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NEXT IN
IRAQ?**

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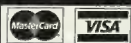
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Robert King/ZUMA Press

On the Cover

82nd Airborne trooper helps secure crime scene of suicide car bomb exploded near Bagdad Hotel used by CIA operatives and provisional government workers. U.S. must provide security while nation building. See Related Stories, pages 24, 38, 50, 68, 70.



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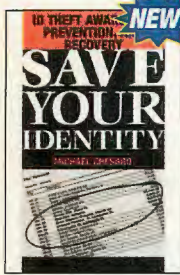
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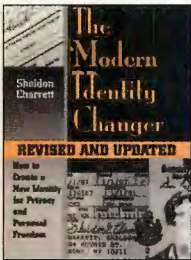
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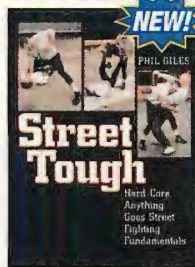
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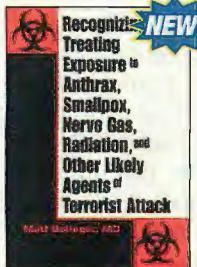
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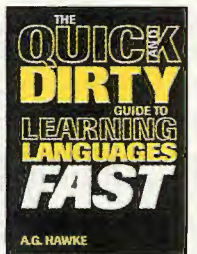
The low-tech, high-impact tomahawk has been carried in every American war, including Vietnam, Afghanistan and Iraq. Here the author traces the origins of the tomahawk and uses his dynamic drawings to show how it can be utilized singly or with the long knife in both offensive and defensive encounters. Includes fighting scenarios, throwing lessons and applications of the war club, as well.



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COMMAND GUIDANCE

BY DON BENDELL

Another SF Nam Vet looks at Kerry

My wife had rotator cuff surgery earlier this year, and the recovery is terribly painful. Then, she developed a staph-epi infection, and they had to cut the same scar open and operate on her again. Just thinking about the pain and anxiety of facing that painful surgery a second time in the same wound, makes me cringe. That experience, however pales in comparison to what I am going through right now, in my heart.

The old hurts are surfacing and the feelings of betrayal by fellow citizens, and their leader stirring them up, are

civilians, razed villages, shot cattle and dogs for fun, poisoned food stocks, and generally ravaged the countryside of South Vietnam."

I was a green beret officer who volunteered for duty in Vietnam and fought in the thick of it in 1968 and 1969 on a Special Forces A-team on the Ho Chi Minh Trail, just for starters. We were the elite. We saw the most action. Everybody in the world knows that. But we did not just kill people, we built a church, a school, treated illnesses, passed out soap, food, and clothing, and had fun and loving interaction with

"Hanoi John ... a phony, opportunistic hypocrite."

breaking my heart again. I am being cut in the same scar. How did we who served in Vietnam suddenly become cold-blooded killers, torturers, and rapists, of the ilk of the Nazi SS or the Taliban? Most of us were American soldiers who grew up idolizing John Wayne, Roy Rogers, and all the other heroes. That was why I volunteered. But for political expediency, John Kerry has rewritten history, again. After spending only four months in the country of Vietnam, John Kerry testified before Congress in 1971 with these exact words about incidents he supposedly witnessed or heard about from other vets: "They personally raped, cut off ears, cut off heads, taped wires from portable telephones to human genitals and turned up the power, cut off limbs, blown up bodies, randomly shot at

the indigenous people of Vietnam, just like our boys did in Normandy, Baghdad, Saigon, and everywhere American soldiers ever served. We all gave away our candy bars and rations to kids. Our hearts to oppressed people all over the globe.

My children and grandchildren could read your words, and think those horrendous things about me, Mr. Kerry. You are a bold-faced, unprincipled liar, and a disgrace, and you have dishonored me and all my fellow Vietnam veterans. Sure, there were a couple bad-apples, but I saw none, and I saw it all, and if I did, as an army officer, it was my obligation to stop it, or at the very least report it. Why is there not a single record anywhere of you ever reporting any inci-

Continued on page 81

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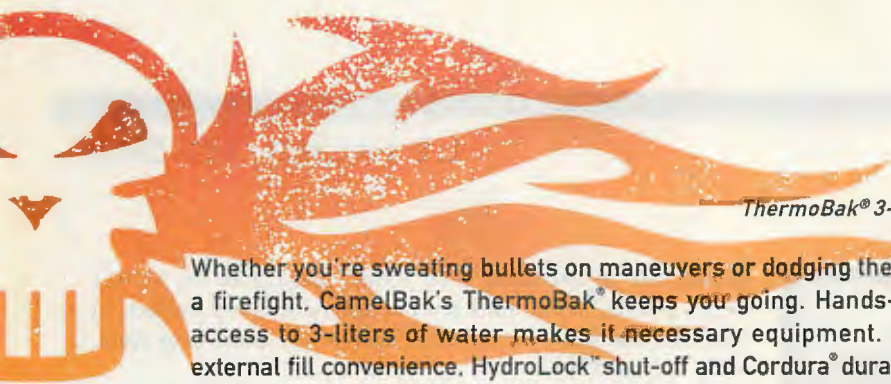
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SOLDIER OF FORTUNE (USPS 525-810, ISSN 0145-6784), June 2004, Volume 29, Number 6, is published monthly by SOLDIER OF FORTUNE Inc., 5735 Arapahoe Ave., Suite A-5, Boulder, CO 80303-1340. Periodicals Postage is paid at Boulder, CO and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to SOLDIER OF FORTUNE, Subscription Department, POB 348, Mt Morris, IL 61054-0348 or call 1-800-877-5207. U.S. and APO-FPO subscription rate for twelve monthly issues \$29.95. Canada add \$15.00/yr. additional postage (includes GST tax registration business number: 12847 6249 RT). All other countries add \$40.00 U.S. FUNDS ONLY. Single Issue Price — U.S.: \$4.99; United Kingdom: £2.60; Canada: \$6.99. PRINTED IN THE USA.

CONTRIBUTORS: Manuscripts, photographs or drawings are submitted at the contributor's own risk. Material should be mailed to Articles Editor, SOLDIER OF FORTUNE, 5735 Arapahoe Ave., Suite A-5, Boulder, CO 80303-1340, and cannot be returned unless accompanied by sufficient postage. Any material accepted is subject to such revision as is necessary to meet the editorial requirements of SOF. All digital manuscripts must be submitted in Microsoft Word. All photographs must be credited and be accurately identified. Payment will be made at rates current at time of publication. Editorial office phone number is 303-449-3750 ext. 309.

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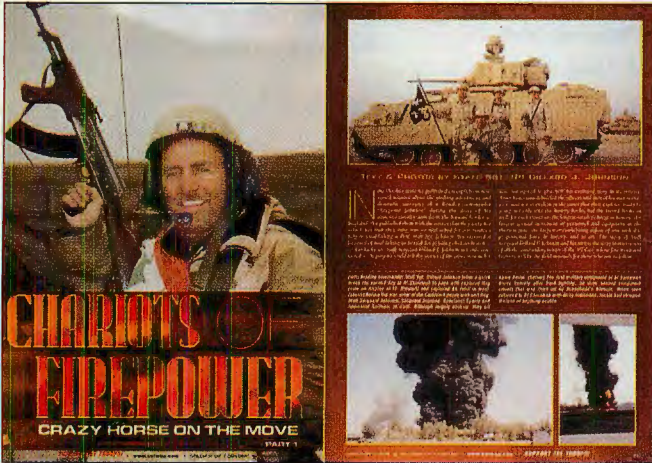
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Cav Rules!

Just wanted to send a quick note to express my thanks for featuring the actions of my troop (C TRP, 3-7 CAV, "CRAZYHORSE"), during OIF.

I think I can speak for most that it means a lot to have THEIR story told, I know by now you too have come to realize what a special bunch of soldiers I had the honor of leading.

Thanks again.
CPT Jeff McCoy
(former "CRAZYHORSE 6")

Bad Law = Bad Magazines

I read Mr. John Farnam's comments regarding the 9mm Check-Mate magazines in Operation Iraqi Freedom in your April 2004 issue. Having been issued four of these mags still in the package, I agree with his assessment of their quality. Everyone I met in Iraq shared my distress about the weak springs. The more gun-savvy the individual, the greater the concern. These magazines helped motivate me to scrounge a long arm for personal defense, which turned out for the best overall.

However, I disagree that DoD's acceptance of these magazines is a great mystery. In fact, the culprit here ... (dramatic pause) is President Clinton's 1994 ban on high capacity magazines.

When these magazines were no longer available to the shooting public, the market-driven competition, which improves good products and eliminates poor ones disappeared. In the absence of market-forced quality control, poor magazines popped up like corpses bobbing to the surface, following the economic principle that "bad money drives out good money." Contrast this sorry situation with the market

availability of excellent 7-10 round magazines for M1911 series pistols. While military procurement is not perfect, in this case the deck was stacked against the good guys from, well, at least 1994.

If you accept this rather obvious economic analysis, then you must conclude that the ban on high-cap magazines, a critical part of the "assault weapons" ban, puts our soldiers' lives at risk for no good reason whatsoever. Our Check-Mate magazines may be the "smoking gun" we need to sunset this dangerous piece of, er, legislation.

Mike Finn

The Classic Is Best

I just finished reading this letter in the May issue. It is strange to me that the NCO would complain about the Beretta not being suitable for back-up and concealed carry, then wish for two weapons (SIG and HK) that are just as bulky, or even more so. He belittles the 1911 for "only" carrying 8 rounds, but then wants the others in .40SW or .45ACP. This is less than the M9, but not a lot greater capacity than the 1911. Finally, if he wants duty and concealability, the 1911 is the slimmer of the three.

I have the highest of respect for SF and the job they do, but I am afraid this trooper missed the point.

Scott Mince
Henagar, AL

New Round, New Vests for Bad Guys?

Your article states that the M855 5.56 mm. lacks stopping power, particularly at longer ranges, and this seems to be anecdotally well-documented. I have long been surprised that the military has not followed the Russian lead and simply designed a bullet like the 5.45 mm with an air space in the tip. European military writers have noted that this bullet does more damage than the 5.56 mm, because when the bullet strikes a solid object (a la Al Qaeda) the tip bends over and the bullet tumbles its way through the target, leaving a very large — and nasty hole. During the Russian Afghanistan adventure, the Afghan patriots called it the "poison bullet" because whenever it struck someone, he usually died.

Although this is anecdotal and not scientific, I can state that when I fired both bullets into a 3-inch phone directory at 25 yards, the 5.45 mm left an approximately 50% greater hole upon exiting than its 5.56 mm counterpart — and the 5.45 mm was clearly tumbling when it exited. I know the military designed the M855 round to penetrate armored vests, but this does not seem to be a problem with our recent enemies.

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Perhaps the answer is for the military to issue both types of cartridge, depending on the situation. This would be a far cheaper solution than replacing the M16 upper receiver halves, magazines, etc., that was suggested in the article. In fairness I must say that if the bulletproof vests become common among our adversaries, perhaps the 6.8mm. would be the way to go.

Charles Hopper

Cousins of 6.8?

I just read with great interest the Article by Gary Paul Johnston about the new 6.8mm SPC round being developed. Ever since I began hearing/reading about the poor performance of the current 5.56mm service round, I began thinking about a replacement round. I am aware that the U.S. designed the 7.62(308) over the objections of the British and their 280 (7 x 49mm) round.

I have Not been able to find information on the larger 7 x 49mm.

Do you have any information on the 7 x 49 in comparison to the new 6.8 mm? Is the ballistics of the 6.8 mm close to that of the 7 x 49? If so, would not the 7 x 49 make more sense in terms of the requirements of the 6.8 mm?

Admittedly, it is a physically larger round and may mean the present service rifles may not be retrofitted to the 7mm round.

Just a thought on my part.

Thank you very much for your consideration in this matter.

Vernon Okamura
Honolulu, HI

A major consideration in the design of the 6.8 round was that it fit existing weapons envelopes, and this was very expertly done.

Journalists and Guns

First I want to thank you for a fine magazine, even if the price is a bit high here in Norway.

I read Bob Poos article, "Should Journalists Carry Weapons" with much interest. Having journalists with the troops is not a new thing. Your magazine's use of articles written by men serving with different units isn't new either.

The London newspaper *The Morning Post* had a contract with a subaltern attached with the 21st Lancers. They lead the last charge of

British Cavalry at Omdurman in Sudan at September 2nd, 1898. This subalterns name?

Winston Spencer Churchill.

Halstein

Maybe this was when this Master of the English Language penned one of our favorite phrases, "nothing is more exhilarating, than to have been shot at without effect."

UW: Greatest Impact

As a fellow Special Forces soldier, I must commend Paul Avallone on his excellent article concerning SF unconventional warfare operations in Afghanistan. He truly captured the little-known and least-understood side of the Green Beret business — that is, living with the indig, earning their trust, and fighting alongside them. True, UW may not be as fun or "sexy" as DA or SR (also important missions for Special Forces), but it ultimately will have a greater impact in the war on terrorism. I do, however, take issue with Mr. Avallone's assertion that the Special Forces Qualification Course is "90 percent mental" after SFAS — I only remember the rucksacks getting heavier and heavier as I progressed through the training!

James E. Hayes III
Major, Special Forces

Oh, But They DO Read SOF...

Too bad the FBI doesn't read your magazine. What a shock that the FBI is now finding and releasing evidence of a conspiracy about the OKC bombing, it is too bad more people haven't read your magazine and found out the truth. How long ago was it that you reported this?

Thankful Reader

New Evidence and a Thank You!

I read with amusement (and dismay) the "revelations" that AP and the FBI have found "new" evidence and improprieties in evidence handling in the OKC case. I recall reading much of the same information in *SOF* in the months afterwards... What happened? Did they let their subscriptions lapse? Keep doing the good work, and many thanks for your coverage of the situation in Iraq from a soldier's perspective.

Leigh Alan Dyer

OKC And Haiti, Too

To the Editor,

I am writing this the day after former Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide left office, following over a month of violence that saw thousands dead, and after he had ruled the country as a dictator for a year and a half.

Ten years ago this fall, when all the other media outlets were lionizing Aristide as God's gift to Haiti, *ONLY Soldier Of Fortune* was warning us that this guy was questionable, and that General Raoul Cedras, Aristide's predecessor, was not as horrific as the major media were making him out to be.

Ten years later, who turned out to be right and who turned out to have put money on the wrong horse? Imagine the thousands of lives that would have been saved if people had listened to *SOF*!

Once again, this shows that *SOF* is the *ONLY* media out-

Continued on page 72

Should Journalists



Carry Weapons?

BY BOB POOS

The Pen And The Sword In Combat

Carrying a gun is considered by the military as a necessary part of a journalist's job. It is a controversial issue, but one that has been debated for years. The military has a long history of allowing journalists to accompany them in the field. This has been done for both World Wars, the Vietnam War, and the current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. The military has a number of reasons for allowing journalists to accompany them. One reason is that it helps to build trust between the military and the press. Another reason is that it helps to provide the press with a more accurate picture of what is going on in the field. A third reason is that it helps to protect the press from the dangers of the battlefield. The military has a number of policies in place to ensure that journalists are treated fairly and safely. These policies include providing journalists with the same level of protection as the troops, allowing them to accompany troops in the field, and providing them with the same level of medical care as the troops. The military has a long history of allowing journalists to accompany them in the field, and this has been done for both World Wars, the Vietnam War, and the current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. The military has a number of reasons for allowing journalists to accompany them. One reason is that it helps to build trust between the military and the press. Another reason is that it helps to provide the press with a more accurate picture of what is going on in the field. A third reason is that it helps to protect the press from the dangers of the battlefield. The military has a number of policies in place to ensure that journalists are treated fairly and safely. These policies include providing journalists with the same level of protection as the troops, allowing them to accompany troops in the field, and providing them with the same level of medical care as the troops.



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Why Was Nichols In The Philippines?

At press time, the trial of Terry Nichols, about to commence on 15 March, has ignited some friendly disagreement among the SOFers regarding Terry Nichols' forays to the Philippines. Some hold that he went solely to snag a Filipina wife, others (myself included) believe that while there he met with numerous Abu Sayyef and al Qaeda terrorists, including suspected deep-cover Philippines intel operative and confirmed collaborator with the Philippines National Police (PNP), Edwin Angeles, later assassinated by gunmen. In order to comprehend Nichols' purposes, I strongly suggest that readers peruse the recent book, *1000 YEARS FOR REVENGE — INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM AND THE FBI: THE UNTOLD STORY* (ReganBooks), by five-time Emmy-winning investigative reporter Peter Lance, whose stories have aired on 20/20, Nightline and World News Tonight.

— Tom Reisinger



DOD by TAGT Andy Dunaway USAF

U.S. Marines with 3rd Bn, 8th Marine Air Contingency Marine Air-Ground Task Force, Camp Lejeune, N.C., patrol the streets of Port-au-Prince, Haiti at the request of the Haitian president to keep things stable, facilitate humanitarian assistance and secure key sites in the capital until the arrival of a multi-national force.

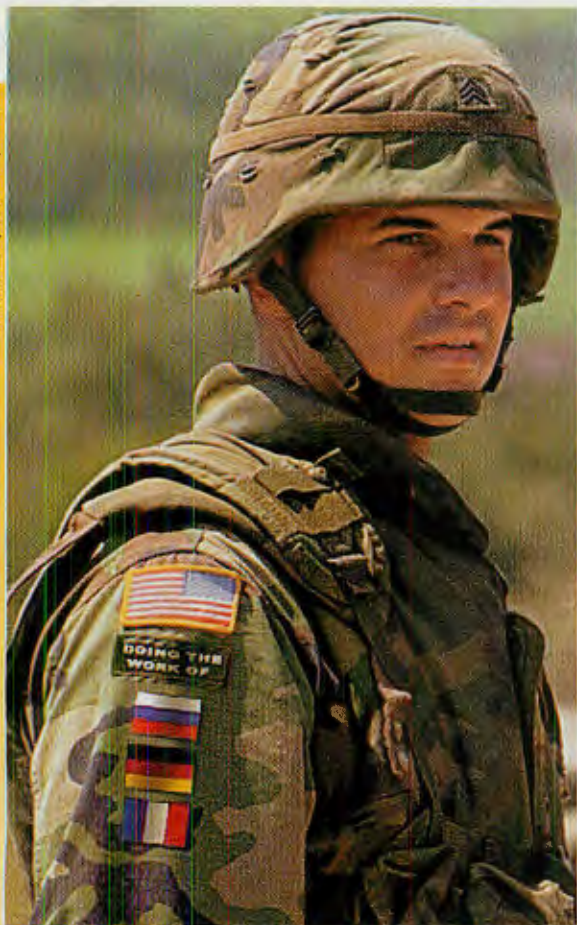
The Iraqi War Debrief: Why Saddam Hussein Was Toppled

Al Venter's new book, published by Casemate Publishers, has just hit the bookstores. In "Novichok, anthrax, smallpox and worse" Venter tells readers that "Novichok" is "the deadliest nerve gas of all ... a dozen times more potent than any other agent ... penetrates all known gas masks made in the west ..." and that UNSCOM biowarfare expert Richard Spertzel told the House Armed Services Committee of evidence that Saddam Hussein not only had anthrax, smallpox, but also Novichok. "Scott Ritter's Curious Tactical About-Face" gets the full treatment in Venter's book as well. Other chapters include "Iraq's Missing Weapons of Mass Destruction," "Russia's Acquiescent Role in Rogue States Acquiring Weapons-Grade Fissile Material" and "Spies: Why American Intelligence Was Caught Short."

Venter has had more than 30 years of research and writing about regional conflicts, tyrants and terrorists in Africa and the Middle East and his work inevitably led to this nexus of terrorism and weapons of mass destruction. A South African and author of some 20 books, Venter has contributed to BBC, NBC News (New York), PBS and Britain's *Daily Express* and *Sunday Express*. He has produced reports for *Jane's Defence Weekly*, *Jane's Intelligence Review*, *Jane's Islamic Affairs Analyst* and *Jane's Terrorism and Security Monitor*. He has also written regularly for *Washington's Middle East Policy*, *Soldier of Fortune*, and *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists and The Middle East*.

— Richard Rongstad.

(available from The Military Bookstore,
at vikingphoenix.com)



Numerous Anonymous Correspondents

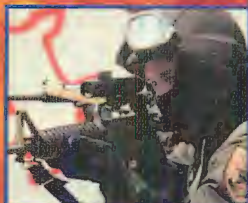
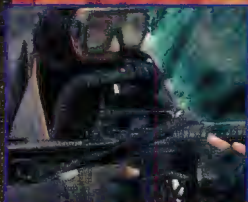
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Fifty Caliber Shooters, Note:

The Fifty Caliber Institute (FCI) is getting ready to go live with the promotion of their 50/50 program: a 50 caliber fun shoot in each of the 50 United States this year. They want to be able to argue on Capital Hill and in those state legislatures that are trying to ban the 50 BMG that the sport is growing and that it is a safe sport enjoyed by thousands everywhere in the U.S. What the Association needs is any information you might have on a scheduled event in your state. If you are aware of any kind of get-together to shoot 50 BMG, it will qualify. It does not have to be a sanctioned FCSA match, just a get-together by a group of people to enjoy their hobby. If you know of such an event contact them at this email address or through their website at: www.fiftycal.org.

