

DAGGER News

DELTA, 312th MI Battalion

Soldiers and Family October 2004

From the Commander

Hello *DAGGER* families and friends! This newsletter is intended to let you know how things are going for us here in Baghdad, Iraq. The bottom line: we are doing very well! October 3rd marks the end of my 1st month in command—I am pleased with the state of the company, soldiers, and families! Thank you all for the great support you have provided to your husbands or wives, family members, the Company, and me!

The company has been involved in several Brigade Operations over the last month that have been huge successes. They were so successful partly due to the superb job the Daggers have done in support of these combat operations. The big focus area for the Brigade has been a place called Sheik Maroof, which is a small part of Baghdad that attracts Sunni extremists, foreign fighters from countries like Syria, and even Shia militants who support Muqtada al-Sadr. One particular street in the Sheik Maroof area called Haifa Street has been the site of many clashes between the insurgents and the 3rd Brigade units who patrol there. You may have seen a picture or some footage on the news over the last month showing a burning Bradley Fighting Vehicle that had been disabled, set on fire, and had a terrorist waiving the terrorist flag of Zarqawi on top of it. The terrorist was quickly eliminated following that footage and the Brigade has had many success stories in that same area as evidenced by our Detention Facility, which has been full of bad guys for the last couple of weeks. We have had over 40 insurgents or criminals supporting the insurgency in our detention facility at one time during this time period. As soon as we process them through to another facility, we get more. There is a lot of work to do. There have been countless caches of enemy weapons that have been seized and many of the enemy have been neutralized. We have definitely made the terrorists' life more difficult and have taken away their initiative for the time being. The real success story here is that we have been able to integrate the Iraqi Security forces such as the Iraqi National Guard and the Iraqi Police into this fight allowing the Americans to focus on other things. The Iraqi Security Forces are beginning to show real promise and will eventually lead to our country's ticket out of here.

The Daggers mainly support the operations such as those mentioned above by collecting information through the use of our Tactical Human Intelligence Teams who gather their information from interacting with the people in the area and through the interrogations that they conduct. Lately, the THTs have been working more and more with the Iraqi Security Forces so that we can move towards the transition when Iraqis can completely take over the security role. The Dagger soldiers that work in the S2 Shop analyze all of the information that comes in from countless sources including our own in order to help piece all of the reports and information together so the units and the commanders know how to successfully defeat the enemy. The Headquarters Platoon ensures that the other sections can complete their mission by taking care of all of the administrative and convoy support requirements along with the majority of the extra details like securing the camp by guarding the gate. The Signal Intelligence Platoon continues to assist the entire Division with the information that they collect allowing the rest of the company to focus on specific areas with our limited resources.

Life for most of us has been very busy lately, but not too bad. The chow could definitely be better but we are fortunate for the safe and peaceful area we live in. Although, we are split between two locations with the Signal Intelligence Platoon being just down the street, both areas are bearable and safe. We have heard a few indirect fire explosions near our Forward Operating Base (FOB), but have not really had any close calls. The reason that this FOB and this area are so safe is because the entire area is "secure", or in other words, there is controlled access with many additional security measures into this area which was once called the Green Zone, but now is called the International Zone. The area is secured this way so we can ensure that the government officials and different agencies that conduct business here in the heart of Baghdad are relatively free of danger.

The Brigade is already planning our trip home in the spring, but it is important that we stay focused on the task at hand because people's lives, including our own, could be depending on our work. We are eager to re-unite with you again, and I will try to keep you posted on our re-deployment plans as soon as they are solidified a bit more.

I hope you are all well. Please see the Rear Detachment Commander, CPT McIntyre, if there are any problems. If the Rear Detachment cannot help you, my wife Aimee will definitely be able to help you in some way. You can reach her at 254-698-6051 or ALRandazzo@hotmail.com. Otherwise, feel free to write or E-mail me (DYLAN.RANDAZZO@US.ARMY.MIL). Take care!

DAGGERS!!

