vertical foregrip was offered on several models with a triggering button for the laser.

In addition to being totally rigid, the RF System left the barrel free-floating, and also provided improved ventilation. Additionally, it was designed to mount unlimited accessories that were independent of the barrel, including the M203 40mm grenade launcher via A.R.M.S. ThrowLever mounts. This solved both of the above problems including damage to heat-sensitive electronics.

Although the RF System was made in several styles for various applications and was advertised, it was not mass-produced, as Dick Swan soon turned his attention to a new design concept that resulted in the Selective Integrated Rail (S.I.R.) System. Encompassing a number of features of the RF System, the S.I.R. System is now being manufactured by A.R.M.S. for a number of M16 variations in addition to the ArmaLite AR-10 Carbine. A.R.M.S. has also just introduced its new SlimLine S.I.R. System that is a full 1/4-inch narrower than the standard version. Like the original RF System, the S.I.R. System leaves the barrel free-floating, but it provides even better ventilation and superior mounting solutions. Look for news of more exciting S.I.R. developments to follow soon.

Hands On

Recently I was privileged to examine and test an original A.R.M.S. Rigid Frame System, only the second one I had ever seen. In addition, this particular RFS was one that had been demonstrated to the U.S. Military with a belt feed developed by Colt, a project Dick Swan had worked on as an engineer at Colt with the late Rob Roy during the 1970s. Although this belt feed was a clever design, it required a modified Stoner



Kent Lomont's new 5.56mm linking machine automatically links 20 rounds of 5.56mm ammunition in seconds.



The Colt M16 belt-feed can be quickly converted to use a standard M16 magazine as seen here.

link and never proved reliable enough for the military, so was not mass-produced.

We briefly tested the RF System with the belt feed along with a new 5.56mm linking machine available from Kent Lomont. Capable of linking at least 20 rounds at a time, this linker proved to be an excellent tool. Since the belt-feed system had been assembled on a pre-ban semi-automatic Colt AR-15, we were not able to test it on full-automatic, but found it to be an interesting device that is capable of being quickly converted to use either a belt, or a magazine.

Even more interesting was the RF System with all of its innovations including its hinged side-mounted handguards. Even though the placement of these results in a wider than normal forend, they are arranged in a very interesting fashion.

Still Viable

Although it was my impression that the RF System has been relegated to something out of the past, Dick Swan assures me that it is not, and that, among other things, it was intended to be a platform for a quick-change barrel system for the M16. While I believe the S.I.R. System constitutes the optimal mounting platform for the AR-15/M16 and other weapons, an updated RF System could provide additional options down the road. In the meantime, for information on the new SlimLine S.I.R. System, contact A.R.M.S. Inc., Dept. SOF, 230 West Center St., West Bridgewater, MA 02379; phone: 508-584-7816; www.arms.com. For information on the new 5.56mm linker, contact Lomont Precision Bullets, Dept. SOF, 278 Sandy Creek Rd., Salmon, ID 83467; phone: 208-756-6819. ✕

inch barrel G3 issued with a retractable stock, and mounting an EOTech sight. The same British group was carrying several H&K model 53s. The model 53 is virtually the same size as a MP-5 but in 5.56mm. The M53s also had retractable stocks, short barrels, and EOTech sights. These weapons are sized just right for PSD work. Two H&K G36s were spotted being carried by an unidentifiable PSD. The G36s are futuristic looking, have side-folding stocks and are made largely of polymer. They are in 5.56mm caliber. Baghdad is definitely an environment for 5.56mm weapons. I would not have felt very well-armed with a 9mm subgun.

Interestingly enough, a German PSD team was carrying the superb Sig 552 carbine. This weapon was sporting a 14-inch barrel, side-folding stock, integral flip-up night sights, translucent polymer magazines, and an ACOG sight. The Germans gave these weapons high marks. They were also carrying Glock pistols.

The Australian military was armed with the Steyr AUG. The AUG is a bull-pup design similar to the British L85. It also has an optical sight and is standard in 5.56mm. I observed a four-man Australian foot patrol in a neighborhood in southern Baghdad. These troops were armed with AUGs and were impressive in their manner and demeanor.

Subguns

There were a lot of subguns in Baghdad. I saw two Beretta M12 9mm subguns being carried by Iraqis. A Spanish PSD team was carrying FN P-90 subguns. These weapons are very small and compact and have 50-round magazines. The caliber of these weapons are 5.7X28mm. Ammunition resupply could be a problem for this "personal defense weapon."

Heckler & Koch MP5s were the predominant subgun in Iraq. Many were being carried by U.S. Army troops. Most were MP5A3s with retractable stocks. Quite a few MP5K models were seen. The K model has a shorter barrel and side-folding stock, which certainly makes it handy in tight spaces. All MP5s observed were in 9mm caliber. Many MP5s were equipped with optics, primarily with the EOTech sight. The MP5 is a fantastic weapon and I really like the compactness and reliability.

Two British Sterling subguns were observed at the palace. A U.S. Army major was carrying a Sterling. He stated he really liked the weapon and it was very reliable but he only possessed one magazine. One Mini Uzi was observed being carried by a PSD at a memorial service.