FCI will post the information about any fun shoot on their website and help promote your event. If you need information on how you might hold one of these events and how to structure it, FCI has posted an "EventGuide" on our their site under 'Resources' and if you have questions that they can help with call them at 405-390-4174 (FCI Office)

— John Burt, FCI

SCG Seeks EP For Overseas Positions

SCG International Risk is currently recruiting candidates for EP (executive protection) overseas. Interested candidates must possess a current DOD Top Secret Clearance and be willing to take a polygraph. These positions are on 60 to 90 day rotations with potential to extend. The compensation is \$625.00 per day for the first 43 days and \$750 per day after

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SF Establishes New "Farm" At Ft. Lewis

Rowan Scarborough writes in the *Washington Times* that Ft. Lewis, Washington, home of 1st SF Group, will be host for a new training facility that will prepare SF troopers to take on additional covert activities formerly a specialty of the CIA, in training a base similar to "The Farm" in Virginia. Although intelligence gathering has always been part of the SF mission, the need is to train for "actionable intelligence" where those in the field can both gather intelligence and act on it in a timely manner.

SecDef Rumsfeld has given SOCOM new powers to plan and execute kill-or-capture missions against terrorists. To do it, SOCOM needs intelligence on where al Qaeda operatives are hiding. The hope is that broader training and deployment of Green Berets is one more step toward that goal.

Yup, That's A Gunman

An AP dispatch from Port-au-Prince, Haiti, noted that "U.S. Marine Col. Charles Gurganus said gunfire broke out on the northeast corner of the plaza and several people were wounded before Marines spotted two gunmen. When the gunmen tried to attack the Marines, the troops shot and killed one of them, he said, adding that he did not know what happened to the other man.

Asked how he knew the man killed was a gunman, Gurganus said: "He had a gun, and he was shooting at Marines. That's what I call a gunman."

Good thing the Fourth Estate was on the scene to ask the tough questions.

WWII Registry Seeking Names

Names of those who served during World War II are being sought for inclusion on the national World War II Registry. So far, the registry contains more than 1.3 million records. However, with 16 million having served in the war, there's the potential

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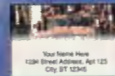
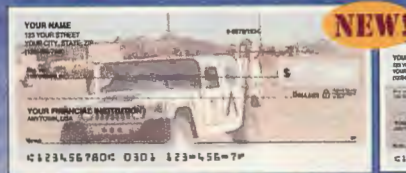
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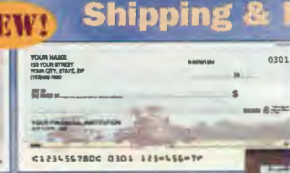
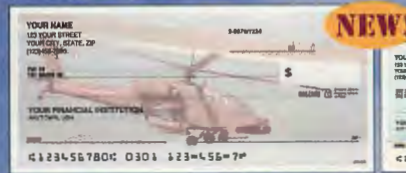
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for many more names to be added. The American Battle Monuments Commission will be including the registry in the National World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C., which is expected to be completed and open to the public in April and officially dedicated on May 29.

To enroll, for free, individuals can go to www.WWII Memorial.com or call toll-free 800-639-4992.

Those eligible to be added to the registry are the names of all Americans who served in the armed forces or contributed to the war effort on the home front, whether in factories and shipyards or farms and neighborhoods.

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Robert K. Brown, Editor/Publisher, SOF

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Kerry on the Web



Vietnam Veterans Against John Kerry Campaign Button, available from: vikingphoenix.com/e2004/vvakbutton-1.htm. One button \$3.00, two buttons \$5.00, five buttons \$10.00, fifteen buttons \$25.00: Best buy is 100 buttons @ \$100.00. S&H to U.S., FPO and APO addresses is cheap and listed on URL.

Londoners may have Hyde Park, but the rest of the world has the Web. Plus, 'Mericans also have the First Amendment, and when the Fourth Estate doesn't serve their interests they go to the web and sort it out themselves. Here, in no particular order, are some of the Anti-Kerry web sites, which currently are springing up like mushrooms after a liberal application of BS (or is it, an application of liberal BS) and a spring rain.

- www.dirtykerry.com
- www.nicedoggie.net
- www.imnotfondakerry.com
- www.notokerry.com
- www.kerrymyths.edcnet.com
- www.nokerry.net
- www.kerrysucks2004.com
- www.hanoijohnkerry.com
- www.vetsagainstkerry.org
- www.socialistkerry.com
- www.vietnamveteransagainstjohnkerry.com
- www.kerryquotes.com/index.html
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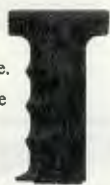
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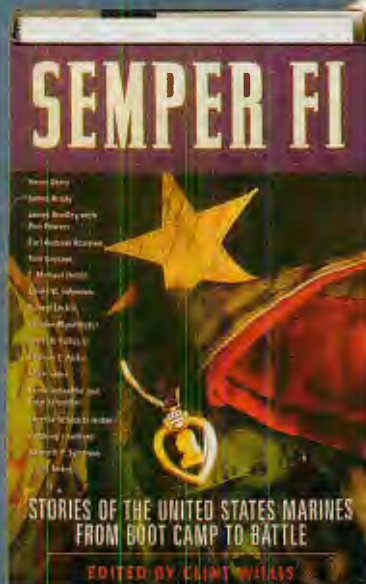
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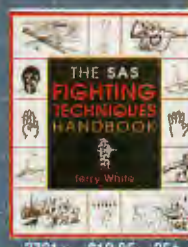
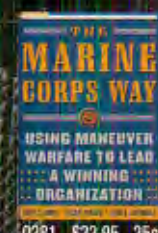
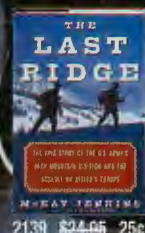
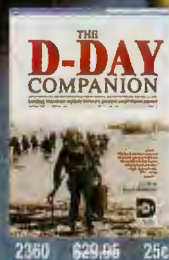
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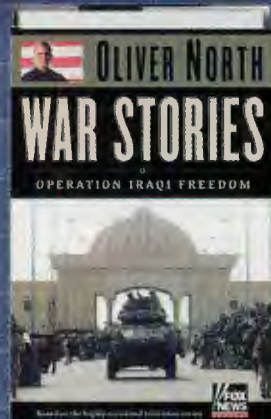
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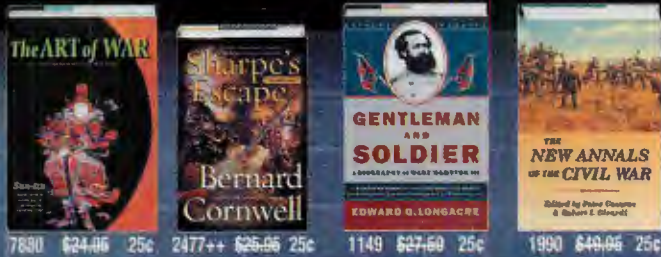
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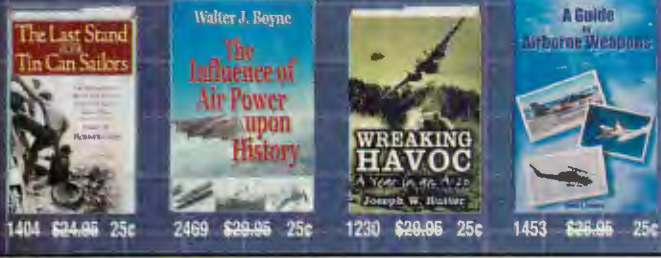
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What Goes Around Comes Around

SOF Evaluates The Rotator Target System

TEXT & PHOTOS BY JOHN HIGGS

How does a world-class firearms instructor challenge his students to achieve more, thereby improving their skills? One way is to have them shoot The Rotator.

No, it isn't another Schwarzenegger movie; it's a portable rotating steel target device that requires no manual resetting of targets and is powered by gravity. Weighing 53 lbs., the Rotator is comprised of four parts: one target/hub assembly, one axle, and two side legs for standard vertical assembly. An optional scissors stand is available for horizontal assembly.

Larry Nichols, of the Burbank, California, Police Department, developed the concept of a rotating steel target in the mid- 1980s. When John Farnam saw it in 1989, he quickly recognized its potential for training people to shoot multiple, moving targets. John had a welder build the first Rotator for use in his classes. The unit, however, broke repeatedly, and required hasty repairs during breaks in the class.

Steve Camp, President of Better Bilt Products, Inc., witnessed the continuous failures of that unit and, with his brother, Scott, redesigned and engineered a vastly superior product that they now manufacture. The latest version of the product is bolted, rather than welded together, which allows for a higher grade of steel and requires less space for transportation and storage.

John Farnam has designed and used various Rotator drills in his tactical classes since 1997 to provide instant feedback to the student either by the sound of the bullet hitting, or the steel moving. There is no time wasted walking downrange to change paper targets.

Ammunition Restrictions

The 500 Brinell hardness steel target 'paddles' resist lead Birdshot and Buckshot, and all the usual centerfire pistol cal-

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(left) SOF Editor/Publisher, and retired USAR Lt. Col. Robert K. Brown was introduced to The Rotator during a tactical pistol class taught by John Farnam, owner of Defense Training International. (above) DTI instructors Diane Nicholl and Kirk Webb duel on the hammer drill. A double-tap is required by each shooter in turn to stop the paddles from spinning.

ibers including .357 Magnum and .45 ACP. Shooting .41 or .44 Magnum, and bigger, will wear the steel out earlier than its normal 100,000-round life. Muzzle velocity of any ammunition should not exceed 1,500 fps. And no armor-piercing, or similar, ammunition should be used. Frangible ammunition, however, is recommended. Under no circumstances should shotgun slugs or steel shot be used due to the risk of projectiles bouncing back. Like all steel targets, there is the risk of splash-back, although the latest Rotator's flat design of the impact areas does reduce the area (splash cone) in which bullet fragments will bounce back.

To minimize any impacts to others, The Rotator must be placed at the foot of an adequate backstop at least 10 yards from the shooter. Everyone on the range must wear eye- and ear-protection, and spectators should stand at least 10 yards directly behind the shooter.

For rifle practice, a separate target system that swings from a horizontal axis is available from Better Bilt. The new improved version features a bolted, rather than welded design with an impact area 8 inches lower than the previous model, resulting in far fewer accidental hits on the horizontal axis. The bolted design also allows for use of 550-grade steel, resulting in longer life of the target. In case a round bounces back, the rifle target must be shot from a minimum of 75 yards.

Drills

The SOF field evaluation was conducted with 158-gr., jacketed

.38 Special; 115-gr., FMJ 9mm; 125-gr., Semi-jacketed .357 Magnum; and 230-gr., FMJ .45 ACP. Regardless of the type of ammunition used, the design requires multiple consecutive hits to make the targets revolve 360 degrees. Our testing confirmed what the manufacturer lists: .45 ACP — 4-6 hits; .40 S&W — 6-9 hits; .357 Magnum — 5-9 hits; 9mm — 8-12 hits.

With consecutive hits, the target will accelerate until the shooter misses or runs out of ammo. On the vertical setup, one arm is slightly longer, and, therefore, heavier than the other, so the target will always come to rest one up and one down. In the horizontal configuration, it's possible for the shooter to turn the target through 90 degrees and be left with an edge-on shot. This will require the shooter to move laterally along the firing line in order to engage the target, and, therefore, encourages development of a good tactical habit of shooting and then moving.

In either configuration, John Farnam runs drills such as: Engage until Rotator revolves a full 360 degrees. Time is measured from first to last shot.

The Hammer: Each paddle is Hammered or Double-Tapped in turn in the vertical configuration, Farnam alternated between top and bottom paddle to STOP the Rotator from rotating. This demonstrates the shooter's ability to rapidly change target focus between the two paddles.

Kudos To Larry Nichols & Steve and Scott Camp

"The people who deserve the real credit for the rotating steel target are Larry Nichols of the Burbank, CA, PD who invented it, and Steve and Scott Camp of Better Bilt Steel who worked tirelessly to perfect the final manifestation. The Rotator teaches precision, speed, concentration, and patience, all at the same time. It is a wonderful training device and deceptively simple. It forms the cornerstone of my training programs, both with handguns and shotguns."

— John Farnam

Author's note: Since we evaluated this system, the Rotator design has been altered to offset slightly the two target paddles. This improved system now requires the shooter to aim approximately an additional 8 inches to left or right to keep hits in the center of the target paddle.

Evaluation

A simple, reliable, and cost-effective tool to improve the shooter's ability to hit multiple moving targets when used with the type of drills designed by John Farnam. As

Robert K. Brown put it: "The Rotator is not only fun to shoot but you also save a hell of a lot of time, which means more shooting, as you do not have to paste targets. I'm impressed."

**Other Better Built Products:
The Safe Direction Handgun Case And
A Portable Backstop**

It has been said that there are two kinds of shooters: Those who have had a negligent discharge and those who will have one. Regardless of how safe you are with a firearm, or wherever you are, wouldn't it be nice to always have a safe direction to point the muzzle while you are checking your piece? Well, now you can with the Safe Direction. This is a soft-side pistol carry case with a ballistic fabric panel designed to absorb and contain an errant round launched from duty or defensive type handguns. When used correctly, the Safe Direction Handgun Case will absorb factory loads up to .44 Magnum. With the empty case placed on a stable surface such as a couch, chair, or bed, one can perform any administrative gun-handling such as loading or unloading whilst keeping the pistol pointed at the center emblem on the outside of the case. It sure beats having to explain to the neighbors or the hotel management how that bullet hole appeared in their wall. Case closed.

John Higgs is a graduate of DTT's Defensive Pistol Class. He also teaches NRA classes and is a Colorado POST-certified firearms instructor. ☞



THE ROTATOR

(Patent Pending)

Contact:

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Better Built Products, Inc., Dept. SOF
900 S. Kay Avenue
P.O. Box 559
Addison, IL 60101-0559
Tel.: Outside IL: (800) 544-4550
Within IL: (630) 543-6767
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LETHAL STRIKES

Shocking NEW Video Reveals HOW TO KILL With Your Bare Hands! Learn 13
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Dear Friend,

My name is Jason Marks. I don't want to offend anybody, but LET'S GET REAL: When "Self-Defense" becomes "Do or Die," you need to know **How to Kill** instantly, without breaking a sweat.

Would you like to have those skills, so ingrained, that they switch on automatically when you need them most?

If so, **this is going to be the most important thing you ever read.** Here's why:

About 2 years ago, some young punks shoved me against a wall and put a knife to my throat. I thought I was prepared for it but I wasn't. I always imagined I'd be able to handle myself in this situation, but in fact...

I Completely Froze!

Luckily for me a cop pulled up and the punks ran away, because I'm convinced that **a Couple of Seconds Later and I would've been cold meat!**

You see, when the Grim Reaper appears, he doesn't give a damn about your rank or how good your form is. The Scum of the earth have no moral boundaries and they will stop at nothing to get what they want!

At that point, you'll be operating entirely on the Lizard Brain, the most primitive "Fight or Flight" part of your brain.

You won't have time to "think about it," or do fancy movements that look great in tournaments and movies. You'll automatically do one of two things:

1. Unleash a rapid-fire barrage of nerve exploding, heart-stopping strikes, or...
2. Get carried off on a stretcher...or worse, in a Body Bag!

I hope you never have to feel your veins turn to ice and your stomach sink as you know, **right then and there**, that you're about to be Beaten Bloody, Raped or Killed. But let's face it: **in today's world - it could happen at any time!**

The Karate schools aren't teaching this - they have rules, formalities and safety procedures they must observe to keep the soccer moms and sports-enthusiasts happy.

The scumbags and criminals on the street have **never** stepped into a dojo - but they **BRUTALIZE, RAPE and KILL every day!**

One Violent Crime every 5 Seconds
- Bureau of Justice Statistics

How do you deal with someone who can do that - and has lots of experience doing it? **HERE'S HOW: you learn what they know - How to Brutally Destroy, Maim or Kill without Hesitation or Doubt.** It's that simple.

When some bloodthirsty thug chooses you as his next piece of meat, if you can't do what he can do - you're dead! Here's the good news...

Andrew Scott teaches Law Enforcement, Military and Corporate personnel these techniques and charges thousands of bucks for it.

It can't be learned from a book, **you must see it in action, so I talked him into letting me put it all on a video - that you can watch in a single evening!**

RIGHT NOW is your chance to get these Deadly Techniques and **Make Them Your Own** for only \$37 bucks!

After you absorb this new video, I'm sure you'll agree with me - **it'll be the most valuable training video you'll ever own! Period. And**

I can Prove it to you. Why would I say such a thing? Because you'll learn:

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And the most important thing is: **It doesn't matter how old, slow, skinny or clumsy you are, or even how much you weigh! Even a Skinny Nerd can drop a Prison Hardcase like a sack of potatoes with these techniques!**

"As a veteran Military Police officer, I've been in just about every kind of violent encounter you could imagine...I know this stuff would work."

- Mark Underwood, Dallas, TX

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FREE Bonus #1: "MASTERING FEAR: The Street Survival Secrets Audio Tape" (\$20).

FREE Bonus #2: "The MENTAL WARFARE SECRETS Manual" (\$120)

"THAT'S \$140 in FREE BONUSES!"

And, the first 50 people to **call right now** get a **3rd FREE Bonus!** The **SHOCKING Report: "Everything is a Weapon: Utilizing Your Environment for Lethal Strikes."** This report is so bloody and effective, they tried to ban it!

Don't put it off because once they're gone, they're gone, and I really mean that. You don't want to miss out on this, so be one of the first 50 to call now and you get \$207 worth of hard-hitting explosive material for **Just \$37 Bucks** plus \$8.00 S&H (foreign orders add \$12.00).

Plus Andrew is so confident, he's offering a no-hassle **MONEY-BACK GUARANTEE** (minus S&H).

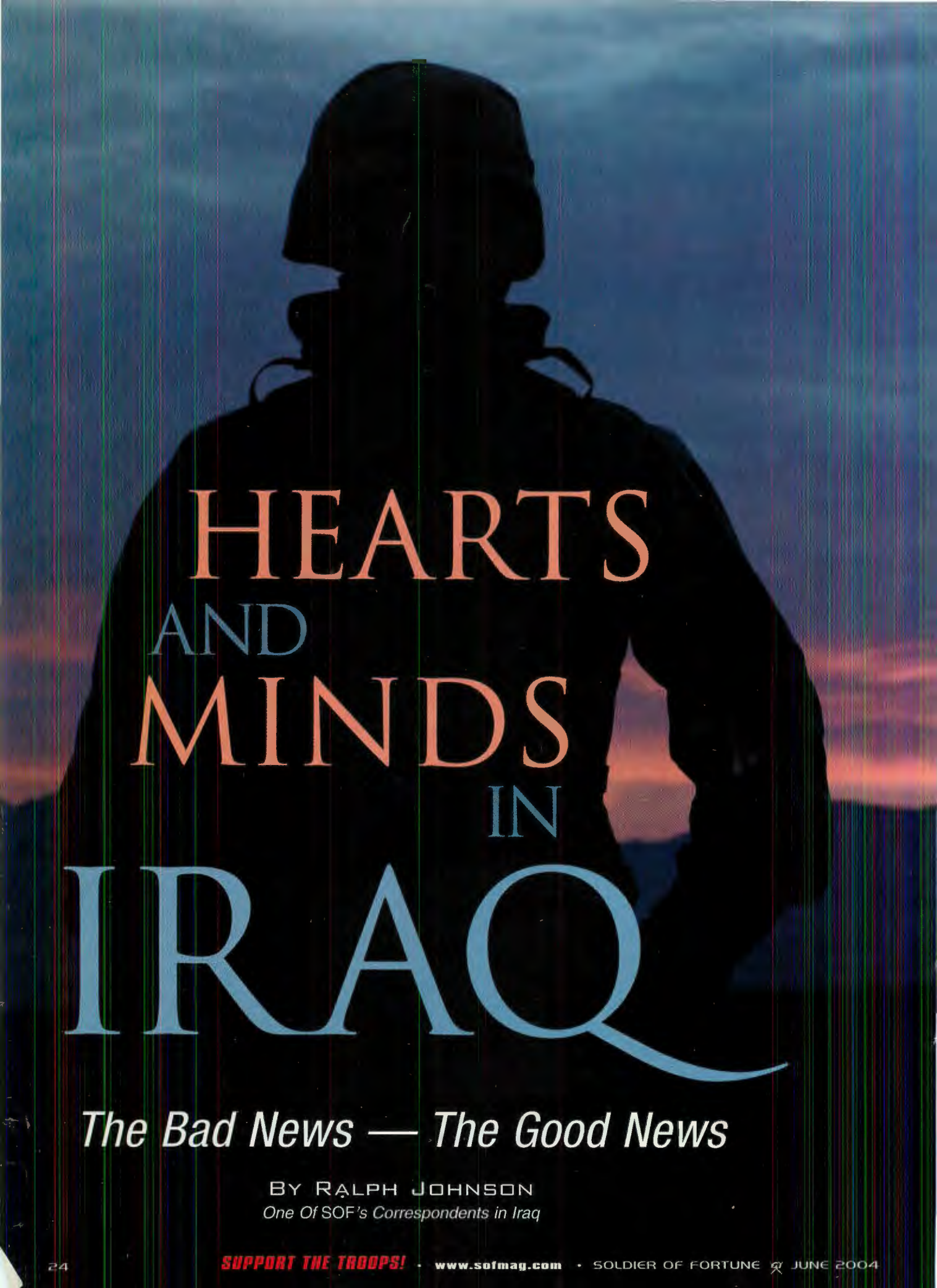
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To use a Check or Money Order, send \$45.00 total (foreign orders \$57.00), along with this code: "SOF5" to get the 3 Free Bonuses to.

