

Proactive training teaches fire readiness

Story and photos by
Pvt. 2 Terri Rorke
11th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan — When servicemembers deploy, they bring with them all of their essential equipment. But one piece of equipment is intangible — a cautious mind.

Servicemembers are taught safety first when learning task, conditions and standards for an operation. They need to know how to react when something unexpectedly goes wrong — like a fire.

A tent can blow up after two to three minutes once caught on fire, said Air Force Staff Sgt. Brian S. Wells, fire protection representative for the Expeditionary Operation Group fire department.



Air Force Staff Sgt. Brian S. Wells, fire prevention representative, 455th Expeditionary Operation Group fire department, shows servicemembers who live in Viper City how to use a fire extinguisher in case of an emergency.

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Afghan reporters first to embed with ANA

By Spc. Worley B. Smith
109th Mobile Public Affairs
Detachment

MADR VALLEY, Afghanistan — News of the activities of the 2nd Battalion Afghan National Army is spreading thanks to the efforts of three reporters. The reporters telling the story are from Kabul. Lutfullah Rashid from “Good Morning Afghanistan,” Sharifullah Baha from “Anis Daily” and Shoib Safi from “Kabul Weekly” aren’t just reporting on a historical event but creating history themselves.

For the first time, Afghan reporters went on media embeds to report firsthand on the activi-

ties of Afghanistan’s new national army. Rashid, Baha, and Safi are leading the wave.

The reporters left Bagram Feb. 25 on their way to Madr Valley, approximately 50 kilometers north of Bamian.

“This is the first time we have had the opportunity to report on the activity of the ANA since their graduation from Kabul Military Training Center,” said Rashid.

Since their graduation, the 2nd BANA have been carrying out missions in the Madr and Kamard Valleys.

Their missions range from presence patrols to organizing and implementing the disarm-

ment effort for the region. Most recently, they recovered national artifacts thought to be prepared for smuggling out of the country.

The three reporters have been able to report on operations that no other news agency in Kabul has been able to.

“Other news outlets in Kabul I’m sure are aware of some of the things that are going on in the Kamard and Madr Valleys but they can only scratch the surface when it comes to reporting the story. This media embed is allowing us the opportunity to tell the deeper story,” said Baha.

“In Kabul, we heard that the

ANA with the support of coalition forces had taken control of this area. It’s a very big story that people are turning in their weapons here in the Kamard and Madr Valley. Until now we weren’t able to get people to the story; now we can,” said Safi.

All three reporters seem very interested in what they have observed of the ANA’s operational tempo and how they interact with and are accepted by local villagers in the area.

“The BANA has exceeded our expectations. We have the opportunity to report firsthand about the successes of the ANA

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World News (Compiled from CNN.com)

U.S. all but concedes U.N. defeat

WASHINGTON — After days of cautious optimism that President Bush would win at least a moral victory on a resolution setting a deadline for war with Iraq, White House aides on Tuesday all but conceded defeat.

The White House acknowledged in a paper distributed Tuesday night that the council was still divided and “peaceful disarmament looks less and less likely.”

The administration had hoped to win a council majority even if the resolution then is vetoed by France or Russia.

11 killed in Black Hawk crash

FORT DRUM, N.Y. — A Black Hawk helicopter on a training mission crashed Tuesday in a snowy wooded area, killing 11 of the 13 soldiers aboard — what one army official called a “sobering” reminder as the nation prepares for possible war.

The army said the two survivors were being treated at a hospital, and that the 11 others aboard have all been accounted for. The conditions of the survivors were not immediately released.

“We will fully investigate this terrible accident,” said Maj. Gen. F.L. “Buster” Hagenbeck, the commander of the 10th Mountain Division.

Shuttle board investigates wind shear, age

HOUSTON, Texas — The Columbia accident investigation board raised the possibility Tuesday that an unusually strong wind shear a minute into the flight weakened the shuttle’s left side. The board also suggested the age of the spacecraft may have contributed to the catastrophe.