Shotguns

Although some may wonder if this is a proper environment for scatterguns, the military still believes in them. Although not carried in great numbers, several were seen in the palace. The MPs were carrying the Mossberg model 590. These weapons were equipped with a ventilated handguard and nine-round magazine-tube extension. The 590 is a pump-action and has a 20-inch barrel. A U.S. Marine from the FAST Company was standing guard with a Benelli M1014. This is the relatively new semi-automatic shotgun being issued to the Marine Corps. He spoke very highly of this shotgun. The M1014 has a seven-round magazine capacity. With one round on the carrier and one round in the chamber this weapon provides a great deal of firepower. The M1014 has a retractable butt stock, rifle sights, and an accessory mounting rail on top of the receiver. I have personally had a great deal of experi-

ence with the Benelli M1 Super 90 shotguns and I have a very high opinion of these weapons.

Sniper Rifles

The only sniper rifles I observed were the ones carried by my PSD as described earlier. Although this would not have been my choice of weapons, it was sufficient. I would much prefer a semiautomatic in .308 caliber for this task. I'm sure that the military has sniper rifles in Baghdad although I never saw one anywhere in the country.

Machine Guns

Browning M2 .50 heavy machine guns were quite common. It was reassuring to see these weapons in close proximity to our PSD. Having served ably since the 1930s virtually any former GI will fondly remember this capable, heavy machine gun.

Many FN (Fabrique Nationale) 240B 7.62mm machine guns were seen in the hands of U.S. Army troops. The Ghurkas had a number of these weapons in guard towers, at checkpoints, and on rooftops. This weapon is manufactured in my home state of South Carolina and I have had the pleasure of visiting the plant before.

The M60 general-purpose machine gun is still around, as well. This 7.62mm belt-fed machine gun was in every helicopter I observed that was equipped with door-gunners. The M60 has been manufactured in various iterations since 1958, and those observed were a lot like the helicopters that flew them — old and tired-looking.

The most widely used belt-fed machine gun was the M249 SAW (squad automatic weapon). In 5.56mm, it was usually seen with a 100-round belt carrier. The M249 is another FN product and is unique in the fact that it will also accept M16 magazines if circumstances dictate. The 82nd Airborne troops were carrying the Para model with shorter barrel and retractable butt stock. Some PSD teams also were carrying M249 SAWs. The M249 was seen all over country. The troops seem to love them.

RPK machine guns were present in watchtowers manned by Iraqi PSDs. The RPK is basically an AK-47 with a bipod and a longer, heavier barrel. Most of the time these weapons were seen with 75-round drum magazines, but occasionally were observed 40-round AK magazines. The Iraqi PSDs were present all over Baghdad and it could be a bit unnerving to have armed personnel in close proximity so much of the time, when you never really knew who was friend or foe. You just knew they were heavily armed and usually carrying their weapon with the safety off.

Conclusion

I would like to express special thanks to all of the U.S. forces serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom. My prayers are with each of you. I particularly admire the Military Police in Baghdad, manning checkpoints and escorting motorcades.

There will be a strong military presence in Iraq for many years to come, and there will continue to be many employment opportunities in Baghdad for PSD work. It is an exciting although dangerous place to be, and having the proper job skills and background are essential. If you go, always watch your backside, and remember, "friendly fire isn't."

The author is a retired law-enforcement officer with 28 years' service. He has been employed as municipal police officer, U.S. Border Patrol Agent, U.S. Customs Patrol Officer, and State Trooper. ✕

go and I saw two 152mm canons, aiming right at me. I laid the gun on the first canon and gave Soprano the fire command "Two guns, left 100 meters, HE, fire!" Five, than 10 rounds hit the two canons. The ammo on one went up in a huge fireball, killing the gun crew. The other gun crew was in an ammo truck trying to drive away from us. Soprano went to coax and let out a 100-round burst into the cab. The passenger jumped out of the cab, and when he hit the ground, he fell under the back wheels of the truck and got stuck between the wheels and the bed of the truck; bringing it to a stop on the right side of the road.

The other two died inside the truck. Broadhead was behind me and fired up the truck with his .50-caliber machine gun, setting the truck on fire and igniting all the ammo on the back. This was bad, because the whole troop was moving behind us like ducks in a row. I came to a cross road, with bunkers on both sides of the road. I had to stop to engage them. Unfortunately, this meant that the Commander's tank was right next to the burning truck that was blowing up and blasting hot pieces of metal at him. I took out as many of the soldiers as I could and started moving again. It was almost night and getting dark when I got to my checkpoint.

Once there, I saw Iraqi Infantry trying to dig in. Two of the soldiers got into a pickup truck and tried to drive away. Three rounds of 25mm HE later, the truck was on fire with them inside.

Charging The Carnivore's Jaws

More cars and trucks started coming down the road at us. I had the Carnivore on the right side of the road and Broadhead had the Camel Toe, his M1, on the right side. That is where we waited for the dumb bastards that started moving at us. We took turns killing them. As first and second platoons set up in our position, I heard Staff Sgt. John Williams call in a contact report: He had nine T-72s digging in, and he had more than 100 dismounts moving in front of him. The commander called it higher and the Air Force came in to hit

them with an airstrike. Williams and his crew moved to a better firing position. The Air Force came in fast and low, dropping two 500-pounders within 100 meters of Williams' Bradley. Williams watched as the bombs headed straight at him, then went over his head and into the palm grove, just to his front. The commander got on the radio net and called off the air strike. Captain McCoy then called Williams and told him to destroy the vehicles. Staff Sgt. Crawford, from Atlanta, Georgia, was a tank commander in fourth platoon and was Williams' wing man. Together they would attack the Iraqi soldiers and vehicles in their sector.

