

Airmen escape minefield in one piece

Story and photo by Tech. Sgt. Brian Davidson
455th Expeditionary Operations Group
Public Affairs

BAGRAM, Afghanistan – Two Air Force Security Forces members found themselves stranded in the middle of an unmarked minefield while on routine patrol along the base perimeter here Monday.

Staff Sgt. Michael Klinkert and Airman 1st Class Christopher Coble, 455th Expeditionary Operations Group security forces specialists deployed from Holloman Air Force Base, N.M., were driving an up-armored Humvee about 8 p.m. when a series of six explosions rocked the vehicle, disabling it and blowing up the passenger side tires.



Staff Sgt. Michael Klinkert (right) and Airman 1st Class Christopher Coble, 455th Expeditionary Operations Group security forces specialists, were driving this up-armor Humvee about 8 p.m. Monday when they entered an unmarked mine field here. They escaped unscathed.

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Vermont National Guard ‘trains the trainer’

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Timothy M. Williams
211th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

KABUL, Afghanistan – National Guard Soldiers with the 124th Regional Training Institute (RTI) from Colchester, Vt., are here to train the trainer and teach the Afghan National Army (ANA) how to become better Soldiers.

This National Guard unit has been here since June in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, training the ANA. Their main focus is getting the trainer to take over training the courses and to ultimately train their own people.

“Our main role is to aid in the establishment of the Afghan National Army and to mentor and guide the Afghan officers and NCO’s (noncommissioned officers),” said Capt. Scott R. Cadieux from Georgia, Vt. “We’re here to help make their army more efficient and more effective. We also want to bring the work smarter not harder type of philosophy and bring their military leadership competencies toward a more western type philosophy.”

Cadieux is serving as the ANA mentor for the Officer and NCO Training Brigade. In his civilian job, he is a financial consultant for Fidelity Investments in Boston, Mass.

The coalition has also contributed to the training of the ANA in various ways. The French are responsible for training the officers and the British are responsible for training the noncommissioned officers. The ANA trains their Soldiers on the fundamentals, which includes basic training.

“My role is specifically working with the French and British army. I assist in giving guidance and expertise in training both senior NCO’s and junior officers,” Cadieux said.

Part of the training the ANA receives goes off the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) doctrine. “It’s not American doctrine, it’s not British and it’s not French. It is NATO. We try to find the best doctrine between the three for the ANA,” Cadieux added.

Meeting and working with the ANA was very tense when the 124th first arrived in Afghanistan. “Initially I don’t think they knew how to take us and we didn’t know how to take them,” Cadieux

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World News (Compiled from CNN.com)



Mike Iacobacci, a civilian field service representative with the 4th Infantry Division's first brigade, shows off the digital division's FBCB2 system.

Army used tech to nab Saddam

TIKRIT, Iraq – When American troops conducted a night raid that led to the capture of Saddam Hussein in December, digital technology allowed Army commanders miles away to watch virtually every move.

Some call the 4th Infantry Division the “digital division” because its vehicles are equipped with a system called “Force 21 (Battle) Command Brigade and Below,” or FBCB2.

Other military units have similar systems, but the 4th Division is the first to be fully digital, according to civilian specialists attached to the division.

The Iraq war is the first time the FBCB2 has been used in combat.

The secure, digital radio system allows vehicles to be seen on a screen at a tactical operations center – a mini war room – in this case at the division's 1st Brigade headquarters in Tikrit.

“The FBCB2 system allows the commanders to see a real-time placement of where their assets are,” said Steve Jones, an Army veteran contracted to maintain the digital communications system at the base.

Assets – military parlance for tanks, Bradley fighting vehicles, helicopters and Humvees – are represented by blue symbols on one of three screens in the war room.

The symbols are placed over topographical maps or satellite images of central Iraq.

So-called “enemy” assets are represented by red symbols.

A civilian, Jones is on loan from Mantech, a Virginia-based information technologies company.

“Maps are a thing of the past,” Jones said, referring to clear acetate screens that operation planners overlay onto paper maps when preparing missions.

Digital specialists say the new technology helps eliminate human error and technical accuracy issues with the old way of drawing maps.



Charles Singleton was diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia.