Andrew Scott
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HEARTS
AND
MINDS
IN
IRAQ

The Bad News — The Good News

BY RALPH JOHNSON
One Of SOF's Correspondents in Iraq

The war in Iraq has been marked by sacrifice, heroism, daily displays of courage, acts of selfless kindness, good intentions, and occasional blind stupidity. In spite of the best efforts to win hearts and minds with Civil Affairs projects, interaction with the community, and charitable efforts of units and individuals, the Coalition in general and the Americans in particular often end up with results that are far from what was intended.

Well-intentioned projects, which may be initially successful in improving the lives of Iraqis and winning hearts and minds, sometimes turn out to have the opposite effect, often through something that could and should have been avoided.

In a guerrilla-war situation, as is happening in Iraq, every attempt should be made to avoid embarrassing and highly public mistakes. It is truly spoken that Ten Attaboys can be cancelled by one Aww, shit.

Recent Cases In Point In The Iraq War:

The Black Flag Incident:

Coalition forces and international relief agencies have spent millions attempting to improve the lot of the Shia Moslem population that resides in the Baghdad enclave of Thawraw, formerly known as Saddam City. During the dictator's time, the Shia in Baghdad were crowded into this slum to better account for and control them. Thawraw is wild and woolly, having several armed Shia militia groups vying for control. Armored Humvees and roving patrols usually maintain order. The Coalition, in order to prove that things are better after Saddam, has sponsored everything from neighborhood clinics to soccer fields. Trash and rubble have been cleared, streets paved, vaccinations given, hospitals upgraded, water quality improved, food programs begun, and electricity restored. Definite Attaboys were scored. Following development on one hand and a security presence on the other, things in Thawraw were relatively stable for several weeks.

Then came the black-flag incident. It is the tradition of the Shia to mark the death of a family member or respected

clergyman with a black banner posted in a prominent location, both to announce the death, and to remind the living of the accomplishments of the deceased. This is a respected part of the right of passage from this world to the next.

The black flags are commonly used to mourn the passage of the Shia's revered spiritual leader, Imam Hussein, more than 1,200 years ago.

The incident in question started when the Shia in Thawraw raised a black flag high on an old communications tower. A zealous

Black Hawk helicopter crew decided to investigate what they may have felt was a flag of sedition. They flew very close to the tower, and their prop-wash tore the flag from the tower, infuriating the Shia. There was a mass demonstration the next day, which turned violent. Fearing for their lives, American troops fired into the crowd, killing two and wounding several. Not only were lives lost, so was the goodwill that took weeks to build. Shia militants, who had previously taken a somewhat tolerant 'wait and see' attitude, began open armed confrontation with U.S. troops. Aww, shit.

The Pipeline Predicament:

Iraq sits on one of the world's largest proven reserves of oil, the sale of which is vital to the recovery of this potentially rich country. The Coalition has been active in restoring and repairing Iraq's oil production and exporting infrastructure. Essentially neglected during the last 10 years, the Iraqi oil fields are limping along on outdated pumping machinery and refining equipment. Just to repair the damage and get the system pumping oil again has cost the Coalition millions of dollars, and to realize the full-production potential of millions of barrels per day, a significant amount of additional money needs to be invested. The Coalition has started the process of rebuilding, and there is hope that the potential millions of dollars per day in oil revenue can support Iraq's recovery without the need for significant Coalition financing. This would mean relief for the American taxpayer, and less political heat on the Bush Administration.

The bad news is that the Coalition, specifically the American forces, can't protect the pipelines that transport Iraqi oil to market in Turkey and elsewhere. There have been several recent incidents where the guerrillas, seemingly at will, blow gaps in the pipelines, with accompanying loss of oil, environmental damage, and flames for the TV news. Everything from car bombs (vehicle-borne-improvised-explosive-devices, or VBIEDs), to rocket-propelled grenades, to man-placed explosives has been used.

The production facilities may be upgraded, but if Iraq can't get the oil to market, revenue is lost. It doesn't take a genius to see that the oil infrastructure represents the economic future of Iraq, and has political ramifications

for the U.S. The security of the pipeline isn't rocket science. Lay down the concertina, place the guard towers, and patrol the line. If the pipeline remains under-protected, Iraq and the U.S. risk an even bigger problem, and a potential change in the U.S. administration. The guerrillas, who feel that on the basis of statements by political candidates who wish to replace the current administration, a Democratic National Command Authority would be more favorable to them, are certain to con-



U.S. Civil Affairs troops reclaim and return animals looted from the Baghdad Zoo.

tinue to target the pipeline and production facilities.

The Tiger's Sorry Tale:

The stories and photographs coming out of the Baghdad Zoo have been heartwarming: American Civil Affairs veterinarians and NGO representatives working to help restore the looted and impoverished Baghdad Zoo. New construction and landscaping, financed by Coalition grants and NGO funds, have returned the zoo to a pleasant oasis in the middle of the tense city, a place where families bring their children for a pleasant outing to see the animals, or ride a paddle boat in the lagoon.

Saddam's Republican Guard used the Zoo during the recent war as a location for antiaircraft artillery and armored vehicles. The fighting damaged zoo property and looters saw to the rest, stealing the equipment and, in many cases, the animals themselves. After months of hard work, the Zoo reopened to delighted Iraqi crowds and wide-eyed children. There were tigers, lions, cheetahs, bears, a wolf, and other local animals from the mountains and desert. Clearly, the Zoo was a success story, and touted as such in the media. Our side won some favorable comments from the Iraqis who visited the zoo, and scored a major "attaboy."

A celebration was in order, so some of the Americans involved in the reconstruction and their Iraqi friends had an after-hours party, to include consumption of some unauthorized alcohol. After a few drinks, one of the Americans decided to take a close look at the animals and — what the hell — try to see if the tiger would take something from his hand. The tiger took the hand. Another American, seeing his buddy struggling to free himself from the tiger, shot and killed the beast.

A sniper, brandishing his M21 U.S. Army Sniper Rifle (an enhanced 7.62-mm version of the M14 rifle) with a 3X-9X scope, with 1st Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division, reacts to enemy movement along building rooftops during a cordon and search mission in Al Fallujah, Iraq, 4 March 2004.

The Iraqis and the world will not remember the time, effort, and money that it took to rebuild the Baghdad Zoo. They will not remember the Americans braving potential ambushes and improvised explosive devices to deliver loads of animal food and veterinary medicine. They will not remember the American veterinarians who worked day and night to save the animals.

They will remember that the Americans shot the tiger.

The Councilor's Cowardly Murder:

The Coalition has worked hard to sponsor a representative Governing Council that speaks for Iraqis during the transition period. Composed of people who formerly were in opposition to each other, these courageous leaders have agreed to work for a better future for Iraq. Various sectors of Iraqi society are represented, in an attempt to cut through the clan and ethnic boundaries that restricted Iraq's politics during the dictatorship. Kurds from the north, southern Shia, Sunni from Baghdad, nomads from the desert, all these groups have agreed to work together.

Councilor Al-Hashimi was an example of what the Coalition would like to promote in the government for the new Iraq: an articulate woman of intelligence, who had ties to the former Ba'athist regime, but who was willing to work with the Coalition and other groups of Iraqis to form a new government and Constitution. Being someone who could appeal to women and former Ba'athists, she was a major threat to those who want to keep Iraq in turmoil. She was marked for and threatened with death. She should have been heavily guarded.

In mid-September, the guerrillas ambushed her car, riddling it with AK-47 rounds, killing one security guard and severely wounding the Councilor. She held off the Grim Reaper for a week, but then slipped away.

Suspects in her slaying were apprehended in February, but the damage to the Council and the reputation of the Coalition's ability to protect Council members has already

DoD photo by Staff Sgt. Charles B. Johnson



been done. The Coalition's hope for the chance at forming a representative council that will include a voice for women has not died.

The Arrogance Mindset Of Field-Grade Prima Donnas:

The way that the U.S. military occupation of Iraq is currently structured (though this will certainly change as authority is returned to the Iraqis) closely resembles the feudal concept of centuries past. The country is run by the Corps Commander, functioning as the emperor, and the sectors, such as Baghdad, run by division commanders, who may be termed the kings. Under the kings are their dukes, the brigade combat team commanders, and then the barons, the battalion commanders. Each of these commanders is responsible for a piece of property. The policy is made by the Corps and Division, and specific rules promulgated by their subordinate commanders. Now that the Coalition in general and the Americans in particular are in charge in Iraq, this means that the word of the commanders is law, enforced by their subordinates. This carries with it the responsibility to govern justly and be responsible to the needs of the people. This has not always been the case.

There are many cases of serious mistakes, some fatal, that should have been avoided. Sometimes the fault lies with the soldier on the ground, but the responsibility always lies with the commander. Commanders, who by necessity have the mindset necessary to prevail against enemy combat formations, are often not suited to the subtle, culturally astute requirements of unconventional warfare. It seems that the Army has not retained its institutional memory about guerrilla warfare. Older soldiers with Viet Nam experience, especially if they are below the rank of O-6, are at best ignored, more often belittled, by arrogant field-grade officers who have not had the time to learn what the older veterans know about guerrilla war, and who are threatened by anything bordering the unconventional.

Their arrogance is costing soldiers and Iraqis their lives.

Everybody Wants To Get Into The Act:

One mistake made early on by the U.S. forces was that many units wanted to engage in their own civil affairs programs, without regard for the Civil Affairs soldiers assigned to these tasks. While it may seem that any and all efforts to assist the Iraqis are worthwhile, duplication of efforts, with more than one unit working on a project, can result in wasted human and economic resources and, worse, misunderstanding by the Iraqis. There have been instances where more than one U.S. Army unit has worked at a hospital site, leading to confusion, frustration, and finally anger, by the Iraqis with whom the project was supposed to build rapport.

During the initial stages of the invasion and occupation, U.S. casualties were (thankfully) light. The Iraqi armored for-

mations did not stand and fight and the expected amount of American casualties were not forthcoming. This left the medical units, both Corps assets and indigenous division assets, with nothing much to do. The solution? Assess and assist the Iraqi hospitals. It mattered not that this was the mission of Army Civil Affairs Public Health teams; this was a job that the medics set to with a will. Consequently, while the medical units did a good job and spent much time doing it, when the CA teams arrived at the hospitals to perform their mission, there was already some "assessment fatigue" evident. The hospital administrators and medical directors, very busy with patients, security problems, and rebuilding, would again have to take time to play host to American soldiers with weapons and body armor who had a thousand questions. Hadn't they



U.S. Civil Affairs officer explains donated medical equipment to Iraqi nurse. CA officers were issued 9mm pistols, and often augmented their firepower with captured weapons.

answered all of this before? And since the Americans were told what help was needed, where was it?

The NGOs also got into the act, assessing and assisting where they could. Often the NGO response was much timelier than that of the Civil Affairs or Division Medical Officer, as the NGO funding requests were not mired in layers of bureaucracy, and their funds were more available. Instead of being able to provide funds and assistance directly, CA Public health teams often facilitated the provision of medical supplies,

equipment, food, or water. While this was of great assistance to the Iraqis, the CA teams were often at a loss as to why the occupiers had to rely on the charity of others to supply basic human needs to the occupied.

The Good News:

The above examples are presented in the spirit of constructive criticism. The critical comments are not to suggest that everything the Coalition forces have done has been ill-advised, or inappropriate, or that all commanders are non-responsive and arrogant. There has been much hard work, personal sacrifice, professionalism and teamwork evident in the liberation and occupation. Though some projects may not have been handled in the most efficient manner, the infrastructure and quality of life for the Iraqis continues to improve day by day. Coalition soldiers and civilian representatives, and brave NGO workers, are risking violent death to provide for the needs of a society long neglected by its former dictator. Most importantly, Iraqis themselves are stepping-up to do what they can to assist in the rebuilding of their society, economically, politically, socially, and for basic human needs. In spite of the threat posed by terrorists and criminals, they have demonstrated compassion and a sense of community.

It is hoped that the types of mistakes noted above are used as examples and not repeated, so that the battle for hearts and minds in Iraq may be more quickly won by the Good Guys.

Ralph Johnson will continue to file reports. ✕

COMBAT WEAPONCRAFT

FARNAM'S GUNSLINGER DIARY ♦ BY JOHN FARNAM

The 2004 SHOT Show

It now takes four, full days to see the entire SHOT Show. It is huge! Here are my comments on the industry, the show, and trends:

I rail against rails! The trend, these days, is to cover the surface of guns with rails. Rails on the top, bottom, and the sides. Rails on top of rails!

This is, of course, so people can attach all manner of gadgets to an otherwise perfectly good gun. I saw rifles so loaded up with rail-mounted accessories, any resemblance to a functioning gun was purely coincidental. Without all that attached junk, naked rails are sharp and awkward. Oh, for a plain-vanilla rifle with a conventional, slim, smooth, comfortable forend. The only "accessories" I need are good, iron sights!

We complain bitterly about media Marxists and leftist politicians assailing our right to own, use, and carry guns, but, I swear, sometimes we're our own worst enemy! Much promotional literature depicts models and even well-known shooters handling guns incorrectly. Cases in point:

Lapua was handing out a brochure showing a scantily clad blonde holding an AR-15 by her crotch, obviously not pointing it at anything in particular, with her finger firmly wrapped around the trigger.

At their booth, Springfield Armory had a huge poster of none other than Rob Latham holding an XD at belt level, too low to have any kind of sight picture, with his finger also wrapped around the trigger. To add insult to injury, he was not wearing glasses. The blond I can understand, but Rob should know better!

H&K's glossy brochure on the P2000 plainly shows a magazine, right on the front cover, with rounds loaded in backwards! I wonder if anyone ever talks to anyone else over there.

On the range, we insist that everyone handle guns correctly and wear appropriate safety equipment, including glasses. Apparently, that doesn't carry over to the marketing end of the industry. We can't really complain

about Hollywood actors handling guns carelessly and stupidly, when we do the exact same thing in our promotional literature, can we?

I was happy to see CEOs at their company's booths, greeting show-goers personally, answering questions, and listening to complaints and criticisms. It's easy for CEOs to skip shows and let underlings take all the heat. The ones who are there personally deserve special honors. They include:

Rich Dyke, Bushmaster
Ernie Emerson, Emerson Knives
Jerry Ahern, Detonics
John Klein, Sage
Peter Pi, Cor-Bon
Lynn Thompson, Cold Steel
Frank Harris and Justin Moon, Kahr
Chris Orlando, Mossberg
Dave Skinner, STI
Bob Weir, Ace
Tim Wegner, Blade Tech
Mike Lowe, Tactical Design Labs (Professional Holster)
Lorie Walker, Wad Wizard
Dick Davis, Second Chance
Alex Robinson, Robinson Arms
Dave Selvaggio and John Milano, DSA
If I neglected to mention anyone, I apologize.

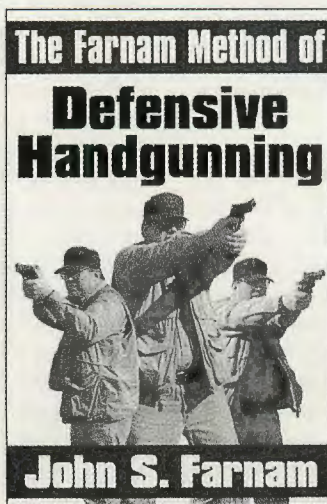
Other News:

Bank Miller, formerly of SIG, is now with the Action Target Academy. Tim Connell takes Bank's job at the SIG Academy. Bank is a tough act to follow, but Tom is a wonderful instructor and will do well.

Charter Arms is back in business. Their small revolvers remind me of their old ones!

Rohrbaugh Arms, of New York makes the smallest 9mm pistol in the world, about the same size as Kel-Tec 380. Expensive, but quite a package.

At the Beretta booth, handguns were an obvious afterthought. They seem to be



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Follow the Legendary Routine That Simultaneously Catapults Your Strength, Endurance and Flexibility to record levels. Feel the results that tens of thousands are raving about worldwide...

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 nuking 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/judoka 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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The 2004 SHOT Show

interested only in shotguns.

At SIG's entire display, they had only one DAK. The new Keller (DAK) trigger is the most significant development in SIG's recent history, and they have only one to show to potential customers!

Beam Hit is now doing basic video simulation, including cowboy action. Lower cost than FATS, etc.

Detonics is back, run by Jerry Ahern. They will do well!

"Safe Direction," by Betterbilt is a Kevlar-lined gun rug that provides a safe direction in which to point your pistol during loading, unloading, and chamber checks — instantly available, no matter where you are. Ingenious product!

Colt, after declaring the "old" Series 70 system obsolete years ago, is now making the "Gunsite Model" 1911 on the Series 70 pattern. Hypocrisy is the sincerest form of repentance!

Springfield Armory is now making the XD in 45GAP. They must think that caliber is going somewhere. The gun itself is a clunk.

The current [Glock] G37 is a G21 slide on a G22 frame, but the slide may be getting smaller, I'm told.

Remington's 7615P is a slide-action .223 rifle (870) that takes M16 magazines. They'll sell a lot of these.

Sage International's EBR (Enhanced Battle Rifle) is an M14 w/extendable stock. Rails everywhere. John Klein tells me that is the way his military customers want them. The M-14 is coming back!

S&W had more guns on display than anyone. The M327 is an 8-shot .357 mag revolver at 21 oz. The 351PD is an extremely light .22 mag revolver. The 325PD .45ACP is big, but light too. S&W's 1911SC is a scandium frame Commander 1911 with a steel slide. Now, if they just had something to compete with Glock!

The Professional Holster, made by Tactical Design Labs, represents a real advance in duty holsters: Level III retention with only one release button. No thumb straps. Retention is reestablished immediately upon reholstering without having to snap anything. Retention is not compromised when an attached flashlight is removed from the pistol. Gould & Goodrich and Bianchi have something similar, but the Professional is superior to both. This is revolutionary!

Continued on page 77

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"Picture Two People, Locked In Mortal Combat, One Strangling The Other. Now, Imagine Yourself In This Scene And Tell Me... What Would You Do?"

(Hint: Whatever Your Answer, The Odds Are... It's Wrong!)"



Kick him in the groin." "Strike the arms or punch the solar plexus." "Grab the hands." "Stomp on his instep"

The list is always the same.

Unfortunately... each answer puts your life at risk in the face of a life-or-death assault.

Why? Because invariably when Tim Larkin asks students this question at his *Target-Focus™ Training* (TFT) bootcamps...

No One — Not Even Trained Martial Artists — Sees Themselves As The One Doing The Choking!!

They're always the one being choked.

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...

You've Just Transferred Your Own Moral Code To A Sociopathic Killer... And With It, Quite Possibly, Your Life.

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?

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.

Don't fool around and miss this opportunity. It doesn't cost you a thing. Call now or go on-line at www.targetfocusweapons.com.

MIDWAY

The Pivotal Battle In The Pacific War

BY COL. JEFF COOPER, USMC (RET.)

The story of civilization is a story of its wars. Wars are punctuated by battles, and these battles can be the turning points in the story of man. There are various sorts of battles, but a battle and a campaign are not the same. Properly speaking, a battle should have a clear-cut beginning and an end, sometimes between sunup and sundown of the same day. A campaign, on the other hand, can drag on for months, or even years. The Battle of Britain and the Battle of Stalingrad were not exactly battles, but Borodino, and Trafalgar, and Waterloo, and Midway were.