Sergeant Thomas Hudgins was the gunner for the Casanova. A good-old-boy from Georgia, he always had the crew laughing about some thing or another. The driver was Specialist John Pecore, a tall kid from Texas who did his job very well. Specialist Clint Leon was the dismount. He had grown up in Arizona and had as much heart as a lion. Any time the vehicle stopped, Leon would jump out and check out the enemy vehicles that Williams had engaged. Sergeant Christopher Sheridan, Crawford's gunner, was one of the squadron's best tank-gunners.

With night closing in on them, Sergeant Williams opened fire on the closest tank with his TOW missile. It was a good hit, but the tank did not blow up right away. It was burning slow, and after about five minutes it blew. The next tank, he shot with 25 mike-mike from the main gun.

Three rounds were all it took and the tank lost its turret in one massive fireball. Leon was standing in the back hatch when he saw 20 Iraqi troop transport trucks driving at high speed without their lights. Leon hit Williams on the back of his helmet and pointed in the direction of the Iraqi trucks. Williams gave Hudgins his fire command "Trucks right, 400, HE, fire!"

Hudgins fired the 25mm main gun just like he had so many times at Fort Stewart, where he was the squadron's Bradley Top Gun. Hudgins fired one round then he adjusted his aim and fired again. This time he hit the cab of the first truck with three rounds and the bed of the truck with four rounds. The first truck was on fire, and the second truck ran into the back of the first one, spilling its cargo of soldiers on the ground. The ones that didn't die from the impact, died from Sgt. Sheridan's M240 coax machine gun from the M1's turret. Williams shifted Hudgins to the last truck in the con-



Staff Sgt. Sowby outfits a new crewmember. Typical of GIs in all wars, there was always time between the fighting to play with the kids.



Williams gives the locals food and sugar liberated from Saddam's warehouse.

voy and gave another fire command, "Last truck, HE, 800, fire!" Hudgins fired one, than three, four, rounds into the last truck. The last truck was a fuel truck and when the 25 mm HE rounds hit the truck, it broke open like a tin can and dumped fuel all over the road and fields.

Sergeant Crawford and his gunner were now firing-up the rest of the trucks with their machine guns. The burning fuel truck was blocking the Iraqi soldier's escape, and as it was getting dark, the burning fuel silhouetted the soldiers trying to run for cover. Williams moved to the next truck and put ten rounds in it. Williams had moved to within 100 meters of the first truck when he saw one of the tanks he thought was empty back up and turn at him. He grabbed the BC's power handle for the gun and fired a long burst of 25mm DU (Depleted Uranium) into the front of the T-72. The 25 mm rounds went through the T-72 and hit a truck behind the tank and destroyed it too. The Iraqi soldiers were bewildered.

Wrong Uniform?

There was only a handful left alive and they took off all their clothes and were running away naked. Williams let them run. He had bigger things to worry about — like tanks. T-72s, at least seven more, were out there and he didn't know if they had anyone in them. For the next two hours Williams worked his way around in the middle of his sector looking for any Iraqi soldiers that still wanted to fight. Crawford was in an over watch of Williams and the Casanova, while the 25mm main gun was chewing up some of the best armor equipment that mother Russia had to offer. Who would have ever thought that an armored recon vehicle like the Bradley would go up against one of the best main battle tanks that Russia had made, and pop the turret off with our little 25mm

main gun? Does size matter?

Back down the road, the rest of Crazy Horse Troop was fighting groups of three and four soldiers at a time. Sergeant First Class Bennett had his mortar platoon set up by the CO's tank in what would be named the Crazy Horse Café. Martin Crawford's gunner spotted a car that was moving slow and dropping off soldiers in the ditch to our front. Sergeant Michael Malecha fired the 25mm into the car's front end, killing the driver and his passenger. Malecha then took out the three guys in the ditch.

Sergeant First Class Christner spotted an Iraqi OP on a hilltop to our front, so he called in a fire mission from Bennett's mortars. Sergeant Justin Litko's mortar track would get the mission. His gunner, Specialist Ian Flanigan, a tough kid from New York, would get the first round on the target — then after 15 rounds the OP was no more.

I moved up to the last truck that Broadhead and I had destroyed, to look for documents. Just as we got there, a guy inside pulled out an AK. Broadhead shot the guy with his own AK. We then moved back to our checkpoint. As soon as we got there, we started taking sniper fire. With all the trees and houses in the area, it was going to be hard to find this guy. As I was trying to get my eye on him, he shot out my matching unit for my radio. That's right: I lost another one, and now I was *really* pissed-off! I put Soprano to looking for this guy in the night, while I tried to fix my radios again. I was on the command net when I heard a contact report of tanks moving on Apache troop: It looked like they were in for a big tank battle. Iraqi armor was finally going to stand and fight.

Next month, the singular tank-on-tank battle for Baghdad, and an enraged bull comes to the aid of the Carnivore! ✘


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Busting A Taliban Bomb-Making Cell

Continued from page 47

do what they wanted to do—wear the body armor and helmets or not. No one was coming out and checking on us, anyway. Hell, if they did and got all pissed, the general refrain was, “What are they going to do, send us home?”