Ark. executes mentally ill inmate

VARNER, Ark. – Charles Singleton, a convicted murderer with a history of severe mental illness who had been on Arkansas' death row longer than any other inmate, was put to death Tuesday by lethal injection for killing a woman during a robbery.

Witnesses described Singleton convulsing slightly and coughing after the drugs were administered.

According to a statement read by Dinah Tyler, spokeswoman for the Arkansas Department of Correction, the injection was administered at 8:02 p.m. (9:02 p.m. ET) and Singleton was pronounced dead at 8:06 p.m. at Cummins Prison, about 70 miles south of Little Rock.

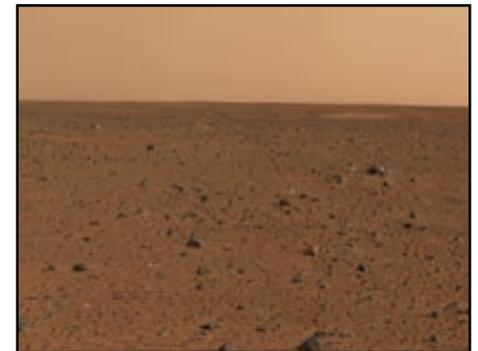
Singleton's attorney, Jeffrey Rosenzweig, described himself as “frustrated, disappointed, saddened” by the execution.

Before the execution, when asked if he wanted to make a final statement, Singleton, 44, said, “I was going to speak, but I wrote it down. I'll leave it up to the warden.”

Tyler later read Singleton's written statement, which was a largely rambling missive

peppered with Biblical references.

“As it is written, I will come forth as you will go,” part of the statement said. “I too am going to take someone's place. You've taught me what you want done and I will not let you down. God bless, Charles Singleton,” the statement concluded.



NASA said this is the highest resolution image ever taken on the surface of another planet.

NASA debuts first color picture from Mars rover

(CNN) – NASA debuted a color picture from the Spirit rover on Tuesday showing gray rocks peppering a Martian lake bed awash in its natural hues of red, pink and orange.

Mission scientists said they were bowled over by the spectacular quality of the image, taken with a dual camera system called “pancam” that's mounted on a mast jutting up from the rover.

“I think my reaction has been one of shock and awe,” said Jim Bell, the team member in charge of pancam. Using special software, mission scientists can “fly” though the image, zooming in on rocks and other landscape features of interest.

“It's approximately the color that you would see with your eyes, if you were standing there,” Bell said

“The resolution, of course, is pretty much what you would see. Pancam has 20/20 vision. It is three to four times better than any previous mission that has gone to Mars, in fact, these pictures are the highest resolution, highest detailed pictures of Mars ever obtained. They are absolutely spectacular.”

The \$400 million rover is expected to send back many more color images from Mars in the coming days, as well as data from a sophisticated array of scientific instruments.

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The airmen escaped injury, and stayed with the Humvee for almost two hours while awaiting rescue. A mine-clearing vehicle, known as a buffalo, was sent in to extract the stranded men.

During the decade-long Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, it is estimated that millions of various types of mines were laid in an effort to protect the Soviet soldiers and to depopulate the countryside. Today, countless mines still remain hidden throughout the country.

Marked minefields surround the base, and unmarked fields are discovered regularly. In fact, the mines the Humvee hit may have been laid before the airmen were even born.

“De-mining operations continue here daily, but it could take years to find and clear them all,” said 2nd Lt. Andrew Rushing, security forces operations officer deployed from Minot

Air Force Base, N.D. “There was nothing to indicate our airmen were heading into danger on their patrol.”

The airmen relied on their training to keep a bad situation from getting worse as they waited, stranded remarkably close to the base perimeter wire. Klinkert climbed into the vehicle’s gun turret with his GPS and called their exact position to Defender Control, while Coble assessed their supplies.

“Our biggest concerns were making sure no one entered the area,” Klinkert said. “In the dark, it would have been easy for someone else to stumble on the minefield.”

Klinkert’s fears almost became a reality when a Marine that was patrolling the area began to approach the Humvee. “I yelled for him to stay back,” Klinkert said. “At first, he didn’t understand, but he got the message and backed off. We were able to keep others out of the area until we were rescued by the Army engineers.”