Retired Navy Adm. Harold Gehman, the accident board’s chairman, said he and others are trying to determine “whether or not NASA was alert enough, whether or not they were doing all the right things” to detect aging as a threat to the shuttle fleet.

“If you agree with the theory that complex systems fail in complex ways, it isn’t a matter of just a bracket breaking. It’s a matter of a whole series of unfortunate events,” Gehman said at a news conference.



Nighthawk "stealth" warplanes will be based in South Korea.

Stealth jets sent to South Korea

SEOUL, South Korea — In a move certain to further fuel North Korean war fears, the United States is sending up to six radar-avoiding F-117A “stealth” warplanes to South Korea for joint military exercises.

U.S. military officials say the deployment of F-117As to Kunsan Air Base in South Korea is the first in a decade but is not connected to current tensions sparked by the revival of North Korea’s nuclear ambitions.

“These defensive exercises are not related to current world events and are not meant to be aggressive or threatening,” Air Force Staff Sgt. Aaron Cram, a spokesman for the 49th Fighter Wing at Holloman Air Force Base in New Mexico, said according to Reuters news service.

Authorities: Death at Spector home not suicide

LOS ANGELES, Calif. — Suicide has been ruled out in the death of an actress found shot at the home of music producer Phil Spector, authorities said Tuesday.

Sheriff’s Capt. Frank Merriman said authorities believe the shooting was a crime, and he disputed news reports that said Spector would soon be cleared.

“No one involved in this investigation said that,” Merriman said. “My opinion is that somebody is orchestrating this to plant seeds of doubt with potential jurors.”

Longtime friend Marvin Mitchelson said Spector sent an e-mail to him and others Monday suggesting that investigators would soon clear him and that Lana

Clarkson’s death was “an accidental suicide.”

Mitchelson said he has not talked with Spector about the e-mail.

House cafeterias change names for ‘french fries, toast’

WASHINGTON — The cafeteria menus in the three House office buildings changed the name of “french fries” to “freedom fries,” in a culinary rebuke of France stemming from anger over the country’s refusal to support the U.S. position on Iraq.

Ditto for “french toast,” which will be known as “freedom toast.”

The name changes were spearheaded by two Republican lawmakers who held a news conference Tuesday to make the name changes official on the menus.

Across the country, some private restaurants have done the same.

“This action today is a small, but symbolic effort to show the strong displeasure of many on Capitol Hill with the actions of our so-called ally, France,” said Rep. Bob Ney, R-Ohio, the chairman of the Committee on House Administration.

OPEC to cover war oil shortfall

VIENNA, Austria — OPEC members have agreed to raise oil output should supplies be disrupted due to war in Iraq.

But the 10-nation Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries refused to raise output immediately, saying only they would keep on top of market conditions and meet again in June.

OPEC president Abdullah bin Hamad Al-Attayah, confirmed that it was not changing its output target of 24.5 million barrels a day after a meeting at their headquarters in Vienna, Austria.

CNN correspondent Charles Hodson, in Vienna, said OPEC, while giving assurances that it would cover any future shortfall, also wanted to avoid a situation where the markets were oversupplied.

He added that Saudi Arabia was key to OPEC plans as most of its member nations were at or close to their maximum production levels.

Bagram PX celebrates first anniversary

Story and photo by
Pfc. Christina Carde
11th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan – After 12 months of working hard to better serve deployed troops, the Bagram Post Exchange commemorated its one-year anniversary Tuesday with door prizes, give-a-ways and memories of a challenging yet prosperous year.

Maria Schizas-Price, store manager, said the PX has come a long way since its beginning, and, for a deployed environment, it is considered top of the line.

“When I first arrived, the PX was in a very small building and the food-line consisted of sardines and Spam,” said Schizas-Price. “This was an upgrade from the force-provider tent it originally started in, which had even less.”

In addition to limited merchandise, communication was also a big issue.

“Until recently, we didn’t have our own phone line to place orders,” said Schizas-Price. “Sometimes it would take six to eight hours just to get an outside line to call in an order.”