Not a minute to waste now that we had our location, we mounted our Toyota trucks. And moved out. Speeding now, in Ranger file, accelerators floored, heading right for the compound. The lead truck turned ... into the compound's entrance, where the gates were open, wide open. The second followed. Whoa, I thought, aren't those first two MRF trucks supposed to be our security? Too late, everyone was following ... into the compound.

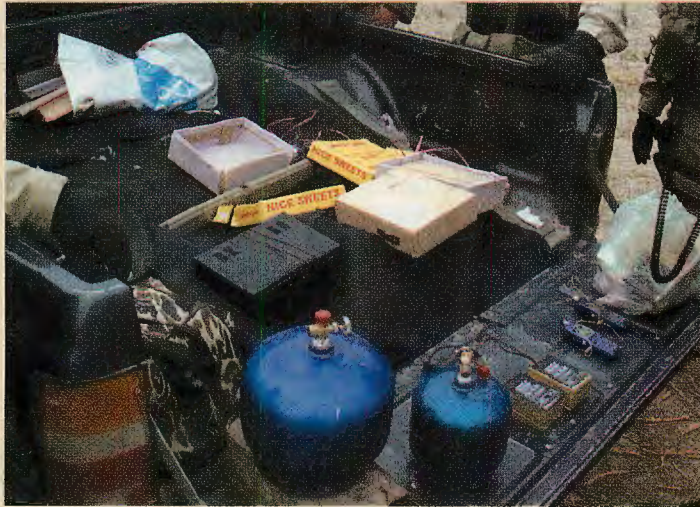
The place was huge and open inside here, and no one was out, no one knew we were coming, or there was no one here. A piece of cake, a walk in the park. There were some buildings in the middle and some along the walls. Fruit trees and palms. And still no one was out, as the trucks followed the lead down the dirt drive, turning now, and from behind came TPT's loudspeakers blasting in Pashtu, “Attention, attention!”

The MRF were jumping off and climbing out of their pickups to burst out in all directions at random, as their general assignment was to always secure a perimeter. Ahead, Deke and Chuck were out of their truck, Laval, Terry and Captain Jim theirs, and “Women and children gather in the center of the compound,” was blasting from TPT's loudspeakers somewhere behind. Then there was shouting from the building just ahead, and our MRF started yelling—everything in Pashtu—then a man was coming out

of the building, AK swinging in his hands, with shouts following him from the building, meaning there were men in there who most likely were, like this guy, armed.

Some of our MRF were caught in the open, near the guy, while we ducked behind the trucks, weapons aimed on the man, yelling to our terps to tell the man to drop the AK, while he kept sidestepping, backing away, swinging his AK toward us then toward the two MRF who were approaching him, yelling at him.

It was a Mexican standoff in the truest sense, except that we had at least a dozen weapons aimed on the guy and could have blown him away. And, by all accounts, should have. Except, we still didn't know how many there were in both the building behind us now and in the rooms along the wall to where the guy was backing away.



The homemade bombs and detonation devices. The propane tanks contained plastic explosives, nails and screws. The yellow “sweet” boxes disguise bombs made of plastic explosive in wooden boxes. With the bombs were cell phones, power sources and a phone answering machine switchboard—all for use to remote detonate the bombs.

Yelling and shouting is one thing, a shot is something else. It can initiate a firefight. One shot, two, a dozen, and all hell was probably going to break loose from those buildings. And guys would go down, plain and simple. We'd win, to be sure, but losing a guy or two and at least a few of our MRF wouldn't be a good win.

We shouted to our terps to tell our MRF, “Don't fire! Tell him to put his weapon down! Don't fire!” And the guy waltzed to the rooms where other men now appeared, and they were weaponless, so firing at the guy would now surely take-down unarmed men too. The guy disappeared.

More shouts came now from behind, from the same building, as another man was coming out, he too with an AK, figuring, most likely, he'd make the same getaway. But one of our MRF squad leaders, Sefuidin, was right there, and he'd had enough of it. He grabbed the guy's AK right by the muzzle—and why the guy didn't shoot him in the belly is anyone's guess. Then Sefuidin brought his own AK down on the guy's skull and yanked the AK from him then shoved him aside where our weapon's sergeant, Dean, clamped him to the ground, secure, with his knees to his back.

Our terps relayed to us that the men remaining in the

(below, from left) Sergeant 1st Class Randy maintains control of the suspect while the ODA and MRF secure the compound. Laval and Deke neutralize the threat of a suspect during their securing of the compound before the search for the homemade bombs could begin. Dean leads suspects to a secure holding area in the compound.



building were yelling that they were innocent and for us not to shoot. "Throw your weapons out," they were ordered. AKs clattered to the concrete outside the door. So far, so good. Then again, the best laid plans ... or, in our case, the most hastily laid plans. Which had called for the lead MRF truck to take far outside security and the second to take near outside security. Both had entered the compound.

Things had happened so quickly, and it didn't immediately register that we had no outside security. It did with the team's second medic and designated sniper, John, who, riding on the truck just ahead of TPT which was last, hopped out just inside the entrance. TPT stopped, as they were supposed to, right there in the street and started the broadcast recording, "Attention! Attention!"