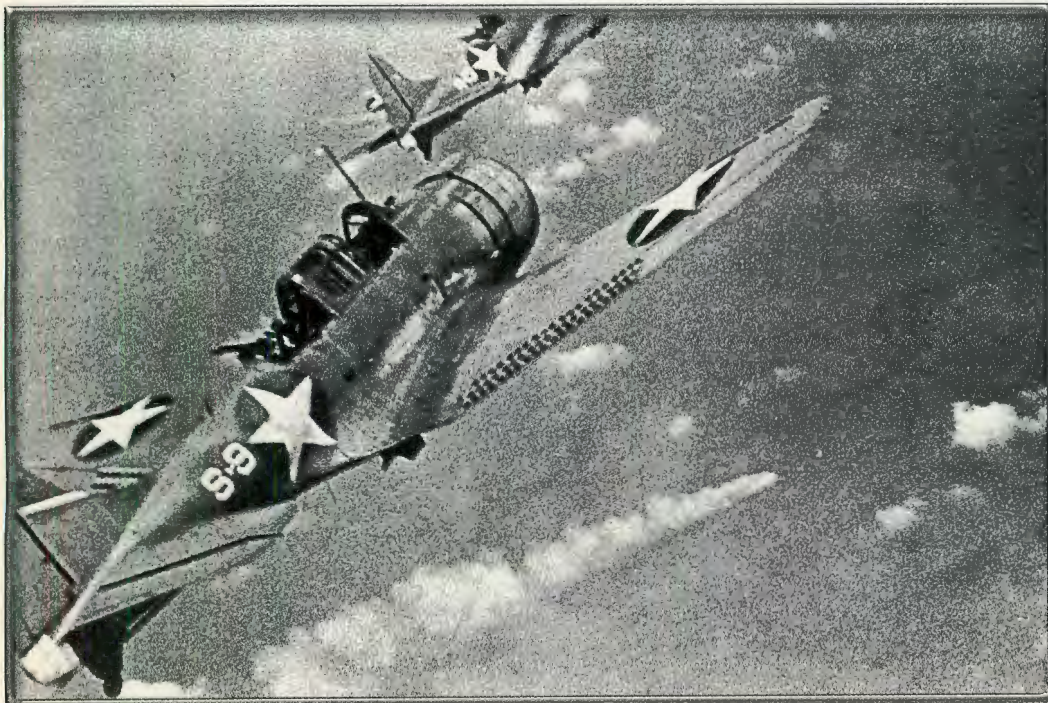
For those of us involved in it, Midway was THE battle. Aboard the U.S.S. *Pennsylvania*, which was an element of Battleship Division 3, I did not fire a shot at Midway, but I was involved in it to the extent of the award of a battle star for that action. I do not claim to be a veteran of Midway, but nonetheless I was around at the time, and I have come to look back upon it as the decisive action of the Pacific War. Midway was colossal. The more one studies it, the more it seems that other actions subsequent to those days in June 1942 should

be printed in lower case. Midway did not involve hundreds of thousands of men, as did Kursk or the Somme, but it did involve the specific and personal actions of a few excellent men, whose behavior turned the tide of civilization.

Prior to Midway, the Japanese swept the Pacific. After Midway, they had lost the war, though neither we, nor they, realized it at the time. It was a day of overwhelming confrontation — a day to remember.

The Japanese sweep southward had been checked at Guadalcanal and Joe Foss, who earned his Medal of Honor there, maintains that it was there that Japan lost the war. What happened, actually, was that Japan discovered they could not achieve air superiority over Henderson Field because it was simply too far from their principal airbase at Rabaul. They could deliver airstrikes against our beachhead on the island, but they could not protect their attack aircraft since the Japanese fighter plane, while a good machine, seldom had the fuel capacity to stick around and fight it out with the American aircraft based on the island.

Archive Photos



The Battle of Midway Island resulted in a pivotal victory for the American fleet. Although the Yorktown was lost to a direct hit, the Japanese lost all the major ships they brought to the battle due to achievements of American aircraft such as the SBD Dauntless 1 Bomber — which crippled their future war efforts.

I have heard it claimed that the Zero was incomparably superior to anything the Americans could put in the air. Truly, it was a nice airplane, described by one of our air generals as "a light sport plane with a thousand-horsepower engine." But an airplane is no better than its employment, and since the Marines on Guadalcanal could nearly always be forewarned of approaching Japanese aircraft from up the island chain, they were frequently in the position to seize the initiative with the advantage of altitude and firepower. Significantly, the Japanese did not have auxiliary drop tanks available at that time, and the drop tank was one of the unsung triumphs of World War II aviation. If the Germans had had drop tanks they might well have won the Battle of Britain. As it was, they had only 15 minutes air time available over the island, whereas the defenders could go up, fight, come down, rearm, and go up again, as long as daylight lasted.

Whether the Guadalcanal campaign neutralized Japanese air power remains debatable, but it certainly helped, for when the Japanese set out for Midway they gathered together the best squadrons they had to be sent, unwittingly of course, to their deaths.

Losing Their Best

Ironically, their best man, Saburo Sakai, would have been sent to Midway with his squadron, except that the replacement squadron leader felt that he needed Sakai's experience to stiffen those formations that remained behind.

To the north, however, Japan ruled the waves, and after ruining the United States fleet at Pearl Harbor and Coral Sea, as they thought, they set forth to mid-Pacific to finish the job so well begun. With decisive naval superiority, they feinted first at the Aleutians in order to pull what remained of the American fleet away from the central Pacific, and thence they headed south with the most powerful naval air armada the world had ever seen. The muscle of this mighty force was made up of four main battle carriers, *Kaga*, *Akagi*, *Horyu*, and *Soryu*, carrying several hundred of the most experienced carrier crews flying the best aircraft in the world. We had three main battle carriers available — *Yorktown*, *Enterprise* and *Hornet*. Our fighter was the F4F Wildcat, a somewhat clumsy but tough airplane, which could neither turn, climb nor sprint with the Zero. Our torpedo plane was the TBD, adequate but little more. Our dive bomber was the SBD, or Dauntless, which, while not a high-performance aircraft, was a very efficient one. Our dive-bombing techniques had been honed to a degree superior to any in the world, including, I believe, those of the Germans, and our best pilots could plant that single 1,000-pound bomb with wonderful accuracy.

I have talked to many experienced aviators from various services who tend to scorn the dive bomber because it is too slow. Speed is important in the air, of course, but under some circumstances the precision and the weight of the blow delivered is more important. I have seen the SBDs at work, and they sure impressed me.

By means of a triumph of decipherment, we were able to discover the overall Japanese attack plans for the Midway operation in time to take action. We were outnumbered and, in a sense, outgunned, but that did not decide the outcome. Oversimplified, our goal was to locate and attack the Japanese carrier force with two arms in coordination. If the dive bombers were able to threaten the enemy, this might well occupy the Japanese fighter defenses so that the torpedo aircraft could sneak in at wave-top without hindrance. This plan might have worked, though handicapped by the relative inefficiency of our torpedoes, which proved both insuffi-

ciently powerful and unreliable in performance. (By contrast, the Japanese "long lance" torpedo was one of their important technological achievements.)

The weather on that great day was spotty, involving varied and broken cloud cover at the point of contact. By contrast, Battleship Division 3, where I was, was totally socked in, suffering our only casualty when one of our spotter planes ran into the superstructure of its mother ship. (Yes, we flew spotter planes in the soup. That was heroic and unsung duty.)

And herewith follows the glamour tale. Combined dive-bomber squadrons were vectored correctly into position with Lieutenant Commander Wade McClusky, U.S.N., in command. The timing of the operation did not work out as planned, and our torpedo squadrons located the Japanese before the dive bombers. The result was that the Japanese defensive air patrol screamed down from on high and simply butchered the torpedo aircraft. As is well known, Torpedo Squadron 8 was destroyed to the last plane, and almost to the last man, the sole survivor being Ensign George Gay, who survived in a life raft.

Unintended, But Effective, Sacrifice

The sacrifice of the torpedo squadrons was not intended, but it worked. Those men did not give their lives knowingly, but they died just the same. The Japanese fighter patrol, having completed its mission, went back aboard the carriers to rearm and refuel.

This is the moment upon which the war in the Pacific hung in balance, for there, aloft amongst the big, white thunderheads at 12,000 feet, was Wade McClusky with 32 SBDs, flown by men who had often proven in practice that they could place a 1,000-pound pill on a half tennis court. And the Japanese fighter planes were down on the deck rearming! McClusky had reached the point of decision some time before and opted to turn to port rather than starboard. This chance decision of his, which could have been decided by the toss of a coin, may be called luck. Others might call it the hand of God.

On his intercom McClusky quickly assigned targets, selecting the lead carrier, which turned out to be *Kaga*, to himself and three others. I do not know if he shouted with exaltation — I'd like to think that he did as he started down. He probably began with a wingover, which is a very graceful and deadly mode of attack. That ride down at 70 degrees, through a blizzard of light anti-aircraft fire, may be properly described only by a full symphony. Of his four aircraft, three put their bombs squarely through the flight deck amidships, and the other was so close aboard as to break the ship's back by detonation in the water alongside.

McClusky started down at 1000. By 1025 the course of the war in the Pacific had been decided.

Of the four Japanese main-battle carriers, three were totaled on the spot. The other lived to launch the attack that resulted in our loss of *Yorktown*, but was so badly damaged that it sank before sundown.

This was an irreparable blow to Japan. Other carriers could be built, and more aircraft, but those 220 expert naval aviators and support crews could not be replaced. Admiral Nagumo, the conductor of the Pearl Harbor attack, survived McClusky's attack in a small boat, but certainly he was aware of the nature of the "sleeping giant," that his people had awakened on 7 December 1941. (He later gutted himself on Saipan, not far from where I was at the time. I suppose he was a good officer, but I never met him so I cannot say.)

It was a cruel victory for us. The sacrifice of the torpedo

squadron, though unintentional, survives as a classic example of the cost of war. But while we lost a number of our best men, the Japanese lost the very cream of theirs. We never knew it at the time. I doubt if even our senior officers were aware of what had been achieved, and none of us juniors had any thought of it.

The war was not over. There was much fighting yet to be done, and many good men would die before we could hang up our SBDs. And we did that. That excellent dive bomber was replaced in due course by the SB2C, which was bigger, faster and packed its bomb load to a longer distance. But the SB2C was somehow not as spirited an aircraft as the Dauntless. When I saw it at work, it never seemed to drop as steeply as the SBD, coming in at nearer 45 degrees than 70 or 80. According to Joe Foss, the SBD was again "too slow." Perhaps it was, but Dick Mangrum perfected the corkscrew dive with it at Guadalcanal, and you never heard that Wade McClusky complained about its top speed after Midway.

Epilogue

There was much great fighting in the Pacific. We throw the term "hero" around today like bags of salted peanuts, but the Pacific showed us hundreds of men who really have a right to that title. Wade McClusky received the Navy Cross, not the Medal of Honor, for Midway, but the awarding of medals is a confused, abstruse and unsatisfactory proposition, and the recipient is the only one who really knows whether what he achieved was what he deserved. I have a Battle Star for the Battle of Midway, which I did nothing to deserve. I have done a couple of things for which I am reasonably proud, but which nobody knows about except me. This is of no consequence. Medals are nice, and like money I guess we can say that more is better, but I have sometimes speculated about Wade McClusky's opinion of himself throughout and after the war, which he survived.

There is a jest about the response of the returned warrior from World War II when asked, "What did you do in the war, Daddy?" In McClusky's case the answer could be very simple.

"I won it!"

Dean of American gun writers and a long-time contributor to SOF, retired Col. Jeff Cooper served in the U.S. Marine Corps in WWII. ✕

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BY DR. MARTIN BRASS

AMERICA AT WAR

1. UNITED STATES DEATH BRIGADES THREATENED by bin Laden aide in audiotape: "Bush appoints corrupt leaders and protects them...al Qaida...is still raising the Islamic flag in the battlefield in the face of the Zionist Crusades. You, Bush protect your country and step up your security measures. The Islamic Ummah Mujaheda (Nation of fighters), who sent its brigades to NY and Washington, is determined to send more 'Death Brigades' (Aljazeera). GLOBAL BOMBMaking NETWORK discovered by U.S. intel who find bomb builders use same instructions for improvised explosive devices in Mid-East, Asia and Africa.

2. GUANTANIMO BAY "TORTURE LITE" techniques of disorientation and sleep deprivation result in obtaining information used to prevent attacks.

3. MEXICO MILITARY HELICOPTERS and forces in Humvees cross U.S. border regularly. Border Patrol reports more than 118 incursions.

4. COLOMBIA FARC remains "militarily intact" according to group spokesman Raul Reyes, despite government's ferocious military crackdown driving rebels from strongholds and putting choke on drug funds. "We can pop up anywhere...anytime," said Reyes. PRESIDENT URIBE claims 14% increase in rebel deaths, 85% captures increase, attacks on towns decrease 84%, massacres decrease 33% and kidnappings decrease of 26% (AP); 22 REBELS killed in raids on rebel camps. AUC rebel groups demand immunity from extradition to U.S. for cooperating with drug cartels.

5. VENEZUELA OPPOSITION leader one of nine killed in movement to recall President Chavez.

6. AUSTRALIA SHIEK AL HILALY, leader of 300,000-strong Muslim groups praises 9-11 as "God's Work;" 9-11 is "God's work against oppressors," he says.

7. UNITED KINGDOM SAM-7 ANTI-AIRCRAFT MISSILE found in Al Qaeda cells, according to Britian's Association of Chief Police Officers. BBC report that discloses classified info triggers "furious row" between M15 and Association of Police.

8. SPAIN 3-11 MASSACRE ROCKS EUROPE. 202 killed. 1800 injured in ten-bomb railway attacks. Fourteen arrested. Suspicions focus on alleged Moroccan-based terror cell with suspected al Qaida links. Suspect Jamal Zougam allegedly linked to 9-11. NEW PRIME MINISTER Zapater, deeply anti-American, threatens to pull Spanish troops from Iraq.

9. KUWAIT U.S. AIR FORCE commandos under fire first time since Viet Nam as they drive buses and trucks hauling material and staff up Main Supply Route from Kuwait to Iraq. COMMANDOS train on M16s, through "combat shooting" course in Kuwait range. Training includes firing hundreds of rounds from moving vehicles.

10. ISRAEL Israeli gunship whacks Hamas' ideological leader, Ahmed Yassn. Hamas and other groups vow revenge.

11. ALGERIA TALIBAN-style Islamic state, goal of rebels, suffers setback as military offensive and amnesty cuts rebels from 25,000 to 1,000, in 12-year state of emergency.

12. NIGERIA ISLAMIC STATE boycotts polio vaccines in emergency immunization for 63 million children at risk in epicenter of polio outbreak campaign, calling it "U.S. plot to spread AIDS and infertility against Muslims."

13. ZIMBABWE 67 "mercenaries" allegedly plotting coup in Equatorial Guinea captured aboard cargo jet to be tried, could face capital punishment.

14. IRAQ 200 SHIA WORSHIPERS killed by suspected foreign Al Qaeda jihadists, part of campaign to trigger civil war. U.S. advisors and trainers find Iraqi commander training and commitment inadequate, sending some to Jordanian and U.S. training camps. DOCUMENTS CAPTURED reveal that Russian engineers were helping Sadaam develop long-range missiles in Baghdad and Moscow. ACHILLE LAURO cruise ship hijacker Abu Abbas and head of Palestine Liberation Front dies of "natural causes" in U.S. custody.

15. LIBYA GOVERNMENT confirms responsibility for Pan Am explosion that killed 270 over Scotland in 1988.

16. PAKISTAN 5-6000 Paki troops fight 4-500 al Qaeda militants in fortress like compounds on Afghan border. Top al-Qaeda thugs escape through mile long tunnel.

THE GREAT IRAQI BULLFIGHT

The Closer to Baghdad, The Closer to Home

TEXT & PHOTOS BY
SERGEANT FIRST CLASS DILLARD J. JOHNSON

Last month we left the Baghdad-bound crew of the Carnivore as they had lost yet another radio to a sniper in the night. This issue brings Crazy Horse through more firefights and into the Iraqi capitol, with thoughts of home.

I turned off the command net and started looking for the sniper that was shooting at Sergeant First Class Broadhead and me, as even a bad shot can get lucky. Sergeant Michael Soprano picked up a guy in the night sight, walking slowly toward us. I hopped down inside the turret and looked through the night sight, and could see the guy walking slow and low — obviously up to no good. I told Spe. Sperry to turn the Bradley off. When the Bradley stopped running, the guy hit the ground. I called Broadhead and told him that I might have the sniper. I had Sperry turn the Bradley on and off two more times to see what the guy would do: Each time I turned the Bradley off the guy would lay down in the grass, and as he got up the second time I saw that he had a rifle.

I called Captain McCoy, our troop commander, and told him I had ID'd a man with a rifle, and he was working his way to me. The troop commander told me to wait till the last second to make sure he was a bad guy before I fired. Ten minutes later he was within 40 meters of Broadhead and me. I watched him bring his rifle up and fire it at my Bradley. I called the commander and told him

that the bad guy was firing at my Bradley. McCoy came over the radio net in a very tired voice and told me to take him out ... quick. I called Broadhead and told him I was going to take this guy out, and to watch and see if he had any buddies with him. With Broadhead watching out for me, I told Soprano to go to coax-range-less-than-100 and fire. Soprano fired a 10-round burst at the guy and he hit the ground.

Then, out of nowhere, this bull came running at the guy at full speed, and hit him with his horns and picked him up just like a rag doll. I called Broadhead and told him he had to see this. The guy somehow got off the bull's head and was running away from him, but that damn bull would catch him and chuck him back in the air again. That was one pissed-off bull. For the next hour we watched through NVDS as this bull carried the sniper around on his horns. War is full of bizarre incidents but this was the strangest thing I had ever seen.

That night Sergeant Broadhead and I would kill another 20 soldiers trying to make it by us. The next morning I walked over to the bull and moved him off the remains of the guy that he had been stomping on all night. The former

(background) If this photo appears blurred, it's because Broadhead just blew up a bunker of 500-pound bombs.



It was a fast but hard-fought road from when Crazy Horse Troop cobbled together a flagpole in Kuwait to put up Old Glory, to when they — briefly — flew the same flag (left) over one of Saddam's mansions in Baghdad.

Staff Sergeant Dillard Johnson and his crew pose for the mandatory photos with their Bradley in Kuwait before the war started. A veteran of the Gulf War, Johnson's biggest fear before Operation Iraqi Freedom was that he would not get to see any action. As it turned out, this was never a problem.





(left) Johnson, McAdams, Soprano pose with the Carnivore and captured Iraqi weapons. Johnson holds the aging No. 1 Mk III Enfield that formerly belonged to the Iraqi who was a fair sniper — but a very poor bullfighter. Russian AKs were routinely retained for use by the troops fortunate enough to get them, as were captured pistols such as the Browning High Power.

(below) Carnivore's crew growls into Baghdad, and stops long enough to Fly the Flag for Lulu.



sniper was now only 2 inches thick. We found his rifle nearby, a WW I-era British .303 Enfield.

It was getting close to 1300 when the First Sergeant called and said that we would be moving over to the "Crazy Horse Café," our supply point. When I got to the fuel truck I saw Staff Sergeant John Williams, and this was the first time I had a chance to talk to him since the war had started. We sat down under a palm tree and talked about home — what we missed and what we were going to do when we got back. The longer we talked, the more people showed up with their input. Other than family, beer and women, food is what everyone missed. MREs are good if you only eat one or two, but after two months of nothing but MREs it was enough. I missed the Big Deal, a pulled-pork sandwich from Sonny's BarBQ, in beautiful downtown Hinesville, Georgia. John Williams wanted to go to Jessup, and get Christy, the barmaid, to bring a big fat T-bone from Dr. Holliday's. Sergeant Jason Raab just wanted to get back to Gilley's, the only real county bar in Hinesville. Sergeant First Class Bennett wanted to get back to the new Bass Pro Shop in Savannah. Specialist Sullivan wanted to go to Hooters in Savannah (he said for the wings, but we know he wanted to see Lulu, one of the hotties there). It was

good not to talk about what we had been through, but remember home and the little things that we missed. Just as we all had got our minds off the shit-hole we were in, it was time to head back to our checkpoints.

Williams would head north and I would move south and set up with Broadhead again.

RPGs Hit Us Again

It would be two days of sitting out in the sun with limited contact until we would start doing patrols again. Staff Sergeant Geary started going on patrols with me, as the roads in this area would not support tanks. The first day we went out, we came across an Iraqi army post. The post was abandoned. Geary pulled overwatch as I checked it out. Finding nothing inside, we moved out and headed down the road to another large building where I saw an Iraqi flag flying. We moved the two Bradleys down to the building and Sperry took the flag down for our troop commander. So far, it had been a good day: No contact, and we had found a flag for the CO.

I was in the lead on the way back when the road exploded next to my Bradley. I turned and looked at Geary. I thought he had fired his main gun at something next to me. That was when I saw four guys



Sure a Bradley is an AA weapon — as long as you can catch them low enough that lack of elevation on the 25mm is not a problem. Like on the ground. Sergeant Soprano also destroyed a couple of MiG 23s, on the ground.

Staff Sergeant Johnson poses with an Iraqi airliner at the Baghdad airport. Or what's left of it.



with RPGs fire at him. I stopped and had Soprano return fire as I called up a contact report to the CO. Then two PG rounds hit my Bradley (the Carnivore weathered some 17 such hits during the course of the war). The first one hit my last two road wheels, half-mooning them. The second one hit the driver's hatch but, luckily for Sperry, it didn't go off. Geary was returning fire and so was I, but we were not sure where all the PG rounds were coming from. Broadhead came over the radio net. He had been listening to what was unfolding with me and Geary: Broadhead had been with me all the way through the war and we had taken care of each other and it was killing him that I was in a fire storm and he could do nothing but listen to his radio.