Captain Dylan Randazzo

From the First Sergeant

Delta Company Soldiers and Families

We are currently at the mid-way point of our deployment. The soldiers are doing great things in support of 3rd Brigade Combat Team. Our Headquarters Platoon does outstanding intelligence and detainee operations for the Brigade...our 1st Platoon intercepts signals intelligence throughout the Brigade and Division area of operations and 4th Platoon conducts interrogations daily with the Iraqi detainees. It still amazes me even after being a First Sergeant for three years, how eager these soldiers are to go above and beyond for their country. Be proud of your soldiers and know that the Commander and myself will do everything we can to keep them out of harms way. Delta Daggers Lead the way!

1SG Bellotte

1st Platoon (Signal Intelligence)

Hello to all of the family and friends of 1st Platoon. We have officially passed the halfway point of the deployment and look forward to a safe return home. We are continuing to improve our mission and capabilities, while also getting soldiers home for some much needed leave. In July, SSG Davis went on leave and returned a proud new father. SPC Reitz is currently on leave and will also return a new dad. Congratulations to both of them and their families. SSG Agnew and SSG Walker have both had successful trips home and are now working to get back into the swing of life in Iraq. SSG Agnew is currently keeping himself busy as the acting PSG and SSG Walker is trying to run 10 miles a day in an attempt to shed the excess weight he gained while at home. SGT Stinson leaves for R&R on September 27th to visit her mother in Michigan. As for everyone else, we are all finding ways to pass the time. SGT Stone is busy working out all the time when he's not on duty, but he still manages to find spare time to catch music videos on our satellite dish. SPC Krumbhaar has adopted a cat to help keep the rat population down in the palace. SPC Tallman has been practicing Shaolin Soccer and card throwing for unknown reasons. SPC Ruppenstein, aside from winning the 3rd Brigade Soldier of the Month board, maintains a steady flow of care packages from his family and friends for the platoon. We all wish to extend our gratitude to the Ruppenstein family for all of their efforts. All in all everyone is doing well. Thank you for your thoughts and prayers and we look forward to seeing you all soon.

4th Platoon (Tactical Humint Team)

September turned out to be a very busy month for the HUMINT section. The Teams were involved in several large operations which led to the detainment of and interrogation of more than one hundred detainees. Fortunately, we were augmented by two Corp level teams, MIT 205(202 MI Bn) and THT 531(502D MI Bn). These teams were instrumental in accomplishing the large task of Detainee processing. Our thanks go out to their Commands for allowing us the opportunity to work with these dedicated professionals. Members of the HUMINT section worked together with members of the Iraqi National Guard and Iraqi Police on several missions this month. It was a great learning experience on both sides.

SFC Reid was extremely busy this month. SGT Nutt had just returned R&R leave and Chief Skyles was leaving on R&R leave soon thereafter. SFC Reid had to assume Chief's duties as well as his own. No doubt SFC Reid anxiously awaits Chief's return. SFC Reid's team with the assistance of members HQ's Platoon, were responsible for the identification and subsequent detainment of an individual involved in a terrorist plan to conduct a Car Bombing attack on Coalition Forces in Baghdad. Not only was the individual detained, but the vehicle and bomb making components as well. SFC Reid's team with the assistance of members from 1st Platoon, assisted in identifying a group involved in the kidnapping of an Iraqi Local Nationals who worked for Coalition Forces. SPC Masamitsu assisted in the location of a weapons cache and SPC El Ashmawi developed intelligence that was recognized at the National Agency Level and identified the members of an Insurgent group operating in the Brigade AO. SSG Negrete, SGT Campbell, SGT Nutt and SGT Ballard diligently worked thru the influx of detainees due to ongoing missions. Their dedication to the mission is unsurpassed. As usual, all the interpreters worked overtime this month, sometimes operating with only one hour of sleep, to support the ongoing Operations and Intelligence Collection missions this month. Our translator's play a vital role in our mission. Without their language expertise, our mission would not be successful.