John yelled to TPT, "Security," and the four took up positions around TPT's Surf and the Norwegians' Land Cruiser, as the two filmmakers hurried on foot inside the compound. John would recall later, "I wanted to be inside where the action would be, but I saw the murf didn't go to their security positions outside, and someone had to."

John and the three TPT had no idea what was going on inside the com-

pound, so they didn't know whether the guy bursting from the corner of the compound a hundred feet from them was friend or foe. As Rob tells it, "He had an AK, but he didn't see us and he wasn't aiming it at us." Was he a threat, wasn't he? Shoot or not? We hadn't shot while the guy was inside, and John and TPT now watched as he dashed out of sight down a side alley.

Protecting Our Ass End

They didn't know it at the time, and we inside didn't either, but the four of them out there were about five minutes away from doing what rear security's designed to do: protect our vulnerable ass end.

Meanwhile, inside it was then a matter of mopping up, rounding up the scattering of men throughout the compound and corralling them. Weapons were confiscated. The compound was searched. The homemade bombs uncovered.

Two of the bombs were what had been described by the source — propane tanks. And they weighed twice what a normal full one would. Later, when the bombs were dissected by TF-180's Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) in Bagram, they were shown to

contain plastic explosive and a mixture of nails and screws. Also uncovered were two homemade plastic explosives built in wooden cases disguised as boxes of candy. With the bombs were cell phones and an answering machine switchboard, all rigged as initiation devices, or detonators.

Naturally, all the detained men denied any knowledge of the bombs. "Bombs, what bombs?" In our experience we'd learned that you could hit a compound in the middle of absolutely nowhere and uncover, say, a thousand 107mm rockets and maybe another thousand 82mm mortar rounds, and not one of the, say, dozen guys you just busted living right there in the compound would have any idea where the ammunition had come from, how long it had been there, who had brought it, and, in fact, by the word of Allah, they didn't even know it was there until we'd stormed in the place. "Rockets? What rockets?"

This day, like all other raids, it would take some serious questioning to find out the truth. But there was no time for that right now, as we learned that an armed force had arrived outside.

What had happened was, word of our takedown of the compound had gone out the moment we had turned

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into the entrance. This compound belonged to a small-time commander, and he and two pickup trucks of his "soldiers" rushed to the scene. Had it not been for John and the TPT who, with their guns locked and cocked, stopped the trucks cold when they turned down the street, these soldiers would have come in from behind and surprised us, and who knows who would have shot first — them, our MRF, or us?

For all he knew, the commander would think that his compound was being raided by a rival commander. Which illustrates one of the problems in Afghanistan. In Nangarhar Province alone one could not count the number of rival mini-armies, sometimes no bigger than gangs, under a variety of commanders.

John and TPT held the commander and his troops off until a quick truce could be established and the commander could be invited inside. He claimed to be one of the sub-sub-sub-commanders under our ally, General Ali, which we would later confirm to be true, though Ali would profess to having had no knowledge of the bomb-making activities of the subordinate's men.

It was the same that morning with the commander. "Bombs," he was shocked to learn, "you found homemade bombs here?" Dismay, surprise or acting, it's Afghanistan; it's not even worth arguing about. Take your prisoners and leave, and sort it all out later. There was nothing more we could get or gain by lingering. Quantity and tonnage-wise, we hadn't gotten much from the raid—a handful of weapons and just the four bombs and their remote detonators. Nothing like the thousands of cases of Dashika machine-gun ammo and thousands of mortar and rocket rounds we had already taken and would take in the future in other raids. But, as our questioning of the suspects would later confirm, the improvised

bombs had been intended for use against us.

Further, we would learn from the identity of the Taliban leaders who controlled this bomb cell. Not that that mattered; we were quite familiar with the names. Guys already on our own most-wanted list. Guys who Laval's sources were reporting were sitting comfortable and safe ... right across the border ... off-limits to us ... in Pakistan.

In the grand Operation Enduring Freedom strategic scheme of things, this raid, though it made the AP wire, didn't even register. For us, though, it was a good lesson — sort of an unexpected look in the mirror. Each of us knew that we should have shot the man wielding the AK, yet we were glad we did not. He was a threat, he was unpredictable, and by the established rules of engagement, we had a perfect right to shoot him. Our collective gut instinct in those few split-seconds had been that shooting him would initiate a firefight, which would have left us and our MRF more vulnerable, as we were out in the open, with an unknown quantity of enemy in the rooms that surrounded us. That we did not shoot, not one of us, was a case of fire discipline to the extreme. That was the lesson learned — our image in the mirror — and it was a small badge of pride.

Sure, one man escaped. But we got the bombs. Before they could get us.

Today from Iraq we are seeing almost daily the horror that comes from homemade bombs. Had Laval's source network not come through at the last minute and had we not recovered the bombs before they could be employed against us, that horror very well would have been ours ... and not all of ODA 2025 would not have made it home in one piece.