So Broadhead did what any good wingman would do — he got on his horse and came to my aid. Broadhead came up the road, wide-open and firing on-the-move. He took out two guys in a building on my left. One 120-mm HEAT round from the MI and there was no more building, or bad guys. Broadhead moved back up the road. Sergeant Hull was firing the coax machine gun at one guy who was running away, when Broadhead's tank got hit by an PG round in his right-rear sprocket, knocking off part of one tooth. This was the heaviest fire we

had taken in days, so we moved back and called-in mortars on their position.

Our Fire Support Officer, First Lieutenant McCormick, called in a battery of 152mm howitzers and for the next hour those poor bastards got steel dropped on top of them. The next day we moved in-force with three Bradleys and one tank, but there was not much left of the Iraqi soldiers. I did get the sight off one of the RPG launchers for the museum at Ft. Stewart. We would have no more contact at the Crazy Horse Café.

Cleaning Up Around Baghdad

Around 13 April, we got an order for change of mission. Another unit's HQ had been hit by a missile and they needed us to move to the east side of Baghdad to help them out in their sector. It was almost dark when we got set up. The first thing we saw were tanks, lots of tanks sitting just like new in the palm trees. Not knowing if there was anyone waiting to shoot from them made it a long night.

The next morning I went out on patrol with McAdams and Broadhead. The first thing we found were three T-72s. Broadhead shot two of them, one with HEAT and the other with Sabot. This is when we knew that the T-72s were real crap: The Sabot round



Wanting to have an armor-on-armor engagement to tell their grandkids about, the Carnivore works over one of Saddam's armored Mercedes: Bradley 1, Mercedes 0.

hit the T-72 in the front deck and went out the back. The HEAT round hit the other tank in the side and popped the turret right off it in one big fireball. We didn't find any soldiers trying to fight. We did find all their equipment, and we were told to destroy it all. Broadhead destroyed more than 100 ADA missiles and two ammo dumps. McAdams took out more than 25 trucks. Soprano took out two MiG 23 jets, three fuel trucks, two MTLBs and one large ammo bunker. After being in the Army for more than 15 years and never getting enough ammo to shoot, here I was tired of hearing the gun firing, tired of seeing stuff on fire; just plain tired.

It was then I reflected on the fact that others should know the story of Crazy Horse. The soldiers of Crazy Horse didn't have CNN, ABC or NBC with us. All we had were each other. We would be in Iraq for another four months and every day was life and death for, although there were no more big gun battles, ambushes and snipers happened on a daily basis.

Unless you've been in combat, there is no way to understand what the troopers of Crazy Horse went through, how hard it became to lean forward and fight everything that came at you, when all you wanted to do was stop and go home to you wife and kids. We fought for each other no matter how tired or beat up we were. I knew that the commander, and, more

importantly, my crew and Broadhead, needed everything I had to give them, just as my staying alive depended on everything they had.

Epilogue:

This small fragment of a very large war recalls what happened to me and to Crazy Horse. This is what we saw, what we did and what we felt. We were in the thick of it, with five Crazy Horse troopers being awarded the Purple Heart — three in my platoon and two on my Bradley. Third Squadron, 7th Cavalry had 10 purple hearts, with Crazy Horse having 50% of the combat wounded.

A Troop Forever Changed

Captain Jeff McCoy was awarded one of the seven Silver Stars from Squadron, and he now is training our future officers. He is missed by all of us in Crazy Horse. First Sergeant Roy Griggs was awarded the Purple Heart and Bronze Star with Valor and has retired, but still works with the Army, planning new ranges for more realistic training. Sergeant First Class Broadhead was awarded the Silver Star and is now Crazy Horse First Sergeant. Sergeant First Class Bennett was awarded the Bronze Star with Valor and now is training the National Guard. Sergeant First Class Christner was awarded the Bronze Star with

The closer to Baghdad, the better and more numerous was the Iraqi armor. Here, an Iraqi motor pool features a collection of BMPs.



Orders were to break it all. Here, remains of an AA gun gets demilled by Carnivore.

Valor and a Purple Heart and works with Bennett. As for the crew of the Carnivore, Sergeant Soprano was awarded the Bronze star with Valor and is out of the Army and getting ready to go back to school. Specialist Sperry, my driver, was awarded the Bronze Star with Valor and is now out of the Army, headed for parts unknown. Sperry did all that was asked of him and now he wants the past to be the past. Specialist Sullivan was awarded the Bronze Star with Valor and the Purple Heart. He is still in Crazy Horse, driving the First Sergeant. As far as this writer goes, I have a new Bradley and a new crew and I named her Carnivore II. Sergeant Tate is my gunner, Private Correa is my driver and Spc. Hellman is my dismounted team leader.

With a new crew and a new platoon, we are training to go back to Iraq in the near future.

This has been the story of one NCO and that of my crew, my personal experiences in Operation Iraqi Freedom. I cannot tell you what any one else did because I was not there, but if 500 guys in the squadron each wrote their own story of the war through their own eyes, there probably would be 500 similar stories of well-trained soldiers working in concert as part of a team, and getting the job done. Although Crazy Horse often led the fight on the

ground, we could not have done it alone, and we cannot properly express our gratitude for the other members of the team, who never let us down. I would like to thank the Air Force for their ordnance overhead and their FACs on the ground with us; Sgt. 1st Class Bennett for his spot-on mortars, and the soldiers in support platoon for all that they did time after time in keeping us alive and fighting. I had 38 tons of steel around me, while these guys in support platoon had next to nothing to protect them. We on the Carnivore saw a lot of action and took a lot of hits, but we were just doing the job we were trained to do. If anyone needs to find a hero, look in support – those kids in support saved the day time after time.

This concludes Sergeant First Class Johnson's chronicle of Crazy Horse Troop's excellent adventure in Operation Iraqi Freedom. C Troop 3/7 Cav was only one of many outstanding units to fight their way from Kuwait to Baghdad, but when the history books are written, there is no doubt they will be recorded as one of the best ever fielded. SOF wishes to express thanks to Sgt. 1st Class Johnson and the other fine men of Crazy Horse Troop who contributed to the swift liberation of Iraq, and to this story. Watch future issues for a story on the tank-on-tank battle of Apache Troop's assault on Baghdad. ✕

USMC SNIPER: GUNNERY SERGEANT Carlos N. Hathcock



*MS Would Take The Man —
But Not The Legend*

PART 2

BY LANCE M. BACON

In our initial installment we journeyed with Carlos Hathcock through his storied first tour in Vietnam. In this concluding segment, we accompany him on his final journey.

The Only Enemy That Could Best White Feather

Upon returning to Vietnam for a second tour, famed sniper and distinguished shooter Staff Sergeant Carlos N. Hathcock was put in charge of the sniper platoon he had helped form. What he found upon his return, however, was a

group of less-than-desirable Marines who had become responsible for tedious little tasks around Hill 55.

Hathcock began to reshape his platoon with help from the company gunny, Gunnery Sergeant David Sommers, who later became the 11th Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps.



As with his first tour, Hathcock's methods sometimes left the command upset, but always produced results.

Hathcock was back in the bush, training his Marines. Soon, the platoon of snipers he had been given had grown into a precise killing machine, and their skills were growing even beyond Hathcock's expectations. As the Marines settled into a groove with their new platoon sergeant, Hathcock also took the time to "reacquaint himself" with the enemy, who had far from forgotten him. Word that White Feather had returned spread like wild fire among the enemy forces. It was as though he had never left.

The morning of 13 Sept 1969, Hathcock placed his crosshairs on a Viet Cong who was planting booby traps on a patrol route. With one squeeze of the trigger he put an end to the man's work. The kill was not much different than many of Hathcock's previous 92 confirmed kills, except that this would be his last.

Hathcock climbed aboard an Amtrac three days later as it departed on a patrol. A conversation between Hathcock and 1st Lt. Ed Hyland quickly ensued, and continued as a mine-sweeping team cleared the path before them. The first two vehicles in the column later turned off the road and onto a trail a patrol had taken three days before. That made Hathcock uneasy; he never took the same path twice because "Charlie" often booby-trapped paths once a patrol had used them. As his vehicle made the turn, a 500-pound box mine told him his worry was well placed.

The explosion knocked everyone in the vehicle unconscious, and flames engulfed the hull. Hathcock awoke and began throwing Marines off the vehicle, though he himself was on fire. He threw seven Marines from the vehicle and, as a second explosion tore what remained of the Amtrac to pieces, he jumped through the flames and into the ambush

that was taking place.

Marines ran to put out the fire that had consumed him and left skin hanging from his body. A corpsman made him drink three canteens of water as a helicopter was called in to medevac Hathcock and the other Marines who were seriously burned.

The majority of Hathcock's body had been burned, 43 percent of which was 3rd-degree burns. Aboard the hospital ship U.S.S. *Repose*, he endured excruciating pain as the wounds were cleaned and he was prepared for transit to the states. The day after he arrived on the ship, Major General Ormond R. Simpson, Commanding General, 1st Marine Division, came to visit Hathcock and personally awarded him the Purple Heart Medal. Less than a week later, the badly injured sniper was in the burn center at Brooke Army Hospital in San Antonio, Texas, with Jo at his side.

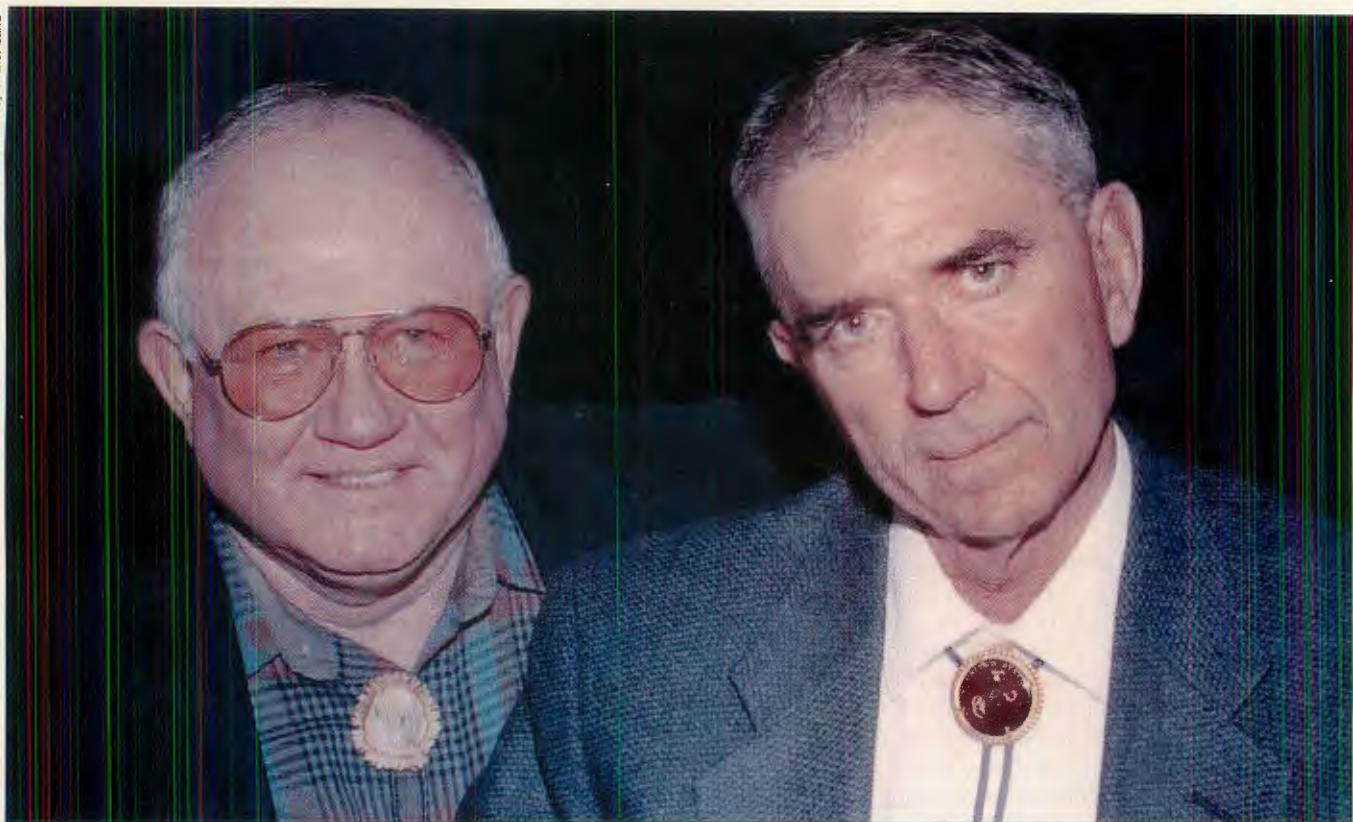
The NVA and VC soldiers had seen the last of "Long Tra'ng." Though no one could claim the bounty by bringing Hathcock's feather and scalp to the enemy commanders, his departure was still a welcomed one. In a little more than one year's time, estimates are that Hathcock was responsible for more than 300 deaths, 93 of which were confirmed.

Now, Hathcock had a far greater enemy to overcome.

The pain still is evident in retired Marine Major E. J. Land's face as he describes his old friend's injuries. As the casualty-assistance officer in Lawrence, Mass., Land buried 211 Marines in 39 months — a grim duty that made it impossible for him to visit Hathcock at the burn center. He stayed in constant contact with family and doctors, but the progn-

A Marine sniper team member with an M40A1 with 10X Unertl scope patiently scans the area for any movement during a sniper / countersniper training exercise. Many snipers agree that Carlos Hathcock perfected this combat tactic.





sis was not good. The road to recovery would be long and difficult, and perhaps even impossible.

At the burn center, Hathcock endured 13 operations in which burned eschar and damaged flesh was stripped away and replaced by skin grafts. During the procedures, Hathcock often contracted serious infections that significantly lowered his red blood cell count. On more than one occasion he stood at the brink of death.

Thousands of letters from military and civilian shooting communities poured in. Carlos couldn't read — he often had gauze over his eyes. But Jo would sit at his bedside and read each and every letter. White Feather would later tell Land that if it hadn't been for those letters, he could have very comfortably relaxed and died.

"Those letters are what gave him the will to live," Land said. "He was in tremendous pain at that time, even though he was doped-up. It was a terrible time for him and his family."

Hyland paid Hathcock several visits during his recovery. The lieutenant lost an arm in the blaze and also was a patient in the burn center. During one visit, Hathcock flatly refused the young officer's intent to recommend him for a medal, saying that he "only did what any other Marine would have done." Instead, and at Hathcock's request, Hyland gave the sniper a memento from the men whose lives he

Retired Marine Maj. E.J. Land and Gunnery Sgt. Carlos Hathcock in 1995.

saved — a pewter mug with the date and names of the seven Marines engraved on it.

Such camaraderie and the support of his family was key to Hathcock's recovery, yet there was another force that drove him: His determination to return to the firing line. Doctors warned that there was little, if any chance, that he would ever be able to shoot again due to the extent of his injuries.

Hathcock paid little heed to such empty words. The determined sniper on 5 Jan 1970, was released from the hospital, and he reported back to the Marine Corps Rifle Team in Quantico 26 days later.

He had fought his way "home" — a place to which many said he would never be able to return.

Indeed, Hathcock had survived the enemy, a landmine, severe burns and subsequent surgeries, but then a new foe began to stalk him. The traumatic injury brought the onset of Multiple Sclerosis, a condition marked by patches of hardened tissue in the brain or spinal cord and associated with partial or complete paralysis and jerking muscle tremors.

While his skin grafts made shooting a painful activity — his grafted skin would literally split from the tight shooting



Retired Marine Maj. E.J. Land in 1971, not long after Hathcock suffered his near-fatal wounds in Vietnam.

positions — his love of shooting blinded him to the blood and pain. Even after losing consciousness on the firing line in July 1976, Hathcock still pursued his love of shooting.

Nothing, however, could halt the disease.

At roughly the time Hathcock hit his 15-year mark, a doctor in Germany sent medical evaluation back that he should be medically retired. The Multiple Sclerosis was growing worse, and because his grafted skin was unable to sweat, the loss of blood when it split easily could kill him.

In response, a tight group of fellow Marines waged a five-year fight to keep Carlos in Marine green until he reached 20 years. That was an increasingly difficult battle, but somehow, somehow, White Feather and his fellow Marines always lived to fight another day.

"I don't know, it seems like some of the correspondence had got lost or something," said Land, who happened to be working at Marine Headquarters at the time. By the time the paperwork was straightened out, Carlos had been transferred to the friendlier fighting grounds of Quantico.

But the combat wasn't over. Indeed, the next five years proved to be what Land described as a "constant battle" to keep Hathcock from being put out of the Marine Corps. The Multiple Sclerosis was affecting his job performance by the end of 1978. After collapsing in January 1979 while observing his students conducting a final examination in the field, everyone knew the end was at hand.

The goal had been to keep Hathcock in until he reached 20 years. The Marines came up four months short, but they were two months beyond what was needed to ensure he got full retirement and benefits.

On 20 April 1979, Gunnery Sgt. Carlos N. Hathcock was medically retired. He continued instructing until the day before his retirement. At the end of that day, he stood looking at the sniper prospects before him and, holding back his tears, turned and walked away.

History Forever Changed ... Or Was It?

While Land and company battled to keep the legendary sniper in uniform, the captain also fought to have established a sniper program at Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps. Promoted to major, he showed the effectiveness and capability a sniper could add to a combat unit, using Hathcock's operations as examples. Land's persistence paid off.

The Corps' 26th Commandant, Gen. Louis H. Wilson, in 1977 approved a concept that a platoon of eight snipers, called the Surveillance and Target Acquisition (STA) Platoon, be implemented in every infantry battalion. That move, according to Land, can directly be attributed to Hathcock.

"Carlos Hathcock not only sparked but inflamed the imaginations of many who would have removed all traces of sniping from the Marine Corps. His real-life heroics served as a demonstration of what could be accomplished with proper training, equipment and leadership," Land said in the foreword of *Marine Sniper*, the biography of Hathcock's life.

"I hope that I had a bunch of [influence] in establishing the sniper program, because I believe in sniping exactly the

same way Maj. Land does," said Hathcock, who attended only a two-week sniper school in 1961. "I have no education to speak of. The only education I got was on the street, but I love to train people. Putting out the knowledge I do have is the greatest thing going.

Today's (Marine Corps) snipers are simply superb," he added. "They receive the best training in field skills and marksmanship, and the professionalism and dedication they bring is second to none. They truly symbolize what it is to be a Marine, and if anyone feels I played a part in that creation, then I can only say that I am honored."

The Marine Corps Scout/Sniper School was first established at Quantico. Its three staff members, including Hathcock, spent their first year attending sniper and scout schools throughout the world. The Marine trio combined their acquired knowledge and experience to form a school that would produce the deadliest scout/snipers the world had ever known.

That school still produces those cutting-edge warriors, and still heavily relies on Hathcock's example — and his old



USMC Scout Sniper from BLT 2/1 providing force-protection in support of ARG/MEU in Kuwait. Weapon is an M40A1 with a 10X Unertl scope.

training schedules, which are part of the inventory.

"In 30 years, we really haven't changed a lot as far as how we build, how we select, how we train snipers in the Marine Corps. And it's all stuff that he set in the beginning," said Gunnery Sergeant Robert Reidsma, the school's staff non-commissioned officer in charge. "The intent he had them do a certain drill, whether it's a shooting drill or whether he had them go out and conduct a stalk, we still keep that same intent, that same philosophy. He laid the foundation for what we do right now.

"When I teach the tactical employment class, I include a lot of what Hathcock did in Vietnam. One of our tasks might be to delay the enemy. Hathcock, as part of a two-man team, laid out on a hillside and delayed a whole company for a couple of days. That gives me an example to use today: Yes, this is possible. Yes, this is true. Yes, this can be done."

That example and expertise is not exclusive to Marine snipers.

Two years ago, Israel approached Land with a problem. There was a quarter-mile stretch of road that effectively was being sniped by Palestinians. It was believed that the enemy was firing from a housing complex, across an open field.

"First thing I said was that if Carlos was here, he'd tell you 'If they're as good as you say they are, they're not where you think they are,'" Land said.

He and Carlos were right.

The sniper had set up not in the buildings, but on an adjacent hill, just as Land surmised. The enemy sniper soon was silenced.

Yet while Hathcock's example remains true, it still meets resistance.

Surprisingly — or perhaps not — Reidsma still finds himself defending and validating the need for snipers with some regularity. When such trying times come, the gunny finds comfort in knowing he's walking some of the same ground Hathcock and Land traveled many times.

"I can't even imagine the stuff those guys went through, but I'm glad they did," he said. "The foundation and experience that has been built in the last 30 years has made our fights a lot easier. We'd be in the stone age of snipers without them."

The recurring need to validate snipers doesn't surprise



Hathcock received the Silver Star, the nation's third highest honor for heroism, for saving the lives of seven Marines though he himself had suffered severe burns. Hathcock never boasted of the award or what he did to earn it.

Land, nor is it his greatest concern when he considers the future of sniping. He is far more vocal about modern snipers being employed in defensive and scouting roles, and heavy laden with a myriad of new technology.