Security forces guarded the scene until morning. Just after first light, de-mining experts from Company B, 41st Engineer Battalion, rolled on to the scene with heavily armored de-mining vehicles to clear the area and recover the damaged Humvee.

“Looking at the damage to the vehicle, it’s obvious that the outcome would have been grim if we hadn’t been in an up-armored Humvee,” Coble said.

The airmen were also fortunate that the explosives they encountered were identified as non-fragmenting anti-personnel mines rather than anti-tank mines, which might have caused significantly more damage to the Humvee.

Klinkert and Coble consider their experience an opportunity to learn and become more effective in their force protection measures. Once they were out of danger, they returned to duty without pause, and were even on hand when the de-mining operations began.

TRAINER, from Page 1

said. “But things have changed. I think they know we’re here to help them and then get out and go back home. They know we’re not here for the long haul.”

There were many obstacles the unit had to overcome while training the ANA. The main obstacle was the communication barrier between the coalition and the ANA, as well as cultural barriers. One area which Cadieux feels is encouraging for the ANA is their strength and resilience. While they may not know everything at first, they are constantly learning and improving.

Organization within the ANA has also improved their vision. According to Cadieux, he sees them becoming more visionary and starting to think more outside the box.

In addition to assisting with the combat leader course, Cadieux and other members of the 124th RTI have participated in the growth and reconstruction of Afghanistan in another way.

“On this side, I’ve started Operation Sandbox, which is a humanitarian effort in hopes to have an immediate impact on the local communities of Kabul as well as future Afghanistan,” Cadieux said. “We’ve touched over 3,000 children through donations and have done three runs to different orphanages, each run consisting of a deuce-and-a-half full of donations.”

A touching moment for Cadieux came during a donation convoy to Northern Kabul.

“The orphanage didn’t know we were coming and when we arrived the coordinator came out in tears. The coordinator who spoke perfect English was very appreciative of the fact that we had a truck full of donations for the kids,” Cadieux said.

“She had \$300 left in her orphanage checking account and was praying. She said she prayed last night that a miracle would hap-



Capt. Scott R. Cadieux, gives a training class to the Afghanistan National Army (ANA). Cadieux, a mentor for the Officer and NCO Training Brigade of the ANA, is a member of the 124th Regional Training Institute (RTI) Vermont National Guard out of Colchester, Vt.

pen,” Cadieux said. “It was just a very good feeling and an honor to give those gifts on behalf of everyone back home.”

The donations are for the children in Afghanistan. These donations come from families and friends of the 124th RTI. They come from many churches and schools across New England, a culmination of many different peoples efforts back home.

The Soldiers of the 124th RTI will soon head back home and will leave a foundation for the ANA to follow. Through the help and assistance of the 124th, the ANA can now rely on each other to train its Soldiers. This training will help them continue in the growth, security and stability of their country making it a stronger and more resilient Afghanistan.

Expanded Army stop-loss affects 7,000 deployed troops

Story by Donna Miles
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – The Army’s expansion of the stop loss/stop movement program is expected to affect about 7,000 active-duty Soldiers deployed in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

Col. Elton M. Manske, chief of the Army’s Enlisted Division, said the expansion, to be announced “within days,” will affect only Soldiers already in theater who have upcoming service expiration dates or approved or scheduled retirement dates.

Most deployed Soldiers, he explained, are not affected because they have service obligations that extend beyond their deployments. The stop-loss restrictions bar voluntary separations and retirements for Soldiers in designated units throughout their deployments and up to 90 days after their unit returns to its home station. In addition, the stop-movement policy suspends the normal rotation of Soldiers into and out of affected units.

The expansion essentially levels the field for all Soldiers deployed in the war on terror, Manske said. Units slated for the next rotations to Iraq and Afghanistan already are subject to stop-loss restrictions based on a Nov. 13 Army announcement. In addition, mobilized Reserve and Guard troops are subject to a stop-loss policy that took effect in November 2002.

Manske said readiness requirements drove the Army leadership to expand the program to include troops deployed for the first rotation of Operation Iraqi Freedom and the fourth rotation of Operation Enduring Freedom.