However, within a few months, a plan was finally put together to turn the PX into a facility everyone could appreciate.

“What is now the new PX used to be an old Russian motor pool that before reconstruction, still had bullet holes in the walls,” said Schizas-Price. “In a few short months, the renovation was complete and we had a bigger,

nicer facility that was capable of accommodating a lot more merchandise.”

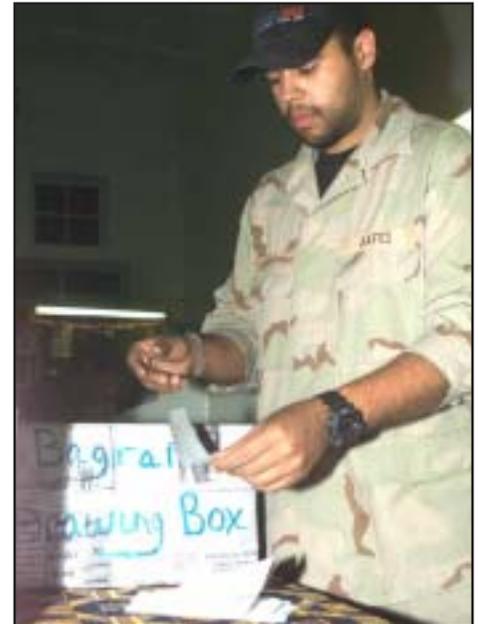
Since opening Dec. 24, 2002, the new PX has rapidly extended its food, clothing and electronic merchandise lines and is still improving daily.

“We were recently authorized email accounts which make placing orders faster and easier,” said Schizas-Price. “As a result, we have new items coming in all the time and new improvements on the way such as portable DVD players, silk plants and scanners for the registers.”

To celebrate the achievements made in the past year, the PX decided to do something for the troops.

“With the help of the employees and other store managers, we decided to have a prize drawing funded by AAFES (the Army and Air Force Exchange Service),” said Schizas-Price. “We had some small giveaways for the first 100 customers of the day including goodie bags and free hair-cuts at the new AAFES Barber Shop. The names of the winners who entered in the prize drawing will be posted Wednesday and they will also receive goodie bags containing t-shirts, flags and hats.”

“The grand prizes for the drawings are a (Sony) PlayStation 2, and front-of-the-line passes which allow four winning individuals first-in-line privileges for either one month, three months, six months or the duration of their tour,” she added.



Antonio Lopez-Santiago, Army and Air Force Exchange Service employee, draws winners' names out of the prize drawing box. The drawing was in honor of the Post Exchange's one-year anniversary where troops were given the opportunity to win various PX merchandise.

These prizes, along with free cookies, muffins and sodas for all the troops who shopped at the PX Tuesday, were just the management’s way of thanking everyone for a successful year.

“Without our team of employees, our AAFES and military volunteers, and our customers, none of this would have been possible,” said Schizas-Price.

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in an area of Afghanistan that has and is experiencing a lot of turmoil and anarchy when it comes to turning in weapons,” said Safi.

According to them, from a news perspective, Bamian and especially the Madr and Kamard Valleys have been a hotspot of media interest.

“In the past 14 months of President Karsai’s term in office this is the first time that the central government has really taken hold in Bamian.

“This is definitely going to warrant an increased interest from news agencies all over the country,” said Rashid.

Rashid, Baha, and Safi all agree that the week they spent in Madr wasn’t only an opportunity of a lifetime for them professionally but would also open doors for other colleagues in the future.

“The reality of us being here is that it generates an overall interest not only in the ANA but also in the area,” said Safi. “More news agencies will pick up where we are leaving off.”



Photo by Spc. Worley B. Smith, 109th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Lutfullah Rashid, “Good Morning Afghanistan,” interviews Col. Aminullah, 2nd Battalion Afghan National Army commander inside Firebase Romero, in Madr Valley.

FIRE, from Page 1

Two members from each unit in the Viper City were tasked to operate fire extinguishers. They trained Tuesday. Eventually all the Life Support Areas on base will be taught.