Paul Avallone, since 1978, has served with the 7th, 12th and 20th Special Forces Group (s) Airborne. ✕



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Continued from page 28

claimed that the entire affair was an Israeli "provocation" designed to diminish his stature in the eyes of the world. But when the cargo of the *Karine-A* was off-loaded at the Port of Eilat, its widely-televised contents caused even Arafat to blush:

Sixty-two 122mm Katyusha rockets with four launching tubes; 283 107mm Katyusha rockets with six launching tubes; 700 120mm mortar rounds with 10 launching tubes; 686 81mm mortar rounds with 19 launching tubes; 159 mortar rounds with 10 launching tubes; 10 Sagger anti-tank missiles with six launchers; 119 RPG-7 "Tandem" rockets; 209 RPG-7 "Madder" rockets; 51 RPG-7 launchers; 346 RPG-18 shoulder-fired anti-tank missiles; 211 YM-III Iranian anti-tank mines; 311 YM-I Iranian anti-personnel mines; 2,200 lbs. of TNT and C-4 with standard and electric detonators; 30 Dragunov sniper rifles with PSO-1 scopes; 18 PK machine guns; 212 AK-47 assault rifles; 699,000 rounds of 7.62mm ammunition; 735 fragmentation grenades; SCUBA tanks, diving gear and two Zodiac assault boats with Yamaha engines.

And still, incredibly, Arafat cried "Foul!" Unfortunately for the Palestinian master terrorist, Israel's interrogators did not even have to lay a glove on the *Karine-A*'s captain Omar Akawi before he "rolled over" on his boss.

"The Palestinian Authority purchased the ship and all the weapons," he confessed. "I was just the delivery boy."

Samuel M. Katz is the author of more than 20 books and 100 articles on Israeli counterterrorism, international special operations and law enforcement. His two latest books are Relentless Pursuit: The DSS and the Manhunt for the al-Qaeda Terrorists and The Hunt for the Engineer. His book, The Night Raiders, was the first English-language study published on Flotilla 13.

Steven Hartov is a veteran of the Israeli Defense Forces parachute corps and military intelligence, and the author of a trilogy of espionage novels; The Heat of Ramadan, The Nylon Hand of God and The Devil's Shepherd. His current work, In the Company of Heroes, is the true story of Black Hawk pilot Michael Durant, who was shot down and captured during the Battle of Mogadishu in October 1993. ✕

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OUT-PERFORMS ALL THE OTHERS

Carlos Hathcock

Continued from page 61

its cover more than 500 yards away.

When Hathcock and Burke came up to the dead sniper, neither could believe what they saw. The flash of light on which Hathcock had aimed had been the sun's reflection in the enemy sniper's 3.5-power scope, evident by the fact that Hathcock's shot had gone through the scope (which was about the diameter of a dime) and into the sniper's eye.

Burke was ecstatic. Hathcock felt a bit of uneasiness in his stomach. Seeing where his shot had hit, Hathcock came to the uncomfortable realization that the only way he could make such a shot was if the sniper was aiming directly at him. Hathcock had been the first to squeeze the trigger, and that was the only thing that separated life from death.

The Death Of A Friend And Hero

Hathcock's first tour in Vietnam ended soon after that phenomenal shot, and the man — now reduced to a trim 120 pounds — returned to his wife and son in New Bern, N.C. Though eager to return to the country he served, Hathcock regretted leaving his Burke, his brother-in-arms.

For many servicemen, a different kind of "war" was found being fought stateside when they returned, but it was a conflict Hathcock admits he never came in contact with.

"I did not see that then," he said. "I didn't understand it, and I actually didn't pay much attention to it. There wasn't any real activity like that going on in New Bern — it was a patriotic little town. If I would have witnessed it ... well, let's just say that I think anyone who burns the American flag should be burnt themselves."

His feelings on the matter ran strong for the remainder of his life. Most strong was the love and thanks he felt for fellow servicemen who didn't return from Vietnam.

"I have the Wall here in my hallway," he said, pointing to a painting of the Vietnam War Memorial. "I cried when I put that up. Those men and women gave the ultimate sacrifice for their country, and I think each and every one of them are heroes."

Despite his strong feelings for his fellow servicemen, Hathcock put eight years of service behind him and took a job as an electrician after returning from Vietnam. He was not very happy with life as a civilian, though, and it showed.

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On a journey to watch the Eastern Division Rifle and Pistol Matches at Camp Lejeune, the weight of missing the Marine Corps grew too heavy for him to bear. He returned home and told Jo how he felt. Though she wasn't thrilled with the idea, she gave him her blessing and Hathcock rejoined Mother Corps.

Soon after, Hathcock moved his family to Quantico, Va., where he was assigned to the Marksmanship Training Unit and the Corps' national champion rifle team. Back on a Marine Corps firing line, he set his sights on the 1968 Olympics.

Just as Hathcock seemed to be back on top of the world, a letter from Land pulled him from his lofty perch. Burke had been killed defending an outpost on Hill 950 at Khe Sanh, Quang Tri Province. Burke exposed himself to enemy fire in order to pull two severely wounded Marines to safety during a sizeable Viet Cong attack, this despite having taken a large amount of shrapnel himself. To keep the enemy away from the bunker that housed his wounded Marines, Burke single-handedly charged with only an M16A1 and some hand grenades. He successfully repelled the assault, but it cost him his life. For his actions he was posthumously awarded the Navy Cross.

"God, did that hurt," Hathcock said of Burke's death. "I stood in my back door and cried like a baby. I don't believe anything has affected me as much as his death did. We were very close — we had to be. We were brothers. He was a good man, and that was a once-in-a-lifetime friendship."

Hathcock received orders to return to the place where that friendship was founded nearly two years later. He hadn't expected another tour to Vietnam, yet knew it always loomed on the horizon. Things seemed a little different the second time around.