“This decision is really being driven by the readiness of units and the absolute intent to keep the units themselves intact down to as low as the squad and crew level,” he said, “so we are assured of putting the best fighting force on the battlefield in support of the Soldiers as well as the Army at large.”

Manske said the Army leadership recognizes that the decision probably will create hardships and disrupt plans for some of the affected Soldiers.

Bagram Air Base MWR presents

“Hulk”

1530Z at the MWR building:
A geneticist’s experimental accident curses him with the tendency to become a powerful giant green brute under emotional stress.



Tomorrow’s movie:
“One Hour Photo”

Local weather

TWO-DAY REGIONAL WEATHER FORECAST:

	Today	Thursday
Uzbekistan:	Rain H: 56F L: 43F	Rain H: 59F L: 47F
Bagram:	Mostly Cloudy H: 39F L: 25F	Rain H: 45F L: 34F
Kabul:	Mostly Cloudy H: 41F L: 25F	Rain H: 43F L: 34F
Kandahar:	Rain H: 61F L: 41F	Rain H: 59F L: 37F

Weather forecast courtesy of the Bagram Combat Weather Team

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Coalition Sports Zone

(Compiled from *SI.com*)

Marbury made six points in first game

CLEVELAND—Stephon Marbury didn't do much for the new-look Knicks after being cleared to play just 30 minutes before tipoff, and LeBron James' 10 assists and Zydrunas Ilgauskas' 24 points led the Cleveland Cavaliers over New York 107-96 Tuesday night.

Marbury, traded from Phoenix to New York along with Penny Hardaway a day earlier, had eight points and eight assists in the Knicks' third straight loss.

James had 14 points on a poor shooting night, but his assists tied his career high. Eric Williams hit baskets at several key points and finished with 22.

For much of the game, New York resembled a team that hadn't practiced together.

Marbury and Hardaway were forced to sit out the morning shootaround because the players traded to Phoenix hadn't completed their physical exams. They received clearance from the league just before tipoff.

Hardaway shot just 3-for-9 for six points. Keith Van Horn led New York with 20 points and Allan Houston had 18.

New York tried to make a run after trailing by 17 with under 11 minutes left, but it was too late.

The Knicks shot just 41 percent, left the Cavaliers wide open for jump shots and committed costly fouls.

Coughlin agrees to 4-year, \$12M contract

(*SI.com*)—The New York Giants and Tom Coughlin have agreed to a four-year contract worth about \$12 million, filling one of the NFL's seven vacant head coaching jobs.

Coughlin, the former Jacksonville Jaguars head coach, met with Giants officials for a second time Monday in New York, and the two sides were said to have had substantive talks, according to Giants officials. The two sides sat down again Tuesday and finally came to terms.

"I look forward to working with these players and re-establishing the New York Giants' tradition of physically controlling the line of scrimmage," Coughlin said in a telephone interview with *The As-*



While Marbury wasn't a factor, James paved the way with 14 points and 10 assists.

sociated Press.

"I am really looking forward to getting back into the competitive part of it," he added.

A potential news conference could be held as soon as Tuesday afternoon or Wednesday morning to announce Coughlin as the team's 17th head coach. Coughlin's agent, Gary O'Hagan, said the two sides were working on a contract. "The T's haven't been crossed and the I's haven't been dotted," he said.

Dennis Eckersley, Paul Molitor both elected in first year of eligibility

NEW YORK—In their final confrontation, Paul Molitor wanted to beat Dennis Eckersley so badly he bunted in the ninth inning to win a game that was meaningless to the Minnesota Twins.

When they see each other this summer, they'll be going into the Hall of Fame together.

The two tough competitors were chosen Tuesday in their first year of eligibility, the only players to gain election. And they thought back to that night at the Metrodome in August 1998.

"I was 43 years old," Eckersley recalled with a laugh. "He dropped down a bunt and, guess what, it worked. He's a little weasel, that's what he is."