Sgt. 1st Class Danny Maybin, Combined Joint Task Force-180 safety manager, said he decided it was necessary to teach soldiers how to use these extinguishers before it is too late to learn.

Although Bagram has had only a few incidents including an electrical fire, two towers burning and another fire involving ammunition, thinking ahead will save lives, said Maybin.

“Fire training is a proactive step in fire prevention and suppression,” added the base’s safety manager.

Bagram currently has 40 of these \$825 extinguishers, said Maybin, and 120 additional ones have been ordered.

The servicemembers learned about maintenance and operation of the fire extinguishers that have a range of 150 feet.

Wells taught soldiers the 4 classes of fires grouped by the type of material burning — class A grouping being relatively harmless fires and class D the most dangerous.

He also taught the group the acronym PASS, which is designed to help remember how to operate a fire extinguisher.

- *Pull* the pin at the top of the extinguisher
- *Aim* the nozzle towards the base of the fire
- *Squeeze* the handle to discharge the extinguisher
- *Sweep* the nozzle back and forth at the base of the fire

He continued to teach by giving tips, like the importance of the buddy system when carrying the 50-pound extinguishers to a needed site and not facing into the wind when operating the device.

If a soldier wants to refresh on what they have learned or just review, they can visit the CJTF-180 website and click on the DCJS SENDS link.

For more information concerning fire extinguishers, smoke detectors or anything related to fire safety, call the EOG fire department at 318-231-4618.

Bagram Air Base MWR presents

1530Z at the MWR building: “Pearl Harbor.” Set during the time of the Japanese bombing of Pearl Harbor, two friends are caught up in the events that draw the United States into World War II. They both find themselves in love with the same woman.

Tomorrow’s movie will be “The Cable Guy.”



Local weather

TWO-DAY REGIONAL WEATHER FORECAST:

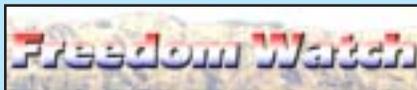
	Today	Thursday
Bagram:	Scattered showers H: 61F L: 32F	Rain H: 55F L: 32F
Kandahar:	Mostly cloudy H: 68F L: 37F	Scattered showers H: 64F L: 43F
Kabul:	Mostly clear H: 59F L: 27F	Scattered showers H: 55F L: 34F
Uzbekistan:	Mostly cloudy H: 65F L: 32F	Scattered showers H: 60F L: 36F

Weather forecast courtesy of the Bagram Combat Weather Team

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- CJTF-180 Commander — Lt. Gen. Dan McNeill
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- Public Affairs Officer — Col. Roger King
- Public Affairs Sergeant Major — Master Sgt. Kelly Tyler

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- Commander — Maj. William Mott
- NCOIC — Staff Sgt. Christina Bhatti
- Editor — Sgt. W. Cullen James
- Journalists — Pfc. Christina Carde, Pfc. Debralee P. Crankshaw, Pvt. 2 Terri Rorke

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Visit the CENTCOM Web site at www.centcom.mil and click on the CJTF-180 link to get the latest editions of the Freedom Watch.

To be added to the daily distribution list email william.james@us.army.mil



Coalition Sports Zone

(Compiled from ESPN.com)

Why major college ball isn't for everyone

ESPN — There's nothing wrong with going to a major-college basketball program and harboring dreams of playing in the NBA. As long as you're a schizophrenic, don't stay too long or understand that you'll have a lot of habits to break upon turning pro.

That is the discovery Mike Dunleavy Jr. made after being drafted third by the Golden State Warriors last summer. Maybe he understood it, in some part, already, Mike Sr., having played and coached in the league for practically Jr.'s entire life. But there's nothing like living it.

"You almost change who you are," the younger Dunleavy says.

Which brings us to the league's proposed 20-year-old age limit. If it's meant to force players to attend college or stay in school longer, it's a bad idea for all concerned. College programs will continue to prostitute themselves for players who only want a platform to showcase their game for the pros. NCAA rules and inferior competition, meanwhile, will prohibit those players from developing as fast as they could without restrictions.