HEADQUARTER'S PLATOON

Greetings from Baghdad! This is a brief update on what your soldiers from HQ's Platoon have been involved with in our Area of Operations. To sum it up in one word—BUSY!!! As this mission is different from any other that we have faced in the past, we have had to make some special changes to meet the specific needs of 3rd Brigade Combat Team, which is the unit we are supporting within the 1st Cavalry Division. We have combined our Analysis Control Team (ACT) section, which is responsible for providing intelligence products to the Brigade, with our Common Ground Station (CGS) section, which normally operates the equipment that receives a downlink from our air assets, to form a dynamite intelligence team that provides superb intelligence support to the Brigade Intelligence shop. The ACT (consisting of SGT Williams, SGT Nicholas, and SPC Avallone) and the CGS section (SSG Mann, SPC Smith, SPC Lynch, SPC Tolin, SPC Denson and PFC Zaborac) have worked tirelessly to accomplish this mission. They have been responsible for the processing of over 400 detainees (including more than 100 in September alone) in addition to the analysis of all of the detainee interrogations. But before the detainees are even apprehended, our soldiers are literally working around the clock to find as much intelligence on each target as possible. By the number of detainees processed this month, you can tell that they have been doing a great job!!

Our other Section, HQ's Squad (SSG Hicks, SGT Howley, SPC Loya, SPC Orta, SPC Russell, SPC Johnson and PFC Schroeder) has been just as busy as they continue to prove that they are the backbone of our Company. They have the never-ending task of sustaining the operations of the company. Their tasks include: maintaining communications equipment, supplying the company with everything they need, daily mail runs, radio watch, administrative tasks, and convoy operations. There is no such thing as a set schedule for these guys as their mission can begin early in the morning and run late into the evening.

To date, half of your soldiers have been on leave with four more scheduled for leave in the month of October. Please continue to keep us in your prayers and you can look forward to another update soon!!!

2LT Trinkle-XO, HQ Platoon Leader

SSG Hall-HQ Platoon Sergeant

HEROS OF THE MONTH

CONGRATULATIONS ARE IN ORDER

Forward Operating Base Union I, conducted their Soldier of the Month Board on 6 September, 2004. Soldiers that participated were from HHC 3rd Brigade, A Company, 13th Signal BN, Brigade Reconnaissance Troop and D Company, 312th MI.

Although all the soldiers did a great job and should be proud to be their units representative...one soldier stood out above the others. I'm proud to say that soldier was our very own SPC Joseph Ruppenstein. SPC Ruppenstein did an excellent job, his military bearing and knowledge were very apparent to not only the Brigade Command Sergeant Major but also to the four First Sergeants that sat as members on this board. SPC Ruppenstein is a stellar soldier and Delta Company congratulates his outstanding achievement!!!

SPC Ruppenstein will be receiving a 3rd Brigade Coin of Excellence presented by the Brigade Command Sergeant Major.

DELTA DAGGERS LEAD THE WAY!!!

SPC Avallone is a 96B working in the ACT Section of the S2. SPC Avallone was given minimal guidance and a pile of reports to sift through and develop a workable intelligence product for the Brigade. The following day she produced an outstanding intelligence product using link analysis that allowed the commander to be able understand a complicated terrorist and criminal network that had previously not been understood. Due to her initiative, ingenuity, and analytical expertise, the Brigade can now successfully collect information on the group and target them during future operations. She clearly exceeded the standard on this task and serves as an example to the other analysts of what diligence and determination can accomplish.

SGT Nicholas was hand selected by the Brigade Intelligence Officer for her knowledge and expertise relating to the Sheik Maroof area of Baghdad to go forward and work with an Infantry Task Force who was conducting combat operations in that area. The Task Force was pulled from another area, so they were not completely familiar with their temporary area of operations. That's where SGT Nicholas came in. She used here knowledge of the terrain and the people who live there to help provide the expertise that they needed about the Sheik Maroof area. She acted as an Liasion between the Task Force and the Brigade on intelligence matters and was instrumental in building the target folders that were ultimately used by the combat unit to successfully target the enemy while avoiding unnecessary dangers.

A Delta Company Military Intelligence Success Story

A true story of how D Company fights the war on terrorism.