"Everybody wants a gadget," he said. "We need to keep it simple, stick with the basics and use technology to supplement the basics, not replace them. We're getting so infatuated with gadgets that we're getting away from the basics. And Carlos would tell you the same thing."

Land recalled an open-house at Quantico in which a sniper team had the wide variety of gear they carried neatly laid-out on a camouflage poncho. Carlos walked up to a Marine who stood at parade rest and bluntly asked the sergeant, "What's all this shit?" The memory causes Land to chuckle still.

As Land recounted the Marine's lengthy explanation and justification for each piece of gear, the retired major pulled out a photo of Hathcock that was taken as he stepped off on a mission from Hill 55. The sniper's trouser pockets were filled with John Wayne crackers and peanut butter. His rifle rested in his hands and a bush hat sat softly on his head. He had everything he needed.

"They've taken sniping and made it a defensive supporting arm, with a 17-pound rifle. I'll tell you what, I'd like to hear what Carlos would have to say about that," Land said.

"They talk about dropping smart bombs and all the rest of that stuff, and that's great. That really does a good job," Land said. "But there isn't anything that strikes fear in an infantryman on either side than one shot and somebody falls."

With Dignity And Spirit Until The End

To look at him in the latter years of life, some might have

found it hard to imagine Hathcock conducting the stalks that left so many North Vietnamese and Viet Cong dead or trembling in fear. The Multiple Sclerosis that left him unable to stalk or shoot again had taken a visible toll on his body. To look in his eyes, however, one could see that the disease has not been able to grip his spirit.

Hathcock had filtered that spirit into a many endeavors. He trained police snipers in his hometown of Virginia Beach, Va., launched the sale of .308 boat-tail hollow point ammo called "White Feather Ammunition," and he hosted with his fellow snipers a national sniping school which, he proudly reported, boasted a 100-percent completion rate.

Hathcock also had been known to take his hunting spirit to the open ocean in a search for sharks.

"I love shark hunting," he said. "It's like being in combat, actually, because you're sitting there doing nothing, then all of a sudden your reel starts singing. When the rounds start flying, you're in combat — the same goes for that reel."

When there was a break in his schedule, Hathcock could be found relaxing with Jo at their quiet home or watching a

war documentary. The walls of their house were covered with memorabilia from his days as a sniper and marksman — decorated pieces of wood and metal that represented the actions and accomplishments that made him a Marine legend. The American and Marine Corps flags still flew in his yard, day and night, and his picture of "Sgt. John Stryker" was told "good night" every evening.

And one more item was added.

Hathcock received the Silver Star, the nation's third highest honor, for saving the lives of seven Marines though he himself had suffered severe burns. Hathcock never boasted of the award or what he did to earn it. But he was deeply honored by and appreciative of the men and women who worked so hard to ensure he would be properly recognized. And, in true Hathcock fashion, he always directed attention away from himself and toward those for whom he cared.

But there was one topic that would subdue Hathcock's humility; one name that would stir up a little pride. All one had to do was speak of Hathcock's son, Marine Gunnery Sergeant Carlos N. Hathcock III.

And his son wears the same crooked smile when he talks today about his dad.

"I had a fairly good relationship with my dad," said during an interview in his Quantico office, which sits just a stone's throw from the house where he spent much of his childhood. "He was a rough one. He was a gunny," he said with a laugh. "We tried to do things right the first time."

Still, the younger Hathcock was unaware of his father's legacy during his early years.

"To me, he was always Dad," Hathcock III said. "I did not realize what he did or how much of an impact he had on anything as a kid growing up. I knew Dad was a Marine

and I knew Dad did some shooting because I remember going out and seeing him on the range. He kept things very close; his past experiences and what was going on."

Indeed, the fondest memories he has of his father was the time the two spent fishing, "when we wouldn't say hardly anything — just sit and fish." The younger Hathcock had an early morning paper route, and often fell asleep in the boat. His father would not wake him; he would move the boat away from the fishing hole and quietly sit while his son caught a couple hours of sleep. When the boy awoke, the two would make their way back to the fishing hole. The fish might not be biting anymore, but that was OK.

That young boy has become quite an accomplished Marine in his own right. In his 21 years of active duty, he has earned a spot as a member and coach of Marine Corps shooting team, he wears the coveted distinguished rifle marksmanship badge and he boasts three stars on his combat aircrew wings.

That's right. The younger Hathcock is an air-winger, not a sniper. And the reason might surprise you.

Hathcock III almost enlisted in the Navy, and it was a savvy Marine recruiter — not his legendary Marine sniper father — who convinced him to stick with Mother Green. In fact, his father was very hands-off when it came to his career, but the famed sniper did give one bit of advice: Don't enter the shooting arena right from the start. Hathcock wanted his son to get some technical training and put a skill under his belt.

"When dad retired, there was not a big market for marksmanship skills," Hathcock III explained. "Sniper teams were not prevalent in law enforcement. As a result, money was tight when dad retired, though he never gave any indication that was the case."

And how accurate was his dad's advice?

"He was spot-on," the younger Hathcock admits with a nod.

Still, there are many similarities in the two careers. Most notably is the passion for marksmanship — and for teaching marksmanship. It is evident when discussing anything from basic fundamentals to the discipline required to compete on the national level.

But sharing a passion and the same last name doesn't mean everything will come easy. On the contrary, when Hathcock III pursued competitive shooting three years into his career, he quickly learned that V rings don't come easy despite his last name.

"Some people are naturals at it, but I had to work really hard at it," he said.

In fact, wearing that legendary name on his Marine cammies only made the situation all the more difficult, Hathcock admits.

"I know people are looking at me," he said. "In my early shooting career, before I came to grips with it, it messed with me. 'Oh, Hathcock just shot a bad shot,' I learned you can make mistakes and still be a good Marine. It took me a while to figure that out so I could be myself."



A chip off the old block: Hathcock's son, Marine Gunnery Sergeant Carlos N. Hathcock III.

Some sound fatherly advice was what helped him figure this out. Hathcock's parting words to his son, whether on phone or in person, always was to "be a good Marine."

"Dad didn't say 'be like me,' or 'this is how you be a good Marine.' He left it up to me. He put the guidance out there and I did what I felt was right for the Marine Corps and myself."

Today, Hathcock III neither flaunts nor regrets his famous name. He just loves his Dad, he loves his Corps and he loves his son.

That's right, there's another Hathcock. The 14-year-old is

becoming more aware of exploits of his father and grandfather. Whether he follows in their footsteps remains to be seen, but his Dad already is following in the footsteps of his own legendary father. When the teenager makes his choice, Hathcock is determined to let him be his own man, just as his dad allowed him to be. And like his father required of him, Hathcock says there will be one stipulation put on his son's decision:

"Get some good technical training under your belt first."

Cognizant of Hathcock's declining health, the Marine Corps moved a promotion ceremony from North Carolina to his Virginia home. The move allowed Carlos to pin gunnery sergeant chevrons on his only child.

Sadly, Carlos died two weeks later on 23 Feb 1999, at 57.

"I think about Carlos a lot," Land said from his office at the NRA headquarters just outside of Washington, D.C., "I think about the courage Carlos taught me; that there are many kinds of courage.

"There's the courage that usually ends up with the awarding of some sort of medal for bravery. There's the courage to do your job when there's nobody watching you. There's the courage it takes to be alone — that's a different kind of courage, where all of the strength you have is inside of you. There's the courage that it takes to face a debilitating disease and deteriorating health and do it without complaint.

"Carlos taught me that there are many kinds of courage. He taught me a lot."

In an ironic and fitting twist, Hathcock passed away on the 55th anniversary of the day his beloved idol, "Sgt. John Stryker", made his final fictitious charge across the *Sands of Iwo Jima*. Perhaps Stryker was once more joined that fateful day by Carlos Hathcock, who as a young boy so often had accompanied his hero as he navigated the Arkansas woods.

"It's been quite a ride, but I wouldn't change a thing about my life, even if I had the power to," Hathcock said less than a year before his death. "One thing leads to another; if it hadn't been for competitive shooting, I wouldn't have been able to do what I did in Vietnam. If I hadn't done what I did in Vietnam, I wouldn't have been able to survive in the burn center in San Antonio, and if I hadn't been through that, I wouldn't be able to stand against my Multiple Sclerosis. What goes around comes around, and that's what has put me here — still alive."

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

BAGHDAD DIARY

TEXT & PHOTOS BY J. S. MOSBY

26 FEB 04 – BAGHDAD: As usual, half the battle is getting there. After weeks and weeks of delays, clearances and holiday-downtime I finally made it to Kuwait. Earlier, it would have been safer to just go to Jordan and convoy across the western desert, but now there were several drawbacks to that option. A lot has changed since the heady days of May and June 2003 when Iraq was a relatively peaceful and open place. Since then, a myriad of threats has sprung up, starting when you hit the remote stretches of highway west of Fallujah and Ramadi.

Before jumping off, I plugged into the SOF intel net to get the real scoop about what was going on; mainstream news being largely useless for this purpose. In short order, the info was flowing from operators in various places and positions across the country — and the news wasn't good. Right out of the gate, banditry was widespread and brazen on the main roads. One report detailed the ordeal of an British operator from the security firm Centurion who got snapped-up before he could get to base and arm-up, bringing in weapons from Jordan being an impossibility. It was a very close thing, right up to the almost execution. They turned him loose, minus most everything he had. Transportation outfits in Jordan were charging journalists \$1,500 one-way for armed-escort. When SOF inquired if we could simply rent some AK-47s until we could lift our own from the bandits, they stopped

returning e-mails. So much for the Jordan route.

Then there was the question of accommodations. Expenses ruled out the company of the hotel commandos in the press corps, thus five-star digs at the Sheraton were out of the question. This led to a merry-go-round of trying to rustle-up relatively secure arrangements with people coming and going and transportation between their AOs. With al Qaeda-types reportedly gunning for a westerner to torture to death on *Al Jezzera*, the getting from point A to B is a fairly dicey proposition. You don't just step out and hail a cab in Baghdad these days. An old-fashioned embed with U.S. troops was looking like the best way to do it.

Hurry-Up And Wait

Having spent weeks stateside lining up the embed, I had to spend a number of days in Kuwait waiting for a Space-A headed north. It was a good time to mingle with the last of the 101st Airborne who had turned things over to the Stryker Brigade in Mosul.

Mission accomplished. Troops from 2nd Battalion, 502nd infantry (101st Airborne) enjoy cigars at Camp Wolf, Kuwait as they wait for transports to take them back to the United States. (L-R) Sgt. David Herrera, San Diego, CA; Spc. Jessie Bossie, Jacksonville, AL; Sgt. Brian Hadrick, Birmingham, AL.





U.S. Soldiers headed home from Iraq drag their baggage at Camp Wolf, Kuwait. Over the next few months, the U.S. Army will deploy thousands of fresh troops to Iraq to replace troops who have been in country for a year or more. (below) The main transit point for incoming- and outgoing-personnel. A U.S. soldier awaits transport home from Iraq at Camp Wolf, Kuwait. Some troops told of days and weeks being stuck there as seats were bumped on aircraft. One kid, a transport driver who had dropped off a vehicle, got stuck there for over two weeks.

They were in that old army mode of "Hurry-up and wait." Just in that morning after a grueling, three-day convoy down from Mosul, the last of the 101st Airborne was headed home. Naturally, many gathered around the smoking area at Camp Wolf between rounds of paperwork, customs clearance and other Army admin tasks inherent when large numbers of men are coming or going.

Having come north to Baghdad last year with Lieutenant Colonel Lee Fetterman's "Rakassans," I am fond of the 101st and as I still wear the division patch on my right shoulder, it was easy to shoot the breeze with these dusty men in their worn desert uniforms. They were happy to be headed home, but not ridiculously so; just sort of a quiet savoring of knowing that they won't have to wear full battle gear and helmets for some time to come.

"It was a mixture of carrot and stick up there," Specialist John Simpson, from Chicago, told me. "We always try to be nice, but sometimes they'd push it and we'd have to set them back a bit. Once they figured out we could play rough, too, things worked pretty well. We still took fire, but nothing major." We wondered how their replacements, the Stryker



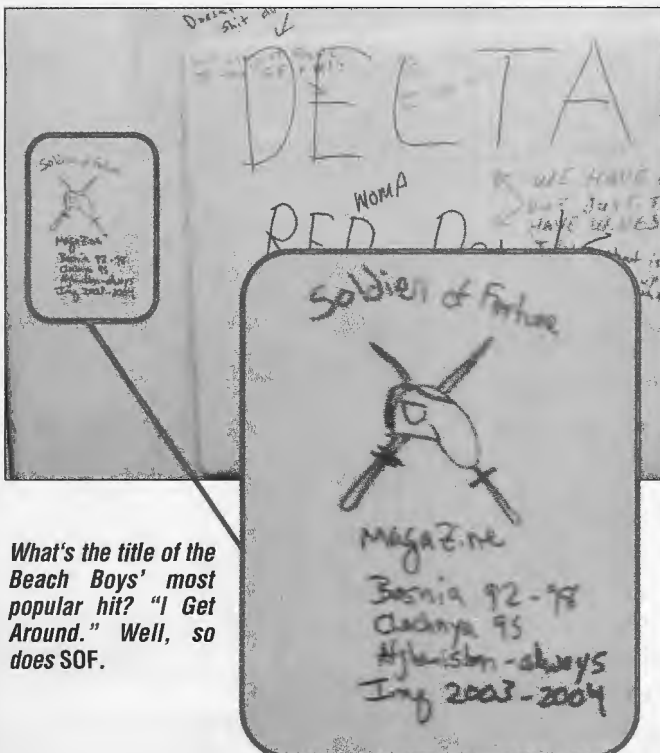
Brigade from 2nd Infantry Division, were going to do. "They'll figure it out quick enough or it will get figured out for them. When our last vehicle cleared town, the radio lit up. Stuff started breaking out all over. They're going to test them," he concluded, blowing a smoke ring.

Strykers Strike-Out?

We talked for a while about the Stryker Brigade, as well. Their time in Camp Udari had been a big splash. Apparently, according to a number of female troops, when their main body moved through quite a few rapes had occurred. One of these had happened to an officer who was somehow grabbed, duct-taped and dragged to a tent where several male troops took turns. The situation was such that receiving officers and camp safety NCOs were briefing everyone from battalion staffs on down that women should at no time be allowed to go unescorted, especially to the latrines at night. News spread through the female ranks like wildfire and more than one lady SOF spoke to is packing loaded nines in their waistband despite a no-brass/no-ammo rule in the rear. An investigation is still pending, but as the women go, Stryker takes the blame.

The guys from the 101st Airborne didn't have much good to say about their newfangled armored car either. "Their vehicles are way, way too big," said one seasoned Airborne sergeant. "They're also real paranoid about Iraqis getting near them. People we've been working with the whole year were getting screamed at and having guns waved in their faces if they tried to walk by the damn things. You'd think that there were vulnerabilities or something," he sneered.

Continued on page 79



What's the title of the Beach Boys' most popular hit? "I Get Around." Well, so does SOF.



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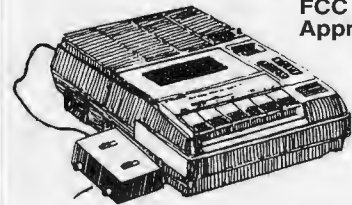


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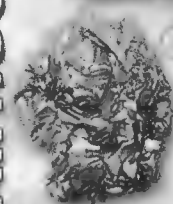
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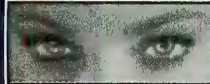
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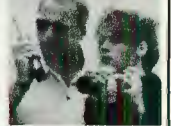
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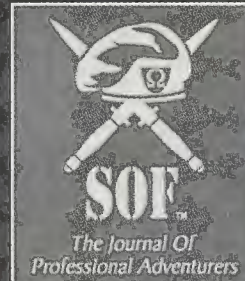


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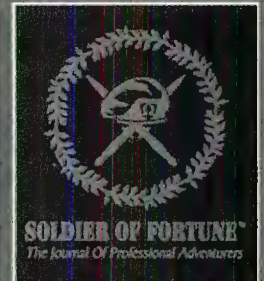


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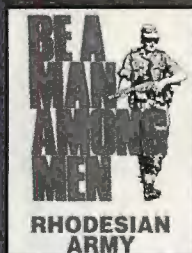
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STEVE SCHREINER

2ND AMENDMENT ORGANIZATION MAN

BY TOM REISINGER

One thing upon which Editor/Publisher Bob Brown has prided himself is the largely "Been there, done that" backgrounds of the numerous staffers and writers who have passed through the doors of *Soldier Of Fortune* Magazine for the past 29 years.

One of the more stalwart examples is Steve Schreiner, now well into his 50s and president of the Firearms Coalition of Colorado, in addition to being a Lifetime Member of the NRA.

Not only Bob Brown, but all of us, are proud to have Steve linked unofficially to SOF. While not a



staff member, he contributes his skills at PR and lobbying as much as possible when not overseeing gun-rights voting at the Statehouse in Denver.

NRA-ILA Volunteer Organization Of The Year Award For 2002

It was all the more gratifying on 12 and 13 September 2003 to see President Steve Schreiner, represent the volunteers from his fine organization, the Firearms Coalition of Colorado (FCC),

Schreiner with a framed copy of the United States Bill Of Rights. (below) First Lieutenant Schreiner receives congratulations on his Silver Star award from MACV CG Blackwell.



THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TO ALL WHO SHALL SEE THESE PRESENTS, GREETING:
THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT
THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
AUTHORIZED BY ACT OF CONGRESS JULY 9, 1916
(35 STAT. 100)

THE SILVER STAR

TO

FIRST LIEUTENANT STEVE C. SCHREINER, GILBERT, ILLINOIS, UNITED STATES ARMY

FOR

GALLANTRY IN ACTION

ON THE BATTLEFIELD OF 13 MARCH 1969

AWARD FORGED BY HAND IN THE CITY OF WASHINGTON

THIS 22ND DAY OF APRIL 1969

Clayton M. Brown
SECRETARY OF ARMY
General, United States Army



Stanley R. Row
Major General, United States Army

presented the 2002 NRA-ILA (Institute For Legislative Action) Volunteer Organization of the Year Award in Washington, D.C.

Fighting for firearms rights are the heart and soul of this group — and they'll be on deck for many years to come.

Back To 1969

Much has changed in Schreiner's life since early 1969 when he received the Silver Star in Vietnam while assigned as an advisor to MACV. The citation reads:

THE SILVER STAR TO

FIRST LIEUTENANT STEVEN C. SCHREINER, OF 113079, INFANTRY, UNITED STATES ARMY FOR GALLANTRY IN ACTION IN THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM ON 15 MARCH 1969 GIVEN UNDER MY HAND IN THE CITY OF WASHINGTON THIS 22nd DAY OF APRIL 1969

(Signed) CREIGHTON W. ABRAMS
General, United States Army

(Signed) STANLEY R. RESOR
Secretary Of The Army

“ ... First Lieutenant Schreiner distinguished himself by gallantry in action on 15 March 1969 while serving as Assistant Team Leader, Mobile Advisory Team III-12, Advisory Team 49 ... Vietnam. On that date enemy forces launched an attack on Lieutenant Schreiner's operational base. The initial attack commenced with heavy rocket, recoilless rifle and small arms fire. Taking immediate action, Lieutenant Schreiner fearlessly exposed himself to enemy



Steve's In-Country Team House Bar, Southeast Asia (1960-1975) display at the Colorado Gun Collectors Show. Some familiar-looking items for those who spent time in the boonies.

fire as he moved about the compound, directing the fire of his Vietnamese comrades. He engaged an enemy 75 millimeter recoilless rifle position with a heavy machine gun, resulting in the destruction of the weapon and elimination of the crew. Lieutenant Schreiner then provided fire support for a neigh-

Continued on page 78

My M1A

I have long been familiar with the M1 Garand family of U.S. service rifles since the 1960s and had shot Expert with both the M1 in school and the M14 in the Infantry Officer's Basic Course in 1967 at Fort Benning, Ga.

When I left the service, I treated myself to two things: a Life membership in the National Rifle Association of America and a National Match (NM)-grade Springfield Armory, Inc. version of the M14 rifle, called the M1A. It came as ordered, with all military parts, issue walnut stock, field-weight NM barrel, and NM front and rear sights. The action was glass-bedded into the GI stock and had a fiberglass solid upper hand guard. Accessories included web sling, brushes, sectioned cleaning rod and the absolutely essential gas piston nut wrench/T-handle.

I shot and hunted with the rifle for years without a scope, but finally found an Adjustable Ranging Telescopic Sight (ARTS) ballistically matched for the 7.62 X 51mm NATO round (.308 Winchester) and a steel mount and installed them. I have since replaced the mount with a two-point A.R.M.S. mount, which requires removing the charger loading slot.

Accuracy with this system is superior and delivers first-round hits at any range. I consider it to be utterly reliable under all field conditions. It is a real rifle that does not have



Steve with his M1A — and his trophy of the day dropped near Maybelle, Colorado.

to be babied or constantly tinkered with. It has been my primary hunting rifle/scope combination since 1975.