"I took every mode of transportation to California — car, bus, train and airplane," Hathcock said. "I had a bad feeling that I wasn't going to come home, so I tried to take as much time getting there as I could."

After stopping in Memphis to see his father, Hathcock finally made his way to California. Days later, he again stood upon Hill 55.

Sometimes the toughest battles are fought after actual combat ceases, such was the case for Carlos Hathcock in next months' part 2. ✕

Lance Bacon is Managing Editor of the Air Force Times. ✕

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Beretta On Beretta M9

After reading John Farnam's article concerning the M9 pistol in your January 2004 edition, I thought it would be worthwhile to advise your readers of some of the errors in his story. Mr. Farnam alleges that the Beretta M9 pistol was chosen because Italy had "threatened to close our air-bases in Italy if we didn't buy their over-priced pistols." The General Accounting Office investigated this allegation in the 1980's when it was first made and found it to be without merit.

Mr. Farnam also called the pistols "overpriced." The price of the pistols was \$178.50 each, which can hardly be called "overpriced," and a federal court that examined the purchase revealed that the Beretta pistols and spare parts had the lowest price and the best performance.

The Beretta M9 pistol averaged 17,500 rounds between malfunctions during Government-supervised testing. In one test, 12 Beretta pistols fired

186,000 rounds without a single malfunction. Independent durability testing on the pistol conducted by Aberdeen Proving Ground found that the slide averaged 75,000 rounds before breaking. Frames in these pistols averaged over 35,000 rounds between breakages. Compared to the 5,000-round service life required for the pistol (derived from U.S. military experience with the M1911A1), it is hard to give credence to Mr. Farnam's claim that the pistol is not durable.

Sincerest regards,
Beretta U.S.A. Corp.
Jeffrey K. Reh/Vice General Manager

Hope For Afghanistan

The last time I looked, *De Oppresso Liber* translated To Free the Oppressed" not blow the shit out of them and leave. The focus of Special Forces has always included nation building after the bad guys are gone. Persian Gulf War I is a prime example of what happens if you light the fuze and leave. Of course, since Paul's comments, the Afghans have ratified a new constitution and are preparing for general elections.

All peoples, regardless of history, are capable of developing a democratic government. Paul's arguments were all over the front pages of America's newspapers at the end of WWII, yet Japan, a country born of warlords and disparate tribes and ruled by an emperor deity, managed to silence the critics and emerge as a representative democracy. Avallone reminds me of the pessimistic reporter in "The Green Berets" who has to be reminded that it took ten years for our 13 colonies to ratify a Constitution. Great effort in cause of freedom is never a waste.

Walter Oszczakiewicz
Clarksville, Tenn.

Scandinavian Friends

First off I'd like to say that your magazine is like a bible to me. I think more people in the world should read your paper, because you write and show the truth. Thank you SOF for existing.

Your Friends in Sweden.

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Command Guidance

Continued from page 6

POW/MIA issue, which finally acknowledged the U. S. Government had withheld information about prisoners left behind in all the wars of the Twentieth Century. Kerry supports trade initiatives with Vietnam while blocking any legislation requiring the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to adhere to basic principles of human rights. He holds forth his experience as a veteran as a basis to respect his judgment on Defense issues, when his VVAW experience, to me, demonstrates how little he learned floating over the brown water of the Mekong Delta. Now John F. Kerry wants to be President of the United States.

Jim Rassmann's story is confirmed by the facts in my extensive database on Special Forces in Vietnam. Although Rassmann, like most of my veteran friends, is a Republican, he said that he would vote for Kerry in gratitude for saving his life. (Only a Republican today would be grateful for saving his life. A Democrat would curse you for adding to his travails.) If Jim wants an expression of something more than words, may I remind him of that ancient Asian custom and suggest he join Kerry's Protective Detail. Actually, voting for Kerry to be President of the United States is carrying the gratitude bit too far.

I am not surprised that there are Veterans who support a VVAW activist. There were some real veterans, like Kerry, among the wannabees. I'm not surprised that some Veterans will support a fellow veteran because of the lack of veterans in the political process. But that bond has to be tempered in light of the individual's record. Just as Kerry threw away medals, only to claim them back again, Kerry voted to take action against Iraq, but claims to take that vote back by voting against funding the recovery.

I would like to see more politicians having had military service. If you are going to vote on military appropriations, it would be nice if you didn't disrespect the soldiers. Congress has not actually had the courage to declare war in more than 60 years despite numerous instances where we have sent our military in harm's way. If they did that part of their job, it should be deliberated on by people who know what they are voting on. But the political parties can't put the nation's interest above their own quest for power. We have to

have a Chief Executive capable of defending the nation. I would *not* like to put my faith in a guy who goes from warrior to anti-warrior to defender of the enemy to weaseling on issues that require resolve, instead of political posturing. One lesson of Vietnam is that the Public needs a Leader capable of demonstrating in himself, and encouraging in others, the resolve to finish what they have collectively started.

I can forgive my former comrade-in-arms for hugging a Democrat. But it won't make me favor this JFK manqué. And I would hate to see anyone giving Kerry a sympathy vote for President

just because being a Vietnam veteran is "back in style."