One September evening, SFC Reid, the senior NCO of the THT (Tactical Human Intelligence Team) of D Company, 312th Military Intelligence received a call from one of his Sources stating that he wanted to meet to discuss an important matter. The meeting occurred and the Source provided the details about a car with explosives and a possible chemical agent that were intended to be used in a spectacular attack in the International Zone at a time in the near future. The Source described the details of the car, the location of the car, the owner, and a number of other details that allowed the THT to gain enough details to proceed with trying to interdict the terrorist attack. SFC Reid then issued a Global Positioning System (GPS) to the Source who volunteered to confirm the grid coordinates of the target car and house where the Target individual was located. Meanwhile, the Company Commander went to the TOC (Tactical Operations Center) before the Source had even left the area to start necessary coordination and planning.

The information was quickly disseminated to several people in the TOC so that no time would be wasted. The sketch of the area was provided to one of the D Company Analysts who works in the S2 Shop, named SPC Denson, so that

she could help use satellite imagery to determine what exact area the sketch was depicting. The Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) Platoon Leader, who also works with and is supported by D Company, was briefed in order to be prepared to help to locate the exact house and take pictures of the objective using the UAV. The BDE S2 (Intelligence Officer) and S3 (Operations Officer) were both briefed on the details of the Source's information and were given D Company's recommendation regarding how to detain the individual and the car with weapons. The plan was to have the Source return after confirming the grid coordinates while the UAV maintained aerial surveillance of the target for the duration of the operation. The D Company translator named Hamza and the source, dressed in a disguise, would accompany a maneuver unit to the objective where the unit would cordon off the area, detain the terrorist, and seize the car with weapons. The S2 and the S3 liked the idea, but they were still not sure about how they were or when they were going to execute the mission. They still did not know the exact location of the target area.

During this discussion about how this plan could work, the Company Commander was approached by SFC Reid and SPC Denson who said they were 90% sure of the location based off a match with satellite imagery. Moments later, the THTs received a call from Hamza, who said the Source just called and provided the exact grid coordinates based off of the GPS that had been provided to him. The grid coordinates matched the imagery and the description provided by the Source. Soon after, the UAV platoon confirmed all of the grid coordinates while flying over the target and began to take photographs of the house and car from all four angles so they could be used by the planners and the unit who would execute the mission. The UAV platoon confirmed the information that the Source provided about a small alleyway behind the house that the D Company analysts were concerned would allow the target individual to escape. They also clearly saw the vehicle that contained the weapons with the UAV.

The S3 agreed with the plan that was proposed by D Company and agreed that there was enough information to execute a mission, but there was one problem...the target was a few kilometers into another Brigade's Area of Responsibility. This meant that the mission just became more difficult and complicated since cross boundary coordination needed to be made and another unit would ultimately be responsible for the execution of this plan. The Brigade Commander then stepped in and was briefed on the plan and made the decision to pass the mission to the other unit. He said that we would conduct the operation if they were unwilling or unable to do it, but it would be best if the other unit executed the mission since they were responsible for the area. The D Company Commander was directed to brief the entire situation over the CPOF, which is a communications network that allows multiple users to communicate while seeing a common picture on three large monitors in front of those using the system. The D Company Commander was able to talk about the situation while drawing graphics on the monitor that both units and the Division could see. All units were now briefed on the situation and the UAV Platoon emailed the pictures that their UAV had taken just minutes before.

It was now about 1.5 hours after the THT had left the Source. The other unit returned our call agreeing to execute the mission. They asked to use the Source to positively identify the target. We agreed with the stipulation that our trusted Hamza accompany the Source since the translator completely understood the plan and all of the details of the information. The other unit agreed and we designated a link-up point and time.

Luckily, D Company's SSG Mann was on gate guard duty allowing the Source quick and easy access to the FOB without compromise. Anticipating that the mission would go as planned, SFC Reid was already getting his translator and his Source who had just returned from his GPS mission ready with his disguise when the Company Commander called to brief him the plan. 2LT Trinkle and SSG Hall's Headquarters Platoon was also getting ready to transport the THT, translator, and source to the link-up point. SSG Mann and SSG Hall were also getting a cot and other amenities ready to allow the Source to have a place to spend the night once the mission was completed.