If it's to foster the NBA's development of the NBDL as a bona-fide minor league, though, then I'm all for it. It would bring the U.S. model of player development closer to the European one, where young players practice and play against men five and six years older, negating the physical advantage the pro-caliber teenager has over his peers. And nothing forces a player to develop fundamentals faster than not having a physical advantage.

"It makes you become a totally different player," Warriors second-year forward Troy Murphy said.



Dunleavy decided to 'be a little more selfish' after the All-Star break.

Wells suspended for 'basketball matter'

SEATTLE — Portland Trail Blazers forward Bonzi Wells was suspended for one game by coach Maurice Cheeks for "conduct considered detrimental to the team."

Wells was suspended for Tuesday night's game against the SuperSonics in Seattle. Cheeks said the suspension stemmed from "a basketball matter" and "an isolated incident" that occurred during practice Monday. He said Wells wouldn't be fined.

"It was an in-house matter. We've dealt with it and we'll move on," Cheeks said. "He'll play tomorrow night," when Toronto visits Portland.

Ruben Patterson, nursing a strained right groin, was expected to start against the Sonics.

Wells is second on the team in scoring, averaging 15.6 points and 5.4 rebounds.

In his fourth year, Wells has been suspended twice by the NBA this season.

In November he served a one-game suspension for spitting on San Antonio's Danny Ferry. The next month, he was suspended two games for his part in a post-game brawl with the Golden State Warriors in Oakland.

Wells did not accompany the team to Seattle.

Rumors floating that agreement age limit of 20 in the works

NEW YORK — The director of the NBA players' union vehemently denied Tuesday having any kind of a handshake agreement with the league to set an age limit of 20 in the next collective bargaining agreement.

"There have been no deals struck between David (Stern) and myself, and there has been no discussion of an age limit between David and myself," union director Billy Hunter said Tuesday.

Stern and deputy commissioner Russ Granik of the



2002 NBA standings

Eastern Conference		Western Conference	
Atlantic		Midwest	
(2) New Jersey	39-25	(1) Dallas	48-15
(4) Philadelphia	36-26	(3) San Antonio	44-18
(5) Boston	36-27	(5) Minnesota	42-24
(7) Orlando	33-32	(6) Utah	36-27
Washington	31-33	Houston	32-30
Central		Pacific	
(1) Detroit	39-23	(2) Sacramento	45-19
(3) Indiana	38-26	(4) Portland	40-22
(6) New Orleans	37-28	(7) L.A. Lakers	35-27
(8) Milwaukee	32-32	(8) Phoenix	33-29
Atlanta	25-39	Golden State	30-33



SPORTS, from Page 5

NBA confirmed Hunter's assessment, noting that a proposed age limit hasn't been up for discussion in two years.

The rumor is so prevalent, however, that Hunter felt compelled to publicly address the belief an age limit could be in place for the 2004 draft — a misconception that could lead to a larger-than-normal number of high school players and 17- and 18-year-old foreigners making themselves eligible for the 2003 NBA draft.

"There's definitely an assumption that there will be an age limit, but whether there's truth to it only the league and the union know," said agent Mark Cornstein, who represents 17-year-old Yugoslavian prospect Darko Milicic — a player often mentioned as a possible overall No. 2 selection behind high school senior LeBron James of Akron, Ohio.

Milicic was ineligible for the 2003 draft until Stern and Hunter reached agreement during All-Star weekend on a change in eligibility rules that will open up the draft to any foreign player who turns 18 prior to draft night.

That surprise announcement led to speculation the sides might reach a speedy agreement on an extension of the current collective bargaining agreement, which expires at the end of the 2003-04 season — unless the owners exercise an option by Dec. 1 to extend it for another year. A group of owners and players plan to meet in early May to open talks on an extension.

"I've heard different things from different people. One general manager thinks (an age limit) is coming, one doesn't," agent Mark Fleischer said.