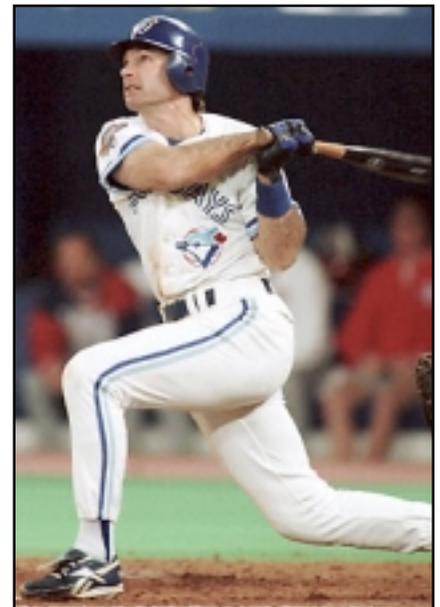
Molitor turned 42 that night, and his single gave the Twins a 4-3 win over Boston, which was vying for the AL wild card. Eckersley had a few choice words for Molitor that night. But the two always had great respect for each other.

"He had a way of being unpredictable," Molitor said. "He could throw any pitch at any time, which added to his effectiveness. Not to mention he could throw it to a teacup."

Molitor, a patient, proficient batter, is eighth on the career list with 3,319 hits, many in clutch situations.

He was picked on 431 of 506 ballots (85.2 percent) cast by reporters who have been members of the Baseball Writers' Association of America for 10 or more years.

Eckersley, among baseball's most exuberant and colorful players, was selected on 421 ballots (83.2 percent).



Paul Molitor hit .320 or higher seven times.

Afghanistan Hot Topics



(Compiled by CJTF-180 Public Affairs)

NATO takes over mission in Afghanistan

By Aijaz Rahi

KUNDUZ, Afghanistan (AP) – NATO-led peacekeepers took over a peace-building mission in northern Afghanistan on Tuesday, the first step in a plan for the alliance to expand into the country's troubled provinces ahead of summer elections.

Troops from Germany, the first nation to respond to U.N. and Afghan calls to provide more troops, took control from the United States of the operation based in Kunduz, 150 miles north of Kabul. Germany is deploying an initial 170 troops, though the number is expected to rise to over 200 later this year.

Other NATO nations are expected to take over provincial reconstruction teams, freeing up the U.S. military to focus on battling Taliban insurgents in the south and east.

The teams are supposed to provide security in key urban centers, reassuring aid workers and pacifying local militias who still control much of the country.

Six already are dotted around the country – including teams operated by Britain and New Zealand – and the U.S. military is opening five more in towns across a troubled band of territory along the Pakistani border.

Some 5,500 international peacekeepers, mostly Canadians and Germans, are patrolling the capital. NATO has agreed in principle to expand into a string of key regional capitals, but member nations have been slow to come forward with more men or equipment.

U.S. troops willing to extend stay in Iraq, Kuwait, Afghanistan for bonus

WASHINGTON (AFP) – The U.S. Army has decided to offer a bonus of as much as 10,000 dollars to Soldiers on duty in Iraq, Kuwait or Afghanistan who are willing to extend their stay, a spokeswoman said Tuesday.

Some \$63 million have been earmarked for the efforts in the 2004 U.S. defense budget, said Army spokeswoman Kristen Carle.

The payouts would range “from 5,000 to 10,000 dollars, depending on their specialty, rank and how long they are re-enlisting for,” the spokeswoman said.

The effort is aimed at keeping thousands of troops on the job as a major troop rotation is looming for U.S. troops in Iraq in the coming weeks, she said. “It’s linked to a big move (in the next few weeks), and to establish or solidify the unit cohesion that’s already in theater,” Carle explained.

“It’s about keeping that skill (in Iraq) and keeping it in the unit; it makes for an easier transition,” she said. The move comes on the heels of the armed forces notifying some troops who were expecting to be rotated out of Iraq that they would remain mobilized until their units return to the United States, she noted.

A note from the editor...

Relationship seminars will be held at the Enduring Faith Chapel on Bagram from Jan. 8 – Feb. 12. The seminars will be at 1400Z (1830L) every Thursday.

The seminars will be conducted by various chaplains stationed here. It is for married as well as single personnel. The Enduring Faith Chapel is located next to the MWR building.

For more information, please contact Chaplain (Capt.) Phillips or Spc. Henry at 231-4755.



kevin_kilgore@hotmail.com

By Kevin Kilgore

Laugh Support