I have taken multiple elk and deer with it over the years. It's an "assault rifle." So much for the myth that these rifles can't be used for hunting.

— Steve Schreiner

Hands-On



Heckler & Koch

*The New HK XM8
And HK M4 Get A Good
Wringing Out In Las Vegas!*

TEXT & PHOTOS BY GARY PAUL JOHNSTON



Using a 12.5-in. bbl. XM8, Jim Schatz fires an entire 30-round magazine on full auto holding the gun like a pistol. It never seemed to move in his hand. (inset) 6-5.56mm brass flies from this XM8 as Gil Angelotti puts the gun through its paces.



H&K's Jim Schatz fired an entire 100-round C-Mag non-stop full auto holding it against his shoulder with only one hand. (inset) Jim explains the workings of the HK XM8 at a briefing before the hands-on shooting began. (below) Shown here is the 12.5-in. barrel XM8 Carbine with its AG-C 40mm Grenade Launcher mounted.



When Eugene Stoner chose his direct gas system of operation for the AR-10 rifle, one of his main considerations was the reduction in the number or moving parts in the rifle. However, from the start, the direct gas system had its critics, especially with the U.S. Military's adoption of the M16, and the situation only intensified when problems surfaced after the switch in loading the 5.56x45mm NATO cartridge with ball powder.

Although the M16's ball powder problem was eventually solved, the direct gas system has been spotlighted (if not blamed) every time function problems surface with the M16. Major factors include hot gases and fouling being blasted right into the bolt carrier via the direct gas tube. Not only can this affect reliability, but also wear and tear compounded by effects on lubrication.

During the M16's 40-year tenure, complaints about its direct gas system of operation continued to resurface in addition to "improved" operating systems being fielded in the form of short-stroke and long-stroke piston operation in .223-caliber weapons. These included the AR-180 and the South Korean Dae Woo K Series. Another of these was the Rhino (conversion) System of the mid-1970s.

With the introduction of the Heckler & Koch G36 family of weapons, came a return to the established operating principle of the short-stroke gas piston. While this basic system has been around since its introduction with the Soviet Tokarev Rifle in the 1930s, H&K refined it further. This basic system has now transcended from the G36 series to the new HK XM8 rifle we brought you the first look at several months ago in *SOF*. The latest news is that we got the chance to fire





(above) To demonstrate the reliability of the XM8, Jim Schatz nearly buried this one in the Nevada sand. It worked perfectly the rest of the day. (right) The HKM4 Enhanced Carbine" designer, Larry Vickers, explains the gun's finer points at the H&K demonstration.



several variations of the XM8 at the North Las Vegas Police Range during the 2004 SHOT Show.

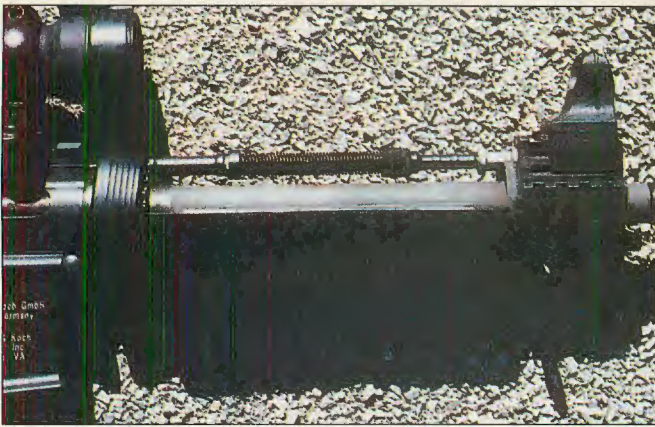
After an introduction on the XM8 by H&K's Jim Schatz, we went to the firing line where Jim threw one of the half-dozen XM8 rifles down in a dusty sand pit and covered it with the grit, and put another into a drum of water. He then proceeded to fire 30 rounds of .223-caliber ammunition through each without incident. Jim then demonstrated how controllable the XM8 is by emptying a 100 round C-Mag from one XM8 holding it against his shoulder with only his shooting hand, and then using a short-barreled XM8 he shot a 30-round magazine on full-automatic with one hand out-

stretched. Indeed, the XM8 did not move in any of these demonstrations. We then filled XM8 plastic magazines with .223-caliber ammunition and went to work ourselves.

The sample XM8 rifles included barrel lengths of 9", 12.5", 14.5" and 20", as well as black and OD green stocks. All samples were equipped with the factory rear-sight optic. The HK AG-C 40mm Grenade Launcher was also demon-



A half-dozen variations of the HKM4 were on hand to shoot including two that were semi-automatic only.



In place of a direct gas tube the HKM4 uses a short-recoil gas-piston to operate its mechanism. This eliminates hot gasses and fouling from entering the receiver.



After removal of the top handguard, the gas-piston/operating rod takes seconds to remove for cleaning.

strated on the XM8.

Since we only had the chance to fire the XM8 at 25 yards an accuracy test was not possible, but several thousand rounds were put through the test guns firing semi- and full-auto long and short bursts. During the two-hour demo, none of the XM8s malfunctioned, and that included the one covered in sand that continued firing all morning.

Although I had a number of misgivings about the XM8 prior to shooting it, I can report that all versions of the rifle were quite comfortable to fire and were very controllable. The bolt release/hold-open control is inside the trigger guard. I tend to think that the only thing that should be in the trigger guard is the trigger, but this one didn't seem to get in the way. I also dislike the cocking handle that "flip-flops" for ambidextrous use. I think the cocking handle should be on the left side of the receiver and, that the 15% of operators who may be left-handed should learn to roll the rifle over to retract the bolt. After all, we right-handed operators don't have a problem with right-sided cocking handles, and how often does this movement have to be made?

The XM8's top-mounted cocking handle also precludes mounting an M1913 rail down close to the bore line where it needs to be, especially for CQB use. To keep the operator's hand away from this reciprocating handle (preventing injury), H&K has added what was until recently referred to as a carrying handle (a useless device on an assault rifle). Now H&K calls this a "bridge" and it can be replaced with an M1913 rail if desired. Still, a sight mounted here would be at

least 4 inches above the bore. Although the XM8's factory optical sight is fine, if it goes down there are as of yet no backup open sights, but H&K reports that these are in the works. By the way, word has it that a variation of the XM8's optical sight will soon be available for the M4 Carbine.

Assuming none of my druthers about the XM8 will be "fixed," I must admit that I like the rifle more than I did before shooting it. It is certainly lightweight, ergonomic and easy to control. Whether or not our military will adopt it remains to be seen, but there is a great move within the military to do so, and it's no longer a secret that a few careers may be on the line. However, does H&K have a backup plan?

The HKM4

After remaining a closely guarded secret for more than a year, H&K also unveiled its M4 Enhanced Carbine at the Las Vegas demo. Designed by retired Delta Operator Larry Vickers, the HKM4 Enhanced Carbine uses the same short-stroke gas-piston system of operation as the G36/XM8 rifles. Four variations of the HKM4 were on hand at the demonstration including 10-, 14.5-, 16.5-, and 20-inch barrel lengths, the latter two being in semi-automatic-only. Of the two selective fire guns, the 10-inch barreled HKM4 was equipped with the "stubby" M16 stock and the 14.5-inch gun had a retractable VLTOR stock that H&K may offer with the guns.

All carbine versions of the HKM4 used the "shorty" length handguards and all four were equipped with triple M1913 rail gas blocks similar to the Triad system used on the new



The HKM4 uses a unique bolt carrier group and its magazine well is larger for easy insertion of magazines.



Shown for the first time is the HKM4's unique blank-firing device for use in training.

Canadian C7 (M16) made by Diemako. Of the half-dozen HKM4 weapons, several were equipped with optical sights including a Schmidt & Bender Sniper Scope, an Aimpoint Comp ML2 Red Dot Sight, an Eotech Military/Police Red Reticle Reflex Sight, the Trijicon 4X ACOG and the Trijicon Tri-Power with their sharp red chevron reticles. The 16.5-inch barrel carbine was equipped with H&K quick detachable open sights, the rear one being an adaptation of the standard H&K 4-position rotary rear sight that clamps on the M1913 receiver rail.

In the HKM4 Enhanced Carbine system, gas is tapped from the barrel to drive a hard-chrome-plated piston back a

short distance to push the operating rod against a solid piece that replaces the carrier key. The operating rod/piston assembly then returns forward under its own spring, but the impingement causes the bolt carrier to continue to the rear, just as in the XM8/G36. Since no expanding gasses enter the bolt group, there is no need for gas piston rings around the bolt, or exhaust holes in the bolt carrier, and these are omitted. Because the tight-fitting gas rings are omitted, the bolt and carrier slide freely inside the upper receiver.

In the original Rhino System of the mid-1970s, a problem

Continued on page 74

GI SHOOTS XM8, MISSES WIFE

(Shortly after SOF published its first story breaking the news of the XM8, we received this letter from a troop in Iraq:)

First of all: great mag! I'm a soldier stuck out here in Iraq. It's not that bad, though — I just miss my wife. I picked up your February issue and was excited to read the cover story about the XM8 (Great article.) That was all the talk in the room I share with a few other guys, "I wonder what it's like... that looks like a bad-ass rifle!" That type of stuff. Well a few days later, we get a call that we need to set up the firing range for the next day. That doesn't usually happen — we know at least a few days to a week in advance. It turns out that there were going to be some high-brass individuals out here to test a new prototype weapon, you know, desert environment testing. That got my buddies and I talking, when one of our roomies, the NCO in charge of the ranges, told us that the new rifle was the XM8. As the BC's driver, I knew I would be there, and because it was being set up by us, I hoped I would get to at least hold one.

Next day, we got there a little early to break down ammo and set up targets. When the "testers" got there and opened up the huge hard-plastic case, I almost had a heart attack, they were so beautiful — three different styles of the rifle: the full size marksman style, the medium size that's comparable to the M4, and the little stubby "Room Clearer." We were all in awe as the "Man" was describing it to us, then he said the magic words, "We are here to just test fire it, maybe a few hundred rounds, and then you guys can shoot all you want."

That weapon is awesome in all aspects of its being! I was in heaven, it fired so smoothly, and was well balanced, and to top it off, we fired over 5,000 rounds in under an hour and a half, with no lubrication or anything. There was never a malfunction, misfire, stoppage or anything, and we got those babies smoking! I think that if you would have fired as much in the same amount of time through one of our antique M16s, the barrel would have needed Viagra afterwards. They passed my standards in every way, except for three small complaints: First, there really is no way yet to mount a sling on it, but I am told that is



Photos courtesy Spc. Chris Long

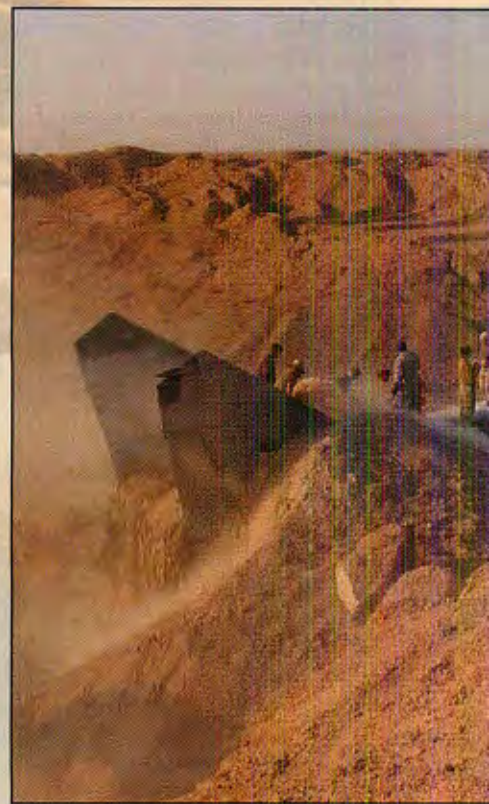
Spc. Chris Long shows off an XM8 fitted with an AG-C 40mm grenade launcher, that he and his buds in Baghdad got to fire for "fun-miliar-ization." (left) Long holds different iterations of XM8, for comparison.

being worked out. Second, the front grip is a little wide and it's hard to get a firm grasp on it, but with the addition of the pistol-style grip for the front stock, it should alleviate any problems there. Last are the sights: They are all battery-powered, and it has no "hard" sights on it. If they would add a set of cross hairs in the existing sight aperture, it would be awesome, and they

would not have to alter the basic design of the weapon. Other than that, I think they need to start passing those babies out right now! I loved it! I just wish I could have kept one. And by the way, the full auto selection blows the 3-round burst crap out of the water!

Anyways, I just had to tell you guys that you are doing a great job, I love the mag, and I guess I had to gloat a little, I feel kind of lucky, not many people have gotten to fire it, or even see the XM8 in person. Thank you so much for doing a great job.

SPC Chris Long,
U.S. Army
Bagdad, Iraq



Crazy Like A Foxbat

Saddam's Non-Existent Delivery Systems For His Non-Existent WMDs

PHOTOS COURTESY USAF

Early after the liberation of Iraq, HUMINT sources led U.S. Air Force teams to dozens of buried Iraqi aircraft, and not the borderline relics widely reported in the media. Of particular interest were the MiG-25 Foxbats unearthed in sand dunes near Al Taqqadum Air Field — of particular interest because this is a Mach 2.8 fighter with a range of more than a thousand miles, and the Foxbat-B version can carry six 500-pound bombs.

The model shown here being unearthed by USAF recovery teams was an advanced reconnaissance model from which the Foxbat-B was developed, and was of considerable technical intelligence value due to the fact it is the current electronic recon version in use by the Russian Air Forces. At the time of its recovery, it was reported as possibly containing advanced Russian and/or French-made electronics sold to Iraq during the 1990s,

in violation of the UN ban on Iraqi weapons sales.

Typically, the aircraft buried at Al Taqqadum were sealed against the sand, covered with burlap and camouflage netting, and buried more than 10 feet deep. Many had their wings removed.

Burying his toys — or the tens of thousands of bodies that bore evidence to the brutality of his regime — was not a new ploy for Saddam. In might even be considered his tactic of choice, considering he chose to hide in a hole himself. His regime had earlier used the shifting desert sands to hide SCUD missiles, and chemical and biological warheads, as found by UN inspection teams in the early 1990s once the locations were pinpointed.

And the current location of the advanced Russian planes uncovered at Al Taqqadum?

“Elsewhere.” ☒



WAR STORIES

By Lt. Col. Oliver North, USMC (Ret.)

REVIEWED BY

MAJOR BRUCE H. "DOC" NORTON, USMC (RET.)

"The real war will never get into the books."
— Walt Whitman, 1862

Oliver North's *WAR STORIES*, certainly an exception, is the one book on the Gulf War by which all others should be judged. It sets the standard for front-line reporting and provides brutal accuracy and the feel of the conflict.

Lieutenant Colonel Oliver L. "Ollie" North, USMC (Ret.) is a combat Marine, highly decorated, universally known and uniquely qualified to tell this story.

He's also a combat correspondent for the FOX NEWS CHANNEL.

His book about "Operation Iraqi Freedom" should be the first you read on the subject.

North molds the story into chapters that are written as Situation Reports (SITREPS). It gives the reader a sense of time and place that lets the narrative unfold in a way that makes perfect sense. I've got to tell you, there's no need to be jumping back-n-forth from chapter to chapter, trying to check up on which character is doing what. The flow of action in this book is just about the best I've read anywhere.

North was the only "news guy" in the entire war to serve (embedded) with three different fighting units: The First Marine Division, the Third Marine Air Wing and the Army's Fourth Infantry Division. He really did "get around" the battlefield and inspired the jealousy of the guys who were dressed out of a Banana Republic or L.L. Bean catalogue.

The historical import of this effort is one of it's strongest points. He calls the events the way he sees them without spin or cleaning-em-up. The style is a

cross between Ernie Pyle's mud-soldier approach and a classical description of combat events as they happen. History is recorded, and you get to meet and know the Marines, Sailors, Soldiers and Airmen ... making it.

The single thing that makes *WAR STORIES* so special, is the people. North tells *their* story, where other authors dwell in grand strategy and what Headquarters — U.S. Central Command — is doing. This story is about the people "at the front."

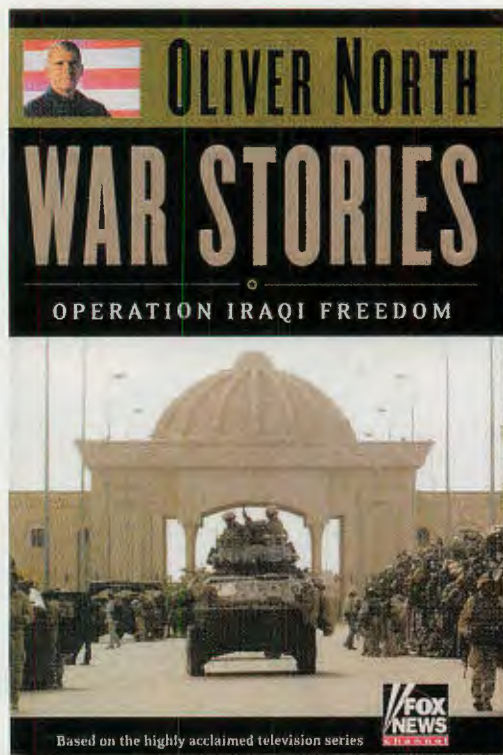
No "REMFs" need apply.

Excuse me for a moment while I tease you with some of the real-life characters in this book. They are people we know ... maybe they have different names and come from different hometowns, but we know these guys. After I read the book the first time, I went back to look at these genuine heroes again. No spit-'n'-polish, no 'make-up' with words ... just humanity in uniform ... in time of war!

There's Gunnery Sergeant Dennis Pennington, USMC, a hard-assed, wise and wonderful leader of men. He showed his concern for his troops by barking orders at 'em and applying that sumptin' extra; maybe a pat on the helmet, or a swift kick in the behind ... but Gunny Pennington is the old "PRO" they always talk about. He comes to life as a hard-bitten, yet always worried-for-his-troops-safety, American hero.

Corporal Nathan Kendall, USMC, a CH-46 helicopter doorunner, can do things with a M-2, .50-cal. machine gun that aren't in the tech manuals. Kendall is one of those kids who, no matter what, makes the old-timers scratch their heads in amazement.

Corporal Phil Sapio, USMC is a tough, wise-cracking Marine who



you'd want on your team, "just because."

Corporal Edward Chinn is the Marine who places the chain around the neck of Saddam's statue in that now-famous piece of Gulf war-footage. The entire world saw it ... including Ollie North.

Lieutenant Colonel Brian McCoy, USMC, the hulking CO of Third Battalion, Fourth Marines, led his Marines into east Baghdad in house-to-house fighting. It didn't last long, because after the first few shoot-outs, the Iraqis welcomed him with open arms.

Lieutenant Colonel Larry Jackson, U.S. Army, Commander of 3rd Battalion, 66th Armored Regiment of the 4th Infantry Division, is a no-nonsense, get-outta-my-way, warrior — who knows the book, but doesn't always use it. His tanks, M-113s and Bradleys shake-up the world in Tikrit.

Sergeant First Class "T" Terrigino, U.S. Army, Scout Platoon Sergeant is a soldier's SOLDIER. He's tough on his troopers and he's not going to get any of his men hurt as a by-product of stupidity. And they all know it.

There's a legion of countless heroes in this book and that's what makes it so special. North, of all the embedded war correspondents, always got our troops on camera. He was the first to do it, and the other "EMBEDS" followed it, after the ratings were posted back home.

Two of the most compelling real-life characters are part of what North calls the Irish Mafia in the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force.

Colonel "Fightin' Joe" Dunford, USMC, is the CO of the Fifth Marine Regiment who wrote history but didn't bother

to dot the "I's" and cross the "T's."

Dunford's combat leadership makes him a modern legend in the Corps.

Lieutenant Colonel Jerry Driscoll, USMC, who commanded the RED DRAGONS of HMM-268, (a helicopter squadron) during the thick of the fighting, has nerves of steel and a dedication to the Marine Corps that rivals a religion.

All of These characters are for real ... and you'll get to know them when you read this book. The perspective here is really unique and it makes you feel part of the action.

In the AFTERMATH section, Ollie gives a unique view on all those who were opening their mouths when they didn't know what the hell they were talking about. He does not suffer these fools gladly. This is no "I saw it for the first time" correspondent. He does not treat the media establishment with kid gloves, he slaps the hell outta them!

The book is written by a combat-decorated "GRUNT." He's also a guy who served as the counter-terrorism coordinator for President Ronald Reagan's National Security Council ... if you can remember that part of his resume.

He's been places he wants to tell you about, but he can't ... or he'd have to — ya. But, regardless, you should read this book, it was written from "the front" and it's a super read.

The REAL WAR did get into the books, Walt!

Major Bruce H. "Doc" Norton, USMC (Ret.) is a highly decorated combat Marine. A nationally published military journalist and author, he has written nine books. He serves on the staff of the Citadel, The Military College of South Carolina. ✕

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Continued from page 10

let that can be trusted 100%! Keep it up, guys, because, if you don't, none of those pencil-neck dweebs are going to report any accurate news!