NBA extends its disability insurance

ESPN — Grant Hill, the Orlando Magic's often-injured forward, has collected most of his \$32.6 million salary over the past three seasons while sitting on the bench. He has played in only 47 games since signing a seven-year, \$93 million contract before the 2000-01 season, and the nagging stress fracture in his left ankle has him on the injured list yet again for the remainder of this season.

All of which makes Hill the poster child for supporters of the NBA's slightly controversial extension of a costly disability insurance policy.

By season's end, the Magic will have collected at least \$15 million from games missed by Hill over the three seasons. With the possibility that he could undergo a fourth operation on his injured ankle, the team would continue to recoup 80 percent of Hill's salary for each game he misses should he continue to be sidelined into next season.

Other teams have cashed in on the policy as well.

The New York Knicks will collect \$5.4 million because Antonio McDyess was sidelined for the entire season, and the Minnesota Timberwolves will recover approximately \$4.5 million of Terrell Brandon's \$10.2 million salary this season. Brandon has missed the entire season with a knee injury and reportedly is contemplating retirement at the end of the season.

Though the insurance industry is still knee-buckled by claims related to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, the NBA's insurance providers have continued to pay off on the mounting claims by professional sports teams who have watched their high-priced players go down with injury in recent seasons.

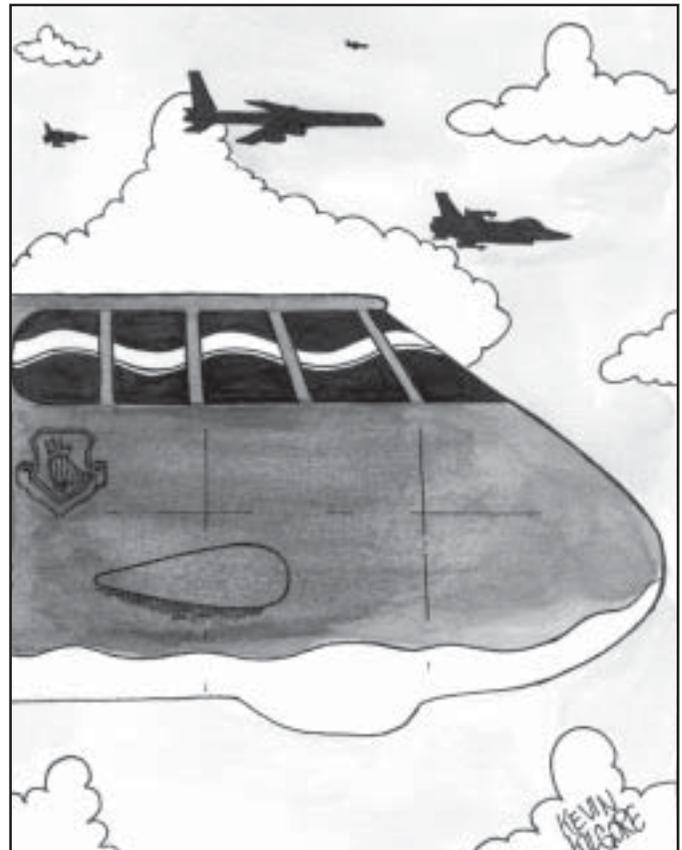
When NBA owners feared they could find themselves without player disability insurance after their current five-year deal with Trustmark Insurance expires after the 2003-04 season, they acted quickly in January to extend the policy for another three years.

But it came at the price of higher insurance premiums, something that does not sit well with some NBA owners.

"This is no longer really about insurance, but rather a financial management tool, and we can get better returns by either self-insuring or revamping how we pay for or replace players who are no longer able to play," Dallas Mavericks owner Mark Cuban said.

The Mavericks were one of several teams that voted against extending the insurance coverage if it came with higher premiums.

"This is your captain speaking, tonight's in-flight movie will be '12 O'clock High' starring Gregory Peck. Thanks again for flying U.S. Air Force."



kevin_kilgore@hotmail.com

By Kevin Kilgore

Laugh Support