Stephen Sherman served as a First Lieutenant with 5th Special Forces Group (Abn) in Vietnam, 1967-1968. He maintains a database and publishes archival information on Special Forces in Southeast Asia. His website is www.greenberet.net/books/, where he maintains a roster by detachment and staff section of personnel assigned to 5th SFGA as well as descriptions and lists of the books and CDs he has published to make information available about Special Forces in Southeast Asia. ✕

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SOUND OFF

by Col. David H. Hackworth, USA (Ret.)

Memo To The Army Chief Of Staff

Dear Gen. Schoomaker:

Maj. Donald E. Vandergriff — who just happens to be one of your officers — is a guy cut from the same bolt of visionary cloth as Billy Mitchell and John Paul Vann.

Remember how in the 1920s Mitchell tried to wake up the brass concerning the importance of air power? And how in the early 1960s Vann predicted that the World War II strategy of “blowing the communists back to the Stone Age” would fail in Vietnam?

We learned with 20/20 hindsight that both Mitchell and Vann were dead right. But because previous Army chiefs turned a deaf ear to their prescient warnings, the troops had to pay too high a price.

Remember when you, as a young Special Forces officer, sounded off with your mates after the botched Iran rescue attempt? For sure, some folks up at the top heard you — just look at your Special Forces today.

Now that Vandergriff's sounding the alarm that the Army personnel system is broken, Gen. Schoomaker, perhaps it's payback time, your turn to listen up. The way things stand, it certainly appears that you could save a lot of soldiers serious grief if you meet with Vandergriff and hear him out.

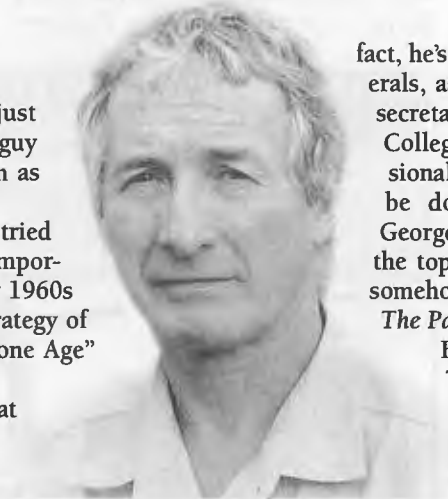
According to the major: “Ticket-punching, rampant careerism and civilian corporate management policies have virtually destroyed a vibrant Army that was once only concerned with people, cohesion, teamwork and winning. Not self.”

“The Army must change,” he says. “We have the finest soldiers in the world and our leaders aren't corrupt, but times have changed, and war has evolved from static fronts to global terrorism. To ensure we uphold our oath to defend America, the Army must transform itself.”

Since early in the Vietnam War, I've repeatedly stated that the Army personnel system is playing a killer game of musical chairs by embracing the Individual Replacement System used in World Wars I and II.

Your antiquated personnel system produces self-serving officers and senior noncoms obsessed with micromanagement and risk-avoidance. And why not? One dent on a fender in today's Army zeroes out a promising career. Let's face it: Patton, Ridgway, Gavin, Emerson, Hollingsworth and Hal Moore, of *We Were Soldiers ...*, would all have a hard time making major today.

Vandergriff has been sounding off since 1999 about getting a bloated, officer-heavy Army off its centralized butt. In



fact, he's briefed more than 30 of your serving generals, as well as an Army vice chief of staff, the secretary of the Army, students at the Naval War College and a platoon of influential congressional representatives concerning what needs to be done. While training future officers at Georgetown University — where he was named the top ROTC instructor of the year — he also somehow managed to write an important book, *The Path to Victory*.

His ideas sizzle with common sense. They're so good that a battalion of self-promoting “graybeards” —

Vandergriff's label for the phalanx of retired generals who hang around the Pentagon selling their

knowledge to the highest bidders and stuffing their pockets with green — are shamelessly claiming a bunch of his reform ideas as theirs. Even some of the briefings you've been presented on how to fix your broken personnel system include complete, uncited paragraphs lifted from his work.

Because his former Army boss at Georgetown provided no support, Maj. Vandergriff did what he felt had to be done all on his own in his spare time. He used vacation days to brief the Pentagon and Congress, and he was so committed that his wife drove him when his foot was in a cast. After all the personal sacrifice, his reward for trying to wake up a sleeping Army: a mediocre efficiency report.

When I was a corporal, my captain promoted his sergeants and my general promoted his lieutenants. Back then, everything was decentralized and based on trust. Soldiers stayed together for years, and we got better — together — with every passing day. No musical chairs. No career tickets to punch. Just hard soldiering that was all about asking not what you could do for your career, but what you could do for your outfit.

So talk to Vandergriff. Then spot-promote him to lieutenant colonel and give him a tank battalion in the hottest zone in Iraq where he can implement his ideas — and get out of his way.

www.hackworth.com is the address of David Hackworth's homepage.

Sign in for the free weekly *Defending America* column at his Web site. Send mail to P.O. Box 11179, Greenwich, CT 06831. His newest book is *Steel My Soldiers' Hearts*.

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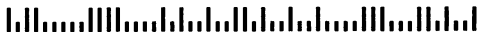
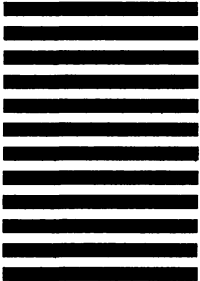
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