Joe Fernandez

Aww, Joe, don't trust us 100%, because we've been doing this for nearly 30 years, and sooner or later we're going to make a mistake.

John Weisman's Letter

It was with great pleasure that I read your letter in the April 2004 Soldier of Fortune magazine, and nothing speaks more true than those words that you have written. I'm a former Marine who just got out of service (more to try to see what I can do on the outside), and I have been and always will be proud of my military service. I was happy as hell that that picture showed up, that's for sure.

Screw all the liberal papers that think that showing pictures of our ser-

vice members being dishonored in another country are good for ratings, and that would prefer that the truth not get out.

The picture of Saddam was a cold visceral truth that warms the hearts of our fine fighting forces, lets them know that all of our hard work and dedication to this country pays off.

I'm glad to know that there are people out there such as yourself that support the military; it supports even former members of the service! Thank you!

From a former jarhead, Semper Fi!
Travis Mohler

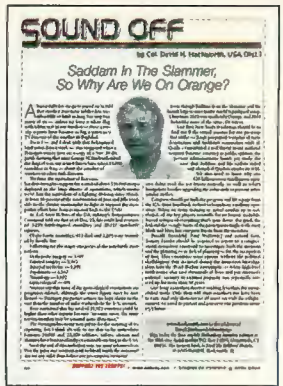
Misleading Numbers?

I was reading the "Sound Off" article by Col. Hackworth; His numbers are somewhat misleading. YES, every soldier's, sailor, airman, and marine life is valuable and one day we will have wars with no losses. Politicians and Military leaders should learn from prior mistakes and lessons learned. His numbers state we have taken 14,000 casualties since the dogs of war were unleashed. In 2001 alone, in the

U.S. we had 79,700 accidental deaths, 3,900 in the world trade center equaling 83,600 domestic deaths, costing the U.S. \$516.9 billion. Now, these numbers are deaths not counting injuries and pregnancies. My point is the good Col. spins his messages like the left wing media.

K. Forbus

Wars with no losses sound good to us, but how do you tell who won?



SOF Solicits Your Letters

by e-mail: editor@sofmag.com ; snail-mail: 5735 E. Arapahoe, Unit 5A, Boulder, CO 80303; or Fax: 303-444-5617. Lashes, laurels, comments, helpful information, questions are welcome. We may edit for space or clarity, and if two letters cover the same subject, the most concise one has the edge for publication. Visit our web site: www.sofmag.com . ✉

HOLOGRAPHIC WEAPON SIGHT *Speed...*

Firefights in close quarter environments are won by fast accurate target acquisition. Locking onto the target fast means you win. The alternative is not an option. The Holographic Weapon sight (HWS) delivers unmatched speed gains... and is the solution.

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was discovered where the operating rod's impingement against the plugged carrier key caused the bolt carrier to tip down in the rear, resulting in damage to the bolt. This was offset by filling the carrier key with leather-and-steel disks to act as a buffer system for the bolt carrier. In the HKM4, the rear of the bolt carrier has an enlarged section at its lower rear that rests on the bottom of the upper receiver to keep the carrier level and in line with the bore during impingement from the operating rod. This enlarged portion tapers at the back of the carrier to allow it to enter the recoil-spring tube smoothly, a simple solution to the problem.

The forward end of the HKM4 bolt carrier is also enlarged to prevent debris from entering the ejection port, and the rails on which the carrier rides are much wider than those on the M16 bolt carrier. Because of this, there is no ejection port cover on the HKM4.

On the lower receiver of the HKM4 the mouth of the magazine well is slightly more flared for easier insertion of the magazine. There is also a retain-

er for the spring and plunger/detente of the receiver locking pin at the rear of the lower receiver, this to keep the spring and plunger from falling out when removing the butt stock. Other than these differences the HK M4 is basically identical to the Colt M4 and the upper receiver group will interchange with the Colt and most variants. A special H&K blank firing system was also unveiled for the M4 Carbine.

After a brief introduction of the HKM4, Larry Vickers removed the upper handguard from one of the 10-inch barrel guns and fired four 30-round magazines full auto as fast as he could change them. He then put his hand on the exposed operating rod to demonstrate that there was no heat transfer from it to the upper receiver group. The heat waves coming off the barrel were an indication of its 350 degrees-plus temperature. We were then allowed to fire the guns to our hearts' content using the new all-steel HK M16-type magazines.

The HKM4 variations exhibited typical H&K high quality and handled exactly like their Colt counterparts and, as with the XM8, no malfunctions were experienced with any of the HKM4 Enhanced Carbines. After all,

the gun uses a cold-hammer-forged barrel made from the highest quality steel, and is designed to function reliably and accurately for 20,000 rounds without cleaning or lubrication!

Being Mil-Std, the upper receiver could also accept the A.R.M.S. Selective Integrated Rail (S.I.R.) System that will allow the barrel to free float if the barrel nut were replaced with a standard one. Additionally, the HKM4 will accept the Knights Mfg. Co. Rail Adapter System (RAS) or the SureFire M1913 rail forend. It was also indicated that H&K will offer the VLTOR retractable butt stock on the HKM4. This is a great improvement over the conventional sliding butt stock with its spare battery carriers. As an aftermarket addition, the HKM4 would also accept the Magpul ModStock that has been adopted by some elements of SpecOps. Then there's the ERGO grip from Falcon Industries. Oh, yes, and in case there was someone out there who still wanted one, the HKM4 will also accept the standard removable carrying handle. In short, the HKM4 is friendly to all current systems.

So, what's the future hold for the HK XM8 vs. the HKM4 Enhanced Carbine? I asked Jim Schatz this very question.

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His response was that the notwithstanding the adoption of the XM8, the HKM4 was intended as a possible interim upgrade for existing M4 Carbiners not only in the U.S. Military, but also around the world at least as an upper receiver component. He also expects the gun to be widely accepted by U.S. law enforcement, as well as in the private sector. When I asked him about rumors of G36 and XM8 rifles being experimented with in the new 6.8mm Remington SPC-caliber I got a "no comment." However, the XM8 is being tested in 5.56mm not only by the Army,

but also the USMC, Air Force and Coast Guard.

Ongoing work on the HKM4 project includes a monolithic upper receiver with integral Rail Adapter System, an improved finish and ambidextrous controls, a Safety Blank Firing Adapter system, an HK free-floating modular rail system, and an integrated reflex sight with IR laser aimer and illuminator much like that for the XM8. Don't be surprised if the HKM4 will be introduced with a new version of the A.R.M.S. S.I.R. System by the time you read this.

The basic 10-in. barrel HKM4 is seen here without accessories or sights. It will accept a host of accessories.

As good as the HKM4 Enhanced Carbine is, and it appears to be darned good, it has some 16 parts that are not in common with the standard M4 Carbine, 13 of them in the upper receiver group along by my count, and I'm not including the recoil-spring group. This could preclude U.S. Military adoption no matter how superior the HKM4 design is. The fact is that the Colt M4 works OK, even

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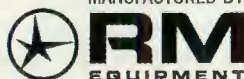
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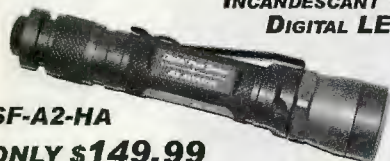
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Combat Weaponcraft

Continued from page 30

Action Target's "Line of Fire" in 20-foot sections contains everything one would want in targets, bobbars to movers. Slick set-up. Blackwater's system is, as near as I could tell, identical. As noted above, Action Target now sponsors a training academy. Their commitment to training is commendable.

Cor-Bon now makes DPX for deep penetration, but I like PowerBall. PowerBall is now available in 9X23, .38Spl, and .30 Carbine. Cor-Bon also makes .32NAA and .25NAA. Cor-Bon is the best ammunition company out there. Their stuff performs, and quality control is the best in the business.

STI makes the LS40, the thinnest and smallest .40S&W available. Nice to carry around.

Paraordnance is hawking their LDA. The trigger is smooth, but it is too light for a serious pistol, in my opinion.

Kahr Arms is now making an M1 Carbine, as well as their excellent line of small 9mm and .40S&W pistols

S&W had more guns on display than anyone. The M327 is an 8-shot .357 mag revolver at 21 oz. The 351PD is an extremely light .22 mag revolver, but, with a barrel that short, .22-LR velocity will be identical. The 325PD .45ACP is big, but light too. S&W's 1911SC is a scandium frame Commander 1911 with a steel slide.

Now, if they just had something to compete with Glock!

Mossberg's 935 autoloading (gas) shotgun is a refinement of their old "Jungle Gun." It now works like an 11-87. Nice gun. I'll have one shortly. Their 590A1 is a grand serious pump gun. Wish they made both in a short, light 20 ga. for my female students.

Bushmaster now makes their version of the Carbon 15. One model, "The Lady," immediately garnered Vicki's attention, because it was so short and light.

We'll have a copy shortly.

Kel-Tec's line of small autoloading pistols garnered lots of attention. I have ne of their .380s, and I must say, it works just fine. Irv Stone at Bar-Sto is

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making a 32NAA barrel for me. Makes a nice backup. Their folding SU-16 .223 rifle is also interesting.

H&K's P2000 with the LEM trigger was on display, and a nice carry gun it is. However, they're still offering manually decocking models (Heaven knows why!), one of which "features" a decocking button on the rear of the slide. None of us could decock the gun without compromising the grip. I thought S&W's P99 decocking button was in the dumbest place imaginable. I was wrong!

H&K's version of the M4 uses a gas piston, similar to the old Rhino system. Their rifle magazines are nice! Their futuristic XM-8 rifle is also a gas piston gun.

H&K's Academy is now headed by none other than Rich Gee, formally of Gunsite.

Taurus is making the PT745 in .45ACP, the PT640 in .40S&W, and the PT111 in 9mm. All are basically a Glock with the addition of a two-position, manual safety. They fit the hand nicely. Triggers are smooth. Now, if we could just keep them running.

My friends at Rock River Arms indicated an "N" stamped into the top of the barrel of their AR-15s indicates a NATO Chamber. Most all heavy, stainless barrels have SAAMI chambers.

Olympic Arms is making AR-15s in all kinds of calibers, including pistol calibers.

DPMS had a nice display of AR-15s. The "Dissipater" model is popular, but reliable functioning is difficult with the gas tap that close to the muzzle.

DSA had their FAL on hand. What a grand rifle it is! DSA is now also making AR-15s. I'll have one soon.

Tim Wegner of BladeTec indicated he is making lots of Taser holsters these days. Like Uncle Mikes, his Kydex holsters are now injection molded.

Brian Esch of Tactical Advantage is making what look like Kydex holsters, but they're made of carbon fiber instead. It is thinner and stiffer than Kydex, and it can withstand many more flexes without cracking. It may supersede Kydex! ❌

Steve Schreiner

Continued from page 59

boring United States engineer unit with the machine gun and was instrumental in repelling this attack and inflicting numerous casualties on the enemy. Inspired by his personal bravery and gallant example in the face of overwhelming odds, his Vietnamese and American comrades repulsed the attack. First Lieutenant Schreiner's conspicuous gallantry in action was in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Army and reflects great credit upon himself and the military service. ... "

Now, To The Fight At Hand

Steve's current battle is to keep Senator John Kerry out of the White House. As he states rather emphatically, "I had no use for Senator Kerry's attitude about the Vietnam War in 1968, and I still don't. ... Senator Kerry is a disaffected blueblood New Englander who has been feeding at the public trough for the last 40 years. We don't need [a] New England version of Bill Clinton — or worse."

When asked about Senator Kerry's rather quick DEROS from Vietnam (allegedly because of three very minor wounds) Steve replies, "It's my understanding that Kerry lost few if any days of duty for his three wounds suffered during his first (and only) four months of duty in Vietnam." ❌



Steve at a recent gun show representing the Firearms Coalition of Colorado; Telephone: 303-369-GUNS.

Baghdad Diary

Continued from page 51

Comments were also passed about how streets in the Mosul area and surrounding villages that were no problem to patrol with Humvees were now strictly off-limits to the lumbering, high-tech battle wagons. Apparently a number of fences and homes have already taken the brunt of a passing encounter and they're apparently sticking to the main roads.

None of this came as a surprise. When Stryker rolled north, it was accompanied by much fanfare, so much so that a light colonel was put in charge of the public-relations effort. It's rare to encounter a PAO above major and then only at division. Down with the units it's usually a friendly captain pulling double-duty. This in itself was suspicious. When it came out that the two-star responsible for pushing the project was now on the board at General Dynamics it was pretty clear what had gone on.

After a short time in the hot zone near Tikrit, where several were lost to accidents and IEDs, Stryker was quickly sent up to the quietest sector in country, Mosul.

Time, apparently, will tell with the Stryker.

Fresh Faces

The camp we were in was also the main in- and out-processing point for troops coming and going to Iraq. While I sat with the John Simpson, a Spc. 4 from the 502nd, an interesting exchange occurred. As we sat, a group of soldiers in full "battle rattle" walked over. (Battle rattle is what the guys call all their armored vests, helmets and equipment gear they have to wear.)

This rattle on the newcomers was clean, very clean, as if it had been issued yesterday. A young private sat down on the sandbags near to us and we asked him where he was from. "Ohio," he said glumly. He and his friends were with a National Guard transportation unit and they had just gotten off the plane. They'd been bussed over to the camp to be processed in and sent north. They were even wearing their gas masks. No one has been wearing gas masks around here since the "war" ended back in May.

He told us how they'd just flown in, had no idea where they were going and asked if we had any advice. It suddenly struck me how much younger he looked than Simpson despite the fact

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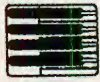


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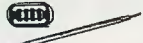
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that they were both in their early 20s. It wasn't that John was haggard, they way the guys in WWII looked after Normandy, but that he just seemed to have much more of an edge to his features than our newcomer. Side-by-side the new guy looked like he was in his teens by comparison. I hadn't really ever seen it like that so starkly before and it sat heavy with me. An edge around his eyes and jaw line, John had taken on a rough-hewn maturity during his time in Mosul.

As for advice, John paused and said, "Well, watch out for IEDs." At this the new guy shook his head and shot back, "That's what we've been hearing for 45 days!" There was just a touch of sass in his voice, a touch of fed up with being told for the 3,000th time to watch out for IEDs, a hint of "Tell me something I don't know, dude."

In an instant John tensed up like a coiled spring, his jaw set hard, the easy going, relaxed smile disappearing from his face. Subtle, but very evident, like a spark off the frizzen on an old flintlock rifle. Hanging for just a moment before the priming flash fires.

Like a papa wolf that's been sassed by a pup, he leaned forward, barely perceptible but electrically obvious, like he was about to snap at the new guy's heels. The new guy froze in mid-drag and his eyes widened. After a long pause John slowly and with quiet emphasis said, "Watch out for IEDs."

John hadn't aged. John had *edged*. Day after day of climbing into a Humvee or moving out on a foot-patrol had honed something deep and instinctual. Something predatory that emerges when coming home in one piece means being constantly ready to react instantly. Keeping an edge. Then, just as quickly as it had appeared, it receded and he visibly softened, coming down a couple of notches. "Just be careful up there," he said. We breathed again.

The new guys nodded silently, crushed out their smokes and scurried away to their staging area. As they disappeared into the crowd, they walked into an age-old cycle of fresh troops going forward and veterans coming home. Over the next few months, thousands more young Americans will make that same journey here, just as the thousands who have gone before them. John finished his cigarette and we shook hands and then he, too, walked off into the crowd.

J.S. Mosby has filed numerous war-zone articles. ✕

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Command Guidance

Continued from page 6

dents like this or having the perpetrators arrested? The answer is simple. You are a liar. Your medals and mine are not a free pass for lifetime, Senator Kerry, to bypass character, integrity, and morality. I earn my green beret over and over daily in all aspects of my life.

Eight National Guard green berets, and other National Guard soldiers, have been killed in Iraq and Afghanistan, and you totally dishonored their widows and families by lumping National Guard service in with being a draft-dodger, conscientious objector, and deserter, just so you can try to sabotage the patriotism of our President who proudly served as an Air National Guard jet pilot. I have a son earning his green beret at Fort Bragg right now, and his wife serves honorably in the Air National Guard, just like President Bush did, and I am as proud of her as I am my son. I volunteered for Vietnam and have no problem whatsoever with President Bush being our Commander-In-Chief. In fact, I am proud of him as our leader.

John Kerry, you personally derailed the Vietnam Human Rights Bill, HR2833, in 2001, after it had passed the House by a 411 to 1 vote, and thousands of pro-American Montagnard tribespeople in Vietnam died since then who could have been saved, by you. Earlier, as Chair of the Senate Select Committee on MIA/POW Affairs, you personally quashed the efforts of any and all veterans to report sightings of living POW's, when you held those reins in Congress. You have fought tooth and nail to push for the US to normalize relations with Vietnam for years.

"Hanoi John," now that it works for you, you beat your chest about your Vietnam service, but to me, you are a phony, opportunistic, hypocrite. You are one of those politicians that is like a fertilizer machine: all that comes out of you is horse manure, and you are spreading it everywhere.

Medals do not make a man. Morals do.

Don Bendell, a Vietnam vet, served as an officer in four Special Forces Groups, is a best-selling author with over 1,500,000 copies of his books in print worldwide, a 1995 inductee into the International Karate Hall of Fame, and owns karate schools in southern Colorado. 🇺🇸

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SOUND OFF

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

Generals, Talk To Your Sergeants

Seasoned combat vets in Iraq are spoon-feeding the newbies from green units as they pour in for their one-year stint in the "sandbox." They're sharing the tricks of the trade — which could dramatically reduce casualties — as warriors have done for years.

A sergeant I've known since he laced up his first pair of jump boots says: "The 21st Infantry is relieving us. Even though they're non-paratroopers, they're pretty good. We're passing on all the little things we learned the hard way and trying to bring them up to speed so they'll get the bear before the bear gets them."

And there's more good news: The senior Army brass have decreed that replacing units on the battlefield rather than individual soldiers is the right way to go. They must have finally figured out that units retain their cohesion, teamwork skills and unit spirit, while the individual replacement system blows away institutional memory with a bigger bang than a Claymore mine. The result is too many American kids learning critical how-to-stay-alive lessons while already in the killing zone.

Another old pro in Iraq reports: "Hack, recently the guerrillas shot at one of my patrols with rocket and machine-gun fire. My boys killed all the bad guys less one. Then this wounded dude started babbling and apologizing for taking us on."

The bewildered sergeant asked the wounded guerrilla what all the apologizing was about. He replied, "We were instructed to only shoot at the sand-colored machines — the green-colored machines always shoot back and then chase us down."

"Once that trickled down to my boys, who are out of Vicenza, Italy, and drive green-colored, camouflaged vehicles," my friend said, "they were even more aggressive."

We owe a big salute to the heroes who smashed Saddam's military last March and April as easily as an Abrams tank can total a beer can. But then our warriors morphed from conventional fighting to taking on the guerrillas — in most cases without proper training and without sufficient troop strength. Apparently, the SecDef's still so into gold-plated, high-tech stuff that he doesn't relate to ground warfare in a guerrilla environment.

Logistics also sucked for the first six months, leaving our fighters short of everything, from the basics like food and water to spare parts for mainly thin-skinned vehicles that



soldiers aren't exactly keen on using in this fight against a terrorist opponent who is into roadside bombings and ambushes.

Yes, Iraq proved in spades that we have outstanding warriors who made a bad plan work and deserve every accolade bestowed upon them. Not so for many of the brass — who need to lose the kinder, softer Clintonesque approach before they do unto the line side of the Army what they've already done unto Jessica Lynch's service and support side.

"I know that these new combat units have good leaders and troops," says a senior sergeant who has been in Iraq for 10 months. "But the higher-ups are pushing them to be passive and not take the fight to the enemy. The rest of the bad news is what we call

the 'Colonel West Syndrome.' For example, the other night when we were conducting a raid, a target was standing behind a steel door as our guys breached it, and the door smacked him in the face and messed up his head. When we turned him into the detention center, the MPs there accused us of abusing this clown, kicking off an investigation that got pretty ugly."

"Gen. Sanchez tore up my very-squared-away battalion commander for not wearing his Hummer seat belt," says another sergeant who's now finishing up a tour with a parachute brigade — the famed 173d Airborne — that made a hairy night-combat jump into Bashur at the beginning of the war and has been in the thick of it ever since.

"Hello? Where has this general been?" asked the sergeant. "The terrorists over here have a bad habit of shooting at us — we have to be able to unass our vehicles in a hurry."

No question that battling guerrillas requires an exceptionally disciplined force and that parade-ground regs don't extend longevity on a guerrilla battlefield. The brass need to get down and talk to their fine noncoms quick smart. The sergeants know how to keep up the initiative — while keeping U.S. casualties down.

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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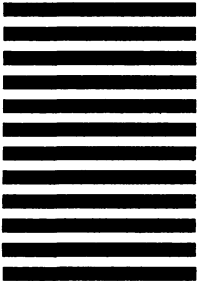
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