It was now about two hours from the point the information had been received to the point when the translator and source were being transported to the other unit for execution of the mission. SFC Reid, SPC Denson, and the Company Commander were now intently monitoring the UAV's "feed" (the picture the UAV was transferring) of the objective area on a large big screen monitor in the TOC to see if there was any change and to see the results of the operation. Hamza continued to give updates to the D Company members in the TOC from his location every step of the way.

After several hours, the objective was cordoned by the unit who sent an Explosives Ordinance Disposal (EOD) robot to inspect the car to determine if it was set to explode. The robot could not see any indicators of the car being rigged, so the unit shot out the windows of the car to see if the robot could get a better look that way. Again, the robot had negative results. Finally, the Iraqi Police were called, entered the house, and escorted the target man from his house to his car and made him open it. They also made him take the suspicious items out of the car and lay them out in the

road for inspection. All of the items matched how the Source had described them except no one was sure what was in the box with the suspected chemical agent. The contraband included explosives and bomb making materials. Both the target individual and all of the contraband were secured. Now it was time to search the house.

The D Company personnel assisted the search by telling the unit and the translator what they needed to be looking for: family photos, automation equipment, cellular phones, contraband, other possible evidence of wrong doing and links to other terrorists. The detainee's wife and three sons were home. The unit, with the help of the D Company translator, conducted tactical questioning of the family members and determined that their detention was not necessary for the investigation. Several key pieces of evidence were taken from the house for exploitation by technical experts and various analysts.

The Source, translator, detainee, and the evidence were then all transported to the Brigade Detention Facility about seven hours after the original information was received. PFC Zaborac, who works in the S2 Shop's Detainee Section, ensured the paperwork was ready for the interrogators to do the proper questioning. Several of D Company's interrogators and linguists went right to work on the suspect including SPC El Ashmawi and Hamza. Other details that will now lead the company to other criminals and terrorists were learned as a result of the D company interrogators and linguists.

A major catastrophe may have been averted because of the efforts of the D Company soldiers. This case is still being investigated but the detainee's outlook does not look good for him. The mission was a success due to the competence, initiative, and winning spirit of the Dagger Company soldiers.

Hails and Farewells

A special welcome to some recent additions to the DELTA family:

**CPT Dylan and Aime Randazzo and – From 2-5 CAV
SGT Matthew and Dana Stone - Coming from Korea
1LT Kyle Norton - Coming from Fort Huachuca
2LT Shaun and Heather Trinkle - Coming from Fort Huachuca**

Farewell to the following soldiers departing DELTA:

CPT Switajewski - HHC 312TH

The following individuals are expecting babies and our thoughts and excitement are with you during your pregnancy.

Mrs. Dana Stone, due date November 17th



Congratulations to SPC Steven and Christina Reitz on the birth for their daughter Stephanie (9-14-04)

The following soldiers celebrated or will celebrate birthdays during September. I hope your special day is a memorable one and I wish you many more!



September

SGT Howley-29 Sep
SPC Loya-26 Sep
SSG Mann-15 Sep
SGT Stone-25 Sep

October

SSG Agnew-14 Oct
SPC Denson-15 Oct
SPC Orta-12 Oct

A Quick Message from your Family Readiness Group Leader!

Hello Everyone! I just want to remind each of you that if you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me. We have our first meeting tomorrow and I will email everyone to let them know what we discussed and what our plans are for the Holidays and Re-Deployment. I do want to let everyone know that we have been given a cut off date for Holiday Packages. It is recommended that you get all packages intended for the holidays out no later than November 4th. I will email more to you later...as this was the only space left...but with so much good information from Iraq I don't think you will mind if I cut my corner short. I hope you enjoyed this edition of the news letter. If there is any other information that you would like to see added, please let me know! Thank you and God Bless!
~Aimee Randazzo 254-698-6051
ALRandazzo@hotmail.com